

Tali put down the holoscreen that displayed the hour's hottest news and stared blankly at the wall in front of her. The warm, humid air hung heavy around her, making her short of breath while the sputtering humming of the malfunctioning A/C unit droned in the background, a noise she had zoned out from her mind a long time ago. She could hear muffled music and shouts from beyond her apartment door, jubilant voices declaring something or another in boisterous tones that seemed to speak of more blind optimism than ability. The sounds of those soon to die.

Shifting her attention back to the holoscreen, she skimmed over the news article once more and sighed as she halted at the picture of the devastated space docks. Such devastation. Granted, it had been mostly a military installation, but as the news article was quick to point out, civilian casualties were also high. Dock workers, maintenance crews... she even felt sorry for the soldiers who'd died in the explosion. Granted, they were fighting on the wrong side of the conflict and anyone who sided with beliefs of a "lesser race", or in this case races, were not seen warmly by her. Nevertheless, being killed in a saboteur's attack was not a way to go, even for a soldier.

She knew that she was no fighter herself. If anything, she sought to avoid conflict whenever possible. However, this did not mean she was unwilling to do her part. In fact, ever since she'd become a part of this new world, made new friends and begun to understand her own potential in the world, she had become even more determined to repay her benefactors and let others become part of the good she'd been granted.

There would be many who would be caught in the middle soon enough. She might not have had experience with wars as such, but she knew instinctively that when such forces clashed, there would be collateral, lots of it, and this was where she could be best of use and aid.

Almost as if on cue, her communicator beeped and she quickly read Koliss' name before answering. The man seemed distressed and not a little bit drunk. Had he been celebrating or lamenting? She would probably soon found out.

"Yes, Koliss, it's me. What's up?" She asked, hearing the same ruckus in the background of his call as she could hear out in the streets.

"I, uh... you heard the news, right?" His heavily inebriated voice replied. "Urp, I...I may need your help, Tali. Lots of work to be done. Gotta help Lotus."

She furrowed her brow. Despite the poor connection and his clearly drunken state, there was something more to his state of unrest. Something was bothering him and he was doing his best to hide it.

"Yes, sure. What do you need?" She stated simply, honing her senses to better try and figure out what he was hiding. He'd only known the man for a short time and as far as she knew, he was a combat medic of sorts. However, much of his past was a mystery to her and despite seeming like a solid bloke, she couldn't rule out the possibility he was setting her up. Indeed, where his loyalties truly lay were for the moment unknown and that made him a potential liability.

There was a long pause. So long, in fact, Tali had to check the connection hadn't been terminated abruptly, before Koliss finally replied.

"There's going to be a lot of refugees and I could use a pair of extra hands. I know you're not a trained medic or anything, but... I'm feeling compelled to do something about this and you were the only one I could think of." He stated with a weary tone.

The Twi'lek considered his words for a while and could sense something was awry. There was an angle he was not quite telling her, but he also seemed surprisingly sincere. It was a very confusing mixture to observe and this intrigued her, enough at least to warrant further investigation. Who knew if Koliss was as trustworthy as the others seemed to think he was? At any rate, she could find out and hopefully make sure whatever ulterior motive he had would not be realized to the detriment of Arcona.

She realized she must have been silent for far too long as well and hurriedly blurted her reply. "Of course! I'dt be happy to help." She stated as cheerfully as she could muster without sounding too artificial. "Vhere do you needt me andt vhen?"

"I'll let you know when I have the details nailed down." Koliss replied with a genuine sound of relief.

For a moment there was silence before he added with genuine emotion, "Thanks, Tali."

She couldn't help but give an empathetic smile and nod, even if he'd see neither gesture. "You're quite velcome, Koliss. Happy to help!" She spoke softly before adding, "Take care, ok?"

There was a noncommittal grunt of amusement at the other end before he ended the call.

Tali let out a sigh and placed the communicator on the desk before running her hand down her face. Well, at least she had something she could do to help. That was good. Yes, it would all be good and she wouldn't have to get involved in the fighting.

Her hands had moved to stroke her lek, like they always did when she was nervous. Despite her best insistence to the contrary, deep down she knew she'd most likely end up in the thick of it before all of this was done. She just *knew* it.

*"We'll make them bleed, sister."*

The whisper carried over the Force with the same cold certainty she was used to, when the mysterious voice she'd come to accept as a mentor of sorts chose to speak. Yet there was a hint of compassion in the voice as well. It had been through times like this before and known great pain, the desire for revenge blatantly obvious.

"Yes, that's vhat I fear... sister." She muttered to her empty apartment.