

The soft clicking of knitting needles filled the lek-accessory shop, *Your Lekku and You*, with a calming clatter of busywork as Tali put the finishing touches on a tailwarmer made to order. The slender tube of soft yarn was a special treat Zujenia had ordered for her husband as a gift, though Tali suspected she would never actually see him wear it.

The evening in Ol'Val's lower merchant district was atypically calm and she'd had few customers so far when the door suddenly opened and the small bell she'd affixed to announce of any entrants chimed with a soft jingle. A moment later she identified the leathery flutter of webbed wings and the heavy tread of combat boots.

"Hello? Shop-slave, have you seen a...?" His words died in his snout as the Toydarian laid his beady pig-eyes on the purple Twi'lek, her golden yellows narrowing as she met his gaze.

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AFa1-kciCb4>)

"You..." She muttered, the needles slipping from her hands as she deftly rose to her feet, eyes never once leaving the green-hued Toydarian's.

"Ah, there you are." Raoul Kar'Dannaa cracked a wide grin, flashing his murky row of teeth with a confident chuckle. "Seems like I did not need to bother the staff after all."

Keenly aware of the quartet of men flanking the Toydarian slaver, though still keeping her gaze nailed to her former 'master', Tali shifted back the folds of her day robe, exposing the pair of saber hilts hanging on her belt.

"Ah, I see you still have what belongs to me." Raoul smirked. "I have to admit, placing a bounty on your head was always distasteful, it was the weapon I want back after all. Your head is just... how shall we say, a bonus." He chuckled softly, rubbing his webbed hands with glee.

She hissed venomously, her lekku twisting behind her neck to jab at her shoulder blades, a sign of foul cursing at the man who'd made her life a living hell. Without more effort than one used to draw breath, she called the two sabers from her belt into her hands, the mercenaries raising their blasters at her in alarm.

"Oh don't be ridiculous, Tali. Just give me the weapon and I promise you a quick and... mostly dignified death. That thing isn't even operational and I'd hate to see it be soiled by your blood..." Raoul chuckled, breaking into a mild coughing fit that ended abruptly as Tali lit both sabers and two iridescent beams of yellow plasma sprung forth to bathe the shop's interior in their light. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6KxtgS2IU94>)

"Huh... I don't remember it doing that before..." The Toydarian muttered to himself. "No matter, I guess that just makes it more valuable when I pry it from your dead hands. Take her!"

The men opened fire on command, a flurry of crimson bolts flashing out as Tali's sabers were already moving. A shimmering blur of light and motion followed as the Twi'lek moved in ways hitherto unwitnessed by her former owner, the pair of blades blocking and deflecting the fusillade directed at her with impeccable precision even as she shuffled to her left.

A mercenary pulled out a concussion grenade, explicitly ordered to avoid using heavier ordinance against the target in case it damaged the saber, and pressed the arming stud before lobbing it towards her. Yet, the Twi'lek had already seen the attack coming and swiped her hand to the side, shunting the explosive mid-air through the doorway of a small storage room where it exploded a moment later in a shower of yarn.

Without breaking stride, Tali dropped down, crossing her blades in front of her to deflect a bolt aimed straight at her face before launching herself after it and towards the guards. The horrified mercenary did not have time to react before the vengeful Twi'lek was upon him, the crossed blades slicing his blaster in two with ease as she drew them apart once more before spinning them around behind her back to deflect another pair of shots aimed at her.

Pirouetting around with all the elegance and grace of a murderous ballet dancer, Tali let her lekku hang loose behind her head, the tendrils extending from the motion and slicing across the mercenary's face, the jewelry protecting their sensitive tips keeping her from harm while cutting deep gashes in his skin.

"Gaaah!" The man screamed, clutching his bleeding eyes as blood pooled from the cut. A moment later a firm backwards kick into his lower gut sent him sprawling backwards into a display table while Tali blocked another series of shots at almost point blank range.

Raoul eyed his hired guns nervously, fluttering further away from the action as the fourth guard tried to attack her, only to have his bayonet attachment sliced off his weapon, along with half of its barrel, and a saber plunged through his guts. Stepping behind the body, Tali let the fire from his comrades rake the dead man's corpse before shutting the saber momentarily and shunting it right at them with a palpable tremor of the Force making the shop's windows vibrate.

The warning of imminent danger flashed suddenly across her perception, the urge to duck easily catered to as Raoul's shock whip buzzed overhead and missing her lekku by mere inches. Pivoting on the spot to face her remaining adversary, the crackling of the weapon in his hands pulling painful memories from her past into the forefront of her psyche which she had to batter down with a sheer force of will. She would not run. She would not submit. She would stand and fight.

The fierce fire in her eyes met the callous coldness of the Toydarian's, a battle of wills fought between the two stares as he sought to make her kneel and submit out of sheer habit when faced by the prospect of his rage and for a moment it might almost have worked.

*"Kill him!"*

The voice echoed from nowhere and yet everywhere at once, the venomous hissing voice of an ephemeral woman spitting into her ear and igniting the flame of vengeance within her once more. The Toydarian seemed to realize this the same instant as he made another feeble attempt to lash out at her with his whip before dropping a smoke bomb at his feet and fluttering away as fast as his pudgy form could manage.

Dodging the rushed strike, Tali had to cover her mouth from the noxious fumes suddenly filling up her shop as the fire alarms sprang to life, wailing their pointless warning at her even as her foe escaped. Pushing through the cloud of smoke and emerging onto the street, she spied the fleeing slaver and sat off in hot pursuit.

Emerging onto the landing docks a few hectic moments later only to see Raoul give some hasty orders to a pair of guards as he boarded his ship to take off, Tali vaulted onto the platform with blades igniting mid-air to deflect the first and last shots the two got off before ramming her weapons through their chests. Even as the bodies fell to the ground, the Toydarian's ship took off, a concealed turret firing a few parting shots that drove her into cover behind a stack of shipping crates as the slaver made his escape.

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nS5Qn4ntV3E>)

Turning around as the shuttle escaped out of Ol'val, Tali knew her life on this station would no longer be safe, nor would that of any of her friends. But she also knew she and them would be ready for anything the vengeful slaver might throw at them. She had proven that to him and herself today.

Walking back towards her devastated lek-shop, she could not help but feel a tremor of excitement run through her. She'd finally shown that bastard he was not invulnerable...

Roll credits!