

# Opportunity Knocks

A Submission to the Competition:  
A New Face Appears!



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**17 ABY**

**Old Town Arena – Nar Shaddaa**

Grexx Inaris felt the punch connect with his chest, having been unable to get his hands up in time to block it. He had been too confident that he could simply dodge it. He stumbled back a few steps, the breath almost knocked from his lungs. He clutched his chest and glared at the large Gamorrean that was his opponent. The creature was bigger than he had expected, maybe some kind of genetic fluke that made him so big, or perhaps he had been designed that way by the Hutts — Grexx had heard rumors that sometimes the crime lords would alter the genetics of their champion fighters to ensure that they always had some kind of advantage in a fight. Grexx still had a height advantage, but he was up against a lot of bulk.

The Lasat let out a low growl before launching himself at the Gamorrean. His opponent wound up to take another swing at him, but Grexx dodged under it before cocking his left arm back and driving it into the pig's gut. Wasting no time, he quickly followed it up by bringing his right arm upwards in an arc to connect with his opponent's chin, snapping his head back.

The Gamorrean recovered faster than Grexx had expected, delivering a blow aimed at the Lasat's side. But this time he was ready, bringing his arms up in a block and spinning away from the blow. Grexx backpedaled from the hulking porcine alien, wanting to put some distance between them once more. The crowd erupted in cheers at the fight on display before them.

The two fighters were in a large, circular dirt arena. Lining the perimeter were walls perhaps three meters high, and atop those walls were rows upon rows of seating, rising even higher. Bodies packed the stands, flowing into the aisles when they ran out of room. Off to one end, high up, the Hutts and their invited guests enjoyed the luxury of service, including drinks and food. Grexx knew that's where many of the heads of criminal organizations would be, even those that technically competed with the Hutts. These fights were a chance for the big slugs to show their power, so they would invite their rivals. A large, well-trained security force discouraged the outbreak of any kind of violence between the parties present. Though the arena was for any to use, the one putting on this show was Boshtok the Hutt. He had recently acquired the Gamorrean and wanted to put him to good use. Grexx had a decent record under his belt – he had won more fights than he had lost, though not by a large margin – and had been in a lot of fights, so he had been selected as the opponent.

“Grexx is on the offensive now, but can it last?” an announcer's voice questioned loudly over the sound system installed throughout the arena. “His opponent, the mighty Kilvor, doesn't seem to be much fazed by the attack.”

“I'll show you fazed,” Grexx mumbled under his breath, annoyed. He gestured at Kilvor. “C'mon, piggy. Come get some.”

The Gamorrean huffed and ran at him. Given its large, bulky frame, Grex was a bit surprised at the speed it displayed. Perhaps more was modified to it than just its size. Not expecting the gap to be closed so quickly, Grex received a meaty fist to the head. Dazed, he stumbled to the side before backing away. He shook his head clear and glared at Kilvor, cracking his neck.

“That’s more like it,” the Lasat said, more to himself than to his opponent.

Feeling like he needed to bring an end to the fight, Grex decided to change things up. He rushed Kilvor, dropping to the ground a few feet in front of him and sliding over the dirt. Once he reached the Gamorrean, he popped up, winding his arm back before launching it right at his opponent’s groin. As Grex’s fist made a solid connection, he heard Kilvor utter what sounded like an amusing cross between a squeal and a squeak before dropping to the ground. Grex got to his feet and moved back once more, smirking to himself. The crowd, apparently, was not amused; booing and other jeering sounds issued forth from the arena stands. Some patrons even threw their garbage onto the dirt floor.

“Oh, come on. Are you not entertained?” Grex asked as he turned about, facing them all, arms spread wide. “Is this not why you’re here?”

Kilvor was beginning to pick himself up off the ground. Once on his feet, he swayed a bit, still a bit dazed from the pain. The mutant snarled at Grex and the Lasat would have sworn its face was twisted up in rage — if it wasn’t already an ugly mess since birth. Swiping a foot over the dirt and kicking it behind him, the Gamorrean came at Grex.

But the Lasat was ready. Instead of fighting it head-on, he ran. Grex moved quickly, heading towards the nearest wall. But he made sure the Gamorrean wasn’t too far behind. When he reached the wall, he ran up it and, thanks to his height, latched on to a wooden beam that was jutting out from it. It was likely some kind of support that had been put in place when the arena was being constructed — they lined the entire perimeter of the arena. Using his own body weight and the strength of his arms, Grex pulled at it hard. He heard a groan from the piece of wood. Lifting himself up, a bit, he let his body drop as he pulled on it again.

The wood snapped free and he dropped towards the ground. As he fell, he kicked off the wall and landed beside Kilvor.

“Surprise, piggy!” he taunted with a smirk.

Grex brought the wooden beam to bear on the Gamorrean, striking him in the side of the leg. The blow caused the mutant’s leg buckle and he howled in pain, dropping to one knee. Kilvor swiped at Grex, but he easily dodged the attempted attack. He took a moment to look at his opponent.

The Lasat had gotten his bell rung a bit during the fight, so he had to give credit where credit was due — the Gamorrean was a good fighter, and a worthy opponent. The problem was Grex was growing tired of the fight, and not just this particular one, either. He had been a slave for years, and in that time he had first been a builder while he was younger, and as he grew older and stronger, they had turned him into the fighter that he was now. He had enjoyed the fight in the beginning, trying to prove himself against the various opponents, but now, he wanted a change of pace. However, it was not up to him, so he would fight until they told him he was done or they gave him something else to do.

Grex walked over to Kilvor, who was still clutching at his leg. The Gamorrean tried to stand, but the moment he put weight on his injured leg, he was down on the ground again. He hefted the wooden beam from its resting place in his palm and changed to holding it with both hands.

“It was a good fight, piggy. But now it’s time to say goodnight,” Grex spoke softly to his opponent.

With that, he swung the wooden beam hard, making contact with the mutant’s face, the sound a mixture of a sharp crack and a solid, somewhat squishy thunk. Kilvor’s head whipped around and he crumpled to the ground. The crowd grew silent. The Gamorrean remained still, but from Grex’s perspective, he could tell that his opponent was simply unconscious. He could see his chest rising and falling and he heard the huff through its porcine snout as he drew breath. Grex tossed the piece of wood to the side and turned his face up towards the sky, slowly closing his eyes. The crowd suddenly broke the silence and erupted into cheers. No matter their earlier thoughts on Grex, they were thrilled to see such a fight, and now it had reached its conclusion.

“And it looks like poor Kilvor, the fan favorite that everyone thought would end up being the winner, is down for the count!” the announcer declared. “Man, that Grex sure packs a lot of power into his blows, I’ll give him that. I hope we get a chance to see him fight again soon!”

Grex blew out a sigh as he turned to head back to the waiting area where he had been kept before the fight began. However, a surprise was waiting for him when he arrived. A Weequay male was there, leaning up against the wall with a grin on his face.

“You, there, hairless Wookiee-like creature,” he began. “Might I have a moment of your time?”

“I’m a Lasat, not a Wookiee. Very different species, bub,” Grex replied.

“My most humble apologies, then. Still, can we talk?”

“Sure, I guess I can spare some time. Not like I have anything else to do.”

“Excellent! Tell me, have you been, shall we say, employed by these Hutts for long?”

“Yeah, you could say that,” Grex began, stretching out a kink in his neck. “I was captured when I was still a kid. They had me doing one thing or another ever since then. First it was just general helping out, maybe some building work when I was a bit older and could carry things and use tools. Been doing fights like this for a while now. I guess I’m pretty good at it. They keep making me fight.”

“Ah, I see. Well, how would you like to be free of this then?”

“What do you mean?”

“Well, I would buy you, of course!”

Grex laughed. “Oh, is that right? How would that be any better than now?”

“You would be free! I would buy you from the Hutts and give you your freedom, and in exchange, you would work for me. And you would be paid, obviously!”

“And what if I don’t want to work for you?”

“Well, that would make me very sad. But please, just work with me, even if it’s only for a little bit. Think of it like paying off a debt, except there would be no interest on it. Once you have paid it off, or even partially paid it off, if you still wish to leave, you may do so. I will not stop you.”

“All right, I guess that seems fair enough,” Grex said after a moment of silent thought, weighing the offer in his mind. “At least that way I know I can actually leave. Will I be free to do my own thing when I want?”

“Yes! Yes, of course! So does that mean you’ll work for me? I could certainly use a fighter like you to help me with my...business matters.”

“Judging by your presence here, I gather you’re some type of criminal, but that doesn’t bother me too much. Besides, anything would be better than being stuck as a slave for these slugs. Count me in.”

“Ah, wonderful! Come, come! Let’s go get this deal settled with the Hutts so we can be on our way. I am Zukalo, by the way. What is your name, my large, purple friend?”

“The name’s Grex. Nice to meet you, I guess.”

“Yes, yes. You, too. I have a feeling that this is the start of a beautiful partnership!”

The Weequay turned to a panel on the wall and entered in a set of numbers. A door slid open to reveal a set of stairs beyond. Grex followed Zukalo as he began to climb the steps, which he guessed led to where the Hutts and their guests were located. The Lasat was still feeling a bit uneasy about what kind of deal he had just made, but he didn't care. He was finally going to be free of the chains that had bound him for so long. He would be able to live his life as he saw fit. Nothing could beat that feeling.