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The History of Creativity

Aspects of Creativity in my paper – Pope Wars

In inception for this creative project began with a joke that a light discussion of the lecture on the middle ages generated among some of my friends. We thought it was interesting how a parody entitled “A new pope” closely resembled the official title of the first Star Wars movie, “A new hope” (nearly identical in all but one letter). My imagination went wild, and I set about developing a story in the form of a script, that would integrate the historical context of actual events, with the completely fictitious Star Wars film. This proved more difficult than anticipated.

First of all, in the historical context, there was never a clear cut good/bad side. There were clear evidences of good/bad in each pope or antipope, and thus one aspect of creativity employed was to change the set story of Star Wars, and mold it over the actual events. Bits and pieces of the Star Wars story are taken at different times and re-arranged to fit the history.

Second, actually factual events, needed to be “adjusted” slightly, to create a more dramatic presentation. The death of Pope Gregory XI, for example, was by natural cause, not by murder. Also, the intrigue associated with the election of the first pope established a good basis for a villain. His tendency for “evil” has been embellished a bit. (My creative license.)

I also had fun with some of the terminology encountered in my research. For example, the word “antipope” has been redefined to fit right into the context of my story.

The creative depth of this project lies in the linking of actual events to a fictional (established) story on many levels. The breath lies in the actual telling of the story and the using the characters in a unique way.

Please enjoy this re-telling of the inception of the Great Schism of the 14th century in the context of Star Wars. (And look for the continuation and conclusion of the trilogy: [Pope Wars: Flanders Strikes Back](#), and [Pope Wars: The Return of the Dark Ages!](#))

POPE WARS

Episode IV

A New Pope

It was a time of great depression in the world. The BLACK DEATH had just swept through great portions of Europe leaving millions of victims. The church is very weak as its headquarters had been relocated to France nearly seventy years ago.

An evil force has been growing in Rome. It has weakened the city and the people, and brought chaos to the government. The COUNCIL OF CARDINALS, protectors and supporters of the Pope, have been unable to stop or even slow it down...

Meanwhile, in the capital of the church at Avignon, an aged Pope GREGORY XI receives a letter that may be the key to restoring peace and hope to the world. Unfortunately things are about to get worse before they get any better...

Scene I - At the Papal palace in Avignon. A Messenger has just entered with an important letter

Messenger: "At last, I have reached you Gregory! I have journeyed long to bring this letter to you. It is of the utmost importance! Countless other messengers have died to bring this message."

Gregory XI: "Let me read it"

Letter: O-Supreme-One Gregory, Forces at Florence and the French king are increasing the persecution. I'm not sure how much longer I can hold out. I have discovered that their great fear is that you will return to Rome and secure authority over the whole church destroying their continued domination over the papacy! You must return to Rome! Help me in this thing, O-Supreme-One, you're my only hope.

Yours,
Saint Catherine of Siena

Messenger: "What does it say Gregory?"

Gregory XI: (musing to himself): "O-Supreme-One Gregory. That's a name I haven't heard in a long time... (Then, as if hearing the question) oh yes. The Saint of Siena has advised that I must return to Rome. I will do so. It may prove the only way to save the church! It might prove difficult to convince the council of cardinals, but I believe it can be done."

Messenger: "Then you should depart at once."

Scene II – A wind in whistling through the hall. The Pope Gregory XI is taking an evening stroll. All is quiet. Suddenly a heavy breathing is heard and another old man appears from behind a pillar, drawing his sword.

Old Man: "At last, Gregory, we meet again! I have waited a long time for this moment. Your supremacy and power are about to end."

Gregory XI: (a light of understanding) At last I understand! Long have I suspected that you were behind all of the dissension in Rome. The Council will never allow you to be Pope! If they were to discover your ruthless plot, they would have you expelled from the order!

Urban VI: "The Council are fools! They suspect nothing! Long have I been destroying their power from within and without. All of Rome is behind me now. When your are gone, they will convene to elect a new pope, and I will be the natural choice! I have foreseen it."

Gregory XI: "The council will never give in!"

Urban VI: “The council will not even know until it is already too late.” (draws a sword)

Gregory XI: (draws his sword as well, previously concealed behind his robes) You have become strong, but your riots and dissention in Rome will never be enough to oppose to the power of the true pope.”

Urban VI: “I have become far more powerful than you could possibly imagine. Soon I will be Pope and have absolute power!”

Gregory XI: “Only an *Antipope* of evil, Urban!” (with that, both begin to clash swords. Gregory is beaten back to a wall)

Urban VI: “I have you now!” (gasping for breath)

Gregory XI: “If you strike me down, *The Feeling* will become more powerful than you can even imagine!”

Urban VI: (with a sinister smile) “So be it.” (with that, he slays Gregory XI)

Scene III – *A meeting of the Council of Cardinals shortly after Gregory’s death*

Cardinal 1: “We have convened here to address the death of Pope Gregory XI. We must elect a new leader, so that the power of the pope will continue.”

Cardinal 2: “The Black death has left few candidates. Before the great death, our power was greater. I sense a great weakness in the council.”

Urban VI: “This is true. Gregory’s death has been a huge tragedy, but we cannot dwell on the negatives. Action must be taken quickly.”

Cardinal 5: “We need a natural leader--someone that we can trust, and that will bring stability to the papacy. The people need someone in whom to place their trust.”

Cardinal 3: “One of us must be elected. It is the order of things—the way they have always been.”

Urban VI: “Yes, this is wise. One of our company—yet, many of us are not actually Cardinals. May I name myself as an example, yet because of the great death, vacancies needed to be taken...”

Cardinal 1: “We know, Urban. And you have served the council well. You are the logical choice—“

Urban VI: (interrupting) “Please! Do not flatter me. I do not wish to be pope, just to help the council any way I can.”

Cardinal 8: “You have the support of the people Urban. It would be a good choice, I think.”

Cardinal 1: “Then we shall cast our vote by secret ballot.” (parchment is passed around, and the cardinals all write down their nominee. The parchment is collected, the names are read off.) “Unanimous—in favor of Urban. You shall be pope. We have placed great confidence in you, Urban. Do not let us down, or the people of the world. I needn’t remind you that this is a very fragile time for the church.”

Urban VI: “I understand, you may have my complete confidence.”

Scene IV – in a suburb of Rome, a man has just come back from a hard day’s work on the farm. This man, Clement lives with his grandparents, taking care of them in their old age. He is sitting down to eat dinner

Grandpa Owen: “How was your work today, my boy?”

Clement: “Hard as usual. I just don’t find farming very satisfying.”

Grandpa Owen: “Well, it’s all you’ve got as an apprentice, so you might as well like it.”

Grandma Beru: “Owen! Don’t be so negative!”

Grandpa Owen: (exasperated) “Well, I can’t help it. A grown man like you, Clement, should be a master by now—at least a journeyman. Can’t understand why you don’t want to continue the trade—farming’s a great profession.”

Clement: “Yeah, Owen, I understand. I’ve just always had a dream that I’ll amount to something bigger than I am—bigger than this farm. I want to make a difference... I almost feel as if some force is calling to me. There must be more to life than just this Feudal system.”

Grandpa Owen: “We certainly won’t be seeing the likes of it—not with the way things are going in Rome. The city’s nearly gone to the dogs.” (the meal continues, as all are quiet, dwelling on that thought.)

Clement: “Well, thanks for dinner. I’m going to go out and get some firewood.”

Grandpa Owen: “And hurry back! I hear there are marauders about.”

Scene V – In the woods, a short time later. A voice is heard...

Voice: “Clement...”

Clement: “Who’s there! (stops, looking around for the source of the voice. Turning, he begins to see the silhouette of a Pope glowing with a strange energy about him) “Who are you?”

Figure: “I am O-Supreme-One Gregory.”

Clement: “What are you doing here?”

Gregory: “I have come because *The Feeling* is strong with you. I want you to join the council.”

Clement: “Who are you? What is this *Feeling* thing, and what council? I don’t understand!”

Gregory: “Let’s just say I’m a friend of the family, from a certain point of view. I knew your great-great-great grandfather—met him when I was a boy. He was a great Pope and leader of the world. Then some terrible things happened...”

Clement: “I never knew my great-great-great grandfather. Wow, he was a Pope? Really?”

Gregory: “Yes, a great and powerful pope. As for *The Feeling*, it is an energy field that surrounds us and binds the universe together. It forms and shapes our destiny. If properly used, it promotes the evolution of our time into the great Renaissance, of which we all hope for some day. With each pope that correctly wields the power of *The Feeling*, we all progress toward that destiny, and we will finally be able to through off the Dark Ages. However, be warned, *The Feeling* can be used improperly to your own corruption. It turns good popes into Antipopes—popes of evil and cruelty. *The Feeling* runs strong in your family. Your great-great-great grandfather had it, and his father after him, and his father... until—yes, you also have it.”

Clement: (shocked and nervous) “But I’m not sure I know how to use this *Feeling*?”

Gregory: “Don’t worry about that, in time you will be trained, but now is not the time. There is a more pressing concern. The council needs you. Even now, a great evil has befallen them, and threatened the papacy. I fear the worst—that my old enemy Urban has been elected Pope. If this is true, then it will not be long before he begins to corrupt himself and turns into an Antipope. You must come to the aid of the council and join them.”

Clement: “You mean *join* the Council of Cardinals? I don’t know if I can! I’m just an apprentice farmer, after all!”

Gregory: “I know you can do it. (pauses, then remembers something) Oh yes, there is something that your great-great-great grandfather wanted you to have. (reaches into his papal robes, and pulls out a glowing sword) This will help you in your greatest need. It’s

a light saber, weighs nearly nothing, and is easily concealed behind robes. (hands the saber to Clement who is surprised at its lightness) Be careful with it. It's much more precise and deadly than conventional knives or bows and arrows. It also responds to *The Feeling*, and as your power with *The Feeling* grows, so will your skill with the saber. Never loose it—it will be your most valuable weapon.”

Clement: “Thanks, but I'm not sure I'm ready to leave. I'm sure the Council can wait, and besides, they're so far away... My Grandpa and Grandma need me... Oh! I forgot, I was supposed to get firewood and bring it home, thanks...(turns to say thank you to O-Supreme-One Gregory, but he has vanished. Finishes collecting the firewood and returns home)

Scene VI – *Clement arrives back at the farm, but to his horror, the marauders have come and the farm house is ablaze, and the recently harvested crops are all stolen.*

Clement: “No! Grandpa Owen! Grandma Beru! (there is no answer except the crackling of the fire in the night. Clement drops the firewood and approaches the side of the burning home and reads something written in crude blood)

Note: Long live the Anarchy of the Middle Ages!

Clement: (with resolution) “Now I have nothing left. I will go to the council.”

Scene VII – *(Some weeks later) Clement enters a shady bar, looking for someone to get him transportation to the city of Rome itself. Approaches the bartender*

Bartender: “What do you want?”

Clement: “I'm looking for transportation to Rome.”

Bartender: “Are you crazy? No one goes to Rome now that the marauders are about! All the roads are being watched and no travelers have gotten through alive! (he lowers his voice) Besides, what's your business in Rome?”

Clement: “I'd rather not say...”

Bartender: “Well, if that's the way you are, then I guess I can't help you.” (walks away)

Clement: (muttering) “Great.”

Strange Man: (whispering from behind) “Did I hear you say you were going to Rome?”

Clement: (turning) “Yes, can you get me there?”

Strange Man: “Well that depends—how much do you have? Passage to Rome isn't cheap.”

Clement: “I don’t have much, just my old wagon and mule.”

Strange Man: “Sorry, that’s not going to cut it. My price is a little steeper.”

Clement: “If you take the wagon and mule as down payment, I can give you the rest—as much as you would like—when we get to Rome.”

Strange Man: “I *would like* quite a bit. But, if you’re right, then we’d better get moving, some strange men just walked in—they look like marauders.” (The duo leave the bar) By the way, I’m called Giovanni Boccaccio, but you can just call me Giovanni. I’m a writer, and I need the money to publish some of my stories, the *Decameron*.” (They enter the shed where his cart is parked)

Clement: “That’s your transportation? It’s a piece of junk! I’m not paying to ride in that!”

Giovanni: “Hey! Watch it! This *piece of junk* is the fastest thing this side of Sicily. Those horses can pull fifty men for ten miles and not even break a sweat. Besides, I’m the only ride you’ve got—unless you’re reconsidering?”

Clement: (resigned) “No. Let’s go.”

Scene VII – Clement and Giovanni arrive in Rome. (after a brush with some marauders and a narrow escape) They head straight to the Council’s palace

Giovanni: “I didn’t sign up for all this trouble—it’s going to cost you a little extra...”

Clement: “Don’t worry about it, my friends have plenty of money.”

Giovanni: “Yes, I can see that—by the looks of it, your friends are the Council of Cardinals. I may have to raise my price a little...” (both leave the *piece of junk* and approach the palace guards)

Clement: “My name is Clement, I’m expected by the Council of Cardinals.”

Guard: “Sorry, the Council is not here anymore. They’ve all withdrawn and I hear they are now gathering in Anagni.”

Clement: “Great, I hope I’m not too late. Thank you.” (turning to Giovanni) “Will you take me there?”

Giovanni: “I’ve got a bad feeling about this—this is already more than I bargained for. It’ll cost a little extra...”

Clement: “Yeah, I expected that.”

Scene VIII – An emergency meeting of the Council of Cardinals at Anagni. There is talking and general commotion among the Cardinals.

Cardinal 1: “Quiet please! (after a moment) Thank you. The Council has made a grave error. Urban VI has corrupted the papacy. It is obvious to me now that he was influenced by the dark side of *The Feeling*. He has caused great contention among the people, attempted to reduce the ruling power of the council, and was unwilling to follow our advice. All of you have gathered here because you feel the same way.”

Cardinal 3: “We were blinded by his influence! He was just using us to get to power!”

Cardinal 4: “He’s an Antipope!”

Cardinal 7: “We should never have elected a non-cardinal to that position!”

Cardinal 1: “This is all true—however, what can we do about it now? We have all withdrawn our support of the Roman papacy. We have no more authority with Rome.”

Cardinal 5: “No! It’s Urban who has no authority—we still have the power of appointment. Let us use it to undermine Urban’s power.”

Cardinal 2: “What do you mean?”

Cardinal 5: “We can use our influence with the parts of the world that still support us! Let us elect another Pope. We will nullify the authority of Urban and rally support for our elected.” (there is a silence in the council as every cardinal ponders the implications and morality of this idea)

Cardinal 1: “That is very risky Cardinal 5. If it doesn’t work, then the church will be divided.”

Cardinal 5: (after a pause) “I think it is worth the risk. If Urban continues, he will cause the death of *The Feeling* anyway. It is the only way.”

Cardinal 1: “If this is so, then whom shall we elect? (another pause as cardinals look at each other) We should meditate on this subject.” (The cardinals all bow their heads in meditation. A light grows in the room, and the spirit of Gregory XI appears)

Gregory XI: “My brothers of the Council, folly has come upon you—yet there is the possibility of hope. One who is strong in *The Feeling*, and could bring us out of the Dark Ages. Our hope rests with this one man—he shall be Clement VII!”

Cardinal 1: “Gregory XI, the council appreciates your wisdom. But we must act quickly, there may not be time to summon him—“

Gregory XI: "He is already here. (turns to the entrance, where Clement has entered)
"Clement VII."

Cardinal 1: "Clement come in. We wish to name you to the Council of Cardinals. Do you object?"

Clement: "No." (A short ceremony follows, where red robes are placed upon him)

Cardinal 1: "Now take your place in the circle. You shall be called Cardinal 10."

Scene IX – The election of the new pope. A large hall with thousands of citizens of France looking on. Music is playing and the ten cardinals are standing in a line on a raised platform wearing white with red sashes. In a short ceremony, Clement is brought before the Council of Cardinals, and bows low to receive a golden medallion and mantle placed upon his head. Cardinal 1 steps forward, and addresses the congregation

Cardinal 1: Behold, *we*, the duly appointed Council of Cardinals, do hereby proclaim and cause to be in force that the previous appointment of Urban VI was made under duress and pressure from the people of Italy. We hereby, with the power given us, do nullify his papacy and all powers, rights, privileges that accompany the office and power, and do declare that election as void. We hereby elect, upon recognition of the power of this council, a true Pope! (Applause echoes through the chamber) Behold, your Pope Clement VII!