**A Brush with the Past**

**By: Locke Sonjie**

**Kitchens**

**Temple of Sorrow**

**Sepros**

Locke stared at the table. It was gone. He had waited all day for it, and it was gone: his pie, his delicious key lime pie. His Proconsul had stolen star destroyers while Locke dreamed of that pie. Politicians had yapped in his ears while Locke dreamed of that pie. Malik had been talking about some big rock, while Locke dreamed of his pie.

And now, here he was, at the end of the day, and it was gone.

At first, Locke thought he would be angry. Shockingly, instead, he was just sad. He looked around and saw no evidence of what had happened to it. No one should have known it was there, but maybe one of the cooks took it? Thinking that this was a good place to start, Locke headed for the kitchen.

He walked inside, and saw the usual. There were pots and pans everywhere. There were things he knew nothing about because Locke had never learned to cook. There were no people, though. It was late at night and all the cooks had probably gone home.

There was also no sign of the key lime pie.

Disappointed, the Consul decided to look elsewhere. He turned to go, but then he noticed something strange. There was a blue glow coming from behind some giant wheeled storage unit. It might have just been a glow-bulb, but it flickered oddly. Locke decided to walk toward it, and he began to hear a soft hum.

When he turned the corner, the Krath Adherent lost all ability to speak and could barely comprehend what he was looking at. Instead of a glow-bulb, it was some kind of circular opening. It shimmered around a central, misty, opaque smoke about the size and shape of a door.

It looked like a portal, but such things didn't exist, did they?

There was only one way to find out. Reaching out with a tentative finger, Locke touched the smoke, his hand sliding through it easily. It felt warm around his hand, like the embrace of a nice bath after a long day, and after enjoying a nice slice of pie. Maybe this was where his pie had gone.

Against all logic, Locke stepped through the portal. Warmth embraced him as he stepped through. On the other side, Locke found himself in a kitchen, but there was something off about it. There was a distant rumble that sounded like starship engines. Beyond that, all he could hear was soft laughter.

Confused, Locke continued on. The kitchen here was much as his had been, but it just felt...off. He stepped out of it, and instead of finding the Temple of Sorrow, he found himself in a huge dining room. The walls were dark green, contrasting sharply with the violet lights above.

Then he saw a figure at the opposite end of the table. As it stood, Locke recognized it as a man. The man wore a long, grey robe that seemed to mimic those of the ancient Sith Lords, but that was not his most recognizable feature. He was grinning, and it was a wide, tooth-filled grin.

As he saw Locke, the man laughed again, and Locke recognized it as the sound he had heard before. It was almost a giggle, but not the type Macron would produce. Instead of granting one images of a dark madness, this one seemed almost happy. *Too* happy.

"Who are you?" Locke asked.

"Why, you don't recognize me?" the man said, his voice somewhat excited. "Have you truly forgotten? It has not been that long."

"I've never seen you before. Who am I, if you know me?"

"Why," the man said, voice almost musical, seeming a little too excited. "You are Locke Sonjie, Dark Jedi, and I am Darth Umbraeis, Pink Lord of the Sith."

*What the hell?* Locke thought, but he pressed on. He had come here for a reason.

"Umbraeis, I have not heard of you, but no matter. Did you steal my pie?"

"That depends," Umbraeis giggled. "Was it key lime?"

"Yes, " Locke said flatly.

Umbraeis nodded. "Then I did eat it. You see, it is my favorite."

Locke thought about asking why the man had come through a dimensional portal just to steal his pie, but thought better of it. This was all too weird.

"No one steals my pie," Locke said.

"Oh?" Umbraeis answered.

Locke ignited his lightsaber, sunfire blade a pale yellow in the strange light of this room. Umbraeis laughed, and he raised his hands, small objects rising in the air around him.

*Telekinesis*, Locke thought. He side-stepped as the first of the objects sailed toward him. Umbraeis was making throwing motions with his hand. The first object sailed past long, and Locke barely noticed it. Then he dodged the second, but the third hit him head on. He expected it to hurt, but it did not. Instead, he chanced a look down at the offending object.

It was a stuffed animal that resembled a bantha.

Then another hit, and this one looked like a nerf. Then a rancor, and more banthas. Locke struggled to dodge the stuffed animals. He cleaved them in two with his lightsaber. He tried to repel them with the Force, but they just kept coming. All the while, Umbraeis laughed and giggled. The stuffed animals began to pile around Locke, and he struggled to move. Then they rose to his chest, and up to his head. Finally, they completely enveloped him, and all Locke could hear was that laughter as he slowly passed out.

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Locke awoke and rolled over, looking at the time. It was well past midnight. He groaned and sat up, shocked to find Kiana sitting in a chair near the bed. His sister arched an eyebrow at him.

"What are you doing in my quarters?" Locke asked.

Kiana smiled. Locke hated when she did that. It usually meant she knew something she could use against him. "You were yelling in your sleep about key lime pie and stuffed animals. The guards were a little worried...so I persuaded them to let me come in."

"But I hate key lime pie!" Locke said.

"I know," Kiana said. "Must have been a bad dream. Oh, unrelated, I found this note by your bed and couldn't help reading it." She handed him a piece of flimsi.

He took it and read, puzzled by what it said, the fuzzy memories of his experience already evaporating as dreams often did.

*Remember the past, Locke. Remember the world that was once yours.*

* *Lady M*

"What the hell?" Locke grumbled, rolling over.

"A love letter?" Kiana asked, laughing softly.

"Definitely not," Locke said. "Let me sleep."

"Sure," she said, standing up. As she left, Locke went back to sleep. In the morning, he would remember none of this.

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