

*"I will kill all she loves, all she protects, until her hands are drenched in blood."* - Darth Sion

The journey back home had been a long one. Nath breathed a heavy sigh as the AGV Nighthawk docked. She was eager to escape its confines to the much larger vessel, and leave behind the memories.

As she stood next to the docking port, other members of the crew eyed her warily. The dried blood that caked her pale skin made her itch; all she wanted was to hit the fresher and wash away the old memories much like the bodily fluid.

"Nath..." Her brother's voice dragged her back to the present.

"Mn?" Her black gaze turned to Kalon habitually. She would always give him her full attention.

"What you did..." The Mandalorian did not get a chance to finish his sentence before the Iridonian cut in.

"Vengeance." With the uttered word spoken she slipped through the opened airlock, not giving anyone a chance to speak further. She didn't wish to talk any more.

For now, she required silence.

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Blood-coated fingers hurriedly keyed in the code. The door did not have the opportunity to open fully as she squeezed herself through the small gap. Wide, purposeful strides carried the Iridonian across the office and through into the living quarters. As she went, her soiled clothes were discarded one by one, strewn in a small trail that led to the bathroom.

Trembling, her fingers set the fresher as hot as her skin could tolerate. Impatiently, she clambered in, not even waiting for the water to run warm. The cold made her shiver violently, shocking her back into awareness before her knees gave way. Panting, she repressed the urge to vomit, focusing on the pink swirl of watered down haemoglobin as she reflexively swallowed.

Memories engulfed her once more.

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"Maaks, get out."

"I can't, he's my patient."

"I said, out."

Nath couldn't recall if Maaks had spoken further, her focus solely on the Rattataki that lay on the medical bay's bed. For a long moment she couldn't move, just watching as his chest rose and fell with ragged breathing.

The first thing the female did was lock the doors. Then, cautiously, she stepped forward, almost hesitant as old fears began to course through her from the past. He did not move, even when a cautious finger probed a deep gash across his chest.

Smiling at the lack of reaction, she used the restraints on the bed to lock his arms and legs in place, pulling the straps taut to ensure he could not escape once she woke him.

*Long time, no see.*

Was the only thought that passed her mind as she retrieved the hypodermic from the drawer. The needle was longer than she recalled, but it did not matter: she knew what to do with it.

Stepping back, Nath delicately unsheathed the needle before ramming it with force into the unconscious male's chest. Her thumb pressed hard on the plunger, sending a surge of adrenaline coursing through his system.

The Rattataki awoke with a yell of pain that elongated when he opened his eyes and looked down to see the thick needle still embedded in between his ribs.

"Hello, Emil. I'm so glad you could squeeze me in, since I know dying can take up one's attention." The Iridonian spoke almost in a whisper but knew he heard every word

"N-Nath?" Emil seemed thoroughly confused by the recent turn of

events. "You should be dead!"

"So sorry to disappoint you, but I am very much alive. Which is more than I can promise of your own condition once I have finished with you."

The female took great joy watching Emil tremble. She could see him attempt to fight for his freedom but it was a fruitless battle. The restraints were designed to hold even the strongest of species down.

Nath stood quickly, dragging the surgical tray closer, nimbly picking out the laser scalpel just as the intercom buzzed into life.

"Nath, open the damn door now!" Teroch's irate voice echoed around the room, and for a moment Nath said nothing in response.

"...I can't do that."

"Yes, you can, that's an order." His voice softened fractionally, recognising the desperation in her own response.

"You can court martial me later." With that said she ripped out the syringe and forcefully impaled the scalpel into Emil's chest. Over the Rattataki's screams she could hear the comm had not been closed.

"Celahir, get that damned door open!"

In desperation, Nath shared the pain Emil had caused her over the years with Celahir, each event crammed into the Kiffar's mind into one moment. The distraction was enough, and by the time the door hissed open the Iridonian had punched through the weakened bones of her captive's ribs and ripped out Emil's heart.

Sanguine bodily fluid pulsed from the shredded blood vessels, coating her fingers in the viscous fluid. She bit deeply into the severed muscle, her sharp teeth shredding the tough fibres with ease.

Naradas was the first through the door, Teroch and Arcia close on his heels. All of them witnessed the gruesome scene in muted silence. None of the trio breathed as they watched Nath.

After a fraction of a second the Iridonian pulled the muscle away, using the force of the motion to sever the last of the stubborn

strands to break away. With an audible growl of satisfaction she spat the mouthful back into Emil's open chest cavity, choked the dead organ in her grasp before slamming it into the centre of the Rattataki's chest with an audible squelching noise, and stepped away.

It seemed odd to Nath but she hadn't noticed when Emil had stopped screaming, and the female no longer cared; revenge was finally hers, and no one could steal it away now.

With a slight growl of satisfaction, she elbowed her way past Arcia who had been partially blocking the exit. No one stopped the Iridonian's retreat, but she dimly recalled Teroch's hushed curse.

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Nath was uncertain how long she had been hunched over in the fresher, but the skin of her fingertips had wrinkled at the extent of the moisture she had exposed herself to. The pink hue of the water had been washed away as the fresher pelted her malnourished form clean.

As if acting on autopilot, Nath turned off the stream of water, blindly groped for a towel and coiled it around herself. Her bare feet padded across the flooring, taking her directly to the bed.

She sat on the edge, but didn't take in anything that happened around her. Nath's senses were completely dulled by exhaustion, and she didn't even notice the arrival of the other person until he stood before her with his own towel coiled around his waist.

"...Nath?" The male knelt before her just as she slumped forward, the side of her head landed against his scarred chest.

"...I missed you..." Was all she could whisper into the patchworkesque flesh she lent against. Hot tears stung at her eyes until she could no longer see her own blood soaked hands.

Finally, the nothingness ebbed away, and inside she screamed her pain as she had never been able to before. Every cell in her body echoed her grief and loss, a harmonious pitch that could only be acquired after a life of suffering in silence.

Her husband could do nothing but hold her close as she wept away the pent-up emotions that had been held in place for all of her adult

life. He could almost see every beating, every cruel act, and he had no words that he could say to ease her suffering.

The pair knelt together upon the floor, tangled in a haphazard embrace until Nath's tears had ran dry and her voice was lost to the nothingness. There was no calm to be had, but neither was there regret.

Dimly she was aware of being picked up, her limp form easily manipulated as he carried her and carefully lay her in the bed they shared.

Neither slept, instead they basked in each other's presence, seeking out the comfort that only the other could bring, knowing that on the morrow new trails and tribulations awaited them.

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