Old Questions by Ka Tarvitz

(A Conversation between Edgar Drachen and Ka Tarvitz)

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“What are you afraid of?” Edgar pressed “What are you really afraid of?”

“Oh, we’re back to this again are we?” Tarvitz sighed.

“Yes, and we’re not leaving this room until you have an answer.”

“I honestly don’t see why you are going to such extremes to get my reply,” Tarvitz protested “Really, I have pledged my sword to your service and will follow Clan Odan-Urr until the Grandmaster meets his end. Why the questions?”

“Because you’re an anomaly here. You asked that I train you in our ways to bolster your own skills. I did exactly that, but this is one novice question you never answered.”

“And because, I assume, it related to your order’s creed once again?”

“Fear leads to anger, anger leads to hate, hate leads to suffering,” Edgar intoned, repeating the familiar words once more.

“I know more than a few people who would disagree with that second point.”

“The Sith don’t count. They have their own values.”

“I wasn’t talking about them,” Tarvitz sighed again, keeping his tone level.

“Or the Krath, or the Obelisks.”

“I meant my own people.”

“Oh,” Edgar paused “Go on then.”

“Then Jensaarai believe that anger and ferocity in of itself can be used for something better. Tempered and controlled, caged by an iron will it can be used to inspire others to greater heights.”

“A dangerous path.”

“If you say so. For the past few centuries it has been quite a reliable one. I cannot think of many of my kind of who have fallen to the Dark Side, certainly far less than the Jedi,” Tarvitz coughed slightly “No offense.”

“Your kind, these Jensaarai, wear Sith alchemical armour, take a position of power-”

“Authority,” Tarvitz quickly corrected “We just stop crimes as we see them and enforce the law.”

“I don’t see the difference when you’re the ones making them,” Edgar continued.

“Because we limit ourselves to only what’s necessary at the time. From what I have seen of your Sith, they fight to claim glory for themselves, to take personal power over worlds and hurl every last fragment of their strength into attaining more control. We do not. We limited ourselves to Susevfi, and were content to guard it over trying and failing over and over again to achieve galactic dominion.”

“Isn’t that something you disagreed with?” Edgar asked.

“Yes, but it wasn’t the part opposing a galactic dominion,” Tarvitz said, considering his words carefully “There is a fine line between measured strength and unwillingness to act. We guarded Susevfi, but failed to pay attention to the wider galaxy. So much so that we failed to predict or sense a pirate raid upon our world, even with the benefit of the Force. With a few simple scouts maintaining a close watch on galactic events we could have predicted and ended that attack before anyone died.”

“So, you fear a loss of control, or a loss of power?”

“... I told you that part of our history to help you understand we’re not like the Sith, and we know not to abruptly fall prey to the darker aspects of the Force. Not so you could psychologically dissect me.”

“Tough,” Edgar said, in the sort of tone which was not to be argued with “Either you give me an answer, or I will be forced to make up my own one based upon what you say here. Sorenn wants this dealt with, one way or another.”

“You realise I could make up anything, now you’ve told me that? There’s no shortage of things I’d run from rather than fight after all. Rancors, Krayt Dragons, Fire-Krakens…”

“What?”

“Nasty things, they’re one more reason why you’d never want to go for a dip on Nal Hutta,” Tarvitz said, his distaste for such creatures obvious in his voice “The point is, I could offer any fifty foot tall monster with too many teeth as an answer.”

“Yes, and I would tell you those are just things to be afraid of. I’m asking what you’re truly afraid of.”

“You’re not making this any easier.”

“It’s not supposed to be an easy question,” Edgar answered “If it was, I wouldn’t need to ask. It’s about what might push you over the edge in the wrong situation, and what might drive you to embrace the Dark Side. We all have our weaknesses in this regard, and before we press onward I need to know yours.

Look, let’s go back to your history for a moment. You said you felt your kind weren’t paying enough attention to galactic events. Why didn’t you simply stop at a few nearby systems?”

“A few sparse and largely uninhabited planets? What would that accomplish? It would stop any pirate setting up shop on our doorstep, but we would still be at the mercy of any power with enough ships and men who saw Susevfi as a potential target. No, we needed something like your Sentinel network.”

“And did it work?”

“Somewhat,” Tarvitz admitted “There were no further attacks, but that was thanks to keeping ourselves hidden more than long range operatives. Yet, we did also gain more knowledge of the galaxy’s state, the role of the Hutts and the New Republic’s current stance on conflict.”

“And Jedi relics.”

“Ah. Yes. I had forgotten I told you about that.”

“They don’t have much to do with defending the Jensaarai or your home, do they?”

“No. That was more of a personal mission. Given how thorough Palpatine was in burning away all remnants of the old Order, I did not want the galaxy to lose anything more of them. Any knowledge of the Force itself is a precious thing in this forsaken age.”

“It wasn’t the only personal mission though, was it?” Edgar said, speaking as if reading them off of a dataslate “Raiding and recovering scrap from derelicts, intervening to defend others, even going out of your way to stop criminal elements on the Outer Rim.”

“If you have a point to make, then please get on with it.”

“I think you fear another Alderaan.”

“Excuse me?” Tarvitz said “I don’t follow.”

“Every time you stepped in, it was always to prevent something being lost. Lives, knowledge, history, resources, and always to defend them against something.”

“I don’t see how that’s any different than what the Jedi do, or my own fears.”

“We do what’s required of us, what the Force tells us to do. I think it runs deeper in your case. You lost a world you never knew, someone threatened your new home and you urged your leaders to actively guard it by watching for threats across the galaxy. When someone threatened to destroy something you saw as unique, you always halted your mission to stop them.

This is just going from what you’ve told me of your outings. If i’m wrong then just say so.”

“...”

“Well?”

“You could be right,” Tarvitz said at length “Can’t say I’ve ever fully considered it, but it’s a difficult thing to argue against when you put it like that.”

“You don’t sound convinced.”

“As I said, i’ve never fully considered it. Honestly, I always felt it was failure I feared the most. Failing to uphold my duties, failing to defend others, failing to styme the rise of the Dark Side. It sounds like it’s the other side of the same credit in this case. Yet, if anything would push me into using the Dark Side to achieve more power, it would be in order to try and prevent a greater evil.”

“So, want me to give that as your answer?”

“You might as well. To be completely honest with you i’m not sure what other one I could give.

Now that’s over and done with, mind if I ask you one question in return?”

“Shoot,” Edgar said.

“What did you tell your Master when they first tried to have your answer this question?”

“That’s for you to ask and me to know.”