

Past and Present

Entry for: **[GJW XIV Phase I] Fiction - Combat Writing**

Written by Dasha Jala Renza on 2020-06-01 as Part 1 of 3 in Phase I.

Jala was wandering the halls of the Shadow Academy's Nesolat Platform after sitting through another course. It has become a bit of a habit of hers in her downtime; she even managed to find some blueprints of the facility in what was later known to be the highly restrictive section... another of the fruits of her wandering.

She may be only here temporarily as required, but it still doesn't seem like her type of place with all the other students sneering at her for one reason or another. After all, she is around their age and was there to learn to read and write with a specialized 'educator'.

In the midst of her walking, her delicate Sephi ears flickered again at the sounds of engines. She should be used to this by now, but at least she wouldn't immediately turn towards the sounds now. This time, something was wrong; the floor shuddered beneath her feet as the sound of a somewhat distant explosion reverberated enough through the walls to signal for her to hide.

Using the memory of the map she found, she ducked into the room with the closest hidden entrance and pulled off a plate with her knife to reveal the controls to a concealed entrance. Of course she'd place the plate back on so her tracks were covered. After she entered, she made sure the hidden doorway was hidden once more.

The problem is, she didn't know where she should go.

An hour later, her ears picked up another hidden doorway opening and a clamoring of students hurrying through. Many of the voices were thanking a familiar name... *HE would know more right now.*

Jala hurried towards where the voices once were to find an opened secret entrance and found no one around. It didn't sound like the person she's looking for headed into the tunnels, so she closed the tunnel behind her and carefully went to look around. Her natural tendencies told her to move away from a battle nearby though nothing has calmed the hairs on the back of her neck since the first explosion over an hour ago.

After a few turns, she heard an unfamiliar pair of shoes click on the polished floors and Jala froze as she heard the footsteps approach from a bend. There wasn't anywhere for her to hide!

Soon, a male Falleen rounded the corner wearing Collective garb. The young Sephi's heart dropped and fear started to take over. The man spotted her and stopped to sigh as he stated, "They're starting to train children now? Pathetic."

He effortlessly unsheathed his rapier before making his way towards her, "Come now child. Konnus Dreen will end this quickly and quietly for you." Yet, he had an odd feeling about this one.

Jala's ears pinned to the side of her head as he started his approach. She backed off a few steps as memories flooded her mind. As she saw the red blade of the rapier come closer, her fingers found themselves pulling out her vibrodagger into her left hand for defense.

The rapier lazily came point first to try to stick her in the heart only to be partially deflected to Jala's right as she attempted a parry. She flinched as the blade slashed the outer side of her right upper arm, a mistake that awoke her to reality.

The reality is another male Falleen... here to kill her.

Konnus frowned as his prey decided to put up a futile fight. Knowing he shouldn't delay, he'd need to end this quickly, and pride was a bit hurt from not killing such a weak opponent with a single blow. He firmly stated, "Just hold still... you... I have other business to attend to after you."

Jala dodged a horizontal slash from the longer blade, then ducked as a diagonal one followed up with the spring of the flexible blade for her head. This allowed her to launch into the intruder's midsection for a slash.

The Falleen's eyes widened at the sudden attack, but was able to reflexively dodge and mount his own counter attack midstep with a backhanded horizontal slash threatening to cut his opponent in half.

Jala did her own leap backwards and dodged most of the blow, but the flexible blade glissed off her vibrodagger and slashed her left forearm as it was brought up for defense in her retreat.

It was then she heard familiar children's voices. The rapier suddenly seemed to shorten into a dagger as the Fallen's features and colors changed before her eyes. Her delicate ears picked up screams from elsewhere that distorted to a higher pitch. She froze as her eyes seemed to be going out of focus, and her vibrodagger dropped from her hands.

Konnus grinned as he noticed his hallucinogenic-poisoned blade was taking effect. He moved in confidently for the kill, finishing off his frozen prey with a beheading horizontal slash.

The past and the present started melding as she was there, in the sleeping room where she and the other orphans had slept; yet she had the itching sense she knew what to do when in a fight now after some good fortune allowed her to learn to kill. The Falleen then looked up after murdering another orphan, knife bloodied; and now he was coming towards her.

What happened next was a blur as Jala's only warning was a disconnected fearful look into Konnus's eyes before she just ducked into what originally seemed like a right-handed punch at the Officer's sternum; something a growing young man has no fear of as he tensed to take the blow. At the perfect time, she released her hidden blade stabbing through his thin clothing and delivering a fatal blow... the young Sephi's own reflex based on her previous training.

Both sides stepped backwards in shock after the exchange. Konnus clutched his chest with utter disbelief painting his face. Jala was staring at her bloodied hands as if it was her first kill, even though it was not.

It didn't take long for Konnus to collapse. But still under the hallucination, Jala looked around, picked up her dagger, and ran off to hide.

Little did she know what would come next for her.

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