

The Barkeep and the War of Two Worlds  
Small hamlet on Judecca  
34 ABY  
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The general clatter of voices, reverie, and song slipped out into the cool, dark, starry night. The door of *The Hairy Wookiee* was cracked just enough to entice any stragglers that happened to walk by. The stars had few if any people to idolize them as most were already safely indoors. Two black robed men blended in with the night, and walked in a swift line straight for the cantina, the creak of the door the only advance notice of their arrival.

The proprietor of this fine establishment was a wizened old woman named Sara, who had a keen eye for business. She watched the two men enter her cantina, their looks and proudly displayed lightsabers trouble. She had survived the formation of the Empire, and several wars that took place afterwards. She would survive on this war torn planet as well. She made the most of it though, and had a talent for knowing who to avoid. She assumed the two men were Sith due to their dark clothing.

As she wiped down her counters and put away glasses, she watched them make their way to one of her finer tables, acquiring it for themselves after a few pointed threats. Sara shook her head ever so slightly as she bend down to pick up a glass under the counter. *Hmm, they always want to the finest table. Good thing I bugged it.* She activated her hidden earpiece and made herself busy serving up drinks.

The beautiful thing about a bartender is that most seem to forget that they exist when they aren't serving you. They fade into the background, become part of it, and collect information. That was how she had survived so far. Sara didn't have to wait long for the bold Sith to strike up a conversation with each other.

"Blasted soldiers, why are they sitting in our seat?! Don't they know what a superior looks like?" The taller of the two Sith complained.

"The things we do for them. You would think they showed a little appreciation. Do you know how many of them I saved in the last house feud? They would have been chopped to pieces," stated the shorter Sith.

The ousted soldiers were still standing close enough to hear their conversation and quickly stiffened. They turned around and their eyes bore into the two force users. Pain, anger, distrust, and frustration seeped out of them in waves of emotion. The two force users sensed their threats and moved their hands to their sabers. Everyone in the room hushed, the tension quickly building. The older soldier with a grizzled white beard broke the silence first.

"If it wasn't for you we wouldn't even have to fight! You pick fights just because you can, and the pawns always die the most. Do you even care?!" The old soldier shouted across the room.

“You are but an ant on a much bigger stage. How dare you question the motives for our wars?! Without us, you wouldn’t even have a job. You need us, and it’s best you understand that for your own well being.” The taller Sith said in a bullying tone.

“Yeah, watch your tongue termite. You might just get sent to the front lines with Grandmaster Pravus. If you think our death toll is high, you aren’t very appreciative of just how bad your life can become,” threatened the shorter Sith.

“How dare you threaten us?!” The younger soldier snarled aggressively.

*Boys and their tantrums* thought the old barkeep, who was keeping a close watch on the dangerous standoff. She didn’t want her bar destroyed again.

“THAT’S IT! CLAUDE, GET THOSE SOLDIERS OUT OF HERE!” Sara ordered her bouncer as she stared up at the angry faces of the two soldiers.

The crowd at the cantina hushed in deference to Sara and the soldier’s faces flushed with the injustice. Claude changed their minds. They cast murderous glares at the grinning Sith and reluctantly exited the cantina. Sara followed them out with her bouncer, yelling at her assistant to watch the bar. Several people in the cantina silently disagreed, but the existence of the Sith’s lightsabers dispelled any violence. The angry infantrymen kicked the door open, the cool air hitting their faces as they exited the cantina. Sara rounded on the two men as soon as the door was firmly shut behind her.

“You stupid fools! You have a right to be angry, but use some sense. They have lightsabers, which were seconds from being activated and used to chop up my bar along with your body. Did you even think about anyone else in that bar?! Don’t be like those force users, you have to be smarter than them. Live longer. That is how you beat them,” stressed Sara, her face flushed red with anger and determination.

“But look what they did...” The young soldier started to say, his face full of shock as the older woman berated him with passionate verbal stabs.

“It doesn’t matter. Living does. You can get them back if you want, but be smart about it and don’t use my bar. I’m sorry I had to kick you out, but I have to make a living too you know. You’ll get free drinks when you come back in a few days. Now go, and if you leave here with little fuss I’ll make those jerks a drink that will make them hate their lives later tonight.” Sara ordered.

“Thank you. Let’s go,” the older man ordered. The younger one sighed heavily and followed his superior home.

Sara watched their retreating backs and quietly wished them good luck. The poor souls were pawns, but if they played their roles well they could end up winning in the long run.

“Let’s go back inside, Claude. Keep an eye on things while I prepare their drinks,” ordered Sara.

As they walked back into the cantina, Sara found herself wishing that there was more she could do. Life wasn’t fair, but she could still win by surviving.