**When Two Became One**

The ceremony had just ended when the celebrants slowly removed themselves from the hall. The hour was late and the drinks were running low. Many of the assembled Dark Jedi had already left; the more junior brethren and the Imperial leadership had been dismissed.

The Equites Hall was less ornate than the Grand Reception Hall of the Imperial Winter Palace on Judecca. The newly minted Krath Pontifex, Zagro Fenn, had wanted his ceremony on Antenora. The Acclivis Draco bastion was his true home. Plus, it would be easier for him to enact his coup de grace.

“Goodnight and congratulations, brother,” stated Kor Vaal, “Well worth the wait. Where you lead, I will follow.”

And then it was left to the four chosen brothers. Koryn Thraagus stayed the entire night, proud of his student’s rise in stature. Zagro’s own students, Cruise and Ulfsark awaited him.

“Gentlemen, it is a tradition that a master and student will have some final words during such a prestigious moment in both their careers. Await me outside.” Ordered Zagro.

His squires departing, the Hapan turned to his master and handed him a tall drink. Thraagus sipped it slightly then put it down.

“I have had my fill friend. It is unique that we have stuck together for so long. Generally, once knighthood hits the student tosses his shackles aside. Especially when he takes his on students.” Came the answer from Thraagus.

Fenn studied the doorway and was sure it was secured. As were the hallways and turbolifts on that level of the palace. He was sure all security cameras and protocols were disabled as he had sliced into them years ago and was in constant control. He sighed heavily.

“Koryn, you took me under your wing and gave me the top coverage I needed to advance. You promoted my deeds and accomplishments through the Imperial hierarchy and allowed my foot in the door. Yet, you never truly trusted me with any of your secrets. You never took me for a brother.”

Fenn’s words came out not as a question or as a statement, but lurked somewhere between the two. Thraagus laughed mightily yet backed away a slight distance, and took on a new posture. Normally, the skilled Krath’s movements would be undetectable but he had drank a good deal that evening while Zagro drank nothing but water.

“I can’t tell if you are joking or if this is some trick. Your mind is unreachable my friend.” Said Thraagus.

“No, it is reachable. However the past few minutes my apprentices have been placing ysalmi cages throughout the walls between the walls of this hall. I have reached as far as I can with you in the Imperial hierarchy.” Spat Zagro.

Thraagus laughed again as he inched for his saber and ignited it. “Is this how you wish to die? By us battling to the end? You are a skilled duelist but you will suffer for this I swear it.”

Instantly the two were upon each other. Blades twirling and giving a dazzling light show. With their Force abilities blocked sheer ability and experience would carry the day. As would youth and stamina.

“Enough of this, you have proved your point Fenn. I should have given you more of my knowledge but it looks like not doing so has kept me alive so long.” Yelled Thraagus.

Fenn kicked at Koryn and lunged with his saber, a bold move but one that forced Thraagus back. “See, old friend, I have taught my apprentices everything. They have locked this area down and have monitored every living person in this palace. They are ready to dispose of your body as well.” Stated Fenn calmly.

With that two crimson blades appeared as out of nowhere. They charged at Koryn Thraagus. Forcing him to adjust his position he was not able to deflect all the blades. Zagro Fenn thrust his golden blade through his master’s back. The apprentices thrust down at the same moment. Beams of light pierced Koryn at many angles.

“Clean this up. We have work to do. Koryn was so limited. He did not believe in teaching apprentices the deeper secrets. That was folly. I taught you each everything. That is the key. Why kill me? Once I am struck down you will both be at each others throats instantly. You are my insurance plan friends. I will dismiss you both as students before this ever comes.”