

Combat Fiction
GJW XV
Alaris Jinn

The city skyline of Aliso City was pierced with the red light of dawn for the first time in several days. The impacts had filled the sky with smoke, dust, and debris that had once been the ground where the craters had formed. The gassy mist, which Alaris had thought may have been more tiny solid particle than an actual gas, had faded and the air scrubbers were finally making a dent in the vile putridness that had imposed on the planet over the last several days.

The streets were mostly empty, save the soldiers from Plagueis and the local militias. The occasional Dark Jedi and Sith crossed the Twi'lek's path, but they were all keenly aware enough of their own mortality to give a wide berth. The Elder scantily ever engaged in his own dirty work; he had droids and minions for that, but this attack was too close to home. Aliso had been a safe place for the Twi'lek to build his corporate empire and now this violence threatened his work. A scalpel was not required for this, nor would a drill. This required a lightsaber.

"Nothing yet," the voice of one of his many assassins came through like clockwork: every five minutes, as required. Mira Dantavi was precision, and beauty, incarnate. To say he could set his clock by her would be literal. He had her perched on a skyscraper overlooking one of the larger parks. She moved with the Twi'lek, always maintaining a sightline.

Alaris Jinn di Plagia turned down another street toward the most recent explosion. Smoke still billowed from whatever was burning down there.

"I'm losing you. Need to reposition."

The child that still thought of herself as the Twi'lek's apprentice, Kahlora Teka, called in a response. "I have him. Two-fifty meters back."

The AAT-1 Hover Tank that burned in the street had blown the glass out of the buildings in the near vicinity when it had exploded. Alaris stepped through the shards carefully as he approached the downed vehicle. This wasn't a random occurrence. It was deliberate to draw him out. Alaris had foreseen this. Why he had not foreseen this meteor shower of ascendent crystals was beyond him.

He stopped as he finally saw it. Standing on part of the tank, as if waiting for him. His pause lasted only a second before he tread toward it.

Thirty seconds.

He knew Kahlora was quick, but she was still pretty far back. He would have to engage the Trooper alone.

He didn't get much of a choice. These things were predatory and Alaris looked like a meal. The Purified Trooper ignited its lightsaber and a sapphire haze bounced off the smoke. It lept and Alaris only just was able to bring his viridian blade to bear.

It was fast, a blur to most, but Alaris didn't need to be faster than it, just be able to outmaneuver it. He lept over its head and landed on the rubble that had fallen from the side of a building. He knew it would only be a moment before the Child of Mortis reengaged, so he was already coiling his legs for another leap. He landed behind the Child and engaged in a flurry of blows intended to put the slightly taller creature on a bit of a defensive. It took a few steps back before finding the violent urge to re-engage.

Alaris had learned the limitations of Ataru years ago and had spent several years studying battlefield manipulation under Muz Ashen. As soon as he felt himself losing the tactical edge, he disengaged, leaping from debris to vehicle, to the top of the entrance to the subway. He didn't have to win, he just needed to buy time.

The dark side fed him instructions and he simply listened. Where a lightsaber struck through, he was no longer standing. When a blast of angry violet lightning struck the metal object he had been standing on, he was already grabbing a ledge on the side of a building.

He finally landed square, fifty feet back from the smoking tank.

"You will die," it spoke to him in Twi'leki.

"Yes. One day." Alaris spat back.

The sound of two lightsabers erupting broke their repartee. The Togruta girl with more piercings than sense emerged from behind Alaris ready to engage.

Alaris smiled. "You may be able to eventually wear me down if I were alone."

The Trooper instinctively brought his lightsaber up and deflected a blaster bolt that had shot down from the building behind him.

The Twi'lek cocked his head. "First though, you'll need to catch me alone."