**Innocence**

Shadow Nighthunter

My father once told me that learning to fight early in life was the best way to prepare for the hostile galaxy that we all lived in. As little kid, I didn’t quite understand the importance of those words. I wasn’t really aware of the hellfire that plagued the world we lived in, just as I wasn’t aware that I had been born with the Force. Life had been perfect for the Night family. Though my parents, Devon and Crystal, didn’t quite make a lot of money for luxury, they managed to make enough for us to live off of. They made sure I was well cared for, and taught me very early that a person had to make do with whatever resources they might have. And you know what? That didn’t bother me a bit.

We were a very happy family. My Sephi mother worked at a café, and my human father was a smuggler for anyone who would hire him. Back then, I wasn’t aware that I had a long-lost sister, and both of my parents treated me the way anyone treats an only child. They’d make sure I was cared for, give me what toys and sweets I desired on my birthdays, and made sure that I learned how to make it through life. My father taught me very early how to fight, although I wasn’t exactly great at it. He took me on a few of his runs, much to my mother’s disapproval, and showed me worlds and many wonders he’d come across. My mother would take me to the animal auctions and travelling zoos as a way of sharing her love for animals with me. Only she remembered how many times I asked to have a nexu for a pet.

It seemed like life for us would always be great, but the Force had other plans. My father always knew there was a possibility I was Force sensitive like he was, but had never told me about it. Instead, it was when I was six years-old that I would find out just how Force sensitive I was. It was when the Jedi first showed up at our home did I then learn that the Force had a different path laid out for me.

I remember I was play fighting with my father, while my mother was making dinner, when the knock came. My mother had opened the door to reveal to strange men in robes and cloaks. I remember looking at them in curiosity as they told my mother who they were. My father picked me up and went over to greet the men whose names I hadn’t quite heard. My parents invited them in, and we all sat in the living room where the elder of the Jedi explained that the Force had brought them to find me. They explained they were lone Jedi who sought children with strong Force sensitivity to train them in the Jedi way.

I didn’t quite comprehend what the Force was, but it seemed my mother was aware that I had it too as she explained that I had a connection with animals that she couldn’t explain. My father had remained silent, and had held me close to him protectively as the men explained that it was best I went with them. Both my parents eventually took me to my room and discussed what to do. My father was against the idea at first, while my mother argued that this was an opportunity for me to become something so much more than a smuggler like my father. In the end, she convinced my dad, and my parents gave their answer to the Jedi.

I was both excited and fearful of what was about to happen. I was afraid of living my parents, and yet I was excited to see what would be in store for me with the Jedi. As my parents packed me some clothes, both kept reassuring me that the path ahead of me was going to be filled with better opportunities and adventure. Such things excited me, but my fear was still present as I kept grabbing hold of my father’s hand and squeezing it for comfort.

Before I knew it, it was time to leave. Both my parents wished me farewell, though it was my father who hugged me the longest. He told me not to be afraid, and that we would one day see each other. Oblivious to the truth, I believed him, and I eventually took the hand of my soon-to-be master. As he led me out, I looked back and saw my mother in my father’s arms as he smiled at me and quickly shouted, “I love you!”

Had they known what events would’ve taken place afterwards, they probably wouldn’t have let me go. From that day on, I was no longer the little Rowan who aspired to be tough like her father. No. From that day on, I would be Jedi Apprentice Rowan Night. I would learn of the amazing power I had inside of me, and I would learn to abide by the Jedi code. It would be like that for a long time, or so I had thought. All of that changed when Marcus Strider became a part of my life. Of course, that story is for another time.