



GEMINI GALLERY Presents A MORGAN TALBOT PRODUCTION SPACE OPERA

Starring WHIMSICAL ARISTOCRAT, MALINDA TALBOT, MORGAN TALBOT,
MIRABELLE BIEDERMANN, SIMONE LANDY, VIXXEN CLOWES,
IRIS OKIDDO, MAY NIZHONI, SHAR ASTRA

WITH
DAIMAJU CLOWES

SPACE OPERA

Written and Directed by
MORGAN TALBOT
WHIMSICAL ARISTOCRAT
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Produced by
VICKI CONCERTINA
KATINA CAZALET

Music by
ZUBY GLOOM



Spiritual Healing Chapter 3.01



Lin walked barefoot along the well-worn path from the sanctuary house to the ruins of the ancient temple, her breathing and stride growing more measured and relaxed as she synchronized with vibrant psionic energies surrounding her. Standing before the statue of imperishable metals with the psionic m'kraani crystal blazing at its

crown, Lin performed a series of graceful gestures in a ritual that was old when dinosaurs roamed Terra.

Looking up at the statue, she took a deep cleansing breath before letting her jade eyes close in the attempt to once again center herself. The trance like state had been harder to achieve since her captivity, her abilities more volatile and violent. Sinking deeper into the trance, in her mind's eye she inspects her psyche and studies the psionic pathways of her abilities. Diving into the flow of memories of her erotic torture she grapples again with the feelings of shame and humiliation, determined to push through she draws on the emotional strength of her two lovers as she senses them approaching.

Bolstered by the commander's quiet strength of will and the doctor's bright love of all things living, she pushes past the memories to study how the altered state of consciousness inflicted on her forced her mind to open new and unexpected pathways of power. With understanding comes control, as a sense of calm flows through her until faerie lights of psi-energy dance around her face.

Her smile grows as her sense of awareness flows around her, feeling the vibrant life force of her companions before sending it out farther. Brushing against the feral consciousness of the creatures that had become the only inhabitants on this lush moon she relished in the feel of her control, of her power, of feeling once again whole.

Morgan glanced around as his senses felt 'something' brush by him and his hand reflexively sought out a pistol that wasn't there and cursing for allowing himself to come unarmed. A soft lilt of laughter echoed in his mind as Shar giggled unexpectedly. Looking over at the lovely doctor with a raised eyebrow, she whispered in response, "It's Lin..." Holding up her medical scanner she tuned it to the levitating T'val'len Adept and bounced on her toes with a wide smile on her face.

Morgan crossed his arms as he reflexively scanned the surrounding area with his eyes for threats. The m'kraani crystal always seemed to drag his eyes back to it and the whisper of some alien song echoed in the back of his mind. Looking back at Shar, he whispered, "I'm going to guess by your reaction she's ok?"

Shar nodded as she adjusted the scanner, as she whispered back, "This is the deepest meditative state we've ever seen her in. the best way to put it, is she's in a 'harmonic state'... So very good."

Lost in Space Chapter 3.02



Vanji leaned back into the seat as she thought back over the events at Drune, a name and a planet she hoped never to see again. The past few weeks had been chock full of crime lords, thugs, smugglers all leading to a half mad AI named “VICKI” that provided a name and a location in return for extracting its core from the crime lord Baron Samadi.

She looked over at the sealed case containing the AI core and subvocalized, “Ally, correlate the records provided by VICKI with current Gal-com libraries”

“Doctor Anjeanette Friedman, an expert in bio-genetic manipulation with multiple PhD’s from the Neo Tokyo Institute of Technology. Apparently, a colleague of your father approximately 32 years ago at NTIT... Odd that I find no record of that in the Angel Interstellar databases. Age 73 Terran standard years with a couple of trips for some extremely expensive rejuvenation treatments. And...”

Vanji was slammed against the seat harness as her ship shook and bucked unexpectedly, red status symbols flowed across the holo-displays as the craft dropped out of FTL.

“What the fu... Ally! Status!” Vanji yelled as she worked frantically to regain control of the wildly rotating ship.

“I don’t want to be the one to say I told you so... but....”

“Cut the crap Ally... what happened?”

“You remember all that blaster fire as we were boosting out from Drune?”

Vanji’s eyes narrowed as she wrestled with the controls, “I was there...so?”

“You remember that faulty rear defector panel? Oh and shutting down the main reactor NOW”

“So you’re saying we took some damage then... Crap! How bad?”

“Analyzing.... You might want to apply some breaking thrusters, we’re awful close to this planetary ring.”

Vanji growled as she quickly diverted what little remained of the engine power to bring the ship to a halt. “Any day now Ally....”

“Hey this computer system is an antique, it takes a few milliseconds to run the diagnostics. I’m sure Commander Talbot would love to hear that he needs to upgrade this boat.”

Vanji winced a bit knowing well how THAT conversation was going to go after going off mission like she did. “Just the report... please...”

“Well, it appears the port drive plasma conduit has burst, necessitating an emergency shutdown of the FTL drive and reactor. Good news is we do have the tools and spare parts to effect repairs.”

“And the bad news?” Vanji groaned.

“We’re going to need to go outside to fix it.”

Vanji floated out of her seat, pushing off toward the supply locker stripping off her ship suit.

“Oh Van...?”

“Yes Ally?”

“I told you so.”

Last Night in Paradise Chapter 3.03



Shar sat nude on the edge of the dining table to pull off her boot, her clothes discarded in a heap at her feet. Looking up from the zipper, her eyes brighten at the sight of Lin leaning against the door frame. Smiling impishly, the beautiful doctor leaned back on the palms of her hands, her boot forgotten. "Well, hi..."

"I'm going to miss this place." Shar sighed, her eyes cutting around the room before landing on the ginger witch again. Lin slowly crossed the room to join Shar, taking a moment to enjoy the view, her own smile grew wicked as she slid her hand around her lover's slim waist. "I am too. It's a shame Morgan had to head over to the starport on our last evening..."

Lin's fingers trailed up and down her lover's spine and over her full breasts. Allowing the hunger, she always seemed to feel around the chestnut beauty and the commander fill her eyes, she whispered, "...though I'm sure we can find a way to kill a little time." Leaning in, Lin brushed her full lips against Shar's while pushing her back on the table.

Laying gentle kisses along the other woman's jaw to her ear. Hovering her mouth above Shar's ear, Lin's words more a breath than a whisper against the doctor's ear, "I need one more taste of you..." Nipping and pecking her way down Shar's body, Lin traced her tongue over Shar's swollen nipple, purring as it puckered from her attentions

"Please, Lin, more. This is torture." Shar begged, her voice full of need.

Lin chuckled under her breath as she continued her decent down Shar's body, paying attention to her navel until her lover arched with a moan. Continuing down, she placed a delicate kiss in the hollow of one hip before turning to kiss and the lick the other. Relishing in the sounds of the doctor's sounds, she focused at the treasure before her, brushing her full lips across the swollen folds.

Whimpering at the promise of pleasure that only her psi-witch can provide, Shar instinctively opened her thighs, her pussy clenching in need. Bending her knees, she hooked her heels on the rim of the table, letting them fall open while she lifts her ass off the glass in offering.

Purring deep and low, Lin ran her tongue over Shar's pussy in long strokes until her lover began to buck and roll her hips. Making a passionate sound deep in her throat, Lin simultaneously slide her tongue deep in to Shar's sex while releasing her power.

Flooding her mind with psionic pulses Lin sent waves of pleasure through Shar until the other woman rode the edge of release. Feeling the moment, the dark-haired goddess lost the last of her control, Lin forced her eyes open, watching as Shar explode, drinking down her desire along with her nectar.

Bad Food and Worse Service Chapter 3.04



“Stargazer station just cleared us for landing on pad 7.” Ally reported.

Vanji lined the courier up with the entrance as she tapped the thrust controls, moving the sleek black ship through the environmental shield and into the station. “Good, I’ve been worrying about that conduit patch job for the past 87 light years. Let’s try really hard not to do that again.”

“Let me add that to the list of 12,457 items you’ve noted on this trip of things not to do.” quipped the AI. Vanji tapped her nails pensively on armrest as the station port authority guided the ship onto the pad, “Ally, make a station directory inquiry for Anjeanette Friedman.”

“Van are you sure? That’s like shouting out to all and anyone on this station that you’re looking for her.” Vanji’s ruby lips curled into a smile, “I’m taking a lesson from the Commander.”

“What? Blow them up and let the transcended beings sort them out?”

“No silly... Bait for the trap. There are a quarter million sentients on this planetoid, it’d take us way too long to search for leads. So, let’s let them find us...”

A few days pass with nothing more than 332 items added to the not to do list and starship maintenance until....

“Van, we just got an anonymous ping ‘Blue Ant, Deck C3 18:00’ looks like someone is testing the bait.” Vanji closed up the access panel on the ship and smiled, “I love it when a plan comes together... I’ll be honest I was thinking of buying this planetoid if I had to wait around another day.”

Arriving at the diner, Vanji was people watching, pondering who the contact was. There was the darkly handsome mercenary leaning near the rear exit as two prostitutes writhed against each other to draw his attention. The bartender yelling at the whores, two obvious thugs, one bored protocol droid and one perky scantily clad waitress.

The waitress approached their table, dropping the plate in front of Vanji, “There ya go hon.. The Blue Ant Special. Anythin’ else I can getcha?” The waitress cocked a hip out, showing off her ample and barely covered curves. Vanji smiled and shook her head to the obvious disappointment of the girl.

With a sigh, she dug a spoon into the grey gloop, “What did I order? This doesn’t look synth.” Ally snickered, “It had some weird Arcturian name, its main ingredient is cage fed vorrat, don’t ask what that is.” Vanji made a face as she put the spoon in her mouth, her implants lighting up with warnings, “Ally! Is it ...?”

“Wait a moment Van, I’m detecting some secret sauce.” Ally said, cutting off Vanji’s complaints, “It contains a fairly exotic nano-neuralizer, nothing you can’t handle but it looks like someone wants you to get a good night’s sleep.”

Vanji’s brows rose but she otherwise remained placidly stirring the ... whatever it was ... with the spoon. “This might be the contact we have been waiting for. But drugged...?” “Van if you neutralize it, they will know, but what if you just eat it and I’ll keep an eye on things, see what I pick up? I can neutralize the toxin and bring you up to speed in seconds when its safe.”

“I’ve got a bad feeling about this.” Remarked Vanji, getting a giggle from Ally at the ancient reference. Vanji suppressed her sense of taste and swallowed the slimy mix, Why ‘cage fed’ anyway, she was wondering, then wondered why that was as the world went dark ...

The Calvary Arrives Chapter 3.05



Lin leaned her hip against Morgan as they stood on the bridge of the Dauntless as the 200-meter-long cutter made its final approach to the planetoid station.

Lin turned her emerald eyes to the Commander and asked, "So, tell me about this place and why did Vanji come here?"

Morgan gaze lingered on the curvaceous T'val'len Adept a moment before replying, "Stargazer Station, a mining and trading port on the Pleiades trade route between the Terran Union and the Sileasian Imperium. While considered an independent station, it is within the territory claimed by the Imperium."

Lin's lush lips curled in a moue of distaste, "Sileasian's... slavers... And you let Vanji come here?"

Morgan arched an eyebrow, "Your wife decided to go off mission and head here instead of waiting for us at Drune. Yes, the Sileasian's are a pain in the ass and I'm not 'expecting' trouble with them but we brought the entire powered armor company with us... just in case."

Lin's eyes flickered dangerously, "Yesss... We DO have a few things to discuss. So why did she come here?"

Morgan's eyes swept the bridge as the crew expertly brought the big ship into the station, "According to her last report, there is an associate of her father onboard who was the recipient of messages sent from the station you were held on. She decided to run this Doctor Friedman down before the trail got cold. And I too have a few things to discuss with her about that line of reasoning."

Lin looked out the window of the bridge at the hollowed interior of the planetoid, a virtual city wrapping around the inner walls of the core. "So what now? I feel her near... but it's like she's asleep"

Morgan smiled grimly, "We need you to pinpoint her location, and we'll do what we do best."

"Break things and cause excessive property damage?" Lin asked with an impish grin.

Morgan chuckled softly as he tapped the comm panel on the chair, "Gunny Mira, deploy your teams. Assault plan alpha."

Mira's voice responded, "Smash and grab as ordered Commander! Deploying assault sleds and tactical teams."

Morgan smiled at Lin, "Lets go find Mrs Aeon shall we?"

Captured Chapter 3.06



Ally pondered the situation with as much trepidation as an AI as advanced as her could exhibit. Two mean looking fellows walked to the table with the waitress, picking Vanji up and carrying her away, while the waitress cleaned the table as if nothing was untoward.

In a moment of pique Ally accessed the waitresses tip account as they passed her and flushed it clean “No tips for you today!”

A few hours later, Ally decided it was time to appear that Vanji was coming to.

Rough hands stripped of every stitch of clothing and equipment, very thoroughly searched and put Vanji into the garb of a Sileasian slave girl. Ally shuddered, thinking she might not tell Vanji that part.

She had neutralized the invasive nano gunk, so physically Vanji was fine, Ally just had her consciousness suppressed.

The thugs had dropped her onto a pallet in a storage room, Ally tentatively sent low level electronic pulses out and gave an electronic chuckle as she picked up the signals of a few discarded droids and immediately started to slice into their systems, activating their diagnostics “Always have a backup plan...”

The door opened again and the two thugs walked in, their eyes crawling over Vanji’s skin like a virus.

The purple skinned Sileasian crouched down, running his claws over the curve of Vanji's breast, "A shame the boss wants to question this girl. This one would fetch a fine price on Sileasia if she remained undamaged."

The human cyborg barked a rough laugh, "Pity that she won't be undamaged. She looks harmless enough, what did she do?"

The Sileasian sneered, "She asked too many questions... Get the point?"

The cyborg shrugged with a scowl, "Well since she's not going to be around much longer, we might as well have some fun..."

The Sileasian's eyes flashed with hunger, "My thought exactly..."

Ally frantically started booting up the droids, milliseconds seeming like days "Come on... Come on... wake up boys, I'm going to need some help."

The storage room door opened again, the bright light of the corridor shrouding a tall powerfully built figure and slim form of a girl in the doorway as the two thugs looked up.

"What? Who? What the hell are YOU doing here!" The Sileasian shouted.

Rescue!

Chapter 3.07



Vanji groaned softly as she 'woke up' to full awareness of angry shouting in the room, she blinked in momentary confusion as her internal AI rapidly reintegrated her memory of the past few hours.

"Stay down!" Ally shouted in her mind as a tall powerful mercenary surged toward her captors and the hot flash of blaster fire barked sharply above her.

The mercenary moved with almost inhuman speed and grace as he grabbed the cyborg thug, flinging him effortlessly across the storage room, hitting the far wall with the wet crack of breaking bones. Without breaking his stride, he angled to the Sileasian. The purple hued alien was pushed back from Vanji by a series of blaster bolts punching into his chest armor, to be decisively put permanently out of commission by the heavy fist of the mercenary.

The mercenary glanced around and looked behind Vanji and growled with a low voice, "Nice shooting Agent..."

Vanji looked up and back to see the petite form of her waitress relaxing from her shooter stance with a pulse blaster in her hand.

"You! You were our waitress! That was a disgusting dish and I recall my face being right in the middle of it!" she exclaimed with a mixture of anger and confusion, keeping her eye on the tall mercenary who loomed nearby looking out the doorway.

“FGF Agent Simone Spacey, at your service. Sorry about the drugged meal. As you might recall I was trying to get you to leave with me, but I couldn’t be too obvious.” Agent Spacey explained as she offered Vanji a hand up.

Vanji rubbed her temples as she stood up, frowning at her slave girl attire, Ally laughing in the back of her mind. “Crap, I look like a Neo Vegas debutante on a weekend bender.... Ok Agent, so why did you break your cover for me? Not that I’m complaining about the help, but...”

“Check those crates along the wall, some old clothing from some of the ‘entertainers’ from this place... And honestly, I’d have to ask why one of the wealthiest women in the sector is alone and here of all places. Sending inquiries about a scientist on the FGF watch list.” Agent Spacey replied with a smirk.

The mercenary glanced back into the storage room as Vanji rooted in the crates for some clothing, and growled “I suggest we get out of here; it won’t be long till someone misses these two.”

Vanji tugged on some boots and a jacket, tossing a pointed look at the mercenary, “Why am I here? Short answer is I need information from Dr. Fieldman... Who’s the big guy? Another FGF Agent?”

“No, that’s Dai... He’s a mercenary who does odd jobs for me, but we can trust him.” Agent Spacey smiled as she called out, “Hey Dai, I can trust you right?”

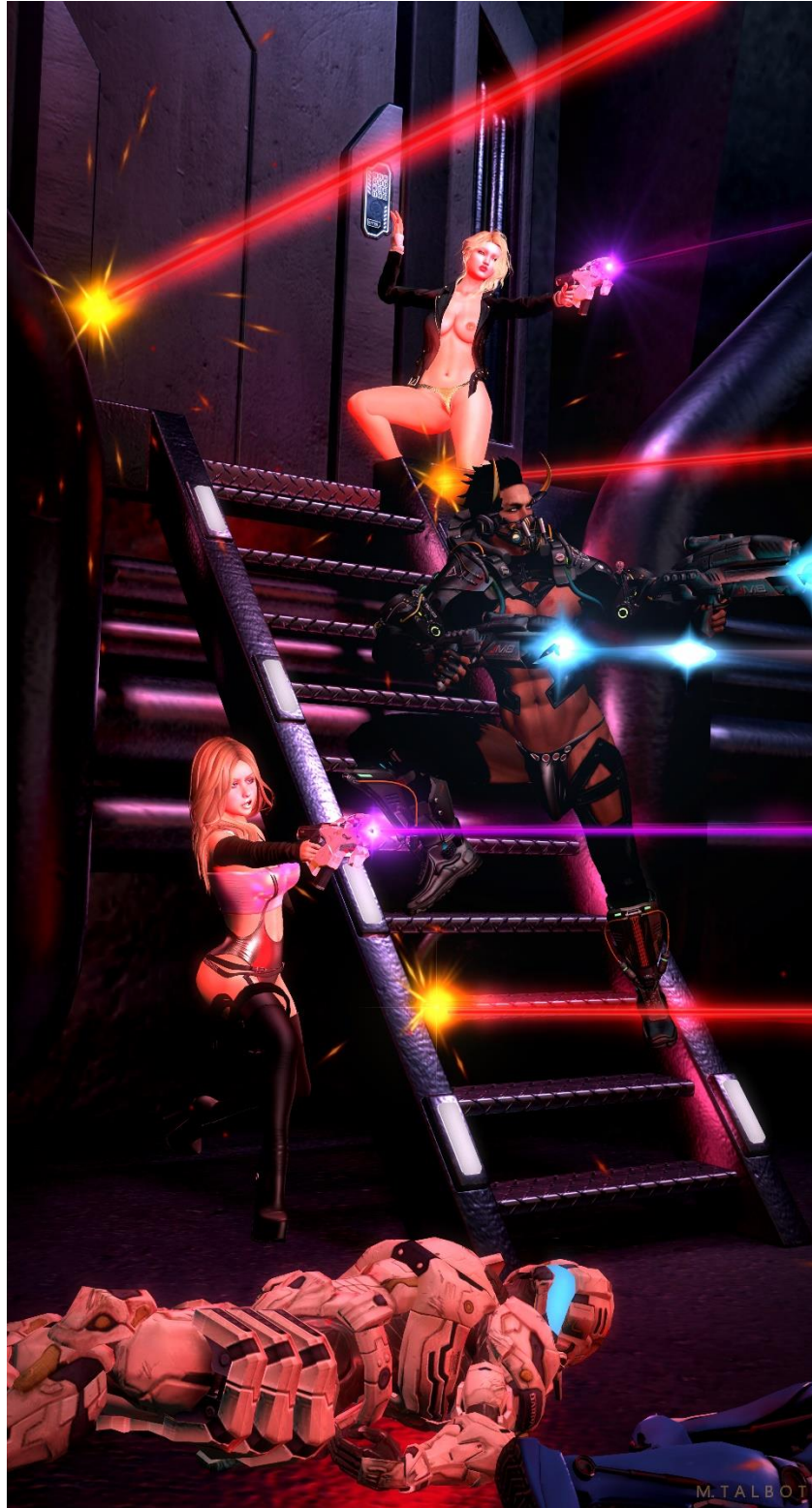
Dai raised an eyebrow at the petite agent, “You’ve paid up to the end of the week, so you are good. I assume we’re going to accelerate your plans?”

Spacey nodded, “This op has gone sideways... Can you get us to the labs?”

Dai nodded, “A lot of rent-a-thugs between here and there. Getting through the vault doors is the challenge.”

Vanji picked up a pulse blaster, checking the weapon out with practiced ease, “Get me to the door, I can get us through it.”

Escape!
Chapter 3.08



The tall mercenary, who simply called himself Dai, lead the way forward, taking point as Agent Spacey took the rear. The lightly armored warrior moved with an almost preternatural speed and economy of motion as he disabled random guards they passed, all the while moving deeper into the complex.

Ally laughed silently to Vanji, “Quit looking at his ass and get your head in the game Van!”

Vanji rolled her eyes, mentally responding to her AI, “Hey I’m used to guys wearing powered armor while doing this kind of stuff. The eye candy is a treat... And, you know, he’s pretty good. We should see if he’d like employment off this rock.”

Stopping abruptly, Dai reached in to the darkness and pulled a hiding thug out of an alcove, before stiff arming his face into the metal wall of the corridor, growling, “Amateurs...”

Ally giggled causing Vanji to snicker, before whispering conspiratorially “Ok, just so you know I’m recording this to replay later...”

Agent Spacey stopped by the unconscious thug. Glaring down at the body, she pulled back and kicked him savagely in the groin. Both Vanji and Dai eyes widened, the ferociousness causing them to pause and look at the petite woman.

“He stole all my tip credits, the bastard...” Spacey explained sheepishly.

“Not a word Van... not... a... word...” Admonished Ally.

Dai narrowed his eyes at the two women, “We’re getting close to the secure labs, up to now we’ve been dealing with random dregs but they’ll get serious once we get to the vault doors. Check your weapons and shoot to kill, because getting captured at this point would be worse than being killed.”

Dai bent down and grabbed an extra pulse rifle, pressing up against the entry, “Ok it’s show time... On three... One... Two... Three!”

The mercenary spun into the room, as the guards shouted, blaster fire flashed as he rolled to the side, firing his rifles with merciless efficiency. Vanji and Spacey rushed into the room, dropping into a crouch back to back covering the room. To find the three guards already dispatched.

“Well, that wasn’t so bad...” Agent Spacey commented.

Dai looked up at the blinking sensor pod, “It’s not over yet.” He commented before shooting the pod almost negligently.

Vanji ran up the short set of stairs to the control panel of the reinforced door, “Just keep them off of me for a minute...” Placing her hand on the panel, she released the nano probes in her skin interface with it, wordlessly instructing her AI, “Ok Ally is the information from VICKI any good?”

“Working it Van... The codes are good but the security system is in lockdown, give me moment to bypass it.”

Dai shouted “Contact!” as blaster fire burst into the room, sending sparks flying through the air as the big mercenary stood on the stairs, firing a rifle in each hand with deadly efficiency. “Now would be a very good time to get that door open...” He ground out between clenched teeth.

“Talk to me Ally! We’re running out of options here...” Vanji pleaded with her AI.

“Oh ye of little faith... Open Sesame! What does a spice seed have to do with doors anyway?” Ally snickered as the heavy door slid open.

“Go! Go! Go!” Shouted Spacey as the trio dived through the door.

Enter the Baroness Chapter 3.09



Sileasian Baroness Iris Okkido cybernetic appendages flailed with agitation as she growled at her guard captain, “Captain... What IS the hold up? Are two little girls and one overly muscled mercenary too much for your men to handle?” The Baroness’ pretty face curled into a sneer, “Do I need to replace you?”

“No, no... Baroness! It’s not the intruders into your labs, it’s the heavily armed company of power armored troops holding a perimeter around the building.”

“What! Who would dare?? None of my ‘peers’ would violate the Imperator’s mandate and risk his displeasure to disrupt the work done here!” Baroness Okkido snarled.

The captain licked his lips, a shot of fear sliding over his spine at this leader’s obviously displeasure. “Baroness, these appear to be mercenaries, but they act and fight like Terran Marines.” The guard captain continued unprompted, “I’d stake my reputation on it...”

“You’ll stake more than that Captain... Show me these intruders.” The Baroness replied in an icy voice.

Morgan’s eyes narrowed as he listened to his comm, “Commander... this is overwatch bravo, you’ve got a platoon of heavies inbound toward you and the main entrance.”

“Copy overwatch... Charlie and Delta teams, take up flanking positions at grid 23 by 102.” Morgan ordered in response.

Lin raised a shapely brow over her glowing azure eyes, as she questioned, “Problems?”

Morgan frowned as he looked up the building, “Apparently Vanji has stirred up a hornet’s nest with the Sileasian Imperium and they’re coming to play... We planned for the worst and we’re in good position, but they will eventually be able to bring enough forces to push us back.”

The glow around Lin brightened, “Then we need to get in there now...”, she commented as she stepped around the corner and directly into the line of fire. Raising a slim glowing hand, she released her telekinetic power. Snarling, the T’val’len Adept pushed a shield in front of her, she absorbing the blaster bolts as they slammed against it.

Morgan grinned wickedly as he drew his pistols and sprinted forward, “You heard the Lady! Let’s get in there!”

Gunnery Sergeant Mira Biedermann racked a charge into the heavy plasma cannon she was carrying and with an uncharacteristic grin as she looked down at big gun, “I finally get to use you.... Ok Marines! Get off your asses before the Lady does all the work for us!”

Mira bounded forward, kicking off from the wall and leaping over the heads of her teammates as she unleashed the heavy cannon toward the Sileasian troopers charging down the road. “Oh YES! I LOVE THIS GUN!!!”

Lin's eyes blazed as she sensed Vanji's fear and with a gesture, ripped the heavy door off the frame, "Morgan! You need to get to Vanji now!" as she placed the location into his mind, "You're the only one fast enough! We'll be behind you as soon as possible..."

Morgan focused, as the world seemed to suddenly move in slow motion, he ducked and weaved his way into the door in a blur of superhuman speed and agility.

Doctor Friedman, I Presume...

Chapter 3.10



Vanji slapped her hand on the armored door and felt Ally working through the nano probes, scrambling the door combination. “That’ll hold them for a while...” Vanji reported to Agent Spacey and Dai.

Dai looked at one of the rifles he was holding, scowling at the depleted power pack and dropping it, “Let’s avoid any more fire fights, I’ve got all of one or two shots left in this rifle.”

Agent Simone Spacey nodded, “You don’t build labs like this without a bolt hole to escape from, let’s find Doctor Friedman before she escapes through it.”

The trio quickly entered the lab area, large areas dedicated to advanced bio-genetics of some unusual plant life as Spacey stopped and stared, “Dammit... This is bad.”

Vanji tilted her head at the agent, “Why what is it?”

Spacey looked pensively at the environmental chambers, “Looks like they’re cooking synthetic thionite here... One of the worst drugs in the galaxy, the only saving grace is it’s so rare and hard to obtain... But this... This is a nightmare...”

Dai looked over the lab, “A lot of combustibles and volatile chemicals here... So, grab the doctor and blow the lab.”

Vanji nodded, “Agreed... lets grab the doctor and perform a public safety service...”

Vanji’s voice trailed off as a beautiful woman walked into the lab while absently stuffing datapads into a case. Lifting her emerald flecked eyes from her task, they

widened in surprise at the sight of the intruders. “Who the hell are you? You’re not supposed to be here!”, she exclaimed.

Agent Spacey stepped forward, her eyes flashing, “Agent Simone Spacey, FGF! You’ve got a lot of explaining to do doctor back in Terran Space.”

Vanji raised a hand at Spacey, “A moment please agent... Doctor Anjeanette Friedman? I’m Vanjielle Aeon... Lassiter Angel’s daughter... Is my father... Alive?”

Doctor Friedman’s eyes softened almost instantly as she gazed at Vanji, quickly taking in the dainty woman’s features. “Oh, my dear Vanji... you look so much like your mother... But wait... If you’re here then....”

Friedman’s eyes suddenly once again widen as they landed on the mercenary. Licking her lips in fear she stared intently at Dai, hissing “You stupid fools! You’ve killed us all! He’s an Epsilon Genetics super soldier!”

Dai’s eyes narrowed mercilessly at Friedman, “It’s so nice to be recognized. You shouldn’t have left the Institute, Doctor. You’ve made a mess of things that I’ve been sent to clean up.”

A look of confusion crossed Spacey’s face, “Huh? What’s going on Dai?”

Dai looked at the petite woman with a look of genuine sadness in his eyes, expertly knocking her out with a swift blow from his rifle. “Sorry Kid... I’ll keep my promise to burn this lab down. But mission first...”

Vanji turned swiftly as she raised her gun toward the mercenary, his hand blurring as it reached out and crushed the pistol. “And you’re a mission bonus Mrs. Aeon.”

Dai’s rifle barked once, hitting the doctor and throwing her back like a ragdoll onto the floor.

Dire Straits

Chapter 3.11



Dai's hand reached out, grabbing Vanji by the throat his grip inexorably tightening and threatening to cut off her circulation, "You've got guts and nerve girl... Almost a shame really, but it's for the greater good."

"Ally! Full combat mode now!" Vanji screamed silently, "Hack into his hardware... Slow him down!"

"Combat mode fully operational!" Ally reported as Vanji felt a surge of strength and her vision overlaid with tactical combat information. Vanji kicked out with a shapely leg, the unexpected power of the augmented blow striking his face rocked the genetically enhanced soldier on his heels, loosening his grip.

Vanji kicked off from Dai, throwing herself back into a flip, she gracefully executed a three-point landing on the lab floor. Predictive algorithms locked onto her opponent, providing details of the most likely attack vectors and defenses.

"Van! There is NO hardware on him... You heard the doctor he's an Epsilon survivor... Like the Commander." Ally reported with a note of concern.

Vanji growled, as she slowly circled Dai, "I guess we'll have to go old school on him then."

Dai cracked his neck as he took a hand to hand combat stance, his eyes burning with glee, "I guess there's a bit more to you Vanji than reported... Not surprising, your father had a habit of building unexpected surprises."

Vanji hissed as her eyes narrowed dangerously, “What do you know about my father?”

“Van, don’t let him distract you... remember he’s strong and fast, but he’s got to move more mass than you... use the lab clutter to your advantage... aaaand... he’s about to jump you...” Ally advised.

Vanji’s tactical display gave her a fraction of a second warning as Dai surged forward, his fist rocketing toward her head, catching only air as she narrowly dodged the blow. Her nails enhanced by nanites to razor sharp points raked across his side, leaving a trail of blood along his body.

Dai almost instantly reversed his attack, his hand sweeping back to clip her shoulder and sending her tumbling back as he dropped into a defensive crouch, his eyes burning savagely as he growled, “Very good Vanji, it’s been a long time since I’ve had a good fight...”

Suddenly the building shook and rumbled, causing the soldier to look up, “Breaching charge... looks like I’m going to have to finish up with you quickly.”

Dai’s motions blurred as the genetically enhanced soldier charged again, his fist cutting through the air as Vanji desperately rolled with the oncoming blow as it knocked her across the room, feeling the sickening snap in her ribcage.

Dai moved toward her as she scrambled back, Ally working hard to dampen the pain and repair the damage. “And now we end this...”

As Dai raised his fist, an armored body slammed into him in a blur of gleaming white and alloy steel, knocking him back from Vanji.

Morgan crouched down and gently helped Vanji to her feet, his eyes never leaving Dai as he watched the big warrior roll into a combat crouch, “Need a hand Vanji?”

Clash of Titans

Chapter 3.12



Vanji looked up as the two men faced off against each other, slowly circling as each looked at the other for an opening to attack. “Morgan! He’s like you! An Epsilon survivor!”

Morgan’s eyes widened in recognition as he whispered, “Dai? I thought you were dead....”

Dai laughed softly, “Now this is unexpected... I’ve watched your career as the Union’s guard dog, playing the good soldier for fools while I’m trying to save humanity!”

Vanji winced as she took a deep breath and thought, “Ow! Dammit Ally I need those ribs fixed!”

“I’m working on it Van... a little slower and he’d of crushed your sternum into your heart.” Ally replied.

“Get me back into this fight Ally, I don’t think these two are going crack open a beer and talk about old times at the mad scientist’s lab...”

Morgan growled, “You think torturing to death a bunch of children is going to save humanity if an Ikarian World Ship decides to sterilize this arm of the galaxy like they did millions of years ago?”

“Bah! You aren’t looking at the long game and I don’t have time for this!” Dai spat as he rushed toward Morgan.

Vanji watched as the two genetically engineered super soldiers clashed in a blur of action, standing toe to toe, neither gaining a clear advantage as each countered the blows of the other. Each moved with a speed and precision that was both beautiful and frightening to behold, both landing a heavy blow simultaneously and forcing both men apart from the force of their attacks.

Dai resumed a combat stance as one clawed hand felt his ribs, wincing, “I think you cracked a few ribs with that punch... I’d have paid money to watch this fight.”

Morgan matched Dai move for move as they circled each other again, grinning savagely, “Next time don’t come to a fight in a thong, I don’t think any of the ladies here are going to tip you. If it makes you feel better, you’ve wrecked a quarter million credits of armor.”

“Ok Van, you’re patched up as good as we can do without a med bay... try to not get hit in the ribs again...” Ally warned.

“No promises Ally... And there they go again!” As Vanji crouched low, her body coiled like a spring waiting for the right moment to attack.

Morgan and Dai surged together again, Dai raking his carballoy claws at Morgan in a savage frenzied blur of attacks, forcing the Commander to focus wholly on defense as the claws scored the hardened alloys of his space armor. At that moment Vanji leaped into the melee, pushing off with all the speed and force she could muster and planting her boot like a jackhammer into Dai’s jaw, knocking him off balance as Morgan’s fists blurred as one powerful punch after another hammered into his torso.

Thrown back, Dai’s eyes glared malevolently at the pair, snarling, “You can’t beat me... You’re not strong enough...”

Morgan smiled as he felt a familiar presence behind him, “I don’t have to beat you... I just have to delay you...”

Dai’s face paled as he whispered, “The Witch...” before his body was jerked up into the air.

A sultry voice filled the room, “You know, I’m not really fond of that title...” as Lin walked into the room, psionic energies rippling in waves off of her body.

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Dai's muscles corded and bulged as he pushed against the implacable force holding him immobile. Lin strode into the Lab, one hand raised imperiously, the bright blue glow of her hand matching the aura surrounding the rogue warrior.

Morgan rolled a shoulder, smiling at the beautiful T'val'len Adept, "Perfect timing Lin. You got him?"

Lin's smile didn't reach her eyes as she nodded, approaching Dai, her mind already attempting to probe his thoughts, but finding the same shifting thought patterns as the Commander. Raising a shapely brow, "A relative of yours Morgan?"

Morgan looked up from where he was helping Agent Spacey back on her feet, "In a sense... Another Epsilon."

Spacey looked up at the floating Dai, "You sonofabitch! I paid you! I should shoot you in the ass!"

Dai's eyes moved as he tried to turn his head, "Sorry kid, No refunds."

Turning his eyes toward the shapely Adept, Dai grinned wickedly, "Oh now I've heard stories about this one... Quite the passionate... aackk..." Dai's comments choked off as Lin clenched her fist, her power flowing about her angry countenance, "You... You touched my wife...", she growled as his eyes rolled back, slipping into unconsciousness.

Lin's body sagged a little and Vanji wrapped an arm around Lin's waist. "I've got you Lin, its ok. I take it Dai is out for a while?"

Lin nodded, her eyes turning to meet Vanji's, a chilling sharpness in her gaze slowly softened, and she wrapped her arms around Vanji. "My favorite pair of misfits," she whispered, "hello Ally, hi my love."

"Hiiiiii Lin! Your telepathy seems clearer to me... We really missed you" Ally whispered on their internal channel. Lin chuckled and spoke on their private link, "It's part of all that witchy T'val'len stuff, but I'm ok now."

Shar crouched over the still form of Doctor Friedman, working with calm efficiency, "Commander! She's still alive, but we need to get her to a med bay ASAP!"

Morgan tapped his comm, "Overwatch, we need an immediate dust off and prep the med bay for casualties. Astra to forward details..."

Vanji reached out to touch Morgan's arm, "Commander, we need to burn this lab down... Synthetic thionite..."

Morgan blinked "Synthetic? Fuck... Mira! Take a squad and rig this place to blow... I don't want two grains of plasticrete sticking together when you're done."

Mira smiled, "Ah you spoil me Commander. I so love making things go boom!"

Morgan clapped his hands, "Ok people, grab anything that looks like a data chip or pad. A lot more is going on here than we expected and I want all the intel we can grab. Smiling he turned to watch Lin and Vanji embrace and gently touch their foreheads together in silent communion.