

Our trip to Omega Station didn't last long. Our first priority was picking up a disguise for Ahsoka. I wanted her along with us when we infiltrated Grakkus's palace, and while Grakkus had already identified us as the Skyforged, I was pretty sure her status as a Jedi was still a secret. The only mission she had openly been on that could have spread that information was when we acquired the *Whale Shark*. While she was seen using her lightsabers, it was primarily only by people who were dead, and any other abilities would most likely be blamed on me, since I was already throwing magic around casually at that point.

Disguising her was relatively simple since all of us would already be armored, meaning the only sensible disguise we could get her was another set of our full body armor. In order for Pola to make one for her, a few of the non-combat members of the Skyforged donated their basic uniforms, which Pola then melted down of their beskar. Those who volunteered received a decent-sized bonus on their next paycheck and were moved to the top of the list to receive more once we got access to the relevant materials, namely beskar.

I also converted two extra bars of platinum into beskar. I purchased the bars on Tatooine during our mission, spending a significant chunk of credits to get them. It was worth it all, though, because Ahsoka was now fully armored, meaning I didn't have to worry nearly as much as I had been previously. Even better, when this mission was complete, Pola would melt down the standard armor again and reforge it to look like the ancient Jedi armor we found on the hidden planet.

According to Pola and Vaz, the ancient Jedi armor was elegant and perfectly designed to allow maximum maneuverability while still protecting the wearer. Enhancing the design with more modern tech and with beskar would only make it even more potent.

For now, however, she would have to deal with our standard armor, which restricted her movement and was a bit on the heavy side. Thankfully, I could switch one of her dexterity-enhancing items to a strength one instead, which helped her a lot.

Once we had all of our gear, and the *Talos Chariot* was filled with everything we might need, including more artifacts and a few specifically designed items that Miru made for us, we once again left Omega Station, our destination set to Nar Shaddaa. It was more than a little nerve-wracking to be heading back to the world I first started this journey on, especially when my arrival had been so tumultuous. It was a world controlled by Hutts, driven by greed and want, but I knew we could handle it. Not only was I much more powerful than I had been before, but the entire crew was now a force to be reckoned with.

We could handle it.

The trip to Nar Shaddaa took two days in total, with the third-morning set as our arrival time, leaving me with a large chunk of free time. Further efforts into enchanting would require me to at least go on another hunting trip and, if I wanted to be safe, find a new source of Kyber crystals. Having brought Ahsoka and the rest of the latest wave of Force-sensitives to the Crystal Caves, followed by watching them go through their Force visions, made the Crystal

Cave feel like it was theirs, if not literally, then at least metaphorically. It didn't feel right for me to go back and strip it for more resources now that the inheritors had returned.

Of course, there may be other sources of Kyber on Dantooine. Geologically speaking, it was extremely unlikely that a mineral or substance could only be found in one single cave over the entire planet. Though, with the Force involved, anything was possible, so the Crystal Cave might be the only one like it.

I also wanted to see about checking the ancient Jedi planet for any pockets of crystal growth. According to Ahsoka and Luke, the planet had a vibrancy in the Force that stood out from any other planet they had been to. Considering that the primary "ingredient" in Kyber Crystal growth was a connection to the Force, that made me think there could be a source of Kyber somewhere on or in it. We would just have to find it with either some sort of scanner or, possibly, Clairvoyance. Despite my hunch and curiosity, I wouldn't be comfortable using any Kyber from the ancient Jedi planet, for similar reasons to my decision to no longer use Dantooine.

With enchantment out, I picked a spell and got to work, spending sixteen hours finally learning the Invisibility spell. It had been a long time coming, and even if stealth wasn't my forte, which was the reason I had held off for so long, being able to simply vanish without a trace was an incredible ability. Even better, it wasn't cheap, bullshit, kind of sort of invisibility like you got in the games. Once I cast the spell, I was fucking *gone*. Not only that, but I didn't even show up when scanning for heat signatures!

It wasn't perfect, mind you. There was a dim flash of light when I cast the spell, but even that was much more faint than almost all my other spells. I still made noise, though that was easily taken care of with the muffled enchantment. I was also weak to the standard anti-invisibility hack, namely any fine, sticky powder or obvious bright liquid, like flour or paint. However, even that wouldn't work for long because the spell turned anything attached to my person when I cast it. That meant if someone managed to cover me in paint or anything else, all I needed to do was drop the spell and recast it, and suddenly I would vanish again.

It made me wonder why people didn't try that more in stories where someone used the powder or paint trick.

With a new spell tucked under my metaphorical belt, I took the following day to recover from the sixteen-hour straight magic marathon. It really took a lot out of me, meaning the rest of the day was spent dozing off and not much else. I woke up the next morning to find we were only a few hours out of Nal Hutta, the homeworld of the Hutts and the planet in which Nar Shaddaa orbited. We used that time to do a final check on everything, checking our blasters and armor, before suiting up.

"At least it's comfortable," Ahsoka admitted, standing in the lounge of the *Chariot*, stretching and testing her range of motion. "The strength amulet you made me is compensating for the weight well, but I definitely feel a bit slower. And I can feel the restriction in flexibility, too."

"I'll breathe a bit easier knowing your blaster is proof, though," I said, passing her her custom-made helmet. "It's just one mission anyway."

Protecting Ahsoka's entire head, including her montrals and lekku, was a task that Pola had taken on with excitement. While we were running around Tatooine, he was working tirelessly to make it a reality. While the standard armor she was wearing for this mission would be melted down and remade into something based on the ancient Jedi armor, the helmet would stay the same.

The base design was essentially the same as our [helmets](#), with the first layer being the undersuit. Unlike our undersuits, hers included an extra "hood" that she would pull down separately and attach to the main body. This would create a pressurized barrier around her entire body. Her three lekku, which were actually non-vital appendages for Togruta, were protected by woven, lightweight beskar alloy, much like our uniforms. Her montrals were much better protected, as Togruta montrals were potent sensory organs. If they were injured, it would completely incapacitate her. To protect the much more critical montrals, Pola designed a segmented plating system that connected directly to the underlayer, piece by piece, with a layer of alloy weave to add extra protection.

The last part of the helmet was what covered her face and the back of her head. It was basically the same as our helmet but sliced in half, with opened-up sides. The two halves were pressed together, one on her face and the other around the back of her head, both pieces then sealing around her extra appendages, to each other, and to the undersuit hood.

The whole thing was easily double the cost of a standard helmet, but well worth it.

With everyone suited up, all that was left to do was wait, which, thankfully, we didn't have to do for long. Once again, we dropped out of hyperspace along the outer marks of the system to avoid ambushes. The *Loyal Hound* did not appear with us, as it was waiting even further away. Nar Shaddaa had significantly more traffic than Tatooine, so we had to keep our reinforcements a bit further back to keep them out of sight. This would mean it would take them a few extra minutes to make the micro jump into the system, but it was all we could do.

Approaching the planet was extremely intimidating, especially since I had never actually seen it from this perspective. The last time we had been above the crime-ridden planet, I had been heavily concussed and injured, drifting in and out of consciousness as the rest of the team escaped.

The planet itself was draped in a brown smog, with clear spots showing up as large-scale weather patterns blew the thick, unhealthy contaminants around the planet. Outside of that atmosphere, we could see several dozen ships flying around, both coming from and heading to the surface. Floating high above the planet, mostly sticking together as they orbited, were at least three dozen warships. They ranged from gunships no bigger than the *Talos Chariot*, to a trio of ancient [Dreadnoughts](#), which would have been considered old during the first years of the Clone Wars. This was the planet's "defensive fleet," with scans showing a second, smaller fleet on the other side of the planet.

"How exactly did we escape the first time around again?" I asked, watching the larger ships drift around the planet. "And how exactly do we plan on doing it this time?"

"Defensive fleet is controlled by the Hutt Ruling Council," Nal explained. "Will not respond to petty crimes and grievances. Designed that way to prevent members from forcing others into submission with threat of bombardment. Only there to control the population and prevent hostile takeover."

I nodded in understanding as we slowly approached the planet, eventually being hailed by the planet's space traffic control network. We gave them the passcodes Yarlo gave us and then waited for their response. The tension began to build as Calima and Tatnia stayed glued to the sensors, waiting for any sign of a sudden ambush. After what felt like a short lifetime, we finally got clearance to land. They fed us very precise instructions before informing us that deviating from those instructions would result in us being evaporated by the Defense Fleet. Before we could ask for clarification, they briskly cut the call, leaving us alone in orbit.

"Alright, guys, this is it," I said, looking around at my friends and crew. "If we descend now, we are committing to this job. No more room to back out. Does anyone have any last-minute revelations about what's wrong with our plan? Any final words of worry or concern?"

I looked around, checking the faces of my crew, turning to the occupants of the cockpit and those standing in the lounge. When nobody said anything, I gave Ashoka a look, who returned with a confident nod, her face hidden behind her helmet.

"Alright, then let's go," I said, turning to look at Calima, who was turned back to wait for my word. "Take us down."

The Tholothian nodded and turned back to her console, tapping the controls before beginning to guide us down through our descent.

As we sank down to the planet, we could see the air quality dropping through the forward viewports. The moon had been well and truly ruined by the [ecumenopolis](#) that covered the entire surface. The smog and pollution didn't create quite a shift in color like they had on Magravia, the planet Tatnia, Vaz and I had been prisoners on, but it was certainly noticeable. Maybe it was because it was worse around where we were landing, or perhaps I just never noticed because it was the first planet I had stepped out into after arriving in this galaxy, but it hadn't looked nearly this bad the last time we were here.

All of us peered out the forward viewports, watching the planet's surface fly by. We spotted multiple collapsed buildings and several trash dumps in the middle of the populace, two of which were on fire. We also spotted a shantytown around a small clearing, with what looked like thousands of people stacked together like sardines.

"This planet is gross," Julius said, shaking his head. "Thank the Force for these helmets because I really don't want to know what it smells like."

"We must have been in the richer part of it while we were here," I said, looking at Nal. "We never saw anything like this."

"Grakkus's Palace is built near the center of Hutta Town, the capital of Nar Shaddaa," Nal explained. "Once a bastion of the moon's wealth. Now, one of the worst cesspits on a planet many would already call a cesspit."

It didn't take us long to see the palace. There were plenty of massive buildings built around the city, as Grakkus was clearly not the Hutt wallowing in the slime of Hutta Town, but none of them were much compared to the Hutt in charge.

Of course, that's not why Ahsoka and I spotted it so easily. The massive building caught our eye because of how familiar it was.

"Well... he is either crazy or brave," I said, shaking my head. "Because I'm shocked Palpy hasn't leveled it already."

"It's not that close..." Ahsoka said with a frown.

"The fact that you knew what I meant means it's close enough for him," I pointed out. "Palpy is just the kind of crazy to absolutely react to this..."

The [massive structure](#) sat on a square foundation, which, compared to the people walking the streets, must have been a couple hundred feet high. The structure then terminated inwards before jutting upwards at an inward angle, rising into the air. It wasn't an exact copy, in shape or size, but it immediately drew similarities to the [Jedi Temple](#) on Coruscant. Knowing how much Vader and Palpy hated the Jedi, I was honestly shocked it was still standing.

"We are being hailed... receiving landing instructions," Calima said. "They direct us to the opposite side."

"Just follow them in," I said, patting her shoulder. "Nice and easy."

Calima nodded and guided the ship around the massive structure, where a large platform was built into the back. Several smaller ships were already landed on the platform, but there was still plenty of room. The *Chariot* slowly descended, touching down on the large landing platform. After tapping a few buttons on her console, Calima turned and nodded to me.

"I'll keep her running, Boss," Calima said with a smile. "Good luck."

I nodded back before stepping out of the bridge, Tatnia and Ahsoka following me out.

"Alright, everyone!" I said, clapping my hands together. "It's showtime!"