**The Expeditionary Library**

**Csilla**

**27 ABY**

Aldaric was awake at his usual early hour, but this day was anything but typical. In his early twenties, he was already a creature of habits. Life was but an organized routine, though, he hoped today would bring some change to that routine. The transport arrived at precisely the time that he was told to be ready. He cracked a small smile when he noticed the Chiss Expeditionary Force logo emblazoned on its hull. Aldaric climbed in, and he was on his way. He had worked hard for this opportunity, and in the end, it took a few strings being pulled to make things happen. As he watched the deep blue crags of ice topped with a dusting of snow fly by through the window, he wondered what his new life would be like and what new insights into the universe it would bring. Information was a commodity to the Chiss, and he was now on his way to the nexus of all the knowledge Csilla had to offer.

After several hours, Aldaric stood before the massive doors that marked the entrance to The Expeditionary Library. It was an enormous facility that sat in a valley nearly ringed by ice covered mountains. After what seemed like an eternity, but may only have been a few minutes, the doors parted and he walked inside. An aged man wearing a crisp Expansionary Defense Force uniform was waiting to greet him, a Chiss of course; offworlders were rare enough on Csilla. An offworlder entering the library was unheard of, and one working there was impossible. He was short for a Chiss, and his facial features had a sunken appearance. Even the typical blue-black hair had begun to gray.

"Greetings, you must be Mithal'dari'canuda, I am Bers'atoka'mrunast. May I call you by your core name?"

"Yessir," Aldaric replied sharply.

"You can call me Satokam, we may be part of the military, but we are a family here. You don't need to worry about such formality unless you're speaking with the Aristocra. Come now, let me show you to your quarters and then we will head into the library."

Aldaric followed Satokam down the corridor to the right of the entrance. From what he could tell most of the living quarters were on that side of the facility, while the administrative area was on the opposite. Nestled between these areas was the library itself. They passed a dozen other officers along the corridor, all of which gave them a brief nod as they walked by. Satokam stopped suddenly and opened the door to one of the doors that lined the corridor.

"You'll be staying here. The rooms are small, but as you can see they have all the necessities. Though, judging by your dossier, I assume you won't be doing much here besides sleeping." A slight grin appeared on his face as he spoke. "Not much at all."

Aldaric walked into his quarters and briefly surveyed it. There was a small desk and bed along the left wall. On the right were a bookshelf and a door that led to the refresher. He gave Satokam a nod.

"This will be more than adequate," he said as he tried the bed, "but what is this about not spending too much time here"?

"Well, aside from the recreation area at the rear of the facility, you are aware that you have the privilege of studying the library's contents in your free time aren't you"?

"I did not!" Aldaric exclaimed excitedly as he sprung to his feet.

"I knew that particular perk would get your attention. Follow me, I'll take you there now." Satokam said as he walked out of the door.

The library itself was enormous. It was a hangar-sized room with four levels of walkways. Stairways leading to the upper levels lined the walls, and a vast sea of bookshelves filled the room. Satokam led him to a large table in the center of the room.

"Here is where you can read whatever you'd like. Satokam said as he handed Aldaric a datapad. "This datapad is linked to the catalog. On it, you can search by name or topic and find the location of the book that you would like to examine. As this is your first day with us, I'll leave you the remainder of the day to explore the collection. Meet me in my office at 0700 tomorrow. I'll introduce you to your duties then." He gave Aldaric a brief salute and walked off towards the administrative area.

Aldaric wasted no time. He quickly searched for books relating to the Force on his datapad. This topic, more than anything else, consumed his mind. His parents had known him to be Force Sensitive from a very early age and had gone to great lengths to conceal that fact. They always told him to ignore his power and live a normal life, and that his abilities would fade with time. However, it seemed fate had other plans for him.

Aldaric read well into the night, he learned so much from the first book, whispers of power that he could have never dreamt of. He debated retiring for the night but decided to at least choose the book that he would read the next night. He picked up the datapad and keyed the search back in. He yawned scrolling through the results and then suddenly breathed in sharply. There was a book about various groups of Force users. He practically sprinted up the stairs to the third level and searched for the tome. After a minute, he found it on a dusty shelf in the corner of the room. He slid back down the stairs and ran to the table. Unable to contain himself, he did a quick survey to ensure that he was alone in the room. When he was satisfied that he was, he closed his eyes and used the Force to turn to a random page in the book. It just happened to be a chapter on a particular group of Force-sensitives and a myriad of other beings. The summary described them as the largest of such groups and undoubtedly the most powerful. They were said to be called the Dark Jedi Brotherhood.

Aldaric greedily read until it was nearly morning. The chapter had unfortunately been quite brief, but there were tantalizing nuggets of information scattered throughout. As he threw himself into his bed, his mind raced with the implications of what he had read. The text didn't speak of any location that the Dark Jedi Brotherhood could be found or the names of any of its supposed members, but there were subtle clues. From that night forward he would devote his free time to devouring whatever information he could glean from the contents of the library. If there was any one place in the galaxy that he could discover a way to contact this Dark Jedi Brotherhood, it was here. T

The End