



**Submission for Kids These Days
By Battlelord Alara Deathbane, Dossier #12681**

Alara's Quarters
Adoniram Tower, Calestis City
Seraph, Caperion System

"Damn it, Kicks!" Alara shouted at her KX-Series Droid from across the hall, "Where did you pack my energy bow?!" The newly-appointed Rollmaster had just moved into her new quarters on Seraph. Jae'lle, her 12-year old Mirialan apprentice, was flopped over the Sephi's bed on her stomach, playing around with her datapad.

"Should be in the armory cabinet in the hall, M'lady!" Kicks politely called in his robotic voice which echoed from down the corridor near the suite's bathroom.

Jae'lle hummed and hawwed at the commotion going around her. She annoyingly blew away the charcoal locks that were tangling themselves among her eyelashes. Her vibrant, sapphire eye flicked from her datapad to around the room to find her master tapping her foot impatiently and staring down at her.

"Yes, *M'lady*" Jae'lle cooed at her master sneeringly.

"Watch it, yellow." Alara glared. "We have to address the Empress soon for dinner. What are you doing laying on the bed being lazy?"

"What do you need your energy bow for if we are going to see the Empress?" Jae'lle matched her leader's question with another.

"I'm going hunting tomor-- That's not the point! Get ready! We are supposed to go soon!" Alara huffed and scoffed while turning out of the room to her dressing area.

Jae'lle took a big sigh and rolled over onto her back to look up at the ornate ceiling that decorated the palace ceiling. Despite having to deal with an easy-to-aggravate master, her life had become so much easier than what it was before Alara had found her. Memories flickered through her mind about how it all came to be.

One Year Prior
Ulr Uvi Alleyways, within Ulress
Orbiting Ragnath, Caperion System

Jae'lle was hiding within some well-worn storage crates in the darkest corners of Ulr Uvi. Rumors had been spreading about with the new war going on between House Excidium and

Sinagra Villa. Gervasio Sinagra, the local crime-king of Uir Uvi, was finally being put to a stop by these new immigrants from who-knows-where. The rumors stated that these members of House Excidium had just escaped the desecration of their own planetary system, of which was committed by their own Grand Master. None of the story made sense to Jae'lle, and that's why she kept her nose out of the rumors. But the homeless talk. And they always have. What better do they have to do other than keeping out of trouble physically?

The orphan huddled tightly to her favoured, tattered blanket. It was all she had to survive the underground chill, but it worked most nights. She had rigged a sort of heating gadget at one point out of scrap kitchen and droid parts, however one of the more violent homeless tenants in her alley threatened her and knife-point for this newly innovated treasure. It didn't matter to Jae'lle though, she had the talent to make another one. It would just take a while for the Novice Tech Weaver to find the parts.

The young mirialan tried to sleep her chills away, but the sounds of war raging the streets kept the goosebumps on her yellow-toned skin from going away. She peered through the small holes along her crate's walls and spied the Force-users attacking the crime lord's thugs. Despite her hesitations, she decided it would be a better rest for her if she relocated to the local sewers. Jae'lle grabbed her blanket, as well as her backpack with various circuitry and gadgets, and began her journey. Before she could completely leave the alleyway, one of the Gungan residents grabbed her arm from where he was sitting and urged her to be careful amongst the chaos. Even though the streets lived only by one principle: every man for himself, some of the older residents much like this one still tried to look out for the younger few. She nodded to the Gungan, gave him a kiss on his scaly forehead, and kept running.

After dodging and quickly darting from alley to alley, Jae'lle finally managed to find the sewer entrance and nestled within one of the sewer's inner walls. Not many other homeless wandered these parts due to the whispers of evil within the waters, but Jae'lle wasn't too afraid of whispers. She cuddled into a slab of concrete and attempted to get some sleep.

That's when the drilling started.

The chaotic sound vibrated roughly through the concrete and travelled rather speedily to Jae'lle's inner ear. She jumped out of sleep in fright, and tightened the blanket around her shoulders. Her heart pitter-patted violently in her throat. She inquisitively peered around one of the sewer's halls until she saw what the commotion was about. She saw a buff-looking Kiffar, among some other Palatinaeans, drilling a hole directly into the sewer wall facing Sinagra Villa's basement.

At this sight, Jae'lle couldn't help but giggle. She knew exactly what the Excidiacs were planning. She wasn't too intrigued in politics, however she was thrilled to hear that the local crime lord was being challenged in this way. And at this rate, he'd be dead by morning. The handsome looking Kiffar turned his smile in her direction, as if sensing the mirialan's presence.

Jae'lle gasped and stepped out of his line of sight. She huddled back to her previous corner and nodded off to sleep after the Brotherhood members had done their damage.

A few days later after the dust of the latest political movements had settled, the young Tech Weaver decided it was time to do some snooping around the Villa, even against other homeless peoples' warnings. Jae'lle had snuck back to the sewer's halls where she had found the Palatinaeans before, and noticed their entrance to Sinagra Villa was just briefly covered up with some concrete boulders and a drape on the other side. Accepting this challenge, Jae'lle began to climb up the rugged rocks and made her way past the curtains on the other side.

Within the walls of the newly-acclaimed Excidium base, there were a lot more members' things than Jae'lle had guessed there would be. Large storage bins littered the basement, as well as all sorts of ammunition, weaponry, and miscellaneous food items on furniture around the room. It seemed as though Excidium's assassins had taken over the basement from what she could tell. Jae'lle's desperate hands eagerly reached for the nearest piece of bread and brought it quickly to her mouth. She gobbled the bread satisfactorily, and stuffed some more in her ragged vest pockets to save for later. The Mirialan rubbed her bare yellow chest and looked around further. To the side of a large table she spotted a smaller cabinet with daggers laid over a piece of leather. The young Journeyman couldn't resist and snagged a sharp, curved blade with a sheath next to it. She stuffed the weapon in her pocket and went on about her sneaking around.

Whenever she heard a noise or heard voices from the House, she quickly tapped into the Force and used her cloaking to disguise herself amongst the clutter. She managed to find the basement's upper exit by ladder, and climbed up to reach the main floor. As she did so, she noticed the traffic from the main entrance to the upper level where the large rich-looking staircase led.

The leaders must be upstairs. Better steer clear out of there, she thought to herself.

Jae'lle quickly turned around another corner in the hallway and reached the entrance to the Villa's gardens. *This should be a safe place to hang out for a bit until I figure out what else I'm doing here.*

The 12 year-old tiptoed into the garden area and gasped at the beautiful foliage around her. A beautiful fountain was built surrounding several large rose bushels with tall trees surrounding the area. *Perfect.* The area was perfectly still and serene. *No one will see me here.*

Jae'lle happily hopped over and sat on the fountain's ridge as she took a big scoop of water with her hands and began to drink. The water was cleaner than anything the girl had found on the streets. This made sense, of course, considering where she was.

Imagine, having enough money to leave water around in a fountain for fun, she chuckled to herself.

However, she realized how blackened her hands had gotten since last she was able to wash, and decided to take this opportunity to rub her hands and arms with the clean water before her. She used a loose scrap of fabric on her pant leg to dry her arms, and took another quick bite of some bread she had stored in her pocket.

“What’s this, an urchin in Excidium’s midst?” a feminine voice spoke coyly from behind the Tech Weaver. Jae’lle nearly dropped her piece of bread and spun around to find where the voice was coming from. She immediately leapt from her perch and darted away from the gardens. Nevertheless, that didn’t stop the Excidiac. The strikingly beautiful Sephi exited from the trees’ shade and scooped up the Mirialan in her arms. Before Jae’lle could fight back, she was plopped back on the ground with her knees bent before the woman. Jae’lle looked up, despite the nervousness she felt within her chest, and glared at the leader standing over her.

“Let me go! I’ve done nothing wrong!” Jae’lle growled at the Sephi.

The woman laughed a hearty, pretty laugh. “I’d agree except for the fact that you’ve just dirtied my recently acquired fountain, ate some of my food, and stole one of my assassin’s daggers.” The Marauder held up the dagger in her hand to show the youngling.

Jae’lle hollered in realization as she patted down her pockets and growled again. “Hey! I need that!”

“I’m sure you do, dear. Which is why I’m going to be a nice Quaestor and give it back to you.” Alara flipped the dagger in her hand, clutched onto the dagger’s sheath, and threw it down to the orphan.

“... Well,.. Thanks.” Jae’lle slightly smiled with a worrisome expression.

Before Jae’lle could do anything else, the Quaestor knelt down in front of her and lifted her chin with a forefinger. “So what has happened to you to leave you in such a state?” The Sephi spoke calmly. Even though the Quaestor tried to keep a collected appearance, Jae’lle could sense a bit of concern in her amber eyes.

“Gervasio killed my dad. He owned a mechanic shop down the street from here. My dad knew he was coming for us, so he hid me in a bunch of crates in the back alley. When I came back after nightfall... He was already dead.” Jae’lle’s eyes flickered from the Quaestor’s eyes to her own yellow-toned hands.

"I see." The Sephi spoke carefully. She paused for a moment, and turned away to think for a moment. "What of your mom?"

"Mom died a long time ago. I was 6 then. She turned down Ottaviano Warrens when he offered her his hand in marriage. I don't really know what happened after that. I just remember one day she didn't come home to the shop." the girl spoke honestly.

"Hard knock life for you, huh?" the Palatinaean leader looked back at her. Jae'lle said nothing, but shrugged.

"Well, if it makes you feel any better, my parents died too." the woman said. "My name is Alara, by the way. I'm the leader here now."

"I'm sorry to hear that... It's nice to meet you though. I'm sorry I took your knife." Jae'lle apologized.

"It's fine. Besides, I killed my parents. But I had my reasons. Don't worry about the knife, either. The assassins won't miss it too much." Alara smirked.

"Oh!" Jae'lle spoke in surprise. Alara laughed in response and stood up from the grass. She offered a hand to the Mirialan, which was accepted.

"Well, Yellow. I think we should get you properly cleaned up. I think your life has been hard enough." Alara placed her hand on the girl's, and then let go of it to walk towards the Villa entrance.

"Wait, what? What do you mean?" Jae'lle frowned and cocked her neck to the side.

"Well exactly what you think. Get over here. We'll get you a bed and get you cleaned up. Welcome to Excidium. Things are going to be a lot different around here now that I'm in charge." Alara smiled back at the girl and continued walking through the doors. With a sudden spurt of excitement, the Tech Weaver ran towards the entrance and placed the dagger in her pocket once more. Though she was uncertain of what was ahead, she could sense that she was going to have a different life from here on out.

Present Day
Alara's Quarters, Adorinam Tower
Calestis City, Seraph
Caperion System

"Are you ready yet, or not, Yellow?" Alara hollered from the other room.

“As ready as I’ll ever be, boss!” Jae’lle shook her head out of her daze and leapt to her feet. She had raised her hand to a salute position before Alara even stepped into the room.

“Jae’lle, you didn’t get changed, did you?” Alara lifted an eyebrow and smiled at her apprentice.

“Nah. The Empress can take me as I am.” Jae’lle pat her chest, now adorned in Journeyman robes, confidently.

“You haven’t changed at all.” Alara rolled her eyes and shook her head. “KICKS! We’ll be leaving now!”

“Have fun, ladies!” Kicks called from the hallway. “How many times do I have to tell you, STOP CALLING US THAT!” Alara snapped back.

“Sorry M’lady! You need to get Ms. Jae’lle to change my programming first!” Kicks responded.

“Ughhh Flii- WAIT A SECOND.” Alara turned to her apprentice in realization. Jae’lle couldn’t contain herself any longer and burst out laughing.

“You programmed the droid to address only ME that way!” Alara frowned at the girl.

“What can I say, I gotta practice my skills somewhere until Kicks finishes my room!” Jae’lle giggled in her hands.

“I’m gonna get you for that, Yellow!” Alara darted towards her Journeyman apprentice and reached out to grab her, but Jae’lle was far too quick and was already exiting the apartment suite.

“Only if you can catch me first!” Jae’lle taunted her.

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