The Inquisitive fall

By: Aiden Lee Deshra

Darkness grows. The scales of dark and light are tilting. The balance that had been so heartily fought for was weakening and Aiden Lee Deshra could feel it. It was all around them. The Force was crying out to him, and Aiden listened intently. He could feel the growing pressure on his chest as his lungs began to constrict. His breath caught in his throat, and his heart began to race. The screams of the Force surrounded him, and Aiden couldn’t escape it. Its presence was punishing. It was immutable. Whatever the future held, all Aiden knew was that the balance needed to be restored, though he had no idea how to do it.

As Aiden sat in the middle of his room’s floor, he continued meditating on the events that had recently occurred around him. The destruction of New Tython, the exile, and the order of execution placed upon all Jedi, as well as their supporters. His own role as a Gray Jedi was under scrutiny. The Dark council didn’t know who the Grays would side with. Would they allow the darkness in their hearts to shadow their morals and work against the Light? Would that bright spark in their souls be unswaying in their purity, not allowing them to permit this atrocity to continue? The Grays were an unknown, and that made them dangerous.

A chiming sound broke Aiden from his trance. Atop his nearby desk lay a newly gifted communications device, given to him for his advancement in the Inquisitorius, was flashing. He understood what that probably meant. There was a new mission for him to accept. Aiden stood up and walked over to the device. Opening it up a message from the Grand Master himself flashed on the screen. Aiden knew what this meant. This was a test of loyalty to the Iron throne. Loyalty to the one who sat in its glorified seat. He was under watch.

“Knight Aiden Lee Deshra, of Clan Taldryan, I have been watching your progress. You have risen through the ranks of my Inquisition, and many have praised your efforts. Though I find myself wondering why. Why do you work as you do? Where do your loyalties lie? A mission has been uncovered. And I want you, Deshra, to complete it. A group of Jedi apprentices have fled our walls. These traitors to my rule may have some important intelligence on our recent activities, and that information cannot be allowed to get out into the open. Your mission, as a newly appointed rank eight Inquisitor; find these five apprentices who have fled to Corellia where they plan to secure a CR90 Corvette. They are being assisted by the Corellian Engineering Corporation. Leave none of these traitors alive. As a side mission, show the CEC scum that decided to help these Jedi what happens when you cross the Dark Brotherhood, and make sure they never do so again. I will be watching with much interest Aiden. Do Not Fail Me.”

Aiden stood silently for a moment as he contemplated his decisions. Should he murder these five apprentices, purely because Pravus believes that the Jedi are a disease that must be exterminated? Pravus, who the Knight believed had thrown the Force out of balance, clearly suspected him of being aligned with the Light siders. If he didn’t do this, what would happen? His own life would be forfeit, but would Pravus stop with him, or would Taldryan suffer the consequences as well? Lee would never put his family in danger such as this. He would darken his heart if it meant keeping Taldryan safe.

Aiden picked up his Inquisitorius scanner and left his room. It was time to carry out this dark mission.

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Space was quiet. Aiden appreciated the soundless vacuum on days such as this. Days when he would be asked to commit atrocities that went against his very nature. It gave him a sense of peace, of connectedness to the universe around him. Not at all like how he felt in this city. The stench of societal progress lingered in the air. People all around him, bustling through their petty lives. None of them aware or caring enough to understand what was happening in the universe around them. These people who were so caught up with their daily lives that they couldn’t see the tarnishing sights in their midst. The poor who stole for their lives, the sick who were on the cusp of oblivion, and the lonely who sat in darkness eternal; these were all stains that the majority pushed to the side. But Aiden could see them, and he also knew their worth, the use these people were to him. With the right incentive, these people, outcasts from their own, would be the only help he needed to find the Jedi, and complete his mission.

Aiden watched the crowd and saw what he needed. A young boy with shaggy black hair and slightly tattered clothes, probably no older than fourteen, was walking through the mass of people pickpocketing several upstanding citizens with ease. The people who did see the boy, looked at him with disgust in their eyes. The Knight smiled as he made his way towards the unsuspecting youth. He could tell that the boy wasn’t bad, he just needed to survive. Aiden respected that, for he too, lived that way for a portion of his life, before Clan Taldryan picked him up. Catching up to the boy, Aiden grasped the kids shoulder startling him.

“Calm down, you’re not in trouble. My name is Aiden, and I need your assistance.”

“Why should I help you?” The boy asked, fear plastered on his young face.

“I’m on a mission of great importance, and I need your help. I am willing to offer payment for your assistance.”

“What kind of payment?”

“What kind do you need?”

The boy looked skeptically at Aiden before sighing slightly. He looked at the ground for a moment before facing Lee again.

“Come with me.”

Aiden followed the boy into a darker part of the city. The slums, overrun with drug trafficking, and other various crime. On a system such as Corellia, this was a common sight. The houses were rundown, or shady looking. The people on the street always looked paranoid about who would come after them next.

“Where are you taking me?”

“My place, you said you’d help right?”

“Yes I did.”

“Good, then keep following me.”

Lee found himself in front of a small house that seemed in slightly better condition compared to the rest of the slum. The boy pulled out a key and unlocked the door before leading the Gray Jedi inside.

“Mom, I’m home.” The boy called out, then he turned to Aiden, “Come on.”

Aiden followed the boy up the stairs. He was led to a room with a frail looking woman lying in a bed, a washcloth on her forehead. A bottle of medicine sat on the table next to the bed. The woman saw Aiden through barely opened eyes, and looked frightened.

“Mom it's ok, he’s here to help,” He looked over to Aiden with worry in his eyes, “You can help her right? I’ll do whatever you need, but please, she’s sick. I need her.”

Aiden scratched his head in unease. He was in no way a healer. But maybe he could help somehow.

“I’ll do what I can for her. Has she seen a doctor?”

“No we can’t afford that.”

“Don’t worry, I have an idea.”

Aiden left the house and procured a small transport. He helped the sick woman into the transport and paid the driver to take himself, the woman, and her child to the closest medical facility. When they arrived Aiden walked in and found some staff members to help get the boy’s mother to a room. The three of them waited, Aiden patiently, the boy and his mother concerned. When a doctor came in Aiden looked him in the eyes and waved his hand.

“You will heal this woman, and charge her nothing.”

“I will heal this woman, and charge her nothing.”

As the doctor started working on her, the boy came over to Aiden and sat next to him.

“How did you do that?”

“The Force can sometimes have a strong effect on the weak minded. These people have grown complacent and weak. Makes it a bit easier. Don’t worry though, your mother will be taken care of, of that I promise you.”

“Weiys.”

“What?”

“My name is Weiys. I told you I’d help you. Anything.”

“Weiys, I’m looking for a group of Jedi Apprentices. They are supposedly hiding out on this planet, trying to secure a ship. I believe they are being helped by the Corellian Engineering Corporation.”

“Why, are you…”

“I’m after them because they are traitors to the organization I belong to. I was sent to dispose of them. And if I don’t complete my mission, it will mean my life and possibly the life of my family is forfeit.”

“You’re gonna kill them?”

“Those are my order, though I’d rather not. The choice has been taken out of my hands.”

“I like to listen in on what the pilots around here say. It makes me think sometimes that I can get out of here someday.”

“I understand that completely Weiys. I used to do something similar.”

“I heard one of them, Captain Ras Nagula; he sometimes flies for the CEC, I heard him saying that he was being paid a lot of money to transport 5 passengers of great importance on “The Covenant”, his ship.”

“Do you know what kind of ship it is?”

“It’s a CR90 Corvette.”

Aiden gave a small smile to the young boy.

“Thank you for your assistance. That is the ship I’m looking for. I must take my leave now.”

As Aiden stood up, he felt something, the Force seemed to radiate off of the Weiys. Aiden smiled at the thought.

“We will see each other again, I’m sure Weiys.”

“Thank you for helping my mother.”

Aiden nodded and left the facility.

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Aiden used his scanner to help him find “the Covenant’s” hangar. Once he found the correct hanger he noticed it was sealed shut. Looking around he found a series of boxes and storage crates stacked at different heights and decided it was time for some good old fashioned climbing. He climbed and jumped his way to the level of the hangar roof and used the Force to propel himself in a jump to the roof. The hangar door on the roof was open, meaning the ship would be leaving soon.

“Looks like I’m right on time.”

Holding his position, Aiden took out his scanner again and used one of its features to map out any lifeforms in the ship, and hangar. There were three life forms outside the ship, and six on the inside. Aiden jumped from the roof and landed on the ground, the Force softening the landing. Quietly he walked around and saw three cloaked figures. The cloaks had symbols of Clan Odan-Urr, these were three of the Jedi. He stopped himself as bile rose in his throat. Was he really going to do this, kill these Jedi, just because Grandmaster Pravus ordered it? “To protect Taldryan”, that’s what he kept telling himself. But those words began to lose their meaning.

Aiden took out his duelist lightsaber and approached his targets. Stealth was not Lee’s strong suit, but in combat he could excel. Though he wasn’t trained to handle multiple opponents the skill level of the three would make the battle easier. Aiden ignited his purple blade, and with a hiss it came to life. The three Jedi Apprentices were startled but took out their own Armory sabers that were stolen the moment they were banished from the Brotherhood. The three blades hissed to life, one blue, the other two green

Aiden could tell by the way they stood with their lightsabers, that these Apprentices were very inexperienced. This fight would end quickly. He stepped forward and one of the Apprentices thrust his blue lightsaber forward. Aiden parried the blade away, knocking the saber up towards the sky with his superior strength, before bringing his lightsaber down across the Jedi’s torso, cleaving through with no resistance. The Jedi fell to floor dead. The other two yelled as they struck together. Aiden dodged the two lightsabers, weaving through the strike and slashing his lightsaber through one of the Jedi’s arms. The final Jedi was behind him, and swung to avenge his allies, but Lee brought his lightsaber behind his head, blocking the strike. As the lightsabers clashed they screeched and hissed. Sparks flying from the meeting point. Aiden pushed against his opponent, knocking him backwards, and spun around before shoving his purple lightsaber into the Jedi’s chest. The three Jedi lay dead on the ground. Aiden collected their lightsabers, for storage in the armory, before saying a silent apology to the three Apprentices.

The Taldryan Knight then walked on the ship. His lightsaber still active, he slashed through the ship walls and what wires he could see, trying to damage the ship as much as possible. An armed crewman saw him and ran towards him. Lee reached out with his left hand and grabbed ahold of the man with the Force. As a second crewman came down the corridor, Lee threw the first man at him, knocking both to the ground before pulling out his own blaster and shooting both men. The final four passengers on the ship heard the blaster fire and went to stop whomever was on their ship. Aiden hid behind a wall, and once the last crewman moved passed the wall, he shot him in the back, killing him.

“So the Grandmaster sent you to kill us!” Aiden heard one of the final two Jedi shout.

Aiden remained silent. He refused to speak as he committed these acts of atrocity. Moving from behind the wall, Aiden Lee was ready to blacked his heart some more. The last two Jedi stood there, blue armory sabers activated, with Captain Ras in between them.

“You need to leave. I’m being paid good money for their safe return and I’m not gonna let you….ugh”

As Captain Ra’s was speaking Aiden grabbed ahold of him with the Force and began choking the man. The Gray Jedi used this as a moment to strike while Lee was distracted at the moment. As they came closer, Lee released the Captain by throwing him down the corridor. The hallway was somewhat compact for a wild lightsaber fight, but these close quarters worked to Lee’s advantage. These Apprentices were untrained with a lightsaber, and stood no chance against the Makashi wielder. The fight was over quickly with Aiden dis-arming both Jedi before cleaving through their necks. He walked up to the prone Captain, and pierced him through the heart.

Aiden brought out his scanner and located the ship's engines. He destroyed them, crippling the expensive cruiser. He made his way towards the exit, but had to stop. His chest ached under the pressure of senseless killing, and he heard the Force screaming with the dead returning to it. Righting himself, he continued on his way. As Aiden walked off the ship, he was met by three more figures standing in the hangar, two with blasters aimed at him. They all wore the logo of the Corellian Engineering Corporation.

“So, you killed our Captain, and our clients. That is quite bad for business you know?” The leader of the three spat out.

Aiden closed his eyes and sighed. HE would have to dispose of these three, though this was also a perfect opportunity to complete his side mission. This ended now. Aiden threw his lightsaber, controlling its path with the Force. It imbedded itself into the chest of one of the gunman, before Aiden pulled it back to him. The purple lightsaber flew out of the man’s body, and the hilt snapped back into the Knight’s hand. The other gunmen began opening fire, and while Makashi wasn’t built for blaster defense, the man’s lack skill made it easy for Aiden to deflect the blasts. He walked closer and closer until he was able to easily destroy the man’s gun, before impaling him with the purple beam. The leader fell to the ground as he backed up in fear.

“P…please don’t kill me. I…I didn’t know who would be after them. I just wanted to make some money. We will never go against the Dark Brotherhood, I swear it.”

“You’re absolutely right.”

“I am?”

Aiden disengaged his lightsaber and started walking away. The man stood back up before trying to hobble away in defeat. Lee turned around, blaster in hand and fired a shot, right at the man’s left leg. The blaster hit true and the man fell to the floor, screaming in agony.

“That’s a warning, next time the one they send will not be merciful.”

Aiden was happy to leave this place. But as he thought back to what he did, his heart was heavy with the burdens of his day. He detested this mission. He hoped that Pravus would back off, now that he did this. But was it right? The Force remained out of balance, and Aiden could feel it. His eyes burned from rage, and he could feel his control wavering. Today was one of his darkest, and he never wanted to revisit one like it. And he wouldn’t. His mind steeled, and he promised himself that he would never cause this type of unnecessary pain again, if he could avoid it.

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Grandmaster Pravus sat upon his throne as one of his top Inquisitors approached him. The Inquisitor held the file that he had acquired from his raid on Corellia. Pravus smiled at the man success. This was one more step the annihilation of the Jedi. But, what about the second mission the man was on?

“How did he do?”

“Knight Aiden Lee Deshra completed both of the missions you gave him.”

“He killed them all?”

“All aside from a member of the Corellian Engineering Corporation. He maimed the man as a warning against working opposition to the Brotherhood.”

“Hmmm. What is your opinion on the Knight?”

“The boy is young, and killing doesn’t sit well with him. He did the mission you assigned him, so he has proven loyalty.”

“But is it loyalty to me or to Taldryan.”

“I do not know Grandmaster. He may still be a wildcard in this game.”

“I detest wildcards. Keep your eyes of our Knight. When the time comes, I’ll test his loyalty definitively.”

“And if he fails.”

“Then his head will roll at my feet.”