

Speaking Beyond the Veil

The stark gray walls rose around him, bare and featureless save for the tattered and burning Imperial banners. The air was heavy and dank, as if the large, dark room was some sort of tomb. Khryso Mallus couldn't remember how he'd arrived in this place, or even why he was here. Something about it seemed familiar, and yet, as he searched his memories to recall its name, nothing came. It took the Chiss several moments before he realized that he wasn't alone. Khryso turned slowly, regarding the silent figure who stood several meters behind him.

"I didn't expect this," the figure said, their voice deep and steady. Something about the sound triggered a reflex in Khryso's mind and the previously shadow-laden figure came into clear view. Another Chiss, slightly taller but thinner than Khryso. His hair was absent entirely, leaving him bald, but his narrow eyes and thin lips gave him enough of a resemblance to Khryso to cement his identity firmly. Khryso had only seen pictures of his father, the man had died when the Sith was still a baby. This, however, was unmistakably Torc'ruum'allus.

"You're dead," Khryso said, his fingertips grazing the lightsaber hilt that hung at his side. "You can't be here."

Torc'ruum'allus frowned, his brow furrowing. "I don't know what you're on about, but here I am." Khryso paused for a moment to reach out with the Force, trying to gather as much information as possible. From what he could tell, the man standing across the room was indeed there. He was surprised to discover, however, that he couldn't sense much beyond that. The dark gray walls seemed to be where the world ended.

"You seem on edge," Torc'ruum'allus said, extending out an open hand as if to invite Khryso closer, "there's no need for that. The battle's long over."

Torc'ruum'allus was dressed in an Imperial officer's uniform, the one that Khryso had seen him wearing in his mother's favorite picture. Unlike in the picture, where the uniform was clean and neatly pressed, this one was marred with black scars and burns. A piece of the shoulder was torn away and, as Khryso looked closer, he could have sworn there were splatters of blood across his father's chest.

"You're right," Khryso said, not letting his guard down or moving closer to his father, "it ended twenty-five years ago. The Empire is dead."

Torc'ruum'allus snorted haughtily. "As if the Empire could die. We may have had our troubles, but even the New Republic could only delay our return to power."

"The Empire was a failed experiment," Khryso said, keeping his eyes locked on the man across from him, "it shattered into useless splinters. Some people are still out there, trying to put the pieces back together, but more still grabbed what pieces they could and ran."

The Imperial sneered. "So you're just here to gloat, I suppose? I fell with the old Empire and you," he gestured towards the lightsaber at Khryso's side, "you rolled over and became Jedi scum?" He crossed his arms. "Your mother and I had such lofty intentions for you, I thought you had what it took to be a true, righteous Imperial. I suppose I misjudged you."

Khryso removed his lightsaber from his belt, letting the familiar and pleasant weight sit in his hand for a moment while he gathered himself. He had never truly given much thought to what would happen if he spoke to his father. It had seemed an impossibility in the past, so it would have been a waste of time to contemplate. Now, though, seeing him here for the first time, it was like Khryso was talking to a stranger. This man may look and even act like his father, but Khryso didn't know him. Torc'ruum'allus was just some old Imperial desperately holding on to what he knew, trying to salvage the final breaths of a dying regime by entrusting its future to his infant son. Khryso was glad he hadn't blindly followed in his father's footsteps. He might be dead now, or worse, working for the First Order.

"I'm not a Jedi." Khryso said with finality, "I am a Sith." He raised his free hand, palm out towards his father. After a few seconds of focus, letting the Force flow through him and firmly grasping its power, Torc'ruum'allus began to slide forward, across the floor, towards his son's hand. "I've become more than I ever would have if you had lived."

The Imperial's face was confused and concerned as he tried to wrest himself from Khryso's invisible grip, but with no leverage and not a clue as to what was happening, the Chiss didn't stand a chance. Once Khryso's hand finally closed around his throat, Torc'ruum'allus grabbed his son's forearm, looking him in the eyes. That gaze didn't carry fear or desperation or anger. Just confusion. "I'll have to make sure you stay dead," Khryso said, igniting his lightsaber. The violet blade sprang to life, its comforting hum bringing strength to Khryso's resolve.

Khryso thrust the blade into his father's heart. To his surprise, the Sith found himself looking away, unwillingly to look into his father's eyes as he committed the dead to rest once again. Just as quickly as he'd done the act, however, he felt the body leave his grip and suddenly, Khryso was back in his bed.

Khryso's memories flooded back to him and in less than a breath, he was back to his senses. Slowly getting up out of his bed, Khryso glanced around the dark room. It had just been a dream. Unless, perhaps, it was some kind of vision. If the latter were the case, he would have to spend some time meditating on exactly what happened. He didn't experience such visions often, so he didn't want to waste a chance to gaze into the will of the Force. For now, though, he needed a drink.