**A Practical Guide to Galactic Domination**

**A Practical Guide to Evil x Star Wars Crossover**

**Chapter 1**

**The Middle of Nowhere**

Disclaimer 1: I don’t own Star Wars. I would have tried far more original plots for certain trilogies if this was the case. I don’t own A Practical Guide to Evil. It belongs to our Lord and Saviour erraticerrata, and I am only an unworthy disciple using a shadow of his genius.

Disclaimer 2: I decided to mix elements of the Disney-verse and the Legends-verse with this timeline. As such, if you sees things largely diverging from canon, it is very much deliberate and in no way a mistake.

**Twenty-three years after the Battle of Yavin**

**Western Marches of the Inner Rim**

**Jakku System**

**Jakku**

Leaving the Star Destroyer *Immortal* behind me, I had a splendid view on an endless landscape of sand and nothingness.

Truly, when the Gods Below thought reincarnation would do me some good, they had not been thinking small.

I was truly in the middle of nowhere.

I could hear Hakram’s laughter in my ears. ‘Catherine, the middle of nowhere doesn’t exist!’

I thought the same thing once or twice during my first life.

But it was before landing on this sandy immensities and experiencing the true middle of nowhere.

In Galactic Basic Standard, the most common language of this galaxy spoken in civilised company, the name of the planet is Jakku.

I won’t reveal what it is called in Huttese, I would probably be censored by proper authorities...not that there are much of them anywhere near this orb of dust and ruin.

There are some good points, of course. For one, the fauna is somehow less lethal and carnivorous than the one I was familiar in the Dread Empire of Praes. Back there, even goats had taken to eat meat, and the less said about the sentient tigers, the giant spiders and other tapir-like monsters, the better.

For all the bad luck it had suffered in history, Jakku had at least managed to avoid being used as a testing ground for the mad creations of a Dread Emperor or two.

Lowering the mask I use to protect myself against the sand and the sun for a few seconds, I took my water jug and emptied it into my mouth. The water provided some temporary satisfaction, but there wasn’t enough of it.

There never was, and since it was empty, it meant the daily expedition was at an end.

Only idiots and fools stayed in the Star Graveyard when they had no more water, and I prided myself, like my father and mentor before me, on being a pragmatic woman – though the age of its body being what it was, most people would insist I add a ‘young’ before it.

Water, food, and fuel; these were the unholy trinity of things you couldn’t ever stop thinking of on Jakku, and the reason why there were so few scavengers running wild around the planet. Well, I suppose there were also the sand storms, the packs of carrion birds assailing the travellers when they had enough of starving, and other scavengers ready to kill you if they believed they could get away with it.

“Truly the middle of nowhere,” I murmured, before surfing down the dune where the *Immortal* was stuck for eternity. It was the most enjoying activity of a scavenging hunt, and I had become quite good at it, if I said so myself. Alas, neither Indrani nor any of the Woe weren’t in sight to judge my performance and laugh about it afterwards around a bonfire.

There had been a few fellow scavengers who had had the opportunity to observe me doing it some two years ago, but unfortunately for them, they had tried to rob me of the spare parts I had just taken from a Republic cruiser’s wreck. I had given them a few blaster shots in their heads to reward them of their courage. Curiously, attempts to steal my stuff had decreased to zero after that.

Even on a sandy world like Jakku, word was getting around. The miracles of intelligence network and rumours, I suppose.

My speeder was waiting for me where I’d left it. I’d built it from my own hands once I’d learned enough about this ‘technology’ the gnomes had made sure to deny us poor mortals on Creation, and once it had been done I’d painted it in red. Why red? Because after being called the Black Queen, the Apprentice of the Black Knight, and being the High Priestesses of the Night, there was no way I was going to paint my sole and only method of transport in the colour of darkness. Besides, I’d been able to grab only red, black and yellow paint in my scavenging hunts. And it was out of the question I used the latter on Jakku or anywhere else, it was far too...heroic.

Three Steelpeckers waited around the speeder, like they’d done since I’ve left it. A native Jakkuvian would wonder why these notorious metal-eaters hadn’t tried to snap at the droid parts and other components I had stashed on the speeder’s side, and the answer was simple.

These mangy and ragged carrion birds were dead, and if the image of life they presented was only an illusion, courtesy of me raising them after having taken their lives.

Yes, I was still able to play necromancer like I had done with goats and other animals in another life.

Obviously, the ability was incredibly limited, worse than it had been when I was the Squire. I needed line of sight to control my undead minions, and complex orders were out of the question. It was too bad, because the Steelpeckers were able to locate many precious metals like vanadium, osniridum, and corundum. If I’d been able to muster a few groups of semi-sentient birds for excavation parties, I would be far richer than I was.

“**Move**,” I Spoke to them, taking great care to visualise the top of the speeder, and insisting a second time they’d better not hurt my transport.

Some good citizens might say these undead Steelpeckers were too much to deal with a few scavengers and other hostile animals and birds, but I wasn’t taking any chance. My personal weapons were limited to a quarterstaff, five blasters, and some landmines I had emplaced around my ‘home’ in the Badlands.

Too bad for them, I wasn’t of the opinion it was too unbalanced to deal with potential enemies. While I had the ability to evoke some pseudo-Aspects and Speak more or less on demand, I was definitely not Named. I wasn’t hard to injure. My skin was as tough as those of any human normally born. I wasn’t going to live forever at such a young age. I wasn’t a Villain in the prime of her life. And while no one had tried to kill me from the planet’s orbit, this was definitely a possibility on Jakku, since the planet had no advanced shield to use as protection.

This was one of the many things making this galaxy – or at least the tiny part I was able to observe – so goddamned strange, I reflected, as I made my speeder roar and I directed towards the east and Niima Outpost. It was evident there were million intelligent species where technology allowed you to travel across the stars in mere days, but magic had obviously not followed this progress curve...despite the fact it obviously existed.

I could draw on *something*, after all, to Speak, invoke some weak Aspects, and change more ugly birds into undead sentinels. There was power in this galaxy, even if the rules were visibly quite different from what they were on Calernia. The prime example being no one had tried to conjure demons or angels in living memories.

I had heard the old tales and read enough records from old Republic and Imperial computers to at least have the ‘local’ galactic designation: the *Force*. Yes, a really imaginative name, the person who invented it must have been quite a genius. There had also been legends, vague archives, and parcelled rumours about the Jedi, an Order which used it. Whether they were Heroes or Villains generally depended on whether you were reading through an Imperial or Republican database.

So far, these researches had been more to satisfy my curiosity than anything else.

When I was young, I was half-way persuaded that soon, an old hermit would approach me to confide me I was the long-lost son of a noble hero or the last hope of a great kingdom, sent to these dunes to be protected from my defunct parents’ many enemies. Or there was a magical sword, one of those rumoured lightsabers, waiting me in the catacombs somewhere.

Hey, it happened on Callow, it could happen here too. The power of stories and roles isn’t to be underestimated.

The problem with this dream was that it had remained a dream. There were plenty of humans coming and leaving Niima Outpost and the other settlements on Jakku – sometimes the ‘leave’ part was far more permanent than they had imagined – but as far as old hermits or mysterious wizards and warlocks were concerned, I hadn’t seen a single one. I hadn’t seen a magical sword in my new life. And where my parents were concerned, based on the fading memories I had of them, I was quite sure they were the ones who sold me to Niima the Hutt when I was two or three.

And believe me, if you loved your children, you weren’t trying to sell them to one of those enormous slugs.

No, that’s not an insult. A Hutt is the intelligent version of a slug. A species which should have felt at home in the Free City of Mercantis, since they would sell their firstborn child for more power and precious resources.

In hindsight, I had realised quickly in my childhood how lucky I was to make myself indispensable finding – after some disastrous attempts at wielding **Find** - among the many scavengers in service of Her Excellency the Hutt. Some other youngsters had failed to give heed to her warnings, and were now collared slaves.

Anyway, this was the situation. There had been an ‘Evil Empire’ ruled by someone who would have had a fair shoot being recognised as Dread Emperor, but like Triumphant – may she never return – the man’s ego had gotten the better of him and once the noble heroes of the Rebellion had killed him with the equivalent of his modern super-flying fortress, his Empire had collapsed like its foundations had been built on sand. There was no central authority able to exert any kind of control over the warlords, and thousands of planets had been torn to cinders. Jakku itself had seen the last stand of an entire Fleet of the Galactic Empire, though both Jakkuvians and Imperials studying the Star Graveyard were unable to explain why Admiral Natasi Daala had chosen the middle of nowhere to die.

There were still many remnants existing today, but they didn’t reign over the galaxy anymore. Instead a Republic was governing most of the known galaxy, something that had sounded like a joke when I learned it the first time.

The madmen of Bellerophon would have screamed in joy at the prospect. Personally, I was horrified. Calernia had many horrors and disreputable forms of government, but even the High Lords of Praes had never been so evil to let the disease of democracy take root on their soil. Once you authorised something like this, it was unavoidably the rule of chaos coming for you.

Fortunately, this wasn’t my problem. I was stuck on Jakku.

On reflexion, maybe ‘stuck’ was the wrong choice of words. I had put aside enough money in solid currencies to pay myself a travel off-world after cancelling my life-debt from Huttese ownership. But I would arrive to my final destination penniless, without any identification chips, no real qualifications supported by licenses and diplomas.

I had numerous skills, not counting the necromancy and my forays into Named skills – but much like my illegal fighting in the Pit a life ago, I was really sure that ‘Catherine, Expert in Scavenging and Dealing with your Problems Permanently’ was not how you began a hiring session.

And so I was continuing to work on Jakku and save as much money as I could once the water, food and fuel expenses were subtracted from my income. Maybe if I had been more gullible and naive, I would have awaited my so-called ‘parents’ to return, but after more than fifteen years and the past of life of being an orphan, I had abandoned all hope of this happening many years ago. I had discarded the first name they had given me – who wanted to be called ‘Rey’ anyway? - and I was known once more as Catherine Foundling, expert scavenger of Jakku.

This was not an enjoyable life. Once the scavenging work was done, there were no boys or girls of my age I wanted to enjoy the company to, or frankly any other non-human I felt close. There had been these two furry Wookies three years ago who had been interesting to listen to – I had learned Shyriiwook just to listen to their legends and war stories – but they had not lasted long, as the sand storms were too much for their furs and they had left for another world.

Most of the other scavengers were best kept at least a dagger away, truthfully. They would sell you to the first slaver in the vicinity if they were told this would earn them a free seat out of the planet.

I had to pass home to depose my undead birds and the precious parts I wanted to use at my home – a former downed Imperial AT-AT – so it was late when I reached Niima Outpost, and it was even later when I was admitted in the underground cantina where Niima welcomed scavengers, clients, slavers, and everyone who for one reason or another wanted to speak with her.

The tunnels and the underground structures were always crowded when I visited during the day hours, and today was no exception. Most of the population of Niima Outpost, temporary or permanent, was doing its business underground. When there was an average of one sand storm every two days, everything and everyone who wanted to live more than a few days followed the trend and went underground. I had adapted the same technique with the walker and several ‘**Dig**’ Aspect tests in the Badlands.

There were several new heads among the customers of the cantina, but I didn’t spend much time examining them one by one. If they lasted a few days, their names would be known soon enough; if not, I wouldn’t and the dunes would erase their very memory.

“Catherine, my girl,” I spoke Huttese like most residents of the outpost, but the words arrived to my ears in Basic, as Niima had around her enormous neck an elaborate translation device. “I trust your scavenging was profitable?”

“It was, your High Excellency,” notice my total absence of jokes, humour, and attempt to use sarcasm. Niima the Hutt’s ego was absurdly large, but she had also the firepower of several smuggling ships at her disposal and quite a few hunters to get rid of the problems. In addition to this, she was for all intent and purpose the Queen of Jakku. If she decided a certain Catherine wasn’t to receive her rations of water and solid food anymore, no one would sell them to me.

I placed first the lesser prizes of my visit aboard the *Immortal*. Most of it both the female Hutt and all scavengers were rather familiar with: energy converters, droids photoreceptors, old models of blasters, holographic emitters, and various pieces of advanced technology I had extracted from the *Immortal*’s bridge.

“As always, you do not disappoint,” the Basic translation wasn’t perfect, but I feigned to not have noticed several insults which were lost somewhere in between; they were more addressed to my competitors than to me. “I think I can-“

And then I theatrically placed the small container in front of the very large and red body, and I saw the huge eyes comically widen.

“Still potent?” the female crime-boss of Jakku asked me as she eyed the Bacta container.

I nodded curtly.

“It was a pain finding a small refrigerated unit still intact in the medical wing.”

“Catherine, my girl, you have done very, very well,” the Hutt tried very hard to not look at me incredibly satisfied – I was not going to tell her she was failing – and called one of her protocol droids by her side. “Two years ago, I would have offered you four thousand New Republic Credits for the Bacta alone.”

This time I allowed myself a smile. On the point of New Republic Credits, all the scavengers of Jakku had the same opinion, and it could be summed-up in a few Huttese insults or a word five letters-long in Basic. And I knew the Hutt shared the poor monetary opinion we had of the Credit.

“And five months ago, I think this would have made ten thousand Credits,” I didn’t know what by the Heavens the Republicans were doing with their money recently, but if I was their advisor, I would tell them to stop. “Do you have any Druggats, your High Excellency?”

The Druggat was the currency of the Hutt Cartels, and while I didn’t like accumulating many coins based on slavery and most illicit activities of the galaxy, it was the best choice among a range of very unpleasant things.

“Druggats, Druggats!” Niima spat along with a few insults in her mother tongue. “You scavengers all want Druggats. I am not the one who creates them!”

No, but the Hutt was definitely the one who had the best access to them on Jakku.

“But you are my favourite scavenger, Catherine, my girl,” the red-coloured Hutt grumbled with a pitiful look which was completely fake. “I will give you ten Druggats for all your discoveries. The rest I will complete in other currencies.”

This was obviously far less than I had expected to get for the Bacta, but with Niima, bargaining had limited advantages and tended to irritate the ‘boss’.

“What sort of currencies are we talking about?” I asked cautiously.

For sole answer, a droid poured on the table separating me from Niima a small mountain of coins, chips and tiny objects which I had no doubt served as currency...somewhere. At least there were a few Calamari Flans, Wupiupi Bonds, and Pentastar Crowns eminently recognisable.

The ten Druggats, big and large golden coins, were posed last on the table with the reverence appropriate to the Huttese money.

Most of these currencies were already familiar to me, but there was a new one in the pile. It had the form of a black rectangle-shaped object, quite similar in truth to the old Imperial Credit – something completely devoid of any value now that there was no government left to back it.

“I’ve never seen one of those,” I freely admitted. “It comes from one of the Remnants?” Nearly two decades after the destruction of the Empire, there were still plenty of men and women playing warlords in the Outer Rim, and each had their own methods to raise money from loyal and not-so-loyal subjects, if the rumours could be believed.

Niima chuckled, though unlike the sound coming from a human throat, it was quite horrible to experience and my ears suffered in consequence.

“What you have in your hands, my girl, is a First Mark, the money of the First Order,” the female Hutt replied. “They have reopened trade with the Cartels recently.”

It was an evasive reply, but I let the owner of the Outpost get away with it.

“That will do if I can have two litres of waters and five rations with those, your High Excellency.”

Niima had fleeced me again, but I had my pride of Callowan Queen. And I always needed to eat and drink, unfortunately, no matter how indigestible the Jakkuvian cuisine proved to be.

“Deal.”

I was beginning to place the money in my purse when I felt it.

There was a pulse of power.

If I had been on a battle on a Calernian battlefield, I would have compared it to the birth of a new Named.

I was assailed by faint screams, and pleas of mercy. There were flames dancing, and the sensation dozens of lives were ending.

It ended as fast as it had begun. In the cantina, no one seemed to have felt it like I did.

But I had not imagined it. Something badly wrong had happened, and it had been *close*. That much I was certain of.

It had happened on Jakku, or very close to it.

I showed no sign of it when I saluted Niima, thanked her for her non-existent generosity, and left the cantina, pursued by the envious eyes of several lower-class scavengers.

Deep inside, I was...conflicted. Something was going to happen.

Something that was no doubt going to shatter all the plans I had imagined to get off this planet of sands, wrecks, and loneliness.

And I was alone to face it.

I sighed, before murmuring one familiar answer to the Gods Above and Below as I jumped on my mighty *Zombie* speeder.

“Let them take a swing. See where it gets them.”