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## *The Court of Public Opinion*

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“Miss Sorram, I understand you were present on the night in question, is that correct?” The attorney paced the area in front of the bench.

“Yes.” She replied, shyly.

“And Miss Sorram, on the night in question, you claim to have witnessed Mr Kast *quote* scream like a Wildman and *quote* drop about five or six innocent fools. Is that correct?” his jowls turned upwards as his eyes turned down to his datapad brief.

“He were all crazy in the eyes. There were all manner of unnatural things what he made happened. I seen't him murder them people.” She replied.

“Please, Miss Sorram, yes or no answers.” K'vin replied. “You claim to have seen Mr Kast on that night, correct?”

“Yes.” She replied.

“Miss Sorram, can you please describe to the court what you were doing in Canto Bight?” the canine attorney said.

“I were there for working.” She replied.

“And what do you do for work, Miss Sorram?” the Bulldog of the Courts was starting to show his hand.

The allegations that had come down in the months that followed the shootout on Cantonica. When the smoke had cleared, two hundred and twelve had died and five times that were injured. Many rumors had sprung up around the event. Speculation, as it often does, had run rampant. There were claims that the First Order had returned, others claimed that it was a gang hit that went wrong, others claimed interdimensional beings. For the notoriously litigious Derc Kast, those claims were welcome. What was not welcomed was the allegations that he was somehow engaged in the tragedy which had occurred. They would be hell for his public relations team to explain away. Fortunately for Derc, his attorney was practically a wizard at making matters like this disappear.

“Miss Sorram, what is it that do you for work?” K'vin reiterated.

“I escort clients.” She replied.

“So, you do security work?” K'vin asked.

“No, not exact.” The Twi'lek woman replied.

“Miss Sorram, please describe the nature of your work to the court.” The Amaran attorney pressed.

The technique was as old as time. K'vin was making the simple step of attempting to discredit the witness. There was nothing inherently dishonest about the type of work the Twi'lek did. Sex-work was ubiquitous across the galaxy, but so was the stigma that came with it. Workers in that field were often viewed in the

court of public opinion as dishonest, bordering on criminal, and driven by little motivation beyond financial gain.

She explained in detail that she was in fact a local prostitute. In places like Canto Bight, they would change the name of the profession to make it sound more official, but the work was the same.

"Thank you, Miss Sorram. Can you now explain walk us through what happened in the hours leading up to the shootout?" the attorney asked.

"Of course. Client pick me up at Seven in evening. We go dinner, dance, laugh. We go casino. We do what is make client happy. This is many hours." The Twi'lek explained.

"And during this time, Miss Sorram, did you imbibe any alcohol or otherwise use any illicit substances?" the attorney said, on the scent now.

"I may have had some drink." Sorram said.

"How many drinks did you have?" He asked.

"I no remembers." She replied hastily.

"Miss Sorram, how many alcoholic beverages do you have on a regular night?" K'vin asked.

"This depends." She replied.

"One? Two? How many?" he asked.

"I say six. Over many hour. I not drunk." The woman replied.

"Miss Sorram, I'd like to point your attention to Exhibit 212a. It is on the data pad in front of you. Can you look at that please?" the attorney asked.

"Yes." Her eyes turned downwards.

"Do you recognize what this document is?" the attorney asked.

"Yes. Is Police record." She replied.

"Can you please read for the court the name on the record?" the doglike attorney asked.

"Yes, it say Dephi Sorram." She said.

"So this is your police record?" He asked.

"It seem." She replied.

In the following minutes, K'vin surgically pin-pointed every drug and intoxicant charge she had ever accrued. The tragic fact was, for many sex-workers, that this pattern became common. In mere minutes, Derc's attorney had ploughed the field and sowed the seeds of doubt that would allow the jury to be swayed in his favor.

The process was drawn out, as if the attorney were deriving some sick internal pleasure from the line of questioning. After painting the landscape, K'vin began to pick out inconsistencies in her story. Particularly, in regard to the timeframe. He was lining up the killshot.

"Now, Miss Sorram, can you please describe for the court what you claim Mr. Kast was doing during the firefight."

"Yes. This is why I have come. I watch, with my eyes, Derc Kast shoot a blaster at many mans. He move fast, faster than human can. He leap, higher than human can. He conjure electricity. He kill and move between so fast, I cannot believe this." She said.

She described in great detail horrendous acts of vulgar and malicious evil. The descriptions were detailed and it took her some time to lay out the whole picture. Dephi Sorram spoke of acts that were unbelievable. She spoke about Derc Kast as if he were some kind of sorcerer.

"Thank you, Miss Sorram. Just a few more questions for you. Can you please look at exhibit 732a, which has been submitted to evidence. It is on the datapad before you."

"I see it." She replied.

"And can you tell me what this is?" K'vin asked.

"It looks as cameras of casino." The woman stated.

"And can you identify the individual on the right of the screen." He asked.

"This is me." She answered.

"And the individual on the left?" he asked, prying.

"This looks as Derc Kast does." She answered.

"I am going to play the footage now. Please tell us when Mr. Kast *quote* moves as a demon." He replied.

At no point did she stop the video. K'vin masterfully stitched together fourteen security camera videos showing Derc Kast fleeing, like all of the other patrons. He made it through eight videos before the defense approached the bench. K'vin joined the group. The court brought down a verdict twenty minutes later.

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"Ohhh, Kevin...Who's a good boy?" Thran said.

"Sir, please." The attorney replied.

"Who's a good boy, Kev? Are you a good boy? Are you? Are you a good boy?" Thran said, goading.

"Yes. I'm a good boy." K'vin said with a deep and pained sigh.

"Yes! Yes you are a good boy! Saving my reputation in the court of public opinion yet again. You get a treat!" Thran smiled, patting his attorney on the head.

"Really? We're doing this?" K'vin asked.

"Ok, fine...I'll cut you a bonus check and not give you scritchies behind the ears." Thran said.

"Now, I didn't say that I didn't want scritchies..." K'vin instinctively responded.

"Ha! I knew it." Thran said.

"It was fortunate that you were aware enough to not have committed any felonies...on camera. We could sue for damages, sir. It might really drive the point home." The attorney said.

"Sithspit, you're vicious Kevin. She's just a working girl, we don't need to take everything from her. We just needed to shut her up. She won't be taking anything to TGZ or any of those other rags now. For now, with his behind us, I need you to focus on drafting up acquisition contracts. There is a mining consortium that could prove useful to my endeavors." Thran said.

"Sir?" K'vin asked.

"Work is never done, boy. Get to it." Thran said, leaning back into his gilded throne.