

The dimly lit conference room bathed in a subtle red glow from the overhead lights, the air heavy with the smoke of shishas and other narcotics with a faint mellow music drifting in the background. Idle banter, spoken only in half-uttered sentences between the gathered guests, did not carry far and pleasantries were scarcer than honest men on Nal Hutta.

Gathered around the sleek black table was an assortment of individuals from all species and walks of life, ranging from the noble-born rich to those whom some might call self-made-men, though even they had ridden others' backs to get where they were now. Indeed, it was the exploitation of others which was the sole unifying feature among the cavalcade of strange bedfellows, slavers every last one of them even if their particular methods might have varied as much as night and day. Rich oligarchs, keeping teeming masses of low-paid workers in perpetual debt to toil endlessly at their factories while skimming the cream off the top rubbed shoulders with violent, psychopathic savages who took unending pleasure out of breaking the spirits of their victims with whip, club or even bare hands.

It was thus no wonder that the men and women present kept eyeing each other with mild suspicion at the very least. A slaver was a cunning and dangerously unpredictable creature. One which wished to ascertain her dominance over others and maintain their position by any means necessary. A choke hold on the enslaved, whether physical, mental or fiscal, was the tool of choice for these professionals and it had made the collar, in its many guises, the universal sign of slavery and subservience.

The slaver was a cunning and unpredictable beast, yes, but it was not without its weaknesses. Tali Zorah had spent her entire life learning their means, their methods, their tastes until she knew their ways to a fault. After crippling the operations of several major slaver rings, freeing countless men, women and children in the process, it had been easy to convince the normally elusive and paranoid ring-leaders to convene in a place of her choosing. For if there was one thing all slavers feared, it was losing control, and her actions had seen their grasps on the master's whip loosen so much that they'd do anything to prevent their ultimate downfall. Even convening with their rivals to discuss how to deal with this elusive threat.

Tali felt her heart race as she glanced at the screen showing the assembled slavers growing impatient while they waited for the anonymous host to present himself. This was it, her moment of triumph. After years of hard work, sacrifice and sorrow, she would finally get her revenge and make the galaxy at least a tiny bit better of a place for people like herself to live in.

Steeling herself for what was to come, her lekku twitching in sympathetic nervousness, the Twi'lek woman felt an encouraging presence brush past her mind. "Do it. Avenge us!" The voice hissed in her mind, clearer and more forceful than in a long time. She could feel the urgency in its demand, but stayed her mind. She was not a murderer and would take no satisfaction from what she was about to do. She would do it for those who could not defend themselves. Those exploited and abused.

Yet as she pulled the hood of her cloak over her head and walked up to the heavy blast door leading into the conference room she knew there was one whom she would take her revenge on in cold blood...

Raoul Kar'Dannaa took a long, satisfied drag from the bubbling shisha at his side, feeling the smoke fill his lungs before slowly letting the mildly intoxicating narcotic flow out his trunk-like nose. The Toydarian's bloated belly,

a result from years of idle living as the head of a profitable pleasure slave business, shone in the dim light with a layer of grease, the green hue spotted by blemishes from an unhealthy lifestyle. He'd survived long to get to his current position and through ruthless acts towards those below him and a suitable modicum of ass-kissing to those above, he'd carved out his personal operation from what had once been a Hut-run slave ring.

All things considered, he had risen to his current position through little more than his wits and will. The number of men he'd had to kill personally he could count with all twelve of his combined digits, though the actual body-count was slightly larger. Still, compared even to the seemingly aristocratic of his peers, he considered himself a sophisticated individual, preferring to achieve his goals through other means than brute violence. Well, lethal violence at any rate.

As a testament of his self-perceived sophistication was his collection of curios from around the galaxy, unique pieces of rare origins and exotic nature which had cost him a major part of his considerable fortune. Yet, in his mind it was all worth it. Spending time in his gallery, admiring the priceless artifacts of a bygone age and surrounded by unique pieces that were irreplaceable made him feel a part of them; a unique and irreplaceable cog in the vast machinery of the galaxy, doing his vital part in maintaining the natural order of things.

Only one thing chafed him, in addition to his ill-fitting slacks which he swore had shrunk since he last wore them, was the loss of two of his precious collectables; a rare lightsaber and the Twi'lek bitch that stole it. He'd spent years and thousands upon thousands of credits hunting her down, but it seemed the galaxy had finally swallowed her. Still bearing the scars on his left wing from the night she'd broken from his service and destroyed most of his original collection, Raoul had taken it as a challenge to become even better at what he did and now counted himself among the galaxy's finest in his line of work.

Why else would he have been summoned to this exclusive meeting?

The blast door opened with a hiss and everyone gathered within the chamber turned to look at whom they assumed would be their mysterious host, but were instead treated to what most presumed was entertainment. A purple skinned Twi'lek woman, dressed in high boots, tight pants and a top that gave a generous view of her bountiful breasts stood in the doorway with a cape draped over her and a hood obscuring most of her face, only the tips of her lekku peeking out from beneath.

Several of the men and some of the women as well licked their lips at this morsel, trained eyes appraising her worth on the market with experienced precision. She was a luxury item for sure, very high class stock.

As she walked towards them with elegant, perfectly balanced steps, the blast door closing behind her, every pair of eyes in the room were nailed to her. She could feel their gazes upon her, crawling over her body like before and seeing her as nothing but a commodity to be traded, sold and used before being discarded once she was of no more worth.

Suppressing the scowl of disgust, she kept her expression neutral as she made her way up to the table, ignoring the lecherous gestures from a female Dug who sat at the corner closest to her. With their expectant gazes upon her, she drew strength from the Force to calm herself and let it fill her body with its power. There was no going back now.

"Gentlemen, ladies," She began calmly, head still slightly bowed to help obscure her features from the only person in the room she knew would recognize her. "I am pleased to see so many of you answered my call. The questions surrounding the trade of slaves have been left unanswered for far too long and I hope we can find some closure here tonight."

There were some murmurs of agreement, though more of surprise and outrage as this slave seemed to speak from the position of master. The slavers found themselves bewildered and confused, unable to quite place her in the natural pecking order. Was she a slave or was she, perhaps, the one who'd summoned them? Her words spoke one, but her gestures and attire spoke the other. Their confusion was precisely what she had counted on.

"Well, let's not mince words then. What do You or Your master propose we do about it?" a Mandalorian male spat with a gruff voice, seemingly fed up with the waiting.

A faint smirk fleeted across her lips, causing a shift of discomfort from those perceptive enough to notice. "I propose..." she stated, grabbing a hold of her hood and pulling it back to show her face. "That you cease your operations at once and let every single slave in your custody go. With payment for their years of service."

A ripple of shock and outrage went through the slavers, some reaching for their weapons even as Raoul squinted his beady eyes to inspect the Twi'lek, the orbs soon widening in shock as he realized her identity.

"Tali!?" He spat, bursting into a coughing fit as shisha smoke belched out from his trunk in thick grey clouds.

She did not bother with a reply, simply pulling her old slave collar from the folds of her robe and throwing it onto the table, the degrading ornament sliced open by her lightsaber. The slowest among them were still reeling from the surprise when she drew her weapon and ignited the plasma blade, a yellow beam of energy springing to life from the ancient hilt she'd stolen from Kar'Dannaa so many years ago.

Blaster shots rang out a split second later, the Mandalorian already on his feet and firing two blaster pistols at her in rapid succession. She deflected the shots that would strike her, dancing through his fire with practiced ease before slicing his weapons in twain and slamming her elbow into his face. The sharp crack of his breaking nose echoed across the room while even the slowest among the gathered slavers got up and tried to defend themselves.

Spinning around in time to deflect another score of shot aimed at her, Tali successfully deflected a round fired by a Quarren into the gut of his Rodian colleague before reversing her blade and stabbing it through the gut of the bleeding Mandalorian behind her.

The most skittish among their number had rushed to the blast doors, but would find them all sealed and barred, leaving the slavers trapped and without a place to escape their extermination. In the red-lit gloom of the high-rise conference room they faced the vengeful Twi'lek and the humming yellow saber in her hands and for the first time in a long while, knew real and palpable fear.

The fighting did not last long, but was all the more bloody and desperate for it. Though she had held the element of surprise and had chosen the venue to her advantage, Tali still came close to being killed or incapacitated on several occasions as she fought the surprisingly resourceful slavers, now fueled by a panicked urge for survival.

At the end, she'd slain all but one of her foes and the scent of burnt alien corpses filled the room with bodies littered all around them. Advancing on the Toydarian with blade in hand, Tali's eyes were dark with malice, her former master desperately trying to shuffle away from her before stumbling on the still-warm corpse of a Zygerrian, her face twisted into a horrified death mask where Tali had struck her down.

"You..." the Twi'lek hissed, pointing her saber at the fallen Toydarian. "are claimedt."

"P-please, mercy!" He blurted, raising a spindly arm up in a vain effort of stopping the lightsaber. It would prove no obstacle for her weapon, even if he was racially invulnerable to her Force abilities upon his mind.

"Mercy?" Tali spat. "Where Vas your mercy when I askedt, when I beggedt for it?" She hissed venomously, each syllable dripping with malice.

"I-I didn't mean to... I never knew... It was just a job, I swear! I-I'll cut you in! I'll redeem my ways! Anything! Just let me live!" Raoul squealed, the bloated bag of loose and spotted skin begging for its life even while his other hand tried to reach for his final gambit behind his wings.

Tali's eyes narrowed as her lips twisted into a sneer. "There is Nothing you couldt give me that wouldt buy your life..." She growled as she stepped over the Zygerrian's corpse, pointing her saber at the Toydarian's bloated gut like a needle about to puncture a balloon.

The sight of her blade so close to his gut made the man freeze up, the beam of plasma held less than an inch from his skin. For a moment the two shared a look, Tali's eyes filled with predatory delight and his wide in horror before she slowly pushed her blade into his gut. The sound of sizzling flesh was accompanied with a high-pitched squeal of escaping gasses like a deflating balloon and a tortured scream from the Toydarian's lips.

"Schutta!" He cried out in anger and hatred, his voice filled with inhuman hatred for this lesser being, this waste, this non-person, this whore daring to raise her hand against him. Even as his guts burned on her saber tip, his hand found the remote he kept in a small pouch on the small of his back and pressed the simple button on it.

A searing pain flared in Tali's mind, her left lek on fire as every nerve end in her brain seemed to burn with a horrific agony. The blade fell from her grip as she grasped at her head in pain, screaming in agony and collapsing to her knees as she momentarily contemplated ripping off the lek entirely to make the torment end.

Grunting as the pain in his gut relented, the Toydarian watched the Twi'lek fall and let out a tortured chuckle even as his other hand covered up the cauterized hole in his abdomen, keeping his guts from spilling all over the floor. "Schutta bitch thought you could kill me?!" He roared, pressing the button again and sending Tali through a series of convulsions, her fingers clawing at the root of her lek until both it and her fingers were bloodied and raw. There, embedded into a hidden slave tattoo that marked her as property was microscopic circuitry that responded to the remote's commands. A failsafe Raoul had not expected to still be in place.

She'd been aware of its presence, but it had been too entwined with her nerves to be removed surgically and supposedly posed no threat. Clearly the doctors had been wrong on that regard. The Toydarian relented, but

only for a second. Letting Tali draw half a ragged breath before shocking her once more with the mind-rending pain that was about to cauterize her brain and scramble it for good.

“Should have had you mind-broken when I had the chance...” Raoul panted, propping himself up into a half-sitting position against a nearby wall. “Makes you a drone. No good for a pleasure slave. Nnngh...” He grunted, glancing at the wound as it spilled out blood in a slowly growing pool beneath him. It could prove fatal unless he was treated soon.

“W-who would want to fuck a mindless body?” He scoffed. “Even a droid’s got more emotion than one of them.” He winced as something shifted uncomfortably inside his ruined intestines. “But for you... For you I’d gladly make an exception!” He growled and zapped her over and over, finding solace in the pain he caused, the sounds of her screams helping him cope with his own.

“Hnngh... O-once we get out of here. I’ll enjoy having you again. My own little Jedi Schutta...” He chuckled wearily, breaking into a cough. “You’ll be the finest piece in my collection.” He leered. “And I’ll take you every single night. You’ll barely feel a thing. You’ll barely react. But deep inside, you will still be there and know that I’ve won...” He coughed sadistically, breaking into an even harsher fit as the speaking taxed his already overburdened lungs.

Lying in a heap on the ground, tears streaking down her face, Tali shivered in the neural aftershock of her torture. Body twitching on its own accord and her mind raw and ravaged, she felt panic and shock. The fear of winding up in his service again was worse than any horror she’d faced and a nightmare about to become reality. A nightmare she was powerless to resist.

“Fight! Kill him! KILL HIM!” The voice in her mind demanded, harsh and cold, filled with malice.

“I... can’t.” She replied, fatigue overcoming her body and the searing pain having left her crippled with her limbs unresponsive to her commands.

“Fight! Kill! KILL!” The demands grew louder, sharper, more adamant. She found it hard to resist them as images of betrayal, of pain, of subjugation all flowed into her mind. They mirrored her own in so many regards that for a moment she thought they were indeed hers, but on some primal level she knew they’d happened to someone else. To someone who’d failed in her quest for vengeance.

“Do it. Kill him! We failed, but you can still succeed! DO IT!” The voice screamed.

The words so strong in her mind she snapped her head up, fully expecting to see the woman screaming at her from across the room. The Toydarian was still recovering from his coughing fit, distracted for a split second longer by his failing body.

Fueled by her own vengeance and that of her unknown patron, the Twi’lek pushed herself up and let the Force flood through her, raw and untamed. Her rage and fear rushed into her mind, a swirling vortex of power threatening to consume her before she wrestled control of the raging energies and honing them to a lethal point with nothing but her will alone.

The Force flowing into her with barely restrained power, Tali threw herself at her former master with a bestial cry. Raoul had just enough time to press the remote as the Twi’lek flew at him with a viciousness he had never seen before in her kind, the debilitating pain lancing across her mind and threatening to sever her connection

to the Force once more before she smashed into him with her full momentum. Grabbing the arm holding the remote, she squeezed his spindly wrist with both slender hands, a sharp yelp of pain sounding from his lips as the bones broke like twigs and his final gambit fell from his grasp.

The pain fading swiftly, Tali turned to face the terrified Toydarian and bared her teeth, the man barely getting out a panicked whimper before she descended upon him.

Body slick with blood and entrails, the ruined form of Raoul Kar'Dannaa beside her, Tali shook from head to toe as the Force finally left her and she collapsed onto her knees. Panting hard, she wearily beheld the carnage she'd wrought barehanded upon the one man who'd made her life a living hell for as long as she could remember. There was not much left of him now, save a mangled spine, clumps of meat and bloodied entrails. Most of him was smeared across the floor and walls, even dripping down from the ceiling, with his pulped cranium smashed against a console that now spat sparks.

Chest heaving with every labored breath she took, the Twi'lek was exhausted beyond comprehension, vision swimming as her eyes beheld the carnage around her. Hands shaking and covered in blood, hands which had torn a living creature limb-from-limb, Tali felt sick to her core.

"Yesssss...! Relish it! Relish your victory! Do it for us! For us..." The voice in her mind gasped in what sounded like orgasmic pleasure before fading into oblivion.

She had done what she'd hoped to do. She'd ripped out the heart of galactic slavery. Generations to come would know this day, even if they perhaps might not know her name. But those close to her would know and know what she'd done.

They would know the monster she had become.

The overwhelming urge to be sick rushed over her as the stench of blood grew too intense. Doubling up as she retched violently and emptied the contents of her stomach in front of her, the Twi'lek collapsed onto the floor, passing out before her head hit the ground.

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The Twi'lek awoke with a startled gasp, clutching her racing heart with one hand while the other nervously caressed her lek as she looked around her darkened apartment. The scent of iron and sick still in her mouth, her hands clammy with blood though visibly clean, she slowly regained her breath as all she heard was the dripping of condensed water from the broken ventilation system overhead, leaving a puddle on the floor where it ran off her bed.

She'd had the dream before. If it even was a dream. She'd inquired about the subject from her teachers, though very elusively, and found out that it might be what some called a Force vision.

She wasn't quite sure about its real nature, but neither did she need to. The conflict within her still raged. One between her heartfelt need for closure and revenge and the paralyzing fear of what the few friends she had made would think of her if she ever went through with it. What the repercussions of her actions would be.

“Kill... him...” A faint voice whispered in her mind, so soft and fleeting she thought it had been but a gust in the vents.

A shiver ran through her form, a result of the cold damp sheets she lay in, rousing her from her introspection. Thankful for the distraction from her own mind, Tali decided tomorrow she'd contact a mechanic to fix the unit. She couldn't afford to get sick.

Turning around to the slightly less damp side of her spartan injection-moulded bed, the Twi'lek pulled her all-weather cloak tighter around herself to keep the cold and dampness away as she tried to fall asleep once more.

Tomorrow would be a new day. She'd have time to kill Kar'Dannaa later...