

In The Face of Danger: A Brush with the Force



Written by
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It was the year 26 ABY, and Reiden Karr had recently met the man who became his first teacher in the ways of the Jedi and the Force. Kadain Thorne. While it was true that in the past, Force-sensitive individuals typically began their training much earlier, Kadain had sensed potential in the eighteen year old. The pair made their way to the planet Dantooine, a fitting place to begin their training since the crystal cave there used to provide young hopefuls with crystals for their lightsabers. They trained here for about a month, honing Reiden's skills. Their lessons had mainly consisted of combat training, but they had briefly touched on the Force. It wasn't much at first, just moving some small rocks around to begin with. With their initial lessons being finished, Kadain informed Reiden that they would be leaving and that they would continue at another location.

Their second stop turned out to be the planet of Nar Shaddaa. Kadain had explained that it would be a good place for Reiden to put his newfound skills to use if he could manage to find work there. Being on the young side, it was clear that the members of the vast criminal underworld there would try to take advantage of him. That ended up working out in his favor, as the denizens of the Underworld had no idea of the extent of his skills. Reiden's past also included some work as a bounty hunter for some time, so he wasn't a complete stranger to dealing with criminal types. Kadain claimed they would be staying at yet another safe house of his. Reiden couldn't help but wonder just how many the man had, and on how many planets they could be found.

"So, do you understand what you should do?" Kadain had asked.

"Yes, master, I understand. You want to see if I can handle myself, to see if my training so far has paid off," Reiden replied. The older man simply nodded his head, and with that, Reiden left the confines of their safe house to head to the nearest cantina he could find.

He didn't have to travel very far. There seemed to be, at a minimum, one cantina about every block or so. While on his way, he took close note of those around him, but not keeping his gaze on them for very long so as to avoid any unwanted attention just in case. He walked into the cantina and took a seat at the bar and ordered a drink. He cautiously eyed the patrons, some of which were eyeing him in return. He didn't like it, but decided to do nothing for the moment. Instead, he listened to the chatter filling the space, trying to pick out any useful information that he could use. It was difficult to filter out the buzz of the conversations, but with concentration, he managed to pick out someone talking about a local gambling den that he would be paying a visit to shortly. Reiden turned to locate the source of the discussion and spotted a Quarren that looked rather downtrodden. He could only guess that the poor soul had made a bad habit of gambling and was merely seeking out his next winning streak, however long that would take. He finished his drink and patiently waited for the Quarren to leave, lagging behind a moment before exiting as well and trailing behind his mark from a safe distance.

The Quarren ambled along for about a block and a half before entering a building that looked even shadier than those that surrounded it – a feat that Reiden had not thought possible. The grimy sign above read: *Zukalo's Casino*. He paused outside entrance for a moment, glancing around out of habit to make sure that he had not been followed before heading inside as well. As he stepped inside the dimly lit establishment, he was instantly struck by the stench of cheap alcohol, sweat, and smoke. This place was certainly a dive, which was saying something when compared to the other buildings nearby. The place was full of

gamblers, all seeking out their fortunes, but it didn't take long for Reiden to spot his quarry. He watched the Quarren – whom he learned went by the name of Krylls – take a seat at a table.

Reiden hung back slightly, taking up a standing position at another table nearby, feigning interest at the action there. Krylls was already having bad luck, but he persisted, and Reiden could even hear him saying “this next hand – that will be my lucky one”.

Reiden shook his head with a slight smile, knowing that every gambler inevitably thought the same thing, and only rarely did it pay off. He resumed scanning the room until he heard a shout of glee coming from Kryll's table. The Quarren leapt from his seat, having just won a big hand, then quickly sat down once more in an attempt to make his newfound winnings grow. He believed he had finally found his hot streak.

But such was not to be. The next couple of hands went by without big bets, paying out little to Krylls until the following one. That hand proved to be his downfall. He had decided to go all in. It was likely a risky gambit and an attempt at a bluff, but his opponents' hands were simply better than his, and they knew it. He lost all of his money, and he looked utterly defeated. A burly man standing near the table looked at Krylls and jerked his head to the side, indicating that he should get up to clear the seat for the next patron. Krylls stood reluctantly, head hanging down dejectedly as he shuffled away from the table. He made no move for the exit, however. Instead, he lifted his head and turned toward a raised area near the rear of the establishment and walked over. Reiden watched him a moment, then looked ahead to the area, where several people were gathered. Some were standing and others sitting down on a large, overstuffed couch. A couple burly humans spread around, with a well-muscled Lasat taking position close to the couch, clearly the personal security for its occupant. On the couch lounged a Duros male with a rather attractive Twi'lek woman on his left side and an equally striking Togruta on the right. It was obvious to Reiden that this was the man in charge. Krylls was stopped after ascending the short flight of stairs by the humans, but the Duros waved them off, allowing Krylls to step closer. Reiden casually made his way over so that he could hear the conversation that was about to take place.

“Ah, I see you're back again...Krylls, was it?” the Duros asked.

“Y-Yes, sir, that's my name,” the Quarren said.

“What can I do for you on this fine day, my good man?”

“Well, M-Mr. Zukalo...I was wondering if, uh, you wouldn't mind, er...extending me a line of credit, perhaps?” Krylls could barely string the sentence together. On closer examination, Reiden could tell that he was shaking slightly.

A wicked grin crept across Zukalo's lips, “Oh, so it's money you need, eh? Well, you've come to the right place! Ain't that right, boys?” He looked to his men, and they all laughed together.

“Yes, that's right Mr. Zukalo. I-If you'd be so kind, I...I would greatly appreciate it. I promise I'm good for it, too!” Krylls pleaded.

The Duros feigned consideration before nodding, “Very well, I'll give you a loan. But remember: you've already got outstanding debt here, so you'll need to pay us back soon. And of course there's the added interest from your previous loans to consider as well.” The henchmen all gave a brief laugh at that.

Krylls looked mortified at the thought of paying back the money. “But sir...I-I cannot pay you back all of the money quite yet, I'm ashamed to admit.”

“Well then, I’m afraid you’re out of luck, squidface,” Zukalo sneered. “Now, get out of my sight.” He nodded to the Lasat, who made a single step towards the quivering Quarren. Krylls stumbled back and whimpered, but continued pleading.

Reiden swiftly ascended the stairs and hauled Krylls to his feet, “Come on, pal, let’s go already. Quit embarrassing yourself!” The Lasat let out a low growl at his intervention.

Zukalo’s hand stayed any further action. “Let them be, Grex,” he said dismissively. “The man’s just trying to help out.” With that, Grex gave a short grunt and stood back, but eyed the retreating pair warily.

Reiden dragged Krylls down the stairs then herded him towards the exit, giving him a quick kick to his lower back for good measure. “Get out of here, ya bum!” He watched the Quarren gaze back before he turned away, head hanging low as he moved on. Reiden turned and made his way back to Zukalo’s lofted area with his arms raised, indicating he meant no harm. The boss waved his security away, allowing him to walk over. “Sorry about that, sir. I just can’t stand guys like him that can’t pay back their debts sometimes. Figured I’d do you a favor and just take care of him myself.”

“I don’t think I’ve seen you here before, and it’s not like we get many new faces here. What’s your name, newcomer?” Zukalo asked, eyeing him up and down.

“The name’s Reiden. My ship just got in today, and I thinking of looking for some work during my time here. I’ve tracked down people like him before, on Corellia originally – my homeworld.”

“Ah, so that’s it. Well, I suppose I could use another collector. My boys could use a little break every now and then. I’ll warn you now though: not everyone will be a pushover like that guy. Understand?”

Reiden grinned, “Thanks, but I can handle myself. I’ll be fine.”

“Heh, I like this kid!” Zukalo laughed, turning to his men. He looked back at Reiden, grinning. “All right, you’re hired. You can start tomorrow, just swing by in the morning and Grex here,” he nodded at the scowling Lasat, “will give you all the details you’ll need about the first people to track down.”

Reiden thanked the man and left the building. He stopped by another small restaurant to get some food before returning to the safe house for the night. When he arrived, Kadain was nowhere in sight, but he wasn’t worried; the old man frequently left without a word and would always return. He was always curious where Kadain would sneak off to, but decided to just let it be. He took to his bed and waited for morning to come as he drifted off to sleep.

The next morning, Reiden got ready and headed over to Zukalo's to begin his work. He kept to himself as he walked down the streets. As he got closer he saw a figure standing outside the entrance. He realized it was Grex, most likely waiting for him to arrive. He gave a wave of greeting to the Lasat, who just grunted in response.

"Well, it took you long enough to get here," the grumpy Lasat stated.

"Hey, what can I say? I enjoy getting my beauty rest sometimes. Speaking of which...you could do with some more yourself, you're not looking too good." The Lasat growled and Reiden smiled at the reaction. "Besides, I'm not late at all. Anyway, where am I going today? I want to get started."

Grex grumbled as he produced a datapad, "These are your targets. We're testing you out with some low-level stuff first to see if you can actually handle the work without ending up dead." The Lasat didn't bother hiding his doubtful gaze at Reiden, or his slight laugh.

"Like I said, I've done this before. And I can handle myself. I'll be fine," Reiden shot back, feeling a bit angrier than he should have.

"Yeah, sure, whatever you say. Just don't wind up dead on the first day, got it, kid?" the Lasat growled, shoving the datapad into Reiden's chest.

"Like I would miss an opportunity to wipe that smug grin off your face," Reiden said with a smirk as he accepted the datapad. He turned and left the Lasat grumbling behind him as he gave the display a quick glance. There were several names, but not as many as he had expected to see. It appeared that Zukalo and his men really were only testing him out, for now at least. He shrugged his shoulders and assumed that he would be given more in the time to come, and made his way to the address of the first name on the screen.

Before long, Reiden had quickly made his way through most of the list of collections he had to make that day. Grex had been right. These were rather easy and the debts they owed were a mere pittance. But even so, all debts had to be paid, so he didn't mind too much. For the most part, all it took was a menacing look, or shoving someone up against a wall before they promptly handed over whatever credits that they could get their hands on. He knew from the datapad that he kept tucked inside his cloak that some of them hadn't paid back their full amount, but that was fine; he'd just collect the rest another day and not worry about it too much. He knew from his time as a collector on Corellia that it didn't always matter if the full amount was paid at once, just so long as it was paid back in full within short order. Paying it all back quickly was also in the best interest of the ones that owed money, since waiting longer also meant added interest on their loans. He made notes on the datapad for each person that did not pay back the full amount and would inform Zukalo of the matter once he was finished. He decided to take a break for some food and a good drink, then left to finish the rest of the list. These collections were all simple and uneventful. By the end of the day Reiden had successfully finished tracking down and collecting as many credits as his targets were willing to part with. He would revisit those that did not pay the full amount in the coming days. He headed back to the casino and made his way to Zukalo's loft, where he returned the datapad and a bundle of credits with a grin.

"Here's your catch for the day. I told you that it wouldn't be a problem for me. Some of the guys didn't have all of the money, so I took what I could and told them that I'd be back for the rest in a couple of days. They got the message pretty clear," Reiden informed the casino owner.

“Well, I’m sorry for ever doubting you, kid. But you do realize that today was just a test, a purposefully easy run?” Zukalo questioned.

“Yeah, I’m no fool. That’s pretty standard for when you hire new guys, I’d imagine.” Reiden answered plainly.

“Good, good. We’ll give you some harder ones over the next few days, then,” said Zukalo.

“Glad we’re on the same page then,” Reiden said with a smirk.

“Oi, don’t get all uppity, ya runt,” snapped Grex.

Zukalo laughed and waved him off, “Don’t mind him, Grex. The kid’s got spunk. I like that.” He handed Reiden a small case. “That’s your pay for the day. Don’t spend it all in one place or gamble it away like these fools here,” he said, nodded towards the patrons filling his casino.

“Believe me,” said Reiden, “I’m smart with my money. I know better than to flush good credits away like that. I’ll see you tomorrow.” He pocketed the case of credits and left, heading home.

The next couple of days were just as uneventful, although the money his targets owed did increase as the days went on, and their willingness to part with what money they had decreased. Some actually attempted to put up a fight, but their skills were rather basic and the attacks were easily avoided. Although one man, a Weequay, was more resourceful than the rest.

The man pulled a blade and lunged at Reiden, who spun out of the way and swung his arm like a bar across the man’s back. Winded, the attacker dropped the blade, and Reiden took the opening to deliver a fierce blow to his gut. The Weequay doubled over in pain and raised an arm in a gesture of surrender, the other arm held across his stomach.

Gasping for breath, the alien removed a pouch of credits and tossed it up at Reiden, “Here’s your money. Just take it and go, please. It’s all there, I swear!”

“Yeah, we’ll see about that,” Reiden said, his tone dubious at first. He opened the pouch and counted the credits. True to the Weequay’s word, everything was there. “Next time, let’s try to avoid all the ugliness, yeah?” Reiden said to the man. Still catching his breath, he simply nodded, and Reiden walked away.

Making his way back to Zukalo’s, Reiden did the usual song and dance of trading in the datapad and collections in exchange for his pay, then retired for the night once more. This continued for about another week, the debtors kept resisting, at first, and the debt they owed increased only slightly. However, it seemed that word of Reiden’s encounter with the Weequay man had spread throughout his little neighborhood on Nar Shaddaa. Some still continued to put up a fight, but most relented. Once his marks learned who was coming to collect, some were even eager to get things over with and practically threw their credits at him before he could even say anything. But he didn’t mind; it just made his job that much easier.

At the start of the following week, he was surprised to find not just Grex waiting for him outside the casino, but the owner himself. He wasn’t sure what was behind Zukalo’s decision to join them, but he knew that this group of debtors would somehow be different.

“Ah, Zukalo. What brings you out to join us this morning?” Reiden asked as he drew closer, coming to a stop in front of the two men.

“Well, ah, this time is a little different, I must admit. You’ll only be going after one collection today. And it’s a rather substantial one, at that,” the Duros responded.

Reiden could sense that his employer wasn’t being completely truthful, and voiced as much. “What aren’t you telling me, Zukalo?”

Grex handed him the datapad, “You’re going after a local gang leader. Goes by the name of Chaka. And I’m going with you this time, you might need the backup.”

“What, you guys still don’t believe that I can handle myself, after all this time?” Reiden asked, feigning wounded pride.

“Listen, runt,” Grex growled. “This guy’s dangerous, and everyone around here knows it. He’s the real deal, too, not just some two-bit thug like a few of the other guys you’ve been dealing with.”

“Don’t worry, kid. Grex will make sure you come out of this alive. You may not know this, but he’s a pretty fierce warrior in his own right. I found him literally fighting for his life in a Hutt slave gladiator pit. They paired him up against well-trained Mandalorians and even some Wookiees. You wouldn’t believe the poodoo they put those fighters through, all of them. But my boy Grex here was undefeated.” Zukalo informed him. Grex puffed his chest out with pride.

Reiden sighed and shook his head, “All right, fine. I’ll bring Grex along with me. But why haven’t you dealt with this guy before now? I’m sure you and the rest of your operation could handle him.”

“That’s the thing. He and I used to be partners, you see? It was only recently that our agreement came to an...er, abrupt and rather unsatisfactory end. In fact, it all went down several days before you showed up and kicked that bum Krylls out for me.” Zukalo continued.

“You ready, kid? We should get going soon. We’ve got a big haul to collect. We’ve kept things quiet about the fact that we’re going to collect from him today, but we don’t want to take the chance of word somehow spreading and reaching him, either directly or through some informant.” Grex explained.

“Of course, I understand,” Reiden replied. “Let’s get this over with already.” The pair took leave of Zukalo, who returned inside to watch over things in the casino. Reiden checked his blaster as they traveled; making sure it was still in good condition just in case. He looked at Grex, who had a large rifle slung across his back. It looked like it was several years old, but clearly well-maintained. He guessed that it had seen a lot of use during the time it had been with its owner. Reiden tried not to let his mind wander down that path too much, instead focusing on the task that lay before them.

After about fifteen minutes, they came to a stop at a large building. It looked exceptionally run-down, more so than the other buildings that he had seen in his time on the planet. However, its walls had been fortified in the recent past. There were also high walls that surrounded the rear and either side, most likely in an attempt to make it harder to infiltrate. There were blaster turrets standing guard in the front, but at present, they were unmanned with nobody in sight. Reiden didn’t let his guard down, however. He knew just from the feeling of the very air around him that anything could happen, and there was no telling how many armed men lay in wait on the inside. Reiden and Grex approached the entrance with caution, the former reaching inside his cloak to ensure that his large dagger was there, wanting more

reassurance than feeling the weight of it on his side. His fingers found the hilt, and he withdrew his hand, placated. Two guards appeared from the large main doors, blasters raised.

“Don’t move! And don’t even think about reaching for any weapons, both of you,” the first guard ordered.

“Easy, fellas. We’re here to see Chaka. He owes our boss, Zukalo, some money and we’re here to collect.” Reiden explained, arms held up slightly in a nonthreatening manner. He looked at Grex, who shot him an irritated glance but did the same.

“Yeah, I recognize the fuzzball. Grex, ain’t it?” the second guard questioned.

“What’d you call me, punk?” Grex spat, growling.

“Stand down, Grex. Just let me handle this.” Reiden said coolly.

“Fine. Just don’t blame me if you die bloody and full of holes,” the Lasat grumbled.

“Okay, boys, take me to your leader.” Reiden asked, unable to suppress a brief laugh.

A third guard appeared, also with a blaster raised, and shoved it into Reiden’s back, “Try anything funny, and I’ll end you, pipsqueak.”

“No worries, I’m not trying to cause any problems. I’m just here to do my job and leave, that’s all.” Reiden replied.

He was pushed inside where he found a large entry hall, with corridors leading off to the left and right, and another, larger one straight ahead. It was down that path that he traveled, ending a short distance later in a large room. The walls were high, terminating in a vaulted ceiling that, one day, long ago would have appeared grand. At the far side of the room was a raised platform with an oversized chair. Upon which sat a blue-skinned Twi’lek man. There were five other men positioned around the room, some lounging in chairs while others stood.

“So, you’re Chaka, I presume?” Reiden asked, approaching as his escort lagged a bit behind, blaster trained on Reiden’s back.

“And who might you be, huh? What do you want from me?” Chaka questioned.

“I want your money. I work for Zukalo and I’ve come to collect. As I explained to your guard here,” Reiden continued, jerking a thumb towards his escort, “I’m not here to cause any trouble. I just want to do my job and move on. I think that’s best for us all, no?”

“Wait, what? You came here to try to shake me down? What a riot!” Chaka laughed, his men following suit.

“Yeah, yeah. Get it out of your system now. I’m serious though, and I’m not leaving until I get what I came here for – credits, and a lot of them, according to the records that my boss kept.” Reiden shot back.

“Sorry, kid, but that ain’t gonna happen, understand? Boys!” Chaka ordered.

The two men closest to Reiden moved closer, one wielding a blaster and the other armed with a knife. Reiden took up a shallow crouch, hands raised and ready for them to come. He studied his opponents and gauged that the one coming from the left – armed with the knife – was a little closer and a somewhat more immediate threat. The blaster that the other one had, however, could take Reiden out much more quickly. He stood his ground and looked at the one on the right.

“What, you don’t believe in a fair fight? How about this: I won’t use my blaster if you won’t?” Reiden challenged the man, a slight smirk on his face.

“How about it boys, should we entertain the kid while you beat the snot out of him?” Chaka asked. “Brynn, throw down that blaster.” The guard on the right just grunted and obeyed, setting the blaster down. The other men around the room watched with interest.

“Thanks, I appreciate it,” Reiden said.

Brynn and the other guard edged closer. It appeared that they were going to take their time until Brynn nodded to the other guard and they rushed at their guest. Reiden focused and crouched low just as they reached him, extending his leg and sweeping it across the floor and under the ankles of his attackers, knocking them off of their feet. He knew it wouldn't last long so he leapt back and raised his hands, making a taunting gesture for them to come get him.

The other guard roared in annoyance and got up first, rushing at Reiden again. Reiden ducked under the man's arms as he tried to squeeze him in a vice, then popped back up and thrust his fingers at the guard's windpipe. The assailant choked and gasped, sinking to his knees. Reiden glanced quickly at Brynn before switching back to his current opponent and brought his fist back, launching it at the man's face where it made contact with his nose.

Reiden both heard and felt the satisfying crunch of bone as the man crumpled to the floor, then turned his attention back to his right.

Brynn's face scrunched up in fury as Reiden advanced, taking a swing at the guard's chest. Brynn blocked it and hammered his own fist into Reiden's side. Reiden gasped and reeled back, holding his side. Brynn kept coming, striking out with his leg at Reiden's knee.

Reiden leapt up and somersaulted backwards and out of the way, then used the crouched knees from his landing to propel himself forward once more, ramming his head into Brynn's chest and knocking the wind out of him. Rather than waste more time, Reiden swiftly drew his dagger and plunged it into the man's neck and twisting it. He yanked the dagger free, crimson blood dripping from the polished blade as he readied himself for the other guards. But they didn't move, seemingly too stunned by what they had just witnessed.

“What are you fools standing around for? Get him!” Chaka yelled.

The guards scrambled into fighting stances and advanced on Reiden. One of the men, outside of Reiden's immediate sightline, drew a blaster and took aim. Something in the back of Reiden's mind rang out and he ducked, narrowly avoiding the blaster bolt that had just been fired. Anger and frustration at being so careless surged through his body. He spun quickly and hurled the knife at the shooter, catching him in the forearm. Reiden rushed over and removed it, then raked the blade across the man's side and then drove it home into his shoulder, angling it towards the neck.

Reiden let go of the dagger and launched himself at the next closest opponent, rage fueling his onslaught. He delivered a savage headbutt and followed it with a gut punch. The man sank to his knees and Reiden took hold of the man's head in both of his arms and twisted it hard with a sickening *snap*. He let the man's body fall and reached out with a hand through the Force. In response, one of the fallen guards' knives wiggled on the floor before being summoned to Reiden's hand. He leapt to the one that had taken a shot at him and pulled his own dagger free, slicing it across the man's neck for good measure. What he didn't notice was the final guard, who crept up on him and slammed the stock of his blaster rifle against Reiden's head.

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Waiting outside, Grex had heard everything, and he leapt into action. He crashed the heads of the two guards with him together and shot them both. He relieved them of their weapons, tossing them aside before rushing in. He encountered another two guards waiting for him and slung the rifle across his back as the advanced on him, both wielding knives.

"Oh, this should be fun. I haven't let loose in ages. Come on boys, show me what you've got," the Lasat taunted. His opponents both lunged at him, trying to take advantage of what they perceived to be superior numbers. Grex let them believe that and engaged them.

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Reiden's head rang from the blow to he had taken, and was forced down onto his knees. His rage flared as he spun to face the guard, summoning every ounce of strength he could. He shoved a hand towards the guard, launching the man into the wall with a blast of invisible energy. Reiden could feel a newfound strength filling him. He knew that it was the Force, similar to when he had trained by moving rocks back on Dantooine, but this was different...almost intoxicating. He pulled his hand back and pushed it forward, applying more pressure to the guard as he stalked over. He sunk his blade into the guard's stomach, down to the hilt. He savagely drew the blade upwards and twisted it before yanking it free, the blood splashing onto him and dripping down his forearm. He faced Chaka and flashed a sadistic grin.

"So, about those credits that you owe...?" Reiden said with a calm that belied the storm raging inside of him.

"Th-There, right there!" Chaka stammered, pointing to a chest. "Oh my god, what did you just do?" The man was visibly shaking.

Reiden walked to the chest and opened it. Credits were piled high, filling the chest to the brim. He nodded and closed it, then glared at Chaka, "Is this all of it?"

Chaka nodded, cowering in fear, "Y-Yeah, that's everything I owe Zakulo, and then some! Just get out of here already. Please, don't kill me!"

It was at that moment that Grex stormed in, stopping short at the sight of the bodies littering the floor. He gaped at the scene of carnage, dumbfounded. The final guard, who had escorted Reiden into the room, was crouched in the corner to make himself as small as possible and hiding his eyes from the mayhem.

"Karabast," Grex exclaimed. "What the bloody fwec happened in here, kid?"

"I happened," Reiden stated plainly. "I guess I just let my emotions get the better of me and well...yeah, things happened. I may have gotten a bit carried away though..."

"What about the money? Did you get it?" Grex asked.

"Yeah, it's all in here," Reiden said, giving the chest a kick. "Help me lug it out of here, will you?"

The two of them picked up the chest and left the building, heading back to the casino. Upon their return, Zakulo was thrilled to see that the debt had been paid back in full, and even more pleased that there was extra. The grin on his face was certainly one to remember.

"Kid, you did well. Fwec me, you did incredible!" he said, clapping Reiden on the shoulder. "Think you can stick around a little longer? I'll even up your cut."

Reiden shrugged. "Sure, I don't see why not. The money's good, and the job's got to be done anyway."

Zakulo and Reiden shook hands. The casino owner gave him another case full of credits, mentioning that there was a little extra in it for him this time, as payment for doing such a great

job. Reiden said his goodbyes to Zakulo and Grex, then departed for his safehouse. He planned to tell Kadain all about his encounter at Chaka's compound. He didn't know the full details of what he had experienced there, but there was one thing he knew with certainty. He had felt powerful, and he liked it. He wanted to experience that kind of strength again.