

Fury

A Great Jedi War XVI Story

By Alaris Jinn

The gate was unnerving. The twi'lek had spent several days in mediation, demanding the dark side tell him what he would face, but it could not be extracted. The future was always in motion, but he was always careful to plan his actions carefully with at least some modicum of prediction.

This was new.

Alaris Jinn di Plagia could not pierce even his own future from beyond the gate, and now something gripped at him that he had not experienced since watching his parents die in front of him: uncertainty. The twi'lek never felt sorrow for that loss. He knew he should have, but he also knew he should have a certain amount of sorrow for every life lost. It was an inconvenience, a distraction. It was just in his way.

The gate stood before him like an empty void in space. If Alaris truly ever felt fear, this was the time. He stood for hours, alone on the massive stone platform upon which stood Darth Nehalem's great architectural feat. Eventually his feet moved without Alaris's consent. His muscles seemed to move themselves. His body and mind were at war and his mind was losing.

The event horizon wasn't wet, exactly, but more like a soft gel across the twi'lek's blue skin and the instant his body pulled him through to the other side he no longer cared. His eyes suddenly widened at the scope and view of it all. Eos City stood before him, but not the way he had anticipated. It was ethereal, but solid. The very ground appeared to be moving like smoke, but when he stepped, he found the hard concrete of the ground.

His slow journey through the war-torn ghostly city confirmed exactly the same thing. Buildings were made of durasteel and duracrete, and what more, it didn't affect Alaris the way he would expect. There was no motion sickness, no uneasy steps. It was like the whole thing was familiar, in fact, he remembered this place so vividly it was like he had been in here for years.

He finally recovered his self-awareness and for the first time realized that he felt physically weaker. He wasn't having any difficulty moving, though, as if the Force itself was helping him walk, run, and -

The Force coiled in his legs and then sprang loose. The twi'lek leapt an unreasonable height, but somehow he knew he would be able to reach the top of the building that couldn't be less than 15 stories. He wanted the vantage so he could survey the damage and pinpoint where the battles were being fought. He found nothing but what was once a city that stood as a massive beacon of the Brotherhood.

His Brotherhood.

Alaris could not discern how, but he felt as if the Brotherhood belonged to him. At least it did here.

He spent the day (Week? Month?) wandering the streets. He never seemed to grow hungry; the Force was sustaining him. Sleep was unnecessary. He never needed to enter a bathroom. He explored towers that he had never been in, those that remained standing anyway. It took him several days to realize something, he didn't notice any crystallization anywhere. The Children were nowhere to be found.

Where could they be?

The twi'lek knew that he had taken some time to follow into the ethereal realm and immediately wondered if time traveled at a faster rate here. It was possible, but there was no gravity change. No black holes nearby or noticeable changes in spacetime. The Force was incredibly powerful here, but gravity was a stronger force still.

He entered a room near the top of a tower. The building was simple, as were many of the domiciles in this area of Eos. It didn't take him long to realize that this had been the room of a small child. The bed was still made. Nobody had been in the room in some time, or ever. It was still something Alaris couldn't wrap his head around. He wasn't sure if this was a replica of Eos, a reflection of it, or something entirely more malevolent. The Force here wasn't just in balance, it was as if there was no differentiating between light and dark. The dark side didn't fuel him, nor did the light attempt to cleanse him. It was perfect and balanced.

He sat on the side of the bed and grabbed a small stuffed wookiee. He squeezed it and nothing came out of it. It felt fresh and new, even looking as ethereal and smokey as everything else. He clasped his hands around it then glanced up at a mirror across from him. He instantly realized that this was the first time he had seen a mirror, let alone himself.

He dropped the wookiee to the floor and grew ill at what he saw. The weakness didn't come from the realm or the Force. The weakness came from him. He could not determine the age of the twi'lek staring back at him, but he had seen enough ancient Force users and elder twi'leks to know that he was probably well into his mid-100s. This explained his frail body, but the Force was strong with him. It was holding his body together.

He left the room as quickly as he could and returned to the street below with haste. He would be having a panic attack if the Force allowed his body to experience that. There was no weakness in the knees, no shortness of breath, no vomiting. Fear overtook him once again. He had no explanation, just more confusion. The confusion was rendered quiet when his ear captured the first voice he had heard in - months? Years?

"Darth Fury!" The yell came rumbling through the empty street like a herd of bantha crashing through a Nar Shaddaa casino.

The twi'lek turned slowly to see a hooded figure approaching him with determination. "Who -" The word wasn't a question or a statement and was cut short for the use of his vocal folds after such a long time felt like they were starting to atrophy.

The human woman seemed familiar. She was aged, wrinkles scattered across her face from a lifetime of furrows and frowns. "You are done hiding from me." A violet lightsaber ignited from seemingly within her long brown cloak.

He stared at her in confusion. "I know you?"

She squinted in annoyance. "No games from you, Fury."

Darth Fury. The name seemed exceedingly familiar. *It is me. I am Darth Fury. I am Dark Lord of the Sith and Grand Master of the Brotherhood.*

"None anymore," the memories began to flood back from 180 years of war inside and out of the Ethereal Realm. The Brotherhood had fled the Realm in defeat; most of the Council dead, the Clans decimated. They had left Arx after its ruin. It had been cleansed after destroying the Children and the Father, but its resources had been stripped clean and no one could live here ever again. But this was not Arx.

"You followed me back in here. A spectre of my past."

Kaira Rohana had long been dead. Alaris slaughtered her. But she had survived in the Ethereal Realm and followed him back through with the Father.

"Why do you pursue me after all this time? Your Jedi are lost. Odan Urr is long gone. The galaxy belongs to me and the Brotherhood will long survive my death. Just let me die."

The old woman sneered. "You shall die, but not at a time of your choosing."

She leapt forward and Alaris wasn't sure whether it was her lightsaber or the Force finally letting his body go, but the life left him instantly and the dark side welcomed him, ready to deliver him his eternity of torment.