“Descent”

By Turel Sorenn #13830

Darkness. There was nothing but darkness and the unmistakable pain of falling onto a duracrete floor face first. Jedi Knight Turel Sorenn found himself in complete darkness, cold, groggy and in pain. He had no idea where he was and how he got there. The Knight tried to push himself up only to find that there was a stump where the lower part of his right arm should be. *This is worse than I thought*. His prosthetic arm was gone.

Wherever he was, Turel was not alone. He heard the sound of footsteps approaching his shivering body. He tried to reach out with the Force to try to get some idea of who and how many there were, but to no avail. He was too groggy to focus. The Knight felt two armored sets of hands grab him by both shoulders and pull him to his knees.

A gruff sounding, yet very familiar sounding female voice barked, “Stand up Jedi, It’s time to collect my bounty.” It was so hard for Turel to focus. That voice was familiar. Who was it? As the Knight’s brain tried to access his last memories to place the identity of the bounty hunter, he felt a shock collar snap into place around his neck.

The two pairs of armored hands felt like they were going to pull Turel’s arms out of their sockets as they pulled him to his feet. A different, very baritone male voice gave another command, “Walk scumbag! If I have to carry your sorry hide, you’re going to regret it!”

Turel did his best to command his legs to move through the haze. He was still shivering uncontrollably and the room was pitch black as far as he could see. Still in a daze he managed to utter, “It’s too dark...can’t see.”

The female voice responded, “It’s carbonite sickness, had to keep you on ice for the journey. I don’t have the means of holding a Jedi for long periods. You’re a tricky lot. You aren’t missing much. Now keep walking!” Turel almost tripped as one pair of the armored hands jerked him forward a little. Who was that woman? The pieces were starting to fall into place but he still had trouble focusing. His short term memory was starting to come back in flashes, images of him fighting off a small framed Mandalorian warrior.

As the trio moved through a hallway and up a set of stairs Turel began to recognize the distinctive smell and thick air of a polluted atmosphere. The smell was one of heavy exhaust and a thick putrid musk. The Jedi’s memory instantly triggered, there was only one place in the Galaxy with that unique mix of pollution and organic musk, Nal Hutta. His slowly returning vision only conveyed a fuzzy brown haze which confirmed his location. “Where am I?” Turel asked in vain.

The male yanked on Turel’s left arm, “Be quiet *Di’kut*!”

The female mando gave a matter of fact reply, “You’ll find out soon enough. Wouldn’t want to spoil the surprise.”

The group stopped at a large door, Turel’s vision was still a blur, but he heard the often irritating voice of a protocol droid, “State your business with the exalted Zietta Anjiliac.”

“I’m here to collect a bounty, I’m expected.” The female stated, somewhat annoyed.

“One moment please.” The droid paused while accessing it’s memory banks. “Indeed you are expected, please check your weapons before entering the audience chamber.” Turel felt the two Mandalorians release their grip on him in turn as they complied. “Everything seems to be in order, please enter.” The large double doors in front of them opened slowly with a low mechanical creaking.

All Turel could see inside the audience chamber was a bright brown blur instead of a dark brown blur. He was still too groggy to gather the focus needed to use the Force in any meaningful way. He was led to the center of the audience chamber where he didn’t need to Force to feel a room full of eyes on him.

A hush fell over the audience chamber as a feminine sounding, yet deep voice emanated from the front of the chamber in Huttese, “*State your business bounty hunter. Which bounty are you here to collect?*”

The female mandalorian replied in Basic, “I am here to collect the Anjilliac bounty for one Turel Sorenn, alive. I present his mechanical arm, as a gift. I’m keeping his lightsaber as hazard pay for the bounty didn’t specify he was a Jedi Knight.” Turel heard the footsteps of a protocol droid retrieving the item and bringing it to the throne at the center of the chamber.

*“Very good, I would like to have a trophy to display when we are...finished with him. You may keep the Jedi’s trinket. See to it that the hunters are paid the full bounty, I need no further proof that this is Turel. I never forget a face.”*

Turel remained defiant as ever, he wasn’t about to let this slimeball, whoever she was, have the satisfaction. He replied in Huttese, “*Forgive me, oh corpulent slimey one, but I don’t believe we have met.”*

The male bounty hunter kicked Turel in the back of the knee, forcing him to kneel, “Be silent!”

“*Oh but we have met, Turel Sorenn of Nar Shaddaa, Son of Kain, traitor to the Anjiliac clan. I remember you well, for you served my cousin Vreecha and murdered him. You could not escape our wrath, even in the farthest corners of the galaxy, hiding amongst the Jedi.”*

A sudden realization struck Turel, he remembered the name Zietta, and if he was talking to Zietta he wasn’t on Nal Hutta, he was on the shadow port Point Nadir. Still, he wouldn’t give any Hutt the satisfaction. “*You might as well kill me now you filthy piece of excrement, hold me long enough and I will escape and I will most certainly kill you.”*

*“Oh you will die traitor, but only after you beg me for my forgiveness, pleading for death and only after you have suffered in ways you cannot imagine.”*

*“I can imagine a lot.”*

*“We shall see. Take him away.”*

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Time became meaningless while in captivity. Turel was kept drugged so that he couldn’t focus enough to use the Force, but not so drugged that he couldn’t feel pain. A very delicate balance maintained by a very sadistic physician Zietta employed for this very purpose, a Dug named Doctor Puto. Puto seemed ecstatic at the idea of probing the pain tolerance of a Force user. Each day brought with it new and exquisite methods of pain. Blades, shocks, exotic creatures and toxins. Puto’s lab was a menagerie of torture. Each night brought a fresh round of beatings from the guards, who took bets on how many blows the Jedi could take before he passed out.

When he did black out from the pain or the sheer punishment of repeated beatings, he would wake up a bacta chamber. The bacta chamber brought little relief for Turel as Puto would periodically run varying degrees of electricity through the tank to keep the pain going, but in waves so he had moments of relief to contrast the pain. Puto would always ask Turel, with a certain childlike glee, “Do you want to die little Jedi?” For a while Turel remained defiant and would reply with his trademark sarcasm. But there were days. Terrible days where the Knight, on the verge of madness would ask for it. On those days Puto would enthusiastically make a notation in his holopad and reply “But we have so many more experiments to perform.”

Turel tried to escape many times. Each time he so much as made an aggressive move or touched the door of his cell the collar would trigger, flooding his body with electricity and he would wake up in the bacta tank. Over the indeterminate passage of time, his hope of rescue faded and thoughts of suicide began to assault the once proud Knight. There were a few times, on some of ‘bad days’ he would attempt to end his own life, only to wake up in the bacta tank, with fresh volts of electricity to keep him awake and lucid.

Eventually Puto got his hands on some Ysalamiri to keep in his lab. Then the daily sessions took on a whole new dimension. Puto no longer needed to keep Turel partially sedated to suppress his Force powers as the Ysalamiri created a Force free zone inside Puto’s lab. The sadistic doctor began experimenting with injecting Turel with drugs designed to increase his lucidity and sensitivity to pain, carefully documenting how the drugs affected how much Turel could withstand.

In the brief periods Turel was alone in his cell he tried in vain to gather enough focus to call on the Force. There were only enough Ysalamiri to keep in the lab and Puto would drug Turel before sending him back to his cell. Out of desperation Turel even tried to use his anger and despair to call on the Dark Side of the Force, utterly forsaking his Jedi teachings. Anything to free him from this ceaseless torment. One day he succeeded. During a routine beating he gathered enough focus to lash out with all his anger. Two guards keeled over with their windpipes crushed before Turel was subdued with the collar. From then on, Turel wasn’t moved anywhere without Ysalamiri nearby.

Madness took him. He cursed the Force or whatever entity in the galaxy had condemned him to this fate. He yearned for death, but it would not come. Alone with this thoughts, Turel began to come full circle. All his aggression, powers and wit had not saved him this time. His friends could not find him. He was utterly alone. He began to accept his fate as a product of his own choices. He knew what fate awaited those who killed a member of a Hutt clan as he had. He knew and he acted anyway out of a short sighted need for vengeance. On that day he condemned himself to this fate. No amount of power he gained or heroics he undertook in the Jedi could change this grisly destiny. Hutt never forget. He could only delay the inevitable. He surrendered, utterly and completely to his circumstance. There would be no daring escape, no timely rescue. He would die here, broken and alone. This was his fate. This was his destiny.

From that point forward Turel was nearly catatonic, only uttering “There is no death, there is only the Force” over and over. After some time of this Puto grew tired and Turel was dragged before Zietta again.

*“Do you want to die Jedi?”*

“There is no death, there is only the Force.”

“*Is that all he says now?”*

“There is no death, there is only the Force.”

“*Prepare the explosive charges, it is time for this traitor to feel Anjiliac justice!”*

“There is no death, there is only the Force.”

Turel was stripped naked and placed on a special slab with his arms and legs spread out. Each limb was rigged with a small explosive.

*“And now traitor, you will die in the same way you killed Vreecha, only slowly!”*

“There is no death, there is only the Force.”

*“Do it!”*

BOOM. A small charge severed Turel’s left arm from it’s socket. He broke his chant long enough to cry out. After savoring his suffering for a few moments, Zietta gave the order, “*Again!”*

The process continued over a number of minutes until Turel bled out from losing all his extremities. A guard came up and severed his head from his body to keep on display in the dungeon. A warning to all those who would defy the Anjiliac clan. A plaque was placed under the perseved head. It read in Huttese,

*“Turel Sorenn, traitor, not even the power of the Force could save him from Anjiliac justice.”*