

"What?" I asked, looking around with a confused expression. "Are you sure they are coming for us?"

"Yes! They have rough images of you two and your descriptions!" Miru said, nearly shouting now. "You need to get out of there!"

Tatnia, who had leaned in to listen when I had started looking around, now looked back at me with wide eyes.

"We need to move!" She said, grabbing my arm and getting me going, both of us running out of the planetside shipyard.

The shipbroker shouted after us, cursing when we all but kicked out his front door and ran into the streets.

"What about you guys? Any trouble near you?" I asked, quickly matching Tatnia's speed, jogging behind her as she picked a direction and quickly set off.

"We are fine, there's no movement near us," She explained. "Racer is keeping an eye on it, but so far, not a single eye is looking our way."

"That's good, that might mean they haven't connected us to the ship," I said, looking around, expecting cops to pop out from behind every corner and speeder parked around us. "How long do we have?"

"A minute maybe, probably less," She responded. "You *really* need to get the fuck out of there."

Tatnia, hearing our time limit, gave a quick look over her shoulder and brazenly stepped into the open area in front of the shipyard, a land speeder whining to a stop, its repulsors straining slow down the vehicle and keep from hitting her.

The speeder, a simple engine in the back, seating area in front design that was common for land speeders, came to a stop just inches from touching her. Without pausing, she pulled her blaster pistol out and aimed it at the person driving, the [Gran](#) driver raising his hands up and talking harshly in a language I didn't understand. Tatnia, on the other hand, spoke right back to him, albeit only a few words, as she climbed into the speeder, the driver shifting over to let Tatnia drive while I sat in the back.

"Miru, I'm hanging up so I can focus on what's going on here," I said. "Stay on the ship, Racer can keep track of what's going on. We don't want them connecting us to the ship if we can help it!"

"Alright, Boss... Good luck," The younger Twi'lek responded, sounding anxious and scared.

As Tatnia gunned the speeder forward, the Gran screamed and shouted until Tatnia shot him in the chest, the familiar stunning blast making him slump down in the passenger seat.

"What are we doing, boss?" Tatnia asked, looking over her shoulder at me as she drove at slightly dangerous speeds considering how small the road where we were driving was.

"The fact that nobody is going after the ship means they haven't linked it to us," I pointed out. "Otherwise, they would have gone after that first. I have no idea why they are coming after us now, but the second we make a beeline toward the *Chariot*, we lose that advantage."

"So... we go to ground?" She suggested, and I nodded in agreement. "We-"

A blaster bolt slapped into the back of the speeder, scoring the plating and making a worrying sound as it whizzed away. I turned back to fire at whoever was shooting at us, only to see someone who very was clearly *not* a police officer with a blaster rifle pointed at us. I pulled my pistol and took a few snapshots at them, knowing I had no chance of hitting them but hoping to make them duck.

I managed to take a chunk of ferrocrete from the corner of their cover, causing them to sink down behind it. Tatnia took advantage of their distraction to gun it, the speeder picking up more speed as we escaped.

"What in the hell was that? Not even gonna try and ask us to surrender?" Tatnia asked angrily, our speed increasing again. "They are going straight to killing?"

"That wasn't a security officer," I answered, shouting over the wind from the open seat speeder. "Maybe a bounty hunter? Wasn't wearing a uniform, at least."

"Really? Fuck, that means it's probably the Hutts!" Tatnia responded. "We need to get off this planet!"

We continued to move as fast as we could, only slowing for a moment to dump our passenger on the sidewalk. Tatnia had hoped having them on board would give us some cover, but now it was too dangerous. For a few minutes, there was no sign of any more people coming after us, though we could hear the police back the way we came. Speeders flew through the air, scanning the streets, but for a while, we managed to escape notice.

Then another bounty hunter, or whoever was chasing us, tried to disable our ride again, the blaster fire immediately attracting the attention of the police. They zoned in on us in seconds, several speeders dropping in behind us.

"Fuck, we need to move!" I said, turning back and firing my pistol at the chasing police, trying my best to disable their speeders without actually killing anyone.

Tatnia didn't respond, only gripped the steering system harder, the land speeder accelerating again, pulling out from the police, who by now were stacked up a half dozen deep, all with sirens and loudspeakers, shouting at us to stop. In desperation, I charged up a shot, my pistol heating up as I dumped in the remainder of the energy cell into the capacitor, taking aim before firing. My pistol kicked back, and a thick, snarling bolt of red, almost orange energy fired from the muzzle and slapped into the lead security speeder, just below the cockpit. Smoke poured from the hole, and the nose of the speeder dipped, colliding with the ground with enough force to carve a furrow as it dragged along.

Unfortunately for the speeder occupants, momentum is a cold bitch, and the back end of the speeder flipped up and over, the speeder smashing into the ground. If that wasn't bad enough, instead of the slow, gradual decrease speed I was hoping for, slamming into the ground stopped it almost on the spot. This meant that three of the following speeders smashed into it, piling up in the road and sealing it up as they failed to dodge the wreck.

"Fuck... there goes any hope of negotiating," I said, changing my pistol's energy cell quickly. "Tatnia we-"

I didn't get to finish my sentence as I turned to see *something* big being pushed into the road, blocking our path. Tatnia swerved as best she could, trying to dodge around it, but it wasn't enough. We slammed into the side of what I think was some sort of dumpster, the impact throwing us around inside the speeder, our inertial dampeners barely holding us inside the vehicle. The speeder itself crushed the dumpster, spinning around a quarter turn before the power cells failed and the repulsors all cut out simultaneously. The speeder dropped to the ground and continued on, bleeding momentum as it skidded along the ground, throwing up sparks. When we finally came to a stop, slamming into the corner of another building, the inertial dampeners were fully off, so both of us were thrown free of the vehicle.

I groaned, looking up at the sky for a long moment, having come to rest on my back. I immediately charged and cast a double-handed fast heal on myself, the healing energy coursing through my body, healing bruises, scrapes, and tears instantly. The second double casting cleared up the concussion, and I climbed to my feet, heading directly to Tatnia, who was slowly standing as well.

"Hey, come on, we need to keep moving," I said, helping her stand and emptying my mana into healing hands as I did.

She groaned and nodded, limping and leaning heavily on me as we made a beeline for a nearby alleyway. I kept healing her when my mana was full, the bruised and battered woman slowly standing up straighter. A walk turned into a jog when we heard people shouting behind

us, talking about how we had cut into the alley. Soon that jog turned into a run, my healing hand's spell doing its job.

"Fuck I hope this isn't a dead end," I cursed under my breath, desperately running away from the chasing bounty hunters.

I was half tempted to turn around and fight, but any action would attract the attention of the security forces again. We needed to keep moving and hide, or I would have to kill a lot more people to escape.

After about thirty seconds of running deeper into the alleyway, the voices were getting closer and closer. I had just about resigned myself to a fight when a door opened, and an older, white-haired, hunched-over woman stepped out.

"Over here, quickly!" She said, motioning for us to rush inside the doorway.

I made a snap decision, turning at the last second and running into the room, skidding to a stop in the dark interior. I could hear Tatnia run in after me, and the old woman close the door after her. I turned to the woman, only to watch her cringe and step back, barely visible in the low light.

"I'm sorry! They made me!" she said, cowering back.

I turned back to see two armed men step out of a dark archway that I had assumed led further into the older woman's home. Both of them had their weapons drawn and aimed at Tatnia and me.

Before I could even say anything or start to charge a spell, the blue light of two stun blasts screamed across the room, slamming into Tatnia and me, the dark and shadowed interior disappearing into pure black.

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I could feel the low hum of a hyperdrive, the floor transferring the familiar vibrations to me. I could also feel a deep ache from most of my muscles, as well as a full-brain headache.

"Note to self... being stunned sucks... almost as much as getting shot," I groaned out, slowly putting together what had happened.

As consciousness returned to me, I slowly got a better sense of my surroundings. I was face down on a metal floor, my face pressed against the cold, probably not very clean surface. While my hands were stuck in a familiar pair of cuffs, I could feel something heavy on my neck. With a groan, I rolled over, my shoulder bumping into someone.

"Tatnia?" I asked, looking over at one of my first teammates. "Are you awake yet?"

"Yeah." She responded, clearly dealing with her own pain. "Boss, what's around my neck?"

I looked over at her, studying the tight, metallic collar she had around her neck. There wasn't much to it save a few greebles and red light that slowly blinked. I let out a long sigh.

"It's a collar. My paranoia says a slave collar of some type." I said, laying back on the floor. "Same as mine?"

I could hear her shift before she let out a grunt of confirmation.

We were silent for a few minutes before I rolled over onto my stomach again, using my body as cover to cast a fast heal spell on myself. Feeling much better, the aches and pains gone, I offered my hand to Tatnia, who, after a second, took it, letting me help her stand. When she was up, I stepped closer, like I was giving her an armless hug, hiding a five-second bout of healing hands to help with her aches.

"Thanks," She said simply. "I don't like how familiar this is."

"Yeah... me either,"

A quick session of taking stock found that we were in pretty good condition, though both of us had been stripped down to our basic clothes. I groaned when I realized they had taken all my stuff and that I would likely never see any of it again.

"Dammit, I really liked that one, too," I said, sitting down on the small bench that ran along the back wall.

"What, your blaster?"

"No, my jacket," I said, shaking my head. "I was just starting to lay the foundations for my look."

Tatnia let out a long-suffering sigh while I couldn't help but smirk. Before I could continue my joke, the only door in the solid metal cell opened with the sound of a firing and sealing piston. A worn, scared, beat-up human man stepped in, leaning on the door jam.

"Aww, you're awake already. Wanted to kick you up myself," He said with a cruel smirk. "I 'm surprised you're moving around."

"Sorry to disappoint you," I responded. "Would you mind telling me what's going on?"

"What's going on?" He asked, shaking his head with a laugh. "You pissed off Jabba the Hutt, that's what's going on!"

"Wait... Jabba?" I asked, suddenly confused. "How did we piss off Jabba? We were worried about pissing off the Hutts of Nar Shaddaa, not the sandworm."

"You... you don't even know... You attacked his smuggling operation *three times*, and you have no idea it was his?" He asked, his eyes going wide. "I would suggest you take that to your grave, I can't imagine him learning that he lost so much on chance would go over very well."

It took me a moment to figure out what the human was talking about, but eventually, it clicked. If you counted our original break out, we attacked the slave smuggling operation three times.

"Jabba was the one running that slave smuggling operation?" I asked, genuinely surprised. "Why?"

"He was until your attacks caught the attention of the Enforcers. You cost Jabba an entire operation!" He said, stopping to laugh again, leaning heavily on the cell door frame. "You're lucky his obsession with Solo gets more insane every day, or he would have taken a more personal interest in you."

"So we are on our way to Tatooine then?" I asked. "I sunburn easily, so I would prefer someplace less sunny if you don't mind."

"Well, that's good then, because you two are headed to [Magravia](#). Jabba wants you to waste away in the spice mines," He explained with a shrug, seemingly frustrated that we weren't panicking or groveling. "I would have just killed you, but he is big on ironic punishments. Attack a slave operation, get made into slaves."

When neither of us reacted to his declaration, he sneered, clearly wanting to get a rise out of us and frustrated we weren't reacting how he wanted. Suddenly, Tatnia stood, ready to charge the human, when he moved his hand. Immediately she crumpled to the ground, barely making it a few feet from the bench. The human laughed, pulling his hand from his pocket to reveal that he was holding some sort of device, probably a control unit for our collars.

"Ooo, almost!. Anyway, I just came to gloat and thank you for the big stack of credits I'm going to get in my account when I drop you off."

"Wai-"

Before I could say anything, he tapped something on his control unit, and like a light switch, consciousness left me.