

"What is thy bidding, my Master?"

"Lord Vader, I have received reports regarding the events at Bespin. Most disappointing."

"Yes, a most unfortunate turn of events."

"Agreed. Yet this failure staining your service had done little to derail our plans. Things are still progressing as I have foreseen."

The Emperor's hologram paused as he considered his apprentice. "I sense you have more to report?"

Vader bristled slightly. Did he know? "Yes my master. We have received word of rebel activity in the outer rim. I have assembled a contingent of troopers to investigate the claim."

"I see, and you feel you should investigate this claim personally?"

"The information indicates that my son may be among them."

A deep meaningful silence fell over the conversation. The oversized hologram of the Emperors head and torso flickered an eerie blue above Vader where he knelt.

"You still believe the boy could be turned, even after your failure at the city in the clouds?"

"As I said my master, he will join us, or he will die."

Another long pause.

"Very well Lord Vader, lead your contingent." The words spat from the Emperor's mouth. "The capture of any of the rebel leadership alive would be preferable, but their destruction would suffice. Do not fail me again."

"No Master." Vader had to work hard to control rage building.

"While you are away send the Executer to join the fleet above Endor. Everything is going exactly as planned, do not waste much time in the Outer Rim. While the son of Skywalker would be an asset, he is not a priority here."

"As you wish my Master."

The holo call was terminated with no further word. Vader rose and turned to make his way to the docking bay. The Emperor still seemed completely unaware of his deception. He just had to have it remain that way until the opportune moment. Right now he had another mission to think about.

Luke had no concept of time in the windowless cell. He knew he was on the surface of a planet, though just which planet that was he had no idea. That wasn't a relevant. The grey soulless steel of the cell was identical to that of the one he was held in on the Executer during the trip here.

Luke sat in a meditative pose on the floor in the center of the cell. He didn't even feel the cold anymore as he sank deeper into the force, still trying to control the storm of emotions that threatened to ravage every part of his being. The revelation regarding the identity of his father had just been the start of his tumult.

After his battle with Vader, Luke had regained consciousness in the medical suite of the Executer, Vader's flagship. He awoke strapped to a medical couch, a pair of 2-1b medical droids were surgically attaching a top of the range prosthetic to his severed right hand. For the next few days he had been there, recovering, undergoing various Bacta and therapeutic treatments and slowly drifting in and out of consciousness. Vader seemed to always be there. Whether he was there in person, or his mind was playing tricks, Luke hadn't known. But his presence constantly weighed heavy on the force.

Sometime later Luke had been transferred to an interrogation room where he assumed his torture would begin. He was right, but it didn't come in the manner he had expected. He had been strapped to a cot that was then tilted upright in to a standing position. The room was full of archaic looking and very aggressive equipment. Technicians worked all around him, both droid and sentient. The doors in front of the cot parted and Vader silently entered. He came to a stop a couple of feet in front of Luke, standing motionless regarding his son.

"Your injuries are almost fully healed."

He seemed to be waiting for a response, he received none but icy cold stare.

"The power in the force continues to grow in you day by day. Yet you still refuse to realise your full potential. I sense much fear and anger in you, yet you refuse to harness them correctly. I can teach you to do so and you will become more powerful than you ever thought possible." Vader's fist clenched in front of Luke's face to emphasise his point.

"You're wasting your time father." Luke's word felt like acid in his throat. "I will never join you."

"When you realise what we can accomplished when you learn the true power of the Dark Side, your mind will change."

Luke spat out a single laugh of indignation in response. "My friends will come from me long before my mind changes."

"That may have been the case my son, unfortunately they did not survive the assault at Bespin."

Luke's blood ran cold. He stared unblinking at the black mask in front of him. "You're lying."

Vader turned and nodded towards one of the male technicians in the room. The technician promptly put down the device he was using to monitor Luke's vital signs and pulled a portable holo screen in front of him. Vader lent over and powered up the device before inserting a data card he retrieved from a pouch on his belt. The screen sprang to life.

It appeared to show the view from the bridge of a Star Destroyer. Possibly the Executer. He could see small dots approaching from a gas planet that Luke assumed to be Bespin. Soon the dots were close enough to the cam to become identifiable objects. One was the Millennium Falcon, tailed by three Tie Fighters, lasers tracing green lines of hard light through the darkness of space.

The Falcon was in full evasive mode, spinning and weaving in space as it dodged between the laser blasts from the three pursuing vehicles. One of the Ties exploded just before the ships reached the edge of the cameras range. The view on the holo skipped to that of another cam on the Destroyer, showing a different angle of the same pursuit. The three remaining craft were flying fast down the side of the Star destroyer, the Falcon avoiding hull mounted turbo lasers as well as those fired from the still pursuing Ties. Luke's entire body was tense as he expected the Falcon to be hit and destroyed at any time.

The camera angle flicked once more as the Falcon shot out in front of the Star destroyer, which seemed mind bogglingly huge in comparison to the small, swift freighter. The small ship containing his friends seemed to be pulling away from the destroyer into open space, surely about to vanish in hyperspace. Suddenly its momentum ceased. The ship rocked violently due to a lucky strike one of the pursuing Ties. The rear shields flared, overloaded and then failed completely.

The hollow feeling gripped Luke. He could clearly see the Falcon's engines grow brighter as the ship powered up. The ship ramped up to full power in an attempt to break the tractor beam that now gripped it. It was useless. The sub-light engine flared out and the entire ship was dead in space. It slowly began drifting back towards the Star destroyer and the pursuing Tie fighters, which immediately changed course to form a twisted honour guard.

The holo view shifted once more, this time to the interior of a large hangar. The scene centered on a close-up of the Falcon's boarding ramp as a squad of storm troopers gathered, two working on the control unit. The white uniformed troopers had weapons trained on the ramp. There was still no sound to the recording as the troopers moved away from the ramp and it slowly began to descend. A hail of fire emerged from the interior of the ship as Chewy and dark skinned human Luke hadn't seen before exited at a dead run, charging in two different directions. Running left and right, the pair continuously fired into the hoard of Stormtroopers yet didn't seem to be making a dent in their numbers.

The dark skinned man didn't last long. He made it to the deck of the landing pad before falling in a blinding red blast of fire. Chewbacca was a little more successful. The swiftness of the Wookiee startled Luke as he leapt from the foot of the landing ramp into a startled group of the nearest Stormtroopers. He took a few shots during his suicidal leap, but they seemed to do nothing to diminish his strength or lust for blood. Bits of Stormtrooper were flying everywhere as the Wookiee's berserker rage took hold and he tore in to the unfortunate human beings in their useless uniforms with his bare paws, pulling off limbs and smashing in heads with reckless abandon before succumbing to laser blasts from multiple directions. The huge hairy figures slumped to his knees before slowly falling face first onto the deck, where he remained motionless. Luke slumped in his restraints.

Attention returned to the ramp. Leia appeared in the door way and slowly made her way down to the landing pad. She was holding a small blaster down by her side, almost casually. The troopers did not fire. One of the troopers lowered his weapon and began to make a move towards where she stood at the end of the Falcon's boarding ramp. He had his hands out in a placating gesture, making it obvious that they intended to take her as a prisoner rather than threatening any violence. He got within five feet of her when her hand twitched. A blast from one of the Stormtroopers behind the one approaching Leia cut his path and passed cleanly through Leia's chest before scorching the Falcon's hull. The holdout blaster hit the floor a second before she did, crumpled in an unnatural contorted position.

This was too much for his will to bear. Luke wrenched at his bonds frantically overcome by madness. He let out a long pained scream. The room around him began to groan and strain. The human and droid technicians backed away cautiously as Luke fully gave in to his anger. Vader remained unmoving, arms folded, simply looking at his son. Gouts of flame erupted from consoles and screens shattered as the force around Luke became an echo of the chaos he was feeling inside his mind. Inside his very being.

After all they been through, to watch helpless as Leia was callously ripped away from him like that was too much to bear. Droids fell and the human technicians began to scream as Luke unleashed a fury he had no idea he possessed on everything around him. A crumpled droid whined helplessly as it flew through the air to be smashed on the far wall. The three human technicians fell to their knees and began to beg in strangled breathless chokes as the life was crushed out of them. Lights dimmed and the walls began to buckle.

Then Luke fell as his restraint snapped, crumbled into nothingness. He hit the deck of the ship and jarred back to reality. Tears streamed down his cheeks and his hands shook as he looked at them in disbelief. Luke trembled all over, covered in a glistening sheen of sweat. The door behind Vader had to be forced open and a squad of Stormtroopers entered, training their weapons on Luke where he knelt, still in disbelief and trying to comprehend what he had just done. What he'd just seen. "You see my son, that is merely a fraction of the power you truly wield."

Two the troopers had hauled Luke from the floor before slapping a set of stun cuffs on him and escorting him back to his cell.

Now, he sat cross legged in the center of the cell. He couldn't keep his mind from the intoxicating power he had felt coursing through him as he unleashed a wave of destruction on that room and its inhabitants. He now understood how his father had fallen to the dark side. He now understood the power that had seduced him, a power that he could possess. And he was trying with all his might to fight against succumbing to it himself. The death of his friends had sparked that in him, what had sparked it in his father?

Luke's meditation was broken as two Stormtroopers appeared outside the force field of his cell. They were dragging an unconscious man between them who looked to have been beaten to within an inch of his life, maybe a little further.

"Just stick him in here. There's no room in any of the others." The trooper nearest the cell said with a nod.

"But, Lord Vader ordered..."

"Don't worry about that. Will have him moved before Vader ever finds out. Some of the others aren't going to last long."

"Fine." The reservations in the second troopers voice were still conveyed even through the helmets com.

With that the trooper on the man's right let go of his arm and moved towards the controls for the force field. He lifted his rifle and aimed at Luke while the other trooper took hold of the man with both hands.

"Don't try anything stupid, kid." The trooper pointing the gun said. "You might be Vader's favourite now, but things around here tend to change pretty quick, so don't think I won't change them myself if I have to."

Luke cocked his head slightly quizzically, but then raised his hands palm out in a gesture of submission. The trooper dropped the force field on the front of the cell and his counterpart dragged the unconscious man in before dumping him on the floor unceremoniously next to where Luke sat. The pair left, initialising the force field as they did.

Luke eyed his new cellmate suspiciously. The man was dressed in what appeared to be the body stocking of a Stormtrooper. The garment worn underneath the armour. Clearly he had done something very wrong, yet he was still an enemy. The man groaned. Luke let out a deep breath and knew full well his conscience would not allow the man to suffer unnecessarily if there was something he could do to help. Luke slowly dragged the man onto the cot that appeared from the wall on command and began to clean up the injured man's wounds

"Well, at least I have someone to talk to now." Muttered Luke as he worked.

The man could only groan in response.