

Nexu

The acklay was dead in the snow. Fumes rose from its battered and charred corpse, courtesy of Appius' use of Force Lightning. The hole in its head was perfectly circular in nature, the perfect sign of a lightsaber being stabbed through its skull. Appius inhaled a deep breath. That was too close. The beast had caught him completely by surprise. His father's cloak was now ripped, and he was in a foul mood because of it.

It was the last relic of his attachment to his father.

Appius' days as a Mandalorian Jedi were long behind him. He was fairly sure Tarre Vizsla would have been ashamed of him for it, but that man was long dead, and now, so was his father.

A rustling behind him caught his attention. He wasn't worried. Whatever it was, he was confident it was something he could handle.

Overconfidence was the downfall of greater men. That was what his father used to say.

The crunch of snow, the low feline-esque growling of a predator cat rising from its slumber entered Appius' ears. He wasn't sure he was believing what he was seeing. The nexu had been mauled beyond recognition, and yet, here it stood in front of him like the acklay had tickled it rather than killed it. Crystals sprouted by its appendages and eye sockets. Appius hadn't seen anything like it since...

Since the Children of Mortis attacked Kasiya.

The risen nexu roared like a beast possessed by madness. It turned its head towards Appius, seeming to smile with its full set of sharp teeth showing, then leapt at him.

The speed was incredible, and if it wasn't for the Force, Appius would not have been able to evade in time. The beast slashed at him, missing, and sliding into the snow. It turned, performing a one-eighty, and pounced at Appius again.

Appius had seen enough. He reached out with the Force, halting the creature in mid-air. The possessed nexu clawed at the air, trying desperately to get to Appius

with all its strength. Whatever the crystals had done to it, it had made its one goal in life to end Appius' life at whatever cost to itself.

No animal deserved to live this way.

With a heavy heart, Appius grabbed the lightsaber on his right hip, igniting the emerald blade. The nexu seemed to act more aggressively upon seeing the threat to its life, flailing and writhing angrily in the air. Appius pulled it towards him at great speed, and jammed the lightsaber through its chin, and out the other side of its skull. He wrapped one arm around the beast, supporting it upright.

"I'm sorry..."

He let the carcass fall to the ground, and then proceeded to separate its head from its shoulders. If there was anything he learned from the attack on Kasiya, it was to never leave the carcass intact.

It was no danger to him now. Though, if the crystalline beasts had a presence on Kasiya, then Elysia was in more danger than they originally realised.

Appius punched through his communicator to the Elysia governor. "Koda, we need to talk..."