

Galactic Wizardry

Chapter 4

Harry was sitting in the cockpit of his ship, the freshly-named Chimaera, flipping switches and listening to the droids that were running scans, tests, and simulations. He loved how the most important buttons were all close to him. When redesigning the cockpit, he made sure to put all of the important stuff near him. Sublight and hyperdrive engines, shields, and the navigation and weapons systems could all be accessed without even getting out of his chair. Hearing the beep of his R2, Harry nodded.

“You say that because of the modifications to the weight of the ship, my Class 1 Hyperdrive will run at 0.9 and maybe at 0.8?” Harry got a beep affirming his question. “That’s great! I can’t wait to find a good spaceport so that I can order quality parts instead of the junk that’s sold around here,” Harry said, reading the diagnostic list that showed up on the screen. He activated the Manual Targeting System and used a side display to point his laser cannons. Moving the crosshair, he heard the whirring of motors as all four cannons snapped onto the target.

“Run diagnostics,” Harry said. R2 plugged into the console and began scanning the system as Harry continued to move the weapons. R2 beeped out a continuous update of what it was seeing.

“Okay. Adjust and level the guns,” Harry told him while getting up. “Let me know when the calibrations are done.” He cracked his neck and arched his back as he groaned. He had been sitting in that chair for hours. Harry had already received a message from Qui-Gon Jinn. Apparently, Harry was right about Anakin, and Qui-Gon was eager to bring him back to the Jedi Temple. He also told him that they used Shmi’s money to buy both of their freedoms. Obviously, both were ecstatic. While Anakin would be going with the Jedi, the Queen of Naboo offered Shmi a place on her planet. He was sure that a job of some kind would be set up for her. Harry was very happy to hear this.

Checking his watch, Harry saw that he only had a few hours left. Padme had spoken with the Queen, and she assured Harry that Padme had complete authority to negotiate on his behalf. Not only that but he was offered a very generous paycheck to help out during their fight to take back the planet. Harry immediately agreed. From the holo message that he had received from Padme, she was quite pleased that she’d be seeing more of him.

Harry was sure that once everything was taken care of and the invaders were chased off, there would be plenty of work on Naboo as well. He could end up making some quick coin by bringing in things like food and medicines. He was sure that the Trade Federation had stripped the planet of all that they could get their greedy hands on. Of course, Harry didn’t plan on paying for any of these foods or medicines. According to Harry, any planet, business, or organization that was part of the Trade Federation was fair game.

Taking what little hard currency that he had leftover, Harry went out and purchased as much food as he could carry. By using some Stasis Charms, the food should last a while. Harry didn't usually like using Stasis Charms on his food. In his opinion, it made the food taste weird and kind of metalicky. Unfortunately, he didn't have much of a choice until he reached a civilized planet with a decent grocery store. Harry apparated back to the ship and stowed the groceries away before going back to the cockpit.

After all of the final checks had been made, Harry just had to wait. Thankfully, his wait was short, and he received the call from Qui-Gon's Padawan, Obi-Wan Kenobi. However, it wasn't the call that he was expecting.

"Potter!" his voice crackled over the comms. The twin suns always did wonky things to communications on the planet.

Harry flipped the switch. "Potter here," he called out.

"My Master is being attacked by what appears to be a Sith! Rendezvous with our ship immediately. I'm jumping out to help him!" he said as the communication crackled and ended. Harry looked at R2, whose domed head spun to look at him.

"No time to waste!" Harry smiled widely. He was barely leaving and already there was an adventure! R2 beeped loudly and excitedly. "Are you linked up with their ship and our hyperdrive?" Receiving a beep in return, Harry nodded his head. He flipped some more switches and heard the engines roar to life. With his heart beating a thousand times a minute, he gripped the control sticks tightly.

"And we're off like a herd of turtles!" he exclaimed and lifted off. R2 beeped loudly as the ship tilted 45 degrees. "Woah!" Harry yelled. The ship was way more responsive than Harry had expected. It kept tilting, and Harry saw that it was headed straight for the building in front of him. R2 let out a high-pitched beep as the side of the ship ripped a deep trench into the ground, sending up clouds of dust and debris. "I am turning!" he yelled as he pulled on the stick.

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The purple-skinned Dug had just finished skinning a Sand Toad that he would be cooking for dinner when his house began to vibrate. At first, he ignored it, but soon the vibrations became thunderous, so he went outside to check. As soon as he turned the corner of his house, he saw the human's ship cutting a path of destruction through his wonderful scrap-heap! Parts and metal were flying through the air as the ship tore up everything in its path.

"AAAARGH!" it yelled and was just able to jump out of the way as his house was obliterated.

Harry pulled off a sweet drift and was able to level off and pull up. Hitting the throttle, he didn't notice when the shockwave blew the rest of the Dug's junk in every direction. R2's beeping was a distraction after all.

"Yes, I practiced on the simulator! Do you think I'm some sort of idiot?" Harry said, flipping switches and checking the sensors for any damage. R2 beeped again.

"Umm ... no. I didn't modify the simulator to account for the massive reduction of weight," Harry winced. "No use crying over spilled milk. Just bring up the waypoints to meet with the other ship. And stop laughing!"

It didn't take them long to reach the other ship. He could see two men using lightsabers to battle another man in black who was wielding a red blade. It looked like the man in black was better than both of the Jedi combined. Harry didn't really know what to do until he saw his chance. Qui-Gon threw out his hand and hit the man with what looked like a Banishing Charm. The man flew back far and did a backflip, landing on his feet. Harry pulled the ship around and drifted between them as the two Jedi made a beeline for the Royal ship. Lining up the shot, Harry pulled the triggers.

His laser cannons erupted with brutal fire as shot after shot rained down on the Sith. Sand blew up in every direction, blocking the man from his view. All that Harry could see was a hazy, red lightsaber trying to block every shot from hitting him. He noticed that the sword was getting smaller and smaller. That meant that the Sith was retreating. Not surprising. Harry knew that Lightsabers could block blaster bolts, but trying to block laser cannon shots was beyond suicidal.

"The Jedi are on board! We're taking off!" Panaka's voice crackled over the comms. Harry continued to fire until they were safely in the air. Once they were, Harry pulled around and took off after them. The two ships met up just beyond the planet's Gravity Well.

"Thanks for the timely intervention my friend," Qui-Gon's voice came through the speakers. "We're sending you the navigation route. Once we get to Coruscant, you can land on a pad usually reserved for Jedi. I'll send you the codes and waypoints once we exit hyperspace."

"Understood," Harry replied. Once the route was calculated, he watched as the Queen's ship blurred out of existence. Giving it a few seconds head start, Harry said, "Guess it's my turn."

He put his shaky hand on the lever and pushed it all of the way forward. Harry watched as the small pinpricks of starlight stretched into long lines before the space around him deformed into a swirling vortex of twisted light. "Wow!" Harry gasped, wide-eyed at what he was actually seeing. He had read about it but seeing it was something else. Snapping himself out of it, he suddenly remembered that he needed to check the sensors and instruments. His hands were a blur as he pressed buttons and tried to remember everything on the checklist in his overly excited state. Thankfully, he had a droid to help him.

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As Darth Maul entered his small ship, the beeping of a droid was the first thing that he heard. Yelling in anger, he ignited one side of his blade and cut the droid in half. Tossing his lightsaber onto a table, he peeled off his clothes and looked at his shredded body. The explosions that he was barely able to fight off had sandblasted his skin. Gritting his teeth, he reached for his emergency medical kit and got to work on his wounds. 'I'm going to kill those Jedi if it's the last thing I do,' he thought as he applied disinfectant and yelled out in pain.

Meanwhile, Harry and his droids were recalibrating the sensitivity of his controls to a more manageable level. Knowing that traveling between planets could be hours or even days, Harry thanked his lucky stars that he had a ship big enough to stand up and stretch his legs. Perhaps he would turn the Rec Room into a place to relax and have fun. He smirked at the thought of adding a stripper pole and hiring a Twi-lek dancer to provide entertainment for those long and lonely hyperspace jumps. R2 brought him out of his perverted thoughts.

"Alright," Harry said. He waited a few more minutes before pulling back on the lever. The swirling vortex turned back into starlines before those shrunk down into pinpricks of light. They had just reached their first point in the route, the famed Corellian Run. The Corellian Run was a major hyperlane that would take them all the way to Coruscant.

As he exited hyperspace, he saw the Nubian ship getting into position before they disappeared again. Harry took a moment to test out the control calibrations. Doing a few twists and turns, he found it to his liking. "Feels a lot better," he told R2. R2 beeped happily. He too got into position and punched it once more. He spent the next seven hours reading up on Coruscant, Naboo, and other places that he was likely to visit while his droids rolled around fixing any problem that they could find like loose panels and unsightly welds.

He had just finished eating a snack when the alarm went off. R2 rolled into the cockpit just as Harry pulled them out of hyperspace. Both were checking readings and sensors as they went through the checklist.

"I'm sending the security codes to your droid. They will get you priority access. Follow the waypoints and they will lead you to a private pad. The Queen's handmaiden will contact you if I don't first," Qui-Gon told him.

"Thanks a bunch, Qui-Gon," Harry thanked the old Jedi as he checked the sublight engine temperatures.

"Think nothing of it. Try not to get into trouble while you are here," Qui-Gon chuckled along with Harry.

"I'll try," Harry replied before they disconnected. When the Security Officer hailed them, his droid sent them the Jedi codes that had been provided. As Qui-Gon said, they were instantly let through. Harry closely followed the waypoints until a large landing pad appeared before him. The flashing lights told him that the pad was ready to receive him. Harry held the tip of his tongue between his teeth as he lowered the landing gear and softly touched down. R2 beeped out his congratulations.

"First successful landing," Harry smiled. Harry lowered the ramp while his droids would stay on the ship and continue to work on the small things that needed to be done. When he walked out, a small droid rolled up to him with a datapad on its head. He saw that it was offering services. Harry selected the refueling option and put in his banking details since he wasn't a Jedi. When the transaction cleared, another droid came up to the ship lugging heavy-looking hoses. Leaving them to it, Harry began making his way down to the lower levels.

As it was still dark out, he got his first glimpse of the nightlife on Coruscant. Harry smiled excitedly as he walked down the sidewalk, looking at the bright, colorful signs. Sexy alien females called out to him, trying to tempt him into paying for an hour of fun. Bars, saloons, pubs, Coruscant had them all in droves. Harry pushed his way into one and ordered a drink. One drink turned to two, then three. Before he knew it, he was a bit tipsy. Leaving the pub with a drink still in his hand, he accidentally bumped into an ugly alien that had just gotten off of a speeder bike.

"Watch it, human scum!" the alien growled and bumped his shoulder as it passed.

"Of course. My deepest apologies," Harry called out as he summoned the keys from the alien's pocket. When Harry jumped on the 74-Z speeder bike and turned it on, he heard the drunken crowd laugh as he took off.

Of course, he didn't really know how to fly the thing. He also didn't have any experience with traversing speeder lanes on Coruscant. Harry, however, wasn't letting any of that stop him. As he flew into head-on traffic, Harry smiled widely. It was just like his old broom! Zipping from side to side, he avoided the speeders that were heading straight for him. Honking as they flew by, Harry suddenly remembered that there were cameras everywhere. Waving his hand, he blurred his face so that no one could identify him. He did that just in time. Out of nowhere, a speeder bike with a member of the Coruscant Security Force on top pulled up next to him. Out of the loudspeaker, he said, "PULL OVER! YOU'RE UNDER ARREST!"

"Not bloody likely!" Harry shouted and pushed down on the handlebars. The speeder bike immediately went into a dive. Looking over his shoulder, he could see that the police were right behind him. The police were inching closer and closer to him. Harry laughed and stepped on the gas. Harry was avoiding collisions like a pro as he zipped and zoomed around, making the police fall further and further behind. Finally, the police pulled up and flew away. Seeing his path blocked except for a massive ventilation shaft, he flew into it while staying ready to apparate away. Harry didn't realize it, but he had flown deep into the lower levels.

Deeper and deeper he flew, traversing thousands of levels down until he exited at level 1313. Harry instantly knew that he had reached the slums of this city-planet. He could tell that this level hadn't seen sunlight in Merlin knows how long. Everything was dirty and rundown-looking, and the people walked with an air of danger about them. This wasn't a place that the weak should find themselves. Pulling into a parking lot, Harry added some wards to his new bike and remembered where he parked. Just as he left the parking lot, two near-humans with blue skin and glowing red eyes approached him. Without even asking a question, one pulled a blaster out and fired. Harry, who was reading his mind, had already thrown up a shield. The blaster bolt bounced off and struck his friend. Harry summoned the blaster from his hand and shot him in the back as he turned to run. Both were groaning in severe pain, but Harry wasn't too fussed about that. From what he saw in the Chiss's mind, they were planning to incapacitate him and place him on ice, where they would sell his organs to whoever was willing to pay. To them, Harry seemed like an easy target since he was clean and somewhat tanned. They instantly knew that he was a surface dweller.

Harry flipped one over with his foot and continued to look through his mind. These two didn't live on this level. They lived on level 2841 but worked here. Obviously, their jobs were horribly illegal, so they needed to be as close to the core as they could to avoid law enforcement. Most of what they knew about this level were locations of different storefronts, but he did get a few juicy nuggets from him. Harry got the location of their "office", the location of their home, the location of their small ship, and the name of a big-time black market dealer that sometimes bought their products. He summoned everything that they had of value, including the blaster, whatever money that they had on them, and the keys to their home. He also made sure to get the security codes for the ship.

He made his way a few streets down before coming to a dark alley. Knowing that there was some small but vicious animal that lived at the end of the alley and hated light, Harry hit the alley with a very powerful Lumos. He heard a pained squeal followed by the shuffling of feet. Knowing that it was now safe, Harry entered the alley and entered the code to the correct door. The lock opened with a click.

As soon as he entered, he noticed that it smelled like a hospital. He could see why. There were bottles of body parts suspended inside of some strange goop. On the table in the middle of the room laid the body of some dead alien. He could see that it had been harvested pretty heavily. Harry wasn't here about that though. As sad as it was, there was nothing that he could do about it. The ones responsible were currently bleeding out a few streets down. Trying to ignore the grotesque spectacle, Harry made his way to the back of the room. Kneeling down, Harry pulled up a loose plasteel floorboard and reached in. As he removed his hand, he smiled at the bag full of Republic Credit Ingots that he pulled up. Shrinking them down, he placed them in his pocket. Looking around, he saw that there was nothing left for him here.

He got back on his speeder bike to go talk to this black marketeer. A twenty-minute drive later and Harry pulled over. Going into a bar named May'aan's, Harry ordered a drink and looked around. He saw a yellow-skinned Togruta dancing on stage while males of all species ogled her.

Finally, he spotted the human that he was looking for. Harry walked up to the table of the man and sat down. "Risho Moor?"

"Do I know you?" he replied, taking a long drag of his Death Stick.

"No, but a pair of Chiss did. They told me about you before their unfortunate accident," Harry told him, sipping on his drink. The man chuckled. Harry found the dark-skinned man's voice pleasant. It had a deep baritone quality to it.

"And what exactly did they tell you?"

"That you can get damn near anything for the right price," Harry responded.

"True. What are you looking to get?"

"On Tatooine, I heard about a black market hyperdrive that was just developed. Very fast. Class 0.5 to be precise. I want one," Harry stated bluntly.

"I've heard of those. They're very hard to get. Every smuggler and his mother wants one, but few can pay. Can you?" the man asked, checking out the Togruta as she shook her tight ass.

"Depends on the price."

"Thirty-thousand. No haggling."

Harry whistled. That was the price of a small, mid-range ship. "What can I get for an ARC-160 in good condition? Half of the weapons are removed to make it legal to fly."

"The Chiss boys' ship?" the man barked out a laugh. "Guess they won't be using it anyway. Ten thousand if you have the codes. Seven if you don't."

Harry conjured a card with the codes on it and told him where it was parked. Risho took the card and called it in. It took only a few minutes before he heard back. "Ten-thousand it is. How are you going to pay the other twenty?"

"Bank?" Harry asked. Risho nodded and pulled out a secured datapad. Harry accessed his account and transferred the funds. By his calculation, he was running a bit low on funds. Thank heaven that Padme offered him some work.

"Excellent!" the man cheered. "The hyperdrives are modified once they are purchased. Go to these coordinates and be there on this day and time. The installation is covered with the price," he told him, handing him a printout. Harry looked at the coordinates.

"Corellia," the man answered his unasked question. Harry nodded.

"If you ever need anything smuggled, here's my contact info. Guaranteed to get there unharmed. The only thing I don't haul are slaves," Harry said, handing him another card. "Pleasure doing business." The man nodded as Harry walked away.

Checking the card again as he walked out of the establishment, he saw that he had around ten days before he needed to be back in the Core. That was more than enough time to take care of the Trade Federation. Harry spent another couple of hours traveling to level 2841. It looked just as dingy as 1313, just not as dangerous. Their apartment didn't hold anything of great value, just another weapons cache of blasters, blaster rifles, and slug throwers. Going to their computer, he used his knowledge to access their bank accounts. Collectively, they had around 3,100 credits that he transferred to his account. Scouring the apartment, he took anything that looked like it would earn him a few credits. He could sell most of this back on Tatooine. They bought anything of half-decent quality there, and he was sure that he would be going back sooner or later. Waving his hand, he sent all of it to his ship. Stepping outside, he powered down his bike and turned it into a Portkey. Sitting astride it, Harry activated the Portkey and vanished back to his ship.

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Leaning back in the Captain's chair, Harry tried to get as much sleep as he could. Thankfully, he had the foresight to stock up the morning after his trip to the lower levels of Coruscant. Later that day, an unamused Queen ordered their contingent back to Naboo to personally take on the Trade Federation. The two Jedi would be going as well, so Qui-Gon called him up and let him know what was going on.

Harry had been in hyperspace for an hour and after checking his instruments, he tried to get a bit of shut-eye. Unfortunately, the flashing of the lights was annoying him. It was something that he would need to get used to.

Eventually, he left hyperspace and got his first look at the planet Naboo. It looked surprisingly Earth-like. Perhaps one day he would make Naboo his home. R2 beeping brought him out of his nostalgic daze. A ship in the shape of a donut appeared on his sensors.

"A Droid Control Ship? Good to know," Harry said, following them down. He landed close to them in an opening in the tree canopy.

After meeting up, they waited for the Gungan to get back. Padme was sticking close to him, nervously asking questions. When he came back empty-handed, they were forced to go to a sacred area that the Gungans likely were at. It was then that Harry learned that Padme was actually the Queen. Frankly, it shocked him. He hadn't even realized that they were using body doubles. He guessed that that was the point. After getting them to agree to fight, Padme apologized.

"I'm sorry for the deception, Harry," she looked at him shyly, her cheeks turning pink. Harry just smiled in return.

"No apology needed. It was the smart thing to do after all," he assured her. She smiled happily seeing that he wasn't mad.

In the end, it was decided that Padme and the Jedi would attack the palace while the Gungans met the droids on the battlefield as a distraction.

"What will you do, Harry?" the Queen asked.

"I'll be up in the air, causing a distraction of my own," Harry chuckled. Everyone wished each other good luck and went their own way. When no one was looking, Harry apparated back to his ship. Harry waited until the planned time when he knew that the droids would meet the Gungans. Firing up his ship, he lifted off and flew toward the meeting point. From afar, he could see tanks firing at the Gungan shields.

"What are those in the back?" Harry asked. He received the answer from his droid.

"Troop Carriers? Target those with the missiles. I'll handle the tanks," Harry said excitedly. He thought that the commanders of the Droid Army were incredibly incompetent. They were lined up in the perfect strafing position. As they got closer and closer, he stayed low, just over the trees. When he entered the open plains, he carefully took aim and yelled, "NOW!"

Harry watched as multiple missiles were fired just as his quad-cannons erupted in laser blasts. He saw the tanks' weak shields flicker after the first shot just before their armor got ripped to shreds. Out of the corner of his eye, he saw multiple carriers explode violently as his missiles met their targets. Just then, the tanks turned on him and began to fire back. He pulled to the side to avoid most of the cannon fire. Suddenly, a loud beep filled his ears. Harry pulled the stick the other way just as the ground beside him exploded.

"Aerial Bombardment?! Harry shouted as dirt and grass hit his windscreen. He pulled up and did a twist as another massive shot flew past him. Apparently, the ships in space didn't like him raining on their parade. Pointed upward, Harry could easily see the shots coming in. Avoiding them, he soon found himself in the blackness of space. The donut ship was right in his sights.

"Let's see how much you like it!" he cheered excitedly. Cannon fire was flying right past him as he twisted and turned. Fighters were on his tail as he flew so close to the Control ship that he damn near crashed. Firing two missiles, they hit a large dome on the ship causing it to explode. Pulling up at the last second, he narrowly missed the middle area of the ship. Two explosions told him that the fighters directly behind him didn't have reflexes as quick as his.

"I have an idea! Take control and fly into the open Docking Bay! Spin around for a quick exit. Understand?" Harry asked and R2 beeped, plugging into the computer. Harry ran down and

lowered the ramp. Hanging on, he waited until they just started leaving before he threw out his hand and yelled, "Igneo Solaris!"

A tiny ball of light flew from his hand and hung there before it exploded in size. The ball grew to a massive size, burning brighter than the sun. Harry had to shield his eyes. Immediately, the floor and ceiling closest to the ball of light began to glow red, then yellow, then white. Harry could see molten metal dripping from the ceiling as R2 exited the ship. Closing the ramp, Harry ran to the cockpit and took control. Turning around, he could see an area of the ship starting to glow red. Deciding that it was probably a good idea to leave, he turned around. Just as he did, part of the ship exploded, making the Chimaera shudder violently as it sped away.