

As the others enjoyed the festivities, Miraluka decided to excuse himself for the time being. Kaled was not really one for crowds but at least he got to spend some time with his clansmen. There was still some politics needed to be polished so that the two clans remain on peaceful terms, and knowing his naive perspective on the world and low communication skills, Miraluka decided to take his leave and wished them all the best of luck.

He was moving towards his ship, trying desperately to get the remaining glitter off and out of his robes, Kaled sensed something...strange.

It was a bit further up, a strange aura of some sort. Shimmering. Like it was there but her presence was faint in some way.

From his prior experience it might be a droid, but he couldn't really be sure until he could get closer to hear it.

Per his usual experience, Kaled grabbed his lightsaber hilt and held onto it tightly before moving forward with caution. As he was getting closer to the ship, his assumption proved to be current. There was a faint metallic noise and heavy footsteps going back and forward from his ship. The outline of the droid was not familiar to the young Arcanist.

"Strange...Where is R3?" Kaled whispered to himself as he tried to sense where the little astromech droid could have gone too.

The Droid seemed to stop for a moment, prompting Kaled to stay put and lower to the ground. There was stillness and silence in the air. Miraluka could hear his heart pumping. His muscles twitched, he squeezed the lightsaber hilt tightly hoping that the droid didn't notice him. Suddenly there was movement again, it seemed the droid noticed anything so it continued doing...something. There was a sound of objects being thrown around. Whatever that droid was doing he was searching for something on Miralukas ship.

"What...are you looking for?"

After a few minutes, the droid started moving away from the ship. Whatever it was searching for was not on Miralukas ship. Against his better judgment, Kaled decided to follow it and get some answers. Slowly following it, and trying to stay as silent as he could, the droid went further from the ship.

Arcanist followed it for what seemed to be eternity until he heard voices up ahead. Quickly he decided to hide in a local fauna, crouching down closer to the earth hoping that nobody had noticed his presence.

There was some chattering but it was too far away to hear who it was and what they were talking about.

Slowly crawling forward, Kaled made his way over until the voices became more clearer. With his natural senses, Miraluka could now tell how many people were there. From what he could gather, there were five people. Four of them were armed with blasters and various other side

arms. The two that were standing by the droid were different. One was taller than the other and he was much lightly armored from what he could tell by the outline of his aura and body. The other smaller one seemed to be...covered in some way. Maybe a robe but there was something else...something familiar.

Before he could finish that thought, there was a sudden movement behind him. Quickly standing up and trying to move away, he ignited his lightsaber in an instant. The white blade roared as it came to life. Before he could take a defensive stance, he was pushed back by a strong kick from this new attacker. Miraluka hit the ground hard, causing him to let go of the lightsaber he was holding on too.

As he was trying to get up on his feet, he heard a lightsaber blade being ignited right in front of him. Thinking quickly, Arcanist rolled over to the side dodging the impact in the nick of time. The smell of grass filled his nostrils, and the feeling of fear started to creep into his mind. As the person in front of him came in for a second attack, Kaled moved forward and tried to close the distance between them as much as he could. The blade swooped down, missing him, and in that moment Miraluka tried and hit the opponent in the leg, throwing him off balance. As the assailant tilted backwards, Kaled managed to grab its arm and twist it, causing it to let go of the lightsaber. Not letting this chance go to waste, Miraluka grabbed the hilt before it fell to the ground and pointed the tip of the blade to the assailant's torso with a twist of his wrist.

*"Kal! Stop!"*

Miraluka stopped, taken aback by the sudden shout. The voice was all too familiar to him. Sudden chill came down his spine as his head moved over to the direction of the voice.

"A-Aayala?" The expression on his face was one of shock.

"What...Where were you? Who are these people?!"

"Kal listen, put the weapon down ok?" The Twi'lek spoke softly. Trying to ease Miraluka's mind. "Just put the blade down and-"

Before the girl could finish the sentence, Kaled was suddenly struck from behind. The impact was so powerful it caused him to fall on his knees. Before he could make an offensive attack, he was struck again and pinned to the ground.

*"Stop! This isn't part of the deal!"* Aayala screamed, begging the attackers to stop the attack.

"Deal?" The sudden rough and mechanical voice spoke.

It sounded like some sort of machine spoke up. A malfunctioning droid of some kind.

*"We had a deal for you to provide us with codes so we can sabotage the Arconian ships and blame them on others. We also had a deal that you bring us the R3 unit so we can extract some useful information out of*

it. But most importantly, we had a deal for you to bring him to us. So as far as I can tell, you only managed to do one of those things. Or maybe it was just luck that he is now here. With us.”

“I told you. Droid was not there.” Aayala spoke up. “I tried to find him but he went off somewhere.”

“Or maybe someone hid him from us. Do you really think I’m that stupid?”

“I-I can tell you everything you need. I know some of their protocols, codes. I can get you-”

“Shhh, now. There is no need for that...” The voice cut her off.

For a moment there was silence. Something wasn’t right. The only thing he could sense in this moment was..fear.

“P-puppet?” Aayalas voice almost shattered as she spoke. “You be a good boy ok?”

“Aayala?” He was confused, scared.

“I lov-”

And just like that, in the blink of an eye, there was a sudden smell of burning flesh. Miraluka screamed and tossed. Trying to break free from the restraints, but it was in vain. It felt like a piece of himself was just ripped out from his chest as he sensed Aayalas aura slowly faded away.

His heart pounded faster and faster. Suddenly a rush of emotions filled his mind with fear, sorrow, and eventually, hatred. He moved, tossed and screamed Twi’leks name until his mind just snapped.

“Hold him!” One of the assailants screamed to the one beside him, desperately trying to hold Miraluka himself to the ground.

“I cant! His’s-No!”

Pushing one of the assailants off of him and finally breaking free, Kaleds arm slammed into the ground. Releasing a strong shockwave of kinetic energy that sent both of his captors to the ground. As he quickly stood up, Arcanist’s body started to move on its own. His mind was clouded, only focusing on one thing. Anger. Kaled didn’t remember how he got his hand on his lightsaber. He didn’t remember when one of them started to scream as the blade pierced his abdomen. Letting the smell of burning flesh fill the air. He only remembers the sensation of danger as the another of the assailants who held him desperately tried to attack him and save his comrade. Miralukas body reacted on instinct, ducking down from the attack he quickly rose up pushing the assailant back before delivering a devastating killing blow.

The smell of burning flesh started to envelope him. Usually Kaled would be disgusted by it but at this moment he was acting more like an animal. Desperate to fight back.

Hearing the footsteps rushing from behind, Miraluka turned around and twisted his wrist making a bold attack, leaving himself open.

The person in front of him jumped back. Clearly surprised by the reaction.

“Good. Not good enough to save your friend.” The man said before taking his stance.

Kaled screamed in anger. Launching himself forward and releasing a volley of attacks from all sides. There was no precision involved, no finesse. He was using his weapon more as a blunt object than a blade.

But the man in front stood his ground, dodging and blocking the attacks with ease. Eventually the Miraluka started to tire. All of the attacks became slower, sloppier. Leaving himself exposed with each swing he took.

Man let out a sigh, clearly expecting something else. But whatever he was expecting was not coming through fruition.

Kaled at one point stopped attacking, the exhaustion finally got to him.

“Done? Right, my turn.”

Before he could even respond, Arcanist felt a strong kick to the chest that sent him jumping backwards. Kaled almost lost his breath for a moment. Trying to regain his footing he was greeted with another powerful blow to the knee that sent him kneeling on the ground.

“Enough?” The man spoke with a monotone voice. Clearly not amused by Miraluka's display of skill.

“*You...I will kill you!*” Kaled growled. Sounding more like a wounded animal than a person.

“Heh, sure you will. But not tonight.”

He tried to get up. Gather up some strength to fight back, but the body just couldn't handle so much punishment. As he rose up, a sudden strike to the temple sent him down to the ground. Making the Arcanist lose consciousness.

The man stood over him. Looking at him with a sort of disappointment. He glanced over to the two of his dead men that were lying down on the ground a few feet away. Taking a deep sigh the man turned over to the masked individual, holstering his saber as there was no more need for it.

“Done playing?” The masked individual asked in its mechanical voice. Clearly amused at the whole situation.

"I guess." The man said. Surging as he lifted his hands up. "What now? We needed those two for the plan to work."

*"It's fine. Next time. We got what we came for. Droid will carry him to the ship."*

"As you wish." He bowed slightly signaling the droid to come forward. "What about the girl?"

*"What about her? Leave her. She will be a good fertilizer for this planet."* The masked individual scoffed as it turned around and started leaving the scene.

The man stayed back, taking one last look at the unconscious Miraluka before gesturing to the droid to come closer.

"Take him to the ship. I'll take the girl back."

*"But master said—"*

Before the droid could finish, the man produced a small blade from his hand and pointed it up to the droid's head.

"I will not repeat myself. Do you understand?"

The droid only nodded its head before taking Kaled up and slowly started to carry him away to their ship.

Now that he was alone, the man took a moment for himself. He noticed Kaled's lightsaber beside his feet. It was an odd little thing with some colorful stones dangling from it. There was no point in leaving it behind so the man decided to take it with him. Taking a couple steps forward, he took one more look at the dead deceased Twi'lek girl, her eyes looking up at him. Her face was not one of fear, but sorrow. Something stirred up inside of him, but he decided to push those emotions back.

Lowering himself down, the man closed Aayalas eyes before picking her up into his arms and slowly taking her back to Kaled's ship.

"I am sorry." He said to the open air, as he carried the girl away. Hoping that if they find her, the clan might come looking for the Arcanist. And he was hoping that they would do it fast.