

Secret Jedi

A fiction written by Appius Taldrya Wight.

Arroyo District

Port Kasiya

40 ABY

"Over here!"

"There's another one!"

"Survivors!"

It never ended.

Why did it never end?

It was like Arroyo had been terraformed into a sea of the sick and injured that demanded her attention. Violet was a compassionate woman, despite her more than prosperous upbringing. All she wanted to do was help, heal, nurse, and care for those who needed it most. She was raised like that. Her parents were good people, but this? This was almost too much.

Towers lay in ruin, and the stench of ash and soot from ill-formed fires lingered in the air. Thankfully, it masked the smell of the dead, who were recovered in numbers from their makeshift graves. The tragedy of it all hit Violet like a vibroknife through her heart. These were men, women, fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, and grandparents, all of whom had family waiting for them, or were also dead. The children were the worst, and Violet had to fight the urge to vomit when she bore witness to the aftermath of young lives being snuffed out like flames on a candle.

Yet, she fought on. She had to. Within every cloud of darkness was always a ray of light, hope just waiting to burst through to the surface. Her parents taught her that when she was a little girl, and she'd held on to those words all her life. Right now, those rays of hope came in the form of survivors. There weren't many, but there was that small pocket of life that still existed.

Unfortunately, most needed help and urgent medical attention, which is what brought Violet to the centre of the carnage. She was Captain of the Taldryan Medical Corps. If anyone could help these people, it was them. If anyone could get them back on their feet, it was them. If anyone could restore even the slightest shred of hope to Port Kasiya, it was them.

Violet had to ignore the call for other Survivors. There were plenty of Field Medics around the area *somewhere*. Right now, she needed to finish stitching up the open wound on a young Zabrak's leg. It cut right down the thigh, like a sharp knife had seeped into it.

Blood had stained the duracrete red, and Violet could only assume it was thanks to her Zabrak hardiness that she was still alive. She was damn lucky Violet got to her when she did.

The blood stained Violet's gloves red. She'd lost count of how many pairs she'd gone through, but it didn't matter. She was laser-focused on the stitches in her hands, sweat dripping down her furred face. She bit her lip as the thin thread passed through flesh, then snapped. It was so damn fragile. Blood seeped from the wound, and she tried as hard as she could to pinch the flesh shut.

"No!" Violet growled. She couldn't lose another one. She refused to lose another one. With a heavy heart, she looked around, there was no-one in sight. She took a deep breath.

The Zabrak was still unconscious.

"If you can hear me, please don't tell anyone what I'm about to do..." Violet said, her voice barely more audible than a whisper.

She then removed her gloves and placed both her hands on the wound, not caring for the blood seeping onto them. She closed her eyes, and focused. The Force flowed through her, calming, soothing, like a chill breeze on a hot day. Ethereal, powerful, and undeniable. She was a conduit for its power, and gently willed it to knit, heal, and nurture. Slowly, the wound closed, and Violet opened her eyes. It worked. She smiled in relief.

"Captain!"

More Medical Corps officers arrived with a stretcher in tow. Upon seeing them, Violet shot to her feet.

"Take her to Holmes for further medical attention. I stopped the bleeding, but she's lost a lot of fluids. She'll need blood packs immediately upon reaching the medical facility."

"Yes, ma'am!"

The officers carefully lifted the barely conscious Zabrak onto the stretcher and disappeared amongst the jagged rocks and duracrete. Violet barely had time to wipe the sweat from her brow before she started making her way toward the next unfortunate soul that needed her help.

Yet, she stopped, and looked to the sky when she heard the familiar whirring of a jetpack coming from above. A heavily-armoured Mandalorian suddenly descended, landing right in front of her with a hard thump.

Violet placed her hands on her hip. "Darrio, do you have to make such an entrance?"

Darrio shrugged. "You know me, Violet. You get what you get."

"How's everything going?" Violet almost dreaded asking the question.

Darrio pointed over the horizon haphazardly. "Western quadrant has been scoured. All corpses that we have found have been collected, identified if possible, and taken to the crematorium in Westwind. Those who have survived have been rescued and are getting the medical attention they need."

"How many died?" Violet asked.

"Hard to say," Darrio said. "At a rough estimate, I'd say we are in the high hundreds."

Violet's heart ached in her chest. So many lives were lost and for what? "How many survived?"

"We are looking at about fifty."

Violet went wide-eyed. "Fifty!? That's all!?"

"Unfortunately, yeah. The Children of Mortis were very efficient at what they did."

Violet covered her face with her hands, completely forgetting her gloves were covered in blood. She let out an involuntary scream. After a moment, she fell silent.

"Feel better?" Darrio asked.

"No," Violet responded, about to walk past Darrio when he held out his arm to block her.

"Where do you think you're going?"

Violet blinked, looking at the arm that stopped her, then into Darrio's visor. "To the next survivor so I can help?"

"No."

Violet recoiled at the bluntness of his answer. "No? What do you mean, *no*?"

"You've been going since we got here. It's been twenty hours now," Darrio said, his voice tinged with concern.

"I'm fine," Violet tried to brush him off and walk past, but she was stopped again.

"No, you are not," Darrio was more forceful with her this time. "Look at you. You are filthy, exhausted, and covered in blood. Eventually, you are going to be more of a liability than a help if you don't take care of yourself first."

"I said I'm fine! Violet protested, why wouldn't he believe her?"

"Go home, Violet," Darrio folded his arms across his chest in a manner that told Violet he wasn't going to budge on the matter.

Violet grit her teeth and clenched her fists. "Is that an order?"

"If that's what it takes to get you to listen, then yes. It's an order. Go home."

Violet wanted to argue back, but she knew Darrio wouldn't let her do what she wanted. He'd drag her out by force if he had to, and Violet wanted to avoid unnecessary conflict if she could help it. Besides, she was exhausted. Some food and rest sounded ideal right about now.

She let out a heavy sigh. "Fine, but just so you know, I'm not happy about this."

"Never said you had to be."

Violet couldn't see it, but somehow, behind that stupid visor all Mandalorians wore, she could tell he was smirking at her. She'd had half a mind to protest further, but her exhaustion prevented her from doing so.

She was tired. She was hungry, and she was dirty.

A good night's sleep and a shower would do her a lot of good. She could come back first thing in the morning and carry on from where she left off. The KPP and Field Medics in the area would be fine without her, right?

She shook her head as she left the area, attempting to shake the thoughts and horrors of what she saw away.

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City Centre District

Port Kasiya

40 ABY

Kasiya was like a different moon when Violet reached the City Centre. Whereas Arroyo was almost lifeless and void of hope, the City Centre bustled with people and life. She couldn't walk for twenty seconds down the path without accidentally bumping into someone. It was like night and day. The sun had set up above, and the stars twinkled in the sky as cold winds brushed past her furred face, bringing relief.

Thankfully, Violet had spent all her life in Port Kasiya. She knew these streets like the back of her scarred hands. Naturally, walking around in dirty, blood-stained uniform would attract attention, so she took the shortcuts she'd memorised to heart to reach her apartment complex.

Once inside, she hit the button for the elevator. She was alone, and she watched silently as the lift ticked down to the ground floor. Five... four... three... two... one... and finally, it opened. She entered and hit floor five. The top floor, because only the best was good enough for her daddy's little princess. Violet had protested of course. She was a Taldryan Military Captain. She didn't want to use her family's accumulated wealth to seemingly take advantage and rise above her station, but on days like these, coming home to a comfortable home was more than in the cards for her.

Or at least that was the plan, until she saw that the door to her apartment was open. Not just open.

"That's odd..." she thought to herself. Did she forget to shut and lock it when she left? It wasn't like her. Thankfully, no-one in the building were the type to go rummaging in anyone else's homes, but one could never be too sure. Something felt off, and she couldn't pinpoint what it was.

She slowly pried open the door, and was immediately unwelcomed by the sight of pristine soldiers in stormtroopers armor carefully searching through her home.

"What is going on here!?" Violet barged into the room, entering the large, circular living area. "This is a violation of my rights and property! I-"

She stopped, going stone-cold silent and still when she saw a man in crimson-red Mandalorian armor. The golden lightning bolt upon the chestplate left no doubt in her mind.

"S-Supreme Chancellor?" Violet stiffened. What in all of Kasiya was he doing *here*?

"Sir!" Another Trooper entered the living room, holding a cylindrical object in their hand. They handed it to the Supreme Chancellor, and Violet's hand pounded in her chest, her entire body going numb when she saw what it was in his hands.

"Thank you very much," the Supreme Chancellor said. "You are all dismissed. I wish to have a private word with the Captain."

The soldiers were nothing if not dutiful, storming out of her apartment, leaving a series of trample marks upon her carpet. Then, they were alone.

"Supreme Chancellor..."

"Just Appius will do," Appius said, offering her a soft smile. "No need to be so formal when it's just the two of us."

"Appius, sir," Violet was hesitant and cautious. "May I ask what brings you to my home?"

"You may, but first..."

Appius pressed a button on the metallic cylinder, and a bright, blue blade hissed out of one end. It hummed brightly, breaking what silence there would have been between them. After playfully swinging the lightsaber around for a few moments, Appius deactivated it, but kept the hilt in his hand.

"It's decent. Fairly basic, if you ask me, but it does what it needs to do," he said as he inspected the hilt closer. His eyes then met hers, an intense glare that formed a lump in her throat. "Where did you get this? And don't think about lying to me"

"I-It's a family heirloom."

Technically, that wasn't a lie. That lightsaber might have been an old, worn down, near worthless piece of scrap compared to those used by today's Force Users, but it had been passed down from her father to her.

Appius raised a brow. "Really?"

He closed his eyes and shook his head. To Violet's surprise, he started pacing back and forth.

"Here's the thing, as I'm sure you are aware, I have somewhat of a reputation for *zapping* things, but that's not *all* I can do. The Force is a gateway to many abilities, and some of those abilities let me recognise the signatures of living beings in the Force. Everyone has a different one, of course, and I make it a point to try and learn the ones of those close to me, or the close to those close to me. Considering how much Darrio trusts you, That includes you, Captain," Appius stepped towards her, only stopping when he was a foot in front of her. "So imagine my surprise when I felt your Force signature spike."

Violet took an involuntary step back, and bit her lip.

"Now, once or twice, I can usually chalk up to intense emotion. You were working hard in an intensely stressful situation, but this was fairly regular. A spike in the Force so sudden it skyrocketed for seconds at a time before suddenly vanishing again. That's not a coincidence. That's the mark of someone who is trained," Appius locked eyes with her, and Violet felt like her heart was about to leap out of her throat. She'd been found out by the *Supreme Chancellor* of all people. Then he asked the dreaded question.

"Who are you?"

"I'm... I'm a loyal Kasiya Citizen, sir. I just want to help people."

"You aren't answering my question," Appius said. "How do I know you are not a Children of Mortis spy?"

Violet's jaw went slack. "I would never!"

"How do I know?" Appius continued to ask. "I think the only way I can be certain of your intentions are to have you taken to the *Tower* for interrogation and mind-probing."

Violet shuddered. It became hard to breathe. Everything she was, everything that made her who she was, was being put into question. She had to do something, *anything*. Even if it went against all of her morals, beliefs, and instincts. She

stretched out her arms, connecting to the Force, concentrating on the hilt in Appius' hands. It soared out of his hands and into hers, and she darted forwards. She activated the weapon, the blue cerulean blade hissed and whooshed as she brought her weapon aside for a wide, vertical strike.

Yet, she stopped inches from striking Appius. His arms were folded across his chest, and he held a stern expression on his face. Her hands trembled uncontrollably.

"Why didn't you move?" she asked.

"Because you have no intention of striking me down. I could sense it. Your heart wasn't in it."

Violet's head lowered. She deactivated her lightsaber, and just stood there, limp.

"M-My father and mother were Jedi, just like me. They broke free from the old Zygerrian slave trade and sought to start a new life together here on Kasiya. My father started a business selling bacta to those who needed it most."

"Zsars Bacta Industries. I'm aware of the company. It's where we get most of the bacta we use for Taldryan," Appius said, then gestured for her to continue.

"Eventually, my parents married, and I was born here. When I started showing signs of Force sensitivity, they took it upon themselves to train me."

"Parents can be really good like that..." Appius conceded, nodding his head in approval. "It doesn't explain why you've been hiding yourself like this, though."

"I wanted to help people, but..." Violet bit her lip. "The perception of Jedi isn't what it used to be. Very few are as trusting of Jedi in Brotherhood territories."

"You can say that again," Appius chuckled at his own comment. "Perspectives can be changed over time. Centam is already doing a good job of that."

"Yes, I've heard the stories of the lone Taldryan Jedi," Violet allowed herself a small smile, a small amount of pride building inside her.

"I have one more question for you at this moment," Appius said. "Does Darrio know?"

Violet shook her head. "I've been meaning to tell him, but... I just..."

"Looking for the right time?" Appius asked, and Violet gave him a nod. "I know you two are good friends, but the longer you wait to tell him, the worse his reaction is going to be."

Violet lifted her head. "Y-You're letting me go?"

"Well," Appius rubbed the back of his head sheepishly. "Not exactly. You proved to me, at the very least, that you aren't a member of the Children of Mortis. They would have cut me down without hesitation. Though, you show remarkable promise. You were able to hide yourself for this long and you have a desire to help those unable to help themselves. I have a proposition for you."

"Go on..." Violet hesitated to say.

"I'll train you."

Violet went slack-jawed and wide-eyed. Was he serious?

"I've trained Jedi before. You have a set of unique talents designed to help others. I can help you nurture that power for good, and the best part? You won't need to hide anymore. You'll be accepted here."

No more hiding? That sounded almost too good to be true in Violet's eyes. Though, the offer was incredibly tempting. How often did one get tutelage from the *Supreme Chancellor* of all people? Plus the fact she'd never have to hide again? That seemed like a dream come true.

"Do you promise?" She asked. She had to be sure.

"I do," Appius offered out a hand. "This Republic accepts everyone. You need not be ashamed of who you are."

Violet shook his hand, cementing her as Appius' apprentice going forward.

"You should probably tell Darrio the truth. About everything. You being a Jedi will probably be a shock to the system for him and Sulla."

It was a simple suggestion, but one that Violet knew needed to be done. She agreed, though that was not a conversation she was going to look forward to.

The sun began to rise in the distance, shining a light on her. It gave her hope, the hope she needed for a brighter future. A brighter, more Taldryan future.

END

