**Survival**

By Dante
#2407

**Nancora
2100 hours**

Sparks flashed around him as Dante slowly regained consciousness inside the destroyed escape pod. Stretching each limb to check for broken bones, the officer took stock of his physical ability and came to the conclusion that he hadn’t suffered any permanent damage in the crash. He would be sore for awhile, but he would be able to live.

Kell crawled to the door and hit the emergency release button. Nothing happened. He hit it again and was rewarded with the door flying off its hinges. “Good….” Kell muttered as he took a step out into what was known as the Badlands on this world. Checking his armor, the seam integrity was still holding, and the air was breathable with the aid of his helmet filtration system. Although his short range comms were worthless, he could still bring up the map of the planet on his HUD. At least he had a general idea on which way to head as the maps of this hell hole weren’t perfect. With luck, he could make it towards the Northern Sector and meet up with his troops.

Kell looked up at the night sky then decided to look through what was in the escape pod. As he scavenged what he could from the craft, he realized that the main survival pack looked like it hadn’t been refilled by the onboard survival specialists. All that remained was a canteen, a flare gun with a single round, a few ration bars, and a pad from the ship. Luckily, he had already been heading towards the hangar bay with his combat gear or else he would have been in more dire straits than he was.

With the cover of darkness, Kell knew that he could make good time before the sun rise so he packed up what he could from the pod and headed towards where his troops should have landed.

**Nancora
0800 hours**

A wind storm had popped up and had forced Kell into setting up his shelter on the leeward side of a rock outcropping. Even though it was daylight, he knew that he was being tracked. Kell had felt the first tinge of warning earlier that morning, but the Obelisk hadn’t been able to get a full lock on who or how many were out in the Badlands looking for him.

The storm subsided a few minutes later, and Kell packed up quickly and started off on his trek towards the Northern Sector again. A break in the rocky terrain lay before him, but he had to move through a canyon that shallowed out into a ravine to reach the higher terrain before him.

Reaching out with the Force, he could feel the approaching danger just as an energy bolt whizzed by his helmet. Kell dove to his left side and brought his rifle to bear on the targets before him. He popped off two rounds of his microgrenade launcher and then rolled to his right to find some cover from the Huntresses’ weapons. He needed to keep that a distance or the pack would overwhelm him as he fired off a few blaster shots at the two or three that he could actually see.

As the main pack kept Dante’s attention, a pair of the warriors had moved to his right and were trying to outflank him. Kell could feel them as the prepared to attack him with their energy whips. Reaching out with the Force to find his targets, the Obelisk took his fragmentation grenade off his belt, aimed, and then threw it. As it went through the air, Kell aided it with a flick of his hand to land at the feet of the pair of warriors.

The death screams of the two huntresses could be heard as their bodies were shredded by the hot pieces of metal.

Dante fired another two microgrenades and then bounded to his right with the aid of the Force.

Behind him, he could hear the sounds of grenades hitting the rocks, and Kell dove again just as a pair of concussion grenades went off. His body was thrown off of the rock outcropping he was on, and Dante landed roughly as his roll didn’t go as well as he had planned.

As he rolled to his feet, a few darts bounced off his armor, but none were able to penetrate it. A short burst from his rifle took out another Huntress who had peeked her head around the protection of the rock that she had hidden behind.

Dante had little time to celebrate as the pack had finally managed to catch up with him. A trio of Huntresses were before him with their energy whips drawn. The crackling sound of the whips could be heard above the wind that was blowing through the canyon. Strapping his rifle onto his back, Kell drew his lightsaber and nodded his head to the remaining members of the pack.

As one unit, the Huntresses pressed the attack against the lone trooper with one attacking from the front while the other two attempted to envelope Kell. Energy whips lashed out as they approached, and Kell did a backwards roll to avoid being slashed open. Moving to his right, he let out a force wave that threw the Huntress back into the wall of the canyon, and the sound of her neck snapping reverberated throughout the ravine.

The Huntresses showed no outward sign of remorse as their sister lay dead, but they backed off for a moment before continuing the attack. The whips flew out again, but this time Kell leapt up vertically with a strong bound. All that remained below was the thermal detonator that the Obelisk had dropped. Immolated almost instantaneously, the Huntresses didn’t even have time to realize what happened to them as Kell looked down on the explosion from the edge of the ravine.

A lone figure began slowly walking towards him as he raised his saber in challenge. “I have defeated your huntresses…. Leave now or suffer the same fate,” said Kell as the woman kept approaching.

“I shall litter this planet with your corpse,” retorted Icasta.

With her huntresses either killed or incapacitated, it was down to just Kell and Icasta. Hers was the first move to make, and she didn’t hesitate as she came in hard and fast.

Kell sidestepped the move and brought his blade down hard to try and end the fight quickly, but the assassin ducked and rolled off to her left.

Stepping inside of her swipe, the Obelisk parried her blow with his saber and brought an augmented fist into her throat. Cartilage was torn and the cracking of bones could be heard as the female dropped like a rock. A slight gasp was all that could be heard as the life drained from what was left of the body of Icasta.

Kell looked down and said “You were a worthy opponent….” as he bent down and scavenged what gear he thought he might need for the rest of his trek.