

Chapter 1: The Day After

Derek's eyes fluttered slightly as he moaned sorely. He could feel himself being dragged along the surprisingly smooth sand of the coast. It clung to his face where tears had been flowing before he had drifted into sorrowful sleep. He could feel the faint heat of the sun. He turned his head slightly and cracked his eyes open to see it peeking out over the emerald blue waves of the sea. The brilliant orange clashed with the fading dark blue sky. The orange glow reflected across the ocean leading seemingly to Derek.

He felt a tug as he continued to be dragged limply. His eyes closed gently as he fell back into unconsciousness. His eyes fluttered open again and he found himself covered lazily with a soft white blanket. The ceiling above him was painted a deep blue color and beautifully polished dark wood accented the edges. He twisted his neck to his left. A floor to ceiling window gave him a stunning view of the endless expanse of sea. He could see the water crashing along the beach and the familiar scent of salty air was faintly noticeable in the room.

He rose up slowly. He was now wearing white jumpers and loose baggy trousers. He edged his feet to the side of the bed and his toes grasped the soft warm carpet below. He stood up, groaning. Finally looking around the room, he realized he didn't recognize it. The walls were dark and foreboding, and it clashed with the blue ceiling and carpet, and especially the snow white bed. There was nothing on the walls except for 2 shelves in the back corner across from him that held an assortment of old battered books and odd looking artifacts.

As he began to truly awaken, his mind wandered to the previous day and he collapsed back onto the bed and began sobbing uncontrollably. The sight of his family getting slaughtered flashed in his mind vividly. Reliving the experience made his stomach churn and he scrambled out of the room. To his left was a refresher. He stumbled in and began retching into the toilet violently. After what seemed like hours hunched over with his head throbbing and his face streaked with tears, he breathed deeply, shuddering with every exhale. Staring blankly at the tiled floor, the seven year old boy slowly pushed himself up.

Stepping stiffly out to the 'fresher, he began to venture further, keeping a hand on the wall to keep his balance. The hallway was dark for about 3 meters past the refresher until it opened up to a larger room he could not yet see. Glass panels lined the sides as he reached the opening. He peered over the edge to the left. The entire side of the room was a massive glass wall. The sun reflected into the home off the waves. The ceiling was high and made of the same Dark wood that accented the corners of his ceiling in his room. He looked down and saw a small kitchen, the smell of food floated up to him. Despite the pleasant aroma, He didn't feel like eating, he still felt sick and weak.

He jumped slightly as he saw a man sat cross legged on the soft carpet facing the sounds of the sea. His hands were clenched lightly into fists and they hung loosely over his knees. His head was up but his eyes were closed. 3 large horns protruded from the front portion

of his head, right above the forehead, and multiple smaller horns circle the rest of the head. His skin was a black color and silver tattoos covered his body. His muscular chest rose and fell steadily with his breathing. Derek walked forward and quietly stepped down the stairs. Just as his bare feet touched the floor the Man spoke

“You’re finally awake child,” he spoke softly. His voice was gentle and calming. Derek didn’t answer but looked hesitantly at the tattooed Zabrak. “There is food on the stove, Eat. you must be starving.” The Zabrak said, again, very serenely, almost as if he was in bliss. Derek shook his head and tried to speak but no words came out. After a couple of seconds of silence, He spoke once again. “You can eat later then.”

He stood up. The man was of average height and though Derek hadn’t ever met a Zabrak. He thought he looked no older than 20. Derek looked up into his eyes for the first time; They were a glowing yellow color. Derek stepped back instinctively, nearly tripping over the first step of the stairs.

“Don’t be afraid child,” the man said smiling kindly. He looked very young, almost boyish but at the same time aged. Derek noticed for the first time the faint scarring around his left eye. The skin looked burned but only half healed. He held out his hand toward Derek and he nodded to it and looked at the brown haired boy in front of him.

“Come, let’s take a walk.” He said smiling more widely now. Derek took his hands and the Zabrak rose. “My name is Aura, Aura Noth.” He said “What yours?”

“Derek.” He said almost whimpering.

“It is a honor to meet you Derek,” he said with a slight bow of his head and then led derek out the home and towards the beach. They walked along the coast for a few minutes before reaching a large tree that sat on the green grass right off the sandy shore. They sat down, Aura laid against the tree while Derek lowered himself to the grass and hugged his legs to his chest.

Aura leaned forward and sighed. “I’m sorry about what happened Derek. I know the feeling of losing your family.” He looked down at his trousers for a moment, as if pondering how to continue. He continued to explain how he had found his family and found Derek alive. How he had brought him to his home. Derek continued hugging his legs and looking down at his toes as Aura continued on about how the authorities had shown up and cleared the evidence and left this morning.

Derek finally looked up after minutes of pained silence, tears filled his eyes. “Who?”

Aura eyed him curiously, and said, "I don't know. The thing is, you no longer have a home and seeing as I know how you feel, I feel obligated to offer you sanctuary." Derek didn't answer but looked back down, closing his eyes in a futile attempt to stem the flow of tears.

Aura looked at him with pity, "You need a home until we can find out what happened. I'm trying to help you Derek."

He looked up, the flow of tears subsiding slightly and nodded without thinking. The thoughts of his family still rolling through his mind. The two stayed next to the tree as the sky began to turn a dark blue color. Derek had stopped crying and the lump in his throat was disappearing. He had greedily eaten the sandwiches Aura had offered and now lay on his back, watching as the stars came into view. They glittered silently, turning the night sky into an charcoal black canvas with small white specks spread out over it. It calmed him to where he had almost forgotten where he was.

"Well it's getting late Derek, you'd better get some sleep. I'll grab your belongings tomorrow." This snapped Derek out of his trance and a rush of cold sadness flooded him. He shivered slightly and followed Aura towards the house.

Chapter 2: Revelation

Over the course of the next year, Aura had become Derek's foster parent. He had taken him in and homeschooled him. The little 7 year old had grown fond of the gentle friend that had given him a home though he still thought of his family often. His grandfather's green pleading eyes looking at him as life left them haunted Derek daily. As time went on, Anger replaced sadness. He had found himself one night, woken by the nightmares that had plagued him since the incident, angry instead of emotional. Aura had run in at the sound of his shouts and looked more concerned than usual when he saw the look on Derek's face. Blind rage boiled in Derek's heart and Aura had realized it.

On Derek's eighth birthday, Aura had decided to tell Derek what he had been hiding from him since they met.

"Derek." He said cautiously to the prone eight year old who was drawing in the sand with a stick. Derek looked up at him as if he was doing something wrong. "I have something to show you." The young boy's eyes brightened at this. It was his birthday and he was hoping that he would get a present.

The two went back to the house and Aura instructed Derek to stay outside. Moments later, He had emerged with two cases. Both matte black but one was longer about the size of him. He put both down and dropped to one knee. He looked into Derek's bemused green eyes and smiled sadly.

"I actually have two gifts for you." He said hold up two fingers.

"What are they?" Derek asked peeking around Noth to see the two cases behind him.

"Only one of these is a gift, the other..." He paused looking back at the smaller case. "Well, maybe you'll get it another day" He said, His black and silver cheeks rising with his grin.

"Oh come on Uncle Noth! PLEEEEEAAAASSEEEEE!!!" Derek pleaded.

"Don't worry, the time will come but for now, I need to give your your first...gift." He paused at the word gift as if he was afraid to say it. "This gift is the truth, You know me as the man who helped you a year ago, but little more. Derek looked at him confused. Aura looked at the boy i front of him and reminded himself he was talking to a child.

"Derek, Have you heard of the force and the jedi?" He said slowly

"yeah, granddad talked about them all the time." Derek answer, still trying to workout where this was leading.

"Well, I was trained by one. When I was young about 12 years ago, my family was killed and a former Jedi Master had found me and took me in, much like I did with you." Noth explained, thinking back to the events that had happened so long ago.

"YOU'RE A JEDI!!!" Derek exclaimed. He had began jumping up and down in excitement. Aura laughed and calmed Derek down after a few minutes of excited jumping by the young 8 year old.

"Not really, I was trained by him for 6 years until he was killed. I went through a lot the years after. They were dark times and I was lost in anger and dispair until I was yanked from it all." He said smiling slightly, fiddling with a small silver ring on his finger. "I see a lot of me in you Derek, and I'm afraid of that, It's dangerous for you. When I took you in I promised myself that I would guide you and teach you. You don't know this but you have powers beyond what you can comprehend. I have sensed it when I first moved here but never thought of finding out more"

Derek was baffled by this until Noth raised his hand and the smaller of the two cases opened and what seemed like a polished chrome baton flew toward Aura's outstretched arm. He couldn't believe it; His grandfather had told of of the mystical powers of the jedi but he had never thought he would see them. His eyes gleamed at what he had just witnessed. Noth smiled.

"Step back for me Derek." He said standing up. He held out the baton and with a hiss, a white glowing blade emerged from either end.

“NO WAY!!!” Derek screamed sounding more like a little girl than a boy. He jumped around in excitement as the blades disappeared almost instantly back into the reflective hilt.

“Derek, I will train you in the traditional art of Ki’thri and teach you to uncover your powers and how to use them. Most importantly, I will teach you to control your anger and hate that has been boiling in you.” He said for the first time, very coldly.

Derek stopped and his eyes dropped.

“Like I said, I know. I have felt the same pain. My destiny is to show you the way away from darkness.” He said, dropping his cold tone. Derek’s thought went back to his family and began to sob uncontrollably, Aura stepped towards Derek, kneeled down, and hugged him tightly.

“Let me help you, please Derek.” He said quietly as The boy soaked Aura’s shoulder with his tears. He gently pushed off his shoulder, and with tears still rolling down his cheek, He nodded.

Noth smiled and rose. The sun had begun to set again and the sky had begun the fight between the orange rays of the disappearing sun and the darkness of the night. He placed his hand on Derek’s back and guided him to the unopened case.

“You still have your present.” He said softly looking down at the top of Derek’s head, his brown hair billowing slightly with the wind. Derek looked back up and the Zabrak nodded his horned head. The birthday boy ran to the case, wiping away his tears with his sleeve, and opened it carefully. It was a dual bladed staff about the size of himself. The center of the grip was a black velvet. The rest of it was a polished chrome with skinny leather bands wrapping around them loosely. At the point where the shined lethal blades meet the center staff were two small golden birds with their wings wrapping around the base of the blades.

“Its called a Zhaboka, It was mine long ago, I want you to have it.” He said as Derek felt the smooth blades. “I will teach you the how to wield it and through the training and drills you will be able to express your dark emotions and eventually abandon them.”

Derek, still sniffing minutely, smiled.

Chapter 3: The Fall

Two years had passed and Derek had improved greatly in his combat skills, for a child, but had yet to unlock his force abilities. Though frustrated, He had grown to enjoy the quiet meditative session he and Noth had on the beaches just outside their home. Noth had, at least partially, filled the void where his family had been and Derek clutched to him emotionally.

The sun was just rising and Derek and Noth had just begun their morning meditation session when Noth spoke. Derek's head whipped toward him in surprise, He had sternly instructed Derek to never interrupt such sessions and here he was doing it himself

"There is someone at the door, stay here and continue. I will handle it."

Derek obeyed but felt himself focusing on the house behind him. After a couple minutes He could sense a sudden surge of anger from inside the house. His eyes snapped open he leaped to his feet and ran towards the house, reminiscent of what he had done almost 3 years ago. He stumbled as he ran up the incline leading to the back door. HE could see through the glass wall that Aura was seemingly trying to calm someone down. Just as he ran into to the room Aura looked to him quickly.

Two soldiers seeing this movement shoved past him and looked at Derek.

"That's him." a Soldier said, raising his rifle at the 10 year old boy. He was a Devorian. Recognition flashed in Derek's eyes as he staggered back.

"NO!" The Zabrak yelled from behind the two. They turned in time to see him charging at them. He punched the other soldier acrossing the cheek, knocking his helmet off his face. The Devorian turned his rifle but Noth knocked it out of his hand and raised his arm. The soldier fell back and smashed against the wall, and a painting fell landing on top of him. The other soldier rose up and pulled a pistol out his holster. Aura was still focused on the Devorian who was beginning to rise up from underneath the painting.

"NOTH!" Derek yelled, but he was too late. A shot had rung out and Noth was frozen. His eyes widened in sudden surprise. He fell to his knees then collapsed forward to the floor where he had sat meditating when Derek first met him. Anger rose from inside Derek. Blind rage permeated his mind. The two soldiers had gotten up and began advancing on the child.

Derek's eyes finally shifted from Noth's limp body to the two in front of him. Without hesitation he raised his hand. Both soldiers dropped their weapons as they fell to their knees grasping at the neck. The grip on their wind pipe tighten as the struggled against it. They began to turn blue and their eyes had enlarged as if they were struggling for air. They finally collapsed to the ground still squirming slightly until Derek clenched his fist and two distinct crack echoed through the now eerily quiet house.

Tears now rolling down his face he ran to where Noth lay motionless, He turned him over and his arms flung around listlessly.

"Noth, please Noth wake up. Please." Derek pleaded helplessly. He knew he was gone. His shallow sobs reverberated around him as clutched Aura's robes. The sun had risen finally

and his tear glistened in the rays, but he hadn't noticed. His sorrow had clouded the sunny day and darkness enveloped him as he grieved, succumbed to his misery.