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Vindictae Immortalis, Excidium, Scholae Palatinae

Dark Path, Order of the Sith

The Sorting Hat

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You are ushered from the boats to an entrance where a stern looking woman stands before you. "You will soon be sorted into your Houses. Once inside, I will call your name. You are to proceed to the stage for sorting one at a time." She opens the massive doors behind her and you are herded by the crowd in her wake. Numerous individuals are within and they stare as you make your way forward. Your name is called out and you stumble onto the stage - caught in the surreal nature of the moment - as a large, leather hat is thrust onto your head.

"What to do with you," a voice says inside your head.

"Oh good! You must be a Force User...! I don't belong here, please help!" Calindra replied, all too aware of everyone looking at her from the dinner tables.

"Ohhhhh... Help, eh? Not afraid to sugar coat things, good! Straight shooter, no nonsense. That narrows it down. I do see greatness in you though! You could have power beyond your wildest dreams if you chose to, but you're more the type to help those in need, and you'd rather stand up against oppressors. You sure you wouldn't sacrifice the defenseless for your personal gain?"

"I, no! Never... The good of the many outweighs the ambitions of few..."

"Well then, Slytherin simply won't do... What to do...?"

"Slytherin?"

"Why yes, aren't you familiar with the four founders of our school? Hogwarts was founded by four great wizards! Salazar Slytherin being one of the greatest and most powerful wizards we've ever seen! Slytherin house values ambition, cunning, leadership, and resourcefulness! Ravenclaw values intelligence, creativity, learning, and wit. Hufflepuff values hard work, patience, justice, and loyalty. Meanwhile, Gryffindor values courage, bravery, nerve, and chivalry."

"I'm not very patient," Calindra admitted.

"Ah, but Hufflepuff could teach you that! Your thirst for justice and hard work would be rewarded there. Tell me, do you like to think things through or do you typically rush in?"

Calindra started thinking of all the things she's done without really thinking the through. "I see! Very interesting..! You've a bit of the brashness of a Gryffindor. Could you learn patience? Do you even wish to... Hmmmm? Hah! Thought not! In that case, best to put you into..."

"Gryffindor!!!" yelled the hat to the cheers and jeers from the room!

"Oh wonderful! You just go sit with the others there," advised the stern looking woman who called Calindra up to be sorted. She seemed to consider Calindra with an approving stare, but motioned for her to hurry up. The large gentleman who had come to get her seemed pleased

and whistled his pleasure at the sorting hat's choice, then winked at her, giving her a wondrous thumbs up from his meaty hand.

"What the krife just happened?" she said out loud.

Someone laughed beside her, "Oh I love the mouth on you already! I'm in love!"

"Leave her alone, can't you see she's overwhelmed? Come now, give her room..." chastised a girl with curly long hair. "Hermione, by the way! Pleased to meet you!" she added as she extended a hand.

"Calindra," she said as she sat down, "I'm not supposed to be here! It's all a huge mistake, I'm a Sith apprentice for krife's sake!"

"That's enough Ms. Hejaran," came Professor McGonagall's clipped warning, "either temper that tongue, or I'll have points deducted from Gryffindor. I don't care if I am heading the house or not, you will keep a civil tongue at all times. Is that understood?"

Calindra was about to retort, but saw the older woman's no-nonsense stare and lips thinned to underline her disapproval. The whole affair was comical, here she was: a Sith Warrior, reduced to the ranks of a novice. Calindra's laughter burst through the meeting hall, earning her an eye roll from the head teacher and blank stares from her new house mates.

"Is that understood, Ms. Hejaran?"

"Yes, professor! Sorry."

"Now if you don't mind, Ms. Hejaran, we have a sorting ceremony to finish. Do we have your permission to carry on then?" The question was rhetorical and accentuated by a raised eyebrow and a stern glare.

"No, professor," Calindra managed with a squeak.

The sorting ceremony continued without interruption, and very soon everyone was seated at their respective house tables. Ms. McGonagall gave one last glance at the sheet in her hand, and then looked up towards the faculty tables, meeting a wizened old man's blue eyes. He stood up, and stroked his long white beard, "Thank you, Minerva."

With a slight bow of her head, Professor McGonagall returned to her seat at the faculty tables as the Headmaster made his way to his podium. The lectern's owl stared blankly at the room, then as the headmaster reached it, the owl majestically unfurled its wings.

"Now... to our new students, welcome, to our old students, welcome back! Another year full of magical education awaits you.

"The first years, please note that the dark forest is strictly forbidden to all students. Also, our caretaker, Mr. Filch has asked me to remind you that the third floor corridor on the right hand side is out of bounds to everyone who does not wish to die a most painful death.

"Now, I'm sure you're all eager to get acquainted and fed before we send you all off to the dorms, therefor may I wish you: *'Bonne appétit..!'*"

Suddenly, food appears on all the tables and the students start digging in.

Calindra's eyes widdened and whistled. "I see what he did there, there had to be a rather powerful veil for us to miss all this food," she said with newfound respect in her tone. "Rather brilliantly powerful, that one."

"Brilliant!? Dumbledore's a genius! Best wizard in the world! Potatoes, Cali? You don't mind if I call you Cali, do you?"

"Well, I don't mind if you do, and thank you! By all appearances, we won't be starving any time soon..!"

"My mom says she got me into Hogwarts, just to get me out of her kitchen," announced one of the boys that was stuffing his face in desert.

"Personally, I'm wondering what's on that third floor," ventured Calindra.

Hermione sat up straighter and looked at her, her eyes as large as saucers: "You will not! Didn't you hear what the headmaster said!?"

"Indeed, I have. Death," Calindra said waving her fork airily with a snort. "I might not have my weapons with me, and this piece of wood they gave me wouldn't stand a chance against another Force user, but I can pretty much handle anything. Including death..!" She clipped and harrumphed loudly.

"You'll get yourself killed! Or worse! Expelled!!" Hermione exclaimed.

"She needs to sort out her priorities," said one of the boys to the general laughter of the others around them.

"Does that mean you'll come with me then... Ronald, was it?" Calindra gave him her most sly smile.

"Me!? You kidding!? I like my life, *'living'* thank you..!"

"Pitty, I guess I'll go alone then. I'll wait for everyone to be asleep, and I'll find out what they're hiding on that third floor... would have been wiser for the headmaster to just not say anything about it. The way he's brought it up, is like he practically invited us to go look."

"What do you mean, invited?"

"Do you know of any school who would kill their own students!?"

"Come to think of it, no..."

"Well that means, it's all bantha poodoo! No?"

“Bantha what..!?”

Calindra rolled her eyes, “Never mind. Just saying that the old coot is bluffing, and there’s no actual danger. I want to know what they’re hiding before they have a chance to move it. Those of you that are brave, can come with me and find out, otherwise stay in your beds til morning. No skin off my nose, really,” Calindra said with finality as the feast continued around them.
