

Landing on a planet that was as active as Terr'skiar was an interesting experience. As we approached the planet, the planetary space command for our sector contacted us directly, asking who we were and what our purpose was. Tatnia gave them our information, our purpose, as well as several other bits of information. Typically, the person on the comms station would do that, but while I could use the console, I had been focusing on the sensor portion. I was learning, though.

After a few minutes of comms silence, we were told to move to a specific set of coordinates while they found a berth for us to land at.

"Trade worlds are usually the easiest to get in and out of," Nal explained as we essentially pulled into a queue behind a few other ships. "You wait your turn, then land. Occasionally have to deal with a surprise inspection."

"Do we have to worry about an inspection?" I asked. "We do have some military stuff on board...."

"Borderline, they wouldn't hassle us for it unless something else was wrong," He explained. "Can't blame people for wanting to defend their ships."

"Are other places harder to get on?"

"Depends on what kind of Imperial presence is on the planet, usually," Tatnia answered, still looking down at her console. "Some worlds just don't like offworlders or cater to "High Class" groups, so they try to keep control over who's coming and going. Government-funded landing pads only, strict control of who can and can't come in, that kind of stuff."

"And trade worlds are different because that makes business slow?" I guessed, getting a nod in response

"And time is credits. All that stuff slows the trading process down to a crawl," She explained. "The Empire expects trade groups to protect themselves."

As we waited, Miru joined us on the bridge, dropping down into an empty seat and spinning around once before facing the rest of us. After a few minutes of toying with her datapad she finally spoke up.

"So... if I have a list of things that I think we should have on hand, would you guys get it for me?" She asked, biting her lip. "Not stuff for personal projects, but for ship repair."

"What do you need?"

"The biggest concern right now is metal stock," She explained. "I need to be able to put together a rig or patch a crack or even reinforce something to prevent problems," She

explained, shifting a lekku around her shoulder. "We have a good stock of internal parts from the base. Those crates you got easily have twenty-five thousand credits worth of parts and materials, probably more."

"Seriously?" I asked with wide eyes. "I had no idea, we didn't count them as being nearly worth that."

"Mhmm, it's more than enough for basic repair and would be sufficient to repair a lot of intentional damage," She explained. "But we would still need a general stock of metal to fix things that aren't standard parts or to build anything you might want."

"Okay, we can get that, Nal?" I asked, the older Duros nodding at me. "Since you're staying here to watch the ship, work with Miru to get what we need, preferably shipped to us since we don't have any way to get it ourselves. Better to air on the side of surplus, but keep it reasonable."

We chatted a bit more before a beep on the console got our attention, prompting Tatnia to activate the comms unit at the co-pilots seat, Nal motioning us to quiet down.

"Attention, *Talos Chariot*, you are being directed to sector 5B, please make your way to the accompanying coordinates and enter the atmosphere. Be aware that entering restricted airspace will net you a substantial fine, and refusal to leave will result in your speedy destruction. Have a safe trip."

It took another fifteen minutes for us to get in position and follow the proper directions into the atmosphere, the larger ship easily staying steady all the way down to the [large landing pad](#). The pad was four or five miles from one of the several massive city centers that dotted the trade planet.

As we slowly made our descent, the sound of the *Chariot's* massive landing gear being deployed vibrated through the ship. As we finally made contact with the thick ferrocrete landing pad, we could feel the landing gear absorb the last bit of inertia, the built-in shock absorbers easily handling it.

"Alright, meet you down at the boarding ramp in five Tatnia, I need to get my stuff," I said, standing from the sensor station.

As I stood and started leaving the bridge, Miru jumped up and followed me out, walking quickly past me, and heading down the first set of stairs to the first deck. I was just about done getting ready when I grabbed my holster, only to find it empty. With a curse, I strapped it on and started looking around my room for it. After a minute or so, I tapped on the intercom.

"Nal, have you seen-" I started to ask, only for my door to open, Miru standing on the other side, holding my pistol and looking slightly winded. "Never mind."

The young mechanic winced and held [my weapon](#) out to me, gripping the barrel so I could grab it by the grip.

"Sorry, I wanted to surprise you with it," She explained as I slid it back into its holster. "I fixed the charging shot option, so you can use that now if you need a bit more of a punch."

"I thought that was going to take some specialized parts," I said, trying to remember what Nal initially said. "How did you manage that?"

"It wasn't hard. I just needed a few bits from one of the super battle droids and one of the spare pistols we got from the CIS base," She said with a smug smirk, following me as I made my way down to the first deck. "So you activate it by pressing the button on the side and pulling the trigger, that's what starts the charging. You can charge it for just a second to add an extra kick, but if you hold the trigger down for long enough, it will dump everything left in the pack."

As she explained how it worked, I pulled the pistol out, examining it as we walked, stopping by the interior side of the airlock.

"Be careful, though, once you start the overcharge, you're committed, the only way to release that energy is to shoot it. And you can't hold it for too long either, you'll melt the pistol in your hands. Also, shooting too many overcharged shots in a row will make it overheat and stop responding until it cools down."

I nodded, flipping the pistol over to check the other side before sliding it back into my holster.

"Thanks, Miru, this will come in handy eventually," I said, tapping the door open and walking through, nodding to Tatnia, who was already lowering the ramp. "Make sure you don't overwork yourself, alright?"

"Alright, have fun and good luck!" She said before heading to her workshop, walking out of view.

As we left down the boarding ramp, I tapped the intercom right by the stairway.

"The ship's yours, Nal, let us know if anything comes up."

"Will do, Boss. Good luck."

As we crossed the large landing pad that the space traffic controller assigned us, which was just big enough for the *Chariot* to land on, Tatnia brought up a question I had been contemplating for a while now.

"So, boss... How are we going to handle this whole thing?" She asked as she pulled out her comm unit to call a speeder taxi. "We got a couple secrets that it might be better not to share."

"Yeah, I've been trying to figure that out myself," I admitted, watching the sky for a moment. "I think that our best bet is to be as honest as possible at first. We are a small crew who just got their hands on a ship. We want to expand our crew, including a full-time pilot and maybe a co-pilot. We expect that we might get into some trouble eventually, as we plan on being bounty hunters, mercenaries, and all-around-for-hire muscle. Emphasize that we will not be doing anything *morally* wrong, but sometimes the law is part of the problem."

As I talked, Tatnia spotted an incoming speeder, which slowed greatly as it dropped down below forty feet. I waved to get the driver's attention, who angled slightly to land near us.

"And your magic?" She asked, which caught me off guard. I knew I had called it magic a few times, but so far, no one else had seriously called it that.

"That's something we can save for a while until we really get a sense for them," I answered, holding my hand up to block some of the dust the speeder was kicking our way. "Ideally, we find at least a pilot, maybe a co-pilot, and at least two more people to join us on missions. A team of five sounds like a good place to start."

"Think we should introduce ourselves as adventurers?" She asked with a teasing smirk.

"Laugh now, but after a few months of doing the kind of things I have planned, you'll be calling it that, too," I responded confidently, getting a curious-looking response.

"What kind of stuff do you have in mind anyway?" She asked as we both climbed into the Taxi, looking forward to the droid controlling the speeder. "Take us to a pilot bar, someplace they go while looking for more work. If there is somewhere that people specialize in Corellian ships, go there."

The droid beeped a confirmation before the speeder lifted off into the air again, its repulsorlifts whining as it accelerated.

"I have a few ideas for some... potentially weird stuff," I admitted. "But we should start off with some basic mercenary or bounty work, so we can familiarize ourselves with the new people. I also need to work a bit more on my... Tracking equipment. I've been working on it off and on, but if I get better at it, I'll probably be able to lead us to quite a few interesting things."

"And in the meantime?"

"We take basic mercenary work, take out bounties, stuff like that," I explained, continuing when Tatnia gave me a look. "You're telling me that there aren't places to find that kind of stuff? I

mean, if we can head to a bar and expect it to be filled with pilots looking for work, there have to be bars where mercenaries go looking for work, right?"

"Usually... alright, fair point," She admitted. "How do you know that if you never left your backwater planet?"

"The more things change, the more they stay the same," I responded. "You just gotta know what trope to apply where."

After thirty minutes of traveling, the speeder taxi landed in an open area, a small screen lighting asking for payment. I swiped my credit chip, the screen blinking green before the door swung up to let us out.

"Your destination is twenty feet down the road, a bar called the Star Song." The droid said before the door closed behind us, sealing it shut.

We quickly got off the street and made our way to where the droid described. When we got closer, Tatnia put her hand on my shoulder, getting my attention.

"I know you're not an idiot, but... just let me take the lead at first, okay?" She said. "I know a thing or two about this, so I'll find some people, and you can lead the actual recruitment, sound good?"

"Works for me," I agreed.

"Good. When we go in, don't freak out studying everyone, you'll just put everyone on edge. We go in, find a place to sit, preferably at the bar and relax for a while."

I nodded and followed her, making our way to a ferrocrete building that was painted blue, with the roof painted an even, navy blue. The front doors were a gray-black color and opened easily as Tatnia led us inside. It took a few seconds for our eyes to adjust to the low light, but after a few seconds, we headed straight to the bar.

The cantina was about half full, which was kind of surprising considering how early in the day it was. Quite a few people turned to look at us but quickly went back to their drinks and conversations. Wordlessly, Tatnia nodded to the bar, and both of us made our way there, claiming two seats for ourselves. The human bartender gave us a look, and Tatnia held up two fingers.

"Two Elba beers," She said, the black-haired man nodding and turning to an enormous container, pulling it open, and pulling two green bottles out.

As we sipped our drinks Tatnia and I made small talk, discussing what kind of speeder we should be looking for.

"I would love to have the A5 back," I said, shaking my head. "That was pretty much exactly what we needed. Slightly armored, armed, big enough to carry us around, could switch between air speeder and ground speeder."

"Would it even fit in the hold?" Tatnia asked. "Or the cargo elevator?"

"Doesn't matter, it would have definitely fit in one of the hangars, and it would have been well worth the space."

"We need a transport ship, one that will fit in the hangar," She said after a silent moment. "Landing the *Chariot* every time we have business is going to get old quickly."

"What kind of options do we have?"

"It's a bit tight, but we can probably find something. Might end up being an ugly no-name box, but there are plenty of those out there, just gotta find one that isn't bantha-shit."

We continued to chat for a while, each having a second beer before Tatnia waved over to the barkeep. She slid a ten-credit ingot on the table and smiled.

"We are looking for a pilot, someone with experience in larger Corellian ships, any recommendations?"

"How big?" He asked, reaching out to take the money

"An old Gozanti class."

"...Try Calima over there, the [Tholothian](#)," He said after a moment, pointing across the bar. "She's been planetside for a bit, but she seems kind enough."

I followed his gesture to see a humanoid woman with darker skin that was tinged blue and, in some places, purple. Her head was capped with large, dense-looking dark blue scales, almost like an indigo turtle shell. Coming from that cap were around a dozen all-white tendrils hanging down to her shoulder, each starting an inch or so wide and growing thicker the further down you went, almost like a paddle or a scoop. She was sitting perpendicular to us on the other side of the bar but seemed focused on her datapad.

I stood up, stretching my leg a bit before Tatnia grabbed my arm to get my attention.

"Tholothians can live a really long time, so don't assume her age," She warned before turning back to the bartender. "A refill for whatever she is drinking now."

He smirked and grabbed a glass, filled it with ice, and poured in what appeared to be just water before placing it on the bar top.

"On the house."

Tatnia gave him a sour look, but I just chuckled and gave him a two-finger salute before grabbing my beer and the glass of water, before heading over to the women's table.
"C'mon, let's introduce ourselves."