

Five Percent
Raiju Kang (4024)

Earthquakes were a rare thing on Karufr. After centuries of cooling and slowing tectonic movement, the planet was relatively stable. Only among fault lines on days of increased pressure could one experience the awe-inspiring power of the planet. Yet, today; no matter where one was on the planet - the ground beneath felt like it was trembling.

Fear and panic had gripped the world. Across the globe masses of the living flooded into spaceports, many desperately leaving behind all their possessions but the clothes on their backs just in hopes they could be crammed into one of the fleeing transports. Every so often the tremors of the earth spiked to a gut-wrenching level that threatened to topple buildings, if the orbital bombing didn't do it first.

When *The Suffering* entered the planet's orbit, there had been concern among the populace; however, it wasn't uncommon for an Iron Throne vessel to bring a visiting dignitary. However, when a twin pair of destroyers added to *The Suffering* in the midday sky; everyone knew there was something more to things. It wasn't long afterwards that the combined might of the attack fleet broke through the planetary defenders and began hammering the planet itself.

"Ninety-five percent?!" An astonished man cried out. He stood amidst a small gathering of individuals belonging to the underground society known as Taldryan. Their organization for decades now had held control over Karufr, and in no small matter had been the direct cause for today's attack. Yet, while the last remaining aspects of Karufr government tried to save the planet and its populace; the world's fate rested upon the selected few here.

"By our calculations, yes. Ninety-five percent of the populace is dead." The response was swift, coming from a sharply dressed Chiss in the centre of the gathering; being broadcasted through a holopad. "The Iron Legion has been merciless and it's very clear that they don't just expect to defeat us; they want to exterminate us."

"What's our response?" The cry from a Twi'lek woman was harsh, with little emotion flowing into her tone.

"Evacuation."

"Taldryan doesn't withdraw!" Several people growled in unison, yet the Chiss was quick to silence them.

"They are readying to destroy Karufr. As we speak, their ground units are withdrawing from the planet. Traditionally battleplans would have them slowly withdraw from orbit to a safe distance incase their bombardment ruptured the core, before moving back to occupy that world. Instead, they are staying within striking distance, readying themselves for a second round."

An awkward silence fell upon the room as the weight of the moment took over the group. Emotions were raw, to say the least, but it was plain to see the group refused to hold defeat in their eyes. Before another outburst could happen, the Chiss was quick to move on to the new strategy.

"What remains of the fleet is being organized on the far side of the planet from the Iron Legion. We will begin landing rescue craft at each of the bunkered sites and pull our people out of the fire. Our fighters will be instructed to disengage from the Iron Legion and focused solely on escorting our rescue craft out. Once aboard the fleet, we will perform an emergency jump to lightspeed."

"What about the five percent, Major?" The cold, defiant tone was quick to cut off the briefing. Immediately, heads turned in sequence opening a path of sight between the hologram and the source of the voice. Stopping on a pair of individuals standing at the back of the room, the Sith among them stumbled off to the side as if the plague infected the creature standing in the brown cloak with his back leaned against the wall.

“What about it?” Ice could have shot from the Chiss’ crimson’s eyes towards the creature that looked half man and half squid; undoubtedly a Nautolan.

“Will we not be rescuing the estimated five percent of the populace that remains on planet?”

Tension was thick in the room as the crowd looked between the men. No doubt there was a desire to save as many as they could, but military strategies usually had to put civilians lower on the priority sequence. Even if they could man enough craft to save all, the real question hadn’t been asked; Could they save the five percent before Jac destroyed the planet?

Time ticked slowly before the Chiss finally answered.

“What civilians make it to the bunkered sites will be given passage.” With that the holopad faded off, and the Chiss disappeared. Following this, the room shook violently once more; raining dust and dirt faintly on the heads of the inhabitants. The crowd had quickly broke into smaller groups as people discussed the news, but one individual was quick to make his way back to the entrance; the Nautolan.

When the Jedi was quick to deactivate the magnetic seal, a hand snatched his collar and quickly spun the Nautolan.

“Forget it, Raiju.” It was the Twi’lek woman, maintaining her tone of harshness. “All you’re going to do is get yourself kill, and we need you for the next engagement.”

“And I’m sure there is many out there that could join us in that fight.” Raiju Kang was quick to snap back. Popping his shoulder, and in turn knocking her hand from his collar. The Nautolan was quick to flee through the door, leaving his response to echo in the doorway.