

[GJW XII Phase II] Fiction - Survival

Ethan Martes

Nancora

The Badlands

Small sparks flew from the escape pod before the door to it jettisons off and Ethan emerged from it. He popped his back as he stood straight up, "Oh man! That frickin' hurt!" He looked to his left, seeing nothing but the wastes of the Badlands, then to his right as saw the exact same. "Spectacular."

Ethan pulled his comm to his mouth and spoke into it, "This is Ethan Martes of Satele Shan, Odan-Urr. Anyone there?" A garbled mess is all that he received, either his comm was broken or being jammed. "Fantastic... Just a wonderful day." He scowled at the comm before putting it away. He reached into the pod and grabbed the survival pack that was standard to all pods. "Ugh rations... always taste like cardboard. Like it would kill them to put one small bottle of wine or something in these things."

He grabbed the working datapad and the flare gun, holding the gun under his arm while he activated the pad. "Alright, let's see... No... No communications can go through this either." Ethan began to think for a moment, what his actions needed to be. No way he could survive for too long out in the Badlands, and a smart enemy would send a small group of units to clear out any escape pods that landed. He tapped a few more commands on the datapad, seeing that a landing zone for Bravo Team was a good distance away for one of the pushes on the capital. "Well, better than nothing."

Ethan put the datapad and flare gun away before making his way towards the LZ for Bravo. He pulled his cloak over his mouth to act as some kind of protection from the harsh winds of the Badlands. He walked for what felt like hours, careful not to push himself too hard as he was unsure if he'd even reach the LZ in time if he ran as fast as possible.

The sun was beginning to set when he finally stopped, a tingling sensation running down his spine that had warned him of danger in the past. His hand slowly reached for his blaster when a voice called out from behind, "Halt! Hands in the air."

Ethan's fingers had just grazed the hilt of his blaster before slowly retracting and raising above his head, he slowly turned around to face two assailants. He recognized them immediately from the reports, a pair of Technocrat Huntresses. "Well hello ladies, I seem to be a bit lost. Care to help me?"

"You are coming with us." They both had their energy bows out and pointed at the Jedi. "Resist, and we will make it very painful for you."

He clapped his hands together, "Well that is a shame, cause I was just thinking of how I'm going to be late for this one dinner date I have coming up. I surrender." He wore that tried and true disarming smile, noting the growing annoyance on their faces. One lowered her bow to retrieve stun cuffs. Ethan eyes locked with the one still pointing the energy bow at him and the Force emanated from him toward them as one hand made a slow light gesture, "Perhaps you'd like to drop your weapon so we can drink?" The Huntress began to lower their weapon, their form untensing as their weapon fell to the ground.

"What do are you babbling about?" The other Huntress growled before her eyes widened as she reached back to her weapon, "Force User!" But that was all she was able to say as Ethan let out a wave of Force that knocked the two of them to the ground.

The two tried to right themselves as they turned to Ethan in rage, but it was too late as he had out Kritim and fired a blast into each of them. The two Huntresses were on the ground now, the life faded from them. Ethan put two more energy bolts into both of them to make sure they were dead before he scrounged through their gear, unfortunately not finding anything of use.

"Oh come on..." He sighed and finally reached into his cloak to produce the canteen of water to drink some of. "Couldn't even ambush me with something I could use." He grumbled in annoyance before taking a swig of water and returning the canteen to the folds of his cloak. He couldn't stay there much longer, more of these Huntresses were likely out there looking for him and anyone else who might have landed. He started walking again, this time with a bit more haste to this step.

He dared a glance up to the sky as the sun set, seeing the outlines of starships still battling high above him. An all out war was happening just over his head, and here he was powerless in the Badlands. The blockade was broken through, but it was still anyone's game. He walked for another hour before coming upon a small cave that he could use for shelter.

Ethan staggered inside and found a comfortable spot to sit. He crossed his legs and closed his eyes, meditating and opening his mind to the Force. There wasn't much else for him to do, but this was something that he could to rest and recuperate some of his strength without making himself completely vulnerable.

His breath and heart rate calmed, his mind clearing as he used the Force to reach out and sense all around him. He stretched this as far as he could, until he could faintly sense something. One, two, three, four more Huntresses. They were moving as a group, looking for Ethan.

"Kark." Ethan muttered under his breath. His eyes slowly opened as he began to try and formulate a plan. The Huntresses were almost on top of him, and all he had was his standard gear. He couldn't see in the dark and there wasn't much for light sources around here.

He then grinned as an idea formed into his head. He removed his cloak and levitated it with the Force, he held Marri in one hand and used it as his focus to keep it in place before him, making it look like it was standing closer to the entrance of the cave. The other hand grabbed Kritim and he kept both guns aimed forward, and then he waited. He got into a squatting position, ready to pounce out of the way.

Faintly he could hear shuffling as feet came closer, until he finally two streaks of plasma rip through the cloak and it falls to the ground. Two of the Huntresses ran over quickly to investigate their target, only for Ethan to open fire with both guns and fill the immediate area with a mixture of blaster fire and slug rounds.

Marri clicked empty and Ethan quickly placed it back into his hip holster before pressing himself to the side of the cave, the other two Huntress' returning fire into the cave. There was silence for a moment before Ethan called out, "You can always walk away, you know."

"We do not fail our missions. You are coming with us, one way or another." A voice called back.

Ethan reached to the back of his belt and produced a concussion grenade. "Now, now. Surely we can get some drinks and a nice hot bath together and just relax instead. We could even take turns scrubbing each other down."

"After you have killed four of us, do you really think we would give you such pleasures?"

"Not really, but you Collective karks tried to kill me first, so I think this puts us just about fair." He kept his eyes on the entrance, just barely making out one form. "Listen, you both put down your weapons and let me go, and we'll call it even."

"No chance. We have our orders and we will fulfill them."

Ethan pressed the button to activate the concussion grenade and fast balled it at the form, watching it dodge out of the way. It raised the energy bow to fire, but then the grenade went off and sent them flying against the wall with a sickening thud.

"Now, it's one on one. Still care to dance?" Ethan called out, the ringing in his ears still deafening him some. There was no answer, or at least none that he could hear. He held out his blaster as he moved, trying to locate the last Huntress.

He moved with quiet, calculated steps. His eyes scanning around carefully, looking for any sign of movement in the darkness. He slowly exited the cave, looking all around for the the last enemy. The tingling sensation ran up his spine just before a form dropped onto him and forced him to the ground.

The Huntress brandished her stun baton and struck Ethan with one hard hit to the shoulder before he rolled her off and sent a wave of Force out and throwing her off of him. "Kark that hurt!" He got into a sitting position as she picked herself off the ground, only for Ethan to blast her before she could fully recover. "No means no lady."

He pulled himself from the ground and rubbed his shoulder, the pain in it telling him that it was dislocated. He grabbed his arm and focused the Force through it as he walked over to the cave wall. He gritted his teeth before slamming his shoulder into the wall of the cave and yanking down on his arm as hard as he could, knocking his shoulder back into place with a howl of pain.

Ethan slid down the wall slowly, trying to regain himself as well doing his best not to throw up from the pain. "Oh damn Seraphol, you were right... That works but holy kark does it hurt." He walked over to his cloak, cradling his left arm. He lifted his tattered cloak up and inspected the pockets, only to see that he forgot his datapad in it and it was now a crumpled mess of circuits. "Well that is just spectacular."

Ethan began to walk again, in the distance he could see the lights of a ship landing. He took out the flare gun and fired it into the air as he walked towards it. Moments later he could see speeders coming for him from the ship. He made it to the LZ.