

Save the Princess

The barren southern plains of Antenora was dotted with a mosaic of watering holes, trading posts, local strongholds, and rudimentary fortresses held by tribal warlords. War was the trade and commerce of this region. And the wars always carried onward embroiling all life in the area. Some fled to the more temperate and civilized northern approaches, most simply raided and died.

The journeying warrior was not told *why* the captive held in this specific stronghold was important. All Zagro Fenn knew was that he was given a task, and as a member of the Inquisitorius Knights, he knew better than to ask questions. The man studied the squat castle through his scope pressed firmly to his eye. The two native scouts held their position beside Fenn, seated on mounts with bows trained on the casually patrolling sentries on the ramparts. Fenn knew getting in would be easy for his force, avoiding unfortunate complications would not.

The native humanoid scout to Fenn's left, Delak noted the time and indicated that it would soon be dusk and that the tired guards would be changing the watch and retiring for a meal shortly. The time had come to initiate the plan. The scouts unfurled their saddlebags to expose conspicuous trade goods and reined their mounts in close formation behind the warrior who urged his beast forward. From the ramparts a warning shot was fired as the threesome approached the ancient wooded gate barring entrance to the earthwork structure.

"My master wishes to offer his trade goods from the far northern Dragon Lands. Humbly, we are merchants who were waylaid by marauding vagrants. Will the master of this holdfast offer us his protection and grace us with his commerce?" asked Delak.

"I, Emperor Xen, deny you my protection. This place is my prison, and all who come to my doors belong to me. Take them away" stated the tall humanoid as he departed the rampart.

Fenn and his two men did not resist as the guards led them towards the cells. They were disarmed, forced to toss their bows to the ground and dismount their beasts which were tied up in the entry courtyard separating the walled perimeter and the inner sanctum of the holdfast. Half of the guards remained at the gate, attempting to repair the damaged lowering mechanisms. All according to plan, thought Fenn.

The group arrived at the prison area inside the holdfast and Fenn quickly eyed his target, a young Twi'Lek woman, Elinia Rei. The five guards accompanying them began nudging Fenn and his men, urging them to disrobe and nudging them towards an adjacent cell. Fenn nodded to his scouts, who promptly maneuvered hidden knives from their palms into place between their knuckles and waited for his command.

Fenn telekinetically released his hidden dagger from its harness below his left armpit. The golden inlay of the dagger caught the eye of the greedy guards, who barely had time to fire off a pair of arrows at the Sith while the scouts jammed their knives into the jugular of the nearest guard. Their cries alerted

others, and rapid short footsteps were heard scurrying towards the prison block. In seconds the struggle was over, and the scouts had retrieved their bows and held covering positions for Fenn to cut through the Twi'Lek princess's cell. Fenn calmed her, urging her to follow. And in the corridor, a vast body of guards assembled.

The shallow corridor was a deathtrap that no escaping prisoner could venture from. Fenn utilized his mastery of manipulation to send a vision of dread and doom to the guards, overwhelming their senses with horror, causing them to recoil for a slight second and ceasing their endless barrage of arrows. The scouts rained arrows down the corridor as screams of the guards could be heard. "Now!" ordered Fenn as the scouts continued their expert cover fire. Fenn ran full speed down the corridor blocking arrows with his dagger as he rapidly closed the gap with the enemy.

The Battlemaster reached the first guard and sliced downward, lunged forward, and then thrust his dagger in a wide arc taking down several of the cloaked small enemy. The scouts and Twi'Lek followed in his wake, cutting down guards as they ran towards the still lowered gate. The scouts fired upon the guards working to repair the gate as Fenn helped the Twi'Lek on the back of his mount. As the last guard fell and the scouts mounted their beasts, the humanoids along with Emperor Xen appeared on the ramparts above, firing down harrowing arrow fire. Fenn turned and fired Force lightning in their direction, pinning them down with terror. Delak and the other scout fell, as Fenn and the Twi'Lek rode out the gate towards the awaiting horizon.