An angry buzzing sound rang through Kenath Zoron’s ears, snapping him out of unconsciousness. As he struggled to rouse himself, he was struck by the odd sensation of his right side being pushed against something uncomfortable and a countering tugging feeling against his hip and neck.

As his eyes finally opened, he looked around confusedly – *where am I? What is going on?!*

His vision revealed a whirlwind of colours and he started to feel nauseous just from the sight. He closed his eyes again and tried to think – *what the Sithspit is happening?* As he struggled to answer that, he became dimly aware of a voice in the background, barely audible over the alarm that was blasting away.

“… can you read me? I say again, Zoron, can you read me? What went wrong? Can you recover? Zoron, can you read me? …” The voice repeated some variant of that message. Zoron cracked his eyes again and caught a quick glimpse of the rest of his surroundings – a cockpit!

With that, memories flooded back in – he was on a shake-down flight for a next-generation laser cannon installation on one of the Odanite Expeditionary Force’s X-wings. Armed with that knowledge, he now understood the significance of the various sensations he was experiencing – he was in a spin, being thrown against the side of the cockpit with the harness barely holding him in place.

His training kicked in instantly and his hands started moving against the centripetal forces with difficulty. He focused his mind and drew on the Force to help “pull” the controls to his hands. Since they were fixed in place, his hands instead leapt towards them – this was a handy trick he’d learned from his old squadron-mate, Sarin. He simultaneously shut down the power to his engines and began hauling on the control stick to counter-act the spin, but something felt very wrong. The control stick was completely non-responsive and he could still feel the thrum in the seat that told him the engines (or at least one of them) was still at full throttle.

With that, he knew he couldn’t recover from the spin and knew he had to get out of the doomed fighter as quickly as possible. He flipped the comm transmit button as he brought his arms into his chest to protect them from the ejection. The voice from the other end was instantly cut-off as Zoron’s comm channel opened for broadcast. “Knight 1, mayday! Mayday! Mayday! Bailing out!” With that, he reached out with the Force and pulled hard on the ejection release.

With a bone-rattling *WHUMP* sound, the canopy exploded off his craft and he was launched out into the open air. Instantly he felt the repulsorlifts in his pilot chair kick in and stabilize him in conjunction with a small parachute. He stared down at the test X-wing as it tumbled downwards and saw that the entire upper-right S-foil was missing with a massive tear in the side of the fuselage where that S-foil should have been. In addition to that, he saw that the lower S-foil was hanging off it’s engine at the wrong angle and that engine was blasting out full thrust.

As he watched, the X-wing impacted on the ground and an explosion shook him as the power core detonated. He continued drifting down to the ground, missing the remnants of the destroyed X-wing by a few hundred feet. He confirmed that his locator beacon was active and settled down to wait for the recovery teams to arrive.

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“…So, it looks like the cannons mis-fired and that over-loaded their capacitors. The breaker on the left side of the craft held properly and shut them down before anything could go wrong, but the right side failed spectacularly. The upper cannon exploded and the damage sheared that S-foil cleanly off of the ship and damaged the remaining engine so that it jammed open. The whole flight characteristics of the entire fighter were so badly mangled that I doubt even Fel himself could have saved it – you did a hell of a job to get out alive.” The Sullustan engineer standing in front of Zoron finished explaining.

“Frankly, it’s the training – you don’t forget that when you get it drilled into you nearly daily for twenty or so years of combat missions.” Zoron replied. “I’m frankly disappointed this design didn’t work out – we worked for months trying to increase the power output.”

The engineering shifted slightly and looked down for a moment before continuing. “You know, we really think we’ve got that error sorted out – when do you think you could give it another try? We really could…”

His voice trailed off as he saw Zoron’s eyebrows twitch.

“Oh!” he stammered. “Maybe another pilot, perhaps?”

“I think that’d be wise – I’ll stick to the design room this time.”