

Sanguinius Entar/Syntari Bastiayn  
#10407/#14353

### The Way, Your Way, and Mine

*The insistent beeping of his commlink woke Sanguinius from slumber. Half awake, the Entar fumbled for the blasted thing and pressed a button, silencing the shrill beep of the incoming communication.*

*“Sanguinius Tsucyra, this is Syntari Bastiayn.”*

*Sang grumbled something unintelligible before saying aloud, “It’s too early to be that nice, Syn, I thought you saved such pleasantries for daytime.”*

*Static answered him, then he heard her words whispered so softly he could barely hear.*

*“--some time to confirm...en route to you now--”*

*“Syn, speak up--”*

*“No time! Whatever you’re doing stop it and keep quiet! Remember that attempt on your life I told you was coming?”*

*His throat tightened. “I remember.”*

*“It’s happening **now**! I’m coming to your location. You’re sick of the war and so am I, you’re just going to have to trust me.”*

*The line went dead. Sanguinius now faced a choice, and it would not be an easy one.*

*“Force forgive me,” he whispered.*

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Time had not been kind to the man standing there, facing the business end of a blaster. The barrel wavered slightly, an obtrusive weapon shoved in the Jedi’s face. Sanguinius smiled at the owner, exhibiting outward calm, while his mind whirred, trying to come up with a plan.

The Entar had spent a while within Naga Sadow now, working his way from the position of Quaestor to the lofty heights of the Consulship. That title held significance to people who didn’t know better. They believed that Consuls were all powerful. Sanguinius had once believed that himself when he was a younger and dumber man. He had come to discover that the opposite was true. Becoming Consul didn’t mean instant respect or power. Instead, it had led to sleepless nights, stressful days and the need to become a political animal. More than once, the Augur had stared in the mirror to see a stranger looking back at him.

Sanguinius shifted his weight slightly, his stance being uncomfortable. The movement was enough to illicit a response from the would-be assassin before him. "Your death will bring freedom to those you have enslaved and kept from their potential, lickspittle!" spat the hooded stranger.

Laughter met that statement, amusement from the words filled him. Enslavement? Keeping them from their potential? That was what they called his diktats? Exasperatedly, Sanguinius chose to act. He nodded, seemingly in agreement. "If you say so, friend." The old trope that time seemed to slow when facing death didn't hold true. No, death was an often messy affair that scarred people. The assassin's finger tightened, pulling the trigger.

A blur of movement came in from the right flank, a bright flash of amethyst erupted, carving through flesh and bone. The blaster bolt screamed out, but smashed into the ground before the Jedi, as the blaster and the hand holding it fell to the ground.

With a scream of pain and surprise, the assassin reacted, grabbing the end of his arm with his other hand. His face was scrunched up as the pain and surprise turned into rage. Turning to face the newcomer who had just helped him become an amputee, the erstwhile assassin reacted poorly. He charged at her, powered by adrenaline and training.

Syntari chuckled wryly to herself as the assassin tried to get handsy with her. Unfortunately, he now only had one hand, the fact of which, was what made her chuckle. The amethyst blade moved again, her strokes were one of a trained warrior. Emotion was not needed for this death, as the blade cut through the assassin and tore the life from him.

Sanguinius had bent down to retrieve the hand lying on the floor. The tissue sample and fingerprints would come in handy in investigating who had sent the assassin, though the Entar had his assumptions already, thanks to the presence of the Knight. She had come to him earlier on in his journey, warning him of the attempt on his life.

Of course, she had only warned him about the first one, as the Augur swore softly, registering that the pair were surrounded. The Consul looked around him, seeing that they were wearing their barely concealed rage on their faces. Sanguinius quickly realised why they were so angry and dropped the hand.

Raising his own in contrition, the Anaxsi attempted to diffuse the situation. "Why hello there," he quipped. "I do apologise for my friend here, but she didn't seem interested in what this gentleman was selling."

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Syntari deactivated her lightsaber, fading into the backdrop of silence that fell in the wake of a man's death. It was nothing to an Umbaran to blend into darkness, and perhaps even more so to the Knight who had spent so long trapped in its embrace. Not a leaf or blade of grass stirred as she crept into their enemy's blind spots.

"I do apologize for my friend here," Sanguinius was saying. Syntari smirked. Imagine, someone like Sanguinius Entar apologizing for *her*!

Nightfall on the forest world of Sepros were all-encompassing in a way that most city dwellers would find frightening. Having Umbaran blood meant she had a rapport with the darkness that others would not possess. It was an advantage they needed, and desperately.

Syntari knelt where she stood and settled her gaze on the nearest black-robed man. With only her willing to draw blood, it was one Dark Jedi Knight against five men. She knew that anything she did would not only be judged, but required bloodshed of the kind that her Consul would not approve of.

Syntari did not have a history of pleasing those in command.

“...she didn’t seem interested in what this gentleman was selling.”

The Sadowan reached out to the Force and pressed her consciousness against her chosen target. Delving into his mind took time, precious seconds she couldn’t afford and nearly all her concentration. Driven by a fury that only death could quell, she overpowered her enemy and found herself mouthing a command.

“*See what I see,*” she whispered. The Force shivered in response and she relished the unnatural stillness in his stance as paralysis stole over his body. She held her control over him for only a moment, murmuring to him of fears born of his own insecurity and uncertainty.

With an inhuman screech the man jerked to life and fired desperately at the phantoms triggered by Syntari’s dive into his mind. It took thankfully little effort on her part. What he saw was of his own creation, and she herself merely suggested to his shattered brain what to see and how to react. To her inflated ego, it was perfection.

A lucky shot took down a black-clothed figure before her Consul’s very eyes. She could have laughed at the way his face paled. Perfection always came with a price.

Another shot and a tear jerking scream rent the night as another body hit the ground. With only her puppet and one other assailant still standing, Syntari rallied her willpower and summoned the Force once again. Fear, anger, and pleasure surged in her heart as she licked bloodthirsty lips.

“*Go to the light,*” she said. The man screamed as he fell to his knees, blaster aimed straight at his face. “*It’s the only way,*” she insisted.

The resulting blaster fire drowned out her laughter. Sanguinius raised his voice again but she couldn’t make out the words. This was what it meant to be alive. This is what it meant to triumph. This was victory.

“Enough,” Sanguinius shouted. His shock at the callous bloodthirst of the Knight swiftly overcome by the veteran. He was no stranger to death, yet still the Entar lamented each loss. Life was precious, a gift from the Force. The Augur knew that Bastiayn didn’t hear him, for he could hear her laughter as her puppet turned on himself and the weapon discharges ceased. One erstwhile assassin remained, surrounded by his now deceased peers.

Syntari dematerialized from the shadows and approached the man, casually dropping one hand on the hilt of her lightsaber. It was all too easy to read his fear in the way his sweaty fingers struggled to keep the blaster level.

"Drop it," she said. He obeyed. She didn't even need to use the Force.

"Syn--"

"Save it, Entar," Syntari said. "They deserved it." Her Consul dared to cross the distance between them and stood his ground in front of their now weaponless prisoner.

"That was uncalled for," he said in a low voice. His eyes bored into hers as if he intended to glare the meaning of his words into her brain. "I cannot condone such violence. As for him--"

Syntari put her hands on her hips and drew up to her full height. "You would scold me for having the guts to save your life? If you had a better plan you should have acted on it."

"You didn't give me the chance! You cut off that man's hand before I could finish my sentence!"

Syntari's gaze sharpened. "You're sounding an awful lot like a Jedi," she said quietly. She moved around him and her prisoner fell to his knees as he saw that Sanguinius would be of no help. "We need to find out how they knew we were here," she said, staring down at the assassin. She directed her words at her Consul, deliberately leaving out any requests for his permission.

"I-I'll tell you everything! Everything!" The words tumbled from the prisoner's mouth like waste from a bantha. "Everything! Please, I-I'm b-begging you! Ple--"

Syntari crouched down and caressed his face with one spider-like hand. At her touch the man cringed backwards, falling onto the ground with a *thud*. "Tell me," she said softly. She savored the flood of emotions flavoring his skin, fueling herself on his disgust and fear. The Force collected slowly at her fingertips as she prepared to unleash a spark of lightning into his body. For encouragement, of course.

"I-I don't know who it was! W-we picked up a c-contract that's all!"

"You can do better than that," she said. Behind her she heard Sang sigh.

"Syn--"

"Go on," she said, ignoring Sang.

"i s-swear I'm telling the truth!"

"Syn--"

"You're lying," she said. "Tell me the truth." The smell of ozone tinged the air.

"I--"

"Knight Bastiayn!"

“WHAT?!” Rage spiraled to her fingertips and Syntari released a barrage of Force lightning directly into the man’s skull. He dropped dead at her feet, the stump of his neck smoldering in the darkness.

Silence.

Syntari whirled on her Consul, yanking her lightsaber from her belt as she did so. “He was about to tell me everything! What were you thinking?!” She hissed.

“What was *I* thinking? What were *you* thinking? This...you...you massacred them!” Sang’s anger was so sudden it manifested as bewilderment. “They were human beings with *lives* and *families*! This was just a-a contract!”

“Are you defending *them* against *me*, Entar? I saved your life, not once but twice! If I had stayed silent you would be dead, Sang! Dead!”

“I wanted to seek peace from the war, find somewhere to take those who needed an escape! I didn't intend to be part of a massacre!”

“I did what needed to be done,” Syn gesticulated to the bodies around them. “Your enemies were just waiting to bring you down and you talk to me about doing the right thing?”

Sanguinius shook his head in disagreement. “Syn...”

“Maybe they're right, Sang. Did you ever think about that?”

Silence met her question as the Entar sullenly stared back at her defiant glare.

“I think about that everyday...”

“You don't act like it,” she snapped. Syn replaced her lightsaber and turned away. “Let's go. You clearly aren't safe here.”

With no further words between them they headed back towards their ship. The war loomed over their heads like the encroaching dawn, heralding the end of a union as brief as it was bloodstained.

End