

Acklay

Appius still didn't understand why Koda needed his help. Elysia was *his* domain. He entrusted Koda to the welfare of Elysia's people, its science, culture, economy, and faith. The only thing Appius should have been hearing about Elysia was the regular reports of infrastructure and trade.

Yet, why did he keep hearing on and on about an acklay terrorising the local populace? It seemed to be all he was hearing about lately. So, when Appius confronted Koda about the matter, his response was surprising, to say the least.

"Can't. Busy governing."

What did he mean he was busy governing!? That had to be the worst excuse he'd ever heard. Dealing with this kind of thing was part of his *governing*. When Appius confronted him about it, he of course, as always, had an answer prepared for him;

*"I'm organising the Aidos fair, the University is finally being built, and I'm working on making the observatory **actually** functional. You said if I needed any help, I could ask."*

Appius *did* say that. So now, here he was, in the freezing cold, on the outskirts of Aidos looking for a creature that had no business being on Elysia. What was an acklay even doing so close to Aidos in the first place? They usually kept to the mountains to the south. One being this far north was unusual, and a cause for concern, especially with the wampa outbreak that had occurred.

Was that why it was here? Was it looking for new territory?

Appius paused when he came across a mutilated corpse on the ground. He wasn't an expert in wildlife, far from it. He'd tell anyone that himself, but even he could make out the distinctive jawline and teeth of a Nexus when he saw one.

Appius knelt beside it. "Damn..."

Blood seeped from open wounds into the snow, turning the ground around it a crimson red. The trees were dented with what appeared to be slashes.

This was definitely the work of an acklay.

The Force rang through Appius' mind, followed by the crunch of snow behind him. A large spider-like shadow loomed over him, and he turned to see the cause.

A giant acklay screeched to the heavens and then attempted to stab Appius with one of its giant claws. His heart skipped a beat as he narrowly avoided the first attack. A second claw came at him. He side-stepped, though it tore into the bottom of his cloak, pinning him in place.

Appius summoned his lightsabers to his hands, and was about to ignite them when the full might of the acklay slammed into his chest. It tore the cloak from Appius' body as he soared into the adjacent tree. He crashed into its spine first and slid down into the snow.

The acklay stalked towards him, letting out another unholy shriek. It was about to strike Appius again, when tendrils of lightning enveloped its body. The acklay shrieked in pain, recoiling, and staggering on its feet.

Appius kept up the barrage of lightning. He returned to his feet, and as the acklay was about to attack again, he struck it once more with Force Lightning. Then again, and again until the creature toppled over onto its side.

Appius summoned one of his lightsabers back to his hand, the emerald blade roared to life like an angry krayt dragon. He drove the blade into the acklay's skull, ending its life.

He stood back, twirling the blade in his hand as he admired his handiwork. He walked over to pick up his cloak, a large rip ruining it. It was his father's cloak, and he was going to have to get it repaired.

Still, the acklay was dead. He'd done his job. Now it was just a question of how Darrio was getting on with the wampas.

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