

30 ABY

Kuat system, Kuat

Stahoes Family Apartment

Wind whipped around the woman's body as she stood on the balcony, watching the sunset. As Damasa Pryde Stahoes looked out on the cityscape, she took a moment to appreciate the beauty of her old home. She and Garhas had spent many years in the city, yet she never grew numb to the wonder that seemed prevalent in this industrial city.

They led a very simple life, with her husband's work as a Kuati Security officer keeping him out late some nights, but this evening was going to be special. Seven years prior, the pair had met at a bar on Coruscant and the pair engaged in several dates as time permitted for the following two years. Tonight marked five years of marriage for the pair. Taking a slow inhale, she smiled thinking to the meal cooking inside. She had purchased several nerf steaks the day before, which were currently soaking in a brine. Their meal would be spicy and succulent.

The sound of the front door drew the woman out of her reverie. Garhas wasn't supposed to be home for another hour. Perhaps the Captain of the security team had let him off early because of the occasion. She stepped through the sliding transparisteel door, smiling widely.

"Evening, my love," she called through the house as she made her way through the kitchen area. "Dinner isn't done quite yet." He didn't respond immediately as she turned the corner. Words of affection died in the woman's mouth as she turned a corner. A tall Falleen in dark clothing was standing in her living room, a blaster pointed at her chest.

"Too bad that dinner isn't ready, I could really stand a bite to eat." The man motioned with his weapon, indicating one of the room's simple couches. "Now sit down, *Ayva*," the man growled the name.

At the name, Damasa's face darkened. "I have no idea what you are talking about." Her tone was cold as she stared down the intruder. "There is no Ayva here. You must have the wrong home."

The Falleen laughed bitterly as he pointed the barrel of his weapon at her chest again. "Perhaps I should have said I was looking for Nara Wan, then? Or maybe the names Kyra Rholar or Senesha Quadrix mean a little something more to you?" The Falleen sneered at his captor. "Though, if your memory is that bad, then I suppose that you forgot old Follnor here then, huh?" His voice was tinged with mock sorrow. "I guess it is hard to remember someone that you left for dead back in the Mon Calamari system."

Realization dawned upon the woman, and her eyes widened. "You are Follnor Nata." Her tone was calm, despite the fact that her heart rate was up and fear began to grip her heart.

"So she finally remembers! I suppose it would be hard to keep things straight though after living double, triple or more lives. It made you a lot harder to track down, but you couldn't keep it up forever. Now," he spoke the next words a little slower, more deliberately, **sit down** before I put a hole in your chest."

Damasa's mind whirled, but she obeyed, slumping down numbly onto the couch. Follnor clicked his tongue, striding across the room to fall into the chair opposite the couch. Her mouth was dry, but she tried to wet her lips as she stared in fearful disbelief. "What is it that you want with me?"

The Falleen chuckled coldly. "What do you expect me to say? Do you think it is something like revenge? Well, as nice of a bonus as that will be, it isn't quite as simple as that. You have made some people rather angry after all the work you did across the galaxy. Despite what you might think, you don't get to just walk away at the end of the day. Some very wealthy clients want you back. Barring that, they want you silenced permanently."

"So you are acting here as a tool of the Command." The woman's words were not angry, or fearful, but matter of fact. "You are just a filthy, low-life mercenary for hire."

With a snarl, the Falleen threw himself up his seat. He drew back his weapon, cracking it painfully across her face. Damasa felt her head snap back, and her ears almost seemed to ring with the pain. "Don't frack with me!" Follnor shook as he bellowed the words. He seemed to show no regard for the warm blood that Damasa could now feel trickling from the corner of her mouth.

As a whimper escaped from her lips unbidden, the housewife watched the mercenary as he huffed. She wanted to push up from the seat. Garhas had a hunting blaster in the bedroom. She just needed to keep him talking, wait for him to slip up. While he teeth remained gritted, the Falleen's breathing slowed. "You know what? You aren't even worth the credits lost to bring you in. You have had this coming for a while. I can't be the only one you left like that." With a growl, he lifted the weapon, so that Daramas could see down the barrel itself.

Time seemed to slow now. There was little chance of escaping now for the woman. Of all the days for something so terrible, her husband would come home upon his anniversary to find his wife's corpse in the living room. Tears stung at her eyes as she stared into the barrel.

"Don't think that tears will save you, woman."

Something in Daramas Stahoes seemed to break. With a sniff, she drew herself up, steeling herself. One word fell from her lips in response: "Fine." Resigning herself to her fate, she closed her eyes. Something shuffled in the background.

The mercenary laughed to himself, placing the weapon flush against her forehead. The sound of a blaster discharging echoed through the room. A body hit the floor and the woman's eyes

fluttered open. Follnor's body was on the ground. The form of a familiar man rushed toward her, drawing her into a close embrace.

"Garhas," the woman breathed as she embraced him in turn, holding him tightly.

"It's okay now, love." Garhas rocked his wife back and forth, and she felt a warm moving through her body. "I am so sorry I couldn't be here sooner.

"I am fine now," new tears flooded her eyes, "I am fine now." Drawing her head sideways, she stared back at the corpse of the Falleen on the floor for a moment. She would have to convince her husband to leave Kuat. She knew he had some family on Corellia. Perhaps they could find some solace there, in a new home, in a new life. This wasn't bound to be the last of her pursuers, and she wasn't ready to tell Garhas everything- not yet.