

As the ship got closer, it got a bit easier to pick out details. It was a [small ship](#), smaller than I expected, but its black hull and brutal design screamed edgelord darksider. It made me wonder if the Inquisitors had a hand in designing the ship and how much their influence reduced the original designs' effectiveness. Despite how serious the situation was, I couldn't help but imagine a red-eyed human with emo bangs and eyeliner demanding his ship be as dark as his soul.

I just managed to keep myself from laughing.

The ship landed with an aggressive dive and rise, its repulsors blasting dirty and trash away from its landing spot. Ashoka must have done something, as an invisible barrier blocked off the grime and garbage from slapping into us. It was an overly aggressive landing, something done to intimidate or impress.

Once the ship was landed, it let out a long hiss, its forward face opening and lowering, revealing the lower internals of the ship. I lost control of my laugh when the lowering ramp revealed an honest to god glowing red interior. Ahsoka, now fully tapped into the Force, quickly picked up what I spotted.

"It is a bit heavy-handed," She admitted.

"Imagine them demanding the red lights and black paint from some poor Imperial designer. It's a wonder they have any fingers left dealing with all that edge," I responded, finally getting a scoff and a chuckle from her. "So, what's the over-under on them knowing who I am?"

"Nearly zero considering the face change stuff," She pointed out. "They may connect the dots with me, however. Not many trained Force sensitive Togruta hanging around."

As we talked, four stormtroopers exited the ship, stepping into the parking lot by four or five meters. They stepped back and stood rigidly at attention, weapons held ready. They were followed by a pair of darkly dressed individuals. Their presence was heavy, just as oppressive as the Jago, the fourth brother I fought and killed during our prison break oh so long ago.

The [first one](#) down the ramp was vaguely female, though from a species I didn't recognize, so who knows. Her skin was green, with long pointed ears and two secondary pointed growths on either side of her forehead. I couldn't quite tell if the markings on her chin and forehead were makeup, but I was pretty sure the dark shadow around her eyes was meticulously painted on.

She was lightly armored with pauldrons and bracers, her outfit decorated by glowing red bits. She already had her weird frisbee lightsaber in her hand.

Her companion, second down the ramp, appeared to be a [Quarren](#), but he was scarred and missing a few bits on his face, which were replaced by cybernetic implants, including a

breathing apparatus. [He was much smaller](#) in frame, with black armor that had some similarities to stormtrooper gear, only enhanced and bedazzled with more red glowy bits. His lightsaber was also in his hand, his grip tight as if he was restraining himself.

Both of the dark Force sensitives continued forward until they were standing between the stormtroopers. They left a gap between in the formation, obviously intended for the third and final Inquisitor, who stepped down the ramp next. Common sense said that this had to be the [Grand Inquisitor](#), and they certainly held themselves like that. The black and red cape, the glowing eyepiece on their helmet, the pauldrons and leather boots, every inch of them was meticulously designed to shout their superiority to the rooftops.

It was also clearly supposed to be scary or at least intimidating.

When the last Inquisitor reached their allies, they stepped through the gap to move in front of them. The whole thing was so clearly practiced that I almost laughed again.

"I must say, when we came to this planet, searching for a potential new recruit, we did not expect to find anyone with training..." The last Inquisitor said, their voice clearly altered by their helmet, coming out with extra bass and reveration. "And so willing to sacrifice yourself for them, too. I wonder-"

"Do those glowing bits on your armor do anything, or are they just for show?" I asked, tilting my head to the side. "I mean, respect for your dedication to the bit if they are just lights, but it seems like a bit much."

Whatever the three Inquisitors expected, a question about their fashion sense was not it. When the green-skinned one recovered from the nonsequitur, she snarled her lip and opened her mouth to shout at me, but the leader, who I was mostly certain was the Grand Inquisitor now, raised his hand to keep her quiet.

"I apologize, but perhaps introductions are in order," He said. "I am-"

"Ooohhh, I get it, Big Papi Palps dresses you guys, doesn't he?" I asked, nodding in understanding. "I mean, I should have expected that, since he already forces you to use those dumb fucking swords."

"Our lightsabers are gifts! They-" The Quarren started to respond, only for me to cut over him as well.

"Severely hinder your learning by forcing you to rely on gimmicks and and tricks, rather than actual skill at fighting, since those dumb spinning bits make them nearly useless for high-level forms?" I finished, giving him a smile. "Or is it to cripple your connection to your weapon since he hands you a useless, meaningless hunk of metal and stone, preventing you

from forming a bond with it. That way, it's just a dead, replaceable weapon, never an extension of yourself, as a *real* Jedi or Sith weapon would be."

The shock was deep enough to be palpable, both from beside me, Ahsoka stunned at what I had just divulged, and from across the parking lot. I could tell both of the lower-ranked Inquisitors had no idea what I was saying, and the revelation was not sitting well with them. Of course, being edgy Dark Jedi, rather than doing anything useful with the information, it all just fed back into their rage, the coiling anger and twistedness they spread around them growing thicker.

Meanwhile, the Grand Inquisitor was giving off an air of... interest. They already knew what I was saying, but they wanted to know how I knew.

"You have some interesting insights for someone with such a weak connection to the Force," He stated. "You almost fade out completely while beside your friend."

"I should hope so, I-"

Without warning, I charged and fired two Chain Lightnings, focusing on the stormtroopers beside them. Not only were they an easy target and had no way of predicting or sensing I was targeting them, but taking them out now would make the rest of the fight much easier.

They were also the ones most likely to call for reinforcements.

My twin blasts of lighting fired out and slammed into the closest trooper on each side, melting their armor in tiny spots, belaying the amount of damage the magic was doing internally. The effect passed from the first to the second troopers, dropping them to the ground as well. The lighting jumped again, this time targeting the two lesser Inquisitors. Somehow, the green-skinned female managed to see the attack coming, catching the shock magic with her blade. Unfortunately, her peer wasn't so lucky, moving too slowly to protect himself. The magic was greatly reduced by that point, of course, but it still caused him to gurgle in pain and anger.

All three of them were screaming, shouting about their confusion, demanding answers, but neither Ahsoka nor I felt like indulging in their theatrics anymore. I charged, taking the lead, conjuring my armor as I went. The purple glowing protection covered my body, taking a good chunk of my mana. I had just enough time and magicka left to conjure two swords before I clashed with the Grand Inquisitor.

For a moment, we had them on the back step, between our aggressive movements, their confusion about what the hell I was, as well as the preemptive attack hurting one of them. Ahsoka managed to compound the Quarren's injury by cutting his arm with her saber, forcing him to stumble back, while I tried my best to overwhelm the leader with two separate blades at once. After a few seconds, they recovered, and the Grand Inquisitor bought them time to

regroup by forcing us both back with a Force push of impressive power. Both Ahsoka and I skidded backward, only our skill keeping us from tumbling ass over end.

"You, your abilities," The Grand Inquisitor said, holding his red glowing weapon at the ready, its blades humming. "You are the escaped convict. We have been looking. You show some rather interesting Force abilities."

Rather than engage in his banter, Ahsoka and I, now separated a few meters, charged again. This time, however, some of my mana had regenerated. As I charged the Grand Inquisitor, I raised my right sword and hurled it at the Quarren, the translucent construct flying end over end at the Dark Jedi, only to get deflected by a simple swipe of his lightsaber. The attack did its job, however, because he did not notice the Conjured Fighter Construct appearing just behind him. At least, not until its blade slammed through his back, punching out through his chest.

I slammed my sword down in an overhead strike, trying to power through the leader's defenses, only to be blocked and rolled to the side. They swiped back with the second blade, the plasma sword bouncing off my conjured armor, reducing its remaining mana. I refilled it immediately, knowing it was a key part in my ability to stand up to a trained Force wielder.

Despite the death of one of his comrades or underlings, the Grand Inquisitor seemed confident. Our weapons clashed, my knowledge of sword fighting barely standing up to their strikes, my armor picking up the slack at least twice. When I realized that my conjured swordsman, shield in hand, had finished off the Quarren with a second stab, I ordered it to attack the Grand Inquisitor from behind. I was rewarded with a grunt of annoyance as the leader was forced to dive and roll away, avoiding the flanking maneuver. He stood, casting a single, short look at his fallen comrade before returning his gaze to me.

I used that time to check on my own ally, spotting her only a dozen or so feet away. She was engaging the green-skinned Inquisitor in a much more standard lightsaber duel. Ahsoka seemed to be winning, but-

Clearly deciding that turnabout was fair play, the Grand Inquisitor attacked without warning, using the Force to tear chunks of duracrete paving from the ground around us and hurl them at me. I raise my hand and summon a Greater Ward, the protective barrier easily absorbing their momentum, the chunks falling to the ground. Meanwhile, I mentally directed my conjured fighter to charge, holding its shield up high to defend itself. As it moved, I got in line behind it, using it as cover, even as a large chunk smashed into its head, and finally, it was dispelled.

Unfortunately for the Grand Inquisitor, as my soldier exploded, as all my conjured constructs could do, I kept running, letting my armor tank the damage. By the time I came out the other side, the armor had shattered, leaving me relatively unprotected, and since I had a

charged spell in both of my hands, I didn't have the mana or the ability to recast it. Instead, I unleashed two whirling dervishes of freezing frost damage.

By this point, I was spitting distance from the armored Dark Jedi. Still, while Ice Storm was powerful and covered a large area, it was unfortunately slow. So, rather than my spells catching my target completely, they managed to partially dodge, frost locking up around one side of their body, crystal shards of ice impaling his side, arm, and leg. His scream echoed across the parking lot, just enough of a distraction for Ahsoka to perform a rather well-done parry and ripost, slicing off her opponent's left arm before calmly finishing her off by driving one of her sabers through her stomach.

To the Grand Inquisitor's credit, his injury only slowed him down momentarily, as with a quick flex of both his body and the Force, the spikes of ice cutting into him shattered. He immediately attacked, his rage flowing like a river, buffeting me as he tried his best to beat me before his injury overwhelmed him. Unfortunately for him, I had already recast my armor and had no plans on letting him batter me down. Instead, I took advantage of his slower movements and reached out, grabbing his blade out of the air. I was funneling an incredible amount of mana into my upper torso armor to keep it running, but it was worth it. With a hard pull, I yanked him forward and off balance. Between his bleeding, torn-up leg, and his blind rage, he stumbled, and I used the split second of weakness to drive a conjured dagger into his heart.

The armored fighter tensed as if trying to stave off his death by pure will. Fearing that whatever he was inside his armor didn't have anything vital where I stabbed, I quickly cast sparks through the blade, dumping the rest of my mana into him. His body jumped and tensed even harder as the shock energy flowed through his body, which soon began to smoke. Once I was sure he was dead, I dropped him to the ground, looking over at Ashoka.

She was lying down on the ground, having collapsed while trying to help. I rushed to her side, my armor and dagger fading as I knelt by her side.

"Hey, where did she get you?" I asked, already charging a Heal Middling Trauma.

"Leg and stomach," She responded, hissing in pain. "Caught me off guard by spinning her saber."

"Yeah, it's a gimmick for a reason," I admitted with a frown. "It's a pain to deal with if you're forced to engage with it."

I put my hand over the bloody patch on her stomach, filling her with Restoration magic. I did it twice more before the bleeding stopped. Once her stomach was good, I healed her leg, too, before helping her to her feet. I finished the treatment with a Respite.

"You good to go?" I asked.

"Yeah, we need to get out of here," She responded with a nod. "Before whoever is in charge catches on that their power move blew up in their faces."

"Took the words right out of my mouth," I said with a smirk. "Just give me a second."

She nodded, and I turned back to the impromptu battlefield. Quickly, casually, I drove a pair of Ice Spikes into all three Inquisitors, one in the heart and one in the head. I then washed them down with sparks, hopefully zapping and destroying any electrical equipment they might have on them. When I was done, I conjured a flame atronach to burn the bodies as I turned back to Ahsoka, giving her a nod.

"Alright, let's go."