

[GJWXIII Phase II] - Combat Writing
#3415 - Manji Keibatsu Sadow

Ordu Aspectu Temple
Lyra-3K-a

The temple was quiet, still and breathless. With battle raging overhead in Lyra Colony, the researchers who normally worked in the temple had fled to safety - making it a perfect place for an ambush.

Manji's boots echoed against the stone as he marched through the arched stone entrance of the temple building. The Inquisitorius had confirmed that his target was down here, and all his senses were on high alert. "A sniper," he muttered to himself, sneering dismissively. "A coward, more like-"

He was interrupted by a sudden flare of warning in the force, followed closely by the sudden deafening retort of a sniper rifle. The Dark Side flooded his veins, hurling him with preternatural speed to one side and behind a large stone pillar as the blaster bolt tore through the air where he'd been moments earlier. The echo of the rifle was deafening, a cacophony rising up to the high ceiling and making it impossible to trace the source of the shot. Still behind the pillar, Manji grinned wickedly as he drew both sabers from his belt, the hilts slipping easily into his hands.

"I guess she heard me?" he chuckled, letting his mind reach out through the Force to probe the large, dark room.

At the far end of the chamber, on top of one of the large pillars, Sencara A'theri kept her rifle raised, sight trained on Manji's last position. She'd shaken off the brief flash of shock at her pursuer avoiding the killshot; he wouldn't dodge the next one. The chamber was dim, but there was just enough light emanating from the kyber shards studding the walls for her to make out the pillars and the circles that decorated the floor. Suddenly, there was an explosion of sound to the left.

Sencara swung the scope across immediately, her finger briefly tightening on the trigger. Then she realised what had happened - a cloud of dust was floating from the wall of the chamber, kyber shards and chunks of rock blasted to the floor. It was a misdirection. Her scope swung back as Manji broke cover on the other side of the pillar, having hurled a telekinetic punch at the wall to distract the mercenary. Before she could squeeze off another shot, the Kyataran made it to the next pillar, closer to her.

Sencara let a hissed expletive slip from her lips before the silence was shattered by another sound - a voice.

“Let’s make this easier,” the Sadowan shouted, his words barely discernible before the echo twisted and magnified them. “You keep shooting and I’ll kill you quick.”

Sencara refused to reply, her mouth tightening slightly with anger. As the echoes slowly faded away, Manji spoke up again, enjoying the effect. “So you *want* to die slow..? **Fine!**”

The last word was almost deafening as Manji channeled the Dark Side once more, this time unleashing a burst of white-hot light that flooded Sencara’s vision - like staring directly at the sun. As she jerked back in surprise and pain, her eyes seared, the Sadowan broke cover once more and darted towards her position, moving in a chaotic zig-zag. The pillar next to the one Sencara was camped on showed signs of damage and age; half of the side facing the mercenary had crumbled away. As Sencara tried to recover, shaking her head and blinking furiously, Manji threw himself at the pillar, bringing both blades across in a furious cross-slash. Superheated plasma bit into ancient stone and carved through it with ease, the pillar immediately starting to topple towards Sencara’s position.

With a huge rumbling crash that echoed and reverberated around the chamber, the falling pillar smashed into the one Sencara was kneeling on. The mercenary, her vision slowly coming back to her, felt the pillar beneath her feet shake and begin to fall. As it plummeted towards the floor of the chamber, she scrambled up onto the side facing the ceiling then hurled herself free before the deafening impact.

Sencara managed to roll as she hit the floor, mitigating the impact, but as she rose to her feet she knew she was in trouble. Tossing her rifle to one side - it was too cumbersome on the run - she drew her pistol and turned, searching for the Force wielder. Suddenly, out of the corner of her eye she caught sight of a streak of silver and heard the unmistakable hum of an ignited lightsaber.

Her finger squeezed the trigger instinctively and a barrage of shots seared towards the onrushing Kyataran as Sencara turned away and threw herself into a sprint, heading for what little cover the remains of the fallen pillar would provide. She heard the clashing sound of one of her bolts being batted away, but the other smacked into meat and there was a corresponding, surprised grunt of pain.

A rush of adrenaline surged through her veins as the pillar drew closer. Then, suddenly, an invisible force gripped her by the throat, halting her progress. It felt like her neck was being crushed by an invisible hand as she twisted her head back to see the Force wielder, his left hand outstretched towards her and shaking from exertion, still gripping the hilt of his saber tightly. The side of his strange robe was scorched from the blaster impact, but it wasn’t a fatal shot - he was wounded, but not enough.

Moving closer, Manji lashed out with his longer blade, the strike cleaving off Sencara’s right hand with cruel precision. Her blaster dropped to the floor, still gripped by lifeless fingers, as the

Umbaran screamed in pain and surprise. The invisible grip around her neck snapped off and she slumped down onto her knees, clutching at the stump of her hand in shock. A heartbeat later, the silver blade swung round to point at her forehead.

“You ruined a perfectly good *kimono*,” Manji snarled, all pretence of humour gone from his voice. He was clearly fighting down the pain coursing through his body from the blaster wound, channeling all of that into rage. “It’s over.”

Sencara fought to regain her composure, her own face twisting in hatred. “Brotherhood **scum**,” she snapped as her left hand went to the fragmentation grenade clipped to her belt. Her fingers touched the mottled metal nanoseconds before both of Manji’s blades arced through her body, meeting almost no resistance as they carved her shoulders from her torso. The sizzling of burnt, cauterised flesh filled the air as what remained of Sencara A’theri collapsed forwards onto her face.

Snapping his sabers off, Manji turned away from the body, shuffling towards a large chunk of stone that had smashed off the fallen pillar and embedded itself in the floor of the chamber. Perching on the edge of the stone, he swore loudly as he tried to catch his breath and direct the Force towards his wound. “**Kark!** Kriffing **snipers**...”