

The thickly armoured, outer door of the Docking Ring slid smoothly open.

I immediately found myself face to face with a handsomely rugged looking man who towered above both me *and* Dave. The man bore his usual, 'I'm full of myself' grin.

"Han Solo!" I exclaimed in greeting.

"Hit-Girl!"

I turned to the *Millennium Falcon's* furry First Mate.

"How you doing, Chewbacca?"

"Wyaaaaaa," the Wookiee replied.

"You still hanging around with this loser?" I chuckled, indicating Han.

Chewbacca made a non-committal nod of his head in response.

"So, who's the boyfriend?" Solo asked with a smile.

"He is *not* my boyfriend!" I replied indignantly.

"Sex slave?"

I glared at the smirking smuggler.

"He is my partner..."

"A bounty-hunter, like you?"

"Yeah..."

Han took a moment to size Dave up.

"So, Hit-Girl – what does *he* call himself?"

"I go by, Kick-Ass!" Dave offered.

"*Kick-Ass!*"

"Got a problem with that, *Han?*" Dave growled.

"Not a thing, kid, not a thing!" Han replied before turning back to me with a dirty smirk. "You at least kissed him, right?"

I felt myself blushing.

"Do I need to shoot you?"

"No offence, little lady!"

"Look, laser-brain... Remember, this little lady carries a fracking blaster!"

Solo looked hurt for a moment as he held his arms up and wide attempting to look innocent but failing miserably...

"Hey, it's me..."

"That's why I carry a blaster...!"

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With the pleasantries exchanged, we got down to business.

We had not planned on meeting – I tried to avoid Solo as much as possible; the man infuriated me for many, many reasons! The man was also a very devious – and successful – smuggler and I despised him for it, but he was infuriatingly charming and I tended to enjoy our witty banter. I liked Chewbacca too – he was awesome, but funny. Dave had obviously never seen a Wookiee up close and personal before and he seemed a little overawed by Chewbacca’s size.

Han had some supplies that I needed and I had some ‘items’ that he needed, so we spent an hour bartering. Solo would always start with a ridiculous offer and I would have to barter him down. He was well known for his talking and the ability to talk himself out of anything – although sometimes he talked himself *into* problems!

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“So, Han – how did you and err, Hit-Girl, meet?” Dave asked.

Han laughed.

“Funny story that,” he smirked at Hit-Girl, “about a year ago, our mutual friend here, received a contract to hunt down, and kill, yours truly. Lucky for me, Hit-Girl is very selective about the contracts she follows through – not to mention that she could see that I was obviously innocent...”

I started choking on that!

“Maybe not *so* innocent, but we became *very* close friends...”

I coughed.

“... *Close* friends?”

I coughed again.

“... *Friends*?”

I decided to let him off there and nodded.

“I let him live and in return he points me towards people who need help – *that’s* what I do!”

“Sounds like you’re in Hit-Girl’s debt, Han Solo...”

“I suppose I am – I’m always in debt to somebody!”

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As Han kept an eye on the exchange of supplies, he pulled me off to one side.

“You two seem well matched – take it from somebody who knows...” He said seriously. “However, if you want it to work, be open – Hit-Girl *is* devious and she *always* gets beyond a lie and she is excellent at worming out secrets as well as anybody – women always find out when a man is keeping something from them.”

I nodded.

“Good advice – she *is* a special girl and I have no intention of getting on her bad side!”

“Don’t – you’ll want to trust me on that!”

“What’re you two guys up to?” Mindy demanded as she found us both lurking.

“Discussing you, honey!” Han chuckled.

I just shrugged and headed back towards the *Sentinel*, leaving Mindy glaring at Han. On the way, I noticed Chewbacca shaking his head in dismay – he must have overheard most of what was just said.

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### **An hour later**

“Stay out of trouble!” Mindy called over the communications system.

“Stay safe, Hit-Girl – I mean that...”

“Get going, you pirate!”

With that, the *Millennium Falcon* accelerated away and was soon gone in a flash of light as she went to light-speed. We pointed ourselves towards a different star and I engaged the hyperdrive which span up with an audible whine before the stars elongated and we found ourselves in the hypnotic blue tunnel of hyperspace.

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Mindy turned to me and smirked.

“Fancy some exercise before we eat?”

“What did you have in mind?” I asked, a little uneasily.

“Oh, just some new kit and maybe some sparring...”

Mindy dragged me aft and into the Number 2 Hold.

“Awesome!” I exclaimed as I looked around the compartment.

The Number 2 Hold was much smaller than the Main Hold and was almost wedge-shaped. On the forward bulkhead was a very nice weapon collection that included numerous blasters, both light and heavy. There was also a decidedly dangerous looking collection of explosives piled near to the starboard bulkhead. Mindy turned to me and said a single word.

“Strip!”

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I grinned and after seeing what Mindy was digging through, I pulled off my clothes, stopping only at my shorts. Mindy looked up and did a double-take. I smirked. Mindy blushed.

“Put this on!”

Mindy passed me a black body sock. I pulled it on before I was handed a succession of armour sections. First came the thighs, which were dark green, then the lower leg sections which were also dark green. A pair of knee protectors connected the thigh and lower leg sections, securing behind the knee. The knee protectors were a dull yellow colour.

Mindy smirked as she passed me the groin, pelvic and waist sections – I ignored the smirk and fitted them around my lower regions. The waist section was yellow while the others were a lighter shade of green. The largest piece, the upper torso armour, was dark green and fitted securely and snugly over the waist and pelvic sections of armour.

Next on the list, were the arm sections, three of them – lower arms with communications array on the right wrist, upper arms and elbow protectors – these last items were yellow. Attaching to the upper torso section were a pair of dark green shoulder pads that had a single yellow strip down the centre of them.

The almost final items, were the black gloves with the light green armour protecting the back of the hands. On my feet went a pair of armed boots in light green. Mindy handed me a utility belt in black. On this were various pouches and attachments, including communications and spare cartridges for blasters. Suspended from the belt was a dark green kama with yellow trim and on that kama were mounted a pair of blaster holsters. The armour was not light, but not overly heavy, either.

The final item was the helmet.

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I recognised the distinctive design instantly – it was the Phase II helmet of a senior Clone Officer, but with a distinctive design. The markings that ran around the t-shaped eye lens and down to the chin, were yellow, while the rest of the helmet was a dark green. I pulled it on over my head and it felt very comfortable.

“How does it feel?” I heard in my ears.

I looked over at Mindy and saw that she was wearing a helmet too. It was of a very different design and was that of a Clone Commander of the Galactic Marines.

“It feels good, Mindy.”

“You look good – go check yourself out in that mirror...”

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I did as I was instructed, taking a few strides over to the mirror and studied my new look. The different colours actually went well together. It seemed that Mindy had struggled to assemble the armour out of any single colour. But I liked what I saw and I decided that the colours went together well.

Was I going along with this? Was I going to become some kind of rebel, some kind of vigilante? Well, I was in enough trouble with the Empire already, so what was a bit more...

“So?”

“I like it!” I replied as I turned around.

“So do I – it works better than I had hoped...”

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I went through the laborious task of putting on my own armour, finally adding the helmet.

After a brief visit to the armoury, I went to find Dave – or rather Kick-Ass, who was waiting in the Main Hold. I passed him two blasters for his holsters.

“Westar-35 blasters – should add some weight to the armour and we’ll see how you move in it.”

“More weight – just what I needed – thanks!”

“Quit moaning, Kick-Ass, and let’s fight...”

It felt strange conversing via the helmets – our voices were both changed electronically and Kick-Ass sounded weird. The communications system was turned off for now – less of a distraction. He squared off before me and I did the same before him.

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I hated to fight in the helmet, but I had a feeling that I might need the protection...

That thought was confirmed quite quickly as an armoured fist hit my helmet, just below the left eye and sending me reeling backwards. I caught myself and drove forwards, hitting out at Dave.

For the next few minutes, we struck out at each other and the sounds of armour hitting armour reverberated around the Main Hold. Dave was good and wearing his armour, I could not get a debilitating strike on him.

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We were at a stalemate.

I had hit Kick-Ass hard, but his armour was protecting him from injury – just as it should. He had also hit *me* hard and I was getting very angry. I actually heard Kick-Ass chuckling a couple of times; he seemed to be enjoying himself – too damn much!

I kicked out, catching him in the chest, shoving him back but he regained his stature very quickly and moved fast to my right, getting closer. I had to keep him away from me, but he bored in and struck me very hard in my left side, knocking me to the deck. I looked up angrily and as Kick-Ass extended his arm to help me to my feet, I swung my right arm out with some force to refuse his help...

Kick-Ass flew backwards and crashed into a stack of crates.

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Something, some force, had picked me up and thrown me into the crates.

I had not been able not stop it. I looked up and saw Mindy pull off her helmet. Her face showed shock and also concern.

“I’m so sorry, Dave – I didn’t mean it; it just happened...”

I got back to my feet and pulled off my own helmet. I smiled at Mindy reassuringly.

“I’m fine, just a little surprised – did you just use the Force on me?”

“Not intentionally...”

“It felt really strange – like something had control over me.”

“I need to learn to control the Force – using it accidentally is not good and may get us into trouble,” Mindy said quietly. “Let’s get out of this armour and then get something to eat.”

Was Mindy some kind of Jedi?

But the Jedi were extinct – weren't they?

My mind was filled with troubling thoughts as I began to remove my new armour.

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Several hours later, we dropped out of Hyperspace in the Outer Rim Territories.

Before us was the sun-scorched planet of Tatooine and its twin suns. There was no hint of greenery, nor was there any hint of the blue that signified water on the surface of the desert planet. It reminded me of my current home, the planet of Jakku. We headed towards the Jundland Wastes and the spaceport town of Mos Eisley, which was located southeast of the Jundland Wastes.

The place was a hell hole and generally known as the 'armpit of the galaxy'. There were 362 Docking Bays or Hangers located in the spaceport and we landed at Docking Bay 92 after receiving clearance from the Imperial Base. As we approached our designated Docking Bay, I smiled; I recognised the familiar shape of another ship as we passed over Docking Bay 94.

I had a feeling that our visit to Mos Eisley was to be...

Exciting.