

A world of fire and Blood: The Raid

Edema climbed from the broken wreckage of the escape craft, blood dripped from a head wound but she paid no attention to it. She pulled out her equipment and looked dejected at the ruins of the distress emitter, shattered on the floor, this was going to be a long trip.

The freighter she was traveling on was passing by the Tatooine system when it was hit by a series of explosions; raiders were tearing the ship apart so she made haste for the nearest escape pod. The ancient pod looked as if it would fall apart by simply looking at it, but it was her only hope of survival, she prayed to the Force that it would hold together long enough. The pod plummeted through the desert world's atmosphere, the ride was horrendous and she braced herself for impact. The pod smashed into the sandy surface, sections abrading away as it gradually came to a halt. It had kept Edema alive, but beyond that it was now just a pile of junk.

Carrying her equipment and what survival tools she could find in the wreckage, she trekked across the desert, she had a rough bearing on what looked like a settlement and was heading in the general direction. The heat was horrendous, she had never known a planet to try and roast her alive. Her water supplies were dangerously low and there was little sign of the settlement. More hours passed, her water had long run out, she wasn't sure if it was the Force or just delusions from heat exhaustion, but she could swear she was being tracked and followed.

The sun and heat eventually got the best of her and her body, despite her drawing upon the Force, had had enough. Through her blurred vision she thought she could make out figures approaching her, no way was she going to let some local scum end her on this desolate dust ball, so with her last energy reserves she drew upon the Force and readied herself. Robed figures surrounded her; some were chanting in an alien language, waving metal weapons, others were jabbing spears towards her, jabbering words she couldn't understand. She ignited her blades, holding them in a combat pose, the *snap hiss* of the lightsabers made her attackers go silent suddenly, one of them began jabbering at another, they looked as if they were in charge, Edema did her best to hold her ground but her body was beyond combat and without a word she collapsed to the sandy floor, her blades falling from her hands.

She had no idea how long had passed; the juddering of heavy movement beneath her brought her round. She was on some kind of grav platform being towed by a strange creature, if her memory was right it was a Bantha, favoured by the Tusken Raiders. She heard someone jabber in the alien language and it surprised her, next to her sat a Tusken Raider, covered in its robes, in its hand it held a water gourd and jabbered, indicating that she should take it and have a drink. Edema needed little encouragement and took the gourd and drank from it, the water was cool and fresh, and made her feel much better; she had no idea why they had saved her but they had and even her equipment. The journeyed for another hour before reaching a settlement, Edema was carried from the platform into the shade of a tent.

She must have lost consciousness as when she came too she had been disrobed, washed and clearly had had water and other things given to her. Her clothes and armour lay on the floor in a neat pile, along with her weapons and equipment and she had been dressed in light flowing, loose robes similar to those worn by the Tuskens, they felt rough but comfortable on her bare skin. The tent she was in was strange, ornate but rustic; clearly it belonged to someone of high importance. The

entrance flap opened with a flurry of sand and a tall female figure walked in, she looked at Edema and bowed her head in some form of reverence, Edema had no idea why but her curiosity had been piqued, the female Tusken waved her hands outside the door and in came an ancient, battered 3PO droid

"I am R3P0, how can I zzzzzrrgg help?"

The Tusken spoke her strange language and the droid translated

"My owner, the revered Lady Alkabesh greatzzzz you, she zzzzhopes you have recovered from you ordzzzeal, zzzhe wishes you to join us, zshee has much to explain"

Edema got up and walked over to the droid, she reached out a hand and using a trick her father showed her, used the Force to realign the droid vocabulator matrix, she had had to do it many a time with her families droids, she wished hers was here with her instead of back with her family. The Droid spluttered and then its vocabulator powered up

"Why thank you Miss, it would seem the legends are true"

Edema looked at the droid, puzzled but figured things would be explained, she followed Lady Alkabesh out into the desert. It was dusk, the twin suns were just sitting above the horizon but there was enough light to follow the Tusken and her droid to a rock formation. Once there Alkabesh pointed at carvings in the rocks and began to jabber in her language, R3P0 translating as she went.

"Our people have a legend that talks of a fire coming from the sky" Alkabesh waved her arms, pointing at carvings showing a fireball streaking from the sky

"The fire would bring us a god, and she would come before us with twin blades of fire"

Edema could make out the image of a woman standing before a circle of Tusken, held in her hands were two swords of fire; she could swear they looked just like her lightsabers, surely not.

Alkabesh continued

"She who was sent to us from the sky would be a warrior from the stars, sent to us to help us, to save us from those who would take from us what is ours"

Edema could see carvings showing the woman leading Tusken into combat, she could make out buildings on fire and people running.

"She would also have the knowledge to fix what was broken and repair what was required"

Edema looked at the droid, then at the Tusken woman

"You think I am this person? This warrior from the skies? I know the Force works in mysterious ways but this is just weird" with that comment she felt her head start to swim and get dizzy and collapsed, clearly she wasn't as recovered as she thought.

Three weeks passed and as she recovered she learned about the history of the world and the Tusken natives. With the help of R3P0 she developed a basic understanding of the language and began to

understand this legend into which she had been thrown into. The Tusken's were utterly convinced that she was the one from the stories, the one that had been foreseen to help them take back the lands that were stolen from them. The more she looked into the legends and the stories, the more she began to realise that the Force had brought her here; her crash and survival were no accident. While she was no god and had no intentions of letting herself become a focus for any kind of worship, she realised that her skills with the Force would make her appear to have godlike powers.

It was another month before she was fit enough to 'fulfil her prophecy' not that she had any idea how she was going to achieve this. Edema was 'Blooded' into the tribe, her armour painted with symbols of the tribe and she was given robes with which to wear over them. Using parts available, she was able to fashion a small heat exchanger that would help keep her cool in her armour, as well as provide her with a small amount of water. It was not long before she was invited into the tribe's war council; her arrival had triggered events that had been in the planning for many if not hundreds of years and in the large tent there lay a crude table with objects representing places in the local region. A sequence of targets had been planned, and they looked to Edema to lead them into the fight, she may not have come here to do it, but she could not leave the Tusken's now.

For six weeks she and her Tusken raiders hit targets, Swoop Gangs, military outposts anything that wasn't civilian, the Tusken's had initially wanted to raid moisture farms, but she insisted that they should get them on their side rather than make them enemies. Word began to get round about the new Tusken leader and her swords of fire, tales said that she used dark magic, others talked about her being an avenging angel sent to punish those who had gone against the planet's natives, Edema didn't care as long as they put fear into the hearts of her opponents.

The Raid on Mos Eisley was the grandest of her efforts, although its success would only lead to greater victories. The vile town, well known for being a hive of scum and villainy, had belonged to the Tusken's before they were forced out by the Hutts and various other alien factions. Her small Force had no hope of taking the town, but they could make a point, enough of one that the town's leaders would be willing to negotiate. Edema and her raiders slipped in at night, she could see Storm troopers patrolling the town and the entrance points, the white armoured idiots no longer served the empire, rather anyone who would pay them enough. She stalked towards the nearest squad and sent shuriken flying towards the gap beneath their helmets, three dropped dead before the others had any clue what was happening, clearly their training and skills had not improved since the fall of the Empire, the others died to her blades and the party made their way into the town. Raiders howled war cries and went about destroying the town's infrastructure and terrorising the population, Edema moved her way through the streets, picking off gangs of pirates and general blaster fodder. Leaping onto a roof she sprinted towards the nearest courtyard, the alarm had clearly gone up and gangbangers and swoopers alike had begun to gather, blaster fire peppering the buildings as they tried to shoot the Tusken's in the dark, Edema just laughed to herself, this would be like target practice. She took her bow out and powered it up before sending a flurry of bolts towards the nearest group of swoopers, smoking holes dropped them to the ground as their blaster fire turned to try and engage this new foe, but it was too late, Edema had vaulted through the air, the Force guiding her landing as she dropped amongst the scum and villainy. The dregs of the town turned their blasters on this new target and opened up, Edema just laughed, her blades had long been ignited and what bolts got close were deflected back at their point of origin and upon seeing the ineffectiveness of their blaster bolts, the dregs began to panic, none survived. Edema arched her

blades through the crowd, the colour creating artful patterns in the night sky and they carved through the pirates and gang members, one did manage to escape and Edema allowed him to think he was safe before grabbing him with the Force and slamming him into the ground with enough Force to pulverise his bones. The Darkside of the Force was flowing through her like a torrent and she let herself just follow it, her skills and training as part of the Brotherhood had prepared her for moments like this. The raid was violent and aggressive, and left the town shattered and burning, they had lost half a dozen Tusken, each of whom was carried back with the survivors to be buried as to their people's traditions, but it had been a success. Retaliatory actions were attempted by brave gangs and groups of mercenaries, but each was either ambushed and wiped out or demoralised significantly enough that they backed off.

The raids were continued without pause, pressure had to be kept up until someone took notice and acted, for too long the Tusken had been pushed around, not any more. Town after town was hit, ships were destroyed, facilities crippled and resources taken, Tatooine was left burning and its crime syndicates and gangs were in disarray. Word reach them about the fire demon that lead the Tusken, Edema could only laugh at the way people were portraying her, a dark Force breathing fire into the streets. It wouldn't be long before someone would have to act against this new Messiah, and as the fates would have it, the Tusken didn't have to wait long. Under a flag of truce, an emissary from what was left of the various underworld elements along with the farmers, visited the settlement, they brought a request of a truce and negotiation. Edema sat with this representative and listened to his words, she paid them little attention as they were nothing but a mask for his true motives. The Force allowed her to look beyond his petty words and see what his real reasoning for being there was, the remaining underworld elements were worried, their power base was being shattered and the Moisture Farmers and local communities were starting to side with the Tusken, they had a plan to draw out this Messiah and remove her from the picture, thus destroying the Tusken support and power, it didn't take long for her to realise that they intended to ambush them at the negotiations, so she made her own plans.

A Neutral location was chosen out near the outskirts of Mos Espa, a small homestead long abandoned. Edema had scouted the location early on the day in question, making sure she had prior knowledge of the site and its features; she had no intentions of this being her grave. The allotted time arrived and the party from the two parties approached and greeted each other, bows and hand gestures were mutually accepted and the two parties sat down. As far as both parties were concerned, Edema was sat at the head of the Tusken group, helmeted and silent; she sat there, watching everyone. The Tusken translated through R3P0, while the other party negotiated with a wily looking Klatoonian. The "negotiation" party from the towns was not the kind you would expect for a peaceful event, Nikto's, Klatoonians and other well-known galactic thugs, even a brace of former storm troopers, their once pristine armour now dirty and cracked. The talks continued but clearly were going nowhere, Edema had wisely chosen to distance herself from the proceedings, instead she had positioned herself on a nearby roof and allowed herself to flow with the Force, it had been some time since she had used her illusion skills, so she didn't want to stress herself, keeping it simple would be fine, the level of intellect within the room was so low, she barely had to put much effort into maintaining the illusion. Through the Force she could tell that the opposing party were trying to bring the talks to an aggressive point, pushing the Tusken delegates, not agreeing to anything, Edema knew full well this would be the outcome and knew full well what was coming.

The Blaster bolt came from behind the Tusken delegates and punched through the illusion Edema had projected, slamming into the leg of the table, both parties were shocked and weapons were drawn. The Tusken and the droid made for a hasty retreat to get out of the building and into the courtyard, but they were surrounded, Alien languages and Basic were being yelled around by the various thugs present. Edema, now free of having to maintain her illusion readied herself, she plotted the locations of the nearest targets on her helmets HUD, working out the best way to create a shock and awe display, the first targets dropped to shuriken and throwing knives buried in their necks, The Equite darted across the rooftops, flinging blades out as she went and guiding them to their targets with the Force, landing with a graceful thud she unslung her bow and sent a volley of bolts at various un-expecting targets. Blaster bolts flew everywhere, some were crudely aimed at the Tusken, but the party had managed to disperse in the initial chaos of Edema's attack, energy bolts and blades flew across the courtyard and blasters made vague attempts to track their target, but it was too late. Edema was among the thugs, her blades glowing with a terrifying light, the Darkside was almost palpable around her as she allowed it to fill her once again, her rage and combat lust exploded from her in a flurry of swings and slashes, heads and torsos began to drop as she was a like a storm of death among the thugs, a few managed to strike her with lucky blows but they did little to her armour or cybernetics and the fury of combat was all over after a few minutes.

There was only a single survivor, the fool who had been at the head of the table, Edema held her blades at his throat and was about to deliver an ultimatum when she heard the scream of TIE fighters. The pair looked up to see TIE's in the unmistakable livery of the Dark Brotherhood, following them were landers and shuttles, Iron legion troops clattered through the streets and an officer approached the pair.

"I assume you are Edema R'uh-Kalinor Ma'am?"

"We were dispatched to assist you once word of your presence reached our Forces, apologies that we could not have been here sooner, but it was requested that we deploy a garrison on the world to assist in peacekeeping efforts, as such suitable Forces had to be gathered"

Edema deactivated her blades and turn to the commander.

"Commander, your presence here is much appreciated; I feared I would be stuck on this dust ball for eternity"

Edema showed her Inquisitorus ID to the commander and he confirmed her identity.

"Well my Ma'am, my Forces can finish up here, if you would like to follow me to a shuttle we can get you home"

Edema stood for a moment.

"There is just one thing we need to sort with a quick stop on route, a matter of property dispute which I am sure you are aware of"

The shuttle departed the planet soon after, Edema had visited Alkabesh, and with the support of the commander, she was given rights over her people's lands and a choice on how they were used, the Garrison would be there to help settle any "disputes" that may arise. After everything that she had

been through, the Arconan was just glad to be back on a starship and heading home; by the gods did she need a bath.