

# Remembrance

Alethia Archenksova

#14287

Great Jedi War XII

Multi-Objective Prompt

It took a moment for her mind to resolve the throbbing into two distinct sensations. First, the alarm claxon sounding throughout the vessel; second, the pain echoing through her own head. Alethia's hands floundered about for a moment until they found what seemed to be solid floor. A wave of dizziness and subsequent nausea washed over her as she pushed herself up and back, coming to lean against the bulkhead.

She was on the *Remembrance of Seher*. She remembered that much. On the bridge? No, the corridor just outside it. She had been inside, run out to deal with something, heard shouting — the tugs. Alethia remembered the bridge crew shouting about the suicide tugs. About intensifying the forward batteries. About impact. She had been going to... to the hanger to coordinate the evacuation. Hadn't there been someone with her?

Archenksova blinked a few times, willing the fog out of her mind, and looked around. There was another Humanoid slump a meter or two away, groaning as it pushed itself up. A Pantoran, Alethia thought as the figure sat up. Female. O.E.F. naval uniform. Lieutenant... something.

"Are you hurt, dear?" Alethia voice seemed to clump up in her head, and she realized her nose was filled with blood. *Kark. I liked my nose the way it was.*

"Nothing... nothing broken, ma'am." The lieutenant looked young. Alethia wasn't sure if it was just her species, but by Human standards she looked like a girl fresh out of the academy, or at least what passed for one as far as the O.E.F. were concerned. "Are you ok, Councilor?"

"It looks worse than it is, I'm sure," Alethia managed to pull herself up to her feet and stagger over to an emergency medkit on the bulkhead. "Nothing bacta won't fix at any rate. Status report?"

"Oh! Yes, ma'am, of course." The Pantoran hauled herself over to the bridge door and keyed in an access code. The panel blurped a denial. She repeated the procedure again with no success. "It's not opening, ma'am."

*That's probably not good.* "Well then, lieutenant, first things first. Would you be so kind?" Alethia held out a bacta injection and gestured to her nose with her other hand. The girl's hand was shaking as she took the syringe, which was hardly reassuring but probably still better than what Alethia could manage herself. "A bit under the eye, if you would."

The injection was unpleasant, but only the soft tissue was damaged at that part of her face, and the natural anaesthetic properties of the bacta kicked in quickly enough.

"Much better. Thank you, lieutenant."

"What do we do, ma'am?"

Archenksova started walking briskly down the corridor. “We’ll find a control station and see exactly what shape we’re in. And then you and I are going to get off of this ship.”

Alethia had always found Mon Calamari ships to be fairly ugly from the outside, but she had to admit that the creatures knew how to wire a vessel for efficiency and ease of use. They hadn’t never made it to the turbolift bay before they found a console. Alethia jabbed her code cylinder into the machine and blew a glob of blood and mucous into a handkerchief while she waited a few seconds for the status report to come up as the lieutenant peered over her shoulder. Thankfully the bacta had repaired enough blood vessels to keep her eye from swelling u—

Whatever she had expected, this was worse. There were no readings at all from the bridge, which she’d suspected would be the case, but the engines were out entirely and there were large portions on the port side that were just gone. The bridge door had probably sealed itself shut due to a hull breach. Alethia could only hope enough remained open for them to make it to a escape pod.

“We need to get off this ship now.”

Archenksova turned to find the Pantoran’s golden eyes welling up with tears. “The... the bridge crew. They’re...”

“Yes,” Alethia said, gently placing a hand on the girl’s shoulder. “They are. Frankly I’m surprised that we’re not. What’s your name?”

“Lieutenant Alessandra Ovolio, ma’am.” She was holding it together, but just barely.

“Alessadra, look at me. We’ll have to mourn our friends later. For now, I’m going to get you out of here alive. I promise. But I need you to help me.”

Alessadra swallowed her eyes and nodded. “Yes, ma’am. Of course.”

Alethia turned back to the console and turned out the alarm claxons. It was very unlikely that anyone had managed to remain oblivious to the situation for this long. She patched her comlink into the shipboard comms system, but all she got was static. Whatever was left of the crew were left to their own devices.

“The hanger’s our best bet, and escape pods failing that. You know the ship better than I do, lieutenant. Take the lead.”

The Pantoran nodded and started off down the corridor.

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“I suppose I shouldn’t be surprised,” Alethia said as she glared at the massive door sealing off yet another decompressed section of corridor. The computer system hadn’t been able to give them a map earlier, and Archenksova certainly didn’t know the layout of the vessel well enough to mentally reconstruct them from a list of destroyed compartments. Her naval escort was clearly not much better.

Alessadra was crying when Alethia turned to look at her. *Wonderful.*

“Alessadra, focus,” the Human began. “We’re going to make it out of this. Say it with me. *We’re going to—*”

“Don’t you feel it? The hull’s vibrating.”

Alethia paused, then brushed her fingertips across the nearest bulkhead. The lieutenant was right; the entire vessel was trembling slightly, though the effect was still slight. “What is it?”

“Nancora, pulling us in. We’re just going to keep speeding up, and then we’ll break apart, and then we’ll burn—”

“Hush.” Alethia took the younger woman by the shoulders. “Where are the nearest escape pods?”

“Below us. But that corridor was blocked, remember?”

Archenksova scanned their surroundings, hunting for any possibility. “Are the interior bulkheads solid?”

“No, there’s pipes and wiring inside.” The Pantoran looked dazed, but as long as she still had the wherewithal to answer questions, they had a chance. Her golden eyes widened in shock at the *snap-hiss* of a lightsaber. “Ma’am! I didn’t know you were a Jedi.”

“I’m not, actually,” Alethia responded as she drove the plasma blade into the corridor bulkhead and started carving out an entrance. “Mar Sûl gave this to me during the fall of New Tython. Come on. It’ll be tight, but we can slip down through the inside to the bulkhead and cut our way out to the pods.”

The Human peered into the opening she’d cut, the white glow of the lightsaber throwing the network of pipes and jagged metal fixings into stark relief. “May the Force be with us.”

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“Well. I suppose it’s some consolation that some of the crew made it out.” The empty pod bays taunted the women even as they provided a rather spectacular view of Nancora below them.

The friction between the ship and the atmosphere hadn't produced a glowing corona yet, but the vibrating was growing in intensity ever more rapidly. "How far to the hanger?"

"Only a two minute walk, ma'am, assuming there's no bulkheads. We're on the right level."

"Good. We'd better run for it."

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"Hurry up!" Alessadra screamed. The *Remembrance* was quaking so violently that it had become difficult to keep standing, and Alethia's brow was soaked with sweat as she forced the lightsaber blade through the last door. The ship had lost power a minute or two earlier, the only light source was the lightsaber, they were tilting to starboard at a forty-five degree angle, the temperature was soaring, but if they could only get through this door they'd be free.

Alethia grunted with the effort as she slammed her shoulder into the door, knocking the smoking metal circle free and revealing the hanger.

The empty hanger.

"No..." she whispered.

"Over there!" Alessadra pointed off to the starboard edge, where a single X-wing had scraped its way across the deck towards the empty hanger bay doors. The nose was sticking out, the rushing winds burning the point off of it, but one pair of wings had been wedged into the corner and held the starfighter in place.

The single-seater starfighter.

"Take it!" the Pantoran shouted, shoving Alethia through the hole in the doorway so forcefully that the Human woman nearly fell on her face.

"Are you sure?"

"The Lotus *needs* you!"

Did it? Was Alethia's life really worth more than a common lieutenant's? In the old days, in the Empire, it wouldn't have even occurred to her to question it. But she was fighting for something different now, something better; did the old rules still apply?

"**GO!**" Alessadra screamed, not even bothering to suppress all the emotions she'd been trying to bury since she had come to outside the bridge. Since she had realized that she was going to die on the *Remembrance*.

Alethia nodded, her own eyes welling up with tears. The girl was right. There was no time to debate it, no time to coax her into taking the X-wing for herself even if that were the right choice. No time—

There was a shudder, no, something much more massive than that. Alethia didn't had a word for it, but even as she tumbled to the deck she knew what it meant: part of the ship, a *big* part of the ship, had broken off. And when she heard the garish screech of durasteel on durasteel, she knew what that meant as well.

She raised her eyes up just in time to see the roaring, burning atmosphere rip the starfighter out of the hanger and out of her life.

She looked back at Alessadra, reached back to her and pulled her into her arms, reaching up to stroke her hair. "It's alright, dear. It's going to be alright."

Alessadra cried with abandon, her entire body wracked with each sob. "I'm sorry. I'm so sorry."

"No. Look at me," the councilor said.

The lieutenant did so, and looked into eyes without fear or grief or regret. All of that had faded away, leaving only the cold, unyielding durasteel at the core of Archenksova's being.

"You did your *duty*. And Odan-Urr will avenge us."

Alethia paused then, her lips moving to vocalize some other thought as her steel, too, melted away in the heat of reentry.

Whatever she said, the roar of the atmosphere and the final, fatal, scream of the *Remembrance of Seher* overwhelmed it.