**Blades in the Shadows**

DEF Aerin Taggart

31 Jan 2014

**The Assassin**

The Assassin had been at this business for several decades. It all started when he was a teenager and his uncle had taken him on a bounty mission. The mission that day was a success and he had never looked back.

Hunting men, bringing them in or killing them, was his passion. Over time, he had brought others into his operation. He found it easier in his advanced age to have help, just like his uncle had done with him. His men were fit, the result of hundreds of hours of training. For this assignment, he had brought two veterans and five of his younger ones. The untested assassins were extremely hungry to make their bones.

The Assassin was puzzled by this assignment. The pay for one inexperienced Jedi had been one of his better paying hits. Granted, an inexperienced Jedi would be more then what mere mortals could handle, but mere mortals don’t successfully hunt Kryat Dragons.

The assignment was a young Sentinel who didn’t even notice she had been watched for the last few days. He was certain of it with several decades of experience. They had quietly sketched out her routine and determined that the best time to kill her would be as she walked from the cantina to the living quarters that she stayed in. A certain section of her walk was isolated from view.

Quietly getting into position, the eight assassins waited for her. As she had done for the last three previous nights, she walked through that section. An assassin stepped out behind her as she walked by. The Assassin walked out in front of her, his blaster leveled at her chest.

She froze for a second. Then she asked if this was a robbery. The Assassin squeezed the trigger. She fell to the ground. The Sentinel was dead and he would be paid well. The body disappeared and the assassins standing around stared, confused. There was a movement in the direction of a generator and one of the younger assassins fired at it.

The generator exploded, sending the assassins flying backwards. For the Assassin, it stung. The Jedi had known and he was now her target. How had she known? Had it been one of his younglings? Was he destined to fail? Would he die here?

**The Citizen**

The Citizen had been asleep. He was aroused by the destruction of the generator, which had shattered all of his windows. He had to work in a few hours. His job at the local fuel station paid very little and now his windows were destroyed. He was angry.

Outside laid a dozen men in uniform. The military or the law was trying to assert their dominance on Bronato. The thought sent rage pouring through his head. His neighbors, also awaken from their slumber, were starting to gather in the streets, blasters in hand. The men in uniform would pay for their insolence.

The Citzen quickly pulled on a pair of slacks and a jacket. Finding his blaster rifle, he ran outside. Already, blaster fire was flying through the air. A few of his neighbors laid on the ground wounded and a few laid on the ground dead.

The men in uniform were putting up a good fight. Their blaster fire was straight and true. However, they were outnumbered, with more neighbors rushing out. The men in uniform were pushed out into the open where they were exposed for attack from every direction. The Citizen managed to shoot one in the abdomen.

**The Jedi**

The Jedi had been sent here to gather information on Scholae Palatinae. Bronato was a horrible place for anyone, much less an inexperienced Jedi. She had already been pickpocketed once and almost been the victim of slave trafficking. Young, healthy Zeltrons go for high prices. Gullible, beautiful, and full of pheromones, brothels paid a premium for such slaves.

The Jedi had a clear view of the flash mob. It was painfully obvious how disproportionate the two sides were. The explosion that her assassins had caused in destroying a generator had aroused and angered the populace at this late hour. Bronato was known for its indiscretions and vices, but massive explosions were considered off-limits. Even in the following years, natives would still remember this night with bitterness.

The assassins were fighting for their lives. They wore black military outfits in a city where the military wouldn’t wear uniforms without the safety of numbers, where the law didn’t exist. One by one, the assassins fell. No matter how well they were trained, how many years and credits went into their training, they were still mortal. They would die. That is the order of things.

She watched their deaths from the shadows, watching their bright blue blaster bolts decrease in intensity while a steady stream of multiple color bolts flew towards them. She was saddened by the display of violence. The assassins had been sent here to kill her and would have without the slightest feeling of remorse, but they had die horrifically. Bronato didn’t suffer fools. Had they the weeks of acculturation, they would have understood.