

[Back To Index](#)

This story was written just for fun and is not an attempt to make money or infringe on any copyrights or trademarks. Only the original ideas contained within the works on this nonprofit web site are the property of their authors, and please do not copy or link these stories to any other website or archive or print without permission of the author.

Just a Dream

by [Cheree Cargill](#)

The spherical droid whirred and brought the syringe closer. Leia backed hastily away from it, came up against the sleeping ledge and scrambled up onto it, her back wedged into the corner. She could go no further and the droid bore inexorably down on her. As she huddled away from it, she felt a curious numbness spread through her body and, though she wanted desperately to move, she found that her muscles would not respond to her bidding. The droid moved in on her and she felt the needle prick her upper arm. within a few seconds, it withdrew and moved to the upper corner of the room.

Vader bent over her and moved one hand slightly. Immediately, her paralyzed muscles came back to life and she slumped down. "Do not make things more difficult, Your Highness," he said. "Fighting the serum will only cause you more pain."

"I'll never tell you anything," she spat back, already uncomfortably aware of the disorganized feeling stealing over her. It crept like a warm river through her mind, opening doors and sealed chambers that she thought were well locked. She shook her head and tried to clear her thoughts.

"Where is the rebel base!" Vader asked.

"No," she answered.

"Where have you hidden the plans to this station?"

"... No!" It was more difficult this time.

Focus -- she needed focus. If she could just concentrate on something, she could block out Vader and his questions. Something ... anything ... Her eyes came to rest on the hovering black droid and her gaze locked on it. With all her might, she concentrated on it--its shape, its color, the soft mechanical whirr it made. Dimly, she was aware of Vader's presence and his droning voice. Must block him out. Must use the hypnotechniques she'd been taught in case of interrogation. Concentrate ...

Gradually, the outline of the droid became that of Alderaan, a beautiful blue jewel nest-led against the diamond studded black velvet sky. She took a step forward in protest and Vader's gloved hand reached out and pulled her roughly back against him. She struggled against his grip, her horror-stricken eyes locked on the world before her. Tarkin stood calmly, watching as the Death Star's destructive energies were activated for the first time. Around them, black-clad men quickly and efficiently fed in readings and pulled levers. It seemed as if the very deck beneath her feet vibrated as the beams gathered themselves and shot forth.

The plasma beams met and coalesced for second, writhing like living beings, then they combined and streaked towards Alderaan--

Leia sat bolt upright and screamed. Before the sound had time to die away, Han was there and had his arms around her. In one corner of her mind, she knew where she was now--in his cabin on the Millennium Falcon, on her way Bespin, with Han's deep voice murmuring reassuringly in her ear, "It's all right, Leia. It was just a dream. You're safe now."

In relief as well as lingering horror, she sank against him and buried her face in his shoulder, surrendering to the tears, to the grief for lost Alderaan. Han rocked her gently in his embrace and twined his fingers through her long dark hair, pressing her head against him. Chewbacca stood in the doorway, alarmed too by her cries, and Han looked at him and nodded toward the galley. Chewie gave a small woof of comprehension and went out.

Leia's sobbing had abated somewhat when Chewie returned bearing a cup of steaming liquid and Han held her away from him, bringing up the lights in the cabin until he could see her face clearly. Chewie handed him the cup and he held it up to Leia's lips.

"Here. Drink just a little. It'll relax you." She gave a shuddering sigh and drank. It was dark, sweet klavan and it spread its warmth through her as she swallowed. She took another sip, more calmly now, and held the cup between both hands, savoring the aromatic steam that arose from it.

"You okay now?" Han asked and she nodded then felt a little stab of surprise as she looked at him for the first time. He was sitting on the edge of her bunk, clad

only in his undershorts and a loose, open robe. She had never seen him undressed before and suddenly felt shy, embarrassed, to see him so. He must have read her thoughts, for he unobtrusively closed his robe and peered into her face. "Leia?"

"I'm okay. Thanks. What time is it?"

O2OO. Middle of the night.

"I'm sorry. I didn't mean to wake you Chewie ..."

What was wrong, little one? Chewie asked, reaching out to stroke her hair with his great paw, as if she were his cub, in need of comfort.

'Bad dream,' she answered, bringing the cup back up to her lips.

'You wanna talk about it?' Han asked.

She closed her eyes and the scenes again swam before her. She shuddered involuntarily. "It was Vader ... and Tarkin, on the Death Star: I was back in my cell and Vader was interrogating me. Then I was on the bridge watching them destroy Alderaan. And ... and through it all, I kept feeling that Vader was ... enjoying it ... was pleased with what was happening."

She reached out and caught his hand again. She started to tremble again at the memories but opened her eyes as she felt Han cup her face in his strong hands. She almost expected a flippant reply, but there was no humor in his face. His hazel eyes intent, he told her, "You're safe now, Leia. Vader'll have to go through me to get to you again. I promise -- I won't let him hurt you again."

Leia felt the tears welling up unbidden again but Han checked them with his expression of love and concern. "Okay?" he asked. "You believe me?"

She managed a smile and a mute nod. 'Good,' he said and the mood was immediately lighter.

Leia had finished the klavan and was beginning to feel her eyelids growing heavy once more.

Han noticed and took the cup from her, handing it back to Chewie with a grateful look. The Wookiee said goodnight and left the cabin.

When Leia had snuggled back down into her bed, Han pulled the blankets up around her and knelt so that he was eye-level with her. Gently, he pushed an errant strand of hair from her face and bent to kiss her forehead. "If you need me, call me. I'm as close as comlink. We'll be on Bespin by tomorrow and then we'll

work hard on setting those dreams to rest for good. Now, go to sleep princess," he said, making it a term of endearment.

She reached out and caught his hand as he stood. "Thank you, Han. I really--"

"I know," he broke in hastily, then squeezed her hand and kissed her gently once more. "Sweet dreams, Leia."

There was so much she wanted to say to him, but sleep was settling heavily over her and she felt warm and loved as he went to the door and dimmed the lights down to soft darkness. For an instant, he was silhouetted against the light from the corridor, then the door slid shut and he was gone. Leia sighed and closed her eyes. She'd tell him tomorrow, once they'd reached Bespin. They had plenty of time and she could wait.

End

[Back To Index](#)