

# Downward Spiral

A Submission to the Competition:  
Darkest Night



Written by  
Reiden Karr (10106)

29 ABY

One more death was added to the tally.

Reiden knew that death was simply a part of life, but that didn't mean he had to like it. In fact, he hated it at times. His master had just been murdered. Of course, there are bound to be casualties during times of war, such as the Tenth Great Jedi War. But this meant little to Reiden. His master was gone, and he was sad, angry. Perhaps furious was a better word.

Reiden was no stranger to death. But he still could not help but feel the way he felt. He didn't like it, but he knew it came as part of the deal with mortality. What made it worse, however, was that it brought to mind the death of others that he had known. First when his parents were murdered when he was fourteen; then when he was forced to kill his close friend Morenn two years after that; then finally three years later when he killed his first master, Kadain Thorne, out of mercy and rage for lying to him about the Dark Brotherhood.

But the death of Angelo Dante was a different matter. Reiden had been used to death from his previous experiences and was old enough to come to terms with life's finality. Still, Dante had been there to guide him as he entered the ranks of the Brotherhood. He further taught Reiden how to harness his strengths, and how to utilize them more effectively, both in and out of combat. Dante even taught Reiden to be more confident in his abilities and that he could accomplish most things if he only set his mind to it. The man was strong in his own right, and a pillar within Reiden's newfound home within Clan Scholae Palatinae. It didn't take long for Reiden to come to hold great respect for his master. Now that Dante was gone, Reiden would never be the same, and neither would his clan. He had reached yet another low point in his life.

However, Reiden was determined not to let that dark abyss claim him for good. But he would need time to deal with things. He decided to set out on his own once more. He wasn't abandoning his home in Scholae, just taking some time to himself. So he boarded a starship heading out of the Cocytus system and left for a bit. Once the ship had reached its destination, he would simply board another one, following his instincts as to which ship to get a ride from. He let the Force be his guide on his journey.

Then again things don't always go according to plan. Reiden's first stop on his voyage was back to the planet Nar Shaddaa, where he had spent time prior to joining the Brotherhood. Upon arriving, he quickly tracked down his old boss Zukalo and worked as a debt collector for him once again. However, he grew restless. He could never figure out why he had been drawn to the planet, despite meditating on the topic regularly. So he stayed there for a little over two months, before deciding to pack up and leave again.

His next stop took him to Kashyyyk. He had also been there before joining the Brotherhood. His original master Kadain had taken him there to teach him how to survive in the wild. The Gray Jedi from the Brotherhood also tried to teach him the importance of balance. Given the turmoil raging within him, Reiden easily understood why the Force had brought him there. He

spent a month in the wilderness, keeping to himself and avoiding any contact with the native Wookiees. Reiden would spend his time meditating, trying to find that ever-elusive balance that Kadain had so often stressed in their lessons together. However, he couldn't help but circle back to the same thought: his master was dead, and there was nothing he could do about it. Nothing would change that fact. Despite having three months of time to deal with this fact, it still burned fresh in Reiden's mind. So he left the planet behind him.

Reiden began to spiral down even further, the darkness within enveloping him completely. He lost track of the planets he would visit after that point. Everything soon became a blur for him. Never staying in one place for long; perhaps a few weeks and then take his leave to find the next destination. He would get into fights that he would start, for no particular reason. He just felt like it. He wanted to feel something, anything, other than the pain of loss and the anger that accompanied it.

He no longer followed the pull of the Force. He felt it, knew that it was there. But he ignored it, instead choosing to follow his own whim, wherever it may lead him. He took on various bounty hunting jobs to finance his living and traveling. Reiden would take on a job and complete it as quickly as possible. In the past he may have tried this in an attempt to build up a reputation for himself, but not this time. This time, however, he just didn't care; it was only a job and a payout.

His choice of fighting others continued. He's frequently find himself at a bar, wherever that may be, and picking fights with random strangers. Sometimes all it took to set him off was a simple bump into him. Even if it was an accident, Reiden didn't care. In the past, he would have shrugged it off. But now, after giving in to his more base instincts and desires, he would spin the person around and confront them. It wasn't uncommon for Reiden to throw the first punch either. Be it a single opponent or a group of people didn't matter to him. He was an equal opportunity fighter. He was confident in his own abilities, even without the aid of the Force. But there were some times when he simply bit off more than he could chew, and he would be beaten.

It was after one such encounter that Reiden finally decided that it was time to stop letting his rage rule him. He cleaned up his act enough to hold down a somewhat steady string of jobs. However, Reiden still felt like he was at the nadir of the current arc of his life. The anger was still there, but held in check, for the most part. The emotional wound still felt raw. He struck out into the galaxy once more.

Managing to seize some semblance of control over his life, Reiden no longer had everything blur together. He found himself landing in a spaceport on Coruscant. After taking on some jobs and always winding up back there, he decided to make the city planet his new home for the time being. The cities offered enough entertainment and opportunities to satisfy his needs, and having a consistent place to return after work concluded helped him to find his center at long last. Reiden didn't feel like he was clawing his way back from the black abyss he had been wallowing in quite yet, but at least now he felt like the spiral had come to a stop.