

**34 ABY**

**Coruscant**

**Fidelity General Hospital**

**1700 Hours**

“Yeah and would you know, kid? I’ve been in this practice for over fifty years, your life twice over. You think you’re hot kark, well you ain’t. You’re lucky I’ve let you have a spot for residency here. Your face was plastered all over the holonet, news-- not a good look Dr. Watson. You’ll be lucky to have a successful career, let alone hospital.”

The words were seething with annoyance and it didn’t go over Avery’s head. His brow was furrowed as he listened to his mentor rip into him. About his past no less. A past that was warped and tainted by someone else. Something that had nothing to do with their conversation at all. He chalked it up to his mentor having a terrible day, not taking it personal. It wasn’t a secret he and his spouse were not doing the best. His husband was on the brink of leaving him and his work was the only thing he had left.

The argument was over how to treat a patient with a poor heart. The prescription his mentor insisted on could be fatal to the patient and that was not a risk Avery was willing to take. “Dr. Schiff, with the utmost respect I say this; I have not failed you once. I know my past is muddy and I thank you for the opportunity to work under you. It’s not my intention to undermine your work, but please. This isn’t about me or you, it’s making sure Mrs. Graham lives the best possible life with the best treatment possible. I don’t pretend to know everything but this medication could worsen her condition. I propose a transplant or stents.”

“Both are risky, Watson. Any operation is a risk for her. You’re not listening.” Schiff’s hands were in tight fists as he stomped over to the holo scans of the patient’s heart, zooming into the arteries that were constricted. “Let your fancy memory take that in.”

“Sir, I know.” Avery said without even looking at the diagram. “It is risky like every other potential treatment but not nearly as risky as that prescription which has a fifty percent effectiveness rate, leaving her no better than before. If we can operate, the risk is there but a greater chance for longevity if successful. Here,” he said, handing over a datapad to the older Pantoran. “If the operation is successful and she doesn’t reject it, there is a ninety percent chance that she leads

a normal life. We should at least propose this to her and her husband instead of letting her leave with a failing heart. With respect, it is lazy practice to not give a patient the full breadth of options available to them.”

He snatched the datapad from Avery’s hand. “What have you had to work for, Watson? You don’t even need to be a doctor to survive. Your folks own a good percentage of the hospitals on Coruscant as well as their hotels. They rake in credits like nobody’s business and it’s not a secret. That inheritance is yours. Why do you care? You could be kicking back on Canto Bight, burn through credits like they’re trash, and still lead a normal life. Your folks don’t even distribute their kark to the lesser folk who roll up their sleeves and get dirty. What about you? Are you on some kind of self-righteous bend to make yourself look better than them?”

“Dr. Schiff, I think it’s time you take a break. Go and try to work through things at home or take a few breaths... Your attitude will rub off on patients and staff alike. I can take this over your head to the board if you do not heed my warning.” Being a young doctor made many envious of his work but usually they kept their thoughts to themselves. He was one year away from completing his residency at a record-breaking twenty-five. His boss, however, was candid. More so than usual. Still, he only needed to prove that his plan was better than Dr. Schiff’s and nothing else.

The older doctor let out a sigh, arms folded over his chest as he looked out of the room’s window. The sun was just setting. “You’ll have to take what I say with a grain of salt, Watson.” He looked at the datapad and the report analysis that Avery constructed comparing and contrasting the two treatment options. “You have been a fine resident and will go on to be one of the best doctors I have seen in a while. A shame what happened between you and your lady. But regardless of your past, you already know, you have a job here once you complete our program.” His golden eyes scanned the datapad. “This is... acceptable. The patient is yours, Doctor. Present them with these options, they deserve hope. I will... take a few days. Give my patient files to Fereday, she’ll be thrilled.”

Avery’s hands were gently clasped behind his back as he nodded. “Of course. Thank you, Dr. Schiff.”

“Thank *you*. Your honesty and ambition are amicable. You truly are a rarity.”

With that, both Doctors departed to go their own way.