

Ahsoka followed us back to the ship while Luke left to grab a few things. It didn't take long, or maybe he ran, because he had caught up with us by the time we were climbing the boarding ramp.

I gave Ahsoka and Luke a short tour of the *Talos Chariot*, showing off the modifications. Ahsoka, who was familiar with the ships from the war, was impressed by the idea.

"You've turned a cargo ship into a pocket carrier, very smart," She said as I showed off the port hangar, where the *Brick* was stored. "The newer *Gozanti*-class has four docking extensions, but this has much more flexibility. Who designed this?"

"Miru did," I said, putting my hand on the young Twi'lek's shoulders, smiling proudly. "She is an incredibly talented mechanic and engineer."

"I do my best," She said, sounding a bit embarrassed by my bragging.

We continued the tour before finally ending at the lounge, sitting down to eat. I was going to apologize for only having shelf-stable, MRE-style food, but apparently, the supplies we had were much better than the standard fare the Rebels ate when on a mission.

"Sometimes our bases have access to the local food, but usually it is stuff like this, only much worse," Luke explained, happily cracking open a meal. "Where did you get these?"

"These... I think the last CIS base we raided," I answered, looking down at my packaged meal.

"Ah, that explains why they are familiar," Ahsoka responded. "And it makes sense. That was a refuge for the leaders of the Separatists, correct? They wouldn't have settled for nutrient paste or protein bricks."

We talked as we ate, the conversation staying light for the most part. At one point, Tatnia tried to poke a little at Ahsoka's past, but it was immediately apparent that she had no desire to talk about it. Rather than let the conversation hang, Miru tried to push it in a different direction. Unfortunately, she had made an assumption, and her topic was even worse.

"So... Is Ahsoka teaching you anything interesting?" She asked, looking at Luke.

Both of the Force-sensitives worked very hard not to look at each other, Luke only being partially successful.

"I cannot, I am not a Jedi... It wouldn't be right," Ahsoka said,

"It would be nice to have at least some guidance, though," Luke responded, mumbling under his breath.

"Wait... you're not teaching him at all?" Miru asked, unable to stop herself. "Why, that's-"

I put my hand on her shoulder, the pink-skinned girl looking up at me and stopped when I frowned and shook my head.

"He will find a teacher soon. I am certain of it." Ahsoka added, putting down her utensil. "

"How can you be so sure?" Luke asked, now looking directly at her, his frustration rising.

Ahsoka remained silent, either unable or unwilling to respond. After a moment, Luke stood and left the room, not precisely in a huff, but clearly done being around the Togruta. I looked to Miru Julus and Pola, and nodded towards the leaving young adult, all three of them getting up and following after him. Confident they would get the intent to help the young Force-sensitive calm down, I looked back to Ahsoka. She was silently eating her food.

"You know, he isn't going to be much of a Jedi, either," I said, getting a harsh look for my statement. "He's only going to bare minimum training. If he makes it through this war, he isn't going to have access to much information about the Jedi. Unless you have a holocron stashed away somewhere?"

"He has the potential to be a great Jedi," She said, defending the young adult.

"Of course, he has a powerful connection to the Force, unsurprising considering who his father is. Even more importantly, he is driven to be a positive force on the galaxy," I explained, getting a hard look from Ahsoka. "What I mean is, whatever order he creates might be called 'Jedi,' but it's not likely to look at all like the Jedi Order that raised you. I mean, think about it. Anakin struggled to fit in because he was, what, ten when he joined? Imagine how different an order that was built from someone who is closer to twenty-five would be. At a minimum, it is going to be closer to the Corellian Jedi style."

For a long moment, Ahsoka was silent, looking at me with wide eyes as I casually mentioned information that wasn't well known even before everyone who knew it was killed under order 66. Eventually, she looked over at Tatnia.

"Is this what you mean by knowing things?" She asked, getting a shrug in return. After a moment, she looked back at me. "As truthful as that may be, that doesn't change the fact that I cannot train him. I... I was a Padawan when I left the order. I don't..."

"I doubt he is expecting you to know how to unravel the mysteries of the universe or know the ancient lore of the Jedi Lords," I pointed out. "Obi-wan barely had time to teach him how to block blaster bolts. Right now, I bet he is more comfortable with a blaster than a lightsaber. Could you not just offer him some guidance, maybe show him some basic lightsaber

forms? No moral stuff, no nature of the Force stuff. Because the alternative is that I do it, and trust me, you're not gonna like that."

"You would train him?" She asked, squinting at me in doubt. "You've emphatically stated that you do not use the Force, how would you train him?"

"If Master Mace Windu wrote down everything he knew about the Force, everything he learned and thought, wouldn't that book have valuable insight and guidance to a Padawan?" I said. "Especially if they were going to attempt to mimic his more aggressive fighting style, or shared his Shatterpoint ability. The book wouldn't be able to use the Force, but it could still teach things about it."

If she was shocked before, now she was dumbfounded. She stared for a full fifteen seconds before finally closing her mouth.

"Who *are* you?" She asked. "How do you know these things?"

Instead of answering, I stood up, walked away from the table, and turned down the stairs. I walked down the centerline of the ship, following the sounds of voices coming from the cargo bay. I spotted Luke, Miru, Pola, and Julius sitting on a few crates, talking and laughing. I smiled, happy that my plan of sending the younger members of my crew had worked.

"Luke, are you up for some training?" I asked when they stopped laughing.

"... From you?" He asked, sounding confused, looking at Miru. "I thought you didn't use the Force?"

"I don't, but that doesn't mean I haven't picked up a thing or two," I explained with a shrug. "C'mon, worst case scenario it's a bust, and we wasted an hour."

"Yes! Absolutely! If you can teach me anything, then please, yes!"

"Good. Let's head out into the hangar where there is a bit more room to mess around," I directed, the young Force user eagerly nodding and heading directly for the boarding ramp, practically jogging.

As he disappeared from view, I turned to Ahsoka, who had stopped just at the top of the stairs to the second deck.

"Imagine if my intention had been to corrupt him, how easily he would accept what I was saying."

Ignoring her response, I followed after Luke, who was waiting for me in the space between the *Penance* and the *Chariot*. He looked nervous and eager and was trying to decide

whether he should have his lightsaber out. When he noticed me approaching, he let it drop to his hip, focusing on me. I stopped about fifteen feet before him, sitting on a crate.

"Alright. So, the most important ability that a Force-sensitive has in their repertoire is deepening their connection to the Force, letting it guide their actions. It's how you block blaster bolts, it's how you fight with a lightsaber without cutting yourself into chunks, it's how you feel a threat coming," I explained. "Sure, there are a lot of fiddly powers, abilities, and tricks, but at the end of the day, it all comes down to connecting to the Force, feeling it flow through you. It's the foundation that everything is built on."

As I talked, Luke nodded along, eating up every word. I paused for a moment when the fact that I was teaching *Luke Fucking Skywalker* about the Force hit me all at once. I coughed and forced myself to continue.

"Obi-Wan Kenobi already started this process with that training droid, the remote zapper thing, and the blast shield helmet?" I said, Luke continuing to nod. "Right, he was trying to get you to pull on the Force, to connect to it. It's a credit to your talent that you had any success at all in such a short amount of time."

"I kept practicing with it," Luke said with a smile. "I've gotten alright at predicting its shots."

"That's good," I encouraged with a nod. "You're already feeling what the Force is trying to tell you. Now-"

"What the Force is trying to... You make it sound like it's alive."

"There is a lot of debate if it is or not, but in this circumstance, I was personifying it," I explained, doing my best not to let my own misgivings about the Force color my explanation. "That's the kind of thing Force philosophers liked to debate, and the fact that after all this time, the jury is still out should tell you something. Now, you're already tapping into the force, so we just need to widen and deepen the connection. Did Obi-wan have time to teach you any lightsaber forms?"

"Forms? No, he never mentioned anything like that," He said, shaking his head and sounding upset. "We never really had the time."

"I know, but I had to be sure. The galaxy is a little less bright with him gone, but he would be proud of what you've accomplished," I said, getting a small smile from the young Force-sensitive. "For now, we need to keep pressing on. Since you don't know any forms, I will teach you some of mine."

I jumped off my crate and walked closer, summoning a sword and motioning for him to move back. After recovering from watching me conjure a sword from nowhere, he took several large steps back, giving me a nice place to work with.

Over the next two hours, we ran through four different longsword forms, basically drills or kata's, to borrow a term from martial arts. I had dozens of them in my head, but I worked four of the most flowing, clean ones into a single string, stepping back and forth, striking and defending. After a few demonstrations, I had him doing them, first with me and then alone. He had attempted to use his lightsaber, but instead I had Miru fetch a bar of lightweight metal from the ship.

"I thought... that you... were going ... to teach... me... how to... connect to the Force," Luke asked, starting the pattern all over again, sweat beginning to form on his brow. "Not just... have me repeat.... the same thing... over and over."

"Well, here's the thing. You are a bit old. If you went to the Jedi Temple the masters would have refused you so fast your head would have spun."

"What?" He asked, eyes wide as he stumbled. "I'm too *old*?"

"The Jedi Order would take Force-sensitives when they were infants," I explained. "So they could encourage a core of peace and serenity."

He looked at me and then passed me to Ahsoka, who was keeping an eye on us despite her refusal to help.

"That's right, even her. Your father was actually the oldest Jedi accepted for a long time. You're around twice his age when he was first ... accepted into their Jedi Order."

I could see the conflicted thoughts in his eyes, wanting to train but desperate to know more about his father. I chuckled and shook my head.

"How about we train for now, and during the trip to our mission, I can tell you some stories about your dad."

He agreed eagerly and continued to do his drills with renewed vigor.

"Because you don't have the core indoctrination, I mean training," I said, Ahsoka shift in her seat behind me. "Sitting down and emptying your mind is a tall order, especially at the drop of a hat. So instead, you're doing kinetic meditation."

I was blatantly stealing from a few different sources, specifically the theory that Master Yoda had been doing something similar when he had Luke running laps on Dagobah. Why he hadn't been using lightsaber forms, I don't know.

"As you run through these drills, I want you to lose yourself. Sink into the movement, letting your mind slowly quiet. There is nothing but the action, the momentum, the movement."

I watched him run through drill after drill, repeating the movements over and over, moving in a small circle. At first, he was frowning, too busy struggling to move to really sink into meditation. But slowly but surely, as he worked his body harder and harder, his expression grew more serene.

"The Force is not a thing. It does not exist as a finite amount," I continued, talking softer so I wouldn't startle him. "It is everything and everywhere. It is infinite, omnipresent. It is you, it is me. It is the planet under our feet and all the living creatures that live on it. Feel that, Luke. Feel the people around us. Don't pull, don't push, just feel."

Again, it took him a while to work out exactly what I was talking about, but gradually he seemed to get it. His movements were quicker, more precise, and his breathing easier. The sluggishness of his swings almost disappeared. When Ahsoka gasped behind me, clearly feeling something, I knew he had done it.

So I pulled out my blaster and shot him.

The stun bolt fired across the gap, racing toward Luke, only for him to fluidly spin around, using the metal pole to counterbalance himself. He ignited his lightsaber as he moved and intercepted the stun bolt perfectly. Considering I had anticipated him just dodging it was impressive. I hadn't even seen him grab his lightsaber.

He opened his eyes, his stance low, ready for the next attack, only to realize there was nothing else coming. I clapped loudly, though, with a big smile on my face.

"Very impressive, Luke!" I said as he warily shut down his lightsaber and tossed me the pole. "How did it feel?"

"It... It was amazing. I could feel you and Ahsoka... I could feel everyone around the base..." He said, looking around as if he could spot the people through walls. "I... Thank you."

"No problem. For now, let's take a break," I said, nodding to the *Chariot*. "We are about three or four hours away from having to head down to the other hangar."

He nodded and started to head to the *Chariot*, leaving me alone with Ahsoka.

"That was impressive," She said, watching me closely. "Especially for someone with no connection to the Force."

"It's not an original idea or anything," I responded with a shrug. "There are many more Force traditions out there, other than the Jedi."

"I know," She responded. "I know better than most the flaws of the Jedi Order."

"Yeah... They fucked that whole thing up, didn't they," I said, shaking my head. "You know... "

For a moment, I was silent, several things going through my mind, things I could say in an attempt to help her get over what the Jedi Order had done to her or about the guilt she felt for abandoning Anakin to his fate. After a long moment of silence, I realized that this wasn't the time or place, nor that I could really have any effect on what she thought.

"Helping Luke understand past mistakes could help prevent them from being repeated," I eventually said.

"...Perhaps." She responded simply, before turning and making her way out of the hangar.