

"I do nae know what yer talkin' about! Check me sleeves, you'll find nothin', I swear!" The Ryn was shouting as he was dragged from the Sabacc table, staring at the pile of chips he'd amassed the past few hours.

"Lying little cheat; typical Ryn," grunted one of the guards in Basic.

"Oi! That's speciest it is," grumbled Kordath Bleu. "I just had a good run o' luck, is all. Come on, lads, I'm sure ya let me keep playin' and I'll lose a few hands."

This is why I do nae mess around with probability while playin' cards, thought Bleu with a mental grimace. He'd needed the credits to get off world; transport off of Tatooine was rough at the best of times, but smugglers and pirates were better about checking their holds for strays than honest merchants. Which meant actually paying his way. That and heightened security at the spaceport out at Mos Eisley; something about a transport burning exhaust out from under the Imperials.

Generally speaking, he was against using the Force to aid in his gambling ventures. His mother had taught him to read the cards for divination purposes, and mucking about with fate for personal gain was never a good idea. The two sets of calloused hands gripping him were proof enough that he'd messed up as they dragged him out of the gambling room and into the halls of the palace.

He hadn't looked into this place enough; he knew they were lowlifes and all that, but beyond that all he'd heard was that a Hutt was running the joint.

"Come on, lads, let's work this out," he grumbled, twisting in the grip of the two pig-faced guards. They merely grunted, snorting at one another and laughing before lifting him from the floor entirely, his feet kicking. "This is stupid, mates, come on!"

They passed through a door into another hall and the sound of upbeat music started to fill the air. A pale-faced Twi'lek appeared, asking questions of the guards.

"What did this one do, then?"

The Gamorrean snuffled back at the majordomo, gesturing with its head towards the gambling hall.

"Ah, ya speak Huttese, mate? Can ya tell these porkers ta let me go? I did nothin' wrong!"

"They would have only interceded if the dealer droid alerted them to a problem. So yes, you did something wrong, vermin."

"Why is everyone a bleedin' racist today?" Kordath grumbled as they entered a room blaring music and filled with chatter. The Ryn twisted his head to look over his shoulder in an effort to see what was going on. His heart sank as he took in the heavy form of a Hutt on a repulsor-sled, surrounded by sycophants and at least one translator droid. "Oh, kark."

Before he could voice further protests, the guards tossed him to the floor before the Hutt. It concerned Kord somewhat that he didn't land on duracrete or carpet, but metal grating in which a foul smell rose up from. In an attempt at dignity, he stood, straightening his clothes and dusting himself off. The Twi'lek ascended the Hutt's mobile throne, whispering in the big slug's ear, shaking it awake.

The Hutt's big, reptilian eyes blinked open and focused on the Ryn, who was trying to hold his tail still, rather than let it lash about in nervousness.

"Uh, hi, sorry about all this, big misunderstandin' and all that—"

A barked command from one of the Gamorreans brought him up short, though he didn't speak the language. 'Shut up' translated well through most forms of communication.

"A card cheat, in my palace?" murmured the Hutt. Before Kord could respond to the accusation, a protocol droid shuffled forward and began to speak, its prissy tone annoying all in the room.

"The almighty Jabba has accused you of violating the sanctity of his gambling hall by cheating at a game of chance!"

"I didn't do nothin'!"

"Almighty Jabba, the Ryn claims he violated no rules of the game, nor did he perform any duplicitous act—"

"I understand Basic, foolish droid!" rumbled Jabba.

"Of course, my apologies, mighty Jabba!"

"How did you win so many games, Ryn?" asked the Hutt.

"The almighty Jabba wishes to know how you were so successful without manipulating the odds nor cheat—"

"Oh would you bloody well stuff it, droid?" growled Kord, rubbing at his temples. He looked up to the Hutt and cleared his throat; speaking Huttese wasn't something he did often, but he could get by. "Uh, hello, Lord Jabba was it? Look, mate, I did nae cheat. No extra cards, no skifters,

nothin', I swear on me mum. Yer lads can search me, okay? Just a run o' good luck, and now a run o' bad, eh?"

The Hutt shook with a deep, rumbling laughter that caused Kord's heart to sink and his tail to droop. He gestured with one large hand towards his guards, "Make him speak the truth."

"Blast it," growled the Ryn, dropping into a low stance as the two guards came at him. There was some laughter from the onlooking crowd as two hundred kilos of walking pork charged him. This turned to more laughter and some clapping as he ducked to the side, easily avoiding the lumbering guards and letting them run into one another. A series of grunts and slaps followed as they tried to disentangle themselves and pursue him at the same time.

A few other armored figures started to approach the fight, a couple holding vibroaxes that looked nasty. Kordath gave them half a thought as he dodged one of the Gamorreans once more, dropping low to kick at the pig-man's knee in an effort to drop him.

Betting started in the audience, credits changing hands and odds being called out as the Ryn did his best to avoid being crushed. It looked like the porkers might tire out before Bleu did, though his shirt was starting to cling to his back. His hits did little, and they were too slow to catch him. Another laugh from the Hutt almost distracted him from the screaming warning from the Force, before another guard stunned the lot of them.

Kord dropped to the grated floor again, nerves screaming and misfiring, tail twitching wildly.

"Amusing little Ryn. You move well. I know how you can work off your debt..." was the last worrying thing he heard before unconsciousness claimed him.

"No, no, no!" shouted Kordath, exasperation clear in his voice. "It be step, step, turn! Start over!"

The trio of women glared at him as they stumbled back into the starting position. He tried to ignore that, and everything else about them that was bloody well distracting. He wouldn't tell the Hutt that he had good taste in dancers, not while the poor girls were probably slaves.

Being press-ganged into being a dance instructor for a Hutt's harem was certainly not what he'd expected when he came here. Still, better than some of the things he'd expected before passing out in the throne room a few days prior.

"Right, now, ya step left, ya step right..."