Claws rip. Ichor spills. It disintegrates the bone of her nails, osteoclasts being forced into action. It burned, it always did. Such is the life of a hunter. The popping of monstrous, ichorous flesh under her claws was satisfying, though the sound disgusted her to the core. It didn't pop like the vessels of skin, only bursted like bubbles of rot. She hated ichor. It made her sick.

Mercy had been contracted to visit the Core Planet, much to her dismay, but at least they paid well. Besides, it's not like she had a place to stay anyway. The scenery was different, and the smells were putrid. Much like a room once she had cleared it. Empty. Ichor beasts did not count as living to her, they were simply filth. Cheap filth that was easy to kill. Being hired to kill these beasts was equivalent to cheap jobs for a couch hopper for her. It's not like she loved the thrill of the hunt or the satisfaction of the kill, though. It was enough cash and enough activity to keep her moving like a shark. Even the larger ichor beasts rarely phased her, only ever commenting on the sheer strength and toughness of their bony plating. Great for trophymaking. Their helms looked nice plastered on a wall, at least. That's all they were good for.

Days went by on the Core Planet, varieties of ichor beasts pummeling her armor with their putrid oil, corroding her hardened flesh. Her claws had born holes, which degraded them to the point of uselessness. It hurt to move her fingers, but a shark always has to keep moving along. Ichor beast after ichor beast was mutilated until her claws were merely rotted stumps of bone, pain shot through her burnt-ended nerves all the way up her arms, body begging for release from the pain.

Unfortunately, she did finally concede once there was nothing left of her fingers. There were no claws to speak of, only ragged tendons that once connected to phalanges. Mercy was forced to rest in her temporary abode upon the Core Planet, scattered bones of deceased ichor beasts decorated along the walls like trophies. Without her claws, she was defenseless. No weapon to kill with. A failure of a bounty hunter. What kind of hunter can't kill?

A killer needs a weapon, and her weapon of choice will always be the claw. She was no carver, but she knew her way around bone and tissue better than some doctors. Her left fingers were still mildly intact, at least having functional carpals and first phalanges. No external bone protected the revealed soft body, but that didn't matter. She needed new claws.

Maybe those beasts did have a purpose, after all. The nautipod thought back to the toughness of ichor beast bone, and decided that was the best she could do. Maybe she could even make some money off of ichor beast weapons. They'd be tough, and immune to ichor… *Not bad*, she thought.

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It took plenty of time for her body to cooperate with her new prosthetics, but they worked just fine. Even though they did not function like fingers anymore, they were capable of ripping flesh like a freshly sharpened sword. She clawed through bodies without having to move a single muscle in her hand. It's not like she needed her hands for anything else, anyway. All she was good for was the kill. Her tentacles were altered for fighting as well, painful cuts and reconstructing done on their tips to create hooks used for grabbing. They cut bodies just as smoothly as her new fingers did, and so did the new teeth of her helm. Maybe visiting the Core

Planet against her own volition was for the best. Maybe ichor beasts are good for something, after all.