

The Devil Went Down

“Miss Halcyon?”

Leeadra’s attention was suddenly pulled to the man sitting in the pilot’s chair beside her. He looked stressed, and understandably so. It had hardly been a few hours since they had first received the distress transmission from Selen’s Song. The cruiser had been badly damaged in battle and the evacuation order had been given, however escape pods had been hastily deployed, some leaving half empty, stranding a decent number of the crew and passengers. The Jedi had gathered a small crew and boarded the first servicable ship she could find, the *Unsung Valor*. The corvette had already made several trips to what remained of the cruiser, bringing as many people as was possible to a small camp on a nearby planet.

“Miss Halcyon, I would not advise attempting to dock again. I am not sure I would be able to safely perform the maneuvers necessa-”

“There are still Arconans on that ship. Do you understand that?”

“Yes ma’am, but-”

“No buts. So long as there are still survivors on that ship, we will continue to make an effort to retrieve them. Contact the bridge of Selen’s Song and have them deploy one of the tractor beams if you need it. Just get us back to that ship.”

“Yes ma’am.”

If there was on thing the Pantoran couldn’t stand, it was cowardice. She stalked toward the air lock to ready herself and her equipment to trek into the crumbling ship that would soon be just on the other side of that door. Upon reaching her destination, she was met by the stares of a half dozen other Arconans, none of which she knew that names of, which she immediately regretted. She made a mental note to get out and acquaint herself with more with her clansmen after things calmed down again. Assuming she survived. As she refilled the medical supplies in her bag, she contemplated her own mortality, imagining situations she could get into which would necessitate the massive quantites of bacta and bandages as well as the three tourniquets she carefully stowed.

Sometime later, Leeadra felt the ship roughly collide with the docking station of Selen’s Song and a light turned green on the control panel near the door. *Well, here goes nothing.* The Jedi pushed a button and the doors before the small group opened with a *whoosh*. Beyond the empty corridor, they could hear the faint sounds of a crackling fire and the groaning of the ship straining to hold itself together. All the survivors in the immediate vicinity of the docking port had already been evacuated and the air was otherwise eerily quiet.

“Ok, folks. Same as last time. My group will head toward the fore, the rest of you head toward the aft. Collect any survivors and bring them back here. Get them comfortable on board and sit tight at the rondesvous point on the *Unsung Valor* until we all return. Any questions? No? Ok. Save some lives.”

The Pantoran's group took off toward the front of the ship, ignoring any doors that had been marred by her lightsaber; their method of marking the passages that had already been searched and cleared. A majority of the front half of the ship had been clear during the battle, making their job just a little bit easier. One of the last remaining areas was the bridge. Leeadra decided that she would handle this one herself. The rescue team had been appraised that there were only minor injuries and all parties were ambulatory, but insisted that they be the last evacuated. Leeadra motioned the rest of her team onward to sweep the last few rooms as she approached the durasteel doors.

Reaching up, Leeadra pounded thrice on the door before it opened. A human female greeted her as she crossed the threshold. Three other individuals were seated in their chairs, carefully monitoring various control panels that the Jedi assumed were rather important.

"As requested, you are the last ones. But it's time to go. I'm not sure how much longer this thing is going to stay together."

Simultaneously, the three chairs spun around, revealing two strangers and one very familiar Zabrak face, though Leeadra couldn't quite place it. All three men stood and made their way out the doors toward the docking ports. The Zabrak dawdled slightly so that he could fall into stride with his rescuer. He looked the blue woman up and down, catching his lower lip between his teeth as he did so.

"Nice to see you again, Leeadra. Still the little *spitfire* I remember?"

As he emphasized his adjective, his right hand connected with her rear, just hard enough to startle the small woman. Trying her hardest to reign in her anger, Leeadra continued on, doing her best to ignore her vile travelling companion.

"Come on, baby. Don't be like that. Maybe we could find somewhere private on this ship of yours on the way to wherever we're going. Just the two of us. What do you say, Little Blue?"

"Look, I don't know how you know me, but I'm here for one reason and that is to make sure all my clanmates get their choobs off this *deathtrap*. Right about now, you're really making me consider leaving the captain behind to go down with his karking ship."

With that said, Leeadra quickened her pace to rejoin the rest of the bridge crew who were already several meters ahead. The Zabrak looked shocked at first, but it didn't take long for an amused expression to claim his features. She was every bit as fierce as she had been when they met at that small cantina on Selen and good Force if her backside didn't look just as wonderful. He still didn't appreciate the 'hard to get' routine, but was sure he'd find a way to convince her. *Nobody tells the Red Devil no.*

It didn't take much for the Zabrak man to catch up to the group, his long strides easily compensating for the distance. Once he had closed the distance, he grabbed Leeadra by the upper arm and pulled her into one of the already cleared rooms off the main path, despite her protests that the ship was literally crumbling out from underneath them. *What exactly does he hope to accomplish with this? What does he think is going to happen?* Without warning, a pair of red lips crashed into her own blue ones. Startled, the Jedi's immediate response was a swift

kick to the gonads. Her counterpart, caught off guard, crumpled to the floor before her, tears welling in his eyes.

“I warned you, Zabrak. I am just here to pull my clansmen off this *heap* before it’s space dust. I have no interest in being your arm candy or your conquest so you can shove that druk idea right back where it came from. Now here’s how this is going to go. I am going to walk out of this room and you are going to stay exactly where you are. I will promise you that if you attempt to follow me or get on my ship, I will personally see to it that you don’t have any jewels left to protect, understood?” The Red Devil nodded his head slightly. “Good. You wanted feisty, well here it is. Kark you, choob licker.”

With a swish of her cape, she turned and exited the room, leaving the Zabrak crumpled on the floor. Once the doors closed behind her, she pulled her lightsaber from its holster on her belt and ignited the shimmering, golden blade and sealed the doors shut. *The universe will be better off without him.* Her heels clicked as she hurried down the corridor toward the docking port where the *Unsung Valor* was waiting. The rest of her small rescue team was already waiting and the bridge crew had already settled in for the ride. A brief conversation revealed that the aft team had completed their sweep of the ship and all remaining survivors were on board.

“Good. Take a few minutes to collect yourselves and then begin assessing and treating the wounded. Whatever you need is yours, just make sure as many as possible survive this flight.”

Leeadra whirled around and took off toward the bridge. As soon as the doors slid open, the captain turned his chair and saw the fury in her eyes.

“Captain, we’re ready to go. Break away from that docking port and let’s get the hell out of here.”

“I’ve been waiting all day for you to say that, Miss Halcyon.”