

Star Wars

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Wanderer of Worlds

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This world feels so dead. Blistered by twin suns, hostile...
desolate. I've seen many planets, but none so unforgiving as this one. I
wonder how anything can survive here.

I wander the stars without a world to call home. My name is
Daushoroc; my partner and good friend is Tamoss. We are traders of gems,
artifacts and curiosities. I scour the worlds of the Outer Rim looking
for items that may pique the interests of wealthy nobles and corporate
leaders. They have a taste for such goods, and I am more than happy to
relieve them of their wealth.

This is my first expedition of Tatooine. There seems to be very
little on this world of sand. Those who come here often serve the
gangster Jabba. I steer clear of him and his minions. No good has ever
come of dealing with the Hutt. Tamoss and I have other reasons for being
here.

It began with a legend. Forty years ago the courier ship Athallian
Messenger crashed somewhere in the wastes. The sand storms soon devoured
the ship. Many treasure hunters have since searched for the wreck and its
cargo of ancient gemstones. A few returned empty-handed, but most
disappeared, no doubt killed by Tusken Raiders or buried by ravenous sand
storms. Even the skittish Jawas refuse to search for the Messenger, but
they were willing to part with a map and some vague clues in exchange for
a few crates of power converters and tools. Tamoss and I are brave enough
to search for the gems and foolish enough to discount the dangers.

We are nearing the canyons the Jawas warned me about. I can already
sense them in the air. The Sand People must be closing in, hiding in the
shadow of the coming night. I am sure they have been aware of our
presence for some time. Only now are they willing to force a
confrontation. We must be nearing their camps and water sites. We must be
cautious.

I tell Tamoss that, if need be, we should be able to outrun them!
Tamoss laughs at that suggestion. We've strapped cooling tarps and water
packs to our dewback. Without them, this harsh climate would kill us
within a day. We have no choice but to make a peace with the Sand People.

We should profit handsomely if we are successful. Thirty or forty thousand credits could be ours. That money would buy many luxuries, but Tamoss and I have a better use: Our credits will purchase the freedom of some of our fellow Eirraucs. Sadly, my people are slaves of the Empire.

We are easy targets back then. We asked only to be left alone. We were farmers and traders, scientists and students, artists and artisans. Warfare was unknown. We were weak.

Conquered, rounded up and dispersed throughout the galaxy, we were forced to serve Imperial nobles and labor in research facilities and prison camps. Most of us did not know the meaning of the word "resist" until much later.

Tamoss and I have resisted in our own way. We liberated ourselves from the slaving pens, and now use our trading profits to purchase the freedom of our people. We deliver our liberated brothers and sisters to a safe world far from prying eyes of the Empire. It is a slow and dangerous process, but little by little we are succeeding.

The silence of the desert twilight, and my reverie, is broken by a high-pitched wail. Tamoss and I see movement from all sides, and instinctively we prepare to flee. Our hind legs pulse with energy, eager to rear up and launch us into the air. Our mid-legs tremble, ready to pull at the sand and send us running! It is difficult to contain these primitive drives, but we stand our ground and hold our heads high. We cannot show weakness or fear now.

Half a dozen humanoid figures approach. Their faces are obscured by crude breath masks, but their intent is easily understood. They snarl in their crude language, brandishing gaffi sticks above their heads. Tamoss and I keep our handmade blasters at the ready.

Their charge is halted by a single howl. Another Raider arrives; he is small and frail, yet easily pushes past the aggressors. He must be an elder. It is time to make peace: I offer him packets of water and a Tusken battle talisman. He slowly approaches, lowering his gaffi stick. The others begin to hiss and scream, poised to attack. They must think we have more water. I try not to guess what they might do next.

The elder Raider silences the others with a cry, and turns back to me. He claims the water packs and the totem, silently staring at me. He has accepted my presence - for now. Tamoss goes to the dewback to retrieve the small water vaporator. Once assembled, the device is barely two meters tall, yet it could collect enough water to sustain this entire group.

Now it's time to test this truce. I pull out my datapad and show him an image of the ship I am looking for. The elder slowly points toward the distant mountains. He uses his gaffi stick to sketch in the sand, drawing a profile of the distant mountains and making a pair of circles - the twin suns. He traces an arc twice more. He turns his back to me, silent. Facing me, he draws a fourth arc, then howls and menacingly

raises his gaffi stick. The others follow suit, but stop when he lowers his weapon.

Three days to find the wreck and return through this canyon; that will be time enough. Tamoss and I soothe our nervous dewback while the Raiders blend back in the shadows of the canyon. Now, the only sign of their presence is a few marks in the sand.

It's then that I realize how much my people share with these desert scavengers. We only want to be left alone. We will fade back into the shadows if we can, but will fight if we must.

We only wish to survive.

And somehow we will.