

Prologue

Churba System

Hurcha

Tremor Fortress – Western Wastes

Darth Tremar, a tall and lean man, stood in the central tower of his fortress. The wind howled constantly, carrying snow, both new and old, in great swirling eddies, like ocean waves, rippling through the frigid air outside. Inside his fortress of stone covered durasteel, however, it was pleasantly warm, well protected from the frigid air outside.

On the far wall behind him, a fireplace contained a real fire, not a shoddy holographic one. He turned from the window, his plain grey robes rustling as he crossed to a side table where an antique teapot sat steaming. He poured some tea into his cup, and walked with it back to the window.

In that short amount of time, however, he missed seeing the four white clad figures slipping through the snowfall and wind. They bypassed the walls and defences of the fortress, and made their way inside. Using a mixture of stealth, force and the Force, they made their way through the fortress to the central tower.

Tremar turned to the door when the door failed under a burst of the Force, its hinges and lock melting. He smiled at the four Jedi who rushed in, activating their lightsabers in a flurry. Tremar's polite smile dropped into a frown, and he drew his own double-headed saber from his belt, but left both blades off. "By what right do you trespass in my home," he asked in a dusty voice, as though he rarely used it.

"Darth Tremar, by order of the Jedi Council, you will lay down your lightsaber, and return to Coruscant to stand trial for your crimes," the center Jedi, a bulky male wielding a yellow lightsaber, declared in a self-important tone.

Tremar scowled at them. "Self-important fools. Come then, and see if I submit to you so easily." He still left his saber off, waiting.

The Jedi who had spoken leapt forward, whirling his blade over his head as the other three Jedi spread out in an attempt to flank him. Tremar lashed out with the Force at the lead Jedi, striking with a blast of densely compressed air aimed for the man's chest. The Jedi swept his lightsaber down, but too late. The blast took him full in the chest, crushing his ribs and collapsing his lungs.

Two of the Jedi leaped inwards at him as he activated his lightsaber, both its blades igniting in brilliant icy blue blades. He spun his saber about, catching both of theirs, and sweeping them out of the way. He started to turn to face the third Jedi when a blast of compressed air blew him off his feet, smashing him into his sidetable, and shattering his antique teapot. He started to his feet, his eyes burning with anger now. "That was an irreplaceable antique. I shall take the price of it out of your flesh, Jeanne," he snarled.

The Jedi that had smashed him into the table smiled sweetly at him. "If you can find it, Tralin," she said, using his birth name. She pushed back her white hood, revealing her face, a face that still bore traces of a luminous beauty. She activated her lightsaber, and its blade shone a pale lavender. "You never could when we sparred, or when we fought on the field. Surrender now, Tralin, and have a chance at trial. You are not the first Jedi to fall, and you won't be the last."

Tremar sneered at her, and leaped forward, whirling his lightsaber in blindingly fast arcs, but the three Jedi slid aside, as though they knew exactly what he would do, and he had a sudden suspicion that they had been conditioned by Jeanne specifically to fight him. He lashed out with lightning next, smashing it into Jeanne, but she absorbed it with her lightsaber, building the charge, and then released it back into him, hammering him with the focused and intensified power, instead of the somewhat diffused blast he had unleashed on her. He writhed in the grip of the lightning, and the two Jedi leapt forward, and cracked the pommels of their lightsabers against the sides of his head, knocking him into unconsciousness.

Coruscant Jedi Temple

Jedi Master Jeanne sat in her chair, part of the unbroken circle of Masters. She was one of the youngest Masters in the Order, and served provisionally as a limited term member on the Council, though her capture of a Sith Lord could be the key to a long term posting. The other eleven members sat ringed around Tremar. He stood with his wrists in binders, and in the center of a ray shield that nullified his connection with the Force. His head was bowed, and, though he was stripped to the waist, he still projected an aura of power and dignity. The Trial had concluded, and now the Council would pass judgement upon him.

Master O'Marth, Eldest of the Council but still a fearful Consular, stood and faced the young man he had once helped to train. "Darth Tremar, you have caused much death and harm against the Republic. Much of the Senate calls for your execution, but that is not the Jedi way. The Jedi Order did not execute Revan in the midst of the Jedi Civil War, nor did it execute Kayl Redhand* at the end of the Manalorian War, and so we shall not execute you," he said, clasping his vein ridged hands behind his back. "However, we have agreed that to cut you off from the Force would be only a partial answer, and exile is difficult to enforce. You are a charismatic man, able to draw people even without the Force to sway their minds and hearts. And thus this Council has decided to imprison you permanently, in cryogenic suspension, for all time."

Jeanne stared at Tremar, and stood as O'Marth sat down again. "Never again will your hatred bring harm to this Republic."

She stepped forward, and signalled to the two Jedi waiting outside, the same two conditioned to fight him. They ignited their lightsabers, and stood behind him as she worked the controls that operated the droid projecting the ray shields. The rest of the Council rose, and led the way from the Chambers, except Master O'Marth, who sat in his chair, his rheumy eyes watching as Tremar was led from the room, wondering if he had made the right call.

In the lowest levels of the Temple, Tremar was placed against a heavy table and bound there as in a coffin. Cold gasses swirled up around him, hissing as valves controlled their release, slowly lowering his temperature. He smiled pleasantly at the Council. "Darth Revan was not killed because he was a useful tool, and Kayl Redhand was exiled because that same Council was weak and afraid of the truth. Now you sentence me to a frozen Hell, but I warn you all. Jedi are not infallible," He stated calmly as his coffin was lowered into the cryo-chamber. With a sudden mighty hiss, his mind went blank as he began the first hour of his endless imprisonment.