

Ahsoka visibly sagged at my promise, beyond happy that the rescue operation finally had a chance. After a moment, she looked at me and nodded before we all sat back around the table and focused on the mission. We were on a timer now, one that could go off at any moment. The quicker we could figure out what we were doing and get to it, the better.

"Would inserting on the *Starcaller* work?" Tatnia asked. "I know it would likely burn the ship as an undercover smuggling ship, but would it work?"

"What sort of smuggling ship is it?" Ashoka asked, a bit confused. "And why would this burn it?"

"It's a higher-end, heavily modified [YV-260](#) we spent a good chunk of credits on, then spent even more money putting in some pretty solid smuggling compartments in," I explained. "The problem is that we've used it twice in pretty rapid succession, once to do a high-profile heist and another in our most recent mission where we stole the *Loyal Hound* and the *Huntress*. Chances are Imperial Intelligence has already labeled it as a risk, which means they won't stop at a normal search. Hell, they might just blow it out of the sky to avoid the risk."

"We can't rely on smuggling ourselves in compartments, anyway," Ahsoka said, shaking her head. "With the Inquisitors around, there's a non-zero chance they sense us, even as we're hidden in special compartments."

Together, we spent about an hour spitballing ideas until we finally managed to land on one. We thought would have the best chance of working.

We would ride the *Starcaller*, as normal passengers, to a nearby planet. There, we would split up and hop onto a mass transport liner to our final destinations. Our target was planet Foless, a decently sized hub world that sat at the crossroads between the Corellian Trade Spine and the Shipwrights' Trace Hyperlanes, conveniently called the Foless Crossroads. This was *extremely lucky*, because if the planet was not such a gigantic hub for trade and shipping, the Empire would have no doubt set on a full-blown blockade, letting no people in or out until they had their target. Unfortunately, as it was, we would most likely never make it through customs. To do that required some... drastic measures.

"Racer could whip up some temporary IDs. That's not a problem at all," Miru confirmed with a shrug. They won't last under any deep scrutiny, not without getting direct access to several protected locations to change some heavily defended records, but they should work short term. The problem is that there's a pretty good chance Imperial Intelligence knows about at least some of the ground team."

"Imperial Intelligence definitely knows me," Ahsoka added with a frown. "Once they know I'm on the planet, it's likely to get worse quite quickly."

"Would he come chasing after you if you're spotted?" I asked as gently as I could, still getting a harsh look from Ahsoka, before she took a long, deep breath.

"It's possible," She admitted, clearly understanding who I was talking about.

I winced, agreeing with her conclusion. It made me wonder if bringing her was a good idea. I wasn't sure if my team could take on three Inquisitors, but I knew for a fact we weren't ready to go against fucking Vader. There were weapons we could get and tactics we could train in to boost those chances, but he was the Chosen One, and there was no telling what the Force would finagle in order to keep it's chosen alive and fulfill his destiny.

"All that means is that even a perfect ID won't make a difference," Tatnia finished. "They will be comparing our faces to their databanks directly."

"We would have to leave behind our weapons and armor as well," Rider pointed out. "No way we would be able to get anything other than pistols through customs."

I considered everyone's points, chewing on my lips as I tried to puzzle out the best way to get through security. I glanced around the room, moving my eyes around until they settled on Rider. A thought came to me, one that led me to wince and curse.

"I have an idea. It is drastic, but... time is clearly of the essence. We don't have time to find easy, less painful solutions."

Rider, having spotted that I looked at him before wincing, looked a bit worried. It was Nal, however, that asked me for clarification.

"What is this plan?"

"We have our medical droids to some scans of our faces... and then have them modify them," I said, holding my hands up to stave off the gasps and shocked words. "With the scans, they should be able to undo whatever change they make. Between changing our faces and maybe mixing up our hair... we could look pretty different."

"That... That is drastic," Tatnia admitted, openly cringing at the idea. "But... it would work. I would want to talk to a medical droid to confirm they could restore our faces and have them make multiple copies of the scans... but it would probably be enough to get us on the planet, at least."

"Wait, what about healing?" Rider asked, "Facial reconstruction takes time to heal, even if you spend some time swimming in bacta."

"You're forgetting who the Boss is," Miru responded. "He can heal anything in a few minutes."

"How will your magic react to having your face changed?" Nal asked, looking at me with curiosity.

"I have no idea, but I'm willing to be the test subject," I said. "I know this is drastic, guys, but these poor kids... what the Emperor will do to them... I'm willing to do a lot to prevent that from happening. Dealing with some minor body dysmorphia for a few weeks is an easy exchange."

While no one particularly liked the idea of having their face changed, the stakes, along with the assurances that it could be reversed, were enough to get everyone, even Ahsoka, on board. With a broad plan settled, we started to fill in the details. We quickly realized we should take the *Staggered Bantha* to the closest heavily populated planet, Bestine, rather than the *Starcaller* since our smuggling ship was still a bit on the hot side at the moment. Bestine had a pretty heavy Imperial presence, but since the *Staggered Bantha* was just a normal ship and since we would all have changed faces, it made the best sense.

From there, we would ride a public transport ship in an attempt to attract even less attention. This way, none of our ships would get attention called to them, and we could silently enter the planet. With any luck, the Imperials would have no idea we were there.

From there, the mission became less planned and more "See how it goes and adapt." Our best bet for locating the missing agent and her wards would be the communication stone that the other rebel was using to confirm they were still alive. If we watched that, eventually, someone would show up to turn that stone.

After making contact... the entire plan became about getting off the planet. Unfortunately, there was not a whole lot we could do to plan that out. All three of our rescue targets had their faces plastered everywhere, including the holonet and local news broadcasts. We were hopeful that we could find some way to get out while remaining undercover, but none of us were naive enough to assume it would work out. Instead, we would plan to have to fight our way out.

"With the proper preparation, I should be able to disassemble my lightsabers and get them through security," Ahsoka explained. "Blaster pistols are allowed on Imperial worlds, but they change the laws constantly to try and reduce the number. Chances are if you bring something recognizably high-powered, it will get confiscated."

"Leave that up to me," Miru said. "I can make sure everyone has a good weapon that looks like trash."

"I believe Pola will be able to fit some of our uniforms under normal clothes," Vaz said. "It will likely not be pretty or overly comfortable, but it will work."

"They won't pick up on armor?" I asked, looking concerned, but Vaz shook her head.

"Armor is not illegal, just eye catching," She explained. "They wouldn't stop you from wearing our full armor, but they would just put you under surveillance. Wearing reinforced clothes, if they even detect them, won't raise too many red flags, especially if it looks improvised."

"Alright. Then we need to get our medical droids so I can change my face," I said, still wincing slightly at the idea.

Despite my nervousness, time was of the essence. I did not have the luxury of taking the time to come to terms or think things through. Our last topic at the meeting was that the *Loyal Hound* and *Intervention* would be waiting nearby in deep space in case we needed support. There were very few things that we could conceivably call them in for, and that wouldn't result in their immediate destruction, but it would be better to have them around than not. When we had settled that, I headed directly for the medbay. Flip was waiting for me, as was a pair of newly purchased medical droids.

We spent five minutes discussing what changes we were comfortable with before they both did in-depth scans of my face. They transferred those scans to several places, including a databank that Miru coughed up. After they were done with the scans, I laid back on the operating table, and the droids knocked me out.

I woke up an hour later with a quickly fading numbness all around my face. The droids had, under our instructions, used as little anesthesia as possible so it wouldn't interfere with anything. It would mean a heck of a lot of pain if this fucked up, but I didn't care. I cast my most basic healing spell, Healing, and slowly watched as the swelling, bruising, and small incisions healed, revealing my new face.

As planned, the alterations were minor but played together to really change what I looked like. My nose, brow, lips, cheekbones, and even my ears were slightly tweaked to make me into a completely different person. If I focused on smaller parts of my face, I could kind of see my old self, but I had a feeling that was just me coping.

And god, did I need it. Watching someone else's face move while I talked to the medical droids as they did some more scans was incredibly bizarre. I found myself wanting to touch my face, poking and pulling in different parts, trying to line things up where they should have been.

When the droids finally gave me a clean bill of health, Nal and Tatnia were next in line. The surgery would take thirty minutes for each of them, and during the entire time, I was outside the medbay, talking to people on comms as we prepared the *Staggered Bantha* for its first mission. We were lucky that the engineering crew was between installing two of the upgrades we had bought, meaning the ship was ready to go. Its shield had been improved, as had its energy core, but that was it.

The surgeries went off without any issues, as did Vaz and Julius's, followed by Ahsoka. When our surgeries were done, Tatnia once again proved herself by tracking down several different engineers she noticed during her time around the station, all of whom had obviously died hair. Three of them had brought a small supply of their dye with them, and my second in command bought all of it. Using that, I lightened my hair by several shades, cut it into a precise, military-style haircut, and even combed it over. The rest of the crew cut their hair as well, on top of adding in streaks, light patches, and other stand-out differences.

During this time, Pola, his small team, and Miru were not idle. The young Twilek genius had bullied her way into one of the armories we had discovered on the station and "borrowed" six of the [DC-17](#) blaster pistols. I already used one as my sidearm, as did Tatnia, so I knew they were pretty potent weapons crammed into a small package. Muri used this to her advantage and managed to essentially stuff them into the frames of several bigger pistols before adjusting their power draw. To any casual examination or scan, the pistol looked like a normal, legal, underpowered self-defense weapon. But, with a simple adjustment, done by sticking a long object into the power pack slot, the energy draw would nearly double, and the DC-17's normal power levels would activate.

Not to be outdone, Pola managed to take several pairs of civilian clothes and reinforce them with the beskar weave. It was not the same level of protection as our uniforms, but it covered the vitals and would keep us from getting one shot in the chest.

Both Miru, Pola, and his team worked overnight to get their projects done, but they crashed almost immediately after they did. Their work was impressive, as always. Racer also completed his task admirably, using new scans of all of us to make us new, or in my case, my first, Imperial ID card.

By the time the *Staggered Bantha's* starboard cargo bay was stuffed full of some camouflage cargo, and the port bay was filled with cots, nearly sixteen hours had passed. Now ready to go, I looked around at a crew I didn't recognize. All of Vaz's fur was a different shade, while Tatnia's hair was dyed green. Nal had a tattoo along his head, while Julius had a face scar that ran along his cheek, which had been a pain in the ass to do.

Out of everyone, Ahsoka looked the most different since she was by and far the most recognizable as a Rebel and a Jedi. She had tattoos all along her arms and painted designs on her montrals. She wore a toolbelt around her hips, which was functional and also contained the pieces of her lightsaber, save the Kyber crystals. Those had been dipped in dye, which would burn off the next time she turned on her lightsaber, wrapped in copper wire, and turned into a crude necklace.

"Alright guys, this is going to be a wild one. As of three hours ago, we have confirmation that our targets have made contact again, which means they have been active in the last ten hours," I said, getting several nods in return. "It's going to take two days to get to the target, during which Ahsoka and I are going to give you a crash course on how to fight Force users."

Ahsoka looked a little nervous about the idea, but I insisted that it was required if she wanted our help. It sucked, but I wanted to give my team as much of an advantage as possible, even if it wasn't much.

"I know the answer already, but this is your last chance to back down," I said, looking around at my people. "This is volunteer only, so anyone-"

"Boss, let's just get on the ship," Tatnia said, shaking her hand. "No one is leaving, and we need to hurry."

I looked at everyone, seeing their determined nods. I smiled and nodded back.

"Alright, let's get going," I said with a smile. "Let's go save those kids."