

Getting our newly acquired station home was a bit of a process, one that our new trade partners weren't jumping up to help with. It seems that, now that our business had concluded, they were a bit too unhappy with the deal they had gotten to be friendly anymore. When we asked for some guidance, they essentially shrugged and said it wasn't their problem.

Granted, between the two stations we had negotiated for, I had essentially gotten close to sixty to seventy million credits worth of hardware for less than twenty, so I couldn't really blame them.

Thankfully, the droids on board our new station knew a lot about the process, and previous moves had been thoroughly documented, giving us something to go off of. It also didn't hurt that a few of our crew had actual experience with station moving, so any serious errors would be spotted before they occurred.

Hopefully.

Our first trip would be a simple test run, jumping for fifteen minutes into the nearest deep-space void. We would then stop and run through the ship's data to confirm everything was in order and not about to explode violently.

The moving process began with the deployment of nearly twenty space tugs, each one latching on in pre-built spots all over the large station. After confirming everyone was in place, we began moving the station into formation with the rest of the fleet. We also started the calculation process.

Tugging a station through hyperspace was not impossible, it was actually a relatively routine procedure, all things considered. It was, however, very delicate. Each tug had to work in concert with the others, combining their efforts to move the station into and through hyperspace. This made the jump calculations astronomically more difficult. We already had several astromech droids helping out the computers with the calculation. Even so, with twenty extra points of complication, one for each tug, to take into consideration, it was still going to take hours.

During that time, we continued to explore the station, starting the process of cataloguing everything that it contained. There were thousands upon thousands of worker droids of various models and purposes, each designed to repair or modify a ship. Honestly, I had no doubt the station could build a starship from the ground up if fed the schematics and proper materials. There were also several dozen smaller worker pods and transports, which essentially served as forklifts for the droids putting the ships together. Some, however, also had specialized tools attached, such as large welders or plasma cutters.

With every additional bit we inspected, the more excited I was to get this ship inspected and safe above Nirn.

We did find some issues as we went. A few components from one of the life support systems were missing, leaving the section it was in charge of without breathable air. On top of

that, the gravity generator for about a fifth of the station wasn't listening to the central control and required manual access to turn on or off.

It took five hours for the calculations to be ready, but when they were, we were settled and ready for the jump. We had already returned to our ships, allowing the droid pilots to control the station. I contacted Commander Erba, assured him that the first deliveries of food would arrive soon, as would their safe and clean freighters. The first delivery of supplies would take a bit longer to get together, but that would arrive quickly as well.

I could very clearly tell that he was *not* happy about letting us leave before he received his payment, but he knew he really didn't have a choice. Our current fleet might not be strong enough to stomp him and his ships flat, but it wouldn't take long to put together a fleet that could. He was forced to trust us because he couldn't force us to do anything, which was fine. After all, I had no intention of going back on our deal.

About five minutes after that, we made the jump to lightspeed.

When we dropped out of hyperspace fifteen minutes later, we had to actually wait for the station to catch up. Usually, when jumping in groups, we could compensate for differences in hyperspace capabilities, slowing down the fastest ships to stick closer to the slower, but the station was so slow that it was easier for us to just make the jump and wait.

What felt like at least a full minute after we arrived, the station did as well. Immediately, we opened up communications between the station and the ship while also running a dozen scans at once.

"No aberrant reading coming in, Sir," the sensors officer stated, looking down at his console. "No energy spikes, hull temperature is cool, not picking up any fluctuations in the shields..."

"All of the tugs are reporting nominal readings as well, Admiral Deacon," the comms officer stated. "Same with the station."

"Okay. Let's do another in-depth scan, just to make sure," I said, sensors nodding to confirm my order. "Comms, let's reach out to the security checkpoint about our arrival. This thing has a lot of mass to look over."

The station was large, about nine hundred meters long, though its thinner shape made it seem a lot less massive. Still, it was vaguely comparable to the *Hope*, so giving our people some warning about its eventual arrival in a few days was only smart.

"Advising them that we will be arriving in four days, sir," Comms confirmed.

I nodded and settled in to wait for the in-depth scan to finish. When it came back with an all clear, we started calculations for the next jump, this one significantly larger.

About a day into our trip home, I decided that it was time to bring Tatnia into the conversation concerning turning people into mages. For one thing, she had a way of stripping

down issues that would be invaluable. While we didn't always agree with the end result, she always had our best interests at heart, which was why she was my second-in-command.

Plus, if anyone deserved the chance to gain magic, it was her. She had been with me from the very beginning, and while Nal had been as well, he had taken a much more passive role. He was loyal, and I would likely offer him the chance later, but Tatnia clearly deserved to have first dibs.

I invited her to one of the more empty hallways of the ship, of which there were many, with the reduced crew size. There we could sit in peace, including Ahsoka, with a nearby viewport looking out into hyperspace.

"Alright, what's going on?" Tatnia asked even before I could start the conversation. When I looked at her, confused, she snorted. "Boss, please, you looked like you saw a ghost the first time we saw you before the mission. A very heavy, dangerous ghost. So, what happened?"

"That... well, I guess I'm not nearly as subtle as I had hoped," I responded, shaking my head, leaning back in the simple, dense couch Ahsoka and I had settled on. "What do you remember about how my magic works?"

"Your magic?" she asked, tilting her head a bit in confusion. "You've got that book that you study from, learning new spells. You've got summoning stuff, ice, fire, electricity, healing, and other weird stuff."

"Right, that's all right," I confirmed with a nod. "But do you remember that, occasionally, I unlock new magic to learn?"

"Yeah, I remember something like that."

"Right, well, something about reorganizing the fleets, or maybe getting the new ships back, seemed to trigger that unlocking," I explained. "I have access to pretty much the highest levels of magic I can get...I think."

"That's good, more magic is better," She said, before frowning. "Though I seem to remember the time to learn each bit of magic adding up, and the last group already taking a bit too long. What are you up to now?"

"Around twenty plus hours, which is why I haven't started yet," I admitted, shaking my head. "I probably won't even attempt learning these spells when I'm not on Nirn, and not before warning you and everyone else who needs to know that I will be unreachable for twenty-plus hours."

"That's... yeah, that doesn't sound like fun," Tatnia admitted with a wince.

"It's not, but it's also not what I wanted to talk to you about," I revealed. "On top of the new magic, I also learned how to give people magic. It comes with some restrictions, but after a long ritual, I can give anyone I want the ability to use the same magic I do."

"I... are you serious?" She asked, her eyes going wide. "Deacon, that is huge! Just the healing alone is incredible...and the thing you do to search for stuff...Boss."

"Oh yeah, trust me, it blew our minds as well," I assured her. "This is not happening anytime soon. I need time to prepare, learn a bunch of things, and do some planning... but, one of the first people I thought of offering this to was you."

Her eyes went a little wide as I explained why I had pulled her aside. She looked over at Ahsoka for a moment before looking back at me.

"You should know, there is a catch. Learning magic deadens your connection to the Force," I explained. "You've heard a few Jedi mention that I feel strange through the Force, blurry and difficult to detect, like I'm barely connected to it? That would happen to you, or anyone who is gifted it to."

"And what would that do to me, exactly?" she asked, now looking at me with a raised eyebrow.

"We aren't... entirely sure," I admitted. "For someone with barely any connection to begin with, most likely nothing. For someone with more of a connection... it could be like losing a sense. It would be even worse for someone who depends on it like a Jedi."

"Well, I don't have any connection as far as I know," Tatnia pointed out, leaning forward, leaning on her knees. "I... the offer is tempting, Deacon, real damn, but I need to think about it."

"That's fine, like I said, this isn't happening now."

"I need to talk to Julius about it," she said. "Things... we are pretty serious, Deacon. I can't make this decision without talking to him first."

"Of course, just make sure he understands how important it is that this stays under wraps, especially for now," I answered. "And before you ask, yes, he is on the short list, all of the crew are, but I wanted to offer it to you first."

"Thank you, Deacon. I appreciate the offer, I just need to think about it," She said, giving me a nod. "In the meantime... what's your plan on announcing it?"

"At the moment, the plan was to awaken magic in someone, train them, and show them off, maybe with the announcement that I will be spreading it around through the squads and civilians slowly but surely so that more people can have access to magical healing specifically."

"... I think that might be a mistake," Tatnia responded after a moment. "Having just one person, with the promise of more... you're going to have a swarm of people looking to apply, hoping to be the next mage."

"You have a different idea then?" Ahsoka asked, gesturing for her to explain.

"Select a large group, both Skyforged and civilians, though doctors and nurses are really the only civilians who would need the help..." She trailed off, only to shake her head. "Find a

large group of willing participants, pass on the magic, train them up to a decent level, and *then* reveal all of them. Stepping forward with a group provides the front of 'these are who we selected' rather than 'this is who we selected first, you could be next.'"

"That...would take considerably longer," I pointed out, but not out of dismissal. "But it would present as more of a united front as opposed to coming forward with someone as some sort of chosen successor."

"Also... just to put the idea out there, we could keep the fact that you're making mages a secret," Tatnia pointed out. "I don't necessarily think it's the right choice, but it's possible."

"Not for very long," I said, shaking my head. "Maybe for the first group, but with more variables would come more risks. Eventually, it would leak. Better to be honest from the beginning."

"Well, if that's the case, you're going to have one massive target on your head," my second in command pointed out. "You think the Emperor wants you now? Wait until he finds out you can take a half-decent soldier and turn him into someone who can go toe to toe with a Jedi and come out on top."

"Yeah, that has occurred to me," I assured her, sinking a bit into the couch. "But between the things I've said and what I've done, I'm already pretty high up the list. Only Luke is going to be higher after blowing up the first Death Star."

Both of my compatriots nodded, but a moment later, Tatnia froze, which triggered Ahsoka to realize what I had said as well. I cursed internally when I also realized what I had said, before letting out a long sigh/

"Did you just say, 'first Death Star?'" Ahsoka asked. "As in, there's a second one?"

"Eventually," I said with a wince. "They need to build it first. It's okay, we have time."

"I think you're going to have to elaborate on that, Deacon," Ahsoka said, her voice tight. "Please?"

"Yeah, sure. It's about time we start thinking about it anyway," I admitted. "Alright, so Grandpa Palpy was pretty pissed about the destruction of the first Death Star. He blamed it on the exhaust port, which was fair because it was left there as a weakness on purpose by [Galen Erso](#)."

"Erso... like the *Erso's Call*?" Tatnia asked, referring to one of our newer ships, an Imperial Arquiten. "Is that who it's named after?"

"Him and his daughter, [Jyn Erso](#)," I responded with a nod. "Galen was an unwilling participant in the Death Star project. He knew that, even if he killed himself, the project would still eventually be completed, so he built weaknesses into the station, like the trench blind spot and the exhaust port with direct access to the central core."

"Jyn Erso was the one who captured the Death Star plans," Ahsoka explained, as she was also familiar with the story. "Without her sacrifice, and the sacrifice of many rebels, they would have never gotten the plans to figure out the Death Star's weakness."

For a moment, Tatnia seemed a bit overwhelmed by all the new information. After a moment, she shook her head and focused back on me.

"And what does that have to do with the *second* Death Star?" she asked.

"Right, sorry," I said with a wince. "So the Emperor convinces himself it's all Erso's fault, and that building a second Death Star, without all those weaknesses, is the way to go..."

We sat there for a while, discussing the Emperor's lack of creativity and foresight, and how he seemed determined to bankrupt the galaxy trying to build the same mega station again. Eventually, we went our separate ways, both Ahsoka and Tatnia now aware of at least one of the threats on the horizon.