

Aura Ta'var stood across a bunch of local thugs and shook her head.

"No, go away now. You will not hurt these people."

The opposition leader stepped forward with a grin and scoffed.

"I don't think you know who we are, little lady. We are the 'The Firm'. We own these parts. This is our land and we will do what we want with it or else," the man ended on a note of finality.

The Rodian gestured with his hands and his compatriots each drew out a gun and pointed it at her. Aura visibly sighed. *This is what you get when Jedi protectors go away. A bunch of hooligans getting their way at the end of a blaster rifle.* Regardless, she had heard about this 'Firm' and its leader, who was a Devaronian male who turned a gift of grift into the big leagues. Galeo Sinastra was a well respected member of this planet's governing body and also a prominent member of this outer rim's gangster infrastructure.

"Remind me again why he owns this land when it is in the name of these villagers?" the Zeltron Jedi asked, holding her ground.

"Because he does," said the Rodian as he handed over a datapad.

On it was a sale transaction for the village and everything in it. Aura perused it and found the signature of the local dictator/leader in charge of this particular region. By law, these villagers were officially trespassing. *This isn't right*, she thought frustratingly. A vocal villager interrupted her as she read it.

"But that's not right. This village is our livelihood. Just because you found some deposits to mine doesn't mean you can just kick it out of our homes. We already told you, we can mine it ourselves."

"You still don't seem to get it. This is now the property of the firm. Get off our land or we bring the walkers. You don't get a cut of our profits and you are only hurting the interests of your own hegemony. What would leader Ricktzag say, hmm?"

Aura could feel the fear and guilt of some of the villagers around her, who were deeply hurt at the accusation. Some had already confided in her that they were being targeted. The gang looked over the Zeltron one last time.

"So what will be it?" the Rodian asked. The implications were clear. Aura paused for a heartbeat or two then made her decision.

"The answer is no." Aura tossed the datapad back at the goons and pushed her Jedi robes aside enough to reveal a lightsaber. "Now, how about you go home. Tell your boss not to come back or he'll have to deal with me."

“With you? You’re just a little Zeltron with no weapon. But if you want him to deal with you then I’m sure he’ll have plenty of use for you as a slave next to his Twi’leks,” the Rodian laughed before raising his blaster.

Aura wasn’t sure what was coming from the end of that rifle but she was already moving her arms as her lightsaber ignited on the way up, using the Force to guide her. She chopped the man’s hand off at the wrist, his finger was a mere centimeter from pulling the trigger. The Rodian screamed and his minions fired back at her in earnest. The Jedi blocked them easily away from harm and then reached out a hand to push the trio several meters away from herself and the villagers. As they flew, she took their blasters.

“You little schutta bitch. You’ll pay for this!” the Rodian yelled as the three gangsters ran back to their speeders and fled.

After they left, the villagers cheered but Aura only frowned. The Jedi handed the blasters to the most capable defenders of the village.

“They’ll be back and they will bring more of them. I’ll need some more help next time they come. I can bring in some more guardians. But we’ll be here when they do. Do you know how to use one of these?” she asked newly minted defenders.

“Not yet.”

“We’ll teach you. But let’s hope you never have to fire it. May the Force be with us.”

“May the Force be with you, Master Jedi. Thank you.”