**“Welcome To the Other Side”**

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*A Clan Arcona Competition: The Mirror’s Edge*

**The Citadel**

**Estle City, Selen**

She awoke in a sudden panic. Her heart racing uncontrollably and her breasts heaving as she labored to catch her breath. *It had all seemed so real,* she thought. Her dreams had been decidedly darker as of late. The Grand Master had said they were visions through The Force, but she wanted nothing more to do with these nightmares. Their authenticity had been alarming. She had really thought of herself as a monster – a Dark Adept of a Brotherhood of Darkness.

Her breathing corrected itself under a Jedi breathing technique. Each breath of the cool night air coming in slow and steady. Her heart no longer fluttering, but beating in strong regular notes. And a sudden chill gripping her. Only now did she realize that she had been soaked through from head to foot. Suddenly awash in cold sweat, she now extracted herself from her bunk. Bare feet touching down on cold, lifeless tile, she marched to a wash basin on the opposite wall of her simple quarters and began to rinse herself off.

The action seemed practiced, but it felt so – misplaced. She could not shake the feeling that something here was not as it should be. Something about this scenario screamed that it was wrong, yet she could not pinpoint the exact thing. Finally, exhausted from her sleep, she discarded the idea as simple paranoia extended from her dreams.

“Danialla,” it was breathed as a question more than a whisper, “are you okay?” The Lady of Light, the Grand Master of the Jedi Praxeum, stood in her doorway. “I felt your distress. I hope it is not too forward of me to intrude into your personal space.”

“No, Lady Atyiru.” She was alarmed, frightened, and embarrassed by the sudden appearance of the Lady Grand Master. Atyiru closed the distance between them and stroked the hair from Danialla’s eyes. Danialla could not help but look into her bright green eyes as the moonlight reflected in them through the window.

*This is not real.*

The voice rocked her psyche, dropping her to the floor. Collapsed on the cold tile floor, Danialla was despondent. Her vision blurred for a moment before the darkness took her. She wanted to scream. It was just like her nightmares, the darkness consumed everything and it would not be sated by the measly light she held within her. Desperately, she reached out for the Grand Master’s power to help her drive off the darkness.

*Wake up.*

The light shined brighter as the darkness swallowed her. The flame would not be put out by something so primal as the dark. It could not be engulfed by something so simple. Strengthened by her will, her desperate desire to live, and the simple kindness of the Lady of Light, she clawed her way back towards the flame.

*Stop fighting.*

The devil insider her would not be quieted as she inched her way towards her goal. Danialla could not be driven from the light. She wanted only for it to touch her gentle skin and bask in its radiance as she did every day in Estle City – the galaxy’s only refuge for Force Users. She wanted to be held by Atyiru and comforted. That all of her dark dreams – those Force Visions – were nothing real. They could not harm her or strip from her the inherent good that flamed inside her. It was her flame and something only she could protect, stoke into a blaze, and shine on the rest of the word.

*Enough!*

The world shifted. For a moment, everything felt out of place and inherently – *wrong.* He could not put his thumb on it, but he knew that he had escaped a decidedly fiendish trap or enemy. Something that had attempted to rip him from his own true identity. Part of him still clung desperately to that illusion. It was the *good* in him that he had abandoned many years ago during his ascension through the ranks of the Brotherhood. To hold the Iron Throne, he could never let it rear itself within him. It would have to be smothered. *In due time,* he thought. He enjoyed its soft caress now – in this moment – as he distressed over his currently feelings.

“Are you okay, Bozzz?” The Barabel’s rasp assaulted his ears. It was a harsh tongue and rattled inside his head for a few moments before the words settled in. He longed to hear the Lady Grand Master’s soft tone.

He shook his head in an attempt to loosen the cobwebs still clouding his thought. Discerning real from imaginary was, for the moment, nearly impossible. He could only hope to discover the truth of it all with time and perspective. He knew that this was not the time to pull the situation apart and begin examining it.

The Adept turned his head to his companion, “Yes. I think I will manage, Zakath.” He continued to shake his head from right to left as he rubbed the corner of his eyes with one hand. “What the frack happened?”

The large Barabel turned to someone standing outside the edge of his vision. A young Equite named Tamashi stepped forward. “That would be my-uh-fault, Sir. We had been dispatched by the Shadow Lady to recover a relic listed in the Perdition’s logs as ‘dangerous’.”

“Why in the hell would we do th-“

The Barabel placed one of his large hands on the Elder’s shoulders and dug his talons in. “It zeeemz that you thought it would be a good idea, Bozzz. That we were stronger than thoze traitorz.”

“Oh,” the Sith Elder fumbled with a quick retort. He could not manage to find an appropriate response in this moment. “What? No, how did you-?” His voice trailed off.

Tamashi stepped forward. “When the object made contact with your bare skin, you went rigid and became catatonic, Sir. At first we thought you were having a vision, because The Force swelled through you…” he turned to the Barabel for further elaboration. Words currently failing the young heir of the Bloodfyre line.

“Yezzz. It was powerful Force uze, Bozzz. It juzt zorta settled onto you and never lefffft. Thiz iz why we need to collect theze artifactzzz.”

Braecen nodded. He had arrived at the same conclusion. Now, fleeing the Grand Master’s wrath, they were free to pursue these rumors and artifacts; items that could be vital in the defense of Clan Arcona or the offensive against the Iron Throne. Should it come to a battle between the Jedi and the Iron Throne, they would need every advantage they could secure.