**Fortune Favours the Loyal**

At some point in her life, what she was about to do would have seemed insane – and she would have checked herself into a mental facility for even considering it. Now, it was just another day at the office. Mirana Fenn was a highly valued and skilled operative in the Taldryan Intelligence Directorate, who was known professionally merely as Cipher-4. She was small of frame, but nature and a smidgeon of corrective surgery when she was a young girl had endowed her with features that even the most desirable holovid actresses would be jealous of: and her looks were the least interesting thing about her.

Having trained at the University of Coruscant, Coronet, and a number of other notable educational institutions throughout the galaxy, Mirana Fenn was world renowned as one of the galaxies premier xeno-archeologists, with the ability to speak and read fluently any number dead languages. Her brother had often teased her that she was little more than a protocol droid for dead cultures. Aeron would have been the only person Mirana would have trusted with her secret identity, but unfortunately, he had been killed while playing at being a smuggler all those years ago. It was actually the tragedy surrounding his death that had set Mirana down the path that would have changed her life: the path of service to the shadowy Clan Taldryan as one of its deep cover Cipher agents.

Truth be told, had she known what wealth of information there was on ancient cultures and wars, she would have flocked to the Esstran sector sooner. When the request for an archaeologist with knowledge in ancient sith had hit the academic circles, Mirana had been overjoyed to be able to apply for the job. The fact that she could follow up on a mission for Taldryan while carrying out important historical works was merely an extra incentive. It was this curiosity in the ancient sith culture and artifacts that had led her to applying to join yet another mysterious organization.

Mirana had been toiling away in a dimly lit workshop on a backwater world named Begeren for months before she had any significant find. Begeren had played host to a battle or two during the Galactic Civil war, and the independent appraisers kept dumping shrapnel on her desk hoping that it was a path to power in this mysterious organization. In the end though, it was a wholly unpleasant woman who delivered the rock carving of Typhojem that made Mirana take notice of the work they were doing , and more importantly, the people she was doing her work for.

She hadn't sent any messages to her contact within Taldryan in months, and even though the small rock carving itself was innocuous, a mere idol... the woman who had delivered it was anything but innocuous. Having spent time working alongside the Jedi of Clan Taldryan, Mirana could spot a Force user with little effort, and this Iktotchi woman reeked of the Force, and suddenly Cipher-4 knew that she had her mission.

In the months that followed her chance encounter with Darth Necren, Mirana dug her way deeper into the One Sith apparatus. Leveraging her expert knowledge of ancient cultures and knowledge of the workings of dark side organizations was able to secure a transfer to the Sith home world of Korriban, where she would find herself surrounded by One Sith adepts and soldiers.

Though Taldryan itself had little in common with the One Sith, even some knowledge of how to navigate Sith power games meant that Mirana was able to make herself more and more valuable to her erstwhile employers. Even though her reports had been sporadic, and communication with her controller had been nearly impossible, Mirana knew that the conflict between the Brotherhood and the One Sith was fast approaching its conclusion, having been informed of the fall of Nicht Ka some weeks earlier. It was still a shock though, whilst in the midst of a dig in the tomb of Naga Sadow, and surrounded by One Sith soldiers, that the ceilings started shaking from nearby artillery fire.

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The flight from the Valley of the Dark Lords was hectic. Even for someone in as good of shape as Mirana was the trek -- short though it was -- was exhausting. Her training and even her time working for Taldryan had never made her into much of a fighter, and dodging mortar shells and air raids while fleeing a war zone was harder work than her education had not prepared her for the exhaustion that comes with forced marches.

Even as they exited the Valley of the Dark Lords, and started ducking into the cover of the small smuggling settlement of Dreshdae, Mirana could tell that this was not a small skirmish. Sounds of blaster fire echoed down the small streets, and the sky looked as though it were burning for all the smoke and ash in the air. The rush through the congested alleys and streets of Dreshdae were a timeless blur, fear colouring every experience. At one point, the group of One Sith soldiers who were rushing them along encountered unknown enemy forces, and despite knowing that these were people who had killed Taldryan forces, she found herself desperately hoping in that moment that these soldiers would deliver her from danger.

Danger though, would be the recipe of the day for hours to come. After what had seemed like days worth of travel packed into a few intense hours, Mirana could see the spaceport approaching in the distance. It seemed as though finally, they'd be able to escape the planet, and Mirana would be able to find a way to abandon this foolish mission: she was not cut out for being shot at. Even as the group approached though, a violent wail shook the air above her causing her to stumble and fall. Ahead of her, the coalescing energy of a full powered laser barrage stuck the star port, causing the structure to swell into a bulbous shape before exploding outward in a deadly spray of shrapnel and doom.

The concussion from the nearby explosion pinned her bodily to the ground, and when she rose, it was as if she were a child standing in the playground of giants. Flames were everywhere, and the men and women she had worked with, joked with, and talked shop with laid around her, cut to shreds by flying debris.

It was wandering around in the haze of war, tears streaming down her face that he found her.

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Quiet seemed like a forgotten luxury, but through the haze of shock she was escaping, quiet was exactly what Mirana had found. Dim lamplight, the kind you'd see from an actual flame, not a glow lamp filled the room in which she sat under a comforting blanket with a warm and peaceful light. It took her longer than it should have to notice the man sitting in the room staring at his data pad, seemingly completely oblivious to the world.

"Uhm.. hello?" asked Mirana tentatively, completely at a loss of what to make of this man. His face had a rugged but handsome look to it, and his hair seemed to be matching the colour of the firelight as though it were a blank canvas to be painted on. Despite his tired looking eyes, he seemed perfectly aware of what was happening, and took care to make Mirana feel at ease by taking slow, measured movements in response to her waking from her reverie.

"Don't be alarmed miss," he drawled in a soothing tone, "we're safe here, and I'm a friend. You were wandering around, and I brought you here to keep you safe."

The measured tone, and the hint of a smile curling at his lips as he said the word *safe* for some reason triggered Mirana's prideful streak "And what makes you think I need someone like *you* to keep me safe?" she bit out, marvelling at her own stupidity before she could calm herself, and quickly apologizing. "I'm sorry, you're right... I have had a bit of a shock and I'll be perfectly honest, I don't even know what's happening, or who you are."

A look of mock surprise and hurt crossed the man's rugged features, and a full smile blossomed onto his face. "Me? I'm just a.. purveyor of hard to find goods, the name is Connor Grey." The looks the man gave her were a strangely enticing combination of protector, and predator, and Mirana knew that she had to be careful with this man. "As for what's going on out there.. it's basically the usual for this area of space. Some ridiculous fool is trying to kill some other ridiculous fool, and they're all trying to become immortal." With the mention of immortality, Grey started chuckling quietly to himself, and stood up. "For all the good it will do them, anyways. Now, let's see about getting you some food.. as I said, we're quite safe here. Even those bastards from Taldryan won't find us here."

The name struck Mirana like a lightning bolt, breaking through her otherwise stoic demeanour. *Taldryan, here? What in the blazes?* As Mirana's mind raced, Grey shot her a strange look, having apparently sensed that he struck a nerve. "What, have you heard of Taldryan? Not many have." The warmth that had previously dominated his voice seemed to have evaporated, and suspicion coloured his every word. Even his body language had changed from unthreatening to a coiled spring of nerves

"Uh.." she stammered, "I had a run in with them a few years back, they were desecrating a dig site and.. uh.." It was increasingly obvious to her that whatever it was she was selling, Grey wasn't buying, so she decided to change tactics. "Oh, whatever, yes, I know who they are, and they'll be looking for me." The bluff was barely out of her mouth when an explosion rocked the shelter, and the sound of a small canister clanked down into the basement.

Riotous light and sound filled the enclosed space, and suddenly she heard a gruff voice coloured with paternal worry that she never thought she'd hear again. "What the... dammit Mirana, what kind of kriffing trouble have you gotten yourself into this time?"

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Mirana Fenn, freshly showered and dressed in a simple black jumpsuit sat quietly in the darkened room, looking through one directional glass at Connor Grey, the man who had saved her; a man who it turns out was a wanted by nearly every major player in the Dark Brotherhood. Admiral Cantor had done little to explain the situation to her, but apparently he had discovered something extremely valuable in the current war Taldryan was engaged in, and rescuing her had only been a side benefit.

As the door opened behind her, Cantor tromped in, and took one last look at Grey before he turned his stern gaze on Mirana. "Mirana, you know I'd prefer if you stayed out of these types of situation. Your father would not approve." The mere mention of her beloved father brought a smile to Mirana's face, but she fought down the urge to be distracted.

"What are you going to do with him sir?" Keirdagh rose an eyebrow at the formal tone, but seemed to take the hint and sighed.

"Truth be told? I want him to join us. I've already dealt with the threat of the artifact he uncovered... the Ritual it contained has been destroyed, and nobody will use it against the people of the galaxy ever again."

"So why the interrogation room? Why is he a prisoner?"

"Unfortunately, I can't be sure that he didn't tell anyone what he found, or made any copies of it." Worry furrowed his brow before he continued on. "Now please dear, don't subject yourself to this." Mirana considered defying the man she had known her entire life, but instead took his advice to heart, and cast one last glance at her saviour before walking out of the room. As she left the observation room, she saw a gaunt man with striking cheekbones enter the interrogation chamber, and was suddenly unsure that she would ever see Connor Grey alive again.

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DJM Keirdagh Taldrya Cantor, Dossier #83