

“Remindt me again, vhy do ve have to vear these ridiculous outfits?” Tali Sroka groaned, tugging at the skimpy dress that seemed at the same time too short to cover her butt and too generously cut to contain her breasts. Judging by the similarly peeved expressions and blushes from her fellow team-mates, Tali could safely assume she wasn’t the only one feeling annoyed by the Consul’s impending visit.

Leeadra suspired, trying to tug her own dress up and downward at the same time in a vain attempt to somehow stretch the fabric into something approaching decent coverage. “I know it isn’t ideal, but you all know how he is and after *someone* spent a sizable amount of our budget on her formal attire collections, we could use a bit of a bonus to keep the *Voidbreaker* running smoothly. If it takes a little show and dance, then I suppose we’ll all have to bend over backwards to accommodate...” the Pantoran explained with a clear bitterness towards the former BTL.

Tali’s dead glare made the vertically challenged battleteam leader reconsider her choice of wording. “Erm, not like that. You know what I meant, Tali,” she muttered. “We’re all in this together though, so just – you know – try to stay positive?”

It seemed the amount of positivity required would have to be simply herculean. Nevertheless, the Twi’lek let out a grumbling groan and said nothing further, instead taking her place alongside Scarlett and Eilen, who seemed even more distracted than usual.

“How are you doing, Eilen? Feeling alright?” she asked as the half-Bothan tried to stare at a dent in the opposite wall and not let her gaze wander.

“Erm, I’m, uh, p-pretty girl... good! Pretty good,” the lanky lady stuttered, trying her best to maintain at least a modicum of professionalism despite her alluring surroundings.

“If you say so, but don’t vorry. If the Consul tries anything, ve’ll vhip him back in line,” Tali reassured her. “Ugh, or maybe not vhip... but you know vhat I meant.”

She only got a distraught whimper back in reply.

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“Consul Bleu, we were beginning to think you weren’t coming. Please, this way,” Yumni Ha greeted the stunted Consul, gesturing towards a docking bay with a generous flourish.

The Ryn, flanked by a Human and a Chiss male who both resembled brick outhouses in build, seemed almost giddy at this opportunity to ‘inspect the troops’. He’d groomed his fur and put on his finest, with a floating Skitter-droid hovering not far from him, the droid’s memory bank having been enlarged for capturing all relevant video footage of the event.

Yumni, though smartly dressed, had chosen to eschew the requirement for the skimpy dress on grounds of allergies to the fabric, but clearly the Consul did not seem to mind. His two

bodyguards, if they felt anything towards the day's agenda, remained stoic and professional with semi-blank stares that told her nothing.

As the bulkhead doors opened with the heavy clanks of inches thick durasteel, a vast hangar opened up before them. Arrayed within were a gaggle of vessels, some old and some ancient, with neatly lined rows of men and women standing before each, the ladies dressed as the Consul seemed to prefer.

Even so, Kordath did not seem pleased as he turned towards the Kaminoan and craned his neck up to grasp at eye contact with the towering woman that stood a full two and a quarter feet taller. "Erm, this nae be tha *Voidbreaker*, luv."

"Very observant, Consul Bleu," Yumni agreed, her tone so bland he could not tell whether she'd just mocked him to his face or been genuinely complimenting.

Overcoming the confusion of her blasé reply, he pressed the matter. "I'd prefer ta inspect 'em first. This nae look like our battle..."

"On the contrary, Consul Bleu, this is your most potent weapon and tool in the Clan's arsenal," Yumni replied before he had a chance to properly finish.

"It nae look like it..."

"I concur, these troops lack discipline and physical fitness. Half of them appear grossly overweight and their uniforms are far from... uniform," Captain Bly chimed up in support of his commander.

"I am pleased to see their disguises have fooled even a seasoned soldier," Yumni mused with the first hint of emotion so far. "Of course they look like that, but are we not a Clan who prides itself on obfuscation, subterfuge and disguise?"

"Well, erm, yes but..." Bly choked slightly at the unexpected retort.

"But it still nae be tha *Voidbreaker*."

"Yes, *that*."

"My dearest Consul," Yumni began, her tone unquestionably alike a mother's when explaining a very simple concept to their young. "Your valuable time is very limited and it should not be wasted on frivolous distractions that hold little merit. Giving priority to such a minor asset as the *Voidbreaker* would be fruitless and unbecoming of your Consulship *and* require a shuttle trip to Ol'val."

"Whutnow?" Kordath blurted. "Ye said this was tha place!"

“Indeed I did, when you asked where we should meet for the appraisal and inspection of the Clan’s finest assets,” the Kaminoan replied before gesturing at the arrayed crews and their transports. “And here they are, all accounted for and away from productive work at great expense, on your orders. If you insist, of course, I cannot tell you *not* to take the transport up to Ol’val, but if I may be so bold, I might suggest calling the ship to land here on Selen instead while you take the time to inspect ALaS Co and her valuable assets.”

The Ryn let out a peeved chime through his fluted nose, annoyed beyond belief at this setback, but deciding to take it in stride. It wasn’t like he had another opportunity like this anytime soon with his busy schedule. Who’d have known running Arcona would be a full-day job?

“Fine,” he sighed. “We’ll inspect yer outfit an’ call tha *Voidbreaker* down at once.”

“Excellent choice, Consul Bleu, I’d be happy to arrange that for you,” the pleased Kaminoan stated before tapping a few keys on her holopad and sending what looked suspiciously like a pre-written message. “Now, this way please...” she gestured towards the ranks of waiting workers, half dressed in coveralls and the rest in the skimpy dresses.

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“We gotta wait here long in these gettups, chief?” Scarlett groaned. She seemed to be the only one not totally annoyed by the trashy number she was wearing, though then again it did not differ too much from her usual fashion sensibilities in terms of coverage.

“I don’t know, actually,” Leeadra admitted. It had been quite a while since she’d assembled the crew in the *Voidbreaker*’s ready room to receive the Consul on his impending visit, but so far little had happened. In fact, nothing had.

“You sure he’s coming?” Tali asked.

“Oh believe you me, he wouldn’t miss this...” Lee sighed when her communicator beeped. Reading the message, she muttered a curse under her breath and turned to her crew.

“Right, speak of the Bogan... Listen up, people! I just got word that there’s been a change of plans. The good Consul isn’t going to be flying up to meet us —”

“Hooray!” Tali cheered, visibly relieved.

“— instead, we’re flying down to meet *him*.”

The momentarily elated Twi’lek seemed to deflate.

“Yeah, tough luck, buttercup. Now get those butts seated and take us out of here. We’re landing on Selen.”

A mixture of sighs and groans followed, some more relieved than others, as the crew filed out to their stations in order to bring the venerable ship online and down into an atmospheric landing. As the scantily clad female crewmembers shifted to their posts, one still-blushing ferret lingered a while longer, fidgeting with the tip of her tail as she watched Scarlett scale the ladder up to a gun turret...

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“... and these are the crew, mechanics, support staff and organizer of ALS V, the ever-reliable *Core Competency*,” Yumni narrated as the procession of an increasingly weary Consul and his two aides passed by a three-rows deep formation of distinctly average looking men and women in coveralls and regretfully short skirts that seemed the polar opposite of their male counterparts, covering precious little. What the Ryn might at first have deemed a cunning plan seemed to be backfiring, as he passed by several obese specimens who clearly could have done well with four of the garments he’d insisted on.

To the shared horror of his blue-hued bodyguard, it seemed a fair few of them had entirely overlooked the Consul himself and instead played some rather salacious eye-games with the stoic Chiss. Although no stranger to such advances ever since making acquaintance with her ladyship Vasano, the *caliber* of interest was starting to make the reserved male itch at the collar.

“Ye, ye, very nice. Just like ‘ne other four before it,” Kordath grumbled, passing by a bulbous mechanic and inhaling a wafting scent of vintage secretions. Suppressing the instinct to gag or hurl, he stumbled quickly onward, nausea beginning to settle in. Where had it all gone so wrong? He’d just wanted to have a nice day of seeing his favorite minions in cute outfits and doing a little song and dance for him. Where was the harm in that? And now he was being put through, through *this*?

“Quite to the contrary, Consul Bleu,” the irritatingly calm Kaminoan continued her guided tour, heedless of the Ryn’s suffering. “She has been the prestigious holder of the ALaS Co Lowest Hypermatter per Tonne -title. We’re trying to replicate it on her sister ships, but despite our best efforts, they’re still trailing behind by a few percentage points. She is indeed a remarkable ship and her crew ought to be commended, do you not agree?” She turned to look at the Ryn who’d by now gone a little pale, and green.

“Medals? We nae have ‘ny medals...” Kordath muttered.

“Oh,” Yumni sighed with a hint of disappointment. “I had assumed you wished to inspect and reward those who work so hard to maintain this Clan and ensure its prosperity...”

Kordath was left standing in a crossfire of emotions. Was this woman trying to tug at his heartstrings? Was there supposed to be some sad violins playing in the background right about now? Or was she playing intentionally dumb and mocking her? In which case, why was he hearing violins?

Glancing over his shoulder at his two bodyguards, both seasoned soldiers continued to offer a most helpful empty stare into the middle-distance, Strong's gaze momentarily lapsing as one of the chubby lovelies made some lewd hand-gestures which caused a purpleish hue to rise to the Chiss' cheeks. Turning back to the Kaminoan, he decided to be the Consul Zujenia would have wanted him to be and take the high road.

"Me regret tha' did nae communicate properly, but we'll see to it they be rewarded as is due. Innat right, Bly?" Kordath shifted his eyes towards his Human bodyguard who suddenly stiffened, straightening his pose minutely upon being addressed by name.

"Aye, sir. Of course, Consul," he replied hastily, not even quite sure what he'd just been signed up for; not that it was the first time that had happened.

"Good, now that's been taken care of, can we...?" Kordath turned back towards their host, only to find she'd taken several fleeting paces onward down the row of ships.

"And over here we have the stevedore crews who man our operations centers all around Selen..."

Kordath gave a long, suffering sigh and pressed onward, almost being bumped into by Strong, who for some reason seemed very anxious to put as much distance between himself and one particularly busty Zabrak who looked like she might give the Chiss a run for his money in a wrestling ring.

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"Umh, Tali, could you maybe come and help me with something?" Eilen asked gingerly.

"Sure, what do you needt me for?" the Twi'lek replied with a polite smile, getting up from her station and descending the short stairs from the bridge.

"I, uh, uuuuh..." the half-Bothan stuttered, clearly having lost her train of thought. "I forgot."

Tali looked at her like the skittish engineer might have had a concussion, but sensed nothing else but nervousness from her. Her concerned expression melting into one of warm empathy, she placed her hand upon the taller woman's shoulder and gave it an affectionate squeeze.

"Hey, it's going to be alright. He's just here for a few hours, tops. Then ve can get back to vearing proper clothing andt being productive members of Arcona again."

Eilen looked at the Twi'lek and gave an awkward smile that showed a bit too much of her rather sharp teeth. "Y-yeah... Thanks, Tali."

"Alright, cut the chatter, ladies. Time to take this ship down," Leeadra called out from her command lectern, prompting both Arconans to turn around and head for their stations.

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Finally, after all the fruitless hours spent admiring distinctly mediocre ships and their distinctly unappealing crews, he'd made it! The *Voidbreaker's* interior was spotless, every surface polished to a mirror sheen and before him stood a row of spectacular ladies in the most barely-decent dresses in the subsector. Oh yes, life was finally good.

"Attention! Consul on deck!" Leeadra snapped as the Ryn's foot touched the *Voidbreaker's* deck, the crew standing to attention in a way that pressed their chests out just so.

The saluting Pantoran looked adorable in the same fetching number, hugging her slender form from shoulder to hip with nary a curve left to the imagination. Dismissing her with a nod, he ventured forth, striding purposefully towards the awaiting row of women whose panties he might juuuust have glimpsed had they saluted any higher.

"Crew, preee-sent!" the Pantoran called out, the assembled ladies seemingly pushing their chests out even further as the Consul's heart skipped a beat. Shaking slightly, but doing his best to keep it under control, he moved up to the first in line.

One by one, he stopped by each crewmember, sizing them up and giving a nod of approval before moving on to the next, doing his best to suppress the giddy boyish grin of a kid in a candy store. Finally, he made his way to the Twi'lek, her breasts seemingly fuller and rounder than he remembered them from recent *internal intelligence*.

A coy thought crossed his mind. "Present lekku," he decreed and the woman obliged without hesitation, brushing her two headtails over her shoulders so they rested over her chest. Reaching out, he wrapped a hand round each, running up and down their soft, alluring lengths approvingly.

"Oh, C-Consul... V-vhat are you doing?" the Twi'lek moaned, blushing and trembling.

"Stay still, operative. Me must be thoro'gh in me inspection..."

He continued to 'inspect' the lekku to the sound of an increasingly hot and bothered Twi'lek, when a chorus of coquettish voices sounded around him.

"Mmmh, Consul. You simply must be thorough with *all* of us," Leeadra moaned.

"Yeah, we all need to be inspected... thoroughly," Scarlett agreed, running her pink tongue over her ruby red lips.

"Care to inspect me too?" Eilen asked demurely, stroking her tail in a way that raised the hem of her dress almost enough to show him the goods.

"Wh...? S-settle down lassies, tha Consul's got hands fer all o' ya!"

“Hear that? We better make ready for a *full* inspection...” Leeadra decreed, glancing knowingly at her fellow crewmates before beginning to pull off her dress.

His hand on the lekku tightened, his motions quickening. The Twi’lek’s moans grew louder and more desperate. “Oh! What are you doing, Consul? What are you doing?”

A faint throbbing headache was dismissed as he hungrily gazed at the women peeling off their dresses, exposing dainty lingerie and bountiful assets to inspect and...

“What are you doing, Consul?”

The pain, again. Sharper and more pressing.

“Consul? Please. What do you think you are doing?”

The voice wasn’t Tali’s. It was the Kaminoan’s.

“*Oh kark...*”

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Kordath awoke to a murderous headache and stinging light flashing into his eyes. A moment of confusion later, his senses told him he was lying on the floor and looking directly into the bright heart of an overhead industrial grade lumenstrip.

“Consul, please. This is not proper,” Yumni’s words repeated once again and the sensation of grasping at soft, supple lekku shattered in favor of a more spindly Kaminoan forearm.

“Are you alright, sir?” Strong asked, his concern touchingly genuine. “That cargo hook came out of nowhere. Almost took your head off.”

“And just when I’d lamented about the unfortunate lack of infrastructure budget to support our brave stevedores...” Yumni sighed, before turning back to the now-conscious Consul. “Also, if you wouldn’t mind?”

The Ryn finally released his grasp on the woman’s forearm and groaned. The headache was murder and the bright lights made his vision swim. He was hungry, tired, disgusted, and what’s worse, the mere thought of venturing to the *Voidbreaker* and being put through the wringer again was beyond appalling.

Climbing onto unsteady feet, he clutching his already-bandaged forehead and glance at his bodyguards. Little use they turned out to be. “Me thinks we’ve seen enuff fer today, miss Ha,” he croaked.

“Oh, so soon? I had a few more ships to go through and the back-office personnel...” she sighed and shook her head. “But of course, you are a busy man, Consul. I shall not delay you any further.” She bowed her head politely and tapped her holopad a few times. “Your transport should be arriving shortly. I recommend a visit to a physician.”

The beaten, both physically and mentally, Consul said nothing as he leaned on the Chiss’ broad forearm and limped away. Turning to her holopad once again, Yumni sent an encrypted message to a pre-destined receiver, before turning to wave goodbye.

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Eilen Jath felt her communicator vibrate to inform of a received message. The half-Bothan continued to fidget in her chair as the crew continued to re-assemble themselves for the Consul’s arrival. Tapping idly on control board before her, she watched the download reach completion and disconnected the cables to the *Voidbreaker*’s security feed. It was just an innocent copy of the day’s internal footage, nothing more. A memento, she told herself.

After all, for the hours of free starship service she’d agreed to pay Yumni Ha in for keeping the Consul away all day, she had earned it...