

Blaster bolts kicked into the dirt, spraying chunks of earth against the Mandalorian's heels as he sprinted forward towards the enemy lines. The militia had set up in a small isolated village, no doubt having evicted the locals first. In place of fields and roads, they had set up a vast network of trenches, wire and bunkers aimed at halting the Clan's advance.

He could sense his allies back him up as they followed him across the rubble strewn land, returning fire with their own blaster rifles. Deflecting a couple of bolts with his argent blade, the Dark Jedi cast a devastating burst of Force Lightning as he reached the first bunker. The sounds of the men frying alive within danced around his eardrums as he unhooked a thermal detonator from his belt and threw it in the opening.

Before the explosive had even dealt with the structure Kalon had moved on, jumping into the trench system and in amongst the militiamen before they knew what was happening. Swinging his saber in a sharp arch, the Savant cut down man after man, leaving a trail for his kin to follow.

As the last man in the trench fell, Kalon turned back to view the oncoming Mandalorians, simultaneously sheathing his blade. They wasted no time in advancing beyond the Dark Jedi, splitting off into underground tunnels and side buildings, searching hungrily for the combat they so desperately craved. Kalon's eyes at last fell upon the last Mandalorian to cross the ruined battleground.

Tracinya was only twelve years of age. As a minor, she did not have the experience necessary to be declared a full fledged warrior of Clan Beviin, however this did not stop her father from taking her out to observe the battles him and his Clan kin participated in. Seemingly unphased by the roaring explosions and eruptive blaster fire, she sprinted towards the trench, dropping into it and regrouping with Kalon.

"Stay close to me, ok?" Said the Dark Jedi, his voice uncharacteristically softening as he spoke to Tracinya, patting the girl on her helmeted head.

"Yes, father." She replied, her hand slipping over the small hold out blaster she wore on her belt.

Looking up to observe his surroundings, Kalon gestured for the girl to follow as he made his way towards the end of the trench system. He spotted another bunker with a sealed door and hastily made his way to it, placing a hand on the dulled metal surface. He could tell it was fused tight and would require an explosive to breach. Though having already used his detonator on the last bunker, the Mandalorian knew it wasn't an option yet.

"We'll come back." He said to himself, once again motioning for his daughter to follow him as he went to rejoin the main Mandalorian force.

26 minutes later...

Twisting the lightsaber into the man's stomach, Kalon unsheathed his *beskad* with considerable speed, not stopping as he sunk the blade into his opponent's neck. The man's cries were cut off with violent gurgles as he choked to death on his blood.

Letting the enemy soldier drop to the ground in agony, the Dark Jedi turned sharply to parry a woman coming at him with a vibrosword. Using his enhanced strength, he pushed forward sharply against her hold as his leg connected with her knee cap. The sickening crack as her leg inverted was followed by yet another cry as she also fell to the ground.

Kalon took this opportunity to survey his surroundings.

The battle was already over, the enemy had been routed and was in full retreat. All that was left now were his kinsmen picking off the last of the resistance that hadn't had the common sense of mind to fall back.

Tracinya was still only a few metres away from him. With pride he watched as she pointed her hold out blaster at one of the desperate militiamen, firing a green blaster bolt that after a few seconds of travelling connected with his unfortunate head.

Turning his attention back to the prone woman, still crying out in pain, Kalon kicked her onto her back and placed his heel sharply on her throat. After a second to savour his victim's realisation, the Mandalorian Protector applied extreme pressure, crushing her throat and snapping her neck with one aggressive motion.

Sheathing his weapons, he approached his daughter as the sounds of combat faded around them, replaced only with the cheers and celebratory chanting of his Clansmen.

"Dad, look what I found." She said, pushing over the body of a fallen trooper and taking the thermal detonator still clutched in his lifeless grip. Handing it to her father, she removed her helmet, allowing her long dark brown hair to fall freely besides from the pony tail she had tied it in.

"Good find, *ad'ika*." beamed the Dark Jedi, brushing a thumb over the explosive device as he looked back in the direction they originally had come from. "Now let's go crack that door open."

Five minutes later...

"Get back!" Cautioned Kalon, placing the thermal detonator against the metal of the door and pressing the activation button. Knowing well the five second timer on the newer models, the Mandalorian ran down the trench, ducking for cover behind a pile of heavy duty crates probably borrowed by the militia to use as additional protection.

The explosion rocked the ground for a moment before subsiding, the noise of the blast was dampened by the sensors in the Mandalorian's helmet. It was a good thing Tracinya had put her helmet back on beforehand too, otherwise her ears would have suffered for it.

Leaving the cover of the crates, Kalon cautiously made his way back down the trench towards the now gaping hole in the side of the bunker. He raised his carbine rifle as he waited for his daughter to catch up, slowly entering into the structure.

It was dark, the blast most likely having disabled all the lights. Unlike the other bunkers that had been fairly shallow and stocked with weaponry, this one went deeper underground and seemed to be pretty desolate except for a doorway Kalon could make out at the end.

"Not locked." Observed Tracinya as they reached it.

"Careful." Replied Kalon, raising the carbine rifle once again as he stood back. In one movement, he kicked the door wide open, stepping into the room with his weapon brought to bear.

The room on the other side of the door seemed to be a supply room. There were several shelves stacked with what appeared to be surplus items, such as canned food and crates of blankets. What really attracted the attention of the Mandalorian were the several huddled figures in the corner of the room.

He could make out their wide eyes and fearful expressions in the dark.

'Looks like women and children.' Kalon thought to himself, now clearly making out a couple of kids no older than Tracinya along with a few adult women. 'Guess they were some of the locals that refused to leave.'

It didn't matter if they were civilians, even the locals had been declared hostiles for supporting the militiamen in the first place. Kalon remembered that the Commanders had been very specific with their 'shoot first and ask questions later' policy.

Unphased, the Mandalorian Protector raised his carbine rifle, noticing the looks of shock and fear emphasised in the faces of his would be victims.

Though before he could fire the first round of carbine, he felt a hand clasp around his wrist. Taking his eyes from the targets, Kalon looked down to see Tracinya standing besides him, her helmet removed and in her hands.

"Father...please...don't." She pleaded, her eyes staring up at him with a mix of desperation and sadness. "It isn't their fault...they don't deserve to die."

Before Kalon could say anything, his daughter continued to speak, her hand travelling from his wrist to the barrel of the carbine rifle.

“You taught me to always do what I felt was right, even if it went against orders. You said that was the most courageous thing someone could do.”

Her hand continued to travel along the carbine rifle until it reached the end. She covered the muzzle with her palm, her eyes still looking up into the cold reflective visor of her father.

“This is the right thing to do, Dad...let them go.”

For what must have been a few tense seconds, Kalon exchanged glances between Tracinya and the huddled group of women and children behind her. He knew she was correct. The orders never sat well with him in the first place, but he wasn't going to make an enemy out of his own child for no reason.

“You're right, *ad'ika*.” Kalon replied, relenting as he let her take the carbine rifle from him. “Let's get out of here.”

With only a nod towards the rescued gang of civilians, the Mandalorian pair turned and made towards the exit. The battle was certain to have finished up, and Kalon knew his forces would need to regroup to defend against the much anticipated counterattack.

“You know, you remind me a lot of your mother.” Admitted the Dark Jedi, a slight grin appearing on his concealed face as he stretched his hand out to her. “She was good at guilt tripping me too.”

Tracinya giggled, taking her father's hand as they emerged back into daylight, leaving the dark confines of the supply bunker behind them.