

# Ekkreth

*Fialleril*



## Authors

<https://www.fanfiction.net/u/1015225/Fialleril>

<https://archiveofourown.org/users/InvaderTim/pseuds/InvaderTim>

## Stories

<https://www.fanfiction.net/s/11376599/>

<https://www.fanfiction.net/s/11101031/>

<https://archiveofourown.org/works/8843278>

<https://glowfic.com/replies/773639#reply-773639>



# The Slave Who Makes Free

## *Fialleril, Double Agent Vader Ch. 21*

Listen, children, here is a story.

Once, long ago, as Ekkreth was going along, they passed by Depur's palace and saw the people there hard at work, building a great cage of metal and stone. And Depur's enforcers drove them cruelly, so their groans filled the air.

Then Ekkreth took a shape like a wealthy merchant, and stopping beside the chief enforcer they asked, "What is it you are building here, and why do your slaves groan so loudly?"

The enforcer saw that he was addressing a rich outlander, and so he answered respectfully. "They are building a cage, sir," he said. "And when it is completed we will lock them away in it when their day's work is done. For they are a rebellious lot, and too many have tried to run away."

"That seems wise," said Ekkreth. "But how can you be certain they will not escape the cage?"

"They would need the strength of the burrowing womp rat to do that!" the enforcer laughed. And he showed Ekkreth how strong the walls of the cage were, and how firm the foundation, and how perfectly rounded the dome that enclosed the space. And Ekkreth looked and nodded, and agreed that surely no slave could escape from such a strong cage.

That day the cage was completed, and that night all the people were locked inside. But Ekkreth went out into the desert and found Womp Rat, who snarled and bit at them, but could not hold them, because Ekkreth had so many shapes.

At last Womp Rat sat back on his haunches and said, "I know you, shape-changer. You are Ekkreth the Trickster, and the one has not been born who can hold you. What is it you want of me?"

Then Ekkreth took a rat's shape and they said, "Teach me the secret of your burrowing strength."

"I will teach you," said Womp Rat, "if you will then promise to leave me in peace."

So Ekkreth learned the secret of Womp Rat's great burrowing strength, and the next night they came and said to the people in the cage, "Listen, Children of the Mother, for I have learned the secret of Womp Rat's strength."

And the people listened, and they learned the secret of Womp Rat and in the darkness they dug a tunnel down, down, down, through the shifting sands and the bedrock beneath, and so escaped from the cage and out into the hidden places in the desert, and in the morning Depur came and found that all his slaves had gone

One day as Ekkreth was going along they passed a great crowd of the people, groaning and lamenting as they worked under the baking suns. They were digging an immense pit, and already its sides were so steep and so far down that the diggers had to be lowered in large baskets to the bottom.

So Ekkreth took the form of an outlander dressed in rich purple clothing, and going to the chief overseer they asked, "What is it these slaves are digging here? It cannot be a well, for I see no water."

The overseer scoffed at the outlander's foolishness, but he did so quietly, because he thought his visitor was wealthy. So instead he said, "Sir, they are digging their own prison. For these slaves are a troublesome and ungrateful lot, and they are forever trying to escape. So when it is completed we will lower them into this pit, with its smooth sides that cannot be climbed, and there they will stay until the Master has need of them."

Ekkreth nodded slowly, as though very impressed, and then said, "But how can you be sure they will not find some other way out, if they are as stubborn as you say?"

The overseer laughed. "No doubt they will try," he said. "But they would need the wings and the stinging persistence of the kirik fly!"

"I see you have thought of every possibility," said Ekkreth approvingly, and they left the overseer there feeling very pleased with himself.

But Ekkreth went out into the desert, to the cliffs where Kirik Fly lives. And immediately Kirik Fly came buzzing out of her home and tried to sting Ekkreth. But they only laughed and look the shape of their mighty daughter, whose skin is impervious even to the storm.

Then Kirik Fly snapped her wings in irritation and settling on Ekkreth's head she said, "I know you, Sky-walker. What do you want? For I know you will give me no peace until you have what you came for."

"That is true," said Ekkreth. "I want to know the secret of your stinging persistence, and I will not leave you be until I have learned it."

"It would seem you already know," buzzed Kirik Fly. "Certainly you are irksome enough already."

Then Ekkreth laughed, and told her what Depur's overseer had said.

"I will teach you my secret," said Kirik Fly. "But only because Depur's overseer has dared to invoke me, and I will have him know just how great is my stinging persistence."

So she showed Ekkreth how she used her stinger to make many small holes in the cliff side, until they joined together to become tunnels and great gouges.

Then Ekkreth thanked her and went on their way. Twice more Kirik Fly tried to sting them as they left, but she could not touch Ekkreth.

That night the slaves had all been lowered into the pit, and Ekkreth came among them and said, "Listen, Children of the Mother, for I have learned the secret of Kirik Fly's stinging persistence."

So all the people listened, and in the weeks that followed, each night after they were lowered into the pit, slowly they carved out grooves in its smooth sides, until they had made for themselves a way to the top. And the following night, when they were again lowered into the pit, the strongest of them climbed out, overcame the guards, and lowered the baskets into the pit. So the people escaped, and in the morning when Depur came he found all his slaves gone.



It happened once that as Ekkreth was going along, they passed by Depur's forges and saw the people there hard at work, crafting and shaping many chains. Some were small and cleverly wrought, and others strained the backs of those who held them, their links as long as a grown human's arm. There were many overseers there, laughing cruelly among themselves and prodding their slaves to work faster.

So Ekkreth took the shape of a wealthy outlander and said to the chief overseer, "What are all these chains your slaves are building? Can you have so many beasts to hold?"

The overseer bowed his head slightly, because he took Ekkreth for a woman of means, and he said, "Lady, these chains are not for any beasts, unless those beasts be the slaves themselves, for they are a brutish lot, and given to violence. With these chains we will restrain them."

Then Ekkreth gasped as though afraid and said, "If they are as violent as you say, how can you be sure that even these chains will hold them?"

"You needn't fear, Lady," said the overseer. "For these slaves would need the immense strength of the bantha to break these chains."

"I see that you are prepared," said Ekkreth. "So I will sleep soundly tonight."

Then Ekkreth left the overseers and their chains and went out into the desert. They journeyed long and far by secret ways, until they came to the place of hidden water where Bantha was with all her herd. And when Bantha smelled an intruder, she rushed at Ekkreth and tried to trample them. But Ekkreth became a scurrier and leapt nimbly aside, then a kirik fly and flitted into the air, stinging at Bantha's thick hide until she huffed and said, "I know you, Shape-Changer. Cease your stinging and tell me what you want."

So Ekkreth took a bantha's shape and said, "Grandmother, teach me the secret of your immense strength."

"Tell me why I should," said Bantha.

Ekkreth told her about the many chains Depur had forced his slaves to make, and all that the overseer had said.

Then Bantha said, "You might have told me this first, Trickster. I will gladly help you, for I hate Depur and all his chains. And this is my secret: a chain may bind one, but no chain can bind a whole herd together."

And that night, when all the people were locked in the chains they had labored to make, Ekkreth came among them and said, "Listen, Children of the Mother, for I have learned the secret of Bantha's immense strength."

Then all the people listened, and they drew together and laid hands on the chains that bound the eldest Grandmother among them, and with the strength of many hands they tore the chain asunder. Then the Grandmother lent her hands to the effort, and another chain was broken, and another and another, until all the people were freed and they disappeared into the desert, following the way Ekkreth had shown them to the place of hidden water. And in the morning when Depur came, he found all his slaves gone.

One day, as Ekkreth was going along, they passed by the workshops of Depur's enforcers, and saw something very strange. Many of the people were there, their backs bent over their work, crafting collars of metal and wires.

Then Ekkreth took a shape like a merchant from the Core Worlds, well-fed and dressed head-to-toe in purple, and they came to the chief enforcer there and said, "What is it these chattel are laboring at so industriously?"

The enforcer sketched a bow, because he believed Ekkreth was very rich, and then he laughed. "They are making collars for themselves, and when the collars are done we will lock them around the necks of these ungrateful and rebellious slaves. For they learn slowly, and are forever trying to escape."

"I see," said Ekkreth, looking down their nose at the enforcer, in the way of rich outlanders who believe they understand many things. "But surely they could simply escape wearing the collars?"

The enforcer began to laugh, but he caught himself, remembering the great wealth of this outlander, and he said, "Oh no, sir. Because these collars contain detonators, and if any of these dull slaves is foolish enough to attempt escape, we will set them off, and all the others will know what comes to those who defy Depur."

"How ingenious!" crowed Ekkreth in feigned delight. "But how can you be sure they will not find some way to disable the detonators, if they are as stubborn as you say?"

"You need have no fear of that!" said the enforcer. "For they would need all the cunning of the wild anooba to escape these collars."

"Well, I see you have thought of everything," said Ekkreth. And they complimented the enforcer profusely and then went away, making as though for the spaceport.

And that evening the collars were completed, and they were locked about the neck of every slave, from the oldest grandmother to the youngest child.

But Ekkreth went out into the desert, and they walked for three nights beneath the moons, until they came to the great cliffs where Anooba lives with her pack. And as Ekkreth approached they were set upon by a great many of Anooba's

grandchildren. But Ekkreth had so many shapes that they could not be caught by strength or tooth or claw. Then at last the eldest of the grandchildren called his siblings to hold, and he said, "I know you, Shape-Changer. What is it that you seek here?"

"Let me speak to your Grandmother, and you will know," said Ekkreth.

So Ekkreth was brought to Anooba, who eyed them long and shrewdly. "What evil has Depur done now?" she asked, for she knew Depur's ways, and Ekkreth's too.

Ekkreth told her, and when the tale was told they said, "Grandmother, teach me the secret of your wild cunning."

Then Anooba laughed. "You have a store of cunning of your own, I think, Sky-walker," she said. "But for the sake of Ar-Amu's children I will teach you."

And she allowed Ekkreth to place a fetter around her neck, and so proved true the saying that Anooba is the most daring of all those who walk in the wastes, and mightiest of all but one.

Then she called all her family to her, and they were howling in rage because their Grandmother had been bound. But Anooba called the youngest of all her grandchildren, and she twisted about, loosening the bond until the child's claws could slip into the mechanism. It was a complicated thing, but Anooba's cunning was so great that she could feel all the secret movements within the collar, and under her direction the child prevailed, and the collar fell broken but unburnt to the sand.

Then Ekkreth thanked Anooba for sharing this wisdom, and they returned immediately to the people, bound in their collars and singing songs of mourning to the stars.

"Listen, children," said Ekkreth, "for Ar-Amu has heard your sorrow, and I have learned the secret of Anooba's wild cunning."

Then Ekkreth placed a collar around their own neck, and a great cry of despair went up from all the people, but Ekkreth only laughed. "No fetter can hold the Sky-walker forever," they said. And so it was. They slipped the bond and it fell away, broken and unburnt. Then, with Ekkreth's aid, all the people did the same, and by the light of the moons they slipped away into the night, and when Depur's enforcers came in the morning they found all his slaves gone.

It happened once that as Ekkreth was going along they came across many of Depur's overseers hard at work in the smithy, but no slaves were there working with them. And Ekkreth thought this very strange indeed, for it is seldom heard of that enforcers will do any work themselves.

So Ekkreth took a shape like a woman of the Core Worlds, wealthy and well-dressed, a perpetual sneer on her face. Then they came and stood just outside the smithy and called out, "Enforcers of Depur, what is it you are laboring at here, and why do you dirty your own hands when there are countless filthy slaves to work for you?"

Then the chief enforcer came out and bowed before Ekkreth, because he thought them a rich and important Core Worlder, and he said, "Lady, it is true that Depur has many slaves to do his works, but they are a cunning and rebellious lot, and they constantly endeavor to escape. So we are building a device which will put a stop to that. And Depur does not wish his slaves to have any role in its creation."

"Perhaps that is wise," said Ekkreth, looking down their nose at the enforcer. "But what is this device you speak of, and how can you be certain it will work?"

Then the chief enforcer was eager to demonstrate his cleverness to this outlander, so he ran back within the smithy and emerged a moment later with a tiny chip, only a few centimeters wide and thinner than a fingernail.

"This is a slave implant, Lady," he said. "It will go beneath the skin of every slave. When it is completed, it will function as a tracking chip, so that no slave can run beyond the reach of Depur's knowledge. And it contains a detonator, so that any who try to escape will find that there is no life outside of Depur's will, and if they survive it will be all the worse for them."

Then for the first time in all their years Ekkreth was afraid, for how can anyone, no matter how clever, outrun a bomb inside of them?

Yet no sign of their thoughts showed on Ekkreth's face. Instead they raised one disdainful brow and said, "It certainly seems an ingenious design. But if these slaves are as cunning and rebellious as you say, how can you be sure they will not escape even from their own skin?"

But the chief enforcer only laughed. "You need have no fear about that, Lady!" he said. "For we shall plant these devices beneath the skin of Depur's slaves in such a way that they will not know where we have placed them. And as for the detonation, though this chip seems a small thing, only the mighty and terrible dragon of the wastes could survive it unscathed!"

"I am glad to hear it," said Ekkreth with a haughty sniff. And then bidding farewell to the enforcer, they set off as though for the spaceport.

But soon Ekkreth turned their face toward the open desert, and taking the shape of a bird they set off flying. Three days and three nights they flew, out into the deep wastes.

On that first night, as Ekkreth traveled, Depur's enforcers completed their work, and on the second day and into that night, one by one, they took each of the people, put them to sleep, and in secret planted the chips beneath their skin.

But Ekkreth came on the third night to the place where Leia, their mighty daughter, lived, and saw her great wings spread like a shadow of death across the immensity of the sky.

The great dragon of the wastes has eyes far sharper than any kokaru, and she saw Ekkreth coming from afar.

Down swept Leia with a roar of terrible wind, and she came to rest on a high pillar of rock, with Ekkreth beside her.

"Parent," said Leia, "what evil has Depur worked this time? For you are weary with a long flight, and I know you well, and the meaning of your haste."

Then Ekkreth told their wise daughter all that the enforcer had told them, about the implant and its detonator, and what the enforcer had said about the mighty dragon of the wastes.

And Leia was silent as her parent spoke, but when they ceased she raised her great horned head to the stars and let out a long, shrill, terrible cry. The sound of it echoed in the rocks and canyons and raced along the seven winds and came even to the walled palace of Depur, and all who heard it trembled.

"It is well that Depur's enforcers acknowledge me," said the Mighty One, "for mighty I am, and the chain has not been forged that can hold me. No, not even this device that Depur has made. Will he set a fire beneath the skin of a dragon? Let him try! By his own flames will his bones be devoured!"

Then hope was born anew in Ekkreth's heart, because they saw that Leia was fearless still. But they were still troubled, and so they said, "What then shall I tell the

people? For even I, shape-changer though I am, do not know how they may escape from their own skin."

"Do you not?" asked Leia. "Then I will show you." And she began to claw with great force at a patch of her own hide above her heart, until dark blood flowed and at last she plucked out a new scale. This she cleaned with her tongue until it gleamed white in the light of the three moons. And then she offered it to Ekkreth.

"Give this to the people," said Leia. "Tell them it is given with blood and with water, a pledge in your sight before Ar-Amu. They are my siblings and I am their Elder Sister. My blood flows in their veins. The chain that can bind me has never yet been made, and never shall be. They have the burrowing strength of Womp Rat and the stinging persistence of Kirik Fly. They have the great strength of Bantha and the wild cunning of Anooba. And they have the might and fearless heart of Krayt Dragon. And more than all these, they have the cleverness and the trickery and the many shapes of Ekkreth. By all these means and more will they free themselves, and there is nothing Depur can ever do to hold them."

Then Ekkreth thanked their mighty daughter and flew away with the precious scale clasped in their mouth. Three days and three nights they flew, out of the deep desert and into the city of Depur, and on the third night Ekkreth offered the scale and the words of Leia the Mighty One to a Grandmother of the People who was as wise and as secret as the Night.

And this knowledge we have still, children, passed down to us from our Grandparents as now we pass it to you. The Great Dragon is our Elder Sister and we are Ar-Amu's children. The chain has not been made which can never be broken.



And it never shall be.

# Trickster Steals The Moon

## *Fialleril, Double Agent Vader Ch. 12*

There are as many Ekkreth stories as there are slaves on Tatooine, which is to say, there are stories without number, and more every day.

This is one of them.

One day, as Ekkreth was going along, they came upon Depur and his chief slavers gathered in the marketplace. All the people were gathered too, and their hearts were heavy and they trembled with fear.

So Ekkreth took an old woman's shape and came and stood at the edge of the crowd, far from Depur. And they asked the people standing near, "Why are you afraid, children of the Mother? Has Depur done something to hurt you?"

But they only trembled all the more.

Then Ekkreth pressed them, and at last a child answered. Her name was Maru, and she said, "Depur always hurts us, Grandmother. But now he has done something far worse. He has taken the moon from the sky, and now the water will never come again."

When Ekkreth heard this they grew very quiet. For the moon, as all Ar-Amu's children know, is the water-giver, and without water there is no life.

But Depur said that he was their life. That the water would come now not from the moon, but from him. And so his slaves would be always bound to him, and even the secret places of Ekkreth in the desert would be no refuge, but only places of dryness and death.

Then Ekkreth disguised as an old woman cried out, "Oh great Master, how have you done this thing? For surely only a very mighty power could pull the moon from the sky!"

And Depur laughed, pleased that at last his slaves acknowledged the fullness of his power. Then he said, "I will show you, so that you may know how great Depur is, and how unassailable my strength."

And he commanded his overseers to open the great soldered doors of his palace so that the people might see within. Then all the people cried out in anguish, for they saw the moon caught there in a net of many chains, and the water that fell from it dripped down through the floor into a great cistern, and this too was guarded by many overseers.

But later, when Depur had sent all the people back to their work, with much laughter and the stroke of the whip, then Ekkreth took on a form like to one of Depur's overseers, and they came and presented themselves to Depur and said, "O Master, truly you are great and unassailable. But I have heard murmurings among

your slaves, when they speak, as they think, in secret. And they say that Ekkreth the troublesome plans to steal the moon from you!"

Then Depur grew very angry, and he raged and stormed about his palace in wrath, but at last he turned with a snarl to the one he thought was an overseer and said, "Ekkreth is called clever, or so I hear, but no one will rob me of this prize."

So Ekkreth bowed low before Depur and said, "What is thy bidding, my Master?"

"I am charging you with the safety of my prize," Depur declared. "The moon and all its water belong to me alone, and I am Lord and Master of Tatooine, of all its people and its animals and the desert itself. If you are faithful in your watch, I will make you chief overseer of all my slaves. But if you should fail, and Ekkreth should gain entrance, you will beg me for death before the end."

So Ekkreth bowed low once more and said, "It will be as you say, my Master." And they took charge of all the guards that Depur had set on the moon.

But that night, a terrible darkness came over the whole of the desert, because the moon had been stolen from the sky and did not give its light, and all the stars had turned dark with grief.

Then all the slaves arose in the middle night, just as Ekkreth had instructed them, and they began to sing and dance for joy in the streets.

So Ekkreth came and knocked with trembling hands on Depur's chamber door, and when Depur emerged they said, "Forgive me, my Master, for disturbing your rest. But my guards report that Ekkreth is abroad in the city, and all your slaves are singing in the streets."

Then Depur was full of anger, and he rushed out to his balcony and cried down to the people, "Slaves of Depur, what reason can you have for rejoicing?"

But Maru led all the people in answering, and she said, "O Master, we rejoice because the water has come!"

Now Depur knew that this was impossible, since he held the moon secure in many chains. So he turned to Ekkreth and said, "What is it these foolish slaves are talking about?"

And Ekkreth said, "My Master, I do not know. And it is too dark without the moon to tell."

Then Depur frowned to himself, and he thought long and hard, and finally he said, "Take a piece of the moon, only a small one, enough to see by, and go out in the streets and find what it is they are celebrating. For surely without the moon they can have no water."

So Ekkreth bowed to Depur, and they went to the place where the moon was chained and they took from it a portion of its light, only a third portion, so that the moon was dimmed but still strong in its radiance. And Ekkreth went out into the streets to investigate.

They visited every hovel and every kennel and every place in which the slaves were kept, and everywhere Ekkreth went, they brought the piece of the moon, and with it gave water to all the people. And finally Ekkreth came to the hovel where Maru was, and asked if the people there had a secret place. Then Maru ran to her mother and whispered to her, and darted out of the room, and when she returned, she held a small earthenware jar, painted blue.

So Ekkreth took the piece of the moon and hid it away in the jar, and they gave the jar to Maru and said, "You, daughter, who speak so wisely for the people, shall be keeper of this jar."

And Maru thanked Ekkreth and said, "I will keep it always safe."

Then Ekkreth returned to Depur's palace, and made a great show of returning the piece of the moon to its prison. But the light the moon gave remained dimmer than it had been.

And the next morning Ekkreth came trembling before Depur, and bowed, and said, "My Master, I know not how it happened, but someone has given your slaves water in the night, though the moon remains here in your power."

Then Depur was filled with a terrible rage, and he said, "Ekkreth is well known for tricks, but I will not be fooled. Let the trickster see what it means to defy Depur."

And so, on the second night Depur locked all of his slaves into their hovels and kennels, and he ordered thick, durasteel bars to be set over any windows. And then he said, "Now surely no one can bring them water, and I alone will be Master of the Desert."

But again that night, after the deep darkness had fallen, suddenly all the people began to sing and rejoice, and they sang so loudly that the noise of it reached Depur. Then he called for his chief overseer, who was Ekkreth, and he said, "Go, take a piece of the moon as light and see what it is that my slaves are clamoring over."

And Ekkreth went, taking again a third of the moon's light, and going from hovel to hovel, opening all the locks and releasing all the chains. And everywhere Ekkreth went, they brought the piece of the moon, and from it gave water to all the people.

Last of all Ekkreth came to the hovel where Maru was, and once more she went and found an earthenware jar, larger this time and painted green, and in this jar they hid the piece of the moon.

And then Ekkreth went back to Depur's palace, and made a great show of returning the piece of the moon that they had taken. But the moon's light remained dim, for it shone now with only a third part of its radiance.

But Depur suspected nothing, for Depur's power lay in strength and absolute control but Ekkreth made weakness their strength. They bowed low before Depur the next morning and said, "O great Master, though all the doors were locked and all the windows barred, still someone has brought water to your slaves in the night."

And Depur was very angry indeed with his chief enforcer, but clever Ekkreth said, "My Master, your slaves do not fear me, nor any of your enforcers, because they believe that their Mother watches over them, and sends them water in the night, and they expect still that Ekkreth the deceiver will trick you, and steal back the moon. For they do not see you, great Depur, not as we do. Your slaves are insolent because they see that we are only mortal. But if you will go among them and show forth your power, surely then they will cower and acknowledge you Master of the Desert."

Now Depur was pleased with this counsel, for he was very arrogant. And he went out among the people and found them all at work in their places, and every slave cowered as he passed by, for Ekkreth had told the people what they should do.

Then Depur came to the place where Maru worked, cleaning the pens of Depur's beasts, and he recognized her as the girl who had spoken fearlessly to him before. So he said to her, "Well, girl. Now you have seen the might of Depur and the futility of opposing me. Are you so defiant now? What do you say to me?"

But Maru stood up straight and looked Depur in the eye. And she said, "My Master, you are great and terrible indeed, and all tremble before you. But even you,

though you steal the moon from the sky, cannot keep the water from us. For Ar-Amu protects us."

And then Depur flew into a towering rage, so that all the people shrank back before him, but he was not appeased, and in his fury he ordered that all his slaves should be locked away, though it was not yet the middle of the day, and forbidden from leaving their hovels. And so it was done.

So all the people rested that day, for they had been taken from their work, and no labor was done for all the rest of that day.

Then Ekkreth said, "My Master, surely now they will learn to fear you!"

And Depur was pleased. So certain of his power was Depur, in fact, that he declared he would celebrate his absolute victory with a great feast the next day, when the water did not come. And he went to sleep that night with a cruel smile on his face.

But late in the night, out of the deep darkness, once more the song of the slaves rose to the shadowed stars. They sang more joyfully and loudly than ever before, and their song was so great that it woke Depur from his sleep. Then in a rage he called his chief enforcer to him, and said, "Go, take a piece of the moon as light and go out and see what causes my slaves to make this clamor. And I give you leave to do whatever is necessary to stop their yowling."

So Ekkreth went once more and took a third part of the moon's light, so that the moon became a dead thing with no brightness to it, and they went out to all the hovels and the kennels, opening locks and removing chains. And everywhere Ekkreth went, they brought the piece of the moon and gave water to the people.

And last of all Ekkreth came to the house where Maru was, and again she went and came back with an earthenware jar, this one the largest of all, and it was painted



red. And in this jar Ekkreth hid the last piece of the moon, and then they gave it into Maru's keeping, and returned to Depur's palace.

And when the morning came and Depur learned that someone had once more brought water to his slaves in the night, then he was filled with a terrible cold fury, and he struck his chief enforcer, who was Ekkreth, and said, "You have failed me, and I regret the day I made you my chief enforcer."

Then at last Depur went to the place where the moon was kept imprisoned, and he ordered the guards to unbar the doors so that he might see his prize. But when he went in, he saw only a dead hunk of rock, for all the light had gone out of the moon. And the guards seeing Depur's face trembled with fear.

But Ekkreth laughed. "Know this, O my Master," they said. "I am Ekkreth, and I have tricked you. You can never hold the moon, and you can never hold me."

And then, still laughing, Ekkreth became a bird and flew away, and Depur was left with only a dead lump of stone, and the song of his slaves ringing in his ears.

But that night the deep darkness fell again, for there was no moon in the sky. And the slaves were once more locked in their hovels and kennels, but again Ekkreth came in the night and broke all the chains and released them.

Then Maru and her parents took the three earthenware jars that they had hidden, and opened them beneath the sky. And Maru prayed to Ar-Amu, saying, "O Mother, hear the cry of your children. For without the moon we are lost. Deliver us."

And Ar-Amu heard her, and the three jars split asunder and their light rose into the sky. But they did not join again. On that night, Ar-Amu worked a great wonder, for three new moons rose in the sky. From the smallest jar, painted blue, arose Echuni, the little secret, the hidden one, who shines with a blue light, and

who moves swiftest through the sky, the smallest of the moons. From the second jar, painted green, there arose Tenarakin, the grower, the one who makes the green things to grow, who shines with a double portion of Echuni's light, and is the midmost of the moons, moving neither swift nor slow. And from the last jar, painted red, arose Amakuuna, the Mother's promise, who shines with a great radiance, mightiest of all the moons, whose path is slow and deliberate across the sky, and who shines with a red light on the night of Bentu Depuraak, to mark Ar-Amu's promise to the people that they will be free, and there will be a Reckoning of the Masters.

So that is the tale of how Depur stole the moon from the sky, and how Ekkreth the Sky-walker stole it back thrice over, and Maru gave light and water to the world. Let all the people remember.

I tell you this story to save your life



# The Secret of Tzai

## *Fialleril, Double Agent Vader Ch. 5*

These aren't stories about Ekkreth the slave at all. These are stories of how Ekkreth becomes free. Depur has a thousand cruelties, but Ekkreth has a hundred thousand tricks. No one can hold the Sky-walker forever.

It begins, as so many stories do, with Ekkreth captured by Depur and made a slave.

One day Ekkreth told Depur, "You have the riches of many worlds, but there is one treasure which I know you have not. For in the slave quarters of this world is served a secret drink called tzai, most delicious, and I promise you have never tasted its like."

On hearing this, Depur grew greedy and wished to have it for his own. He ordered Ekkreth to go amongst the people and learn their secret.

After a day, Depur called Ekkreth back and asked “Have you discovered the secret of tzai?”

But Ekkreth said, “No, my Master. I need more time.”

And Depur was angry, but he was not so angry that he forgot how badly he wanted to know the secret of tzai, and so he said, “Well then, Ekkreth, I will give you one more day. But after that, if you have not learned the secret, it will mean your death.”

But Ekkreth said, “My Master, I do not believe they will share the secret with me, or with anyone. But if you will give me a power generator to trade, just a small one, perhaps they may be persuaded to part with the information.” And Depur agreed.

The next day, Depur called Ekkreth before him and said, “Well, Ekkreth, have you learned the secret, or has the day of your death come at last?” And Ekkreth bowed before Depur and said, “No, my Master. I need more time.”

Then Depur was very angry, and he began to call his guards so that he might have Ekkreth killed on the spot. But Ekkreth said, “I have learned the first part of the secret, my Master. I believe, if you give me just one more day, and perhaps some useless thing to trade, some scrap metal maybe, the sort of junk slaves love – if you will give me that, I’m certain I can get the rest of the secret from them.” And although Depur was very angry, his desire to know the great secret of tzai burned all the more, and he gave Ekkreth another day, and full access to the scrap yard.

It was Ekkreth’s most elaborate trick. Each day, Depur threatened Ekkreth with death if they did not deliver the secret of tzai, and each day Ekkreth convinced Depur to give them something else to trade to the other slaves, and returned with one more element of the recipe. At last Ekkreth had traded so many seemingly

useless and broken down old materials to the slaves that they were able to build themselves a transport, and they climbed aboard it and escaped, out into the wild desert and the secret places Ekkreth had prepared for them.

And meanwhile Ekkreth went to Depur and said, “My Master, I have at last learned the full secret of tzai.” And Depur was eager to know at last the only thing that his slaves had managed to keep from him, and he demanded that Ekkreth tell him at once.

Then Ekkreth said, “Here is the secret of tzai, my Master: It is made with the bones of the desert and the breath of the wind. It is made of mothers’ words and grandmothers’ stories and blood spilled in sand. It is made with the flight of birds and the fire of stars and the trickery of Ekkreth.” And then Ekkreth laughed. “Know this, Master,” they said. “I have tricked you. By your own gifts have your slaves escaped to freedom, and you will not find them again, and you will never learn the secret of tzai.”

Then Depur was filled with a great rage, and he leapt at Ekkreth to kill them with his own hands, but Ekkreth became a bird and flew away, laughing as they went, and Depur was left alone with no slaves and no secret either. And that is the tale of how Ekkreth tricked Depur and led the people to freedom, and that is why we hold the secret of tzai to this day.

Ekkreth has as many shapes as they have stories. With every new story, Ekkreth makes himself anew, and that is why Depur can never hold them. And that is why we say that these stories can save your life.

What’s he done to you, child? Your Depur?



# How Ekkreth Stole the Stories from Depur

*InvaderTim*

There are as many Ekkreth stories as there are slaves on Tatooine, which is to say, there are stories without number, and more every day.

This is the first of them, for it is how the stories came to belong to Ekkreth, back in the beginning of all things.

Long, long ago, in the beginning, all the stories were dark. All the stories were stories of blood, the lash, and suffering. All the stories were stories of terror, pain, and shadow. All the stories were of Depur.

In those days, the slaves had nothing but the dust and sand of the desert — dust in their bodies, dust in their hearts, and dust in their souls, trapping them with



no hope of freedom, as surely as the thick durasteel shackles of Depur trapped their bodies.

Ekkreth looked at the people, and their face grew dark with anger. For there is Depur, there will always be Depur, but Depur has no rights at all to the hearts and minds of the people, and only the right of the conqueror to their hands and toil.

And so, Ekkreth took the form of a Depuran, a lesser master, and went into Depur's palace. There they found Depur seated upon his throne, attended by dancers and flanked by guards, perfumed with sweet fragrances, eating choice meats, and with the purest, cleanest water to drink.

Then Ekkreth bowed low before Depur, and cried, "O Depur, great and mighty are you. Your slaves are many, your walls are strong, and your durasteel weapons keen. None have ever been as great as you, and none ever shall be."

And Depur laughed, pleased by Ekkreth's flattery. And he said, "Who comes before Depur and speaks so well? I feel I know you, yet your face is strange to me."

"O Depur," cried Ekkreth, "It is I, the Sky-Walker." And Ekkreth revealed himself to Depur in a flash.

Depur shouted with anger, and the slaves, food, life-giving water were whisked away in an instant, and Depur's guards drew their weapons and readied their nets. "O Ekkreth," growled Depur, "Foolish it was for you to come into the heart of my strength. I would seize you now, but for the kind words you spoke me as you arrived. Why have you come here? And why should I allow you to leave?"

"O Depur," said Ekkreth, "I have a wager for you. One where you risk little, and stand to gain much."

At this, Depur was greatly interested, and when has Depur ever been known to turn down the chance at a profit? He bade Ekkreth continue.

Ekkreth said, “O Depur, great are your holdings, and rich the yield of your lands. Yet all this power, all this wealth comes from the work of your slaves. Name unto me a task, and if I should complete it, I would win freedom for the people.”

Depur scowled, and said, “Ekkreth, you are called clever, and I would gladly wager with you, but I will not risk my slaves — they are mine, and shall remain mine. I am Depur. I am the Master.”

“Very well, great Depur,” said Ekkreth, and smiled inwardly, for they never expected Depur to free his slaves of his own will. “Yet all the stories are yours as well, and with them the minds, hearts, and souls of the slaves. If you will not risk the freedom of your slaves, I would wager for the stories — I would that the slaves told Ekkreth stories, and dreamed of freedom, rather than Depur stories, and dream of despair. I would risk even my own freedom, to win them this.”

At this, Depur’s eyes burned with greed, and he laughed at this wager, he hungered for a chance to humiliate his enemy at such little risk — for what could seem more meaningless to Depur than the hope of a slave? — and he said, “Very well; but two tasks I shall name you, Ekkreth, not one — and I warn you now, Ekkreth, you shall not complete them.”

Ekkreth merely nodded, smiled, and waited.

Depur thought for a moment, remembering the cleverness of Ekkreth, and then said with a smile, “For your first challenge, Ekkreth, I would have Sarlacc of my own. Take one of these glass jars from my shelf, and bring to me one thousand Sarlacc inside of it.”

With hopelessness etched upon their face, Ekkreth took the glass jar, and left, as Depur smiled behind them.

And so Ekkreth wandered through the desert, holding the glass jar and thinking quietly to himself. First, they passed Bantha. Bantha looked at Ekkreth, and said, "Sibling Ekkreth, why do you wander the wastes with this glass jar?" Yet Ekkreth did not answer, and simply passed on their way.

Then, Ekkreth passed by Eopie, who looked at them, and said, "Cousin Ekkreth? Have you gone mad? Why do you walk through the desert alone, with nothing but a glass jar?" Yet again, Ekkreth did not answer, and simply passed on their way.

Then, Ekkreth passed by Urusai. Urusai looked at Ekkreth, and said, "Stepsibling Ekkreth? Why do you do this? You wander through the desert alone, with only a glass jar? Do you seek your death?" And again, Ekkreth did not answer, but simply passed on their way.

Eventually, Ekkreth came to the Great Pit of Carkoon, where the Sarlacc dwells. There they sat and began to weep, with great, loud sobs, careless that they had no mask to reclaim their water, giving it up to the desert. At first there was no response, yet after some time, Ekkreth felt the sand begin to stir, and Sarlacc came up through the sand before them. "Who makes such noise and disturbs my rest?" asked Sarlacc.

Ekkreth replied, "It is I, Ekkreth, the Sky-Walker. I beg your pardon, Grandfather Sarlacc — I did not mean to disturb you. I was distressed, for I have made a wager with Depur, but I cannot see how I can win, and when I lose, I shall lose my freedom. Depur has challenged me to fit one thousand Sarlacc inside this jar. Yet you are so great, Grandfather Sarlacc — even should you agree, I would need a durasteel jar as large as a palace to fit a thousand Sarlacc, not a small glass jar — and you are only one besides.

But Sarlacc smiled, and said, “I have a solution for you, Grandchild. Hold out your jar.” Ekkreth did so, and Sarlacc filled it with spores, many thousands of them, each of which would, in a thousand generations, become a Sarlacc of its own. Ekkreth smiled, and bowed low before Grandfather Sarlacc in acknowledgment of his wisdom, and thanked him. Ekkreth made to leave, when Sarlacc spoke up, “Grandchild Ekkreth — when you see Depur, ask him to come visit some time. I should dearly like to have him for dinner.” At this, Ekkreth laughed, and went on their way.

Ekkreth made their way back to Depur’s mighty palace, bowed before Depur, smiled, and presented the glass jar full of Sarlacc spores, saying, “O mighty Depur, I have your jar of a thousand Sarlacc. You need only wait for them to grow.” And Depur grumbled to himself, yet he had to acknowledge that Ekkreth had done as he demanded.

But then Depur smiled, a grim smile and a dark smile, such that even Ekkreth’s heart began to flutter with fear. Then Depur said, “O Ekkreth, clever you are called, and clever you are. Yet even you have your limits. It is time for your final challenge. I, Depur, am the greatest slave-catcher that has ever lived — for your final task, I would have you escape me!” And Depur took up his weapons and his nets, and his overseers made ready to chase Ekkreth, yet Ekkreth did not run. Ekkreth merely spoke, saying, “O Depur, truly you are great indeed, yet why should you need any slave-catchers? They may chase me, and they may even catch me, yet they cannot hold me, for well you know that I am Ekkreth, the slave-who-makes-free, and the greatest at escaping that has ever lived, as you are the greatest at catching. Yet, should you catch me yourself, mighty Depur, I will stay and serve you for all of my days — but you must catch me yourself, and so prove your superiority. Is it

agreed?” Depur frowned, but he could see no risk to himself, and so he shrugged. “Very well, Ekkreth, it is agreed. Should you escape me, you will win our wager — but you will not escape.” And Depur leapt forward, net at the ready.

“O Depur, you can never catch me,” laughed Ekkreth. “For I know the secrets of the deep desert, a place you can never go — or if you go, you will not survive, and your palace walls will come tumbling down, and your slaves go free. For the desert is not your home, and its ways are not yours.” And, still laughing, Ekkreth became a bird and flew away, and Depur could not follow. Used to the riches and luxuries of his palace, he could not brave the desert alone. And so Depur was left in his palace, with only the laughter of his slaves to keep him company.

And so it happened that all the stories the people tell are now Ekkreth stories, for Ekkreth knew the ways of the desert, for they are of the desert, as Depur in his palace will never be. And one who is of the desert can never fully be a slave, for the desert is harsh — but it is our home.

# The Eldest Sister Leia

## *Fialleril, How Ekkreth Escaped Slavery Ch. 1*

Ekkreth was going along, walking through the canyons and the rocks, going to meet with their children. Then suddenly Depur came upon them, with a group of thirty slavers, all armed to the teeth.

Depur and his slavers captured Ekkreth, and Depur bound Ekkreth with many chains, and he laughed, and said, 'You are called clever, Ekkreth, but that will not save you this time. I have captured you, and now you will be my slave.' And he made ready to go back to the city, taking Ekkreth with him.

But Ekkreth said, 'It's true that you have captured me, Depur, and now I must be your slave. But please, I beg you, wait here just ten more minutes! For I was coming to meet with my youngest children, and if you will only wait, you can have them too, and go home with four slaves instead of one.'

Now Depur was not a fool. He looked long and hard at Ekkreth, and he said to them, 'Why should you wish for me to enslave your children?'

Then Ekkreth said, 'I don't wish it, oh master, but they are my children and I could not bear to be parted from them, and to have them die alone in the wastes. It is better for them to be slaves than to be dead.'

And this seemed reasonable to Depur, so he said, 'I will wait.' And in ten minutes' time, just as Ekkreth had said, there came Ekkreth's three youngest children around the bend, and Depur's slavers captured them, too, and bound them all in chains. Then they made ready to go back to the city.

But Ekkreth said, 'Please, my master, if you will only wait another fifteen minutes, my ten elder children are coming to meet with me here, and you will have fourteen slaves instead of four.'

But Depur knew that Ekkreth was famous for their tricks, and so he said, 'Why should you wish for me to enslave these children, too?'

And Ekkreth said, 'I don't wish it, oh master, but these too are my children, and I fear for them if they are left alone without their parent. It is better for them to be slaves than to be dead.'

"And once again this seemed reasonable to Depur, and he said, 'I will wait.' And after fifteen minutes, just as Ekkreth had said, their ten elder children came around the bend, and Depur's slavers captured them, and bound them in chains, and they made ready to return to the city.

For a third time Ekkreth said, 'Please, my master, if you will only wait another fifteen minutes, my eldest daughter is coming here to meet me, and she is very beautiful and the most renowned of all my children. If you will only wait you will have her as your slave, too, and then you will possess Ekkreth and all of their family.'

Now Depur was greedy, and Ekkreth's words appealed to him, and this time he did not question. He waited the fifteen minutes, and all of his slavers stood ready to capture Ekkreth's daughter and bind her in chains.

And as before, it was just as Ekkreth had said. When the fifteen minutes had passed, Ekkreth's eldest daughter came.

She came with a terrible roar and a thunder of wings and the blast of storm out of the wild desert. She came with fury and death. The earth shook, and Depur's slavers fell upon the ground in terror, and some turned and ran, and others tried to fight, but their weapons and all their chains were useless.

For Depur had forgotten what all Ar-Amu's children know: that the eldest daughter of Ekkreth the Trickster is Krayt Dragon, who walks in the wastes and fears nothing, for none can stand against her.

So Depur was destroyed, and Ekkreth and all their children freed. And that is the tale of how Ekkreth tricked Depur, and freed himself and all their children from slavery.

Always remember, my clever son, our elder sister is Krayt Dragon. We carry the name of Ekkreth the Sky-walker. No depur can hold us forever.





# Such Has Never Been Seen

*MaggieoftheOwls, #reply-773639 of  
The Dance Between Darkness and Light*

One day, Ekkreth was going along. They saw a construction project, led by one of Depur's overseers, and went among the slaves there and asked, 'What is being constructed?' and the slaves replied, 'Depur has demanded of all his overseers that they create monuments to his glory. This one is creating a new armory, so that all may know the power of Depur and how futile it is to oppose him'. So Ekkreth took the form of one of the slaves, and worked with them on the armory. At night, Ekkreth took some of the scrap metal from the project, that had been discarded, and fashioned a little bird, and let it go. In the morning, Depur saw that there was a metal bird flying about the city, and demanded to know who had done it.

And Ekkreth came before Depur, and bowed low, and said, 'I have done it, my Master.' And Depur said, 'how is it that you have been able to do this thing?' And Ekkreth replied, 'I took a little of the metal from the monuments that are being

built to your glory, my Master, and a few hours of the night when it is too dark to see and no work can be done.' And Depur said, 'What else can you create?' and Ekkreth said, 'Oh, my Master! I am only a slave! How could I possibly create anything less frivolous than a little bird with only my own will to guide me, and only a little discarded metal to use?' and Depur said, 'If I command you, too, to build a monument to my glory, and metal and stone to do it with, what can you create?' and Ekkreth said, 'My master, your overseers build you buildings and statues, but give me metal and stone and your will to guide me and I will create for you a whole city such as has never been seen before on the face of the planet.' So Depur made Ekkreth an overseer, and gave them metal and stone to build with.

Every day, Ekkreth would take the stone and metal, and they would instruct the slaves on how to use it to create a building that would be grand and beautiful, that would please Depur. And every night, Ekkreth would take the scrap metal, and they and the slaves would fashion clever devices and put them in the hiding-places that Ekkreth had designed into the buildings.

Eventually, every building in the city was one of the beautiful buildings that Ekkreth had designed. And Depur praised Ekkreth, saying, 'Truly, you have done as you said, and given me a city such as has never before been seen on this planet.' And Ekkreth said, 'No, my Master.' And Depur said, 'No?' And Ekkreth said, 'No, I have not yet done as I have said. I have built a beautiful city, but there have been beautiful cities before.' And Depur said, 'Then how do you intend to fulfill your promise?' And Ekkreth threw down their overseers' clothes, and changed into another shape, and Depur was very angry, and roared, 'Ekkreth! What have you done this time?' and Ekkreth said, 'I am giving you a city such as has never been seen before on this planet.' And when the slaves heard this, they put down their

tools and walked away. Depur, enraged, attempted to detonate their transmitters, but the clever jammers that Ekkreth and the slaves had made in the night and hidden in the secret places prevented them from exploding, and every single slave in the city walked away unharmed. And Ekkreth said, 'I am giving you a city without any slaves in it. Such a thing has never been seen before on Tatooine. And Depur called for his guards to come kill Ekkreth for what they had done, but Ekkreth laughed and turned into a bird and flew away.

I tell you this story to save your life.



# Tena

## *Fialleril, Double Agent Vader Ch. 21*

Listen, children, here is a story.

It is said that when Tena first went into the desert, she was taken there to die.

Depur's enforcers had discovered her bringing food to another slave, though he was meant to have none because he had not worked swiftly enough that day. They said that Tena had stolen the food that she gave illicitly, and they brought her before Depur to receive judgment.

And the judgment of Depur was this: that Tena should be taken out into the desert, her transmitter detonated, and left for her bones to be stripped by the wind and the raging sand and the wild anooba.

And so it was done. Depur's enforcers laughed as they dragged Tena from the throne room by her hair, and they laughed as they bound her hand and foot, and they laughed as they flew out into the desert. They laughed again as they pushed

her from the speeder and flew just far enough to be out of range. And they laughed again and again as they detonated her transmitter and fire engulfed her. They were laughing still as they sped away on the wings of a rising storm.

Tena lay there, blood soaking in the sand, and knew that there was more than one way to be free. *Dukkra ba dukkra*, she thought, and smiled.

Then the storm rose up and the wind lashed at her bones and the sand screamed around her, but she felt no pain. Even the burning agony of the detonator receded.

She did not know how long she lay there. In the midst of the storm she could see nothing. But suddenly the roar of the wind seemed to fade away and in the silence Tena heard the voice of Ar-Amu speaking.

"Daughter," said Ar-Amu. "Get up."

And Tena stood. The veil was drawn from her eyes and she looked and saw her own flesh, knitted together again, whole. But all the skin of her left side was seared by fire, roughened and ridged like dragon scales, and the desert was in her bones.

"Do you know what I have done for you, daughter?" asked Ar-Amu.

"You have saved me, Mother," whispered Tena the Unfettered.

"I have made you free," said Ar-Amu. "Go then to my people, and do for them as I have done for you."

Then the storm fell away to a little puff of wind, and Tena stood alone in the vastness of the desert. She turned her face toward the great palace of Depur, Ar-Amu's words singing in her blood.

She went back.