**Chute Town**

**Lucrehulk-class Battleship *Godless Matron***

Trab Pu’kcip snuck around the streets of Chute Town much as he always did. The forty-year old Human hadn’t been on the *Godless Matron* for very long, but he suspected that he was still one of Chute Town’s longer lived residents. Many came and went on a daily basis, staying only to sell or exchange the cargoes on the huge variety of freighters that passed by.

Pu’kcip’s job was far less scrupulous than most even on the *Matron*. He presented a public face as a member of the ‘Scheming Sarlaccs’ gang, and had very quickly worked his way up the ranks with a reputation for being particularly ruthless.

In reality, Trab Pu’kcip worked directly for Morgan Sorenn, the *Godless Matron*’s captain. His official role was ‘Agitator’, but the job was far more complex than such a simple title. In short, he, along with a counterpart in each of the other major gangs, were largely in charge of adjusting the atmosphere in Chute Town to however Morgan liked.

Trab actually quite enjoyed leading a double life. Before he happened upon the Herald and her ship, the Alderaanian had spent the previous two and a half decades travelling the galaxy. After being left an orphan at the age of six when the Empire destroyed his planet, the man made his own luck.

Pu’kcip’s wrist comlink buzzed with an incoming message. A quick check of the display indicated that the caller was Morgan.

“Trab. I hope you’re not too busy,” the Herald’s voice began.

“If you’ve got the credits, I’m never too busy. Just spit it out and I’ll get it done!” the male replied.

“So direct. You Alderaanians are all the same!” Morgan stated.

*I’m sure she’s met loads of them*! Trab thought to himself.

“I need you to start ramping up the tension between the gangs. Things are getting too quiet. You know that makes us incredibly nervous,” Sorenn declared.

“Anything else I should know? I’ve noticed a lot of new faces around here today. Quite a few of them are carrying lightsabers,” Pu’kcip answered.

“Just stick to annoying the other gangs. Those Force users aren’t your concern!” Morgan snapped, ending the call.

Sighing, Trab craned his neck around, looking for members of the rival gangs. For him, the worst part of the job was that he did not know who among his targets were fellow Agitators; the Herald did not divulge such information. Whilst the Alderaanian didn’t mind targeting gang members, particularly those with a particularly nasty reputation, killing those who were supposed to be his allies did not seem a sensible course of action.

After scanning the immediate area for some time, Pu’kcip noticed a male Twi’lek harassing a beggar. He was well out of hearing range, but he ascertained from the way that the beggar was moving his arms about that the alien was being incredibly threatening.

It was at times like this that Trab Pu’kcip was glad that he was a sniper. Taking his DLT-20A from its harness, the Alderaanian expertly balanced it on his right shoulder, already beginning to line his shot up. He knew he had to be quick; standing in such a crowded area with a large blaster made him an obvious target, especially if Morgan had stirred her other Agitators.

Squeezing the trigger, Trab didn’t take his eyes away from his sight until he confirmed that his shot was a perfect hit, the blaster bolt tearing through the Twi’lek’s forehead. The beggar looked in the Alderaanian’s direction, trying to find his saviour, before turning to flee the area.

Quite the crowd was stirred into action by Pu’kcip’s attack. A few people, dressed in similar armour to the deceased Twi’lek, began to fan out away from the fallen alien.

Trab knew what to do next. Sticking around was never a good idea for a sniper who had just successfully eliminated his target, and with the situation already beginning to de-stabilise, the Alderaanian needed to find somewhere away from the crowd to continue his mission. Spotting a nearby ladder, the sniper quickly scrambled to the top, rolling along the roof of a cantina. As he moved into a crouching position, he readied his DLT-20A again, taking the situation below in through its sight.

The chaos that Pu’kcip’s initial shot had sparked was now unfolding rapidly. Members of the various gangs were attacking each other, whilst others either joined it or sprinted for cover. There were even a few lightsabers drawn, confirming the presence of the Force users that Morgan had hinted at.

Trab’s eyes were drawn to one particular, purple bladed lightsaber. Its owner was dressed in an identical shade of purple, and had long, black hair with purple tips.

*What the frak is SHE doing here?* The sniper thought to himself. He was so surprised by having spotted the female that he nearly fell from his vantage point. He briefly considered getting her attention, but decided against it; she was carving her way through gangsters in a way which told Trab that he would probably not survive the encounter. He also couldn’t remember how his last encounter with the woman, over three decades before, had gone, further pushing him away from making any attempt to talk to his fellow Alderaanian.

Putting the brief vision of his past to the back of his mind, Pu’kcip fired several shots into the crowd, taking the time to aim but not to identify his victims. When Morgan wanted things to get nasty in Chute Town, she generally did not care who got hurt, so long as the *Godless Matron*’s actual crew members were unharmed.

With his rifle’s energy cell starting to deplete, Trab decided it was time to move on. He had fired enough shots to alert the crowd below that there was an active sniper, and quite a few of the more adventurous denizens of Chute Town were now looking in his general direction, whilst others ducked for cover.

The Alderaanian pushed a button on his comlink.

“Job done. Chute Town’s pretty manic right now. Just one question, Captain,” Trab began.

“What’s that?” the Herald queried.

“When you mentioned Alderaanians, did you know that I wasn’t the only one aboard?” the sniper asked.

“Now, now, Trab. That would be telling. I suggest you just get out of there before someone spots you. Thanks to you and your fellow Agitators, things are exactly how I’d like them. Find somewhere and enjoy the show!” Morgan replied.