**The Independence Games**

2013

**Defining Moments**

*by*

*~~SWL Xanos Goatham Zorrixor (Sith) / CON / Naga Sadow~~*

*DP Darth Vexatus (Sith) / Marka Ragnos of Naga Sadow, #188*

Betrayal



**Sadow Palace**

**Sif**

**19 ABY**

There had been no word from Trevarus.

The Consul stared out through the jagged remnant of his office’s main viewport, which had been shattered during the battle against the Imperial forces that had laid claim to the palace while he and the Clan had been trapped on the isolated world Klind’arith. Behind him, the body of the Imperial captain remained on the floor. Nobody had bothered about cleaning up the mess.

They could all feel it.

An ill wind blew through the hills.

The Falleen shut his eyes and reached out into the web of interconnections that made up the tapestry of creation… the Force itself thundered as in the distance bright forks of lightning broke up the grey skies above the city of Juraas-Kur. Something had happened, but their communications had been cut off and contact with anyone outside the system on Eos or the fleet had been severed.

And even his link with Trevarus had been deafened.

Whatever had happened on Aurora, the deaths had been catastrophic enough to send shockwaves resonating all the way across the Emperor’s Hammer here to the Phare System.

Either the Seven had been caught out or they had gone through with their threats.

He would have known had he been there…

But the Great Sadow Library had been at risk, and it had been impossible for both he and Trevarus to make the journey to Eos. The eight had become seven, but at least Sadow Palace had been reclaimed from the mundane fools that had thought the secrets of the dark side were theirs to control.

In the end, that was all that was important to him.

If it would not be Trevarus himself, it was down to him to make sense of the Oracle’s visions.

The identity of the Herald of the Final Way would not be lost to the Empire.

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*This is how it feels to be betrayed.*

 *The Imperial captain’s throat glows red from the tip of Xanos’s lightsaber as he holds it right alongside the left of the unfamiliar Saraii’s neck. Most of Sif’s native Chiss had years ago pledged their lives to Lord Sadow, but this coward, who refuses even to reveal his name, has prostituted himself to the highest taskmaster, no matter what price that brings upon his own friends and family.*

 *“Astatine,” Xanos growls, allowing a flash of anger slip into his ordinarily even voice.*

 *Someone sold them out.*

 *One of the Seven’s contacts had already run off and revealed what they planned to do.*

 *The Saraii stares up from where the Consul has him pinned, unable to speak with the blade so close to his throat, but his plea clamours through the fabric of the voice, like a shockwave.*

 *LET ME GO!*

 *But the Consul holds his weapon where it is, indifferent to the Chiss’s fear for his own life.*

 *The fear is like a drug.*

 *For every silent cry of anguish, Xanos only wants to drink more, to squeeze every last drop of pain and dread. As Darth Plagueis the Wise once wrote, it was only in these last moments of life, as a body’s midi-chlorians prepared themselves for what they already knew was to come, that the true fear rose to the surface, and the mortal anima revealed its futility to all those with the sight to see it.*

 *Xanos moves his lightsaber away again, just enough to allow the Chiss room to take a breath.*

 *“It… it wasn’t me!” the captain insists. “The… the Executive Officer… he… he* knows*!”*

 *The Consul already knows this. The Seven knew the moment Mairin was chased into exile.*

 *The Fleet Commander has been aware of a threat for months.*

 *He just did not know who was behind it.*

 *“Does he,” Xanos answers finally, sounding entirely indifferent.*

 *It makes no difference what the Grand Admiral is or is not aware of.*

 *They have already come too far.*

 *There is no turning back now.*

 *With one short move of his hand, the Consul decapitates the Chiss captain.*

 *The will of the Seven Who Shall Stand in Darkness will not be stopped.*

End of Part 1

The Betrayer



**New Sadow Palace**

**Sepros**

**29 ABY**

The blue Saraii grabbed for his own neck as the invisible hand pinched his throat shut. A moment later the Chiss that had come with Lord Sadow during the Exodus and risen to be one of the chief officers in the walls of the New Sadow Palace collapsed to the floor, his blue skin going bluer still.

Throughout the Hive, the home of the central security system that controlled every ship and facility across the Orian System, more guards raised their assault rifles while technicians pulled out blaster pistols from inside their jackets. But in the end, it made no absolutely difference.

Blasters were nothing to the power of the Force.

Darth Vexatus held up his right hand and redirected the attacks directly back at their sources and across the room Chagrians and humans, Twi’leks and Zabrak, even a Wookiee, all collapsed right where they were, the holes in the center of their foreheads still glowing as they all reached the floor.

Behind the Sith Lord, black armoured soldiers from the Obsidian Cohort spilled into the room, some of his Master’s private computer specialists already unfolding their own devices even before they had sat down. It would only take a matter of minutes to hack into the Clan’s systems.

Not that it was even hacking when Trevarus and his apprentice had been the ones who had set the systems up in the first place exactly ten years earlier.

But in all those years, the Dark Brotherhood had never managed to do what the pair had set out to achieve right back at the very start: the Herald of the Final Way had still not been found; the Seven Who Shall Stand in Darkness remained unidentified. There could be no more procrastination.

If the Yuuzhan Vong were to be stopped, and the Force brought to an end, there was but one answer remaining, and it was not to be found on Sepros, nor the dead sands of Antei or Korriban.

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*This is how it feels to become the betrayer.*

 *For ten years, Darth Vexatus and his Master have stood by the Clan that they have worked hard to build. But those days are now over. The Sons of Sadow have forgotten their true goal.*

 *Do they not remember why the Falleen made certain that the holocrons and artifacts stored in the Great Sadow Library were evacuated instead of allowing them to fall into the hands of the Empire? Many had died that day. Not least during the Battle of Darkened Hearts at Dargbar’rh Stronghold on Frigg. Those sacrifices were made for a reason that has now been forgotten.*

 *Not that the Dark Lords on Antei are little better.*

 *Even before the Prophet warned them, the Star Chamber had already known that the Vong were coming, but hid the truth. Why? Not for the good of the Final Way, that much alone is sure.*

 *Had it not been for Trevarus and his visions, there would have been no Exodus, no Antei. Back then, Firefox and the other Seven understood this, they accepted it. That was why the Exodus had been successful.*

 *But today the Lords of the Council have turned their backs on the words of the Oracle.*

 *Today the Dark Brotherhood is driven for itself, not by any greater vision.*

 *But no more.*

 *For the Culmination of the Final Way has finally arrived.*

 *On Lehon, the Heart of the Force shall be sundered, and the Great Void will swallow all.*

 *As the Oracle foresaw, so has the day finally come.*

 *A Brotherhood will be betrayed so that time can begin anew.*

 *Darth Vexatus is the Herald that was prophesied to bring about the End of Days.*

End of Part 2

**References**

1. My character sketches were built off the Falleen in the *Ultimate Alien Anthology*, [here](http://starwars.wikia.com/wiki/File%3AFalleen_UAA.jpg).

2. The first-person sections are inspired by Matt Stover’s *Revenge of the Sith* novel.