The Tale of Two Fulcrums

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Summary

When someone claiming to be her agent appears and starts helping to rebellion, Ahsoka is sent to track down this individual and discover who they are, and what they want.

Notes

Ok, so sequel time.
This is set during season 3 of rebels, after the events of "The Antilles Extraction", but before "Hera's Heroes".
Also, as this continues on from "The Formers Apprentices", the Maul centric episodes of season 3 do not happen, as Maul has no interest in Ezra or the Sith holocron anymore.
This fic can act as a standalone story, but to understand what went down on Malachor, its best you read the previous story first.

See the end of the work for more notes.
A New Mission

How did she get here? When did she get here? Why was she here?

Ahsoka Tano stood and observed her surroundings.

A dark forest, will tall billowing trees clearly blowing in the ominous wind. Dark shadows covered everything, in every direction.

A sense of fear. Mystery.

Ahsoka took a step forward.

The air was thick, a pungent aroma filled her nostrils. Her montrals could pick up even the slightest movement in the trees.

But that was it. Just the movement of the trees, and her own. Nothing else moved in this dark forest that Ahsoka found herself in.

“Hello? Is anyone there?” Ahsoka called out. She didn’t expect an answer, but it was worth a try.

She continued forward, trying to determine where she was. Around her it appeared the shadows moved. Some to consume her, others to let her pass.

And then one stopped in front of her, and spoke.

"Why did you leave me?"

Ahsoka halted at the voice. It was familiar to here, like she had heard the words before from that specific voice.

The shadowy figure disappeared, only to be replaced by another, this one taller and bulkier.

“You killed me! After everything I did for you, you killed me!”

The voice was more mechanical this time, attempting to intimidate her.

Ahsoka backed off slowly, hoping that whatever spirit like entity this was would not pursue her.

That was until another appeared behind her. She had bumped into a shadow, not walked through it.

They were solid?

Ahsoka turned quickly, and this time she recognized the shadow. It was shorter than her, clearly different from the first two. The figure possessed long brown hair, wearing a regal dress, a sense of authority about her.

“You did this to him. It was your fault he fell!”

Ahsoka backed off again, mumbling under her breath, “No, I’m sorry. I’m sorry Padme.”

The Padme shadow disappeared, much like the previous ones.

In Ahsoka’s peripheral vision, another shadow materialised, this was also recognizable to Ahsoka.
“You failed to save me. You never liked me. And now my brother pays the price for your failure!”

The shadow that Ahsoka identified as Steela Gerrera taunted her failure on Onderon, one of Ahsoka’s greatest regrets. It was as if Ahsoka’s past had come back to haunt her, in a dark forest of some kind.

“No.” Ahsoka whispered again, a wave of anger spiking inside of her.

Another shadow appeared before her. A tall figure, wrapped in a dark cloak, face disfigured, either by age or injury Ahsoka couldn’t tell. The figure cackled menacingly, evil intent obvious.

Ahsoka recognized the figure, her hands going to her legs to equip her lightsabers. She would need them against…

There were not there! Her lightsabers were missing!

Ahsoka looked up in horror, as the shadow stood there, gold eyes watching her.

“No. You are not real.” Ahsoka shouted at the shadow. In response, the shadow cackled again.

“Oh but I am Ahsoka Tano, and soon you will be mine.”

Ahsoka awoke in an instant, a chill covering most of her body, sweat pouring off of her like a waterfall.

‘Another nightmare.’ Ahsoka thought. They had been coming thick and fast since the events at Malachor. Since she had killed Darth Vader and recovered the Sith holocron.

Ahsoka sat up, eyes blurring from her sleep. She was used to the nightmares by now. One didn’t fight in a war since age fourteen and not be accustomed to such things.

However, whereas before she would have the constant support of her master to talk them over with, now she was alone.

Sure, she had friends in the crew of the Ghost, and Rex was still around, but she wasn’t exactly close to them. Not like they were with each other.

And she was fine with that. Ahsoka had survived sixteen years on her own, before meeting them. Running the rebellion from behind the scenes with Bail Organa.

But moreover, she didn’t want to impart her problems on someone else. That was not who she was.

When she had returned from Malachor, and subsequently left Atollon to report to Senator Organa, she had fully intended to return to her duties immediately.

But Bail has stopped her, ordered her to take some time off for herself to recover, both physically and mentally. He knew about the connection between Ahsoka and Vader, and thus knew that she was badly wounded inside.

So here she was, at her small hidden retreat on a moon in the Alderaan system. Out of the way. Bail had built the place for her as a home for her to relax in, equipped with everything a former Jedi would need. Ahsoka had refused the offer at first, stating that she had a job to do.
But Bail had been quite insistent, ensuring that his best agent was not dropping dead from overworking.

By now it had been six months since Malachor, and Ahsoka was going stir crazy. As a Togruta, isolation was often a bad thing. But after years she had grown accustomed to it.

That was not what concerned her.

Guilt was the concern, she was not helping out the rebellion, rather relaxing in her own retreat. She could be out there dealing with the empire.

Instead, she was mulling over her past failures.

The time away did give her time to train however. She had mediated daily, seeking answers, trying to find anymore Jedi. She had no such luck.

She had also trained daily, trying to keep herself at the top of her game. She may have defeated Vader, but Sidious was another thing altogether.

Ahsoka stood from her bed, now awake. She assumed her normal morning routine, taking a brief but refreshing shower, followed by making herself a cup of caf. Afterwards, she sat down at her personal terminal to check on the news, as well as her personal messages.

Not much had changed in regards to the news. The empire had continued to oppress people. Several articles were present about the upcoming empire day celebrations.

Strangely though, six months later and still no official confirmation about Vader’s death. It was as if Sidious was trying to keep it a secret.

Ahsoka turned her attention to her personal messages. Aside from the usual junk mail she seemed to collect, there was an update from Rex about Atollon, as well as a message from Hera hoping she was well.

Below those were two messages from the Organa family. First, a message from the Organa Princess Leia, with an attachment. Ahsoka opened the link to find a dissertation written by the young princess.

The two had struck up a friendship from the second they had met, with Leia freely admitting that she saw Ahsoka as a mentor of some kind. In response, the two kept in contact, Leia often asking Ahsoka to look over her school work. This dissertation was just one in a long line of past pieces of work that Leia had sent her. Ahsoka smiled. That girl would make an excellent Senator for Alderaan one day.

She closed Leia’s message and opened the next, this time from Bail.

It contained only five words.

“URGENT. HELP REQUIRED. FULCRUM NEEDED!”

Concern filled Ahsoka as she sprang into action, grabbing the various pieces of armour that made up her outfit, before setting off for her personal A-wing fighter.

Bail clearly needed her for something. Something important judging by his message.
She arrived aboard the Tantive IV in quick time. The ship had already been in the Alderaan system, clearly awaiting her arrival. Jumping out of her fighter, Ahsoka made a beeline for Senator Organa’s office, not even stopping to knock on the door, she strode in.

Bail sat behind his desk, a confused expression on his weathered face. Something had baffled the Senator. He looked up at Ahsoka, his eyes meeting hers, and spoke.

“Thank you for coming so quickly Ahsoka, we have a bit of a situation.”

“I’m listening.” Ahsoka responded, taking the seat on the other side of Bail’s desk.

Bail keyed up a holographic interface before them. A series of boxes appeared before the two, each with what looked like a recording in them.

“What you see before you are a series of transmissions recently made to various rebel cell leaders from a secure channel.” Bail began, gesturing to the recordings. “Each transmission offer vital intelligence about imperial actions, and allowed us to achieve a tactical advantage over them.”

Ahsoka nodded in understanding. These transmissions had proved to be beneficial to the rebellion. But clearly there was more to this, Bail would not have called her otherwise.

“So what’s the problem?” Ahsoka inquired.

Bail’s face turned grim, and selected one of the recordings. A distorted voice began to play.

“This is Fulcrum with an important message.”

Ahsoka narrowed her eyes. That was not her speaking.

Bail stopped the recording, before pressing play on another.

“This is Fulcrum. I have important intel that could benefit the rebellion.”

Bail stopped the recording, looking directly at Ahsoka.

“Recently, several major rebel cells were contacted by a mysterious individual using your codename. Commander Sato, General Dodonna and Admiral Raddus were all contacted by this person. At first I thought it was one of your agents.”

Ahsoka knew immediately what was wrong. This figure was not her agent.

Bail confirmed it moments later.

“However, I asked around, and none of you current agents sent these messages. Cassian Andor himself believes that these messages were sent from an outside party, using your codename as a way of legitimizing their intel.”

Ahsoka snorted and smiled, “So someone is trying to be me.”

Bail smiled back at her, despite the situation. “Precisely, we have an unknown Fulcrum agent producing information about the empire. Clearly not one of your agents.”

“A self-appointed Fulcrum then.” Ahsoka finished for Bail. She could see what the major issue was. This was a major breach in security for the rebellion. It could also be a trap, meant to lure her out. She wouldn’t put it past Sidious.
“I sent two of my best agents out to gather more intel about the source of these Fulcrum transmissions, and they reported that they found something. I would like you to meet with them in person, and ascertain whether or not this new Fulcrum can be trusted.” Bail spoke, authority in his voice. He and Ahsoka worked in parallel to one another. Bail played the political game, while Ahsoka dealt with intelligence and military aspects. Their rebellion was beginning to take shape.

“Ok, I’ll do it. Give me the coordinates of the meeting point.” Ahsoka stood from her seat, Bail rising to join her.

“Excellent. I knew I could count on you Ahsoka. Let me know what you find.” Bail said.

Ahsoka stopped, something just coming to mind. She would need a bigger ship if she was undertaking an assignment this large. And one came to mind immediately.

“Senator, you said that Commander Sato was contacted by this Fulcrum agent. Would I be right to assume that the crew of the Ghost were involved in some manner?”

A smirk came to Bail’s face. He was fond of the Ghost crew, much like Ahsoka was.

“They were. If you wish to abduct them for this investigation, I’m sure they will not mind.”

Ahsoka laughed in response. It would be good to be among friends again. And she knew that they would be equally interested in the mission once they heard the details.

Ahsoka departed from Bail’s office, making her way back to the hanger bay where her A-wing was. Hopping into the pilot seat, she set course for Atollon.

She had a mission to complete.

And she wanted her friends by her side.
Reunions

Chapter Summary

In which Ahsoka returns to Atollon.
And the team meet Bail's agents.

Chapter Notes

Not much happens this chapter, more dialogue and setting the scene.

Ahsoka hadn't set foot on Atollon since returning from Malachor, since she had cremated Vader's body.

It wasn't that she was purposefully avoiding the planet, she really had intended to go straight back there after reporting what had occurred on Malachor to Bail. However, Bail had all but forced her to take an extended break, citing possible stress and overworking as reasons. She had disagreed at first, wanting to help her friends. Bail had then threatened, albeit in a humorous manner, to fire her if she didn't rest.

So for the past sixth months, aside from frequent correspondence with her friends on Atollon, Ahsoka had no idea what the current shape of Chopper base was. As she brought her A-wing through the orbit of the planet, Ahsoka could see that much had changed. The base was larger now, more ships and equipment, as well as people being present in the base. The rebellion was clearly growing.

"Approaching A-wing fighter identify yourself!" A voice spoke over her intercom. Security was strong. That was good.

"This is Fulcrum. I am on special assignment." Ahsoka responded, sending a twelve digit access code to clarify her identity. Moments later, the voice cleared her for landing.

Ahsoka piloted her A-wing for a vacant landing platform. She was unsure if the crew of the Ghost knew she was coming. She had seen the cargo freighter on approach, suggesting that the team was at base. That being said, she wasn't expecting to welcoming committee.

She was wrong however. As she vaulted out of her fighter, a young boy approached her, a cheerful smile on his face.

Ahsoka had to do a double take to recognize the figure. In the past six months, it was evident that Ezra Bridger had grown. His hair was no longer the wispy and free as it had once been, but cut short. He had grown too, evidently hitting some sort of growth spurt. Ezra also seemed to carry with him a greater sense of maturity. Ahsoka was sure he would never lose the playfulness that he was known for in his youth, after all she was still as snippy and outgoing as she was when she was a child. Yet Ezra had an atmosphere of confidence about him, not just of his own confidence, but of
those around him too.

Ezra Bridger was growing to be a strong Jedi.

Much better that she ever could have been.

Ahsoka shook off her thoughts, walking up to the young Jedi.

"Ezra Bridger, you got taller." Ahsoka smirked. She knew he would find the humour in the statement. Ezra blushed in response, looking down sheepishly, before looking back up at Ahsoka.

"Glad you're back Ahsoka. It's not been the same without you." Ezra lifted his hand out, offering a handshake.

Ahsoka stared at Ezra's hand perplexed. Since when was he so formal?

Nevertheless, Ahsoka took the hand in her own, shaking once, before turning to walk towards the command centre, Ezra following alongside her.

"How goes your training?" Ahsoka asked, genuine interest seeping through in her voice.

"Good. Kanan was absent for a while. Still recovering from Malachor and his injury. But since he's been back we've been training daily. He seems to be stronger now he's blind." Ezra replied.

"Kanan is strong. It'll take more than losing his eyes to permanently break him." Ahsoka responded, her thoughts going to the blind Jedi. The crew had been shocked when the extent of the injury had been revealed. Kanan had seemed to withdraw somewhat, suggesting that his confidence had been crippled.

Ahsoka had not been worried. During her time as a padawan she had heard of the strong-willed Caleb Dume, always questioning himself, yet making considerable strides in the process. Ahsoka admired that about him.

So when he was blinded by Vader on Malachor, she knew that he would have trouble recovering and finding his purpose again. All he needed was an anchor.

His anchor was Ezra.

"So, why are you here? Standard check-up on your favourite rebels?" Ezra smirked, cheek evident in his voice.

Ahsoka laughed, something she rarely did these days. "No. Got a mission of great importance. I wanted your help. Is the team around?"

Ezra nodded once, intrigue on his face. If Ahsoka had an important mission, then it was probably dangerous.

But that wouldn't stop him from helping her. Nor would it stop the others.

"I'll round them up." Ezra stated, before heading off in one direction while Ahsoka headed towards the Ghost.

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"So someone is trying to be you? Why would anyone want your life?"
The crew of the Ghost turned to gape at Zeb in surprise. Ahsoka merely chuckled under her breath. She knew he wasn't trying to insult her. That wasn't Zeb. He was just not very good at being discreet.

"Essentially yes. Someone is pretending to be one of my agents. Rebel command cannot identify this person, so it could be a major breach in security." Ahsoka replied, looking over the assembled crew members. Kanan and Hera sat together, with Rex sitting across from them. Ezra stood beside Ahsoka, and across from them, Sabine and Zeb lounged against a bulkhead of the Ghost. Ahsoka had explained the situation and what Bail had informed her of.

Rex spoke up next, concern in his voice. "Or it could be a trap? No doubt Sidious isn't too pleased with you commander."

Rex was right, Ahsoka knew. Sooner or later the Emperor would come for Ahsoka, whether to get revenge for what she did to Vader, or worse, she didn't know.

"All the more reason to ascertain whether this person can be trusted or not. I have coordinates to meet up with Bail's agents who are investigating this. Apparently they found something. I'm not forcing you all to help, but I would like transportation via the Ghost to the meeting spot. You can leave afterwards if you desire." Ahsoka finished her explanation. She did want her friends to help, but she wouldn't force them, even Rex, if they had other priorities.

The members of the Ghost, the family that they were all looked at each other in turn, deliberating silently. Not that there was much to deliberate.

"I'm in." Kanan spoke first, confidently.

"As am I." Rex this time, rising to approach his long-time friend. He would always help her.

"We're all in." Sabine this time.

"Damn straight." Zeb spoke.

"Yeah. The family is back together again." Ezra cheered, slapping Zeb on the back enthusiastically. The Lasat grumbled from the impact, nearly losing his balance.

"Give me the coordinates Ahsoka, I'll get us underway." Hera rose to meet Ahsoka, gesturing towards the Ghost's bridge.

Ahsoka was stunned for a brief second. Despite everything, her not being around for six months, her friends were still willing to help her.

"Thank you." Ahsoka responded happily. It was nice to be around friends again after so long.

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Hours later, the Ghost emerged in the Tyrius system, home to Rodia. While the planet had fallen under imperial control after the fall of the republic, the planet was not Ahsoka's intended destination. The signal from Bail's agents was coming from the fringes of the system, from a small cargo vessel not unlike the Ghost. The ship was smaller than the Ghost, and clearly not outfitted for combat like Hera's ship was.

Nevertheless, it was an adequate ship for moving around undetected by imperial. Bail's agents clearly knew what they were doing. He had spoken of them very highly in his mission briefing to Ahsoka. Only, he hadn't told her their names, only that she would recognize them when she met
them.

If Ahsoka knew her own luck, chances were she was about to run into Hondo Ohnaka. Ezra had told her all about his 'adventure' with the Weequay pirate in the past. She was loath to encounter him again herself.

Ahsoka sat in the co-pilot seat of the Ghost, alongside Hera, who slowly brought her ship towards the cargo vessel before her. Chopper worked behind the two, momentarily stopping to beep a series of suggestions at Hera for improvements to the drive core. Hera turned to look at Ahsoka, rolling her eyes at the droids antics. Ahsoka smirked in response, entertained.

The crew of the Ghost really did feel like a family to her. Kanan and Hera were clearly the parents, Ezra and Sabine the children. Zeb was the grumpy uncle, and Chopper...

Chopper was the angry nexu cub who had nowhere else to go.

What surprised Ahsoka the most about them was how readily they had accepted Rex into their family. On the voyage from Atollon, she had encountered the clone sparring with both Zeb and Sabine in the cargo hold. Despite his growing age, her oldest friend was still standing his ground against both the Lasat and the Mandalorian at the same time, while Ezra egged them on from the side.

Kanan had disappeared into his private cabin shortly after leaving Atollon. Ahsoka didn't wish to disturb him, sensing he wanted time for private meditation.

So Ahsoka had headed to the bridge and had sat with Hera. The two had spoken briefly about how the rebellion was shaping up, and how Kanan and Ezra were doing. Hera had voiced some concern about Kanan earlier, stating that his blindness had impaired him at first, but that one day he had returned from the wilderness of Atollon with newfound vigour in him.

Something had clearly happened to Kanan, as had returned sharper and wiser than before. More humbled too. Ahsoka would have to ask him about it at a later date.

"We're in range to transmit to Senator Organa's agents." Hera spoke, gesturing towards her dashboard. Ahsoka accepted the invitation and contacted the ship.

"This is Fulcrum. I am here on behalf of Senator Organa about the information you have acquired in regards to my namesake. Request permission to dock and board your ship."

Ahsoka and Hera waited for the response, hoping this wasn't a trap of some kind.

"Code phrase?" A female voice responded on the other end of the channel.

Ahsoka had a sense of deja-vu. She recognized the voice, somewhat. She couldn't place it though. The last time this had happened the mysterious voiced turned out to be Darth Maul. What was she going to get this time?

For a brief second, Ahsoka wished she was dealing with Hondo.

"By the Light of Lothal's moons." Ahsoka took a risk. She needed the information that these people had. Only one way to find out.

After a short pause, the voice replied. "Confirmed. Welcome Fulcrum. We shall meet you by the airlock."
Ahsoka signed, reclining in her chair. She hadn't realised she had tensed up.

Hera's hands moved quickly over her interface dashboard, directing the Ghost to dock.

A large clang sound resonated through the ship, as the Ghost connected to the cargo vessel.

Ahsoka stood from her seat, looking down at Hera. "Let's go see what they have for us."

Hera smiled, standing and following Ahsoka as she made her way to the airlock.

When the two arrived, the rest of the crew, minus Chopper was already present waiting.

"You ready?" Rex approached her, taking his rightful place by her side, as Hera moved to Kanan's.

"Always." Ahsoka responded, moving towards the airlock door.

The team crossed over ships, before coming to a stop in the cargo vessel's own airlock. A voice, this one different to the previous one spoke. Ahsoka recognized the second voice too.

"Stand by for decontamination."

"Decontaminiwhat? What do we need that for?" Zeb spoke, clearly on edge. If this was a trap, Ahsoka would make sure the crew got out first. Their survival was her highest priority.

A thin veil of gas covered the crew, acting exactly as it had been advertised.

"Decontamination. Safety reasons no doubt. No reason to worry Zeb." Sabine tried to improve the atmosphere. Tension was in the air, all expecting a trap or ambush of some kind.

Moments later, the gas stopped, and the door in front of them opened.

Ahsoka made the move the step forward and greet Bail's agents, but halted when she saw them.

A pair of dark-skinned human women stood before her, clearly related. They were older now than when they last met. But it was clearly them. That was why she recognized the voices.

The two women looked over the crew of the Ghost, but paused much like Ahsoka had, surprise written on their faces, when they saw her with them.

The older of the two women stepped forward, her eyes widening. Ahsoka couldn't help the smile that came to her face, larger than any she had produced in years.

"Ahsoka?"

"Hello Kaeden."

Reunions are nice, aren't they.

For those who don't know, Kaeden and the other character with her are both from the Ahsoka novel.
By this point in her life, very little surprised Ahsoka Tano. She had seen practically everything. Sith taking over the galaxy: Check. Former Sith Lord helping her: Check. Living embodiments of the force: Check.

That being said, seeing two old friends that she hadn't seen in over fifteen years was perhaps one of the most pleasant surprises yet. She hadn't meant to ignore them, she had simply got too involved in the growing rebellion to keep track of where they ended up after Raada.

She found that she had missed the Larte sisters.

Kaeden crashed into her at speed, enveloping Ahsoka into a tight hug, tears of joy evident on her face. Behind her, Miara smirked.

"Ahsoka! You're Fulcrum?" Kaeden asked, pulling to Togruta woman closer to her, as if she would vanish if Kaeden let go. Ahsoka reached her arms around Kaeden in response, allowing her guard down even for a brief second. If Kaeden and Miara were Bail's agents, Ahsoka would trust them explicitly.

"Surprise!" Ahsoka smirked in response, pulling out of the hug, somewhat mournful at the loss of the contact. She stepped away from Kaeden in order to get a better look at her and Miara.

Now that her initial surprise had worn off, Ahsoka could see just how much they had changed. On Raada, both had been shorter than her, and both still were to be fair. But it was evident that they had grown internally more than externally. Miara carried herself well, a sense of authority about the younger sibling. On Raada, she had been a risk-taker, using the unorthodox to outwit her opponents. Here, she was more reserved, but still carried the same attitude. She was clearly a valuable asset to the rebellion.

Kaeden on the other hand had been outgoing around Ahsoka on Raada, always showing up in the early months of her arrival to visit, even if it was just to talk. However, Ahsoka had discovered that
her outgoing attitude had been somewhat of a facade. In private, Kaeden had seemed unsure of herself at times, questioning her position on Raada. She had been dealt a bad hand in her youth, with both parents dying early, and being forced to care for Miara.

And when Ahsoka had arrived on Raada, she had brought the empire, and an Inquisitor, with her. Kaeden had paid the price, forced to watch her friends die, and endure torture that would break most Jedi.

The experiences had humbled Kaeden. She seemed more confident in herself now.

Ahsoka was glad to see she was happy, despite everything.

It was then that Ahsoka noticed Kaeden was staring back at her, a wide smile on her face. She too was clearly remembering the past, and analysing how much Ahsoka had changed.

Rex chose that moment to step forward alongside Ahsoka. "You know these people commander?"

Ahsoka noticed the way Kaeden's eyes drooped slightly, remembering the presence of others in the airlock. Behind her, Miara rolled her eyes and sighed, stepping forward and offering Rex her hand.

"Miara Larte, rebel agent. This googly eyed fool is my sister Kaeden."

Kaeden began spluttering under her breath, blushing lightly before pushing past her smirking sister and heading deeper into their ship.

Miara chuckled lightly, turning her attention away from Rex, and looking at Ahsoka, mischief in her eyes. "It's good to see you again Ahsoka. Thought you'd disappeared on us forever."

Ahsoka smiled in response, stepping forward to embrace Miara briefly. Pulling out of the hug, she turned to the crew of the Ghost.

"Miara, this is Captain Rex, Captain Hera Syndulla, Sabine Wren, Garazeb Orrelios, Jedi Knight Kanan Jarrus and his apprentice Ezra Bridger." Ahsoka gestured to each individual in turn. Miara's eyes widened at the mention of Jedi.

"You found more of them? I thought they were all gone." Miara inquired, clearly in awe at being in the presence of the two Jedi.

"Some of us survived, but at terrible cost." Kanan spoke gravely. Order 66 was still a tough subject for him to deal with. Hera and Rex knew that better than anyone.

"Of course. I meant no disrespect Mr Jarrus." Ezra chuckled at the address Miara chose for Kanan. "Any friend of Ahsoka's is a friend of ours."

Ahsoka nodded, before turning to look down the hallway where Kaeden had gone. After a brief moment, she turned to Miara.

"Is Kaeden ok Miara? She seemed... distant."

Miara turned to look at Ahsoka, concern on her face. "I'll tell you later. Now come, all of you. I believe we have information for you regarding a Fulcrum agent.

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Ahsoka was alive! After all these years of searching for her, she had been right under Kaeden's nose the entire time.
Kaeden wanted to smash something.

She and her sister had been working for Bail Organa for a few years now. Kaeden had grown bored of farming, it reminding her too much of what had occurred on Raada, and her sister had wanted to be a pilot.

So the two had teamed up, Kaeden getting access to the intelligence network of the growing rebellion and finding that she had an unexpected talent in information handling, whereas Miara acquired them a ship to fly. The cargo vessel was small, but enough for the two of them to sneak behind imperial lines to retrieve information for the rebellion.

Kaeden had heard about a mysterious figure calling themselves Fulcrum shortly after. If she had known that Fulcrum was Ahsoka, she would have made contact sooner. Not waited until irregularities appeared in the list of known Fulcrum agents. It hit her in that moment.

Someone was impersonating Ahsoka. Her friend.

'Friend? Yeah, sure Kaeden!'

Kaeden could hear her sister's voice in her head, mocking her.

Kaeden sighed and collapsed onto her bed in her private quarters.

It wasn't that she didn't want to see Ahsoka ever again. She did, truly. But her presence was a reminder of the past. She didn't blame Ahsoka for Raada, she would never. But after being tortured by the grey monster, and seeing her friends die by his blade, Kaeden was apprehensive at best.

Still, her friend needed her. Ahsoka had saved her on Raada, more than once. And now Ahsoka needed help, and Kaeden was willing to help. To repay her debt to Ahsoka, even if Ahsoka did not believe she owed one to her.

Kaeden rose from her bed and headed to the door.

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The Crew of the Ghost, along with Ahsoka and Rex had congregated in a small communal area of the Larte's cargo vessel that served as their home. Miara stood before them, a holographic interface before her. Currently, the younger Larte sister was detailing how they came to find the information regarding the new Fulcrum agent.

"Bail contacted us after multiple cells experienced contact from this mysterious signal. Clearly not a known Fulcrum agent." Miara continued her explanation, the others listening in depth.

"How did you know that it wasn't one of Ahsoka's agents?" Hera asked, taking charge of the situation. Ahsoka smiled lightly at the Twi-lek. She was a born leader.

Miara gestured to the recording before her. "The signals sent to the rebel cells were encrypted differently to that of normal Fulcrum transmissions, regardless of the agent. Normally, the secondary encryption is laced with a secondary code name for each Fulcrum agent."

Ahsoka was surprised. She had built the rebel intelligence network from the ground up, and when she had begun to recruit more agents to act as Fulcrum, it had been impossible for rebel high command to keep track of which Fulcrum was which. So she had given all her Fulcrum agents code
names. Hers was Grey, a reference to her alignment in the force. Cassian Andor's was 'Separatist', due to his past allegiances. Ahsoka held no grudge against him for it of course. He was but a child during the clone wars, much like she had been.

Miara continued, "However, this mysterious Fulcrum transmission was lacking the secondary encryption that contains the agent's code name."

So it was a case of missing a small detail. Enough to fool most people into believing that it really was a Fulcrum agent contacting them, and not someone using the name.

However it had clearly not fooled Bail, nor Miara and Kaeden.

Ahsoka was subtly proud of her two friends from Raada.

"This all seems incredibly convoluted. How exactly are we supposed to find this individual exactly?" Zeb spoke up, his gruff attitude showing through in his impatience at the situation.

The sound of movement could be heard, as a figure entered the room. Ahsoka turned her head to see Kaeden confidently striding towards her. When Kaeden reached her, she smiled and nodded, before turning to address the crew.

"The secondary encryption also acts as a defence mechanism. Contained within the coding are subroutines that mask the location of the transmission." Kaeden spoke directly surprising Ahsoka at her depth of understanding of the intelligence network the Togruta had built up herself.

"So without the encryption, you can track the source of the transmission?" Sabine finished, understanding clearly.

"Yes. And we have not only a destination, but the coordinates of the transmission itself." Kaeden responded, stepping towards the interface and keying up the location.

The crew looked on as a familiar planet appeared before them.

Zeb growled under his breath clearly exasperated at the revelation.

Sabine chose to curse. "For the love of!"

It was Ezra that stated the planet's name, not that it needed to be said. They all knew the planet well by name.

"Lothal? The transmission came from Lothal?" Ezra yelled, surprised. It had been a while since he had set foot on the planet he was from. He didn't exactly enjoy his last visit, as it had involved Inquisitors and force visions.

To Ahsoka's surprise, Kanan was relatively calm about the revelation. Whatever had happened to him had changed him. And not just the blindness.

But Kaeden and Miara weren't done with the revelations just yet, as the image zoomed in on the location of the transmission.

This time, Ezra's jaw practically hit the ground. Kanan seemed to tense, as if sensing something through the force, most likely through the bond he shared with Ezra.

Ezra exploded this time. "What!? This new Fulcrum is using my old tower as their base?"

"So it would seem." Hera replied, trying to calm the young Jedi down.
Ahsoka analysed the situation.

The tower was a good place to hide, out of the way of imperial entanglement. However, whoever was sending the transmissions would have to be there in person.

That gave her an idea.

"We have to get to Lothal and catch this person in the act. Then we can determine their true intentions." Ahsoka spoke, taking complete command of the situation. Rex nodded his head in agreement, as did Kanan.

"I'll set a course for Lothal then." Hera spoke, agreeing to the mission.

"Here we go again!" Zeb snarked under his breath.

Ahsoka turned to the Larte sisters, intending on thanking them for their help, when she saw a steely look in both pairs of eyes.

"Let us come with you. We started this investigation, we want to help you finish it." Kaeden spoke first. Miara then voiced her opinion.

"You may need us Ahsoka."

Ahsoka didn't want to refuse. She had missed her friends from Raada. But this mission was dangerous. And regardless of her personal feelings, she was not willing to risk their lives over what was essentially her problem. She felt bad enough roping the crew of the Ghost into this.

"No. This mission is too dangerous. Anything could, and probably will go wrong. I don't want the two of you hurt." Ahsoka spoke softly, trying to reason with them.

Kaeden stepped towards her, looking Ahsoka directly in the eyes.

"Stop trying to be a hero Ahsoka. You can't do this alone. This isn't Raada. I just found you again. I'm not losing you now. We are coming, end of story."

Ahsoka was shocked to say the least. Kaeden had always been outgoing and bold with her emotions, but to willingly risk her life for Ahsoka's?

But Ahsoka could see the determination in both Larte sister's eyes. Even if she refused their offer, they would probably still smuggle themselves aboard the mission, much like she had once during the clone wars. Anakin had not been happy at her that day.

So, against her better judgement, Ahsoka relented.

"Fine. You can come. But at even the slightest sign of danger I am pulling you out. Understood?"

She didn't like being passive aggressive towards the sisters, but it was perhaps the only way they would understand the severity of the situation.

Miara nodded once, accepting.

Kaeden smiled at the Togruta, nodding also.

Ahsoka found herself smiling back.
So I realise that my explanation for how they tracked down this new Fulcrum was convoluted as I wrote it, hence why I added the line of dialogue by Zeb. Not my best idea I admit, but necessary in order to advance the plot. Couldn't just have the team meandering around the galaxy till they by chance stumbled across this new Fulcrum.
The Agent and the Admiral

Chapter Summary

In which the perspective shifts towards everyone's favourite ISB agent.
And a mysterious blue guy shows up.

Chapter Notes

Apologies for the delay. I've had no internet connection recently due to holiday.
However I am back now and have made great strides with this story.
Hope you all enjoying it.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Agent Kallus was not having a good day.
To be fair, he had not had a ‘good’ day for some time now. Years even, he would say.
But today was shaping up to be a particularly bad day. He was back on Lothal, a place he seemed to frequent far too often for his liking these days.

Still, it allowed him time to catch up on any outstanding paperwork he had left behind. Or other… activities.

His personal quarters were bare, as was expected from an agent of the ISB. What few personal trinkets he had collected were scattered throughout his room. The small meteorite rock he had acquired on his adventure on the moon of Geonosis was still glowing, producing very low levels of heat. It rested on a small shelf, just above his bed. No one came in his room, so he had no worried about possible thieves or unwanted questions about the rock.

His bow-staff, won in combat from a Lasat honour guard, rested at the end of his bed. He had recently made further modifications to the weapon, as well as trained rigorously to perfect his fighting style. He never knew when he might need it. He seemed to be encountering lightsaber wielders by the dozens now.

They had been the true source of Kallus’ stress. Whatever conflict they had going on, the Jedi and red blades, seemed to cause chaos for the empire. The ISB had toughened up security measures, training many of its agents in how to respond to a force wielder.

Not that it did much good. Kallus had seen Jarrus and Bridger, as well as the Inquisitors and Vader at work. Even fully trained, a member of the ISB stood no chance.

Kallus was in the middle of trimming his sideburns, something he did at the start of every shift in order to maintain their look. Some mocked him for it. He had heard whispers from the Stormtroopers, nicknaming him “Agent Sideburns”. He paid them little attention, even if he was a superior officer. He would allow them the brief entertainment.
Three knocks sounded at his door. Kallus turned to look at the door, confused. Who needed him this early? His shift wasn’t due to start for another few hours.

Still, Kallus stopped what he was doing and made his way to the door to open it. It might just be Lieutenant Lyste, come to ask for help.

It wasn’t Lyste.

Before him was a tall blue man, dressed in spotless imperial uniform, uniform that showed he was clearly high up in the ranks. His white outfit shone, even in the subdued light of Kallus’ private quarters.

Kallus recognized this man. He had heard manner rumours about him. A supposed legend of the imperial navy.

And one of the few aliens to not only actively serve the empire, but play a key part in ruling it. Kallus would have to show respect, so he snapped to attention.

“Grand Admiral Thrawn, how may I help you?”

The Grand Admiral’s gaze had not left Kallus’ face since the door had opened. While Kallus had been studying him, Thrawn had been studying Kallus too.

“I apologize for the inconvenience of this visit Agent Kallus, but I wonder if I may have a word with you in private.” Thrawn spoke, in a commanding, yet eerie voice. Kallus almost shuddered when he heard him speak.

“Of course Grand Admiral, let me just finish up.” Kallus replied, hoping he wasn’t being too insubordinate to a superior. He wasn’t even in uniform yet!

“No need Agent Kallus, I wish to speak to you now. Please may I enter?” Thrawn responded, no threat or dislike for Kallus evident in his voice. Had Kallus tried similar to someone like Vader or Tarkin, Kallus was sure he would have been air locked for it. Or worse.

Kallus nodded his head in understanding, stepping aside to allow the Grand Admiral access to his room. The Chiss strode past Kallus, moving quickly, yet with grace, as he entered Kallus’ quarters.

Once Thrawn had entered, Kallus closed to door, turning to look at the Admiral.

Thrawn appeared to be studying the piece of meteorite Kallus had acquired, inspecting it with great detail.

“Fascinating. Where did you acquire this?” Thrawn asked. Kallus froze, fully expecting a reprimand. Should he tell the full details to Thrawn or not?

Kallus settled with a half-truth.

“I was stranded on a moon of Geonosis after an encounter with a rebel cell. The moon was cold and icy, that rock was my only source of heat. It saved my life.” Kallus spoke. He wouldn’t mention his alliance with the Lasat Garazeb. It would cause suspicion. Something he could not afford right now.

“So you kept it? As a memory? A trophy?” Thrawn turned his attention away from the meteorite, looking Kallus square in the eyes.
“A reminder. That despite how grave a situation, there is always hope.” Kallus spoke with confidence. “I know it is not imperial protocol to have personal items such as this. I apologize Grand Admiral, and understand if you wish to confiscate it and punish me.”

“Nonsense Agent Kallus, I myself am a purveyor of art and culture. There is no problem with owning such items. Especially since you learnt a valuable lesson from the experience.” Thrawn smiled as he spoke. The chill that had ran down Kallus’ spine came back, but stronger than before. Something was not right with the Grand Admiral.

Kallus decided to get back on track. Comparing personal items could come later. Thrawn had come to him for a reason.

“What did you wish to discuss Grand Admiral?”

Thrawn’s face hardened in an instant. His gaze was focused solely on Kallus.

“What I am about to tell you is of the highest level of security clearance within the empire. Even Grand Moff Tarkin knows nothing of it. It must remain a secret between us. Is that possible Agent Kallus?”

So it was big! If Tarkin didn’t know it was. So why was Thrawn willing to share with him? Kallus sensed something was very wrong. But still he nodded his head in agreement. No other imperials would hear what Thrawn had to say from him.

Thrawn continued after seeing Kallus’ acknowledgement. “Several months ago, the Jedi members of Phoenix squadron managed to not only eliminate three of the emperor’s Inquisitors, but also managed to terminate Lord Vader.”

Kallus was shocked. Anyone who had managed to harm Vader, let alone kill him was a dangerous foe. Or maybe a worthwhile ally?

Kallus decided to risk the question.

“What do we know which of the Jedi it was? Jarrus or Bridger?”

Truthfully, Kallus couldn’t see either of them disposing of Vader easily, let alone working together.

“Neither of them are responsible for Lord Vader’s demise. Instead, it was the rebel agent and renegade Jedi Fulcrum who was responsible for the incident.”

Kallus had seen footage of Fulcrum in action. He didn’t know her true name, only that she was a Togruta female, who clearly had Jedi training of some kind. Her duel with the two Inquisitors had been a talking point for some time.

However, that presented Kallus with another question.

“Why tell me this? What do you need me for?”

Thrawn stared at him for a moment, clearly contemplating Kallus. Kallus felt uneasy as Thrawn watched him.

“Aside from myself and the emperor, you are the only person to know this information. As you have dealt with the members of Phoenix squadron before, I desire your expertise.”

Kallus would not call himself an expert at dealing with the members of the Ghost crew. In nearly
every encounter, they had outsmarted him. So what was Thrawn really after?

“I’ll do what I can to help. But why me?” Kallus asked.

“Because Colonel Yularen spoke highly of you when I mentioned you.” Thrawn responded.

That surprised Kallus. The fact that Yularen even remembered him was a shock to the system. The last time he had seen the Colonel had been when he left ISB training. If Thrawn had spoken to Yularen about Kallus’ reliability, it must have been important.

“Ok. So what do you need from me Grand Admiral?”

Thrawn turned away from Kallus, bending down to examine the bow rifle briefly, before standing to take another look at the meteorite.

“The Emperor has ordered that the rebel agent Fulcrum be captured alive and brought before him. I believe that by luring her here to Lothal, we can capture both her and the leaders of Phoenix squadron in one go, solving both of our problems at once.”

It was an inspired plan, it was just missing the bait.

“How will we lure them here?” Kallus asked.

Thrawn smiled briefly, yet viciously.

“We are conducting research and development programs here on Lothal in the factories for a top secret military project, one that could turn the tide of the conflict with the rebellion. We have leaked the plans to Phoenix squadron, and no doubt they will send Fulcrum and her allies to investigate.” Thrawn spoke confidently. He had clearly thought this plan through.

“Leaking information is a capital offense Grand Admiral! You could be charged with treason!” Kallus spoke with false alarm. What was the Admiral up to?

“Indeed Agent Kallus, but it is necessary in order to bait them in. I can assure you they will not escape this trap.”

So that was the plan. Lure them in with vital information, only to spring the trap. It was a cold calculating plan.

One worthy of Thrawn’s name and legend.

“A sound plan Grand Admiral. What do you wish of me?” Kallus inquired.

“Remain on Lothal and go about your normal duties until I request your presence.”

Kallus saluted, a feat that had considerably less impact due to his state of dress, but nonetheless Thrawn reciprocated.

As Thrawn turned to leave Kallus’ quarters he stopped before opening the door, turning back to look Kallus in the eyes.

“Remember Agent Kallus. No one must know of this plan. There are rebel spies everywhere.”

Thrawn turned and left the room, leaving a still cold Kallus in his wake.

Thrawn was everything they said he was. And that unnerved Kallus.
Agent Kallus turned back to the sink, resuming his daily grooming activities.

He still had a few hours before he had to be on duty. He would finish here, and get into uniform.

Then he had business to deal with before his shift began.

Chapter End Notes

Thrawn is perhaps the most idfficult character to write for.
And Kallus is surprisingly easy.
The trip to Lothal had been quiet, even when the Ghost had emerged from hyperspace to see an increased number of imperial ships above Lothal. Luckily, security seemed to be somewhat lax, even with the presence of five star destroyers. Hera had managed to sneak the Ghost past the imperial monoliths, landing not far from Ezra’s old tower. It was early dawn on Lothal, the sun had yet to rise. Thus it was easy to hide from any prying eyes.

Kaeden and Miara had abandoned their ship, leaving it on Rodia and joining the voyage aboard the Ghost. Two ships would have attracted more attention that one, and the Ghost was by far the superior ship.

Ahsoka and Kanan had retreated to Kanan’s room together, opting to share a session of meditation together, hoping to find answers to whatever lay ahead for them.

Miara had quickly fallen into good graces with Sabine and Hera, Miara sharing their respective interests of piloting and explosive devices. The three seemed to be getting along famously.

Ezra and Zeb, joined by Chopper, had gone to keep an eye on the tower, in case their mysterious Fulcrum agent decided to show. They had to catch them in the act.

That left Kaeden in the common room of the Ghost, playing a game of Dejarik with Rex on the holographic table. She didn’t know much about the man in front of her, only that he was some old friend of Ahsoka’s, one that predated her and Ahsoka’s friendship.

Also, he was a monster of a player at Dejarik.

Rex made a move, eliminating another of Kaeden’s pieces. Kaeden didn’t claim to be a good Dejarik player. She had only ever played against Miara before.

Kaeden contemplated her next move, analysing the board. Regardless of what she did, she would lose a piece, it was a matter of determining what the least significant piece was.

“How do you know Commander Tano? The two of you seemed awfully friendly towards each other.” Rex asked. Kaeden blushed in return, memories of Raada flooding her mind.
“She showed up on Raada one day, looking for a house, calling herself Ashla. I helped her get settled into an abandoned house.” Kaeden replied.

Rex raised his eyebrow in response, interest evident on his face. Ahsoka didn’t like to speak about what had happened on the fifteen year gap since they had last met. Whatever had happened had left an impact on Ahsoka, and clearly some semblance of guilt.

Rex may not have been a force sensitive. But even he could tell that Ahsoka was relieved to see Kaeden and Miara alive and well.

Kaeden made another move on the board, sacrificing a piece to Rex’s onslaught.

“God I suck at this.” Kaeden murmured. Rex chuckled.

“It takes practise. I used to play with my brothers as well as my Jedi Generals. They thrashed me constantly.”

Kaeden’s eyes widened at the mention of brothers and Jedi generals. If that meant what she thought that meant…

“You fought in the clone wars? With Ahsoka?”

Rex looked up from the board, smiling as if remembering the past.

“I did. Commander Tano was my superior officer, her and her Jedi master. I’m a clone. One of millions. And probably one of the last.” Rex spoke sadly. The outcome of the war had angered Rex, especially more so when he heard about what Skywalker had done. He was not sorry to see him go, regardless of what he had told Ahsoka.

In Rex’s mind, Anakin Skywalker was no better than General Krell.

Rex made another move on the Dejarik board, trapping Kaeden into a corner. She was effectively defeated, with no comeback possible. So she conceded the game.

“Well played Captain. I can see why Ahsoka likes you.” Kaeden stated truthfully.

Rex nodded back in return, standing from his seat as he heard movement coming down the Ghost’s hallways.

Someone was coming.

“I can see why she likes you too.” Rex smirked as he left the room, greeting the new arrival as he past her.

Ahsoka brushed past Rex, affectionately bumping shoulders with him. Kaeden noticed that the two of them had a closer relationship than Ahsoka had with the rest of the crew of the Ghost. She was somewhat envious of the clone captain.

“Hey.”

Kaeden was brought out of her thoughts as she shifted her eyes to look up at Ahsoka, who had come to stand before her.

“Hey.” Kaeden replied cheerfully. Ahsoka smiled back, before claiming Rex’s seat at the Dejarik board. She didn’t reset the game though, and that confused Kaeden.
“We haven’t really had time to talk since meeting again.” Ahsoka began, playing with her fingers as if unsure what to say or do.

If Kaeden didn’t know any better, she’d say that Ahsoka was nervous.

“Don’t worry about it Ahsoka. We’re all busy these days.” Kaeden replied.

“That’s not an excuse! I didn’t mean to abandon you and Miara. I just…” Ahsoka continued, jumping out of her seat and beginning to pace. Kaeden began to grow concerned about the Togruta.

“You didn’t want to cause any more harm to me and Miara. I understand. But Raada wasn’t your fault. We all played a part in the uprising.” Kaeden stood from her seat, placing a comforting hand on Ahsoka’s arm. Ahsoka halted her pacing.

“If I hadn’t come to Raada, all those that died might still be alive. The Inquisitor might not have come.” Grief was clearly consuming the Togruta woman.

Kaeden moved around Ahsoka, standing before her. She was shorter than Ahsoka by far, her Togruta anatomy offering her several inches on Kaeden. But that didn’t matter right now. What did was proving to Ahsoka that she didn’t blame her for Raada.

“Raada is in the past Ahsoka. You saved me. You saved Miara. You saved Selda and Vartan. It’s because of you that we survived. So let me return the favour now. Let Miara.”

Ahsoka looked at Kaeden, contemplating. Her life was chaos now. And aside from Rex, she had cast aside everything about her past. Destroyed it even.

And here before her was Kaeden Larte, one of the few people who truly knew her. Ironic really considering she had originally used a pseudonym when they first met.

A small smile graced Ahsoka’s face as she wrapped Kaeden into a hug. For the first time in a long while, she felt comforted.

Ahsoka felt at peace.

Kaeden gently returned the hug, before pulling back to look at the Togruta.

The two stared at each other for a brief moment, admiring one another.

Their peace was then rudely interrupted.

Chopper barged into the common room, releasing a series of alarmed beeps and other vile noises. Clearly something had spooked him.

Ahsoka and Kaeden pulled back from each other, Kaeden blushing and mourning the loss of contact as Ahsoka cursed under her breath.

“What is it Chopper?” Ahsoka asked. The droid beeped that she should follow, so she did.

Chopper ended up leading both Ahsoka and Kaeden, who had got over her embarrassment quickly, outside of the Ghost, where Ezra and Zeb stood waiting next to a pair of speeder bikes.

Ezra saw them coming, taping Zeb on the shoulder, who had been looking over the horizon at Ezra’s old tower, the source of the odd Fulcrum transmissions.

“We just saw a speeder bike heading towards the tower. It might be our imposter.” Ezra said.
Ahsoka nodded. Their chance had come.

“Then let’s go.”

Ahsoka mounted one of the speeder bikes, Zeb and Ezra mounting another.

“Kaeden, go and inform the others. We may have our target.”

Kaeden nodded, turning and heading back into the Ghost, Chopper following her heel, grumbling to himself.

Ahsoka watched Kaeden’s retreating form briefly, before turning her attention back to the mission. She powered up the speeder bike, flying off across the fields of Lothal, Ezra and Zeb on her tail.

The trip to the comm tower had only taken a few minutes, but by the time Ahsoka, Ezra and Zeb had arrived, their mysterious stranger was already up the tower.

 Whoever it was had cornered themselves unknowingly.

“That bike is imperial standard. Our imposter Fulcrum is an imperial?” Zeb spoke as he examined the bike used by their target.

“All the more reason to be careful then. If this is an imperial trap, we are walking right into it.” Ahsoka replied, before heading towards the elevator that would take them to the top.

The elevator ride felt like it took hours. Tension was rolling off of Ahsoka in waves. She had gripped one of her lightsaber hilts in her hand, ready to defend or attack if she needed to. Beside her, Zeb had unslung his bow rifle, and Ezra had equipped his blaster.

When the elevator stopped, they exited slowly, being careful not to make any noise.

It was slightly humorous to see a Lasat as big and bulky as Zeb trying to be stealthy, yet he pulled it off with grace.

The door to the inside was closed, but as they approached, Ahsoka’s montrals, and heightened hearing capabilities could pick up a voice. Someone was in there.

Through the door, she word three words.

“This is Fulcrum.”

She had found him. Or her. Whoever this imposter Fulcrum was.

Ahsoka signalled to her two companions to ready themselves. Zeb took one side of the door, Ezra another. Ahsoka stood directly in the middle.

Reaching out with the force, she opened the door, and ignited her lightsaber.

Chapter End Notes

So by this point I have sort of decided the direction of this fanfic.
It is essentially this AU's version of "An Inside Man" and "Through Imperial Eyes". Hope you enjoying so far. Feel free to comment with predictions or just general comments.

:)
Kallus knew he would be in serious trouble if he was ever found out. He knew he was risking his entire career, his life. But that didn’t matter. In the past few months, through research and personal experience, he had come to doubt the empire, doubt that they were just.

And that doubt had come to head in his current actions.

“This is Fulcrum with an urgent message for the rebel cell known as Phoenix Squadron.”

He didn’t care that he was using a call sign that was not his own. The rebellion leaders clearly listened to Fulcrum, so that was the easiest way to get them to listen to him.

Whatever Grand Admiral Thrawn had in store for the rebellion, it wasn’t good. If they had any chance to succeed, they had to be warned.

So that was what he was doing. Warning them.

He finished up his message, repeating the limited details of what Thrawn had told him. If Fulcrum and her friends were walking into a trap, they had to be informed.

Kallus was about to transmit the message, when the door behind him opened suddenly.

A sharp hiss sound filled the room as it became illuminated in white light. Kallus was too stunned to turn. He knew that hiss sound. It was a lightsaber activating.

“Kriff!” Kallus muttered under his breath. Someone had found him.

“Hands in the air. Turn around slowly.” A woman’s voice echoed across the room.

Kallus was certain he was about to meet death. He would turn around and find an Inquisitor or something, which was his guess.

And he would face his death with honour and dignity.

So Kallus turned, hands in the air.

When Kallus saw the people before him, his mouth dropped.
The young Jedi, Ezra Bridger, and the Lasat, Garazeb stood, equally surprised by his appearance as he was by theirs.

But Kallus’ focus was not on them, but on the towering Togruta before him.

He had never seen her in person, very few people had. But in that instant, he knew why the rebel agent known as Fulcrum was such a concern to the emperor.

She was bathed in the white light of her lightsaber, giving an ethereal look about her. She radiated power and control, with a sort of deadly beauty about her, similar to the sirens of legend, who would draw you in, only to kill you in an instant.

And she was the person he had been pretending to be. Surely she would understand why.

But then he remembered that she had killed Darth Vader personally.

She was clearly not to be trifled with.

“Kallus?” Zeb’s voice echoed across the room next, as he lowered his bow rifle from where he had been flanking Fulcrum.

“What’s he doing here?” The boy, Ezra, spoke next, caution evident in his voice. Unlike Zeb, he didn’t lower his blaster.

Unlike both members of the Ghost crew, Fulcrum remained steady. She did not waiver from her goal. Did not question his presence here. She was analysing him, calculating the outcomes with her eyes.

Even if Kallus wished her harm, he knew he would never succeed, not in a million years.

“So, you are Agent Kallus?” Fulcrum spoke taking a step towards Kallus, lightsaber still ignited, ready for anything.

Kallus nodded in respect. “And you are Agent Fulcrum.” He responded.

A brief smile came to the Togruta’s lips, disappearing as quickly as it arrived. “I am. Though if rumours are true, you are also Fulcrum.”

Kallus panicked. So she was here for him. To silence him.

He tried to apologize, not anticipating any success. If she had killed without remorse before, what chance did he have?

“I apologize for the deception, and for the stealing of your identity. It was the only way your rebellion would listen to me though. If I told them who I really was...”

“They would have hunted you down a lot earlier.” Fulcrum finished for him. “I understand.”

Kallus watched in astonishment as Fulcrum extinguished her lightsaber, placing it back on her leg. Kallus noted that the Togruta wielded two sabers, unlike her Jedi companions who had one each.

“Your information has proved most fruitful for our cause Agent Kallus. Thank you for your efforts.” Fulcrum spoke, offering her hand to Kallus. Kallus looked on surprised at how readily she was accepting him.

Clearly he was not the only one surprised.
“Ahsoka? That’s Agent Kallus. THE Agent Kallus. He’s an imperial!” Ezra yelled, still not lowering his blaster.

Kallus understood the boy’s stance. He had tried to kill them many times. So for him to have seemingly changed sides so easily was rather unbelievable.

‘Wait, Ahsoka? That’s her name.’

Kallus’ mind only briefly picked up the passing mention of the Togruta’s true name. He would not use it yet, he did not have the right.

And the last thing he needed was Ezra Bridger growing more suspicious of him.

“I know Ezra. But he had also risked his life for us these past few months.” Fulcrum spoke again, turning to face the boy. She wasn’t reprimanding him, merely suggesting an alternative to him.

It seemed to work. Bridger calmed down, lowering his blaster from Kallus, but still glancing at him suspiciously.

Kallus didn’t mind.

“We have business to discuss Agent Kallus, but not here. We must return to the Ghost.”

That set off Ezra again. “Okay, it’s one thing to thank him, but to welcome aboard our ship, our home!”

This time Fulcrum did not turn to the boy, but focused solely on Kallus, looking him right in the eyes. Kallus felt like shrinking back, like he was being watched by a superior officer.

“He shall be closely guarded and restrained.” Fulcrum gestured to Zeb, who had a pair of cuff in his hand, ready to restrain Kallus.

“And if he tries to betray us, or is found to be a plant, I’ll kill him myself.” Fulcrum finished, before leaving the room, Ezra following behind her.

Kallus felt cold suddenly. Not the same cold that he had encounter when he met Thrawn, but a different sort of cold.

Fulcrum was compassionate, and gave it to you straight. If she said she would kill you, she would, end of story.

Thrawn would play the long game, Kallus was sure. Torturing you slowly until you broke, and then he would kill you.

Agent Kallus sighed. His bad day had just got even worse.

********************************************************************

Kallus had had to leave his speeder bike behind, instead being forced onto a bike with Zeb driving, whilst Fulcrum took off with Ezra. Minutes later, the four ascended a hill, and the Ghost lay before them.

It hadn’t changed much since his last encounter with the ship. Kallus noted that it was missing the smaller vessel that was usually attached to the rear of the vessel. He wondered what had happened to it.
The two speeders came to a stop at the ramp of the Ghost, just as Hera and a man with a mask over his face came down it.

Hera’s reaction to Kallus’ presence was somewhat between Fulcrum and Ezra’s. Shock at first, seeing an imperial with them, but then resolute determination and understanding.

It took a few seconds for Kallus to recognize the man in the mask. It was Kanan Jarrus! The mask clearly covered his face, obstructing his eyes. Something had happened to the elder Jedi. No doubt it had to do with whatever happened to Lord Vader. Kallus felt sympathy for Jarrus.

“Guess who our mysterious agent is?” Ezra sarcastically quipped as he jumped off of Fulcrum’s speeder bike, Fulcrum following too.

“I’m guessing it’s not Tarkin.” Kanan responded to the quip. Their dynamic may have changed since Malachor, but not their bantering with one another.

Hera stepped towards Kallus, sizing him up. “Agent Kallus.”

“Captain Syndulla.” Kallus returned respectfully. They were allies now, regardless of what they thought. He wanted to earn their trust, any way possible.

“Captain, please inform the others of our guest’s identity, and organize a meeting in the Ghost’s common room. Kallus and I will join you shortly.” Fulcrum took command, moving next to Kallus as Zeb headed into the Ghost, following an evidently grumpy Ezra.

“Understood commander.” Hera responded, before turning and following the Lasat.

That left only Kanan, who had been reaching into the force to determine whether Kallus was being genuine. When he could sense no deceit or manipulation, he left without a word, following Hera and into the Ghost.

And so Agent Kallus was left with Fulcrum.

“You understand if Ezra and his friends distrust you. While you and I have never met, they have been dealing with you and your actions for over a year now. It’s difficult to see why a high ranking imperial such as yourself, and a member of the ISB, would willingly defect.” Fulcrum spoke, towering over Kallus, at least so it seemed to him. She was surprisingly intimidating.

“I understand completely.” Kallus answered. He didn’t want to anger her. After all, she had threatened to kill him if she didn’t consider him worthwhile.

“Then answer me this, Agent Kallus. Why?”

Kallus had long considered why. It wasn’t just down to the events of the moon of Geonosis, or his unlikely alliance and newfound respect for Garazeb.

Since he had encountered the Ghost crew of Lothal, he had been witness to the extreme lengths the empire would go to hunt them down and destroy them. The deaths of innocents, as well as other extreme measures, and the terrifying presences of Vader and his Inquisitors would have been enough to break most people’s will. Their spirit to fight.

But the crew of the Ghost kept on fighting, pulling victory from the jaws of defeat again and again. And they never resorted to unsavoury tactics to achieve their victories. Their goal was to ensure peace, something Kallus had originally wanted when he joined the ISB. But not through terror.
In the end. His reasoning had been simple. Why he defected, started feeding information to the growing rebellion.

“Because it was the right thing to do.”

Fulcrum watched him, eyes steely. Kallus briefly wondered if she was doing some sort of Jedi mind trick on him.

After a few seconds of silence following his answer, Fulcrum smiled lightly.

“That’s all the reason I need.”

If anyone else had readily accepted that as proof of Kallus’ change of loyalty, Kallus would have doubted them, even if it was his own skin on the line.

But there was something about Fulcrum, something that screamed ‘Trust Me!’ about her.

So he would trust her.

And hoped that the others would too.

“Thank you.” Kallus chose to respond, simply and politely.

“Our welcome, but we have business to discuss inside. I need to hear what you were trying to transmit earlier.” Fulcrum replied, moving behind him briefly to remove the restraining cuffs that Zeb had placed on his wrists.

“Of course Fulcrum. I’ll tell you everything.” Kallus said.

Fulcrum nodded, before turning to walk towards the Ghost’s ramp. Kallus fell in alongside her.

“If we’re going to work together, call me Ahsoka.”

Chapter End Notes

Update time!
So I have planned out that this AU series is ultimately going to end at some point. To that end, the series itself will consist of four stories, with this being the second. This story and the next will act as the awkward middle acts that serve the purpose of getting all the main players together for the finale.
Long way to go yet.
Hope you are all still enjoying.
Feel free to comment.
:)
Infiltration

Chapter Summary

In which Kallus reveals all he knows.
And Ahsoka and Kaeden have a moment.

Chapter Notes

Plot advancement... at long last.
Kallus is a fun guy to write for.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“Whoa whoa whoa! Kallus is Fulcrum! How does that even make sense?” Sabine blurted out as Ezra and Zeb filled the rest of the crew in on recent developments.

Beside her, Chopper released a series of profound sounding bleeps, some evidently curses.

“I guess I sort of recruited him on that Geonosis moon. Crazy right?” Zeb had collapsed into his seat in the corner, grumbling to himself.

“How can we trust him?” Sabine demanded, clearly agitated at the revelation of their once mortal enemy now being their ally.

“We can’t.” Ezra interrupted, venom in his voice.

“We’ll wait and see what information he had.” Hera tried to intervene, ever the mediator of the group. But Sabine and Ezra were not having any of it.

“That’s poodoo Hera! It’s Agent Kallus! He can’t be trusted.” Sabine waved her arms about to emphasise her point, Ezra standing behind her, nodding his head in agreement.

Off to the side, Rex stood with Kaeden and Miara watching the normally tight knit family descend into an argument with one another.

“Enough!” A new voice boomed from a nearby doorway.

The other eight occupants of the room immediately turned to look at the source of the voice. They were surprised to find it belonged to Kanan.

The blind Jedi walked into the room, seeing everybody in it, despite his impairment.

“I trust Ahsoka. If Ahsoka trusts Kallus, then so do I. If you trust me, then you trust her.”

It sounded like some ancient Jedi proverb, meant to both deliver an important message to a person, and utterly confuse and confound them at the same time.
Nevertheless, it had the intended effect. Sabine backed down, seeing the folly in continuing to argue, as well as the sense in Kanan’s words.

Ezra had reached out into the force, feeling the concern radiating from Kanan about the mental state of his family.

Ezra trusted Ahsoka, as Kanan did. So if she came in saying she trusted Kallus, then so would he.

It was Hera that broke the tense silence. “Sorry love, we’re just all a bit worked up at the moment.”

“Tell me about it. I don’t like this anymore than you do. But this is Ahsoka’s mission. She asked for our help. So we follow her lead.” Kanan moved to stand next to Hera, his shoulder brushing against hers.

Kaeden watched them from the corner she was in with Miara and Rex. Despite being a Jedi, Kanan seemed to have no qualms about the attachment issue of the Jedi. He was willing to be open with his feelings, especially towards the Twi-lek pilot.

Kaeden thought it humorous that both Kanan and Hera were being discreet. They really weren’t no. Though Kaeden guessed she was an expert at not being discreet with emotions.

Her thoughts drifted to the differences between Kanan and Ahsoka. Why couldn’t Ahsoka be more open and willing, not held back by attachment issues, as Kanan was?

Before Kaeden could mull any further, the object of her thoughts came into the room, a man dressed in imperial uniform following her. Kaeden guessed this was the aforementioned Agent Kallus.

The tension in the room was palpable as Kallus followed behind Ahsoka. Every person present had a reason to want Kallus dead, even the droid.

But they all trusted Ahsoka. If she thought Kallus was safe, then they would follow her lead.

“Agent Kallus has important information for us.” Ahsoka stated, as she came to a stop before the crew of the Ghost.

Their heads shifted to look at the imperial spy.

‘Oh boy!’ Kallus’ mind cried out. ‘This could go badly wrong.’

“It appears the empire is using the factories of Lothal to produce a new type of experimental weapon, one that will dismantle the rebellion you have constructed.” Kallus began, reiterating what Thrawn had told him in confidence.

If only the Admiral knew…

“What sort of weapon?” Hera chimed in, concern on her face.

“I don’t know. I don’t have clearance to get in myself. I only know what I was told.”

The crew looked at one another, some doubting Kallus’ word, others more concerned about the shape and protection of the rebellion.

“What’s your source on this?” Ahsoka inquired. Kallus felt if anyone would understand what he was trying to say, it was her.
He should also inform her that the emperor was after her personally.

“Just this morning, a high ranking imperial admiral showed up and confided in me about the existence of the weapon. He also stated that he had leaked the information to the rebellion, in order to lure the members of Phoenix squadron in and capture them. He also told me that the emperor ordered that Agent Fulcrum be brought to him alive.” Kallus retold his discussion with Thrawn, purposefully leaving out the admiral’s name. For all he knew, Thrawn was a rebel spy himself!

Kallus observed the crew as they took in what he had said. None had seemed surprised when he stated that the emperor wanted Ahsoka. He figured it had to do with the death of Lord Vader at her hands.

“We’ve received no information regarding this mystery weapon before. Gotta be a trap!” Ezra said.

“Regardless of whether or not it’s a trap, we need to see exactly what is weapon is.” Ahsoka commanded to the assembled group. “That means we need to sneak in undetected.”

Murmurs of agreement echoed around the room, Ezra almost immediately volunteering for the mission.

“We got two stolen Stormtrooper outfits in the back. We could use those.” Ezra suggested enthusiastically.

“Yeah. Two suits that won’t fit you.” Zeb butted in, smacking Ezra hard on the shoulder, who stared back with playful venom.

Ahsoka held up her hand, silencing the debating group, and turned to Kallus.

“Do you think you can get Chopper and two others through security?” The Togruta asked.

Kallus didn’t hesitate.

“Yes.”

Ahsoka nodded in acceptance, before turning to address the crew of the Ghost.

“Kallus will escort Chopper through security, and allow him access to the imperial archives. Hopefully you can find something on this new weapon. Bring whatever you find back here as soon as you can so we can analyse it.”

Kallus nodded again, whilst Chopper buzzed his reluctant acceptance.

“Now all we need is two volunteers to dress as Stormtroopers and provide backup for Chop.” Ezra stated.

Rex immediately stepped forward, volunteering himself.

“I may hate the armour, but I know how these imperials work. Plus I will fit in the best.”

Ahsoka nodded her compliance. She may not like putting her oldest friend into danger, but if anyone could handle it, he could.

However, the next person that volunteered almost made her lose her cool.

“I’m in too. Everyone else is too recognizable.”
The entire crew, Kallus included turned and looked shocked as Kaeden volunteered herself. Ahsoka was beside herself with worry. It was one thing for Rex to put himself in harm’s way, but he was a trained soldier who could handle it. Kaeden was not!

“Absolutely not Kaeden! I won’t have you risking yourself like that. Someone else can go!” Ahsoka blurted out, horrified by her own lack of discretion. She looked around wildly at the crew of the Ghost, praying for someone to volunteer in Kaeden’s place.

“Like who, huh? The big purple Lasat? The blind Jedi? The two children? Everyone else is too obvious. Let me try, please.” Kaeden didn’t want to cause a scene in front of everyone.

Ahsoka watched Kaeden with worry in her eyes. But in the end, she knew Kaeden was right. And she knew Kaeden wouldn’t back down.

“Fine.”

The plan had been set, and the participants were gearing up for departure from the Ghost. Kallus, Chopper, Rex and Kaeden would take the two speeder bikes into the imperial base, and then Kallus would gain them access to the factory district.

Ahsoka stood in the cargo bay of the Ghost, staring down the ramp, her feelings mixed up. Why was Kaeden trying so hard to prove herself to Ahsoka? First coming along on this mission, now volunteering for an infiltration mission.

It could all go so easily wrong, and then she would lose Kaeden for good.

Ahsoka found that she didn’t ever want to lose track of her again. Rex came up beside her, grumbling about being disguised as a Stormtrooper. The armour looked comically small on him, his larger frame not quite fitting the standard suit. Still, the disguise would do.

Rex was about to voice his dislike, when he noticed Ahsoka’s solemn mood. He had rarely seen her lose control and allow her emotions to burst out as it had when Kaeden had volunteered for the mission. It was evident to him that Kaeden was important to Ahsoka, and that Ahsoka was gravely concerned about the human woman’s wellbeing.

“Don’t worry commander. I’ll make sure nothing happens to Kaeden whilst we’re out.”

Ahsoka glanced towards him subtly, a small smile evident on her face.

“Thanks Rex.” She whispered. The clone smiled back. From a nearby crate he picked up a Stormtrooper helmet, and passed it to Ahsoka.

“She’s down the ramp. Give this to her would you?” Rex asked, as he moved to collect his own helmet.

Ahsoka grasped the helmet in her hands, taking it from Rex, and turning to head down the Ghost’s ramp, into the fields below. When she reached the bottom of the ramp, she saw Kaeden immediately.

The woman was dressed head to two in pristine white Stormtrooper armour, minus the helmet. The
colour of the armour contrasted vividly to Kaeden’s dark skin tone, making her stand out to the Togruta in the midst of the brown and yellow fields of Lothal.

Kaeden heard Ahsoka coming, turning to face her, a sheepish smile on her face. Ahsoka approached her, helmet in hand.

“I’m sorry about before.” Ahsoka muttered, fiddling with the helmet, looking everywhere but at Kaeden.

“No worries, you’re just looking out for me.” Kaeden responded.

“I trust you Kaeden, please don’t think I don’t.” Ahsoka took another step towards Kaeden, closing the personal space between them. Kaeden blushed lightly.

“I know you trust me Ahsoka. So let me do this for you.”

Ahsoka raised her eyes to look at Kaeden’s.

Kaeden saw conflict and self-doubt, as well as guilt in Ahsoka’s eyes. But she also saw confidence and fire.

That was enough to inspire Kaeden forward, regardless of the outcome.

Kaeden reached out for the helmet, intending on taking it.

Only Ahsoka didn’t let her have it. Instead, she raised the helmet herself, sliding it gently down onto Kaeden’s head, equipping it to the armour. Kaeden merely stood, and allowed Ahsoka to place the helmet on her.

As the helmet hissed into place, Ahsoka took a step back to admire her handiwork.

Ahsoka and Kaeden stood, watching each other for a few seconds, still in close proximity to one another. Behind her helmet, Kaeden was smiling in joy.

Ahsoka spoke in her commanding voice.

“Come back safe Kaeden Larte.”

**********************************************************************

Despite the secrecy of whatever Thrawn was building on Lothal, it was still astonishing easy for Kallus to get himself, a now red painted Chopper, and Rex and Kaeden through security. Two Stormtroopers flanking a droid, being overseen by Agent Kallus was hardly a rare sight on Lothal, which was probably what made it so easy.

Still, they have been inside the compound, but that didn’t mean they were anywhere close to finding whatever it was they were searching for.

Kallus lead the way through the winding corridors of the Lothal imperial base He knew where all the information they needed was kept, inside a heavily fortified bunker at the far end of the facility.

What he lacked were the necessary access codes to enter. So he would have to steal them.

Or rather, Chopper would.

“There’s a terminal over there, see what you can find.” Kallus pointed at the terminal plug in used
by droids. Chopper grunted, moving quickly and plugging into the terminal.

“Found anything?” Kallus asked impatiently. Chopper buzzed back something about needing time and to stop rushing him. Kallus rolled his eyes as Rex snickered under his breath.

Seconds past for Kallus, each one longer than the rest. Chopper was still either not finding the codes, or was stalling for some bizarre reason.

Perhaps the droid was out to get him killed.

By now, even Kaeden and Rex were growing concerned.

“Chopper, what is it?” Rex inquired, laying a hand against the astromech’s dome. Chopper beeped in alarm, before rotating his head to look past his companions at something beyond.

“Agent Kallus? Is there a problem?”

Kallus froze at the sound of the voice.

He pivoted quickly, snapping to attention. He needed to maintain his disguise.

Otherwise…

Grand Admiral Thrawn strode towards the group, hands clasped behind his back.

Chapter End Notes

So the plot thickens. I wonder what Thrawn is up to now. One thing I do want an opinion on however.
You may have notice that Ahsoka and Kaeden had a bit of a moment in this chapter, as they did in a previous one.
I'm still undecided on whether or not anything will happen between them by the end of this fic. So I ask this of you readers...
Kaesoka, or no Kaesoka...
Let me know if you have an opinion one way or another.
“Grand Admiral Thrawn, nothing to worry about. Just a small technical glitch with this astromech.” Kallus lied through his teeth as Thrawn approached them.

He had to fool the Chiss. A feat easier said than done.

“I see. And older model by the look of it. No doubt having trouble interfacing with the mainframe.” Thrawn responded as he looked over the droid, before turning to look at Kallus.

“Agent Kallus, I have something I would like to show you. Please follow me.”

Kallus froze. He could not afford diversions now, especially not to follow Thrawn around.

But he couldn’t say no. Not if wanted to maintain his cover.

Thrawn turned to face Kaeden and Rex, both still disguised as Stormtroopers.

“Trooper, remain with the droid until its upload is finished.” Thrawn commanded, pointing at Kaeden and Chopper.

The Admiral then turned to Rex. “You will follow us and act as security.”

“Yes Sir.”

“Yes Sir.”

Both Kaeden and Rex replied in unison, helping to maintain Kallus’ cover for the duration of the mission. As Thrawn set off down a hallway, Rex and Kallus followed.

Kaeden turned to Chopper.

“Guess it’s just us now eh?”
Chopper buzzed in response.

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Kallus walked side by side with Thrawn in silence, Rex following behind them. The only sounds between them was of their boots on the metal ground.

It unnerved Kallus.

“You remember what we discussed earlier Agent Kallus?” Thrawn spoke quietly, trying to hide their discussion from prying ears.

“Of course Grand Admiral.” Kallus whispered back.

“Good. Then you will remember the secret weapon I discussed with you.”

“Developed to crush to rebellion I believe you said. You never did tell me what is was though?” Kallus pushed lightly, trying to force Thrawn’s surprising trust in him to lead to the information he so desperately needed.

Thrawn turned down another hallway, Kallus and Rex following.

After a short walk, the three approached a heavily guarded door. Flanking the door on either side were a pair of black armoured Stormtroopers.

‘Deathtroopers!’ Kallus’ mind exploded in surprise. What were the empire’s elite soldiers doing on Lothal?

Thrawn turned to Rex. “Trooper, remain here and wait for Agent Kallus to exit. I must speak to him alone.”

Rex saluted, before taking up a post next to a nearby wall, subtly nodding at Kallus as he passed him.

Kallus nodded back, before falling into line with Thrawn, who was speaking to the Deathtroopers.

“Agent Kallus and I need access to the assembly line to see the prototype.”


Both Deathtroopers nodded, before presenting Thrawn with a manual security device, attached to the wall near the door they were trying to enter.

It required Thrawn to enter a four digit code, one he had no doubt chosen by himself.

That meant that Chopper would, not be able to access the plans himself, let alone the security code.

Because one didn’t exist in the first place.

Kallus doubted that the door could be hacked either, as that would require a basic set of codes to work from in the first place.

So Kallus carefully observed Thrawn was he typed in the code.

Thrawn’s fingers darted across the keypad.
‘4, 7, 2 …’

Kallus missed the last digit. There were only ten possibilities so he didn’t panic, only following Thrawn through the doors as they slowly opened.

Once on the other side, Kallus was greeted with a pitch black room. The door behind him had sealed, and all he could hear was the sound of his own breaths.

Then, suddenly, the lights flickered on dramatically.

Before him, on a pedestal was a TIE fighter. But a heavily modified TIE fighter. One that he had never seen before.

It’s central pilot seat as surrounded by three large protruding wings, both of which divided into two, presenting the fighter with six wings. Each wing had a large blaster attached to it, larger than the normal armaments of a TIE fighter.

It was bigger too, much bigger.

Thrawn stepped up alongside Kallus.

“This Agent Kallus, is our secret weapon. Introducing the future of the imperial fighter navy. The TIE Defender.”

***********************************************************************

If someone had told Kaeden beforehand that she would be stuck guarding an astromech while it infiltrated imperial systems, she would have laughed.

This mission was supposed to be dangerous.

Yet here she was, on watch.

Kaeden sighed.

‘It’s not so bad. Nobody is shooting at us!’ The voice of her sister echoed in her head. Kaeden resisted the urge to laugh. She couldn’t afford to drop her disguise.

It was then that she caught a glimpse of the droid, Chopper, staring at her. The eye located in the centre of his dome seemed to bore through her, as if analysing her.

Suddenly, as if it had been caught, Chopper quickly averted his gaze, focusing on the task at hand.

Kaeden shrugged her shoulders. This droid was peculiar.

Chopper’s dome shifted again, his eye looking at Kaeden, before moving away again.

Kaeden’s suspicions began to grow. What was he up to?

When Chopper repeated this action for the seventh time, Kaeden snapped.

“What? Why do you keep looking to me like that?”

Chopper stared right back at her, before his head rotated away from her again.

Kaeden growled under her breath. The empire wouldn’t kill her. At this rate it would be this droid.
This time round, Chopper’s dome slowly rotated, looking at Kaeden.

Kaeden looked back at the droid, staring at him with the same emotionless expression he had on.

She may have been wearing a Stormtrooper helmet, but she felt like Chopper could see right through it.

The droid then beeped out three words.

“You like her.”

Kaeden nearly dropped the blaster in her hands.

“What?” She asked.

Chopper beeped again.

“You like her.”

Kaeden was confused. What was the droid on about now? If she didn’t know any better she’d think he had a malfunctioning logic circuit.

She decided the humour the droid, as much as one could a machine.

“I like who?”

Chopper released a long series of sounds.

“Commander Tano. You like Commander Tano.”

Beneath her disguise Kaeden was blushing furiously. Now, not only was it her sister teasing her about her crush on Ahsoka, but the damn droid too?

“No I don’t.” Kaeden argued back, annoyed at the cheek of Chopper.

“Yes you do!”

Kaeden did a double take as Chopper replied to her.

“No. I. Don’t” Kaeden responded again, with more emphasis this time around.

Chopper beeped again.

“Yes you do!”

Kaeden almost wanted to hit the droid. How dare he?

“What are you trying to say?” She confronted him. She never liked it when people teased her. As far as she was concerned, only her sister was allowed to do that.

Chopper replied, beeps, buzzes and other random sounds coming from him.

“That you want Commander Tano. I’ve seen it before, with Hera and her stupid Jedi.”

To Kaeden, Chopper almost sounded sympathetic, almost like he secretly cared.

That perhaps, his gruff hostile demeanour was nothing more than a façade to cover up his true
personality.

Chopper beeped again.

“You should tell her.”

Kaeden did another double-take. The droid had her cornered, she knew that. And despite how often she denied it, her feelings for Ahsoka had not disappeared, only laid dormant.

“She needs someone. She needs you.”

Kaeden halted her train of thought, looking at the astromech before her. What had he said? That Ahsoka needed her?

Kaeden could tell that Ahsoka was troubled, far more now than when they had first met. Something had happened to her that had changed her, and with what Agent Kallus had said about the emperor personally targeting her, she assumed it was something to do with that.

And Kaeden wanted to be there for Ahsoka, she did.

But would Ahsoka let her?

She hadn’t after Raada. She had disappeared instead.

Kaeden shook her thoughts clear, and spoke.

“Don’t tell anyone about this.”

It wasn’t a threat. Nor a demand.

It was a request. To see what the droid would do. To see if he was genuine.

Chopper made a sound, somewhat like a sign, before beeping out a response.

“Ok. I promise.”

Beneath her helmet, Kaeden smiled, believing him.

If someone had told her she would make friends with an astromech today, well, this day was full of surprises.

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“Impressive, isn’t it?”

Impressive was not the word that Kallus would use to describe the fighter. It was clearly a much more formidable tool for the empire than the standard TIE fighter.

But it was still a TIE. Whatever was so impressive about it had to be down to its internal engineering. And he had to find out about it.

“How powerful is it?” Kallus inquired, turning away from the Defender to look at Thrawn. The Chiss Admiral continued to stare at the prototype.

“The Defender is far more manoeuvrable than the normal fighters we possess. It also has increased firepower, with weapons based off of those of Lord Vader’s personal ship”
Kallus had to stop his jaw from dropping. He had seen what Vader’s ship had been capable of. The Sith Lord had managed to destroy a rebel capital ship by himself with the fighter.

So if Thrawn was mass producing a ship with the same capabilities?

The rebellion would be doomed!

“But there is more Agent Kallus. This fighter also possesses its own hyperdrive, as well as personal shields to increase durability. It will outmatch anything to rebellion has in its arsenal.”

The more Thrawn spoke about the ship, the more concerned Kallus grew. A fighter with shields, as well as a hyperdrive and weapons capable of destroying capital ships would be a disaster to the rebellion.

No he saw why this project was so top secret.

Still, there was one saving grace. The fighter was still only a prototype, and thus not finished yet.

“It is a work of art Grand Admiral. When will the prototype be ready for production?” Kallus inquired.

Thrawn slowly turned away from the fighter, his gaze meeting Kallus’. In his eyes, Kallus could see menace.

“Why Agent Kallus, this prototype is already completed, and mass production will begin shortly. I have arranged it to be tested in the field tomorrow.”

‘Kriff. Kriff. Kriff.’ Kallus’ mind raced in alarm. If the ship was ready, then he had to warn the rebellion now. They wouldn’t stand a chance against it.

He just had to get away from Thrawn, without alerting him to his intentions.

Luckily, it seemed Thrawn was playing right into his hands.

“You may leave now Agent Kallus. I just thought you should see what I have planned. Please, take the rest of the day off.” Thrawn spoke, before heading deeper into the warehouse where the Defender was stored.

Kallus turned, heading back through the way he came in, passing by the two Deathtroopers who stood guard.

He didn’t notice Thrawn turn to look at him retreating, a calculating smirk on his face.

Kallus turned a corner, intending to head back to where he had left Chopper and Kaeden, when he saw another Stormtrooper in front of him.

Kallus gestured discreetly with one hand, a signal, to see if it was who he thought it was.

The trooper nodded back in confirmation, before turning to follow Kallus.

“Find out anything?” The trooper, who was a still disguised Rex, asked.

“Everything, come on. We have to get back to the Ghost.” Kallus replied bluntly. He had no time for explanations right now. He would fill everyone in at once.

The two continued through the corridors pf the imperial base, turning one last corner, before
coming face to face with Kaeden and Chopper, still doing the same as when they left them.

Kallus interrupted, “You won’t find anything, and we have to get back to the Ghost now. I have everything we need.”

Chopper released a series of aggravated sounds, grumbling about rude ISB defectors, before disconnecting from the terminal and following Kallus and Rex, Kaeden behind them.

“What’s going on?” Kaeden asked of Rex.

The Clone merely shrugged his shoulders. “Wouldn’t tell me. Guess we find out back at the Ghost.”

Kallus knew that he was acting suspicious, that the rebels might begin to doubt his loyalty. But he didn’t care. Right now, his only goal was warning the rebellion about Thrawn’s new ship.

The four exited the compound, mounting speeder bikes, and headed back to the Ghost.

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Grand Admiral Thrawn closed the blinds of his office, the room becoming dark, before heading over to his holo communicator.

He keyed in a series of commands, linking the call he intended to make. He had important information to deliver about his current mission.

Seconds later, a hologram flickered to life. A tall man in dark black robes stood before him.

Thrawn bowed in a sign of respect.

“Your excellency. I have news regarding the mission you have assigned me.”

The hologram of Darth Sidious stared back, gesturing for Thrawn to rise. The Admiral did so.

The two had a mutual respect for one another. Thrawn admired the way the emperor had taken power, and saw a keen strategic mind, one that had outwitted the galaxy.

Sidious saw an unflinchingly loyal warrior before him. One that would do his bidding in an unorthodox manner, yet get results even in defeat. Thrawn was leagues and bounds ahead of anyone else Sidious had at his disposal. And unlike many others, was not actively trying to betray their emperor to gain more power.

Thrawn had ambition, but it was not overzealous enough to undermine his empire.

That was why he had assigned the mission to capture Ahsoka Tano to him in the first place.

If anyone could capture a renegade such as her, it was Thrawn.

“What have you to report Grand Admiral?” Sidious responded with a croak.

“I have lured Ahsoka Tano and her allies to this world. My star destroyer reported the ship known as the Ghost entering orbit. Furthermore, I have leaked the plans regarding our prototype fighter to the rebel agents. They will come for it, and then I will strike.” Thrawn responded.

Sidious nodded. Thrawn’s plans were always complex, yet usually led to rewards.
“You are taking a great risk leaking the plans of the Defender prototype to the rebellion. Are you sure they will fall into the trap?” Sidious had to ask. It was a risk to chance his newest weapon on what the rebels might do.

“Do not worry my emperor, my spy will unwillingly convince them to come. Your prototype is safe.” Thrawn replied respectfully. The Admiral was well aware of the risk… and of the punishment for failing.

“Very well Grand Admiral. Inform me when this is over.” Sidious responded, before disconnecting the channel.

As Sidious’ hologram flickered off, Thrawn was left standing in the darkness of his office… alone.

Chapter End Notes

Looks like Kallus is already busted... surprise, Thrawn was playing him all along.
In regards to Kaesoka:
Many seem to want Kaesoka to happen, and I’m all for it myself.
However, at the same time it was pointed out that Ahsoka is essentially the captain of the HMS Oblivious when it comes to Kaeden's feelings for her.
Also, the whole thing did to some extent seem to be forced in the novel, but perhaps that was simply due to the length of time spent on developing it, which was next to none.
So... I came to a compromise that will hopefully please all parties.
Whilst Kaesoka will be the endgame, it will most likely not happen in this fic, but further down the line once I have had a chance to develop it. This whole story is incredibly AU by this point, (what with Vader dead and all), but I do want to keep some semblance of canon.
Oh, and I also couldn't resist putting in the bit with Chopper teasing Kaeden about her crush on Ahsoka, as that seemed to be a running gag for Kaeden's character.
So yeah... hope thats a decent compromise.
As per usual, let me know if you have an opinion one way or another, or even any suggestions that I could incorporate somehow.
:)}
A Desperate Plan

Chapter Summary

In which the team must come up with a plan to deal with Thrawn's Defender.

Chapter Notes

Short chapter this time. The calm before the storm.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Once the four had arrived back at the Ghost, Kallus had been quick to call a meeting in the common room.

Once again, he stood before the rebels, his former foes, to deliver information that would help them.

And as before, Ahsoka stood beside him, offering a reassuring presence in the lion’s den.

“Grand Admiral Thrawn is using the Lothal factories to design and build a new prototype TIE fighter specifically designed to destroy the rebellion.” Kallus didn’t sugar-coat what he had discovered. They needed to know what they were up against.

“What makes this fighter so special?” Hera asked, her interest in ships showing. Miara too leaned forward from where she sat, attention grabbed.

“The ship, codename Defender, is equipped with heavy blasters, as well as a hyperdrive and shields. It can out manoeuvre anything currently in the imperial arsenal, as well as what the rebellion currently possesses.” Kallus replied.

Murmurs of discontent and shock reverberated around the room. Sabine’s eye widened in horror at the description of the fighter.

Hera looked down at her lap, concern evident on her face.

“Furthermore, the weapons sported by this prototype are capable of causing significant damage to larger vessels, such as corvettes and even capital ships.” Kallus continued. He could see the upset in the room. This ship was clearly designed as a way to crush their rebellion. A way to destroy them.

And Kallus was just unlucky enough to be the bearer of bad news.

‘Still, at least they found out in advance.’ Kallus thought. He couldn’t imagine the chaos if they had hadn’t. It would have been a massacre. At least now they had time to repair.

“Any idea how close the prototype is to completion?” Kanan inquired, his mask hiding his facial expression. Without being able to see his eyes, Kallus was having a hard time determining what the
elder Jedi was thinking.

That being said, Kallus could see Ahsoka’s eyes. Her eyes were dazed, as if she was staring off into the abyss. Most people would think she wasn’t listening.

Kallus knew otherwise. He had done this previously. She was merely in deep thought.

“Unfortunately, Admiral Thrawn already has one prototype completed, and he intends to send it on a test run tomorrow.” Kallus finished relaying his story, answering Kanan’s question in the progress.

“Then we blow it up!” Sabine stood from her seat, excitement in her eyes.

“I’m with Sabine, let’s torch the thing!” Zeb bounced on his heels at the idea of destroying something imperial.

“Assuming we can infiltrate the compound that is.” Kaeden inserted into the argument, acting cautious.

“We’ve had worse. Just remember Malachor.” Ezra replied.

The room froze at the mention of the Sith planet. Through the force, Kanan could feel Ahsoka’s presence darken slightly. Her face briefly distorted into one of internal pain and suffering, before returning to its normal composure.

‘Clearly she hasn’t recovered completely.’ Kanan thought, worry for the Togruta in his mind. He would talk to her about it later.

It wasn’t fast enough however, as everybody in the room caught the shift in expression.

“Kriff Ahsoka, I’m sorry. I didn’t mean to…” Ezra began, angry with himself for upsetting his friend. For reminding her of what she did. What she lost.

Ahsoka waved him off. Now was not the time for sentimentalities. They needed to do something about Thrawn’s prototype.

Fortunately, Ahsoka had a plan.

“We’re not going to blow it up. We’re going to hijack it.”

The faces of the people in the room showed that of surprise at Ahsoka’s suggestion.

“If we destroy it, Thrawn will just build more. But if we capture the prototype and return it to Chopper base for study…” Ahsoka continued.

“We can find its weaknesses. And develop a countermeasure for the Defender.” Hera finished, realisation coming to her.

“Precisely. We can’t stop the production of this fighter, it’s too late for that. But we can create a response to it, but only if we know the Defender’s weaknesses.” Ahsoka spoke to the assembled rebels.

“Why not just steal the plans?” Sabine enquired.

“Because the prototype is already ready for deployment. We need to ensure that it is not used.” Kallus interrupted, understanding the plight.
“But that would require getting past Thrawn’s security. And then piloting the ship out of there. All the while the imperials will be upon us.” Zeb voiced his opinion. It sounded suicidal in his mind.

Ahsoka looked over the people before her. Two Jedi, an ace pilot, a Mandalorian, a Lasat, a grumpy astromech, a loyal clone, a former ISB agent and two farmers turned rebel agents. If she was going on a suicide mission there was no-one else she wanted watching her back.

Clearly Ezra agreed. “We can do it.”

Spurred on by the encouragement of the youngest member present, the rest of the members nodded their confirmation. Even Chopper released a series of excited beeps.

“I have the codes to get into the warehouse where the fighter is stored, all we need is someone to pilot it.” Kallus said.

Every head in the room turned to look at Hera, the obvious choice. Very few had gone toe to toe with Hera in piloting and beaten her. She had even outwitted Darth Vader once.

Ahsoka was about to assign Hera the task, when another voice chimed in.

“I volunteer.”

The heads in the room shifted again, this time to look at Miara, who now stood before Ahsoka.

“I’ve been training to be a pilot. Besides, I’ll need Hera to cover me in the Ghost, as well as pick the rest of you up. One fighter is not enough to extract an entire team.” Miara spoke with confidence. Ahsoka could see the fire in her eyes, the determination to help.

“Miara no. Flying a fighter is different to flying a cargo freighter. You could be killed!” Kaeden marched over to her sister, grabbing her by the shoulders and shaking her gently.

Miara gently pushed Kaeden away. “You don’t need to protect me sis, I can do it. I want to do it.”

“But, but…” Kaeden began to babble, worry evident. The rest of the crew of the Ghost remained silent, allowing the sister’s to sort out their concerns with one another.

“I’ll be fine Kaeden. Besides, it’s my turn for a dangerous mission.” Miara replied with humour, trying to make her sister more comfortable.

Hera then stepped forward to join the sisters, placing a hand on Kaeden’s shoulder. “Let her do this. I believe in her.”

Kaeden glanced at the Twi-lek briefly, before looking at Ahsoka.

The Togruta woman stared back before speaking. “I’ll make sure nothing happens to Miara.”

With Ahsoka’s word, Kaeden relented.

Ahsoka smiled, before moving in front of everybody.

“Ok then. Kallus will get myself Miara and Rex into the warehouse. The rest of you will distract the guards and draw attention away from us. When we have the fighter, Hera will extract the ground team, and then we get off of Lothal.” Ahsoka revealed the plan to the team, who accepted it without question.
The plan wasn’t solid, but it would do.

And if all went wrong, then Ahsoka would do what she did best.

She’d improvise.

Chapter End Notes

Nearing the end of this fic now. Hope everyone is enjoying it.
Feel free to comment/speculate on what happens next.
Till next time.
A Plan in Motion

Chapter Notes

Ok. Enough planning for missions. Enough exposition. It's time for the battle. Let us see if the rebels get the Defender.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Grand Admiral Thrawn stood in his office, staring out the window, overlooking the vast fields of Lothal. It was a beautiful planet, one Thrawn hoped to return to one day, without a mission. He wished to study the planet. Find out its secrets. Discover its history.

But for now, he had a mission. Capture Ahsoka Tano.

She was coming, he was sure of it. Agent Kallus had played his part well.

Thrawn knew about Kallus’ deception. About the shift in his allegiances.

He had studied before coming to Lothal, to determine who this new Fulcrum was.

That was why he had told Kallus every detail of his plan. So he would reveal it to the rebellion.

And lure them into a trap.

When they came, he would capture Tano for the emperor.

And rid himself of the traitorous Kallus.

******************************************************************************

Night had once again fallen across of Lothal. And in the shadow of night, the rebels planned to strike.

Hera had remained aboard the Ghost with Kaeden offering support, not being a fighter like the rest. They had taken to the skies, moving through the clouds to hide the ship from vision. All they waited for was a signal.

Kallus led Ahsoka, Miara and Rex towards the compound entrance. They couldn’t very well just march straight in. That would cause chaos, and severely damage the plan.

Instead, they to waited in the shadows.

“We are ready.” Kallus whispered form beside Ahsoka. Ahsoka nodded back.

It was time to begin.

Ahsoka tapped her comm, contacting the other members of the ground team.


It was time to begin.

Ahsoka tapped her comm, contacting the other members of the ground team.

“Spectre One, we are in position. Begin diversion.”

Kanan’s reply was instantaneous. “Copy Fulcrum. We’ll try to draw as many guards away as
May the force be with you.” Ahsoka replied, before cutting the comm.

The four only had to wait a few brief seconds, before a monumental explosion erupted from the other side of the imperial compound. In the distance, the sound of imperial walkers toppling over could be heard, as well as the resounding crashes of their impact.

“Sabine does it again.” Rex muttered. Ahsoka smirked too. The Mandalorian had been quite insistent that she blow something up. So Ahsoka had let her.

The compound was suddenly filled with the sounds of alarms, as well as the patter of boots, as a legion of Stormtroopers emerged from the front door of the compound.

The troopers headed off in the direction of the explosion, leaving the door unguarded.

“Rookie mistake.” Rex snickered.

“Indeed. Now’s our chance.” Ahsoka replied, sprinting out of the alleyway the four had been hiding in, her companions behind her.

In the distance, the sound of blasters, as well as the occasional explosion could be heard.

The diversion was working.

The four quickly bypassed the door to the compound thanks to Agent Kallus’ authorization codes. Inside, the endless corridors were empty, no trooper in sight.

“Guess nobody is home.” Miara quipped humorously.

Ahsoka expected there to be one or two guards at the very least, maybe a maintenance worker or something.

But the compound was empty. It seemed to be just the four of them.

That unnerved Ahsoka.

“Which way?” Ahsoka asked. Kallus took point, leading the others down a series of turns.

After a minute or so, they came across the large door to the warehouse where the prototype was stored.

This time, there were no guards in sight.

“Something is not right here commander.” Rex stated, sharing the unease that Ahsoka was feeling.

It was then that Kallus’ comm rang out.

Miara jumped in surprise when Grand Admiral Thrawn’s voice sounded over the comm.

“Agent Kallus, I need to speak to you right away. Come to your quarters.”

That was all the admiral had to say. Kallus froze. What was he supposed to do? Stay with the rebels and help them? Or go to Thrawn?

He made his mind up. If he could play this charade for a bit longer, possibly even eliminate
The code to the door is 4, 7, 2 and then another number that I didn’t catch.” Kallus turned to head back down the way he came, towards his quarters.

“What about you?” Ahsoka asked, concern on her face. She didn’t come to Lothal to find him only to lose him.

“I’ll distract Thrawn. Go, get the fighter out of here.” Kallus ran off, leaving the other behind.

Ahsoka stared where Kallus had been for a brief second, before turning her attention to the keypad by the door.

On her fourth attempt, she entered the correct code.

The doors slid open, and the three remaining rebels stepped inside.

Before them, was the TIE Defender.

As well as a squad of Deathtroopers.

Kallus made it too his quarters in minutes. He didn’t know if Thrawn was inside waiting for him.

If he was, then Kallus would have to move carefully.

If not, then he would lie in wait for the Chiss.

Kallus opened the door, and stepped inside.

The lights were off, and the room undisturbed. Kallus moved slowly towards the light switch.

With a flick, the lights were on.

And Thrawn sat in his chair by his desk, waiting for him.

“Agent Kallus. I’m glad you came. It appears were are under attack.”

Kallus moved towards his bed, where his bow rifle lay. He needed to look as if he was preparing to fight the rebels.

“Indeed Admiral. I was about to go and deal with the intruders.”

Thrawn watched him, eyes steely. The Chiss sat completely still, not moving whatsoever.

‘It would be so easy to kill him.’ Kallus thought as he picked up his rifle. He could turn and kill Thrawn right now.

“No need Agent Kallus. For the attack is merely a diversion.”

Kallus froze. How did Thrawn know? Had he guessed? Or deduced it somehow?

“Admiral?” Kallus questioned, turning to face Thrawn.

“The attack outside is meant to distract us from the insurgents that have infiltrated this compound. But then you already know about them, don’t you Agent Kallus!”
It happened so fast that Kallus did not have time to react. As Thrawn finished his statement, he rose his hand, a blaster equipped in it.

Kallus tried to raise his rifle to respond, but was too slow.

A bright blue blast of energy erupted from Thrawn’s weapon, stunning the turncoat imperial.

As Kallus fell to the floor unconscious, Thrawn rose from his seat.

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A hail of blaster fire came down upon Ahsoka, Rex and Miara, who scrambled for cover. Ahsoka had her sabers in her hands in an instant, white energy flaring to life and deflecting shots. Rex and Miara took cover behind a crate, firing their own blasters back at the Deathtroopers.

It was clear to anyone that the imperials had to strategically superior possession. Plenty of open space to move too.

The rebels were backed against a now locked door, which had slammed shut behind them.

Ahsoka dodged and weaved, deflecting as much fire as possible. She managed to down one trooper before they repositioned into better cover.

“We’re pinned down.” Miara called out in alarm.

Ahsoka could very well charge the Deathtroopers, and more than likely cut them to shreds.

But that would leave Rex and Miara exposed.

So she held her ground.

Another trooper fell, courtesy of Rex.

“Nice shot Rex.” Ahsoka called back to her long-time friend.

“Thanks commander.” Rex replied, shifting his position.

Despite their training, slowly but surely the Deathtroopers fell to the rebels.

And then a shot came from above, on a gangway above the Defender.

“Snipers!” Rex called, shifting his attention to them.

They were slowly being surrounded from all directions, Ahsoka realised.

“Rex, Miara, focus on the ground threat. I’ll handle the snipers.” Ahsoka ordered.

Rex immediately shifted his focus back to the troopers on the ground, fully trusting his commander.

“What are you going to do?” Miara called out.

Ahsoka deflected another shot back at a trooper, taking another down, before reaching deep into the force.

She embraced herself. Both her lightside and her darkside, tapping into her dormant anger and power that remained since Malachor.
Ahsoka channelled the energy of the force, wrapping around the gangway plank above them, and pulled.

The sound of creaking metal could be heard, before the gangway collapsed, taking the snipers down with it.

The large beam of metal fell directly on top of the other Deathtroopers, crushing some. Others managed to jump out of the way in time, narrowly avoiding death.

The collapse of the beam however disrupted the order of battle, and the troopers broke ranks.

In that instant, Ahsoka attacked.

The Togruta moved at lightning speed, darting around the battlefield, impaling and eviscerating the remaining troopers with her lightsabers.

One trooper tried to make a run for it, fear evident in his voice as he screamed in terror at the sight of Ahsoka slaughtering his friends.

He didn’t make it very far however, as the Togruta pulled him towards her with the force, decapitating him as he passed by her.

In a few brief seconds, the battle was over. The troopers lay dead.

Rex stood from his position behind a crate, and slowly moved towards his commander. The tension in her shoulders was palpable. She was breathing heavily. A clear sign of her anger.

“Ahsoka, you ok?” Rex quietly asked.

Ahsoka extinguished her sabers, turning to face Rex, her anger fading.

“Yeah, sorry. Much be that Togruta rage thing again huh?” Ahsoka replied, placing her sabers on her legs.

Rex was about to joke back, when he noticed something.

Rex could have sworn he saw a brief pigment of yellow in Ahsoka’s eyes, just for a moment. The clone did a double take. No, her eyes were blue.

But Rex could have sworn he saw yellow, if only for a second.

He didn’t have time to worry about it though, as Ahsoka and Miara were already moving towards the Defender.

“Kallus wasn’t lying. Look at this thing!” Miara spoke with astonishment.

Ahsoka had to admit, the prototype was impressive. And would definitely cause problems for the rebellion.

“Can you fly it?” Ahsoka asked.

Miara looked over the ship.

“I think so. TIE’s are generally designed to be easy to pilot. I figure this one is no different if they plan to mass produce it.” Miara replied.
Ahsoka looked over at Rex, who had a peculiar look on his face.

“You good captain?”

Rex watched Ahsoka for a second. Then nodded in reply.

‘What was that about?’ Ahsoka thought. She’d ask him later.

They had secured the fighter. Now all they had to do was escape with it.

Ahsoka brought her hand to the comm.

“Spectre One, we have secured the fighter.”

Ahsoka waited for a response, but none came.

“Spectre One do you read me? Kanan?”

Still no answer.

Ahsoka turned to face Rex, worry on her face. If Kanan and the others had been caught…

Her comm flickered to life, and Ahsoka released a sigh of relief before speaking.

“Kanan, you ok?”

The voice that responded was not Kanan.

“I am not Kanan Jarrus, Ahsoka Tano. I am Grand Admiral Thrawn, and I have something of yours, or more specifically, I have someone!”

Chapter End Notes

Big surprise... Thrawn knew everything all along. Looks like Kallus’ pokerface was all for nothing.
I hope I’m writing Thrawn right. He's a tricky one to get into his head.
Hope you all enjoyed this chapter.
Feel free to comment/speculate as usual. Always good to see what others are thinking.
To rescue a Fulcrum

Chapter Summary

In which Ahsoka deviates from her own plan.
And everything that can go wrong, does go wrong.

Chapter Notes

Not much to say in regards to this chapter. More Thrawn. More Kallus. More Ahsoka.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

The air was still in the warehouse. Nothing moved. No sound could be heard. The TIE Defender stood in the centre, the three man team waiting around it, listening.

Then Ahsoka’s comm light up again.

“If you want Agent Kallus back, I suggest you face me yourself Ahsoka Tano. We have much to discuss.” Thrawn spoke in a commanding voice. Miara visibly shuddered at the sound of the admiral’s voice. It was slow and methodical, the sort of voice used by a person who rarely, if ever, lost their patience.

And that meant he was dangerous to Ahsoka.

Still, she had come to Lothal to rescue Kallus. And that was what she would do.

“Rex, Miara, get the Defender out of here, I’ll go get Kallus.”

Rex and Miara shared a look of concern between them.

“You know it’s a trap, right commander?” Rex asked. He wouldn’t stop her, not that he ever could when she set her mind to something. He just wanted peace of mind.

“I’m counting on it Rex.” Ahsoka replied, before sprinting back out the door they came in.

Rex and Miara watched her leave, before returning to the task at hand. Vaulting up the Defender’s architecture, they entered into the cockpit. It was surprisingly spacious for a fighter, yet could only fit one or two.

Miara went to work immediately, hands flowing over the various pieces of console in front of her.

“I’m guessing Thrawn had jammed comms.” Rex spoke, remembering that they had been unable to reach Kanan earlier.

“Which is why I’m trying to patch this ships comm link into our own. Hopefully Thrawn isn’t watching his own channels as close as he is ours.” Miara replied, activating the comm link and synching it with the rebels. If she could contact the Ghost, inform them of the change of plans,
then she could arrange for extraction for the others.

“Huh, good idea.” Rex smiled approvingly.

Miara smirked back. She liked the old clone.

Miara turned her attention back to the comm link. First she had to contact Kanan.

“Spectre One do you read me?”

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Grand Admiral Thrawn stood in his office, behind his desk, looking out at the fields of Lothal. The direction he was facing was void of any conflict. The peaceful backdrop would have fooled most people.

But not Thrawn. He knew what was at stake.

The Admiral turned to face his captive. Restrained in a chair opposite of him was Agent Kallus. The rebel spy had regained consciousness only minutes ago, and was no doubt looking for an escape route.

He would find none, of course. Thrawn had posted his best guards by the door, just in case.

And then he had summoned Ahsoka Tano to his office. He was sure she would find him without directions. She was once a Jedi after all.

Still, at this moment, he had bigger concerns.

“Tell me Agent Kallus, what do you know of your newfound friend?”

Kallus tried in vain to wriggle out of his restraints. Thrawn almost found it amusing.

The Chiss tried again. “Do you know who she is?”

Kallus looked up, a sneer on his face. In his eyes, Thrawn could see hate for him. A sense of malice that he had not expected form the ISB agent.

“I assume she is a Jedi.” Kallus responded. He wasn’t giving away any information. Just trying to humour the Grand Admiral, Thrawn could tell.

“Oh no my friend, she is not Jedi. In fact, the Jedi order of old expelled her for treason.”

That caused Kallus to halt. If she had been expelled by the Jedi, why was she helping them now? Surely she would be more likely to side with the empire.

“Do you not wonder how she was able to defeat Lord Vader, Agent Kallus?” Thrawn continued, coming to stand behind the restrained Kallus. By now, Kallus was growing more and more uncomfortable. Thrawn was up to something… but what?

“Before Lord Vader, he was Anakin Skywalker, a powerful Jedi. And Ahsoka Tano was his apprentice.”

Kallus had heard of Skywalker, a legend of sorts from the days of the republic. Knowing now that Vader had been Skywalker changed little. What did, was knowing the truth about Tano’s relationship to Vader. If he had taught her, they were bound to be close.
It also explained how she was able to beat him.

“So tell me Agent Kallus. If she was so willing to kill the person who raised her, what will she do to you when she discovers you inadvertently led her friends into my trap?” Thrawn moved back around his desk, settling into his seat, staring directly at Kallus. His red eyes bore a hole through Kallus, right into his soul.

Kallus analysed Thrawn’s words. He had betrayed the rebels. Possibly led them to their doom. He didn’t want to, it was an accident.

It then clicked in his head. Thrawn had said that he had leaked the plans for the Defender to the rebellion himself.

That had been a lie. Instead, the Chiss Admiral had tricked Kallus into revealing the plans.

That meant that Kallus was the one responsible in the eyes of imperial command.

He would most likely be executed.

Kallus was resigned to his death when he started impersonating Fulcrum. But this way was not the way he wanted to go out, his name and honour tarnished. While Thrawn had no real evidence that Kallus was Fulcrum, he did now possess information that pointed to Kallus revealing imperial secrets to the rebellion.

Kallus’ hate for the Grand Admiral grew. If he was going to go out, he would do so with his head held high. Escape was unlikely now.

Gathering all his courage, Kallus looked Thrawn in the eye, and spoke with venom.

“What do you thing she will do to you?”

Thrawn’s eyes widened in shock at Kallus’ statement, clearly not expecting it.

If Kallus was not mistaken, a brief glimpse of fear was seen in the Chiss’ red eyes.

Kallus smirked.

He had managed to break Thrawn’s usually solid composure.

If nothing else, that was a personal victory for Kallus.

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The situation was bleak, Kanan could tell, even without the use of his eyes. His team, consisting of himself, Ezra, Sabine and Zeb were supposed to distract the majority of the imperial troops, allowing Ahsoka and the others to steal the Defender with minimal resistance.

It had gone well to begin with. Sabine had destroyed a column of unmanned walkers, limiting any advantage the imperials had. As such, they’d been forced into a fight in close quarters. Members of both sides traded shots, individuals ducking and weaving between various bits of cover, attempting to gain the advantage.

The rebels were holding their own well against the swarm of imperial Stormtroopers. But Kanan could sense something was wrong. The force was unbalanced. What limited bond her shared with Ahsoka, one that had emerged after many meditation sessions together, was clouded. She wasn’t in peril, but something had definitely gone wrong.
“We should have heard from Ahsoka by now!” Zeb was clearly thinking the same thing, despite his lack of force sensitivity. The Lasat was surprisingly perceptive, when he wanted to be.

“Just keep shooting Zeb!” Sabine shouted, moving between a pair of crates whilst throwing a thermal detonator towards a trio of Stormtroopers. The explosive detonated seconds later, sending the troopers flying in different directions.

It was unlike Ahsoka to break protocol the way she was. If the mission had changed, she usually inform them immediately.

That being said, Ahsoka had changed dramatically since Malachor. She had become darker and more reserved, prone to outbursts of emotion.

So it was a surprise to him when she had asked for his advice, rather than the other way round. The meditation sessions had been an attempt to help Ahsoka balance herself once more. They had shared experiences with one another, Kanan allowing her to see memories of his master, Depa Billaba. In exchange, Kanan had viewed Ahsoka’s memories of Anakin Skywalker, before he became Vader.

It was clear to Kanan why Ahsoka was suffering. She and her master had been close, and his betrayal had hurt her tenfold.

“Fulcrum do you read me, this is Spectre One.” Kanan tried the comms, but received nothing but static back.

Something was disrupting communications, Kanan realized as he deflected a series of blaster bolts back at a Stormtrooper. In that moment, Kanan came to a horrific deduction.

“It’s a trap! Thrawn knew we were coming!”

Either Kallus had set them up, which wouldn’t surprise Kanan, or Thrawn had somehow busted him. Either way, the mission was compromised.

“We can’t just leave the others Kanan!” Ezra called out, clearly sensing Kanan’s intent. He didn’t want to leave them anymore than Ezra did.

“Ahsoka will find a way out, she always does.” Kanan replied over the sound of blaster fire.

Ezra’s face contorted with various emotions, clearly contemplating every possible alternative.

Suddenly, a loud clanging sound could be heard. It was similar to the sound created by imperial walkers, only louder, and deeper too. The creaking of metal followed. Something was moving on their location.

Zeb saw the monstrous machine seconds later.

“Karabast! AT-AT!”

Ahsoka moved swiftly, yet cautiously, through the various hallways of the Lothal imperial complex. She had no clue where Thrawn and Kallus were, so she was following the force as it sang to her. As she reached the end of one corridor, the force would tell her to go left, then at the end of another, right.
She knew she had deviated from the mission, allowing her past recklessness take control of the situation, but she didn’t care right now. Rex and Miara could handle whatever was thrown at them, as could Kanan and the others.

That was the difference between her and someone like Thrawn or Palpatine. She trusted her allies completely, and knew they wouldn’t let her down.

As Ahsoka turned another corner, the force sang a warning to her. Down the hallway stood two imperial Deathtroopers. They were actively guarding a doorway deeper into the imperial complex. The force told her she had reached her destination. Beyond that door, lay Kallus and Thrawn.

Ahsoka wasted no time, igniting her lightsabers and charging the Deathtroopers. Both troopers were clearly caught off guard by her charge, as they began wildly firing in her direction. Ahsoka deflected one blast back at the troopers, knocking one of them down and out, whilst swinging her saber horizontally at the other.

The second deathtrooper fell to the saber cut in his abdomen, collapsing to the floor without a sound. Ahsoka calmed her battle instincts, turning to the doorway and keying in open. To her surprise, the door was unlocked.

Ahsoka figured that she shouldn’t be surprised. Thrawn wanted her to come to him after all. And she would grant him his request.

As she passed through the doorway, Ahsoka found herself in a short corridor, with another doorway at the far end. Moving forward, she keyed the second door open, and entered into the room.

Before her, restrained in a chair and facing away from her, was Kallus. And behind him…

“Ahsoka Tano. I’m so glad we could meet at last.”

Thrawn was a tall man. He radiated confidence, clear in his intent. His pristine uniform shone even in the darkest of places. He may not have been a force sensitive like Ahsoka, but there was a strange powerful and commanding aura about him.

Ahsoka believed she would have got along well with the man before her, if he had not been a high ranking member of the empire.

“Grand Admiral Thrawn I presume? I wish I could stop and chat, but I’m on a bit of a schedule.” Ahsoka snipped at the Chiss, trying to get a rise out of him.

The Admiral merely smiled lightly back. “But we have much to discuss Ms Tano. I have never had the privilege to meet a Jedi of your capacity before.” Thrawn replied. Ahsoka could tell he was trying to strike a nerve of hers. Clearly he had done his research on her.

“Former Jedi actually.” She responded, as she rose her hand to demonstrate. All she had to do was knock the Chiss back, allowing her time to free Kallus and escape.

A simple force push should do it.

But it was then that Ahsoka realized she couldn’t touch the force. Something was blocking her connection to it. How was that possible?

Her eyes darted around the room. Clearly something in Thrawn’s office was blocking her, but
Her montrals then picked up movement in the far side of the room. She may not currently be connected to the force, but her Togrutan anatomy still provided her with advantages that others lacked. The passive echolocation had saved her life numerous times, as well as revealed the secrets of the battlefield to her many times.

And now, her montrals were picking up a light patter patter sound, almost like footsteps.

From behind Thrawn’s desk, a small creature emerged.

At first glance, it appeared to be a small lizard like animal, one that would probably be kept by people who like exotic pets.

On deeper analysis, the creature had a strange fur like coating to it, something that was uncommon among most reptiles.

“Fascinating creatures, the Ysalimar. They possess a natural ability to negate the force, blocking out the central power of Jedi and Sith alike. Remarkable really, to possess such a natural defence against such a power.” Thrawn spoke, bending down to scoop the lizard up, before placing it on his shoulders.

Ahsoka deduced that the Ysalimar, as Thrawn had called it, was responsible for her disconnection to the force. And while she could still charge Thrawn down without the use of the force, she would most likely get either herself or Kallus hurt in the process.

So she relented, and extinguished her sabers.

“Ok Thrawn. I’m listening.” Ahsoka replied, not moving from her spot. She still held her saber hilts in her hand, in case Thrawn decided to attack. But something told her he would not.

“It is not I that wishes to speak with you Ahsoka Tano.” Thrawn replied, before tapping a key on the console on his desk.

The room darkened as the hologram flared to life, appearing beside Thrawn.

The hologram quickly took shape. A tall man, covered completely in a black cloak, only showing wrinkled hands, and a deformed face.

When Ahsoka recognized the person before her, she stepped back once in horror.

“Ahsoka Tano, we meet again, at long last.” The figure croaked menacingly. Beside the hologram, Thrawn smirked.

Chapter End Notes

So the battle of the wits begins. In one corner, we have two fulcrums. In the other, two imperial chessmasters.
Place your bets. This should be good.
As per usual, comment/speculate if you wish.
As of posting this chapter, I only have the epilogue to write.
I anticipate 3 more chapters after this one.
Hope you are enjoying it.

:)
The imperial AT-AT was bearing down upon the rebels at an alarming rate. Its twin cannons firing in unison, destroying cover and forcing the rebels to evade in every direction.

Kanan could sense the fear of both Sabine and Zeb through the force. The team possessed nothing that could easily take down a walker of that size, aside from the lightsabers of both Kanan and Ezra.

But in order to use said sabers, the Jedi would have to get close to the walker, directly underneath it to be precise.

That would have been relatively easy on most occasions. However, this time round another platoon of Stormtroopers joined the fight, moving alongside the walker, preventing Kanan and Ezra from approaching. The best they could do was continue to deflect the blasters from the Stormtroopers.

“No way are we beating that thing!” Sabine called out in alarm.

“Can we call in Hera?” Zeb asked, firing a series of blasts towards the line of troopers approaching the rebels.

“And risk the Ghost getting destroyed, no way!” Sabine replied.

The chaos around Kanan was beginning to overwhelm his friends. Sabine and Zeb usually always kept their cool. It was usually Ezra that panicked first.

It was then that Kanan realized that Ezra was not fighting, but rather crouched behind a large metal crate. Through the force, Kanan could tell that Ezra was mediating. A strange sight to be sure, Ezra rarely if ever mediated.

“What’s the kid doing now?” Zeb called out.

Kanan smirked as he felt Ezra reach deep into his own power, his own influence in the force.

Ezra’s hand reached out, his palm facing outwards.

The force sang, moulding around, being shaped by Ezra.
Kanan could no longer see, but he didn’t need to. He knew what Ezra was doing.

Suddenly, without warning to anyone aside from the Jedi, the imperial AT-AT stopped firing at the rebel position. Instead, it turned, focusing on the Stormtrooper column that had pinned the rebels down.

Seconds later, the walker opened fire. The cannons tore through the troopers in seconds, some turning to look at the walker in horror, others turning to blast it in vengeance. Despite their attempted resistance, the Stormtroopers were no match for the power of the AT-AT.

“What the?!” Zeb shouted over the sounds of battle. “What’s the walker doing?”

As the battle began to move away from the rebels, Kanan spoke out. “Ezra had mind tricked the pilots.”

Zeb and Sabine turned to look at Ezra with surprise. The fact that the young boy had grown so powerful in the force was a surprise to them both.

Deep within himself, Kanan couldn’t be more proud of his apprentice.

Kanan’s comm link then lit up.

“Spectre One do you read me?”

In the space of one year, Ahsoka Tano had somehow found herself face to face with both dark lords of the Sith. Vader had been a tough fight, one she didn’t want to repeat anytime soon.

So she was glad that the Sith master was appearing via hologram, and not actually present in the room.

“Emperor Palpatine, or would you prefer Darth Sidious?” Ahsoka snarled at the cloaked man. He was the physical embodiment of everything she despised, and everything she sought to destroy.

Part of her wished he was in the room with her, just so she could hit him.

“Let us bypass any pleasantries Ms Tano, we both know who the other truly is, and we have much to discuss.” Sidious croaked, his spider like hands articulating his words, even though he was a hologram.

Ahsoka chose not to reply. Anything she said could be twisted to be used against her. She had to be careful. Even if she somehow outmanoeuvred Sidious, Thrawn was also still present.

“You know why I wish to talk, don’t you Ahsoka?” Sidious continued.

Ahsoka remained silent, staring directly into the glowing eyes of Sidious. She let her hatred of the man show, both physically, and through the force.

Sidious clearly picked this up, as a devious smirk grew on his face.

“Yes. I can feel your anger, your hatred for me. You would be a powerful Sith lady. Far more powerful than Lord Vader ever could have hoped to be.”

Ahsoka rolled her eyes. What was it with Sith Lords wanting her to fall to the darkside, to become her apprentice? Recently, she had had an ever increasing number of invitations. First Vader, now
Sidious.

Even Maul on Malachor who, whilst he had not asked her directly, Ahsoka could have sworn was trying to turn her discreetly.

Ahsoka couldn’t help herself. This time, she chose to respond.

“The last person to offer me that ended up dead. And I promise you this Lord Sidious, I fully intend for you to share his fate!” The Togruta snapped at the Sith Lord, bearing her fangs at him in a threat.

Sidious merely smiled back. “You are no match for me alone. Your friends are not nearly powerful enough to stop me. The only way anyone survives is if you join me.”

When Vader had offered her a place by his side, she had considered it, entertained the idea of joining him, if only for a brief second. The only reason she had was because of their past relationship with one another.

And in the end, the only reason she had been able to beat him was purely situational. She had been angry at him, and inside of a Sith temple that had amplified her power.

If she faced Sidious, she would do so on his terms. And she would lose.

In the time after Malachor, Ahsoka had opened the Sith holocron, learnt from it. There was not much on it that she didn’t already know, but the very act of opening the holocron in the first place required tremendous power. She felt stronger after each time she opened it.

In time, and with allies, she could defeat Sidious.

“Maybe I’m not strong enough, but I will fight you regardless.” Ahsoka spoke with confidence.

Sidious’ smirk faded. “I look forward to it Ahsoka Tano.”

It was then that Sidious’ hologram turned to face the Grand Admiral.

“Thrawn, dispose of Agent Kallus and bring Tano to me!”

Ahsoka’s mind went into overtime. If they killed Kallus, then the mission would be compromised. But she still couldn’t access the force due to the Ysalamir.

So she did the unexpected, one she would possibly regret later on. She charged Thrawn.

The brief look of surprise on Thrawn’s face would have made a younger Ahsoka laugh. To see such a man, usually so composed, break in such a way.

But Ahsoka was not young anymore. And she was not the same person she was during the clone war.

Thrawn managed to bring up his blaster before Ahsoka reached him, and fired a series of shots towards her. Ahsoka successfully evaded the first three, the blasts sailing behind her and impacting on the wall of Thrawn’s office.

With the fourth shot, she was not so lucky.
“Miara this is Spectre One, what’s your status?” Kanan’s voice echoed from the comm link within the Defender. Miara couldn’t help the sounds of joy emanating from her own voice.

Quickly shaking off the happiness, she returned to her task at hand.

“Spectre One, we have secured the Defender. Ready for phase two of the plan.” Miara replied. Behind her, Rex stood listening in, checking various consoles behind the pilot seat.

“Copy Miara, patching in Hera!” Kanan replied.

They had secured the Defender, now all they had to do was escape with it. And that required Hera to provide escort, and extract the ground team.

“Ground team this is the Ghost, head to these coordinates for extraction. Miara, prepare to take flight. We’ll provide you cover.” Hera’s voice sounded over the comm link this time.

It would not be easy, Miara knew that. To fly not one, but two ships past the imperial blockade above. But she had faith in Hera’s skills, despite only knowing her for a brief period of time. The Twi-lek was a natural born leader, and an ace pilot form what she had heard.

Rex chose that moment to intervene, leaning down next to the comm link to speak.

“Ghost, we’ve had an unexpected development. Agent Kallus was captured, and Ahsoka has one to rescue him. We need to wait until we hear from them.”

Rex expected to hear the calm voice of Hera next, or perhaps the concerned one of Ezra inquired as to what happened.

What he didn’t expect was Kaeden’s panicked voice coming through.

“WHAT?! You just let her go alone?!”

Rex winced at the fear in Kaeden’s voice. He didn’t like in any more than she did, especially after what he witnessed with Ahsoka’s eye colour earlier.

But he had faith in his commander. She would pull through.

“She’ll be fine Kaeden.” Miara attempted to comfort her sister through the comms. Even without being physically present, it had the desired effect.

“She better be!” Kaeden responded to her sister.

Ahsoka felt the impact the second it occurred, as well as the searing heat. It had only been a glancing blow, impacting on her breastplate, causing her to stumble slightly. It would leave a nasty bruise beneath her armour, as well as a few burns on the skin.

Ahsoka was suddenly grateful she wore the armour. She had been shot before, in her youth, but not like this. Had she not been wearing armour, she was sure it would have been a lethal shot.

Regardless of the wound, she pushed forward, closing the distance between herself and Thrawn.

Unable to fire another shot in such close quarters, Thrawn discarded the blaster, dropping into a low stance, ready for hand to hand combat.
The two traded a series of blows with their fists, trying to get around one another. Ahsoka kicked her leg out, trying to trip the Chiss over, but Thrawn jumped over it, delivering blow to her right Lekku.

The brief sting of pain on caused Ahsoka to redouble her efforts. As Thrawn tried to hit her again, she grabbed both fists in her hands. The two pushed against one another, trying to gain ground.

“I have studied your species Ms Tano. A tribal based race, who place great significance on their warriors.” Thrawn spoke in his ever calm voice, despite the situation.

Ahsoka snipped back at the Chiss, trying to anger him. She hoped that if she succeeded, he would present an opening for her.

“Yeah, well I can’t say I’ve heard much about your species. Some sort of knock off Pantoran right?”

If was an incredibly low and insensitive blow. One that even Anakin would have chastised her for. Hell, she didn’t even begin to imagine the reprimand she would get from Padme for it.

But it worked, Thrawn’s face contorted in anger at the obvious disrespect of his species.

“A shame. Most Togruta are polite. I guess your master did not discipline you enough.” Thrawn snarled back.

In the corner, Sidious cackled at the display. Tano was growing ever darker. Soon, he would have her.

Ahsoka had had enough. Thrawn had insulted her back. But he had left himself open.

“Oh shut up ‘Grand Admiral’!” Gathering her strength, Ahsoka launched her forehead towards Thrawn’s face.

Her cranium impacted on Thrawn’s face with a sickening crunch. The Chiss Admiral collapsed to the floor in pain, blood pouring from his now broken nose. Ahsoka allowed a sense of satisfaction flow through her at the sight of the powerful Grand Admiral curled up on the floor clutching at his nose.

Behind her, Sidious broke into a series of cackles that caused her bones to shiver in discomfort.

“Yes. Good my dear.”

Ahsoka ignored him, instead turning her attention to Kallus. Removing his restraints, she helped the former ISB agent stand, before placing his arm over her shoulder and helping him to the door.

As the door out of Thrawn’s office opened, Sidious spoke again.

“You can run Ahsoka Tano, but I will find you. I will always find you.”

Ahsoka said nothing back, merely exiting Thrawn’s office supporting Kallus, and with a fresh wound on her chest.

Chapter End Notes
So a while ago in the comments, someone by the name of "Mystery reader" requested a funny/badass Ezra moment. I hope this classes as badass Ezra. A funny Ezra moment will be coming up in future chapters.
Also, I hope I got Sidious right. He's insane after all.
Comment/speculate at will. Always nice to see what others think.
Till next time.
:D
Ahsoka supported Kallus as the two made it down the hallway away from Thrawn’s office. Her chest was stinging from the impact of the blaster shot, yet still she ran, ignoring the pain. She would patch herself up later, right now she had a mission to complete.

“Ahsoka, thank goodness you’re ok. You are ok, aren’t you?” The concern in Kaeden’s voice was touching. It was nice to know that someone cared for her, especially when it seemed to Ahsoka that all manners of dark entities were currently trying to corrupt her.

“I’m good Kaeden, no need to worry about me.” The Togruta lied, not wanting to worry her friend over what was a simple battlefield injury.

Hera was next to speak. “We heard about your predicament. Rex and Miara have secured the prototype and are waiting for our signal. The others are heading to these coordinates for extraction.” A flurry of digits appeared on Ahsoka’s comm link, indicating the extraction point.

“Copy that Spectre Two, we are on our way. Don’t leave without us.” Ahsoka quipped back at the pilot. Kallus had regained his strength and had pulled away from Ahsoka to stand by himself. The ISB agent was looking at her peculiarly, like he had a question on his mind.

“You ok Kallus?” Ahsoka asked.

“Why did you come back?” Kallus questioned, clearly wondering why she had risked her own life for a turncoat imperial who had inadvertently lead her friends into a trap.

Ahsoka’s response was immediate.

“Because it was the right thing to do.”

Kallus didn’t miss the fact that Ahsoka was quoting him from earlier, when she had interrogated him as to why he defected.

She had been listening to him. And clearly she valued his words, if she herself was now using
Kallus nodded at the Togruta with renewed purpose. Perhaps he would fit in with the rebellion after all.

“Let’s get out of here.” Ahsoka stated, before darting off down another hallway, towards the extraction point.

“Right behind you Commander.” Kallus replied, following suit.

The extraction point was a large open courtyard just outside of the imperial complex. There was only one anti-ship battery that could target the Ghost if it landed there, and luckily for the rebels, it appeared to currently be broken.

Kanan, Ezra, Sabine and Zeb darted into the courtyard just as the Ghost landed, its ramp descending.

Kaeden Larte came down the ramp seconds later, spotting the rebels and waving them over to her. As they approached, Kaeden informed them of Ahsoka’s progress.

“She’s on her way with Kallus, we need to wait just a minute longer.”

Kanan and Ezra nodded, turning to face the troopers that were inevitably going to arrive.

Seconds later, they did.

A dozen troopers entered the courtyard, weapons firing widely. Kanan and Ezra ignited their sabers, deflecting and redirecting shots from the imperials, whilst Sabine and Zeb picked them off one by one.

“Ahsoka better hurry or we won’t last much longer!” Sabine shouted, just as another group of troopers arrived to join in.

“We’re not leaving her!” Kaeden shouted back. She too no possessed a blaster, Hera’s to be precise. The Twi-lek had lent it to her to assist whilst she prepared the Ghost for departure.

Kaeden was no marksman, but she could fire a blaster, and at very least give the troopers another problem to deal with.

An explosion occurred as Sabine tossed a detonator into the fray.

“I wasn’t suggesting we leave her!” The Mandalorian yelled over the combat. “She’s our friend too!”

The battle raged on. As more troopers fell, more seemed to arrive, a never ending supply of fresh troops.

“Where are these guys coming from?” Zeb called out, blasting another two with his bow rifle.

Ezra was about to reply sarcastically, when a white light ignited behind the troopers.

From the smoke of a recent explosion, Ahsoka Tano emerged, cutting down the rear guard of the troopers. She span and jumped between the imperials, her white lightsabers disposing of the threat with ease. Behind her, Agent Kallus was picking off troopers with his own blaster, one acquired
from a fallen trooper.

Ezra quickly informed his team of the development. “Ahsoka’s here. We can leave now.”

“And not a moment too soon.” Kanan called out, as he began to back towards the Ghost’s ramp, still deflecting shots from the Stormtroopers.

Sabine, Zeb and Kaeden boarded first, whilst Kanan and Ezra held the line for Ahsoka and Kallus.

By now, Ahsoka and Kallus had broken off from combat, and sprinted towards the Ghost.

Seconds later, they barrelled past Kanan and Ezra, up the ramp, and into safety. The two Jedi followed seconds later.

As the ramp sealed shut behind them, Kanan called to Hera.

“Everyone’s on board, we can go now.”

Hera didn’t respond, she didn’t need to, as everyone felt the Ghost lift off.

Ahsoka allowed herself to rest against a nearby crate, sitting on it slightly to regain her breath. There was nothing she could do now, it was all down to Hera.

“Ahsoka, you’re hurt!” Ezra spoke, and instantly everybody was looking at her.

Truthfully, she had forgotten about the injury. She hadn’t even had time to look at it properly.

Now that she did, Ahsoka realized it was worse than she had anticipated. Thrawn had hit her breastplate, but on its very edge. While the armour had taken some of the shot, another part of her had been unprotected. A small burn wound, one that had gone through her tunic and burnt away the skin of her stomach was present. The smell of burning flesh filled Ahsoka’s sense. It explained the burning sensation she felt earlier.

“Kriff, where’s the bacta?” Kaeden moved like lightning coming to support the Togruta as she swayed lightly due to the realization of the injury. Kaeden stopped Ahsoka from tumbling over, gripping her arms to hold her upright.

Behind her, Zeb had darted off to retrieve some bacta from a storage unit in the cargo bay of the Ghost.

“You’re gonna be fine Ahsoka, I promise.” Kaeden was looking directly into Ahsoka’s eyes, trying to offer her comfort.

Ahsoka was too exhausted from the day’s events to tell Kaeden that it wasn’t that serious. She had suffered worse before, both physically and mentally.

Instead, she allowed Kaeden to worry about her. When the bacta arrived, she allowed Kaeden to apply it without interference.

She wanted Kaeden to know she trusted her, so she let her friend look after her.

‘It’s nice to have someone care about me.’ Ahsoka thought, as she relaxed despite the situation.

From across the room, Kanan felt Ahsoka’s relaxation and happiness through the force, and smiled lightly.
Miara and Rex were waiting patiently for the go signal. Once it came, Miara would use the Defenders weapons to blast a hole in the roof, and fly out with the Defender.

Then it was just a matter of getting past the destroyers in orbit.

If they were able to do that, then the two teams would rendezvous back at Chopper base.

“What’s keeping them?” Miara muttered to herself, her hands lightly travelling over the dashboard of the Defender, checking its systems over for the sixth time.

Rex could tell she was nervous. She was restless, constantly twitching and checking everything over again and again. The clone placed his hand on Miara’s shoulder, squeezing it lightly.

Just as he was about to offer some words of comfort and encouragement, the comm flared to life.

“Spectre Two to Defender, we are go. I repeat, we are go!”

Miara wasted no time powering up the Defender. The prototype fighter slowly lifted off of the ground. The warehouse was too small to get a feel of the fighter, and they were on a timer.

Miara’s hands wrapped around the controls of the fighter, elevating it slightly, and tilting the vessel to point upwards.

“Let’s hope this works.” Miara spoke aloud, more for herself than for Rex.

Miara pushed the button on the side of the fighter’s joystick.

Bright green bursts of energy erupted from the fighter’s wings. The heavy blaster cannons fired a series of shots towards the ceiling of the warehouse. Seconds later, the roof caved in.

Some of the rubble impacted on the fighter itself, but merely bounced off of the shielding the prototype possessed. Miara pushed the joystick forwards, directing the fighter out of the now ruined warehouse.

As Miara manoeuvred the fighter out of the imperial complex, various troopers on the ground, as well as a pair of anti-ship batteries attempted to take them down. Miara expertly weaved the fighter side to side, evading the shots from the ground.

What shots did hit the Defender did little damage, harmlessly being absorbed by the shielding. Even a shot from one of the anti-ship batteries did little to damage the prototype, merely shaking the vessel slightly.

Behind her, Rex was gripping tightly onto the pilot seat to maintain his balance.

‘Why do I always get stuck with the crazy pilots?’ Rex thought, as Miara weaved again to avoid another anti-ship battery.

“Ghost, we are airborne.” Miara yelled into the comm.

Seconds later, Miara saw the Ghost pull up alongside the Defender, entering into a formation.

The vessels quickly gained altitude, moving away from the imperial complex, and into the clouds of Lothal.
Now all they had to do was get past the destroyers in orbit.

“Everyone ok on your end?” Rex inquired into the comm.

Hera responded immediately. “Kanan says Ahsoka’s been hurt. Kaeden is treating her as we speak.”

Rex leaned forward in an instant, concern on his face for his friend.

“How bad is it?”

It was Agent Kallus that replied. “Thrawn got a shot off on her. Got her in the waist.”

Miara could feel Rex’s anger perforating from him.

“I’m going to kill him!” Rex snarled. Anyone who hurt his commander had to answer to him, if they survived Ahsoka in the first place that was.

‘Skywalker should be glad he’s already dead!’ Rex’s mind thought venomously. Vader was still a sore spot for him as well.

“Get in line!” It was Ezra that spoke through the comm next, clearly just as angry at Thrawn was the others were.

“Ok everybody off the comm. Miara and I need to concentrate.” Hera interrupted, assuming her authority voice.

As the Ghost and Defender left Lothal’s orbit, they came face to face with an Imperial Star Destroyer. Its design was the same as most, except its underside sported an intricate mural, representing a creature of some kind.

“Since when do Star Destroyers have go faster stripes?” A voice came over the comms.

“EZRA! OFF THE COMMS NOW!” Hera shouted back. The young Jedi decided to keep his mouth shut this time, rather than provoke Hera’s wrath.

The Star Destroyer chose that moment to open fire. Turbolaser blasts came sailing towards the Defender and its escort. But between the piloting skills of Hera and Miara, as well as the advanced technology both vessels possessed, it was easy to avoid the turbolasers.

Star Destroyers were designed to combat larger vessels, such as capital ships.

Not take down individual fighters.

“Charge the hyperdrive!” Hera ordered over comm. Miara complied, her hands hitting the respective switch.

A squadron of TIE fighters emerged from the Star Destroyer, barrelling down upon the rebels.

“Just a few seconds longer.” Miara whispered, watching as the hyperdrive charged.

Hera evaded another group of TIEs, lining up to jump to hyperspace.

Seconds later, both hyperdrives were charged.

“NOW MIARA!” Hera shouted over comm.
Miara keyed the hyperdrive.

Seconds later, both vessels vanished from imperial scanners.

They had escaped.

And they had Thrawn’s prototype.

Chapter End Notes

And they are away...
So it may seem like Thrawn just let them escape, but believe me he has a plan, he always does.
Hope you enjoyed this chapter, as I said only the epilogue to go now.
Feel free to comment/speculate at what Thrawn's plan is.
Till next time.
:)
Epilogue

Chapter Summary

In which the team returns victorious.
But not all is as it seems.

Chapter Notes

So, final chapter of this fic. I hope you all enjoyed it. Check the end notes for my roundup, plus a tease on the sequel.
Also, word of warning... someone does something in this chapter that might be considered very out of character, and it may shock some of you. But don't worry, it will be addressed, in the sequel as to why it happens.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

The trip through hyperspace back to Atollon would take a few hours, giving Ahsoka time to dwell on what happened on Lothal.

Once again, she and her friends had escaped certain death by the skin of their teeth.

To say she was proud of them all was a colossal understatement. They had all proven their worth in executing what was essentially a gambit. They were more likely to win a game of Sabacc than succeed in their mission.

Yet despite all odds, the crew of the Ghost had done it again.

And they had also acquired not only Thrawn’s newest prototype fighter for study, but gained a new valuable ally in the process.

Currently, the former Agent Kallus sat in the Ghost’s cockpit with Hera, discussing their pasts. Kallus had made an effort to apologise to each member of the crew for his past actions against them.

It was clear to Ahsoka that Kallus was trying to redeem himself. And she was glad the others were willing to let him try.

In all of the chaos of the aftermath, Ahsoka had managed to sneak away into a secluded chamber of the Ghost.

She had completed her mission, which meant she had to report to Senator Organa.

Accessing her encrypted Fulcrum comm link, she keyed in Bail’s number.

Seconds later, a hologram appeared before her.

But it was not the Organa she was expecting.
“Princess?” Ahsoka was surprised to see the young daughter of Bail and Breha answer the channel rather than the senator himself. Was something wrong? Was Bail ok?

“Hey Aunt Soka, dad is busy right now.”

For some reason, Leia had one day starting calling Ahsoka her aunt, despite the lack of any blood relations. Hell they weren’t even the same species.

When Ahsoka enquired, Leia had told her that Bail had said she was her aunt.

At the time, that had perplexed Ahsoka considerably. Sure, she had mentored the girl a bit, helped her here and there, but that was not enough to form that close of a bond, right?

So Ahsoka had asked Bail, and Bail had told her that Leia looked up to her greatly.

So Ahsoka had readily accepted the title of ‘Aunt’.

“No problem princess, let him know I need to talk to him would you?” Ahsoka asked, smiling at the hologram of Leia.

Leia smiled and nodded back, before a surprised look overtook her face.

“What’s wrong with your waist?”

Ahsoka looked down. A freshly wrapped bandage, courtesy of Kaeden Larte, was now carefully wrapped around her midsection, holding a bacta pad against the burn wound she had received from Thrawn’s blaster.

“ Took some fire Princess, nothing you need to worry about.” Ahsoka replied. Leia was still young, she didn’t want to cause any more alarm for her.

“If you say so. I’ve gotta go Aunt Soka, take care of yourself.” Leia replied.

Ahsoka smiled at the transmission. “You too Princess.”

Leia moved to disconnect the call, but halted.

“You’ll come and visit me soon, right?”

The question came out of nowhere. Ahsoka felt her heart warm at the desperation in the princess’s voice. She had missed the young Organa.

“I promise.” Ahsoka replied truthfully. When she had the time, she would go to Alderaan and meet with Leia in person.

The hologram of Leia faded before her, leaving Ahsoka in the dark once more.

Bail would get back to her when he had some free time, and it would still be a few hours before they got back to Atollon.

Ahsoka felt her eyes beginning to droop slightly. The day’s events, as well as the injury she suffered, had worn on her.

Laying down on a nearby bed, Ahsoka closed her eyes, and allowed sleep to claim her, if only for a few hours.
She was in the dark forest again, alone and without weapons. All around her, ghostly figures moved, some passing by her, others right through her.

For the first time in years, Ahsoka Tano was genuinely terrified.

“Ahsoka.” A whisper of a voice, indistinguishable to her montrals.

“I would never let anyone hurt your Ahsoka.” Another whisper, this time she recognized it. An empty promise from the man she once admired.

She moved forward, through the dark trees and spectral figures before her.

“Why are you doing this?” The voice from before whispered to her again, another question from the past. One she still didn’t know how to answer.

“She will be expelled from the Jedi Order!” A different voice whispered to her again, this one bringing great anger to her.

“Your Padawan status will be stripped from you.” A second whisper followed in a different voice, both memories of an unfair trial, where she was used as a scapegoat by people she had learned from.

Ahsoka tried in vain to block out the whispers, moving through the never-ending forest, trying to get away from the shadows that followed her. She didn’t want to be reminded of her past.

“You abandoned me! You failed me! Do you know, what I have become?” The whisper snarled this time, in anger and hatred.

Ahsoka ignored it. He was dead now, he could never hurt her again.

“Ahsoka, it’s so good to see you.” A new whisper occurred, sounded excited. Ahsoka was hopeful for a second. Then she realized.

No, she was dead also.

They were all dead, all of her friends. Her past.

And none of them had stood by her when it mattered. Those that had, either died, or turned traitor.

“Back into the order, you may come.” A broken croaking whisper of a man she once thought of as the wisest in the galaxy echoed throughout the forest.

Ahsoka continued, moving around trees in vain, trying in desperation to escape. Tears freely ran down her face, anger and depression running rampant within her.

But try as she may, the ghostly figures followed her. And the whispers continued.

Suffice to say, Ahsoka Tano did not get a good rest.

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Several hours later, the Ghost arrived back at Atollon and proceeded to land at Chopper Base. The captured TIE Defender, piloted by Miara, followed the Ghost, landing next to the freighter.
With Thrawn’s prototype now captured and under rebel control, they could effectively take it to pieces and analyse it.

Ahsoka had woken from her nightmare ridden sleep shortly before exiting hyperspace, and was thus in the cargo bay the rest of the team by the time Hera had landed the vessel.

Ahsoka glanced at her comrades. Kaeden was locked in a discussion with Kanan and Ezra, inquired about Jedi training and what it entails. Ezra was describing in detail his trip to the temple on Lothal, where he had acquired his first kyber crystal. Ahsoka noticed however that the young Jedi was over exaggerating certain aspects of the story. Kanan had already interrupted the recount several times to correct Ezra’s interpretation of events.

“No Ezra I did not abandon you in the temple, and I certainly didn’t get killed by the Inquisitor.”

“You did Kanan, I saw it with my own eyes!”

Ahsoka chuckled under her breath, watching as Kaeden listened with interest.

The Togruta’s gaze shifted to another discussion going on in the cargo bay.

“You were right about asking questions Garazeb. I’m glad I did.”

“So am I. It’s good to have you on our side Kallus.”

The two former foes had put aside any animosity that lay between them. It had surprised Ahsoka that Zeb had been the most readily accepting of Kallus.

Still, she was glad to see someone was accepting him. Whilst everyone else had, they were still weary of his true intentions, being a former ISB agent after all.

Something suddenly bumped into Ahsoka’s legs, and her gaze immediately shifted downwards.

Chopper was at her feet, looking up at her.

“You ok Chopper?” Ahsoka asked. It was rare for the droid to spark up conversation with anyone. Unless of course he was just seeking to be a nuisance to someone.

The astromech beeped back at her.

“No more suicide missions please.”

Ahsoka laughed. The mission to Lothal had been dangerous, but she wouldn’t call it a suicide mission.

“Remind me to tell you about the mission to the Citadel later.” Ahsoka spoke, running her hand along Chopper’s dome affectionately. Now that had been a suicide mission.

Suddenly a sound echoed throughout the cargo bay, and the ramp descended.

Ahsoka wasn’t expecting anyone to greet them when they got back.

She was wrong.

“Where have all of you been? I’ve been worried sick?”

The entire group of individuals in the cargo bay stared with confusion.
Ezra stepped forward first.

“Oh hey AP5, we had a mission.”

AP5’s head moved in all directions, scanning the faces of the people before him.

“A mission? Why was I not told, I could have been of considerable help?”

Ahsoka could have sworn the droid was feeling somewhat hurt inside.

“You know, I guess we sort of forgot about you. Sorry AP.” Ezra replied, a small sheepish smile appearing on his face.

AP5 was silent for a minute. Then he spoke.

“YOU FORGOT ABOUT ME! AFTER ALL I HAVE DONE FOR YOU AND THE REBELLION! HOW DARE YOU! I’M GOING TOO…”

AP didn’t get to finish his rant, as Chopper came down the ramp bumping into him, before speeding off in a random direction.

“Why you no good piece of scrap metal, come back here this instant!”

Ahsoka watched as the two droids disappeared from sight. Beside her, Ezra laughed.

Hera then proceeded down the ramp of her ship, stopping beside her crew.

“Ok everyone, we need to report to Commander Sato.” The Twi-lek spoke, once again seizing authority over everyone else.

With groans, the crew of the Ghost began to move towards the command centre of Chopper base.

This left Ahsoka with Kallus. She turned to face the former imperial.

“You did well today Kallus. Thank you for your help.”

Kallus nodded back. “Thank you for this chance to start again. It means a lot.”

Ahsoka smiled. Kallus have proven his worth, in more ways than one. And he made an excellent information supplier.

“So? How would you like to work as one of my agents?” Ahsoka asked, assuming her own authority voice. She was back to being Fulcrum.

“What do you mean commander?” Kallus enquired confused. He assumed he would just be put on basic duties to begin with. He was half expected latrine duty.

Instead, here was Ahsoka Tano offering him a position by her side, or so it seemed.

“You showed great skill and cunning, as well as the willingness to take risks, over these past few months. How would you like to be a proper Fulcrum agent?” Ahsoka replied more forcefully. Kallus was everything she sought for in one of her agents.

A wave of surprise hit Kallus. She was offering him a job, and a respected job that he could do.

Kallus realized in that moment that he was truly free. No longer did he have to deal with the
bureaucracy of the empire, or the manipulations of people such as Thrawn.

Now, he could help those who needed it, the right way.

“I’d be honoured Fulcrum.” Kallus responded, snapping into a salute.

To his surprise, Ahsoka saluted back.

“Then welcome to the rebellion Agent Fulcrum.”

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Captain Rex watched from the side as Ahsoka spoke to Kallus. She seemed to be readily accepting of him.

But that wasn’t what was bugging Rex. Instead, it was what had happened on Lothal.

When he saw her eyes turn yellow, if only for a brief second.

Anyone else would have left it alone, not daring to anger the Togrutan women.

But Rex hoped he was close enough to the Togruta to raise the issue without upsetting her.

Miara had already gone ahead to the control centre to meet up with the others, and as Rex saw Kallus depart from Ahsoka, he seized the opportunity.

“Ahsoka? Can we talk?” Rex called out to her.

Ahsoka turned and saw him, a bright smile appearing on her face. He hoped it would remain when he had said his piece.

“What’s up Rex?” Ahsoka said once she was within earshot.

The clone hesitated for a second. She would understand his concern, right?

“I need to talk to you about something that happened on Lothal.”

Ahsoka’s face changed quickly, concern appearing.

“What’s wrong? Is someone else hurt?” She asked. Rex had yet to enquire about the shape of his friend’s wound.

“No Ahsoka, it’s about you.” Rex spoke.

“What about me? You don’t need to worry about me Rex. I’ll heal soon enough.”

Rex didn’t want to beat around the bush, but he didn’t want to upset his oldest friend either.

“It’s about what happened in the warehouse. When you killed all those troopers without remorse.” Rex spoke boldly.

Ahsoka’s face changed to one of surprise. “What about it?”

Rex took the risk of asking. “Your eyes Ahsoka, they went yellow for a second, like a Sith’s.”

Ahsoka’s face didn’t change. “No they didn’t.”
Rex wanted to hug the woman, to tell her it would be alright. But another part of him wanted her to listen to what he had to say.

“I’m worried about you Ahsoka. That wasn’t like you. You haven’t been the same since Malachor.”

Ahsoka took a step back from the clone, trepidation evident in her body language.

“Whatver you have to say Rex, just say it.”

So Rex did.

“Have you been using the Sith holocron from Malachor?”

Ahsoka replied instantaneously. “I’ve opened it yes.”

Rex wanted to shout at her. To warn her about it. He knew that holocrons of any affiliation were extremely powerful.

And also extremely dangerous to force sensitives.

“Dammit Ahsoka, you can’t do that. It’s dangerous for someone like you to open those things, especially one belonging to the Sith!”

Ahsoka’s eyes hardened, repressed rage deep within them. Rex was sure she wouldn’t attack him, but she was clearly upset.

“I know what I’m doing Rex!” Ahsoka spoke slowly and forcefully.

“Do you? You keep using it and you will end up like your traitorous master!”

Rex felt the punch before he saw it, which was a remarkable feat in itself. Ahsoka had decked him in the face, sending him to the floor. He lay on his back, clutching his eye where he had hit him. It would definitely leave a bruise.

Ahsoka stepped above him, towering over him, looking straight down, anger written on her face.

Once again, Rex saw a brief pigment of yellow in her eyes, but stronger than before.

“Don’t you dare compare me to Vader, Captain! I am nothing like him, and never will be!”

When she finished her sentence, Ahsoka turned and stormed off into the wilderness of Atollon, nothing even caring about the mission report.

Rex slowly sat up, still holding his face.

He wouldn’t hold it against her. She was upset and angry, and he had pushed too far. Frankly he deserved it.

But he had to ask her, because she had to know what he thought, about what had happened.

She was his closest friend. The only person he had left from a time when he had a family.

And he couldn’t lose her the same way he lost Anakin.

He wouldn’t.
Grand Admiral Thrawn sat in his office, surrounded by three holograms.

His nose was broken, a bright purple bruise have appeared on his face from where the Togruta had head-butted him. He had done what he could to bandage his nose. The bones would just take time to heal.

That wasn’t his concern right now. What was was the debrief he was about to undergo. No doubt he was about to be reprimanded for losing the Defender prototype to the rebels, as well as letting the traitor Kallus escape.

‘If only they knew.’ Thrawn thought.

His thoughts turned to the holograms before him, of the people they represented.

On one side was the Governor of Lothal, and his friend, Arihnda Pryce. She was always willing to support him, even in his most risky plans. Thrawn hoped today that she was on his side.

On the other side of him was the hologram of Grand Moff Tarkin. Thrawn despised the man, seeing him as nothing more than a power hungry despot. Tarkin had no depth of understanding of risks that needed to be taken. He preferred a straight up fight, preferably one where he had superior strength to his opponent. Tarkin would most certainly not be on his side.

The third hologram was that of Emperor Palpatine himself, who currently had his eyes closed, as if he was listening to something. Thrawn knew enough about force sensitives to know that the Emperor was listening to something in the force.

Tarkin clearly didn’t have the patience to wait any longer.

“Your excellency, I believe we need to discuss the situation.”

Palpatine’s eyes opened, and immediately shot an aggressive look at Tarkin.

“Do be patient Grand Moff. But you are right, we have much to discuss.”

Thrawn prepared for what he knew was next.

Tarkin began his rant. “Thrawn has not only managed to lose one of our prototype weapons, but has also lost the traitor. The rebellion will only grow stronger because of his blunder. He must be punished.”

If Thrawn was alone, he would have rolled his eyes. Tarkin really was a naïve fool.

Palpatine turned next to Pryce.

“Grand Admiral Thrawn did indeed lose the prototype, but we also managed to uncover Agent Kallus as the traitor who was giving away our information. That is a victory in itself.”

Tarkin did not wait to be addressed before he spoke up. “Yes, but Kallus escaped to help the rebels. Thrawn’s over ambition has cost us dearly today!”

Thrawn wanted to bring up the point about over ambition. That sounded more like Tarkin than Thrawn.

Clearly the Emperor agreed, as he did roll his eyes at the human male.
Pryce continued her points. “Thrawn may have acted recklessly today Grand Moff, but he has been responsible for many victories in the past, some that no one else could have achieved. This one defeat today does not outshine all the good he had done for the empire.”

The debate stopped briefly, Tarkin sneering at both Thrawn and Pryce, before slumping down in his seat. Even over the hologram, Thrawn could tell Tarkin was sulking.

Pryce meanwhile had a smug look on her face. She hated Tarkin just as much as Thrawn did, so any chance to take him down a notch was worth it.

“What say you Grand Admiral?” Emperor Palpatine spoke up for the first time since the discussion had begun.

‘Finally!’ Thrawn thought. He could reveal the scope of his genius.

“I allowed the rebels to capture the Defender prototype.”

The look of surprise on Pryce’s face, as well as the confusion on Palpatine’s was worth it. But Tarkin’s face almost made Thrawn laugh.

Anger had overtaken the Grand Moff’s facial expression. “You betrayed the empire! You let them escape!”

Thrawn nodded. “I did, because by doing so we will learn the location of the rebel base.”

That caught the attention of the others.


“When I took command of the project, I discreetly altered the design. Built within the prototype Defender that was stolen is a small tracking beacon. Completely undetectable to anything the rebellion currently possesses.”

Palpatine’s face lit up with a sinister smirk.

“So we can track the rebels to their base?” Pryce inquired.

“And indeed Governor, once the signal stops moving, I believe we will have found the location of the rebel base.” Thrawn continued.

Palpatine cackled aloud.

“So you see Grand Moff Tarkin, I may have allowed the rebels and the traitor to escape, but in doing so, they will lead me directly to their rebel base. And I will annihilate them all!”

Chapter End Notes

Surprise cliffhanger ending.
And so we are done. Once again I hope you all enjoyed the story. Please feel free to comment on it. I’d love to know your final thoughts on the story.
Personally I don't think this was as good as "The Formers Apprentices", but hey, I still enjoyed writing it.
I also know that I left many things unanswered, as well as interactions unfinished. They will be addressed in the coming sequels. Thanks again to all those that even glanced at this story. You are the best. :D

So... tease time for the sequel methinks.

Coming soon- "Hearing a voice in her head, Ahsoka Tano travels to a distant planet in the outer rim to uncover a hidden truth. Meanwhile, a Grand Admiral plots his next move."
This story will be continued in: "Vendettas and Stratagems"

P.S.- So, funny anecdote time: Halfway through writing this story I realized I had completely forgot about the existance of AP5, which horrified me as he is one of my favourite characters, singing and all. Since I couldn't just have him materialize out of nowhere, I put him in as a joke at the end of the epilogue. I hope you all liked it. :D

End Notes

Feel free to comment. I always like to hear peoples opinion on the story, whether positive or negative.

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!