

Felanil Baaks, Jedi Artisan

By Morrie Mullins
Former **Living Force** Plot Director and Campaign Designer

Felanil Baaks was born to be a Jedi. From his early life in the Duro system to his training on Coruscant to his work in refining the creation of lightsabers, he has demonstrated quite aptly that there are as many ways to be a Jedi as there are Jedi in the galaxy. Now, with war threatening to shatter the Republic, Baaks has come to Cularin. The lessons he has to teach are less useful on Coruscant, where much of the daily activity of Jedi centers around the defense of the Republic.

For all of his training, Baaks is not truly a warrior, nor is he a diplomat. If forced to describe himself, the first words he might use (after "Jedi," of course) would probably be "artist" and "teacher." The medium of his art is the lightsaber -- not its use so much as its design and construction. Felanil Baaks is a Jedi artisan, one of a handful in the galaxy, and he has come to Cularin in search of what he believes may be his last class of pupils. The following are his own words, delivered in an introductory lecture on Almas.



Greetings, Padawans. Greetings, Knights. Greetings, Masters Lanius and Devan. I am called Felanil Baaks. I am a crafter of lightsabers.

I am not one for speaking much about myself. In fact, I find myself to be one of the most uninteresting topics possible! Yet Master Lanius has asked me to speak of who I am, where I come from, why I am here, and what I have to offer you in this time of great strife throughout the galaxy. I am much beholden to him for allowing me to come to your wonderful academy and pass on what meager knowledge I have gained in my time as part of the Jedi Order. So, I will speak, but I will endeavor to make this brief. Those of you who work with me will find out that I do not speak much. I am going to talk more about that shortly.

I have told you who I am in name and in craft. To be more precise, I am what you might call a Jedi artisan. I have long sought to understand the nature of the Force. We are all taught that the Force is an energy field created by all living things. When we examine the lightsaber, then -- a weapon, a tool, an inanimate object in which the Force resides -- we find ourselves faced with a quandary. How do we understand this manifestation of the Force? Certainly, the Force binds all things together in the galaxy, be they organic or inorganic. But a lightsaber is something more. It is an object, an inorganic thing, into which we channel our essence, our essential connection to the Force. If there were a tie between that canister, those switches, those crystals, and the Force before, it was so small as to be almost negligible. When we are done, though, we have created an object of matchless beauty and elegance, capable of taking lives and of protecting them.

Thoughts like these led me to explore the creation of lightsabers in more detail than many of us choose. For most Jedi, the creation of the lightsaber is a rite of passage, a signal that they are ready to cease being Padawans and instead become the protectors of the galaxy that we all strive to be, in our own way. For some of us, the creation of that first lightsaber is only the beginning. When I completed my first lightsaber -- it hangs at my hip now, though it has changed much, and not at all, since I first imbued the crystals inside with the Force -- I looked at it and saw that it could be better. I saw that the connection created between myself and the lightsaber was an imperfect representation of my own connection to the Force. This made me wish to know more, to understand more. I stand here now because of those desires, and because of the incumbent responsibility to share what I have learned.

That is who I am and what I am. As to where I come from, I was born in the Duro system. Specifics have never been important to me, as I was given to the Jedi at an early age by my family. They recognized that my gifts would allow me to contribute to the galaxy in a way that did not involve hyperdrives or the Kessel Run. I consider my childhood to have begun on Coruscant, where I received lightsaber training from Master Yoda, among others.

I would describe myself as having been an average pupil. I did not excel at the combat forms. Master Yoda once joked that I was a master of Form Zero -- of wielding the lightsaber without igniting it. Please, feel free to laugh, because there was some small laughter when the Master said this. But you must remember -- he told us all this, and I tell it to you now -- that Form Zero is the truest form of wielding a lightsaber. If you cannot wield a lightsaber without igniting it, then you should consider whether you are worthy to wield it at all. I do not doubt that there are many present -- some Padawans included -- who could easily best me, were we to spar with lightsabers. Being able to defeat another being is insignificant, though, unless you can understand that being, and accept that if the situation were different, he might be as completely justified in killing you as you feel in killing him. You must understand when to ignite and when to ignore. That is Form Zero.

Where I come from, then, is from the Jedi. I believe in what we do. It is right to protect those who cannot protect themselves. I am proud to be a Jedi. I am proud to train other Jedi.

I am here, on Cularin, to convey and record what I know of the creation of lightsabers. I will take pupils while I am here -- perhaps some of you. But I will not take a Padawan. I have never taken a Padawan, and I will never do so. I will offer what you might consider to be advanced training in the art and craft of lightsaber design and construction. Only those who have already crafted their own lightsabers need express interest. If you have not demonstrated at least this much facility with the act of creation, then you are not ready for more advanced lessons.

I have been told that a lightsaber I crafted some time ago has made its way to Almas, a gift from Master Windu to one of you. If it is the lightsaber I recall, I was pleased with the work, and I am glad to know that it is in hands that will use it wisely. That is the nature of what I do: I create, and then I release. If you are to work with me, you also must recognize that this is the nature of creation. We do not hold tight to the things that we bring into the world. Just as my parents did not hold tight to me when they knew I had a destiny other than what they might have wrought, and just as I myself have not held tight to a dozen or more fine quality lightsabers I created with casings of crystal or wood or stone - or, the one that presented the greatest engineering challenge, a liquid matrix suspended in a compressed gravity tube - so, too, will you see that the products of your creative acts often are not "yours."

The creation is a product of the Force. It will always be at the whim of the Force to dispose of that which it assists in creating.

Felanil Baaks: Male Duros Jedi Consular 7/Jedi Artisan 5*/Jedi Instructor 1; Init +7; Defense 23 (+3 Dex, +10 Class); Spd 10 m; VP/WP 75/10; Atk +13/+8 melee (4d8+2/19-20, +3 mastercraft lightsaber) or +11/+6 ranged (3d6 or DC 15 stun, blaster pistol); SQ Deflect (defense +2), deflect (attack -3), deflect (extend defense and attack), inspire confidence +1, Jedi Knight, material mastery, mastercraft lightsaber (+3); SV Fort +6, Ref +11, Will +13; SZ M; FP 4; DSP 0; Rep +5; Str 8, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 19, Wis 14, Cha 10.

* His full 5 levels in Jedi Artisan qualify him for the Jedi Instructor prestige class, in spite of a lack of levels in Jedi Master.

Equipment: Blaster pistol, +3 mastercraft lightsaber constructed by Felanil Baaks, Jedi robes.

Skills: Appraise +13, Astrogate +7, Craft (lightsaber) +23, Diplomacy +6, Knowledge (Jedi lore) +13, Pilot +12, Read/Write Basic, Read/Write Durese, Read/Write Rodese, Read/Write Ryl; Repair +21, Sense Motive +10, Speak Basic, Speak Dosh (Understand Only), Speak Durese, Speak Kel Dor (Understand Only), Speak Rodese, Speak Ryl, Speak Shyriiwook (Understand Only); Treat Injury +10.

Force Skills: Battlemind +8, Enhance Ability +10, Enhance Senses +12, Force Stealth +8, Force Strike +10, Friendship +9, Heal Another +10, Heal Self +5, Move Object +9, See Force +12.

Feats: Force-Sensitive, Improved Initiative, Skill Emphasis: Craft (lightsaber), Spacer, Weapon Finesse (lightsaber), Weapon Focus (lightsaber), Weapon Proficiency (simple weapons, blaster pistols, lightsaber).

Force Feats: Alter, Aware, Battle Meditation, Control, Knight Defense, Lightsaber Defense, Master Defense, Sense.

*If you want to learn more about the **Living Force** campaign and how to take part in the adventure, this [introduction](#) will get you started.*