

Nal and I arrived back at the *Chariot* not long after we finished cleaning and refilling the second hole. We debated visiting the other locations my Clairvoyance spell was directing me to, but we ultimately agreed it wasn't worth the risk. The nameless pair that found us before might have been easily appeased, but the next person might not be. Besides, I now essentially had an infinite amount of beskar, a dozen or so extra plates of various shapes really didn't mean much.

Once we arrived and re-loaded the *Arrow* onto the *Chariot*, it didn't take long for us to lift off of the planet. Our next destination was a nearby system with a populated planet called [Plooma](#), which had a slightly larger population than Dantooine but was still small enough that we didn't anticipate an Imperial presence. We had a day-long hyperspace trip, and I used that time to learn Soul Trap. Thankfully, it was an Apprentice-level spell, meaning it only took about six hours to learn. That didn't mean I wasted the rest of the trip, however. The book included a method of attaching the Soul Trap spell as you conjured a weapon. This was a perk in the game, but here, it was a secondary matrix you cast with your offhand while conjuring a weapon.

It would make trapping life energy from creatures we hunted extremely easy, and since it was an active thing I would have to cast, I didn't have to worry about accidentally using it on a person.

The rest of the day was spent with me struggling with the logistics of an [Arcane Enchanter](#). I had scanned through the first few pages of the process several times, but since it had been basically useless without soul gems, I had focused on more valuable parts of the grimoire. Now that I was reading it fully, I was discovering it was a much more involved process than I had originally believed.

On top of the wood, glass, gold, silver, and filled soul gems that I would need to physically construct the table, I would also need to learn three Apprentice level spells. One would infuse the glass sphere, the next would infuse the silver carvings set into the wooden table, and the third and final spell would infuse the wood of the table.

When we arrived at our pit stop, Nal helped me contact a metal fabricator, who was reluctant to work with silver and gold but agreed after we put in a down payment. On the other side of the planet, we managed to find a woodworker who agreed to carve the necessary grooves and shapes into a table he had created previously. He even put us in contact with a glass worker who could create a sphere to my precise requirements.

Twenty-four hours and five thousand credits later, three of which I paid for myself, the other two coming from the group fund, and I had everything I needed. By that time I had also learned two of the three spells I would need, leaving the last one for the two-day trip back to Thila Command. I also used that time to assemble and partially infuse the table. The silver symbols, each representing a different school of magic and the centerpiece focus, turned a pale, glowing blue and slid into their carved slots in the table. The gold stand for the glass sphere set into its mount easily, and the glass sphere itself glowed with a swirling green hue once I infused it with its specific spell and placed it on the mount.

This was where the table took a hard turn from the design I was familiar with. Instead of candles arrayed along two edges leading toward the glass sphere, the table needed eight "stabilizing soul gems," which was a fancy way of saying eight fully charged soul gems of approximately the same size and charge. Once I had those, I would slot them into their own gold mounts, and I could infuse the wood of the table, which would complete the Enchanter by tying everything together.

"This... people are going to think you're worshiping something," Tatnia said after seeing the Enchanter for the first time. "It kinda looks like an altar."

"Kinda, but it's not, thankfully. It's a sort of stabilizer. Keeps outside influences from breaking down the enchantment before it's stable," I explained. "Otherwise, you could enchant anywhere you wanted."

"So... What's left?" Tatnia asked.

"What's left is to fill up a bunch of soul gems," I explained, sitting, leaving the enchanting room, and heading to the lounge. "We need eight for the table, but that's like a drop in the bucket if I'm looking to get any real practice in... Dammit."

"What?" Tatnia asked.

"I'll need stuff to practice on," I explained, shaking my head. "I should have bought a bunch of cheap jewelry while we were still at Plooma."

"Well, you know, once we settle on a place to recruit for the *Intervention*, we can look around," Julius pointed out, dropping down on the couch as well. "What needs to happen to get some of that beskar armor?"

"I either need a lot of normal metal, and I mean *a lot*, or a decent amount of a rare metal," I explained. "It needs to be mostly pure, too. Otherwise, the Transmute spell won't work."

"Is there any reason we shouldn't turn around and sell the beskar?" Tatnia asked, pouring herself a drink at the bar.

"Other than the fact that a new source of beskar would likely get a lot of attention?" I asked, getting a nod in response. "It won't be very cost-effective. The Transmute spell is hilariously mana-intensive, meaning I could only create so much in a day. On top of that, the resulting metal probably won't be worth much more than we spent to make it. For a material like beskar, which isn't just rare, but also exclusive and *useful*, we could probably turn a profit, but not nearly as steep as you are probably thinking. For materials like gold and platinum, which are valuable but that can be purchased easily with enough money, the margin for profit would be even more tight, if there even is one."

"Plus... if we are the only ones supplying a steady source..." Calima said, leaning against the door into the cockpit. "We control who gets any."

"Exactly! Think of how much we could get by handing out a set or three of complete beskar armor to people. Not just money, either," I eagerly pointed out. "Yes, we could probably make a tidy profit off of selling Beskar ingots, but what's the point? We aren't hurting for money at the moment, and if General Syndulla agrees to sell the Kyber crystals, we will be set for even longer."

We chatted a bit more, debating if the rebellion had a way to sell that sort of material or not. I assumed they did, considering how often they had to rely on smugglers to move things and people around. Tatnia, on the other hand, didn't think they would risk it. Eventually, we had an early dinner before we went our separate ways to our bedrooms.

For the rest of the trip back to Thila, I spent a chunk of time turning Kyber crystals into soul gems, about thirty in total. After some thought, I ended up grabbing a bag, a sort of side satchel, from the survival gear we got helping Solinda. I emptied it out and carefully stored the crystals inside, weaving some cloth through the pile to keep them from breaking against each other and making too much noise. Once I was satisfied with my efforts, I stored the bag in the Enchanting room.

After I was finished with that, I spent a while experimenting with the Transmute spell, shifting around metals to get a feel for the energy drain and just how inefficient the spell was in general. I discovered that metals would not shift *up* in quantity just because I started with something worth more. A palm-sized plate of beskar turned into a palm-sized plate of aluminum. That same aluminum plate turned into a few grains of beskar sand when I transmuted it back.

It was that discovery that mass wasn't conserved in either direction that finally convinced me that whatever entity had sent me here was messing with how this worked. I honestly couldn't blame them since the Transmute ability was absolutely busted, even with the harsh limitations. Most likely, they were shifting how the spell worked to keep me from doing some broken, munchkin crap. It was disappointing, but I had to play the hand I was dealt.

My curiosity sated for now, I spent the rest of the trip learning Frenzy, an illusion spell that I was nervous to use. Its own description said it made its target unpredictable and potentially very dangerous. Still, depending on how well it worked, it could be invaluable in taking down a group of people who were set in a defensive position.

When we finally arrived at Thila, there were a surprising amount of ships in the space around the rocky, mountainous planet. Just under a dozen larger capital ships floated in general formation with two [MC80 Star Cruisers](#). Two Nebulons immediately started rotating towards the *Chariot*, but when Calima responded to their hails properly, they slowly returned to their position,

giving us direction to get to the surface correctly. When we finally arrived, we pulled right into the large hangar bay in which the *Intervention* was being kept.

Surprisingly, we were once again greeted by General Syndulla as we stepped down and out of the *Chariot*. Even more surprising was that Miru was nowhere to be seen, nor was Vaz or Pola. As we approached, General Syndulla held out her hand for me, which I happily shook.

"Good to see you again, General," I said with a smile. "How goes Alpha Base?"

"Good, we are getting more infrastructure set up out there. We hope to turn it into a temporary base for when we finally get our people off of Yavin 4," She said with a smile. "We are already converting some of the interiors for better use. How was your excursion?"

"It went well. We found everything I was hoping to find," I responded. "In fact, there is something I would like to show you. Are you busy?"

"Surprisingly, no. More people have gathered here for our rescue operation, including three other generals. My workload is a bit more reasonable now," She admitted with a smile. "What did you find?"

"Well... I think it's better to show you. It's not something I would speak lightly about," I explained, wincing slightly as I looked at her guards.

"Really?" She asked with a raised eyebrow. "Alright. Calum, Redor, stay here, please. I'm sure I'll be out in a few minutes."

The two guards frowned, clearly torn between their jobs of protecting the General and following her orders. Eventually, they settled on following her orders, stopping by the boarding ramp as I led the Twi'lek Rebel into the ship. Tatnia jogged ahead, and as we walked, I gave General Syndulla a simple tour, pointing out the large doors to the two hangar bays as well as Miru's workshop. As we got to the second deck, I spotted Tatnia carrying the box of Kyber shards to the lounge, so I followed after her.

Once we were in the lounge, I gestured to the box, wordlessly inviting our guest to take a look inside. She rolled her eyes at the dramatics but stepped to the table, fiddling with the latch of the shoebox-sized container.

"You know, I-"

Whatever she was going to say was lost when she finally laid her eyes on the box's contents. Silently, she reached out and picked up a blue shard, not much smaller than my thumb. She turned it over, looking at it from a few angles before looking at me.

"Is this... a Kyber Crystal?" She asked, her eyes wide. "Where in the hells did you find this many?!"

"I think the fewer people who know that, the better," I said, the woman nodding in agreement immediately. "I'll happily show Luke or Ahsoka the location, of course."

"There's more?" She asked, her jaw dropping a bit. "There must be... close to a hundred here! And so many colors... I didn't know they came in these shades..."

"There are about sixty pieces that might be useful in a lightsaber, about the same amount of chips and shards," I confirmed. "We have a lot more, but I need them for my own projects. As for how much is left at the location... well, let's just say that we took maybe two or three percentage points of what was there, including that box."

"How... No, I don't want to know," She started to ask before stopping herself. "You are absolutely correct. The less anyone knows about where or how you found these, the better. But I want you to show Luke and Ahsoka ASAP."

"No problem," I agreed easily. "Does that mean you're interested in these?"

"Absolutely. If there are plenty more, then the Rebel Alliance would love the ability to run tests on these," She admitted. "What do you want for them?"

"Well, we were just going to ask for fifty percent if you sold them... so make an offer," I responded.

"Deacon, I can't authorize a payout big enough to cover this without being able to answer a lot of questions, which, in this case, I do not want to do," She explained with a frown. "One or two pieces of Kyber crystal would be one thing, but I don't want anyone to know there is an actual source of it out there that isn't controlled by the Empire. Is there anything else I can help with? Anything you need. I can't give you ships, we need those, but-

"Boss... Didn't you just mention needing something...?" Tatnia pointed out.

"Oh! We do need metal. The more valuable, the better. Doesn't have to be useful. We just need a lot of it. Even better would be precious metals like gold, platinum, and silver. Could be mixed as well, as long as each of the individual metals are pure, no alloys."

She looked at me with a critical eye for a long pause, taking a deep breath and letting it out. She looked back at the box for a moment before shaking her head as if coming to a proper conclusion.

"I don't think that's going to work either. Materials are almost as valuable to us as actual ships, since we use them to build with," She explained. "If I diverted a shipment of metal, even a cheap one, a lot of people would ask questions, probably more than if I just gave you credits."

"So, what are our options?" I said. "I'm open to suggestions. This is more of a shot in the dark than anything. We didn't really know what to do with the pieces that were too small for my project."

"... I'm going to give you fifty thousand credits. It's the most I can get away with no explanation," She responded after a long pause. "And the Rebellion is going to owe you a favor or three."

"That... sounds like a deal," I said with a smile, reaching out and shaking her hand again. "Nice doing business with you, General."