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Tattooine

“...and that is when I leapt up onto the giant beast’s back, and plunged my lightsaber into it’s thick skull. Oh, how he thrashed and roared trying to throw me off! He reared his mighty head back, and I flew across the dragon’s cave. I stood up, and he charged me, mouth wide open, ready to eat me whole. I jumped to meet him, readying my blade to strike, but he swallowed me whole. A whole week a sat in the belly of that dragon. I thought I had lost my lightsaber, but it was not lost, simply hiding. I retrieved it and used it to cut my way out of the beast.”

Karran Val’teo sat in the middle of the village, while the local children gathered around him. The younger ones who had not heard all of his stories looked up at the aged Zabrak with wide eyes. While the older children still listened to the tales they had heard a hundred times each, occasionally rolling their eyes at the old man’s exaggerations.

“How big was the dragon?” a small purple Twi’lek girl with big, golden eyes looked up at the old Sith.

Karran leaned in and whispered, “As big as a star destroyer.”

The little girl gasped and looked in awe of the Zabrak.

“Oh really? As big as a star destroyer? The last time you told the story it was as big as one of the old AT-AT.” Karran looked over to see his wife, as old as he was, or perhaps older, he had stopped counting the years a long time ago.

“Blast it you old witch! It is my story and if I say it was the size of a star destroyer, then it was!”

“Yes, yes. Come now, supper is ready.”

The children sounded their disappointment. “One more story.” “Just one more.” The voices overlapped.

“Alright alright, just one more.” His wife conceded.

“Good! Now children, what kind of story would you like to hear?”

The children looked between each other, whispering. They knew that this would be the last story of the day, so they wanted to make it a good one. The Twi’lek girl from before stepped forward.

“Could you tell us a story about being a Sith?”

The light in Karran’s eyes dimmed. It had been many years since anyone had called him a Sith. He had left the Brotherhood on good terms many years ago. But he had left because he had grown weary. His time as a warrior was done and it was time to let the younger folks have their moments of glory.

“That is a dark subject, are you sure you want to hear about it?”

The little Twi’lek nodded.

“Very well, I shall tell you of my greatest battle. His name was Yezid Kel’dor, and he was my apprentice.”

Karran removed his old cloak. The edges were tattered and worn from years of wear and too many close calls with blaster bolts. His robes underneath left his arms uncovered. His left arm had the still unfinished tattoos of his people. Arcing lines of tribal patterns tattooed by his own father. His right arm was covered with the story of his time in the Brotherhood. The dragon he had received from Grot, and the spectre he had received at the same time. The ancient symbol of the Sith, the Lotus, and many others making a mural representing the events and the family he had found. Lastly, he ran his fingers along the scarlet band tattooed around his head, over his eyes.

“Yezid was a gifted young Miraluka. I was strong, but he was fast. He always had a sense of what I was going to do before I could do it. The Force guided him and even though I was stronger and more trained, no amount of training matters when your opponent knows everything you’re going to do. I trained him. His first lightsaber had been my first lightsaber. He saved my life on more occasions than I can recall. But one day, as all Sith masters and apprentices know, the time came for him to strike me down, or be stricken down. He did me the honor of challenging me to a single duel. We met on Malachor, the site of an ancient Sith temple. We made our way to the very top of the pyramid and took the time to meditate and prepare. We had one last embrace as friends before we set to the unfortunate task. He struck first, lightning fast, but hesitated. I parried his blade and threw my head forward to hit his. Like always, he dodged.”

Karran stood up, acting out this great battle for his young audience. His old bones and joints ached and creaked with age.

“He stepped back and vaulted over me, striking down at my, I parried again and struck out at him and missed once again. We traded blows like this for many hours until we both grew weary. Finally, I disarmed him and brought him to his knees. I raised my blade and…” Karran grew quiet for a moment before whispering, “the battle was over.”

The old Zabrak sat down, his eyes lowered, tears began to grow in the corners before running down his cheeks. His audience was enthralled. The Twi’lek girl piped up, “Did...did you kill him?”

“It does not matter. The battle was over and I was victorious.”

Karran’s wife came to his side once more, “Now children, it is time for you all to go home. Come inside old warrior, it’s time for dinner.”

“Yes, thank you, *min challa*. I shall have more stories for you tomorrow, children.” Karran wearily stood up, gathered his cloak, and went inside.

The old Sith went into his house and unlocked a durasteel door. He stepped inside and closed it behind him. In the corner stood a deactivated IG-100 droid. The walls were lined with relics. Holocrons, masks, helmets, suits of armor, and various trophies adorned the various shelves. Karran walked to the center of the room and stood before a small pillar. He picked up the lightsaber that rested on it. It was a simple thing. Machine-pressed metal, mass produced, easy to fix or replace. It was the standard issue armory lightsaber of the Brotherhood, but it had been his first lightsaber, and then Yezid’s after him. He placed a hand on the hilt and closed his eyes.

“Yezid. Wherever you are, I hope you are well.”