

Pilgrimage Pt 1

Strask Rurra'bek reclined behind his new desk, grinning over his recent promotion. He has finished his work for the day and was now taking the time to look around the room he had been assigned to. As his eyes crawled through the partially complete room. His collection of books, the awards beside the door, and his personal inventory of liquors. As he finished looking through the room, his eyes closed, and he fell asleep.

"Strask... Wake up, Strask," called a familiar voice, disturbing his slumber. As he opened his eyes, he saw what appeared to be the ghost of a former Master.

"Ronovi," he asked curiously, "I thought you were killed!" As he spoke, the Bothan could still feel the familiar sense of power radiating from her spirit. "How can I serve you, Master?"

"You need to help bring bring back the power of Necromancy to Tarentum. Although many think they were destroyed after I was executed, many secrets still lie in the Laboratories of the Pyramid. You must bring the information to Bloodfyre. He will know what to do with it."

Strask, still in shock that his master is standing before him, stood and nodded, "I understand, Master."

As he finished his sentence, Ronovi faded away, showing a grin as she faded into nothing. Strask sat back down at his desk. Pushing his paperwork aside, he grabbed his transmitter.

"Apprentice, are you there?"

"Yes Master, what do you need," Sul Ip replied promptly.

Strask grinned, "We need a pilot."

As the transport landed off the edge of the forest, the two grabbed their gear and stepped onto the planet surface. A heavy rain was falling, and the enormous trees loomed over the land. Lightning struck periodically, although none was seen under the shadows of the trees. There was almost a presence of pain as they groaned in the wind. Strask looked towards his apprentice, noticing the look of disgust on Sul's face, and grinned.

"I forgot that you had not been to Yridia III."

“This is terrible, why would anyone want to live here,” Sul replied in disgust.

“Privacy was crucial in the past, and it will be in the present. I feel that this will soon be our new home. Let us begin our journey,” Strask said, as he began walking into the dense forest. “Keep your eyes open for the native species, and remember that we are not the top of the food chain. The creatures here are not as delicate as the Reeks you hunted as a child.”

Sul sighed as he began following his master into the unknown. Feeling that his master doubted his abilities, he began to search for anything to prove himself to his master.

The pair trekked through the forest for hours without incident. The hum of the insects and animals throughout the forest was overpowering. They sensed life all around them, but rarely saw anything other than small creatures. As they became fully accustomed to the noise, they were startled by a loud thud. Strask stopped walking, and closed his eyes, attempting to focus his mind on the source of the sound.

“Master, it was probably just a tree,” Sul muttered as he walked past him. “Let's just keep walking.” After taking a few steps, he noticed Strask was still standing there. He could feel that his master was focusing on something, using the force to perceive any threat. Sul took a seat on a root, and waited.

“We need to move,” the Bothan said quietly, “Now.”

Strask began running through the forest, with Sul right on his tail. The pair were both physically fit and agile, jumping over fallen branches and brush. Strask used the force as they ran, pushing larger obstacles out of the way as they sprinted, while Sul was ignorant of the threat behind them.

“Why are we running,” Sul yelled, “What are we running from!”

As he finished his sentence, Strask leapt around and pushed Sul to the side. As Sul landed, he saw a large creature. It resembled a large reptile, unlike anything he had seen before. It stood nearly 15 feet tall. It had brown, leathery skin, with a tail as long as it was tall. Its eyes were a piercing green, with a long snout below, filled with razor sharp teeth. It was a truly terrifying creature and it was running towards Strask.

As it lunged at Strask, and he raised a hand towards it. With a sweeping gesture, the creature was slammed into a nearby tree, but recovered quickly. Sul had

recovered as well, and had wielded his lightsaber, now standing at his master's side. Strask drew upon the force again, and struck the beast with telekinetic punches, followed by a blast of force lightning. All the while, Sul was running towards it.

"I've got this, Master," he roared as he closed the distance to the beast, "I'll show you I'm not a child!"

The beast was far from beaten as Sul came face to face with it. As it lunged towards him, he quickly rolled underneath the monster, between its legs, and cut through its tail. The beast roared as it lost some of its stability, and swung its talons towards the Apprentice. Sul dodged most of the attack, just getting his robes slightly torn, and gracefully swung his lightsaber in retaliation and cut the beast's foot cleanly off. It fell to the ground, convulsing in torment.

"I see you've been training," Strask smirked. "If we find another, maybe I won't weaken it for you before you attack."

"I don't need help with a creature like this," the Zabrak responded as he cut off the beast's head. He pulled out a knife and removed a single talon from the animal's foot. "I told you I'm not a child anymore, and I will prove it to you, Master."

"We will see in the future, Apprentice. We'll see."

The rest of the journey was completed without any other disturbances. As the pair approached the Pyramid, Strask could feel an overwhelming strength residing within. Once more, he felt the familiar power of Ronovi. They passed the last trees, and the Pyramid was now fully in their view. It was hardly visible from the jungle growth that had consumed its walls. As they continued to the main entrance the duo noticed that the doors were sealed

"It's locked. Why would someone lock the doors of a building so isolated," Sul questioned.

"Focus, Apprentice. Do you not feel the power from within this structure? Great things have been done here, and my hope is that many more will follow in the future. If you underestimate what we may find here, it could be the last thing you do," grunted Strask.

He pulled his lightsaber from his robes, and began working to open the door with Sul.