

Nesolat Platform

38 ABY

Stesa Armani had no real connections to the Dark Brotherhood. She was not a member of the Iron Legion, nor affiliated with any clan. Her closest interactions with any Force User come by way of the contracts she takes on aboard the *Godless Matron*. She surely could not care less about any ancient Sith artifacts outside of their inherent value, so when the call of aid went out to defend the *Nesolat*, she wasn't exactly thrilled. Still, a job was a job, and the Iron Throne paid well above the standard.

"Good girl, Syrah!" An excited high pitched voice echoed down a smoke-filled hallway that had just become silent. Just a few seconds prior, a three-legged Cythraul managed to rip out the esophagus of the last of a squad of Collective marines, only to be met with the small explosion after. She had help, of course, from the pair of remaining Iron Legion troopers.

The two heavily armored men were what appeared to be the last of their squad. The grit and tired look on their faces indicated that they've been through a rough fight.

One of the troopers stopped for a moment to kneel and offer their gratitude to the canine, only to be met by a deep growl.

"Friend!" The voice command immediately dampened down Syrah's aggression as her friend came running. A short, thin Zabrak approached the scene whilst holstering her pistol. "Sorry gents, she needs to be called back sometimes. I think India Squad is holed up ahead in the meditation chamber, let's keep moving."

"Who are you?" barked the senior of the two troopers. "We don't take orders from children."

While Stesa was used to being teased about her small frame, she never encountered someone making fun of her age. "Cute," she replied quietly. "Stesa Armani, and that's Syrah," she quickly nodded to her pup, "and we just saved your asses."

"Who do you belong to, girl?!" barked the younger trooper. They spent their entire lives being fodder that they assumed most other combatants were the same.

Stesa shuddered at the thought of *belonging* to anyone. Her loyalty towards someone wasn't something that was guaranteed for any one reason or another. She did, however, have an unbreakable bond with her canine companion. "I belong to Syrah, and she belongs to me!" The young Zabrak was getting irritated that she was being interrogated for coming to the rescue. "Now please, let's keep moving," she reiterated.

"We're supposed to be evacuating of all trainees to the ---" one of the troopers replied quickly.

“I know what your orders are, dipshit. I’m telling you that there are more --” the girl couldn’t get another word out before the entire platform began to shake violently once more. She fell to the ground, with the armored men nearly falling on top of her. Almost instantly, she felt the warm river of blood flow down her tattooed face. Life slowed to a near standstill, and her cries for her best friend seemed to be drowned out by the continued explosions. She closed her eyes for the last time.