**Remembrance**

Zagro sat in his chambers at the Dragon Citadel and busied himself with tidying up. As the wars on Begeren and Nicht Ka had concluded, it was time to take stock of the Sergeant’s possessions. Trophies had been won and lost and new gifts needed a place. In one box lay a purple robe and epaulettes of remarkable craftsmanship.

This had been the Hapan’s prized possession. He had earned it with much trouble at the Shadow Academy. For the Researcher’s Robes were not given freely.

Fenn remembered the day he had been granted them. He was still a Guardian and ran into a fellow Scholae Palatinae brother at the Academy. Yet, both men were out for blood on that day. Jealousy and exaltation make poor bedfellows….

Draped in scholarly robes of rich tapestry and fine workmanship sat the ephemeral Kor Vaal. The Kel Dor was immersed in an ancient manuscript scribed in thin parchment and straining to decipher its secrets. It took him a full ten seconds of overwhelming silence to ascertain that his table of fellow students had cleared the way and were eyeing with apprehension the Krath clad in the robes of a Shadow Academy Researcher. Kor Vaal glanced up without betraying a shred of visible emotion. “What in the name of Antei are you doing here?” came the inquisitive remark from the seated Kel Dor.

Palpable animosity and anxiety filled the dim and tepid library as students braced against bookshelves and slowly congregated towards the far stairwells. One by one, the academics marched up to the overlooking galley and were soon visible with their hands on the railings and outstretched heads vying to get a better vantage point of the coming maelstrom.

The Kel Dor slowly rose, pushing the heavy wooden chair behind him with his outstretched right arm, the left arm hidden beneath his robes. Before Kor could take a step in either direction Zagro drew down on him with a concealed BlasTech DL-44 tucked away from underneath his robes.

“Put that damn pistol away before you get hurt, Hapan.” Kor Vaal stated the words with bitterness and implied derision, enunciating the Krath’s species in an elaborate and elongated fashion. “Researchers’ robes? For one so new to the Shadow Academy?”

Unsure of his next action, Kor expressed his own puzzlement. He took a few idle moments to turn his attention to the galley above and surmised there was a strong chance the Hapan would not strike him down in cold blood in the view of so many witnesses. The Shadow Academy was deemed a neutral territory under the control of the hegemony of Antei. That this sacred place of learning should become a battleground for two brothers of the same House was unthinkable to most of the assembled spectators.

Kor slowly backed up to the table behind him, never taking his eyes off of Zagro or moving his left hand and its prized content hidden behind his garments. “Zag...Zag…what are you going to do? Kill me in front of all of these people? You are a man wanted by your own people, a traitor to everyone you have ever been associated with. House Scholae Palatinae is your only salvation. Killing me will make you an outcast and above our protection. Think this carefully, if your Hapan brain can allow that!” barked Kor Vaal after the initial appeal to his adversary.

Fenn backed away as well, bracing himself against the nearest bookshelf and half lowered his blaster. “Kill you? I fear not. All Scholae Palatinae brethren have been called back to Juddeca. Caina is in open revolt and we are needed immediately for a mission to retake the Kas’im Citadel. No Kel Dor, I cannot kill you. What I have planned is worse. You will be humbled in front of all of these people in reparation. Hopefully, your pride will heal by the time we get back to our system.” Zagro lowered his blaster to his waist and allowed it to rest near his right hip…

That day begun with such jealousy and animocity had transpired to create an enduring friendship between two Dark Jedi Knights. Fenn ran his fingers across the robes and sighed. He now donned his Scholae Palatine armor but dreamed of the day he would attain his scholarly robes once more.