

It's Nothing Personal

By Ood Bnar

Landing Platform 32A, Arcona Citadel
Selen, Dajorra System
39 BBY

The ship made a slow half turn as it went through its landing procedure. The hangar was nearly deserted as the, seemingly, heavier than normal craft touched down with an audible thud.

"Hmm, he clearly filled that thing up with anything not nailed down." one of the officers remarked, as if to himself.

"Even the nailed down stuff wasn't safe, he's got a lightsaber after all." Came the response as the man turned towards the Proconsul. "Have your men ready to scan everything, the ship and the cargo. If he's brought slaves or other illicit goods, they are to be confiscated before they can leave this hangar."

"Of course Doctor!" The squadron of Customs Officers jumped to attention as a side door opened and the Shadow Lady walked in, seemingly deep in discussion with two of her predecessors.

"All I'm saying is, the man was batshit insane when I first encountered him. Force's sake, didn't we keep a quarantine active on Boral for nearly a decade on his word alone?" Kordath stated, a wry smile on his face.

"I sometimes still recall the screams of those two Knights he brought back." Atty murmured as the discussion drifted off topic further.

"Well, he's not getting away with it under my reign!" the Shadow Lady stated confidently.

"Lucine, he supplied his ship with us before sailing off to join a pirate gang in active conflict with the majority of the Clan. He's already gotten away with it." Kordath interjected quickly as the former rulers reached the party prepared to investigate the returning Warlord.

Some time later

As the Nubian vessel had finished its landing, the entryway opened and the Neti strode out. "A welcome committee! How interesting!"

Taking a quick glance at the pirate hat he was wearing, Rhyllance moved to intercept him. “We won’t hold your actions against you, as the Iron Throne dictated. This doesn’t mean we’re happy to have a slaver in our midst. You will be allowed to keep your loot, but any slaves must be handed over. We will then liberate them and return them to their home. Captain Selwon here will lead the inspection...”

The Proconsul trailed off as a young man wearing a Lieutenants uniform of the Iron Legion started to move down the ramp. An advanced shock collar rested snugly around his neck. “Sir, the landing procedure has been completed and I’m ready to oversee the unloading if you wish to head to your quarters.”

“Thank you Lieutenant Blarn, you may instruct the cargo droids to start unloading. Oh, this is Captain Selwon, he’ll be overseeing the customs inspection. So make sure to assist him in his duties.” The Neti stated as he turned back towards the group, “So can we let them get to it? I have...ideas...and would like to get to my laboratory as soon as possible.”

“Oodles, is he your slave?” Atty stated, a slight hitch in her voice the sole signal of her mental anguish at the mere concept of an Arconan owning a sentient.

“Who? Jervik, no no he’s my personal assistant.” the Neti stated quickly.

“Yes but, are you paying him for his services?” the Kiffar former Shadow Lord inquired, his calm voice hiding a veneer of rising anger.

“Huh? What does it matter how I compensate him?” the Neti stated, seemingly skirting the issue.

“Why’s he wearing a Shock Collar?” the Shadow Scion asked, hand slowly inching towards a weapon.

“Oh, that’s an Advanced Shock Collar. Pretty nifty piece of technology isn’t it? There were hundreds in this storeroom I found in the Garganta Galleria Casino Hotel. Though I was looking for the security control room at the time so I’ve only managed to get one.” The Neti seemed genuinely happy as he talked the Proconsul through all the features this highly advanced piece of technology seemed to incorporate.

“Alchemist Bnar, are we going to have to fight you in order to liberate this poor young human from the chains of servitude?” the Shadow Lady hissed as she held her inactive weapon at the ready.

“Why’d you want to do that? He’s just my assistant after all. Lieutenant Blarn, my companions here want to ask you to take off that collar of yours?” the Neti’s loud voice boomed throughout the hangar.

“Why’d I do that Sir? Wouldn’t it just be inefficient?” the young voice sounded back.

Turning back to the group before him, the Neti continued speaking. “Anyway, I told you I found the collar, never said I found the codes to activate/deactivate its payload nor whether or not I found it already attached to someone or not. Now, I really must be going. I don’t know what experiments I left running in there while I was away...” With this statement, the Neti used the confusion to sidestep the group and rush out of the room as the droids started to unload paintings, statues, crates and more.

A few hours later, as the inspection finished and the young human began to arrange transport of the goods to a pre-hired warehouse in the lower levels of the Citadel, a scream could be heard in the distance:

“It’s alive! Run for your lives!”

Quickly followed by a deep voice, many associated with the Neti Warlord. “Oh come now, it’s not that dangerous! Just avoid the stingers, acid spit and whatever you do, don’t pierce those sacks on its sides! They might detonate with enough force to damage the structural integrity of this tower!”

As further screams were seemingly added in at random, distant sirens could be heard seemingly supporting the chorus of horrors.

“So this is home now?” Jervik Blarn stated to himself as he gently brushed some dirt off the dome of an astromech droid, “We’re going to have a lot of fun here won’t we?” softly whistling to himself, the young man started to make his way to accompany the droids as they carried the rather large amount of loot to its destination. “I wonder if he remembered to requisition me some quarters connected to that courtyard of his...”

THE END