

# The Good Fight

*by Bale Andros (826)*

The tension in the room was as thick as the smoke in the air. Everyone watched on in absolute silence, frozen like statues as they waited for the proverbial drop of the hammer. Everyone knew that anything could happen when Bale Andros was involved. One moment, you were chasing a high, the next your teeth were being met with the crack of a giant's fist

So they kept their mouths shut and kept their eyes open.

"You know what's about to go down, right?" The hulking Zabrak gunsmith locked eyes with his adversary, flashed a wide, taunting grin. The bug-eyed Rodian's funnel-like mouth twitched. At that moment, Bale was hyperaware. He could hear the breath wheezing out of his opponent. One of the onlookers somewhere off to his right was grinding his teeth. Another particularly jittery fella seemed like he was about ready to bolt out of the room. Bale's leg, or the junction where the prosthesis began, was still burning. His knuckles, white from clenching his fists so hard, were itching.

*"Don shee, dah baeg'lae!"* The Rodian spat in his native tongue.

"Don't know what that means." Bale's grin only grew wider around the words. "But I'll drink to that!"

The Rodian was the first to move but the Zabrak launched forward with a speed that belied his massive frame. The onlookers exploded in unison, screaming and cheering, pumping fists as the opponents met head-on. Bale's hand clamped down and swept the first of sixteen shot glasses off the table. He threw it back, swallowed the searing hootch in one gulp, then smashed it back down on the tabletop down in

an explosion of glass. The flying shards hadn't landed that he'd repeated with a second glass. Then a third, a fourth. The Rodian whimpered as he struggled to keep up with his adversary. By the fifth shot, the green-skinned milksop was choking and coughing and spitting. By the time Bale downed the ninth shooter and assured his victory, his opponent had stopped trying. Not that he noticed. The Zabrak's awareness had long turned to the task at hand.

The table and what remained on top of it flew up at the Rodian when the victor let out a roar and burst out of his seat, both arms in the air. The bar patrons all flocked to him, swallowing Bale into their cheerful cacophony, hands slapping at his back and fists waving.

"Where's my drink?" demanded the giant.

The night was just getting started.