

The Duros Unchained

Xantros

11518

12 BBY, orbital platforms over Duros

Xantros looked at a message he received through a holonet consol at his parent's room. He blinked twice and read it again.

„What does the Office of the Social Welfare wants from me?“ whispered the young Duros with trembling voice. It was a rare case that the organization contacted minors directly. He did not know anyone who would have been contacted by the Office. Not even minors, but also adults. Still, he had to visit one of its offices on the next morning. He sighed and rolled his eyes. He thought that the state should care about people's education and the assigned hour of the meeting would make him miss an important exam. Why they did not check his school schedule and adjust the time to let him come to the Office in the afternoon?

Xantros sighed again and decided not to fight with something he could not win with. He knew that public administration was one of such things. At least, his parents told him that and he had no reason to not believe them so far. He did not want to waste his time on an attempt to change something that was impossible to change. Bureaucracy was a machine that would simply grind any individual trying to change it. He had no choice, but to comply with the orders of the Office, no matter if he liked it or not.

In the early morning, the teen Duros sent a message to the school stating that he would be late due to the scheduled meeting. Couple of minutes before the meeting, he knocked on the door of the Office of the Social Welfare and entered the room. There was just one clerk in there. The adult Duros looked at the person entering the room and smiled sadly.

„I believe you are Xantros, right?“ asked the clerk.

„Yes, I am,“ answered the teenager quietly.

„Please, take a seat. We need to talk.“

Xantros sat down on a simple chair in front of the clerk.

„Unfortunately, I have a very sad news to convey to you, young boy,“ spoke the clerk.

„What is it?“ asked Xantros.

„I am sorry to tell you that, but we received a message from a starship from the Corellian fleet yesterday,“ explained the adult Duros. „They had found a transport that your parents were travelling on. It was raided by pirates and all of its passengers, including your parents and sister, were killed during the attack.“

Xantros gasped in shock. It was the reason his parents had not contacted him for few days. He expected some delays as they had taken his severely ill sister to a planet with better medical care. He thought it was natural that they had focused on making the travel as much comfortable for her as it was possible. However, the reason for the lack of communication from them was so different. He shook his head. He could not believe that they were dead. He refused to accept that he was alone now!

„Are you alright, Xantros?“ asked the clerk with sympathy seeing that the boy's face turned pale even by Duros' standards.

„Are you crazy?“ screamed Xantros angrily. „You just told me my family is dead! How can you expect me to be alright?“

„Calm down, I will call a counselor who will help you in dealing with this situation. You will have as many sessions as you will need. You will be assigned a legal guardian for the remaining time until you will become an adult. They will take care of you and make sure that you are safe and well. Despite the fact you will inherit your parents' estates, the government will cover all your expenses related to school, food, clothes, health services and other costs necessary to live.“

Xantros looked at the clerk blankly. What was that man talking about? What estates? What expenses?

The clerk noticed that the young Duros did not really understand him, so he printed out few pages and handed them to Xantros, saying, „Take this, these documents shall explain everything. Please, read them, when you will be able to. You may go back home now. I will let the school know about your situation and I believe a week or two off the school would help you start dealing with this tragic news. The counselor will check on you in few hours and help you decide what to do later.“

Xantros took the papers with shaking hands and slowly walked back to his quarters, not paying attention to what was happening around him and bumping into other people on his way like if he did not see them. Yes, the quarters were his now, but he did not care about them. The only thing he wanted was to awake from that nightmare, so he returned to his quarters and immediately fell on his bed, hoping that he would wake up with his family with him.

However, it did not happen. He got awoken, when the counselor arrived few hours later. It was a short visit as Xantros did not want to talk much, but he changed his mind on the next day. Ultimately, it turned out to be extremely helpful for the young Duros as he managed to come to terms with the loss of his family, but it took him several months of therapy to achieve that. But he did more than the counselor expected as he learnt to see the whole situation as an opportunity. He realized that his family was a burden for him, a chain that dragged them down. Without his overbearing parents constantly observing him, he had an opportunity to free himself from choking restraints of their expectations and demands. He could explore the stations freely as long as he earned good grades at school, which was not an issue for him. Once he reached adulthood age, he would be able to sell all possessions and the quarters of his parents and start new life. He would no longer be dependent on anyone.

Even though the death of his family made him suffer, Xantros managed to come to terms with it and to transform it into an event that brought some positive impact on his life.