# Sidious and Skywalker

**Rating:** Mature  
**Archive Warning:** Graphic Depictions Of Violence  
**Category:** Gen  
**Fandom:** Star Wars - All Media Types, Star Wars Original Trilogy, Star Wars Episode VI: Return of the Jedi  
**Character:** Luke Skywalker, Anakin Skywalker | Darth Vader, Darth Vader, Sheev Palpatine | Darth Sidious, The Emperor, Obi-Wan Kenobi, Leia Organa, Han Solo  
**Additional Tags:** Return of the Jedi AU, Return of the Jedi plot divergence, Jedi Luke Skywalker, Force Bond (Star Wars), Alternate Universe - Star Wars Setting, Death Star, Alternate Ending, Torture, Psychological Torture, Imprisonment, Jedi, Darth Vader Lives, Memories, Father-Son Relationship, Hurt/Comfort, Emotional Hurt/Comfort, Hurt, Angst and Hurt/Comfort, Angst  
**Stats:** Published: 2018-02-02 Updated: 2018-07-30 Chapters: 7/? Words: 14918

## Summary

An alternate ending to *Return of the Jedi* where Luke is taken prisoner by the Emperor. Sidious will destroy Skywalker's belief in the Jedi and undermine everything the young man believes in by simply telling him the truth.

Will Vader rescue his son or will he stand by and allow Sidious to endlessly interrogate Luke?

How long can Skywalker survive under the Sith's wrath?

*The Emperor found it amusing to see such determination in one who stood no chance of escape. Sidious was not yet sure what he wanted from Luke, but for now he was content to pry and puncture and dissect the boy’s mind, to see not only what he could discover but to*
also see what he could corrupt.

Notes

This story takes on some major plot divergences and needs a bit of explaining. My intention was to just look at Luke's character, so in this version of *Return of the Jedi* Luke ended up in a confrontation with Vader and the Emperor on the Death Star, but there is no Rebel attack going on and there aren't any Rebels on the forest moon of Endor. The duel between Vader and Luke happens exactly as it does in the film. I begin to diverge right after Luke cuts off Vader's hand and the Emperor says, "Now fulfill your destiny. Take your father's place at my side." That's where my story picks up.
Chapter 1

Chapter Notes

So... I wrote a thing...

Here it is.

I have absolutely no confidence in this story. But I've been working on it for a few days and I figured what the hell, I might as well share it. Maybe somebody out there will enjoy it. It really has nowhere to go, but don't worry, I have an ending planned. This isn't going to be an open-ended fic that I just keep adding chapters to forever.

I needed a little break from my Obi-Wan fics. Ever since The Last Jedi came out I've been thinking a lot about Luke. This is my attempt to explore some stuff that has always interested me about his character. It gets into some Vader & Obi-Wan issues as well.

As per usual, it's a pretty dark fic with torture, nightmares, violence... that sort of stuff :-(

What is wrong with me? lol!! If you're new to the party, don't read my stuff expecting to find kittens and snuggles (well sometimes there are snuggles...) If you're a return visitor, welcome back!

“Never,” Luke said, tossing his lightsaber across the room. “I’ll never turn to the Dark Side.” He squared his shoulders and took a stepped toward the Emperor, resigning himself to his fate. “You’ve failed, your highness. I am a Jedi, like my father before me.”

Whatever happened next, Luke would face it knowing he had stayed true to himself. A moment ago he had felt the Dark Side, allowed it to flow through him, using it to defeat Vader. And though he felt powerful, it also filled him with despair. Luke knew he could never survive with darkness in his heart; the sensation was unbearable. He didn’t know how his father had endured it all these years.

The Emperor stared at Luke for several moments, taking stock of the young man. When he finally spoke, his sickly red eyes betrayed nothing but distain. “So be it, Jedi.” Sidious was not used to being thwarted and he had no intension of letting this boy make a fool of him. His instinct was to punish Skywalker, kill him even; but then, as he watched Vader drag himself into a sitting position, cradling his newly damaged arm, Sidious decided to try a completely different approach. Even if Skywalker could not be turned, the Emperor could perhaps still make use of the boy’s power.

With a quick gesture, he used the Force to call his Imperial Royal Guards back into the chamber. Sidious could feel Luke’s power from across the room. The boy was strong and defiant; watching him suffer would be satisfying.

“You think you will not be turned,” the Emperor said, slowly lifting his hands and pointing his fingers at Luke’s body. “But you will suffer for your lack of vision.” A torrent of energy erupted from Sidious’s fingertips and shot across the room, striking Skywalker squarely in the chest.

As pure Force lightening tore through him, Luke was thrown back against the bridge railing. The pain was unlike anything he could have imagined; his blood felt as though it boiled in his veins, like
his breath burned inside his lungs.

“Young fool,” the Emperor sneered. “There is no escape for you.”

Vader finally managed to haul his battered body up, but he was too weak to stop the Royal Guard that stepped around him. He could sense something merciless was about to happen but he was powerless to intervene.

Luke barely managed to recover before the Imperial Guard thrust a vibrospear into his back. Skywalker choked on his breath, his body going rigid as his eyes widened in shock. Vader’s indifferent, emotionless mask hid his reaction as he felt his son’s sudden fear and pain shudder across the Force. The Sith lord lumbered to his master’s side and watch as the guard wrenched the weapon out of the young Jedi’s back.

The Emperor unleashed another onslaught of Force lightening, driving Luke to his knees. “Your feeble skills are no match for the power of the Dark Side,” Sidious said as he came forward and stood over the boy, relishing in the Jedi’s pain. Luke was bent forward, fighting for breath as blood from his wound began to pool on the floor underneath him.

For a moment, Sidious felt Vader by his side, felt the conflict roiling in his apprentice’s heart. The Emperor paused, baiting the Sith, giving him the opportunity to strike out and protect his offspring. He could sense that Vader was truly tempted to rebel against his master and this fascinated the dark lord. Deep down, Sidious knew that Anakin Skywalker was still alive in the Sith’s heart. Luke would be the perfect tool to break Vader of his compassionate weakness once and for all.

The dark apprentice sensed that the Emperor was testing him, and though watching his son suffer was more distressing than he ever thought possible, the Sith knew this was not the time to strike. He had been severely weakened by his duel with Luke. If he tried to stop his master, he would fail. No, he must bide his time, even if it meant watching his son endure torture.

When Vader merely stood there and made no move to interfere, the Emperor reared back and loosed a ruthless concentration of Force lightening into Luke. The young man fell to the floor, writhing in pain. Skywalker could not keep himself from screaming as the agony tore through his flesh and bone and blood. Over and over the Emperor tortured him, taking special pleasure in the young man’s torment. When Sidious finally released him, Luke opened his eyes just in time to see a Guard’s boot heel right before it kicked him in the face.

For Luke Skywalker, the world went dark.

His mind registered that he was cold. Very cold.

There was a constant hum, a deep incessant pulsing that he recognized as air compression circulated in all spacecraft, whether large or small. The sound was deafening in the silent chamber.

Luke tried to open his eyes but the effort it required was exhausting. He just wanted to sleep.

He realized his right elbow was wet; this struck him as unusual so he forced his eyes open and dragged his head up to inspect his body. Luke was laying on a narrow durasteel slab in a small, dark, bare cell. The question of whether or not he was still on the Death Star flickered through his mind but quickly receded. He was too tired to care. With drooping eyelids, Luke lifted his right arm to see
why his sleeve was sodden and instantly saw he was covered in blood. His vibrospear wound was still bleeding.

He let his head fall back, too weary to hold it up. Perhaps he would bleed to death. That’s one way to escape, he thought. His eyes rolled back in his head as a dark wave rose up to swallow him; he didn’t resist. The silence would be soothing.

The cell door slid open and Sidious crept down into the dark narrow space, his Royal Guards standing watch in the corridor. Luke was barely conscious, his enervated body sprawled across a black metal panel bolted to the wall. The dark lord quickly noted the pool of blood on the floor. He gestured to his guards. “Send for a medical droid immediately.”

Sidious turned back to Skywalker and began to scrutinize his condition. He looked the young man up and down, taking in his strong frame and handsome face. Much like his father’s.

Despite his injuries, Luke was a well of untapped potential. Sidious thrilled at the possibilities the young man presented. The dark lord reached out with a single finger and turned Skywalker’s face toward him. A purple bruise spread across the boy’s bloodless cheek where Sidious’s guard had kicked him. “You’ve suffered terribly,” the Emperor said, resting a hand on Luke’s brow. “We’ll take good care of you.”

Skywalker’s eyelids fluttered erratically as he tried to pull away from the Emperor’s touch, his head weakly lolling to the side. The dark lord could not help but smile. “I told you there would be no escape. Not even death can free you now.”

A medical droid appeared in the doorway and clanked down into the cell, turning to the Emperor for instructions.

“I want him conscious and fully alert.” Sidious tucked his hands into his sleeves and climbed up the chamber steps. “Whatever it takes, droid.”

The robot was dispassionate. “Yes, my lord.”

Chapter End Notes

NEXT CHAPTER: Sidious wants to know more about Skywalker’s past. Luke learns that the Force can be used in ways he never imagined.

Thank you for reading!

Kudos and comments are very welcome!

Much love!
Chapter 2

Chapter Summary

Luke endures his first exchange with the Emperor. It is not fun.

Sidious reveals some of Anakin and Obi-Wan's past to our adorable hero.

Chapter Notes

Why do I treat the characters I love so badly?? :)

Just another reminder that this is NOT a fluffy fic!!! Consider yourself warned.

Thanks for all the kudos and comments! They make my heart happy.

P.S. Chapter 2 is much longer than chapter 1. Sorry, the lengths are going to be really uneven in this story.

A deep, gritty voice came out of the darkness.

Son.

Luke woke with a start, his eyes wide and unfocused as he instinctively reached into the Force with his feelings. He ignored everything tangible, the barren cell disappearing as he sought to connect emotionally with the strange sensation he had experienced in his dream. Austere and withdrawn, yet somehow familiar, someone or something had brushed up against his thoughts while he slept.

As he opened his heart he instantly felt the dominant – though not cruel – presence in his mind.


Father. Skywalker looked around the room to gain his bearings. He noted that he was completely unrestrained, no binders, chains, or Force-inhibitors anywhere in sight. The chamber was cold and dark with only a few dim running lights lining the floor. Vader was clearly not in the room with him.

Dizziness suddenly washed over the Jedi and he clutched his head as he collapsed back onto the durasteel slab. He took a deep breath to steady himself as a sickening aura draped over him like an icy shroud. There was something evil nearby and its tension was pulsing through the Force like a coiled serpent ready to strike. Luke squeezed his eyes shut trying to block out the horrible feeling.

He heard Vader once more. Son. There is no escape. You must be strong.

Their communion was interrupted as the cell door slid open. Sinister, crushing power flowed into the room, filling every corner, as the Emperor stepped down the stairs.
“It’s good to see you awake,” Sidious said pleasantly as he stood over Skywalker. Mock concern spread over his face as he leaned closer. “Though you look rather ashen. I understand you had lost a considerable amount of blood.”

A cumbersome medical droid waddled gracelessly through the door. The Emperor turned to the machine. “Restraints. And a stimulant, if you please.” He turned back to Luke. “We need your mind sharp, my boy.”

The droid moved surprisingly swiftly despite its bulky form. Holding the Jedi in an iron grip, it activated wrist restraints that secured Luke’s arms to the platform. Then, turning the young man’s head roughly to the side, the droid jabbed a syringe into Skywalker’s neck before the Jedi could resist.

“That will be all,” Sidious dismissed the robot. The machined clattered out of the chamber and closed the cell door behind it leaving Skywalker alone with the dark lord.

Luke was shocked by how quickly the stimulant took effect. He felt it coarse through his veins into his heart then bloom across his chest into the rest of his body. He fought for breath as his heart pounded. Everything felt open and electrified, as though the drug was intensifying his senses, increasing his connection to the energy flowing all around him. It was uncomfortable, painful even, and he inadvertently clenched his jaw against the manic vibrations throbbing through the Force. Luke was determined to prevent the stimulant from undermining his self-control. Though he was disoriented from his injuries, he would do his best to stay true to the Jedi path.

Sidious stood over Skywalker, watching the stimulant take effect. Despite the analeptic, the young man’s eyes showed amazing awareness and control. The Emperor found it amusing to see such determination in one who stood no chance of escape. Sidious was not yet sure what he wanted from Luke, but for now he was content to pry and puncture and dissect the boy’s mind, to see not only what he could discover but to also see what he could corrupt.

Luke looked up at the Emperor towering over him. The dark lord’s face was horrific up close, deformed and pallid with cruel eyes set under a protruding brow. But Sidious’s physical aberration was nothing compared to his harrowing presence in the Force. Luke could feel the evil energy reaching out to him in icy tendrils, wrapping around his wrists and legs and throat. He couldn’t stop his body from shaking as Sidious leaned closer, a repulsive gap-toothed grin spreading across the Sith’s face. To Skywalker’s horror, the Emperor reached out a knobbly, cold hand and grabbed him roughly by the chin. When their skin touched, the sensation was nearly unbearable for the Jedi, like being burned by ice. He tried to pull away but Sidious held him tightly.

Skywalker assumed he would be interrogated, even tortured. He was a leader in the Rebel Alliance after all; he knew base locations, had memorized encryption keys, could reveal the status of all rebel resources, among a number of other Alliance secrets. Luke knew he was a prime catch for the Empire. “I’m not going to tell you anything,” he said defiantly through clenched teeth.

Sidious’s eyes widened in mock surprise. “So bold.” He tightened his grip, causing Luke to wince. “I’m not going to ask you any questions. You will show me everything I want to know.”

Skywalker’s chest tightened with fear as the Emperor’s hand slid up his face, running up into his hair before resting across his brow.

Everything seemed to slow down. Luke could hear the blood rushing through his ears; he could feel the energy hovering between his forehead and the dark lord’s palm; he watched the room dissolved around him as his vision blurred. He clenched his fists nervously, pulling them against the binders that were locked around his wrists.
“Try not to resist,” Sidious said calmly.

Luke felt the dark lord’s fingers tighten, brutally squeezing into his temples, releasing a surge of powerful energy that thrust the Jedi down against the metal slab, his head smacking against the durasteel. Skywalker’s entire body went rigid, paralyzed by excruciating pain as Darth Sidious used the Force to rip into his mind. At first his lungs spasmed, choking him while his veins bulged up through his skin. Then his head felt as though it would split in two. A shrill ringing – like a knife scraping against metal – deafened him, building with every second until he thought his head would burst. Luke couldn’t stop the scream that tore from his throat.

To his surprise, he didn’t die. As the pain peaked Skywalker’s eyes began to burn and his body began to tremble uncontrollably. Sidious dragged him deeper into his subconscious chaos, below the cacophony and into a place that was wind-whipped and tumultuous but not as loud. Luke could not see anything, not in reality and not in his mind’s eye, but he felt the torrent sweep around him. Suddenly, out of the darkness, something appeared in the maelstrom and was pulled toward him unwillingly. The dark lord dragged a memory to the forefront of Luke’s mind and forced the young man to acknowledge it.

A child, on his knees in the sand, bent over and coughing as a smoldering skyhopper burned in the background. He was lucky to be alive and he remembered wanting to cry with relief when he saw Aunt Beru come running around the canyon wall. He was scared and needed her comfort. But as she went to scoop him up Uncle Owen stopped her. “Leave him, Beru. If he can’t see the importance of what he’s got, then he doesn’t deserve your mothering.”

The memory caused a dull ache in Luke’s heart. He had been stupid and reckless. Owen was right; he didn’t appreciate how poor they were and how much his uncle had sacrificed to pay for that skyhopper. He deserved to be punished. But something about that particular memory had always been painful for Luke. Why would anyone withhold affection from a child? He knew his uncle loved him, but in that moment he had felt like an outsider in his own family.

Another memory formed in the stormy edges of his mind. The Emperor saw it and hauled it forward before Luke could hide it away.

He was fourteen and he had disobeyed his uncle, wandering into the Jundland Wastes by himself just to test what he was made of. He had startled some of Jabba’s goons who were out collecting the crime lord’s “water tax.” They beat him to within an inch of his life then left him tied up, unconscious, and propped against the front door of the Lars homestead. Owen found a note pinned to the boy’s tunic that said, “We’ll be back for water or more blood... you decide.”

The ordeal had been humiliating for many reasons, but most of all Luke was ashamed that he’d brought a threat right to his family’s home. He had learned his lesson, had become stronger, stealthier; but the experience had also started a fire burning in his heart, created an intolerance for brutality and injustice. Beru had feared it would make Luke hardhearted, but all it did was increase the boy’s loyalty to his adoptive parents. Nevertheless, Owen was so angry he didn’t speak to his nephew for nearly a week.

Sidious pushed the memory aside and began digging around for something more ruthless. Shame was an adequate negative emotion to play off of, but the dark lord wanted desperation, wanted a torment that was so destructive it had altered Luke’s path forever. Skywalker carried immense pain in his heart, pain that occasionally caused him to make rash, angry decisions. Sidious wanted to know the darkness that hid inside this Jedi’s mind.

Luke had never known such agony; it was both physically and mentally excruciating. He felt the Sith stretch out through the Force, through Luke’s memories, and pry back the mental shroud he kept
wrapped around his heartbreak.

All living creatures suffer loss and heartache; Luke Skywalker was no exception, but instead of becoming hateful and cruel he carefully took the shattered remnants of his life, the most painful moments, and sequestered them in a small corner of his heart. He didn’t forbid himself from acknowledging them, but he tried not to think about them too often – especially while on missions with the Alliance, consciously preventing them from becoming a distraction.

As he saw Sidious approach this sacred space in his heart he began fighting back. Luke squeezed his eyes shut and pulled the Force around his mind, envisioning a solid wall barring the dark lord’s path.

“Very clever,” the Emperor sneered. “But you are no match for me.”

Skywalker felt Sidious’s energy simultaneously enter a different part of his body. Black, oily Force tendrils slowly wrapped around his lungs and began to squeeze the life out of him, crushing him from the inside. Luke choked and gasped, the distraction causing his mental barricade to crumble. The dark lord thrashed forward, releasing Skywalker’s lungs but plunging into the darkest corner of the young Jedi’s heart.

Slowly, the horrors began to bob to the surface, memories Luke wished he could forget. He recognized them as profoundly formative moments in his life that had made him into the man he was today, but he had no wish to relive them.

*Two corpses sprawled across the sand. No, not even corpses. Nothing remained but blackened bone and melted sinews. The homestead burned in the background, plumes of ash and smoke rising up into the hot desert air. He hadn’t been there to protect them; they had died alone and afraid. What horrible weapon had the stormtroopers used to vaporize his family? Owen and Beru were all he had. He and his uncle had bickered the night before. Luke hadn’t had a chance to apologize.*

“Orphaned a second time,” Sidious sighed. This was the kind of memory he desired. He could feel the deep-rooted grief rising up from Luke. Loss, helplessness, and self-loathing filled Skywalker’s heart, but the dark lord sensed that no emotion was greater than compassion. The boy, years later, still worried that his family had suffered, that they had been afraid in their final moments. Sidious could feel that the young man would have given anything to rescue his aunt and uncle.

Luke tried to breathe through the torment as his body trembled uncontrollably. He felt sick, his stomach roiling while his flesh burned feverishly. The Emperor’s grip tightened and Skywalker’s face was dragged closer to Sidious. Luke could feel the dark lord bend down, the Sith’s lips hovering next to his cheek. The young man’s breathing became panicked.

The Emperor couldn’t help but relish in the tortured sensations radiating from the Jedi through the Force. “Shhh,” he whispered. “Don’t let your fear get the better of you.”

Sidious gathered his powers and slowly began to filter them into Skywalker’s body, pouring them into his head, working them down into the boy’s chest. “What other memories are you hiding in there?”

A cold, thick pall muddled Luke’s senses. The Emperor’s darkness pressed him down from head to toe, paralyzing him. Everything became very still and quiet as ice bloomed across Skywalker’s nerves. Sidious, his hand remaining cupped over the young man’s forehead, closed his eyes and concentrated.

Luke’s mind was still self-aware but he was immobilized, completely under the dark lord’s control. “Please let me go,” he whispered.
“Not yet,” the Sith replied. Once more he forced his way into Skywalker’s mind. There was something specific he wanted to see. He thrashed around until he found the exact memory.

“Obi-Wan never told you what happened to your father.”

“He told me enough. He told me you killed him.”

“No. I am your father.”

“No. No, that’s not true. That’s impossible.”

“Search your feelings. You know it to be true.”

Fathomless horror consumed Skywalker. How could this monster be his father? Vader had murdered Luke’s family and Obi-Wan Kenobi, he had tortured Leia, and he had imprisoned Han in carbonite. He had ruined or hurt everything Luke held dear.

But deep down Skywalker knew it was true. He could feel something familiar in the man that loomed over him. Why hadn’t Obi-Wan told him the truth? Why hadn’t Yoda? They had sent him to the Death Star hoping he would kill his own father. How could that be the Jedi way?

“Luke, you can destroy the Emperor. He has foreseen this. It is your destiny. Join me, and together we can rule the galaxy as father and son. Come with me, it is the only way.”

Sidious suddenly release Luke, letting the Jedi fall back heavily against the durasteel panel. He froze for a moment, considering what he had just seen in Skywalker’s memory. Was Vader planning to overthrow him with this boy? He filed this nugget of information away for later use.

Luke gasped for breath, grateful to be alone in his mind once more. He turned his head away and sucked in great gulps of air. His entire body felt like it was vibrating, ringing like a high-pitched meditation bell. He closed his eyes and tried to center himself. Sidious was far more powerful than he had ever imagined. Luke knew living beings could connect using the Force but he had not known one person could sift through another’s mind without permission. He felt nauseous and exhausted; he suspected he might have passed out if not for the stimulants the droid had administered.

When Skywalker opened his eyes again the dark lord was staring down at him, his gaze hard and unreadable. Sidious reached out and wiped sweat off Luke’s brow with a finger. “You did well,” he said quietly. He crossed his hands in front of his robe. “Your pain is so different from your father’s.”

This comment startled Luke; it had not occurred to him that the Emperor would use this as an opportunity to compare him to Vader.

“Anakin Skywalker was paralyzed by fear, specifically crippled by a fear of loss. So much so that he was willing to do anything to outmatch death.”

Luke’s eyes grew wide with surprise. The mechanical creature he had come to know as Darth Vader showed no signed of sentimentality and seemingly had nothing worth losing.

“You, however,” Sidious continued, “your pain comes from loneliness. Orphaned and left with distant, unaffectionate relatives that never really wanted you. Divided from your friends as a youth on gods-forsaken-Tatooine because you were never quite like any of them. Alienated from your fellow rebels because you are trained in the ways of the Force – a burden you carry all on your own.”

This depressing analysis of his life made Skywalker’s heart sink in his chest.
The Emperor’s brow arched with amusement. “And, even worse, you have been used by the people you trusted most, misled by the mentors you held in such high regard. Your masters lied to you, my boy. They used you for their own purposes, letting you fight your own father, hoping you would kill him, without telling you the truth.” Sidious couldn’t suppress his cackle. “Young fool. You are purposeless; the Jedi left you to teach yourself, left you neither doctrine nor guidance. It is because of the Jedi that you never had a family – at least not the one you were meant to have. Even now you are adrift with no home, no family, moving forward with a heart full of doubt.” The dark lord enjoyed the look of defeat that crossed Skywalker’s brow.

Luke couldn’t deny that he had been lonely his entire life, that he had felt betrayed and adrift. But, like almost everyone else, the Emperor misjudged him. “I have no need of a home,” he said defiantly. “I learned long ago that home is carried in your heart. And I do have a family.” He thought of his sister wrapping her arms around him, of Han’s crooked smile, and of Chewie’s unbreakable loyalty. “Nothing you do can take that away from me.” It was hard to feel defiant while tied down to a durasteel slab, but Luke knew the truth in his heart, and he wanted to wipe that stupid smirk off Sidious’s hideous face. “I give myself purpose,” he said obstinately. “Unlike you, I have a conscience.”

The Emperor was silent for a long time, rage flashing through his putrid eyes. “You are brave to say such things to me. It shows confidence, even arrogance, that you are not afraid to lose what you have.”

Luke clenched his jaw defiantly, ready to accept the consequences of his words.

It was Sidious’s turn to put the Jedi in his place. “Do you know the reason you were taken from your family, why you were never allowed to know your father?”

Skywalker was once again surprised by the dark lord’s comments. He honestly did not know why he had been delivered to his aunt and uncle on Tatooine. Owen had always refused to tell him the story.

“It was because of the man you idolize. Because of Obi-Wan Kenobi.”

“You’re lying.”

“I tell you nothing but truth,” the dark lord said casually. “Kenobi butchered your father, leaving him for dead, then took you away from your mother to be raised in hiding.”

Skywalker was horrified. “That can’t be true.”

“I can even show you how it happened.”

As the Emperor reached for him, Luke tried to twist away. “No,” he nearly moaned. The thought of having the Dark Lord of the Sith in his head again was unbearable. “Please no…”

Sidious ignored him. The second time around was far more brutal. The Emperor grabbed Luke’s face, wrenching it to the side and pressing him hard against the metal slab. He easily smashed his way through the young man’s mental defenses and immediately forced him to watch the death of Anakin Skywalker.

*Obi-Wan Kenobi stood on a precarious rocky slope that spilled down into a river of magma. He was sweating, clearly exhausted, his hair blowing in his eyes and his clothes singed. His chest was heaving with exertion. “It’s over, Anakin. I have the high ground.”*

*Skywalker stood on a hovercraft floating over the lava flow several yards away from Kenobi. There was pure rage burning in his eyes. “You underestimate my power,” he shouted angrily.*
Kenobi knew what was about to happen. “Don’t try it,” he pleaded.

Anakin ignored him, leaping high into the air, attempting to summersault over his ex master. In his fury, Skywalker had forgotten Obi-Wan’s singular understanding of this kind of attack. Kenobi had used it himself in a duel against Darth Maul. His opponent hadn’t seen it coming and Obi-Wan was able to utilize the weakness, cutting Maul in half at the waist. In the months that followed the fight, Kenobi made a diligent effort to analyze his own offense and develop a counterattack. He was perfectly trained to both execute and defend against this kind of assault.

With a precise flourish of his blade, and spinning quickly on his bracing foot, Obi-Wan Kenobi severed Anakin Skywalker’s left arm and both his legs before the young Sith’s body even hit the ground.

Skywalker smashed into the volcanic soil, screaming in agony, tumbling down the slope toward the molten river. Kenobi looked thoroughly disgusted. He made no effort to help the young man who lay clawing at the ground, crying in pain.

“You were the chosen one!” Obi-Wan screamed. “It was said that you would destroy the Sith, not join them!” The Jedi’s heartbreak was all-consuming, his emotions barely controlled. “Bring balance to the Force, not leave it in darkness.” Kenobi scooped up Skywalker’s lightsaber and turned to leave.

As Anakin slipped further down the incline, heat from the deadly magma began to creep up behind him. “I hate you!” he screamed, tears streaming down his face. Suddenly, his body caught fire as he slid to the lava’s edge, flames leaping up his back, quickly consuming every inch of him.

Obi-Wan just stared down at him, neither coming to his aid nor putting him out of his misery. After a moment the Jedi turned and walked away, leaving Anakin to suffer alone. Skywalker lay there slowly dying until the Emperor arrived with a medical transport to rescue him.

Luke writhed under Sidious’s touch. The visions were horrible. He could feel every emotion swirling in his father’s heart. This couldn’t be how it happened.

Obi-Wan would never have been so ruthless.

Vader would never have been so helpless.

The Emperor carefully selected the moments he wanted the young Jedi to see, leaving out whatever he felt was inconvenient. Luke’s compassionate nature made him vulnerable to the intense exchange, leading him to scream in pain along with his father. Sidious could feel tears under his palm as Luke became overwrought with emotions. He slowly released Skywalker and withdrew from the trembling boy. Luke clenched his jaw against the feelings that suffocated him. He didn’t want to accept what he had just seen. Obi-Wan and his father had suffered so much. How could men who had been friends fall so far from each other? Luke could not stop the tears that slipped down his temples, his chest heaving as he tried to get himself under control.

The dark lord disdainfully wiped Skywalker’s tears. “We’ve had a fine start, my boy.”

Luke turned his head away.

Sidious smiled. “That will be all for now.” He released the binds around Skywalker’s wrists then exited the chamber, leaving Luke to contemplate Obi-Wan Kenobi’s betrayal.
NEXT CHAPTER: Luke needs to know the truth, even if he won't like it. There's only one place he can turn.

Thank you for reading!

Kudos and comments are very welcome!

Much love!
Chapter 3

Chapter Summary

Luke is trying to come to terms with the horrible things Sidious showed him.

Chapter Notes

Hope people are enjoying this story... somehow... lol!

I know it's a bit of a departure from my usual Obi-Wan........

.......But I need more dreamboat Luke Skywalker in my life right now......

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Luke didn’t move for a long time. He lay there, staring up at the cell ceiling, as his brain tried to make sense of everything he had just learned. His heart felt heavy, burdened by watching his father suffer. The shame Sidious had forced him to relive was nothing; the memories stung at first but after a little while their power over him dissipated. He wasn’t a boy any more; he had developed emotional distance and a mature perspective that had begun to serve him well. Revisiting his own sad past was difficult, but the memories were his; he wasn’t afraid of them because they belonged to him.

But his father…

What had transpired between Vader and Obi-Wan was something Luke could not understand. Ben had always seemed so kind and protective, often speaking of the Jedi path, of honor and duty. How could a man who had devoted his life to a higher power simply stand there and watch his friend burn to death? How could that gentle old man be the same Jedi who dismembered Anakin Skywalker?

Luke thought about how Obi-Wan had leaned down and picked up Anakin’s lightsaber, dragging the beautiful hilt out of the obsidian gravel as he turned his back on his ex apprentice.

*Your father wanted you to have this when you were old enough.*

Luke squeezed his eyes shut as the memory made his heart twist.

Had Obi-Wan told him the truth about anything? *From a certain point of view.*

Holding his father’s lightsaber for the first time had changed Luke. The weapon had felt alive, like the kyber crystal humming at its center was somehow tied to his heart. Luke had felt drawn to it, or maybe it was drawn to him. The hilt felt sacred, like some sort of holy relic. He could sense his father’s residual energy as he turned the lightsaber over in his hands.

*I hate you!*
Luke shook his head. He had to stop thinking in circles. The stimulants he’d been injected with were gradually starting to wear off but he was far too distracted to rest. He decided to try another approach. Luke pushed himself up, slowly stretching his stiff muscles. He winced and placed a hand on his back. The vibrospear wound was still healing. Though the medical droid had fused it shut to stop the bleeding, it was very sore. Luke sat cross-legged on the durasteel slab and leaned back against the wall. He took several deep breaths and gently stretched his neck. Meditation would help calm his mind. He centered himself and closed his eyes.

*What if all this was a lie created by Sidious?* he immediately thought. *Why am I taking the word of a Sith over the word of a Jedi?*

Luke shook his head again. *You’re supposed to be meditating, remember?* he chastised himself. He took another deep breath and tried again.

The dim running lights lining the cell floor suddenly went out, plunging the young Jedi into complete darkness. “Great,” he muttered sarcastically. The cell was freezing cold, he hadn’t eaten for days, and now he couldn’t see a thing. *Use it to your advantage, idiot.* Luke snorted to himself in the dark. “Good idea.”

He closed his eyes and tried to clear his thoughts. He reached out with his feelings and let the absence of light press in against him, wrapping around him like a cloak. For a moment Luke enjoyed lovely silence.

*Ben lied to me about Vader.* His internal conflict flared to life instantly. *Neither he nor Yoda told me the truth. They let me fight Vader – hoped I would kill him – and never once thought I should know that he was my father.*

Frustration got the better of Luke and he slammed his elbow into the wall behind him. Quieting his mind for meditation seemed nearly impossible; his emotions were far too complex to process all at once. He methodically rubbed his temples before pushing his fingers up into his hair, letting his palms rest over his eyes.

Who was the liar?

*I must know.*

He knew what he had to do.

Luke took another deep breath and exhaled slowly. He closed his eyes and let his feelings extend into the Force, reaching from his heart out into living energy that surrounded him. It did not take long for him to find what he was looking for.

*Father.*

*Son.*

Luke could sense that Vader had become very still on the other end of their bond. The Sith had not expected his son to reach out to him. Skywalker paused, realizing he wasn’t exactly sure what to ask.

*I sensed a great disturbance in the Force, Vader said. You were in terrible pain earlier.*

*Yes.* Luke swallowed thickly then soldiered on, his chest tight and nervous. *There’s something I must ask you.*

Vader did not respond but Luke could sense he was still listening.
The Emperor showed me something… something horrible.

The Sith remained silent.

A confrontation between you… and Obi-Wan Kenobi.

Luke felt Vader’s anger crackle across their connection, sending a chill up the young man’s spine. Skywalker wasn’t sure why but he was suddenly overwhelmed by his own feelings. His heart sank and he fought to breathe through the emotional swell. He felt so lost, so betrayed, so adrift. He knew Vader could sense all his feelings, but Luke was too tired and angry to care.

Is it true? He couldn’t keep his rage at bay any longer. Did Obi-Wan leave you for dead? Did he mutilate your body and then turn his back on you?

The Sith was surprise by his son’s fury, by his compassion. Terrible conflict battled inside Luke.

Is Obi-Wan the reason you’re in that horrible suit?

There was silence between them for a long time. When Vader responded he only spoke the truth.

Yes.

He could feel his son’s devastation.

Tears slipped down Luke’s cheeks. His mentor had betrayed him in so many ways. How could he ever trust any of his teachings now? And his poor father had suffered unfathomable anguish. How could a man ever turn back from such a traumatic ordeal?

Do not pity me, Vader said almost angrily. Pity and compassion leave you vulnerable.

Luke disagreed. In a moment of surprising clarity he realized that he pitied all of them – the Emperor, Vader, Obi-Wan. They were blind to each other’s pain and that made them compassionless and single-minded. It narrowed their view of the Force and prevented them from seeing the power of truth.

Vader was shocked by the boy’s quick recovery and emotional fortitude. For a single instant he was reminded of his wife.

The Sith quickly changed the subject. Is the Emperor aware of our connection?

I… I don’t know.

Vader wondered how much Skywalker had revealed during his interrogation. The Sith knew his position with his master was precarious at best. Sidious had forbidden him from being present during Luke’s questioning. The dark lord didn’t trust him.

You must rest, son. Clear your mind. The Emperor will come for you again soon.

Luke let their connection fall away. Knowing the truth didn’t make him feel better, but at least he could say there wasn’t hatred in his heart. He certainly felt disappointed, bitter, and heartbroken, but he was relieved to realize he did not hate anyone.

He bent his legs up and rested his forehead on his knees. Wrapping his arms around his abdomen he let the darkness envelop him, mindful of his breathing until he fell asleep.
NEXT CHAPTER: Round 2 with the dark lord... What will he want from Luke this time?

Thank you for reading!

Kudos and comments are very welcome!

Much love!
Chapter 4

Chapter Summary

Luke faces a second session with the Sidious. Even Vader is surprised by what happens.

Chapter Notes

Thank you to everyone for reading and leaving comments! I appreciate you all so much!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Luke woke suddenly in the darkness. The room was pitch black but he could sense that he was not alone. His eyes could not adjust; no light penetrated the umbra surrounding him. He could not even see his hand in front of his face.

But in the far corner, opposite the cell door, was a sinister energy. Someone was standing there, concealing their presence, trying to subdue their discoverability in the Force.

Skywalker reached out a hand as his breathing increased to a panic. “Who’s there?”

Something cold wrapped around his wrist and coiled slowly up his arm.

Luke froze before he had a chance to withdraw in horror, gasping as his lungs became paralyzed with the rest of his body. Whatever had him in its grasp took hold of his other wrist, then each leg, then his throat, until his entire body was completely entangled in its clutches. As his breath rasped in and out, Skywalker realized what felt like stinging tentacles from some ghastly creature was actually dark energy wrapping around him.

“You were so peaceful while you slept, my boy.” Sidious slid forward through the darkness.

Though he could not see, Luke could sense the Emperor standing right in front of him. The dark lord tightened his grip around the Jedi, the paroxysm causing Skywalker to shake violently, his teeth audibly chattering. The Dark Side of the Force felt like shattered glass, like rusty barbed wire, like rot and decay, and it was twisted around every inch of his body. Sidious had taken him completely by surprise, wresting control from the young man before he had a chance to fight back. Luke sat there, totally powerless against the Sith lord.

“I have a minor curiosity that I think you can help me with, an experiment of sorts.” The Emperor was only inches away from Skywalker, leaning in, feeding off the boy’s fear. “I have never tried this before, but I believe your raw power and your natural empathy will make you the perfect conduit for what I would like to attempt.” He took a quick read of Luke’s aura before speaking again. “Let’s make you more comfortable before we begin.”

With a quick gesture the Emperor used the Force to lay Skywalker on his back across the durasteel berth, then he activated the wrist restraints. “For your own protection, of course,” he lied. “Now, my boy, clear your mind, think of nothing but empty darkness, and try to relax.”
The request was almost laughable considering Luke’s discomfort. The Emperor’s power was intense and suffocating, constricting around every limb. Skywalker would have scoffed if he had been able to speak. He felt Sidious’s hand reach out for him, hovering just over the Jedi’s face.

“Calm yourself,” the dark lord soothed.

A single finger touched the center of Skywalker’s forehead.

“Just relax…”

An energy bolt drove strait into Luke’s mind like an arrow loosed from a bow. His eyes became wide and his shoulders arched, lifting his chest slightly forward as his head rolled back.

At first there was nothing but pain; however, after a moment, images began to form in the distance. A pinprick of light grew into a blinding, burning sun; and at the center of this sun was a writhing, charred dragon.

All things die, Anakin Skywalker. Even stars burn out.

The light snuffed out and nothing but shadows remained. Ghosts swirled by that looked as though they were dipped in soot, skidding past like smudges on paper.

Luke could feel rage, anxiety, and fear, all with an undercurrent of crushing grief. But none of the feelings were his. He did not understand what he was experiencing.

They’re like animals and I slaughtered them like animals. I hate them!

You will not take her from me!

Your powers are weak, old man.

Vision after vision sped by so quickly Luke barely had time to see their outlines before they disappeared. He felt Sidious’s darkness holding him down as the presence in his mind became overwhelming.

Then, suddenly, incredible power rose up out of the chaos, a third consciousness overflowing with harrowing disbelief and a deep sense of betrayal.

Finally Luke understood.

The Emperor was using him as a conduit, a means by which to infiltrate Vader’s mind, expertly manipulating the Force bond between father and son.

Skywalker could feel that Vader was enraged by the violation, scarcely believing that the dark lord would dare breach his mind. But neither Jedi nor Sith could muster defenses against the remote attack.

Sidious pressed forward, refusing to release his control over either Luke or Vader. He wanted information and he would not be denied. Show me, he instructed his apprentice, the moment you learned of the boy. How long have you known?

The Sith could not resist his master. An image appeared of Vader as he stood on the deck in his private chambers aboard his command ship, his helmet gleaming in the narrow starlight as his respirator loudly echoed in the barren room. A bounty hunter in battered Mandalorian armor stood just behind the dark lord.
"I lost him." Boba Fett admitted.

Vader did not turn around. “That is most disappointing.”

“He got lucky.”

“Did you bring me anything of value, bounty hunter?”

“Not much. Just his name. Skywalker.”

Even in his constricted state Luke felt a shiver rattle up his spine. The Emperor seemed most displeased and Skywalker could feel the dark lord’s rage coiling tightly deep in his center.

Sidious forced his apprentice to reveal more.

Vader now stood alone, staring out a massive viewport, his rage cresting out from him in waves, causing the glass to fissure and chip.

“I have a son. He will be mine. It will all be mine.”

The vision instantly ripped in half, renting from the bottom all the way to the top. Luke wasn’t sure whether Vader or Sidious was to blame, but the bifurcated memory dissolved and unfathomable anger surged up in both Sith to take its place. Skywalker had never experienced such asphyxiating fury; he felt powerful and devastated all at once. In that moment, as the Lord of the Sith fed off him like a parasite and allowed the young Jedi to experience the inner workings of a Sith mind, Luke knew he would rather be dead than live with such anger in his heart. The Sith ethos was toxic; it drained living Force from the pure in order to perpetuate the twisted corruption of the power-hungry.

Luke heard Sidious’s voice seethe through his mind. Betrayer! After all I’ve given you, after all the power and the position, you were going to use this boy to destroy me?

Skywalker felt Vader bristle as he openly spoke to his master for the first time. Your plan was to kill me and force my son to take my place. I was merely forming a defensive contingency as protection against your own betrayal.

Liar.

The boy means nothing to me.

There was silence for a long moment.

Is that so? Sidious finally asked.

The Emperor suddenly released Luke’s mind and the young man collapsed back coughing and gasping violently for air as his connection with Vader went dark. The Sith’s Force tentacles were still twined around Skywalker’s limbs and they tightened to an almost unbearable level. Sidious bent down and spoke quietly into Luke’s ear.

“You have been your father’s downfall time and again. You are his weakness, my boy.”

Luke jumped, still blind in the dark, as a cold, rough hand swept across his face, pushing his sweaty hair off his brow. The Sith’s touch had all the warmth of an animated corpse and all the comfort of a predator. Luke tried to pull away but Sidious took a fistful of his hair with one hand and gripped his cheek with the other.

“He claims to have no feelings for you,” the Emperor said, his voice low and sinister. “And you
believe there is still good in him, something you can redeem.”

Fear clenched in Luke’s chest. He couldn’t move an inch, his wrists still secured to the berth and his limbs immobilized by the Sith’s power. But what scared him more was Sidious’s rising anger. Vader had enraged his master and now Skywalker feared he would be the one to pay the price.

“Let’s see if what your father says is true.” The Emperor tightened his grip. He had grown tired of his own game; rage filled his heart and now all he wanted was to make both Skywalkers suffer. Torture for torture’s sake was uncomplicated. He would allow himself this simple pleasure. “Vader will feel every inch of your pain. And you… you will finally know the truth about Anakin Skywalker.”

Sidious’s fingertips pressed against Luke’s skull and white-hot pain instantly bloomed across the young man’s mind, his entire body constricting with agony. He heard screaming, heard someone suffering horrendous torment, but he wasn’t sure if the sounds were made by him or were merely inside his consciousness.

“Stop! Stop now! Come back! I love you.”

A beautiful young lady was desperately pleading with a dark knight. Tears streamed down her cheeks but her companion was unmoved, his rage-filled eyes cold and ruthless.

“Liar!” he screamed in her face. He reached out with the Force and took her by the throat, crushing the life from her and her unborn children.

Luke’s blood turned to ice in his veins. My mother…

He knew it was his mother though he’d never seen her. She had Leia’s eyes.

Anakin’s fury was all-consuming. He was blind to his actions, guided by hatred. His lip curled slightly as he squeezed his wife’s throat a little tighter.

“No…” Luke was horrified. He tried to twist out of the Emperor’s grasp. He didn’t want to see anymore. “Please stop…”

“You can’t run from the truth, boy,” Sidious said, holding him in place.

They were in a medical ward, a black room filled with droids and pain and blood. Anakin was sprawled across a surgical slab, his body cut to pieces and burned beyond recognition. He screamed and flailed his one remaining arm as prosthetics were fused to his damaged limbs. One piece at a time Anakin Skywalker disappeared into Darth Vader’s suit until nothing remained of the Jedi hero.

“Lord Vader, can you hear me?” Chancellor Palpatine asked.

“Yes, Master.” The emotionless mask turned. “Where is Padme? Is she safe? Is she all right?”

“It seems, in your anger, you killed her.”

“No, please…” Luke pleaded. The truth couldn’t be this terrible. “You’re lying!” he suddenly shrieked, his voice becoming hoarse and brittle.

Sidious paused, struck by the desperation in the boy’s cry. Something had changed in Skywalker; he had slipped from nervous and defiant into frantic and overstrung. The young man’s nerves were near breaking point, snapping erratically like a frayed wire. The Sith smiled to himself as a thought crept
into his brain; if he could break the boy, make him desperate enough, he might yet be turned to the Dark Side. Skywalker had shown considerable willpower and self-control. He was still a worthy apprentice, far stronger physically than Vader and unmatched in potential.

Sidious loosened his grasp on Luke’s hair and face, a plan forming quickly in his mind. He would have to change his approach. “Too much of this and I risk damaging you,” the dark lord whispered conciliatorily, running his thumb over the young man’s brow. “I have no wish to cause you permanent harm.”

If the boy were physically up to the challenge, Sidious would be able to satisfy both his vengeance on Vader and his corruption of Skywalker. The method he had in mind was crude but efficient; however, he would need time to prepare and arrange the required catalyst.

He leaned over Luke, their faces only inches apart. “I will return shortly, my boy. In my absence a droid will come to prepare you for our next session. But first…”

Luke’s relief at having the Dark Lord of the Sith out of his head was short lived as an equally horrible abuse began. Ice-cold Force tendrils pressed through his chest and slowly wrapped around his heart and lungs. They slipped into his veins and pulsed through his blood before seeping into his muscles. It felt as though Sidious occupied every cell in his body.

“I must assess your physical state. I have no wish to waste my time on an unworthy creature.”

Luke’s eyes rolled back in his head, every inch of his body strained with pain. His blood vessels felt as though they had hardened and turned to crystal. He fleetingly wondered if it was possible for a human to shatter.

After several long moments the Sith slowly withdrew from the Jedi. “You are exhausted but well enough to survive,” he concluded. “Rest, young Skywalker. You will need all your strength for what is to come.”

Without another word the Emperor exited, leaving Luke still cuffed to the durasteel slab in the darkness, the cell door slamming shut behind him.

Chapter End Notes

NEXT CHAPTER: Sidious makes a final attempt to turn Luke to the Dark Side.

Thank you for reading!

Kudos and comments are very welcome!

Much love!
Chapter 5

Chapter Summary

Darth Vader's inner conflict is starting to get the better of him, but will it come too late as Sidious uses a nasty trick in a final attempt to destroy Luke's faith in his father?

Chapter Notes

Aaaah it's been so long since I've updated.

I'll be honest, I'm losing steam on this story...

...In truth, I'm losing steam on writing in general.

Any who, just a warning, there is torture in this chapter (lord, what is wrong with me???). Not a lot but a little bit. Sorry (or not)... Is that what you're here for :) I don't know! LOL!

Vader was formulating a plan.

He sat in his private chambers patiently thinking through all the possibilities. The Emperor clearly no longer trusted him. Perhaps for good reason.

The Sith lord was surprised by his own internal conflict. He had killed more living beings than he could count; he represented the Emperor’s unwavering presence in the galaxy; he had betrayed and hunted down his Jedi brethren. But over the last few months all this confidence and power seemed to falter; and all because something profound happened to him when he was near his son.

He felt…

…compassion.

When they first met on Bespin he had only selfish reasons for tempting the boy to the Dark Side. He truly had wished to overthrow the Emperor and he would need another strong Force wielder to make it possible. His own flesh and blood would be the perfect adjuvant for destroying the most powerful dark lord that ever lived.

But, during their second confrontation, several days ago as they dueled in the Emperor’s throne room, Vader felt something yield in his icy heart. Over and over Luke refused to engage, insisting that he would rather die than turn to the Dark Side. Something about the boy’s interminable empathy and his willingness to forgive rattled Vader’s self-control. Luke, his son, was so much like Padme Amidala. He wondered what, if anything, Skywalker knew about the mother he never met.

When the Emperor took Luke captive Vader had assumed he would be used to help interrogate the young Jedi, but it quickly became clear that Sidious wanted to keep them separated. After his
master’s devious infiltration, using Luke to access Vader’s mind, the Sith understood that the Emperor’s intentions had not altered; at the end of this conflict either Vader would kill Luke and maintain his position or Luke would kill Vader and become Sidious’s slave.

The thought of his son suffering such a miserable fate made Vader’s heart tighten. He knew what it meant to serve a Sith master; Luke would know power, deference, and position, but deep down he would be a creature on a leash, constantly negotiating through manipulation, corruption, and power-plays. It was a dull, exhausting, crippling existence and Vader realized he could not let Luke fall into Sidious’s trap. His only options were to defeat Skywalker or betray his master.

Luke’s nerves took a long time to settle. He struggled to empty the pain from his mind, reaching into the black void surrounding him, using the battle station’s incessant mechanical hum to focus his concentration. He went inch by inch through his body, starting with his feet and working his way up, mindfully willing himself to relax, deliberately ignoring the emotional torrent threatening to rear up in his consciousness. The Emperor had shown him horrors he could never have imagined, yet he knew dwelling on the fear would do him no favors. So he took his time, forcing himself to live only in the current moment.

When his focus finally reached the top of his head, Luke’s body felt heavy and empty. He allowed the Death Star hum to completely swallow him while he focused on the sensation of his palms pressed flat against the durasteel slab. Yoda had not been a complimentary or effusive master, but he had been impressed with Luke’s meditation skills. Despite his young restlessness, Skywalker craved inner control. He knew the difference between a young boy’s desire for action and a mature man’s confidence in his abilities. With Yoda’s guidance, Luke quickly learned that true power came from self-control – not the ability to control others – and from valuing patience, from reading the Force and allowing it to guide you.

He didn’t know how much time passed but he was startled from his respite when the cell door swished open and a 2-1B medical droid stood silhouetted against the external corridor’s light. Its eerie yellow eyes glowed in the darkness as it approached Skywalker. Without hesitation it pressed an applicator to the young man’s neck and depressed the plunger, administering a syrette directly into the vein. Seconds later the droid was gone.

Luke wasn’t sure what had been administered but after only a few moments he felt certain it was another stimulant. He was desperately tired, feeling almost crazed with exhaustion, and all he wanted was to shut down and rest. But now his blood vessels opened and his heart rate began to increase as the analeptic crept through his body, tensing his muscles. His throat became dry as his chest tightened.

Just make it stop, he thought piteously. He immediately reproached himself. He couldn’t start thinking that way. The moment he gave in to desperation was the moment he would lose control. Whatever happened he needed to stay mindful.

The Force suddenly became cold and prickly, causing him to wince. The Emperor was near.

The door swished open again and Sidious stepped into the oppressive cell, his robes billowing around him. He wasted no time asserting his dominance, allowing his presence in the Force to flood the room as he ran a cursory evaluation of Luke’s state. The young man’s energy was flaring to life,
brought to an unnatural level by the stimulant coursing through his blood. He was primed.

Sidious moved aside, permitting a new droid to roll through the door on a single large wheel. Luke could barely make out the durasteel monstrosity in the darkness; it had two long, jointed arms with claws at the ends, multiple red glowing photoreceptors, and a large arsenal of sinister looking tools. The T0-D interrogator droid rolled forward and positioned itself near Skywalker’s head, its claws suspended just over his face.

“Begin,” Sidious said to the droid.

Instantly, one of the claws retracted and was replaced with a glaring white light that the droid shined directly into Luke’s eyes, blinding the young man who had been kept in the dark for days on end. Skywalker cried out, squeezing his eyes shut, reflexively wanting to shield his vision with his hands but his wrists were still restrained.

While Luke’s contracting pupils distracted him with pain, the interrogator droid inserted a long syringe into the Jedi’s upper arm and quickly injected him with a clear liquid. Skywalker tried to jerk away but again was held in place by his restraints.

_Calm down_, Luke tried to soothe himself. The Emperor had anticipated him too well and preempted his ability to protect himself. He tried to take deep breaths and regain control.

“The injection will increase nerve sensitivity and decrease pain suppression,” the droid said with a growling monotone voice that sounded metallic and brittle. “You will feel extreme discomfort.”

Almost on cue Luke felt his senses burn to life as every nerve in his body seemed to swell. His arms and legs went rigid and his hands contracted into twisted claws; his eyes froze open as his lungs struggled for air.

“He is ready, my lord,” the droid addressed the Emperor.

Sidious slowly moved to Luke’s side and once again evaluated the Jedi’s aura. Skywalker’s Force signature was stronger than ever but his body was paralyzed, completely at the Sith’s mercy.

“Forgive these crude methods,” the Emperor said. He did not lean closer; he simply stared down his nose at Skywalker. “They may seem barbaric but they serve their purpose.” He reached out and placed a single finger to the center of Luke’s brow. “I know you think your father can be turned back from the Dark Side, that he harbors some secret sentimentality for you.”

Luke felt heavy pressure on his forehead as the Sith quickly penetrated his mind, harnessing control of the Jedi’s connection to the Force. It happened so fast Luke could do nothing to stop it.

“In truth, my boy,” Sidious continued. “Lord Vader has come here to interrogate you.”

The room seemed to go blurry. Luke blinked to clear his vision and as his eyes opened again the Emperor was gone, replaced by Vader.

“You will tell me every detail of your Jedi training – who trained you, where, for how long, every lesson and every method,” the Sith lord said, his mechanical breathing loudly echoing in the cramped cell.

Luke’s mind swirled with confusion while his body vibrated with drug-induced energy. “Father,” the young man gasped. “Help me.”

“With Obi-Wan dead, who was left to train you?” Vader asked, ignoring his son’s plea.
“Father...”

“Answer the question or this droid will make you suffer.”

Skywalker stared up into the vacant mask that hid his father’s true face. He reached out with the Force, but unlike in the past, there was no conflict, no call to the light within Anakin. Something had changed in Vader; Luke only felt ice-cold darkness.

“I will not ask again.”

Luke defiantly clenched his jaw. He would not betray the Alliance and he certainly would not betray the Jedi.

Vader nodded to the T0-D interrogator unit. The droid held up a talon that automatically split into half a dozen distinct segments that were sharp as needles. It proceeded to insert each segment one at a time directly into several of Skywalker’s inflamed nerve endings. At first the young Jedi choked back his agony, but after several needles were inserted into his neck and fingers, a scream tore from his throat.

The Sith Lord leaned over him. When he spoke his voice was uncharacteristically gentle. “You must have had a master, Luke.” He reached out and placed a hand on the young man’s forehead. “Your master wouldn’t want you to suffer, would he?”

*Anger, fear, aggression, the Dark Side of the Force are they. Easily they flow, quick to join you in a fight.* Skywalker remembered Yoda’s lessons, growled into his ear as the young man ran, jumped, and climbed through the Dagobah swamp.

“Who was your master, Luke? Tell me and I’ll bring him to you.”

The droid pushed each needle deeper into Skywalker’s flesh.

The Jedi’s eyes watered from the intense pain, tears slipping down his temples.

Yoda was dead. Would it do any harm to tell Vader what he wanted to know? “Master...” he breathed. *What should I do?*

“Yes,” Vader urged. “Your master...”

Luke’s vision suddenly cleared as he thought of the wise, ancient Jedi who had trained him. Neither Yoda nor Obi-Wan had been completely honest with him, each picking and choosing the truth that served them best. In the beginning this had made it harder for Luke to find his true path, but eventually he learned how and why his teachers had been so dubious. He forgave them. They were still his masters after all, his teachers, and they deserved his respectful gratitude. They had opened him to the Force in ways he could never have imagined, and though he may not have agreed with all their actions, Luke loved Obi-Wan and Yoda despite their imperfections.

And this was why, even in lieu of everything the Emperor had shown him, he would remain loyal to his teachers.

“Tell me, Luke...”

“No,” Skywalker cutoff the Sith. “I’ll never tell you anything.”

Vader silently stared down at him for what seemed like an eternity. Then he turned to the interrogator droid and said, “Loosen his tongue.” The Sith stepped back into the shadows to watch.
If you're wondering, Luke was injected with the same stuff Vader used on Leia in *A New Hope*. According to the radio drama (which I know is technically not canon anymore but I don't care because I love it!), it makes people susceptible to influence. I didn't come up with this twisted stuff all on my own :)  

NEXT CHAPTER: Vader gets pissed.  

Thank you for reading!  

Kudos and comments are very welcome!  

Much love!
Chapter 6

Chapter Summary

Luke and Vader each make a desperate decision. Sidious is a manipulative bastard (as usual). Someone ends up dead...

Chapter Notes

I WILL FINISH THIS STORY IF IT KILLS ME!!!

We're almost there, people. Closing in on the ending.

Thanks for all your lovely comments and support <3

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Lord Vader, in fact, was not torturing his son.

The Sith was sequestered in his meditation chamber, trying to develop a feasible plan to save Skywalker and remain loyal to his master. Going against Sidious was pure madness; the Sith would never allow Vader to be free.

But how to free Luke?

The connection with his son suddenly crackled to life, though Vader was fairly certain Skywalker was unaware their bond had opened. The young man was screaming, his mind nearly hysterical from the pain ripping through his body. Vader’s hands clenched into iron fists and he fought to remain calm. He felt a large, dark form looming over his son. When it spoke, Vader’s blood ran cold.

You have the power to stop this, Luke, a deep, resonant, mechanical voice urged. You know what I want. Give it to me and the pain stops.

Rage violently flared to life in Vader.

Did the Emperor’s betrayal know no bounds? He had shown the boy Vader’s duel with Kenobi and his brutal treatment of Padme. Now Sidious was subverting Skywalker’s single remaining strand of loyalty to his father; if the boy believed he was being tortured and betrayed by Vader, then the Emperor might finally succeed in turning Luke to the Dark Side.

The Sith leapt to his feet; his master was attempting to destroy him, using his image without consent to torment and enslave his son.

Vader finally knew what he had to do.
Luke didn’t know a person could experience such pain and not die. If not for the drugs coursing through his blood, he would have been completely enervated. He lay on the freezing durasteel slab, his body tense and vibrating like an overloaded power circuit. His right eye was bloody and swollen shut, cuts and bruises were spattered across his cheek and neck and arms and chest, he had burns and lacerations around his wrists and legs, and several of his fingers were broken. The Force was too strong, he could feel too much; all he wanted was to feel nothing. But the interrogator droid had injected him over and over with stimulants and toxins, never letting him rest, never allowing a moment of respite. Luke’s body was exhausted, bloodless, and racked with pain, but his brain was aware, snapping erratically in and out of lucidity, though never drifting off into blessed oblivion.

After what seemed like days, Vader had finally ordered the T0-D unit to cease its interrogation. Neither Vader nor the droid had asked Luke any new questions; all they wanted was information about his Jedi training. When Skywalker refused to answer, the droid made him suffer, carefully moving inch by inch over his body, the toxins in his blood making even the slightest injury seem like fire burning across his nerves. It went on so long he expected the droid’s power reserves to give out. When Vader mercifully gave the order to stop, the T0-D unit simply powered down. For now, the impassive monster was in stand-by mode, but Luke feared the moment it would reactivate.

Vader had left the cell immediately after halting the droid. Skywalker hoped he would not be coming back anytime soon.

Gradually, the injections began to wear off; Luke felt drowsy and his pain dulled from blazing agony to steady discomfort. He heard the cell door whoosh open but was too exhausted to open his eyelids. Even so, the Force told him who approached.

“My boy,” Sidious said placing a hand on the Jedi’s shoulder. “Can you hear me?”

Luke moaned as his head lulled blindly to the side.

The Emperor took Skywalker firmly by the chin and shook him until the young man’s eyes opened. “You must listen to me, Luke. We haven’t much time before your father returns.” Sidious could see the Jedi was struggling to focus so the Sith used the Force to reign in Skywalker’s consciousness. “Can you hear me?”

Luke nodded weakly, his eyes frozen open and his pupils abnormally dilated as he stared up at the Emperor.

“I hate to see you suffer like this, my son,” Sidious soothed, cupping Skywalker’s cheek in his hand. “Are you in pain?”

The young Jedi nodded again.

The Emperor leaned closer. “I can make all the pain go away.”

A desperate flicker passed over Skywalker’s face.

“All this suffering, this cell, this vicious droid will go away if you pledge yourself to me.” Sidious could see that the young Jedi was tempted. He could sense Luke’s desire for mercy, for relief by any means necessary, even for death.

He leaned down and whispered directly into Skywalker’s ear. “Say the words, my boy. Give me your oath.”
Luke’s chest had become so tight he could barely breathe. How could he betray everything he had come to love just to save himself? As he lay there smeared with his own blood, broken and lacerated, sleep-deprived and anxiety-riddled, he knew he was willing to agree to almost anything if only they would show him mercy. He was so exhausted he could barely open his mouth. “Yes…”

The Emperor’s eyes widened with surprise. “You are ready to take your rightful place at my side?”

“Yes,” Skywalker whispered.

Sidious could not believe his ears. He had not imagined, after days of careful mind games, that the Jedi would break in such a quiet, understated moment. It was an unusually subtle victory that would require an immediate proof of loyalty.

“Very well, my young apprentice, your training begins now.” The Sith reactivated the T0-D droid and released Skywalker’s restraints. “Get up.”

Luke tried to lift his head but he was far too exhausted and injured to move. Sidious gestured to the droid, which rolled over and grabbed Skywalker by the collar, dragging him into a sitting position before slamming his back against the wall. Luke swallowed thickly, hardly able to hold his head up, but when he saw the droid coming at him with another syringe he recoiled.

“Just a little something for the pain and to help you focus,” the Emperor said.

The injection worked quickly, bringing Skywalker to his senses. The synthetic energy boost made the young man feel unnatural and agitated. He looked up at the T0-D interrogation droid that had tortured him for countless hours, and without a second thought he reached out with the Force and crushed the machine, crunching it into a pile of twisted metal.

Sidious looked at the young man archly before repressing a slight smile. How interesting, he thought. “Come with me, my boy.”

At first Luke felt shaky on his feet. He followed the Emperor through several corridors until they came to a lift. While they traveled up in the elevator he looked down at his fists. His mechanical hand was still perfectly intact but his left hand had three bruised and swollen broken fingers. Why hadn’t Sidious allowed him to receive medical treatment? He desperately needed it. What was the Emperor playing at? Whatever happened next, Luke was sure it wouldn’t be pleasant. He honestly didn’t care anymore. He would take each moment as it came.

The lift doors opened revealing the Emperor’s throne room.

And standing in the center was Darth Vader. “I have been waiting for you, Master.”

Sidious hesitated for just a second before crossing to his throne. “I was about to call for you. Strange that you have anticipated me.” Luke followed the Emperor and stood at his side.

Vader climbed the staircase and stood before his master and son. He was shocked by Luke’s bloody appearance. The boy’s body was clearly broken and injured but he stood with an unnatural rigidness and his eyes looked wild.

The Emperor steepled his fingertips together as he settled into his chair. “The time has come…”

“You think you’ve won.” Vader cut him off as he moved slowly closer.

“I beg your pardon?”
“Time and again you have forced me to prove my loyalty,” Vader’s voice was controlled rage. “You’ve taken my past, my wife, even my body. What more could you possibly want?”

Sidious leaned forward and casually draped his arms over the throne’s edge. “Youth,” he said simply. He waved a hand at Skywalker. “A young body that is strong and all in one piece.”

Luke inadvertently tightened his mechanical hand. *Not completely in one piece.*

“I want raw power that has not spent over twenty years swallowing Obi-Wan Kenobi’s diatribe.”

*I was once a Jedi knight, the same as your father. He was the best star pilot in the galaxy, and a cunning warrior.* Skywalker blinked the memory away.

“This ends now, old man,” Vader pulled himself up to his full height. “I grow weary of your insolence.”

Sidious stood and pushed Skywalker between himself and Vader. “Very well. But you must go through him to get to me,” he said with an evil grin.

Luke looked at his father, reaching out with the Force to read his aura. He felt the familiar conflict, the flicker of light, the noble heart of Anakin Skywalker. In that moment Luke knew what had to be done, knew that it went against the Jedi Code, knew that what he was about to do was neither passive nor defensive. But as he looked at his father, a man trapped by his master inside a torturous machine, Luke knew he had no choice.

“It’s time you had this back.”

Skywalker turned to see Sidious holding out his lightsaber.

“Take it, my boy. Use it to avenge your mother.”

The young man wrapped his fingers around the familiar hilt. The weapon was a part of him and he felt alive as its energy merged with his. The kyber crystal at its core was beautiful and pure. Luke felt the Force flow through him, filling him with purpose and clarity.

Vader’s right hand hovered over his own lightsaber while his left clenched in a vice-like fist. This was the moment he would avenged his wife, even if it meant his own death. He had never feared his own demise, only the loss of those he loved. And now, for the first time in his life, as he felt his son’s lack of fear, Anakin Skywalker understood that death was not an ending, it was a threshold. He could feel his son’s energy from across the room; Sidious had misjudged his new apprentice. Vader looked at the young man’s sandy-colored hair, his strong shoulders, his unwavering gaze, and all at once the Dark Lord’s fear drained away. His son did not fear death; his son was the embodiment of hope.

“Strike down our enemy,” the Emperor commanded Skywalker. “Prove your loyalty.”

Luke looked into Sidious’s eyes as he took his lightsaber. “Yes, Master.” He instantly ignited the blade and shoved it through the Emperor’s chest.

The Sith’s eyes grew wide with disbelief. *Betrayed for the last time.* Surely, even in death they had underestimated the power of the Dark Side. Sidious’s fingers contorted into a twisted claw and he struggled to lift his hand toward Skywalker’s heart. All he needed was one surge of energy to kill the boy. At least he would take one of these damnable Skywalkers with him.

There was a vibration in the Force as Vader rush up behind Luke; instinctively Skywalker dropped
to the ground just in time as the Dark Lord’s lightsaber swung in an upward arc, lopping Sidious’s head from his body. The Lord of the Sith crumpled into a heap, dead on the throne room floor.

Skywalker rolled to his feet and called his lightsaber into his hand at the same time. He clipped it to his belt and turned to his father. The two men stared at each other for a long time. Each set expectation aside and finally truly understood the other. Luke would never fall to the Dark Side; every fiber of his nature forbid it; his heart would always err on the side of compassion. And Vader could never be a pure Jedi for he had demons that could not be put aside, but he could redeem his place in the Force. Luke had seen this potential long before Vader recognized it in himself. In spite of all their differences, their blood and their family name bound them to each other. It would have to be enough for now.

“You did well,” Vader finally said quietly.

“Thank you, Father.”

“It is done now.”

Luke nodded. “We can’t stay here; we should go.”

Vader eyed his son’s black and blue face and blood soaked clothes. He could feel Luke’s energy beginning to falter. “You are not well.”

Skywalker started down the stairs and headed for the lift. “I’ll be all right.”

Vader took one finally look at his dead master before following his son.

While they stood waiting for the lift car to arrive, Luke reached out and leaned against the wall. He couldn’t get a deep breath. His injuries, not to mention all the toxins in his blood, were beginning to catch up with him.

“Son,” Vader said warily.

“I’m…” Luke took a deep breath and turned toward his father. “I’m all ri…”

The young man’s legs buckled and he collapsed; Vader caught him just in time and eased him to the floor. Skywalker lay senseless, his arms and legs sprawled in all directions as the Dark Lord tried to revive him to no avail. Vader wasn’t sure what exactly was wrong with his son, but it was clear that Skywalker was fading quickly.

The Sith took action; pulling Luke’s right arm around his shoulders he stood and dragged the boy into the lift. He made his way to his personal docking bay where his shuttle waited. Luckily, no one had discovered the Emperor yet; they were able to takeoff and make it to light speed within a matter of minutes.

If Luke was going to live, Vader’s only choice was to reach out to the Rebel Alliance.

Chapter End Notes

NEXT CHAPTER: This story is about to become hurt/comfort between Vader Dad and Luke "A New Hope" Skywalker.
Thank you for reading!

Kudos and comments are very welcome!

Much love!
Chapter 7

Chapter Summary

After 5 days of torture, Luke's strength gives out and his life begins to fade. Vader has no choice but to turn to Leia for help.

Chapter Notes

We're almost there, friends! Maybe one more chapter after this one.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

As the galaxy coiled past in a distorted, nebulous swirl, Vader locked the hyperdrive coordinates into the shuttle’s computer and double-checked the journey’s estimated length. He wasn’t certain where exactly to take Luke; finding the Rebels had often proven a difficult task even when he wasn’t planning to entreat them for help. Time was against him and he had little margin for error.

Vader stood and moved out of the cockpit, heading into the larger aft compartment where Luke lay unconscious on the floor. After retrieving a med kit and blanket, the Sith knelt next to his son and began inspecting the young man’s wounds. Skywalker’s face was bruised, his right eye bright and swollen, his lip torn. Several wounds wrapped around his neck and disappeared under his collar so Vader pulled Luke’s tunic open to see the extent of the damage. The Sith’s blood ran cold when he saw what his son had endured. He bit back his anger and slowly began applying bacta and bandages. The Emperor deserved to die for this, he thought as he worked.

Luke’s eyes slowly opened and dully blinked at the dark form hovering above him. As recognition finally settled in, the young Jedi gasped and tried to pull away, fearing the T0-D interrogation droid and Vader had captured him again. “No!” he mumbled. “Don’t…”

The Sith quickly understood Skywalker's confusion. “Luke,” he tried to sooth, pulling back and giving the young man more space. “You are safe here.”

Skywalker worked himself into a panic; he tried to drag his body away but realized he was not even strong enough to lift his arms. How would he escape? It hurt to breathe, hurt to think; his entire body felt like it had been run over by a speeder. He began to wheeze as he fought to protect himself, his lungs becoming tight and heavy.

Vader knew he had to calm Luke before the boy hurt himself so the Sith placed his hand in the middle of Skywalker’s chest and sent a calming wave through the Force. “Son,” he said more firmly, “search your feelings. Quiet your mind and let the Force speak to you, let it show you that you are safe.”

Luke froze and stared up at Vader. He did as he was told and let his mind turn inward listening to the subtle messages all around him. The energy surrounding the Sith was unlike the energy Luke had experienced during his interrogation. When the T0-D droid tortured him, the room had been filled with a crushing, dark, glittering energy--the Emperor’s energy. Vader’s presence was entirely
different, cold yet oddly familiar, as though deep down Luke could feel their shared bloodline. He calmed as he began to remember what had happened in the throne room on the Death Star. “The Emperor?”

“Dead,” Vader replied flatly.

“Yes,” Luke whispered as a vision of Sidious, limp and headless, appeared in his mind. He and Vader had killed the Emperor; together they had destroyed the infamous Dark Lord of the Sith. Did this mean everything had changed? Had the tide of the war turned or had they destroyed one evil only to make way for another?

Skywalker became aware of his father’s hand resting on his chest. He focused on the sensation before shifting his gaze to Vader’s unfathomable black mask characterized by large expressionless eyes, a molded breathing apparatus, and a sloping helmet—a personalized prison perfectly designed for Anakin Skywalker. “Father,” the young man said quietly. Vader’s head tilted toward Luke but the mask obscured every expression, every blink, every emotion. “What will you do?” Now that the Emperor was dead, he worried what would become of his father. Was Vader now a slave without a master, or a tyrant waiting to take his throne?

“Don’t concern yourself with that now.”

Luke wrapped his mechanical hand around his father’s as it rested on his chest. “Don’t turn back to the darkness.”

Vader was still for a long time, neither speaking nor moving. Finally he flipped his hand over and wrapped his fingers around his son’s. “Luke…”

“Promise me,” Skywalker cut him off, reading his father’s reluctance in the Force. “Promise you will find another way.”

The Sith could sense that Luke was beginning to fade again. Skywalker’s body was awash with exhausting pain and the young man was struggling to breathe. “All that matters right now is you, my son,” Vader said quietly. “You need medical care. We must find your comrades or I fear I will not be able to save you.”

Skywalker smiled weakly. “You’ve already saved me.” His words slurred as he fought to stay conscious, his eyes rolling back in his head.

Vader scooped the boy into his strong arms. “Son, you must help me. How do I find your friends?” He shook Skywalker gently, trying to keep him awake. “Luke…”

The young Jedi could barely keep his eyes open as he spoke. “The Alliance assigned me an emergency comm link channel,” he mumbled. “Echo375. You’ll need to provide my clearance code. That will get you directly through to Leia…”

Skywalker grew heavy in Vader’s arms as he began to slip away. The Sith shook him again. “What is your clearance code?” Vader reached out through the Force, pulling Luke’s consciousness away from its desperately needed sleep. “Son,” he implored, “tell me the code.”

Luke’s eyes did not open and he could barely make his mouth move. “Five-five-whiskey-two,” he whispered languidly.

Vader wrapped the young man in a blanket then laid him back down on the floor to rest. He quickly scrounged up a comm unit and entered the frequency Skywalker had given him. There was a high-pitched tone followed by a long pause, then a male voice came out of the comm link with no

The comm unit suddenly bloomed to life and a blue hologram appeared in Vader’s palm; a lovely young woman with piercing eyes and a long braid coiled around the crown of her head smiled at him. “Luke, I’ve been so worried…” Her words cut off as her eyes grew wide with fear and recognition.

The Sith gave a slight nod. “Greetings, your highness.”

Leia Organa and Han Solo huddled together over holomaps in the Alliance communications center. They had spent days pouring over intel and debriefing squadrons that were reconnoitering potential planetary base locations. The room was abuzz with communication officers, pilots, and navigators when the chief relay screen suddenly lit up with a red alert.

“What is it?” Leia asked, leaning toward the relay officer sitting at the consul across from her.

“It appears to be one of our emergency comm channels, Ma’am,” the soldier replied.

“Bring the number up on the screen,” Organa instructed.

The relay blinked and Echo375 flashed across the board.

Han stepped forward, his hands on his hips. “That’s Luke’s number,” he said as his brows pulled together with worry.

“Have you verified his clearance code?” Leia asked, concern plain on her face.

“I was just about to, Ma’am.”

“Go ahead,” Organa said with a nod. She turned to Han. “Luke’s been gone for days. He wouldn’t tell me where he was going and he hasn’t checked in since he left. I have a bad feeling about this.”

“Hey, I’m sure he’s all right. Knowing him, he’s probably just blown out his x-wing’s hyperdrive pulling some stupid stunt and needs us to come rescue him.” Han took a step closer to Leia and gently squeezed her elbow. “Try not to worry.”

“Excuse me, Princess, but the clearance code matches. It’s definitely Commander Skywalker.”

Leia took a step toward the comm consul. “Please put it through.” The officer flipped a few switches and a giant blue hologram began to flicker to life. “Luke, I’ve been so worried…” Her voice suddenly froze as her throat went dry. Her entire body went rigid with fear as she gazed at Darth Vader.

“Greetings, your highness,” the Sith said with a slight bow.

Han jumped forward. “Shut it down,” he hissed at the communications officer. “He could use this signal to track us.”

Leia thrust out her arm to stop them just as the officer reached for the cutoff switch. “No, wait!” she shouted. “What about Luke?” Han froze, staring at her with wide conflicted eyes. “There’s no other
way Vader could have gotten this emergency frequency.” She turned back to the hologram where Vader waited patiently. “Where is Luke?” She squared her shoulders, taking on a more regal posture. “What have you done with him?”

“Skywalker is here with me,” the Sith said, his tone even and calm. “As improbably as this may seem, I am contacting you in good faith on his behalf.”

Solo stepped to Leia’s side. “You’re right. That’s pretty damn improbable.”

“I don’t understand,” Leia said, her voice tight with worry. “What do you want?”

“I ask that you put aside our past differences as I beg your assistance.”

“Past differences?” Han snorted indignantly. “Like when you tortured me and then froze me into a carbonite wall decoration? Or when you tried to kill Leia? Or when you cut off my friend’s hand? You mean those differences?”

“I assure you,” Vader continued, his tone growing considerably less patient, “if you do not assist me, Skywalker will die. The boy fell into the Emperor’s clutches five days ago and has suffered greatly. He is in desperate need of a proper medical facility.”

Solo threw up his hands. “How stupid do you think we are?”

“Princess,” Vader said, his voice becoming more urgent. “I appeal to you directly. I swear on the Force, I mean you no harm. Skywalker needs you now more than ever. Please help him.”

Leia could feel the truth in his words.

“You’re not actually buying this bullshit, are you?” Han asked her. “It’s obviously a trap. Another one of the Emperor’s vindictive plots.”

“The Emperor is dead,” Vader cut in. “Skywalker and I killed him before we made our escape.”

Leia stared at the Sith Lord in disbelief. There is still good in him, I’ve felt it. I can turn him back to the good side. I have to try. Had Luke been right all along? Had he finally turned Vader away from the Dark Side? “Show me Luke,” she commanded.

Vader hesitated for a moment.

“You said he was with you. Prove it. Show him to me.”

“As you wish.”

The hologram spun around revealing Skywalker wrapped in a blanket on the floor.

Leia felt Han tense beside her. Luke’s face was black and blue; blood was smeared across his cheek and neck. Solo clenched his teeth, fighting back a mixture of horror and rage.

“Let me speak to him,” Organa carried on, swallowing a surge of emotion that threatened her self-control.

“He is in no condition to speak,” the Sith replied.

“You’re asking me to take a considerable risk in trusting you. I’m sorry, Vader, but you have to give me more than just your word. Prove to me that Luke is alive.”
The Sith was silent for a moment before finally answering. “Very well.” He knelt by Skywalker’s side and gently shook him. The young man stirred but didn’t open his eyes. Vader place a hand on the Jedi’s cheek and rolled his face toward the hologram. “Luke,” he said gently, “your sister is here.”

Very slowly Skywalker’s eyelids pulled up and his gaze blurrrily shifted side to side. He focused on the blue hologram in Vader’s palm and he instantly reacted. “Leia,” he croaked.

She could feel Luke’s relief and desperation fighting for dominance; it broke her heart to see him in such pain. She wanted to speak but no words would come to her.


Vader rested the Jedi on the floor and turned the hologram back on himself. “Well, Princess?”

Organa bit her lip. “All right,” she said reluctantly, her brow furrowing. “Where am I meeting you?”

“I’ll leave that to your discretion. Select anywhere you like, preferably somewhere neutral.”

Leia searched her mind for a location that was remote but with an atmosphere friendly to humans, somewhere that wasn’t largely inhabited, where a quick exchange wouldn’t put the locals at risk. “Maridun,” she finally decided.

Vader hesitated but eventually agreed. “I will arrive before you,” he said. “I’ll broadcast this emergency frequency once we land. You’ll be able to find us easily enough.”

The Sith signed off and the hologram disappeared.

Leia took a deep breath and turned to Han. “We have to hurry. There’s a lot to prepare before we leave.”

“Hold on just one second,” Solo said, his face twisted in confusion. “I want something cleared up right this instant.”

“And what exactly is bothering you so much?” She couldn’t help rolling her eyes, in no mood for an ill-conceived lecture.

“Luke is your brother!?”

Chapter End Notes

NEXT CHAPTER: This story is winding down, maybe one more chapter... More Dad Vader and loving son ahead... and I'm sure I'll climb on my soap box and scream about what a pure heart Luke Skywalker has (this story has been my silent protest against Last Jedi Luke). No matter what, Luke Skywalker always finds the good in people and he is never cruel, bitter, or unforgiving.

Thank you for reading!

Kudos and comments are very welcome!
Much love!

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!