

"My lord, an urgent message has just come in via the Council's priority line," a nervous young officer said, having approached the Emperor. His quivering hand held out the datapad with an encrypted seal message flashing. Thran gave an annoyed look at his Emperor. Kamjin, glared with a 'you know this can't be ignored' look as he reached his hand out to take the datapad. The young officer snapped to attention while Kamjin entered his security codes to read the message.

The pad beeped in acknowledgement of the codes and Kamjin began scanning the message. As his eyes took in the message, a barely perceivable smirk crossed Thran's face. Kamjin threw the datapad back at the officer, sending him sprinting from the room. "You have got to be frakking kidding me!" Kamjin yelled at Thran.

"I'm afraid I don't know what you mean," Thran said, calmly. The shadows distorted the features on his face.

"Don't play coy with me. You know exactly what is in this message you gnort licker, it's got your bloody signature on it," Kamjin spat back as a retort.

"Oh yes...now that you mention it. I believe I do know what was contained within that message. I can assure you it is of utmost importance."

"No, no it isn't. This is another one of your childish power plays and I refuse to participate in it."

"You have no choice, because that order," Thran stressed the last, "carries the authority of the Council with it. You must obey or risk being removed from power." Kamjin fumed at his Proconsul and the political maneuvering he continued to wield against him. He raised his fist threateningly as Thran gave a 'frak around and find out' look. Kamjin slowly raised his index finger, shaking with rage at Thran before turning to leave. His cloak billowed behind him as his Proconsul laughed.

* * * One Week Later * * *

"I want to see the schematics for the next level," Kamjin shouted over the roar of machinery. The foreman nodded and gestured over his shoulder for one of the workers to bring a pad. Kamjin beamed in the sunlight, already the new citadel of Scholae Palatinae towered over the skyline of durasteel spires being erected. The sea air warmed his face and stood in contrast to the Ragnath seaspray that would have greeted him in Caelestis City.

Kamjin felt the presence of the approaching worker. "Finally, let's see if we've got everything in ord..." Kamjin's voice halted as he saw K'vin and a squad of Thran's personal enforcers with weapons trained upon him.

"By order of the Council, the Emperor Kamjin Lap'lamiz, also known as Dadrick, is hereby seized for dereliction of duty, gross incompetence, and..." the Bimm hesitated. Kamjin glared at him, daring him to go on. K'vin sighed and continued. "And, crimes against fashion with that cloak," K'vin eyes seemed to plead with Kamjin not to kill him cause it was clear Thran has forced the last piece into the charges.

"I am going to play this farce out but I swear K'vin, if this delays anything of importance I will make you into a rug," Kamjin snarled.

Kamjin had not expected to find himself on this side of the newly constructed courtroom. In fact, he hadn't expected to find himself in the courtroom at all. Law and order were constructs for the people, an illusion of control. In his Empire he was the law and now he found himself facing down a court that should have no power over him.

"All rise," one of Thran's enforcers commanded.

"Rise to who?" Kamjin said as his jaw fell slack. Thran had just entered behind the 2 story high judge podium. A powdered wig placed firmly upon his head. Its curled locks spread across his shoulders. A flowing black robe billowed over him as he took the seat.

"You have got to be kidding me," Kamjin muttered.

"Silence in my court!" Thran bellowed. "Toby, you may present the case." The audience in the courtroom sat, Kamjin stood.

"What gives you the authority for this mockery of justice," Kamjin said defiantly. Thran stood and thrust his hand forward with a massive ring bearing the mark of the Regency.

"This does, oh and I asked Thane and he just sort of grunted at me so I ran with it," Thran said, sitting back down. "Now, proceed Toby."

K'vin muttered something that sounded a bit like 'that's not my name' under his breath as he stood and began to pace in front of Thran's tower. "Approximately one week ago the Emperor was given direct orders by the Regency to procure a specific item from one of their agents and deliver it to a storage facility on Arx," K'vin said as Thran nodded. His wig's curls bouncing along with each nod.

"I delivered it!" Kamjin screamed, standing up again.

"Silence in the court or I'll have you gagged," Thran said, his wig shifting upon his head before he adjusted it back into place.

"Oh for frak's sake, just get this over with," Kamjin said, sliding back into his chair. K'vin cleared his throat before continuing.

"Approximately one day after receiving the order a package was delivered to Arx. Upon inspection the item was proven to be a fake."

"How in the world can you claim it's a fake? Where's the evidence?" Kamjin bellowed, looking around the courtroom expecting some reaction. K'vin returned to the table and picked up a bulging envelope.

"The prosecution offers into evidence exhibit Aurek," K'vin said looking at Thran. Thran waived his hand in approval. K'vin ripped open the seal and withdrew a small chance cube.

"See, that's the damn chance cube. The orders said to deliver a chance cube and it was delivered," Kamjin said, gesturing at the generic chance cube.

"Guards, muzzle the Emperor," Thran said, banging a gavel that he must have been hiding until he could use it to the biggest dramatic effect. Two guards advanced on Kamjin, who had finally had enough. With a flick of his fingers the two guards flew through the air, crashing into the wall. They slid to the ground motionless.

"Enough Thran, your childish power play said to deliver a chance cube and I did that," Kamjin said, his finger pointed menacingly up on his Proconsul. "Now let's have it, what is the real issue here?"

"You were ordered to go and obtain a specific chance cube. It was spelled out in the orders," Thran retorted, waving the gavel menacingly back at his Consul. His wig askew.

"It's a bloody chance cube. They're all the same!"

“But I wanted the one from Bakura!”

“It said it was from Bakura!”

“You ordered it from Techno Union Prime and you didn’t even put your damn name in the from section,” Thran’s face was flushed with rage.

“Is that what this is about? A damn signature?” Kamjin said, reaching out, he pulled the notepad from K’vin’s table. He scrawled upon it and tossed it up to Thran before scrolling out of the courtroom. Thran looked down at the paper and read the message ‘To Thran, one chance cube’ and a flourished signature of Kamjin’s name.

Thran laughed to himself, “I’ve got you now.”