

For a moment, it seemed as if time had paused. Ahsoka's crystal had broken into two perfect chunks, falling into her hand, its internal shine reduced to a low glow. Then, the moment passed, and Ahsoka wobbled slightly as if a wave of great exhaustion had run through her. I had to jump forward, stabilizing her enough to keep her from stumbling down further into the cave.

"Thank you," She said softly, rubbing her face with her free hand. "I'm okay. There's just a lot catching up with me. I... I need to sit down."

I nodded and let her down gently, idly noting that Sabine was already rushing down to Ezra.

"Go check on Felia," Ahsoka said, and I nodded, making sure she was okay before jumping down further into the cave.

Felia, it turned out, was fine, having managed to sit down safely on a rock. She smiled as she spotted me, and I cast a quick healing spell on her to make sure everything was okay. Before I could even ask her any questions, she shook her head and pointed behind me. I turned to see what had gotten her attention, letting out a laugh when I realized what I was looking at. Felia appeared to be fine, but Luke, on the other hand, who was only a half dozen or so feet away, needed a bit more help.

"How did you even get up there?" I asked, scratching my head as I walked closer.

Luke's feet were off the ground, and almost his entire body was shoved into a seam that ran along the wall. The gap was barely big enough for Luke to fit into, so much so that he must have had to shove himself in pretty hard to get as deep as he was. Most of his body was inside the crack, save the bottom half of his legs.

"I don't know!" Luke said back, his voice muffled slightly. "I could use a hand, though..."

I started clapping, and Luke let out a curse that made me laugh again. Felia was giggling behind me as well, which I imagined didn't help.

"Alright, alright. We will get you out," I assured the stuck young man, turning back to the cave.

"Sabine, if Ezra is okay, I could use a not-exhausted hand here," I called out, getting an affirmative from the young, purple, orange-haired woman a second later.

After she arrived and recovered from her own laughing, we set to work freeing Luke. Together, we managed to pull Luke from his predicament. We also somehow kept him from falling on his ass on the way out, or worse, onto the deceptively sharp crystal of the nearby Kyber growths. Luke let out a happy half-laugh when he finally had his feet on solid ground and his back against the cave wall. Despite the less-than-glamorous position and the dirt that now stained his clothes and face, he was smiling. He held up his hand, showing an incredibly deep green Kyber crystal, a faint glow still emanating from inside.

"Nice," I said with a smile. "Well done."

"Thanks," He said, his smile slowly falling as he looked around. "How is everyone else? Did the... are they waiting for me or...?"

"Everyone is fine, just a bit tired. As far as I can tell, everyone had the same kind of vision you did," I explained. "You all just woke up."

"Everyone?" Luke asked, looking surprised. "Including you?"

"No, I mean everyone with a firm connection to the Force," I explained, making my way back to Felia. "Even Ahsoka."

Luke looked surprised but started to make his way back to the entrance of the cave, Sabine following after. I helped Felia to her feet, after which she showed me her deep blue crystals.

"I'm sure Ahsoka or Huyang will say this as well, but there is probably a reason you got two," I pointed out to the smiling child as we walked around the cavern's central pillar. "Ahsoka did as well, after all. It might mean the Force thinks you'll do well with two blades, either in a dual-saber configuration or as two sabers at once, like Ahsoka."

"Really?" She asked, looking down at her crystals, which had the same faint glow that Luke's did, only in blue. "What's a dual-saber?"

"It's a double-bladed lightsaber," I explained, miming its shape with my hands. "A central long staff center with blades extending in either direction. It's a more sweeping weapon, good for crowd control, but it's difficult to master. It also had a reputation because of its effectiveness against other lightsaber users."

As I described the weapon, I could see Felia becoming more and more interested. It was pretty clear I had sparked something inside her, and I could imagine pretty easily just what it was.

"If that's what you want, that's fine," I said, pausing along a growth of green crystals. "But I recommend building two lightsabers that connect in the middle, turning into a dualsaber, rather than one solid build. It will give you more flexibility, plus let you train with the standard saber first before graduating to the dual saber. You should talk to Ahsoka and Huyang as well."

The young girl, looking equal parts excited and determined, nodded in understanding at my advice. After that, we continued climbing to the entrance, stopping at the rest of the group. Ahsoka, who had recovered from her vision, gave me a small smile and a look before focusing back on her conversation with Ezra. The young Force-sensitive was showing off an interesting orange crystal.

"Alright, is everyone ready?" I asked, clapping my hands together to get everyone's attention. "I know that you guys are probably a little tired, but the less time we spend down here, the less likely it is to get found."

People nodded in agreement, and together, we slowly made our way out of the cavern and up through the cave system. At some point, Ahsoka stopped us, pausing to put her hand along a large rock foundation.

"Luke, Ezra... give me a hand with this," She said, calling both of the men closer.

They spent a minute whispering to each other before all three of them took more anchored stances, lowering themselves and reaching out with their hands. The air seemed to flutter with pressure before a massive chunk of stone, which I hadn't even realized wasn't attached to the rest of the cave, shifted to the side. It took a few minutes, but the three of them managed to almost completely block the cave. There was still some clearance along the ceiling, but to the unknowing eye, it simply looked like a normal indent. The cave, which had been at a natural narrowing point, now looked like it was ending naturally.

With some lights and a ladder, we would be able to crawl over the massive stone, but any wandering people would most likely assume that that was where the cave ended.

"Well done," I said, slapping Luke's shoulder and giving Ahsoka a nod. "That should discourage casual spelunkers."

"I think it's the best we will be able to get for now," Ahsoka said with a frown. "Likely the best we will get until the Empire is defeated, and we can station a guard force here or something."

"It should do. And if it doesn't, I'll find a new source," I assured the once Jedi Padawan. "It would suck to lose this, but there will always be more."

She reluctantly nodded, and after another minute or so of recovery, we continued to make our way out of the caves. I was still partially anticipating an ambush by those nasty bug things that attacked us last time, but nothing came up.

We made quick work of the trip back to the ship, making our way back on board the *Starcaller*. It was decided that since Ahsoka had been through the vision and was still feeling a bit out of it, we would leave to head back to the ancient Jedi Temple in the morning. Almost everyone, myself included, headed directly for bed.

Leaving Dantooine and traveling back to the ancient Jedi Temple was mostly uneventful. Ahsoka once again flew the ship off the planet so that no one else could know where we had been. It wasn't that I didn't trust everyone, as I was intimately aware of the fact that I was essentially riding in a ship full of main characters who could all handle themselves. Even Claron and Felia had survived years on the streets, doing relatively well despite their disadvantages. Unfortunately, I was just as keenly aware that the more people who knew a secret, the weaker it was. Thankfully, nobody disagreed.

The trip back through hyperspace was passed mainly by Huyang giving lessons on lightsaber assembly. There was a particular process involved, a method of influencing the construction, of feeling how the parts should fit together and how everything melded and worked

as one. Yes, someone with the right skill could put one together clinically, with only minor use of the Force for guidance. However, if a padawan wanted to create their own weapon, something that was connected to them, that was an extension of their limbs, then that required something a bit more.

Ahsoka rather embarrassingly admitted she had forgotten how much of a difference it was having a crystal that was bonded to herself. She had disassembled her previous white blades, pulled out the old crystals, and reassembled them with her new ones as a demonstration. She had followed Huyang's instructions, and when igniting them for the first time, she had stared at her blades with a look of wonder. The blades were a [deep magenta](#), with a lighter [electric pink](#) center.

By the time we arrived at the ancient Jedi temple, everyone was itching to assemble their lightsaber. Unfortunately, they would have to wait until we got back to Omega Station at least, maybe longer, since there was no guarantee we would have the right parts.

We arrived back at the temple ruins with little fanfare. The landing was simple, if a bit nerve-wracking, since we still weren't sure if the suspended cliff-side platform could hold us. Rather than risk it, we did the same thing as before, with the ship hovering in place just above the platform. Once "landed," Ahsoka and I made our way out of the ship while everyone else stayed on board. Knight Amescol, as well as several others, were waiting for us as we descended the boarding ramp. Part of me wondered if they had felt our approach through the Force or if they had just spotted us as we descended from space.

"It's good to see you both again," The older Jedi greeted us with a smile, reaching out to shake Ahsoka's hand first, then mine. "Was your Gathering successful?"

"It was," Ahsoka explained with a smile, her hand unconsciously touching one of her sabers. "The Force was... unusually forthcoming. Even I was able to find a new crystal, although under different circumstances."

"Interesting," He responded. "I would love to hear more, if you're willing to share?"

"I... suppose we could take a moment," She said after a pause to consider.

Knight Amescoll led us back into the hangar, sitting down around the same table where we had shared a meal days before. A crowd quickly formed as Ahsoka nervously talked about her experience, leaving a lot of it out. Thankfully, Knight Amescoll and his people seemed to understand that it was personal and didn't push.

"To receive a vision of Bastila Shan..." He said once she was done, looking at Ahsoka with renewed respect. "Truly, we can expect great things from you, Ahsoka. I believe quite a few Jedi Masters are regretting their actions, even as they are one with the Force."

"It was... surprising," She admitted. "I am still in shock."

"She was the perfect person to deliver a message of change," I pointed out. "In her early years, Bastila was a hardline follower of the Jedi Council of her time. But as she grew older, she

realized their flaws and began to chafe at her leash, so to speak. It was Revan, however, who really convinced her that change was needed or that the Jedi Council was just as flawed as any group of sentient leaders."

"I believe that neatly brings us to our decision," Knight Amescoll said, casting a look at several of the people around us. "We debated your offer, as well as your offer for you to take us off the planet so we may join the Rebellion. It was your fears and certainty that we not repeat the same mistakes of our past that won us over. The time of the Old Republic and the old Jedi Order is over. Now, we must change and evolve into something new, something better. We wish to work alongside and with the Skyforged Vanguard. As long as your people are fighting against the Empire and against those who would harm innocents, we will join you."

Silently, I stood, Knight Amescoll following suit a second later. I walked closer and stuck out my hand.

"In that case, Amescoll, allow me to welcome you, and any who wish to join, to the Skyforged Vanguard," I said with a smile. "Things are a little hectic at the moment, but I'm hoping that together, we can make a big difference."

We chatted a bit more about what their joining meant and what exactly would happen next. I assured them that we would rush out a delivery of portable structures, more supplies, and some heavy weapons to potentially deal with the ocean dwellers. They could block up the lift access and turn some more of the hangars into living space. We would also be sending them at least one ship, something capable of carrying everyone off the planet if need be. Mentally, I kicked myself for selling the pirate freighter from the last mission to the Rebellion.

Eventually, we could work on getting the entire island safe, but that was for later. Once the island was a bit more comfortable to live on, we could use it as a refuge and training area for Force-sensitives. I had a feeling that Felia would want to stay close to Ahsoka, but something told me Ezra was already thinking about returning at some point soon.

Once we were done talking about that, Amescoll brought up something I hadn't considered.

"While we have joined you, I still think it's only right that I at least meet with the Rebellion," He explained. "I... would like to see it with my own eyes and explain why we have decided to work with the Skyforged rather than them."

"That... is probably a good idea," I admitted, Ahsoka nodding from beside me. "I take it that means you will be coming with us?"

"Yes, at least at first. I would like to see the station you speak of, as well as talk to the Rebellion," He explained. "I don't want to stay away long... I have long since started considering this place my home, and I would hate to stay away long."

"You can ride back with the ship we plan on buying for you," I suggested, getting a nod of agreement from Amescoll.

After another thirty minutes of talking and discussing, Amescoll, his wife, and two of the older Padawans, including Malua Var'Samallo, would be coming with us. Once we had everything set up, we would start considering a more routine rotation for the Jedi.

Amescoll promised a swift return, and his people said a final goodbye. After that, we promptly returned to the ship. Ahsoka and Luke set a course home to Omega Station.