

Trust

Elysia
Ray Shield Arena
41 ABY

This was another one of Anders' tests. It had to be. His friend and mentor had a peculiar penchant for putting Draca into situations that tested his skills in one way or another. He didn't like it, not one bit. Why did he always have to resort to violence? Damn it all, it wasn't fair! He gazed upon the large creature at the other end of the circle. Its blue-tinted fur blended into the sky above. What had it done to deserve any if this?

Probably nothing.

It didn't matter. Draca hopped from one foot to the other, shaking away his nerves. He needed to impress, but didn't want to hurt the creature that was coming towards him. He didn't know what to do. Did he engage in combat with the wampa? Or did he just have to run circles around it until it got tired, hoping they would let him go?

"Welcome to the fighting pits of Elysia! You've been tossed into it to fight the opposing creature of your team. Trying to avoid the fight? Too bad! The roof has a ray shield above it, so you can't fly or jump out even if you tried. Have fun contestants!"

The words chilled his bones more than the cold air of Elysia ever could. Draca was conflicted, doubt creeping in as the young man slowly backed away from the approaching creature.

'Believe in yourself.'

That voice. Draca recognised it.

"Anders?"

Of course. His teacher was a natural telepath. He was here, watching, observing...

Judging.

Draca didn't want to let him down, the pressure was an awful lot for him to bear on his shoulders.

'Have you forgotten your training?'

Draca shook his head. He was at the edge of the circle now, the ray shield within reach of his fingertips. "No, of course not! But..."

'But nothing. Trust in my teachings, trust in your strength, and trust in the Force.'

The Force...

Of course, the Force always guided him when he needed it most. Draca dropped to his knees, the small layer of snow chilled his knees and legs, though he didn't care. He closed his eyes, taking several deep breaths as his senses opened up to his surroundings and emotions. The birds with wings fluttered in the wind like the two hearts that beat in his chest, the humming of the ray shield that reminded him of a lightsaber, and the crunch in the snow of the wampa's footsteps timed with each breath he took as they encroached upon him.

Draca became a vessel for the Living Force, allowing it to flow in through him, soothing him, and then back out. His heart rate steadied, his breathing calm as a large shadow overtook his body.

The Force answered him. He would do what he must.

The wampa roared as Draca's eyes shot open into a focused warrior's gaze. Two giant arms lunged towards him, but he was ready. The Force guided his actions as he dug his hand into the snow, cartwheeling around the creature. He grabbed his lightsabers and leapt into the air as the wampa turned to face him.

Snap-hiss!

Draca spun his body, his weapons becoming a blur of blue motion amplified by the raw currents of the Force flowing through his veins. His lightsabers weren't just weapons, Draca himself *was* the weapon, the embodiment of Ataru. He was too fast for untrained eyes to see, too mobile, too swift, like a starfighter with twin lightsabers. He swiped his blades through the wampa's neck, cleaving its head from its shoulders like a razor blade. It dropped to the snow with a thud, its body collapsing after it.

The young Jedi retracted his weapons, placing them back on his belt to thunderous applause.

"Blue Wampa down! Here is our winner, Draca Zul!"

Draca placed his hands in front of him, giving a small bow.

'Well done. That was more like it.'

Draca couldn't help the smile that tugged at his lips with Anders' praise.

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