

Suggestions to Demands

Entry for: [GJW XIV Phase I] Fiction - In Opposition [Option 1]

Written by Dasha Jala Renza on 2020-06-04/09 as Part 3 of 3 in Phase I.

=== Nesolat Platform ===

Jala looked around after wrapping the bracer in the enemy's cloak and looting his bag to store it in. Her mind swirled slightly before she heard a woman's voice rasping, "Young Sephi, are you sure you don't need anything else?" followed by an extremely strong temptation to loot the rest of the corpse of usable parts. Unable to resist the suggestion, her hands worked quickly.

On top of her salvaging instincts, she wanted to take a look in the direction from where the bracer came from, after all... there could be more loot.

Her eyes shone as she saw a large room filled with relics and artifacts. It seemed like the larger valuables had been packed and shipped out on pallets to some safe location already through a blocked door in the rear and a large sack was being used to stuff the rest of the smaller items into; then some battle erupted here as Shadow Academy researchers and some Collective soldiers lay dead. She shook her head thinking, *'I don't need valuables, they're heavy.'*

The voice spoke again, "Take a look again." and a twinge of curiosity pulled her into the room as she stepped cautiously in.

Upon inspecting the blocked door, a thermal detonator made the entrance impassable as debris filled the small hallway and a Collective soldier's arm lay limp on the visible side. Next, she went to inspect the sack. She blinked and suddenly, the sack was partially filled with small, tasty bread and more were on the shelves. No longer was she in the Shadow Academy again, instead she had just broken into a bakery back when she was desperate for food. The woman's voice asked, "Won't that make 'that' person happy?"

Quickly, she went to stuff more of the bread into the sack which surprisingly held all that's left. The weight felt fine and she managed to fix it to her back like a backpack using cables in the room.

Her mind swam a bit after it was secured, but it felt like a hunger thing to the Sephi whom just took a snack bar from her belt to munch on. The sack also felt... lighter. *'It's probably just my grumbling belly satisfied.'* the innocent Sephi thought as she looked to the door to leave.

As she prepared to leave, she heard footsteps coming down the hallway; they were orderly, patrol-like... authorities were here to take her bread again! She had to run! But wait, what was the feeling she was having instead of... fear?

Using her vibrodagger, she destabilized the fuel cell she looted and waited for them to be just about in view before throwing the improvised explosive at their feet releasing enough juice to severely burn one of the scouts through their armor while startling the rest.

Jala followed up while they were taking in the situation by making a dash for the door while unsheathing her vibroblade into a slash for the first throat she saw.

Within close proximity, the blasters the remaining 2 had were not as effective and they blind fired as Jala was splashed with the blood of one of their comrades. They were quickly disarmed as the vibroblade slashed their wrists before she entered into their space and finished them off.

The odd feeling subsided as she was now covered in blood. Startled, she quickly took the fuel cells from their blasters and hurried off, running down what she perceived as a street.

Some streets she didn't want to go down as there was too much light or a blockage, whereas in reality there was nothing of the sort. She kept running but eventually felt her muscles ache a bit as she was running out of energy after her fights and now hauling nourishment. She needed to find a place to hide and munch.

Another voice hissed in Jala's ear making her nearly jump out of her skin, "Nearly there! Take the next right, then left! Hurry!" Freaked out at this point, she did what she could to follow the instructions down the 'streets'.

Her left leg gave out first as she fell onto her left knee, lungs moved as she gasped for air without regard to the iron taste with each breath. She closed her eyes then opened them to see a Taldryan transport ship in front of her with its ramp down, but she was struggling to move. A deeper voice now sounded, "My turn. Move!" with that she felt a bit of energy return but also a sense of imminent danger.

Jala quickly made her way into the open transport ship. Her eyes were barely staying open now but her arms moved across some buttons of sorts before she just collapsed. She felt some rumbling, some shaking, then the ground move. The transport had closed its doors and taken off in autopilot to Taldryan HQ.

The woman's voice sounded again, "Refresh yourself; you have served us well." but Jala couldn't even feel her own arm move while food and water can be felt moving down her throat. Eyes still closed, she couldn't see the eerily red light surrounding the artifacts glowing.

A clamor of voices that was not even a whisper grew into an audible conversation.

“Did we get out in time?”

“The ripple has been released, the mule couldn’t have moved faster, could it?”

“It’s coming, brace yourselves!”

Screams of pain and agony of thousands of voices filled Jala’s head. She clutched her ears to her head as she could feel a cold burning sensation within her skull; her legs kicked out as she squirmed in pain. Then, there was just nothing.

=== Taldryan HQ - Hangar ===

“Alright boys, you know the drill. Single life form non-responsive to radio calls. If it appears dangerous, blast it. The other teams have the perimeter, so watch the doors and corners... and Devon, remember to look up.” a squad leader reminded his team.

The set of 5 entered the transport and found an unconscious, blood-covered, stunted Sephi in the cockpit huddled next to an unidentified sack and a Collective satchel slung on her arm. The team moved in to secure the limp Jala and dig around to find her identification. Another member retrieved the ship’s logs and gasped as he noted that the ship was from the Platform that suddenly went on radio silence earlier.

The squad leader moved an arm up to talk into the radio, “Ship secured. Taldryanite needs medical attention and we need a cart for whatever she brought back from the Nesolat Platform.” That was when yet another member opened the sack and revealed the artifacts, “Sir... you should...” prompting the leader to state, “We need some nerds in here.”

=== Taldryan HQ - Medical ===

Her head wasn’t throbbing from whatever it was and she felt alright; slowly she opened her eyes to see the familiar white ceiling of the medical bay. Machines’ beeps near her to remind her that she’s alive. With a groan, she tries to sit herself up only to find restraints... again.

An argument can be heard down the hall from her room, too far for her to hear the details of. Heavy footfalls came down the hallway and a nearby door flung open yet stopped just before slamming into the wall. “NURSE! When will she be--- Oh, good afternoon.” A looming figure came to her bedside with an aura that made the hairs on the back of her neck stand up, “I have some questions for you... But first, how are you feeling?”