

# The Spark That Lit the Fire

A Submission to the Competition:  
[Voice Workshop] Fiction: Catalyst



Written by  
Reiden Karr (10106)

## **23 ABY**

### **Nal Hutta**

Reiden stepped out of the bright daylight outside and into the bar that he had decided to visit. He pulled back his cowl and glanced around the interior. If he had seen one dive bar, he had seen them all. With slight variations, they were mostly consistent. A wall holding shelves of various types of alcohol lined one side, with a long bar across from it, with stools upon which patrons could perch themselves. Lining the perimeter were booths for those that wanted a more private location. Small tables sat between the bar area and the booths, offering additional seating.

The establishment was bustling with activity, and Reiden felt a surge of reassurance that he had picked the right spot. He noticed an empty seat at the bar and made his way over before sitting down. Behind the bar was a rotund Besalisk and Reiden signaled that he wanted a drink. The man glanced his way and nodded, ambling over.

"Haven't seen you before. Welcome to the Tippy Dragonsnake, I guess. What'll it be, pal?" he asked.

"Glass of Corellian rum, if you've got any," Reiden responded.

The Besalisk briefly looked him over before giving a grunt and getting the drink. Reiden thanked him and slid credits over the bar top. Given his young age, Reiden was a bit surprised that he was able to order anything. Then again, people had always told him that he looked older than he was, and his time living on the streets of Corellia after his parents were killed two years ago could have added to that. On the other hand, Nal Hutta was controlled by the Hutts and there were criminal types aplenty milling about; it wouldn't surprise him if such trivialities passed by unnoticed when compared to what could happen at any given time. As long as people were kept happy, there was no need to worry about such things, and drinking was a part of that, it seemed.

Reiden studied the amber colored liquor in the glass before bringing it to his lips and sampling its contents. It burned a slight trail of fire down his throat and the taste reminded him of home. Back before he had decided to leave home and travel the galaxy, he had been given a few drinks, so he wasn't unfamiliar with alcohol, not that he had ever made a habit of it. But when your crime boss employer offers you a drink, it's best to accept it rather than turn it down.

Shaking his head to clear away the old memories, Reiden knew it was time to get down to the business at hand. He had made his way to the planet in hopes of gaining more information. What he sought were answers to his past. The Corellian always had a knack for knowing when something was going to happen beforehand, and his reflexes seemed markedly faster than most his age, and even some people that were older. However, he could never quite put his finger on exactly why that was. That was where the decision to travel and search for any knowledge on the matter came in.

Since his initial departure from Corellia, the information Reiden had found was limited. The most progress he had made was drawing a possible connection between what he could do and something called the Force. It was a mystical thing that most seemed to dismiss as simply legend. But there were others, typically the older people, that claimed it was real, that there was once a group of people that wielded control over the Force and could call upon it at will – a group called the Jedi, and another one known as the Sith, and that the two had conflicting views as to what to do with their powers. This was different from what Reiden had experienced himself, having mostly done things seemingly on instinct or without meaning to. Still, this scarce information intrigued him. He had learned that the Jedi were supposedly more like guardians, using their abilities to help others, and that they dealt with criminals at times.

With that in mind, he had made his way to Nal Hutta and then this bar. He had hoped to listen in on the conversations around him, maybe pick up on something useful. In his travels, Reiden had heard whispers about the possibility of some shadowy organization known as the Brotherhood. Rumors held that it was full of modern day Force users, but he had never been able to find anything concrete regarding this claim, or even of the organization's very existence. However, the thought that there might be others like him, people that could potentially teach him had spurred him on.

Reiden turned around from the bar and leaned his back against it as he looked out at the patrons filled the establishment. Conversations buzzed among the gathered people. He took a small sip from his glass and focused his senses, trying to pick up any useful information. Something off to his right at the edges of his hearing caught his attention; he concentrated further.

"You're doing something with the Brotherhood? Are you insane?" one voice said in shock.

"What? They pay me, and credits are credits. Who cares where they come from?" a second voice replied with a laugh.

Reiden glanced over in the direction from which the voices had come. There was a booth along the wall opposite the cluster of tables and the entrance to the bar. Two aliens sat there – a Rodian and a Trandoshan. Wanting to know more, he got up, offering his seat to someone that was standing by the bar. He walked closer to where the booth was located and leaned against a grimy wooden support column situated near the booth.

"Those people are crazy dangerous," the first voice continued. It was the Rodian speaking.

"More dangerous than the people you'd find around here?" the Trandoshan questioned incredulously.

"Yes! I've heard stories about people mysteriously disappearing!"

"And I've heard the same thing about people that make deals with the usual folks from here," the reptilian man said with a laugh. "How is that any different?"

"The people that dealt with the Brotherhood came back! But here's the kicker: they had no memory of what they had been doing or where they went. Some didn't even know who they were anymore!"

Reiden had heard that Force users could do some incredible things, but never something like that. If the Force could be utilized to mess with a person's mind to that extent, what else could they do with it? He was both apprehensive and intrigued at the same time.

"That's preposterous! There's no way such a thing is possible. Are your sources even reliable?"

"Of course they are! They're the contacts I use to get all my information, and they've never steered me wrong before."

"Oh, brother. Listen, your sources are usually questionable at best; everyone knows it, too – except you, apparently." The Trandoshan laughed once more.

Reiden had heard enough. He decided that now was as good a time as any to question the pair about their discussion. Hopefully he'd be able to gain some new information.

"I don't mean to intrude, but I heard someone mention something about some Brotherhood. I've been trying to track down more details about it for a while now; what can you tell me about it?" Reiden asked, walking towards their table.

"Beat it, kid," the Trandoshan responded.

"Yeah, the grown-ups are talking," the Rodian added with a chuckle.

Reiden was used to people not giving him the time of day, as it were, but he never let that deter him from his goal. For better or worse, he was nothing if not persistent. "Look, all I want is a little bit of information. Maybe even an introduction to a contact or two. That's all, I swear."

All that met him were stern, unsympathetic gazes. Instead, he chose to try a different tactic.

"I can pay, if that's what you're interested in." He held up a small pouch of credits to emphasize his point.

Time seemed to slow for a moment and something in Reiden's mind rang out in warning. Past experience had taught him that he should listen to whatever it was that was screaming that something was wrong. Relying on his quick reflexes, he tossed the credits into his left hand before his right shot down to the holster that held his blaster pistol. He drew the weapon and pointed it from one man to the other and back again. The Rodian's hand had been reaching for his own blaster while the Trandoshan's arm was stopped short of reaching for Reiden, likely in a bid to snatch the credits away from him. Both aliens had stopped short of their actions upon seeing the blaster trained on them. The Trandoshan's mouth hung open slightly, but he quickly closed it, trying to regain his composure.

"I don't want any trouble, okay?" Reiden said plainly.

"Let's not be too hasty here, all right?" the Rodian suggested.

"Yeah," the Trandoshan began. "I'm sure we can work something out. What is it that you want to know?"

“Who is your contact within the Brotherhood? Would you be willing to introduce me? I’ve heard rumors about the organization before, but nobody could ever tell me how or where to find it, let alone confirm that it even exists.”

“I deal in weapons, see,” the Trandoshan said. “The guy I talked to wanted to make a purchase from me, a big order for blasters. I don’t know what he needed them for, but with the amount he wants, he might as well be preparing for war or something.”

“I see. Do you know where he’s based out of, or where the final destination of the weapons shipment is? Anything can help.”

The Trandoshan opened his mouth to speak but paused. His eyes went wide. But he wasn’t looking at Reiden, not really. It was like he was looking past him. Whatever it was clearly had him spooked.

“Well, are you going to say anything?”

“On second thought, you don’t wanna know, kid. Trust me on this one.”

Confused, Reiden wondered what had changed the man’s mind. Now it was the Rodian’s turn to look scared, and it even looked like he was shaking. Reiden whirled around to see what had them so nervous and afraid. He caught sight of an older Human male looking their way. Judging by his appearance, the man was possibly in his mid-sixties with graying hair parted in the middle that reached down to his shoulders and skin that wasn’t quite as firm as it used to be, wrinkles setting in on his forehead in particular.

The man stood from his seat at the bar and faced them, beginning to walk over. He was broader than Reiden had originally thought he was. Although his age was more advanced, the hooded cloak draped around his shoulders did little to hide what appeared to be a great strength underneath. As the man drew closer, Reiden caught sight of his eyes. Their fierce gaze startled him, seeming to bore right through him – like all of his secrets were being laid bare. An involuntary shiver ran down the length of his spine.

The newcomer stood by the table and glared at the two aliens.

“Get up,” he said. “Leave now – for your own good.”

The pair glanced at each other and back at the man, nodding. They quickly got up and rushed to the door, exiting the bar. Reiden couldn’t help but scowl at the man,

“That really wasn’t necessary. I was about to arrive at a deal with them.”

“You misunderstand my actions,” the older man started. He took a seat at the booth and motioned to the other side. “Please, join me.”

Reiden looked at him skeptically before sitting down. “Then why did you do that?”

“Because whatever they might have been able to tell you is nothing compared to the information I have at my disposal.”

“Oh, really?” Reiden arched a brow, his curiosity piqued. “So you know about the Brotherhood and the kind of members it has?”

“Yes, I do. I know about the Brotherhood, the Force, the Jedi, and the Sith, all of it. It’s all true.”

Reiden’s mind immediately erupted with questions that he wanted to ask. They were the same questions that he’d been thinking about for a long time. But now that he was confronted with a source of potential answers, he had no clue where to begin.

“How do I know you’re telling the truth?” Reiden was able to tamp down his curiosity to ask that one question, and it was an important one.

“Because I’m a member of the very same Brotherhood which you seek,” the man replied. He turned his gaze to the bar, the spot where he had been sitting before walking over – his drink was still there. He stretched out an arm and, as if by magic, the glass wobbled slightly before sailing through the air into his hand. He took a drink from it and turned back to face Reiden with a grin on his face. “Is that proof enough for you?”

Reiden sat there, shocked. He had heard stories of such things before. But there was a rather large difference between hearing about something and seeing it in action right before his eyes. He couldn’t have imagined something like what he had just witnessed. It rendered him speechless – for a moment.

“How did you do that? Who are you?” Reiden asked, his mind churning with questions once more.

“My name is Kadain Thorne and I’m a member of the Brotherhood. I was trained in the ways of the Force many years ago by a master that is long since gone from this world and passed into the next. For some time now, I’ve been searching the galaxy for a suitable person to train. My travels led me here, to this very planet. You see, I have been watching you since your arrival – something was calling out to me. What would you say if I told you that I could train you to wield the Force in the same ways that I can?”

And with that, Reiden’s fate was sealed. “Well, it’s nice to meet you, Kadain. My name’s Reiden. And what I’d say is actually pretty simple – when do we start?”

Reiden had no way of knowing it at the time, but this fateful encounter would forever change who he was. It was this meeting that set him down on the path that he

would follow for years to come – the path of knowledge and power. After this, nothing would ever be the same again.