

Nothing Matters on Nancora

A Great Jedi War XII Fiction

by Alaris Jinn

The pain was excruciating. He must have slammed his head into the durasteel hull of the small shuttle. He was positive that he was concussed. A groan left his lips as consciousness slipped back in and reality became present for him once again. He tried to remember what brought him to this moment in time, but the memories were fleeting, like a fading dream that was disappearing into oblivion.

He looked down at his hands and marvelled at their colour. *Blue*. He remembered that he was a Twi'lek. His lekku were aching, and he wondered whether it had been his head that had smashed on the durasteel or it had been his lekku. He was no medical expert, but he had a sense that damage to his lekku must have something to do with this sudden memory loss. He had heard of such circumstances in the past.

"We have terrible physiology." He remarked aloud to nobody. The mild echo bounced off the durasteel rang in his ears and his head ached. He recognized his own accent as fairly posh, mostly likely a core world. He was impressed that he remembered so much basic knowledge about the galaxy, but remembering nothing about himself frustrated him.

He collapsed into the most comfortable position he could and closed his eyes. He was exhausted; being knocked unconscious wasn't exactly a restful sleep. The rest he so craved came slowly, but eventually he was wrapped in its warm embrace.

He awoke again as the planet's star shone through the viewport upon the Twi'lek's eyes. He blinked and rubbed the sleep from his eyes. His headache wasn't gone, but it certainly had waned. Thirst grabbed at his throat and he pulled himself toward the survival pack near the back of the shuttle.

He emptied it all to take inventory. He was more than a little surprised to find a lightsaber and slightly more surprised to realize that he knew its operation quite aptly. A green hue took over the chamber. *Jedi use green lightsabers*. He must be a Jedi, but why in heavens would he be here? He was getting some answers, but every single one prompted more questions.

He climbed up and finally out of the shuttle and stood on top of it. The heat of the sun bore down on him. He realized quickly that he'd need to find a way to deal with the dust and the sun and he settled on waiting until dusk. Wind was less likely during the evening, just based on how pressure systems were supposed to work, and he certainly didn't want risk his concussion flaring up from too much sun piercing his eyes.

He slipped back inside the shuttle. He sat in the empty co-pilot's seat and put his feet up. He glanced over at the dead shuttle pilot, still strapped in, and took a bite out of one of the ration bars. He made a face as he chewed through the tough military ration. "How do you military types eat this garbage?" he asked the not-yet-rotting corpse. He recognized the uniform, but he wasn't sure how.

The chair, though military, was still comfortable enough for someone to be able to sit in it for long hyperspace flights without experiencing pain. The Twi'lek tried to relax as much as he could, but he couldn't help the nagging feeling in the back of his head: the feeling of uncertainty.

Uncertainty frightened him. He started to wonder if he was an extremely organized and meticulous planner. The confusion clawed at him, and the longer he sat in one spot, the worse it became. He dared not brave the elements outside again; once had been just about enough for him thus far. He fiddled with some controls, but power had been completely knocked out. Mostly likely repairable, but the Twi'lek had a feeling that he wouldn't have any clue what to do with it.

"I have people for that," he thought aloud. Was he an important Jedi? He certainly could feel the Force when he concentrated. It felt warm *and* cold, like a blast of frigid blizzard wind on his back while his toes were heated to impossible temperatures, and yet it felt familiar and comfortable. It wasn't the ever flowing current that he internally associated with the light side of the Force.

Am I Sith?

The rest of the day passed uneventfully. The Twi'lek faded in and out of sleep. He finally pulled himself upright at the crepuscule and gathered his belongings in a shoulder bag. He climbed out of the tiny shuttle and back on top to survey the surrounding landscape now that the sun was in a position that still provided some light but didn't scorch the Twi'lek's very eyes.

Things looked bleak. The star had destroyed the planet. He wasn't sure how the balance of gases was stable enough to breath, but the Twi'lek wasn't about to look a gift bantha in the mouth. Off in the distance he saw a flash of light. He stared intently at it and it began to draw closer.

His eyes lit up and he scrambled into his bag for the flare gun. He lifted it above his head with the intention of firing it into the air, but stopped. He knew nothing about who he was, where he was, and who might be looking for him. As much as he wanted to be found, he wanted even more to survive and he had no clue who was approaching.

He looked around his immediate surroundings. There was another small ship nearby, also obliterated. He leapt down from his perch. The Twi'lek rolled in the dust, letting it coat his

clothes and skin, then walked backward toward the other wreckage, trying to give the impression that he had headed the other direction. He didn't know who was coming his way and there was a chance that those looking into the crash were doing so for nefarious purposes. He climbed up the shuttle and lay prone on top, hoping the dust would be enough to keep him relatively concealed in the twilight.

The approaching speeder eventually slowed and came to a stop. Three small figures stepped out from it. They moved quickly to investigate the shuttle and the Twi'lek swore internally. If his plan had been to make them think the pilot had made those footprints and then died, he would have had to made the poor corpse's clothes a little dustier than not at all.

Indeed, very quickly they were clearly not fooled and they followed the long trail of backward tracks toward the Twi'lek's growingly conspicuous hiding spot. The Twi'lek had to make a decision and quickly. He settled on probably the best way to survive: conversation.

He stood up from the top of the shuttle and waved. He was greeted by two drawn bows aimed at his now less achy skull.

"Whoa, whoa!" he called out at them. "Don't shoot now."

They ignored his request and two bolts flung themselves at where the Twi'lek had just been standing. The Force had given him enough warning to sidestep them and in one move ignited his lightsaber.

"I just want to ask you some questions!" He focused his mind forward and attempted to touch the brain of the one who did not shoot.

The two with their bows out looked at the third who nodded and spoke from behind a completely wrapped face. Based on size, the Twi'lek was unsurprised to hear a female voice. "You get three questions before we decide what to do with you."

The Twi'lek nodded and extinguished his blade, as something of peace offering. "Thank you." He stayed on his perch. He had a basic understanding of having this tactical advantage and wanted to maintain it in case he required it again. "Where am I?"

All three laughed, their voices confirming that all three were women. "You're telling me you have no idea where your Brotherhood sent you?"

The Twi'lek's eyes widened. *Brotherhood*. It hadn't answered his question and he was unsure of the context, but he got another one out of the way. Maybe he could manage to turn one question into two answers. "The crash messed with my skull a touch, and I'm missing out on some key information."

The one who seemed to be in charge paused a moment which may have been to consider the validity of this comment and spoke again, which said that she was at least humouring him. "Nancora. You're in the badlands of Nancora."

The Twi'lek smiled, the name of the planet was familiar and he recognized that it had recent importance. Given their hostility, they must be an enemy of the Brotherhood of which the Twi'lek must be a member of, and their homebase must be Nancora.

He now decided to play a game with himself to see how many answers he could get with only two questions remaining. "Why would the Brotherhood have sent me here?"

"We attacked you."

Dammit. The Twi'lek thought on his toes. "Yes, I remember avoiding your arrows, but that doesn't answer my question."

"I didn't mean us personally. I meant the Collective attacked the Iron Throne and the Clans."

The Twi'lek nodded, trying not to show his satisfaction. Instead, he frowned and bit his lip. *Iron Throne. Clans. Collective. Brotherhood. Nancora. What am I missing?*

"Then, the Iron Throne must have sent me to Nancora, which is your seat of power." The Twi'lek was very careful with his words.

"Is that a question?"

The Twi'lek smiled. She was catching on. The Twi'lek shook his head. "It is not. Just thinking out loud."

The apparent leader crossed her arms over her chest and sighed audibly. "Get to your last question so that we can get to killing you."

The Twi'lek smiled. "Of course, of course." He thought for a moment then nodded. "What benefit do you get in killing me?"

The answer was instant: "The pleasure."

The Twi'lek's lekku twitched. "What a coincidence."

He leapt into action before bows could come to bear. Two arrows flung themselves harmlessly by the Twi'lek and it only took three simple slashes to end any more action from the three women. He looked at the speeder and sprinted for it, hopeful to get as far from there as possible before any more of these archer women arrived.

He slid into the driver seat and swore. He had a basic understanding of how this work, but he couldn't pilot a karking thing. He closed the door to be protected by the elements and placed both his hands on the controls before realizing his incredible error.

His suspicions were confirmed when he heard the distinct sound of a weapon cocking. The barrel of a handheld gun was placed on the back of his skull. He didn't dare turn to see who was holding the weapon, but he was unsurprised to hear another female voice, this one more confident and a touch cocky.

"And you thought you were so smart."

The Twi'lek nodded. "You were listening?"

"Yes, and now I'm done listening."

The Twi'lek opened his mouth to speak again but no words escaped. Instead the transparisteel windshield were suddenly covered in brain matter and skull fragments.

Kendra Icasta let out an audible sigh. "I wonder who that one was?" She shook the thought away and climbed out to start cleaning up her mess. "It doesn't matter."