

Galactic Wizardry

Chapter 22

Sweat dripped down Harry's face as he parried yet another vicious strike from Shaak Ti's lightsaber. Again she swung down, and Harry held his blade to the side, barely keeping hers from hitting his face. The colored haze produced by her blue blade did incredible things to her blood-red skin as he peered through it. He could see beads of sweat dripping down her chest and rolling into her expansive amount of cleavage. Just then, her blade was pulled back, and she struck him in the side of the arm.

"OWW!" Harry yelled as he stood back. The training setting on her blade had been turned to nearly max, so every strike hurt quite a bit. Harry rubbed his throbbing arm while they circled each other.

"When in battle, you must focus completely," she lectured him while she stalked him like a wild animal. In truth, he thought that she looked incredibly sexy when in battle.

"Is that why you removed your robe? To distract me?" he asked as he studied the wonderful curves of her body. She was wearing her leotard that was practically made from strings. One thin, cream-colored band fit snugly into her butt cheeks before splitting in two and looping over her shoulders. Those two straps ran down her front and hid her nipples from view. However, they didn't do a very good job of hiding everything, since plenty of her breasts were hanging out on all sides. Not only that, but her nipples were rock hard and very distracting. The two straps then merged back into one and hid her hairless mound from his view. He looked back up to her pretty face to see her smirking.

"Possibly," she said before hitting him in the hand.

"Jeez!" Harry backed up, hissing from the pain. Shaak chuckled merrily.

"I'm glad that you find my pain so hilarious," Harry rolled his eyes.

"Pain is a great motivator," she said wisely as they both swung and locked blades. Harry kicked her in the belly which sent her sliding back. He then closed the distance and attacked with an aggressive, but still cautious, variant of Form VII. Being a newbie, it was nothing that an experienced Jedi like Shaak Ti couldn't handle. She was having difficulties with his sheer physical power and stamina. He had gotten quite good at enhancing his body with his magic. Shaak slashed his strike away and went on the offensive as well. Harry immediately was forced into a defensive position by the speed of her attacks. Even so, she thought that he did a good job of keeping himself safe. He didn't get hit by a single strike during her intense volley. When they were just about to lock blades again, the ship shuddered violently, knocking her on her butt. As her back hit the hard, metal floor, she let out an "oof!" She let out another groan when Harry's sweaty body landed on top of her. They were suddenly face to face.

Shaak couldn't help but blush deeply at being so close to him. They occasionally fooled around, but she hadn't had any decent one-on-one time with him. She very much hoped to rectify that mistake in the coming days. Without thinking, she wrapped her arms around his neck and pulled his head down. Her eyes closed as his lips found hers. Shaak moaned deeply into his mouth as their tongues dueled. 'He's better with his tongue than his lightsaber, that's for sure,' she thought to herself as his hand slid underneath her strap, and his fingers brushed against her hard nipple. Her back arched from the sudden and pleasurable contact. When their lips broke, Shaak was left breathing deeply.

"Looks like Padme and Sabe still need more practice," he joked which caused Shaak to chuckle. Harry pulled his hand from her breast and helped her to her feet. Shaak straightened up and silently berated herself for acting like a horny padawan when she should be properly training him. To be fair, it was a little hard when he was right up against her and his hands were groping her tight, nearly-naked ass. Liking the attention, she didn't bother chastising him. In fact, she leaned in a bit closer and "accidentally" rubbed her perky breasts against his chest. He didn't seem to mind in the least.

"They'll get it eventually. They don't have much experience flying a ship, especially one of this size. You must also remember that the Chimaera is heavily modified ... both with technology and the use of your powers," she said as she nuzzled his jaw with her nose. She loved his scent when he was sweaty.

Aayla was teaching the girls how to fly a ship. It would be a useful skill to have while they were galavanting across the galaxy and getting into trouble. It could also be useful if they ever needed to make a quick getaway. Unfortunately, neither of the girls had access to the Force, so they had to learn the regular human way. Harry didn't have the Force either, but he had a history of flying, going all the way back to his days on the Gryffindor Quidditch Team, so it was easier for him to learn. Harry was also the one to modify the ship, so he knew it better than anyone.

Shaak was squirming in his grip. His hands had just given her ass a hard squeeze when the ship lurched violently once again, nearly knocking them back to the ground.

"I don't think that's the girls doing," Harry said before they broke free of each other and high-tailed it for the Bridge. When they entered, he saw that Aayla had taken control of the ship and was flying through a sudden asteroid field. The girls got up and let Harry and Shaak take their normal seats. Immediately, they began to go to work.

"What happened here?" Harry asked as he ran diagnostics while Shaak scanned the area.

"I was teaching them how to make short Hyperspace hops when we suddenly came upon this after our last Hyperspace exit. According to the star-charts, it shouldn't be here," Aayla explained as she rolled the ship on its side and slipped through a deep crack in a very large asteroid.

"I think that it's a traveling asteroid field," Shaak chimed in. "One that hasn't been affected by the gravitational pull of a star or planet in a very long time," she explained. "As you can see, they are all moving in one direction."

Sure enough, all the chunks of rock and ice were moving directly toward them. "What caused this?" he asked.

"It was probably a planet that was destroyed when its star went supernova," Aayla told him as he ducked and weaved. Smaller pieces were deflected by their shields which were at ninety-eight percent max power.

They flew through the field for the next few hours before it began to thin out. Suddenly, Padme gripped his shoulder and pointed in the distance. "What's that?!"

Harry squinted while Shaak studied the sensor readings. "It appears to be a damaged ship," she declared.

"Should we go and try to help?" Aayla asked.

"Fly over there and let's take a look," Harry told her while he readied the weapons, just in case. Aayla flew closer until they were still a respectable distance away. "What do the sensors say, Shaak?"

"The life-support systems are down," she said.

"So they're dead?" Sabe asked as she stood next to Padme.

"They could have escaped in a pod," Aayla reminded them. "Or they could be wearing EVA suits."

"The ship looks in bad shape," Harry told them. They could see several parts that were shorn off. The hull had massive dents and was even split in one place. "Looks like their pilot wasn't as good as ours." Aayla hid her slight blush. Now was not the time to gush over her boyfriend's compliments, she thought.

"So what do you want to do?" Aayla asked them.

"Stay here and monitor the situation. Shaak and I will go over there and see what happened," Harry told her.

"Can we come too?" Sabe suddenly asked. Harry's first instinct was to say no, that it was too dangerous. Unfortunately, Harry couldn't always watch over them, no matter how much he wanted to. He needed to make them stronger and better able to handle things themselves. The

only way to do that was through experience. Besides, Padme would chew him out later if he began coddling them.

"Alright," he sighed. He made sure that they each had two EVA suits ... one primary and one spare. "Let's go get ready. Aayla, fly above the ship and mag-lock onto their top emergency hatch. We'll get in that way," he told her. Aayla nodded and began to slowly creep forward. Shaak and the girls began to follow Harry down to the Cargo Bay. Once there, Harry hit a button on the wall and it slid open, revealing a line of EVA suits and weapons. Shaak immediately went for hers. Hers and Aayla's were specifically designed for their species.

"Those are yours," he told the girls, pointing them out. They saw what Harry was doing and quickly donned theirs. Once they were in their suits, they all tested their comms.

"I can hear all of you just fine," Aayla's voice came through their helmets.

"Okay, girls. Each of you grab a blaster and place it on your thigh. A magnet will keep it in place," he said, grabbing his own and holding it next to his leg. It snapped into place. The girls followed his directions. "Now grab a blaster rifle."

When they did, he showed them how to use the flashlight that was attached to it. When all four were kitted out, Harry led them into the belly of the Chimaera where the lower hatch was located.

"Are we locked on, Aayla?" he called out.

"Yeah. Just be careful," she responded.

"I always am." Harry heard a snort through his helmet.

He flipped a switch and the top hatch opened. "Inside," he told them. They all climbed down into the small chamber. He then hit another button and the hatch closed.

"We're depressurizing," he told them. When the red light turned green, they were ready to go. "I'll go first. Don't come in until I give the go-ahead." He saw them nod.

"Can you open it from our Bridge, Aayla?" he asked.

"There's enough power, but it's code-locked," she answered.

"I'll just do it my way then," he said. He waved his hand and hit it with an Unlocking Charm. Instantly, the hatch began to open downward, groaning as it did. The hatch probably had never been used before. When it was fully opened, Harry turned the flashlight on and hopped down. Once he escaped his ship's shields, he began to float from zero gravity. He used his free hand to worm his way into the ship. As soon as his feet hit the metal floor, he turned on the magnets

in his boots. Now he was able to walk properly. Before he called them down, he conjured a ball of light in his hand and tossed it against the wall. The light stuck there and lit up the area. He looked around and saw nothing out of the ordinary. "Come on down," he said quietly.

He guarded the area until all three were safely down. He held Sabe down until she was able to turn her own magnets on.

"It's kind of creepy," Padme stressed, clearly not liking the eerie setting. The ship was really big and dark.

"That's why we're going to try and turn on the lights," he responded. "Aayla? Can you lead us to the breach in the hull?"

"I'll try. The ship's not in the database. I think that it's an old heavy freighter that's been heavily modified over the years," Aayla explained.

"Just do your best," Harry told her. With Aayla's help, they slowly made their way to the area of the ship that was damaged the most. Shaak whistled appreciatively at the destruction as they stood at the breach and stared out into space.

"I think the impact right here was what caused the power to go out. Such a sudden and powerful strike likely blew the master fuse in the engine room," the Togruta explained.

"So if we can replace the fuse, we can get the power back on?" Harry asked. Shaak shrugged.

"Possibly."

"May as well try," Harry said. "Stand back."

They stood back from the breach and watched as Harry held out his hand. He concentrated deeply and soon, the metal began to groan as it warped back into place, inch by inch. When the tear finally fixed itself, Harry exhaled deeply. Shaak smiled at him.

"Your powers truly amaze me sometimes."

"It's what I live for," he teased, making her laugh quietly. "Lead us to the engine room," Harry told Aayla.

The trek there was more difficult. They had to quietly creep down a corridor with tight twists and turns in the pitch black. Only their weapon flashlights provided enough lights to see.

Padme wasn't going to lie. She thought that maybe she and Sabe should have stayed on the ship. She was trembling with every step through the long maze of corridors. She snuck a peek at Sabe, only for her to give the same nervous look. Every soft clank of their magnetic boots

sounded much louder than it actually was. She would have been sweating profusely if her suit wasn't cooling her body down. She suddenly stopped, thinking that she heard a noise. Her heart was pounding as she swung her blaster rifle around. The light reflected off of the scuffed metal panels, blinding her temporarily. She blinked away the blindness and saw nothing. She desperately tried to calm her breathing but nothing seemed to work. She took a step toward her friends but caught her foot on something. Swinging the light down, she let out an ear-piercing shriek.

Harry was at her side instantly. He saw a human on the floor with only his head and arms hanging out of an open side room. He was tightly gripping Padme's ankle as she panicked. She jerked her leg violently to break the grip. Instead, the rest of the man's body was pulled from inside the room ... or at least what was left of it. She screamed even louder when she saw that the man was torn apart at the waist. A streak of blood smeared the floor as his shredded meat and torn innards scooted along the floor.

"Heeelp!" he gasped out from behind his helmet. Just then, out of the shadows, something struck like a snake and pulled the man back. The crunching of bones and the gurgled screams of death made the two girls want to vomit.

"Back up!" Harry called out. Without needing to be asked, they began walking backward in the opposite direction, their rifles aimed at the open door. Harry made sure to stay in the front to block the others in a worst-case scenario.

Padme's hands were shaking so bad that the light seemed to vibrate against the walls. Harry suddenly stopped walking backward, even though everyone else continued to walk. She could feel vibrations on the floor. Faster than her brain could comprehend, Harry was hit, and she watched as his body corkscrewed through the air. Her light illuminated something with lots of very long teeth that were heading straight for her. Without thinking, she pulled the trigger. The room was immediately lit up with flashes of red light as multiple blaster shots struck the beast. It reared up and let out a wail that she felt in her bones.

"Run!" she heard Shaak Ti yell. If a Master Jedi said to run, then it must be bad, she thought as she high-tailed it down the hall. The three girls ran as fast as possible, but the cries of the beast seemed to be gaining on them. Adrenaline kept her going, but her body was getting tired. She made a mistake and looked over her shoulder. What she saw was a large, open maw with dozens of spiked teeth coming down to get her. Suddenly, Shaak stopped, turned around, and held out her hand. Padme looked in time to see her Force Push the beast back. She ignited her lightsaber and swiped at the beast, hitting it in the face. It reared back, angry and pained.

Suddenly, the air became so chilled that she could feel it through her suit. The surrounding noise seemed to disappear, replaced by an ungodly howling. Padme yelped and fell back on her butt as a blade made of black light exploded through the base of the beast's lower jaw. The beast fell forward, and Harry rolled off of its back. Turning off his blade, he checked on them.

"Are you alright?" he asked, pulling her to her feet. Padme couldn't seem to get her mouth working. Instead, she simply nodded her head. When he smiled sweetly at her, she suddenly felt a bit better.

"Are all your adventures like this?" Sabe asked with a very shaky voice.

"Pretty much," Shaak joined in, walking up to the beast and shining her light on it. "An Exogorth, or Space Slug if you will. Still very young," she explained.

"But no less dangerous," Harry added, studying the fifteen-meter-long worm-like creature. He was thankful that his suit was blocking what was likely a very foul scent as blood oozed from the vicious wound. "I thought that they mainly lived on asteroids?"

"They do. The asteroid that hit the ship most likely dislodged the creature. It was probably ejected into the tear in the hull. Very bad luck if true," she shook her head sadly. She heard Harry clear his throat and turned her light to him. He was standing by several rows of crates. She walked over to him.

"I wouldn't be too sad about that," he told her, kicking the side of an open crate. One crate was filled with Spice while another was filled with shackles that were used in the slave trade.

"They were probably smugglers who may have been dabbling in the slave trade. Or maybe they were just transporting the tools of the trade for a price. Either way, I can't feel too bad for them," Harry explained. Shaak nodded.

"Let's get out of here. I'll contact Eden and have some droids bring a recovery team out. They'll fix the ship and fly it back to Eden where it will be put to good use for once," he said.

The girls were more than happy to get off that dark and derelict ship. They were hot on his heels as he led them back to the hatch. Before they left, he placed a transponder on the ship so that his droids could easily find it. And if by some miracle there were survivors on board and they got the ship running, he could easily find it again.

Later that night, Padme was sitting in her room thinking. She was so caught up in her thoughts that she didn't hear the door sliding open. When a pair of soft, warm lips touched the side of her neck, she yelped and jumped in surprise. She calmed when she heard Harry softly laughing at her. "What are you thinking so heavily on?" he asked kindly, wrapping his arms around her slim waist as he sat on the bed behind her. She closed her eyes and leaned back against him.

"I was really scared on that ship," she confessed.

"So was I. It was a scary situation," he told her as he kissed the top of her head. She smiled when she heard him smell her hair. She always used the shampoo that Harry liked best.

“But you didn’t panic,” she added and placed her hands on top of his.

“Unfortunately, I’ve been in plenty of bad situations. I’ve kind of gotten used to it,” Harry explained. She was quiet for a little longer before going on.

“Do you think I’ll be a burden in the future? On our mission I mean,” Padme clarified.

“No,” he told her, kissing the side of her neck. Padme mewled cutely and tilted her head to give him more room. “You’ll keep training and getting better. Just use how you felt today as a motivator. Thankfully, most of our missions aren’t that pants-poopingly scary,” he joked which earned him a cute giggle from her. When his lips found hers, she forgot about all the nonsense that she had been worrying about moments ago.