

A sole hunter

Augur Xantros

11518

35 ABY, Faron, Nancora

It was a tense battle. The forces of Dark Jedi Brotherhood Clans and the Iron Legion were fighting the Collective on numerous fronts on Nancora. Clan Scholae Palatinae attacked city of Faron. The siege of the city was long and arduous, but Xantros did not pay attention to blaster shots, explosions and shouting troopers. His target was present in a different district of the city, fighting with troopers of the Iron Legion. Kerwin Drake, a Devaronian mercenary, who was an elite soldier of the Collective, posed a significant threat to the forces of both the Iron Legion and the Imperial Clan. He had to be eliminated as soon as it was only possible and Elincia Rei, the Consul of Clan Scholae Palatinae, had ordered the Duros to assassinate the mercenary amid the chaos of the battle.

After studying dossier of Kerwin Drake, the Augur knew one thing. Despite being strong and quick himself, he was no match to the Devaronian in those fields. He had to surprise his target and strike him, when the mercenary would be not prepared to react. It was not going to be an easy task as locating his target would be the easiest part. It was quite obvious that Kerwin Drake was going to be present at the location of the most intense fighting. He was not mistaken. He moved through heavily damaged districts of the city, moving towards the south western part of it, where the most recent reports stated the heaviest battle raged.

Soon, the Duros noticed the Devaronian. Tall, muscular with the right arm replaced with a cybernetic implant. The mercenary was standing behind a barricade, preparing himself for another attack of the Iron Legion troopers. Grim determination was clearly visible on his face. Xantros realized that his target was going to fight either to his victory or to his death. Even more importantly, Kerwin Drake was not alone, surrounded by a large group of soldiers.

The Augur hid himself behind a large pile of debris that provided him a perfect place to observe the mercenary without risking that he would be spotted by his enemies too early. He took out his E-11 blaster rifle and carefully aimed at the Devaronian. He shot directly at man's head, but suddenly a thermal detonator thrown by a soldier of the Iron Legion exploded nearby. Kerwin Drake immediately fell down on the ground and looked around to see what happened. A second later a blaster shot hit the barricade. The mercenary looked back and ordered other troopers to remain at their places and to watch for the Iron Legion, while he would deal with a threat from behind.

Xantros realized that his cover was exposed. However, instead of standing there and waiting for his enemy to come, he started firing from his E-11 blaster rifle in the direction of the mercenary. His shots were close enough to force the man to find a cover for himself, significantly slowing him down. When the Devaronian got closer, the Duros hid behind the

debris and started gathering energies of the Force to conceal his presence from the eyes of his enemies. He moved just a couple of meters away, to avoid instant detection.

Half a minute later, he observed as Kerwin Drake slowly crouched out from behind the debris, looking around carefully. However, he could not see the Augur cloaked with the Force, who was standing just few meters away. Xantros slowly walked towards the mercenary, trying not to make any sound. Suddenly, the Devaronian turned around and charged ahead, forcing the Force User to jump away and dropping the camouflage due to distraction. It seemed that Drake was not just a simple brute, but an intelligent and smart soldier, who was capable of predicting actions of his enemies.

“No more pathetic tricks, Jedi,” snarled the mercenary at Xantros standing ten meters away from him. “Just you and me. No blasters, just melee weapons.”

“As you wish,” replied the Duros with a nasty grin that made his hairless, noseless and earless face look particularly terrifying, constantly drawing energies of the Force.

When the Devaronian charged again, the Augur released the Force and surround his enemy with a wall of darkness, drawing all light away from the mercenary. Drake stopped and growled, “You son of a Hutt...I will tear you apart with my bare hands.”

“You need to see me first,” replied Xantros, still focusing on maintaining the darkness around his opponent. However, he had to act quickly as he was fully aware that he would not be able to use that Force power much longer. He slowly drew out his lightsaber and activated it, dropping the wall of darkness from around his target.

The Devaronian growled again and charged towards the Duros, who waited till the last possible moment. His muscles tensed, prepared to jump up. He used the Force to jump higher than it would be possible under standard circumstances. His action surprised the mercenary, who stopped for no more than a second. However, it was a second too long.

Xantros cut Drake’s left arm off while landing back on the ground. He quickly swirled around the mercenary and cut of his right arm with another precise strike. He could see pain, shock and disbelief on the face of the mutilated Devaronian. The Duros grinned evilly to his victim and beheaded him with a gentle blow of his purple blade.

However, it was not going to take a long time for the Collective operatives to notice that their companion got killed and they would gladly kill the Augur, if they only had a chance to do that. Fortunately for Xantros, the forces of the Iron Legion decided to attack the barricade again, keeping the Collective soldiers occupied with defending themselves, instead of allowing them to fight the Force User. He immediately used the opportunity to cloak himself and to retreat from the combat zone and to return to the area, where the army of Clan Scholae Palatinae was fighting. As his mission was completed, he was much more need elsewhere.