

## 36 ABY

### Trepus Mining Facility

#### Solyiat

Tisto stepped off of the XS-800 freighter he had stolen on his way back to the clan's system. He trudged across the ice, heading into the mining facility. No one met his gaze on the way in, through no fault of their own as his head was down, and he was given a wide berth with people actively moving out of his way. He did not look well, his nose was broken, he had fresh cuts on his face, and his cloak needed a good wash to clean off the blood. The Kiffar made it inside, checking in after his disappearance.

Tisto walked through the mine looking for the closest corner he could simply hide in. His eyes fought against him, trying to close and rest. He was hoping coming here would be safe, after all there was one person he didn't want to see. After a few minutes of walking deeper into the mine he finally passed the majority of the people stationed there and slid down the wall. His eyes closed momentarily before snapping open. He refused to give himself the luxury of sleep. He saw soldiers pass by occasionally, and pushed himself into a better sitting position.

He saw her approach, and grimaced. Ozosi walked up to him, her new arm seemed out of place on her. Bile built in his stomach looking at it, if he had not waited for back up maybe he could have saved her arm. He forced himself to take several deep breaths as she continued to close in. He didn't want to be reminded of his failure but it was bound to happen.

"Finally come back?" she said, close enough to talk without being overheard.

Tisto eyes refused to meet hers. It was all he could to hide his own pain, he didn't need to see hers. "I cut out the possibility of that damn mercenary group targeting you again. Took a few days to track them all down," he replied softly. "The last one put up quite the fight on Nar Shaddaa and tried to flee on his ship. Well, my ship now."

"Are you ok?" Ozosi replied kindly. "I figured I would ask as according to Celevon you left the second you couldn't heal my arm."

"Just a broken nose and some new stab wound. Nothing a bit of rest won't fix," the Kiffar said in a failing attempt to scoff. "Didn't have much time between the last mercenary and here. I'll just rest here a bit then go clean up."

"Why did you join the rescue mission?" the Togruta asked.

Tisto froze, unsure how to answer. "Because I... thought that abandoning a teammate was a stupid idea," he lied.

"Really?" Ozosi replied. "So you didn't do it to save a friend?"

Tisto fell silent. He wasn't sure why but that stung him in more ways than one. It felt like an attack, and he immediately felt bad for lying. *But what can I say? He thought. That I don't know why? That I acted out of something that eludes me? All I know is that I couldn't let you die, and I don't even know why. Hell there is even a part of me that is hurt by the word friend. How can I say that you confuse me beyond belief and that I don't know why I acted in your defense?*

"You aren't my friend," he said sadly. "You wouldn't want to be either. They have a history of dying."

Ozosi paused for a second, concern flashing across her face. She recalled the brief glimpses of a burials and someone sobbing, and glanced at her new arm. "Well I won't die," she replied with a soft smile. "So what will it be?"

"This again?" he said bitterly. "Run out of lines and need to reset your speech patterns?"

Ozosi sighed and sat next to the obstinate Kiffar. "The way I see it," she began. "You are my friend whether you admit it or not. You went out of your way to help save me. And then went on a several day long galactic rampage to stop anyone from coming for revenge. So why won't you admit it?"

*Because I don't know if that is what made me act. Because I don't know.* "Fine," the boxer said with a tone of finality. "But I'm not going to wear some damned friend bracelet or something stupid like that."