### Deadlock

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<td>Additional Tags:</td>
<td>All aboard the pain train (toot toot), KOR are kind of a big deal, Slow burn? (Ha) FULLY ENGULFED Chapter 1, OC Bonanza, Festival of Swearing, Vaginal Sex, Wall Sex, Forbidden Sex, Compulsory Drug Use, Illegal body modifications, Straight up Science Fiction, And Math Fiction, and Physics Fiction, and a puppy, Expert Level Wookiepedia User, Extended Metaphors, Computer Science for Everyone, Red Rover Red Rover - Let Keech Come Over, Giant Pussy (we mean it), Dubious Consent, Metaphorical Beastiality, Oral Sex, Lick Job, Puddles of wetness, Not Those Balls, NICE PANTS, Vader!! , WTF is a Babbit?, Cosplay, Dry Humping, Drunk Writing, Space Trig, Deep Hurting, Holdo is a Thundercunt, Stillbirth, Miscarriage, HeartS loves Poe so much he got his own chapters, Yes--we do mean chapters, Explosions, Pants are always optional, Hurricane Poe Dameron, Contraceptives are covered, SPACE STDS, Panic Attacks, 10 Little Banthas All In A Row, As promised - a rockin' lick job, Poe banks left, Ma'am/Sir, Sexy Sentient Rocks, Poe is a man hoe but TBH what did you expect? Mating fluids, Shit goes down, mental breakdowns, Sweet!Poe, Herpeous spaceous, Eat A Dick, HeartS loves Hux so much he got his own chapters, General Dartholomew, Mean magic 8 ball, kitty!, Sweetness, Team!DADS, Three men and a little lady, watermelon, Turbo laser, Manscaping, Brochachos, The Ginger Menace, Sex Brig, Suicide, Daacha Ren is a man hoe to rival Poe Dameron, Phux - Freeform, Little lost girl, Tea Party, Samantha Bantha, Daacha is a pretty pretty princess, Vaguely Creepy Kylo, murder!, WE FORGOT TO BLOW UP THE HOSNIAN SYSTEM, Oops, Pants Shortage, Hux navel gazes, League of Antiheroes, Smut and explosions, Killer Semicolons, He's not into you, Snoko Supremo, Snoketry, Throne Room Thursdays, Snake is a Kylux stan, Le Gasp!, Spanking, Red Shirt, Fartstar, Gratuitous Back Story, We will never finish this story, GoldySnoke, Mother Ben, Finger Touches, Math is hard, le gasp, Supply Closet the re-deux</td>
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| Stats: | Published: 2018-04-14 Updated: 2019-01-31 Chapters: 20/? Words: 84666 |
Are you looking for trash fiction? Well you have found it, my friend. We are the spark that will light the dumpster fire that will burn your computer/mobile device down.

Set a bit before The Force Awakens and ending concurrent with The Last Jedi, Deadlock is a comedy/thriller/love story/pain train/smut fest. Check tags for summary. New tags for each chapter.

**We swear this is not abandoned, just on hiatus**
Prologue

Chapter Notes

*We look up from writing/poeming/eating mac and cheese*
Oh hi there - It's HeartSand and shuns. We made something for you, hope you like it!

Make sure you click through to the next chapter, darlings... we got you a two-for-one special

It starts off a long time ago, in a galaxy far, far away....

There was nothing. No sound when he screamed. No sensation when he flailed his arms and legs trying to escape the pain. Nothing but black when he opened his eyes. He could feel his mind tearing, pieces of his memories were coming loose. They were floating, whirling, spinning away.

This piece felt like the first time he realized the Force flowed through him. That piece showed his lightsaber glowing blue before... everything. There was the shock and anguish of having killed her. Then another from the night at the Praxeum when his life changed forever. Next, his arrival at the First Order. His first taste of pain as Snoke ripped through his body and his mind. And those eyes... with their brown, green, and gold flecks, where he lost himself completely. The plan, their way out. He scrambled for that piece, holding it back desperately. Still more pieces flew by, too fast to register as the black faded. He was falling...

...into hands. Large hands. They were rough and covered with callouses. He knew these hands.

“Do not disappoint me again, boy. Find him. Failure is not an option in the First Order. We do not have that luxury,” drawled Snoke. “Remove him from my sight.”

Hands picking him up. Feet, he had feet. They found the ground. His legs buckled. An arm caught him. He leaned into it. It supported him. They were moving. He tried to shuffle, but his legs would not cooperate. Sounds. Voices. Everything was pressing in on him. He had been cut off for so long... days... weeks... months? Now he could feel everything around him. His mind rebelled and he was shaking, teeth chattering audibly.

A voice talking. “Not long, just hang on. We are almost there.” He knew that voice. It was deep. But something was different. It was scared. Why was it scared? Something important. He needed to remember. The pieces were still floating by too fast. Words. He needed to use words. None came. Words were hard.

Lights. He could see lights. They hurt. “...Bright,” he choked out. “Too… bright.”

“Dim the lights.”

“But sir, we need to see...”

The air was filled with explosions as the light bulbs burst. The room dimmed. “No you don’t. Leave. The droids stay.” There was rustling, the whoosh of the door opening, then quiet.
Hands and arms laid him on something soft. He sighed, tipping his head into the sensation. He felt the cool metal of a droid touching his temple as it started its exam. He opened his eyes. The Face. He knew it.

“...Does he know?”

“I don’t think so. But he pulled apart your mind.”

“Will you kill me if commands it?”

“Not yet.”

He fell back into the cushion of the bed in the med bay. Not yet. It wasn’t much, but he had survived one more day. He was one day closer to what he had glimpsed through the Force. She was out there. Somewhere. He was sure it was a she. She was something important. He didn’t know what yet.

“I don’t want to die.”

“We are all that is left.” He paused like he wanted to say more. Maybe to remember their friends or acknowledge the futility of their plan. But he knew better than anyone that someone was always listening, so instead he said, “Rest now, brother. I will watch over you.”

He closed his eyes. His wounds would heal. He would have new scars. He would die, probably soon. But tonight his friend, the last Knight of Ren, sat beside him and watched over him. He slept and dreamed of sand, hunger, and light.

Chapter End Notes

Wait, I thought this was supposed to be comedy/thriller? How did I get on this pain train?!?!? Well this story is brought to you by your friendly neighborhood Siths, so we have to start with pain. But it’s all coming
*waves hand* **YOU WILL TRUST US AND READ ON**

WE HOPE YOU LIKE OCs!

Tags and (maybe)story updated weekly. See you in the comments section.
Of all the ways Keech liked to fuck, up against the wall was her favorite. Maybe it was the skill of balancing on one foot, the way everything rubbed just right, or the speed of the event. It made her feel so alive.

She knew it was going to be a good day the moment she walked into Jasper’s room. He was agitated, so she let him vent for twenty minutes. First about the late change he had to make to the comm stream going toward the Trade Worlds, then about how he had to prep for the new technicians starting after the next Rotation. Soon enough, he would realize they were running out of time. It wouldn’t be boring sex on the bed, not if she wanted to make it to her station on time. It would have to be hard, fast, and up against the wall. So she let him keep talking.

He ran his hand through his curly black hair again. Such a beautiful mess. It looked like they had already had sex. She would kill for gorgeous hair like his, but she would have to settle for pulling on it while they fucked. He looked up at her as a slow smile crept across his face, his brown eyes sparkling. She loved when they sparkled, it meant he was going to do something very, very bad - hopefully to her. “Shit, does your Rotation start today?”

“Yeah. See you in two weeks.”

“Fuck Keech. Wanna see me now?”

Jasper jumped out of his chair, crossed the small space, and pressed her firmly against the closed door. He pushed his lips against hers in a kiss that was hungry, bruising, and aggressive, and then ran his tongue between her lips, opening her mouth. She sighed with the pleasure of surrender. He slid one hand behind her neck and the other moved to undo the fastenings on her grey uniform jacket. He started to run his hand up her neck toward her hair, but she stopped him.

“Not the hair,” she scolded, smacking his hand away. “No time to fix it.”

He pulled her jacket open with both hands to reveal her undershirt. He pushed it up to expose her small breasts and cupped them, then ran his thumbs tenderly over her nipples; they hardened and pebbled with his attention.

“I’m going to miss these… so responsive.”
Nipples did nothing for her. Keech sniffed, “Is that all?”

He dipped in for another kiss. His hands roamed to the waistband of her grey pants and undid the buttons holding them up, then he crouched and dragged her pants and skivvies to the floor. She stepped out of them, glad she hadn’t tucked them into her boots. He looked up at her as he kissed her thigh. Oh, he was a tease.

“Well?” she asked expectantly. “It’s not going to lick itself.”

“Sorry girl, but not now. You can’t be late for sign-on.”

He was right, of course. They needed to make this fast. But then again, it was never the right time or place for him to eat her out. In the months since they had started fucking, he had never once licked her. In fact, he rarely touched her for long down there, mostly just to check that she was wet and ready, which she always was. Jasper was damn lucky he was the only game in town, otherwise, she would have dumped him into the trash compactor a long time ago.

On the other hand, he did have a pretty magical dick, she was pretty sure it was magnetized to her G-spot. He stood and pushed his pants down and it sprang free - thick, red, and so hard that the vein on the underside popped out. He looked her up and down and licked his lips.

She stood there in just her boots and open jacket. “Damn Keech, give me that leg. I am gonna make you cum so hard you’ll still feel it when you surface from Rotation.”

She hitched up her right leg, half straddling him, and he grabbed her knee as she snaked her leg around his hips. She opened and stretched as he pressed himself into her warm and wet center. He wound her arms around his neck and she threaded her fingers through his hair. He positioned his arms under hers and braced them against the wall, supporting most of her weight. He was stronger than he looked and she was so thankful he was. He bent down to kiss her again.

“Ready?”

“Uh-huh.”

He pushed into her all the way to his hilt. She let out a gasp and he tilted back to see her eyes go wide. She watched them over his shoulder and wondered if he had figured out why she’d hung the mirror across from the door. She loved watching their reflection; she could see her brown hair trying to escape from the prim bun at the nape of her neck and her brown eyes glittering with desire. The view of Jasper’s adorable butt, clenched as he thrust into her, wasn’t bad either.

“Damn you’re tight. I just had you yesterday. What have you been doing? Did you try those balls I got you?”

She smiled. He was a wordy bastard. “Stop talking and fuck me.”

Jasper obliged by pulling out and ramming home again. He nuzzled her neck, kissing her collarbone then licking the spot where her pulse slammed against her skin. He hadn’t shaved today and his stubble tickled. He rocked into her at a steady pace and kept trying to lift her off the floor, but she resisted. She kept her left foot firmly planted and leaned her hips forward, tightening around him. He let out a guttural groan.

Keech panted. When he buried himself in her again, he dragged across her clit and pressed inside deeper than he ever had. She could feel herself building. Heat coiled in her belly, and she peaked after a particularly toe-curling thrust, mewling into his hair. The waves of her orgasm broke and she tingled all over.
“Good girl, I like it when you cum for me.”

She couldn’t say anything because she was still riding high from her climax. Jasper continued pounding into her, increasing his speed. She could tell he was close so she reached under his shirt and raked her nails down his shoulders. He hissed and plunged into her one last time, cumming with a cry into her shoulder.

He shuddered as he came down. “You are so good.” He planted a kiss on her collarbone.

“Yes, I suppose I am,” she teased, and a huge smile split her face.

Jasper pulled out and moved her leg back down to the floor. She felt empty without him inside. His arms stayed to support her; he knew he couldn’t let her go yet. The first time he had released her too soon, she had fallen to the floor and ended up in the med bay with a concussion. He was not in the mood to talk a med droid out of reporting a sex injury today.

Sex was forbidden in the First Order. No intimacy. No sex. No romantic relationships. No love. No exceptions. These were the trappings of weaker beings and would not be tolerated in First Order troopers or officers. But forbidding it did nothing to stop it. The universal policy of abstinence had created a whole culture of innuendo, where ‘helmet’ stood in for penis during conversations and clandestine meetings were scheduled in every grungy locale on the base. The lengths that most junior members of the First Order went to to get laid would qualify them as entry-level spies.

And they had to be stealthy, for where fear was not sufficient, punishment was applied. Reconditioning for sexual infractions was particularly severe. Keech had been sent twice: the first time after she sought treatment for Herpeous spaceous, and the second time while trying to end a relationship with a clingy lover. It had been terrifying the first time, she had seen things she could never unsee. The second time, she took notes.

“You good?”

Keech was still breathing heavily but both her feet were steady on the ground. “Yeah, you can let go.”

He walked over to his ‘fresher and she heard him running water. He brought out a damp cloth and wiped her down, dropping a kiss on her lips when he was finished.

She stretched her muscles then leaned down to wrestle her skivvies and pants back on and refasten everything.

“Do you want me to dose you?”

“Yes please, you know how I feel about needles. Can you set up time for us when I get back? And try to make it look random this time. I don’t want to have to dive into another supply closet.”

“Sorry about that,” he grinned sheepishly. Then his grin widened. “I’ll miss your tight little pussy. You are the best piece of ass in the First Order.”

“Whatever, I am the only piece of ass that puts up with your shit.”

“You shut your whore mouth,” he said, smiling. ”Obviously that makes you the best. And the worst.”

She punched his shoulder lightly. He brought out the dosing gun.
“Ready?”

“No.” She liked the drugs but their delivery left something to be desired.

Jasper put the cool metal to her neck as he grabbed her hand and squeezed. “I’ll see you in two weeks. Don’t you go forgetting about me now.” He depressed the plunger and she winced at the needle’s painful bite.

She pressed a hurried kiss to his lips and rushed out the door.

Keech jogged down the hall. She had just a few minutes before her Rotation started and the drug kicked in.

The First Order took order very seriously. The bureaucracy and petty infighting that had been part and parcel of the Empire were replaced by ruthless efficiency, consistency, and control. But humans were not made for such things; they needed help.

The First Order’s Experimental Medical Unit, or EMU for short, had pushed the boundaries of behavior enhancement using both pharmaceuticals and brainwashing in ways not seen since the Empire. The fruit of their labors was a tiered system of drug use and frequent mental conditioning. Stormtroopers were administered Follazine (called Follow by the masses) daily, which made their minds receptive to their superior’s orders even when faced with certain death. Technicians and strategists injected Focazine (Focus) to sharpen concentration and allow full immersion in the complicated tasks of managing the First Order’s strategy during two-week rotations. The third version for officers was called Furazine (Furor), and it concentrated one’s passion for the cause into a canny ability to lead. Armitage Hux was often cited as an example of Furor’s success, but no one really knew if that rumor was true.

But Specialist First Class Keech Favi didn’t give a shit about that. She knew she needed to be at her terminal to sign on by 0700. She rounded the corner and waved at the other Specs. Her first class designation meant she led a small team of three men: HG-1257 (or Hugo, as she called him), CT-0025 (Cooter), and GU-6002 (happy little Grue). She was the only woman in her section and just one of six on this base of 200 located in the Lehon System. The base, which was built to look like a small moon, was a communication node for the First Order. It orbited Taxiode, a planet in the Unknown Regions about 7000 parsecs from the start of the Rimma Trade Route. She settled into her seat just as her peripheral vision began to blur. Her vision collapsed to a narrow point and she could feel the electricity in her brain change as the alpha waves shifted and settled into a new pattern. Gods, she loved the feeling as the Focus took control.

She booted up her terminal and logged on. All her cares melted away and she fell fully into Focus; now she was a vessel to execute commands. She moved through her queue of tasks, assigning some to her team and others to herself. She would be building datasets, looking for patterns within them, and collating it all into useful information. Requests came from everywhere: soldiers in the field, officers on the bridge, even a priority task for the Supreme Leader himself, once. She had been a solid analyst for the past two years, cautious and consistent. She could do more, but the First Order didn’t want it. They were happy with just half her brain. If they only knew where the other half of my mind wanders.

Keech wasn’t just building data sets, scanning for patterns, and collating information for the First
Order. She was stealing that information and transmitting it to the Resistance. Her double life was possible thanks to a very illegal and somewhat temperamental wetware augmentation her best friend had melded to her brain while they were in school during a lost weekend of sex, drugs, and game shows. Although not the intended result, she could move data with her mind, a skill she now used to the full advantage of the Resistance. And so far, her Augmentation hadn’t been detected because nobody knew to look for it.

With Focus, movements were limited just like personal desires, she struggled to reach back under her bun to touch the hidden ridge that activated The Augmentation. It only affected one side of her brain at a time, so none of the biological sensors monitoring her would show an anomaly.

The Augmentation was a truly custom piece, but Bala had been an artist. The only doctor she had ever revealed it to had marveled that the apparatus hadn’t cooked her cortex into a useless pile of bantha guts, though he seemed pretty sure that it would happen someday. He’d attributed her success at the time to her uniquely partitioned brain: each hemisphere was independent of the other. She could read both pages of a book simultaneously and add three numbers at the same time. When she was younger these tricks had made her weird, different. Now, they were her weapons, and she used them to fight the First Order. They had taken everything from her, but their biggest mistake was letting her survive.

Originally, she had desired something much more interesting than data movement. Bala’s laugh echoed through her mind.

“You want to want to incinerate people with your mind? Wow Movi, that is pretty sick, even for you.”

“Bala, how many times have you asked to open up my brain and see what is going on in there? I just want to fight fire with fire.”

Bala pursed her lips. “Shit, I am going to need to be a lot more fucked up than this to even consider it. This is highly illegal. Probably galactic warrant level illegal.”

“That’s never stopped us before.”

She had been a different person with a different name then.

Here and now, her left eye went white while her right continued working on her Queue. It was hard to manage both sides separately and simultaneously without Focus. She had managed before the First Order, but it had taken practice and it left her drained. At least the First Order had good drugs, and moving smoothly from one side of her brain to the other when the Augmentation was active was a definite benefit of taking Focus. Sometimes, when she grew bored with her tasks for the First Order she would retreat to The Augmentation just to see what her brain thought up.

Once activated, The Augmentation dropped Keech into The Construct. It looked like an endless white room. Well, not white so much as blank. If she looked up there was nothing but boundless white. Side to side, all she could see was white stretching uninterrupted off into the distance. She looked down and saw that she was naked. She really needed to fix that start-up program. “Clothes,” she said.

A very wide, full skirt puffed out at least a meter from her waist to end at her knees. She was wearing a shirt made of curly, very scratchy black hair. This was complemented by an enormous floppy hat and one shoe. And of course, this useless shoe had a very long toe; when she raised her foot in the air she could almost touch the tip. Great, the right side was controlling the Augmentation again. Righty had the sense of humor and the love of extended metaphors. It would
be a long two weeks. Fucking brains.

“Training Clothes,” she said.

The clingy black pants and shirt that stormtroopers wore under their armor and technicians wore while running on treadmills appeared. No shoes though, she hadn’t asked. Thanks, Righty. She would probably need shoes to get Home.

“Socks,” she said, then added, “And shoes. Normal shoes.” The last time Righty was in command, she ended up wearing Ewok slippers. They were both adorable and comfortable, but they had tripped her up when she was trying to run away from a very aggressive defragging program that was cast into The Projection as a large, leggy, bitey kouhun.

The Augmentation created both the Construct and the Projection. The Construct was inside Keech’s head and she had complete control, and it was where she stored the years of code knowledge she had amassed. At this point she could do almost anything in code, she just had to ask for it. But it meant she did very little coding anymore, she really missed it sometimes. She also used the Construct to build tools or create items to protect herself.

The Projection was a completely separate matter. When she was connected to a network, the Augmentation created (or imagined, perhaps) a ‘physical’ environment built using her code library that she could interact with like a real environment. It changed each time but she was pretty sure that was just her mind showing off. She wished she wasn’t so damn creative.

Most of the rules of reality applied to the Projection. Gravity made things fall. Sharp things hurt. Hot things burned. However, unlike in reality, she had some control over time: she could speed up or slow down cycles when necessary. She had to be careful how and when she did this because it drained her as badly as when she used the Augmentation without Focus. After most Rotations, she needed a few days to recover from the mental exhaustion. But then again, so did everyone else and they were just pulling single duty.

Keech brought her fingers together then pulled them apart as if she was drawing a line between them. This opened a slit between the Construct and the Projection. She pushed her hands through the tear she had created and stepped into a jungle.

A jungle? What. In. The. Seven. Hells. Everywhere she looked she saw green. Huge leaves. Tall moss-covered trees. Long vines with delicate tendrils curving out. It was so vibrant, and when she looked closer she could see that the leaves were made up of very small 0’s and 1’s. It was code. Code could be changed. Users were solid, and they couldn’t be changed outright, but the could be persuaded to change, gently. She needed to keep a low profile and messing with a user was a sure way to generate an anomaly. She wondered what would happen if she broke off a leaf though. Would she truncate a query?

She reached out to test this hypothesis but a brightly colored something with glittering eyes hissed at her. A red tongue darted out and she realized there was a snake coiled around that leaf. Great. Snakes. Why’d it have to be snakes? She pulled back her hand. She could see 0’s and 1’s, meaning the snake was probably some sort of security program. She didn’t need to break off that particular leaf. Hopefully, she and the security snake could agree to let each other be.

She turned toward the sound of leaves rustling and looked up to see a flock of small blue birds tearing through the canopy. “Probably a batch of comm messages,” she mused. Keech could just make out the words that formed the bodies and wings of the ‘birds’ as they flew past. If she listened she could hear the hooting of some distant monkey. Really, data monkeys?
Well, she had interacted with users wearing far stranger masks. Two rotations back the Augmentation had projected *The Raddus*, complete with crew. It was disconcerting when she realized the Resistance fighters she was interfacing with were actually First Order analysts. She spent three whole days avoiding a particularly dim system admin who projected as a Mon Calamari. His version of Admiral Ackbar would shout “It’s a trap!” as he tried to shut down her permissions in the system, which manifested in The Projection as him dragging her away from the Bridge. Her brain, particularly the right side, was always looking for ways to entertain itself, especially with puns, similes, or metaphors. She would commune with the Data Monkeys later. Now, she needed to go Home.

While the Projection would change each time she logged on, Home was a quiet, forgotten corner deep in the First Order Network. She sighed as she saw the door. It was the same one she had walked through into their apartment for two perfect years she had been married. She kept three essential programs here.

The first program was the ever-changing hexadecimal cipher she used when she sent a message to the Resistance. It looked like a digital clock that was forever blinking the wrong time. She transmitted the intelligence she’d gathered in small stream bursts no wider than a byte of data. It took days to send messages out, but it ensured that they were undetectable.

The second was the unlock code for messages from the Resistance. She received messages infrequently, mostly requests to corroborate odd rumors. What is Starkiller? *A hollowed out planet that has a big fucking cannon in the middle of it.* Where does the First Order get its money? *Conquered planets are subject to a tiered taxation system based on the Imperial Model; the average tax rate is 37.4%.* What does Snoke want? *Indeterminate, but if the requisition slips are any indication, he seems to favor gold robes, Endorian chicken, and hard candy.*

Holdo had said, “Every bit of information we get is a slice, cut them enough and they will bleed out.” Keech was happy to engage in the blood-letting, but reporting without doing anything was hard. She didn’t like playing defense; she was an offensive kind of girl.

The final file was her *Scout* program. She had written it to identify messages that would fit her mission brief of finding out how First Order worked and what vulnerabilities the Resistance could exploit. In a fit of loneliness, she had designed the program to appear as a small, friendly dog with big brown eyes, a large black nose, floppy ears, and soft blond fur.

A year ago Scout had been in a very bad fight with a security program that had caused him heavy damage. She destroyed the offending program; nothing would hurt her dog (program) and live. She applied a patch with security upgrades: sharper teeth, a wicked snarl, and an understanding of fear so he wouldn’t get into any more scrapes. Once she committed the changes, a patch had appeared over Scout’s left eye. She liked how it made him look like a pirate, so she added a striped bandanna to complete the costume.

Scout was playful and usually danced around her ankles when she walked in. She whistled. When he didn’t come, she called for him. She heard a whimper and the steady thump of his tail coming from under the couch.

“Hey buddy, wanna come out and show me what you found?”

She got down on the floor and she could hear him say, “scaredscaredscaredscaredscared…”

She held out her hand and he crawled towards her, still whining his litany. When she gathered him up for a cuddle, he sighed and finally quieted. She had never seen this type of behavior before. Eventually, he pushed his nose against her hand, the signal that he had found something.
Thousands of First Order messages, queries, and transactions passed through the base’s communication node, but Keech was only interested in the aspects of how the First Order worked: funding, administration, command structure, or anything with reference to the Resistance directly. “Your job is defense.” Vice Admiral Holdo had been adamant about that. “Remember, a good defense is our best offense. Stay low and under their scans. And don’t do anything stupid.”

Recovered from his spell, Scout bounced over to his bed, panting and wagging his tail. She realized that something was off: she had sent four messages to the Resistance in her latest stream, but now there were five messages. Had she forgotten something? She moved towards the messages.

“Open,” she said, and they obeyed. The first was about the Starkiller Base. It was now staffed at 65%, and aside from the existence of the big fucking cannon, she didn’t have any other leads. She had been keeping tabs on the construction of Starkiller since her arrival two years ago, but from what she could tell, construction had been going on for much longer.

It was the first time the First Order had actually occupied a planet, and there was fear it was another Death Star. Planets were stationary. How the fuck were they going to target anything with that monstrosity? Were they just going to lob energy across space and hope for the best? Space was a vacuum. How would that work? Hadn’t anyone thought this out? Still, a concerning amount of resources was being directed toward it and she needed to figure out what they were for.

The next message was about the tax collection efforts in the Western Reaches. General Janeek Yellen was a cantankerous bitch, but she got the job done. As the only female general in the First Order, Keech couldn’t help rooting for her even if she was aligned with evil.

Then there was the order for a new dreadnaught from KRR. Keech was not familiar with KRR. Now if it was Kuat Drive Yards, or KDY, well, it had been a long time since she had thought of Kuat. She wondered if the build platforms and rigs were still there. The other Specs often talked of First Order settlements in the Unknown Regions. Perhaps KRR was one of the First Order’s mysterious production outposts.

The fourth detailed a shortage of pants in the Colonies. She had been particularly pleased with that message; it looked like union activism really could drive change. She idly imagined officers being forced to march around their ships in their skivvies and chuckled at the thought.

Her heart stopped as she scanned the fifth message.

_I will find you._

Four words and her whole world was turned upside down. She couldn’t feel it but she knew her body had betrayed her. She hoped her sudden anomalous sweating everywhere wouldn’t show up on the scans. She understood now why Scout was scared. She was caught. She wanted to run. She wanted to hide. She wanted to get away. What the fuck was she going to do?

This was a problem like any other. She had to break it down into parts and take it piece by piece. They knew about her. She had lived with this possibility for two years and that possibility was now a reality. Were they coming for her now? If they took her while she was on Rotation with her mind altered by Focus, she would be defenseless. But the message had said ‘will find’, perhaps they didn’t know it was her yet? Did they really mean to use the future tense? Could she really hang her hopes of survival on good grammar? And who was this fucking elusive I?
She breathed in and out and started counting by threes. It always helped when there were too many problems coming at her too fast. She collapsed on the couch and Scout jumped up then settled in beside her. She stroked his ears. It took some time but she calmed down.

First, she would follow the message to the source. She didn’t know who she was up against, yet, so she would have to hide her identity. She had time, if the tense was correct. Plus, it wasn’t like she could go anywhere when she was so Focused. She needed to use her time trapped in her chair wisely. She just needed to figure out what in the seven hells to do next.

Chapter End Notes

We will update tags weekly. And maybe even the story. Probably on Friday or Saturday nights.

Some shout-outs to other stories that are referenced above. General Janeek Yellen is a character in shun's story (shameless self-plug) Rock and Hard Place. This story was inspired by HeartSandwich because she is shuns’ Muse of Ridiculousness and uselessenglishmajor's story Free To Fall. The shortage of pants comes from sap1066's The Second Order. Give them some love if you have the time.

See you in the Comments section.
KOR-2440

Chapter Summary

Keech goes for a walk on the wild side.

Chapter Notes

NEW TAGS! Expect them to become increasingly ridiculous. SORRYNOTSORRY

A/N: We tagged this scene as dubious consent because neither character can indicate consent. But we think if they could they would. If this is a trigger we’ll meet you down in the Bottom Notes for an admittedly terrible awesome summary.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Keech stared at the smooth gray granite. The large wall rose high into the sky; even when she tipped her head back the wall continued seemingly without end. “Fucking metaphor,” she muttered. “I get it already!” She yelled at the wall, at the jungle, at everything. “YES, it’s a wall! I have hit THE WALL!”

It had taken the better part of five days to follow the message back to its origin. The only thing she had learned was his designation, KOR-2440. She assumed it was a he because the First Order was overwhelming male, 87% overall, with males accounting for 92% of Troopers, 75% of technicians and analysts, and 95% of officers on a weighted basis. Statistics being what they were, she would take the bet on the elusive I being a man. Besides discovering his user ID, she had found nothing else about him. Every time she tried to get anywhere near him she found herself looking at this wall. Unhelpfully, the Projection had made it into a cliff that disappeared into the sky.

It was like looking for Bala all over again, or as the First Order knew her, Scientist Second Class Bala Bakkett, BB-3156. Keech had hit a similar version of this wall when she’d investigated what had happened to her best friend. Former best friend. She’d sent a desperate message to Holdo when leads on Bala dried up. She’d refused to believe she was dead. Bala always had a plan. “Stay the course” was Holdo’s only response. The terse reply reminded her she was here for the Resistance. Revenge was supposed to be secondary, but ‘supposed to’ just wasn’t her style. Especially where Bala was concerned. She might have been a cold, hard bitch, but Bala was still her person. Keech needed to know what happened, even if it broke her heart, again.

She was sitting on a rock by a data lake. She was pretty sure it was full of maintenance requests because there was an oily sheen on the water. She could see a cloud of bugs hovering near the edge. If she was nice, she would swat them and resolve some issues for some poor programmer. Maybe even Jasper, of course, he would find something else to complain about while still not giving her the lickjob she deserved. A line of ants scurried past her. They weren’t made up of 0’s and 1’s, so they weren’t programs but users. Real people. She took a stick and directed them along a different vector, wondering what she had just changed. She shouldn’t be careless, not now, but she loved to see how one small change altered the system.
In fact, altering the system was how she had found Home. She had been looking for information on Bala and Left Side had been in charge during that particular rotation. Left Side loved puzzles so The Augmentation had projected a world full of shapes. She’d had to fit them together to build bridges or connect them into weapons to blast obstacles out of her path. Eventually, one of the bridges brought her to a new place with a completely different texture than the rest of The Projection. It had been coded using an older programming language and under different assumptions than the rest of the systems she knew.

After poking around a bit, she’d figured out she had found an old network node that likely dated back to the Empire. It was tied into many different systems. As is often the case, the reason it had survived so long was that no one knew what would break if it was removed. The obsolete node had been left alone, almost like it was waiting for someone to find it. She imagined it as an abandoned building; it had great bones.

Keech loved the style of Empire code; it was spare and efficient. Say what you will about their administration and grandiose plans, but they had phenomenal programmers. Home had its tendrils wrapped into so many systems that Scout didn’t have to run too far to fetch data. She took the orphaned node and made it her own. The Projection was always a surprise, but like the Construct, Home was always the same.

It always projected as their Home. The little apartment that was just right for two. Her collection of obsolete computation devices were still stacked on the shelves from floor to ceiling on one wall. His schematics of what seemed like every ship in the known universe were hanging on all the other walls. Their song was always playing softly in the background. He had been so proud when he had installed the sound system; it almost made up for the way it would play a song on repeat, sometimes for days at a time. He may have been a brilliant engineer, but he was a shit technician.

Her husband was also a terrible dancer. His version of dancing was shuffling around in a circle while he squeezed her ass. But when they were listening to their song, she forgot how awkward he was and it was like they were floating on a cloud.

Are the stars out tonight
I don’t know if it’s cloudy or bright
I only have eyes for you
The moons may be high
But I can’t see a thing in the sky
I only have eyes for you

She would give anything to dance with him one more time.

She sighed. These musings weren't getting her over the wall. She was going to need teleportation for that.

She had been thinking about this since day one of Wallmagedon. None of her options were good, and most of them were worse than bad. She could build a huge cannon and blast the wall to smithereens, but that would bring too much attention. Too loud. Too much destruction. Alternatively, she could build a craft to fly over the top of the wall, but she had no idea what was on the other side or what could go wrong. She wasn’t sure the wall even had a top to fly over. What if it took up infinite space in all directions?

Herein lay the appeal of teleportation. If she could beam herself in and out of the area behind the wall, she could probably limit her impact. She might even go unnoticed if she was lucky. ‘A good defense is our best offense’ was the mantra that Holdo had beaten into her. Teleportation would cut through the thickness and height of the wall. Plus it was fucking cool.
Of course, Keech knew that teleportation was pure science fiction. She had read Hooft’s paper detailing why it could never and would never be possible. But she believed quantum entanglement created a possibility. Particles could be split and still interact, even at unimaginable distances. Sure, it was all theoretical, not real, like hyperdrives or laser blasters, but that wouldn’t stop her from using it to solve her problem. But, she needed to know where she was going. She had to find someone on the other side, preferably not KOR-2440.

Two days later, she settled on a little mouse droid named MUSR-1893, or Squeaks, as she had decided to call it. It had all the right permissions, lucky droid, and it was on the base network so the connection should be stable. She could link with the little droid from her side of the wall, but entangling required a further step. It took some trial and error, but what finally worked was to imagined herself as a mirror - not a flat plane, but each cell fluid like mercury. Every particle in her body, every drop of her essence, coalesced to form her into an aqueous mirror. She shimmered in the artificial sunlight of The Projection. Now, she just had to switch with Squeaks.

Standing in front of the Wall, she said, “Switch with MUSR-1893.”

And she did.

Keech didn’t know what to expect on the other side of the Wall; the jungle looked the same except that it was darker and less colorful, like stepping outside at night. Righty had decided to be helpful, for once, providing The Projection moonlight for navigation. She was now a human-sized mouse, complete with the whiskers and tail. She tested out her new form and found her dexterity adequate. She couldn’t move exactly as she had when she was human, obviously, but she could still grasp things and had gained some nice, sharp claws and a long, elegant tail.

She looked around, spotted a data stream, and decided to follow it. She didn’t know what she was looking for, and she really needed to make the most of her time. Following the water usually worked in reality, so maybe it would apply here too.

She crested a hill and discovered what appeared to be an abandoned pyramid. *This looks promising.* She made her way toward the building and was lucky to find an unobstructed door. She looked around for any traps. Finding none, she entered the antiquated structure.

It was gloomy inside, though the gaps at the top of the pyramid let the diffuse light of the moon shine down. It was just enough for her to maneuver without running into anything. There were rows upon rows of small nooks and cubbies. She approached the closest one. It held a metallic orb; FN-2187 was etched on the side. She reached for the orb and removed it from the recess. She turned it over in her hands, looking for the seam of an opening, but nothing stood out. She placed the orb back on its shelf and looked around. The other orbs in this row started with F; Keech wondered if there was a B section.

After hours spent stumbling down endless corridors, she found the row she was looking for. And then, there it was. BB-3156. Bala’s orb. It was huge compared to the others around it. She hoped that meant it was packed full of information on what the hell happened to her and where Keech could find her. She desperately wanted answers. She took it out of the nook and pushed it down the aisle in front of her. Now, she needed to find KOR-2440.

She finally found the K section and likewise seven orbs with KOR written on them. Bala’s orb was
pretty big, but these were slightly smaller than Bala’s. They were practically teeming with spiders. Intricate webs hung from every surface, interwoven with 0’s and 1’s. What secrets did these orbs hold that needed this much security? She was pretty sure touching the webs would set off alarm bells. Or worse, she could get caught in a web with no chance of escape. Since she was already pushing Bala’s huge orb, the only way she would be able to carry anything was with her tail. But to retrieve KOR-2440’s orb she would need both paws.

Keech stood back and smoothed her paw along her whiskers. There was no easy way to remove the KOR orbs without disturbing the webs. She went around the back of the nook hoping for a backdoor. They had forgotten to fortify the back, no security webbing at all. She just had to cut through the back of the nook.

“Multi-tool,” she asked, holding out her hand. Her laser multi-tool materialized in her hand. She flicked on the laser cutter side, working carefully to burn a hole she hoped was large enough to fit KOR-2440’s orb. She reached through the hole and pulled out the orb; two spiders came with it. She considered them. *No numbers. Users then.* She probably shouldn’t crush them, who knew what would happen to them in the real world if she did. She moved the orb close to the hole and willed the spiders to climb back inside. The first obliged. Keech flicked the second back into the nook. She hoped that it wouldn’t go skittering off and trigger an alarm.

She’d gotten what she’d come for. Her whiskers twitched triumphantly. She wrapped her tail around KOR-2440’s orb a few times and pushed Bala’s orb in front of her. *Tails are very useful.* She hummed as she left the temple. She didn’t notice that the jungle had gone quiet. Eerily quiet.

As she followed the stream back through the jungle, she felt the hairs rising on the back of her neck. She turned slowly and saw the massive shadow of some unknown creature.

“Shit!” she exclaimed as she realized how much danger she was in.

She broke into a halting run as she struggled to push Bala’s orb in front of her and drag KOR-2440’s behind her. Whatever was stalking her followed, crashing behind her through the forest. She tried to run faster. Keech could see the wall on the horizon but wasn’t sure if she could teleport back from this distance. She needed to get closer.

Suddenly, a large limb reached out and swiped at her, sending her sprawling onto her stomach. The orbs spun off in different directions. She rolled over and looked up. The beast - a sleek black panther - was enormous. It looked her over like she was a tasty morsel. She panicked; she really did not want to be eaten.

She tried to roll away, but a paw the size of a dinner plate pressed down on her chest and crushed the air from her lungs. Still, she succeeded in grabbing the closer of the two orbs. The other one was too far out of reach. The panther’s face came close and it sniffed her. Now that it was near, she could see that the monster wasn’t a program. It was a person, and one who would do heavy damage to her by the looks of him. Keech was pretty sure she would survive if she died in The Projection, but she didn’t want to test that hypothesis. She needed to get out from under the paw.

She had a brilliant idea.

Keech imagined her particles slipping past each other and said, “Liquid.” She turned into a puddle. Sometimes when Keech interacted with the Projection she could see where the Augmentation and
her brain met, the seam where the idea and the execution didn’t quite match up. At this moment, however, The Projection, The Augmentation, and her brain were perfectly in sync. The second the cat’s tongue dipped into the puddle, her body tingled with ecstasy. All the sensations were targeted at the electric spot between her legs.

She could kind of understand why this was happening. She really missed oral sex and Righty had no control when it came to desire. Even though the Augmentation projected this user as a giant hellcat, the tongue felt like a human tongue. For a minute, Keech forgot she needed to escape. She gave herself over to the feeling of a warm, wet, and wonderful tongue lapping at just the right spot.

The panther licked a stripe from bottom to top of her slit that would have had her moaning, but as a puddle, the most she could do was ripple appreciatively. Then it licked her clit and rolled its tongue around slowly, pausing to suck between every few licks. “Please...” she moaned. Soon the tongue was back between her folds, thrusting into her and licking up all of her moisture. She wondered if the tongue's real-life owner was this good or if this was simply the product of The Projection’s fevered imagination. Metaphorical oral sex, who knew that was a thing? Fuck, it was one of the best lick jobs she'd ever had and it wasn't even real.

Wait, was it really just licking? As a puddle, it was hard to be sure, but the licking might have actually been drinking. If he kept going, it might straighten out her Squeaks entanglement. Then she would be stuck on the wrong side of the wall at the mercy of this large panther/technician/whatever it was. She needed to get the orbs and get away. Quickly. The cat licked another stripe from bottom to top, and a flash of heat rushed through her. She was so aroused by the sensation between her legs that she was struggling to concentrate. She tried to gather her thoughts. She had one orb; she would have to come back for the other one another time. Her only way out was teleporting; she sincerely hoped she could.

She imagined shifting her particles from Squeaks back to Keech. “Switch back,” she said. For one terrifying moment, she thought it wasn’t going to work, then the tongue was suddenly gone. She had been really close, both to being caught and cumming. Was it really worth being caught to orgasm? Sigh...probably not.

She had made it back to her side of the wall. Poor Squeaks, Keech could only imagine what it was dealing with. Droids weren’t normally the on the receiving end of a champion-level tonguing. She had all but signed Squeaks up for a memory wipe. Well, work for the First Order and bad things will happen to you. Even if you’re a droid.

Keech laid on the jungle floor collecting her thoughts, still tingling a bit from her experience. She hoped she would never see that jungle cat again, mostly. She looked at the orb in her arms. KOR-2440. If she was being honest, it was probably the better orb to have grabbed. He was was a more pressing problem, but she wished she could have brought Bala’s back too.

For now, she needed to get back Home and see if she could crack open this orb and see who KOR-2440 was.

Chapter End Notes

Summary:
Keech hits a wall and finds her way through it by teleporting into a Mouse Droid who
has better permissions than she does. She becomes the mouse with a tail, because tails are cool and useful. She finds Bala's and KOR-2440's personnel files. But she triggers a spider alarm. A big bad panther chases her and catches her. She drops both orbs then reclaims one. She turns into a puddle to get away. The panther licks her. She almost has an orgasm. She takes a risk and switches back to herself. She gets away. It turns out she grabbed KOR-2440's orb. But now she needs to figure out how to open it.

Sooooo we gave Keech a lick job (thanks to alcibiade for coming up with the term). We loved it so much it became a tag and we will be using it throughout the rest of the story where appropriate and also where inappropriate. Also there is some accidental beastiality for good measure.

You're welcome.

Up next... cosplay....Vader... lightsabers... tight pants
Keech had tried everything to open KOR-2440’s orb, but nothing had worked. Not dropping it from the top of a tall tree, or hitting it with a giant hammer, or shooting it with a blaster or an even bigger blaster. She had even made a bomb just to see if she remembered how. It had produced a colossal boom but the orb remained unscathed.

She was going to have to take the direct approach. She brought her fingers together and drew them apart again to open the Construct. For particularly difficult problems, Keech had found metaphors sometimes got in the way and she just needed straight code. She coded in The Construct, not The Projection. She grabbed the orb and stepped inside.

“Display,” she said.

The solid sphere morphed into a series of wires and nodes that was roughly the shape of a sphere. It almost looked like a lattice.

“Well shit,” she said. Of course. Keech smacked her palm to her forehead. She had been thinking of it as an orb, but it was a BALL file: Big Ass Laser Lattice. This file format was unique to the First Order and she loved it. It had been carefully designed to pack information into an incredibly compact space. A minute laser retrieved the information, so data could be stored in three dimensions instead of just two. The downside: it was almost impossible to crack. She had devoured the design files, fascinated to learn more, and laughed when she understood the name. It was how she met TM-4420.

TM-4420 was a gifted programmer. No, he was more like a Master, an artist, and code was his medium. After months of lurking in his files, Keech’s curiosity got the best of her when she came across a new technique to specify a particular type of variable. She’d messaged him; she had to know how he had come up with the idea. Normally, she wasn’t shy, but things in the First Order were different, especially for a woman. His reply had been prompt and brilliant. She had been programming most of her life, but she learned more from those few lines of text than she had from any book. It had been about a year ago, right around the time she had started to fuck around with Jasper. They both reminded her that the First Order was made up of real people who could surprise you.
It had been some time since she heard from him. She should check for a message when she Surfaced. They had developed a collegial rapport, passing code problems and design ideas back and forth. He had even offered her a technician job aboard The Supremacy on his special System Administration Team. She had declined because she didn’t want to call attention to herself and jeopardize her mission. Though if she was being honest, the real reason was that she didn’t want to meet TM-4420 and find out he wasn’t as dreamy as she imagined.

It was a new kind of relationship for Keech. Typically, it was fuck first and ask questions later. Without a physical body, her interest in TM-4420 was more a meeting of the minds. She loved how he thought, how he tackled problems, and his black sense of humor. Keech had a bit of a nerd crush on him. Sometimes, when Jasper was being particularly exasperating, she would slip into a daydream about what it would be like to actually be with TM-4420. But she was on TX-12 and he was far away on The Supremacy. He was just a fantasy. Jasper was her reality.

Ugh, back to work. BALL format was proprietary to the First Order, and she had done some work to break it by converting BALL files to other file formats. Nobody had hardware or physical systems like the First Order; whoever had built them was a mad genius. But that fucker was also paranoid as hell because trying to get anything out of them was damn near impossible.

Well, impossible if you weren’t as skilled as Keech was. She could open a BALL file if she converted it into a Jumbo Ass Regression file. JAR formatting file was her own brilliant creation. It could take any file and turn the code into a line, then extrapolate the original arrangement to recreate the data into a readable format. The resulting copy lost some fidelity, but enough of the original data usually remained to give some idea as to it's content.

“Reformat BALL into JAR,” she said.

The first conversion usually took a few minutes. This gave her some time pop open the log file. The log file made note of all the code for The Projection and The Construct. She had some questions about the giant Hellcat. Mainly, WHAT THE FUCK HAD SHE BEEN THINKING?

It had been intense, almost as if something had compelled her to stay there. Being brought to orgasm by a tongue alone was pretty compelling on its own, but this was something more. She recalled that the air had felt heavy, charged. Well, it wouldn’t be the worst thing to relive the best tonguing she’d ever had.

As she read the code log her alarm level hit eleven; she had been so reckless. The panther had been KOR-2440, and he had almost fully penetrated her borrowed disguise. What she hadn’t realized until she looked at the log file was that he had cut her off. If she had lost her connection with Squeaks and the base network, he would have had her. Even worse, her depravity had been recorded. She could see where she had begged for it, had said, “Please.” It was written plainly in the log script. She blushed when she thought of it. She was lucky she had gotten away clean. Well, clean except for the dirty thoughts. But luck never lasted.

With a resounding crack, the wire sphere morphed into a fractured spherical crystal. Keech furrowed her brow. Well, shit, that hadn’t worked. She knew that TM-4420 used even numbers wherever he could. She preferred odds, but to each their own.

“All right,” she said. “Reformat BALL into JAR starting at 2 and increment string by 2,” she said. The sphere morphed again into a scatter of dots. Fuck.

Besides the good code and funny file names, TM-4420 loved babbitts. He had hundreds of pictures of them stashed all over his files: bending over to pick things up, rolling together on soft blankets, rubbing noses with other babbitts. It was all very sweet. Wait, the babbit problem.
“Reformat BALL into JAR starting at 2 and increment string by babbitt,” she said. Growing like babbitts was a simile used throughout this part of the galaxy. Two babbitts became four then eight then sixteen, and on and on and on until you had babbitts everywhere. The well-known exponential sequence was sometimes used when a programmer or economist needed a numerical seed.

The one and only paper she and Bala had written together had presented this idea and a method to use the babbit sequence as a seed for cryptology. They had almost come to blows over the charts. It was the only fight they’d ever had. They didn't speak for three days. She had seen a side of Bala she didn’t like at all. Bala had been imperious, arrogant, and scary; it had been mildly terrifying.

The sphere finally resolved into a humming blue line of code. She would have to go back to The Projection to use it, but at least now she could find KOR-2440. She tucked the line under her arm and opened a hole into the Projection.

The jungle was dark. Keech peered around nervously. The Projection, and especially Righty, was wed to whatever it imagined for her. To make any change, well, she needed to be on her guard. The best plan would probably be to go Home. She was safe there, or, safer at least than standing out in the open network.

When she got to the door it was hanging off its hinges. She walked through and gasped, her hand coming to cover her mouth. Her Home, Their Home, had been torn apart. The room looked like it had been turned upside down and dumped. There were huge claw marks scraped across the wall. She was so furious that it took her a moment to realize they were letters. She stood back to read the message:

Little mouse, I know where you are now

See you soon on TX-12

Well, this just went from bad to Oh. Fuck. Me.

She turned around slowly, hoping that he, that fucking Hellcat, had overlooked her programs. She saw her communications ciphers in pieces on the floor. It looked like they had exploded outward with some force. Her heart dropped. Where was Scout? Keech whistled but he didn’t come.

She turned and saw a heap in the corner. At first, she thought it was a rumpled blanket, but it was Scout. She ran to him, dropping to her knees. She hugged him to her. His face was bashed in, and he had a bloody mark on his side where he had been slashed the same way the wall had. No, this can't be happening. She had spent weeks building him, getting the fur right, the happy bark, even the warmth of his body. She would have lost her mind and started shooting up the base long ago if it hadn’t been for him.

Scout turned his head and licked her cheek. He wheezed, “Hurt-sad.” Then his head lolled and he shivered. The light went out of his eyes and he went limp.

Fuck no. She could fix this. She couldn’t fix anything else in her broken little life. But Scout was hers. She’d made him. Just like she'd made her Home here in The Projection. She had the power to make this right. Nobody was dying today.

“Bacta,” she said.
She wasn’t sure if bacta would work on a virtual dog program whose source code that had been grievously injured inside a computer network. In the real world, Bacta could fix anything, as long as the ailment was topical. If it was more complex, like cancer or diabetes, then you were fucked. But here inside the Projection she just needed something to keep him going while she undid the damage caused by that fucker KOR-2440. She massaged the goo over the slash.

She carefully probed around his ear and pushed the hidden button to open his access panel. She ran the diagnostics and was dismayed to see that almost all of Scout’s systems had failed or were failing. The gash had ripped apart his source code. He was coming apart at the seams. There was little time left before the entire program corrupted and he was gone for good. Her only option was to restore to a previous back-up, hoping it was still intact. She made the selection and committed the change, hoping for the best.

Scout froze as the restoration occurred. His face rearranged first; his snout was no longer bashed and bloody. Between the bacta and the restoration, the slash on his side had sealed. His eyes lit up and he let out a happy yip. He tried to stand up but immediately fell over. He tried again, but when he fell over he remained on his tummy and whined.

Keech popped open his diagnostics. The back-up had been damaged in the attack, all of them had. It had disabled his back half, his legs couldn't move and even his tail wouldn't wag. It was going to be a pain to rebuild. She needed a temporary fix, something that would let the disabled program move around. For a moment she considered rocket boots, but that would most likely end in disaster as it always did. Once, on Bador, she had seen a disabled person in a levitation chair. Maybe that could work for Scout.

Twenty minutes later, she whistled to Scout. “Come on buddy.” He flew over to her and then executed a perfect barrel roll. Just like Poe showing off. Maybe the doggie lev chair was a bit much. But his happy barks as he did another somersault through the air were a balm for her soul. In all her years fighting against the First Order, this was the first time she had brought someone she loved back. Will wonders never cease.

Now she could focus on KOR-2440. She picked up the line and shook it. It opened like a screen and Keech threw it into the air to hover in front of her. “Show me, KOR-2440.” She needed to study him, and fortunately, First Order ships were full of cameras. These were primarily used to identify officers and troopers that did not adhere to the abstinence-only policy, and at this moment she was acutely grateful for their existence.

It took but a moment to locate KOR-2440. Keech noted the location stamp: he was on The Supremacy in Training Salle 34. Suddenly, there were two bare-chested men in her living room, circling each other with lit lightsabers. Their chests glistened with sweat and she thought they looked strangely perfect amongst the disaster of her Home.

R’iia. They were fucking beautiful, she could tell that much even if they were blurry. The JAR reformatting had not worked as well as she’d hoped. One of them was quite tall, broad in the shoulders and narrow at the waist. He had pale skin and a dark mop of hair, but she couldn’t make out his face. His blade flashed, and for a moment it looked like a beautiful insect with its wings flashing in the sun. He advanced on his opponent, steadily pushing him toward the opposite side of the mat.

His sparring partner was not as tall, less broad but just as defined. His skin was deeply tanned, and his brown hair was cropped close like a military officer’s. Just as she thought he would be pushed out of training ring or sliced by the pale one’s saber, he battled back.

Keech couldn’t understand why they were fighting with laser swords. Luke Skywalker was the last
Jedi (if one believed in that sort of thing) and no one had seen him for years. Who were these tasty snacks and why were they pretending to be Jedi? She wanted to see them better, and hear them if she could. “Zoom in, enhance audio.” Well, they were bigger now but even more blurry. It was hard to make out their faces, but she wasn’t really looking at their faces. Gods, bless the First Order’s commitment to physical fitness and tight pants.

All she could hear was the fighters’ grunts and the electric symphony of their sabers humming, sparking and crackling as they repeatedly crashed together. After a particularly fast thrust and parry, the tan one spoke.

"Did you review the leads I sent you about Skywalker and the Church of the Force?"

“Yes, is 75% probable to be Lor San Tekka good or bad? I don’t want to go on Wild yunax chase again. Jakku is at the ass-end of the universe. From here, a week to get there and another week back."

“75% is very high, Ky. It'll be a shorter if you go on a star destroyer.”

Wait, Ky? Was the pale one the infamous Kylo Ren? Rumors occasionally surfaced about the mysterious Knights of Ren. Like Luke Skywalker, Keech took them as fairy tales meant to frighten unimaginative children. There was a difference between dismissing a story and being confronted with two men actually wielding lightsabers.

The tan one huffed as he was pushed to the edge of the mat again by a particularly aggressive advance.

“And what of your little mouse, Cha? Have you managed to trap him yet?” asked the pale one.

The tan one chuckled. “The vermin was clever enough to slip into the personnel files using the mouse droid’s credentials, but I found his communication array and destroyed it. I will head out to TX-12 on the Pulverizer tomorrow to locate him. I must find out how much he knows.”

“TX-12? Where the fuck is that?”

“It orbits Taxiode.” The pale shrugged. “Taxiode? You know, in the Rakata Prime system? It’s only about two days from Jakku.”

“I’m sorry I don’t know where all of our communications nodes are, NERD.”

“Maybe if you looked at a starmap once in awhile instead of spending all your time in front of the mirror with your hairbrush or writing awful poetry you would know what I was talking about.”

The pale one touched his hair defensively then swung his saber savagely at the tan one. “You may not live long enough to regret that comment, Cha-Cha.”

“DON’T CALL ME THAT,” the tan one yelled. His voice dropped to a low growl, “We both know who has more skill with a lightsaber Ben. Here’s a hint: it’s me.” The tan one battled the pale one back to his side of the mat.

Keech’s mind reeled from all the new information. He had destroyed her equipment, but he’d said ‘his communications array.’ Did that mean he didn’t know that ‘he’ was actually a ‘she’? Even after trashing her Home, he still didn’t know her identity. And now he was coming TX-12, to find her. Fuckity-fuck-fuck-fuck.

Keech had been very cautious when building her Home. She had done most of the construction
using defunct Empire accounts so the chain of attribution looked consistent. She had painstakingly backdated all her changes so it appeared seamless. Apparently, her efforts had paid off. KOR-2442 had gotten close, but he still didn’t know who she was.

It was a lesson worth remembering. She should be more careful now to hide her identity. She had another trick up her sleeve. “VDR-000001 proxy enable.” Keech twirled around. It was always a thrill to wear a cape and the helmet was over the top. Her breath rattled through the vocoder, “Hhhh haaaaa. Hhhhh haaaaa.” There were more subtle ways to hide her identity, of course, but resurrecting Darth Vader’s system ID was much more fun than the alternatives.

Anger spent, the two fighters bowed to one another and walked out of view. She wondered for a second if she could get a glimpse of them in the showers. “Follow targets.” As the monitor refocused, she saw that the pale one had stopped and gestured toward where the monitor’s camera would be. Keech realized she had made a mistake.

The pale one’s lips moved and the tan one nodded. He grabbed a helmet and a cowl from the bench and donned them as he spun and threw out his arm. Suddenly, he wasn’t a blurry image anymore. He was inside The Projection, standing right in front of her.

“What are you?” his voice rasped through his vocoder.

*What a dumb fucking question. She was a resistance spy with an illegal brain augmentation that had allowed her to infiltrate the First Order’s computer network. She was hiding deep in obsolete Imperial code, wearing Darth Vader’s system ID to obscure her identity. Why the fuck would she tell him who she really was? Oh, he was a dumb fucker.*

“I’m Vader,” she croaked through the vocoder. She grabbed Vader’s saber from her belt and it spit to life, the red blade humming. He ignited his blade and moved into a guard position, his saber held high in both hands by his shoulder, ready to strike.

*Oh shit, we are going to fight with lightsabers. She didn’t know how to do this. She had never held a sword before, let alone one with a plasma blade. What’s more, she had just fixed Scout who was now flying around Home barking his head off. Fuck if she was going to let KOR-2440 damage him again. She needed to get out of here.*

She turned and bolted out the door.

She ran through the jungle, tripping and falling down. He caught up to her. Menace rolled off him in waves as he loomed over her. He threw out his hand and she was dragged up and forward. She couldn’t move, couldn’t breath; she was choking. Oh Gods, she was going to die here.

“Who are you? I will not ask again.” And then she was in immense pain, like a knife was digging into her cerebellum. Why did men ask questions they knew they weren’t going to get answers to? Wordy fuckers. She ignited her saber and swung it at him. It appeared that the last thing the KOR-2440 expected was for her (or Vader) to fight back. He feinted and jumped to the side to avoid being cleaved in half. The pain in her head vanished.

“I already told you, motherfucker. I’m Vader,” Keech explained. “Don’t you pay attention?”

“So be it, Vader,” he sneered. He launched himself at her with a barrage of advances, pushing her back. She had no idea how to parry. He was intent on striking her down. And if he succeeded? Would she be dead? It had always been an academic question. Would her real self die if her digital presence was eradicated in The Projection? She did not want to know the answer.
Then she realized she was going about this all wrong. This was The Projection. *Her Projection*. They were fighting in code, and there was nobody better than her when it came to coding. His thrusts and parries were simply him blocking her queries, his attempts to reroute her along a different path. He was just another cock blocking her. She knew what to do with cocks, you fuck them right back.

“Babbit, six meters tall.” Keech became a giant fluffy lavender babbit with long ears, a pink twitchy nose, and the fluffiest tail. More importantly, she now had *BIG* fucking paws. She reached out with one of her hind legs, knocked him down, and pinned him to the ground with her paw.

"I don’t think you quite grasp what is going on here,” she said. “I can out-code you. I can imagine things that will blow your mind. This is my world and I will destroy you here. I think it’s time you were the one answering my questions. So tell me. WHO. THE. FUCK. ARE. YOU. KOR-2440?” She lifted her paw from his chest, moved it to his crotch, and lightly rubbed his bulge. She felt him harden and wondered if his real life persona was affected as well. After what he had done to her on the other side of the Wall, it was only fair.

“I-I am Daacha Ren,” he rasped with some difficulty.

So the rumors were true. The First Order was ablaze with secrets. One of the more fanciful ones was that Supreme Leader Snoke loved gold lamé (which, considering the requisition slips, this was probably accurate). No one but Kylo Ren, General Hux, or those disgusting red Praetorian Guards ever saw him, and they weren’t about to confirm this rumor for the masses. Although it is hard to confirm rumors when your tongue’s been cut out. *But really, what bad guy wears gold? It's black or nothing.*

One rumor that Keech had actually investigated was the identities of the Knights of Ren. Were they fallen Jedi? Princes of forgotten worlds? Broody teenagers who had never really grown up? Keech had not been able to confirm anything and she assumed that it was just water cooler talk. Oh, how she had been mistaken. Now that she was confronted with the real thing, a real Knight of Ren, she wondered if that meant the other rumors were true. Were there actually seven of them? Did they each have a special Force power? Gods, this meant that the Force was real too.

More importantly, Keech realized Luke Skywalker really was a Jedi. In the preceding weeks, Scout kept bringing her messages about Luke, which meant that the First Order was looking for him. She had dismissed them thinking they were just one off queries, but now... this was trouble. She had to get word back to the Resistance about the search for Skywalker and information about Lor San Tekka.

But first, she had some business to attend to with Daacha Ren/KOR-2440/Hellcat. He had fucked with her. Now it was her turn. Keech continued to rub her paw against him. His whole body stiffened and his breathing increased, the sound amplified by his vocoder.

“Are you enjoying this?” She asked, amused. She quickened her pace and Daacha's resultant groan of arousal sent an echoing tingle of electricity through her body. *Down, Dirty Girl. Remember, he wants to kill you not fuck you.*

“Why would I be enjoying this?” he panted. “First you were Vader, now you're a giant babbit. Whatever form you choose, I will end you.”

“End me? I’m not the one on the ground. Hmmm, what are evil fuckers into? I know… Twi’lek?” She changed into a female Twi’lek. Normal sized, she twirled and then lowered herself on top of him, straddling his stomach. Her lekku caressed his body, shoulders, and upper arms. She twitched her hips and he shivered. *Of course he likes a Twi’lek, everyone does.*
“You don’t like that at all do you?” she teased. *Hm. Maybe a Pantoran? Their females were usually quite beautiful.*

“Pantoran.” She morphed into a magnificent blue skinned humanoid, with purple hair and golden tattoos on her cheeks and forehead. She leaned forward to put her full weight against his chest, then slid down his body and reached back to stroke his rock hard cock through his pants.

“Or perhaps you prefer green? Mirialan.” Her appearance shifted and she surveyed her green skin. The tattooed diamond pattern was beautiful. She sat back up and moved down his body until her crotch was positioned over his. He bucked his hips up toward her, groaning as he made contact.

“I can see how focused you are on ending me.” She moved her hips to slide up and down over the hard, erect penis that was straining at the fabric of his trousers.

“Kylo Ren.” Her features morphed into a version of the pale one she had seen on the monitor. His cock stayed hard. *Interesting.*

“Why are you so blurry? The face is all wrong. And the ears. They're bigger. And the hair. Needs more shine.” The effort he expended to get the words out told her he was close to cumming.

“Something sharper then? Red Rover, Red Rover, Let HUX COME OVER.” She had seen enough of him to correctly articulate his features, even adding her Hux impression. “Careful, Ren, I won’t have my methods questioned.” She reached down and palmed him, running her fingers up his length, pausing at the sensitive head to trace it.

“You need… to work…” Daacha struggled, “on your facial… expression. He wears more… of a… self-important… sneer.” He choked out the last word.

She placed her free hand on his neck and squeezed her fingers around his throat. He brought his hands up as if to fight her off, grabbing at her wrists halfheartedly before giving up. *He must really be desperate if Hux turns him on.* But it was time to stop playing, she owed him that.

“Hutt.”

With that, her form bulged out into the repulsive, gray-green slug body of a Hutt. She wasn’t so much sitting on him as she was lolling across his body. She leaned forward and slid her slimy tongue across his mask; it left a shining trail of saliva in its wake. She felt his dick deflate underneath her.

“Karking Hell!” He blasted her into a tree.

She shook her head to clear it. *Karking? What was he, eleven?* In some parts of the galaxy people said kark instead of fuck and kriff instead of shit. It was fucking annoying and she hated them. She also hated trees when she was thrown into them. But she really fucking hated Daacha Ren. She heard a crashing through the Jungle and took off running toward the sound. It was time to end this.

“Giant babbit!” She covered the distance easily and had soon caught up, only to realize it was a trap. Daacha had transformed into a huge Rancor with slobber collecting on the left side of his mouth. He reached out to grab her, barely missing her as she jumped back.

*Enough.* She needed to get away. She kicked out one of her enormous hind legs and knocked him to the ground. She turned tail and ran, and didn’t have to go far to find a clearing. She stopped and used her paws to draw a line to open The Construct. She stepped through the rip, but something caught her foot; she fell down and was dragged back into The Projection. She kicked her paws but he held her with a viselike grip.
“Seal Construct.” She couldn’t let him in there, not when he had already invaded so much else.

She was back to herself. She lay panting on the white floor and immediately realized she wasn’t alone. A black glove was lying on the floor two meters away, and it had started moving toward her in a grotesque fashion like a large, evil spider.

She was naked again. Fuck, she really needed to fix that start-up program. “Boots, with spikey heels.” And like that, she was wearing shiny knee-high boots with very sharp heels. She walked over to the glove and looked at it for a moment, then stomped her foot down, slamming the heel of her boot into the palm again and again until it stopped moving. Then she jumped on it a few times for good measure.

“Locate KOR-2440, visual,” she said. He was flexing his hand as if it was bothering him, as if he was trying to relieve a phantom pain. “Good,” she said acidly. “You deserved that.”

She felt like she had won this round. But he was getting on a Star Destroyer and coming to TX-12. She needed to stop him, but she had two problems: First, her Rotation was ending today and that would make it harder to connect with the network. Second, she couldn’t protect herself inside The Projection. He had gotten into The Construct as well. She was in danger, both in real life and in the virtual world.

Then she had a thought. It was a long shot, but deadlocked systems were serious business. Deadlocked, wasn’t that was she and KOR-2440/Daacha Ren/Hellcat were? Two systems competing for the same resources, blocking each other from completing their tasks. Yes, a deadlock would do nicely.

She would need Jasper’s credentials, they were traceable. It was a cowardly way to break up with someone. Once they figured out it was him, he would disappear like he had never existed. She would never have to tell him, “It’s not you, it’s me.” Totally a lie. Or talk about feelings. No thank you. Or ask why he wouldn’t go down on her. Just plain rude. But work for the First Order and bad things will happen to you. That’s just how it was.

She knew one thing for sure: Daacha Ren would be dead within 24 hours.

Chapter End Notes

Summary: Keech tries to open the orb only to find it is a BALL file which leads to her musing on her FO crush TM-4420. She opens the file using a text string correction based on a paper that she and Bala wrote together while they were in school. Then she finds her Home in shambles. Scout almost dies, but ends up a disabled program so she makes him a levitating doggie wheelchair. She watches Kylo Ren and Daacha Ren spar shirtless in tight pants. She calls their attention. Daacha enters the computer network and her Projection and tries to fight, but she runs away. Then she realizes she can fight him with code. There is a parade of aliens while she dry humps him. She escapes The Construct, but he loses a glove as he tries to grab her. The glove creeps around and Keech stomps on it. Then she realizes how she is going to stop Daacha Ren from coming to the based to look for a spy.

Have your passes ready, we will be boarding the pain train next week.
Holdo

Chapter Summary

Alternate Title: Deep Hurting

Chapter Notes

shuns and HeartS walk in and see Keech drinking blue milk and munching on space snacks.

Keech: What’s up shitty fuckers?

HeartS: Keech, remember how we talked about pain? This chapter is going to be intense. shuns wrote your back story and she included all of it.

Keech: (eyes narrowing at shuns) All of it? Fuck, shuns that is private. Besides no one is going to want to read about that. People are here for fun. WHY DROP A TON OF FEELS ON THEM???? Not even sexy love feels....(stares at shuns really hard) Why you gotta be that way?

Shuns: (shaking head) I dunno, fiction is cheaper than therapy? Listen Keech, you have a lot of HeartS and I inside you. This is something I need your help with. I want the readers to understand what is at stake here. It’s not just flirting with the Big Bad. You have deep motivation to take on the First Order.

(Keech sighs and nods)

HeartS: Soooooo, I feel like I should make a dick joke now, but nothing comes to mind…. How about we let everyone read the chapter then meet in the Comments section for hugs and hair pats?

Shuns: Sounds good (looks at Keech).

Keech: Fine, but there better be some epic sex in this chapter to make up for it.

HeartS: Calm down Keech. You get a deep dicking.

Keech: And I better get a lick job for real or I riot.

Shuns: We’ll see…

Keech: Fuck you shuns. There is no place in this universe where “we’ll see” doesn’t translate into “the 12th of never.” *throws space snacks at shuns* I kind of hate you.

A/N TO OUR LOVELY READERS: There will be an epic lick job in this story. Eventually. And it will be out of this world… (wink wink, get it?)

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See the end of the chapter for more notes
Riding Jasper was her fourth favorite way to fuck. She liked being in control. She got to set the pace and use him like a tool. It was fitting, because that was exactly how he was acting.


“It’s just wrong.”

She trailed her fingers across his chest then pinched one of his nipples. “If you let me, I promise I’ll be quick.”

“I don’t know,” he said, “I’m just not comfortable with this, it’s not right.” He ran his hands up her thighs to her hips, then waist.

She shivered from the light touches. *Two could play that game.* She ground down on him, his cock hitting her in just the right spot. She moaned; she was hot, wet, and needy. Normally, she would wait a few days after she Surfaced from her Rotation before having sex. But right now she had no time to play the waiting game. She had cornered Jasper and told him to meet in their closet. Storage Closet 69, ironically, was one of the few secluded places on TX-12 Jasper and Keech (and an assortment of others, to be sure) could rendezvous.

He groaned and his hands clutched her waist as he thrust up into her. She quickened her pace, bouncing up and down on his cock. “Huh, if this is so wrong, then why are you *right here?*” she teased.

“You WIN, you can borrow my credentials to make the changes. But I get to be on top. Now.”

He flipped her over, falling out, then reinserted as he nuzzled her neck. He trailed kisses on her jaw and lips as he pumped into her. She sighed; being on her back was probably her 76th favorite position. It gave her zero sensation and she felt like she was being smothered by a sweaty wookie. But the worst part was that there was no mirror on the ceiling to watch.

“*Keech, babe, they’ll be able to see it at inspection and they will be on to us.*”

She wished he would take a risk. Jasper had always been so cautious and careful. All that effort would be wasted when she threw him out the proverbial airlock. He would take the blame for her action, which he believed was an emergency change to fix a corrupted data store. Not the simple removal of a semicolon that would start a cascading failure of the maintenance routine, eventually overworking and disabling the life support systems on the *Pulverizer* and killing everyone on board.

If this worked, her death toll would be in the thousands. She had already killed hundreds anyway. She didn’t know why adding one more to the tally bothered her. Then again she was acutely aware of how the loss of one life, small, tiny even, could be devastating. But work for the First Order and bad things will happen to you.

*He had it coming, right?*

She stared at the ceiling and let her mind wander.
Movalia Coyle did not like being pregnant. She looked forward to cuddling her baby girl. She and her husband Dunbar Favi had an obscene amount of sex on almost every horizontal surface in their apartment and a few vertical ones as well to make her. But the months in between all the sex and the arrival of their child were a literal pain. Actually, many pains.

Everything hurt. Her ankles, her back, her head, even her hair. Bar was so sweet. He would rub her back and her head. He even rubbed her stomach while talking to his little Keech, telling her how excited he was to meet her. It almost made up for the swollen ankles.

The First Order blockaded the system not long after they found out they were pregnant, but worry had died down after the initial panic. The First Order had made no move against Kuat. The Kuat Drive Yard Consortium had refused to support the New Republic, choosing to go it alone, but they were still locked in negotiations with the other side. Besides, who would attack the largest and most profitable shipyards in the known galaxy? The news was optimistic that peace could be achieved. But politics, meh.

Unfortunately, politics reared its ugly head in the form of her former mentor, Professor Amilyn Holdo. No, not Professor anymore. She probably had a different title now. The Hope of the Rebellion had gone back to the New Republic. She did something ambiguous as some sort of ‘Liason’ or other ostentatious asshole that ordered people around. The only reason Movi even considered taking the holocall was because Holdo had hinted at news of Bala in her message.

Movi had lost track of Bala after she and Bar had gotten married. Bala had sent a thousand credits and a note saying “Congratulations, Quitter.” She, and at one time Movi, enjoyed playing the field and couldn't be bothered to settle down. That was the last she had heard of her, and since then all attempts at communication had bounced back.

She wasn’t sure why Holdo would be contacting her now. Her last conversation with Holdo had not ended well. But when you call someone a Lying, Self-Serving Thundercunt, it abruptly ends the talking. That bitch had earned it: she was the deciding vote to kick Bala out of school.

This conversation was not going any better than the last one.

“Movi, reach out to Bala. She’ll listen to you. We need her. We need you. You two were a perfect team. Strategy and Tactics. Plan and Action.”

“I remember it differently, you called us Harm and Havoc.”

She shifted, straightening her shoulders. If the quality of the holo had been better, Movi knew she would see Holdo’s eyes narrow, “Movi, it’s only a matter of time before Kuat falls. The First Order swept Eriadu and now controls the Hydrian Way. They are amassing along the Rimma Trade Route and they won’t stop until they control all the hyperspace routes. Then they will restrain movement. The New Republic’s Navy doesn’t have enough ships to challenge them. We think the First Order is treating with KDY to ensure this continues.”

“The Blockade is just posturing. A gambit. The First Order isn’t the Empire. They’re rabble-rousers from the Outer Rim. They’ll be gone within a year.”

“Movi, Bala is with the First Order.”

Movi was quiet. This explained the bounced messages. “What is she doing there?”

“She’s a science officer. I believe she would cross lines if asked by the right person, by you. But you have to leave Kuat now, bring Bar. We could use his and your help to set up the ship
manufacturing site. We can find Bala and convince her to join. You can make a difference. Join the Resistance.”

“Abso-fucking-lutly not! I am nine months pregnant. Going into hyperspace could trigger labor. Besides KDY are negotiating with the First Order as we speak. You are overselling this.”

Holdo paused for a moment. The holocall quality was shit, probably because of all the signal scramblers it needed to go through to protect her location and, she hoped, her identity. Holdo had not seen the bump. “My congratulations. But you should know, once they sweep into a system, they pick it clean and leave a mess fit only for scavengers. This will be no different, except that when the time comes you and your family won’t be able to escape. Because you all will be dead.”

Movi rolled her eyes. Holdo still had the flair for the dramatic. It had made her a compelling teacher even with a subject as dull as Strategy and Tactics. But she wasn’t twenty years old and this wasn’t college. She had left those years behind her in the past.

Holdo was still trying, unmoved by her stubbornness. “Movi, we need people who can live outside the law. Ship fitters who can do illegal and unsafe mods, scoundrels, code slicers, money launderers, bomb builders.”

“Yeah,” said Movi, “A typical Friday night for me. I thought the New Republic was above that. I certainly am. I gave that life up years ago.

She paused furrowing her brow. “I am not with the New Republic. The Resistance broke with them so we can confront the First Order while the New Republic works out the policy.”

She snorted, “You mean twiddle their lekku. The KDY figured that out and decided to go it alone. So what are you then? Freedom fighters, guerillas, good guys, bad guys?”

“We are whatever we have to be,” she paused for dramatic effect, because Holdo did that. “Given what you and Bala got up to when you were together…”

She gestured toward her protruding stomach. “This isn’t my fight.”

“It’s everyone’s fight Movi. Don’t you want your baby to grow up free? Able to choose her future?”

“You mean like when you told Bala her choice was to leave or be thrown out? No, I want my baby to be happy. The best way to do that is to stay away from politics, economics, and you. This isn’t my problem, it’s yours. Don’t try to drag me down with you.”

Holdo ran a hand through her hair, Movi wondered if she still colored it. “Bala brought that on herself, Movi. She was violating the laws of nature and the Republic. She was experimenting on you. Or have you forgotten about the Augmentation she forced on you?”

Movi had found that being pregnant meant she was either crying or yelling and right now she wanted to yell. “Bantha shit, this Augmentation made my life 100% better and you know it! Besides you were willing to turn a blind eye to what we did, up until the Board of Deliberators found out you were fucking one of your students.”

“I… well… umm…”

“Fuck off, Thundercunt! Like I said, this is not my fight. But I’ll give you some hope since you were the Hope of the Rebellion. I’ll be happy to join you. On the twelfth of Never.”
Movi switched her holopad off. She thought she would never see Holdo again.

She was wrong.

Movi wanted to keep working. Things were expensive on Bador. The commute between the planet and moon was irritating, but the quality of life was better. Better schools, better markets, and better houses. Kuat was dirty, loud, and industrial. It put food on her table and credits in her pocket, but it didn’t mean she wanted to live there.

She was on a late transport back to Bador when it happened. Bar was blowing up her commlink with messages oscillating between sickeningly sweet and seriously fucking annoying. She could go anytime, but she still had a huge list of things to do. She sat with her holopad in her lap. She had finally reached Bala, or at least she thought she had. She had sent a message addressed to Bala on the First Order exchange. She included the most recent scan and the text ‘Guess who is going to be the shittiest aunt in the galaxy? Meet your niece Keech. Holo me, Sister by another Mister.’ She didn’t get a bounce back so she assumed Bala got it.

Her gaze drifted out the window. A huge ship the likes of which she had never seen dropped out of hyperspace. It filled up all visible space beyond the window. Bar would shit a brick if he could see it. She held up her holopad to snap a picture as the viewport lit up. The ship was firing on Bador, reigning hell down on all.

She blinked at the scene, dumbfounded.

The passengers on the ship let out a collective gasp and she pushed her face closer to the glass, desperate to see what was happening. Explosions blossomed on the surface like obscene flowers, their fiery petals enveloping the cities of Bador in clouds of smoke and death. It was hard to fathom that thousands, no, millions of people were dying. She realized that one of those dying was Bar and her stomach clenched into a ball. She knew there were gravity stabilizers on the ship, but they did nothing as her mind spun out of control. She could hear the blood rushing in her ears. Her mouth went dry and her teeth started to chatter. This couldn’t be happening. It was just as Holdo had said it would be.

The pilot’s voice came over the intercom. “Umm.. folks, I’ve just been advised to return to Kuat.”

The ship turned and she could see a few KDY fighter ships. The small security force they had was engaging with the TIE fighters. Kuat didn’t have a Navy. Oh the irony. They made ships but had no way to defend themselves. She watched as one of the KDY fighters blew up a TIE fighter. She was rooting for him, but he was quickly overtaken by three TIE fighters. He turned from the fight toward Movi’s ship and was blown to smithereens. Pieces of his ship were careening toward her transport and there was nothing she could do except watch, knowing death had come for her and her unborn child.

She hugged her stomach, “I love you, baby girl. I wish we could have met, Keech. I really wish you could have met your father. He wanted you so much. We would have loved the hell out of you.”

The wreckage slammed into her ship. There was a bright flash, a rush of air, and then cold, empty darkness.
She gasped. Every nerve was on fire. She wanted to scream but no sound came out. A blurry face bobbed into view, stretching and bending in impossible ways.

“This one is alive and awake. Knock her out and take her over for Collection.”

By sheer force of will, Movi choked out, “My baby…”

“Yes, Yes, we’ll take care of it.”

She felt cold metal, then a needle bit into the side of her neck. She thought she heard a cry. Then she knew nothing else.

Movi woke with a groan. Everything was fuzzy. She was lying on a narrow cot in a small room with pink walls. Must be a hospital. She felt her body: she had all her limbs. She felt her face: no scars or bandages. There was something she needed to remember but her head hurt so much. What had she been drinking? Or was it drugs? Wait, she wasn’t doing that; Bar wouldn’t let her because it was bad for the baby. The Baby.

It came flooding back in a rush. The Blockade. The explosions. Bar was gone. She clutched her stomach. It was flat, no longer round and hard where Keech’s head used to be. Nothing moving under her touch, letting her know that her baby was there. She was gone.

Her wail shattered her voice.

A woman came to her bedside, “Hello, Patient,” she said. “Can you sit up?”

Movi was shaking, her teeth were chattering, and she was rubbing her upper arms with her hands. “Wh-Where’s my baby.”

The woman’s face fell a little. “I’m sorry to tell you this, but your baby was stillborn. Your ship ruptured and you had spaceburn from exposure, it triggered your labor. But the burn was too much for your little one…” Her voice trailed off. “I am so sorry, ma’am.”

Movi didn’t talk for two days.

“Can I see her?”

“Your baby? I’m sorry, she was buried with the other dead.”

“When?”

“Three weeks ago, right after the Fall of Bador. We thought you might not pull through, but you surprised us.”
“Where am I?”

“In the First Order’s Field hospital on Kuat. You were lucky to be found, I heard you were part of the group rescued from space.” The nurse paused. “Can you tell me who you are?”

As Movi looked around the room, the details etched themselves into her brain. She would never forget this place. She knew it would be the location of her nightmares for the rest of her life. The only solace was that whatever else happened to her, she had already lived the worst day of her life.

She had survived after losing everyone she loved. Everyone. Part of her wanted to join them. She couldn’t imagine a galaxy without Bar, Keech, her friends, or her family around her. She had lived a magical existence of happiness, laughter, and love. But that was all gone now. She was alone, with only her memories and her love for them.

And her love for them was Big and Scary and Hungry for revenge.

She would go on for them. But old habits die hard. She wasn’t going to give up her name to anyone. First, she needed a new identity. She would honor Bar by taking his name now. She hadn’t before because it was such a bother to change, but she wished she had. She couldn’t fix that. Keech could live on. It was in name only, but it was still something.

Next, she wanted Revenge. Justice. Closure. She was going to take down the First Order. She would need the help of two people. Two people that she hadn’t seen in a long time. She would start with the one she knew how to find and worry about the second one later.

“My name is Keech Favi. Can you get me a commlink?”

She sent one message, just six words, and they probably went through a thousand scramblers. She hoped that it would arrive to Vice-Admiral Amilyn Holdo the same way she sent it.

_Thundercunt, it’s the 12th of Never._

It took her a month to get off Kuat. Getting her credits was the hardest. The First Order had locked down anything to do with the shipyards. People were being hauled off, disappearing on transports. But they didn’t stop there. Even from the ground, she could see the massive gimbels in space that held the ships as they were built were being disassembled. Spoils of war.

She bought a new identity. Gone was Movalia Coyle, hyperspace computer programmer. Now she was Keech Favi, useless English major. English was an archaic language spoken only by the aristocracy on Bador. No one was going to stop her for that unless they wanted to hear one hell of a story.

She had been able to get on a refugee transport headed toward the Core Worlds. From there she had bounced around until she got a line on Holdo’s ship, the _Ninka_. She snuck aboard a fuel transport and hid in the walls for two days. When she arrived, she strolled right off the ship. No one stopped her. It wasn’t exactly heartening to know how easy it was to sneak aboard a Resistance ship. She made it to the bridge before anyone drew a blaster on her, and by that time Holdo had recognized her.
She sighed. “Take her to my quarters.” The corporal looked like he was going to say something but one look from Holdo silenced him.

In her quarters, Holdo poured tea. “You look terrible,” she said.

“Nice, to see you too, Thundercunt.”

“Movi, this is my ship and I am a Vice Admiral. Please have some respect.”

“Nice to see you, Vice Admiral Thundercunt. And it's not Movi anymore. I'm Keech, Keech Favi.”

If Keech was honest, she was here because she had nowhere else to go. She had mocked Holdo, ignored her advice and refused her offer. Holdo had every right to space her without another thought. She should plead with her to give her for another chance for a purpose. But the rage and hatred of being left behind to carry on alone bubbled, so close to the surface that they were the easiest thing grab when she talked.

Holdo fixed a sharp gaze on Keech for some moments. “When I was about your age. I was fighting for the Galaxy. For Hope. For Light. For Love. Before the Battle of Chyron Belt, I was just a young pilot that liked to get in my X-wing and blow shit up. I was very good at it. As you may recall from class, the Belt was peppered with gravity wells and black hole seeds. I was able to use them to crush twenty TIE fighters outright and disable the Star Destroyer Justice.”

Keech had heard this story many times, “Yes, I remember, this is where you became the Hope of the Rebellion.”

She sighed, “It’s a title I didn’t want and a reminder of the worst day of my life. A few days before the battle, I was going through a medical screening because I was having nausea. I found out that I was pregnant. It was the worst time it could have happened. We were in the middle of the war. I loved the father, but he had just been commissioned as an officer on a different ship. I remember whispering to the baby that now was not the time.”

Keech nodded. That had been her reaction when she had gotten pregnant, but Bar’s ecstatic reaction had overwhelmed her fears. “There never is a right time,” she responded.

Holdo continued, “When I got in my X-wing that day, I wasn’t just flying for myself. I was flying for my baby too. The irony is that the maneuvers I used to evade my enemies and trap them were probably what led to my miscarriage a week later. It was the worst day of my life. I resigned my commission and left. I never flew again. The guilt of knowing if I had made a better choice for my child, maybe even my family, broke me. The only good thing was at that point, we knew that the Empire was going to fall it was just a matter of time. I could walk away.”

Keech let out a breath she didn’t know she had been holding in. She reached out a hand to Holdo and she took it. Keech was surprised how warm Holdo’s hand was. Holdo squeezed Keech’s hand.

“So that is how I ended up, eventually, at the Academy teaching you and Bala,” she paused. “It will get better. The first time you laugh it will feel like a betrayal. But it will get a little easier each time. You will be able to keep on living, but you have to choose to do so. And know that the life will be different. Which is what I believe brought you here today.”

“So what now?” Keech asked.

“We get to work.”
Chapter End Notes

Sorry for the sads, everyone.
*offers head pats and hugs*

Next Week: Keech uses Jasper's credentials in an attempt to kill Cha-Cha.
Episode I: The Phantom Poe

Chapter Summary

Keech Meet Poe, Poe meet … Damnit Poe you just met her!

Chapter Notes

Shuns: SOOOOOOO… we got a little carried away. Wanna tell the nice readers what happened HeartS?

HeartS: *pretends to look offended* What?!?! I thought after the last chapter our readers might like something a little longer… harder… deeper.

Shuns: *shakes head* Originally, Poe wasn’t even in this story, now he has three chapters.

HeartS: Listen, it’s not my fault Poe is so sexy, okay? Have you seen Oscar Isaac? Hello? Yum. Poe is very easy to write about in so many different situations. Like thousands of words easy.

Shuns: Don’t you mean, over ten thousand words? You are ridiculous.

HeartS: And you’re an enabler.

A/N: We wrote A LOT about Poe. SORRYNOTSORRY Originally, it was one chapter but it got really out of hand so now it’s three chapters. We will try to publish them all this week (we’ll do our best). We love Poe and we are really excited about these chapters and we just want to shower you with our love so here it is.

There are some POV changes coming up in these chapters (and some of the later ones too), just to mix it up a little. But they have all the sex so we hope you enjoy them. (There is some plot thrown in here too, don’t worry.)
In the months following the Fall of Bador, Keech went where Holdo ordered her. In a twist of irony, Holdo started calling Keech *The Hope of the Resistance*. The legend caught fire because the Resistance needed to believe in something. Holdo played it smart, she kept Keech's backstory hidden. She understood that some pain was private, but it worked to their advantage. People were happy to fill in the gaps. Just last week, Keech had heard that *The Hope* was a disgraced princess *not with her manners*, a bloodthirsty pirate who took ears as trophies *closer to the truth but gross*, or an actor hired by the Resistance to play a part *wouldn't that be nice?* The truth was Movalia Coyle was a dead girl back on Kuat. Keech Favi lived, and her identity had become the most well-guarded secret in the Resistance.

It had been much too easy to fall back into this life. She built a small team of hell raisers that did a little bit of everything, because when you're taking part in an insurrection you wear a lot of hats. Even though they were her friends, her family, they didn't know her name. Sometimes they called her *The Hope*, but mostly they called her Boom. She really loved making bombs. It was guerrilla fighting at it's best. They brought the battle to the First Order everywhere they could...

...until the First Order brought it to them. They were trapped on Sullust, at the center of the Rimma Trade Route, whoever controlled the planet owned the Route. This was the first time the First Order had ventured so brazenly into the New Republic's territory. After the assault on Bador, the First Order had been emboldened, and now it seemed they were ready to push their advantage.

“Hit the evac code!” Keech screamed into her commlink. “Guys, we gotta go, drop what you are doing and pull back to the launch pad! NOW!”

AT-AT blasters were pummeling the buildings and everything had gone to shit. It was like the First Order had some preternatural ability to coordinate attacks. The Exploratory Force from The New Republic had left hours ago, but her team had people, on the ground that they wanted to get to safety. They delayed until the last minute, but now it was here. The First Order assault had been seamless - no blind spots, no gaps, just unrepentant fury as their weapons tore everything apart. This was all before the dreadnought reigned down hell from above. Well, *dreadnoughts*; two of them had jumped into low space only eight hours prior. They turned the tide in favor of the First Order; they had won the Battle for Sullust. All remaining Resistance Fighters needed to get off this planet or they were dead.

Her comm crackled to life. “I hear *The Hope of the Resistance* needs an escort.”

“Um, yeah, who is this and where can I meet you?”

“I’m Captain Poe Dameron, Black Squadron. And you need to buy me dinner first, but the evac point is 3.2.5900 by 34.21.5667.”

“Cute asshat, thanks for the assist.”

She shouted to Hylon. “I have the rally point: it's 3.2.5900 by 34.21.5667. Pass it on. We need to get to the ships.”

She turned to yell at Runnet and she saw him catch fire. The smell caught the back of her throat. She would have retched if she’d had time, but blaster bolts were coming at her fast and hard. She
ducked into the remains of a house to catch her breath. The ground continued to shake as First Order bombers dropped their payloads nearby.

Keech stepped out from her hiding place when the ground stopped rumbling. Her comm crackled again.

“Hey Hope, you still out there?”

“Not dead yet. Your bird still in the air? I’m two clicks south of the evac point and that tin can better be waiting for us with canons hot when we get there.”

“Tin can?” Poe countered, sounding appalled. “Listen here lady, don’t you ever insult my beautiful baby again.” Then his voice softened, “Don’t worry, I won’t let her talk to you like that.” She imagined him stroking the dashboard of his fighter.

She shook her head and broke into a run toward the launch pad. By some fucking unbelievable stroke of luck, they’d managed to scrounge up not one but two working ships; a Y-wing Courier variant that could seat five (probably from the Clone Wars, judging by the rough shape she was in) and an X-wing. Both could fly, and Geo was probably already inside the Y-wing bitching about the state of the wiring. She could see Hylon run up the ramp with Dover close behind. She was the last one; they were going to make it.

Now, how to break the news about Runnet?

She heard the crack before it happened. A blast split the air and the Y-wing exploded in front of her. She was thrown backward onto the ground and she lay there for a second wondering if she was dead. The second explosion pushed the air out of her lungs. She rolled over and tried to sit up, making it on her second try. Fuck. Her head was pounding and everything was muffled. She shook her head and then looked up to see everything on fire. The ships were ablaze with no hope of salvaging, She looked for around for movement. Why isn’t there any movement? Where are the guys?

She activated her comm, speaking words she couldn't hear, “Are you there? Anyone? Come back.” She held it to her ear, the only thing she heard was static. She got up. She wanted to sob, but the best she could do was gulp and dry heave. She gave herself until the count of 36 by 3’s. When she hit 36... Right, get to the evacuation point. She ran; she would make it there and then figure out what to do next.

Fifteen minutes later, Keech stood on a small ridge looking down at a black and orange T-70 X-wing Fighter with a man crouched behind the landing gear. He was firing his blaster at a group of stormtroopers. Not this shit again.

She pulled out one of her sticky bombs. It had a thorium core and was covered with a synthetic goo that, chemically at least, was very similar to whatever coated the floor of the Cantina Rata, her favorite dive back in the day. She had never been able to get that shit off of her boots. She held the bomb by the wrapper, pushed the detonator delay, and lobbed it at a trooper wielding a flamethrower. Why does the First Order have all the cool shit? The bomb hit him squarely in the chest, stuck for a moment then exploded, taking out the stormtrooper and everything around him within a four-meter radius.

She was running toward the X-Wing when the man behind the strut stood up. R’iia, he’s beautiful. Even clad in the bright orange flight suit, he looked like a snack.

Captain Poe Dameron had gorgeous, curly brown hair, rich, dark eyes, tan skin, and a smile that made her wet. Snack time would have to wait until after the heroic rescue though, there too many blasts and First Order TIEs flying around. She didn’t want to lose another transport while she eye
fucked a handsome stranger.

“Come on, Asshat, let’s ion trail outta here.” Keech took a running leap into the X-wing and settled into the pilot’s chair. *What the actual fuck?* It was a one-seater. How the HELL were both of them going to get out of here?

“Excuse me.” Poe poked his head over the side of the ship. “You are in my seat. I’m here to escort you. I thought you had your own transport.”

“I did. It blew up.”

He let out a sigh, “If I’d known you were going to stow away I would have brought something bigger.”

“Something bigger,” she snorted, “This is some rescue. Something bigger would be nice, and something that I could be rescued in would be nice too.”

“It’s PLENTY BIG!” he yelled. “Keep it up and you can let the First Order rescue you right into a cell.”

“Well, at least they know how to count higher than one, Da-MORON. Of all the reckless, fucking things. Two people, two seats. It’s basic fucking math.” She held up her fingers to demonstrate in case he was a visual rather than auditory learner. Shit, she would probably have to pull out the puppets for him.

Whatever retort he was trying to brew up died on his lips as blaster fire pinged off of the nose of the X-wing.

“I’ll give you something to sit on,” he muttered as he swung up the side of the ship. He straddled the side of the cockpit before grabbing her by the waist and lifting her out of the seat. Then he slid them both in so she was sitting on his lap with the stick between her legs. She sighed. Wrong stick.

“Okay Dirty Girl, we are gonna have to work together to get out of here. I need you to do something with your mouth that doesn’t involve insulting me for the next five minutes while I get us off this planet.” His mouth was near her neck, his breath hot and wet, and she could think of a lot of things to do with her mouth, all of them too distracting for the moment. *Down girl, get off the planet in one piece first.* *Haha* get off.

“Pfft, nerf herder,” she sniffed.

“Whatever, babbit wrangler. BB-8 drop the canopy!” He shifted and fussed as he jammed a helmet on his head. “Okay DG?”

“DG?”

“Yeah... Dirty Girl. I’m going to need you to be my hands right now because your cute ass is in the way.”

“Okay, DM, for Da-Moron, just remember that this cute ass is going to save your sorry one.” She wiggled her butt.

“I’m letting that one go because I need you to flick the four switches on the right, now.”

She reached over and complied. “Okay, they’re flicked.” She flicked him in the arm to demonstrate.
“That’s real nice, DG. Now ease the stick back nice and slow.” *I’d like to ease onto your stick nice and slow.*

“I can’t, it’s too tight.” *Said no man ever.*

Poe reached around her. “Relax.” He placed his hands on her upper arms and pulled back, guiding the stick back as well. “See? Easy.” But there was only so far for it to go, and soon it was pressed up against her pubic bone in a wholly uncomfortable manner.

“Does your seat adjust?” she asked.

“I don’t think so.” BB-8 let out a series of binary beeps and the seat abruptly dropped five inches. It wasn’t much, but it meant that her head was no longer pressed against the canopy, and it gave the stick a tiny bit of wiggle room.

They broke atmosphere and Poe entered the coordinates to the base. As the stars stretched into a blur, Keech asked, ”How long until we get to the base?”

“Two days.”

"What? I can't spend forty-eight hours in here with you."

"Relax, relax, we're only going as far as the Raddus, six hours away. It will drop us off at the base on D'qar."

For the first time in days, she caught her breath. No one was shooting at her. She had made it out. But her team… Images of the recent days flooded her mind. The command center, blown up. The Sullust Fleet, blown up. Her team, *her friends*, her dysfunctional little family, blown up.

She was not okay. As the adrenaline drained from her system, the trauma of losing everyone she cared about, again, days of no sleep and just the sheer fucking futility of it all caught up to her. She was going into shock, and she was so cold that her teeth chattered. She shook, and not in the *I'm about to cum* way. She was collapsing like a neutron star inside the tiniest possible place in the galaxy.

Her vision was getting dark around the edges. She could feel herself detaching. Normally, she would vanish into the Augmentation and let it pass. It was how she had made it off Kuat and to the Ninka. She couldn’t do that now, because she was perched on the lap of this pilot. The Augmentation was a secret. Only a handful of people in the Resistance knew about it. Of those, only two knew she was carrying the diagnostics of the cluster f*ck that had been the Battle for Sullust, taken from the Command Center as it burned. But more importantly, those diagnostics included scans of the dreadnoughts. She wasn’t giving that up to anyone. The panic attack broke over her in waves. She was sure she was going to die. She shuddered, waiting for the end to come as her heart exploded in her chest.

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The stars stretched as they entered hyperspace, and he wanted to spend the next six hours fucking around with the *Hope of the Resistance.* He had been struck dumb as she ran towards him. He had never seen anything more beautiful than watching her long legs eat up the space as she pivoted and lobbed the bomb at the stormtrooper. She was as graceful as a Twi'lek. Before today, he thought *The Hope of the Resistance* was just a marketing ploy. After seeing her in action, he was ready to
follow the mysterious woman, who had become a living legend in less than a year anywhere. Poe couldn’t believe she was sitting on his lap. He was trying to figure out what to say to her when he saw her shoulders tense as she started to shake.

“Uh, you ok DG? Why are you shaking? Do you need a snack or something?”

“I could use something to eat,” she said tensely.

*Oh fuck. I wonder if I have any food on this bird.* Poe dug around underneath his seat. His hand brushed a wrapper. *I hope this is a ration bar and not a condom wrapper.* The last time he had tried to use a condom it had exploded from the package during hyperspace travel. That was when he stopped using condoms. If it was a condom wrapper, it was at least four years old.

He pulled out a half-eaten ration bar and offered it to her. “This is all I’ve got, DG.”

She grabbed the bar and took a bite. She chewed, then turned and spit it back out into the wrapper. *Unlike me, ration bars don't improve with age.* He could see half of her face, lit by the instrument panel and the bright, hyperspace trails. She was pretty, with high eyebrows and cheekbones, a thin nose, and medium-sized mouth. The things he could do with that mouth. She was long and lean. As she pressed against him, it was hard not to let his hands roam over her body. He wanted to touch her so badly. Mostly, he was thankful for the bulky flight suit. It covered up the hard-on he had since Sullust for her, but it took away some of the sensations. Now, was not the time for sexy thoughts. He felt her shiver again, coming down of the adrenaline was hard. He knew the feeling. She hugged herself as her teeth started to chatter more.

“Can you say something?” she asked. "Please, just keep talking."

“Sure, want me to sing the ‘Ten Little Banthas All in a row?’ *Or I could rip open your pants and we could fuck, that always works for me when I’m tense. Though, after a little foreplay. I’m not an animal, I’m a gentleman.*"

She huffed and gritted out, “That is literally the worst song in the galaxy.”

“Sorry, it’s the only song I know all the words to.” *Distract her. Throw her a compliment. Women love compliments.* “That was a pretty wicked bomb back there. I haven’t seen an explosion that color in a long time. Did you make that yourself?”

“Explosions, so many fucking explosions,” she said flatly. “So many people dying,” her voice began to rise, "The base was compromised and they brought fucking dreadnoughts! How do you fight that shit?” she yelled. She balled her hands into tight fists and punched the canopy.

“HEY HEY HEY!” Poe grabbed her by the hands and pushed them into her lap, putting his arms around her like a human straight jacket. “NOBODY, and I mean nobody treats her like that. You’d better apologize to her.”

She thrashed back and forth. She finally had something to fight against. She bucked her hips; she flung her head back and tried to break his nose; she threw an elbow. He knew it could cathartic to hurt somebody when you were in pain. She needed to get that pain out, he just wished he wasn’t the one she needed to hurt.

“Woah, girl, woah. I wasn’t that serious.” He held her tighter and wedged his face close up to her neck. “Shhh, shhh, shhh. Talk to me. Tell me what I can do.”

When Poe was little and he got angry, his mother would hug him tight, swaying back and forth until he calmed down. He thought it was worth a try. He tightened his grip hugging her to his
A sob tore out of her throat. “WHY...” was all she could manage, the sound of it like a wounded wookie.

“Alright, DG, it’s gonna be alright. Let it out. I’m here. I got you.”

She was silent for some time. Then she started talking. She told him about the Fall of Bador, how she lost everything and everybody. He had always wanted children, but listening to her story made him realize that if he was ever lucky enough to have a kid and something happened, he would be utterly destroyed.

He had loosened his hug so he could stroke her hair. It was dark brown, falling in soft waves to her shoulders. He was quiet for a long time as he carefully unknotted the tangles. It had probably been days since she had time to take care of herself. But now they had hours to kill, this was something he could do for her. He knew whatever he would try to say right now would come out wrong, so he said nothing at all. She had been through so much, words just couldn’t cut it.

Eventually, he spoke up. “I want to say something profound about hope and the sun and the night, but really, the only thing I can think of is, why did such a good person like you have such shitty things happen to her?”

She snorted, “I dunno, it’s probably the fucking Force or some other bantha shit makes no sense. But thank you,” she said. “Do you have a knife?”

What? Where was this going? He did not have the supplies or the wits to treat an attempted suicide.

“Uh, yeah... can I trust you?”

“All right, DM. I need you to cut a hole in my pants so we can fuck.”

“BB-8, sleep mode!”

Five and half hours later, Black One touched down in the Raddus’ hanger. The entire Resistance leadership was assembled there to greet The Hope of the Resistance.

They weren’t prepared for her to show up with Poe Dameron in an X-wing that usually only fit only one person. Or for her to tumble out completely naked when the canopy opened.

She climbed down the ladder, all tits, ass, and sassy smile, reeking of sex. She took one look at the assembled greeting party and quirked a grin. She popped out her hip and placed a fist on it. “Well isn’t this a warm welcome. What’s up shitty fuckers?”

Leia unclasped her cloak and went to offer it to her but Keech shook her head no. She didn’t need clothes.

“Show me the way to the canteen. I need a caf, a hot meal, and a shower. In that order. We can debrief...” she paused to laugh at her own joke. “We can debrief after that.”
Admiral Ackbar, who had seen some things during Rebellion but had never seen an ass that bounced like hers, gestured the way down the hall.

“Anyone want to join me?” Keech asked, looking around. “And for your information, pants are optional. *Always optional.*”

Poe scrambled out of the X-wing looking very red and very embarrassed. His flight suit was still on but a sizable hole had been added to the crotch area. He moved his hands to cover up the rip.

“Really, Captain Dameron?” Leia shook her head.

“What? It was a long flight. We got bored.”

Leia looked him over. “Keep in mind, Dameron, that’s Resistance property. I expect you to repair that yourself before turning it in for cleaning. Or maybe we should just burn it, probably more sanitary. On second thought, throw it in the incinerator. I don’t want anyone else getting cubic fleas.”

“Come on, that was three weeks ago. I got rid of those.” He watched *The Hope of Resistance* sashay away. He really liked that cute ass.

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Leia sat in her office and thought of the Resistance; as in most cases, it was the exact opposite of the First Order. So many strong personalities, so much chaos all the time. The training base on D’qar where she and the Resistance were hiding was a writhing orgy after dark and during most of the day. When you ran on adrenaline all the time, you needed an outlet and fighting only got you so far.

General Organa knew that the Resistance harbored a bunch of sex addicts as evidenced by *The Hope* and Poe's grand entrance, but you weren’t going to put that on a Recruitment poster. *Wanna Fuck? Join the Resistance.* It was a running joke that ‘Hurricane’ Poe Dameron could blow the clothes off anyone with just a look. He was a walking advertisement for bravado and sexual energy. It was widely known that he was glorious in the sack and a very generous lover, whatever the species. And now he had another new playmate. This could be a disaster; the last time he fell in love, the Resistance almost lost a ship.

She took two actions to keep her base running as smoothly as possible. The first was to provide contraceptives on demand for any male, female, or non-binary that wanted them. Couldn’t have everyone getting pregnant at once, the Resistance just didn’t have the resources to handle that. They went with Noimpregtron, or NIPT for short - a small, metal tab that used electricity in a unique wave pattern that fooled the body into infertility. It worked universally for all species and had a success rate of 99%. Grafted to a neck or neck like structure, NIPT could block even a Mon Calamari fertilization, and that was millions of eggs. The second was mandated venereal disease testing for everyone on a three-month cycle. She did not need another outbreak of Sphätáikilis. The gradual crystallization of one's genitals tended to cloud judgment in the cockpit.

She had once said, “When I love, I love for miles and miles… a love so big it should either be outlawed, or it should have a capital and its own currency.” She believed in love. And of course lust, love’s bastard offspring. Sexual pleasure was, after all, a legitimate right of all beings. Obviously, this didn’t refer to on-base debauchery specifically, but Being Rights were a Rebellion...
cornerstone for Gods’ sake. The New Republic had forgotten this. But it was how the Resistance, the bastard offspring of the Rebellion and the New Republic, had been born, shrieking into the galaxy.

Unfortunately, her soldiers only heard what they wanted to hear, translating her words to, “Have as much sex with whomever you want. We won’t try to stop you. Just make it to your station on time and bring your A-game.” But maybe that was the trouble with the Resistance. It was hard to focus on winning a war when you were always in a storage closet having a quickie.

She picked up her holopad and called the infirmary. If Poe was going to stick it in her star player, she would make sure she got her some protection.

“Yes, General?” The med tech was new and Leia didn’t know her name.

“Hello dear. Sorry we haven’t met yet.”

“The name’s Peria Redesson, Medical Technician Third Class, ma’am.”

“Pleasure, Peria. Please book your earliest available appointment for *The Hope of the Resistance*. She needs a full sexual health workup and an NIPT tab.”

“Right away ma’am.” The tech tapped on another holopad. “I can fit her in tomorrow morning at 0800 hours.”

“Perfect.” *The sooner, the better*. She needed to nip whatever sexual plague Poe had brought back with him this time in the bud.

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It was entirely too early to have someone sticking their finger in her vagina. She hadn’t even had her caf yet. But there were worse ways to start out the day.

The med tech, Peria, smiled wanly. “We are almost done, but did you know you have cubic fleas?”

“What the fuck?” Keech asked.

Peria blushed, “Well, when you love someone very much and you have sexual touches with that person… sometimes if that person hasn’t been faithful and is a karking piece of shit that cheats on you with literally ANY OTHER sentient being in the galaxy, you can a get a venereal disease.”

Keech looked at her incredulously, “Did you really just explain to me how venereal diseases work? No, dipshit. I wanted to know what cubic fleas are.”

“Oh,” she said. “They were microbots invented on planet Putainas that were supposed to keep the prostitutes’ vaginas hairless. At some point, they became self-aware, rejected their programming, unionized and vowed never eat hair again. They still like to hide in pubic hair for some reason, so the only option is to shave it all off.”

She was okay with that.

Peria continued, “Have you had intercourse with Poe Dameron?”
Keech shook her head yes and looked at Peria curiously.

“Well, the most recent outbreak was traced to his DIRTY, FILTHY CROTCH! So you might want to think about that the next time he propositions you.”

Peria was young. She thought about saying something cutting or maybe something wise, but nothing came to mind. She didn’t understand why people judged each other so harshly, especially women. It was exhausting and pointless. Peria probably didn’t know how quickly things could fall apart. Keech hoped that Peria would outgrow her pettiness with time and experience.

As for Poe, she was put out with him. However, it had been dark and tight in the X-wing, so maybe he didn’t know about the fleas. She could give him the benefit of the doubt. He had been there when she needed someone. He had been better than just a someone, he was her person now. She took care of her people, whatever they required. Shaving her crotch wasn’t that worse thing she had ever had to do. She was willing to do much more for him, and, honestly, to him.

Chapter End Notes

Yeah look, we know. We started out with implied sex. SORRY BROS. But that means you should strap in. It's going to be a roller coaster of pain, pleasure, and punishment, so clutch those pearls, Mabel.

If you would like more Poe, we suggest reading anything by Draco_sollicitus. Her stories are all DameRey if that is your jam. Bound to the Light is her EpIX but the Force and Fortitude Series which is a DameRey AU set in Pride and Prejudice is magnificent. Like seriously, shuns loved it so much she wrote poetry about it. (She did it for Bound to the Light too).

BONUS:

Ten little banthas all in a row
One fell out of line and then there were nine

Nine little banthas all in a row
One met his fate and then there were eight

Eight little banthas all in a row
One went to heaven and then there were seven

Seven little banthas all in a row
One fell for tricks and then there were six

Six little banthas all in a row
One took a crash-dive and then there were five

Five little banthas all in a row
One took a snore and then there were four

Four little banthas all in a row
One banged his knee and then there were three
Three little banthas all in a row
One stepped in poo and then there were two

Two little banthas all in a row
Both took a spill and then there were none
Episode II: Attack of the Poes

Chapter Summary

Oral Sex, because Happy Mother's Day. Keech gets to see Poe fly and it’s hot until its not. Poe and Keech get it on again because in fiction recovery time is quick. He gives her an STD again and she goes to the Medbay again.

Chapter Notes

You've been waiting for oral sex... well here it is, HeartS and shuns style.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

4 years ago near the Hydrian Way midpoint

Keech was laid out on Leia’s desk like a buffet, and Poe was one very hungry customer.

She was leaving again in an hour. No, now just forty-five minutes. She was going to spend her last minutes on the ship right where she belonged, cumming all over Poe’s face. For the last two years, they had met up to fuck whenever orders brought them close enough. It probably wasn’t respectful to diddle in Leia’s office, but they had been talking about fantasies and the only one that did not involve small furry animals was her laid out on Leia’s desk as he tongued her to completion. Seriously, what was up with him and furries?

She checked the corridors and commed him the all clear, then slipped into the office, marveling at how easy it was to sneak into the General’s personal office. Poe had walked in five minutes later ‘looking for Leia.’ The smirk on his face said everything: his day was about to improve dramatically.

He may have had his faults, but Poe was a fucking gentleman who always made sure she came first when they were fucking. All bets were off when it came to drinking games. She usually won those anyway because she had tamed her gag reflex, a skill he was forever thankful for even as she lorded her wins over him. But today he was winning, well so was she, and that meant he was feasting on her thighs, pussy, and clit like they were a three-course meal. And who was she to stop him?

He unzipped her flight suit from one ankle to the other, running his tongue up her leg and stopping to sprinkle kisses on her right thigh. “Can’t have Lefty getting jealous,” he murmured as he gave her left thigh the same treatment. The nips got closer and closer to her pussy and she was soaked just thinking about him breathing on her, let alone touching her. When she thought she would dissolve into a puddle, he gave her a few quick sucks through her skivvies. He ran his tongue over them and the friction was intense. It felt so good. She gasped. She squirmed. She came.

“That’s one,” he said. ”I am going to make you cum... hmmm... how many times should it be, DG?”
Keech didn’t know, and she had kind of forgotten how to talk for a moment. Was three a good number? “Uhhh, three?”

He laughed, “How long until your transport leaves?”

She looked at the chrono. “Forty-two minutes.”

“Okay, I’m thinking four, but maybe if you are really good we can go for five. Just be patient and let them… um… come.”

Keech had never cum that many times in a day let alone in forty-two minutes. She would probably die of ecstasy or her clit would fall off. Challenge accepted. He sucked her again before pulling her skivvies down. Keech watched him. Gods she would never get tired of seeing him between her legs.

“When have you ever known me to be patient?” she asked as she ran her fingers through his fucking beautiful hair. “Now get to work, time’s a-wasting.”

“Yes, ma’am.” That was the last thing he said for the next 30 minutes.

The second time she came, he was sucking her clit. He had started with a long lick of her slit from bottom to top, then he flicked and teased her clit. Every few flicks he would use the slightest bit of pressure from his teeth. It was his oral foreplay. He clamped his mouth at the top of her vagina and started sucking. The pressure was light at first. He continued to tease and probe with his tongue, but then he varied the pressure, a little harder, a little softer. It felt good but it wasn’t going to get her there.

She tugged at his hair, their signal for ‘try something different.’ He did, and it was everything. He sucked her clit like his life depended on it, like it was the only thing that mattered. She moaned and mewed and panted. Her back was arching, she was tingling and building. Then he stuck his tongue in between her pussy lips, thrusting in and out and wiggling every few passes and she was there again, gushing as she came.

He held up two fingers. He was counting. What a moof milker.

He was laving her with his tongue as she came down. The wide strokes from the bottom to top weren’t going to bring her to orgasm but they were comforting. He thrust a finger inside her; she was so slick from her last two orgasms that it slid right in. She was so sensitized now that she was panting, partly due to pain, partly due to pleasure. He inserted a second finger. The two of them together felt marvelous, but then he started to scissor them in and out. It felt very, very nice, but not nearly as good as when he slid in a third finger and thrust in and out with the same rhythm he used when he was giving her a deep dicking.

He took a moment to catch his breath and make eye contact with her, but then he plunged his face back down, capturing her clit again and giving it a few short, powerful sucks. She clamped her thighs around his face and yanked on his hair. Overly sensitized as she was, the orgasm was more shallow than the first two but it still left her reeling. She felt like a little like she was dying. She was hot, practically burning up, and she was covered in sweat, his spit, and her own slick.

He let go of one of her thighs to knock three times on the desk.

As he turned back to his impossible challenge, Keech heard a real knock at the door. Don’t they know how to use the chime? She didn’t say anything, hoping that no one would open it. No luck. It opened. She reached for her blaster, exercising extreme control because she wanted to blow the
fucker away. No court martial would convict her, she was sure. **WHO WOULD INTERRUPT THE BEST ORAL SEX OF HER LIFE?** Only someone with a death wish could be that stupid.

When the door opened she saw Fargus. *So, stupid then.* He was a clueless oaf who somehow managed not to get himself killed on a daily basis. He walked into the office holding a datapad. “Leia, I brought those plans you asked me for…” He looked up and stopped, his mouth hanging slack. Keech lifted her head from the desk and put a finger to her lips. He looked at her dumbfounded. She held eye contact while Poe continued to work away at her, and he stood there watching like a creep. She held up the blaster and pointed it at him, then she flicked it in a shooing motion. Fargus dropped the datapad on the table next to the door and fled like his life depended on it. Which it did.

Poe looked up and raised his eyebrows. He had heard, then. “It was just Fargus. And why did you stop? Get going, you owe me one more at least. Or I might forget who you are. Wait, your name is... Jhan right? Or is it Botter? Well, whatever your name is, I have clearly already forgotten it.”

“I’d better try harder then, can’t have you screaming someone else’s name. Gives people the wrong idea.”

“Less talking more licking,” she said.

“How are we on time?”

“Ten more minutes until my transport leaves.”

“Damn, I would love to give you another one but you need to go.”

“They’ll wait.” She looked at him expectantly.

He assumed the position, but because he was an ass he started to ion wave. He hummed and shook his head in an approximation of the noise an ion wave generator on a ship made when hitting pulse factor 5. It was a welcome break from the intensity. At this point Keech’s back hurt from the desk, her thighs were sore from spreading and clenching repeatedly, and her clit and vaginal lips were so stimulated she wasn’t sure if she would be able to walk or wear pants for the rest of the week.

But that didn’t matter to Poe. He had an objective and he was going to make it happen. He put it all together: the tonguing, the sucking, the fingering, one final capital performance. She reached the crescendo, singing his name. It was his magnum opussy. She was an appreciative audience and applauded him as he surfaced.

“That’s four, want me to try for five?”

After the last fifty-ish minutes, Keech knew two things. First, her well-tended pussy would never be the same again. Second, if he touched it again she would have to kill him.

“Please no, just no. If you do, I don’t know if I will ever be able to have sex again.”

He looked at her, “Well that would be a damn shame.” Then he waggled his eyebrows, “Okay DG, my turn?”

“Hmm, no, I don’t think so.”

“What? Come on, why not?” Poe pleaded. “By the looks of you, you enjoyed yourself quite a bit and it has me all riled up now.”
“We literally just got caught by that doofus Fargus. He probably went and tattled to Leia already. Do you really want her walking in to see you shoving your goods into my mouth, the Hope of the Resistance sucking off the Best Pilot in the Resistance?”

“No. But… I… At least we are keeping it in the family?” he finished lamely. Poe looked around helplessly and gestured toward his pants. A stiff tent had formed.

“Look, I’m sorry Dameron.” Not that sorry. “It’s too risky, someone might discover us again.” Not that it matters, the whole base can watch us if they want. “Plus we don’t have time anymore. I have to get going.” She zipped her flight suit legs down. It was nice they had re-designed the suits as she suggested so they were easy to get in and out of. And easier to fool around in. She moved to brush her hand across Poe’s mouth. It came away slick and she wiped it on his shirt. She slid off the desk and went to stand up, but collapsed towards the floor. Poe caught her before she hit the ground.

“You okay DG?”

She was flushed. “Peachy, but I can’t move my legs because apparently, this much bliss has a price: control of my lower body movement was a casualty. Can you carry me to my transport? I seem to have been temporarily paralyzed by your tongue.”

“Gladly.” Poe swooped her up into his arms and carried her down the hall to the hanger.

Keech nuzzled Poe’s neck and jaw, even though he shaved each day he always had stubble. It was scratchy and delightful. She would miss it. It had been a good week as the Raddus traveled toward the Ninka. She had serious work ahead of her, the refugee crisis was at a critical point. She hoped that the two pallets of neatly stacked and wrapped credits and three gigantic ion cannons would be enough.

She had been all over the galaxy, coaxing, cajoling, and collecting the money that had been promised for those beings displaced by the First Order’s actions in the past two years. Kuat, Eridu, Sullust, the list went on. Whole systems had been razed. The logical solution would be to let the displaced people resettle in the Core closer to the safety of the New Republic, but as always the Core Worlds pushed back. Leia had negotiated a compromise, setting up on Azraya in the Mid Rim near Sullust. The planet was terraformed but no beings had claimed it.

Someone had to make sure promises were kept. Someone with a title like The Hope of the Resistance, a can-do attitude, and a fondness for thermonuclear detonators when things got dicey. Now the real work started. She was headed to Azraya; Leia had named it, it meant shelter in Old Alderaanian. She was to meet with the administrator to pass on the credits and the ion cannons. The scans she had taken from Sullust had revealed that the dreadnoughts were susceptible to a direct hit of an ion cannon boosted to factor 7D. Of course, factor 7D would actually explode the cannon, so there was that.

Engineers from across the Resistance had worked the problem: a containment field and a huge modulator capable of handling variable-loop flow made it physically possible. Creative programming allowed the blast from the three cannons to be synced and concentrated. She had consulted on it and it felt good to use her brain again.

They had just got to the hanger when the ship jumped out of hyperspace at the midpoint of the Hydrian Way Hyperspace route to see the Ninka taking heavy fire from a star destroyer. The battle station alarm blared.

Poe set her down on some crates. He dropped a salty, musky kiss on her lips and said, “Gotta go to
work, DG.” He jogged a few steps then reversed and kissed her one more time. “For luck.” He winked at her. "Don't go anywhere?"

"Not likely," Keech said.

From her crates, she could see the ship’s launch bay. She recognized his ship immediately, the only black X-wing in the fleet, with orange paneling to help it stand out in the darkness of space. She needed a better view. She stood and made it to the wall for support. There was a viewport outside the hanger and she could see the battle. It was too far away, which was a good thing if you wanted to be safe but bad if you wanted to see your lover in action. Well, a different kind of action.

She stumbled into the Bridge. They really need to get a better handle on who could enter, it would be too easy to stage a mutiny. C-3PO was fussing and tried to stop her. Thank the Gods, at least the droids would stop a mutiny. Leia put a stop to it, gesturing for her to enter. At the center of the room, the battle was projected in real time from the holotable.

Leia pointed, “He’s here.” Keech didn’t need to ask who he was.

His ship was a fast moving blip, but she could see the way he drew in the TIEs then evaded them blowing them up. The Raddus opened fire on the Star Destroyer, but it was now taking fire from both sides. It was slow work, but the shields on the First Order ship gave way first and it was crippled. But the TIEs kept coming, and one headed straight for Poe.

“Bank left, Asshat,” she said to no one in particular.

It was like watching the wreckage headed toward her all over again. She was sure that he was going to be hit but he banked left just in time, avoiding the collision at the last possible second. Keech walked off of the Bridge. She leaned up against the hallway wall, letting the cool metal soothe her burning face. Her breath was coming in pants and the blood was roaring in her ears. Fuck.

What had been a casual arrangement of mutual satisfaction crumbled as she realized she had feelings for Poe. She couldn’t do it. She knew that if she let herself love him he would die. Everyone she loved died. She moved as quickly as she could to the ‘fresher and dry heaved until the nausea passed. He deserved better than a broken woman who was always leaving him. She wanted to stay in the ‘fresher and hide, but he would be back soon.

She took the small vial of pills out of her pocket. Shit, I'm almost out again. Since Sullust she had been having panic attacks more frequently. She was almost never in a place that she could retreat to the Augmentation, and the shit they gave her in medbay hadn’t helped at all. In the end, she had dug through her memories to make Relax. Bala never tired of tweaking her drugs. Relax was something she made just for them. It had taken some doing, but she had found an apothecary who would mix it for her Naboo. It wasn’t as good or long lasting as what Bala made, but Bala was an artist and chemicals were her medium.

As Keech bit down on the pill, she felt a wave of warmth wash over her. The overwhelming feeling of hopelessness retreated. The roar in her ears died down. Her heart was no longer trying to break out of her chest. Her skin was still covered in clammy sweat. She should go take a shower back in Poe’s quarters. Poe. He was going to come back. What do I tell him?

She had told that beautiful, reckless man she would meet him. She wasn’t going to let him down. She rinsed out her mouth and patted her hair back into place. She gingerly walked back towards his quarters. She wasn’t back to normal yet, but she was pretty sure she could give him at least three out of seven hells of a welcome when he got back.
Once she had stolen him away from the other pilots she whispered, “You, me supply closet, now.”

He hadn’t even bothered to take the flight suit off. Poe dipped his head close to her neck and sucked at her pulse. It thrummed at hyperspeed as she ramped up for the jump. Gods, she loved the take off with him. She hoped he would set the coordinates to hard, fast, and filthy.

He knew what he was doing. The minute she closed the door he had her shoved up against the wall. He pushed her pants down just enough so he could press his fingers into her.

“Gods, how are you so wet all the time? I just gave you four orgasms. I can’t believe you were even able to move off those crates.”

“Why do you talk so much?”

“Don’t you want me to talk dirty to you?”

“NO POE! I WANT YOU TO DO DIRTY THINGS TO ME! USE YOUR MOUTH FOR SOMETHING USEFUL!”

Since they were in the cleaning supply closet, at least they would clean up if it got too dirty. At this point, Keech realized a bucket was gouging into her calf in a painful (but not in a good way) stab that was distracting. She kicked it out of the way.

That was all he needed. She heard him unzip his flight suit and push it down, He was stroking himself. She reached back to help but swatted her hand away. “No, let me take care of you. I’m not gonna see you for a while and I want you to have something to remember me by. “

He grabbed one of her hips, his other hand in the middle of her back as bent her over. When he pushed into her, his thick cock stretched her. Poe wasn’t especially long, but he was thick. It had been a couple hours since his epic tonguing and her pussy had recovered. Poe loved to tell her that she was made out of fucking elastic.

“So tight. Do you want me to go deep or shallow?”

“Will you stop talking and just fuck me hard already?”

“So, deep then.” He breathed in hear ear and nuzzled her neck with his perpetual stubble. He thrust in once, slowly, and then rammed in, causing the shelving unit next to them to shake. A roll of fresher paper fell on the ground.

His hand snaked up her hips and stomach to her chest. He palmed her left breast and flicked the nipple, which did nothing for her.

“Oh right, I forgot to wet it.” He pulled his hand back and licked the fingers. He shoved his hand inside her shirt again and it felt so much better.

His other hand wound around her waist to play with her clit. He rubbed it in circles, then squares, then triangles; she was pretty sure he might have even gone pentagon. Who knew shapes could be so sexy?

He set the pace and the wet smack of skin-on-skin as he pushed himself inside her was satisfying.
“Do you like this, DG?”

“Yes, more.”

She wanted to change the angle and see if she could get him to hit her spot. He had ground her g-spot for a good half hour when they have been fucking in the X-wing and it had been life changing. She needed to be both closer to and above him; she needed something to step on. The bucket. She toed it toward her and tentatively raised her leg to see if it would hold her weight. It did. She put her other foot on the edge and it raised her up enough that she was now at the right angle. Each time he pushed into her he hit the bundle of nerves that were set to orgasm.

Her hand brushed the mop handle. She scrabbled for it as heat coiled through her belly, but she knocked it over. Some unknown cleaning liquid splashed their legs and Poe made to slow, but Keech clenched and he groaned into her shoulder. “Don’t you dare stop, fucker. I’m so fucking close. FUCK ME, FUCK ME!”

Poe kept pumping. “Do you ever say anything other than fuck?”

She would have loved to say something witty or sarcastic, but she was finally cumming, and at that moment the only thing she could say was, “FUUUUUUUUUUUUUCK!”

He gave a few more thrusts and he came with an outrageous moan.

“NNNNNNNNNNNNNGGAHHH.”

They were fucking poets.

In the moment she came, Keech lost her mind and her balance. She fell off the mop bucket, taking Poe and the bucket with her. ”SHIT, SHIT, SHIT!”

They ended up in a tangled heap on the floor along with bottles of fresher cleaner, assorted paper products, and the contents of the upended bucket. In addition to taking down two shelves, they had inadvertently activated a very confused cleaning droid who only wanted to help them clean off.

“Ma’am-Sir, should I remove the mating fluids from your clothing?”

“Uhhh,” Keech wasn’t sure that she wanted to trust this little droid with cleaning her off. Especially, when it was Poe’s job to lick it up.

“Ma’am-Sir, I must insist. It is my directive...”

“Screw you, bolt bag, you aren’t touching this,” she interjected.

“DG,” chastised Poe, “Be nice, it’s only trying to help.” He patted the little droid on what approximated a head.

“Whatsoever, it has a vacuum attachment. What do you think it’s going to clean with that?”

“OH HELL NO!”

They scrambled up and pulled on their pants. She pushed open the door and they made to run out of the closet with droid hot on their heels. They were halted unexpectedly by a crowd of about fifteen people who gathered in a semicircle around the door. The crowd applauded and someone whistled appreciatively.

Keech took a bow and Poe waved as a sheepish grin crossed his face. She looked down at their
pants. They were covered in cleaning supplies and cum.

She heard the vacuum whir, she looked over her shoulder at Poe. “Why don’t you show him your attachments, Poe,” as she jogged down the hall.

After the skirmish, the *Raddus* and the *Ninka* had jumped into hyperspace. Holdo wanted to gather the fleet to protect the Hydrian Way which meant Keech had a few more days with Poe on the *Raddus*. This was good because something was definitely wrong *down there*. She walked quickly into the Infirmary. She recognized the medical technician but couldn't place her.

“It’s Peria. We’ve met before.”

“Uh... Hi... Peria... I’ve got this thing going on... um... down there, and I need you to take a look at it. It’s hard and smooth, and it looks a little like... glass?”

“So you didn't heed my warning then?” Peria asked, a smirk on her face.

Keech stared at her; she had no idea what she was going on about.

“As you probably know, HOE Dameron went on a mission to Sphātáika recently. Sphātáika is the only place you can contract Sphātáikilis. You are the seventh person on this ship with symptoms. I told you he was a man whore. Didn’t you believe me?”

She stared at Peria. “Sphātáikilis? What the fuck is that?”

“The crystallization of one’s genitals. Contracted when one has sex with one of the sentient crystals from Sphātáika. They are immune, but humans aren’t so lucky. Honestly, I don’t even know how he managed to survive sex with a rock in the first place.”

*A sentient rock. Huh. Poe is into some weird shit.*

“Look, I already took care of his crystal dick this morning, but we need to treat this before it occludes.”

“Occludes? You mean my vagina could shatter? Please tell me this can be fixed.”

Peria shot her a withering glance. “Only advanced untreated cases can occlude. Please, try to be more careful. There are plenty of attractive people out there. You *really* need to avoid Poe and his dirty sausage. I’m serious.”

The treatment for Sphātáikilis was a decalcifying rinse followed by a vaginal bacta application. It wasn’t the worst, but even though she cared for him, Poe was a fucking idiot. And she was an asshole. Leia kept a large crystal in her quarters, a memento from some long forgotten mission. Keech stole it.

As *The Raddus* orbited Azraya, Leia and Poe were there to see her off. He escorted her onto her transport and placed a sweet kiss on her forehead. “See you soon. Don’t go forgetting me now.”

She smiled back meekly and nodded. “Da-Moron. I wouldn’t know how.”

He exited the ship and stood on the flight deck next to Leia, grinning like a buffoon until she
spoke.

“Poe, we talked about this. You know my office is off limits for your sexcapades.”

“How did you know we were in there?”

“I have eyes everywhere. In case you forgot, Fargus came to my office to deliver a holopad and saw you guys. He finally spilled the beans today.”

“Oh,” he said. He bowed his head and mumbled an apology.

“Go take a cold shower. You’re going to poke an eye out with that thing. And get a clean shirt while you’re at it. One that doesn’t have evidence of your depravity smeared on it.”

“Yes General.”

Keech poked her head out the transport and shouted to Poe, “Oi, here, in case you get lonely, Da-Moron.” She threw the crystal at Poe and he caught it.

Leia looked at Poe and back a Keech. “So the latest outbreak WAS you, Captain? Really, with a rock?”

“They are renowned for their beauty,” he said lamely. She smacked him on his ass as he walked away.

Later that day, Leia issued a notice for mandatory Sphātáikilis testing for the entire base. Again.

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"Brought you some presents," she said.

The Administrator of Azraya turned towards her. He was a handsome older man with dark skin, curly gray hair, and a fantastic mustache. His grin split his face. "Well, aren't you are sight for sore eyes. Come here Hope and give me a hug."

Lando Calrissian was the shittiest scoundrel, cleverest entrepreneur, and best story teller in the galaxy. He gave the best hugs and he smelled marvelous. He was Keech's favorite person. She had gotten to know him over the last year as she collected for the Resistance. Leia had called him in to administer the Azraya project. There were currently 500,000 beings on the surface with more arriving every day.

"I sure hope you brought more than two pallets of credits. We go through that in about seven days now," he huffed.

"Have you considered my proposition? It could be a steady revenue stream for us. Kind of like a tax on rich assholes that party too much," she said.

He shook his head at her. "We aren't drug dealers, Hope."

"We are whatever we have to be," she said.

He sighed, "This deal just keeps getting worse all the time. Alright, tell me again how this works..."
Did anyone catch that sweet valentine to Between a Rock and a Hard Place? *wink wink* Those sentient crystals are trouble.
Happy Birthday Keech/HeartS

Chapter Summary

Excerpt of next chapter wherein Poe and Keech celebrate her Life Day (birthday) because art imitates life.

Chapter Notes

This chapter is an Excerpt. You can skip and go to the next chapter to read the whole thing. Unless you like sex. Then you can read it here first then read it again in the context of the whole chapter. Whatever works for you.

HeartS is out of town celebrating her birthday this weekend

As such, we will be taking a break from posting next weekend to get some more story written. But we wanted to give you a taste of what is coming up in the next chapter.

Please note that last weekend AO3 was being very flaky and we did post Chapter 7. But we never saw the notification. You may want to check to see if you read it. We start off with some pretty epic lickjobs. So you just might want to read it again.

NABOO... 2.5 years ago

Leia had taken it in stride. “I’ll accept this once you come back. Take two weeks leave, and take Poe with you. Here.” She lobbed a small metal tab at her. “This is the data spike to get into my villa on Naboo. I want you to go there. We can discuss your resignation later.”

She didn’t want to go, but Poe had insisted. Everything on Naboo was softer. While Azraya had been harsh, cold, and wet, Naboo was mild, sunny, and clear. It was beautiful. She drifted in and
out for the first few days, and Poe had been gentle. Some nights he held her close to his warm, hairy chest and just breathed on her. Other nights she clawed off whatever clothing he had and took solace in his body. He didn’t seem to mind.

They were laying in bed when she asked, “What day is it?”

“Well, we left on the 6th, and we have been here six days so it’s the 12th.”

“Huh, then I guess happy life day to me.” She twirled her fingers around in the air in mock-excitement.

He sat up. ”Wait, today is your actual LIFE DAY?”

She rolled towards him, propping herself up on her elbow, “Yeah, no big deal.”

“NO BIG DEAL? Of course it’s a big deal it’s your Life Day .”

Shit, he’s one of those people. Keech had never understood why people got so excited by their Life Day once they were more than 10 years old. It was just another day like any other.

He grinned at her and rubbed his hands together. “So today we are going to celebrate you. We are going to eat and drink as much as we want. And there will be a cake.”

Poe’s smile was infectious. Maybe celebrating wouldn’t be too bad.

The kitchen looked like a warzone. There was flour everywhere. Orange shreds of something all over the floor. So many bowls. The smell was terrible. Keech was by no means a great cook. But she had smelled things baking before and they never smelled like that. It was revolting, somewhere between dirty socks and burning trash.

She thought the smell was bad, but then she saw it. It was a misshapen, brown lump with orangy bits in it. He called it ‘carrot cake’. She called it an abomination. He had tried heaping icing on it to help. It didn’t. When they cut into it, parts in the center were still raw and oozed out.

“You can eat around that,” he said.

She had put a lot terrible things in her mouth, but she really didn’t want to eat his cake. He was looking at her expectantly, so she picked up the fork and speared a bite. She brought it to her lips and put it in her mouth. OH MY GODS. The taste was foul, so foul that she had to bite back vomit. She grasped for a glass of water.

“Well, What do you think?” he asked tentatively.

"That’s quite a taste,” she said.

“You hate it,” he huffed.

She did. She never, ever wanted to taste anything that awful again. But she cared for this man. This crazy man who held her all through the night and was there whenever she needed him. Sure they had their ups and downs. He had given her almost every know sexually transmitted disease in the galaxy. But whenever things fell apart he had been there, touching her and caring for her, but it was
more than that. He wasn’t just there. It was something else. It was something warm. Something like home. She realized what it was.

“I love you,” she said.

Poe’s eyes went wide. “I never thought you would say it, DG.” He paused, and then followed with, “I love you too.”

She never thought she would say it either. Love wasn’t a luxury that the *Hope of the Resistance* could afford. But Keech Favi every-day-citizen could say it. She was going to resign her commission. She was done struggling for the *Good of the Galaxy*. The Galaxy could fuck off. She had given it enough. Now she was going to take, and it would be as easy as cake. Well not that cake. That cake needed to be thrown out. Over a cliff. Into a deep trench. And then buried by lava.

She launched herself at Poe, wrapped her arms around his neck and legs around his waist, and kissed him deeply. His kisses were helping her forget the terrible cake. He carried her to the counter. He sat her on the edge and sent the bowls and the ingredients flying with a wave of his arm. When the bag of flour hit the floor it sent up a cloud the covered him, her and everything in white. They laughed.

“You know Da-Moron, you are all-White, get it all-white/all-right.”

“You should be *the Flour of the Resistance. F.L.O.U.R.*”

They were laughing even harder. Keech hadn’t laughed like that for so long. It felt good.

He was unfastening her pants, then pushed them down. She pulled up her shirt and took off her undershirt. Her tits bounced a little. He put one in his mouth and sucked her nipple while caressing the other with his fingers. She played with his hair and watched him. He looked up at her, his pupils were almost fully dilated, making his eyes look black. His free hand found her pussy. She was wet and ready. He pushed in a finger and then a second, timing the thrusts with his exploration of her breasts. She arched her back. His fingers were so thick.


He obliged. He released her tit from his mouth with a pop, He kissed her, his tongue prying apart her lips, so he could sweep her tongue with his.

He lined himself at her entrance, “Ready?”

“Always,” she said.

The first thrust was good, as she stretched around him. But the second, as he grabbed her ankles putting both of them on his shoulder, was amazing. He was deep, deeper than she could ever remember. Oh Gods did it feel great.

“Don’t stop,” she panted. She could feel the sweet friction as he moved in an out of her. When he pulled back he was almost fully out, only to push it back in with a groan.

He was chanting, “IloveyouIloveyouIloveyou.”

She raked her nails up his back. They both came with a loud cry.

They laid there on the counter for a moment. “Come on DG, I have a surprise for you.”
“Is it big and dangling between your legs?”

He laughed as he hefted her off the counter. She wrapped herself around him and he walked them toward her bedroom and opened the doors. BB-8 made a soft whistle as he spun out of the room.

There were lit candles everywhere. The room had a soft glow. “Happy Life Day, DG.”

It was beautiful and warm. They didn’t have much to give each other, but he had found a way. She wanted to give him something in return. Something just as special, “It’s Keech, actually. Keech Favi” she said as she held out her hand.

He was puzzled, then startled. For years he had been trying to get her real name. The Hope of the Resistance didn’t have one. She was a nameless ideal. But as citizen, she could go back to being a person with a name people knew.

As he set her down on the bed and took her hand, shaking it, "Nice to meet you Keech Favi," he whispered, “Thank you.”

They made love two more times that night. He came both times yelling “Keech” and smiling like a fool. It wasn’t sex or fucking, it was making love. She stopped being an ideal and became a real person again. She found that she liked being a person much more. She was glad she had him. They were going to be together and make this work. After losing so many thing the gods wouldn’t do that. They couldn’t be that cruel to her.

But they were.

The next morning Poe’s communicator pinged them awake. She threw a pillow on it. It was distorted, but she could see the holo. Leia was upside down, “Return to Raddus, we need to talk.”

If Leia wanted to talk, fine, they could do that. But Keech's decision was final: she was no longer the Hope of the Resistance.
Episode III: Revenge of the Poe

Chapter Summary

Things fall apart. People fall apart. Cakes fall apart. Life is an Enigma.

Chapter Notes

The end of the Poe arc is nigh, strap in kids

It's a long one because we are wordy fuckers and couldn't stop ourselves. What a surprise.

In case you missed it:

Episode 1: The Phantom Poe
Episode II: Attack of the Poes

Azraya: 2.5 years ago

“Call.”

Keech threw down her cards. “26.”

“Sorry Hope, looks like you bombed out.” Lando reached in and made to sweep the pot toward himself.

Senator All-Bright ‘Ta-Uanahoo scowled. “Not so fast, Lando. I have minus 22. Show us your hand.” All-Bright pursed her lips and her four eyes blinked out of sync. She folded her three arms across her chest. She used to have four arms but the Empire had claimed the lower left one as a trophy years ago when she refused to fold under torture.

Lando hesitated. He was cheating. Keech knew it and so did All-Bright.

“This cycle, Lan-slow,” Keech prodded. “We don’t have all fucking night.”

“19,” Lando grumbled. He threw his cards down on the table with an exasperated sigh.

“I’ll take those.” All-Bright’s remaining left arm reached out and swept the credits into a neat pile in front of her. “So, you guys showed me everything you wanted me to see. When do I get to see what you don’t want me to see? Specifically, I want to see where you make Relax and Party.”

Keech tried to keep her breathing even. So she knows. Fuck.

Lando opened his hands and shrugged his shoulders, “I don’t know what you are talking about.”
All-Bright had been dragged still talking from the Senate Chamber when the Senate had been dissolved. She usually crafted delicate metaphors designed to elicit maximum pathos, a skill that earned her the title Voice of the Resistance, but there was nothing delicate in her voice now. “Cut the shit Calrissian. I know you are making drugs and it stops immediately.”

They were churning out about fifty kilos of Party and twenty-five kilos of a modified version of Relax every month. Most of it was going to Hosnian Prime and Raysho. Drugs went out and mounds of credits came back in. It didn’t have to be this way, but it was the only leverage that the pitiful souls on Azraya had over the Core. Keech had been advocating for it from the start, but it wasn’t until Nebulenza had spread through the eastern sector of Azraya and killed 20,000 people that Lando had listened. Drugs bring in a lot of credits, something the refugees desperately needed.

The refugees on Azraya were barely hanging on. Food and water were stretched thin and the shelters were miserable. Sickness was everywhere, and nobody wanted another unchecked outbreak of Nebulenza. Keech could understand why the Core was reluctant to take refugees. The illness had decimated the Core and Inner rim after the fall of the Empire, and the people in power believed the refugees harbored the virus. The reality was that lumping a bunch of desperate people in a place lacking adequate sanitation or medical care made it more likely an outbreak would arise. Still, Nebulenza was a horrible way to die.

“Senator,” Keech postured, “I can assure you that we have never made any drugs. Terrible things. Waste of life. Not unlike the plight of our people here.” She probably would have had more to say, but at that moment the siren blared: two short blasts followed by one long on. Evacuate the surface.

Keech looked at Lando. “I’ll take her to the bunker. You ready for this?”

Lando nodded and pulled her in for a hug. He smelled like spice, candy, and mustache wax. “Looks like the kids are going to be alright, force be with you Hope.”

“Whatever, don’t get shot down. You have precious cargo.”

It had been hard won, but All-Bright had agreed to let the children and pregnant women be evacuated off Azraya should it be threatened. The shields and big fucking cannons would buy them enough time to get away. The remaining refugees had only luck to determine if they would make it through the night.

Keech gestured for All-Bright to follow her. “Senator, next on our tour are the bunkers we built to cower in while the First Order pummels us from above because we didn’t have enough money to buy more ion cannons.” All-Bright started to speak but Keech cut her off. “Oi, shush. There will be time for questions at the end of the tour.”

Lando chuckled as they walked away. “If I die today, I’ll die happy, because I saw the Voice of the Rebellion shushed.”

Keech wished he had chosen different words.
shuddering. She stopped running to stare at it, trying to figure out what was happening. The beam blinked out and slivers of light appeared between the pieces of the generator. It looked like each individual piece of the generator was being pulled away from the others, as if it was being dismantled from the inside out. *But how?* The pieces stayed suspended in the air for a moment before they crashed to the ground with a colossal bang and a cloud of dust.

"I didn't know you could do that to a machine," she said. Whatever technology the First Order had, it was wicked. "Fucking hells. How do you fight that?"

"You don't," All-Bright replied.

Turning away from the scene, Keech shouted into her com, "Shields down, Central Quadrant."

"Fuck! That was the last one!" someone in Central Command screeched in reply.

She hoped that Lando hadn't gotten too far. She punched his code into the com and yelled, "Lando! The shields are down, come back! They'll be able to catch you!"

All she got in response was static. He was out of range.

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Keech and All-Bright charged into Central Command. Keech could hear Lando on the comms.

"...transport of women and children. As part of the Galactic Concordance, these humanitarian transports are allowed free passage to the Core." Lando paused and Keech could almost imagine the look of frustration on his face. "First Order Command, please acknowledge."

The holo projection showed all the transports locked in tractor beams. They hadn’t gotten far without the shields.

Lando resumed his pleading. "Dammit! These are kids. Give them a chance, let them go!"

They were caught. Keech looked at the gunnery sergeant, "Is the ion cannon ready to go?"

All-Bright grabbed her arm. "No, you can’t fire. Think about it. Why did they take out the shields but leave the cannon array? They left you only one horrible option, breaking the Concordance by firing. They want a reason to fire on us and you’re about to give it to them."

Keech stared at her. "In case you haven’t figured it out yet, I give fuck-all about the Galactic Concordance. All our shields are down. There are more than a million people on the surface and 50,000 kids in the air. If our only option is the ion cannon array, then I will damn well use it. We might just be able to take some of those fuckers with us."

Keech turned back toward the gunnery sergeant. "Sergeant, heat ‘em up. Tell me when you are ready to fire. I want to aim at the big ship in the middle."

The gunnery sergeant balked. "You want to fire on the *Finalizer*?" he asked.

"If that’s the one in the middle, then yes."

Keech watched the cannons ramp up. When they were charged the sergeant turned towards her for the signal. "Fire away," she said.
They only got off one shot. It hit the Finalizer but didn’t cause any critical damage. Before they could fire again, the ion cannons were ripped apart just like the shields had been. All-Bright had been right: the First Order had been waiting for them to take the first shot. Hell reigned down from above, scouring the surface of any life. They lost all contact with everyone, even Lando’s comms were silent.

The First Order was gone as quickly as it had come. The whole assault had lasted less than forty minutes but the aftermath was sickening.

Before they attack, there had been 1,568,945 beings on Azraya. After the attack, there were a mere 12,477. Most of those who had survived had made it to the bunker, but mortality rates outside of the bunker were 99.2%. There were a few small victories. A group of twenty had hunkered down under the rubble of the western sector’s shield generator, and a family of four had prayed and their gods had delivered them.

Keech coughed as she surveyed the scorched landscape. Most of the fires had burned out, but she couldn’t find any landmarks to orient herself. She finally spotted the melted surveillance tower. It has been part of the ion cannon array, so that meant the hospital was over to the left. She turned and a small wind kicked up, stirring the ash. It was almost pretty until she realized it was probably the dust of her people, the ones she had failed to save. She could feel her heart squeeze. She didn’t regret firing on the First Order, the only options had been bad or worse, but the sheer scale of destruction and loss of life was overwhelming.

Holdo found her standing there contemplating the enormity of it all. She stood next to her and surveyed the devastation. “I know you want to jump in an X-wing and do something stupid, but it won’t work.”

“Don’t try to talk me out of this. I’m going after Lando. He's my friend. I love that guy.”

“I need to show you something first.”

She couldn’t unsee it. Lando was in pain. His mind was being ripped apart.

The metallic voice of someone unseen said, "Tell them."

Lando’s face loosened and his eyes opened. “No.” His face contorted in pain again. A high pitched wail tore from his mouth. It was unnatural.

“Say it.”

Lando slumped, “Eat a dick.”

This time the scream lasted for minutes. Keech looked away from the holo. Holdo’s mouth was set in a hard line. Keech turned back to the holo of Lando’s final minutes. He was spent. Keech knew this was it.
The voice spoke again, “Very Well. To the Resistance: too long have you destabilized the galaxy. You now have a choice. Cease you unauthorized military actions. Halt any further production of drugs. Surrender orphaned children to the benevolent care of the First Order. Failure to comply ensures the painful and complete end to the Resistance. You will be hunted down. You will be destroyed.”

Lando roused himself, “Leave the kids alone or else.”

The voice answered, “An empty threat from a dead man. Rest assured, we’ll take it from here.” The holo terminated.

For some reason, that phrase ‘we’ll take it from here’ sounded so familiar to Keech. She hugged herself and felt a chill run up her spine. There was a cry in her ears almost like a baby’s cry. She needed to get a grip; now was not the time to fall apart again.

She looked at Holdo. “So that’s it then? What else do we know?”

Holdo’s eyes were sad, “Keech, you can’t go after him because he is gone.” She handed her a small box. “They sent it over this morning along with the holorecording.”

The air rushed out of Keech’s lungs as a groan escaped her lips. *He’s gone. Fuck, he’s really gone.* He had been cheating at sabacc yesterday and now he was in a little box in her hands. It was too much. Too many people had died. Nobody cared.

She ran and found her way deep in the bowels of the ship, only stopping when she found a secluded access shaft. She crawled inside the narrow space and cradled Lando’s ashes to her chest.

It took four people to restrain her when they finally found her two days later. She was delirious, dehydrated, and dissociating. The medical attention she needed would require a base. She was sedated and woke up on D’Qar.

“Morning, DG.” Poe smiled down at her. She reached up and touched his face and for a second she smiled. It was scratchy like always. Then she remembered she had touched Lando like this and the memories came rushing back. She curled in on herself with a sob, crushed by grief.

Poe didn’t turn away. Instead, he climbed into the bed and curled around her, burying his nose in her hair as he whispered sweet things to her. His words weren’t registering, but it was comforting to listen to his voice rise and fall as he talked about anything that came to mind. He traced large, slow circles on her stomach with his fingers.

"...and then after that, I like to give BB-8 some lubrication..."

“Poe, can you do me a favor?”

“Sure Hope, anything you want.”

“Take a message to Leia. Tell her I’m resigning my commission.”
Leia had taken it in stride. “We’ll talk about this once you come back. Take two weeks leave, and take Poe with you. Here.” She lobbed a small metal tab at Keech. “This is the data spike to get into my villa on Naboo. I want you to go there. Heal. Think. Love.”

She didn’t want to go, but Poe had insisted. Everything on Naboo was softer, beautiful. While Azraya had been harsh, cold, and wet, Naboo was mild, sunny, and clear. She drifted in and out for the first few days, and Poe had been gentle with her. Some nights he held her close to his warm, hairy chest and just breathed on her. Other nights she clawed off whatever clothing he had and took solace in his body. He didn’t seem to mind.

They were laying in bed when she asked, “What day is it?”

“Well, we left on the 6th, and we have been here six days so it’s the 12th.”

“Huh, then I guess happy life day to me.” She twirled her fingers around in the air in mock-excitement.

He sat up. “Wait, today is your actual life day?”

She rolled towards him and propped herself up on her elbow. “Yeah, no big deal.”

“NO BIG DEAL? Of course it’s a big deal! It’s your life day!”

Shit, he’s one of those people. Keech had never understood why people got so excited by their life day once they were more than ten years old. It was just another day like any other.

He grinned at her and rubbed his hands together. “So today we are going to celebrate you. We are going to eat and drink as much as we want. And there will be a cake.”

Poe’s smile was infectious. Maybe celebrating wouldn’t be too bad.

The kitchen looked like a war zone. There was flour everywhere. Orange shreds of something all over the floor. So many bowls. The smell was terrible. Keech was by no means a great cook, but she had smelled things baking before and they never smelled like that. It was revolting, somewhere between dirty socks and burning trash.

She thought the smell was bad, but then she saw it: a misshapen, brown lump with orangy bits in it. He called it ‘carrot cake’. She called it an abomination. He had tried heaping icing on it to help. It didn’t. When they cut into it, parts in the center were still raw and oozed out.

“You can eat around that,” he said.

She had put a lot of terrible things in her mouth, but she really didn’t want to eat his cake. He was looking at her expectantly, so she picked up the fork and speared a bite. She brought it to her lips and put it in her mouth. OH MY GODS. The taste was foul, so repulsive that she had to bite back vomit. She grasped for a glass of water.

“Well… what do you think?” he asked tentatively.
“That’s quite a taste,” she said.

“You hate it,” he said, disappointment clear on his face.

She did. She never ever wanted to taste anything that awful again. But she cared for this man. This crazy man who held her all through the night and was there whenever she needed him. Sure, they had their ups and downs. He had given her almost every known sexually transmitted disease in the galaxy, after all. But whenever things fell apart he had been there, touching her and caring for her, but it was more than that. He wasn’t just there. It was something else. Something warm. Something like that felt like home. She realized what it was.

“I love you,” she said.

Poe’s eyes went wide. “I thought you would never say it, DG.” He paused, and then followed with, “I love you too.”

She never thought she would say it either. Love wasn’t a luxury that the Hope of the Resistance could afford. But Keech Favi every-day-citizen could have love. She was going to resign her commission. She was done struggling for the Good of the Galaxy. The Galaxy could fuck off. She had given it enough. Now she was going to take, and it would be as easy as cake. Well, not that cake. That cake needed to be thrown out. Over a cliff. Into a deep trench. And then buried by lava.

She launched herself at Poe, wrapped herself around him, and kissed him deeply. His kisses helped her forget the terrible cake. He carried her to the counter and sat her on the edge, sending the bowls and the ingredients flying with a wave of his arm. When the bag of flour hit the floor it sent up a cloud that covered them and everything in the vicinity in white. They laughed.

“You know Da-Moron, you are all-white. Get it? All-white, all-right?”

“You should be the Flour of the Resistance. F.L.O.U.R.”

They were laughing even harder. Keech hadn’t laughed like that for so long. It felt good.

He unfastened her pants and pushed them down. She pulled up her shirt and took off her undershirt. Her tits bounced a little. He put one in his mouth and sucked her nipple while caressing the other with his fingers. She played with his hair and watched him work. He looked up at her and his pupils were almost fully dilated, making his eyes look black. His free hand found her pussy. She was ready. He pushed in a finger and then a second, timing the thrusts with his exploration of her breasts. She arched her back. His fingers were so thick.


He obliged. He released her tit from his mouth with an exaggerated POP! and kissed her. His tongue pried apart her lips so he could explore her tongue with his.

He lined himself at her entrance. “Ready?”

“Always,” she said.

The first thrust was good, and she gasped as she stretched around him. He grabbed her ankles and put them both of them on his shoulder. The second thrust was amazing. He was deep, deeper than she could ever remember him going. Oh, Gods, did it feel great.

“Don’t stop,” she panted. She could feel the sweet friction as he moved in and out of her. He pulled back, almost fully out, and pushed back in with a groan.
He picked up the pace and was chanting in time with the movements, “IloveyouIloveyouIloveyou.” She raked her nails up his back and they both came with a loud cry. They lay there on the counter for a moment. “Come on DG, I have a surprise for you.”

“Is it big and dangling between your legs?”

He laughed as he hefted her off the counter. She clasped her legs around him and he walked them toward her bedroom and opened the doors. BB-8 voiced a soft beep and spun out of the room.

There were lit candles everywhere, giving the room a soft glow. “Happy life day, DG.”

It was beautiful and warm. They didn’t have much to give each other, but he had found a way. She wanted to give him something in return, something just as special. “It’s Keech, actually. Keech Favi,” she said as she held out her hand.

He was puzzled then startled. For years he had been trying to get her real name. The Hope of the Resistance didn’t have one. She was a nameless ideal. But as a citizen, she could go back to being a person with a name people knew.

He set her down on the bed and took her hand, shaking it. “Nice to meet you, Keech Favi,” he whispered. “Thank you.”

They made love two more times that night. It wasn’t sex or fucking. It was different, better. When he came, he yelled “Keech” both times and smiled like a fool. She had stopped being an ideal and had become a real person again. She found that she liked being a person much more. She was glad she had him. They were going to be together and make this work. After losing so many things in her life, the gods would let her have this. They couldn’t be that cruel to her.

But they were.

Poe’s communicator pinged them awake the next morning. She threw a pillow on it. The holo was distorted but she could still see it. Leia was upside down. “Return to the Raddus, we need to talk.”

If Leia wanted to talk, fine. They could talk. But Keech’s decision was final: she was no longer the Hope of the Resistance.

Walking into the room was fucking unnerving. There had been a famous picture taken during their youth, circulated to help drum up more support for the cause. Cynically, she’d assumed it had been staged, but seeing them interact now, she knew it was real, a candid shot even. This really was how Leia, Holdo, and All-Bright looked when they were together. The Light, the Hope, and the Voice of the Rebellion; they were all here and in the same positions as in the photo. It was hard not to squeal. They sat together talking quietly, intensely; they looked like goddesses. It was scary as all the hells put together.

All-Bright noticed her first, and then four pairs of eyes were trained on her. “The Hope returns,” drawled All-Bright.

Keech bristled. “I’m done. I can’t do this anymore.”

The goddesses exchanged glances. “You can’t just go, Leia said. “You are the Hope of the...”
“Resistance. Your uniform is custom. No one else can fit their ass in it.”

“Not a good enough reason to stay,” said Keech.

“What about the benefits?” asked All-Bright.

“Getting shot at, almost being blown up, losing friends, witnessing planetwide genocide, and contracting dozens of exotic sexually transmitted diseases, all for 900 credits a month plus medical and a ten credit co-pay on bacta. Yeah, once again, not a good enough reason to stay.”

“But the good of the galaxy…” Leia trailed off, her hand gesturing, eyes searching for a connection.

“In the words of the eloquent Lando Calrissian, and I quote, ‘eat a dick’. Listen, I’ve made up my mind. I’m out. There is nothing you can say to me that will pull me back in. Besides, I’ve been out of circulation. You can just find someone who looks like me and let them stand in for the pictures. Let the legend live on. That’s how it works.”

Holdo had remained quiet through the whole exchange so far. She turned towards Keech and fixed her in a gaze. “So we replace you. Then what? Bador is gone. Azraya is gone. What exactly will you do?”

Keech hadn’t thought about that. She had only thought as far as resigning her commission. She wouldn’t be able to go back to hyperspace computing. The drug lab was gone. That really only left smuggling or piracy, and neither choice was entirely appealing.

Holdo continued, “Now, I could offer you another option. Something that would challenge you, use your unique talents. And the pay is better.”

Leia snorted. “It would also reduce the amount of sexually transmitted diseases you would be exposed to.”

Keech chuckled. Well, that would certainly be nice. “I’m listening.”

All-Bright trained her eyes on Keech. “Enigma reported that there is a new Death Star. But confirming this is difficult. We need to send someone in who can blend in.”

“I don’t blend.”

“WE KNOW,” the women said simultaneously.

“What we mean is,” Leia stalled. “Oh fuck it, Keech, we need you for this. Specifically. You have been asked for by name.”

“Who the hell in the First Order is asking for me?”

Holdo pursed her lips. “Who do you think, Keech? Bala. Or as you know her, Enigma.”

No fucking way. Enigma was the most trusted source of intelligence in the Resistance. More times than Keech cared to remember, a timely tip from Enigma had saved them all. The only thing more closely guarded than her true identity was who or what Enigma was.

“I haven’t spoken to her in years. She disappeared. I knew she joined the First Order but I never got any responses to my messages. I assumed she was dead.”

Holdo reached out and grabbed Keech’s hand. “She is. I’m sorry you have to find out this way. We
have been receiving the same message now for two weeks. *Send Movi Coyle 1-2-4-8-16-32, Remember Heart Sandwich 1-3-6-9-12.*

“But how do you know she’s dead? What if she’s just requesting assistance?”

“Prior to this message she had requested an evac. We sent the elite extraction team but no one was at the pickup point.”

Keech was getting angry. “So you are just assuming she is dead? You don’t know that, she could still be alive. She could be hurt. She might need your fucking help.”

If Keech paid closer attention, she would have seen Holdo’s eyes glittering. They did that when she knew she had won. Bala was Keech’s last friend in the entire galaxy, and Holdo knew Keech would do anything rather than allow for that loss.

“Fuck! Just when I thought I was out you pull me back in. Damn you.”

The meeting lasted another two hours. Holdo would be point on infiltrating Keech into the First Order, providing her with a cover story and credentials. She had cultivated assets on Rakata Prime that would make it happen. Keech rushed to the med bay the minute she left the meeting.

“Report to the med-bay for a screening. Get your affairs in order. You are about to go in deep.”

Keech nodded grimly. “I needed to stop there anyway.”

Leia just rolled her eyes.

“So what is it that brings you in today?” Peria sniffed.

"Uh, this is really...” Keech stalled. “Well... something is happening down there again.” She gestured toward her vagina. “Also I’ve been ordered to get a standard med-screening.”

Peria rolled her eyes. "Great, let's take a look at Poe's House of Horrors. What freak show have you brought me today?"

She brought the view screen over as Keech laid back on the exam table and spread her legs wide. She felt the uncomfortable probing and gritted her teeth.

"What the kark?"

Keech looked up curiously. "What is it?"

Peria was aghast. "I've never seen anything like it. You have a yeast infection, that's for sure, but when I probed it, it flipped me off.”

“It gave you the finger? How is that possible when it doesn’t have fingers?” *What drugs is she on and where can I get some?*

“I don't know, but your yeast infection has become sapient.”
I have a self-aware yeast beast in my vagina. Fucking awesome.

For the next four hours she debated with Peria, then the medic on duty, and finally Dr. Genessian about the rights of the sapient yeast beast in her vagina. In the end, they compromised. They would treat it, but first they would take a culture to let the infection grow in the lab. Dr. Genessian insisted on doing a full medical workup to document it.

“I don’t know that this has ever happened,” he told her. “In all my years, I have never seen anything like it. I can only assume that Captain Dameron used unorthodox ingredients to make the cake you ate.” Unorthodox was certainly a nice way to say travesty of taste. He closed the door to the exam room. “But you have something else I’ve never seen, on your scans…” he prompted. She remained quiet. “Why don’t you tell me about your implant, Keech.”

“I… uh… my what?” Keech tried to play dumb.

“Your implant.” He pointed to the anomaly on her brain scan. “This right here, young lady, is an illegal piece of tech. Totally against all galactic laws. Things like this were banned during the Clone Wars and for good reason. They are insanely dangerous and unpredictable. How did you get it?”

Keech told him about Bala and their crazy weekend at the Academy when she woke up with the implant. When she explained how it worked, he was baffled.

“Well, that is quite interesting. And dangerously stupid. She could have killed you or left you brain dead.”

“But she didn’t. I turned out just fine.”

“For now, but there is no precedent for this. Your implant is unique so I can only speculate. All of this electricity could be changing you in ways we can’t understand. It could be killing you every day.”

Funny, I’m already dead inside. Maybe this damn thing will finish the job.

“To be honest, I can’t believe it hasn’t completely destroyed your cerebral cortex. I assume it has something to do with your split-brain. One lobe probably takes the strain from the other, allowing normal brain function in the unaffected lobe. Who knows though? It’s still quite probable that your brain will be reduced to a mushy pile of bantha guts. Hard to say when that might happen. Have you thought about getting it removed?”

Keech recoiled. “No. That won’t be necessary. Make sure you lose that part of your report. My Augmentation isn’t up for discussion. Talk to Holdo if you need to verify. It’s need to know, and you don’t need to know.”

He considered her a moment more, then nodded and did not ask any more questions.

As Keech exited the exam room, she turned and said, “Thank you, I will be sure to check in with you next time so we can marvel at how wonderful and intact my brain looks.”

Yeah, there won’t be a next time, asshat.
Vice Admiral Thundercunt had asked C-3PO to calculate the odds of a successful mission. When Keech asked what her chances were of returning safely from TX-12 as a deep cover asset, Holdo had only responded with, “Define safely,” and “Not good.”

She hadn’t told Poe yet that this would probably be the last time they saw each other, and she wasn’t sure how he was going to take it. She found him in the hanger working his X-wing in only his undershirt and a fine coating of oil. It was a look.

“Poe. We need to talk.”

His face fell. “You’re leaving aren’t you?”

“Yes, and you’d better be waiting right here when I get back.”

He nodded, “How long?”

Keech shrugged. “Not sure.”

“Where are you going?”

“That’s classified.”

He looked at her. He wanted to ask if it had meant anything. She was going to leave it all behind. She had said she loved him. She had told him her real name. And now she was leaving. He needed to know.

“Why?”

Keech sighed, “Because I have to.”

“Since when? You were ready to leave it all only yesterday. What changed?”

“Someone important to me needs my help.”

Poe wanted to be mad. He was important, and she was choosing them over him. But he couldn’t be mad at her. Lovers come and go. Better to live in the moment.

“Wanna fuck?”

They ended up where they had started all those years ago: in the tiny cockpit of his single-seat X-Wing. He covered her in oil and she slid up and down his body like an obscene oil slick. Keech ended up with grease smeared across her forehead and greasy handprints on both her tits.

They had been fucking for hours, but it was almost time for her to leave. She was draped over instrument panel of the Black One while he sat in the pilot's seat. He was eating her out like it was his last meal, nestled between her thighs and licking her clit while scissoring his two fingers inside her. The movement was always on the knife’s edge of pleasure and pain. When she came, she flooded his mouth and he licked up every drop with wide long strokes of his tongue, running from the bottom to the top of her slit while humming ‘Ten Little Banthas All in a Row.’ She hated the fucking song but the vibrations and his warm breath made her toes curl every time. She twisted her hands in his hair; he yelped and scowled at her.
“Dammit, Moron, if you get that that song stuck in my head I will rip your left nipple off and keep it in my pocket.”

He reached up and covered his nipples. They were sensitive. She had a method to her madness.

“DG, why you gotta be that way,” he paused. “You nervous about leaving? Worried I might meet the man, woman, or non-binary of my dreams and forget you? Don’t worry, I couldn’t forget you.”

“Come on Poe, this isn’t our style,” Keech responded.

“Yeah,” he said, running his hand through his hair. “But when you come back maybe it could be? I love the freedom but Keech... you are special to me. You aren’t just the Hope of the Resistance,” he said haltingly. “You're my Hope too.”

Leia was furious. “WHAT THE HELL, POE? Why does this keep happening? Can’t you keep it in your pants?”

“General… you know how hard it is. I’m so worked up all the time, what with being the Best Pilot in the Resistance and all. I need a way to let out my energy.”

Leia slapped him across the face. “There are now thirty beings on base with Herpeous spaceous. And maybe they didn’t all get it from you directly…”

Poe had the good sense to look ashamed as he said, “Well... possibly... ten... or twenty... may have gotten it from me.”

“TWENTY! Poe, you need to start thinking with your head. You are continuously spreading diseases around the base, which costs us time, credits, and most importantly, personnel. This isn’t a brothel. No, forget that. People take care of themselves in brothels, better for the clientele. This is a nasty cesspool, and you are floating in the center of it.” She glared at him and he paled under her sharp stare. “Thank the Gods Keech has already started her mission and you can’t give her anything else. Although I’m sure you gave her space herpes, and that could be seriously detrimental to her mission.”

“What do you mean General? She didn’t tell me about her mission, she said it was top secret.”

“It is. And if you tell anyone what I’m about to tell you, I’ll space you.”

Poe stared at Leia, mouth agape. “You wouldn’t.”

“I would, and I will. You might be the Best Pilot in the Resistance, Poe Dameron, but if you break my confidence I will demote you so far down the ranks you’ll never see your precious Black One again and BB-8 will be on permanent mess duty.”

“Ok, ok, leave BB-8 out of this, will you? He’s innocent.”

Her gaze softened a bit. “In this instance, perhaps.” Poe’s face darkened as she began to detail the plan. Twenty-four hours ago he had been in a soft bed with his head buried between even Keech’s softer thighs. She had finally told him her name, her real name, And now she was gone.

“This plan is dangerous. Whose idea was it? Scratch that. WHY WOULD SHE DO THIS TO ME?
She was going to leave. Resign. Become a normal person again."

“Vice Admiral Holdo’s. But it’s a good plan, and Keech is smart, this posting was tailor-made for her. And there aren’t any other resistance operatives could pull this one off. She’s the best hope to get the information we so desperately need. If... no... when she succeeds... she will have access to everything the First Order has to offer. We need that intel, Captain. Desperately.”

“But when will she come back?" Poe looked at Leia, a troubled look storming across his face. “She will come back, right?”

Leia shook her head. She knew the odds of her returning. “1 in 56,398,” C-3PO had said. Since the First Order had instituted their drug policy, their spies had been caught one after the other. Now even droids were being suspected of spying as well. And up until two weeks ago they’d still had Enigma, their lifeline. If ever there was someone made to spy, it was her. Without her, they would be in the dark about so many things.

Looking into Poe's eyes, she understood what it must have been like for Han when he left. She could see the searching, the longing, he just wanted to understand why. Hadn’t she been in his shoes so many times?

“Captain, I can’t answer that. It’s a deep cover mission.”

Poe pressed more, “So, what will happen if she ends up with herpes? What will they do to her?”

“The First Order does not look kindly on sexual deviance. I’ve only heard stories, but apparently, there is some terrifying sexual reconditioning. I don’t know what it entails but it can’t be good. She doesn’t need anything to draw attention to herself and you may have painted a target on her back. She needs to fly under the radar.”

“Have you actually met her, General? Flying low is not really her style.”

“Well, not having an STD would contribute significantly to that effort Poe,” she reminded him.

Poe nodded slowly. “I’m worried about her.”

“We all are. But we need her right where she is. She is our Hope.”

Poe looked out the viewport, imagining that he was looking in her direction. Sending all of what they had built up over the four years they had known each other out into the Force. He believed in it. He knew it was real. He loved her but he didn’t know how much until it hit him like a rock to the face. He fell to his knees. He'd always believed that he had a lot of love to give. Too much. That was his justification for fucking around. But what he really wanted was to be remembered by someone when he was gone. Instead, the fucking irony was that the one person he wanted to remember him was gone.

“No General, she’s my Hope.” He buried his head in his hands.

They say it takes the same amount of time to fall out of love as it does to fall in love. Captain Dameron had some thoughts about that, but nothing he would say out loud. His heart still had a large gash from the woman with the dirty mouth, long legs, and a willingness to fuck just about
anywhere. It had been two years, but he was certain: it would take a lifetime and probably his gruesome death to stop loving Keech Favi.

Chapter End Notes

We hope you have enjoyed this little Poe-vella in the middle of our story. We certainly did.

We will be taking a break from posting next weekend to get some more story written.

That being said, the next chapter is another one that wasn’t originally planned. (Thanks for being an enabler shunsbuns, I LOVE YOU!). General Hux needs some love in this story too, and HeartS is always repping for those antiheroes. Be warned, this is not going to go the way you think (bc Hux is a sweet baby angel? Just saying)
Episode IV: A New Hux

Chapter Summary

General Hux has a few secrets.

Chapter Notes

Shuns: So originally I wanted to be enigmatic as hell about Daacha Ren. The whole story was supposed to be told through Keech’s (albeit sometimes unreliable) POV. There was going to be a brief interlude midway through the story where Snoke would talk about force bonds and stuff. But then...

HeartS: I had ideas. So many ideas. About Poe (you’re welcome), and Snoke poeming and chicken thighs and old people (OH YOU JUST WAIT). And about Hux. I fucking love Hux. He’s my sweet angel baby.

Shuns: Lots of ideas. Because she is the real bad idea bear here. But the revelation was Hux’s reactions to Snoke, Bala, and Daacha Ren. They were fantastic. And then things went sideways, upside down, and inside out.

HeartS: I was pretty sure we could follow my boy Hux for one chapter and then go back to the original outline, but then we just kept writing and writing and writing. And then we hit 10K. Sooooooo…

Shuns: Yeah. So enjoy a wholly unexpected but delightful HeartS deviation that once again became an essential insight into our characters and plot development.

HeartS: And it’s multiple chapters again! Wheeeeee! SRYNOTSRY

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Eadu: Three years ago

They had been secret lovers for three years now. Mostly, they met aboard the Finalizer, and occasionally on Starkiller Construction Site, but this was the first time Bala had asked him to come to Eadu. It was where the Death Star had been designed originally, but it now hosted the EMU’s main lab and was the manufacturing site for all First Order drugs. Officially, Hux was here for his next round of Furor injections. Unofficially, he was there to be tied up, whipped, and fucked by the smart, beautiful woman who led the EMU in her personal sex dungeon. He hadn’t seen her in a few weeks. It had been torture.

She looked so tired. He knew that she was consulting on Starkiller along with her other duties. She was so thin; he could feel her bones as he held her, just breathing her in after their separation. “Are you sure you want to play?” he asked.

“Always,” she said.
She had just cuffed his ankles to a spreader bar when her comm beeped. “Miss Bala?” A soft voice, lilting but mechanical, issued from the device. “Miss Bala can you come here? I need your assistance.”

Bala pressed her comm and responded, “One moment.” She grabbed Hux’s chin and squeezed, “Be right back,” she dropped a light kiss on his lips.

“Where are you going? What does the droid want?”

“No questions.”

He waited patiently for five minutes. Maybe this is a test. Five more minutes more passed. Now, this is just rude. He uncuffed his legs from the bar, pulled his pants back on, and stuck his head around the corner, peeking into the small laboratory Bala had in her quarters. He saw a crack in the opposite wall. He waited, listening for a few moments. There was giggle followed by the patter of little feet.

What is a child doing here? It was illegal to have a child outside the proper parameters. Any woman found to be pregnant in the First Order was immediately removed from her post and put on permanent Maternity Duty. There, the sequestered women would churn out babies, one per year, until their uteruses gave out or they went insane. Most went insane.

He walked across the lab and poked his head into the hidden room to see Bala holding a young child who was clapping and singing while a med droid fussed over a small scrape on her arm. The med droid noticed Hux and pointed.

“Miss Bala! Who is that man? What is he doing here?”

“Damn it, Armitage, I told you to STAY PUT!” Bala exclaimed. “Get out!”

“The better question, Miss Bala,” Hux sneered, “Is what is that?”

“What does it look? She’s A CHILD, OBVIOUSLY!” She cuddled the little girl to her. Her smooth brown hair, light brown eyes, and white skin were a stark contrast to Bala’s curly hair, dark brown eyes, and coffee colored skin.

“That child isn’t yours, she doesn’t look a thing like you.”

“Of course not. She’s a casualty of Bador. My best friend died there. Vala is her child. I found her among the children we salvaged for the Program.”

“And now she’s here on a First Order facility? She should be in the Stormtrooper School.” He could feel the vein pulsing in his temple. He needed to calm down but that wasn’t happening any time soon.

She glared at him, “No, She’s mine. She’s too good for the Program. She gets to have a mommy. Right, baby?”

“Lub you Momma,” giggled the little girl as she hugged Bala.

“And who is the Daddy? Treso?”

Bala pursed her lips, “No. He doesn’t know. He... he wouldn’t understand. He would make me give her up.” Her gaze softened as she ran a hand through Vala’s hair. She smiled tenderly, “As if I could give this, any of this, amazing little person up.”
“Why are you even with him?”

“Because you never asked.”

*Because you never asked?* If she had hit him between the eyes he couldn’t have been more surprised. All these years, he had stood on the sidelines assuming that Bala wanted Treso. He was a Knight of Ren. The Overseer of Starkiller. He was her science project. He assumed their relationship was a dirty secret. He was willing to take whatever crumbs she gave him. Did this mean she wanted him more than Treso? *Could I have had her all along?* His heart swelled. How did she wrap him around her little finger every time?

“Cunt,” he said.

As three years olds often do, Vala keyed into the word she wasn’t supposed to hear and immediately started using it. “‘unt, ‘unt, ‘unt!” Vala scooted off Bala’s lap to jump up down each time she said it.

“Miss Bala, get this man outta here. He’s teaching Vala naughty words.”

Bala rolled her eyes. “Nanner, who was the one who taught her the words nipple and vagina?” Nanner whirred uncomfortably.

Hux looked at Bala and raised his eyebrows. “Nanner? What’s a Nanner?”

“Nanner, as in Nanny. She’s a nanny droid. I repaired a broken med droid and converted her into a nanny droid, because I needed help. But Vala can’t say Nanny. It comes out as Nanner.” She paused and looked hard at Hux, “It might be best if you waited outside. While I finish up here. We need to talk.”

Later that night Bala told Hux about her illness. Cancer. All the bacta in the galaxy couldn’t fix it now, it had gotten into her bones. She needed someone to take care of Vala. The irony of the whole situation was that she led a team some of the smartest people in the galaxy who worked on cutting-edge science and technology. But they had never bothered to cure cancer. Now, it was too late.

“I can’t trust Treso. He can’t hide her from Snoke. He’ll stick her in the Stormtrooper Program and she’ll be a number. She’s special, the one good thing I’ve done in my life. I won’t let that happen to her.”

“And you think I can hide her? Protect her? I’m no Jedi,” said Hux.

“Snoke focuses on the Knights. He thinks you are beneath him. All of them do. It’s their weakness. Use it.” Bala’s eyes bore holes through him. “Promise me you will keep her. Leave the First Order if you must. But never ever let Focus, Follow, or Furor touch my baby. I want her to be normal. Happy. Please help me, Armitage. You’re my only hope.”

Her eyes burned into him. They were open, honest, and scared. Hux knew that was the very look he had given her all those years ago when she’d found him about to walk out the airlock and end it. They had sat for hours just talking. She’d promised to take the fear away and she had. He owed her his life. He couldn’t say no to her. The effect she had on him was maddening. This was the worst idea in the history of bad ideas, yet somehow, he agreed.
Eadu: Three Weeks Later

He thought that he would have more time to adjust to Bala’s illness, but she had told him she was dying and a week later she was dead. The week following her death certain systems locked, they were all ones that Bala had developed. Even Daacha Ren did not know how she did it. Entire data stores had been encrypted. Key processes for the drug production on Eadu and the construction of Starkiller just froze. She had brought the entire First Order to its knees. It was a nightmare.

Treso Ren was unhinged. His grief over Bala’s death fed into his desperation to unlock Starkiller. He lost his humanity completely and bent people until they broke. Those he didn’t murder killed themselves to stop the pain.

Hux and Daacha Ren had arrived after Treso to find a bloodbath on Eadu at the EMU facility. They stormed in to see Treso with his lightsaber drawn moving toward Norren I’Drasaa, Bala’s second in command and research partner. With a flick of his hand, Daacha reduced Treso’s lightsaber to its component pieces. As the pieces of his lightsaber clattered to the floor, Treso rounded on them with a growl. “Sleep, brother.” Daacha waved his hand again and Treso collapsed into his open arms, lost to a deep Force-sleep.

Daacha bound the sleeping Knight and Hux looked around the room. He noticed Norren sitting a table quietly, sipping a cup of tea nonchalantly like she hadn’t almost just been killed by a madman. She gestured to the pot. “Tea?”

“Yes, please,” said Hux dropping into the chair opposite. The room was in shambles, with bodies everywhere and blood dripping from almost every surface.

“Sorry for the mess,” she gestured around. “So, let’s talk about Vala.”

Hux was surprised, but then again, Norren was Bala’s right hand Mon Calmari. “What about her?”

Norren stirred her tea. “You were supposed to leave the First Order with her. Instead, she is still sequestered here. You think I didn’t know? And you wonder why Bala deadlocked the systems? She wanted to remind you of your promise.”

Hux’s mouth gaped. Bala had shut down the First Order from the grave to remind him to take care of her little girl. It seemed excessive, but then, she was a woman of extremes.

“Norren, do you know how to stop this?”

“Of course. Pull up her personnel file. Just enter your safeword.”

Hux blanched. Norren let out a quiet chuckle. “Really General? The walls are thin and sound carries. Your secret is safe with me, but just know this is your one freebie. You need to leave, take Vala away from here. If you don’t, well, I won’t be able to help you with what comes next.”
Daacha and Hux stood in the Command Center. There were limbs everywhere; obviously, Treso had come through here as well. Daacha rerouted enough power to the holotable to project the server menu.

“Show Bala Bakkett personnel file. Authorization General Armitage Dartholomew Hux.”

“Dartholomew?” Daacha asked.

“Yes, after my great-grandfather Bartholomew and my father’s favorite sith lord, Darth Plagueis. Now, if you please, shut up.”

A smooth, silvery ball displayed above the holotable.

Daacha sighed. “What. The. Actual. Kark. I don’t know what I am looking at but I am in love with it. Dartholomew, do you know anything about this?”

Hux shook his head. He had no idea was this was. Chemistry was Bala’s first love, but she dabbled widely and was insatiable in all her pursuits. He wasn’t going to share that with the Knight of Ren.

“Display frame,” said Daacha. The graphic morphed to show thousands of thin, intricately connected wires making up the sphere. Daacha let out a low whistle and removed his helmet to get a better look. “She’s built a brand new file structure. It looks more efficient. I’ll bet she used lasers. Oh, Gods, that’s so karking hot.” Daacha’s eyes were shining and a big dumb grin, like it was his life day, splayed across his face. “Say what you will about women, but Bala was some kind of genius to program all this. This is a kripping thing of beauty. I’m about to cum in my pants from excitement.”

That was a disturbing image that Hux never wanted to imagine again. He focused on the task at hand, “Access file. Password...” Hux paused. He would never hear the end of this. “Pink Lemonade.”

Daacha doubled over with laughter. “Gods. That is your safe word?” He slapped his knee. “What was hers? Tea and cookies?”

Bala’s safeword had been Petals, but that was private. “What, like yours is better?” he bit back.

The sphere flashed.

“Obviously,” replied Daacha. “My safeword was Ginger Snaps, but now that I’ve told you I will have to think of something new.”

The sphere stopped flashing and a line of text appeared:

Remember your promise.

Cold fingers of grief, or quite possibly fear, crept up Hux’s spine. He hadn’t checked on Vala yet. Gods, what if Treso had gone after her? He ran out of the room, Daacha’s voice calling after him in question.

Bala’s room was torn apart, and her laboratory looked like an ion bomb had gone off. Tables were upended, equipment was melted, there were burn marks everywhere, and shards of glass from broken beakers peppered the floor. Mercifully, the wall behind which Vala’s room sat was still perfectly smooth, unbreached. He palmed the hidden access port and the wall split with a soft whoosh. He walked into the room quickly and Nanner whirred at him softly.
“She is napping. I managed to calm her and keep her safe, hidden.”


“Hey, what’s all this… OOOOHHHHH, a secret room!” Daacha poked his head in.

“GET OUT!”

Daacha’s boyish grin turned wolfish for a moment, “Oh, you are so hiding something. What is it then? A sex dungeon, perhaps? Please let it be a sex dungeon.”

“Armsyyyy?” A small bedraggled girl, pigtails askew, came out from the back room clutching a fuzzy scrap of cloth and a small, furry Ewok toy. They had become very popular after the Battle of Endor. No matter that Ewoks were just as likely to kill and eat you as they were to cuddle you.

Hux stepped between Daacha the girl. He didn’t know how to explain this.

“And just who are you, youngling?” Daacha asked her.

She took that moment to be shy, so Hux answered for her, “None of your business. Of all the disturbing things you saw here today that you will want to forget, this is the one that you MUST forget.”

“You’re not a Jedi. You can’t just make me forget things. Or are you one with the Force, General Dartholomew?”

“Daacha, I’m serious. Please…” Hux pleaded, a pained expression on his face. “She cannot be found.”

“Okay, okay, whatever. I’ve already forgotten. Now, you have to come back and see what Bala’s file just did. It’s fantastic!”

_Could it really be that easy? All I had to do was ask?_ Hux hadn’t imagined he would gain an ally in Daacha Ren, but there it was.

________________________________________

“Okay I understand why you left now, but you missed the best thing. Look at the message.”

*Remember your promise.*

*Or I will use your guts for garters.*

*I’m watching you, Dog.*

“You’re right, Ren, that is quite something. But then you never met her,” said Hux.

Daacha considered the projection for a moment. “I think there might be more here. He pointed to the sphere. That looks like some sort of Artificial Intelligence Interpreter. I think this ball can actually talk.”

Hux looked at Daacha. He had experienced too many emotions today - including a threat from his lover from beyond the grave - to understand, let alone give a shit about, what he was saying.
“Daacha, I know it’s fascinating but are you telling me we can talk to a file?”


*Not happening, Pencil Dick, get lost before I use your sliver of manhood to take notes.*

“Well that’s rude,” Daacha replied. “I will have you know I am very well endowed.”

“Display Starkiller Stasis Field Study,” Hux asked. He remembered the weeks she had devoted to the flux inhibitors. She had taken her frustrations out on him with her riding crop.

*Kinky Boys
Get no Joy
When they ask
About other’s toys.*

“What the hell? It’s rhyming now?” asked Daacha.

Hux was quiet. It wasn’t just generating insults. It seemed, alarmingly, to know who they were. He was nervous to ask this next question but he had to know, “Who are you?”

*Don’t all Dogs know the sound of their Mistress’ voice?*

“Oh kriff! She didn’t?” Daacha looked frantically between Hux and the holotable. “Did she?” He looked utterly perplexed. “First of all, it’s impossible. That tech doesn’t exist. And second, it’s just so wrong. Life ends, it can’t go on indefinitely.”

*It can if you cheat.*

Hux shuddered. *Fuck.* “She did.” This is fucked up. Bala had always loved philosophy. It was one of the many things Hux loved about her. She had been fascinated by droids and their consciousness as well as death. She maintained that they had a facsimile of self-awareness, only a copy. She had been working on a self-aware consciousness for years, long before she came to the First Order. It was her way of cheating death. It had actually been a source of friction between her and Treso. It appeared that Daacha was of the same opinion. “Cunt,” Hux muttered under his breath.

*I heard that. I should punish you.*

The lights flickered ominously and went dark and the holotable projection of the sphere winked out.

“Well, a malevolent, mildly sarcastic consciousness from beyond the grave can control our key systems. It looks like my next mission impossible has just presented itself. I can’t wait to hear what the Supreme Leader has to say about this. My guess is he’ll tell me to try turning it off and on again. After he rips my mind apart because I didn’t realize she would be able to do this. Bloody Women. If tits weren’t my favorite thing ever I would space the lot of them.”

Hux didn’t know what to do. He was standing in the dark, surrounded by death, and the woman of his dreams was locked inside a file of her own design. *Really, it’s like a stupid story. Could it get any more complicated? Oh, please no.* He started to laugh, quietly at first, then slowly, a more maniacal shriek bubbled out and threatened to consume him.

Daacha turned on a flashlight, walked over to him, and shined it in his eyes. He slapped Hux across
the face. “Snap out of it! We have things that need to be taken care of and it can’t happen if you go off the deep end. Let’s start with Treso, shall we? Then we’ll deal with the little girl. And finally Bala. Alright?”

Hux was coming back to himself, he nodded, “Yes. That sounds like a plan.”

This is how they found themselves dragging a large, snoring Knight of Ren into their shuttle. “I hope I never have to do this again. Can’t you just levitate him with the Force or something?”

“The Force doesn’t work that way.”

Hux rolled his eyes. The Knights of Ren really are useless posers.

After they hefted his bulk into a stasis pod, Daacha turned to him. “Now what about the little girl?”

“I have no idea,” Hux replied gloomily.

Coruscant: Eight days later

They tried to hide Vala and Nanner on the Finalizer for a week. It was going well until some techs found her. Daacha spaced them, but with people at a premium, he couldn’t keep doing that. The only option left was family, and even though Hux’s family history was troubled, she had always been there. He sent a coded message to his younger sister and her response was simple, “Bring her.”

He knew the moment he walked in that he shouldn’t have come. Adellia was perfect, playing with Vala, holding her and singing songs. It tore his heart apart.

What was I thinking? I can’t give her up. She’s Bala’s daughter, I made a promise. She was all he had left of her. The plan was to give the little girl to Adellia. He would go back to his ship and close the book on the worst week of his life.

After living with her a week he had grown fond of her. He tried not to think of how messy his quarters were. How they were now covered in drawings - some on paper, some on the walls. He’d put her in time out and all she could say after was that she was, “Very sowwy,” and then she hugged him. He hadn’t been prepared for the hug, or how small and fragile she felt in his arms.

He had to distance himself from those thoughts. He turned his back on his sister and Vala and counted to thirty. He thought if he could make it without turning around, he would be able to walk out the door. Then Vala opened her mouth and a feral howl shrieked out. She reached for him, “Arrrrmmmmssssyyyyy!” When he got to ten, she had fastened herself to his leg, crying so much she had started hiccuping. By fifteen, she was coughing. He never made past seventeen.

He still wasn’t sure what had happened. One minute she was screaming and the next she was in his arms, snuffling into his shoulder quietly, her face still stained with tears as he shushed her softly. He did not like to be touched and did not like to touch other people. And he hated tears and wetness in general. But somehow, at that moment, all of those reservations melted away.

He made his apologies to Adellia and started walking back to his shuttle with Vala balanced on his hip. Vala squealed and pointed into the nearest alley toward a mangy looking rag.
"Armsy, look, cat!" she said gesturing toward the rag, which was slowly moving around. It was in fact not a rag, but a small cat, a kitten really. It looked half-starved and it was covered in garbage, mewling like its pitiful heart had been broken.

"Pretty kitty," she added.

Hux huffed, "No Vala, that is NOT a pretty kitty."

She squirmed and he almost dropped her. He tried to readjust his grip but she slithered out of his arms and ran toward the alley. Hux reconsidered if he should have left her with Adellia, but she didn't go far. She stopped in front the cat, squatted, and then started to pet it. Hux winced, sure that she would get scratched. Then, wonders behold, the cat leapt into Vala's open arms. She turned towards Hux, an ecstatic smile stretched across her face.

"Armsy, pretty kitty go home?"

Hux had done many things in his life that he regretted, but he did not regret picking up a little lost girl with a scrawny orange tabby clutched to her chest.

“And what do we call it?” he asked her.

“Mewy?” Vala asked.

He thought that was a terrible name but he could work with it, “How about Millie?”

“Miwee, Miwee, Miwee!”

_Millicent it is._

Bala had told him once about having people. At the time, he thought it had seemed more like a burden than an honor to be connected to other people. They made you vulnerable. As the cat purred and the girl babbled happily, both content in his arms, he wondered why giving them both well-needed baths followed by playing with them and the laser sight on his blaster seemed like such a better use of an afternoon than being _General of the First Order._

“So that didn’t go according to plan,” said Daacha as he gestured to Hux, Vala, and the orange kitten she cradled in her arms.

“Shut up Daacha. I’ll figure something out.”

“Listen, I’m not judging. You were supposed to come back without the kid. But she’s still here and now she has a cat attached to her. You are totally winning at this not being tied down thing. This will not blow up in your face. At. All.”

“I hate it when you are sarcastic.”

“Karker, you hate it when I’m right. I told you this was a dumb idea and you would never be able to follow through. Like I said before… we should hide her in plain sight.”

“We? There is no we. This is my responsibility, Daacha. And besides, I can’t take her to Starkiller. What if something happens to her and I’m not there?”
“Two words: Dopheld Mitaka. Best babysitter in the First Order. He has been babysitting Treso for years.”

Hux contemplated the idea for a moment. “Well, I guess I don’t have a lieutenant more loyal than him.” *Could this really work? Or is this suicide?*

“There’s totally a *we* now, buddy. Deal with it. And if you keep acting like a butt I’m going to braid your hair and make you a friendship bracelet to remind you how connected we are.”

*General Dartholomew and Daacha Ren: Team!DADS. What could possibly go wrong?*

Chapter End Notes

Hello Sweet Darlings!

**DID HEARTS MENTION HOW MUCH SHE LOVES HUX?**

Yah so anyway, enjoy this new Hux plot expansion and *eventually* we might get back to our regularly scheduled program and find out what our girl Keech is up to. But I mean, really, strap in for a few chapters because we are smack in the middle of the “HeartS disrupts shuns' story outline” tangent of this fic.

P.S.: HeartS would like to politely point out that we never promised canon-compliancy and our Sweet!Hux is the best Hux.
Episode V: The Hux Strikes Back

Chapter Summary

In which we learn about Snoke's technological prowess (or lack thereof).

Chapter Notes

(HeartS nudges shuns who looks up and sees readers.)

Shuns: Oh Hi, we were just discussing the boundaries of the Hux/Daacha relationship.

HeartS: Spoilers. There are none.

Shuns: Time jump to a few months before the present. Vala was three and is now almost-six. Hux, Daacha and Mitaka have been doing the 3 Men and a Little Lady thing this whole time. And it is mostly working…

HeartS: Until Snoke starts pushing buttons.

Shuns: Literally.

HeartS: PS this chapter is LONNNNNNG.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Starkiller base: a few months ago

The meeting paused as the holoprojector clicked on. Supreme Leader Snoke’s face unexpectedly loomed into view. Lieutenant Mikita was just about to start a presentation but his words died on his lips. The whole room held its breath, sure someone was going to get force choked, or quite possibly, die.

Hux watched Snoke; his attention was clearly elsewhere and he was mumbling. Damn, it’s happening again.

“What rhymes with longing clutches… hmmm… ginger touches… perhaps… hmm yes.”

“Supreme Leader?” Hux spoke up. “Are you joining us?”

Snoke looked up, momentarily startled, his face morphed into a displeased grimace. “Yes General. Inform me of the status of our...” he paused a moment to consider. “… of our droid elimination plan,” he drawled.

The officers all looked to Hux, confused by this question.

“Supreme Leader, Sir, if you recall from our last meeting, we decided to scuttle that plan. We need droids for menial and technical work throughout the fleet due to the shortage of technicians. We
cannot eliminate them if we ever expect to complete Starkiller Assault Base on time.” Hux suddenly found himself choking, invisible fingers wrapped around his throat. *Fucking great. Not this shit again.*

“WHAT DO YOU MEAN, WE DECIDED THIS?” Snoke’s voice echoed through the meeting room.

*FUCK! Fuck, fuck, fuck. The bastard had us on mute during the last meeting.*

“Sup-reme Le-ad-er…” Hux struggled, unable to get out any more words. Snoke released him, and he slumped in his chair for a moment collecting his thoughts as oxygen made its way back to his brain. He cleared his throat and spoke, voice now raw, “L-L-last week at our meeting with the Leadership Council. We thought you were in agreement, Sir. *Now I know you weren’t even paying attention. What are you doing in that throne room all day?*

“Ah yes, General, I recall. Do not make me regret trusting you with the completion of Starkiller. It is imperative it be fully operational as you promised.”

The call cut off.

*What the actual fuck? I’m already working twenty-two hours a day to build a weaponized planet while trying to be a supportive and nurturing co-parent, a creative and talented lover, and a responsible pet owner. If I die because he doesn’t know how to use his holopad, I’m going to be so fucking pissed.*

The officers looked at Hux cautiously. His face was still bright red and he was running his hand over his neck where it was sore.

“Sir? Shall we continue?”

Hux sat back in his chair, deflated. “Mitaka, present your report on the final preparations for Starkiller Go Live.”

He sighed. He would have to talk to Daacha Ren, again. Clearly, the Supreme Leader tech bubble was not working. They were meeting later to test Starkiller’s targeting system, then having drinks after. *At least I have something to look forward to today.*

Hux looked around the space. He’d wanted to install a cantina but Snoke had only allowed him a juice bar. He understood the reasoning behind it, but it still rankled. *Alcohol fuels rebellions, General,”* Supreme Leader Snoke had said.

*And it keeps me from spacing myself. Good thing Daacha knows a guy.*

Hux met Daacha in the juice bar at 1900 galactic standard time. Though not the brandy he deserved, he ordered a Nabooian Nargle Nectar, his favorite non-alcoholic drink. He had been with Daacha Ren and his IT commando team for hours to smoke test Starkiller’s targeting systems and tried not to feel too smug that there were no major defects. *And why should there be? Everything is proceeding as planned.* After the morning he’d had, blowing up an unpopulated moon had been just the thing to keep the migraine behind his right eye from taking hold.
Daacha stalked into the room, throwing himself into the booth and removing his helmet with a
snap and a hiss. Hux never got used to seeing the boyish face under the mask, and his short brown
hair looked perfect, not a single crease from the helmet. It made Hux jealous; he always got terrible
hat hair whenever he wore them. Come to think of it, Kylo Ren’s hair always looked perfect too.
Maybe it was a Force thing.

Daacha’s brown eyes sparkled with merriment, the corners crinkling as he grinned. *Do we work for
the same organization? Where does he get all that joy?* Daacha was a naturally happy person. Still,
spending the morning with his favorite almost-six-year-old brought out the mischief in him.
Daacha could have let anyone on his Team handle the infrastructure of Starkiller, but he had used it
as an excuse to visit as often as he could. Mitaka still had duties beyond babysitting; the
construction of Starkiller didn’t stop just because they were all secretly raising the cutest little
turbo laser (their code word for Vala) in the First Order.

“Honestly,” Daacha started. “It took him twenty minutes to settle onto the throne yesterday.
Twenty minutes! I was on my knees the entire time waiting for him to settle. I could have smushed
a girl twice during that time.” He made a few crude thrusts with his hips.

“Daach, Shhhhh!” Hux held his index finger up to his lips in warning and looked around warily.
“Don’t say that too loudly. The First Order has an abstinence-only policy, or have you forgotten?”

“Which no one follows! Including you, General. Don’t try to act all innocent, I’ve seen your sex
dungeon.” Daacha reached under his cape and pulled out a flask. He poured some in his cup then
offered it to Hux.

“It’s not a dungeon. It’s on a spaceship so it’s…” Hux trailed off. “You know what, never mind.”
He grabbed the flask, tipped it into his nectar, and took a long draw. *Oh, that hits the spot.* “You
don’t need to *advertise* that the policy does not apply to us. The fear of reconditioning helps keep
everyone in line. I don’t want a mutiny on my hands simply because you can’t keep it in your
pants.”

Daacha leaned in close. “Dartholomew, you hypocrite, what’s Phasma’s safeword? Come on, spill
it.” He raised his eyebrows suggestively.

*Watermelon. But fuck if I’ll ever tell you that. I’ll never hear the end of it.*

Hux snorted. How had he gotten here? Dartholomew and Daach, what a pair. He didn’t have many
friends, but the clean-up (or cover-up, depending on how you looked at it) of the Treso/Bala
debacle and their shared interest in a charming little girl had cemented the last Knight of Ren as an
ally, confidante, and friend. Still, Daacha took too many liberties. He was so damn informal all the
time. Hux tried not to be jealous that Vala called Daacha ‘Fun Dad’ and he was just Dad. Friends
were hard to come by in the First Order, and co-parents even more scarce.

Daacha continued, “But really. I don’t understand why he doesn’t just get those red guards to carry
him around. What else do they do all day besides standing around sweating in those duraplas
gowns? Might as well sweat while doing something useful. Otherwise, it’s just a waste.”

“I know,” Hux snickered. “What, pray tell, is their purpose? No one is allowed in the throne room.
Do they really just stand there staring at Snoke, all day? Or maybe they are busy choreographing a
song and dance number?”

Daacha responded in a sing-song voice, “Red and gold, red and gold, it’s a beautiful thing that
never gets old, our lovely legs too much to behold.” Daacha tipped his head back as he let out a
braying laugh. “You know, in another life, I could have been a poet. Who karking knows what
they do, Dartholomew. They don’t have tongues since Snoke cut them out, so if anything it’s just 
the dance number? I guess they could lip sync, but then they would have to remove their masks 
and I’m pretty sure those are welded on.”

Hux smiled wryly. Wouldn’t that be a sight? He imagined the guards twirling in complicated 
patterns around the throne room with Imperial March playing in the background. “Oh my gods, I 
forgot I wanted to tell you about our meeting today. The Supreme Leader holoed in mid-meeting. 
He still doesn’t know how to use that holopad you set him up with.”

“Still?” Daacha threw up his hands in frustration. “A five-year-old could operate it, and I genuinely 
don’t know how to make it simpler. It only has enough buttons to perform three functions. And I 
color-coded it,” Daacha replied, slightly exasperated.

We should give it to Vala first, she can be our Snoke tester.

Hux continued, “Well he holoed in talking some nonsense and derailed the meeting on a complete 
tangent. He proceeded to Force choke me and then acted like he was doing me a favor by letting 
me continue managing Starkiller. The nerve.”

Daacha laughed. “That’s nothing. I’ve been looking for a new technician for three months to deal 
with him and I can’t fill the position. He has killed the previous four already. We’ve had to look to 
the communication nodes for candidates, and I hate scraping the bottom of the landing gear.”

“Find anything?”

Daacha’s eyes lit up. “GODS did I. There is this beautiful woman parked on TX-12. I would give 
my left nut to get her.” He looked away longingly. “But, given the life expectancy of technicians 
assigned to Snoke, I wouldn’t hire her. It would be such a waste. Well, that, and she’s a woman, so 
her tits get in the way of her programming.”

Hux snorted. “How do you get so much ass when you are such a misogynistic git?” Daacha 
shrugged his shoulders as Hux continued. “I don’t get it.”

“Women love the helmet.”

Hux snorted, “The real travesty here is Snoke.” Hux looked around and spotted Lieutenant Mitaka 
sitting across the room with a few other junior officers. “This guy! Mitaka!” he called. “He knows 
exactly what I’m talking about.” Hux waved to Mitaka from across the room. “Mitaka, come over 
here.”

It was Mikata’s night off while Vala stayed in the children’s barracks. Daacha had been right: 
hiding her in plain sight was genius. Though his original idea of dressing her as a midget 
stormtrooper was weak, he had redeemed himself with bringing a small group of children to “learn 
about Starkiller” and be groomed to become officers. It meant one of them, either Daacha, Hux, or 
Mitaka was always nearby.

Mitaka joined their table with a snap of a salute and click of his heels. “General. Knight 
Commander.” He looked at Hux and Daacha nervously. Even after rounds of diaper duty, bouts of 
fever, and numerous play dates, he was still uncomfortable. “Sirs, how can I be of assistance?”

“I was just telling Daacha Ren here about the Supreme Leader calling into our meeting today,” 
Hux replied. “He didn’t know he was there at first, was talking to himself about ginger, or some 
other ludicrous thing. Tell him.”

“Well… yes, Sir,” Mitaka responded slowly. “He did mention something about rhyming before he
noticed any of us. What do you make of that, Knight Commander, Sir?”

“Oh that,” Daacha dropped his voice conspiratorially. “That’s just one of his quirks. He thinks we don’t know…” Daacha started shaking, trying and failing to curb his laughter. “He writes poetry.”

Hux’s eyes widened and then he let out a hoot. “Have you ever read any?” Hux asked eagerly. “He almost never leaves the throne room, let alone the Supremacy. What could he possibly have to write about?”

“I can’t say that I have. One of his guards is in charge of his poetry holopad, but those guys are not easily swayed. Trust me, Kylo Ren and I have tried to get it. And that guard must be a tech genius, too, because it’s impossible to break into. I would imagine he writes about his greatness. Or ruling the galaxy. Or maybe about his fabulous fashion sense. I think he’s really old so maybe he had an interesting life before he became the Supreme Leader.”

Mitaka shifted, looking extremely uncomfortable. “Sirs, are you sure we should be talking about this?”

Hux’s eyes went steely. “Why, Mitaka? What do you think will happen?” Mitaka stared at him with wide eyes, afraid to say anything. “Do you see anyone here who is going to tell him what we’re saying?”

“No, Sir,” Mitaka replied squeakily. “But doesn’t he just… know things? Because, because of the Force?”

Daacha stopped laughing long enough to respond. “That’s not how the Force works.”

Hux and Mitaka both turned toward him, their interests piqued.

“Each Force user has a unique experience in the Force. For me, the force is a giant system. I can see all the gears turning, all the valves and switches. It’s like a giant machine. For Snoke, it is more subtle. He can manipulate empty spaces. The air between words. The quiet moment between your dreams or nightmares.”

“Wow, Sir.” Mitaka looked at Daacha in awed terror.

Daacha let out a howl of laughter. “I’m just kidding.” He clapped a hand on Mitaka’s shoulder. “I really had you there for a minute, didn’t I? I wish the Force was that cool. The Force just lets you lift rocks, have good hair, and stop blaster bolts from hitting you.”

Mitaka looked immensely relieved with that explanation.

“Go back to your table now, Mitaka,” Hux directed. “The adults would like to finish their conversation. Don’t forget your shift with the turbo laser tomorrow morning, you need to tire it out.” Mikata gave Hux a small smile. Vala called him Quiet Dad.

“Yes, Sir.” Mitaka walked back to the other officers and sat down.

Hux looked at Daacha quizzically. “So, that first bit. That was the truth, wasn’t it?”

“Obviously, you’ve seen me in action. How many times have you watched me pull things apart into pieces? But didn’t you see his face?” Daacha turned thoughtful. “Sometimes the truth is scarier than any lie. I don’t want him to have nightmares about Snoke invading his dreams, because he can. It’s terrifying. He’s done it to me, in fact, he’s done it to all the Knights. There is literally no space that he can’t occupy.”
“Mmmmh,” was Hux’s only reply. He continued sipping his spiked nectar and lost himself to his thoughts. He had much to hide. This new knowledge was incredibly distressing.

Sensing his mood shift, Daacha changed the subject, “How about blowing up that moon? BOOM! I’ll bet you wished you had a Starkiller when we took Bador.”

Hux was flattered that he remembered Bador. It was where he had first made a name for himself. After months of negotiating, the First Order had been boxed into a stalemate with the K DY. After watching the patterns of commuter traffic, he suggested a strike on Bador. The attack was timed right before rush hour to preserve the shipbuilding rigs, to capture most the essential workers, and to secure hundreds of children. It had been his finest moment.

The only thing that marred that success was Treso Ren. It was scary how he had moved men around. Bala told him later that Treso had used battle meditation, a Force power which connected him with every member of the fleet. She was working on Follow and Focus at the time but hadn’t perfected them yet. She wanted to make the chemical equivalents of battle meditation, which would yield perfect execution and perfect knowledge for non-Force users.

She was also experimenting with Furor on him at the time. As always, she was right, it had led to better things. He had been made General and been given the Finalizer, and Treso had received the Starkiller Project. Until he went mad, that is, and then Snoke had handed it over to Hux under the guise of him being the most competent. Translation: Kylo Ren is a man-baby who can't be trusted with this, and Daacha Ren is too busy trying to keep the First Order online. As if he’d needed more to do.

Hux opened his mouth to reply, but Daacha stood up. He nodded towards the woman talking to a service droid, “Looks like you got some fresh meat here. Why didn’t you tell me sooner.”

“Ah yes,” said Hux, “Biscuit Girl, the new troop liaison. She is very happy, loves cookies, any kind of sweet thing in fact. You should leave her alone. Not your type. At all.”

“Does she have a pulse? Is she standing upright? Then she is my type. Besides, unaccompanied women need to learn their place. Namely, on their knees before me.” Daacha reached for his helmet, then strode off in pursuit of Biscuit Girl.

Hux shook his head. He knew what would happen. The poor fool would be drawn in by the helmet, the good hair, and the bad boy reputation of Daacha Ren. There would be sex all over the place that he would have to hide by sending everyone to reconditioning. In the end, there would be a messy breakup. He had lost some very promising officers to Daacha’s dalliances. Phasma was right, Daach was a mess. Really, all of the Knights of Ren were. Bit Hux knew deep down that Daacha was a sweet romantic, looking for love but only finding sex. I can fucking relate to that.

Maybe that was why Daacha wore his helmet during sex. When Daacha had shared this particular kink, Hux had tried to purge the image from his mind. The idea had grown on him though. Perhaps wearing the helmet could help him hide his feelings. He had asked to borrow Daacha’s helmet for his next encounter with Phasma. He wanted to wear it to hide his resentment as she pegged him yet again.

Of course, Daacha had told him no. More like ‘hell no’, but he told him he knew a guy who could design and fabricate whatever Hux wanted. Of course he knows a guy. Maybe he would make that happen once Starkiller went live and things were only somewhat out of control. It would be his reward to himself, because all he was going to get from Phasma was a flogging with her electric cat o’nine tails. Perhaps he could convince her to use the leather one instead; it had less bite, but the sounds were much more satisfying.
Later that night, Hux found himself wide awake in his bed, unable to fall asleep. He wondered what exactly Snoke would see in his dreams if he visited. Would he see the orange tabby cat lounging on his bed in his quarters and have her chucked out the nearest airlock? Or even more worrisome, be able to see her? The little girl with brown hair and brown eyes that they had taken such pains to hide after Bala died. From where he was laying he could just see the marks on the wall that recorded how fast she was growing up. To anyone else, they would just be scuffs to be painted over but to him, they were tallies of a life worth living. Bala was right, Vala was the one good thing she had ever done. Now she was the one good thing he had done.

He had given so much to the First Order. The cat and the little girl were his. The thought of Snoke finding them in his mind or Gods, in real life. He stopped breathing. They were special. He bit back the bile that had crept up his throat and threatened to escape. It would never happen as long as he buried those feelings deep.

To clear his mind he thought of giant laser cannons and big explosions for a few minutes until his thoughts shifted to Bala. His cock swelled. He squeezed and tugged at it, picturing her perfect brown tits. He loved the contrast of her dusky skin against his pale body. When he disappeared into her, she consumed him. She took everything away. All the pain and humiliation and fear simply melted when he was with her. Submitting to her wasn’t debasing himself, it was surrender. Winning had been so costly, it tore apart his soul. Being able to lose was a privilege and a pleasure. He remembered their first time.

He was still sore from the injections she had given him, the predecessor to Furor. The clarity was unreal. Words had color. The air moved in swirls. Scents had sounds. For the first time, he felt like he could accomplish anything, including seducing her. He knew it was wrong, but he had thought about her hot, wet cunt for months.

He had kissed her. Her lips were full and dark. They parted for him with a sweet sigh. He didn’t know how but he had up against the wall, grinding into her, he expected for her to scream or cower, not to thrust back and moan. He tore her clothing, pushing her pants down and ripping her shirt open, then turned her against the wall and pounded into her. She was so wet and warm. He was in heaven when she came. He thought that was it, the pinnacle of his life. Then she had grabbed his chin, squeezed, and commanded him, “On your knees and clean up your mess, Dog.” In no universe could he have imagined he would do such a thing. It was filthy. It was glorious. She came a second time from his ministrations, moaning his name ‘Armitage!’ as he lapped up her wetness like the greedy cur he was.

“Good Dog,” she had said as she scratched his chin, she swiped her hand across his mouth capturing the remains of her spend. Then she wiped her hand on the front of his uniform.

Back in his quarters, his hot cum spilled into his hand. If she were here, Bala would have insisted he lick it up, but instead, he reached for the shirt on the floor next to his bed. Hux wiped off his mess and put the shirt in his laundry receptacle. She wasn’t here. He let a sigh out slowly. Gods I miss her. He curled into a ball and drifted off to a fitful sleep.
Hux awoke the next morning and walked into his ‘fresher to get ready for the day. He stopped abruptly at the only slightly-horrifying sight of Daacha’s bare ass. His pants were around his ankles and he could hear an electric buzzing sound. He realized he was now watching Daach use electric clippers to methodically trim his pubic hair. It was falling all over the ground into a mess at his feet.

“Oh good morning, Darth,” Daacha acknowledged Hux as he walked in.

“Yes and hello to you too. If I may, WHAT THE FUCK ARE YOU DOING?”

“What does it look like? I’m manscaping. Duh.”

Hux squeezed his eyes shut for a second before proceeding. “I can see that Daach. What I meant was, why are you doing it here, in my ‘fresher? I know for a fact you have your own ‘fresher.”

“Well, I do, but yours has better mirrors and a more pleasing overall lighting scheme.”

“I know, I designed it myself like that on purpose.

“Why are you manscaping?” Oh. Right. Biscuit girl. I guess that makes sense.

“You know how I like to look good. I have to be ready for anything. If I’m gonna hit that hot-as-kark troop liaison, I want to be at my best, and that means giving ‘The Pulverizer’ a little TLC.”

“Tell me you do not call your dick ‘The Pulverizer’?”

“Why wouldn’t I? It’s a badass name?”

“It’s the name of your ship. You named your dick after your ship.” Hux was smiling now. This is preposterous.

“First of all, my ship is named after my dick, because really it’s just an extension of me, out there pulverizing the universe.”

“You’re ridiculous.”

“I know.” Daacha grinned broadly. “Hey, can you help me trim my man-hole?”

Hux quirked his head. It really was difficult to get the right angle on your own. Most often he would have to ask Lieutenant Mitaka to help. It fell into his ‘other duties assigned.’

“Why don’t you just wax it? That’s what I do; it’s so much smoother that way. And the hair doesn’t interfere with the toys. “I can get a med droid in here, or Mitaka perhaps, to take care of it.”

Daacha’s face paled a bit. “NO! No waxing. It’s much too sensitive there. I prefer trimming, thank you.”

Hux sighed, resigned. “We never speak of this again, is that understood?”

Daacha looked at him in the reflection, “Of course.”

“Okay, Daach, spread those cheeks.”

Daacha Ren, Knight Commander of the First Order and Conqueror of Women’s Virtues still had some shame. He turned red from his cheeks to his chest, but he grabbed his ass and parted it, all
for the sake of a shiny butthole that someone might want to touch.

Suddenly, Lieutenant Mitaka walked in to report on his morning with Vala, “General Hux…” he trailed off and stared, transfixed by the sight.

Damn it! I’ve really got to get my locks changed. He looked at Mitaka curiously. Well, I’m certainly not interested in this, but Mitaka is positively salivating. How did I not notice before?

“Hey brochacho,” Daacha called over his shoulder. “What’s cooking?”

Mitaka recovered himself. “My apologies, Sirs,” he replied as he looked down, backing out of the room.

Hux called to him, “Lieutenant, Daacha is having some grooming issues. Perhaps you can help him?” Well played, now I don’t have to touch his poop chute.

With that, he left the awkward scene and strolled out of the room. “Don’t forget to clean up your mess,” he called to Daacha as he walked away.

Hux tried not to think too hard later when he saw Lieutenant Mitaka gazing off into the distance dreamily, or when he heard Daacha Ren whistling through his vocoder. Really, this abstinence-only policy is shit.

One week later

“General Hux?” Snoke’s voice boomed. “Are you there? Can you hear me?”

“Supreme Leader, I can hear you loud and clear,” Hux responded.

“Hux? Hux, what button do I need to push so you can see me?” Snoke asked.

Hux sighed and responded, “Supreme Leader, you push the one with the arrow.”

“How many times?”

“You just need to push it once. It’s the one with the arrow, Sir.”

“No, I still don’t see it. What color is it?”

“Green, sir. The button is green.”

The message cut off abruptly. Snoke always pushed the red button instead of the green one. Every. Damn. Time.

Hux had tried to get a technician to set up the all Holo conversations, and each time Snoke had killed the poor bastard. They were running out of technicians they could sacrifice. Even with Daacha’s intervention, Snoke’s technological abilities appeared to be a lost cause.

“You there,” he addressed a technician sitting to his left. The technician visibly paled. ”Contact the Supremacy. Put me through to the Supervising Technician.”
“Right away Sir.” A moment later, an unfamiliar voice bounced across the bridge.

“Hello, General! This is BG-8976, Supervising Technician for today’s shift! What can I do for you?”

_Why the hell is he so excited? Oh right. He gets to talk to me._ “The Supreme Leader is having trouble using his holopad again. Send a technician to help him.”

“Sir, he has killed every technician we’ve sent.”

“Yes, yes, I know. What about a droid?”

“Sir,” an officer to his right responded. “The Supreme Leader doesn’t like them.”

_Of course, he can’t feel them in the Force._ Hux shook his head and covered his eyes. The light on the bridge was too bright. He felt a pulling pain behind his right eye, another migraine. They had been getting worse.

“So help me BG-8976, the next time I step foot on the _Supremacy_, my boot will be on your neck if you don’t figure this out.”

The technician let out an audible gasp.

“He doesn’t kill them all, you know.” A _blatant lie_. “Make it happen. I expect your report in one hour.”

“Yessir. Right away Sir.”

Exactly sixty minutes later, BG-8976 made contact with the _Finalizer_. “General Hux, the Supreme Leader should be contacting you within five minutes.”

“And the technician?”

“Snoke killed him, Sir.”

_Damn._ “Thank you. End transmission.”

Lieutenant Mitaka gaped. “Sir, that’s…”

“That’s what, Lieutenant?” Hux sneered. “It was to be expected.” _They are going to run out of capable technicians on the Supremacy if Snoke can’t figure out how to make a fucking holo-call._ “Careful, I might send you next time.”

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**Three weeks later**

Hux was sitting in his office when the holo clicked on.

“Ah General, there you are. What is your progress on Starkiller?”

“I am able to report that Starkiller is now fully operational, Supreme Leader. We tested yesterday and were able to destroy a small moon in the Tourellian Cluster.”
“Excellent. I have asked Daacha Ren to join us.”

Daacha strolled into the room. He removed his helmet and bowed deeply to the holoprojection. “Supreme Leader”

“With the new Starkiller in operation, we will be able to advance toward the Core. Daacha Ren, you will return to the Supremacy, and General, you will return to the Finalizer.”

Hux’s eyes met Daacha’s. What about Vala? “Supreme Leader. I look forward to commanding my ship once again, but I thought I would be remaining here to oversee Starkiller.”

“No, the heroes of Bador and Azraya are needed once again to extend our Order.”

The holo ended.

Hux and Daacha looked at each other.

“Shit,” said Hux, “I can’t go. She’s so little. We can’t give her up…”

The holo blinked on. Hux shut his mouth with a snap, both men bowed low again. Hux and Daacha could only see one large eye. It was milky and grotesque.

“General Hux, are you there?” drawled Snoke.

“Yes, Supreme Leader.”

“Is Daacha Ren there?”

“Yes Supreme Leader.”

“I can't see either of you. Is this thing broken again?”

Daacha piped up, “Supreme Leader, you are too close to the camera. Move back.”

There was rustling, then they saw most of his disfigured face. It wasn’t the best, but it was less disconcerting than the large eyeball.

Hux had to ask, “What of the children stationed here on Starkiller? Perhaps they could be moved on the Finalizer to continue their education. I have quite enjoyed working with them; they are progressing quickly thanks to the special sessions with Daacha Ren and myself.”

Snoke stroked his chin, “Yes, extraordinary talents displayed by those children. No, they will remain on Starkiller. Space is no place for children. Antigravity will stunt their growth. We can’t have short Stormtroopers.”

The Supreme Leader’s visage cut out again.

Hux turned towards Daacha gaping. This was the worst news.

The holo blinked back on. “…force bond, now why hadn’t I thought of that…” He looked up from his musing. “General, Daacha Ren, why are you still here?”

“You holoed us back, Supreme Leader.”

“Ah, yes, I did. I just wanted to say, prepare to leave within the week.”
He cut out again.

“FUCK!” shouted Hux. “What just happened?”

Daacha took off his helmet. “I think we are being rewarded for our success. Hux started pacing back and forth for a few minutes. Daacha Ren sat on the ground deep in thought.

*Some reward this is.*

The holo clicked on yet again.

Snokes was now very small and one of the Red Guards was standing next to him, slightly bent over.

“Here, take the pad. I’m done poeming. Now, once again from the top. Entertain me.”

The Guards assembled and began a complicated choreography, akin to a dance or possibly a fight scene. “More flair. I need more energy!” He called.

Then one of the guards pointed to the screen.

“ Heckity, heck.” the holo cut out.

Hux wasn’t sure what he had just seen. Daacha Ren had fallen over, laughing and snorting. Between guffaws, he was finally able to wheeze, “I karking told you so.”

Hux sat down. This was all too much. The Supreme Leader’s avocations. Returning to his ship after devoting himself to Starkiller. Leaving behind his little girl. He held his head in his hands, it was suddenly too heavy for his neck to support, “What do I do now?”

Daacha had rolled on his back and was wiping away the tears from his laughter. “*You* don’t do anything. *We* come up with a cunning plan.”

“We are not trying to pass her off as the shortest stormtrooper in the fleet. That is the dumbest idea, ever”

“WHY NOT? That would totally work, you know,” he huffed, “Well, probably.” He shook his head. “Okay, that was my one idea. Well, that and building a training outpost here.”

The reality was that now Vala was ‘almost six’ as she reminded him each time he saw her. She didn’t need them as much. She rarely snuck into his room anymore. Hux realized with a tug at his heart it had been weeks since she had done that. The last time was when she had a dream about her mommy. Or more correctly, had a nightmare about her mommy leaving her. He had held her, telling her she would never be left behind and now that was the very thing he was ordered to do.

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*Four days later*

Mitaka, Daacha, and Hux were in Hux’s quarters. They had tried for days to come up with a solution. But they only had bad options. Hux could take her aboard the *Finalizer*, but she would have to hide. She could go with Daacha Ren on the *Supremacy*, but children there were older and as part of the Storm Trooper program, they were dosed with Follow. One of them could leave but the penalty for desertion was death if they were caught.
In the end, Quiet Dad had been the voice of reason. Hux would assign him as liaison to Starkiller and he would stay behind. Hux would have the Finalizer assigned to Starkiller's sector so he could visit as often as possible. Daacha Ren said he would invent IT problems that would bring him back to Starkiller. They wouldn’t get to see her daily as they had been, but it was the best of the bad options. Though it tore out his heart to do so, Hux agreed. He asked to be the one who told her. He felt it was his responsibility. He wished more than anything that he wouldn't have to take this step.

He was sitting alone in his quarters when she came in. Her smiled was bright, even with her missing front tooth. She was still wearing pigtails, although today they were falling out. They never stayed put whenever Mikata had hair duty; he never put enough twists for them to stay tight.

“Hello, kitten. How was your day?”

“Very good Daddy. I drew you a picture.” She handed him a folded piece of paper.

He unfolded it and what he saw pulled at his heart. “Oh my, what a very nice picture this is. Can you tell me about it?”

There was a stick man with red hair in a black outfit (“That’s you, Daddy”). Next to him was an orange cat (“And Millie”) and then a little person with brown pigtails (“And me”).

“What are we doing?” He asked, although it seemed quite clear.

“They’re building a laser cannon!” she proclaimed. In the background, she had drawn a not-terrible representation of Starkiller’s cannon. Then again, she had been fascinated with the model in his quarters. She’d brought her dolls in to play with it.

“What a wonderful picture. You draw so well.” She gave him a hug. “Daddy needs to tell you something.” He paused, holding her tight before looking at her. “Daddy has to go away.”

She looked up, “Oh, for long?”

“For a while.”

“Will Fun Daddy be here?”

“No, Fun Daddy has to go too.”

She was biting her lip and shifting back and forth between her feet. “What about Quiet Daddy?”

“He is staying.”

“Oh,” she sighed. “Could Quiet Daddy go away and you stay instead?”

She was looking up at him with big eyes. He shook his head, “No, kitten. Daddy has to go and make the galaxy a better place for you.”

“Maybe I can come? I can help make the galaxy a better place. I’m big now.” She stood up and puffed out her chest.

Hux had a moment of vertigo. He could see the little girl as she had been not three years ago with the baby fat and dimples. Her face was changing. She was getting bigger. He could almost imagine what she would look like as an adult. He wondered if he would get to see it happen.

“Remember what I told you before? We are all a part of the same Order. We fight together. I have to go, but it will be easier for Daddy to fight knowing you are safe. Learning and growing. This is
your post. You need to stay at your post. Will you be my good soldier?”

She broke out sobbing and hugged his leg. He could feel tears through his uniform and tears forming in the corners of his own eyes. It was the same as it was three years ago when he had tried to leave her with his sister. Only now he knew how much he loved her.

When he was very young, his father had asked him the same question. It was odd now to hear those words coming out of his mouth. He had built so much of his life around not being his father. Yet, when the moment came, the same words that had crushed him as a boy when he watched his own father leave were the ones he used as well. He wondered if his father had felt how woefully inadequate they were to comfort and console, just as he did. He shushed her as her sobs became sniffles.

If she asked him to stay he knew that he couldn’t say no to her. He would take his chances and leave the First Order. He had never fancied himself a romantic but he was head over heels in love with this little girl. He would do anything for her. She wiped her eyes on the edge of his jacket and drew back to look up at him. Her face was red and splotchy, but her brown eyes were resolute.

“Yes, Daddy, I’ll be your good soldier.”

Chapter End Notes

Shuns is not at all sorry for this cliff hanger. But we promise to (mostly) resolve this. We still have a lot of story to tell.

Omg guys I forgot about this great gif which inspired Daacha's "smush" comment:
**Episode VI: Return of the Hux**

Chapter Summary

The plot thickens and Hux deals with everything. Honestly, our poor guys just can't catch a break.

Chapter Notes

**Warning: This chapter includes the suicide of a minor character.**

shuns: Wait... Wait ... and then Scout comes flying in... and then...

Hearts: That's great shunsy but this chapter is over 8,000 words.

shuns: Yes, but Hux? And Plot?

Hearts: Okay but for real this is the last time we split chapters. Hux is a SUPPORTING character. (So there is going to be another Hux chapter after this one. Because reasons. And words. And Plot.)

shuns: Glad you see it my way, (sigh) I love that ginger.

Hearts: (Patting shuns' head) we all do shuns, we all do.

A/N from Hearts: As we all know by now, I love Hux dearly, and honestly I wish I had thought to write a whole story from his point of view. But that is not really the way this story is supposed to go so instead I just disrupted the original story with some Huxy goodness and then shuns added her 1M words (A/N shuns: more like 15K words. The whole story was supposed to be only 30K total with only 10 chapters). So just one more to go after this one (probably?IDK?). (A/N shuns: at this point who knows, but we are almost caught up to Keech, remember her? Yeah, I do, vaguely. (A/N HS: Wait, who's Keech?))

See the end of the chapter for more notes

**The Finalizer: Present Day**

Phasma tsked, never a good sign. “What shall we do about Kylo Ren?” she asked.

“Do? We don’t do anything. He’s just a petulant child, a buzzing insect whom we must endure. I don’t take him seriously and neither should you,” sneered Hux.

She worried her lip, blue eyes fixed on him. “He’s getting worse. He destroyed a whole command
center. Mitaka hid in his quarters for hours.”

Hux sighed. *Not exactly the conversation I want to have right now.* “Leopard Milk, then?”

Phasma wrinkled her nose. She hated his safeword, thought it disturbing. She took off her helmet, “Fine, I’ll untie you.”

Hux was stretched between the columns, the cords tied around his wrists and ankles. His pale backside was covered with red, stinging welts. It was Tuesday, and she always whipped him on Tuesdays, but neither of them had been into it tonight. Once untied, he quickly donned his black, velvet robe and cinched it tightly. She was still in her leathers and cape. He sat down on the couch and patted the seat next to him. Phasma took the chair across. Even after all this time, she still didn’t like to be touched.

“What’s on your mind?”

Phasma’s mouth opened and closed a few times. She shook her head, her eyes downcast. Reaching up, she ran a hand through her hair, ruffling the blonde fringe. “I think, we need to stop seeing each other,” she said.

*Go for the jugular, Woman.* After the damned fiasco that was the previous day, Hux wasn’t surprised that she wanted to talk. *Fucking Jakku. Fucking Kylo Ren. Fucking Skywalker map. They had all combined to make a shit day.*

“I can’t be with someone I don’t respect.” She paused. “I don’t understand how you can let him run around your ship doing whatever he wants. Destroying equipment, threatening every living thing, brooding like a temperamental child. Show some backbone! He walks all over you - and you LET him! You are taking this submissive role much too far.”

Hux watched her. He always watched people, learning their tells and their secrets. Taking stock of what he saw, he noted that her head was down, her gaze was averted, there was a little twitch at the corner of her mouth, her shoulders were tensed, and her hands were fisted. She was at the end of her tether, but it wasn’t because of Kylo. He was just an excuse. They had weathered so many of the Knights of Ren’s melodramas. Laughed about them. Analyzed them. Cleaned up after them. She was displacing her feelings.

“Would you like to talk about the stormtroopers? About FN-2187?”

She buried her head in her hands and let out a long sigh. “Why are my men being so insubordinate? This has never happened before. They used the be cohesive, you know, of one mind. Now they are improvising, questioning me. And FN-2187... he deserted, Armitage. This shouldn’t be happening. What if it happens again? Keeps happening? What am I supposed to do?”

*Well maybe if you stopped threatening them...* The thought died before it reached his lips. While it was true, it was definitely not helpful. He looked at her. Did he owe her an explanation? Calling Phasma his lover was being too loose with the term. He did not love her, nor she him. They just enjoyed each other’s company. She was his partner. They kept each other’s secrets. He had so many secrets. Carrying them around was such a burden. None of that existed in the sex brig until she had brought it tonight. Bala had never allowed the outside world in when they played; it was supposed to be a refuge.

*Ah, Bala.* He had thought about her often lately. He remembered her face, the pain, the screams, the exquisite torture. Gods he missed her. He hadn’t changed a thing in her sex brig. It was laid out with ruthless efficiency, which had certainly made things easy for Phasma to step in. She was a
cruel mistress, but her cruelty lacked the creativity that Bala had brought to their play. Bala had made him. Then she had unmade him. For that, he could forgive her, but he struggled to forget her.

He sighed. “It’s not you Phasma. It’s the drugs. Follow and Focus are failing.” Furor had been failing for some time but she didn’t need to know it.

Phasma gasped. “But why?”

_Fuck if I know._ What had started as an aberration had become a regular occurrence. Reconditioning, and not just for sexual infractions, was at an all-time high. For almost six years the routine of conditioning, drugs, and reconditioning had worked, brilliantly, in fact. It had built the First Order. But now something was wrong and the EMU was stumped. They knew that Focus, Follow, and Furor were no longer effective, but they had been unable to ascertain the cause thus far. It was maddening.

He sighed and ran his hand through his hair, mussing it even more. “The only person who could answer that question has been dead for three years,” he paused. “I have sent a Star Destroyer’s worth of analysts to investigate with no results. I even pulled Lieutenant Mitaka from Starkiller to investigate and he has no answers. _And he’s already been away from Vala for too long. I will head to Eadu myself tomorrow. I want to get to the bottom of this._”

He stood and walked over to her, then dropped to his knees between her legs. He was going to take a risk because he needed her tonight. Ironically, he needed to focus and their session would help him get there. Taking her hands in his, he asked, “Join me?” He brought them to his lips and whispered, “Please?”

She smiled, “Well when you put it that way. Back to the columns, Ginger Menace.”

Phasma stood and replaced her helmet. She stepped away to retrieve something and when she returned, her strap-on jutted out from her hips. Hux sighed. _This again. I guess it will have to do._ He remembered the first time he’d had anything in his ass.

_It was the night after he had been made General, and the Finalizer was finally his. Bala had asked him to come to her quarters. Up until then, they had only shared frantic tumbles in empty rooms, fucking up against walls or on tables. When he arrived, he was surprised that her quarters were standard issue. They shared a light meal and made small talk. He ached to remove his clothes, but he knew if he was good he would get a sweet reward._

“Would you like to see my lab?” she asked.

“Yes.”

_He had tried to hide his disappointment when she actually showed him her small laboratory, “It’s nothing like the one on Eadu, but it keeps me sane when I’m here.”_

_Hux nodded. “It’s good to have hobbies.”_

_She glared at him her cheeks darkened with a blush. “I’m the Chief Scientist of the First Order. I clawed, fought, and killed my way up from Scientist Second Class. I’m responsible for at least half of the tech you use every day. And don’t forget, without your injections, you would still be a lieutenant, stuck wetting your bed because of your daddy issues. This is not a hobby. This is my life’s work. Belittle it again and they will have to invent new words for the pain I will bring down on you. NOW, STRIP!”_

_She placed her hand on a blank stretch of wall and a previously invisible palm reader lit up. The_
wall cracked and slid apart to reveal a large room. Hux’s eyes widened and darted around the room. Its purpose was clear. He had read about some of the things he saw. Some of the others, however, he wasn’t sure what they were for or how they could be used for that.

He turned to Bala, “Wh-What is this? A sex dungeon?”

She scoffed, “Don’t be an idiot. We’re on a spaceship. Spaceships don’t have dungeons, do they? They have brigs. It’s obviously a sex brig. And you are still clothed. What part of strip did you not understand, Dog? Looks like I have been too indulgent with you. Allow me to correct that egregious error.”

Five minutes later, Hux was naked and lying face down, bound to an interrogation frame. Bala’s lubed finger was moving slowly in and out of him. Then he felt the pressure of something cold and hard.

“Let go,” she whispered as she pushed in the plug. The stretch and burn were frightening and exciting. “It’s the smallest size, don’t resist.” He wanted to fight it, but her voice was in his ear again. “Don’t fight me. I am your Mistress. I know what is best for you.” She pushed the plug deeper, but her arm came up around his neck, cutting off his breath as she drew it around his throat. “Do what you’re told.” She pushed the plug in fully and he collapsed on his stomach, seeing stars.

She lowered the frame and climbed on top of him, sliding up his body, her nipples raking over his chest. Her left hand caressed his right arm until she found his hand and wound their fingers together. She grasped his erect penis with the other hand, giving it a few strokes. Then she lined herself up with him and dropped down, enveloping him all the way to his hilt. She moaned as she rode him, bouncing up and down on his dick, her bouncing breasts keeping time. She leaned forward and whispered, “Mine.”

“Yours,” was his reply. It wasn’t what he wanted to say. He wanted to tell her, “I love you,” but how could he? She was brilliant, strong, and impervious. At best she would laugh, at worst she would cut him off. He couldn’t let that happen. Even though he owed so much to Furor, Bala was his drug of choice. He was an addict and he wouldn’t let anything interrupt his fix, even if that meant keeping his feelings to himself.

Bala had ruined him for anyone else. He was going through life looking for a ghost, having to content himself with mediocre partners and a fluffy cat. Gods how I miss her.


She pushed into him roughly.

He grunted.

“Do you like that?” She pulled out to the tip and shoved back in again.

Hux winced and then shifted slightly to adjust to the pain. “Yes, ma’am.”

"Ginger, we have been through this.” She slapped his right ass cheek. “You will call me Sir. I am superior to you in every way and you will show me the proper respect, regardless of the First Order’s ludicrous rules about women being less capable than men.” She slapped it again. “Do I seem less capable? Less able?”

"No, Sir .”

She rubbed the sore spot. "That’s better."
Eadu: The Next Day

Hux took a shuttle to Eadu. It looked the same as his last visit, but the smell was markedly less astringent. *This does not bode well.* Focus, Follow, and Furor were distilled there, and their sharp scent usually permeated the air. Now, the spicy, acrid scent no longer coated his throat. It was thin at best. He hurried to his meeting and desperately hoped there would be good news.

Hux looked around the room. No one would meet his eyes. No one except Director Norren I’Drasaa. She was glaring at him as she always had.

“So, after months of study, thousands of credits, and additional analysts, you’ve learned nothing new? The only thing you can tell me is, *it’s getting worse*?” sneered Hux.

The assembled scientists of the EMU all bobbed their heads. Norren continued to stare, her face in open mutiny. She was the only one left from Bala’s original research team. She loved Bala and had always been jealous when Bala had spent time with him. He felt the same way about Treso, even though he was long gone.

The meeting ended with no resolution. He was surprised when Norren caught his eye and asked him to accompany her to her office.

Her office was cozy; instead of the durasteel walls of the facility, they had been covered with plaster. Hux perched himself on a rather comfortable chair. “Tea, General?” she asked.

Hux watched her. She smiled with a grin that could cut glass. While he didn’t think she would poison him outright, he knew she could kill him and easily get away with it. She had been trained by Bala, after all, so she knew how to hide a body so it stayed hidden. Whatever she wanted to talk about would hurt.

“No thank you.”

She was quiet for a moment, watching him watching her. “General, how is Vala?”

Hux felt everything slow down. His blood felt like stabbing pins as it flowed through him. While leaving Vala behind had been a sacrifice, it was a secret. He was aware of his promise to Bala. He didn’t realize that others were privy to it. *This complicates things.* He knew his eyes were icy as he looked at her over the rim of her cup. “She is fine.”

“Really?” asked Norren.

“Yes.”

Norren leveled her gaze at Hux. Her voice was cold, “I beg to differ. As I told you before, I can’t help you now. There are consequences for breaking your promise, General Hux.”

“Can’t help or won’t?” asked Hux.

She shrugged her shoulders, “Both.” She paused for a moment then put her cup down. “As you may recall after Bala’s death, she orchestrated the shut down of Starkiller and all EMU projects. Her reach was wide-ranging.” Hux nodded. “What you don’t know is that Bala put in place certain
failsafes to ensure her wishes were fulfilled. For instance, did you know that the dosing guns that are used for Follow and Focus collect a minuscule amount of blood for genetic identification? We use it to track who has taken what.”

Hux considered this. It was clever, of course, and a good way to track abuse of the drugs. “I did not.”

“Imagine my surprise when I received a notification telling me that Vala Bakkett, the beloved child of Bala Bakkett, had received a dose of Follow. Four doses, in fact, one right after the other. Well above the safety recommendation, and to say nothing of the age recommendation. Do you know what Follow will do to one so young? Do you know why Bala put the limits in place?”

Hux shook his head.

“Follow will wipe her mind. She won’t just be obedient, she will forget everything she ever knew and everyone who ever taught it to her. She will forget she had a mother who loved her. And she will forget the father who failed her, that’s the one good thing to come of this. I told Bala you weren’t up to the task. You never loved her. Not as she was meant to be loved, anyway.”

Hux’s mind reeled. When? How? Mitaka has only been away for a few days. “I-I-I didn't know.”

She let out a barking laugh. “General, they could write about book about what you don’t know. Perhaps even volumes. The first would explore how such a beautiful, intelligent creature such as Bala could consent to let you touch her when she had more worthy options, most notably myself. The second would explain why she would consider you, a selfish, vain, hollow man, to raise her beloved child. Then there would a third book to round off the trilogy about the kill switch Bala built into Focus, Follow, and Furor just in case you were not up to your task. Pity though, it will destroy the First Order as we know it. I’ve heard one of the troopers has already defected. You know, it’s only going to get worse.”

“So you’ve known all along the reason they have been failing?”

“But of course. I was the one who triggered it and hid it.”

“You sabotaging bitch.” Hux lunged for her but she jumped out of her chair and kept it between them. He paused. She was indeed an evil bitch, but, like Bala, Norren played the long game. “Why are you telling me this?”

She laughed again, “That’s not the right question, General.”

“Then what is the right question?”

“Well, shit. That didn’t go well. Hux had forgotten how fanatically loyal Bala’s people were. They had hidden a little girl and orchestrated the utter chaos that followed her death, all while building the stuff of dreams and nightmares that kept the First Order marching forward. The First Order was bleeding brain power at an alarming rate; he was running out of people to consult. I wonder… it worked before, maybe it will work again.

He left her office and walked to the Command Center, positioning himself at the holotable. “Show Bala Bakkett personnel file. Authorization General Armitage Dartholomew Hux.” Pity Daach isn’t
here to say something to lighten the mood.

He considered the sphere in front of him. Daacha still hadn’t cracked it after three years of study. Daacha was certain that Bala had mapped her mind, preserving it inside the orb at the time of her death. He had been fascinated and built models, eventually working with his team to create a new file system: B.A.L.L., short for Big Ass Laser Lattice. He had jokingly called it BALL in honor of Bala, though once he began to understand the intricacies, Daacha had told him *Karking Kriff* would have been a better name. He’d hoped that by building it he could better understand her file, but it hadn’t helped and he’d made next to no progress cracking it.

The room had been cleared so no one saw him crumple to his knees, fists in his hair as he came apart. “What can I do?” he murmured.

“I imagine you’ll do what you’ve always done, react instead of anticipate. You may be a tactical genius, but you are a strategic idiot. That is why I beat you at chess, every time.” Hux looked up. *It couldn’t be.* Instead of Bala’s orb, Bala herself was standing there. *Have I gone crazy?* She was hazy blue like a holoprojection, but the same smirk and sparkle in her eyes shone as they always had. He had forgotten just how much she was to look at.

She was looking at him expectantly, “You have to ask a question if you want an answer.”

Hux was dumbstruck. He had wished for just one more moment with Bala so many times. Now he had it and he was as tongue-tied as a teenager. “H-How are you here?”

“I left a few triggers that, if tripped, would set off the Communications Projection Node. One of them was you saying, ‘What can I do?’ As you may recall, that is what brought us together.”

“I’m so sorry, Bala.”

“You have to ask a question if you want an answer.”

“Ah…” controlling and enigmatic as ever, even as a projection. “Will you forgive me?”

“For what? Betraying your promise? Or breaking my heart?”

“Please, will you forgive me?”

“No.”

“Why not?”

She paused, “I’ll tell you a story. Once upon a time, there was a little boy with hair like flames. He wanted to be the best. He tried so hard because he thought that if he was the best his father would finally notice him and love him. But nothing worked. So the little boy sat down and cried.

Then a very curious, smart girl with wild curly hair found him crying. She asked him, ‘Why are you crying?’ He told her to leave him alone because she was a filthy half breed; her father was human and her mother was Zeltron. But she didn’t mind, she’d told him, people called her that all the time. It looked like he needed a friend, and she wanted a friend, so she decided they would be friends.

She sat next to him with her arm around his shoulders until he stopped crying. He asked her to play chess and they spent a lovely afternoon talking and playing. She beat him twice but she let him win once, so he would keep playing with her. They played every day, but then one day he was gone. Her father told her that the boy’s father had sent him to the Academy and that she would be going there soon as well. She was excited because she wanted to see her friend again.
But it wasn’t to be. Her father died at the Battle of Jakku. Her mother was a scientist and took the little girl to Kuat while she worked on ships. Then her mother died in the Nebulenza epidemic and the girl was sent to an orphanage. She was smart and clever so she worked hard in school. She thought if she was smart enough and clever enough, a nice family would pick her and take her home to be loved. But that didn't happen. The only love she could remember was her parents and the only friend she'd had for a long time was the sad little boy.

Twenty years passed. The boy had grown up and so had the girl. She found him crying again, but this time he was standing in front of an airlock on a star destroyer. She knew he was about to open it up and walk out. She stood next to him and put her arm around his shoulders until he stopped crying. He asked her, 'What can I do?' 'Play chess,' she told him. Over the game, they talked about everything and nothing; he had forgotten her but she hadn’t forgotten him. Her friend, the sad little boy, had become a nervous, scared man.

She was a clever woman and she wanted to help her friend. She had made a tonic to make people stronger and more confident. She told the man she would share this with him, and she did. He never asked why. When he took it, he became the best version of himself: strong, smart, confident, and successful. She loved this version of him too. She thought he might love her, but he never said. This was sad because the one thing she wanted most was to be loved, especially by him.

Unfortunately, she couldn’t wait for her first love because another man told her he loved her. She was swept off her feet. Sadly, he didn’t really love her, not the way she deserved. He just wanted to possess her. Most of all, he wanted to breed with her. All of her brilliant ideas and inventions were nothing compared to what was between her thighs. Her parents’ legacy may have been love, but sadly their daughter was a hybrid. Her body couldn’t cope with the differences in their biologies. She was barren, and she couldn’t give the other man the baby he so desired.

Then the Fall of Bador happened. Quite unexpectedly, she found herself with both the best and worst gift ever. Her best friend had died but had left behind an orphaned baby girl. She took the baby as her own, but the man she loved said he wouldn’t love an orphan. He wanted his own seed to pass on his Force. He pressed and pressed her to figure out a way to have his child. The new baby consumed her time. He wanted her to abandon it, but she would have rather cut off her arm. She pretended to get rid of her adopted baby, but she hid her away instead. She grew to love the child and hoped for miracles.

She got her miracle over Azraya. She knew the voice that yelled ‘Fire!’ and she wept with joy at hearing her friend again. After the battle, the children were taken. Her love was going to use her invention, Follow, to make them forget their lives and obey. So she fought, quietly and subtly. She fed information to the Resistance. She adjusted his drug, Furor, until it drove him insane. But she was too late. She had burned too bright and would live only half as long. She was dying. So she turned to her first friend, the man she had loved all her life, and hoped that he wouldn’t let her down. For the second time, she gave him her heart, only now it was held by a little girl she was keeping safe for her mommy.

And what did the man do with this precious gift? He did the same as before, he ignored her love. Worst of all, he allowed this child to be hurt by the very inventions her mother had made to help people.

I will not forgive you. You betrayed my promise and broke my heart. You have no right to ask.”

Bala faded away.

“Bala, come back! Please! What should I do next?”
His mind reeled. Bala had known him as a child? She had loved him? He needed to talk to her again, desperately. He pleaded and begged for hours but the only response was “File Restricted. Access Denied.” Finally, hoarse and tired, he commed Daacha Ren.

It rang and rang and rang, but finally, a flirtatious female voice answered, “You have reached the quarters of Daacha Ren. He is unable to come to the comm because he is currently cumming under me…”

Hux heard rustling, a growl, and a smothered squeal. Daacha’s muffled voice came across the comm with only every few words being picked up, “Woman… sandwich… spanking.” The comm cut off abruptly.

Hux called again and Daacha finally picked up after the seventh ring, “Listen karker, can’t you take a hint…”

Hux cut him off, “It’s me. We need to talk. Can you holo me?” He had learned the hard way not to holo Daacha unannounced. The last time he had done that he had seen galaxies more of Mitaka and Daacha than he had ever wanted to.

Bala’s orb was replaced by a shirtless Daacha. His hair was still perfect. Stupid Force. A blonde woman walked past and Daacha smacked her on the ass. Yet another girl.

“I’ll comm you,” he told her. When she was gone, Daacha focused on Hux. “I won’t. She’s too clingy. I’m sending her to reconditioning later today. After I get my goodbye blow job, of course.”

Of course. “I’m sure Dopheld will be pleased to know you’re available again.”

Daacha shook his head, “Nope, sometimes you feel like a nut and sometimes you don’t. Besides, I’m on the Pulverizer, headed to TX-12.”

“The communications node?”

“Yes, THANK YOU! Karking Kylo didn’t know what it was. We might have a situation but I’m taking care of it.”

Hux looked at him expectantly.

“Looks like we’ve got a spy,” Daacha said dramatically.

“A spy? Really? How is that even possible with Focus and Follow…” his voice drifted off as the enormity of the situation hit him. So much in the First Order relied on Bala’s drugs, and now entire First Order was vulnerable because of his mistake.

“I know, it shouldn’t be possible, right? But somehow this one has managed to elude us. You find anything on Eadu yet?” Hux shook his head as Daacha continued. “I’m nervous that you had to recall Mitaka back to the Finalizer. I wish someone was with Vala.”

Hux gripped the edge of the holotable, his knuckles white. It took a few tries, but once he started talking the whole story tumbled out: Vala’s accidental dosing, Norren’s revenge and subsequent suicide, Bala’s projection and the revelations about his past.

Daacha ran his hands through his hair. “Kriff. Man. Just... kriff.” He thought for a moment. “Okay Darth, be honest. Which is more important: Vala or First Order?”
Hux didn’t even have to think before saying, “Vala.”

“That’s what I thought. You get back to Starkiller and get our girl as fast as you can. I assume the reason you holoed me is to ask that I try for the sixty-seventh karking time to break into that karking impenetrable file to find anything to reverse the kill switch.” Hux nodded. Daacha huffed, "I can’t guarantee that it will be any different this time, but it should help distract me from that file’s karking trash talk. I’ll put the whole team on it.”

“You have them all with you?”

“Yeah, this kriff-head on TX-12 is good, but I’m better. And with my team, we will bury him. I'll have the Resistance location in hours.”

Daacha may have been too casual, but he did know his work. It was the first good news Hux had all day, “Any chance I can convince you to come to Starkiller?”

“No dice Darth, if the drugs are failing then we have to lock down the systems immediately. But comm me the minute you touch down. Oh and Dartholomew, uh, can you let Mitaka know, uh, oh kark, I don’t know…”

“I’ll tell him you asked after him.”

“Yeah, that’ll work. But don’t be too sweet-like, okay?” He looked vaguely uncomfortable.

“I wouldn’t dream of it,” Hux replied.

“Daacha out.”

Hux watched the hyperspace star lines stretch out to infinity. The ship couldn’t go fast enough. He needed to be at Starkiller now. He couldn’t begin to imagine how he would fix this, but he desperately hoped he could find a way.

Chapter End Notes

Sorry for the cliffhanger, but we are almost done with this arc. If you love Hux like we do (so much), there are some great Hux/Original Character stories. Would you like to read more? Then I (shunsbuns) would suggest the following:

Merimna is a canon-compliant deep dive into Hux, Phasma, and the OC. It explores the inner workings of the Starkiller. I just love this story to bits. The description of vacation Hux is magnificent. Plus steamy wall sex (which I love) and MILLIE!!!

Close is the Hux/OC continuation of the Reylo Held. There are strong BDSM themes
and dubious consent. But if you enjoy a darker story these two will not disappoint. Really her Hux is reading feminist philosophy, so he can be a better Dominant and I love him for it. Heed the tags before you read to ensure this is something you can tolerate. But it is worth it.

I love Pristine Condition as with Close there is dubious consent and strong possessiveness. But there is a turn and honestly, when you get to it I challenge you not to curl up and cry like I did. Really, big fat sad tears.

HeartS has not read any of these but they are on her "to read" list. How is this possible with her intense Hux obsession? She wastes her time reading Dramione smut, obviously.

(A/N shuns: mmmm Draco....)
Episode VII: The Hux Awakens

Chapter Summary

(A/N HS: Hey sooooo...... Originally we posted this chapter and forgot a big fucking plot point, ahem, the Hosnian System exploding, ahem, so we chopped off the end and moved that to the next chapter. Which is, in fact, another Hux Chapter. So really we all win.

• Dad!Hux to the rescue (sort of)
• Vala makes a new friend (new to her)

Chapter Notes

Shuns: …and they have a tea party with tiaras!
HeartS: Ohmygod I love this and we need to write it.

(door crashes open, bouncing off the wall after being kicked open)
Keech: WHO DO I HAVE TO THROAT PUNCH TO GET BACK INTO THE STORY? (Throws chair)
HeartS: (Runs behind shuns, peeking out around her side.) Keech, relax, you are literally in the next chapter. And we have plans for epic sex. So much oral.
Keech: Really (looks at shuns) no lie?
Shuns: (glances at HeartS hiding behind her somewhat nonplussed at being used as a human shield, turns back to Keech.) I promise it will be awesome.
Keech: Not metaphorical oral… Real Oral? Real Sex?
HeartS: Yep.
Keech: About fucking time.

(A/N shuns I had my fingers crossed the whole time. Keech is going to be PISSED when we get to Chapter 14.)

A/N HeartS: There’s a new POV. We hope you like it.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Starkiller, twenty-seven hours later:
Hux paced the conference room. It had been an agonizing twenty-six hours from Eadu to Starkiller. He wished more than once that there was something faster than hyperspace jumps. His shuttle was only twenty minutes away from Starkiller when he started receiving a flurry of comms.

The first one was from Phasma regarding Kylo Ren, the Skywalker Map hunt, and a promising lead on Takadona. She asked permission to follow up. The second was actually a holo from Snoke, or what he assumed was Snoke; he could only see a single, large eye and hear music in the background before it cut out. The last message was from Kylo Ren, informing him that he was taking a contingent of stormtroopers to Takadona. Although he could take issue with Ren commandeering his 'troopers, he thought better of it. *Meh, better to let him have what he wants than to lose a million credits worth of equipment.* It was bad parenting, but Hux could give a shit about the mess that was Kylo Ren. Nor did Hux care if the fool was successful on Takadona. He had no time for Kylo’s wild farckle chase. He had but one concern: Vala. Everything else be damned.

The door quietly brushed open. He turned, expecting to see Vala as he remembered her: the bobbing pigtails, bubbling laughter, and shining brown eyes. Instead, he saw a child he didn’t know, an empty husk with a shaved head. *Oh Gods no.* His first thought was that Mitaka would be distraught, he loved playing with her hair even though he was absolute shit at pigtails. She was too quiet. No greeting rang out from her lips. Daacha would be crushed, he lived for her giggles. She stared at the floor, not daring to meet his eyes. *Gods what did they do to you?*

He was told upon arrival that all the remaining children had been assigned an identification number. “VB-3456, look at me please.” She looked up, and he noticed the deep bags under her eyes. Hux’s heart stuttered. It was clear that she didn’t recognize him. He wanted to run to her, to hug her, to shake her, anything to break this horrific spell she was under.

Behind her the Commandant of the base bustled in, he extended his hand and said, “General Hux, we meet at last.” He was a forgettable, paunchy, old man, probably from the Imperial days, with gray hair, pale skin, and a terribly weak handshake. “I was surprised to receive your hail. I didn’t know that you still kept tabs on the Starkiller Children.”

“Yes, Commandant. Thank you for bringing her here. You are dismissed.”

“Of course, Sir, but... permission to speak freely?” Hux nodded dismissively, “This girl, how did you know?”

Hux was taken aback, “How did I know what?”

“I’ve never worked with children before. I find them to be loud, unruly, and well, *childish.* This one though, she was a thorn in my side. She never stopped talking about her dads and her damned cat. She got the other children riled up. Do you know she tried to stage a mutiny and take me prisoner?”

Hux was impressed. They had only started insurgency training a month before he left, but Bala had told him that Vala was special.

“She was tough to crack. It took four rounds of Follow to shut her up. The other children did not require nearly as much, but they will all be perfect ‘troopers now.” He finished with a smug smile.

Hux seethed; it was hard to make words come out. “None of the children were intended to become Stormtroopers. They were part of a special program to groom them into the future officers of Starkiller. You have needlessly destroyed the next generations of First Order leaders. Do not think this will go unpunished.”
“Ah,” said the Commandant, his eyes narrowing. “You know she talked about Fun Dad and Quiet Dad, but her pictures of Daddy always had red hair. Not unlike your own.” The Commandant paused for a moment. “You know children aren’t allowed in the First Order, General Hux.” The man sneered openly. “Or should I just call you Daddy?”

“VB-3456, leave the room and remain outside the door.” Hux rounded on the Commandant, “I need to talk to the Commandant alone.”

Hux felt powerful as he watched the Commandant’s face redden then purple as he choked the life out of him. He could understand why it was the Supreme Leader’s choice for punishment, it was so satisfying to deny him breath and end his wretched life. He deserved to die. He let the Commandant’s body drop to the floor as soon as he felt his life leave it, then he slumped down the wall.

Hux took a moment to consider what needed to happen next. He would have to dispose of the body. Mitaka could make it happen. The wolves on Starkiller were always hungry. He would tell the Supreme Leader that the new Commandant had disappeared after taking the latest round of Furor; if the drugs were failing, why not use that as an excuse? He would take over Starkiller again. Back on the Finalizer, he would recommend Captain Reaux as an acceptable replacement. The siege on the Hosnian system wasn't going anywhere, what trouble could he get into anyway? But the most important thing to do, and what he would take care of first, was getting Vala to the medbay. He needed to know what happened and how it could be reversed.

The door opened quietly and found Vala standing there looking blankly at the wall. Hux kneeled in front of her. Her eyes met his only for a moment before they went wide and she looked away, staring straight ahead at the wall over his right shoulder. She swallowed and mumbled, "Sorry, Sir."

She can't even look me in the eye, this is not how a six year old should be. “VB-3456?”

Still looking at the wall, “Yes Sir?”

“Do you know me?”

“No, Sir.” This won't do. Before Vala, he had never thought about a family or children. Now he couldn't imagine a galaxy without their odd little quartet: Daacha, Mitaka, and of course, her; three men and their little lady. He would spend the rest of his life fixing what he had broken. But right now he needed her to stop looking ahead blankly.

“Well you did, VB-3456, but it seems you have forgotten. Allow me to introduce myself. I am General Armitage Dartholomew Hux. Your name is Vala Bakkett.” She remained quiet and continued to stare straight ahead.

“Walk with me. I have a story for you.”

Her voice was flat, “Troopers have no time for stories, Sir.”

He stood, smoothing his trousers and jacket, “I think you’ll like this one. It’s about a brave little girl, a sad man, and a wonderful orange cat.”
For a brief moment, she looked up at him then looked away. She nodded and followed him down the hall.

Doctor Domhnall massaged his forehead. He opened his mouth to say something, but thought better and closed it. He was an old man, balding, with wisps of faded strawberry blond hair clinging to the sides of his head, and gentle blue eyes. Hux had always thought he was too kind to be in the First Order but he was glad of it now, “General, how well do you know this little girl?”

“Very well, why do you ask?”

“Well, Sir, were you aware this girl has an implant bridging the two halves of her brain?” Hux’s eyes went wide. “Ah, you weren’t. I’ve never seen the likes of it. In fact, tech like this has been illegal since the Clone Wars, because of the risk to the augmentee.”

“How has this not been found before? When I was here, the children were having weekly check-ups.”

“We’ve never needed to do brain scans. We would have never known it was there if you hadn’t requested one. It’s too well hidden. Do you know who might have put this inside of her or why it was done?”

“I have an idea of who did it. Her mother was part of the EMU. However, I cannot fathom why.”

Doctor Domhnall tapped a finger to his lips, deep in thought. He nodded his head and started speaking, “General, I have a suspicion that this device is corrective. The question is, does it also enhance her mental abilities?”

“Why would her brain need to be bridged?”

“It is rare but there are people who are missing connections between the two halves of their brains, where the lobes function independently of each other. Split-brain, it’s called. I think the device might link the two halves, helping to smooth things out.”

Hux thought about it. “Is it possible that one lobe could be in control while the other retreats?”

“With brains, anything is possible. I don’t think you are far from the mark. “He gestured towards the monitor. Vala’s active brain waves were displayed on-screen. “Do you see the two lines? The top is the left side of her brain. The bottom is the right. For most people, they are in sync.”

Hux look at the lines. They weren’t in sync. The left side of her brain had longer waves, about twice as long as the right side. “I see the difference. What does that mean?”

“I think both sides of her brain are working. But the meaning... I’m sorry, Sir, I just don’t know without being inside her brain.” He paused and put a hand on Hux's shoulder. “I know she is special to you, Sir. I did my best to stop the Commandant from dosing the children, but he outranks me.”

Outranked. Past tense. Hux appreciated the gesture and words from the Doctor. They did not, however, lessen his fury at the rapidly stiffening body he had left in the conference room. He nodded, “Thank you, Doctor, that will be all.”
The doctor left the room.

Hux turned towards Vala. She seemed so small and fragile sitting on the bed with her legs hanging off the side. He sat on the bed next to her and she stiffened. He kept his eyes on the floor lest he spook her. How do I reach her? He loosened his right glove one finger at a time then peeled the whole thing off. He rested his hand on the mattress and listened to her breathing. On the nights she’d snuck into his bedroom, he’d found himself fascinated with how soft her breaths were. He had forgotten about their sound, they were that soft now.

He willed her to reach out to him. He hoped with every part of his being that something inside of her still recognized him. He promised himself that he would wait there as long as it took.

Vala had been walking a long time. She was lost. It looked like the Base but different. The doors were all locked. There were voices, but no people. She was scared and cold and tired.

Finally, she sat down, and she couldn’t help the tears. She didn’t want to cry. She’d told Daddy she would be a good soldier and good soldiers didn’t cry. But it was hard. She missed her friends. She missed Millie. Most of all, she missed her Dads. Daacha Dad, Fun Daddy was the most fun and had pretty brown hair, he tickled her and made her smile. Mitki, Quiet Dad, hugs were the best, and never pulled her hair when he was combing it. But most of all, she missed Daddy. She missed his hugs when she was scared. She missed his secret winks when he saw her on parade. She missed him singing her ‘Ten Little Banthas’ before bed.

She wished Daddy was here now.

Her tears made her shirt wet. She didn't have a hankie, so she pulled her legs in and wiped her face on her knees, then she rolled onto her side and curled into a ball. She laid like that for some time. She decided to pull out a mind picture to make herself feel better. When Vala tried to remember things, her mind pictures helped. They were like stories in her head.

"Brightest Star, it's time for bed."

"No, Mommy more play."

"Hmm, what about a story?" Little Vala in the mind picture bounced up and down. "Tell me about Movi."

"Of course, Movi is Mommy's best friend. She is like you, brave, funny, and very, very smart (Mommy nuzzled her). Her brain is special just like yours. It is in two pieces that don’t work together. But Mommy fixed it for her. Mommy built a bridge so her thoughts could move back and forth. Then Movi had the most marvelous ideas. She and Mommy had so many adventures."

"Does she have mind pictures too?"

"Yes, Bright. But it's a secret. It's a special gift that Mommy gave Movi and now you have it too. This way, you'll always be able to see me even when I am gone."

"No Mommy, don't go!"

"Not yet, Bright, but soon. Mommy's friends will take care of you." Mommy leaned down and
kissed her. Her curly black hair was soft as it brushed her cheek. "Go to sleep. You need rest if you are going to have marvelous ideas and fantastic adventures like Movi and Mommy."

"Will I ever meet Movi, Mommy?"

She leaned in rubbing their noses together, "I hope so, Brightest Star, with all my heart."

Vala's sobs had turned to sniffles as she watched the mind picture. The sniffles became sighs then snores as she fell asleep.

She dreamt of Daddy. He was speaking to her and calling her by a name she didn’t know. Not Vala, or Kitten, or even Bofa Fruit (she loved it when he called her that) he said it was because she was so sweet and always sticky. In the dream, he called her VB-3456, a soldier’s name, but not her name. Her name was Vala. He was upset. He wasn’t looking at her. She didn’t know what she had done wrong. His hand was right there. She wanted it to hold hers. She wanted a hug. Why wouldn’t he hug her? She tried to reach for him but her hand didn’t move.

She was crying again, “Daddy...Why can I only see you in my dreams?”

Hux was not a religious man, however, being a non-believer does not exclude one from receiving a miracle.

It was so quiet he almost didn’t hear VB-3456 say, “Daddy…” He turned, and there, those were the eyes of his Vala. He grabbed her and hugged her to his chest. He was crushing her, but he was elated she had come back to him. He held her away from him so he could take her all in. His beautiful, perfect child.

Her face was confused, “Why can I only see you in my dreams?”

“Kitten, this isn’t a dream. We are both here.”

She shook her head, “No, I’m asleep. I’m on the Base but no one is here except you. I’m by myself. I’m scared, Daddy.”

Hux felt panic brush against the nape of his neck. What does she mean? “Of-of course you are on Base, Kitten. I’m right here next to you.”

“No, you are Dream Daddy, not real Daddy…” She looked to her right at nothing, “Daddy, I hear a noise. It’s loud and scary. Help me!”

Hux grabbed her shoulders, “Vala. Where are you? Tell me and I’ll find you.”

“I don’t know. Daddy, please find me. I miss you. I don’t want to be lost anymore.”

Her eyes glazed over and she slumped down on the bed. “Vala!” Hux yelled. He held her close to him he was shaking it took a moment to realize he was crying, “Kitten, please wake up. When I find you, I will never let you go again.”
Vala woke with a start, and the growling she’d heard was closer now. There in front of her was a dog, floating in the air. Why does it have a patch over its eye? Its tinny growl made her laugh and she wondered if the dog was like Millie. If you put your hand out Millie would rub her head against it.

She closed her eyes and held out her hand.

The growling ceased, and then she felt fur under her hand. The dog gave a small ‘Woof.’ She opened her eyes. His mouth was hanging open and his tongue flopped out.

“How are you lost too?”

He gave a bark. Vala couldn’t tell if it was a yes or no. She didn’t speak dog.

“Do you know where I can find my Daddy? His name is General Hux.”

The dog cocked his head to the side.

“Um, Lieutenant Mitaka? Or Daacha Ren?”

The dog growled. She could tell he didn’t like one of those names.

“What's your name?”

The dog tilted his head and she could see a little collar. There was a tag and she sounded it out as she tried to read it. Reading was still new. “S-C-O-U-T, Sc-ow-tuh? Scout? Is your name is Scout?”

The dog let out a happy bark and did a flip in the air. “Well, Scout, my name is Vala. I’m six years old and almost a grown-up. I’m a good soldier and I’m…” Vala’s lip trembled but she continued, “I-I’m lost. Can you help me?”

He let out a series of barks. He flew a little bit down the hall then came back to her, circling around her head.

“Follow you? That way?”

She hoped he knew where he was going.

Scout’s house was a mess. The front door was off its hinges and everything was broken. If Daddy was here he would have made them pick up. He liked things to be ‘in order.’ There were large words written on the wall, but there were too many and she didn’t want to sound them out. She was tired.

She turned to Scout. “Is there a bedroom? I’m tired.” Scout glided down the hallway. There were two doors. He was floating by the right one, it had an old-fashioned door made of wood. She turned the handle.

Soft light filled the room and there were stars everywhere on a dark blue background; it was so
pretty. There was a white crib, a white dresser, and a soft chair with a table and a little lamp. On
the wall, Vala could see every type of ship she could think of. On the wall above the crib, there
was a string of letters. Vala sounded them out.

“K-E-E-C-H, Kuh-ee-chhhh, Keech?” Vala wondered who Keech was and if this was her room.
There was a small cot along the opposite wall. Vala walked over to it, grabbing one of the blankets
from the dresser on the way. She lay down and Scout joined her, curling up into a small ball by
her feet.

“Shall I tell you a story before bed? I like stories before bed. Daddy always used tell me one each
night.” Scout ears pricked up, then he raised his head and dropped it on her leg. She stroked his
neck.

“My mind pictures are different here. I think you can see. Would you like to see?” Scout huffed.
"Your house is a big mess. My Daddy doesn’t like messes. I’ve never seen anything like it, except
one time and it WASN’T MY FAULT! One of my Daddies, Daacha...” Scout growled, which made
Vala pause. Ah, so he doesn’t like Daacha Daddy... "Is very messy."

Vala concentrated and a picture of her room, well, what used to be her room, appeared.

"Daacha Daddy (Scout growled) had just come back from a long trip and we were playing tea
party. It was so much fun. He even brought me a special gift called a ‘Tiara.’ I didn’t know what it
was, but it was so sparkly and shiny, even shinier than Captain Phasma’s helmet and definitely
more pretty." The mind picture changed showing Daacha pulling the tiara out of his cape.

"He also brought pretty cakes with purple frosting. They were so pretty I almost didn’t want to eat
them. But I was hungry, so I did, and they were super yummy. Daa-(growl) err-Fun Dad put the
Tiara on top of my head and said it was like a fancy hat and that I was a pretty, pretty princess. I
didn’t know what a princess was, so I asked him if a princess was like a general." The mind picture
Daacha said, ‘Sometimes, especially if it’s General Hux.’

"I was just pouring Mr. Ewok another cup of tea when Mitki came in.” Vala turned to Scout. “I
have three daddies. Fun Dad is Daacha Ren (Scout growled), Mitki is Quiet Dad. He's a
Lieutenant. Daddy is General Hux.” The mind picture showed each of her daddies but then hopped
back to the tea party.

"So Mitki said, ‘What’s this? You’re having tea without me?’ I said to him, ‘Silly Mitki, you can
come to our tea party too.’ He moved Miss Samantha Bantha, and Fun Dad made him apologize
because Miss Samantha loves tea parties. Mitki asked me, ‘What is on your head, young lady?’
and I told him, ‘It’s a tiara, Daach (growl) err-Fun Dad brought it for me.’

"Mitki looked mad and said to Fun Dad, ‘I thought we agreed on holding back with gender
assignment?’” Vala paused and looked at Scout,"I don’t know what that means but I think its
important because both of them starting talking fast and LOUD. Fun Daddy made a face and said,
‘Whatever, she’s a girl and girls just want pretty things.’ Mitki said, ‘Don't be part of the
Patriarchy, it doesn't suit you.’ Vala looked at Scout, I don't know what that is either, but then
Mitki said, 'How will she learn to have the dignity of a Grand Marshal if all she does is wear
sparkly trash?""

It made me sad that Mitki though my present was trash. Fun Dad told Mitki, ‘Ha, As. If: A woman
will never be Grand Marshal and it's not trash, I got it from a princess. Those are real gemstones.’
Then Mitki said, "Let me guess, for services rendered?" Vala looked at Scout, I think the services
were for giving back scratches. Mitki said once that Fun Dad 'scratched his itch.' I guess it was in a
really hard to reach place. But then Fun Dad said, 'No, I just borrowed it permanently.'
In the mind picture, Mitki's eyebrows shot up, 'You stole it?' he said. Fun Dad smiled. He picked up Miss Samantha Bantha, holding her in front of his face and made his voice high, 'Mitki, don't be such a spoilsport. Besides, you called it trash anyway.' But Mitki was really mad, 'Leave Samantha Bantha out of this. You are teaching our little girl that stealing is okay and that girls should like pretty things instead of aspiring to greatness. Don't be a villain.' In the mind picture, Daacha looked hurt, he put the toy down, 'Let's continue this later.' Mitki's arms were crossed and he said, 'Fine.' They stood that way for a loooooooooooong time. Then Fun Dad said, 'Maybe, you should wear it since you are being a princess.' I wanted them to stop fighting so I took it off and brought it over to Mitki, so he could put it on. I told him he would be the prettiest princess, even more than Daddy. In the mind picture, Mitki looked confused. "I explained that Fun Dad told me princesses are like Generals. Both Daacha and Mitki started laughing. Mitki pulled out his comm and called Daddy to come join the tea party.

Daddy took a long time to come, and while we waited I put the tiara on Fun Dad. When Daddy walked in, he didn’t know what to say. I think he thought Fun Dad looked pretty but I’m not sure. Mitki said to him, 'General, we need you here to settle a disagreement. Who do you think is biggest, prettiest princess?" In the mind picture, General Hux looked back and forth between Daacha and Mitki a few times, then his eyes rested on Vala. He walked over and knelt by her, looking back at Daacha and Mitki.

"Daddy put his arms around me and said, ‘Vala, you are the prettiest and the smartest girl. If you want to be a princess, you can. Or you can be a grand marshal. Or a scientist. Or a star pilot. But whatever you choose, you will always be our best daughter.’ Both Mitki and Fun Dad were quiet. Then Fun Dad said, ‘Well kriff.’" Vala covered her mouth. ‘I’m sorry Scout. That’s a bad word and I’m not supposed to say bad words. Daddy said, ‘Language.’ Then Fun Dad asked, ‘How do I compete with that Darth?’ Sometimes Daacha Daddy likes to call Daddy ‘Darth,’” Vala explained to Scout. “I think it’s because his middle name is Darth- Darthol-” Vala screwed her eyes up, thinking hard. “Dartholyew.” In the mind picture, Daacha asked Hux, ‘Why do you have to be such an adult?’

"Daddy smiled and said, ‘Someone has to, it isn't going either of you two. But if I have to choose, the biggest princess is Daacha (growl) because he knows how to accessorize.’ Daddy got Fun Dad's helmet and one of my feather boas. He put the helmet then the tiara on Fun Daddy's head and wound the boa around his neck. Then Fun Dad made everything in the room float: the chairs, the table, the toys, the bed, even Daddy and Mitki. Then everything started to spin and then guess what... Fun Dad dropped everything. It was such a mess. It took forever to clean it up. Especially, since Fun Dad had stomped out of the room, because 'Everyone picks on me.'"

Vala wound her finger through Scout’s fluffy fur. “I miss them so much, Scout. Do you think they are looking for me?” Scout whined and licked her hand. She buried her face in his side; he was warm and soft. “But you’ll stay with me until they come right?” He woofed quietly and licked her face. She giggled. “I think that's yes, good.”

As she drifted off to sleep, Vala was glad Scout had found her, and she hoped she would see Daddy in her dreams again.
The adorably fluffy tea party story is dedicated to lunalunemoon (Moons) because Daddy Hux makes us melt.

(A/N shuns) If you have not seen Peter Rabbit, you should watch it because it is exactly what I imagine this Hux to be like.

It's good we did that for her because Moons called us out in the comments when we forgot that the gang see the beam from Starkiller on the way to the Hosnian System when they are on Takodana. So we pulled stuff out of this chapter and changed up Chapter 14 to fix this. Keech is going to be SOOOooooo pissed.
Episode VIII: The Last Hux

Chapter Summary

Alt Title: That time shuns and HeartS forgot to blow up the Hosnian System.

Chapter Notes

Imagine you are us. You wrote this sweet chapter (Chapter 13), and felt pretty good about it.

HeartS: We already mentioned FN-2187 defecting, let’s add in some more current events.

shuns: Okay but slow build to blowing up the Hosnian System. I want to get into politics and economics. Maybe Senator All-Bright ‘Ta-Uanahoo could make an inspiring speech. Hell we could get all the Rebel Girls back together. We’ll have time to really build it up. (Rubs hands together plotting.)

HeartS: Don’t forget Reylo, I’ll put some in now. (adds in a scene where Kylo brings his pet back to Starkiller)

shuns: (snorts) Kylo Ren, the Last Virgin (looks off in the distance as the Muse drops a bomb of an idea) WAIT, I’VE GOT IT (spews sparkly tiaras everywhere)

HeartS: Yes Yes Yes I love it. Let's watch The Last Jedi. It's on Netflix now.

shuns: Ohmygod, lip bite, finger touches and thigh grab!?!?

HeartS: Maybe we should watch The Force Awakens? For our story to make sure we don't miss any plot points?

shuns: THIGH GRAB!!!!

HeartS: Ok.... (watching TLJ and eating mac and cheese) So post?

shuns: (reveling in Thigh Grab and ice cream) I'm posting now...

(Twiddling our thumbs, whistling, answering comments)

lunalunemoon (Moons): So if Kylo is back on Starkiller with Rey already, when did Hux take a moment away from murdering child abusers and tracking down the rest of the dads to hold a rally and blow up the Hosnian System off screen?

US: LOL WUT?

shuns: That hasn’t happened yet. Has it?

HeartS: No, we’re fine.

(HeartS and shuns watch The Force Awakens)
US: (Running around in Muppet Panic) SHIT SHIT SHIT SHIT SHIT! WE FORGOT TO BLOW UP THE HOSNIAN SYSTEM!!!!

So, darlings, we bring you this additional chapter to rectify this egregious error (But seriously WTF how did we forget that? (A/N shuns: I blame Rian Johnson and his finger touches. A/N Heart$ I second that). Essentially, we lopped off the end of the last chapter and then expanded it into this one. Re-read the last chapter just to see where we decided to cut it.

Please note that all previously posted events still occur, we just added in a MONUMENTAL PLOT POINT that we inadvertently, um, forgot about/thought happened later.

Enjoy.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Starkiller, later that day.

Hux tucked the blankets around Vala as she slept. She hadn't woken as he carried her back to the now former Commandant's quarters. He was heartened that a small smile played at the corners of her lips. It seemed she was able to make friends even with the monsters in her dreams. *There's probably a lesson for me there....*

He stepped out of the room lest his conversations wake her. He needed help. He commed Daacha but it rang continuously. *Dammit Daach, stop fucking around. You said to comm when I got here. I need you now.* He tried a few more times but the result was the same. *Busy. I hope whatever stupid slut you're under is worth it.*

He holoed Mitaka who answered immediately. “Lieutenant. Get on a shuttle NOW!”

Mitaka's face was haggard. There were dark bruises under his eyes. His voice was high and rushed, “General, did you find her? How is she?”

“She is... alive.” Hux explained what had happened with the Commandant, what the doctor had said, and how Vala had briefly surfaced. “We need to hide the body then figure out how to bring her back. Can I count on you?”

“Always, General—“

Mitaka's holo dropped as Snoke came into view. His whole scarred face was visible, but only just. “Good Evening, Supreme Leader,” Hux said, trying hard to act normally given the interruption. He schooled his face and tried to calm his mind. Snoke would seize on any weakness and he couldn't let him.

“General Hux, I was told you returned to Starkiller unexpectedly. Since I did not order your return there, perhaps you could explain?”

Hux felt pressure on his throat, restricting his breath considerably. Snoke was annoyed but not enough to full-on Force-choke him. *I can’t answer your fucking question if you are choking me, Wanker. “S-s-upreme L-l-l-eader, Sir...”* The grip loosened. ”I received word that the Commandant of Starkiller was acting erratically and had disappeared. Due to the sensitive nature of the Starkiller
Project, it warranted immediate investigation.” He felt the invisible grip on his neck disappear and his breathing returned to normal.

“Indeed,” Snoke looked off into the distance for some time. Did he forget we were talking? “Interesting, interesting,” Snoke replied. “Yes, that does require your attention. I will reassign you there until he can be found. Do you have any insight yet on why this happened?”

“No, Sir, but as you know from my report; Follow, Focus, and Furor are failing due to the sabotage of the former director, so this could be a related incident. He may have gone mad, Sir, just as Treso-”

Snoke’s face contorted with rage as he cut Hux off, “YOU DARE SPEAK THE NAME OF THE TRAITOR?!” Hux was thrown to the floor and a crushing pressure pinned his entire body to the ground.

Great, he found something worse than choking.

"He betrayed the First Order with his half-breed, harpy of a wife. He neither delivered the Force Child I required nor the technological means to make it happen as she promised.”

What the fuck? Snoke was the reason Treso was trying to get Bala pregnant? Why does he want with a baby anyway?"

After a moment, Snoke recovered, “Be that as it may, your arrival on Starkiller is fortuitous. You are just the man for the job.”

HUH? One minute he is choking me, the next he is complimenting me. Why can’t he make up his fucking mind? Really, this relationship leaves much to be desired. I can SO do better.

“I wish to demonstrate the power of the base to the rest of the Galaxy. Use Starkiller to blow up the Hosnian System.”

The Hosnian System? The entire Hosnian System or just Hosnian Prime? Wait, why am I even considering this? It is fucking insane. “Sir, the Hosnian System, the heart of the New Republic?”

“Yes General, the very same. With the completion of Starkiller, we now have the means to end the embargo that the New Republic and the Core Worlds have placed on the First Order. Goods will flow again. Most importantly, textiles will be available to make pants.”

Not exactly priority one, but I follow you on ending the embargo.

“We must show the Galaxy that we are a power unto ourselves, and what better way to do so than by eradicating its central government? With the Senate gone, the galaxy will lay at our feet. The pants will be ours.”

The pants will be ours? Hoo-Boy, so we are going to destabilize a galactic powerhouse over... pants. What could possibly go wrong? “It will be a monumental display of power, to be sure, Supreme Leader. Without the double-dealers on Hosnian Prime, the Resistance will lose its support and will wither away like shadows before the sun. There will be trousers for all.” Why am I indulging a madman? I do not have time to wax poetic about trousers. Vala needs me, Daacha is unreachable, and Mitaka is on a shuttle somewhere.

"You mean pants."

“Excuse me, Supreme Leader?”
"You said trousers. Not pants. It’s pants."

_Exactly how the fuck did this lunatic become Supreme Leader? "Of course Supreme Leader. My mistake, there will be pants for all." I give 0% of fucks about this topic._

Snoke continued, "Of course, General. You will rally the Stormtroopers. Give them a speech. Remind them why we are all here."

_You mean, other than the obvious reason that they were forced into the Order as children and drugged to obey every command?_

"I expect this done by the end of the day. Do not disappoint me." The holo blinked off.

_Wait, What? End of the day? That's in two hours. I can’t even... Shit. I’ll have to write a speech._

All personnel who could be spared from their posts would be assembled in twenty minutes, and he would have to address them. _What am I even doing? I should just take Vala and run._ He shook his head. _No, he’ll just send Kylo Ren after me, and Vala will be caught in the crossfire. I can do this. I can do this._

He looked hard at the ‘fresher mirror, and his reflection glared back. He was trying to will himself into the correct state of mind to not only give the order to end billions, no, probably _trillions_ of lives, but to gloat over it, revel, even, in the act. When he realized this, the man looking back at him in the mirror was scared.

_“Oh fuck, I can’t do this.” He leaned his head against the mirror, his breath fogging it._

_In the abstract, he had believed that the New Republic and the Resistance were evil; it was the First Order’s main tenet. In reality, he thought them destructive and chaotic for sure, but more often than not, mostly harmless. The New Republic was consumed by petty infighting and the Resistance was a collection of aging zealots. While he saw the merit in eliminating the New Republic stronghold, he wondered at the cost of winning the battle today; would they lose the war tomorrow? Strategic idiot my ass, Bala._

_He would forever be remembered for this action, just as Tarkin was remembered for Alderaan. Of course, Krennic was the first to fire the Death Star over Jedha City, but he was a mere footnote. The destruction of a planet like Alderaan secured Tarkin a place in history. He had classes taught about him. Hux had taken every one of them when they were offered at the Academy. Then, it had seemed like the obvious solution, inevitable even. Now he wasn’t so sure._

_Using Starkiller to destroy an entire star system would be a turning point in galactic history. He had always wanted to be part of something larger, a part of history. But he felt that this action balanced on the knife’s edge between fame and glory or infamy and humiliation._

_Despite his reservations about taking the shot, it’s not like he had a choice. Snoke had ordered it. Even though Starkiller was a formidable feat of engineering, without a demonstration it was like a rancor without teeth. If he didn’t follow through, the punishment at Snoke’s hands would be devastating, if not lethal. He could not die. He needed to find Vala and help her heal. For one terrible moment, he realized he was willing to trade the lives of all the beings in the Hosnian System for more time with her._
The thought came unbidden but brought him to his knees when he realized that there would be thousands if not millions of parents that would think the same thing as the blast came towards them. He could feel the vomit coming up but he had nothing left to purge so he dry-heaved until his throat was raw. His head hit the tile of the floor. It was cool and hard. A creeping sensation paralyzed him as he lay there. He had felt it so often at Snoke’s hands, but this wasn’t the Force. No, it was the weight of his own actions. They were smothering him.

He really was a failure, just as his father had said. When it mattered, when he was tested, he crumbled. His father had told him it was because he was a bastard sprung from a weak line of servants that could only buckle and break. Of course, Brendol Hux would know, he loved breaking things, especially his own son. Without Phasma and Bala, Hux would have been lost long ago.

Hux rolled onto his back. He wished there was a way he could borrow the zeal he did not have for a cause he didn’t truly believe in. *If only there something I could take...*

**Wait.**

He had the germ of an idea. It was a very bad, very risky idea. But it would be the only way that he could give a speech and then give the order to end so many lives. The speech would be shown throughout the First Order. Even if he didn’t believe, he had to make sure others did. It needed to be powerful, and he felt anything but at the moment. He rolled back onto his side and pushed up to a sitting position. *That’s a dangerous thought. It’s been tainted, but it could still work.*

He called Doctor Domnhall to the Commandant’s quarters and laid out his plan. He would inject Furor right before his speech; the Doctor didn’t need to know about the Hosnian System, just that he had a big speech and that he was nervous. But he did explain to the Doctor about the tainted supply of Furor and that he would need something to counteract it. When Hux had surveyed the mess that was the Commandant’s files, he was quite certain that Furor had been the detrimental factor in his decision making. He couldn’t afford that now. *The stakes are too high.*

The Doctor shook his head in disagreement. “Sir, I can’t condone this. It’s extremely unsafe, especially given the tainting of the drug. Who knows how you will react? Anything could happen. It might not even be reversible. You don’t understand what the Commandant was like these past days. I don’t want that for you.”

“I need it. I need the intensity, the passion, that Furor will bring. Please, help me. I have to get through this speech. Then I can devote myself to Vala.”

The Doctor shifted, seeming to weigh his options. He scrutinized Hux, “I have a small supply of catalyst interrupter. It finds the drug’s neuroreceptors and binds them, making it inert. Most of Furor will pass out of your system over the next three days. I warn you, though, it will feel like your body is coming apart. You will have aftershocks for weeks as the half-life burns out. The drug wasn't mean to be short-circuited and you will pay to interrupt the cycle.”

“If there was any other way, I would take it.” Hux thought for a moment, “Could we use the catalyst interrupter on Vala? Try to pull her back from Follow’s grasp?”

“I doubt it. She is a different case, with the implant and her split brain. The catalyst interrupter works best when taken immediately, and she has been gone for a few days already. Also, she had a massive dose of Follow, I don’t know that I have enough to counteract it. I’m sorry, I wish I had better news.”

Hux shook his head, “I will pursue any avenue for her. But for now, I need to do this.”
The Doctor nodded his head, “Of course, Sir. I will get the interrupter and meet you after your speech.”

Twenty minutes later

Hux left Vala locked in the Commandant’s office. She was still sleeping and he believed she would be safe there for the time being. He sighed as he stroked her head, tucking a stray piece of hair behind her ear. We could still run. He knew he wouldn’t; he didn’t really have any choice but to do as Snoke commanded.

He put on his coat followed by his hat, adjusting it until it was straight. He looked the part of the First Order General even if he didn't feel that way. His shoes echoed in the hallways as he made his way to the viewing platform; they were altogether too loud but also not loud enough to drown out the sound of the war machine coming to life. He ducked into a secluded alcove and pulled a dosing gun from his pocket. He pressed the cool metal tip to the side of his neck. Well, here goes... everything. He pulled the trigger and felt the sharp prick of the needle as it pierced his skin.

The drug hit his body immediately and he felt the liquid spread, warming as it went. Unlike his previous dosings, it didn't stop there. His temperature kept rising as the heat of a scorching fire tore through him. Flames licked his veins and his fears burned away, leaving him ready for what came next: Confidence. Clarity. Conviction. The emotions pulsed through him and he felt their raw power give him strength. He pivoted, his feet coming together with a sharp 'snap,' then he marched out the door and onto the platform. It was a thrill to see his officers and ‘troopers assembled in perfect formation. Such loyalty. He glanced at the ostentatious crimson-and-black banner that hung behind the platform displaying the First Order insignia, and suddenly, he knew exactly what to say, as if was the most natural thing in the world.

Hux turned and addressed the crowd, “Today is the end of the Republic. The end of a regime that acquiesces to disorder. At this very moment in a system far from here, the New Republic LIES TO THE GALAXY while secretly supporting the treachery of the loathsome Resistance. This fierce machine which you have built, upon which we stand, will bring an end to the Senate, to their cherished fleet. All remaining systems will BOW to the First Order and will remember this as the LAST DAY OF THE REPUBLIC!”

Deep below his feet, the last preparations had been made to fire the massive weapon. Technicians sat at the ready for his command. The assembled personnel shifted their stance 180 degrees to properly observe the great display of the First Order’s might.

Hux took a deep breath and bellowed, “FIRE!”

Some way off in the distance, an enormous blast of bright, fiery energy was released from the weapon planet; it was both terrifying and beautiful. This - this is true power, true might. This will bring the Galaxy to its knees. He stood watching the culmination of so many years of work with the satisfaction that he had finally done it, had finally brought the First Order out of hiding. And oh was it magnificent. I did it. My efforts have finally been realized. My father was wrong. He stood on the platform for another minute, basking in the glory he felt, rich with the feeling of success. When the weapon finally powered down, Hux retreated from the platform.

He was only a few steps down the hallway when Doctor Dohmnall called after him, “General
Hux? I have the interrupter here.”

Hux turned, “Oh yes, thank you, Doctor. That will no longer be necessary. It was a rash idea. I find I am quite invigorated by this new batch.”

“But Sir-”

“Doctor,” he growled, “You are dismissed.” Hux waved him away with a flick of his hand. He turned to continue down the hall, but an arm was thrown around his upper chest then there was a quick stab in his neck. “OW!” Doctor Dohmnall had dosed him with the catalyst interrupter and he immediately retched. He heaved for a few moments more until he was sure he would vomit up a kidney if he continued. He leaned against the wall and wiped the sweat from his brow. What the fuck just happened?

He looked up to see Doctor Dohmnall looking down on him. “Like I said, the interrupter has quite a kick.”

It was like jumping to ludicrous speed, GO! “Yes. Though that doesn't actually prepare you for it. So thank you for that.”

Hux paced Hanger 8 while waiting for Lieutenant Mitaka’s shuttle to arrive. He was disappointed when Kylo Ren’s ship landed instead. Just what I don’t need right now. Hux walked over as six stormtroopers disembarked. They took up a post on each side of the ramp and Kylo Ren exited with something draped across his arms.

What is he carrying? Hux looked closer. What the hells, is that a woman? Why does he have a woman with him? Did he finally get laid? Did The Last Virgin give up his cherry?

“General…”

“Master Ren, we don’t bring random women on base. Especially when the base is an interplanetary weapon of mass destruction.”

“She knows the location of the Skywalker map, she has seen it.”

Oh Gods, not that fucking map again. “Can’t you see into her thoughts?”

“I can.”

“Well then why didn’t you just do that? Why did you need to bring her here?”

“Oh, well, um… It’s complicated.”

Hux looked at the girl and noted that Kylo’s hand was on her breast, squeezing slightly. Oh, this is too easy. "Master Ren, why are you groping the prisoner?"

"I am not."

Hux raised his eyebrows. "Your hand is on her breast and I can clearly see you squeezing it. Textbook groping, in case you weren't aware. Further, standard practice is to get your partner's consent before you grope them. I would refer you to the First Order handbook, but ‘Abstinence is
Vala's head rested Mitaka's leg, he stroked her hair while she slept, "What can we do?"

Hux was at the desk going through the Commandant's files, trying to understand how the man could have created so much chaos in so little time. "The Doctor recommended reaching out to the EMU."

"Really? You want to do that?" asked Mitaka incredulously.

"Fuck no. Anyone who worked with Vala is dead and I have no idea how far Norren's reach extended. Besides we don't need a scientist, mad or otherwise. We need to get inside her mind."

Mitaka thought for a moment, "We need... Daacha," his voice cracked as he said his name. Hux was aware they had ended their 'relationship.' He hadn't asked about the details. He didn't want to pry. Mitaka continued, "He really can see inside machines. I-I saw him do it. If what you say is true with the implant... he could find her. If she is still in there..."

Hux smiled wanly, "It's a start. Now if only he answered his comms, Lazy Fucker."

There was a chime as a priority comm came through. "General, Sir, pardon the interruption. We discovered why the Pulverizer wasn't responding to any of your hails."

Hux raised his eyebrows at Mitaka, Speak of the Sith... “Yes, Technician, and?”

There was an audible intake of breath. This can’t be good. “Sir, a critical malfunction aboard The Pulverizer caused it to blow up."

FUCK! Hux arm shot out and swept violently across the desk, scattering holopads, a mug, and The Commandant's miniature Death Star replica onto the ground. The mug crashed to the floor and
broke, sending caf in all directions. *NO! Daacha can’t be gone. I can’t lose anyone else today. We need him.*

He drew a ragged breath, looked at a stricken Mitaka, then asked, “What of Daacha Ren and his team?” He wanted to know but wasn’t sure he could stomach the answer.

“Their status is unknown at this time, Sir.”

There was a thump as Mitaka fainted.

*Fuck, we’re swooning now? And I thought Daacha was the pretty, pretty princess.*

Chapter End Notes

Shuns: Yeah. So when we expanded Chapter 13, it was too much (A/N HS: what. a. surprise.) so Chapter 14 isn't what we promised Keech. I am pretty sure that she going to kill you, HeartS. You promised her real sex in Chapter 14, instead, she got the cold shoulder and planetcide.

HeartS: Why is she going after me? You're the one who gave her a sentient yeast infection.

shuns: Yeah, but she knows I am a vindictive author and will punish her in fiction. You are too nice. Let's get you suited up.

HeartS: Wha?

shuns: Protective gear, because she is going to beat the snot out of you.

HeartS: I suffer for my art.

shuns: We all do...

HeartS: I HEARD THAT!

A/N HS: P.S. Where my Reylos at? I love creepy Kylo and his little pet.
Chapter Summary

Smut and explosions. ‘Nuff said.

Chapter Notes

HeartS: (Leaning over large hole in the ground) shuns? You down there? What happened?

shuns: (faintly) I fell down a Harry Potter fan-fiction hole, you know Dramione, a little bit of Theomione and a bunch of Marcus Flint/Katie Bell. So much smut. Glorious, wonderful smut. And quidditch.

Hearts: (Shakes head and face palms) Oh yeah, *ahem*, sorry about that... You know, YOU can write your own smut, you silly monkey.

shuns: (peeking up over side of fiction hole.) I can?

HeartS: Of course you can. Here I’ll start (Typing) ‘His throbbing member parted her wet folds…”

shuns: (grimacing and climbing it of hole) No, no, no! No throbbing members! No wet folds! (pauses). It sounds like a country club where they do kinky things with laundry. But this gives me an idea.

HeartS: I thought it might….

shuns: You did that intentionally didn’t you?

HeartS: (shrugs) Maybe.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

It had been six years since the Fall of Bador and her promise to take apart the First Order and Keech had little to show for her efforts except a string of broken planets and millions of lives lost. Bala’s disappearance was still a mystery and she missed Poe; their love story felt like it was a lifetime ago. Now she was being stalked by a Knight of Ren with an inconvenient hard-on for her destruction. What a fucking disappointment.

Jasper, grunting on top of her, unceremoniously gave the signal that he was finishing up. And the parade of disappointments continues. At least one of us got something out of this. Jasper rolled onto his side and tried to pull her close in a sweaty cuddle but Keech was having none of it. She got up to leave but he caught her wrist, pulling her back down.

“Mmmm, can’t you stay, babe? Cuddle?”
“No Jas. Do you not see where we are? It’s a storage closet. I like to fuck in here. Cuddling should be relegated to beds, couches, blankets, or other similarly comfortable surfaces. However, if you’d like...” her eyes flicked down, “I could make an exception.”

Jasper looked at her with a mixture of disgust and longing and let out a sigh. “Ya know, babe, I just don’t have it in me right now.”

*What, your tongue? No, you don’t, you asshat.* She sighed, dredging up the last memory she had of Poe.

*They had been fucking in the Black One for hours, trying to prolong her departure, and he was eating her out like he’d been starved his whole life, licking her clit while scissoring two fingers inside her. Soon enough, he had her gushing, quite literally, with pleasure, and he sucked up every last drop of her while fucking humming ‘Ten Little Banthas All in a Row.’ She hated the song, but between the vibrations and his warm breath on her, she almost broke her feet from how hard she curled her toes.*

Lust crashed over her; her cheeks reddened and she was wet between her thighs again. Just the memory of Poe was better than any encounter she had ever had with Jasper, especially the last twenty minutes. Keech stood and slid her pants back on, turning to leave, but Jasper grabbed her. *Fuck! When did he get so clingy?*

“What’s so important? You just got off Rotation, it’s light duty for the next two weeks. Stay here with me a little longer. We could… talk.”

*Shit, he’s a stage-five clinger.* “Did you forget I have to fix that corrupted data store?”

“No,” he sulked. “Be quick. I don’t want you to get caught using my credentials.”

Keech threw him a kiss and carefully exited the closet, narrowly avoiding two patrolling stormtroopers. She wandered the halls to the server room, found the terminal, and logged as JS-5967. It took only ten minutes to find the right semicolon to do what she wanted. She had already built the code packet so she simply inserted the location pointer and compiled the code. Her fingers hovered over the execution pad, hesitating. She just needed to press one button to commit the change.

*This is it. Once again, lives hang in the balance.* If she did this, she wouldn’t be playing defense anymore, she would be at war with the First Order. The question was, would the New Republic join her? She knew that the New Republic was locked in a stalemate with the First Order. They weren’t at war, exactly, but there certainly wasn’t peace either.

The embargo on manufactured goods from the Core Worlds had begun to bite about a year ago. It was impossible to get replacement parts for the large munitions like the ion cannons and turbo lasers, and you could forget about anything to do with the basal computer arrays, which wasn’t a surprise. But common items like sucralose, nicotine sticks, alcohol, and oddly, pants, were also in short supply. The dreadnoughts may have been self-sustaining, however, not everything could be made on board. Life’s little luxuries were the currency of the First Order, the oil that kept the machine moving. If the chatter from the ‘Troopers could be believed, the shortage had led to an outbreak of hoarding and a quite a few skirmishes within the ranks.

Destruction of the magnitude she had planned could push either side toward declaring all-out war. Keech had stood on the sidelines for six years watching the Core Planets’ representatives wring their soft patrician hands while doing fuck-all to help those whose lives had been destroyed by the First Order. If her actions brought the War to their doorstep, she was fine with that, and would, in
fact, be happy to see them. Welcome to the party, fuckers.

Yeah, I’m going to do this.

Once her code went live it would create a never-ending loop wherein the routines wouldn’t refresh or complete. Instead, they would spin endlessly, tying up more and more resources until they eventually crashed the entire system. It wasn’t the end of the world for something trivial like a data request - you could kill the process and start it up again with no problems - but the systems she had targeted were life support. Air, water, and gravity would all fail. The program would hit the main process and corrupt redundant systems when they tried to sync at failover. If they got as far as trying to restart one or all of them, it would trigger her code packet again and begin a whole new deadlock. The entire ship would suffocate and die long before anyone realized what was happening.

When Keech had come up with this plan, she’d understood that everyone aboard the Pulverizer would have to die in order for her to take out Daacha Ren. She’d already killed hundreds, but targeting an entire dreadnought meant she would kill hundreds of thousands. She paused again but then remembered the explosions that tore apart Bador. These assholes deserve everything they have coming to them.

She committed the packet and let out the breath she hadn’t realized she was holding. It would take at least an hour until it was picked up by the next update cycle. Keech wasn’t sure when the ship would die, but life support would be compromised shortly after the code was accepted by the Pulverizer’s processors. The deadlock would create the perfect distraction. She would be able to sneak back into the Projection and across the Wall to steal Bala’s file, all without worrying about Daacha Ren. She had nothing but time to kill so she started working on her personal messages that had stacked up during her Rotation. She sat down and put her feet up; it would take a while to get through the messages, but she wasn’t going anywhere, and soon neither would Daacha Ren.

Enough time had passed to see that the packet had been picked up. With no way to confirm what was happening, she sat and tried very hard to concentrate on her messages. She had already taken two fingernails down to the nub. Thankfully, the next message was from TM-4420,

Hey Kriffer,

I’m coming to TX-12. "Memory Leak" is the official story. Tell you more when I get there, I think I’ll need your help. Can we grab a caf, or whatever your caf equivalent is, and talk?

It is weird that I am excited to meet you? I have a new Hutt joke for you in case things get awkward, because being me, they probably will. I’ve warned you, so prepare to suffer.

-TM

He had called her Kriffer from their first message exchange. It was a play on her designation, KF-3546, and she hated it. Kriff was not nearly as satisfying to say as ‘shit.’ She could not understand why in the Seven Hells anyone in the galaxy thought, ‘Let’s replace the two most useful words in Basic, namely FUCK and SHIT, with made-up words.’ She had pretty specific feelings on this, but she was willing to forgive TM for pretty much anything because his Hutt jokes were fucking hilarious.
In fact, she was full of feelings about his visit: excitement, trepidation, maybe even a slight flutter of arousal followed by abject horror. She re-read his message, zeroing in on the source string. It was a ship designation, the same one she had used for the Pulverizer packet. He’s on the Pulverizer! The very same ship she had coded into a death sentence not two hours ago.

SHIT AND FUCK.

She started pacing. She could rollback the change, but it would have to be done this minute. TM would live, but then so would Daacha Ren. She would have to fight him on TX-12 without any weapons. She didn’t even have access to a blaster, because why would an analyst need a blaster? To threaten the data, torturing it until it told her what she wanted to know. Or to kill bad guys. Oh wait, I’m pretending to be a bad guy.

Keech buried her face in her hands. Am I really going to do this? She was really considering scrapping her attack on the Pulverizer to save one man. A man she had never met. A man she had never met and who she had a not so tiny and definitely unreciprocated crush on. This was the stupidest idea ever, and she would know, she had a lifetime of stupid behind her.

Then a thought struck her: she could make a bomb. Yes, blow up the base you are on, what could go wrong? She couldn’t do that, obviously, at least not without an exit strategy. Keech groaned. For two. Because if she was going to save his skin, that Kriffer was coming back to the Resistance with her. Of course, this was assuming they would both still be alive at the end.

Okay, so the plan is to stop the deadlock on the Pulverizer’s life support, tell TM-4420 I’m a deep cover asset for the Resistance, convince him to run away with me on some sort of transport yet to be obtained, and then blow up TX-12.

Blowing up TX-12 was dumb, but this whole scenario took the cake. Could she do it? She’d sat on her hands for almost two years, playing defense and watching the First Order advance. She was ready to be back in the fight. He might not have been a planet of millions, her best friend, or even her child, but by Gods, she was going to save something from the First Order.

Hells yes, I’m doing this.

She snuck through the base into the depths of the computing core, right next to the basal server array. It was a powerful computer, and she could feel the hum of the magnetic waves pulsating from it. The magnetic feedback was helpful when connecting without Focus to lubricate the way, and her near-field communicator would hook into the system and easily ride the waves.

Even still, this was going to hurt. A lot. She reached up and slid her finger over the switch. Her vision went white.

Keech’s code packet was a masterpiece, and apparently, the Augmentation agreed, because when she asked to see it, she was presented with a magnificent painting of the Pulverizer in a large, gilded frame. But the painting was static; she couldn’t manipulate it or the base code it represented inside the Construct. It made sense, she had built the program to become multidimensional when it was committed, changing and morphing as needed, with its sole directive to twist the Pulverizer’s systems into knots. She would have to connect directly to The Pulverizer to make any changes.

Her face fell as soon as she stepped into the Projection. She was greeted with a mess of
interconnected, never-ending staircases. How the fuck will I find anything in here? The added bonus to this fucking enormous disaster was that they twisted, turned, and folded in on themselves like some fever dream of a deranged architect. She had run up the stairs, under them, and around them, only to find herself running up them again as they contorted in new directions. Fucking kaleidoscopes! She didn’t have time for this and realized trying to stop the program would be next to impossible.

Time for Plan B. If she couldn’t stop it, she could at least alert TM and tell him to get the ‘kark’ out of there. “Shortcut. The Pulverizer, TM-4420’s quarters.” A doorway appeared to her right. “Time to meet my mystery man.”

She stepped through the door into familiarly standard quarters. It was unnerving how real it seemed. She heard creaking, followed by moaning and thrashing, and turned toward the bunk. She looked harder to locate the source of the noise and huffed at the scene, “Shitty fucker…”

She moaned and dug her fingers into his scalp. He could tell she was getting close and paused to take in the view. Her head was thrown back, eyes squeezed shut, and her nipples were taut and rosy from his attention just a few moments ago. Her legs were sprawled wide open and there was so much glorious skin on display. He squeezed the meat of her buttocks and she giggled. Girls make the best karking noises. He resumed his suction of her swollen clit, only to pause a moment later to lick her slit from bottom to top. He bumped his cheek against the inside of her right thigh, knowing she loved his scratchy stubble brushing against the sensitive skin.

“You are so wet for me and you taste like… mmmm… honey. Salty.” Lick. “Sweet.” Lick. “Golden.” He punctuated his declaration with a long suck on her clit, then thrust two fingers inside her, pumping them to the same rhythm as he sucked. When he grazed his teeth over her sensitized clit, she finally fell apart and wetness gushed from her as he coaxed out a scream. Her thighs clamped together and his head was trapped between them. She held him like this for a long moment as she crumbled, but he didn’t mind. He never did; this was the best part.

Well, second best. The best part was that now she would do anything he asked, just to feel that again. Too bad I have to send you to reconditioning. He liked JX-7770 - or Juliet Xeenh, as she called herself - but he had business on TX-12 and he couldn’t afford to be distracted. Besides, she was returning to the Reaper in a month and he hoped to be balls deep in KF-3546 by then.

He’d juggled girls before but it was taxing, and with all he had on his plate, he was going to take them one at a time. It was a time commitment issue, he’d told himself. Absolutely nothing to do with the way his stomach flipped over when he got a message from her or she said she liked one of his jokes. No, absolutely nothing at all.

He knelt to wipe his mouth and chin with his hand. She really did taste good, but then, most women did. That was one of the many reasons that he loved eating pussy. There was no better way to own a woman, body and soul.

He crawled up the bunk to lay next to her, pulling her close. He propped one hand behind his head and bent one leg at the knee, the other flat so she could lay her legs across it. His eyes were half-closed and a lazy smile played at the corners of his lips, the picture of relaxed debauchery. She was lying still next to him, albeit breathing a little harder than normal.
“So…” he started.

“Tam, just one more minute,” she responded. “Then I promise I will ride you until I break you.”

A smirk stretched across his face.

Keech stared at TM and the woman cuddled next to him. She shut her eyes, physically pained by the scene. She felt like her stomach was somewhere near her feet. Her skin was cold enough that she was shaking, but her cheeks were flaming hot as if they were on fire.

She hoped for a brief moment that maybe she was in the wrong room. She opened her eyes and looked anywhere but at the bunk. Even though they couldn’t hear or see her, she quietly repeated, “TM-4420 quarters, the Pulverizer.” There was no change. She looked back at the couple, unable to help herself.

Stop being a creep! Look away!

Instead, she watched them move, continuing to stare as he rolled onto his hands and knees and hovered over the woman, kissing and licking her neck. Keech could feel it on her neck. He whispered in the woman's ear and she was giggling again, and Keech found herself aching to know what he'd said. He lined himself up and thrust in, and she was wet imagining TM inside herself. She sighed with them as they moved.

It seemed the girl had other ideas; she wrapped her legs around him and pushed up, flipping them. Once the blonde was on top, Keech was treated to an unimpeded view of her chest. Her breasts were perfectly round and perky, and she was beautiful, her body slender and lean. It was difficult to watch, and she couldn't get enough air in her lungs. Why can’t I look away?

“Tam, oh yes, Tam, more, oh Tam... Please... I need... I need you. Give it to me.”

*Tam. His name is Tam.*

Names were a delicate business in the First Order. Actually, anything to do with identity; sharing your name implied you were looking for... illicit coupling. She’d learned this the hard way during her first week when she had introduced herself as Keech, and now she’d had more sex at this post than she'd ever had on shore leave with Poe, quantity-wise. However, quality-wise, Poe was still the gold standard of sex to which all others had thus-far failed to measure up.

She knew Poe had other relationships when they were together. It was pretty obvious when he gave her cubic fleas. And that weird crystallization of her vagina. And the yeast beast. And space herpes. They’d never talked about being exclusive, they never really talked about anything; sex took priority. Why be exclusive when they both lived on the precipice of danger, their lives promised to the Resistance? But Poe really believed in 'loving the one you're with,’ and when they were together, she was the center of his universe.

It had been different with TM. All they shared were scattered conversations and fanciful ideas sent across the void of space. She had worked hard to get to know him, overcoming his prickly disposition. He had snipped at one of her ideas and she had stopped messaging him. It took him a week, but he sent an apology. It was also the first time he'd sent her a Hutt joke.
Q: What is Jabba the Hutt’s middle name?

A: The

Sorry I’m a jerk. Please don’t abandon me to my thoughts. It’s scary in here.

It reminded Keech of her husband. When Bar had been an ass, he would tell her a joke or wiggle his ears. Either way, he would make her laugh and the fight would be over. Poe was dashing, loud, and enjoyed sex in exciting places, and they didn’t have time for fighting. But sometimes she wanted terrible jokes, quiet words, and sex in a bed. She’d had that with Bar, and she believed that TM, Tam, was like that too. He was worth saving, but he and his beautiful girlfriend were not.

Keech might have been the Hope of the Resistance, but she wasn’t a charity. TM was just a First Order tool who liked to poke his stick in any willing woman he found. She owed him nothing. She turned her back on him and his lover as they both arrived at their climax. At least the last thing they would remember was great sex.

“Take me to the Wall.”

He buried himself in her one more time, emptying himself, and Gods it felt good. He could feel her contracting around him, now a boneless puddle of moans. He would miss Juliet, but not that much; she never laughed at his jokes.

The bed shuddered underneath him. Weird, I thought we were done. He opened his eyes; something was very wrong. He could feel it, actually feel it. The ship shuddered again, followed by the creaking and shrieking of metal as an explosion tore a hole in the hull at midship. It reverberated all the way to the front of the ship where his quarters were. The emergency lights flipped on and shrill alarms rang out. He pulled out of her, rolled off the bed into a crouch, and reached for his pants and a shirt.

“Hey, Babe… Babe… you need to get up,”

“Mmmuunph, not now Tam. Sleep. It’s just a drill.”

“Babe, this is NOT a drill. We have to get to the escape pods.”

Her eyes flew open at that and she screeched, “WHAT?”

He cocked his head to the side, listening, “I think we have about seven, maybe eight minutes before the ship breaks apart.”

“Oh kark, how can you be so calm?”

He shrugged his shoulders as he went to the closet and put a few things in a small bag. “Not my time to die. But we have to move. Right now!” She threw on her discarded clothes and nodded as he opened the hatch. They walked out into utter chaos, panic spilling out of every hatch. They held hands as they jogged down the hall.

“The pods are just up ahead,” she said. There was a crush to get to them.

“Come on, this way,” said Tam. He pulled her along behind him through the throng of people.
pushing toward the group pods. Before they left his quarters, he had looked out the viewport and seen the streaks of hyperspace. If the Pulverizer didn’t drop to approach speed, the ship would be torn apart, wreckage spread for hundreds of parsecs. The same would be true for the escape pods. If they were ejected at hyperspeed they would get torn apart. But not the officer’s pods. There were fewer of those, but he knew where they were. They ran through a connecting hallway, meeting no resistance.

“Trust me?” he asked. She nodded. “It’s going to be a tight fit with the two of us,” he waggled his eyebrows at her, ”But I happen to like it tight.”

“Now is not the right time for jokes, Tam.” Kark, it was never the ‘right’ time.

They climbed in awkwardly and found the best arrangement was lying on their sides face-to-face, hugging. Ironic. I want to break up with you and now here we are. He smiled and kissed her nose.

The ship was shaking now and the pod with it; it had never come out of hyperspeed. He could only hope they would survive ejection and the wait for rescue. “Here we go,” he chirped as he pushed the eject lever with his foot. The pod disengaged and then there was another explosion as the ship started breaking apart, buffeting the pod with atmosphere and debris.

*It’s not my time to die.*

---

Keech stared at the Wall, or at least what she thought was the Wall, it was moving and shifting just like the staircases.

“Switch, JS-5967,” and she turned into Jasper. She looked at his hands. They were nice, big hands. She had to remember that the next time they had sex. She recalled that when they’d first gotten together, he’d *loved* finger-fucking her. His fingers were quick and nimble, and he'd sent her over the edge with just his hands more than once, his mouth whispering complete filth in her ear. It drew her back in over and over; she loved dirty talk.

*Focus! Over the Wall we go!*

---

Without Daacha Ren on her heels, getting Bala’s file had been easy: in and out, home and safe. No giant cats, quivering puddles, or parade of aliens. *Finally, let’s get some answers.*


*Fuck, not this again.*

She sat down to have a think. Her vision had grown increasingly fuzzy while behind the Wall. Now she was seeing spots. It had been a busy day: she had screwed over her lover, doomed her crush to death, and stolen information for which she had almost been killed by a force-wielder. All on her first day off Rotation without the aid of Focus. *I really need to pace myself, you know, stop and smell the blueblossoms, or whatever plants we have growing in the greenroom.* She'd done
enough today, she could come back tomorrow and finish.

Keech came back to reality with a thump, feeling like her brain had just dropped sixty meters. Her head was splitting in two and had an unpleasant feeling of fullness. She staggered out of the computing core and back up to the living levels only to find utter chaos. People were running. Alarms were going off; the klaxons signaling 'All Hands! On! Deck!'

She overheard a group of Specs discussing how the Pulverizer’s ionic motivator system had overheated, causing the adjacent warp oscillator to explode. Instead of a quiet death as the ship slowly froze, she had ripped a giant hole in the side. Of the 280,000 people aboard, only 700 had survived the blast, spread out in a variety of life pods that had survived ejection at hyperspeed. Apparently, the ship had never dropped to approach speed and the majority of the escape pods had been shredded. The rest of the crew had either been burned alive, impaled with shrapnel, or spaced. Survivors were now being brought to TX-12, the closest First Order outpost via shuttle.

There weren’t supposed to be any survivors, but there were. They weren’t supposed to find her, but he knew where she was. There was a 1 in 700 chance the Daacha Ren had made it, but she knew he had. Because I have the shittiest fucking luck.

Against her better judgment, she really hoped that Tam had survived too. Though maybe not the girl.

Okay, definitely not the girl.

Chapter End Notes

Sorry for the ghost posting yesterday. Editing while getting a mani/pedi can lead to posting, unexpectedly, swearing loudly and a lecture from the lady doing one’s nails.

Lesson learned.

(shuns gets dragged out of nail salon by a surprisingly small yet diminutive woman)
I tell you NO MORE BAD WORD!

Mostly.

A/N HS: SHOUTOUT TO MY GIRL SHUNS! thanks for doing all the heavy lifting in this chapter while I just sat around eating and texting you. LOVE U
Chapter Summary

Standby for surrealism as Snoke Supremo arrives.

Chapter Notes

Shuns: So this chapter… it’s something.

HeartS: (Bouncing in seat) I know RIGHT?!?!?! It’s been months in the making. I am so pleased to be presenting it to the WORLD.

Shuns: It’s pretty surreal. Makes me think of a joke. How many surrealists does it take to screw in a light bulb?

HeartS: I don’t know, 3? One to hold the giraffe and two to put the lightbulbs in the tub?

Shuns: …to get to the other side.

Hearts: You are so weird.

Shuns: Thank you.

Friendly Reminder: We never promised canon-compliancy. We did, however, promise bananas. So… yah. Here’s a bunch.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

*In which we are reminded of Snoke’s crippling inability to use technology:*

The soft hum of the *Supremacy* was soothing. Inspiring even. His holoprojector pinged with an incoming image. Snoke rubbed his forehead. *Why does that ginger always have to holo me when I’m busy?* He pressed the button to reveal his General’s image.

“Yes, Hux? What is it?” He stared at the spot that should have shown an obsequious Hux kneeling before him but there was nothing. “Where are you? Why can’t I see you?”

"Supreme Leader, Sir, I am kneeling right here."

Snoke pressed another button, and this time he used the Force to guide his hand to the right selection. He pressed it, but still saw nothing. He sighed, “Why are there so many buttons? I still cannot see you.” He gestured to the guard closest to him, “Free the holo droid. Direct it closer to me.”
In Snoke’s opinion, the latest generation of holoprojectors was the most irksome. In the past, the projector was a simple device. Push one button and the image was projected above the device. Spin the button to adjust the volume. Push that same button again and to end the holo. One button, easy to operate. Now, small droids hovered through the air to adjust the image. He did not like droids in general, but he specifically hated these holo-bots. Their algorithms gave them a borrowed likeness of intelligence but he could not control their electronic ‘minds.’ That, and they never got his good side when projecting the image.

The guard grabbed the small device out of the cradle and launched it into the air. It hovered quite close to Snoke’s face.

“How about now?” He asked.

“Sorry, Sir, still nothing.”

He gestured to another guard. “You there, any ideas?”

The guard moved forward and pushed the only button Snoke hadn’t pushed. An image of Hux perched on one knee appeared.

"Ah, Supreme Leader, there you... are...” He trailed off and pulled back his head as far as he could. “Sir, you are too close to the aperture. You need to move it back. I only see your nostril and a bit of your upper lip.”

Snoke growled and pushed the holo-bot across the room with the Force.

“Sir, what’s happening now? The holo is spinning. No, wait, the picture is stabilizing... and now I only see.. the ceiling?”

Snoke sighed and flicked his hand again, spinning the bot.

“Supreme Leader, I believe you have turned the aperture of the holo-bot upside down. Now I can only see your slippers.”

“ Heckity heck. Holos are supposed to make communication easy. I CAN’T abide by this fiddley droid or all these buttons.” He slammed his fist down on the button pad. “Why are they so many blasted buttons?” The image of Hux faded.

“Supreme Leader, shall I send for a tech?” Hux asked.

“Yes.”

As he waited, Snoke opened a hidden compartment in the arm of his throne with a small whoosh. Inside was his golden treasure. The room was quiet except for a whisper of crinkling. "Mmm, yesssss, the best part.” He spun the wrapping, drawing apart the twist and holding the prize in place. “Just untwist here. A little twirl there.” He pulled the wrapping back to reveal the hard shell. “Mmm mmm mmm. There you are, my sweet.” He ran his finger along the top. “You’re mine.” He picked it up and popped it into his mouth. “Mmmm, butterscotch.”

"Supreme Leader, are you talking to me?"

Snoke’s eyes went wide. He hadn’t muted the sound, "Hux? Hux?" Oh dear, how embarrassing. I’ll just hang up. He held his hand in the air and crushed the holo bot, effectively ending the call.

Most calls ended this way.
In which we learn of Snoke’s poetry prowess:

“Guard, you there.” The guard to his right stepped toward him. “No. Not you. The red one, YOU! OVER THERE!” They all stepped forward. Snoke threw his hands up, exasperated. This wouldn’t be a problem if the guards could tell him their names, or even talk. It was at moments like this he regretted cutting out their tongues, but no one could know his secret.

Time for a break. Word Meditation.

When your very words can become manifest, it makes sense to practice using them. Palpatine had scoffed at this practice. Look how far that got him. He found when he grew restless or anxious, poetry soothed him. Or as he liked to think of it, ‘Snoketry.’

Words were power. Let the Jedi seek their balance and the Sith their passion, but his was an older race. For him the Force was a paradox; a full emptiness, a blinding dark. Manifesting his desire from nothing was well beyond the japes and tricks of the Jedi or Sith. He had been at this for millennia. He was a master. He honed his skill as an artist practices their craft.

He pulled the closest guard toward himself. “Do you have my poetry pad?” The guard nodded. "Transcribe this so I don’t forget.”

Snoke steepled his fingers in front of him, fixating on where they came together, then opened his mind to the vacuum of space and let the words appear:

```
Here I reign, Supreme  
Upon my throne of lies  
Blood of my enemies screams  
With impotent wordless cries
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```
From across the galaxy, they come  
To take this throne of Dark Magic  
But they don't know the things I've done  
Binding them to their fates most tragic
```

```
I sit here swathed in sparkly lamé  
But all that glitters is not gold
```

Snoke paused. What rhymes with lamé? Display. Birthday. Ashtray. Nothing was quite right. “Hmm.” He drummed his fingers against the arms of the throne, then exclaimed, “I’ve got it!”

```
I turn to the left and sashay
```

“Yes sashay, that’s good, don’t you think?” He looked at the guard, who, obviously, said nothing.

```
I turn to the left and sashay away  
No one chasing me into the cold
```

“You know... because I’ve killed them all? So they can’t chase me?” The guard just stared at him. Or so he assumed. Those red masks obscured everything. “No? Ah well.”
All eyes are on the mystical prize
Those glorious flash-fried chicken thighs

He stopped again. *Flash-fried chicken thighs?* That wasn’t right, but all he could think about was food. “Dinner time, I think.” He had let his blood sugar get low and it was seeping into his work.

Snoke looked around until his eyes settled on one of his unpleasant metal servants. “Droid, fetch me my dinner. I would like chicken his evening.” *I have to remember to take my pills after dinner. I can’t take them on an empty stomach.* His ‘itis had been flaring up again. He had endured more and more pain during the last century. ‘A side effect of old age,’ his doctors had said. *Old. Who’s old? Certainly not me.* He turned back to the guard holding the datapad. “Right. Where was I?”

All eyes are on the mystical prize...

In which we learn of Snoke’s past and his penchant for shipping:

Snoke was only halfway through the evening cycle when he learned that the *Reaper* was behind on its tax collection. General Yellen had remained silent through most of her reprimand, unable to say much while being held upside down and choked. He had found that was the easiest way to make sure his point got across. The Emperor had favored Force lighting but he found Force choking to be a much better tool. It was the only thing that he and Darth Vader had agreed on. *Bloody Vader.*

He and Senator Palpatine had been friends long before Anakin Skywalker had dropped out of nowhere. *Well, Tatooine, though might as well be nowhere.* It had been hard not to feel jealous of him. He was *The Apprentice*, chosen to do great things. Snoke had just been the Shadow Apprentice. *More like a ghost.* But he had outlived them both. It was his skill. In the vacuum left by the collapse of the Empire, Gallius Rex had activated the Contingency. He did not see the opportunity that lay before them. The way to remake the galaxy. It was all there within his grasp.

He gestured to the nearest Guard. “My poetry pad. Bring it to me,” he commanded. The guard brought him the special datapad. It had been configured outside the normal IT structure of the First Order, remaining separated and disconnected from the First Order network. He knew Daacha Ren had tried to hack into it but had failed. They all had, at one point or another.

*Daacha. That condescending tool.* He would have to think on whether or not the Knight had outlived his usefulness yet. Especially because he could not seem to create a simple system that could be used to holo the rest of the fleet. *How hard is it to make a system with one button to do everything? He is a Fallen Jedi! A wielder of the Dark Side. WHY IS THERE MORE THAN ONE BUTTON?!* There was a reason there where only two of the Dark Jedi left. *And soon there will only be one.*

They had come to him young, hardly schooled and raw. He could still smell the smoke from the Praxeum wafting from their skin. The youngest, Dopei, went first. He had reeked of fear and was not human. Snoke made no allowances for non-humans and had coaxed Kylo into killing him. ‘*It’s one life for many. Do you want all your friends to die?*’ It was then that the Dark started to take root in Ben Solo, or as he was now called, Kylo Ren.

The next to go were Malaak and Elsa. They were so deeply in love that it was almost too easy to turn their passion into hatred. Their battle had been something to behold, a fantastic fight involving
so many chairs, eventually ending in their mutual beheading.

Then Nala. She didn’t like poetry. He invaded her mind with rhymes, driving her mad until she finally slit her own throat with a dinner knife.

He’d assumed, wrongly, that Daacha would be next. He was weak and the scar from the loss of his twin sister shone prominently across his Force signature. Snoke could not understand how he could live with Treso’s treacherous action, and he knew Daacha’s compassion held him back from being a true follower of the Dark Side.

Originally, Snoke had thought the final two would be Treso and Kylo, or as he liked to think of them, Trylo. They would have made a good pair, Treso’s harshness balanced out Kylo’s softness. He’d been surprised when Treso had been driven mad by his wife. Wife. What a waste of time she had been. It was for good reason the Jedi had forbidden marriage. Women made legs weak and resolves crumble. There was no place for them in the First Order. He hadn’t given up on Treso and Kylo and had kept Treso alive, mostly. Though that woman’s drugs were useful in begetting maximum obedience from the soldiers, a Dark Jedi capable of battle meditation was not something to be thrown away. Even if he had tried to kill the Supreme Leader of the First Order.

So he was left with Kylo and Daacha. Snoke couldn’t imagine them together. Kycha? Daachlo? Both were weak and fragile. They can barely get out of bed. They would not be able to sustain the First Order. His only hope was Hux. Hmm, Kylux, that could work. Hux would bring the fire and Kylo, the smolder.

He thought of them longing for each other, clutching themselves in loneliness. Just the other day, Kylo had shot Hux a heated glare across the throne room. Those two just really need to get a room and work out their… problems. He felt suddenly inspired by their forbidden love.

His smoldering glare set Hux aflame
Hux hoped and prayed he would feel the same
His mind played out scenarios filled with longing clutches
But in the end, he just wanted… ginger touches

This was helping, a little Kylux dabble before he went back to his main work, his epic paean to the Force. Snoke opened himself to the void and let it fill him. He was an empty cup, filled to the brim with nothing. Empty space, that was his ability. He could create empty space then occupy it at will. He opened his eyes and let the words flow.

I sit upon my throne of ebony
Contemplating my galactic legacy

"And a great one, it is, this throne. Although, you there..." He called to the nearest praetorian guard." Get my donut pillow. My tush is hurting. Now, where was I? Aww, yes,"

Behold my golden robes of power
Worn to make my enemies cower

"Yes, yes, they cower with fear," he cackled to himself. “No one has robes as golden as I.”

My scarred visage betrays my past
The product of a rebellious clash

"But still prettier than Kylo Ren." He Force-choked the guard to his right. "Isn't that right?" The guard went limp. “Dang,” he remarked, letting the guard drop to the floor.
**In which Snoke gets metaphysical and discovers the Force-bond:**

Snoke was sitting on his throne, deep in meditation, reaching out into the Force. Suddenly, a thread materialized in front of him, glistening just out of reach. “Hmm... Well, well, what is this?” He stroked his chin contemplatively. The thread stretched across the immeasurable expanse of space. He reached out to touch it but pulled back at the last second, wary. One didn’t live as long as he did by touching random Force objects.

He followed the thread, his Force winding its way across the black abyss before finally coming upon his apprentice. The thread was both attached and separate from Kylo. It was clearly linked to him and yet it was able to pass through as if it were an illusion. Upon further inspection, the thread appeared to be woven into the very fabric of Kylo’s essence, the lustrous fiber moving through and around him. He was entirely entangled and yet appeared unaware of the attachment, unimpeded in mind or body.

I have not seen anything like this in my time within the Force, nor otherwise. What could be the purpose of such a thing? His quest for knowledge unsatisfied, Snoke turned and traced the cord back to its source. Slowly, agonizingly slowly, he glided across the galaxy. After what seemed an endless amount of time, he arrived at his destination.

A girl? She was sitting on a sand dune next to a fallen AT-AT, unaware of his presence. The thread was woven throughout her very being, just as he saw with his apprentice. As before, she seemed unaware. Her essence was intertwined with his and yet they were both oblivious. He considered the implications of this... thread. Was it a connection, a shared fate? Curious, he stretched out a finger and cautiously, gently, allowed his fingers to brush against it. When nothing happened, he plucked it. A low note sounded at first, but the vibration rose until it filled his mind, his body, his whole being. His beautiful empty space was replaced with crashing sound.

The sound pulsed with longing, a painful need. "An awakening," he sneered. The sound was everywhere now, and it had reached a deafening pitch. "Too loud!" He had made a mistake, a grave mistake. He thought that he had winnowed the Jedi down to their last dregs, but instead, the Force had rebounded.

On Jakku, Rey was watching the sunset. Alone. Again. For one moment she felt a note pulse and sing through her whole body. It was Peace. Understanding. Balance. She had never felt anything like it, and for once the night did not seem to hold empty promises. Instead, she felt a connection for one brief moment, and then, just as quickly, it was gone.

Snoke made a hasty retreat and returned to himself in the throne room. “Uh-oh, I have a bad feeling about this.”

**In which Snoke considers the importance of pants:**

It was Thursday. Laundry day. Which meant no pants. The Core World embargo was at first a
bother, then a nuisance, and now a full-blown crisis. While they could find other fabrics for uniforms, Correllian Ovine was the only way to go, as it had a nice weight and wore well. Anything less would just have been a sartorial sacrilege. Rear Admiral Gelerta Shutan had bemoaned the poor quality that she was able to find.

“It is such trash. I cannot stomach outfitting the officers of the First Order in such substandard stuff. Maybe if this was the Fifth Order, or the Sixth, but certainly not the First,” she sniffed.

“Too true,” agreed Snoke, fingering the samples she had sent. “But more importantly, what about the other fabric I asked for? The lamé?”

She wrinkled her nose delicately, “My apologies, Supreme Leader, but I was not able to procure it. Even after I offered the smugglers triple. Perhaps it is time to confront the Embargo. It is simply making life impossible for artists like you and me.”

While Snoke had never shared his poetry with the Rear Admiral, they had discussed it and the fickle creature that was their Muse. “Indeed, Rear Admiral. I will think on it.”

And so he did. What could I possibly use to get the Core Worlds to lift the Embargo? It has to be big. Something that will make a statement. A bombastic statement. A bomb? I wonder if one of the techs could rig something up. Or maybe... perhaps a cannon would be better. He chuckled to himself. Good thing I have a planet-sized cannon just waiting to be revealed to the galaxy.

Snoke beckoned the closest guard over, “Push the button to make me appear before General Hux.” The guard pushed the middle button, “That was exactly the button I would have pushed. You have passed the test. Once the pants are out of the dryer, you get first pick.” In his opinion, warm pants were the ultimate reward.

Hux entered the projection field, kneeling with eyes downcast.

“General Hux, I was told you returned to Starkiller unexpectedly. Since I did not order your return there, perhaps you could explain?” Snoke reached out through space to grab his throat and squeezed. He had noticed that lately Hux had been distracted. He hoped throwing Kylo into his path was finally paying off.

“S-s-uptimel-l-l-eader, Sir...” Snoke loosened his grip. ”I received word that the Commandant of Starkiller was acting erratically and had disappeared. Due to the sensitive nature of the Starkiller Project, it warranted immediate investigation.”

“Indeed,” Snoke vaguely remembered an older man, a relic of the Empire, that had been assigned to replace Hux on Starkiller once it was complete. If Hux is back on Starkiller, I will have to direct Kylo there to ensure their paths cross. A verse popped into his head at the thought of the two of them together.

Hux is eager to please
Running around my knees
Bitting at his fleas

Kylo’s tail is swishing
And I know he’s wishing
That he could eat what Hux is dishing

Fickle Muse, he couldn’t very well write this down in front of Hux. How entirely maddening.

“Interesting, interesting,” Snoke replied. “Yes, that does require your attention. I will re-assign you
there until he can be found. Do you have any insight yet on why this happened?"

“No, Sir, but as you know from my report; Follow, Focus, and Furor are failing due to the sabotage of the former director, so this could be a related incident. He may have gone mad, Sir, just as Treso—"

Snoke felt the anger course through him at Treso’s name. Why did Hux continue to beat around the bush? *Really, I know he wants Kylo.* He cut Hux off, “YOU DARE SPEAK THE NAME OF THE TRAITOR?!” He threw Hux to the floor, adding crushing pressure to pin his entire body to the ground. He would never bring up Treso again. ”He betrayed the First Order with his half-breed, harpy of a wife. He neither delivered the Force Child I required nor the technological means to make it happen as she promised.”

Snoke took a moment to let the punishment sink in. He had to be careful not to kill Hux, it wasn’t like he was a technician, easily replaceable. *I must get that fabric.* He relented. “Be that as it may, your arrival on Starkiller is fortuitous. You are just the man for the job. I wish to demonstrate the power of the base to the rest of the Galaxy. Use Starkiller to blow up the Hosnian System.”

“Sir, the Hosnian System, the heart of the New Republic?”

*No, silly boy, the OTHER Hosnian System. The one without the textile embargo.* “Yes General, the very same. With the completion of Starkiller, we now have the means to end the embargo that the New Republic and the Core Worlds have placed on the First Order. Goods will flow again. Most importantly, textiles will be available to make pants. We must show the Galaxy that we are a power unto ourselves, and what better way to do so than by eradicating its central government? With the Senate gone, the galaxy will lay at our feet. The pants will be ours.”

“It will be a monumental display of power, to be sure, Supreme Leader. Without the double-dealers on Hosnian Prime, the Resistance will lose its support and will wither away like shadows before the sun. There will be trousers for all.”

Snoke caught the slight whiff of sarcasm from his General. For a moment he considered another Force choke, but perhaps Hux had simply made a mistake. He should correct him. "You mean pants."

“Excuse me, Supreme Leader?”

"You said trousers. Not pants. It’s pants."

"Of course Supreme Leader. My mistake, there will be pants for all."

*Excellent, he understands.* Snoke continued, “Of course, General. You will rally the Stormtroopers. Give them a speech. Remind them why we are all here.” *To end the embargo. I need my precious lamé.* “I expect this done by the end of the day. Do not disappoint me.”

Snoke gestured to the guard to end the Holo. “We should see pants within the week.” Snoke tried not to smile. He would enjoy Pantless Thursdays while they lasted though. *It’s for the good of the Order, after all.* There was a pant shortage. The least he could do was let the Guards march around without pants. He didn’t make them do high kicks anyway. *I’m not a monster. Or that perverted. Usually.*
In which Snoke illustrates how much size matters:

Kylo Ren’s need for guidance projected toward him through the Force, practically screamed at him. Snoke knew he did not do this intentionally, and in fact, he probably meant to hide these feelings from his master, but his apprentice still fought to control his emotions. So needy.

He chuckled to himself and looked at a guard, “Even after all these years under my thumb. Will he never learn? Ah, youth today and their grandiose schemes.” He would need to show him again, Forcibly, if necessary, but now was not the moment for those kinds of fun and games.

By the time Kylo arrived at the Holo-theater, Snoke had already activated the projector. His scarred visage, complete with throne, was projected into the theater on the enormous setting. Daacha had originally fought him on it, not grasping the concept that Size Matters, in this as in all things. Daacha kept trying to adjust it down, causing Snoke intense annoyance. The Tool had tried to explain how the size parameters for the holo-projectors worked, but he did not care to listen so he had silenced his voice.

As if Daacha could ever get the settings right anyway. He still can’t program one button to do everything, so why does he think he should he be trusted with this task? In the end, one of the many techs that had come to help had finally gotten it right. On the rare occasion that he had to reset the size parameters, he just had to select ‘Snokey.’ The tech had put a sticky note next to the right button, the one button that he needed. Maybe I should have set her up with Daacha. She could have given him a few pointers on buttons. Maybe she would have given me the child I desire. A child to fulfill my plans. A child that understands the importance of one gosh dang button!

He remembered the tech specifically because the tech had been a woman. He hadn’t allowed one in his direct presence for years, choosing instead to instruct General Yellen and Rear Admiral Shutan through Holos. The tech had been rather pleasant, it was really too bad he’d had to kill her the next time he saw her. Too mouthy. Why are women are always so mouthy?

Kylo swept in and knelt at his feet, head bent in reverence. Snoke swept through his mind, ascertaining his intentions immediately. Her again. The girl. It seemed that her awakening wasn’t only being felt through the Force, but also in Kylo’s pants. Dirty little Sith. She was but a tender bud, petals opening slowly and shyly to her Force powers. Most importantly, she was on Starkiller, the most protected place in the galaxy. His apprentice, soft as he was, longed to know her but did not know what to do with her now that he had her.

Women and their feminine wiles, bringing men to their knees and ruining all my plans. At least Kylo doesn’t know who she is to him. If he finds out… Snoke banished the thought. Any revelation about the nature of their connection could turn Kylo against him. And Daacha, that daft fool, would follow him, of course he would , once he learned the truth. Yes, he has outlived his usefulness. I shall kill him when he returns.

“Inform me on your progress with the girl,” Snoke commanded. Kylo hesitated, so Snoke breached his mind in a show of power. Kylo grimaced in pain. “The scavenger resisted you?”

“She is strong with the Force,” Kylo responded. “Untrained but stronger than she knows.”

“And the droid?” Stupid metal abominations.

Hux chose that moment to stalk into the throne room and interrupt them. It he wasn’t so efficient and useful, I would crush him. Well, maybe not. He and Kylo are such a nice pair. Kylo’s angsty
fire, Hux’s obsessive-compulsive clenching. It’s the stuff those sexy holos are made of. Besides, training a new general is such a bother. I wonder if I could use a whistle… Would the sound travel over the holo?

“Ren believed it was no longer valuable to us. That the girl was all we needed.” He looked at Kylo with disgust, like Kylo was a slime on the bottom of his shoe. Methinks I detect some sexual tension. They deserve each other. I should compel them to kiss, just this once. “As a result,” Hux continued, “The droid has most likely been returned to the hands of the enemy. They may have the map already.”

Those blasted Skywalkers! Just showing up and ruining my plans. WILL I NEVER BE RID OF THEM? First Vader, usurping my rightful place next to Darth Sidious. Then his spawn, Vader Junior, ruining my beautiful face. And now, Baby Vader Wannabe. If his little bond ruins this, I will DESTROY him. Then I will mess with his mother, something cruel like ‘Your mama is so fat that even the Death Star couldn’t blow her up.’ Which come to think of it, that’s partially true. Heh, Baby Vader, I must remember that.

“Then the Resistance must be destroyed before they get to Skywalker,” Snoke replied. Why can’t we just kill them all and be done with it?

Hux perked up, like a pet looking for a treat. “We have their location. We tracked their reconnaissance ship to the Illenium system.”

Eeeexxcccceellent. Keep sniffing, dog. Biscuit for you if this works out. “Good, then we will crush them once and for all. Prepare the weapon.” And this better work. Hanky-panky and explosions are what keeps me going.

“Supreme leader, I can get the map from the girl, I just need your guidance.” He looked up at Snoke anxiously as Hux walked out of the room with renewed purpose.

“If what you say about this girl is true, bring her to me.” Snoke could see it written plainly on Kylo’s face: the sap wanted to keep the girl all to himself. And yet he doesn’t know? They are BOUND! How can he not know? They are BOUND! How can he not know? The lust must blind him. He touched Kylo’s mind again and found intrigue. Kylo knew she was special, important, but he hadn’t pinned down the reason for these feelings. What a buffoon. Well, he will discover the thread soon enough. They both will. Their lives have been intertwined since her birth.

Kylo bowed and the holo blinked off.

Chapter End Notes

Did you miss us?
We missed you, but summertime ennui and flooded basements intervened. Hopefully, back to a more frequent posting schedule unless we get distrac....

SQUIRREL!!!!
Jasper

Chapter Summary

Plottiness because HeartS was on vacation.

Chapter Notes

A/N (shuns): If we can contain ourselves and NOT digress (HeartS laughs) we are within striking distance of the end to this story. Probably 6-7 chapters. They are sketched out but not written so posting will continue haphazardly. (Sorry) However, we promise you a tidy ending that will pull the loose ends together.

There probably won’t be a cliff hanger... we wouldn’t be that evil.

Or would we?

See the end of the chapter for more notes

TX-12, Present Day:

Keech was sure her head was going to split in two. Making an unsupported incursion into a supercomputer using an illegal mind modification resulted in a migraine. *I'll add it to the side effect list.* She had a small stock of painkillers but they would probably be ineffective against her brain liquifying and dripping out her ear. Because it sure felt like that’s what would come next.

She opened the door to her quarters with a sigh of relief, ready to collapse on her bed. It was cut short when she saw Jasper. He sat in her desk chair, looking at her. His face was blank, like he was holding all his emotions in check, but only just. “What the *fuck* did you do?” he growled.

Keech stumbled and caught the wall, using the moment to arrange her face into a neutral mask. “What do you mean?” She recovered by leaning against it, folding her arms across her chest. She was glad the wall held her up because if she had stood unsupported, she would have swayed. Now was not the time to be weak.

He snarled, “You weren’t fixing a corrupted data store, were you? I don’t know what kind of novice you think I am, but I know you sent out something large using my clearance.” He unfolded from the chair and walked toward her with slow, measured steps. “Right around the time the Pulverizer blew up.” His hands were clenched into fists.

“No, seriously, I have a massive headache and you are making no sense. I don’t know anything about the Pulverizer.” *Oh shit, fuck, and seven hells.* Keech looked around the room for anything she could use as a weapon within reach. He was too close, he had blocked her off. Her pulse was rising.

“Oh, but I think you do.” He grabbed her upper arms and his eyes flicking between hers as he held her in place. “It was the most brilliant fucking thing I’ve ever seen.” He leaned in and his lips
crashed against hers as he dropped his hands to her waist. He lifted her and backed them up until she was pinned against the wall. The force of the kiss cracked her head against it and she saw stars, unable to tell if they were caused by a head injury or the denial of oxygen as he devoured her mouth.

Her hands found their way into his hair as she kissed him back, their teeth clicking; the kiss was hard, hot, and raw. His tongue shoved into her mouth, probing and pushing. R’iia, she didn’t know he had it in him. If blowing up a destroyer turned him on... *Wait, that shouldn’t turn him on, he’s First Order.*

“Stop, Jasper, stop. I don’t understand.” She pushed him back to look him in the eyes. They were glassy with lust and his lips were already swollen with the fierce kisses he had rained down her mouth. *This makes no sense.* “Why would you want me to blow up a destroyer?”

His face fell just a bit. “Then Holdo never told you? She’s no fool. Why send just one spy when you can send two? While you’ve been playing defense, I’ve been playing offense trying to sabotage their systems. But I guess you beat me there, too.” He drew her close again, feathering kisses from her temple to her cheek then to the corner of her mouth. He kissed her again, moving his lips slowly over hers and nipping her lips every once in a while as he stole her breath away.

*What the fuck is happening?* Keech remembered Holdo’s training. She had talked about offense and defense. She also talked about compartmentalization, only knowing as much as you needed to do the job. It kept everyone safe. Too much information could jeopardize a cell or ship. But there was such a thing as counter intelligence. He could be trying to draw her out. *This could be a trap. A big fucking trap.* She tried to wiggle free from his arms, “I don’t know what you’re talking about.”

He let her down and grabbed her shoulders as he looked into her eyes, “You are Keech Favi. The Hope of the Resistance. Victim of the Bador massacre. Survivor of Azraya. The love of Poe Dameron. Co-inventor of the Babbit sequence. Though, at that time you were known as Movi Coyle. I know who you are, Keech, believe me.”

Her heart was racing, practically galloping out of her chest. “Show me.”

One of the reasons why Bothan spies were so useful was that they could go anywhere, changing their appearance, their mind, and allegedly, even their smell, to blend in. They could manipulate their matter, making themselves larger or smaller as necessary. If Jasper was really a spy for the Resistance, that meant he was a Bothan. Once the First Order had started using the mind shaping drugs, only Bothans and droids could spy. This meant that the face she had known for almost a year was a lie.

His face went hazy for a moment as his cheekbones, curly hair, and bright eyes morphed, losing definition as the fur returned. His body shrank, stopping at about one meter tall. He had brown-black fur and long ears, like a lotha cat. Keech tried not to think about where his hands, *his claws*, had been. *What is it with me and cats?* He blinked up at her and his long whiskers twitched. She could just see the tip of a very bushy tail swishing back and forth. The silence stretched awkwardly between them.

He smirked. “Not what you were expecting?”

Keech looked him up and down. She shook her head trying to clear her thoughts, the headache wasn’t as bad thanks the adrenaline spike of the past few minutes, but she felt drained. She shrugged. “Not really. I guess I’m more shocked than anything else. My secret lover is not human and he is a Resistance spy. Oh! And he is turned on because I blew up a star destroyer! This day
really couldn’t get any weirder. No wait, don’t tell me. The Supreme Leader secretly writes poetry and General Hux is into bondage. Nothing can surprise me anymore.” She would remember that later.

Jasper sat down on the bed and patted the spot next to him. “What were you thinking? You put a target on my back, and if they find me, they’ll find you too. We have to leave.”

Keech sat down with a thump. Her world had just been upended; between her receding headache and the burgeoning heartache, she was finding it extremely hard to concentrate. Thoughts flitted through her mind too fast to register. “Yah, uh, sorry about that. They were getting close to me so I needed to do something.”

He snorted, "That was something all right."

Keech rolled her eyes. "Do you have a plan? Because right now my give-a-fuck is broken. Seriously, I got nothing.”

"Do you still have your comm array?"

Keech had to stop and replay his words before she answered, “No, it’s hosed. Daacha Ren busted everything to hell. Besides, it takes more than a day to send a message. I programmed it to send out small bursts to prevent detection.”

He grinned at her, “Clever, but now is not the time to be subtle. Do you think you could fix it and boost the signal?”

“Probably, but I’ll probably fry my brain if I try to code. What about you, could we use your contact method?”

“I have a dead drop on the supply ships. We might see another supply ship soon because of the Pulverizer, but I don't want to bet my life on it.” He was right, there had been fewer supply ships lately, and one might even call their timing sporadic at this point. “The survivors will be coming in for the next seventy-two hours, but after that, it’ll just be a recovery mission. The traffic should hide any messages.” He put a furry arm around her and drew her toward him, and she was so tired that she let him. He was warm and he still smelled like he always did: a little sweet and musky. She rested her head on his shoulder. “Take a quick nap. Then we can take advantage of the chaos.”

Keech laid down but reached her arms towards him, “Cuddle?”

Jasper growled in the back of his throat, his eyes were slitted, “I thought you didn’t like cuddling?”

Keech yawned, “I don't like cuddling in storage closets. This is a proper bed and you have soft fur. Can I pet you?”

Jasper laid down next to Keech. He was slightly smaller than her, so she curled around him and rested her arm on his chest. She stroked the fur as he purred. She knew this was weird, but it was so comforting to touch him. The fur was nice but having an ally that was better.

“Why didn’t you tell me before?” Keech asked, ending on a yawn.

“I thought you knew and you were playing your role. I know it’s hard for humans to lie. You were very good. You hardly ever broke your cover. So I didn’t want to interfere and make it harder for you, but I did want to be close to you. I always wanted to meet the Hope of the Resistance.”

Keech snorted, “Sorry you got Specialist Second Class Keech Favi instead.” She stroked his neck
and he stretched so she could get at what she guessed was his sensitive spot. It was now or never. “Since we are revealing all our secrets, is the reason you never want to go down on me because you are a Bothan? Is it some weird pheromone or Alpha/Beta/Omega thing? Sorry, but I have wanted to know for ages.”

“No, I just don’t like the taste.”

“You are an asshat.”

“Humans make no sense. Why would an ass need a hat?” he growled.

”indeed,” Keech chuckled as she drifted off to sleep.

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Keech woke with a start. The space next to her in bed was empty and cool. Jasper was long gone. She roused and blearily cleaned herself in the sonic, threw on a uniform, and made her way to the cafeteria, only to find that all the hells had broken loose.

The only space large enough to accommodate the survivors from the *Pulverizer* was the dining hall. After triage, they would be billeted to quarters. There would be doubling, and probably, tripling up, but that was a future problem. Now, the issue was just to help them.

People were hunched in chairs moaning, and she could hear screams and whimpers coming from behind the curtains. The few that were capable shuffled toward the caf machine and the hot mush that was being served. When she got to the caf machine, one of the wounded was trying to get it to work one-handed; his sleeve was folded and pinned where an arm should have been. Keech pulled down the release and caf flowed into his cup. He looked at her and nodded before shuffling off. Keech tried not to let that set her off breakfast, she needed the calories if she was going to make a run at rebuilding her comm array. As a veteran of too many desperate battles, she knew this was what was left after the adrenaline burned off: thousand meter stares, broken bodies, and shitty caf. It shouldn’t matter. They were the enemy. She had done the right thing to protect herself and eliminate a threat. She had watched the First Order devastate countless worlds. Up until this moment, she had never considered what happened to them after a battle. She just assumed they went back to their evil lair and plotted. The fact that they had set up a triage to care for the wounded was normal, expected even. Not something an evil empire would do. But the First Order hadn’t caused this misery. No, she was the one who built the code. All of this misery was her doing. A gnawing panic filled her and a sob escaped her lips. She turned and walked quickly out of the space, overwhelmed. Before she knew it, she was running, for once not giving a fuck who could see.

She found their storage closet quickly. The room where she and Jasper, her fellow spy, had had sex just a few hours ago. *Has it only been a few hours? It feels like days have passed.* She opened the door except it caught on something. “Oof,” the something said. Keech flicked on the light and gasped with surprise. He had bags under his eyes and was wearing a training shirt and pants. When she had seen him last he was plowing into a busty blonde. A breathy word escaped her lips as she sagged against the doorway, “Tam.”

“Who the kriff are you?” he asked.

She walked into the closet and sat next to him on the floor. “As improbable as it seems, I am KF-
3546. Or as you call me, Kriffer.” He looked like he was chewing on her words, trying them on for goodness of fit.

“KF?” His eyes went wide.

She pulled out her ID stick and pressed the button to show her credentials. “In the flesh.”

“I-I-I can’t believe this,” he stammered, looking her up and down. “You don’t look anything like I expected.”

She quirked her eyebrow at him.

He groaned, "I didn't mean it that way. I just mean... um... you are... um... well, you." His cheeks were red with a fierce blush. He cleared his throat, "How’d you find me?"

“It’s not so much finding but stumbling upon; this is my hideout. I come here to think.”

“Yeah, I know what you mean. I had a thinking spot too on the… ship.”

Keech winced before continuing, “You need some time alone or do you want company?”

He stared hard at the opposite wall for a minute then shrugged. “Company would be fine.”

Keech had been down this road before, but now the shoe was on the other foot. She could still remember the days of Poe rambling on about BB-8’s maintenance routine and the seasons on Yavin 4 which seemed to be rain, rainier and torrent. She leaned back against the door and stared at the opposite wall. Then she started talking. She talked about her struggles with Bala’s file and what she would do to crack it open. While not the same as the BALL files he had invented, they seemed similar and she hoped he might have some insight, or that she might get an idea while talking it out.

She was outlining the hard crack methodology she would need to break into it when he blurted, “They’re all dead. And there was nothing I could do to save them.” He pressed his palms to his eyes and hunched forward. “I was in the escape pod for seventeen hours until they picked us up.”

She nodded, not making eye contact.

“She died, KF. I was in one of the officer pods with a… uh… friend. The turbulence of the atmosphere from the ship breaking apart tossed the pod around like a toy when it exploded. She broke her neck. And I held her body for seventeen fucking hours.”

She nodded, not making eye contact.

“She died, KF. I was in one of the officer pods with a… uh… friend. The turbulence of the atmosphere from the ship breaking apart tossed the pod around like a toy when it exploded. She broke her neck. And I held her body for seventeen fucking hours.”

“Shit,” Keech said softly. She reached out, took his hand gently. She looked down and noticed he was rubbing small circles with her thumb. She had done that for months after Kuat, at one point she rubbed the skin off her hand. Bacta had fixed her wounds but it did nothing to help her mind. He looked at their joined hands and back up at her. His face was blank, like he didn’t know what emotion to process for this touch. She squeezed.

She knew what it was like to survive when you didn’t understand why. The burden of living was hard to shoulder. You did it because you had to go on living for those that were lost. After all the shit that had happened and all the terrible things she had done, she had kept on going. Not for herself, but for those she had lost. It was how she showed her continued love for them.

Keech squeezed his hand again and willed all she knew about surviving into the squeeze. There are some things you can’t say; she hoped he could feel them instead. He looked up, his eyes no longer blank. Something flicked through his eyes but it was too fast, she couldn’t read it. *Emotions are*
She understood when he squeezed her hand back.

“Come on. I know they haven’t assigned anyone quarters yet, but you look like shit. Why don’t you take a kip it in my quarters while I try to get you a replacement uniform and something to eat that isn’t mush?” She stood, still holding his hand. He looked up at her and nodded.

When she tucked him into bed, it was hard not to feel the weight of what she had done. A thousand people dying was a statistic, but one person dying was a fucking tragedy. She didn’t think that boots and clean pants could make it up to him, but it was a place to start.

There was no doubt that the pants shortage was real. She had gone all over the station looking for a uniform that would fit an almost two-meter tall man. The quartermaster wasn’t any help, though she only found that out after he made her show him her breasts in exchange for a uniform he didn’t have. Pervert. She had gone to the laundry and tried stealing one, the laundry drones chased her away, swearing in pissed off binary and pinching her with their calipers. She did manage to snag a pair of underpants, but in the end, her only option was Jasper. Tam was taller, but at least he wouldn’t have to be naked.

He looked up as she entered, “Wanna explain why there is a man snoring loudly in your quarters?”

“It’s been a weird fucking day.” She shrugged and leaned up against the wall. “The guy is a friend. He’s sleeping off being in an escape pod for seventeen hours.”

“You realize that our covers were blown, we are trying to get off this base and you invited the First Order - the enemy - into your quarters.” He ran his hand through his hair. He had reverted to his human form, and looking at him, she realized that he looked an awful lot like Poe.

“Wow, thanks for breaking that down for me. I had totally forgotten what was at stake. I’m so glad you were here to remind me,” she crossed her arms, “Fixing the array won’t take long, it’s just costly,” she paused for a moment, “Do you have an extra pair of pants?”

His brows shot up. “That’s cold Keech. First, you are putting us in more danger, then you’re giving him my pants. What’s next? You gonna fuck him too?”

“It’s a possibility. No, Jas. He just has nothing. He left the ship in his sleep wear. Come on. Be a pal. Help me out? I could make it worth your while.”

“Really? You would trade sexual favors for a pair of pants?”

She considered him for a moment. “Depends on the favor.”

“Spanking?” Jasper’s face gave nothing away, but his eyes were dark. “You’d let me? Really?”

Keech nodded. Why not? It’s not like this day could get any worse.

Keech had a lot of kinks but spanking wasn’t one of them. It had never really turned her on. Sex with Poe had been so good that they didn’t need anything extra to spice it up. She nodded, “Yeah, sure, let’s give it a shot.”

She stripped her jacket, pants, and underthings, moving toward him. “You will be gentle with me,
right?” she asked, quirking an eyebrow.

He grinned, “Maybe. Turn around and put your hands flat on the wall.” She obeyed and felt the heat rising in her cheeks. He was barefoot and his steps were quiet as he approached her, finally standing behind her. He stood breathing in and out long enough that she turned, ready to cut into him.

“I didn’t say you could turn around. Face the wall. Palms flat against it,” he said coolly.

She shivered. *This is new.* He had never taken charge like this before. He stepped into her, using one of his legs to push hers apart, his breath tickled the back of her neck. The few stray hairs that had escaped her standard bun brushed her neck making her shiver.

“Did you know there is a whole list of prohibited actions thanks to you and Dameron? We called them the Dam-Hope rules because no one had a ‘damn hope’ that they would ever get that lucky. The ones about what is not allowed in a cockpit alone made me cum in my pants.” He trailed a finger down her lower back then palmed her butt, massaging it. “You are a very naughty woman Keech. What do you think happens to naughty women who blow up star destroyers?”

“I-I-I don’t know? I’m guessing it isn't a big group, so not so much precedence.”

His response was a stinging smack on her right butt cheek. He leaned into her and whispered into her ear, “Naughty women who blow up star destroyers get punished.”

There was another smack, this time on her left cheek. “That’s for letting another man into your bed.” A third stinging slap added to the warmth. “And that’s for giving my pants to him.”

Keech was biting her bottom lip. She had no idea how *fucking hot* this would be. She was tingling everywhere, sure that her gush of arousal was dripping down her leg. She could hardly stand it, tilting her head to let a moan slip free.

He put the most force into the fourth and final slap. “And this one is for whatever dirty thoughts you are thinking. You are as bad as a Hutt.”

“Will you fuck me now?” Keech whined. “Seriously, just do it already.”

She heard scrape and jingle as he unbuckled his belt and shoved his pants down. Then his fingers tested her, dipping into the *lake* that had formed between her legs. He pulled her ass just a bit higher, then there was something hard and warm. “When you send the message to the Resistance for evac, make sure to request a two seater and a deaf pilot.” He pushed all the way to his hilt with one thrust. She let out a hiss. *Damn if this didn't feel good.* “Because you are sitting on my lap all the way back.”

He covered one of her palms with his, the other hand curled around one of her breasts as he flicked the nipple with his fingers. He was trailing kisses down the side of her neck as he set a punishing rhythm. In and out. In and out. He was squeezing her breast and hand, as he dragged his teeth up her neck. This was easily in the top ten of fucks she had ever had, and this was by far the best it had ever been with Jasper. She took everything he was giving her. When he dropped his hand to rub her clit, this moved up to being in the top five of fucks. When she came, the orgasm left her weak kneed and ready to fall down. She leaned her head against the wall for support. *Thank Gods for walls.* Jasper draped himself over her and sucked where her neck and shoulder joined. They were both panting and sweating.

“So that was… something…” Keech said. “We should do that more often.”
Jasper chuckled as he withdrew, “Sonic?”

They took turns cleaning up. She sat on his bed and watched him get dressed. He pulled on a red undershirt. “So you need one of everything, right?”

He palmed the plate to reveal a closet built into the wall and pulled out a full uniform complete with hat. As he handed it over to her, he cautioned, “Be careful Keech. We have a lot on the line right now.”

Keech stood and caressed his cheek. His whiskers tickled her fingers. “I know, you saucy bastard. I promise I won’t get you or myself killed,” she paused, “Intentionally.”

She gave him a peck on the cheek and opened up the door. Normally, when Keech left Jasper’s quarters she was very careful, sneaking out so no one would see her, but she was in a hurry to get back to Tam, so she just stepped out into the hall. A movement to her right caught her eye.

One night years ago, Keech and Lando had been drinking, a normal occurrence, but on this particular night, Corellian brandy had been involved. A lot of fucking Corellian brandy. They were talking about close calls and comparing scars when they started talking about Darth Vader. Like many beings throughout the galaxy, she had a morbid curiosity about him. The only thing that was left were holos, and while he seemed menacing, what could a holo really tell you?

When Lando described his encounter with Vader in Cloud City, Keech had actually gotten the chills. The cape, the mask, and the raspy breathing sounded terrifying, but what Lando had fixated on most was the encroaching darkness.

Lando's eyes were distant, thinking of a different place and time. "It felt like I would never see another sunny day or have another happy thought. It was like... if a black hole could be a person. He was actually sucking all the light toward him. All that was left behind was pain and hatred." He took a sip of his brandy. "I know you are curious, but I hope that you never have to feel something like that. No one should."

Now, here on this space station, Darth Vader was walking toward her. No, not Vader. His black helmet was crisscrossed with silver, as if every time the helmet had been damaged, he had fixed it with metal. It looked like battle scars. He was swathed in black from head-to-toe, black cape billowing out behind him. Worst of all, she could feel the icy emptiness that surrounded him. She pressed herself against the wall trying to shrink and go unnoticed. She clutched the bundle of clothing to her chest like a shield and bowed her head, knowing her expression would give her away. I hate you, fucker.

His tread slowed as he came closer to her at Jasper’s open door. He paused, his head turning to look them over. It felt like the longest ten seconds of her life until he continued on his way down the hall

That was the first time Keech saw Daacha Ren.

It wouldn’t be the last.

Chapter End Notes

(Pineapple rolls by)
HeartS: So what did I miss?

Shuns: (starring off into space) Oh nothing.

HeartS: I know that look, you're plotting aren’t you? Someone is going to die. You always get that look when you want to kill someone. Who is it? It’s not me right?

shuns: Why would I kill you? It’s not like you abandoned me for paradise, beautiful outdoor showers and drinking fruity cocktails from hollowed out pineapples? But it doesn’t matter. Anyway, I got you this red shirt.

HeartS: (reading from shirt) ‘I went to paradise and all I brought my co-author back was edits.’ *sighs* sorry shuns. If it makes you feel better I’ll put it on. (Dons shirt)

Shuns: Would you like some poi?

HeartS: Sure. (Eating poi) it tastes funny though is it the poi itself or ...wait... What did you do to the poi shuns? WHAT DID YOU DO?

shuns: MWhahahah.

A/N HS: Seriously though guys, the amount of Poke I ate in the last week was unreal. And so good. Thanks again to my sweet shunsy for plotting it up while I was away... and if you paid close enough attention, you might know what is coming next. Just TOSing you all a hint about shirts...
The Private Journal of Ben Solo

Chapter Summary

Ben Solo’s journal is very revealing.

Chapter Notes

HeartS: shuns what happened to us? It has been like forever since an update?!?!? (and by forever I mean over two months. WTF us?)

shuns: HeartS you will never know something as soul-crushing, energy-depleting, will-to-live-sapping as potty training ... of twins.

HeartS: Ewww.

shun: My life is actually shitty. So. Much. Poop. Why hasn’t someone built a robot to do this?

HeartS: Sounds like a business opportunity.

Finally a chapter...Just imagine this is handwritten. Because of course it's handwritten. In beautiful script too. With calligraphy pens. Obviously.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

17.3.14.10.26.12

Dad left last night. I wanted to go with him but he said next time. Like he always does. Why is it always next time?

Mom was gone all day. She said we would have dinner together at the floating restaurant tonight. She's going to miss my birthday next week because she has to go on a trade mission to the Outer Rim. I don't know what that is and I don't care. I don't understand why my birthday is less important than some dusty planets THAT NO ONE KNOWS ARE THERE. You only turn thirteen once. But I guess it's not as important as the plight of junk traders on some planet that just has a numeric designation.

I waited for her all night. In the end I just had a bowl of protein meal, then all ice cream I could eat. I finally went to bed after watching a selection from Dad's dirty holo stash. It was educational. I quite like boobs.

I had the dream again that night. Not sure if it was the ice cream or the fight. It started like it always does. It's black and cold. There's a snap and hiss. A bright red glowing sword. It looks like Uncle Luke’s lightsaber, but it’s different. Someone was holding it this time. Someone in a mask. There was a raspy breath followed by a metallic sigh. I know it’s Darth Vader.
I ran toward the light, but I was scared. I heard the voice directing me, familiar, but not. Like I’ve always known it. He asked me how I felt and I told him I was scared. He told me to use it, that fear is the master and I am its student. I told him I don’t want to learn about fear. I want to learn about the Force. He told me they are the same thing. He called me his apprentice, Kylo.

I wanted to tell him my name is Ben, not Kylo, but I then I woke up.

The bed was wet. C-3PO helped me change the linens. For once he didn’t say anything. I wanted to die. It was sooo embarrassing.

I can’t tell anyone I wet the bed.

18.4.6.20.19.13

I got in a fight today. My nose is broken. Mom is so mad. C-3PO lectured me and I told him to switch off. Dad would probably ruffle my hair and ask how the other guy looks. Then mom would give him the look and they would argue. Then I wouldn’t be in as much trouble.

But he isn’t here.

Again.

The fight was kinda cool. Everyone was there. Mermo was calling me “Sith Spawn” and flicking his gross tongue at me as his skin morphed color. I don’t know what a “sith” is but the way he was saying it, I know it must be something bad.

Whatever. Mermo’s skin turned blue right before he punched me. I’ve never been punched. I fell down and Mermo was laughing at me. I got angry. I stopped hearing his laughter and just heard that raspy breath in followed by the metallic sigh.

I didn’t stop hitting him until his face was squishy. Headmistress Lunae said I fractured all the bones in his mandible when mom came to get me.

I’m in a lot of trouble.

I think I'm going to be grounded forever.

18.4.16.19.1.13

I got expelled from school.

I have been grounded. Forever.

I’m not allowed to leave the apartment and I CAN’T DO ANYTHING! All I am allowed to do is stay here, watch holos (not the fun kind either), and lay on my bed. It’s so BORING!
I have a new stupid tutor who I hate. She’s a Chiss. Her red eyes are so weird, but I like it when she leans over me. I stare at her a lot. I asked her what a sith is but she said she didn't know. I’m pretty sure she’s lying to me like everyone else always does.

I was laying on my bed punching my pillow, imaging it was stupid Mermo with his gross tongue. It’s ALL his fault. I heard the voice from my dream. It scared me so I turned on music to drown it out. Then Mom disabled my music pod.

I punched the wall. There is a hole next to my door and my arm is in a cast.

Mom is scared of me. She doesn’t say it but she doesn’t look at me or touch me anymore. She spends a lot of time in her room now making private calls and talking about me.

The Voice keeps telling me that I should leave and run away. That I could be great. That my family is holding me back.

I think he might be onto something.

19.5.17.23.5.14

The Falcon smells bad. I had forgotten that. I’m not sure if it’s Dad’s fault or Uncle Chewie’s. Or maybe it’s because we eat beans for dinner every night. Every. Night.

Though I did win last night’s farting contest. Uncle Chewie almost broke a rib hugging me. He was so proud.

Why am I in the good ship FartStar? Mom said it’s so I can ‘embrace my destiny’. Dad says it’s ‘a big adventure.’ Uncle Chewie says “Raaaaawwr -RRRRRWWWGH.” I couldn’t agree more. They are lying.

I’m being sent away to Uncle Luke. I heard Mom and Dad talking arguing. Well, how could they not once the vase hit the wall? Mom blames Dad for not being around. Dad blames Mom for not shielding me from this ‘religious mumbo jumbo.’ I think both of them are stupid. If we could just be a normal family none of this would happen. I don’t want the ‘Hope of the Rebellion’ as my mother. Or a senator. Or the Chancellor. I want my mom. And I don’t want ‘the biggest scoundrel in this sector’ for a father either. The man who flies off at a moment’s notice. I want my dad. I just want someone to listen to me.

But what I want never matters… especially after I levitated every piece of the furniture in the apartment. Then dropped them.

Things got really quiet after that.

At least I get to learn about the Force. I’ll be able to float rocks and use a lightsaber. I’m hoping he can tell me about the Voice in my head, maybe it’s a Force thing.

Celibacy is not a Force thing, is it? Can I still jerk off if I am a Jedi?
It’s official: I am in a Sarlacc pit. I don’t know how long I’ve been here but it has to have been at least 100 years of misery already.

When I was little, I used to think Uncle Luke was amazing. He could make things float. He was a Jedi Knight. He saved the GALAXY. He was my hero.

He’s actually a prick.

We have to wake up at dawn. Then it’s just running up and down the steps until we feel like throwing up. We pick up heavy things, put them down, pick them up again, carry them around. We float stupid rocks around. ALL THE ROCKS. How will this make me a Jedi?

We never use lightsabers. NEVER. We never do anything fun because, and I quote, “Seeking adventure is not the way of the Jedi.” What? Why would anyone want to be a Jedi if this is all there is? If Master Luke lectures me about balance one more time, I will balance a stick RIGHT UP HIS FORCE HOLE!

I hate it here.

I can't sleep.

Obviously.

We got some new recruits yesterday. Master Luke says I should call them padawans. I think they are just annoying Outer-Rimmers.

They are from Yavin 4. I’ve never been there, but I remember my tutor telling me about it. I think its supposed to be nice there. They have rain forests full of really cool plants: purple-barked trees, bioluminescent orchids, ferns that climb all over everything. My parents never took me anywhere, and Yavin 4 is just another thing I missed out on.

Anyway, there are these two, Maalak and Elsa. She is really pretty, with pale white skin and silver hair. He is blue. Just blue. They came together but I think they are also together. They look happy. They hold hands all the time. He helps her get things off of the high shelves. She laughs at his dumb jokes. And spoiler: ALL of his jokes are dumb. He growls when I get to close to her.

I wish I had that.

I wonder if they will want to be my friends.

Probably not.
I got a present today. Uncle Lando sent me a copy of his memoir, *My Life in the Clouds: How To Be Successful in Everything*.

His note said it’s already a best-seller in the three systems.

I started reading it. The chapter on cheating at cards was interesting, but the sex chapter was amazing. I am so glad he put in the diagrams and the breathing exercises. It explains/helped so much. Not that I didn't already know. Because I did. I'm totally having all the sex here at the Praxeum. Plus I watched all my dad's holos.

But the chapter on relationships and robosexual relations... I don’t know if that it’s for me. Ramming my tender lightsaber up against a metal wall? It just seems painful.

I'm going to practice my breathing exercises. I wish I had someone to practice with.

---

Mistress Luke and I left the Praxeum together today. He said he wanted to take me on a short trip away from everyone else, for my birthday.

I'm 18 today. An adult. I was really hoping for a trip to a brothel. Or at lease a congratulatory drink of something.

Nope.

When went rock hunting. Is it hunting? Seeking? Spelunking?

Anyway, there is a vein of kyberite that runs through the caves on the other side of our planet. Mistress Luke took me there to find my own kyber crystal. We were there for a long time; I think I wandered the caves for more than seven hours. One finally spoke to me.

I'm pretty sure it called me a kinky fucker. It didn't really use words, it was more like a feeling. It shuddered when I held it in my hand, like it was sighing. I swear I heard it whisper, "Bring the pain, kinky fucker."

I don't know how I feel about a crystal judging me, but it's mine now. I still can't make my own lightsaber yet. Mistress Luke wants me to wait until everyone else is ready.

Hurry up and wait, that seems to be the Jedi way.
There were new arrivals today, bringing the total to twenty-nine. They're twins, a boy and girl. The boy is Daacha. His sister is Derrica. They’re younger than me, maybe fifteen or sixteen. Its hard to tell, they are both pretty puny. They are from Jakku. I have no idea where that is. Tre teased them about being from an Outer Rim junkyard that’s the closest you can get to nowhere. He’s an asshole but he’s funny.

Daacha is quiet and really smart. He knows all the answers to Mistress Luke’s questions. Obviously, Tre hates him and gets mad when Daacha “shows off.” Daacha’s okay I guess, but Derrica. She’s sooooo pretty. She has brown hair and brown eyes. She is so small and thin, like a little bird. I don’t think she likes me. I wish she did.

Everyone hates me. Except for Treso. He says he hates me too, but just a little bit less than he hates everyone else. I guess that makes him my friend?

This morning Derrica was yelling at Tre. I floated the bucket of water over to dump on him to make her laugh, but I dumped it on her instead and she ran away crying. Nala laughed. She is nice and I like her. But I really like Derrica. A lot. And I like her boobs. I like boobs. Master Luke told me not to think about things like boobs, but I think he might just need a girlfriend. Or maybe he needs to play with his lightsaber more.

I’m going to play with mine. You can be a Jedi and masturbate. The Voice told me so.

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25.1.22.22.47.19

Today was the BEST day of my life! I touched a boob. FINALLY.

And not just any boob. It was Derrica's boob.

It was soft and heavy. When I turned my cheek I could feel the nipple. THE NIPPLE. It was amazing. I want to do it again.

Derrica had me in a headlock. Then she used the Force to flip and throw me on the ground. She’s really quite strong for her size. I laid there just getting my breath back trying not to cum in my pants.

I have a bruise on my side that really hurts. But it doesn’t matter because I TOUCHED DERRICA’S BOOB!

It was glorious.

---

25.7.27.17.42.20

Mistress Luke is making us explore ‘Force signatures.’ This means we sit around cross-legged until our legs fall asleep, or, if you are Tre, actually fall asleep. He snores. Mistress Luke thinks we will discover the deep truth about ourselves. So far I’ve only discovered that it’s fucking hard to sit still.
with an erection. Derrica has been sitting next to me since she kissed me.

Apparently, my boob touch was AMAZING because the next day, she kissed me while we were
drawing water. It was wet and weird. But we have been sneaking off to ‘practice meditation’ after
our evening meal. We kiss a lot. My lips are chapped. I. AM. NOT. STOPPING. Last night she let
me touch her under her tunic. IT WAS EVERYTHING.

Her skin is so soft and she smells pretty, like flowers and sun.

When I kiss her she pants, making little breathy noises that I love. She twists my hair around her
fingers then pulls. IT FEELS AMAZING.

The only bad thing is that Derrica talks to me. She smiles too but I don’t know what to say.
Usually, I just kiss her to stop the talking.

Most of the time it works.

Her freak brother frowns at me. He doesn’t like me. We’ve been building lightsabers. He has been
working on something, I think it’s a new type of lightsaber. He’s getting tall. Almost as tall as me.
We both tower over Treso. He doesn’t like it. He keeps trying to punch me in the nuts. He gets
Daacha all the time. He’s as slow as a Hutt.

26.10.30.21.26.21
Derrica died today.

26.10.31.16.32.21
She’s gone. She died. Dead.
It was stupid. Stupid.
We killed her.

26.10.31.18.57.21
We had been working on projecting feelings and thoughts through the Force. Derrica is was good
at it. Like, able to find feelings of people systems-distant good. I could hardly feel Daacha who
was sitting right next to me. Mistress Luke was praising her and it made Tre mad.
He teased her and told her she was faking.
So she reached out to us, to me, Daacha and Tre. She was pulling the Force from us. I could see it, like a thousand strings attached to me pulling beads of light from my soul. But then she pushed. All our threads joined and rushed up through the sky, stretching out into space. It seemed to go on forever. Probably to the other side of the galaxy.

Then we were there, a place that was sandy and so bright it hurt to look around. There were people, two men, a woman, and little girl. The ugly man gave the man and the woman something that looked like money and they walked away, leaving the little girl behind.

Then Derrica was there. She had projected herself to wherever we were. She tried to run after them but the ugly man held onto her, digging his nails into her shoulder and telling her she was his. The girl cried and screamed. Derrica ran after the man and the woman, yelling at them to stop. But they wouldn’t.

She turned back to the little girl. She tried to hug her but her hands passed through her. She fell to her knees next to the little girl. She was vibrating.

Derrica screamed. It was terrible. It reverberated through my brain. She was pulling so much from me and I was getting weaker and weaker. The shaking and the sound were ripping me apart.

I don’t know how I did it but I cut myself off from her. I was back in the circle watching her meditate. Tre was standing over me still yelling. He had been shaking me trying to wake me up. Daacha and Derrica were still projecting. Tre tried punching Daacha in the face but that didn’t work. He ran to find Luke. I kept trying to reach Derrica. I tried everything. I shook her. I slapped her. I even tried kissing her.

But it was too late. She and Daacha started convulsing.

She opened her eyes and they were glowing. In one second, maybe not even that long, just an instant, a thousand points of light flashed. She was gone. Just her robes were left.

Daacha slumped down like he was dead. By the time Tre and Luke got back, Daacha had started to stir, but he was in a far-away place. Hours later, Daacha could only speak in a whisper, because he was so drained. He was so close to death. He told us what we saw. Derrica almost sucked the Force right out of us so she could project to their home on Jakku. She expected to see her parents and little sister. She did not expect to see her parents selling their little sister just like she and Daacha had been sold.

She had put everything into materializing on Jakku. At least that is what Daacha got from her feelings. But just like bacta can’t fix everything, there are some things the Force can’t do, like astral projecting across half a galaxy. Daacha said she split into hundreds of thousands of tiny mirrors reflecting the light as she tried to materialize on Jakku.

Luke listened and nodded, “She couldn’t let go.”

I don’t remember punching Luke. I remember Tre wrestling me off him as I kept trying grab him to choke the life out of him.

But we were sent to our huts “to meditate on our actions.”

I think my action is going to be burning the Praxeum to the ground.
I haven’t left my hut in three days. Everything tastes like sand. When I sleep all I hear is Her voice calling to me, begging me to help her.

I try to reach her but she slips through my fingers and she is gone again.

I’ll never love anyone again.

I didn't dream of Derrica last night. I wish it was a relief, but it wasn't.

The Voice dream is back. The Voice... I wish I knew what it was. He, I think it's a he, talks to me in my dreams. He calls himself my Master. He calls me his Apprentice. He told me Luke is weak. That he could have saved Derrica. That Luke should have saved her but he didn’t. Couldn't? Wouldn't? Luke was worried she was distracting me so he let her die. The Voice says I can reach her. I can bring her back if I just love her enough. I can save her. Anything is possible in the Force.

I’ve been afraid of the Voice for so long. When I was little it scared me so much. I thought it was Darth Vader coming to get me. I thought it would be my end.

I was wrong. The Voice is the beginning.

Treso, Daacha and I meet in secret now. The Voice talks to them too. We discovered this one night while we were polishing our lightsabers. No, really, part of basic maintenance is to polish the focusing crystal. Luke takes lightsaber polishing very seriously. Teaching us, not so much.

With the Voice as our teacher, we are learning amazing things about the Force. Things Luke would never teach us.

Daacha still cries at night.

I still have nightmares.

Treso still snores.

I envy him.
Tre, Daacha, and I still meet, but now Malaak, Elsa, Dopei, and Nala come too. The Voice is teaching us all now.

He still speaks to me when I am alone. He says I'm the leader. That I can shape them into who we need.

I don't feel like a leader. Is it because I am older than everyone else? I'm not special.

I can't tell them that though. My friends.

---

27.6.12.21.24.22

I learned something interesting today. Darth Vader was my grandfather.

I guess that’s why Mermo was calling me “Sith Spawn.”

I’m really glad everyone in my whole entire life kept that flaming hot turd of a secret hidden from me.

Thanks Mom and Dad. This isn't upsetting at all.

---

28.1.6.15.17.22

Nala kissed me today. It wasn’t like kissing Derrica at all. Her lips were warm and wet, but there was no sunlight, no sweetness. When she pressed against me she was different. Her carapace is hard. Her body has a hard shell, not soft flesh like Derrica. It wasn't bad, but it wasn't good.

She took her tunic off and I touched her. Then she pushed down my pants and started kissing me... down there. Her tongue is really long. It felt amazing but also terribly wrong. It wasn’t what I imagined. When I came it got all over her. I tried to warn her and she pulled back, but I hit her in her second set of eyes. Then I told her to put her shirt on and leave. She was crying.

Dopei tried to fight me. He loves Nala. Loved her? I don’t know anymore. His wings were vibrating, chirping as he stared at me with those dark eyes on the ends of his wildly moving stalks.

I’m a monster. No one will ever love me. All my friends, I’m going to lose them. If I ever had them to begin with.

Everyone leaves me.
I smell like smoke.

I look at my hands and there is blood. Most of it isn’t mine.

The crystal in my lightsaber screamed and cracked as I killed them. My saber isn’t blue anymore. It’s red.

What have I done?

Master Snoke.

The Voice has a name, I know that now. He has been watching over me, over us, for years, whispering his words of wisdom from afar. He has been waiting for me to realize my true destiny.

He told me that I am powerful, “A focal point between the dark side and the light.” He said that I am the embodiment of a Force warrior, that I will do great things. That together, we will accomplish everything I’ve wanted.” I’m not sure I believe him. I’m not sure my friends do either.

Friends. Is that what they are? There must be something there because even after what I did, they followed me here. That must count for something. I don’t want to let them down.

Master Snoke said we can achieve whatever our hearts desire through the Force. The Force will give us power, lend us strength, bring back love.

We would never have had those things if we’d stayed.

I can't stop thinking about what I did. About the blood. The screaming.

Master Snoke says that what happened was not my fault. That Luke betrayed me. He tried to kill me... I did what I had to do to protect myself.

He's right. Of course he's right.

He says I must put it out of my mind, focus on my training, my friends. They are all looking to me for guidance. I have to be strong now.
28.4.29.19.51.23

I don’t know why I’m writing this. I probably shouldn’t.

I killed Dopei today.

Master Snoke told me he was weak and fearful and that it would not do the group any good to keep him around. He said, “One life for many.” He asked if I wanted to risk my friends’ lives by protecting someone who isn’t strong enough to fight for ours. If I wanted everyone else to die because I wasn’t strong enough to cut the dead branches off the tree.

I didn’t want to do it. But I have to protect what’s mine. My friends. Dopei never liked me anyway.

Master Snoke laughed and clapped like a happy child when I cut Dopei down.

I spent all night in the ‘fresher throwing up.

28.6.30.15.2.23

Malaak and Elsa are gone. I don’t want to accept it. They loved each other so much, more than anything else in this galaxy. I don’t understand how that devotion got so twisted.

I was sparring with Treso when it happened. We were both concentrating so hard we almost didn’t notice the shift in the force. By the time we got to the Officer’s Dining Hall, it was too late. Half of the chairs were broken, but worst of all was their bodies.

They'd cut off each other's heads. Treso threw up. He apologized to the cook.

28.7.24.23.11.23

Nala killed herself.

She had been feeling off lately so Master Snoke let her rest today. Daacha and I checked on her before dinner and she was babbling, kept asking me to make it stop. She kept saying she just wanted it to stop. I asked her what she wanted me to stop. She told me to stop the poems. She kept repeating, “The poems, no more poems, make them stop.” Daacha shook his head. We still don’t know what she was talking about.

Certainly not my poetry. No one knows about that.

We left her to rest and had a droid bring her meal to her room. A mistake. When I came back later
she was lying in a pool of her own blood. She slit her throat with her dinner knife.

This was carved the wall next to her bed:

\[
\text{Once upon an eclipse total, while I pondered, weak mortal,} \\
\text{Over the assembled might of a lost and forgotten Empire,} \\
\text{A New Order stretches out beyond all borders.} \\
\text{But the words turning, spinning, whirling, twirling never tire.} \\
\text{Why don’t they stop dancing, easily entrancing -- never tire} \\
\text{Just make them stop, let me -- expire.}
\]

28.9.15.13.32.23

My name is no longer Ben. Almost no one knows me by that stupid, weak name anymore. Everyone left me.

Today I have taking my new name. I am Kylo Ren. Master of the Knights of Ren. Destroyer of Dreams. Corrupter of Worlds. The Jedi Killer. I am Snoke’s creature. He is in my mind. My breath. Every action he consumes until I am nothing.

Just like he wanted. I understand now.

\[
\text{His Voice, it lied.} \\
\text{And led me astray.} \\
\text{I shouldn't be surprised.} \\
\text{But here I must stay.} \\
\text{For the debt of everyone who died.} \\
\text{Lest their memory I betray.} \\
\text{Do they know how hard I've tried?} \\
\text{That for their forgiveness, I pray?}
\]

It will be different now.

Chapter End Notes

Hiiiiii friends. We are alive, we have just had some *life* goings ons. Also, there will be a companion chapter to this (soon? it’s basically written, so soon...) featuring adult Benji!

P.S. in case you did not figure out the dating scheme (because you are not an insane person), it goes Year ABY(After the Battle of Yavin).Month.Day.Hour.Minute.Age, based on a 24-hour day and 12-month standard galactic year.

Ben was born in 5 ABY, and HeartS arbitrarily chose his birthdate as Third Month, 22nd Day, 5 ABY (because HeartS is a nerd and looked alllllll the events up.)
And yes. If you were paying attention to the ages, you will have noticed a certain lack of... experience. He was a late bloomer, to be sure.
Officially NOT the Journal of Kylo Ren

Chapter Summary

Kylo Ren resumes his journaling.

Chapter Notes

shuns: So… we are still writing this... *sigh* Channeling my inner angsty-guy-space-virgin is hard.

HeartS: (Bouncing in chair with barely contained excitement) but so worth it right? This chapter is basically Kylo Ren’s grown up journal. If Kylo Ren kept a journal. Not that he has time, what with his tortured inner monologue, Jedi treasure hunt, kidnapping Rey and the force-skying. Don't even get me started on the finger touches -- FINGER TOUCHES. But if he did… well… maybe it would read a little something like this.

shuns: But no robot sex or sentient crystals?

HeartS: (somewhat offended) I feel it stands on its own.

shuns: You just hate fun don’t you?

See the end of the chapter for more notes

30 ABY 6 12

I was cleaning my quarters today and I found my old journal. I can’t believe I kept it, and I really can’t believe how young and stupid I was. What was I trying to do with my ridiculous dating scheme? Gods, what a little prick I was, why did I ever think writing dates that way made sense? Like, did it really need my AGE? Way to overcomplicate things, dumb Padawan.

If I’ve learned one thing in the past two years, it’s that time does not heal all wounds.

What a surprise. But I am waaaay better at poems now. For example, here is one I wrote yesterday during my evening meal:

It's hard to know what to say
To confront your past
Is the hardest task
When you watched it burn away
31 ABY 7 17

Tre has been so intense lately. Writing has been a respite from his glares and sulky sighs. When he’s around, that is, which thankfully is not frequently. He has a special project that he won’t tell me or Daacha about that has him gone from the ship for months at a time.

And by “special project,” I assume he means ‘skive off training and have sex with the ‘Chief Sexy Science Nerd.’ I get it. I mean, not the having sex part, although I’ll bet she does amazing things to his… lightsaber. Obviously. But Bala does have some nice boobs. So I understand. In theory.

He has been killing an awful lot of people lately, though. Should I talk to him about that?

Maybe I’ll let sleeping rathtars lie.

31 ABY 8 26

Okay, so it turns out Treso’s special project was actually to build a giant space gun. And I mean, he did that by weaponizing an entire planet. I always thought he was a little slow, but wow. Oh and he married the sexy science nerd. I totally envied him until she died. He totally lost his shit and instead cooked up a new plan with only two goals:

Main objective: Kill Master Snoke.

Secondary objective: Fuck up the EMU lab on Eadu.

Although he was wildly unsuccessful in his attempted murder (read: thwarted by Snoke’s praetorian guards, and somehow Treso is still alive, so maybe the guards didn’t have their morning caf? Who fucking knows?), he did manage to thoroughly fuck up the EMU lab and kill the entire EMU staff.

Unluckily, Hux was already on site with Daacha and they cleaned everything up. They took Treso back to Snoke and according to Daacha he has been iced because “He may have some value to us.” Please. I can read between the lines. His value lies in his fantastic ability to perform battle meditation. It could not be more clear that Treso is a hedge against the mind control drugs the Chief Science Nerd was brewing.

Upside, he’s not dead yet. I know what the death of one of the Knights feels like. He just feels distant. Not that that’s a bad thing.

Downside, I have one friend left. Maybe one and a half if you count Hux.

But I don’t, because eww.

32 ABY 4 3

Well, it’s official. I can confirm that Daach has, in fact, fucked every fuckable woman on this ship.
And a fair number of men. And most of the non-binaries. Probably all of them.

I just don’t get it. How does he do it? He’s such a misogynistic ass but everyone is just lining up to suck his cock. Is he really that good in bed?

Not that I’m actually wondering. I am a little bi-curious.

He’s a jerk and treats lovers like garbage chutes, but he’s handsome and funny and unattainable and they love him for it. I wish we could switch places, that I could have his charismatic temperament and he could be, well, me. The Sad Sith Loner. *Star Destroyer-Virgin, Imperial Class.*

Maybe I should go mingle with the masses, flirt with the commoners.

Yeah. I’m gonna head over to the commissary and pick up some new nibs for my calligraphy pens/flirt with ladies. How hard can it be? Chicks dig nice penmanship, right?

---

And I’m back --

That did not go well. That did not go well at all.

For the record, talking about your nibs is a good way to make a girl laugh at you, but does not get them to come back to your quarters for a session of 'hide my pen.'

---

32 ABY 5 14

That son of a bitch is still alive.


No one has seen or heard from him in over four years. I thought he was dead, that he burned up the night I left him, but I was so, so wrong. I wish he was dead. His knowledge of the Force must be deeper than I’d ever imagined.

Master Snoke says the Jedi were a plague on the galaxy and Uncle Luke is the last bloom of the disease. He believes purging the galaxy of the Last Jedi will rebalance the Force. That Luke is a threat to the galaxy and he must be eliminated at all costs. I think Master Snoke feels threatened by his very existence.

It’s nice that he has an arch nemesis. I just want to kill him because he’s a fucking bastard who thought someone dying was okay because “the Force willed it.”

I’ll find him. It’s my task, deemed by Master Snoke as “A worthy challenge for my worthy apprentice.”

Sometimes it’s not about a complicated plot, it’s about killing someone who deserves it.
Some people just need a good killing.

32 ABY 8 19

One of Daacha Ren’s technicians found a map, pulled it from the archives of the Galactic Empire. I am told it leads to Luke Skywalker’s location. Or more specifically, where everyone thinks he went. The first Jedi Temple. And it makes sense, more origin story. It’s exactly what he needs.

Unfortunately, the glorious map is missing one last piece, the damn temple location. Because STUPID FUCKING ORIGINS OF COURSE IT’S MISSING!

Stupid fucking IT only doing half the job. I am well and truly fucked if I don’t find him. I would be content to let Mistress Luke die on whatever rock he’s now living out his hermitage. Unfortunately, Snoke will NOT be denied this inevitable confrontation with the Avatar for the Light Side of the Force. He will stomp in his obscenely shiny golden slippers and bob his giant head, making vague threats to everyone until he gets his way.

I hate my job.

Luckily (but is it lucky, really?), there are spies everywhere. I swear there is one in my toilet. They heard Lor San Tekka has the missing piece of the map. As to where I can find this relic from my past the Church of the Force? Fuck if I know. Daacha is as helpful as a third nipple, but that isn’t new. But at least I know who has the damn thing (but how do I know this for sure? I just have to trust that this intel is correct, apparently, and then flit around aimlessly until I locate him in this EVER SO TINY GALAXY WITH A BILLION AND ONE HIDING PLACES).

Thanks IT, really making information accessible. I’m so glad we live in this shiny new age of the First Order. I can only imagine what this would have been like under the Empire.

There would have been so much more Force choking. SO. MUCH.


Fucking origin stories.

33 ABY 7 31


I could be doing a thousand and one things. Working on my hair. Polishing my saber handle. Working through my defensive forms. Shining my mask. Practicing calligraphy. Polishing my saber handle, again.

We traveled to the Jinata system to search Pillio. Honestly, a trip to this planet under any other circumstances would have been immensely interesting. There is this massive coral reef that stretches across the entire planet which plays host to more species than I would probably ever come into contact with. I wish I could have taken a water pod to explore the coral caves, but who
has time for recreational pursuits anymore? Certainly not me, I have the important assignment of looking for one old, broken-down Jedi.

Besides, it would probably mess up my hair.

I guess the trip wasn’t a total bust even though San Tekka was not there. We captured Del Meeko, a traitor of the Empire and a Skywalker sympathizer. I took what I needed from him and turned him over to the Inferno Squad (which is a fucking stupid name if you ask me - they don’t ever use flamethrowers!).

Anyway, the map and Tekka are most likely on Bayora.

33 ABY 9 16

The map is definitely not on Bayora.

It is also definitely not on GUHL-JO387O.

Further, why are Outer Rim planets so dirty?

The filter on my mask was so clogged with yellow dirt that I could barely breathe by the time we got back to the transport ship. And I found yellow dirt in my underwear for days after we got back. I kept going to the med bay because I thought I had some backwater disease.

Anal probes aren’t all that bad if you think about boobs.

34 ABY 6 13

Why do I put up with Daacha the Dick? How are we still friends after all these years?

I suppose I can't really afford to be picky. It’s Cha-Cha or nothing. I’ll take that dick bag over the prospect of my impending loneliness any day. He’s still a shit friend. Especially when he makes fun of my poetry.

My poetry is good. Mostly. And more importantly, it’s mine. How does he even know about my poems? Those files are encrypted for fuck’s sake. I should probably change my password, NotBen2U, but it meets the password parameters and I CAN REMEMBER IT.

I need to remind him not to call me that name anymore. Ben is dead. What if the Supreme Leader hears him? Hours of torture. And hollow laughs. And vaguely sinister threats.

Maybe it’s time to resurrect ‘Cha-Cha’ permanently. He hated when Tre called him that.

He followed his spy into the network today after our sparring session. When he returned he had a wild story about fighting with Darth Vader and a parade of hot aliens. I think the sex is getting to him. Or maybe he got infected with some cyber-virus. Well, put your dick in a hot beverage
dispenser and it’ll get burned. Or so I hear.

Fighting hot aliens sounds fun. I wonder how many boobs they had? Four? Six? I guess at that point they become teats.

Teats are not as sexy as boobs.

34 ABY 6 19

We are on the way to Jakku to find Lor San Tekka. Cha-Cha’s most recent report indicated a 75% probable match and that is at least 30% more to go on than what we’ve had lately. Apparently, he has been hiding in a tiny dirt hole village called Tuanul.

He’d better have the map. I want to finish this endless game of hide-and-go-seek.

Once I find the Church, I am going to destroy it. Then burn it. Then bomb it. And probably piss on it for good measure.

34 ABY 6 26

The Finalizer dropped out of hyperspace and I gasped. The only reason Hux didn't notice was because of my mask. It's good to wear a mask. It means I can make faces at him and he doesn't see. I can break a little when I finally see where a friend Died. Collapsed like a star? Returned to the Force? I don't know what to call it.

Jakku.

I've been having the dream again.

After Derrica died I had it every night. Until I killed Dopei. Then I had different dreams.

Those eyes. I can't remember anything except those eyes. They are the same as Derrica's. Brown. Open wide like they are trying to see the whole galaxy in one blink. I wake each day drained like I have been sparring for hours.

Snoke is planning something. I think it might be time to spring our plan. I will need to discuss with Daacha.

Though getting him to pay attention without the aid of boobs might be hard.

34 ABY 6 27
Fucking Jakku.

Of all the fucking sandy shitholes in this galaxy, it had to be fucking Jakku.

What happened on Jakku? Fucking sand everywhere. It was coarse and rough and it GOT FUCKING EVERYWHERE! I shook out all my clothes. And had the droid vacuum it up. But there was still sand under my fingernails and in my underwear. Again.

I hate sand. And Jakku. And old men who think they know me. And fucking Resistance pilots who think they're better than me.

But most of all, I hate fucking Luke Skywalker because he made me go to fucking sandy fucking Jakku.

And I hate droids. Especially when they get away with the ONE fucking thing I need.

Thanks Hux. Fucking ginger. I hope FN-2187 causes him a lot of trouble.

________________________________________

34 ABY 6 28

I met a girl in the forest on Takodana. She’s seen the map to Skywalker so I brought her with me. To interrogate. Not because I thought she was pretty. It had nothing to do with her boobs. But she is really pretty. Her smile probably lights up the room. And I bet she could suck a dick for hours.

She was there with him. Fucking Han Solo. Of course she was there with that worthless piece of shit. But even better, I saw the good ship Fartstar. It’s still a piece of junk. It probably still smells like wookie farts. Why haven’t I blown it out of the sky yet?

I hope Uncle Chewie is ok.

She smells like sunshine and dirt.

It’s not pervy to sniff someone when they're passed out, right?

And maybe lick them a little too?

Asking for a friend.

________________________________________

We are on the way to Starkiller Base. The girl is sleeping. She might be more beautiful than an angel, though I’ve never met one. I could stare at her for hours.

Huh, I guess today wasn’t the worst.
I am in my room on the transport, holding her. She is warm and soft and curled into me. I am almost asleep.

I wake up to small hands at the nape of my neck. Then a snap-hiss as my mask is unlatched and lifted off. I see those eyes, the same eyes I have been seeing for months in my dreams. The same eyes I once knew. Derrica’s eyes.

“I wondered if you were man or machine.”

“No, you know”

“Yes, I do.”

Soft, full lips move across mine. They are chapped, but she tastes like sunshine and sand. Fingers twist through my hair and pull. I never want her to stop doing that, it feels so good. She flicks her tongue across my lip. I open my mouth and she pushes her tongue inside. It has been so long since anyone has touched me. I moan.

She straddles me. Her hands are moving fast. She pushes and pulls our clothing out of the way. I run my hands down her body, and there is no cloth in the way, only skin on skin. Warm, soft skin. I kiss her neck and shoulder. She nuzzles my neck and ear.

I realize she is not wearing a shirt and I don’t have one on either. Her nipples are right there. I lean back to look at them. She tries to cover herself, suddenly ashamed, but I stop her.

“Let me look. Ahhhhh. So pretty.” Pretty isn’t the right word. Beautiful. Monumental. Elemental. It is hard to think as everything inside of me begins to squeeze.

I push her shoulders back so she lays down and I pull off her boots and pants. She is naked in my bunk, blinking at me. She is so little, but every part of her is aware of my presence. She thrums like my lightsaber. She licks her lips and it’s the signal I am waiting for. She wants me. I stand up to strip my pants and she giggles as my erection bobs toward her. Now we are both naked. She smiles and crooks her finger to beckon me closer.

I bend down to kiss her, nibbling my way down her neck to her chest. I slip my tongue around her nipple. It changes in my mouth. I can feel it hardening until it feels like a pebble. I blow on it and she gasps. I move to the other nipple and she mewls. She grabs my hair to pull me closer, arching into me.

I kneel between her open thighs and run my hands along her legs until they find the spot between them, her center. Her molten core. She is dripping for me and I part her wet folds with my fingers. I dip a single finger in and out and she squeaks, she pants. I add a second finger and she clutches my arms as her eyes go wide.

“Don’t stop.”

“I won’t.”

“I need you. Now.”

I pull back to look at her. She is breathless. She wants me.

I should tell her it’s my first time, but I don’t want to admit it. I think it’s her first time too. I should tell her I don’t know how long I’ll last. Or that I’ve dreamed of her for months. That she is too good to be true. Instead, I nod.
I grasp myself, rubbing a bead of pre-cum over my tip. I line up with her slit and slide into her with my velvet steel, sinking deep into her liquid heat. It’s like a sheath of silk wrapped around me. Not even one stroke and I am already cumming. But it is bliss. It is amazing. It’s too good to be true.

I woke up to find my lap full of rapidly cooling cum as the girl lay in her force-sleep on the bench across from me.

It’s going to be a fucking long trip.

---

34 ABY 6 29

UGH! Why does that ginger bastard have to be such a dick? Doesn’t he know I can read his thoughts? It’s like he purposely thinks terrible things about me when I’m around.

*The LAST Virgin.* Seriously? That’s SOOOOOO original.

There are plenty of virgins, and how would he even know that anyway?

It's not like I was fantasizing about her. Not at all.

AND he accused me of groping her, WHICH I DIDN’T. My hand slipped when I was carrying her. I didn’t have a good grip and I grabbed her boob because it was it was there. I thought I saw a bug. Boobs are really fun to hold reasons. It’s not like it was on purpose. It was mostly an accident.

But, I mean… it was nice. On the small side, not that it matters because I WAS NOT GROPING HER!

I did smell her hair again. That is not groping.

During all this Hux was thinking about his *sex dungeon*. I didn’t even know he had one. Who the fuck is he having sex with that he needs a SEX DUNGEON? Who would even have sex with him? He’s so uptight, stiff, and PASTY. I will have to ask Daacha about it the next time I see him. I’m sure he knows allllllllllll about it. Too bad that asshole isn’t responding to my coms. Hux doesn’t seem to know where he is either, and they’re practically married, so if he doesn’t know...

I will worry about that later.

---

Well, my only friend is probably dead.

So there’s that.

At least I still have Hux.
34 ABY 6 30

That shitty, red-haired bastard. Why did he have to go and rescue me? I was doing fine on my own, wallowing in my despair while Starkiller broke apart, thinking about how I killed him.

I should feel free now, that's what he said would happen. Free to embrace my full potential. But I don't feel any different. Just your average Tuesday. Kill your progenitor, get shot by a Wookie, get beaten up by a girl, and watch a weaponized planet crack apart.

I can’t wait to see what Goldysnoke has to say to me about this. If this was the big capstone to my training, I feel like he might need to rethink his lesson plan.

But that girl. That little fucking girl sliced my face open and ripped out my soul with Grandfather’s lightsaber. My lightsaber.

How dare she? She doesn't deserve it. She’s just a desert urchin with no parents. She's nothing.

Maybe I'm nothing too.

34 ABY 7 1

Fighting at the Starkiller Base on a Snowy Evening

Whose woods these are I think I know.
His hair is red, he shouts a lot, though,
    He will not see me stopping here,
To fight this boy, then girl, toe to toe.
That girl over there must think it queer,
    To stop and not force drag her near.
Between the woods, now gaping chasm,
    It is the darkest evening of the year

    I saw the lightsaber give a shake,
    Fly into her hand, it is a mistake!
The only other sounds are the creak,
    Of the Planet Starkiller about to break.
The woods are lovely dark and deep,
Yet, to her I have so much I could teach.

And my scars are more than skin deep,
And my scars are more than skin deep.
Fuck. Why can’t I stop thinking about her?

All my poetry is about her. I can’t get that slip of a girl out of my mind.

She was just standing in the snow holding Vader’s lightsaber in nothing but rags. No cloak, no gloves, not even a hat. She must have been chilled to the bone. I hope she didn’t catch a cold.

Don’t they have snow gear in the Resistance? She’s probably fine because she was radiating fury like a volcano or a molten-hot star exploding. She was a force of nature ready to destroy me. Protecting the traitor. Protecting him herself. From me.

She’s powerful. Unpolished and raw. Untainted. She reminds me of Derrica, when we were but children.

She needs a teacher, someone to show her the ways of the Force. Someone to cut through the haze, the newness, to help refine and sharpen her skills.

It could be me. It should be me. She could be my apprentice, and I, her Master.

She could be mine.

She should be mine.

She will be mine.

I wonder if I should send her some gloves? That's thoughtful, not creepy, right?

---

34 ABY 7 2

Daacha Ren: Cunt Extraordinaire. I should make him a badge and pin it to his stupid cloak so everyone knows what a cocksucker he is.

The Pulverizer blew up THREE DAYS AGO and he has finally dained to inform me of his inability to die.

It’s not like I was worried about him or anything.

What a prick.

In other news, he thinks he knows who the spy is but he said he doesn't want to tell me yet in case he's wrong.

I'd bet it's a woman. If so, he's fucked. We're all fucked. Fucking women.
I saw her. She was here but she wasn't.

It was almost real.

I was sitting in the officer’s medbay having my face mended. It was so BORING. I should have brought something to read. Then there she was, that beautiful, terrible angel, sitting across from me. I don’t know how she appeared. She was just there...

AND THEN SHE FUCKING SHOT ME.

Or, she would have shot me, if she was real. But she wasn’t real. It was a strange connection. Like through our minds. BUT STILL, she aimed her fucking blaster at me and pulled the trigger. And then she ran away. I chased after her and ended up in the hallway. I tried to exert my will over her but it was like trying to control sand. She slipped through my fingers.

I don’t know what happened but it’s like we were connected by a thread. I could see her, but just her. Nothing else.

I don’t know what this is yet. I can’t tell the Supreme Leader. I wish Daacha was here so I could talk to him.

I hope it happens again.

Maybe while she’s showering.

It happened again, but she wasn’t in the shower or naked. The connection was like a holocall but bigger and more bright. It would have been better with boobs.

It got quiet. That was how I knew. I turned around and there she was. I tried to talk to her about what was happening but she just insulted me, called me a murderous snake.

She told me that I was too late. That she found Skywalker. I’m sure it’s true. I guess I’ll find out soon enough. She was fierce. And she had the same fire from our fight on Starkiller.

She thinks she knows me. Called me a monster and I agreed. She seemed taken aback that I would admit that. But I know what I am.

She really has no idea.

I wish I knew where she was. I wish I could be with her. When the connection broke my glove was wet. I hope she was wet.

I just noticed my lightsaber looks a little dim. I think it needs some polishing. Be right back.
This time she asked me why I hated my father but she got distracted. By my abs.

To clarify, I wasn’t wearing a shirt and refused to put one on. For reasons. Ok honestly, I had just worked out and it was hot. And I looked hot.

She kept asking why I hated him. Han Solo. I told her I didn’t hate him. It’s true enough. I made her ask me why I killed him. She doesn’t know anything. She still thinks I’m a murderer.

She was crying and all I wanted to do was hold her. To make it stop. But I didn’t. We talked about her parents. She’s still convinced they didn’t abandon her. Didn’t treat her like a piece of shit, throw her away and leave her to die on that FUCKING SAND TRAP. Jakku is everything I hate.

She’s so fragile, looking for her parents in every adult she meets. She’s not going to find them. They don’t exist anymore.

She said she knew what happened at the Praxeum. I’m sure Skywalker told her some bullshit story, made himself look like the hero. But I told her the real story.

He tried to kill me. So I destroyed him.

I’m not sure if she believed me but she will. She will see the truth about Skywalker soon enough.

She has so much potential. She just needs to see it for herself. She needs to let her past die.

And perhaps wear less clothing.

WE TOUCHED HANDS! ACROSS THE GALAXY! WE FUCKING TOUCHED HANDS AND IT WAS GLORIOUS!

Ok. We only touched our fingers together but it was MAGICAL. I felt her essence coursing through me. All the light. All her goodness. ALL THE FINGERS.

And what I saw...

I saw who her parents were. I was right, and she really has no idea who she is.

And I saw our future together. She will come to me and we will rule the galaxy together like royalty. My Dark Lady. My Twilight Princess. She will be mine and I will be hers and everything will be as it should. I should probably see if we have any crowns, something shiny. And some flowing robes. But no underwear. Ok maybe underwear. If it’s crotchless.

I saw the look in her eyes, I know she glimpsed our future too. We belong together and now she knows.

Master Snoke will see. This feels right. I feel the balance. All I needed was her.

But FUCKING LUKE SKYWALKER. HE ALWAYS RUINS EVERYTHING.

He is a Jedi-level cock blocker. Who needs to die. If I didn’t have a reason before… now I truly do. He ruined it.
But she’ll still come to me. Our destinies are intertwined just like our fingers.

I’m imagining her legs intertwined with mine. Her hair fisted in my hands. Her tongue thrusting into my mouth as I push back with my own tongue.

My lightsaber is dimming again. Need to go polish it. Be right back.

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**A Sith Sonnet**

Shall I compare thee to a desert night?  
Thou art more quiet, deadly and cool.  
Winds shape dunes bathed in moonlight,  
Harsh, it breaks not the flower of Jakku.  
She though distant from the eye of heaven, shines,  
She is a beacon of Passion never dimmed;  
A tower of Strength where the Light reclines,  
Her Power courses, surging forth, untrimmed;  
Her head, unbowed, never hung low in defeat,  
She is the Breaker of Chains for worlds still bound.  
In her eyes, her body, Victory's champion meet.  
As dawn comes to the desert, Light rebounds,  
The Dark retreats but will begin anew. See,  
She is the One, freeing herself, the Force and me.

---

34 ABY 7 16

My force-girlfriend just mailed herself to me like some fucking present.

Happy Life Day to me! BRB, time to open my gift.

With my teeth.

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**Chapter End Notes**

A/N (shuns) the answer to the question, ‘Does HeartS hate fun?’ is of course not. She is a boatload of fun and the best co-author anywhere. Even if she said no to robot sex or talking pissed-off lightsaber crystals.

She is also a ravenous reader. HeartS would like to plug the *The Letters of Lord Voldemort* which VERY LOOSELY sprung this idea into her brain. Like, seriously, if
you like Harry Potter at all, you will enjoy them.

Bonus follow up for 34 ABY 6 27:

I don’t like sand.
Chapter Summary

Back to the regularly scheduled story...perhaps even with regularly scheduled updates?

Chapter Notes

shuns: (sheepishly) So my muse is fickle....

HeartS: My muse is hungry. She would like some candy. Did you try feeding your muse?

shuns: Huh. No I didn't (gets ice cream from freezer and eats spoonful.) So I just don't know where to go after... wait... words. I want to write words HeartS!!!

HeartS: shuns your muse is powered by ice cream. Mine is powered by candy. It is known.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

The room was cold and white, with the lights set to ‘bright enough to hurt.’ The metal chair, a triumph of bad design, hit her legs and back all wrong, and she was uncomfortable no matter what position she shifted to. Given how meticulous the First Order was when it came to torture, it was probably intentional.

Keech sat at the table, the only other feature in the room besides the gods awful chair, jiggling her leg trying to wake it up after it had fallen asleep, again. She had been alone in the room for hours - waiting for something, she supposed - and she had used the time to visualize Trillian geometry using fifth-dimensional derivatives. Flipping figures in her mind always kept her occupied and had done so since school. Bala made a game out of it, seeing who could do it fastest.

The morning was busy, her normal rec time abandoned as she was pressed into helping the survivors settle on TX-12. She had just brought up a load of blankets from one of the stores (they were destined to become much-needed pants) when she saw the two guards talking to Jasper. She looked away, trying not to gawk and betray her interest.

She shouldn’t have been surprised that they came for her too, but she was, and her insides squeezed into tiny cubes that tumbled sharply, painfully down to her feet. Her arrest was surprisingly civil considering what she had seen of the First Order. They hardly manhandled her at all.

A quiet whoosh preceded the ten-degree drop in temperature of the room. Her first shiver was involuntary, but as the tall, black-clad figure rounded the table; the second was a reaction to him. He watched her and she felt smothered, like a layer of ice had settled over her. It was hard to breathe.
He reached in his cloak - Robe? Kaftan? What the fuck is he wearing? Gods, she was going crazy if she was critiquing the sartorial choices of her would-be killer. Not a wise move. She waited for the hiss of the ignited lightsaber, resigned. Instead, he dropped a piece of paper - an honest to gods piece of paper - and a Number 4 stylus on the table with a flourish. Fuck, I don't think I've seen one of those since college. The paper was blank and her hand itched to reach for it, twitching slightly. She looked toward the impassive shadow for a clue. Seeing nothing, she made to grab it.

“Not yet.”

Thrown off balance, her hand hung suspended in midair, waiting. Well, don’t I feel like an idiot? She hated the moment before a test started. All of her anxiety concentrated into one single, burning point. And this shadowy bastard was dragging it out. The silence stretched taut until he finally said, “Begin.”

She turned the paper over and blinked. The formula was familiar, hadn’t she just been using it to adjust the shapes in her mind? Yes, Trillium geometry with fifth-dimension derivatives. The limiting factor was a wave pattern, one that would make the matrix reflexive. It would diminish to nothing without a progressive seed to keep it growing...

Not a seed, no, more like some babbits.

She stared intently at the paper, concentrating hard to choke back the chuckle that was bubbling up and out. That's it! Of-fucking-course it's babbits. Why didn't I think of it before? She had the answer to cracking open the file. All she had needed was something to point her to the seed. But if she wrote it down the First Order would have the answer too. She gulped in a breath of air. She couldn't give it to them. This was hers.

“I don’t know what this is,” she tried. “What am I supposed to do with it?” The shadow gave no indication that he had heard her. She shrugged her shoulders and added, “Math is hard.” Saying those words hurt. Math wasn’t hard, it was the only thing in her overly complicated life that was easy. Now that she had seen the answer, she couldn’t unsee it. Her fingers twitched toward the stylus. It wouldn't even take a minute to write out the answer, but she swallowed it down. She had to hold back, she couldn't blow her cover now. “Can I go?”

He waved his hand and the door slammed open. Keech leapt out of the chair and raced through the door, sprinting through the corridors and back to her quarters, back to TM. She felt light and happy, like she had finally, FINALLY gotten one over on the First Order. She was going to open Bala's file and figure out what happened.

Her quarters were empty. They seemed bereft without TM occupying the space. His note was brief:

Gone for food. Thanks for everything.

She was exhausted from the ordeal. As her adrenaline faded, she collapsed on the bed and nuzzled into the pillow; it smelled like spice. Sleep and his scent wrapped her in a cocoon of comfort and she drifted off.

The klaxton sounded with two short bursts followed by one long one. The 'All Hands' signal. The pattern repeated twice more as Keech roused herself. She splashed water on her face and jogged
toward the canteen, the only room large enough for an assembly. She aimed for the back of the gathering crowd but was pushed to the front where a newly erected dais stood. She saw her team and pushed through the mass of bodies until she could join them. “Any clue what this is about?” she asked HG-1257. He shook his head. She scanned the room anxiously but couldn’t find Jasper or TM.

A hush settled over the crowd as Commandant Krall marched in flanked by his staff. Daacha Ren strode in after, though his gait was off. The crowd parted as he ascended the dais, dragging something behind him.

_Not something, someone._

The body fell to the floor with a wet smack. Keech saw brown hair slicked closely to a head and smelled the tang of blood mixed with the pungent scent of urine. She felt a modicum of pity. He had been worked over, and hard, whoever he was.

“Honesty,” Ren spat, as he spun slowly surveying the room. “Honesty is what binds the First Order together. Not the lies of the New Republic. Nor the empty promises of the Empire. The honesty of the First Order is beautiful and brutal.” He paused to let his words sink in, before speaking again, “He is not honest.” He gestured to the pile at his feet. “He is a spy. For the New Republic. Stand and meet your truth, Resistor.”

There was a collective intake of breath as the occupants of the room stared openly at the hunched figure.

The man rolled to his side and pushed up to his hands and knees, wobbling, but he was slowly able to kneel, crouch, and finally, stand. His face was a map of the pain he had endured in the preceding hours, and he looked like he might topple back to the floor at the slightest breeze. Whatever hadn’t been bloodied was bruised, and he was holding his side like there was a wound, his fingers at odd angles. _All broken._

Keech concentrated on his injuries. It meant she didn’t have to see Jasper standing there bloody, beaten, and at the mercy of Daacha Ren. His eyes met hers and he gave the slightest nod, one that could have meant ‘I'm sorry’ or ‘Be strong’ or ‘I never broke.’ Maybe it was all three.

There was a snap and a hiss. She could smell the lightsaber cook the air as it fell. Jasper was cleaved in two from shoulder to scrotum and she flinched at the sound of his body hitting the floor with a meaty thud. No one moved, they were all too well trained. Her eyes were drawn to the pieces of Jasper and the lack of blood struck her as incongruent. He was covered in blood from the beatings but the kill was neat, clean, cauterized by the lightsaber. _Beautiful and brutal, indeed._

She felt inappropriate laughter bubbling up in her chest. Not the kind that would bring her relief, but the kind that would shatter her sanity and send her into oblivion.

Daacha Ren surveyed the room and his metal gaze stopped on her. She’d had nightmares when she was younger of being in a public place like school or the market, only to realize she had forgotten to put on a stitch of clothing. She felt that same stomach dropping dread as he observed her now. Bothan spies never broke. She was certain Jasper had acquitted himself admirably. He wouldn’t give her up. Her confidence in this fact did nothing to assuage the feeling, the certainty, that Daacha Ren knew about her too. Why else would she have been sent to that terrible little room?

She left the gathering as normal. She walked the halls at the same pace she did every day. She even acknowledged those specs she knew with a nod. She acted as if nothing had changed.
But it had. She was more vulnerable. She was going to fail. They knew about her. *They have to know, right?* She had to get away.

But nothing would change if she left. The First Order would chew up more systems, planets, and people. The air pressed in on her and it was hard to breathe. She didn’t know when she had started running nor when she had begun crying, but she hoped no one had seen her as she raced towards her destination.

Standing in front of the storeroom, *their* storeroom, broke the dam. Keech fell through the door and collapsed on the cold metal floor, weeping for all she had lost.

Large, gentle hands picked her up and she was pressed against something warm and solid. Warm, moist air blew against her fists. “Gods, your hands are like ice.”

Words. She was supposed to use words but her teeth were chattering and Keech realized that she was shivering, and quite violently. She didn't know when that had happened. She looked up into a face she barely recognized. “TM?” Her brain felt sluggish like it was rebooting. “Wh-where w-w-were y-y-you? Wh-why d-d-didn’t I s-s-see y-y-you th-th-there?”

He frowned, “I got there late and sneaked in the back. That was pretty wild, yeah?”

Disturbing. Cruel. Evil. These words were more accurate. “Y-y-yeah. W-w-wild.” She took the moment to look at him. He had a long, lean face, brown hair, and dark brown eyes. He held both her hands in one of his the other was rubbing her back, his brow furrowed with concern. She appreciated that he had come for her. She relaxed into his touch and the chattering lessened. His presence was sweet and unexpected, albeit a bit creepy. “H-h-how did you f-f-find me? Th-this closet is p-pretty well hidden.”

He leaned against the wall as she shifted in his lap. *Wait, when did I end up in his lap? How long has he been here? What is that lump? Oh, Gods, does he have an erection?* She was slowly putting it all together. But an erection would not help the situation. Although, she was content to stay there, as long as he kept rubbing those big circles on her back. She wasn’t going to think about it… too hard.

‘I... uh... I followed you.”

Keech looked at him and blinked. Something was off. You don’t play sabaac with Lando Calrissian without learning when someone is bluffing, badly. “Banta shit.” He flinched. “It took me three months to not get lost when I was trying to get to the canteen. This place is so remote not even the mouse droids come here. Tell me how you really found me.”

He looked away as he mumbled, embarrassed, “I watched you, okay? Kriff!” He ran his hand through his hair with agitation. “When you wouldn’t come to the Supremacy, I started following you. On the cameras.”

Her heart froze. He had been watching her. *What has he seen? “How long?”*

He turned to face her. “Six months, maybe a bit longer.” He shrugged. ”I was pissed when you declined my offer. I wanted to know why.”
She squirmed in his lap, trying to break his hold, but he pulled her firmly back to his chest. She went still in his arms, pressed against all of him. The first kiss was just a brush on the rim of her ear. Emboldened when she did not resist, he dropped light kisses around the edge. Then on the bare skin behind her ear. Down her neck where her pulse was thumping. Along her jaw, which was clenched to hold back her moan of pleasure. Across her burning cheek. He kissed her just to the side of her mouth and nuzzled her face, tickling it with his short stubble, silently asking if it was okay to take that last step and touch his lips to hers.

If she was any sort of hero she would have stood up right then and left. It would honor Jasper, her fallen comrade, whose body wasn’t even cold. It would fulfill her duty to the Resistance, to, well, resist. It would be a small, petty vengeance against the First Order. Even if it was just crushing the heart of one sweet, brilliant technician that had magical back-rubbing fingers.

It really was no fun being the good guy. "TM, I can’t."

He shook his head, “He wasn’t just a spy, KF,” his breath was warm as he whispered. “He wasn’t good for you. I saw it. When you walked away from him you sighed and your shoulders slumped. Every time.” He brushed his lips over hers. “I would make it good, so good for you.”

His mouth slanted over hers, breath mingling. It was a soft, chaste kiss, just his lips against hers and nothing more, asking her the same question. Is this okay? Gods, how she wanted it to be. She really did. Sex was her coping mechanism. It wasn’t the best way, but it was her way. He was offering it to her so sweetly.

She should contact the Resistance and let them know what had happened Jasper. She should ask for extraction off the base. She should abandon her search for what had happened to Bala. She should leave First Order behind. She should live to fight another day.

Running was the smart move.

But she couldn’t do it. Figuring out how to fix this shitty mess was going to be future Keech’s problem. Current Keech needed him, right fucking now.

She slid her arms around his neck and kissed him, deepening it as he opened his lips allowing her to slide her tongue against his. When she finally pulled back from him, he whimpered. “If we are doing this,” she gestured between them, “Then you should probably know my name. It’s Keech, Keech Favi.”

He gave her a small smile. “I’m Tam.”

In that moment, all the tension that had built up over the previous days broke between them. Sharing your name wasn’t just a formality. It was trust. If you were born in the Order you never had a name just your designation, and if you joined, you gave up your name as Keech had. But names are powerful things. The First Order was as successful at eliminating them as they were at eliminating sex, which is to say, not at all. Name exchange was the secret code used by those who wanted to pair off, the first intimate act a couple would share before lips touched or clothes were removed.

Even if her life was in free fall and everything was on fire, for this one tiny part, things were normal. She threw herself into the next kiss until they were both breathless. Blood thundered through Keech’s head and her skin sparked with his touches. She was caught up in the sweet moment where they hung on the precipice of something big. His hand crept up to her hair, his fingers tangling in it as they kissed. He stroked her head, rubbing her scalp, and it all felt so good - right up to the point that his thumb brushed the contact point for the Augmentation.
It switched on and she saw white in her left eye and then… she was in the Construct. Only she wasn’t alone. A startled, confused, and gloriously naked Tam was gaping at her with wide eyes.

“Shit.”

Chapter End Notes

OOOOOHHH cliffhanger!

Writers block is insidious like the First Order. You are going along with a story in your head then WHAM. Words just don't come because of Life, the universe and everything. And no matter how many times you type the word forty-two. It just doesn't help.

But this is the reason that bookmarks and subscription buttons were invented. We hope you will continue to follow along. I promise this story will be finished.

A/N HS: shuns, my wonderful, brilliant co-author, wrote this whole chapter, I was merely a humble edit-bot. Put your crown on, queen!

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