

THE UNSILENCED WARRIOR

Written by

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FADE IN:

EXT. DERVELLIAN WAR ZONE - DAY

A burned-out, rubble-strewn section of an alien planet. Massive CORREDIAN GUNSHIPS soar through the smoke-filled sky. Raining down and taking on laser fire. Explosions everywhere.

SUPER: PLANET DERVELLIA, FOURTH OCTANT. CURRENTLY AT WAR WITH PLANET CORREDON OVER TERRITORIAL RIGHTS TO THE ICE PLANET IKAR.

A small team of GALACTIC MARINES, two FEMALES and three MALES, wearing light military armor and helmets with the GM insignia, race through the streets, avoiding fire.

They take cover behind a bombed-out building. The team leader, SENNA SAVINE (mid-30s), athletic, tough human female, wears a Captain's insignia on her helmet.

She pulls out some high-tech binoculars. Studies an official-looking building across the street.

SENNA

No guards. Either dead or fled.

MAK DORTON (40), rugged, scarred half-human half-alien, wears a First Sergeant's insignia on his helmet. He's second-in-command. The other three Marines are unranked infantry.

MAK

How do we know the President's still alive?

SENNA

We don't. But our orders are to get him out of there if he is.

MAK

Heard the guy's a scuzzball. He really worth risking our necks?

SENNA

Dervellia's important to the Alliance. And those are our orders. That's all we need to know.

Mak smirks.

MAK

Your dedication to the Corps is
admirable, Captain Savine.

Senna grins back at him.

SENNA

Take a lesson, Sergeant Dorton.

She hears Mak's telepathic voice in her head.

MAK (V.O.)

Seriously, Senna. Be careful in
there, okay? No crazy chances.

Senna nods.

SENNA

Just watch my back.

Mak gives her a thumbs-up. But he's not smiling.

She gestures to the other Marines.

SENNA (CONT'D)

Okay. On my lead.

Senna and her team charge across the street. They keep low and circle around as they scurry toward the government building's entrance. Weapons at the ready.

They encounter no resistance as they enter the building.

INT. DERVELLIAN CAPITAL BUILDING - DAY

The team slinks through the hallways. Alert to anything.

Senna holds a thermal scanning device. Uses it to guide them through the building. Outside explosions and laser fire provide an occasional burst of light in the otherwise darkened space.

SENNA

(whispering)

Heat signs one floor up. Let's go.

They ascend a crumbling staircase. Reach a certain closed door. Senna studies the device more closely.

SENNA (CONT'D)

(whispering)

This is it.

She switches it off and sticks it on her belt. Gestures for the team to flank the doorway and for Mak to take point.

Senna nods. Mak kicks open the door.

INT. DERVELLIAN PRESIDENT'S OFFICE - DAY

Mak leads the team into the room, guns ready. They're in the ornate office of the Dervellian President, reduced to shambles.

Senna circles around an overturned desk. Sees the PRESIDENT (50s), an alien man wearing torn clothing, lying on the floor. Blue blood oozes from several wounds.

She kneels next to him. Checks his vitals. Gives a thumbs-up to the others - he's alive!

At that moment, five armored CORREDIAN TROOPERS appear in the doorway. Start blasting lasers at Senna and her team.

One of the Male Marines gets killed instantly. The Female Marine takes a bad shot in the leg as she dives behind a piece of furniture. Mak and the other Male Marine manage to take cover and return fire.

Senna glances around the room, calculating their options. She spots a blown-out window nearby. Signals to Mak, who's hiding behind a large chair. Directs him to join her and carry the President out through the window.

MAK (V.O.)
Roger that, Captain.

Senna jumps up and fires at the Corredians while Mak quickly crawls over to her and the President. Mak holsters his gun.

Senna takes off her helmet and shoves it onto the President's head for protection. Mak hoists the President over his shoulders in a firefighter's carry.

Senna counts to three with her fingers. On "three," she jumps up and sprays more cover, taking out one of the Corredians.

Mak races toward the window. Suddenly stops. Turns and gives a thumbs-up to the remaining Corredians.

They stop firing!

Mak shoots a pained grin at a shocked Senna.

MAK (V.O.)
Sorry, Senna. The Corredians' offer was just too drackin' good.

Senna's stunned.

SENNA
What... what about your oath? The Corps?

MAK
Screw the Corps. Money's the only real power in this universe. And in case you were thinking of following me...

Mak pulls a grenade sphere off his belt. Activates it. Tosses it into the center of the room. It bounces and lands close to the injured Female Marine.

Mak jumps out the window while the Corredians retreat.

The Female Marine tries to stand but it's too painful. Senna sees the grenade about to go off near her teammate.

SENNA
NOOOOO!

She races over. Dives on top of the Female Marine right before the grenade EXPLODES.

Senna SCREAMS as shrapnel pierces her skull just in front of both ears, as well as other exposed parts of her body. Her teammate huddles beneath her, protected and unscathed.

Senna goes limp. Barely alive. The Female Marine rolls Senna over. The remaining Male Marine runs to join them.

Senna lies on the floor, going in and out of consciousness.

POV SENNA

She looks up at the distorted faces of her two teammates. The Female Marine talks to her, but her voice sounds faint and fading.

FEMALE MARINE
Hang on, Captain! We'll get you some help!

The Female Marine yells at the Male Marine. Her voice fades out completely. Then all goes black.

OVER BLACK

SUPER: THREE STANDARD YEARS LATER

INT. SENNA'S APARTMENT - MORNING

THWACK! THWACK! THWACK!

Two gloved fists pound at an unusual-looking heavy bag.

THWOCK! A bare foot slams into the bag. Knocks it swinging on its chain.

SUPER: PLANET KRAKOR, SIXTH OCTANT - 0800 HOURS

SENNA'S POV

Lean, muscular arms attached to the fists fly out, hitting the bag at high speed and various angles. Another side KICK.

BUT NO SOUND.

BACK TO SCENE

Senna, a little older, wearing a slightly futuristic bodysuit, continues her sweaty workout. Punishing the bag with punches and kicks. Faded scars run down both sides of her face in front of her ears.

The bag hangs in a corner of her small, sparsely furnished one-room apartment. A cot, a strange-looking desk and chair, a couple of floor lamps and a small kitchenette with a few alien dishes and appliances round out the decor.

A sleek monitor sitting on the desk begins FLASHING. Senna stops her workout, breathes heavily. She gives the bag one last hard punch, then heads over to the desk.

She touches the screen. Sees a new message. Touches the symbol to open it. Starts reading.

CU SCREEN

The message reads: "Captain Savine: We regret that your latest request for reinstatement to the Galactic Marine Corps has been denied. It is the opinion of this review board that your disability precludes you from active service, and we currently have no relevant openings in the support ranks. We appreciate your valorous past service, and wish you well in your future endeavors."

BACK TO SCENE

Senna drops her head. Pounds the desk with her fist. Takes a deep, disappointed breath. Notes the time in the upper right corner of the screen.

SENNA
Drack.

INT. BATHROOM - MORNING

Senna stands inside a tiny shower stall, eyes closed, letting the water roll down her short hair and muscled body. Her back, torso and arms feature several additional healed scars.

She opens her eyes. Gives a resigned smile.

SENNA
Guess I should keep my job. For now.

EXT. ELAR'S DINER - DAY

At the edge of a bustling city, just outside a fairly busy spaceport, sits a small square building with windows all around.

A holographic projection above the building flashes in several different alien languages until it finishes in English - "Elar's - Great Food!"

A helmeted Senna roars up on a hoverbike and parks in the empty parking lot. She clicks a button on the collar of her heavy jacket to make her helmet disappear back into the jacket.

Senna gazes wistfully at the building for a moment.

INT. ELAR'S DINER/DINING AREA/KITCHEN/OFFICE - DAY

Senna enters the diner. It's a typical mom-and-pop eatery, with a few alien touches like a couple of outsized booths and lots of odd knickknacks on the walls. A glowing light globe hangs from the ceiling, changing colors.

JASILLA (40s), a plump, four-armed, yellow-skinned female alien wearing a colorful outfit, carries plates of food with three of her arms to some early-morning CUSTOMERS.

She waves to Senna with her free arm. Enunciates her words slowly and loudly with her rather large lips.

JASILLA

Morning, Senna! Glad you could make it.

Senna gives a little wave.

SENNA

Sorry I'm late. Lost track.

JASILLA

Pretty sure the boss'll forgive you.

Jasilla smirks at her. Senna grins and shakes her head. Walks back to the kitchen area.

KITCHEN

Three futuristic stoves, two ovens, gleaming countertops filled with orderly rows of dishes, pots and pans.

Standing at one of the stoves, cooking something up a storm, is ELAR (early 40s), a decent-looking human male whose body is just starting to go a bit soft.

He looks up at Senna and smiles warmly. He speaks slowly and clearly while also signing to her in ASL.

ELAR

Hey, Senna. You look great. Good workout this morning?

Senna nods shyly. A puzzled look comes over her face. She signs back "workout" as she speaks.

SENNA

This is "workout?"

Elar repeats the sign then continues signing and speaking.

ELAR

It's the sign for "exercise." Remember, sign language isn't always exact translation.

Senna nods again. She notices a light on in the office at the back of the kitchen. Points to it.

SENNA

Fayeth here?

Elar signs and replies.

ELAR

Yes, it's a school holiday. She didn't want to stay home alone.

Senna walks back to the office. Pokes her head in.

OFFICE

Sitting behind a cluttered metallic desk is FAYETH (17), Elar's smart, precocious daughter. She's engrossed reading something on a sophisticated tablet device. A soft metallic backpack hangs on the back of the chair.

Senna smiles. Gives her a little wave. Fayeth doesn't notice.

Senna clicks the light off and on. Fayeth looks up. Breaks into a big grin. Jumps up and runs to hug Senna. Senna responds warmly.

NOTE: From here on, all ASL-only dialogue will be in Italics and Subtitled.

Fayeth pulls away. Begins signing rapidly.

FAYETH

*Couldn't wait to see you today!
We're studying the Ikarian War. I
know you were there, so I have lots
of questions--*

SENNA

Slow down, please!

Fayeth wrinkles her nose in annoyance.

FAYETH

Haven't you been practicing?

SENNA

*Yes. But I'm still learning. Give
me a break.*

Fayeth shakes her head and chuckles.

FAYETH

You signed "break me."

Senna rolls her eyes. Concentrates.

SENNA

I meant, "I'm trying."

Fayeth signs a bit more slowly.

FAYETH

*Thought you were a big important
soldier. This should be easy for
you.*

SENNNA

*I was. But it's not. Easier to
learn when you're born deaf.*

Fayeth shoots her a look.

SENNNA (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. I didn't mean--

FAYETH

Forget it.

SENNNA

*How's your senior science project
going?*

FAYETH

*Still trying to figure out how to
power it. I don't want to run up
Dad's bills too much this month.*

SENNNA

Very thoughtful.

Fayeth smiles.

FAYETH

Got something for you.

Fayeth runs back behind the desk. Pulls a small package out of her backpack. Brings and hands it to Senna.

FAYETH (CONT'D)

Happy Birthday!

Senna's surprised.

SENNNA

How did you know?

FAYETH

I did a little digging.

SENNNA

*You mean you hacked the Marines'
personnel database?*

Fayeth shrugs and grins. Senna shoots her a look of exasperation. Then quickly opens the package.

She takes out an elegant silver necklace with what looks like three octagonal dog tags. Engraved on them are "Senna," "Elar" and "Fayeth."

Senna's really touched but tries to hide it.

SENNA (CONT'D)
You make this?

Fayeth nods proudly.

FAYETH
Used an old necklace my Mom gave me. Wanted to give you something so you won't forget us when you go back to the Corps.

Senna lovingly fingers the tags. Then slips the necklace on over her neck. Slides the tags underneath her shirt.

SENNA
It's beautiful.

FAYETH
No matter what, you're part of our family now.

They share a warm smile.

SENNA
We still on for fight training after work?

FAYETH
I'm hoping you'll have other plans.

Senna rolls her eyes playfully.

SENNA
Your Dad's going to ask me out again?

FAYETH
Absolutely. It's your birthday! Please say "yes." I promise you won't regret it.

Senna chuckles.

SENNA
He might.

She tousles Fayeth's hair. Leaves.

Fayeth goes back to the desk and returns to her studying.

EXT. SPACEPORT/DOCKING BAY - AFTERNOON

A stripped-down military transport ship uses landing thrusters to descend into an open docking bay. Part of the ship looks burned and damaged.

COMPUTERIZED VOICE (V.O.)
Cargo ship X-Three Niner, you are cleared for landing.

MAK (MUFFLED V.O.)
Roger that, docking control.
Thanks.

The ship lands.

INT. MAK'S SHIP/COCKPIT - AFTERNOON

Mak Dorton, a little older and scruffier, sits in the co-pilot's seat next to AZER (30s), an athletic alien with orange reptilian skin. Both wear unmarked military-style clothing.

MAK
Looks like that fake ID beacon worked.

Azer speaks in a deep, unsettling voice.

AZER
It better. Cost us a fortune.

MAK
How long to make repairs?

AZER
An hour. Maybe two. Damage didn't seem that bad.

MAK
Good thing those guys were bad shots.

AZER
No, good thing I'm a great pilot.

Mak chuckles.

MAK

Right. Keep it to an hour. Our buyer's not a patient guy. The sooner we make the drop, the sooner we're all rich.

AZER

Roger that.

GRUNTA (40s), a 7-foot tall, not-too-bright alien muscleman, pokes his head into the cockpit.

GRUNTA

I'm hungry!

MAK

I could eat too. Wonder if there's someplace good around here. Sick of Lastor's cooking.

AZER

Don't go too far.

MAK

We'll bring you back something.

INT. SPACEPORT/OFFICE - AFTERNOON

A scrawny, officious-looking alien CLERK with four eyes sits behind a desk in a small, utilitarian office. Uses his 10-digit hands to rapidly type manifests into a monitor.

Mak saunters in, followed by Grunta and LASTOR (30s), a thin, insect-like alien with a nervous temper.

MAK

Hey there, friend. Where can we get some food around here?

The Clerk never stops typing. Two of his four eyes glance at them.

CLERK

There's a pretty good diner just outside the spaceport. Elar's.

MAK

Can we get there and back in an hour?

CLERK

Not on foot. But you can rent a transport for thirty mechacredits.

Mak's not happy about that. He looks at Lastor and Grunta. Sighs. Pulls six hexagonal coins out of a pocket. Deposits them onto the Clerk's desk.

The Clerk stops typing. Presses a button to open a drawer in his desk. Takes out a key card and tosses it to Mak.

CLERK (CONT'D)
Take a left out the door. It's the
first one parked there.

MAK
Thanks, friend.

Mak and his crew leave. The Clerk thinks for a moment. Changes his screen to a different display.

A grainy image of Mak appears on the screen with "WANTED" in bold letters and several alien languages under it.

INT. ELAR'S DINER/MAIN ROOM/KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

Only two CUSTOMERS sit in the dining room, one alien and his scruffy human companion. Jasilla serves them some hot beverage as they finish their meal.

In the kitchen, Elar cleans the stoves while Senna washes dishes with military speed and precision.

Elar keeps sneaking looks at Senna, like he's working up the courage to say something. She notices but doesn't push it.

Finally Elar takes a deep breath and walks over to her. He clears his throat. Signs and speaks slowly.

ELAR
Listen, um... Fayeth told me it's
your birthday. And, uh... I was
wondering... if you don't have any
plans... maybe you'd let me take
you out to dinner.

Senna smiles at his awkwardness.

SENNA
Fayeth warned me about this.

ELAR
Look, I know I'm not... the best at
communicating my feelings.

SENNA
That makes two of us.

ELAR

What I'm trying to say is... the past year and a half... have been amazing. The way you've bonded with Fayeth, I can't tell you how much I appreciate that.

SENNA

She's a great sign language teacher.

ELAR

Yep. You know, things were so tough for us after Marina died. But with you around, Fayeth is almost back to her old self.

SENNA

Glad I could help. And I appreciate your letting me pay you back by working here.

ELAR

Hey, you've been great for the diner. Kitchen's never been so clean.

They both chuckle.

ELAR (CONT'D)

Even Jasilla likes you, and that's saying a lot.

Senna shrugs.

SENNA

Took awhile.

ELAR

Anyway, the point is... I've grown to really care a lot about you. Not just for Fayeth's sake, but... mine too. And since today's a special day for you... I'd like to show you how much.

As they've talked, the romantic tension in the room has grown exponentially, though neither of them quite knows how to express it.

Elar's almost trembling. Senna struggles to stay reserved. Rubs the new dog tags underneath her shirt. After an uncomfortably long pause, Senna finally speaks.

SENNA

Sounds good. Especially since I've grown to care about Fayeth... and her dad, too.

Elar almost collapses in relief. Breaks into a broad grin.

ELAR

Great! You won't regret it, I promise. I know a place where the food's actually better than mine.

Senna laughs.

SENNA

That's hard to imagine.

ELAR

I'll take the compliment.

(pause)

Hey, why don't you knock off early and go home to change. Doubt we'll get any more customers at this point. I'll finish up then you can meet me back here.

SENNA

What about Fayeth?

ELAR

Jasilla already said she'd stay with her tonight.

Senna shakes her head, smiling.

SENNA

Thought of everything, didn't you?

Elar shrugs.

ELAR

I tried. Just wasn't sure how you'd answer.

SENNA

I'll be back in an hour.

ELAR

Perfect. Can't wait.

Senna wipes her hands on a rag, grabs her jacket off a peg near the kitchen entrance, and heads out.

Elar sees Fayeth standing in the doorway to the office, watching expectantly. He gives her a big grin and two thumbs up. She claps excitedly.

EXT. ELAR'S DINER - AFTERNOON

Senna straddles her hoverbike. Hesitates. Sees Elar working inside the diner as Jasilla finishes up with the last two Customers.

After thinking a moment, she shakes her head with a thoughtful smile. Pops her helmet on. Starts up the bike.

Senna zooms out of the parking lot just as a bulky wheeled transport vehicle pulls in.

INT. ELAR'S DINER - AFTERNOON

The two Customers hand Jasilla some hexagonal coins and mosey out.

JASILLA
See ya tomorrow, guys!

The Human Customer waves back at her. Jasilla goes behind the counter and deposits the coins into a lockbox underneath.

Elar calls out from the kitchen.

ELAR
How're we doing, Jas?

JASILLA
All clear, boss! Want me to lock up?

ELAR
Please. I have just enough time to get clean before Senna comes back.

JASILLA
I don't know, maybe she likes you dirty.

Elar laughs.

Jasilla starts toward the front door. Before she can get there, Mak, Lastor and Grunta enter the diner.

Jasilla immediately gets a bad vibe from these guys.

JASILLA (CONT'D)
Hey, we're just closing up.

Mak gives her a fake warm grin.

MAK
Can't you take pity on some weary
travelers? We had to dock for
repairs, and my crew hasn't had a
decent meal in weeks.

Jasilla hesitates.

JASILLA
Hang on.

Jasilla hurries back to the kitchen. Mak, Lastor and Grunta
nonchalantly take a seat at the nearest booth.

Mak keeps an eye on Jasilla. Grunta quickly becomes
mesmerized by the light globe changing colors.

GRUNTA
Pretty light.

KITCHEN

Jasilla speaks quietly to Elar.

JASILLA
I don't like their look.

ELAR
Yeah, but it was a slow day. We
could use the money.

JASILLA
What about your date?

Elar glances at his wrist timepiece.

ELAR
There's time. We'll try to get 'em
out of here fast.

JASILLA
You're the boss.

She returns to the dining room. Elar runs to the office.

OFFICE

Elar flips the light off and on to get Fayeth's attention.
Fayeth looks up from her reading. Signs.

FAYETH

Ready to go?

ELAR

*No, got some last-minute customers.
Stay here and keep the door closed.*

Fayeth rolls her eyes. Elar shuts the door as he leaves.

DINING ROOM

Jasilla pulls out her tablet as she walks up to the crew's table.

JASILLA

Okay boys, what'll you have?

MAK

What's the house special?

JASILLA

We've got the best larptoburgers in town.

GRUNTA

Yum!

MAK

Sounds good. Four larptoburgers with fries and three glasses of malg. Make one of those food orders to go.

JASILLA

Gotcha.

Jasilla inputs the order and hurries back to the kitchen. Lastor leans over the table and speaks in a low, hissy voice.

LASTOR

You sure this planet's safe? Never heard of it.

MAK

Pretty sure. I once knew someone from here. It's far off the main spaceways. No one'll find us.

Lastor doesn't seem convinced.

LASTOR

You know the longer we have that cargo, the more dangerous things get.

MAK

Calm down, Lastor. Just think
about your take on this job.

GRUNTA

(too loudly)

More money!

Mak shushes Grunta. Lastor slaps him on the arm. Grunta puts his head down, chastened.

Mak eyes the kitchen. Sees Elar working away while Jasilla quietly converses with him.

MAK

We'll eat fast then get outta here.

LASTOR

I'll second that.

INT. SENNA'S APARTMENT/BATHROOM/MAIN ROOM - EVENING

Senna steps out of the shower drying her hair. She wraps the towel around her body and walks to a small closet in the main room. Opens it.

Several shirts and pants hang neatly in the closet. On one side hangs a crisp, tight-fitting military outfit. A large metallic suitcase lies on the floor of the closet.

Senna chuckles to herself.

SENNA

Nothing to wear on a date.

She sighs. Takes out her nicest shirt and pair of pants. Pulls off the towel and quickly dresses.

Senna goes back into the bathroom and stands in front of a mirror over the tiny sink. She runs a brush through her hair. Tries to style it a bit. Checks her reflection.

She touches the scar in front of her left ear. Her expression turns dark.

SENNA (CONT'D)

What the drack does he see in me?

INT. ELAR'S DINER - EVENING

Mak and his crew finish their meal. A communication device on Mak's wrist gauntlet BEEPS. He talks into it.

MAK

Yeah?

AZER (MUFFLED V.O.)

Ship's ready, boss.

MAK

Good work. We're heading back.

Mak waves to Jasilla.

MAK (CONT'D)

Can we get the bill? And that go order?

Jasilla comes over and reads off her tablet.

JASILLA

With the drink refills that comes out to twenty-five mechacredits.

Max takes out some coins and hands them to Jasilla. She quickly counts them.

MAK

Thanks. Know you want to get out of here as much as we do.

JASILLA

I don't care. But the boss has a hot date.

She gestures back to the kitchen, where Elar bustles around, cleaning up.

Mak chuckles.

MAK

Good for him. Gotta say, you were right about the larptoburger. Best I've ever had.

GRUNTA

Yeah! Delicious!

JASILLA

He'll appreciate that. I'll get that order--

Suddenly, three large Enforcement hovervehicles with flashing lights and blaring alarms zoom into the parking lot outside. They surround the rental transport.

Six ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS, four humans and a couple of aliens, burst out of the vehicles and rush to cover the front door.

Mak's face falls as he sees the Officers outside.

MAK
Drack.

Lastor lets loose with a long annoyed, hissing noise.

LASTOR
No one will find us, huh?

MAK
Okay, so I was wrong for once.

A terrified Jasilla slowly backs away toward the kitchen.

The Lead Officer speaks through a combination loudspeaker/translator.

LEAD OFFICER (MUFFLED V.O.)
Mak Dorton! You and your men are under arrest for Grand Theft and Murder. Come out with your hands up!

Mak takes a deep breath.

MAK
Well that's not happening.
(to Lastor)
You two cover the door.

With lightning speed, Mak jumps out of the booth. Pulls a laser pistol out of his side holster. Dashes back into the kitchen.

KITCHEN

Mak sees Elar and Jasilla scurrying toward the rear entrance. Aims his pistol at them.

MAK (CONT'D)
Stop right there!

They freeze. Turn to him, holding up their hands.

ELAR
We don't want any trouble.

MAK
Neither did we. But looks like it found us anyway.

JASILLA

Please. We didn't see or hear nothing.

MAK

Not the issue. Only way we're getting out of here is with hostages. Sorry.

Mak motions for Elar and Jasilla to join him. Elar can't help but glance behind him at the office before they comply.

Mak notices the light on through the office door.

MAK (CONT'D)

Anyone else here?

ELAR

No, no. I just left the light on. Hate to run up the power bill.

Mak chuckles.

MAK

Nice try.

Keeping his gun trained on them, Mak stalks over to the office door.

ELAR

Please don't!

Mak opens the door. Sees Fayeth sitting at the desk. She looks up. Lets out a loud SCREAM.

MAK

Come on out. Now!

Elar rushes to Mak's side. Quickly signs to Fayeth.

ELAR

Come with us. It'll be all right.

A very scared Fayeth slowly rises from her chair. Grabs her backpack. Slings it over her shoulder. Walks toward them.

Elar puts a comforting arm around her. Looks at Mak.

ELAR (CONT'D)

She's deaf. I need to translate.

MAK

Gotcha. Come on.

Mak herds his hostages back out into the dining room. Lastor and Grunta crouch behind the counter, large guns trained on the front door.

Keeping Elar, Jasilla and Fayeth in front of him, Mak calls out to the authorities.

MAK (CONT'D)
We've got hostages here! All we want is safe passage back to our ship. No one has to get hurt!

LEAD OFFICER (MUFFLED V.O.)
Not a chance, Dorton! This is your last warning! Release the hostages and come out with your hands up!

LASTOR
Now what, Mak?

MAK
They're not gonna kill innocents. Three hostages, three of us. Let's go.

Lastor grabs Jasilla, who's standing nearest to him. Holds her tightly in front of him.

LASTOR
No tricks, lady.

Jasilla shakes her head. Mak pushes Elar over to Grunta, who treats him roughly. Fayeth reaches out for her Dad but Mak grabs her by the arm.

Grunta keeps Elar in front of him. Fayeth struggles against Mak's firm grip.

MAK
(to Elar)
Tell your daughter to calm down.

Elar signs "Stay calm" to Fayeth. She stops struggling. Mak maneuvers to stand behind her.

MAK (CONT'D)
Everybody keep icy and we all walk away from this. Okay?

Elar and Jasilla nod. Fayeth grimaces, trying to stay calm.

MAK (CONT'D)
Lastor, take point. Keep 'em between us and the Enfs.

Lastor pushes Jasilla toward the front door. Mak follows close behind, with Grunta bringing up the rear.

At the door, Lastor jams his gun into Jasilla's back.

LASTOR
Open it. Slowly.

Jasilla pushes open the door.

EXT. ELAR'S DINER - EVENING

The Enforcement Officers take a few steps back as Lastor and Jasilla lead the others out of the diner. The mercs cluster together, using Elar, Jasilla and Fayeth as shields against the Officers.

LEAD OFFICER
This is crazy, Dorton. You'll never get offworld.

MAK
Entirely up to you, Officer. You want to kill these innocent people just to capture us? Go right ahead.

Elar and Jasilla share a horrified look. The Enforcement Officers keep their guns trained on the crew as they maneuver toward their vehicle.

The Lead Officer grits his teeth. It's a hard decision, but he only has one choice. He gestures to his men to lower their weapons.

MAK (CONT'D)
Smart move.

LEAD OFFICER
This isn't over.

MAK
'Fraid you were gonna say that.

Lastor opens the driver's side door. Shoves Jasilla into the vehicle. Quickly slides into the driver's seat next to her.

Grunta looks a bit confused.

GRUNTA
Boss?

MAK
Get in! Now!

GRUNTA
What about--

MAK
Take him with you!

Grunta opens the back door and pulls Elar into the vehicle with him.

Mak backs his way to the other side of the vehicle, keeping Fayeth in front of him. At that moment, Senna roars up to the scene on her hoverbike.

She pulls to a stop outside the parking lot. Flips up her visor. Sees Mak grab Fayeth by the waist as he slides into the crowded rear seat, keeping her on his lap. She doesn't see his face yet.

A horrified look fills her eyes.

MAK (CONT'D)
(to Lastor)
Drive!

Mak slams the door. Lastor powers up the vehicle. Backs up and rumbles out of the parking lot at high speed.

LEAD OFFICER
Go! Go!

The Enforcement Officers scramble back to their hovervehicles.

Senna flips her visor back down. Guns her hoverbike. Takes off after the transport vehicle.

EXT. STREET/MOVING - EVENING

The transport vehicle races down the street toward the nearby spaceport, dodging in and out of slower traffic.

Senna pursues on her bike, catching up fast. Far behind her, the Enforcement hovervehicles chase after them, sirens blaring and lights flashing.

INT. TRANSPORT VEHICLE - EVENING

Lastor drives skillfully. Jasilla cringes next to him in the front seat.

Mak sits scrunched next to Grunta in the back seat. Fayeth's on his lap, while Elar's squeezed between Grunta and the other back door.

Holding tightly to Fayeth, Mak yells into his wrist communicator.

MAK

Azer! We're coming in hot! Prep for takeoff.

AZER (MUFFLED V.O.)

Roger that.

EXT. STREET/SPACEPORT ENTRANCE/MOVING - EVENING

They near the turn into the spaceport.

Senna drives her bike right up on the vehicle's back bumper. She pulls a big knife out of one of her saddlebags. Shoves it into her belt.

She jumps up onto the seat of her bike, keeping her hands on the handlebars.

With a twist of her wrist, Senna accelerates and bumps the bike against the back of the getaway vehicle. Then she launches herself into the air. Lands on top of the vehicle.

INT. TRANSPORT VEHICLE - EVENING

Mak and Grunta look up, hearing the THUMP above them.

MAK

What the hell?

He glances back out his open window. Sees Senna's bike veering off and slowing to a stop onto the side of the road.

Mak also spies the Enforcement Hovervehicles zooming toward them at high speed, closing in.

EXT. TRANSPORT VEHICLE - EVENING

Senna flattens her body on the vehicle roof. Grabs onto a ridge running horizontally across the top. Barely hangs on as the vehicle turns into the spaceport entranceway.

She pulls herself toward the driver's side window. Reaches the edge. Takes the knife out of her belt. Swings it high and drives it down into the window.

INT. TRANSPORT VEHICLE - EVENING

CRASH! Senna's knife smashes through the window next to Lastor. He ducks the flying glass.

Senna stabs the knife in again. Slashes Lastor's left arm. He lets out a hissing SCREAM. Loses control of the vehicle for a moment and takes his foot off the control pedal. It slows down slightly near the gated entrance.

MAK
Drack!

Mak grabs Fayeth's arm. Shoves her toward Grunta and Elar.

MAK (CONT'D)
(to Grunta)
Hang on to her!

Elar beats him to it. Takes Fayeth by the arm. Pulls her close to them.

Mak lowers his window, crawls out and sits on the edge.

Lastor regains control of the vehicle. Guns it toward the spaceport gate.

EXT. TRANSPORT VEHICLE/SPACEPORT - EVENING

Several GUARDS run out from the gatehouse, waving their arms at them and yelling "Stop!"

Mak sees Senna lying on top of the vehicle. Getting ready to take another stab at Lastor.

Mak aims his gun. Just as he FIRES they CRASH through the gate. The jolt causes Mak to miss, sending the fiery blaze of light flying over Senna's back and singeing her jacket.

She turns her head. Sees the gun about to blast her into oblivion.

Keeping hold with her left hand, Senna swings down over the left side of the vehicle, causing Mak to miss again.

INT. TRANSPORT VEHICLE - EVENING

Senna hangs onto the left side of the vehicle, right in front of Grunta, Elar and Fayeth.

Elar can't believe what he's seeing. Grunta growls. Tries to pull his gun out, but they're so cramped he can't.

Fayeth recognizes Senna. Frantically signs.

FAYETH
Please, help us!

Elar sees his daughter signing. He shakes his head vigorously at Senna. Quickly signs.

ELAR
No! Protect yourself!

Mak slides back into the vehicle's rear seat. Starts to aim his gun at Senna.

Fayeth YELLS. Jumps onto Mak, grabbing his arm. Fights to keep him from firing at Senna.

EXT. SPACEPORT - EVENING

The transport vehicle rumbles toward a particular docking bay. The WHINE of engines can be heard coming from the bay.

The Enforcement Hovervehicles close in from behind.

INT. TRANSPORT VEHICLE - EVENING

Fayeth continues to wrestle Mak for his gun. He SLAPS her away. Elar pulls her back.

ELAR
Don't hit my daughter!

MAK
Then keep her under control.

Grunta still can't get to his gun. Frustrated, he smashes out the window beside Elar with his huge fist. By doing that he succeeds in knocking Senna off the vehicle.

EXT. SPACEPORT/DOCKING BAY - EVENING

Senna tumbles from the transport vehicle. She goes into a tuck and roll. Then springs up and starts running after them, still holding her knife.

The Enforcement Hovervehicles race past her.

The transport vehicle SCREECHES to a stop at the docking bay. Mak clammers out of the back seat, keeping Fayeth in front of him with a tight grip on her arm.

Lastor grabs Jasilla and pulls her out through the driver's side door. Grunta tumbles out with his arm around Elar's neck.

The Enforcement Vehicles WHINE to a stop around them as the three mercs try to rush into the docking bay. Enforcement Officers quickly get out and train their weapons on the fugitives.

LEAD OFFICER

Last chance, Dorton! Release the hostages and surrender now!

MAK

Not a chance.

LEAD OFFICER

Orbit patrol's been notified.
They'll blow you out of the sky.

Mak glares at him.

MAK

Then I guess they'll be taking
innocent lives.

Mak starts dragging Fayeth toward the docking bay entrance. Lastor and Grunta follow, keeping their hostages as shields between them and the officers.

Senna runs up to the scene, still wearing her helmet. For the first time she gets a good look at Mak. Her head cocks. Behind the visor, her eyes widen in stunned surprise.

SENNA (MUFFLED)

Mak?

Senna stands there, frozen.

Jasilla starts panicking as Lastor drags her toward the rising ship inside the docking bay.

JASILLA

I can't go in that thing! I get
spacesick!

LASTOR

Shut up!

Senna glares at Mak. She snaps into action. Raises her knife to throw it.

Suddenly Jasilla wrenches away from Lastor. Her momentum causes her to stumble toward Mak just as Senna hurls her knife at Mak's head.

Senna's knife cuts through the air and buries itself into Jasilla's upper chest. Jasilla falls, gasping for air.

SENNA (MUFFLED)
NOOOOO!

MAK
Cover him!

Mak starts firing at the Enforcement Officers as the now-unprotected Lastor ducks behind him. The Officers have no choice but to return fire. But they miss badly, not wanting to hit Elar or Fayeth.

The mercs drag their hostages into the docking bay.

INT. DOCKING BAY - EVENING

Mak, Grunta and Lastor rush up the boarding ramp of their ship, pulling Elar and Fayeth with them.

The ramp closes. The ship lifts off on retros to about forty feet off the ground. Then the main engines kick in and it zooms up into the stratosphere.

EXT. DOCKING BAY - EVENING

As Mak's ship flies away, Senna rushes over to the prone Jasilla. She retracts her helmet. Cradles Jasilla's head.

SENNA
Jas! I'm so sorry! Jas!

Jasilla opens her eyes. Looks up at Senna weakly.

JASILLA
S-Senna?

Jasilla's eyes close. Enforcement Officers crowd around them. The Lead Officer yells into a communications device.

LEAD OFFICER
Need a medvac at the spaceport,
stat! And alert Orbit Patrol.
Dorton still has the hostages.
Tell 'em to watch their fire.
Disable the ship only!

EXT. OUTER SPACE/KRAKOR

Mak's ship screams out of the planet's atmosphere and into space. Two sleek PATROL GUNSHIPS swoop in to try and intercept it.

INT. MAK'S SHIP/CARGO AREA

The main hold of the ship. Filled with several large cargo boxes. One strange-looking smaller box with a keypad lock is strapped into a corner of the space. A few uncomfortable-looking seats line the walls.

Lastor charges through, holding his arm, which oozes yellow-green blood. He heads through a door at one end, which leads to the cockpit.

Mak pulls Fayeth over to one of the seats. Shoves her into it. Fayeth fights as Mak tries to strap her in.

MAK

Stop it!

Elar, held tightly by Grunta, signs to Fayeth.

ELAR

Calm down, please!

She does, reluctantly. Mak straps her into the seat.

Grunta throws Elar into the seat next to Fayeth.

ELAR (CONT'D)

I can strap myself in.

Mak waves his gun at Elar.

MAK

Don't try anything crazy.

ELAR

We won't. Promise.

Mak and Grunta head to the cockpit while Elar straps himself into the seat. When he's finished, he strokes Fayeth's head, trying to soothe her.

ELAR (CONT'D)

Everything will be all right.

Fayeth shakes her head vigorously.

FAYETH

No it won't. Jasilla might be dead. Senna could be hurt. These assholes will probably kill us. Or worse.

ELAR

I'll do everything I can to make sure they don't.

Fayeth fights back tears. Elar pulls her head to his chest.

COCKPIT

Azer deftly pilots the ship. Lastor sits in the co-pilot's chair.

Mak and Grunta crowd into the small space.

MAK

How many bogies?

AZER

Two. So far.

MAK

Could be worse. How long till we can jump?

AZER

Couple minutes.

A sharp VOICE crackles over the external comm system.

GUNSHIP PILOT (MUFFLED V.O.)

This is Orbit Patrol. Return to your dock immediately or we will open fire.

Mak reaches over and presses a button on the console.

MAK

Be advised we have hostages.

GUNSHIP PILOT (MUFFLED V.O.)

We know, Dorton. That's why we're just going to cripple you, not blast you to bits.

Mak chuckles.

MAK

You can try.

He pats Azer on the shoulder. Azer grins up at him.

MAK (CONT'D)
Let's get out of here.

EXT. OUTER SPACE/KRAKOR

Mak's ship banks hard just as the gunships fire several laser blasts at them.

The ship puts on a burst of speed and easily dodges several more volleys of laser fire.

The gunships keep trying to hit the ship, but Azer's too good a pilot. The blasts just go off into space.

After a couple more missed volleys, Mak's ship suddenly seems to hesitate, then disappears in a burst of hyperspeed.

EXT. SPACEPORT/DOCKING BAY - EVENING

Two Enforcement Officers tend to the prone Jasilla, slowing her bleeding and doing whatever they can to keep her alive. Senna holds her hand and strokes her head.

The Lead Officer stands nearby. His communicator buzzes.

GUNSHIP PILOT (MUFFLED V.O.)
This is Orbit Patrol. Dorton's
ship just went into space jump. We
lost 'em.

LEAD OFFICER
Drack. Copy that.

He turns off his communicator. A MedVac vehicle rumbles up to the scene.

Jasilla opens her eyes. Looks up at Senna. Speaks slowly.

JASILLA
W-why... still... here?

SENNNA
Gotta make sure you're all right.

JASILLA
F-forget... me. Save... Elar...
and Fayeth.

SENNNA
What can I do?

Two alien PARAMEDICS jump out of the MedVac with an inflatable stretcher. Rush over to them.

Jasilla release Senna's hand. Touches Senna's cheek.

JASILLA
You're... a M-Marine. Find... a
way.

Senna stands and steps back to allow the Paramedics to load Jasilla onto the stretcher.

The Lead Officer moves next to her.

LEAD OFFICER
Ma'am, I'm pretty sure that was an
accident. My guess is you were
trying to hit Dorton with your
knife. So what's your involvement
in all this?

Senna doesn't look at him. She watches the Paramedics work on Jasilla while rubbing the dog tags under her shirt.

The Lead Officer waves his hand in front of her face.

LEAD OFFICER (CONT'D)
Ma'am? What's your involvement--

Senna gives him a cold, hard stare.

SENNNA
He took... my friends.

LEAD OFFICER
So you know the hostages? Good.
Maybe you can give us--

Senna pushes him away. Stalks off. The Lead Officer shakes his head, exasperated.

LEAD OFFICER (CONT'D)
What a day.

INT. MAK'S SHIP/CARGO AREA

Mak stalks out of the cockpit and heads to Elar and Fayeth. Elar strokes Fayeth's head, continuing to comfort her. Trying to stay calm, he looks up at Mak.

ELAR
Are you going to kill us?

Mak grins.

MAK

Not unless I have to.

ELAR

So what happens now?

MAK

Guess you're along for the ride.
We don't have time to drop you off
anywhere.

ELAR

So we're prisoners?

MAK

I prefer guests. Look, this was a
case of bad timing for all of us.
Let's make the best of it.

ELAR

Any idea how long we'll be your
"guests?"

MAK

'Least till this mission's over.

ELAR

What mission? You're not military.

MAK

Used to be.

(chuckles)

But my associates and I found
something that pays way better.

ELAR

So you're mercenaries.

Mak shrugs. At that moment Azer exits the cockpit and comes over to Mak. Whispers something in his ear. Mak nods.

Azer takes a long uncomfortable look at Fayeth. Gives her a little grin. Fayeth shivers.

Azer goes back into the cockpit, passing Grunta coming out.

ELAR (CONT'D)

Look, the less we know about what
you're doing, the better.

MAK

Agreed.

ELAR

If we cooperate can you guarantee
our safety?

MAK

No guarantees in life, friend. But
right now there shouldn't be any
reason to harm you.

This doesn't make Elar feel any better. Mak turns and stares
at Fayeth.

MAK (V.O.)

I know you're scared, kid. Just
stay calm.

Fayeth's eyes widen in surprise. She quickly signs to Elar.

FAYETH

I hear his voice in my head!

Elar looks up at Mak.

ELAR

Are you Tarkaylian?

MAK (V.O.)

Part. I can project my thoughts to
others. Can't read minds though,
like they can.

ELAR

Why haven't you done that before?

MAK (V.O.)

It's kinda hard. Easier to use my
voice. But figured it might come
in handy for your daughter.

Fayeth signs to Elar.

FAYETH

It's really creepy.

MAK

What'd she say?

ELAR

She just said it's... unnerving.

MAK

Yeah, guess it can be. Hey, in the
meantime, those larptoburgers you
made us were great.

ELAR

Thanks.

MAK

Keeping us well-fed will keep you in our good graces. Understand?

ELAR

Clearly.

MAK

Azer needs some chow. I'll show you to the galley.

Elar unstraps himself. Gestures to Fayeth to do the same.

MAK (CONT'D)

She can stay.

ELAR

I'm not letting her out of my sight.

Mak chuckles.

MAK

You're a good Dad.

Elar and Fayeth get up. Start following Mak to the galley section.

MAK (CONT'D)

Almost forgot. Who was that daredevil with the knife?

Elar and Fayeth share a look.

ELAR

I... think that was my dishwasher.

MAK

Where'd he learn those kinds of moves?

Elar hesitates.

ELAR

No idea.

INT. SENNA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Senna storms in with a purpose. She turns on a light. Goes straight to her closet. Pulls out the metallic briefcase and her military uniform.

She sets both on her bed. Opens the case. It's filled with several laser pistols, one mini-rifle, an exotic military knife, and a foot-long metal rod.

Senna stares at the equipment.

SENNA

Glad they let me keep all this.

BEGIN MONTAGE

- 1) Senna checks each of the guns to make sure they're clean and in working order.
- 2) Senna holds the metal rod. Presses a hidden button on it. It extends out to a bo staff about 4 feet long. She twirls it and does some quick practice thrusts and hits, kendo-style.
- 3) She repacks everything but the now-retracted staff and one of the guns. Throws some toiletries into the case. Shuts it.
- 4) Senna's changed into the military uniform. Laser pistol and bo staff attached to her belt. She stares at herself in the bathroom mirror. Determination fills her face.

END MONTAGE

INT. SENNA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Senna grabs the case off the bed. Starts to leave. Thinks of something.

She goes back to the desk. Opens a drawer. Pulls out small device with a display screen. Stares at it for a moment.

SENNA

Drack.

She shoves the device into a pocket in her uniform. Hurries out.

INT. DOCKING BAY - NIGHT

Senna loads the briefcase into the storage compartment on a two-person fighter-type spaceship sitting in a small docking bay. An overhead sliding door finishes opening, revealing the night sky above.

She climbs into the lead cockpit and closes the canopy.

INT. SENNA'S SHIP/COCKPIT - NIGHT

Senna slides on a flight helmet and powers up the ship. Checks the dials and readouts. Everything looks good. She punches her retro rockets.

EXT. DOCKING BAY - NIGHT

Senna's ship rises on jets of steam and fire. Clears the roof of the docking bay. Keeps ascending for about another hundred feet.

She kills the retros and kicks on the afterburners. The ship rockets up into the atmosphere.

EXT. OUTER SPACE/KRAKOR

Senna's ship zooms away from the darkened planet. Sunlight from the planet's star glistens off its hull.

INT. SENNA'S SHIP/COCKPIT

Senna types in some coordinates. Checks another readout. Takes a deep breath.

SENNA
Here goes nothing.

She flicks a switch. Stars stream by as the ship jumps into hyperdrive. Senna's thrown back in her seat by the G-forces.

She grimaces. Starts to become disoriented. She puts her hands to her head - something's wrong.

SENNA'S POV

Her cockpit instruments swirl and fade in and out. A weird NOISE fills her head.

BACK TO SCENE

Senna grabs the ship's main controls. Squeezes them till her knuckles turn white. She fights to stay conscious.

SENNA (CONT'D)
(muttering)
Don't pass out. Don't pass out.

She closes her eyes. Takes deep breaths. Slowly starts to regain control of her remaining senses.

Stars and planets streak by her cockpit as she flies through hyperspace.

Senna keeps her eyes closed. Continues talking softly to herself.

SENNA (CONT'D)
Elar... Fayeth... Hang on. Just
hang on.

EXT. GALIDON

A large, industrialized planet orbits a reddish star. Several armed space stations surround the planet, with numerous ships of various sizes and purposes either leaving or arriving.

SUPER: PLANET GALIDON, THIRD OCTANT - HOME BASE OF THE GALACTIC MARINE CORPS

Senna's ship pops out of hyperspace some distance away. It seems to meander for a minute, then turns and heads straight for the planet.

INT. SENNA'S SHIP/COCKPIT

Senna's head starts to clear. Her breathing returns to normal. She guides the ship toward a particular section of the planet.

A light flashes on her control console. She pushes the button beneath it.

A computerized VOICE fills the cockpit, with its words printing out on a small screen on the console.

GALIDON CONTROL (V.O.)
Unidentified craft, this is Galidon Control. Activate your I.D. beacon or state your purpose.

Senna punches another button on the console. After a pause, the Voice returns.

GALIDON CONTROL (V.O.)
I.D. confirmed. You are cleared to land on Alpha Base, Platform Twenty-Two.

SENNA
Roger, Control.

She pilots the ship down into Galidon's atmosphere.

EXT. GALIDON/ALPHA BASE - DAY

Senna's ship cruises over a sprawling military base filled with utilitarian buildings and spaceships of all sizes and purposes.

SOLDIERS, both human and alien, march or run around the base, drilling, doing exercises, working on the ships, or engaging in some rough sports.

Senna brings her ship to a soft landing on a platform near the base's Control Tower.

INT. COMMANDANT'S OFFICE/RECEPTION - DAY

An officious, blue-skinned alien CORPORAL (30's) of indeterminate gender sits behind a metal desk in a small reception area. They type furiously on a clear keypad connected to a large monitor.

Shelves filled with books and military paraphernalia line the walls.

Senna enters. Steps over to the desk. Holds her device so she can read it.

SENNA
I need to see the Commandant.

The Corporal gives her a suspicious once-over.

CORPORAL
What is that you're holding?

Their words print out on the screen.

SENNA
It's a translator. I'm deaf.

CORPORAL

Interesting. Do you have an appointment?

Senna checks the translator again.

SENNA

No, but it's an emergency. Tell him it's Captain Senna Savine.

A flash of recognition passes over the Corporal's face. They shrug. Press an intercom button built into the desk.

CORPORAL

Sir, Senna Savine is here to see you.

FERNALL (MUFFLED V.O.)

Senna Savine? What the--

CORPORAL

She doesn't have an appointment.

The door to the inner office opens. COMMANDANT FERNALL (50's), tall, rugged human, steps out and stares at Senna with a mixture of warmth and concern.

FERNALL

It's really you.

Senna checks her translator and cracks a smile.

SENNA

It's me.

Fernall waves her toward his office.

FERNALL

I can give you five minutes.
Corporal, hold my calls.

CORPORAL

Yes, Sir.

Senna follows Fernall into the office.

INT. COMMANDANT'S OFFICE - DAY

Senna takes a seat in a guest chair while Fernall settles into a cushy chair behind his large alien wood desk.

Various exotic alien weapons hang on the walls, alongside holographic photos of Fernall with fellow soldiers and galactic dignitaries.

Senna lays her translator on the desk in front of her. Throughout the conversation she glances at it each time Fernall speaks.

Fernall takes note of this. He speaks slowly and clearly for her benefit.

FERNALL

Senna, if you think coming here in person is going to change our decision not to reinstate you--

SENNNA

Not why I'm here.

Fernall raises an eyebrow in surprise.

FERNALL

Then to what do I owe the pleasure?

SENNNA

Mak Dorton.

Fernall shifts uncomfortably in his chair.

FERNALL

What about him?

SENNNA

He was on Krakor a few hours ago.
Kidnapped some friends of mine.

FERNALL

Yeah, heard about that. Heard a civilian was injured too.

Senna grits her teeth. Tries to stay calm.

SENNNA

She'll be okay. What intel can you give me?

FERNALL

Officially nothing. You're no longer in the Corps, remember?

Senna jumps to her feet and pounds her fist on Fernall's desk.

SENNA

Don't give me that bulldrake, Sir!
You know I can still do this. You
know I have to go after him.

Fernall stares up at her icily.

FERNALL

At ease, soldier.

Senna sits back down. Glares at him. Fernall returns her glare for a moment, thinking. Then he breaks into a sardonic smile.

FERNALL (CONT'D)

High brass might think I'm crazy
for what I'm about to do. But
they're all over me to get this
wrapped up as quickly and quietly
as possible. And nobody knows
Dorton like you do. Or has more
motivation.

SENNA

Damned right.

FERNALL

This information is highly
classified. Understand?

Senna nods.

Fernall leans over. Punches some buttons on his desk. A holoscreen pops up in the air between them.

Fernall touches and swipes some data on the holoscreen. Brings up a photo of a small, glowing, multicolored sphere.

FERNALL (CONT'D)

Recently some scientists on Beta
Three developed a prototype for a
new hyperdrive power source. More
efficient, far greater range.
Could revolutionize space travel,
both civilian and military.

SENNA

Hopping galaxies?

FERNALL

Potentially. Yesterday we got word
that Dorton and his mercenary crew
stole it. Killed everyone onsite.

Senna shakes her head.

SENNA
That greedy bastard.

FERNALL
It's too dangerous to put up for auction, so we figure he's already got a buyer. But we don't know who. Or where the deal will take place.

SENNA
Any leads at all?

FERNALL
Been trying to coordinate with Galactic Intelligence, but you know how bureaucratic they are. And we're gearing up for a major new offensive against the Corredians, so I haven't been able to spare anyone.

SENNA
Sounds like you could use me.

Fernall smirks.

FERNALL
Assuming dishwashing hasn't dulled your skills.

Senna grins.

SENNA
Want to test me?

FERNALL
No time. Your mission will be to retrieve the power source. And arrest Dorton and his crew.

SENNA
What if I can't take them alive?

FERNALL
I leave that to your discretion.

Senna and Fernall lock eyes. Senna gives a little nod.

SENNA
I'm also gonna do everything I can to keep my friends safe.

FERNALL
Assuming they're not already dead.

Long pause.

SENNNA
They better not be.

Fernall gets out of his chair. Senna picks up her translator and stands too. Fernall steps around the desk.

FERNALL
We couldn't get a fix on where
Dorton was headed after he escaped
Krakor.

SENNNA
I have an idea where to start.

FERNALL
Senna, remember. We can't afford
to let this power source fall into
the wrong hands.

SENNNA
Roger that.

FERNALL
If you retrieve it... I guarantee
I'll get you reinstated.

SENNNA
Thank you, Sir.

FERNALL
But for this mission to succeed, I
think you need some help.

SENNNA
What kind of help?

FERNALL
Someone to go with you. Be your
ears and watch your six.

Senna considers this. Heaves a reluctant sigh.

SENNNA
Makes sense. But he better be
good.

Fernall smiles.

FERNALL
She is.

INT. SHOOTING RANGE - DAY

A large indoor shooting range. SOLDIERS of various species and genders practice in divided booths, firing large and small laser guns at metal targets.

In one booth stands LIEUTENANT HELYNA DANZ (late-20s), fierce, athletic brown-skinned alien female. She blasts away at her target with a hand pistol, hitting the center every time.

Fernall and Senna enter the range. Fernall leads her to Helyna's booth. Fernall shouts over the din of laser fire.

FERNALL
Lieutenant Danz!

Helyna turns. Snaps to attention and gives a perfect, rigid military salute.

HELYNA
Commandant, Sir!

FERNALL
At ease, Lieutenant.

Helyna relaxes into her stance.

FERNALL (CONT'D)
I have an urgent special mission
for you. Top secret. Understand?

HELYNA
Sir, yes Sir!

Fernall indicates Senna.

FERNALL
You'll accompany this officer and
take orders from her. She'll brief
you on the details en route.

Helyna takes in Senna with a quick glance. Can't hide her slight confusion and disdain at Senna's slightly outdated uniform and translator, which she's using to follow the conversation.

FERNALL (CONT'D)
You'll be going into a highly
sensitive and dangerous situation.
(MORE)

FERNALL (CONT'D)
I expect you to take care of each
other.

HELYNA
Sir, may I ask this... officer's
name and rank?

Senna sees the translation of Helyna's question. Smiles.
Snaps to attention and salutes her.

SENNNA
Captain Senna Savine. At your
service.

Helyna's eyes go wide.

HELYNA
Captain Savine? It's an honor,
Ma'am. Didn't know you were back.

Helyna turns her attention to Fernall.

HELYNA (CONT'D)
I'll protect the Captain with my
life, Sir.

FERNALL
I know you will. Soldiers... good
luck.

Fernall salutes. The two women return the salute. Fernall
hurries away.

Senna and Helyna study each other for a minute.

SENNNA
To answer your question... yes, I'm
deaf.

HELYNA
The translator was kind of a
giveaway.

SENNNA
I know some sign language and can
read lips to a certain extent. But
I'll need you to help me
communicate. And more important,
to listen.

HELYNA
Roger that. Be your ears.

SENNA
And have my back.

Senna glances over at Helyna's target with its numerous bulls-eye hits.

SENNA (CONT'D)
I see you can shoot. How are you
at hand-to-hand combat?

HELYNA
First in my class.

Senna smiles.

SENNA
Me too.

HELYNA
I know. Don't worry, Captain. You
can rely on me.

SENNA
Every second counts on this
mission. Let's go.

The two women march out of the range.

INT. MAK'S SHIP/GALLEY

Azer and Grunta sit around a small table inside the cramped galley section of the ship. Elar cooks two larptoburgers in a pan on the electric stove.

Fayeth's slumped on the floor in a nearby corner. Glaring at Azer, who can't take his eyes off her as he nurses a drink.

Meanwhile, Grunta keeps looking at the strange lock box, which now sits on the table next to him. Fayeth takes note of his intense interest.

Elar scoops the steaming patties from the pan with a makeshift spatula and deposits them onto two metal plates. Sets them in front of Azer and Grunta.

Azer glances at Elar.

AZER
Better be as good as advertised.

Elar gives him a wan smile. Azer and Grunta dig in.

Fayeth signs to Elar.

FAYETH
Your cooking won't keep us alive.

ELAR
*It will until we think of
something.*

Azer watches this exchange.

AZER
What are you two doing?

ELAR
My daughter's deaf. We use sign
language to communicate.

Azer's gaze shifts back to Fayeth.

AZER
It's very pretty to look at.

ELAR
Yes, it can be very elegant.

Azer chuckles. Resumes eating.

Grunta finishes wolfing down his burger. Satisfied BURP.

GRUNTA
Really good.

ELAR
Thanks.

Grunta clumsily punches in a code on the box's keypad.
Fayeth watches him intently.

The box unlocks. Grunta opens it.

AZER
Shouldn't do that, Grunta.

GRUNTA
Just wanna look at it.

Grunta takes out the multifaceted sphere, which gives off a pulsating blue glow. He stares at it like a child.

GRUNTA (CONT'D)
It's pretty.

Fayeth also checks out the sphere, but with more scientific curiosity than fascination.

Elar cleans the frying pan in a nearby sink. Fayeth slaps the floor to get his attention. Signs frantically once he turns to her.

FAYETH

That's an energy sphere. Could be a new weapon. Or something to power a hyperdrive.

ELAR

Whatever it is, it's none of our business.

FAYETH

If we steal it, we'll have leverage.

ELAR

Don't even think about it. We need to be very careful.

AZER

What are you two talking about now?

Elar fakes a laugh.

ELAR

Just about how we ended up in this crazy situation.

Grunta keeps playing with the sphere, turning it over and staring at it, making a soft purring sound. When he accidentally presses one of the facets, it briefly glows a different color.

Azer finishes his burger. Wipes his mouth with his sleeve. Stands up.

AZER

Well I for one am glad you're here.
Mak was right, that was a drackin'
good larptoburger.

ELAR

Thank you.

Azer steps over to Fayeth. Looks down at her with a sinister grin on his face.

AZER

And this cute little thing sure brightens up our ship.

Elar grows concerned. Slides himself between them.

ELAR

Please leave my daughter alone.

AZER

And if I don't?

ELAR

Your boss promised we'd be safe.
At least for now.

AZER

He's not exactly my boss.

Fayeth jumps to her feet. Stares defiantly at Azer from behind Elar. Balls her fists.

ELAR

Please. We don't want any trouble.

Grunta pulls his attention away from the sphere to watch the tense scene unfolding. He belts out a hearty laugh.

GRUNTA

Azer's horny!

AZER

Shut up, Grunta!

At that moment, Mak enters the galley. Quickly sizes up the situation.

MAK

Azer! Leave them alone. And
Grunta, put that thing away! You
could blow us all to hell.

Azer gives Elar a sly grin. Leans closer to him.

AZER

(softly)

Can't protect her forever.

Elar puts his arm around Fayeth. Glares at Azer.

Mak storms over to the table. Snatches the sphere from Grunta and sticks it back into the box.

MAK

The buyer said we have to change
our drop point. Too much heat on
us right now after Krakor.

Azer turns and steps back over to Mak.

AZER

Where are we going then?

Mak re-locks the box with the keycode, which Fayeth pays close attention to. Picks it up and puts it under his arm.

MAK

I put in new coordinates. Go check 'em and figure out the safest route. Avoid as much traffic as you can.

AZER

I've been thinking... Boss. Why don't we just keep that thing for ourselves? We could expand our territory. And our client base. Make a lot of money.

MAK

Forget it, Azer. Too risky. Plus with our take on this deal, I can finally retire.

AZER

What about the rest of us?

MAK

Do what you want with your share. But I've been working toward this my whole life. And I'm not letting anything... or anyone... stop me.

AZER

Gotcha... Boss.

Azer stalks out.

Mak turns and looks at Elar, shaking his head.

MAK

Hard to get good help sometimes, you know?

ELAR

Just keep your promise, please.

MAK

I'll do what I can. But Azer's the best pilot around. Can't afford to piss him off.

Mak saunters out. Grunta BURPS again.

GRUNTA
Want another burger!

Elar and Fayeth share a worried look. Elar goes back to the stove to cook another burger.

Fayeth sits down on the floor, lost in thought.

EXT. OUTER SPACE/HYPERSPACE

Senna's ship SCREAMS through hyperspace, stars and planets flying by in a dizzying light show.

INT. SENNA'S SHIP/COCKPIT/CO-PILOT SEAT

Senna grips the controls and takes deep breaths. Still trying to adjust to the sensations of hyperdrive.

Behind her, in the co-pilot seat, Helyna watches the scene in rapt awe with a grin on her face. Both of them wear utilitarian civilian clothing.

HELYNA
Never get tired of this. So beautiful.

Senna sees Helyna's words on her display screen.

SENNA
Wish it felt as nice as it looks.

HELYNA
Hearing loss causing issues?

SENNA
Yeah. But getting used to it.

HELYNA
Never thought about that. Must be hard.

SENNA
Been three years. Still...
adjusting.

HELYNA
Couldn't the docs fix your hearing?

SENNA
They tried. Nerves were too badly damaged and both eardrums were blown out. Nothing they could do.

HELYNA

What about hearing devices?

SENNA

They need something in your head to work with. I've got nothing left.

Helyna shakes her head.

HELYNA

I can see why you want that bastard Dorton so bad.

Senna says nothing, but her face is grim.

HELYNA (CONT'D)

You mentioned there may be hostages in play?

Senna's face softens.

SENNA

Unfortunately.

HELYNA

Civilians or military?

SENNA

Civilian. Elar and Fayeth.

HELYNA

You know them?

Senna rubs the dog tags underneath her uniform shirt.

SENNA

They're my fa-- um, friends. Father and daughter.

HELYNA

How'd you meet them?

SENNA

My therapist recommended I learn sign language. Fayeth's a great tutor, even though she's only seventeen. And her dad's...

Helyna senses Senna's fondness toward them.

HELYNA

They sound nice.

SENNA

I started helping out at their
diner to repay them for the
lessons. Fayeth also wanted to
learn how to defend herself.

(pause)

Felt good to keep busy.

HELYNA

I'm sure.

Senna's face grows dark.

SENNA

I should've been there when Mak
showed up.

HELYNA

Don't blame yourself, Captain. And
don't worry. We'll save them.

Senna again rubs the dog tags under her shirt. A determined
look on her face.

EXT. CARILLON

Senna's ship swoops down into the thick, cloudy atmosphere of
the planet Carillon. It soars over a lush landscape, heading
toward an impressive city in the distance.

SUPER: PLANET CARILLON, FIFTH OCTANT - A PLEASURE PLANET

EXT. CARILLON CITY/LANDING PAD - EVENING

Senna sets her ship down on a landing pad at the edge of the
city. She and Helyna disembark. Both have laser pistols and
extendable bo staffs strapped to their hips. Senna holds her
portable translator.

An officious-looking ROBOT GREETER rolls toward them.

ROBOT GREETER

Welcome to Carillon City. There is
a fifty mechacredit landing fee--

SENNA

Here.

Senna tosses the Robot Greeter six large hexagonal coins. It
manages to secure them after a bit of fumbling. Looks at the
coins.

ROBOT GREETER
This is more than necessary.

SENNA
Where do the mercs hang out?

ROBOT GREETER
I'm afraid I don't quite
understand.

Before Senna can check her translator, Helyna whips out her pistol. Points it at the Robot Greeter's head.

HELYNA
How about now?

ROBOT GREETER
No need for violence. The most
popular gathering spot for carbon-
based lifeforms is Rudaker's.
About three hundred meters that
way.

The Robot Greeter points down a busy thoroughfare leading from the spaceport. Senna sees what he said and nods. Helyna holsters her pistol.

HELYNA
Thanks.

EXT. CARRILON CITY/STREET - EVENING

Senna and Helyna walk close together down a crowded street, surrounded by tall, elegant buildings and ALIENS of all shapes, sizes and species.

Senna discreetly holds her translator. Helyna leans over and speaks softly.

HELYNA
What's the plan?

Senna checks her readout.

SENNA
Try this Rudaker's place. See if
we can find anyone familiar.

HELYNA
Gotta be honest, I don't have too
much field experience. Doubt I'll
know anyone.

SENNA
Don't worry. Just watch my back.

HELYNA
Always.

They spot a large bar/restaurant-type building on the other side of the street. A glowing sign alternates between alien languages, finally showing it as "Rudaker's."

Senna and Helyna cross the street, dodging several strange vehicles, and enter the popular establishment.

INT. RUDAKER'S - EVENING

The place is packed with the dinnertime crowd. A hulking ALIEN BOUNCER stands behind a large counter just inside the door. He speaks in a rumbling deep voice.

ALIEN BOUNCER
No weapons.

He holds out a three-fingered hand. Senna and Helyna give him their pistols. The Bouncer hands them each a metal token.

Helyna starts to take off her bo but Senna grabs her hand to stop her.

SENNA
Come on, honey.

Helyna chuckles as Senna leads her to the crowded bar. They squeeze into a small gap among the BAR PATRONS.

The chubby six-armed ALIEN BARTENDER notices them. Waddles over.

ALIEN BARTENDER
What'll you ladies have?

SENNA
Glenficken.

HELYNA
I'll take a Gordaggian Ale.

ALIEN BARTENDER
Comin' right up.

Senna turns and scans the crowded room.

SENNA'S POV

Silence. She checks out the eaters, the revelers. A couple of young HUMANOID LOVERS in a nearby booth.

BACK TO SCENE

The Alien Bartender returns with their drinks. Helyna taps Senna on the shoulder. She turns back around as the Alien Bartender starts to leave.

SENNA

Hey!

The Bartender stops. Stares down at her.

SENNA (CONT'D)

We got a job for someone. Anybody worth knowing here tonight?

The Alien Bartender glances around the room. Gives his version of a smile.

ALIEN BARTENDER

Talk to Lerrick. He'd be your best bet.

The Bartender points to a far corner of the restaurant. Senna clocks where he's pointing as she sees what he said, then turns back. Nods.

The Bartender ambles away. Helyna leans in. Speaks softly.

HELYNA

You know this Lerrick?

Senna smiles at reading Helyna's words.

SENNA

Oh yeah.

HELYNA

He ex-military like Dorton?

SENNA

Worse. Ex-politician.

Helyna chuckles. They quickly down their drinks. Leave the bar and thread their way through the restaurant.

They come to an isolated corner where LARRICK QUEZNAR (50s), a dark-skinned human male with mechanically augmented limbs and an implanted earpiece, sits with two gorgeous ALIEN WOMEN and a large, muscled reptilian REPSKAR BODYGUARD.

Lerrick keeps his attention on the Women. Thinks Senna and Helyna are a couple of servers.

LARRICK

Another round of grogmead, please.

Senna checks her translator. Does this each time Lerrick speaks.

SENNA

We're not the staff, Lerrick.

Lerrick looks up at them. His eyes widen in recognition.

LARRICK

Captain Senna Savine! By the gods, I thought you were dead.

SENNA

Nope. Still kicking.

Lerrick notices her translator. Points to it.

LARRICK

What is that?

HELYNA

Translator. Her hearing's not the best.

LARRICK

Interesting. And who might you be? I can tell you're a Marine.

SENNA

She's my partner. That's all you need to know.

Senna indicates Lerrick's arms.

SENNA (CONT'D)

I see you've gotten some upgrades since I last saw you.

Lerrick grins.

LARRICK

In my business, it's good to be prepared. And fortunately business has been pretty good.

He takes a long sip of his drink.

LARRICK (CONT'D)

Well, I have to say I'm glad you're alive. I've never forgotten what you and your team did for me during that fracas on Histalion.

SENNA

Great. Then you won't mind me asking you for a favor.

LARRICK

Of course not, my dear. Sit down, let's chat.

SENNA

No time. I'm sure you know Mak Dorton's got a big deal brewing.

Lerrick leans back in his seat. Narrows his eyes.

LARRICK

And exactly why would I know such a thing?

SENNA

News in the merc world travels fast.

Lerrick shrugs.

LARRICK

That is true.

SENNA

Got any idea where he's making his drop?

Lerrick shakes his head. Lets out a snide laugh.

LARRICK

Hah! Even if I had that information, I'm sure it would be way beyond your price range.

Senna smiles.

SENNA

I figured you'd tell me out of the kindness of your heart.

LARRICK

And here I thought you knew me.

Helyna takes a step forward.

HELYNA

There are innocent lives at stake,
merc scum. If you know something,
tell us.

LARRICK

My, aren't you the gung-ho one?

SENNNA

Come on, Lerrick. You said
yourself you owe me.

LARRICK

I owed your team, Captain. And
that debt's been paid. Several
times over, as a matter of fact.

Senna glares at Lerrick.

SENNNA

I bet part of that payment was
helping Dorton arrange the buyer.

LARRICK

That, my dear, is none of your
business. And this inquisition
bores me.

Lerrick snaps his fingers at the Repskar Bodyguard.

LARRICK (CONT'D)

Frud, escort these ladies away.

The Repskar Bodyguard stands. Hisses menacingly.

Senna shakes her head.

SENNNA

You never did like to do things the
easy way, Lerrick.

Senna sets her translator down on the table.

With lightning speed, she pulls out her bo staff, extends it,
and jams it into a spot in the Repskar Bodyguard's neck. It
wheezes, trying to catch its breath.

Senna slams a kick into the Bodyguard's lower mid-section.
It doubles over in pain. Senna whacks it on the head with
her staff. The Repskar Bodyguard hits the floor face-down,
out like a light.

Senna turns back to Lerrick, who's mildly impressed.

LARRICK
Still have your skills, I see.

SENNA
Just tell us where the drop is.

LARRICK
I think not.

Lerrick WHISTLES and gestures to a nearby table. Four more REPSKAR BODYGUARDS stand and advance toward them, hissing and growling.

Senna drops into a martial arts stance, readying her bo staff. Helyna prepares her bo to fight as well.

SENNA
Ever fight Repskars before?

Helyna shakes her head "no."

SENNA (CONT'D)
Watch out for their--

At that moment, the nearest Repskar Bodyguard lashes out its tongue like a chameleon. Grabs Helyna by the wrist. Tosses her into a nearby table, scattering its PATRONS and dishes. Her bo staff goes flying across the room.

Another Repskar tries the same tactic with Senna. She dodges it. Rolls to the floor. Jumps up, swinging her bo staff. Connects hard with the Repskar's head.

Helyna quickly recovers as other nearby PATRONS scramble away from the fight. The first Repskar shoots its tongue out again.

This time Helyna grabs it. Yanks the Repskar toward her. Slams her knee into its lower midsection then head-butts it.

The Repskar drops to its knees. Helyna whirls and delivers a flying kick right to its nose. One down.

Lerrick watches the fight, amused. He whispers to the two Women beside him, both of whom giggle in awe.

Senna finishes off the second Repskar with her bo staff, slamming it several times in the head.

She doesn't hear the third Repskar sneak up behind her. It locks her in a bearhug and lifts her off the floor, causing her to drop her staff.

The Repskar HISSES as it tries to squeeze the life out of Senna. She fights like a maniac, kicking back and trying to wriggle out of the hold.

Helyna sees that Senna's in trouble. But she gets engaged with the last Repskar before she can help, dodging its tongue and sharp claws.

Senna does a backwards head-butt. The Repskar HISSES in pain. Its body slams Senna face-first down onto Lerrick's table, smashing it in two.

She's dazed, but still tries to fight back as the Repskar scrambles to its feet, keeping her in its iron grip.

Helyna rolls to the floor and grabs Senna's bo staff. She comes up swinging and connects with the last Repskar, stunning it.

Wielding it expertly, Helyna delivers several more blows to the last Repskar, knocking it out.

Senna grows weaker, still locked in the Repskar's crushing embrace. She's about to pass out.

WHAM! Helyna slams the bo staff on the back of the Repskar's head. It releases Senna, who slumps to the floor. Turns to face Helyna.

The Repskar shoots its tongue out. Locks it onto the bo staff and tries to yank it away from Helyna.

But Helyna hangs on. She uses the Repskar's own tongue momentum to jam the bo staff into its mouth. The Repskar HISSES, and green blood flows from its mouth.

Still holding the staff, Helyna twists and delivers a hard sweeping kick to the Repskar's legs, knocking it to the floor.

The Repskar releases the bo staff from its tongue. Helyna twirls it and smashes it down into the Repskar's stomach, then cracks the Repskar's head with it, ending the fight.

Helyna rushes over to help Senna to her feet. Senna tries to catch her breath and shake out the cobwebs. Takes her bo back from Helyna.

Lerrick does a slow clap.

LARRICK

What an excellent show! Best entertainment I've seen here in years.

(MORE)

LARRICK (CONT'D)
You ladies should apply for a job.
I'm sure it would pay more than the
Marines.

Senna's head clears. She stares daggers at Lerrick. Clicks another button on her bo. A small triangular blade flicks out from one end. She jams it against Lerrick's neck.

SENNA
Listen to me, you scum-sucking
herfknocker. Tell me what you know
before I bleed you dry.

The two Women who've been watching all this with Lerrick quickly slide away. Helyna keeps an eye out for any further attacks.

Lerrick sighs.

LARRICK
Oh, very well. But it won't do you
any good.
(sighs)
The drop was supposed to take place
on Melstar. But after Mak's dustup
on Krakor, which I believe you were
involved in, the buyer got worried.
So Mak changed it. And I honestly
don't know to where.

Senna's been watching Lerrick's lips, struggling to read them. Still unsure, she turns her head to Helyna. Helyna shakes her head and mouths "He doesn't know."

Senna turns back to Lerrick. Stares into his eyes. Trying to figure out if he's telling the truth.

Lerrick just looks up at her placidly. Senna pulls back her bo and retracts it, along with the blade. Re-holsters it on her belt.

SENNA
Could've just told us that to begin
with.

LARRICK
And miss all this fun?

Senna glances down. Sees her translator smashed on the floor. Simmers. Kicks the broken translator away.

Three ALIEN PATROLMEN rush into the restaurant. The Bartender points them toward Helyna and Senna.

Helyna pulls out a clear plastic card with the Galactic Marine insignia. Holds it up as the Patrolmen approach, raising her other hand as well.

HELYNA
Official Galactic Marine business.

The Patrolmen stop. Look at each other, wondering what they should do.

Senna glares at Lerrick one more time.

SENNA
Always a pleasure, Lerrick.

She turns and storms toward the Patrolmen. Gestures back at Lerrick.

SENNA (CONT'D)
He'll pay for the damages.

Helyna falls in line behind her. Grabs up her bo staff from the floor, retracts it and replaces it on her hip.

Lerrick chuckles as he watches Senna and Helyna retrieve their guns at the door and hurry out of the restaurant. Then he clicks his earpiece. Speaks softly.

LARRICK
It's Lerrick Queznar. Got a quick job for you.

EXT/INT. LANDING PAD/SENNA'S SHIP - NIGHT

Senna and Helyna walk briskly toward the ship. Senna looks very troubled.

As they reach the ship, Helyna stops Senna. Tries to mouth her words slowly and clearly.

HELYNA
Sorry about your translator.

SENNA
Let's talk on the ship.

The two women climb into the cockpits and settle in. Senna turns on the electronics so she can see what Helyna is saying.

HELYNA
What do we do now?

Senna trembles with anger and frustration. She bangs her fist against the cockpit wall.

SENNA

That fraggin' Repskar got the drop on me because I couldn't hear him. I might've died if it wasn't for you.

HELYNA

That's why I'm here, Captain. To watch your back.

Senna closes her eyes. Takes a deep breath.

SENNA

Maybe they're right. I'm not fit to be a Marine anymore.

HELYNA

The hell you're not. You took out two of those Repskars on your own and showed me how to fight them.

(pause)

Besides, who's gonna save your friends? Fernall only cares about getting that sphere back.

Senna shakes her head. Gives a little smile.

SENNA

You're right. We've got to figure out where Mak's going.

HELYNA

How? It's a big galaxy. The drop could be anywhere.

SENNA

Not really. If I know Mak, he'll pick someplace out of the way, but that he's familiar with.

HELYNA

The original location was Melstar. Probably wouldn't want it to be too many jumps from there.

SENNA

Good point. The clock's ticking on them.

Senna punches up a star chart on her console. Zeroes in on a particular system.

SENNA (CONT'D)
Okay, there's Melstar.

She turns a dial to scan for other habitable planets in the sector. Helyna can see the chart as well.

HELYNA
Not much around there.

Senna gets an idea. Moves the chart to another system, not too far from Melstar.

SENNA
Duma.

HELYNA
What's Duma?

SENNA
Our best bet. Fits all our parameters. Mak and I had a mission there once. I remember him being really intrigued by the place. It's only a couple jumps from Melstar. And luckily, from us too.

HELYNA
What are we waiting for?

Senna grins. Fires up the ship's thrusters. Rubs the dog tags for luck.

SENNA
(softly)
I better be right.

EXT. LANDING PAD - NIGHT

Senna's ship lifts off and screams up into the night sky.

A moment later, a fancy transport vehicle pulls up to the empty landing pad. Lerrick gets out, along with his five battered and bruised Repskar Bodyguards.

The Robot Greeter rolls up to them.

LARRICK
Did you secure the homer on their ship?

ROBOT GREETER
No trouble at all, your Excellency.

Lerrick hands the Greeter several coins.

LARRICK
They didn't notice anything?

ROBOT GREETER
Of course not. My work is
impeccable.

LARRICK
Better be. Thanks for the quick
assist.

ROBOT GREETER
Always happy to do business with
you, your Excellency.

Lerrick turns to the Bodyguards.

LARRICK
All right boys. This could be our
biggest payday ever. Better not
fleg it up.

The Repskars grunt and hiss. Lerrick leads them to an opulent spaceship parked at a nearby landing pad.

INT. MAK'S SHIP/HOLDING AREA

Elar and Fayeth sit huddled together in the cargo area. The box containing the sphere lies strapped into a corner opposite them. Fayeth glances at it occasionally.

Mak hurries out of the cockpit. Steps over to them.

MAK
We got time for one more meal. Get
in there and make it quick.

Elar sighs. Stands.

ELAR
Yes, sir.

Fayeth glares up at Mak. Signs furiously to Elar.

FAYETH
*Why are you just following orders
like a mildork?*

Mak looks at Fayeth. Projects his thoughts to her.

MAK (V.O.)
Calm down, kid. Let your dad do
his job.

Fayeth sneers at Mak. Signs to Elar.

FAYETH
*Put some poison in their food or
something.*

Elar shakes his head "no."

MAK
What's she saying?

Elar hesitates.

ELAR
She's wondering how much longer
we'll be your prisoners.

Mak gives a snide chuckle.

MAK
Right. Look, if we're lucky, just
a couple more hours. Depends on
how smoothly our deal goes.

ELAR
You'll let us go if everything
happens as planned?

MAK
That's the idea.

ELAR
How will we get home?

MAK
Not my problem.

Mak starts back toward the cockpit.

ELAR
And if it doesn't go well?

MAK
Then your guess is as good as mine.

Mak exits. Elar gestures for Fayeth to follow him to the kitchen area.

Fayeth hesitates.

FAYETH

I have to go to the bathroom.

ELAR

Okay, I'll wait for you.

Fayeth shakes her head.

FAYETH

No, I'll be fine. Go ahead. I'll be there in a minute.

Elar hesitates, then nods and heads off into the kitchen area. Fayeth glances around furtively.

She dashes over to the locked box. Squeezes her hand between the box and the strap and manages to type in the code.

She opens the box. Takes out the sphere and quickly stuffs it into her backpack. Removes a small metal-bound book from her backpack and sets it inside the box. Closes and re-locks it. Runs off toward the galley.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. DUMA/LANDING AREA - NIGHT

Mak's ship touches down in an open area outside a gigantic industrial facility. The facility resembles a high-tech oil refinery, with lots of lights, belching pipes and machinery.

SUPER: PLANET DUMA, SIXTH OCTANT

INT. MAK'S SHIP/GALLEY - NIGHT

Grunta and Lastor finish their larptoburgers. Elar cleans up while Fayeth sits on the floor, watching everything. Her backpack lies next to her.

Mak and Azer enter. Mak carries the lockbox.

MAK

Okay, buyer said they're about five minutes out. Lastor, Grunta and I will head to the drop location. Azer, you stay here with the cook and the kid. Keep the ship prepped in case things go sideways.

AZER

Anything you say... Boss.

MAK

Cut the attitude, Azer. Gettin' on
my nerves.

Azer chuckles. Grunta and Lastor get up to join Mak. Mak looks over at Fayeth.

MAK (V.O.)

It's all gonna be over soon, kid.
Be smart and don't give Azer any
trouble.

Fayeth smiles and nods sweetly.

ELAR

Hope everything goes well. For all
our sakes.

MAK

You and me both.

Mak, Grunta and Lastor leave. Azer grabs a bottle of something out of a nearby cooling unit. Plops down at the table. Stares intently at Fayeth.

AZER

So. Just the three of us for a little while, huh? Wonder what we can do to pass the time.

Elar finishes cleaning the cooking pan, leaving it in the sink. He steps over to Fayeth while shooting a worried look at Azer.

ELAR

Mak said to keep the ship ready.
Shouldn't you be focused on that?

AZER

Trust me. It's ready. Take about five seconds to get us in the air.
So just relax.

Azer takes a long swig on his bottle.

EXT. DUMA/LANDING AREA - NIGHT

Mak, Grunta and Lastor exit the ship and close the landing ramp. They head toward the industrial facility.

LASTOR

How will the buyer find us in
there?

MAK

Soon as we get to the location,
I'll activate a homer.

LASTOR

Won't that attract attention?

MAK

Shouldn't be there long enough to
cause problems.

LASTOR

Better be right.

Grunta's transfixed by the lights blinking and shining all over the giant facility.

GRUNTA

Lights are pretty!

Mak chuckles.

LASTOR

Why'd you pick this place anyway?

MAK

Not too many people know about it.
And it's got some advantages.

LASTOR

Like what?

MAK

Try firing your gun.

Lastor looks at Mak like he's crazy. He pulls out his laser pistol. Twirls it expertly. Fires at a metal storage bin nearby - THE LASER LIGHT SPUTTERS AND DIES.

LASTOR

[Alien expletive]

Grunta's stunned too. Mak laughs.

MAK

Lasers don't work here. Something about the atmosphere and magnetic fields.

Lastor re-holsters his pistol.

LASTOR

Cuts down on potential ambushes.

MAK

Exactly. And I like our chances in any hand-to-hand combat.

Grunta pounds his right fist into his palm.

GRUNTA

Grunta likes to fight.

Mak pats him on the shoulder.

MAK

Easy, big guy. Hopefully there won't be a need.

Grunta looks disappointed as they enter the giant facility.

INT. MAK'S SHIP/GALLEY

Azer takes another swig on his bottle. Elar now sits on the floor, holding his arm protectively around Fayeth.

Azer wipes his mouth. BURPS. Sets the bottle down. Leers at Fayeth.

AZER

I'm bored. I can think of a lot better things to do than babysit you two.

ELAR

You could let us go. Then you wouldn't have to babysit anymore.

Azer laughs.

ELAR (CONT'D)

I could make you a larptoburger.

AZER

Nah. I've got a better idea.

He stands. Stretches. Takes a step toward them.

AZER (CONT'D)

Haven't had a female in a long time. And you, little girl, are just too appetizing.

Elar jumps to his feet. Blocks Azer from getting to Fayeth.

ELAR

Please. We don't want any trouble.

AZER
Then get out of the way.

ELAR
I won't let you touch my daughter.

Azer looks Elar up and down.

AZER
I seriously doubt you can stop me.

Fayeth senses the tension. Scrambles to her feet. Ready for anything.

Azer juts out his chin at Elar.

AZER (CONT'D)
Come on. Take a shot. Let's see
what you can do.

Elar hesitates. Balls up his fist. Prepares to hit Azer as hard as he can.

But before he can do anything, Fayeth shoves him out of the way. She drops to the floor and performs a perfect sweep kick to Azer's legs, knocking him down.

Fayeth leaps up and drops onto Azer, driving her elbow into Azer's midsection. Azer GRUNTS in pain and surprise.

She then pounds her fist into Azer's groin area. He SCREAMS in agony and doubles over.

Fayeth jumps to her feet. Runs over and grabs the frying pan from the sink. WHACKS Azer's head with it several times as she SCREAMS.

Azer's out. Gray-green blood oozes from a wound on his head. Fayeth drops the pan and yanks his pistol from his belt. She picks up her backpack and throws it over her shoulders.

Elar's watched all this in stunned wonder. Fayeth gestures to him to "come on."

ELAR
Where did you learn all that?

Fayeth tucks the pistol under her arm so she can respond.

FAYETH
Senna taught me.

ELAR
(speaking)
Senna?

FAYETH
She's been giving me self-defense lessons.

Elar shakes his head.

ELAR
Why didn't you tell me?

Fayeth shrugs.

FAYETH
Let's get out of here.

EXT. LANDING AREA - NIGHT

Fayeth and Elar hurry down the landing ramp. Leave it open. Elar now has the pistol shoved into his belt.

They look around for a moment. Fayeth points to the industrial facility.

FAYETH
There should be communications equipment in there somewhere.

ELAR
What if Mak and his guys are in there too?

FAYETH
Then we'll avoid them. Come on.

They rush into the facility.

INT. SENNA'S SHIP - NIGHT

Senna pilots her ship into Duma's thick atmosphere. Studies her readouts intently.

HELYNA
Where should we start?

Her words print out on Senna's communications screen.

SENNA

Lot of atmospheric interference.
But I think we've got some lifeform
readings in Sector Four. Let's
take a look.

HELYNA

Roger that.

Helyna scans outside her cockpit window.

HELYNA (CONT'D)

Doesn't look like a very friendly
planet.

Senna thinks of something.

SENNA

Just remembered. There's another
reason Mak might have picked this
place.

HELYNA

What's that?

SENNA

Duma's atmosphere does weird things
to lasers. Makes them basically
inoperable.

HELYNA

That'll even the odds a bit.

SENNA

Hopefully in our favor.

Senna banks the ship hard, heading toward the main industrial center of the planet.

INT. INDUSTRIAL FACILITY - NIGHT

Mak, Lastor and Grunta stand in a large open area surrounded by loud machinery and industrial piping. The machines hum along, doing whatever it is they do.

Mak presses a button on his wrist gauntlet.

MAK

Okay, homer's active. Shouldn't take long for the buyer to find us.

He checks out their surroundings.

MAK (CONT'D)

Pretty amazing place. Rakonians built this facility. They have some of the most advanced technology in the galaxy.

LASTOR

Doesn't look that advanced. What does it do?

MAK

Mine and refine various minerals from around the planet. All automated. They provide raw materials for hundreds of worlds.

Grunta looks bored. He stalks around, looking at the lights on the machinery a little too closely.

MAK (CONT'D)

Grunta, don't touch anything. Can't afford to call attention to ourselves.

Grunta circles back to them. Annoyed.

LASTOR

Waiting is always the hardest part.

Mak chuckles.

ECHOES of heavy footsteps approach. Mak signals Lastor and Grunta to be alert.

From a nearby hallway, three figures emerge. The leader is JAYPEC (50s), a tall, muscular, distinguished white-skinned Calpurnian male with fleshy horns protruding from his head. He holds a strange, fancy walking stick.

Jaypec is flanked by two Bodyguards of the same race, one male (KARLEC, 30s), one female (SORICCA, 20s), both big and athletic, wearing body armor. Each have twin laser pistols holstered around their hips and alien swords strapped to their backs.

JAYPEC

Mak Dorton. At last we meet.

MAK

Your reputation precedes you, Jaypec.

JAYPEC

As does yours.

Lastor's a bit in awe. Grunta has no idea who this guy is.

JAYPEC (CONT'D)
You have the item?

Mak pats the lockbox he's holding.

MAK
Right here.

JAYPEC
Then let's not waste time. Show it
to me, and I'll transfer the money
to your account.

MAK
Of course.

Mak sets the lockbox on the floor. Kneels down. Punches in
the combination. Opens it.

His face falls.

MAK (CONT'D)
Drack.

Jaypec steps over. Sees the metallic book in the box. His
horns twitch as he tries to hide his fury.

JAYPEC
Thought you were reliable, Dorton.

Mak stands up.

MAK
I'm sure it's an honest--

Jaypec's bodyguards whip out their laser pistols. Aim them
at Mak and his crew.

Mak stays calm. Raises his palms.

MAK (CONT'D)
Let's not overreact. For starters,
your guns won't work here, so you
might as well put 'em back.

Jaypec eyes him icily.

JAYPEC
See if he's telling the truth,
Karlec. Shoot the big one.

Karlec turns and fires at Grunta. The laser fizzles out, never reaching its target. Grunta laughs.

GRUNTA
Can't hurt Grunta!

Jaypec signals his Bodyguards. They re-holster their weapons.

JAYPEC
You know we don't have much time,
Dorton. Where's--

At that moment Azer staggers in, still bleeding and a bit groggy.

MAK
Azer! What happened?

AZER
Little bitch... and her Dad...
ambushed me. Knocked me out.
They're gone.

Mak puts two and two together.

MAK
They've got the item. But they
can't have gone far.

He thinks for a moment.

MAK (CONT'D)
First thing they'll do is try to
contact the Marines or someone
else. Let's find the
communications center.

JAYPEC
You should turn off your homer so
as not to attract any outside
parties.

MAK
Good point.

He turns off the homer on his wrist gauntlet.

MAK (CONT'D)
Let's go.

Mak leads everyone down a connecting hallway.

INT. INDUSTRIAL FACILITY/COMMUNICATIONS CENTER - NIGHT

Elar and Fayeth breathlessly rush into a large, gleaming room filled with consoles and instrument panels. At the center of the room is a large desk with a communications array.

Elar looks around at the amazing technology.

ELAR

I can't believe we found it.

Fayeth looks at him. Signs "what?"

ELAR (CONT'D)

How did you know where to go?

FAYETH

Figured it would be at the center of the facility. Just made sense.

Elar smiles and shakes his head.

ELAR

Sometimes you're too smart for me.

Fayeth grins. Runs over to the communications array. She looks over the various buttons, dials and readouts. Turns back to Elar.

FAYETH

Do you know how to work this?

Elar stares at the equipment, totally puzzled.

ELAR

Of course not. I haven't worked outside a kitchen in almost twenty years.

Fayeth shoots him an exasperated look. Goes back to studying the array.

Slowly the buttons and dials start to make sense. She turns a couple of the dials. Pushes several buttons.

On one of the displays, the word "Message?" pops up above a small keyboard.

Fayeth types in "Mayday, Mayday. We are in trouble. Send help immediately to these coordinates."

She presses a large button next to the keyboard. On the screen, a new message appears below hers: "Message transmitting."

Fayeth breathes a sigh of relief. Turns and hugs Elar. He's still very amazed at his daughter.

EXT. INDUSTRIAL FACILITY - NIGHT

Senna's ship lands about fifty yards from Mak's ship.

INT. SENNA'S SHIP - NIGHT

Senna glares at Mak's ship as she prepares to shut down her cockpit.

SENNA

That's Mak's ship.

HELYNA

Looks like you were right. He's got to be in there somewhere.

Senna notices a flashing signal on her console beneath Helyna's response. She presses a button beneath the signal. Fayeth's message plays out on her cockpit readout. Senna's eyes go wide.

SENNA

That's them! They must've escaped somehow.

Helyna touches some controls on her wrist gauntlet.

HELYNA

I'll home in on that signal.

SENNA

Come on!

Senna opens her cockpit. Helyna quickly hits some more buttons on her console before opening her own.

EXT. INDUSTRIAL FACILITY - NIGHT

Senna and Helyna scramble out of the ship and race toward the facility.

INT. INDUSTRIAL FACILITY/COMMUNICATIONS CENTER - NIGHT

Elar paces around while Fayeth studies the various control panels and consoles. She notices a large rectangular red button on one wall, beneath some alien writing. Makes a mental note about it.

She also notices a number of metal panels embedded into the walls around the room. Shoots them a curious look.

Elar waves to get her attention.

ELAR

What if Mak and his crew get that message?

FAYETH

*We had to take that chance.
Hopefully help will come before
they find us. If not...*

She points at Azer's pistol in Elar's belt. Elar shakes his head.

ELAR

Did Senna teach you how to use this too?

Fayeth grins.

Elar hears noises and heavy FOOTSTEPS coming from the hallway outside. He signals "Hide!" to Fayeth. They rush to crawl under a large console facing away from the door.

Mak charges into the room, followed by his Crew, Jaypec, Karlec and Soricca. They all take a quick look around.

Mak calls out.

MAK

We know you're in here! And we know you have the device!

BENEATH CONSOLE

Elar's eyes go wide at hearing this. He frantically signs.

ELAR

You have their device?

Fayeth grins sheepishly.

COMMUNICATIONS CENTER

MAK

Come out with it quietly, and I might forgive you. But you're really starting to test my patience.

Mak scans the room intently.

BENEATH CONSOLE

Fayeth's eyes widen as she hear's Mak's voice in her head.

MAK (V.O.)
 Kid, your only chance of surviving
 this is to give me that device.
 Don't make me hurt you or your Dad.

Fayeth looks at Elar and sees how worried he is. She thinks for a moment. Then quietly opens her backpack and pulls out the glowing sphere.

ELAR
What are you doing?

Fayeth slowly mouths the following words.

FAYETH
 We've got to make a bargain.

She slides out from underneath the console. Elar scrambles to follow her.

COMMUNICATIONS CENTER

Fayeth stands and holds up the sphere. Mak and the others see her. Azer growls and starts toward her. Mak grabs him by the arm to hold him back.

Fayeth glares at Mak. Manages to speak the following with her voice in a heavy deaf accent.

FAYETH (CONT'D)
 We give this to you... you let us
 live.

Jaypec chuckles.

JAYPEC
 The young lady has courage.

MAK
 That she does.

He smiles at Fayeth.

MAK (V.O.)
 It's a deal. But try anything
 funny, and you're both dead.
 Understand?

Fayeth nods to him. She takes Elar's hand. Starts walking toward Mak.

At that moment, Lerrick and his five Repskar Bodyguards rush into the room, all with pistols drawn. Fayeth stops and looks at them, confused.

LARRICK

Hello, all. Nice of you to make this so easy for us.

Jaypec regards Lerrick as he would a bug. Mak shakes his head, frustrated.

MAK

Lerrick, what the frag are you doing?

LARRICK

What does it look like, Mak? I'm taking that sphere.

JAYPEC

The deuce you are. You're out of your league, Queznar.

LARRICK

You may be right, Jaypec. But if I can sell that thing to the right buyer, I'll be in a league you've only dreamed of. Ruining your reputation will be a nice bonus, too.

JAYPEC

Dorton, ignore this mildork. Get me that sphere.

Mak takes a step toward Fayeth and Elar.

LARRICK

Boys!

The Repskars try to fire their pistols - of course, nothing happens. Fayeth and Elar note this with surprise.

Mak chuckles.

MAK

Your guns are worthless here, Lerrick.

LARRICK

Then we'll do this the old-fashioned way.

He gives a high-pitched whistle. The Repskars holster their weapons. Whip out big, serrated alien knives. Charge toward Mak and Fayeth, fangs bared.

Jaypec gestures at his two Bodyguards. They unsheathe their swords. Race to intercept two of the Repskars.

Grunta and Lastor quickly tangle with two more. The fifth one challenges Mak and Azer.

Lerrick attacks Jaypec, who deftly fends him off with some athletic defensive moves and his walking stick.

A brutal fight ensues between Lerrick and his Repskars, Jaypec and his Bodyguards, and Mak's Crew.

MAK
Azer! Get the sphere!

Mak pulls out a knife and engages the fifth Repskar while Azer goes after Elar and Fayeth.

Fayeth shoves the sphere back into her backpack. She and Elar scramble away from the action. Frantically look for a way to escape.

Fayeth spots a small open door at the side of the room. She points it out to Elar.

But before they can make a run for it, Azer leaps in front of them. Blocking the door. He slowly pulls out a wicked-looking knife.

AZER
Now I'm really gonna make you pay.

He advances menacingly.

Suddenly - WHAM! Senna's retracted bo staff flies in and cracks into Azer's skull, knocking him sideways.

Senna jumps up onto a nearby console. Hurdles over Fayeth and Elar. Snatches the bo out of the air and extends it with the blade. Lands between them and Azer, ready for battle.

Helyna, holding her own extended bo staff and blade, dodges and fights off the other combatants around the room. Trying to reach Senna and the others.

Azer shakes out the cobwebs. Glares at Senna.

AZER (CONT'D)
Who the frag are you?

Senna responds with an icy stare.

Azer attacks. Slashes at her with his knife. Senna blocks it easily with her bo. Elar and Fayeth back away, letting Senna and Azer battle.

Helyna struggles to reach them, but keeps getting blocked by fighting Repskars and other Alien combatants.

Jaypec and Lerrick continue their one-on-one battle. Lerrick lands a hard punch to Jaypec's head. Jaypec staggers back, stunned.

Lerrick leaps in. Wraps his mechanical hands around Jaypec's throat. Starts to choke him out.

LARRICK

I'm tired of scrounging in your shadow, Jaypec. Time for a new kingpin.

JAYPEC

(choking)
I think not.

Jaypec grabs Lerrick by the shoulders. Leans forward.

ZAP! Little electrical bolts from Jaypec's horns singe Lerrick's forehead. He lets go and jumps back. Tries to clear his head.

Jaypec pulls a sword out of his walking stick. Goes after Lerrick with it. Lerrick manages to fend Jaypec off with his mechanical arms. Helyna's barely able to avoid getting caught in the middle of their duel.

Lastor and Grunta fight viciously against their two Repskars. All of them get cut and bruised. Same with Jaypec's bodyguards and their Repskar foes.

Azer and Senna continue dueling, knife against bladed bo. Pretty evenly matched, each inflicts minor damage to the other.

Mak, still engaged in his own knife fight with the fifth Repskar, sees Senna protecting Elar and Fayeth. He's only mildly surprised.

Senna suddenly hears Mak's voice in her head.

MAK (V.O.)

Senna! Thought that might've been you on Krakor!

Hearing Mak's voice in her head surprises Senna. She lets her guard down for a moment. Azer kicks her in the stomach. Then slams his elbow against her temple.

Stunned, Senna drops her bo. Staggers back. Azer raises his knife. Goes in for the kill.

A terrified Fayeth sees Senna in trouble. Notices she and Elar have maneuvered themselves near the big red button on the wall. She rushes over and presses it.

A blaring high-pitched ALARM blasts through the facility. The extreme loudness has a bad effect on the Repskars, who HISS and SCREAM in agony. The more humanoid fighters cover their ears in pain, but aren't as disoriented.

Fortunately Azer also gets badly affected by the alarm. He HOWLS in pain.

Senna of course can't hear it. She quickly clears her head. Deftly flips up her bo up off the ground with her foot. Whirls and slams her bo staff hard into Azer's head. Knocks him down.

Senna stomps on Azer's hand, forcing him to let go of his knife. She kicks it away. Whacks him a few more times with the bo, knocking him out cold and opening another nasty wound on his head.

Helyna finally reaches them, covering her ears against the incredible noise. Senna's still not sure what's causing all the weird reactions.

SENNA
(to Helyna)
What's going on?

Helyna points to the alarm button. Shouts.

HELYNA
She hit the alarm! It's really
loud!

Fayeth and Elar, who's holding his ears in pain, rush to join them. Fayeth hugs Senna tightly.

POV SENNA

In slow-motion silence, Senna looks down at Fayeth wrapped around her. She puts one arm around Fayeth and pulls her even closer.

She reaches out her other hand to a beaming Elar. He grasps it warmly, tears in his eyes.

BACK TO SCENE

Helyna watches the reunion with a smiling face. Taps Senna on the shoulder and shouts.

HELYNA (CONT'D)
We should get out of here!

Senna nods. Coaxes Fayeth to let her go but keeps hold of her hand.

SENNA
Come on!

They start trying to maneuver their way through the battle chaos to the open door.

Thanks to the alarm, Mak gets the upper hand against his Repskar antagonist. Rams his knife up through the Repskar's jaw and brain, killing him.

Lastor and Grunta also manage to take out their two Repskars. At almost the same time, Jaypec's Bodyguards brutally kill the remaining Repskars with their swords.

Jaypec notes these events while he continues to duel with Lerrick. Their battle causes them to block Senna and the others from getting to the open doorway.

Jaypec smirks at his opponent. Shouts over the alarm.

JAYPEC
Give up, Queznar. Your Repskars
are dead.

Lerrick risks a glance back at the carnage. Turns and smiles back at Jaypec. Shouts back.

LARRICK
(shouting)
Just means more money for me.

Lerrick lashes his leg out and kicks Jaypec away. He touches a button on one of his mechanical arms. It morphs into what looks like a gun barrel.

JAYPEC
(shouting)
You idiot. Lasers don't work here.

LARRICK
(shouting)
Who said anything about lasers?

Lerrick snaps the fingers on his other arm. BLAM! An explosive projectile shoots out of his arm and blows a hole in Jaypec's chest. The Calpurnian gangster falls down, dead.

Senna instinctively pushes Fayeth and Elar behind her. Shares a quick worried look with Helyna.

Karlec watches his boss die. Yells.

KARLEC
Noooooo!

He charges Lerrick, sword held high. Lerrick turns and calmly blasts him into oblivion.

While all this is going on, no one notices six of the panels in the walls around the room slowly sliding open. Large, strange-looking guns emerge from behind the panels.

Suddenly the alarm stops. A low pulsing sound emanates from each of the wall guns.

Mak yanks his knife out of the dead Repskar. Shakes his head to clear his ears. Takes a quick glance around at their situation.

Lastor and Grunta hurry to join him. They see Azer out on the floor, with Senna and her friends standing near the door, blocked by Lerrick.

LASTOR
What do we do, Mak?

At that moment, Lerrick turns and takes aim at Soricca. She surrenders, dropping her sword and putting her hands up.

SORICCA
I'm not dying for that bunghole.

LARRICK
Smart girl. Interested in a new job?

Soricca smirks.

SORICCA
'Long as it pays well.

LARRICK
We get that sphere, you'll be set for life.

Soricca picks up her sword and joins Lerrick in advancing toward Senna and her friends.

Senna backs away, keeping Elar and Fayeth behind her. She and Helyna ready their bladed bo staffs for action.

Mak, Lastor and Grunta also move closer to hem them in.

MAK

Okay, Lerrick. You've won. I don't care who pays us.

LARRICK

Why should I pay you when I can get the sphere myself right now?

MAK

Because I can get it for you without any more bloodshed.

Senna hears Mak's voice in her head.

MAK (V.O.)

Isn't that right, Senna?

Lerrick chuckles.

LARRICK

In all honesty, I think Captain Savine is more likely to make a deal with me than you.

Senna whips her head back and forth between Mak and Lerrick, trying to read lips and figure out her next move.

HELYNA

You're both wrong. That thing is military property. It's leaving with us.

Lerrick points his gun arm at Helyna.

LARRICK

Don't be foolish, Madame Marine. You're severely outnumbered and outgunned.

Senna's mind races. She notices Elar signing to Fayeth out of the corner of her eye.

ELAR

Put the sphere on the desk and let them fight it out. Then we can escape.

Senna's face softens. With one hand she touches the dog tags beneath her shirt and gives a little smile.

She nods at Fayeth, mouthing "Do it." Turns back to their antagonists as Fayeth starts removing the sphere from her backpack.

SENNA

Mak, Lerrick. Let us go and you two can fight it out for that piece of crapshit.

Helyna shakes her head and steps in front of Senna. Mouths her words carefully.

HELYNA

Senna, we can't let them have it. The Commandant ordered us to bring it back.

Senna stares into Helyna's eyes.

SENNA

The hell with the Commandant. I'm just here to save my family.

Elar breaks into a grin at the word "family." Lerrick chuckles.

LARRICK

How sentimental. For what it's worth, I'm fine with that arrangement.

He turns and points his gun arm at Mak. Behind him, Soricca readies her sword for action.

Suddenly one of the wall guns locks in on him. A BOLT OF FIRE/LIGHTNING COMBINATION shoots out, frying Lerrick's gun arm. He SCREAMS in pain.

SENNA

Run!

Fayeth shoves the sphere back into the backpack. They take off for the open side door, dodging a screaming Lerrick as he tries to douse his flaming arm and clothing. Soricca tries to help him.

Mak, Lastor and Grunta rush to intercept Senna and the others.

The wall guns start firing away at everyone. They barely miss Senna and Helyna.

Lerrick finally gets the flames out. Tries to fire his gun arm at the fleeing Fayeth. No luck. Another BLAST from a wall gun hits him square on.

Soricca can only watch helplessly as Lerrick shudders and falls, his whole body bursting into blue flames.

Mak and his Crew block the door. Mak both talks and projects his thoughts so Senna and Fayeth can hear.

MAK
(echoing)
We're not letting you leave with
that sphere.

A blast from one of the wall guns hits near all of them.

SENNNA
None of us are getting out of here
alive if you don't move your ugly
ass!

They all duck as another blast barely misses them. Mak realizes Senna has a point.

He motions to Lastor and Grunta, and they take off out the open side door. Senna leads Elar, Fayeth and Helyna through it, close behind.

INT. INDUSTRIAL FACILITY/HALLWAYS - DAY

All of them race down a hallway away from the Communications Room. Mak glances back. Sees they're safe from the guns.

He halts. Gestures to Grunta and Lastor to block the way again, knives raised. Senna and her group stop in their tracks.

MAK
(echoing)
Okay, now where were we?

HELYNA
Give up, Dorton. There's a squad of Marines on their way right now. The only way you're getting off this rock is in a box or in custody.

SENNNA
Mak, be reasonable. Both your buyers are dead.

Senna glances at Helyna, then turns back to Mak.

SENNA (CONT'D)
Look, I'll give you one chance to
take your losses and escape.
That's more than you did for me.

MAK
(echoing)
Can't do that, Senna. There are
other buyers out there. And I
swore nothing would stop me from
getting a big payday for that
thing.

SENNA
Money always was the only thing you
cared about.

MAK
(echoing)
What else is there? Grow up like I
did and you realize money's the key
to the universe. And happiness.

SENNA
You're wrong.

LASTOR
We're wasting time!

MAK
(echoing)
He's right. No more negotiating.

Mak charges toward Fayeth, knife at the ready. Senna intercepts him and they begin dueling. She yells back at Elar and Fayeth.

SENNA
Get out of here!

Helyna attacks Grunta and Lastor, running interference. Elar and Fayeth sprint down the hallway and turn a corner.

Mak starts after them. Senna trips him with her bo. She leaps on top of him. Tries to smash him in the head. Mak fends her off with his arms, taking several brutal blows.

He spots an opening. Slashes Senna's left shoulder with his knife. She SCREAMS in pain. Mak kicks her off. Scrambles to his feet. Races after Elar and Fayeth.

Helyna's holding her own against Grunta and Lastor. Avoiding their knives while dealing blow after blow with her bo.

Suddenly--

THUNK! A Calpurnian sword skewers Grunta through the chest. He looks down at it with a confused look on his face. His legs give out and he crumples to the floor, dead.

Soricca rushes toward them, yelling a WAR CRY. She reaches Grunta and yanks her sword out of his body.

A bleeding Senna gets to her feet. Clears her head. Looks at Soricca while Helyna and Lastor continue to battle each other.

SENNA (CONT'D)
Who's side are you on?

Soricca gives her a sly grin.

SORICCA
Mine. I'm getting that sphere.
And killing anyone who gets in my
way.

Soricca attacks Senna with her sword. Senna fends her off with her bladed bo. They battle and duel all around the area, avoiding Helyna and Lastor, who keep fighting each other.

ANOTHER HALLWAY

Elar and Fayeth run down a different hallway. Come to an intersection of hallways. Stop, both panting for breath.

Elar looks around in confusion. Signs to Fayeth.

ELAR
I'm lost. Any idea where we are?

Fayeth shakes her head "no."

FAYETH
*Think we took a wrong turn back
there. None of this looks
familiar.*

ELAR
This place is a maze.

Elar hears Mak's heavy footsteps echoing in the hallway behind them. He grabs Fayeth's hand. They start running again down one of the hallways.

FIRST HALLWAY

Senna and Soricca continue to duel, sword against bo. Helyna and Lastor battle on as well, each bleeding from several hits and cuts.

Suddenly Lastor HISSES. Spits a glob of something into Helyna's face. She reacts and tries to wipe it off.

Lastor takes the opening and rams his knife into Helyna's gut. She groans and spits up blood. Manages to slam her bo against Lastor's head with her last bit of strength.

Lastor staggers back as Helyna collapses onto the floor, dropping her bo.

Senna sees Helyna in trouble. She fakes a swipe at Soricca's head. Soricca raises her sword to block it.

In one smooth move, Senna somersaults down to the floor. Comes up and jams the dull end of her bo into Soricca's midsection. Then she swings it and knocks the sword out of her hand.

A couple more blows to Soricca's head and she's down for the count.

Lastor starts to take off down the hallway. Senna hurls her bo like a javelin at him, blade-end first. It skewers Lastor through the chest. He falls face-first to the floor, dead.

Senna takes a deep breath. Rushes back over to Helyna, who's trying to stem the bleeding from her gut wound.

SENNA

How bad?

Helyna mouths her words slowly for Senna.

HELYNA

Pretty bad. Got to keep the pressure on it so I don't bleed out.

Senna nods. She goes back to Lastor's body. Pulls out her bo then uses the blade to cut off part of his uniform. Takes it to Helyna and helps her push it into the wound.

SENNA

This should help.

HELYNA

Go get Mak.

SENNA
What about--

HELYNA
I'll be all right. I signaled the
nearest base when we landed.
Reinforcements should be here any
minute.

Senna nods. Helyna pulls her close. Stares into Senna's eyes.

HELYNA (CONT'D)
Go save your family.

Senna nods. Grabs up Soricca's sword as she races off down the hallway.

Helyna presses a homer button on her wrist gauntlet. Groans in pain. Pushes herself back up against the wall and holds the cloth tightly over her wound. Closes her eyes.

HALLWAYS

Elar and Fayeth race through the maze of hallways lined with alien machinery and piping. They keep frantically searching for a sign that they're nearing an exit. But everything looks the same.

They round another corner. Stop.

Ahead of them stands Azer, bleeding from his head wounds, eyes red with anger. He brandishes his deadly knife.

Fayeth looks up at Elar.

FAYETH
Not again!

Elar shakes his head in exasperation.

Azer stalks toward them. Still a little unsteady on his feet.

AZER
You can't get away from me. I've
got your scent, so I can track you
anywhere.

He calls out.

AZER (CONT'D)
Mak! Can hear me? I've got 'em
cornered!

Fayeth drops into a martial arts stance. Azer grins.

AZER (CONT'D)
Not gonna get away with that this
time, little girl. I'm ready for
you.

Elar suddenly steps in front of Fayeth.

ELAR
I have had it with you threatening
my daughter, you piece of Zalzonian
trash.

AZER
What are you gonna do about it?
(insultingly)
Human.

Elar charges Azer. Fayeth watches in horror, certain her Dad is about to be killed.

Azer readies his knife. But Elar ducks under Azer's stab attempt.

With a YELL, Elar wraps his arms around Azer. Lifts him up and SLAMS him into the wall behind them.

The stunned Azer drops his knife. Elar pulls back and begins raining clumsy but effective punches against Azer's head and face.

Just as it looks like Azer's going down, he lashes out his leg, kicking Elar back.

Azer drops to one knee. Manages to pick up his knife. Waves it around dizzily.

AZER (CONT'D)
Gonna... gut you...

Before either he or Elar can react, Fayeth jumps in. Delivers a hard kick to Azer's head. He goes down and out, the knife clattering to the floor.

Elar glares down at Azer, breathing hard. He picks up the knife. He and Fayeth share a satisfied look.

MAK (ECHOING V.O.)
Nice work, you two.

They spin around. See Mak standing nearby, wielding his knife. He speaks and projects his words.

MAK (CONT'D)

(echoing)

You know, I think I've been too nice to you two. I gave you so many chances to cooperate, but you were too damned stubborn. Guess I've learned my lesson.

Mak hurls his knife at Fayeth's head. Elar pushes her away at the last second, taking the blade in his shoulder.

Elar cries out in pain. Drops Azer's knife.

MAK (CONT'D)

Son of a muke.

Mak rushes in. Yanks his knife out of Elar.

Fayeth kicks Mak in the side. He grunts but retaliates with a strong kick of his own, knocking Fayeth sprawling.

Mak slams a backhand fist into Elar's face. Elar collapses to the floor, unconscious and bleeding.

Fayeth scrambles away as Mak stalks toward her. She tries to get to her feet, but Mak dives to the floor with a flying tackle.

Mak pins Fayeth to the floor, face down. He rips open her backpack. Pulls out the sphere. Grins in satisfaction.

MAK (CONT'D)

Finally.

He looks down at the struggling Fayeth.

MAK (V.O.)

If I'd known you were gonna be this much trouble, I'd have killed you and your Dad as soon as we left Krakor.

Fayeth relaxes. Suddenly she manages to flip over. Knocks the sphere out of Mak's hand. It rolls away from them.

Mak's face turns dark with anger.

MAK (V.O.)

That's it! You're dead!

He grabs Fayeth by the neck with his free hand. Raises his knife.

SENNA (O.S.)
Mak! Stop!

Mak looks up. Sees Senna standing a few feet away with the sphere and her bladed bo staff, sword stuck in her belt.

He quickly jumps to his feet, pulling Fayeth up with him. He holds the knife blade across Fayeth's throat.

MAK (V.O.)
What's it gonna be, Senna? Your loyalty to the Corps worth more than her life?

Senna glares at him.

SENNA
Hell no. Her and her Dad's lives mean more to me than anything.

She lays her bo staff on the floor. Takes out the sword and lays it down as well. Keeps her free hand raised as she stands back up.

MAK (V.O.)
Okay, toss me the sphere and I'll let her go.

Senna shakes her head.

SENNA
No, Mak. She goes first.

Mak chuckles.

MAK (V.O.)
Stalemate huh? Guess you don't trust me.

SENNA
I did once. Learned from that mistake.

MAK (V.O.)
Look, sorry about your ears. The Corredians' offer was just too good to pass up.

Fayeth notices another red alarm button on the wall between them. She makes eye contact with Senna. Indicates the alarm to Senna. Senna smiles.

MAK (V.O.)
What are you grinning about?

SENNA

Just thinking about some of the
good times we had.

MAK (V.O.)

We did, didn't we?

SENNA

Too bad you value money over
friendship.

MAK (V.O.)

All I've learned about friendship
is it can get you killed.

SENNA

That's true. But it's also worth
killing for.

Senna slowly pulls out her pistol. Aims it at Mak. He smirks.

MAK (V.O.)

Come on. You know that doesn't
work.

SENNA

I know. But it's still good for
something.

Senna turns. Hurls the gun at the alarm button. DIRECT HIT!

The ALARM starts blaring. Mak grimaces in pain.

Taking advantage of the distraction, Fayeth elbows Mak in the ribs. Ducks away from him.

Senna tosses the sphere to Fayeth. She catches it and runs to her unconscious father.

Senna snatches up her bo. Charges Mak.

Mak sees her coming. Tries to defend himself with his knife. But he's too disoriented from the alarm.

Senna expertly slams her bo against Mak's body and arms. Forces him to drop the knife. She kicks it away.

Mak tries some martial arts punches and kicks. Senna easily blocks them. She smashes the bo against Mak's head. He goes down to one knee, dazed.

MAK (V.O.)

Senna, wait!

With a YELL, Senna slams the bo against his head. Spins and does it again and again. Mak crumples to the floor.

Senna stares down at him. She jams the blade of her bo against the unconscious Mak's throat. Gets ready to deliver the killing blow.

Fayeth gestures wildly, catching Senna's attention. Senna looks into her eyes.

FAYETH
No! You're better than him.

Senna calms down.

SENNNA
Damn right I am.

At that moment, a squad of ten armored GALACTIC MARINES carrying special electric weapons rush onto the scene.

Senna drops her bo and raises her hands.

The SQUAD COMMANDER (30s), a muscular, athletic human, runs over and presses the alarm button twice. The alarm stops.

He checks a readout on his wrist gauntlet. Looks at Senna and Fayeth. Mouths his words slowly.

SQUAD COMMANDER
Captain Savine?

Senna salutes him.

SENNNA
Yes, Sir!

SQUAD COMMANDER
Can you understand me?

SENNNA
Barely.

The Squad Commander opens a compartment in his utility belt. Pulls out a translator like the one Senna had previously. Hands it to her. She nods her thanks.

SQUAD COMMANDER
Give me a sitrep.

The words appear on the translator screen.

SENNA

All hostiles are dead or
incapacitated. There's an injured
Marine somewhere in here--

SQUAD COMMANDER

Right. We're reading her signal.

He points to three of his Men. Directs them to follow the signal. They take off.

Senna reads his words. Sighs in relief.

SQUAD COMMANDER (CONT'D)

What about the target object?

Senna smiles. Gestures to Fayeth.

SENNA

Right here. Safe and sound.

Fayeth comes over and places the sphere in the Squad Commander's hand. Nearby, Elar GROANS as he wakes up.

MARINE #1

Sir, we've got an injured civilian
here!

Fayeth rushes back to comfort her father.

SQUAD COMMANDER

Get him out and take care of him.

Two Marines help Elar to his feet. Start ushering him and Fayeth away.

Fayeth glances back. Shares a warm look with Senna.

The Squad Commander points at the unconscious Azer and Mak.

SQUAD COMMANDER (CONT'D)

Who are these two?

Senna checks the readout. Her face darkens.

SENNA

The two surviving mercs who stole
the piece and killed those
scientists. They're all yours.

The Squad Commander nods. Directs the remaining Marines to drag the bodies away. He stands at attention and salutes Senna.

SQUAD COMMANDER
Excellent work, Captain.

Senna checks the translator. Shakes her head.

SENNA
That's actually ex-Captain, Sir.

The Squad Commander grins.

SQUAD COMMANDER
Maybe. But you're still a credit
to the Galactic Marines.

Senna can't help but smile.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. GALIDON/ALPHA BASE/LANDING PAD - DAY

Senna stands next to her ship, her injured shoulder patched up. Beside her are Elar, with a metallic bandage around his chest, a wide-eyed, excited Fayeth, and Commandant Fernall.

They watch the Squad Commander and his team lead the heavily-manacled Mak, Azer, and Soricca away from their military transport ship.

Mak glances over at Senna.

MAK (V.O.)
Guess you finally got your revenge,
huh, Senna?

Senna just shoots daggers at him with her eyes.

A MEDICAL TEAM shepherds Helyna on a hover-stretcher off the ship. Senna runs over to her.

Helyna looks up at Senna. They clasp hands.

SENNA
Thanks for all your help,
Lieutenant.

Helyna gives her a weak salute. Talks slowly and clearly.

HELYNA
It was my honor, Captain. Hope we
get to do it again sometime.

Senna checks the readout on her translator and nods. Stands back as the Medical Team loads Helyna into a ground transport.

She rejoins her friends. Fernall gestures to the translator in Senna's hand.

FERNALL

Have to say, I wasn't sure you could pull this off. But I'm certainly glad you did.

Senna smiles at Elar and Fayeth. She shows Fayeth the translator as she speaks.

SENNA

That makes three of us.

FERNALL

Senna, you did your part. Now it's my turn. I've started the process to get your commission back. You've certainly proved you can still be an effective Marine.

Senna looks at Elar and Fayeth. She can tell they're both torn about this news. Happy for her, but they don't want to lose her.

Senna thinks for a moment. Looks at Fernall.

SENNA

Thank you, Sir. I accept, but with one condition. I'd like to be stationed here as an instructor.

She puts her arms around Elar and Fayeth.

SENNA (CONT'D)

I don't want to risk what I have by going back out in the field again.

Fernall raises an eyebrow, genuinely surprised. Then he chuckles.

FERNALL

Sounds like a good deal.

Fernall and Senna salute each other. Fernall marches off.

Fayeth signs to Senna.

FAYETH

Does that mean you're staying here?

Senna responds "yes." Looks slyly at Elar.

SENNA

*But I'm hoping I can persuade you
and your father to stay here too.
He still owes me a birthday dinner.*

Elar and Fayeth both break into a wide grins. Fayeth starts nodding emphatically.

Elar signs and speaks to Senna.

ELAR

I think both of those can be arranged.

(pause)

Would it be permissible to give the Captain a thank-you kiss?

Senna shakes her head, smiling. Then hauls off and kisses the hell out Elar, much to Fayeth's delight.

DISSOLVE TO:

SUPER: GALIDON - SIX MONTHS LATER

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Elar works hard inside an industrial-sized military kitchen, filled with all the latest cooking gadgets. Several other COOKS and SERVERS bustle around, making food and putting meals together.

Jasilla pokes her head into a large opening leading to the dining area.

JASILLA

I got three orders of larptoburgers, two mangan steaks, and a Zanzillian salad!

ELAR

On it!

Jasilla heads back into the dining room.

Senna, wearing a crisp new Captain's uniform, strolls in from a door leading to the outside. Greets and salutes several of the Cooks and Servers.

Elar smiles as he sees her coming toward him. She gives him a light kiss, eliciting some "Oohs" and "Aahs" from the kitchen staff. Elar waves them off. Signs and speaks to Senna.

ELAR (CONT'D)
What time will you be home tonight?

SENNA
My last class is at sixteen hundred, so figure about seventeen-thirty.

Elar makes some mental calculations.

ELAR
Okay, so five-thirty.

Senna laughs.

SENNA
Better get used to military time.

Elar gives her a mock salute.

ELAR
Yes, Ma'am!

Now they both laugh. Senna gives Elar another peck on the cheek. He signs and speaks.

ELAR (CONT'D)
Don't be late. I'm making something special for our six-month anniversary.

Senna gives him a sly grin.

SENNA
Can't wait.

As she saunters out, Elar accepts more ribbing from his co-workers.

EXT. PRACTICE FIELD - DAY

Senna stands at ease before a group of thirty uniformed CADETS of various ages, genders and alien races.

Two large translator screens float above the field, one behind Senna and the other behind the Cadets.

The Cadets talk and whisper among themselves. Front and center stands Fayeth, beaming at Senna and wearing her uniform proudly.

Senna spots a recovered Helyna walking past the practice field. They wave to each other.

She turns her attention back to the Cadets. Shouts.

SENNA
Cadets! Atten-tion!

Senna's words appear on both floating translator boards. The Cadets snap to attention. Senna looks her class over. Locks eyes with Fayeth. Tries to hide a smile.

SENNA (CONT'D)
Today we'll cover some more basic
leg attacks. Let's warm up. First
position!

Senna takes a fighting stance, fists curled in front of her face. All the Cadets mimic her perfectly.

Senna starts firing mock punches, counting them out.

SENNA (CONT'D)
One! Two! One! Two!

Fayeth happily punches the air along with her fellow Cadets. Senna tries to look stern and commanding. But it's hard to hide how happy and content she really is...

FADE OUT.

THE END