Reclaim the Palace

Competition Entry

Seer Raziel

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House Sunrider

Tython Squadron

Pin 11584

“Shouldn’t have ordered your troops away, *Commode*,” Raziel sneered, his icy lightsaber held low serving to illuminate his less than impressed face. “You’re going to wish you’d kept them handy.”

Arcturus gave his own sneer and let his red lightsaber tip turn backwards as he held an almost casual stance. “This is a fight of warriors, surely you can respect that.”

“I respect nothing where you’re concerned, Arcie,” Raziel quipped. He flipped his helmet open and plopped it onto his head with a well-practiced motion, the clamshell closing and making contact with the induction plates in his armor within the span of a half-second. Once powered, the eyes of his helmet, styled like that of an Akk hound, illuminated to match his blade. Stealth and subtlety were not Raziel’s hallmarks.

“Then you have revealed your fatal error,” Arcturus fired back, already in motion. His blade dipped even further down, trailing the floor and throwing sparks even as it gouged a trail of molten stone behind him. It was clear he was already in the mindset crucial to the Way of the Vornskyr, giving himself more fully over to the fray.

Raziel let his right foot slide in a half-circle away and leaned his weight that direction, his left foot already trailing to get himself out of the way of the attack. He dipped his own blade low and let it come up in an uppercut swing that put every gram of his weight behind it.

The strike was telegraphed, and more than that, put in the most perfect place for even a fool to deflect it, just like Raziel wanted. The moment Arcturus’ blade met his, Raz slid his position, putting his emitter right at the center of Arcturus’ blade. This gave him the extra leverage to push up and away, allowing him to come under the red blade even as it was being deflected, and in-line for a brutal downward slash that should have no defense.

Of course, that’s how it would have worked in a perfect world. Arcturus, feeling his blade getting manipulated, simply lashed out by bringing both feet up in a box jump before snapping them out, handily drop kicking Raziel and sending him tumbling.

His roll brought him into a fire, comprised of a fallen banner and some wood furniture. Embers flew wild as Raz barreled into it, and only his lightsaber, stuck into the floor and dragging a far deeper gouge, stopped him from winding up in the center of the blaze.

“That the best you got?” He asked upon rising to his feet, dusting himself off far more casually than he felt.

“I have yet to feel concern, truth seeker,” Arcturus spat, and dashed straight towards Raz, his blade moving as slow as his feet were fast. The motion itself, a wide windmill, was deceptive that way, and it was all Raz could do to get his blade up into Krayt’s crest and begin whirling in orbits to give him some measure of offensive deterrence.

Offensive deterrence, now that was a funny thing. Not so much defense as it was a reminder that coming too close was going to get a person cut. It was one of the foundations of the Djem So Avalanche. It worked great, most of the time. This was not one of those times.

Arcturus completed his windmilling motion and grasped his hilt with both hands, turning the movement into a diagonal cut. It was the tip of Raziel’s lightsaber, in motion, that checked that strike and popped it mostly away, though a deep score still gouged itself into his armor. It left Raz entirely off-footing and without an iota of the momentum necessary to really get violent.

Again, Arcturus capitalized on it, shoulder checking his opponent back into the fire. Without near the momentum of his own that his dropkick had, the effort was largely wasted, and served to put both men entirely too close to one another for proper bladework. Not that that stopped either of them, as both combatants turned towards each other with a downward diagonal cut.

The red blade of Arcturus and the electrically charged icy blue of Raziel’s met and locked near the emitters, throwing a purple light into both men’s faces. Immediately, Raz dropped his weight and widened his stance. Arcturus did very much the exact same thing.

For a moment it was only the two of them, their breath quite calm compared to the building inferno surrounding them. It was Raziel who broke the silence. “I can keep this up longer than you Arcie,” he stated, not a quip, but as pure matter of fact.

“Provided you live long enough,” Arcturus replied. He dipped his weight further, coming almost into a squat, and dug his shoulder into Raz’s sternum before shoving off hard. Again, the effort brought him less success than he’d hoped, but more than he needed.

With the pressure of the saber lock off, Arcturus brought one hand out and let all of his hatred and anger coalesce into pure violet lightning, which struck the entirely too-close Raz fully.

“Stangin’ metal armor,” Raz snarled, feeling his muscles beginning to lock under the Force assault. The pain that accompanied it was hellish, as searing burns began erupting all across his body. His nervous system wasn’t responding correctly either, which led his chest to slow in motion and his heart to start going well and fully erratic.

“Foolish,” Arcturus muttered as he doused his blade. “To think you were capable of crossing blades and willpower with me? You’re truly an idiot.”

“Takes one,” Raz muttered, forcing himself to ignore the pain. “To know one,”

Arcturus was ready with another pithy reply when he discovered he had no air with which to make said comeback. The sudden telekinetic grip around his throat was solid, and there was real fury backing it up. With his concentration faltering, he wasn’t able to keep pouring lightning into his foe the way he wanted to.

Raziel watched the lights begin fading from Arcturus’ eyes, and could keenly feel the man’s weight going dead in his telekinetic grip. It would have been nothing to keep squeezing, to crush his trachea and obliterate the arteries supplying oxygen to his brain. The Commodore’s reign of terror would be over, just like that, easy as breathing, or, in his case, not breathing.

Of course, that wasn’t the Jensaarai way, not at all. That killer instinct required tempering with control or they were no better than the Sith. It left Raziel paused, his grip faltering in that crucial moment where he weighed his soul against his mission.

Just like Arcturus wanted. Having played on the man’s fears so expertly, it bought him the opening he needed to resume the conflict, and used it without delay. His lightsaber lit again in the familiar snap-hiss and he dashed dead at Raz, his blade at waist height and leveled for a bisecting cut.

“Oh hell,” Raz mumbled, and leapt completely out of the way of the impending doom, landing on his shoulder in a roll, and finally coming up a couple of meters away. He was getting about sick of the getting shoved around nonsense. Normally it was him who did the shoving and the bullying and whatnot, but it was rare he picked on someone his own size. Bigger he could handle. Smaller he could handle. This even footing nonsense had to go.

Arcturus hadn’t relented, so Raziel’s need to change the rules of the game would have to wait. If anything, those rules were tilting even further in Arcturus’ favor. His rush back into the fray was faster, far faster than previous, and the dead-set focus on his face gave even the battle-hardened, and Jensaarai trained Raziel a reason to keep on the defensive, a place he wasn’t at all interested in being.

“Stang stang stang stang stang!” Raziel called out, backpedaling at first while batting at Arcturus’ weapon before saying to hell with it and just darting further out of the way. He zigged behind a pillar, before zagging towards the broken throne. A casual swat of Arcturus’ red blade cut the big chair further into pieces and brought him that much closer to Raz.

“Your death will be so very satisfying,” Arcturus spat with pure venom. One would expect that maybe he would slow down, just a little bit, to deliver such a demoralizing statement, but that wasn’t the case. He just kept advancing, lightsaber swinging in pure fury. “I do love killing cowards slowly,”

In an effort to put more distance between them, Raziel slashed twice at a pillar and sent the massive chunk he’d cut free flying at Arcturus before turning again and running. Behind him, Arcturus turned away and reflexively shielded himself from the attack, throwing up a telekinetic barrier in an effort to not get smashed. While it kept him from being crushed, it didn’t ablate the entirety of the weight of the chunk of stone that had been hurled at him at ballistic speed, so he survived, but for a moment, it sure looked like he wished he hadn’t.

That was the opening Raz wanted. No, the opening he desperately *needed*. Sensing the opportunity, Raz spun on his heel and turned back towards Arcturus, who’d quite handily kipped up to his feet with that same look of hatred and battle lust.

Immediately, he took the offensive, battering at Arcturus’ extremely fast but almost sloppy defense with a reckless abandon. It was here that their fighting styles were so similar it was almost funny. Neither Vornskyr nor Krayt lent to defense, and both relied on overwhelming their opponent through superior offense. Through the fight, that had largely been Arcturus’ approach, but finally, Raziel chinked the armor and found his way in.

Three rapid strikes from his saber, two straight down from Kray’s horn before a transition to the tail position and becoming an uppercut. These shots all met his opponent’s lightsaber, but each one struck like a commercial hauler. Arcturus, barely able to get to his feet, could only throw up shoving blocks to keep himself alive.

To Raz’s trained eye, the man was becoming gassed, and quickly. “Told you I could keep this up longer,” he taunted. Poking a Sith, or any other darksider, with a stick was a calculated risk as oftentimes it spurred them to harness more of their hatred, but the evident pride emanating from the Commodore on his first approach had warranted the effort. He’d tried to end the fight quicker but couldn’t finish the job, and now the toll was becoming evident. Fighting in a low oxygen and high carbon monoxide environment like a burning room, combined with the effort to keep up his Force fueled assault had left him vulnerable.

“Your head’s pounding,” Raziel said, striking intentionally at Arcturus’ weapon. “Probably getting dizzy, maybe even nauseous, am I right?”

“I’ll live long enough,” Arcturus snarled with renewed vigor. He popped his blade against’s Raziel’s swing, shoving his blade out enough to create an opening. He followed it into a tightly chambered stab with his saber vertical at eye level before shoving with all his might into the strike.

Unable to dodge, Raziel could only get back into Krayt’s crest and turn from the strike. Arcturus’ blade struck armor, causing more sparks to fly as it hit the Beskar weave sandwiched in the metallic layers. This didn’t stop it from hurting, in fact it was quite the opposite, as a flash burn began erupting across the outside of Raz’s bicep as Arcturus’ blade cut its path.

It hurt. It hurt a hell of a lot, and Raz’s attention was already divided enough by lowering his oxygen consumption already. It meant he couldn’t effectively shunt the pain away, With a howl, he rode out the strike, and at the apex of the movement, allowed even more of the Force to flow through him, shaking fatigue from his muscles and empowering his reflexes.

In the span of half a heartbeat, Arcturus was off-balance and extended. Raziel’s back foot slid sideways, allowing him to turn. He brought his icy lightsaber around his back in a tight orbit and let the motion carry it over his shoulder. With a twist of his hips and a dip in his knees, Raz dropped his weight as he snapped his lightsaber down, striking at the fully exposed back of his enemy. With that single motion, the job was done.

Raz paused long enough to collect the now useless red bladed lightsaber; another to add to the collection. As an afterthought, he chose the grisly duty of collecting the top half of Arcturus’ corpse as well. *Someone* would want some evidence for sure.

With that, he strolled as casually as one could in a burning throne room away from the battleground. As he headed down the steps, the broken pieces of wall allowed fresh air to flow, and he took advantage of it, finally taking good deep breaths of clean, well, cleaner air.

Part one of the job was done. Arguably it was the most important job, but there was still the matter of rescuing the Empress and the Princess to see to as well. Raziel doffed his helmet and affixed it to the mag-plate on his belt, and continued his walk down the stairs and into the palace. Off in the distance, he could hear the sharp whine of blaster fire as the two sides continued to clash.

“You know,” He said to the dead Commodore. “It’s a shame this is my first visit to this place. I bet it was gorgeous before this whole clusterstang you started.”