Rise of an Empire - A Star Wars Story

by catradora_mp7

Summary

3681 BBY - The great Sith Emperor has rallied his forces to finally overthrow the Jedi order and bring peace to his great Empire. And in midst of his freshly trained Sith forces, the two young apprentices, Catra and Adora, burn to get into their first battle together. But their paths divide as their first mission ends in a catastrophe...
Chapter One - Training

It was time for the apprentice to show what she was capable of, only minutes laid in between her biggest fight and opportunity yet. The small room around her was dark, the air smelt wet with a scent of copper hanging in it as if a thunderstorm was about to arise from out of nowhere. Somewhere from deep within the bowels of the arena, the regular splashing of water drops hitting the floor echoed off the walls. It was distant but Adora could hear the drops as if it was just next to her, her senses sharpened by the meditation. She could feel every single bug inside the moldy walls, all the soldiers patrolling the upper decks and a faint but familiar presence somewhere nearby. She knew there was going to be a great challenge ahead, so the girl concentrated and let her fear bottle up inside her guts, let her anger flow through every inch of her very being as her master had taught her in order to harness the girl's inner strength.

"We will make the Sith proud again," Shadow Weaver had always said with her mask not being able to cover up her excitement, "With your help we will annihilate the Jedi order."

Adora had always felt the same sting in the pits of her stomach when her master talked about finally achieving revenge and taking the land the Jedi had unrighteously ripped out of the Sith's hands. The galaxy was theirs to take, theirs to lead with their strong empire, not the weaklings of the galactic republic. Years had gone by as the Emperor had remained hidden in the deep regions of space to set up his great plan. He had founded Dromund Kaas, the greatest capital in the galaxy, Adora's home, the place her new family would crush the republic from. Since her birth she had been raised to fulfill this one sole purpose, to fight alongside her brothers and sisters to reclaim what was theirs.

Ready yourself, a voice called out from somewhere inside the apprentice's head, a call through the force that connected all living beings. With a small but accurate movement, Adora picked up the cold hilt of her weapon. Elegant curves of coils wrapping around a kyber crystal, connected to power conductors that were ready to shoot a beam of destructive bundled energy smoothed to her sweaty palm as she found a better grip on it. The engravings in the metal clutched in her fists reminded her of her parents, the people she had lost because of the republic. Never again would anyone make her suffer, it was her turn to make them suffer in her place. It was finally time to get revenge for not only the Sith but herself, slaughtering the Jedi as they had slaughtered her family. And this was the last challenge she had to face for finally living her dreams of vengeance.

Like a lit torch her anger flared up once more and with a fluid motion her finger pressed a button located just underneath her fingers. Red light flooded the room, the humming sound drowning her sensitive ears as the red light saber unfolded. Adora knew she had a few minutes left so she remembered to warm up by getting into a lose combat stance. This fight would not be an easy one, especially not against who she expected to meet in the arena.

"You've got this Adora, use your inner strength and you will prevail," she whispered and swung the sword at an invisible contestant. Quick parades followed aggressive strikes towards the imaginary threat, the whirring of the energy beam growing louder and louder as the speed of the strikes increased. Within seconds all there remained of the blade was a thin red whir that seemed to cover the young girl in a cobweb of surging protective energy.

"You looking at me, Jedi?" With one last strike she held out her hand towards the moldy wall, channeling all of her anger until her eyesight went red. Dust rained from the ceiling as a gigantic crack appeared in the stone, slowly making its way above her head. Small chunks of concrete rained on Adora's blonde hair and dust settled on her red jacket.
"Well that could have gone wrong," she mumbled to herself and brushed off the debris from her clothes and readjusted her hair poof everyone kept mocking her about. Now she was ready, ready to strike down every threat her master was about to throw at her in the arena. There was no stopping for the glowing sphere of hatred in her guts, no stopping for the heated blade of her light saber. With every slash she would come closer to avenging her family and her anger fueled her strength as she tapped into the dark side of the force. Once again, the faintest noises grew almost unbearable, the faint pumping of hearts in the chests of the spectators was as loud as sledgehammers. Adora's own fear was suddenly thrown into the mix and the Sith apprentice remembered one of her first lectures:

"Fear leads to anger, anger leads to hate, hate to total domination."

This was the path of the Sith and today, she would show how much of a part of the empire she really was.

There was a slight rumble that alerted her when the big door finally started to be lifted. Light as well as a fresh breeze replaced the creeping shadows and the stale air inside the room, making Adora gasp as she started to adapt to the new environment.

Huge crystal spires lined the way to an open space surrounded by small towers that looked like they would survive the next few hundred years without any human or other species' intervention. The emblem of the Sith empire was brandished all over them, the red hexagon with its seemingly trapped beams of darkness was the pride of everyone in the Empire and especially in the order itself. Between the spires long streaks of ivy grew up the shining surface of the gems, potentially hiding unknown threats. Little bushes and trees threw their shadows on the lifeless rock ground underneath the apprentice's feet, making it almost impossible to spot any enemies. Almost.

Adora held her light saber in a defensive stance as she felt the presence of multiple troopers around her. It was as if the light around some of the green spots seemed to be sucked into their bowels, making the work of guessing easier. The girl had worked with these people all of her life, she knew how to sense they were nearby. It was hard to pinpoint their exact location but she knew there was at least seven of them. The air was tensed as the girl heard the distinctive click of an energy cell being loaded into a mag well. There was a little pause, as if time had stopped around Adora, the leaves of ivy slowly rocking back and forth in unison with the slight breeze rustling through the empty yard up front.

Then suddenly, without any louder sound that might have predicted it, blaster fire emerged from the green undergrowth. Hot bolts of red energy raced past her, scorching the plants where ever they hit. With the loud whirring of the Sith's blade, Adora rushed into battle. Even though this training course was new, she had a basic idea of the terrain. The heat of one of the shots stung in her eyes as she deflected one of the bolts back to its owner, making him yell out in pain as the energy hit him square in the chest. The black armor of the trooper was tossed backwards with the soldier still inside, being swatted against a nearby wall. Soon, another count of two soldiers followed his involuntary example and hit the wall with a loud crack. But right next to the fallen comrades, another trooper exchanged fire with her opponent, not willing to give up the fight. Swinging her light saber towards the incoming blaster fire from all sides, Adora broke into a run. Faster and faster her blade spun all around her body, the immense kinetic force of the shots being tossed aside like children's toys.

She could sense the fear in her old comrade as the Sith jumped over a fallen tree in her way and kicked the soldier in the helmet, the user letting out a squeal of pain as her nose broke underneath
the covers without any apparent facial features. The female trooper would have risen up to fire once more, hadn't Adora spun around to cut into the soldier's shins, earning a louder cry of pain immediately as the hot saber blade smoldered the soft flesh underneath. Now that she was down for good, the apprentice felt triumph rising up in her throat. A grim smile parted her lips while the battle around her continued.

Feeling triumphant was her first fault. Being overconfident was her second. And her third and final fault was not to immediately move on to the fight. Just a few moments passed as Adora stood there, light saber glowing red in her hand, staring down at her prey. But it was enough time for one of the blaster bolts to strafe her shoulder. Burning pain surged through her body as she held her shoulder, letting her guard down only for another shot to hit her in the knee, forcing the young woman to stagger. Although the amount of energy in the bolts had been reduced for the training, the hit was still as if she had been stabbed with a vibro blade. With one weak arm Adora deflected the next shot to her side, spraying some of the pulverized stone in her face.

The pain became unbearable, stinging in her eyes, burning in her shoulder and leg, exhaustion trying to push past her focused mind. She closed her eyes, fists clenched and teeth biting against each other as a wave of even greater rage made the youngling rise to her feet. Her eyesight went red as she pulled her fists in front of her chest until she suddenly jerked them outwards, a cry of pure hatred leaving her throat.

"I... have... had... enough!"

Small stone particles around her started floating as the force surrounding her and all of her foes was bent to her will, grabbing the last three soldiers across the room. Their shocked yells pitched in screams as their floating bodies were pulled towards the Sith apprentice with high speeds. After that it was just a series of three quick slashes in midair to end the fight. With the clattering of armor against the stone floor, the limp bodies of the troopers fell down, small twitches still running down their now unmovable muscles.

"Fuck you," Adora said and spat down on one of her victims before she continued her way towards the yard in the center of the arena.

Intuitively she knew this was her goal. But the sight of the still abandoned towers standing around made her nervous. Even though the soldiers were out of the game, something wasn't right. The Sith apprentice looked around, observing the static shadows, waiting for something to jump out of them and try to strike her down. But nothing happened. Every step she took was louder than she expected, her sudden deep tap into the dark side still sharpening her senses to a high degree. The floor beneath her feet seemed to grow colder as her wandering eyes met the small shrine standing in the middle of the open space. Red light, way colder than her saber's one, seemed to flow down the steps of the stone construct, as if it was smoke coming out of the broken catalytic converter of a racer engine.

Her heart seemed to follow an irresistible pull towards the small triangular object residing in midst the red fog. Something told her this was what she needed to become a full Sith, to unravel the deepest natures of the force to avenge what had been taken from her by the republic. As if attached to an invisible rope she stepped forward, mesmerized by the glowing beauty of the pyramid.

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Adora was so mesmerized in fact that she forgot the feeling of uneasiness she had been feeling since she had set foot on the square. One of the seemingly static shadows began to move, sharp claws silently scraped the ground as the unseen foe started their secret approach. Jumping from tower to tower the enemy closed their distance with Adora. Last was completely awed by the sight
in front of her that she noticed the shadow a bit too late. A low growl sounded before the sharp sound of two light sabers unleashing their power in unison ripped the air apart.

Adora ripped her blade up in the last second when two beams of red rushed down at her, striking her own saber and almost ripping her out of balance. With a short stagger, the girl regained her stance and threw her attacker a look full of anger until her eyes widened as a voice said,

"Hey Adora..."
Chapter Two - Battle

"Hey Adora..."

The feline grinned, exposing her two little fangs which glistened in the artificial light of the arena. Her hetero chromatic eyes remained focused on only Adora; the instinct of hunting prey obviously shrouded behind them. Blue and yellow, two such different colors united in just one person's orbs, it was something entirely unique to her.

"Catra! I should have known they'd send you," Adora growled, spinning her light saber in a threatening way, the humming becoming louder as she did. Without wiping off the smirk, Catra curled her tail and moved a step forward, testing her opponent with a few low set strikes. She parried them with ease, knowing the fellow Sith apprentice was playing around without yet using any of her strength. She could feel that the tan skinned feline was fully recovered, that she hadn't even fought anyone yet. Adora however was weaker, exhausted and mildly wounded. This would be an unfair battle.

Catra started circling her enemy with light steps, looking for a weak point in her defense, "Well of course they would, the others wouldn't be much of a challenge for you."

"I don't know if I should feel honored or if I should be pissed. It's low to send someone as close to me as you into a fight," the other girl remarked. She took a step backwards, trying to maintain her defensive pose. Normally she would use the knowledge she had about forms of light saber combat to strike with extreme aggression but something held her back.

Adora's opponent giggled evilly, "Aw, you know nothing's too low for me." Even though it was a tense situation, Adora felt the urge to smile. Before she could do that however, Catra lashed out in a series of furious strikes. The red beams of their weapons connected with the sound of thunder, both of them trying to overpower their enemy. It was hard for the young girl to maintain an intact defense as the feline pushed onward, her two blades disappearing in streaks of red light that occasionally stopped as she reconsidered an attack only to slash at Adora from a different angle immediately afterwards.

"I see you have been training," she mocked Catra while blocking a strike of both of her opponent's light sabers at once. Sparks rained down the touching beams of energy, slightly singing their skins as they stood only centimeters away from each other.

"Everything for you," Catra answered with a smirk. Then there was a streak of brown blocking Adora's view as the cat woman jumped six feet into the air, using the force to enhance her strength. She landed right behind Adora, both of her weapons glowing with red hot energy. The blonde turned around to be greeted with two low attacks that were supposed to hit her knees, causing her to jump backwards. She tried to concentrate, tried to regain the smoldering rage she had felt while fighting the troopers but there was nothing. It was clear that Shadow Weaver had known this would happen, that was why she had chosen Catra for this fight: To make it challenging. Adora felt no hatred towards her, they had been growing up with each other after all. Best friends forever and... sometimes even more than that. How could she defeat someone like her without the necessary pain...?

Fortunately, or unfortunately, something Adora would question for a long time, Catra took a step back, simultaneously closing her sabers again. The look in her eyes made the young girl shudder. "I love these fights way too much to stop but just the two of us? That's getting a little boring, isn't it? Why don't we spice this up a little?" the small form of Catra said before slowly retreating into one of the shadows. She raised her right hand, holding both index finger and thumb close to each
other before she snapped. The sound was enhanced by whatever trick she had learned but Adora knew it couldn't mean anything good. And she was right. With the creaking of metal sliding on metal, the towers finally revealed their purpose. Dark silhouettes emerged from their inners, their shining armor reflecting the light.

"Oh, are you fu-" Adora bellowed before the Sith troopers opened fire.

The blaster bolts ripped holes into the soft stone, smaller ones but there was something odd about them. Hot bubbles formed where the energy beams hit the floor, only leaving slight bruises in the material when they did.

Adora deflected one of the shots towards the ground, shooting a glare back to the still laughing Catra, "Sharp ammunition? Really?!

The feline smiled, "Oh? So you think that's challenging?" There was a little spark of betrayal in the back of her head when the blonde Sith continued to defend herself against the enemies. Shot after shot bolted towards her, every strike of her light saber hitting them with high precision. But she knew that it wouldn't be long until her body started to overheat, to grow weaker and take her concentration with it. Soon there would be no way Adora could stay safe in the open. So, she chose the obvious choice of retreating into cover.

Using the force to give her a lift, the apprentice jumped into the shadow of one of the crystal columns, trying to escape the roaring thunderstorm of concentrated energy singing her flesh. Powerlessness and fear tried to overwhelm Adora, this situation was hopeless. She couldn't risk stepping back into the yard to retrieve the mysterious glowing pyramid from its middle. Either Catra would use her chance to strike or one of the shots would strike her down.

"Use your fear, concentrate. Fear leads to anger. You are stronger than this. Show me what you're capable of and I promise you, you will be there with us, leading the first strike against the galactic republic. Now fight, make me proud my apprentice."

Shadow Weaver's voice was nothing more than a whisper but it gave the girl a sudden boost of confidence. The reminder of what she was trying to reach was more than enough of a motivation for her to close her eyes and concentrate, once more bottling up the fear, hatred and all the negative feelings she was being exposed to. She took one final deep breath before stepping back into the light. Her light saber reignited in a rain of sparks as thousands of volts were bundled by the legendary kyber crystal inside the weapon.

"You want to end my life? Then come and get me!" she yelled, using her newfound strength to force her hurting knee to bend and run towards the nearest tower. The incoming fire intensified as one of the gunners inside used his comrade's light machine gun in order to push back Adora but there was no way he could try and stop the raging apprentice. For Adora, there was no try to win either. There was do or do not, prevail or go down in a last act of glory. Her weapon moved in low but powerful arcs, shooting the bolts back at their owner. The combination of luck, skill and pure rage finally got rewarded as one of the stray shots hit the gunner in the guts, leaving him to tumble down the tower's rim. With a loud thud, his body hit the floor.

Using some of her bundled strength Adora catapulted herself onto the next tower, taking down three of the dark troopers inside in the resulting skirmish. When she was finished with them, she picked up one of their rifles. She had trained with them for an extended period of time but the plump weapon had never suited her needs. However, now it was time to put those skills in action. Hiding her saber, she raised the metal gun against her shoulder, squeezing one eye shut as she looked through the scope. The blue visor was confusing at first but it took Adora only seconds to
realize the blinking lights on the inside, showing her distance, charge of the energy cell and a red dot in the middle to aim with.

"C'mon bastards," she whispered as she aimed for the troopers in the next defended post. The first shot was a complete miss, sailing past the heads of the soldiers. The second one hit the metal frame of the building, making it blacken as the steel began to boil. The third shot finally hit something, even though it wasn't a trooper. The bolt sailed through one of the men's legs and hit one of the small resupply stations they had brought with them, igniting the highly explosive load and sending them tumble to their death as they tried to avoid the flames.

Adora giggled nervously as she saw the tower's structure break loose, making it tilt in a dangerous angle, "Not what I wanted to hit but it worked." Only one real opponent remained, the creaking of her sharp claws echoing off the arena walls. The Sith apprentice looked down the steep side of the tower she was on, trying to see where Catra was running to. There was no sign of her but the silent rattling of nails hitting the floor now and then. She began to grow nervous, where was that damn feline?

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"Looking for someone?" a voice whispered only centimeters away from Adora's ear, making a shudder run along her spine. In one fluid motion she ignited her weapon, swinging it at the voice in a try to win the fight before it had actually begun. But Catra's natural reflexes didn't need the force to enhance them when she simply stepped back, the dirty grin on her face still not leaving since they had started to clash.

She continued to tease, "Wow, is that how you greet a friend?"
"Not a friend, but a foe," Adora answered before lunging at her adversary with fierce determination. Seeing as Catra's eyes widened at the unexpected attack, her plan to take her by surprise had worked just a little. Her own red blade was weakly deflected by the other girl's two ones, making it strike the ground and burn through a few layers of metal before she regained her balance. "So, you're finally back in form to fight?" the brunette asked, "I have been waiting for this for a looong time Adora."

She knew the tower was a bad place to fight, she needed more space. A quick plan formed in her head and this time, it was her turn to smirk. "Oh yeah? Well, me too and look, I have a little present for you," the blonde answered and raised her hand. A sudden wave of energy swiped her opponent off the tower's platform, making her shriek as the ground raced towards the feline. But she had the reflexes of a jaguar, landing on her feet and growling towards Adora as she jumped down to the concrete, slowing her departure with the force around her. The midichlorians in her blood felt like they made it boil as Adora regained her balance and started to advance towards her old friend.

Another growl emerged from both of their throats as they started to slash at each other with rapid speed, their blades claspng together with the sound of lightning, the whirring being a noise-drowning hum as if a whole fleet of dragonflies had decided to move their colony. Deflecting one of the furious strikes, Catra spun around, slashing and hacking with the gained momentum, making Adora slowly retreat as she tried to maintain an active defense.

"Sometimes, offence was the best defense," Shadow Weaver had once said. But for an attack, for a real attack, she would need something to fuel her, to drive her forward. Rage was no option, neither was hatred nor pain. Catra had been there since Adora could remember, always by her side, always ready for a new adventure. It was hard enough to fight her in the first place, both of them knowing each other's strategies and thinking it challenging to get the upper hand on each other. Was there anything else she could use...? Parrying one of her attacks, the blonde quickly countered with
a wide slash, pressing her friend into making a step backwards.

There was this small pull in her guts when she looked at Catra, standing there with all of her confidence, the red light of her sabers only making the picture more perfect than it already was. This feeling, what was it? Frustration? Annoyance? No, it was... passion. And passion was a weapon most of the Sith were unable control. Adora had heard stories of long-lost masters who had used their love and passion to win every of their fights until they started to grow hungry, joining the light side in its path of destruction in the galaxy in the end.

But right now, there was no choice to make. This was Adora's last hope. And she took it, embracing the feeling and receiving a certain kind of calmness, her face smoothing to a mask of peace and replacing the grim mask. Catra raised her eyebrow, noticing the sudden change in her best friend's behavior. But she didn't mind, stepping forward, one foot at a time, slowly advancing towards the feline. Each of her strikes were slower now, resting in their place for only the split of a second longer. And with each step, she began pushing Catra back. The sound of their colliding blades grew louder as the power behind the strikes intensified with Adora using her strength. Her opponent's eyes widened as she started to feel herself weakening, the aura of her opposite overpowering hers.

And then, with one last powerful blow towards the lower part of Catra's sabers, Adora disarmed her. The two blades remained open as the flew away, only closing when they had almost reached the ground where their metal clattered when it hit the cold stone. Her blade was at the feline's throat, whose eyes were wide open with fear and defeat in them.

"How did you... How...?" she stuttered, slowly crawling backwards to escape the lingering heat of the saber's tip. Adora blinked, quickly holstering her weapon. "Wha... I don't..." she replied, unable to keep up her voice. Puzzled she extended her hand to help her beaten friend up, her accepting the invitation and heaving herself up to her feet. "We'll talk about this later," she whispered as a big hidden door started opening towards the yard, two figures slowly starting to emerge from the darkness within.

"Well done, my apprentice."
"Well done my apprentice."

Shadow Weaver's form emerged from the darkness of the door, black coils of smoke wrapping around her feet. Her long red dress sliding on the ground made it look like she was floating instead of walking as she approached the two exhausted Sith trainees.

Next to her, the much taller figure of a real pure blooded Sith lead the way, his red skin shining viciously in the cold light of the arena. Adora had seen him already, there was no one on this mission who hadn't. The black robes slid past the concrete with the sound of thousands of snakes making their way towards them as they bent their knee and fell to the ground in a gesture of respect.

"Rise apprentices," the Sith lord said, his gleaming red orbs piercing through Adora and Catra. Both of them rose, their hearts beating as if they were going to jump out of their chests. "Lord Vindican, what do we owe the honor of your visit to?" Catra asked, her tail flicking from one side to the other in her anxiety. He smirked in amusement as he felt her uneasiness just as much as Adora's before replying, "I've come to inspect the last preparations before the battle. Looks like my demands have been met with success." As he said this, his eyes dwelled upon the blonde in front of him.

Catra laughed quietly, "Have you ever doubted us?" Before the feline could add anything however, Shadow Weaver stepped- or rather floated- forward, her aura darkening the room. "Are you pleased with their performance my lord?", she asked, the hidden eyes behind the mask glaring towards Catra as she spoke.

"I most certainly am," the dark lord nodded towards Adora, "Especially with this one. The force is strong with her." Lord Vindican extended his hand towards the small shrine behind the two girls, the sound of air parting responded his move. The red pyramidal object rushed into his hand. Catra flinched when the thing flew by, the fast movement irritating her sharpened senses. The Sith lord examined the mysterious pyramid, letting his eyes wander across the sharp edges of steel and glass being combined into one being.

"A Sith holocron." He turned it towards Adora who's eyes started gleaming in the light of the holocron, once more mesmerized by its strange beauty. She could still feel the strange pull towards it, the feeling of knowing this contained something she needed. What it was, she didn't know. Taking a step forward she asked, "What's inside it, my lord?" The Sith smiled, his dark red skin wrinkled over his muscles trying to express pride.

"That, young apprentice, is something you will have to find out yourself. The force has helped you form a somewhat adequate fighting technique when you two clashed, it will have to help you unravel this secret on your own," he explained, "Until then I would like you to study something new." Vindican turned to Shadow Weaver, his dark robes following his movement.

"This girl has shown great potential for Niman, train her this form instead of Ataru. As for your other apprentice," the Sith looked down at Catra with a smile, "She'll be ready soon enough, her acrobatic skills are admirable. You have done an excellent job training them, Shadow Weaver, I wished all of our trainees would show such... dedication."

The dark woman bowed slightly as the lord turned around to leave the arena, his steps echoing off the stone walls until he was out of earshot. Then, Shadow Weaver chose to speak. Her eyes glared at Catra from behind the red mask. The air sparkled with electricity as she said, "Insolent child, it
is your luck Lord Vindican was in good mood and didn't strike you down at once! Dare to open
your cheeky trap in his presence one more time and I will dispose of you myself, did I make myself
clear?"

Catra's ears twitched with uneasiness as the shadows around the three seemed to grow denser and
move towards Shadow Weaver's location. Her eyes sped in between her master and the invisible
threat around her, "I'm sorry master, it won't happen again." Without having really noticed, Adora
had moved in front of her best friend, her right hand already resting on her light saber. Her master
froze, looking at her apprentice with great care.

"Adora, don't let her lash out like this. You have to keep her under control, do you understand me?"
The dark woman's hand rested on the young Sith apprentice's cheek, the soft cloth caressing her
warm cheek. Then without any more word, she turned towards the door and left the two girls
standing alone inside the cold and darkening training dome.
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"Goddamn Shadow Weaver and her dumb rules," Catra grumbled as they walked down the long
corridors of the Star Destroyer. Long silver steel plated the bowels of the ship, red carpets with the
symbol of the Sith empire stitched onto them laid on the floor, dampening their footsteps as they
made their way to the sleeping quarters.

"Aw come on Catra, don't be mad about it. You know she's just like that all the time," Adora
replied, bumping her shoulder into Catra's, making her yelp in excited surprise as she lost her
balance. She grinned, exposing her little fangs, "Mad? Me? Never! But I bet you are going to be
mad when I win the race back to our rooms!" Now it was Adora's turn to smile, "Oh, so you wanna
lose twice in the course of an hour?"

Their race was accompanied by laughter as they dodged troopers and maintenance staff in the tight
hallways, sometimes missing them only by centimeters. When they arrived at their quarters, they
were sweaty and exhausted, not only from the running and the training but mostly from the
muscles of their bellies being constantly tensed. Catra managed a slight wheeze, "I think I won!"
Her blonde friend pushed her out of the doorway, quickly dodging one of the feline's weak punches
to hinder her of getting into the small room. But she failed, her hand softly hitting the frame before
Adora slipped into the dimly lit chamber.

Two mattresses lined the spartan interior, one slightly messed up and the other still freshly made.
Adora threw herself onto the messy bed, exhaling loudly as the warm blankets enveloped her body,
making the damp coldness of the arena disappear.
"Nope, I won," she whispered and grinned with her eyes closed. She felt the blankets move as
Catra stole her way onto the mattress too, her warmth settling on the blonde's side.
"Asshole," she giggled before stealing one of the blankets, evoking a little shriek from Adora.

Wrestling for the stolen cloth, the two didn't notice how the ship around them turned quiet, the
engines powering down and most of the staff going to bed as to prepare for the incoming battle.
Only when Catra managed to get the upper hand and stand up with the coat in her claws, they
noticed the eerie atmosphere. "Shh, don't you hear that Adora?" the girl asked, her ears twitching at
the sudden lack of sound.

"I don't hear anything...?"
"Exactly, come on, let's check it out!" The feline jumped to her feet, both of her differently colored
eyes gleaming with lust for adventure. Adora laughed out with joy in her voice, "Don't you think it
has some kind of reason why everyone went silent all of a sudden? I don't think Shadow Weaver
would approve."
Catra flinched slightly, her eyes contracting as the name fell. However, her change in behavior was so short not even Adora was able to notice it. Catra was deeply distressed by her master but she knew not to show it too much. They had a long and complicated relationship; the dark woman had never been supposed to take care of the little feline orphan but this wasn't the right time to think about it. She grinned, brushing off her unease, "First of all, if there's a reason for silence we just have to investigate and second, have you ever seen a time I listened to Shadow Weaver?" Adora responded with a raise of the corner of her mouth too, "Well, you've got a fair point there."

Catra giggled, using her flexible tail to brush along the blonde's jawline and give her a slight slap on the cheek, "Let's go then. Come on, you look stupid lying down there." With a loud groan, the blonde lifted herself up from the sheets, quickly grabbing the dark red jacket from the grey ground. She sighed and gave the feline an amused look, "I knew it would end this way."

They sneaked along the interior of the ship, having to dodge some of the guard droids every now and then. Giggling like little children again, they halted in front of a blast door with a big sign on it. The heat from its inside was calming and comfortable but Catra squirmed as she read out aloud, "Engine Room, enter on your own risk." Adora took her shoulders and gently pushed her towards the door. But her friend didn't seem to be in the mood to enter, the hair on her tail sticking up to every side.

"No, Adora! I hate that room, it's so noisy and ugly!" she hissed as she wriggled herself free from the blonde's grip. She giggled and let go of her friend's shoulders, "Aw come on, no fun?"

With a few quick steps Catra put some distance in between herself and the blast doors, a little growl escaping her lips.

"Not in that room. Don't we have somewhere different to go...?" she asked, her tail nervously flicking from one side to the other. The girl opposite smirked as she remembered one of her favorite little spots, one that her friend would definitely like. Grabbing the feline's hand, she said, "Well there is one place but you'll have to be quiet." A spark of adventure re-lightened in Catra's eyes as she did so, the corners of her mouth turned upwards.

"What are we waiting for then?"

Adora nodded, put up one of her fingers against her lips and then pulled the feline along to a small hatch not far away from the engine room. Catra shivered as the cold of the vents touched the bare skin of her arms before she followed the blonde. The small set of ladders inside was even colder than the air around them but they didn't care, their excitement building up a little bubble of protective warmth around them. Every step was followed by the low creak of metal as they ascended; the cold slowly intensified.

Shivering, Adora reached the top of the ladder, lifting up the heavy hatch with a loud groan. The space above her was massive, darkness enveloped the only dimly lit deck. Catra followed her to the top, her eyes widened as she saw the stars above her twinkle with their warm light. Still shivering she turned around to be greeted by a warm coat held by her friend. The feline snuggled herself into it, leaving more than enough place for Adora as she sat down on the metal exterior of the star destroyer.

"How did you find this Adora?" she said, her both blue and yellow eyes dwelling on the twinkling lights above her. The blonde cuddled herself closer to her friends, enjoying the warmth of her body, "You like it?"

With a small punch to the blonde's shoulder Catra replied, "Of course I do! May be a bit cold out here but you can't have all comfort, right?" "Yeah, the shield generators don't hold up against the
cold of space but I managed to sneak something up to help it with." The blonde pulled out a little canteen from her belt, giving it to the feline next to her. The bitter sweet smell of hot chocolate flooded her nose as she opened the lid.

"Oh, hell yeah," she said after gulping down a sip of warm sweetness, then she passed the liquid on to Adora who followed her example. "This is my little alone-time place, happy to share it with you anytime though," the girl explained, extending her legs into a more comfortable position. Catra giggled, "You sure it's not considered private space intrusion?" "Oh, what do you know about private space, you jump on me the second you get a chance! Now, gimme another sip."

The feline grinned, slowly pulling away the canteen, "Why don't you get it yourself?" Adora pouted and looked away, trying to form a quick move. Her plan was revealed as she pounced at her friend, quickly grabbing the canteen as the feline was confused why she was lying beneath the blonde's arms. Their breaths were short and quick, they could feel the warmth of the air caressing their skin as heat rose up to their faces. Adora quickly rolled off of her partner in crime, her heart beating in a fury. Trying to ignore the lump that had formed in her stomach she drank another bit of hot chocolate, keeping a calm silence before turning to Catra and saying, "What do you think will happen tomorrow?"

"We'll win of course, no doubt the republic will be outnumbered when we arrive," the feline responded, brushing back her hair in an attempt to restrain the mane on her head. But that wasn't what Adora had meant. "No, I mean... What happens if we get parted...? If one of us gets captured or... killed?"

Catra wiggled around in anxiety, letting the coat slip to her bare shoulders as she turned to Adora, "We don't have to worry about that as long as we stick together. We're stronger in a pair, don't think about things like that as long as it helps you connect to the dark side. We look out for each other and soon we will be the ones calling the shots." The blonde nodded, giving Catra a timid smirk in response, "You're right, I'm just overreacting."

Then, Adora leaned back onto Catra, pulling the blanket up to cover them once more and closed her eyes. The exhaustion took over both of them, slowing their breaths until the two girls finally slipped into the sweet scenery of sleep...
They awoke to the sound of alarms blaring into their ears. The ship underneath them seemed to jerk forward, leaving the two girls tumble towards the small maintenance hatch they had used to climb the ship's outer hull. Catra heaved the heavy metal door upwards, revealing the darkness covering the ladder underneath. With quick but secure moves the two entered the destroyer, shutting the hatch over their heads with a loud clunk.

"It's the attack, isn't it?" the feline asked, throwing a glance upwards to the climbing silhouette of her best friend. "Yeah, and we are not where we should be. Shadow Weaver is going to kill us if she finds out," she said, quickly grabbing the next bar of the ladder beneath.

Catra snorted, "Well quite literally in my case I bet. Got any plans on how we-" She stopped with her mouth opened as the shadow above her disappeared. Adora was gone, only the slight vibration of the metal underneath her sensitive fingers told her that she had been there seconds before.

"Adora? Adora!" she hissed and climbed upwards again. Just seconds later something grabbed her from behind, evoking a shriek of horror from the feline as she was pulled into a small hidden space. Behind her, the blonde girl giggled as Catra turned around with her mouth contorted into a mask of fear and aggression before she understood what had happened.

Retracting her small claws again she punched Adora in the shoulder, "You asshole!" Her friend smirked, "I know, don't mention it. Now let's go, this air vent should lead us right to the landing bay." She turned around to lead the way with Catra still smiling and shaking her head at the unforeseen attack.

On and on they went, past old tattered parts of cloth, both of them were wondered how they'd gotten up here, large fans buzzing in the circulating air and the cold wire intestines of the star destroyer. Casually daring to take a look down, Catra spotted some of her brothers and sisters in arms preparing for the incoming fight, their dark armors glistening in the cold light. Although they had to stop from time to time to avoid detection, they arrived at the hatch soon after having entered the air ducts. Adora lifted it a slight bit to see if anyone could see their descend but they were lucky - or the force had given them a little push towards the right way.

"Follow me and stay down," the blonde said, putting her hand on Catra's shoulder one more time to give her words a deeper impact. The feline grinned as she nodded, keeping her mouth shut as to let no sound out of it. When the hatch lifted, the sound of metal scraping on metal appeared to be louder than it actually was, their hearts started beating in an effort to hide their fear. With one last nod, the blonde let her feet dangle down the ledge and jumped onto the steel deck beneath.

"Hey, Catra, you can come down, it's clear!" Adora hissed and waved at her friend. The feline above gave her a small smile before jumping down next to her. Catra's feet landed on the metal without the slightest sound, her tail wagging to keep the girl's balance intact. In front of them, the endless widths of space lazily drifted along, a blue barrier of energy shielding them from the cold death lingering behind the tricky beauty of the universe. To their right, a massive construct of metal stored the empty black shells of multiple imperial fighters ready to conquer the galaxy.

Catra patted Adora on the back, "What now? Don't you think we'll need all of the training gear for
"airborne fighting?" The blonde opened her mouth but before she could say anything, another voice, slightly deeper than hers concluded, "I don't think that'll be necessary."

They bolted around, hands on their light sabers. Behind them, the silhouette of a girl in dark red and black armor stood leaned against a wall. Adora's hand twitched before a relieved smile parted her lips, "Lonnie, thank god!" Next to her, Catra still stared at the newcomer with unchanged hostility. But she didn't seem to care at all.

"Good thing I caught you here, Shadow Weaver is looking for you already. Here, have your armor plating, you won't need any training gear anymore. This fight's gonna be real combat, no baby toys allowed," Lonnie explained and threw a small duffel-bag to their feet. The metal alloy inside clattered as it hit the floor and when Adora rummaged through it before distributing the insides between herself and Catra. With a few quick pulls at the strands holding the armor together, the two stood up, the cold steel weighing them down only slightly, "Thanks Lonnie, we owe you." The trooper just smirked in response and turned towards the docking bay, leaving the two girls fondling around their armor to make it fit better.

"God, I hate this stu-" the feline was about to say when the backside of the chest plate started squeezing the upper part of her tail in a very uncomfortable manner. Before she could end her sentence however, the voice of their master bellowed over the concert of sirens, "Adora?! Catra?! Where have you been?" The darkness surrounding the Sith seemed to be inkier than normal, the shadows danced around her as she slithered towards her apprentices.

"Sorry Shadow Weaver, we took a slight detour to avoid all the troopers storming down the main hallways," Adora replied quickly, her hands sweating as her mentor looked first into her and then Catra's eyes, hate burned in the last glare. "Aha, I see. We will talk about this later; the mission goes first. Are you ready to crush the republic once and forever?" The blonde nodded in a stiff manner, trying to suppress the conflicting emotions building up in her throat; Fear, excitement, worry, anger. A glance towards Catra told her that she was feeling just the same, her tail trying to flee from the painful restraints of the armor.

"Yes master," the feline said with an even stiffer nod, her chin moving only slightly as she did. Shadow Weaver put the tips of her fingers together and the entire room could feel she was giving her apprentices a grim smile. "Well then, may the force be with you. Rip them to shreds my children, make them suffer."

The seat of her fighter was less comfortable than Adora had last remembered but she payed the slight stinging no mind. Rather she tried to stay focused as the ship underneath her started humming louder and louder, the engines preparing to make one last jump through hyperspace to reach their destination. Korriban, the real holy home of the Sith would soon be back in their possession. The blonde checked her fighter one last time, running one last prognosis to see if all systems were online. A thing she payed special attention to was the little modified hyperdrive that she had tried to install since months. Last time she had tried to use it, she had almost crashed into an asteroid. But it had worked.

"Hey, is everything alright?" the voice of Catra sounded over the comlink strapped to her head, a slight faint of worry swinging within the mumbled words.

"Yeah, I'm fine Catra. Just checking if everything's still working," Adora responded, flipping the switch to power down the routines still running to prove the ship was alright. Pushing her worries aside, the young Sith trainee pulled down the belt from over her shoulder, securing it for good. Then she put her hands onto the steering wheel in front of her. The warm leather seemed to animate
her to push it forwards and race out of the hangar into battle.

"All wings report in," the feline's voice said, evoking a stream of replies from the fighters of their squadron.

"Red Three, standing by."

"Red Five, standing by."

"Red Two Leader, standing by," Adora replied, a smirk carved into her face. This was it, her first real battle. The fear and anger were pushed down somewhere down to the depths of her belly, only producing a slightly damp feeling of unease. Underneath her she could feel the ship coming to a hard halt as a voice over the loudspeakers bellowed, "Ready for hyperspace jump." Closing her eyes, the blonde got one last glimpse of the starts becoming blurred until they looked like small stripes of pure light when the ship bolted forwards into the inter-dimensional portal. Her stomach turned upside down as they reached light speed but she had accustomed to the feeling since years.

It took them just a few seconds but Adora knew how many miles they had flown through, unseen by the crews of the ships along the way. The girl pushed a button and with a loud hiss her engine started. The roar of the other engines around her answered soon after, blue beams of light blasting out of the back ends of the fighters. Another quick motion enabled the front-faced laser turrets, maximum destruction packed into a small package. The buzzing of energy flowing through the entire ship reached every small part of her soul, evoking even more conflicting emotions that desperately tried to surface. But the Sith trainee didn't give into it.

This was her chance to show the republic what beast they had unleashed when they had bombarded her village as a child. Now, after years of preparation she could finally avenge the death of her parents, make the Galactic Republic pay, an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth.

"Prepare for battle," the voice from the speakers sounded again, the star destroyer noticeably slowing down as their destination came nearer at high speeds. With a deafening boom the battleship emerged from the depths of hyperspace, the stars around it finally merging together to small dots again. In front of Adora's view port, a gigantic floating structure of metal floated above the red rugged surface of storm-plagued planet. Korriban looked so much more threatening than in the pictures she had seen, the fear, pain and anger the Sith had pledged their loyalty to being radiated from its surface.

Everything seemed to be quiet at the structure above the planet, the space station didn't seem to have noticed them yet. Nothing told them there were any battle stations being manned except the lit lights inside. The insignia of the Galactic Republic was imprinted on the steel fueling Adora's rage.

"Squad, move out!" she barked, jerking her steering wheel forward. The blue of her engines intensified to a lighter shade of color, the heat intensifying as it was propelled into the empty space between the machines of destruction. Behind her, Catra followed her example; a fierce battle cry exited her throat as she did. The rest of the fighters formed up behind them, yelling "Oorah!" into the intercom to demonstrate their strength. All of them knew that not everyone would survive but their loyalty outdid their fear.

"Looks like we're getting some company up here guys!" Catra bellowed, pointing the nose of her ship towards one of the lit-up bays of the space station. And she was right, the white and orange forms of republican fighters raced out of the hangar, their pilots being even smaller than pinheads. They seemed to be headed right for their squadron.
Adora positioned her comlink one last time to give her comrades a reason to fight for, "Alright, this is it. May the force be with you and hail the emperor!" The squad behind her replied with one last cry before breaking out of formation to engage the enemy, leaving Catra and the blonde in their own separate constellation.

"May the force be with you Catra," she said with a sad smile, the reply soon following, "May the force be with you too Adora, take care of yourself, we've still got some adventures to go on." The girl smiled, "Hell yeah we do, now let's show those assholes what we do with filthy republic scum!" And with one last glance on the blinking lights of the console, she gripped the ends of her steering wheel and pressed the triggers for her turrets...

Chapter End Notes

So before we head to the battle of Korriban, I just quickly wanted to thank all of you guys for your amazing feedback! I uploaded yesterday and you already searched this up more than 150 times? What have I earned the honors with?! Hell, I doubted anyone would read this but looks like I was absolutely wrong! Thank you, you're all just amazing!
Invasion

With a loud indelible sound, the energy of the gun bolted forwards in a big beam of light. It was like watching a shooting star fall out of the sky, beautiful but deadly and destructive where it touched. The enemy fighters were able to dodge the incoming fire, however, Catra saw her chance to strike. With a maniacal laugh she pulled the trigger, aiming for one of the ships that had swarmed out of the protective formation.

A ball of fire ignited in the cockpit of the republic soldier; his ship quickly being annihilated by the explosion of his reactor. The lifeless body of the man floated out of the wreckage, it was uncertain if anyone would ever find it or if it would endlessly drift in the endless dark space surrounding him until the gravity of a planet pulled him out of it.

"That's number one," Catra said over the comlink, "Still a couple more to go." With a grim nod Adora opened fire once more, aiming for the middle of the squad in front of her. This time she scored a hit, setting the wing of a fighter on fire. If it wasn't for the empty vacuum surrounding them, Adora could have sworn she heard the man scream out in terror as his controls started lightening up like a Christmas tree.

Bolts of energy rushed towards the blonde as the other fighters came into range. With a quick nosedive she dodged them, the light only closely missing the top of her spacecraft. But that was just what she'd expected. Tilting her steer, she performed a pirouette, catapulting herself above Catra where she once again squeezed the trigger.

"Hey there Adora, how's it going?" the feline teased and looked upwards through the glass top of her cockpit. The blonde stared back and laughed, her voice reaching the depths of Catra's heart beneath. She couldn't help but blush from the conflicting happiness Adora gave her, this was a battlefield and even here the blonde had this effect on her.

It was then they realized the enemy fighters were still closing in, playing a dangerous game of who-dodges-first. Ripping the vehicle around, Catra flew beneath the tight enemy formation, quickly attempting to fall into their backs by turning off her left engine mid-flight. The energy propelled her into position, the window in front pointing at one of her opponents' glowing backs. With an excited scream the feline fired, hitting her target within seconds, leaving nothing behind but blackened scraps of the once white exterior.

"Hey, Adora! What's up with you, I haven't seen you shooting down anyone yet!" she boasted through the headpiece, evoking a jealous little sting in her friend.

"Oh, I'm going to show you some shooting then," she answered, quickly turning around her fighter and rushing behind two of the airborne enemies. The first shot hit the spacecraft right in the tail, leaving it spiraling to its doom on the surface of Korriban below. The second man however didn't seem to be as easy to defeat as his comrade.

"What is he-", Adora attempted to say as the fighter's engines turned off, forcing the Sith trainee to steer out of the way in a rush. She raced past him, catching a short glimpse of the orange and white helmeted silhouette inside staring back before it disappeared out of view. It was too late to shut off her engines herself, Adora realized as her board computer started beeping furiously as it detected the enemy signature behind the empire's fighter she was flying.

"Damnit, I got one on my tail, can't shake him off!" she barked through the intercom, pulling Catra's attention on her from the growing distance. "Hold on," the feline sounded, throwing herself
into a tight curve to dodge another shot from two of the incoming fighters streaming out from the intestines of the flying fortress above the planet as they started following the girl.

"Adora, turn around. Let's play a little chicken with them." Adora tilted her head as she tried to escape the beams of light hunting her. "Catra this is not the ti-" she said, only to be alerted by the rapid beeping of an incoming homing missile. "Just do what I say!" the feline replied, her voice almost breaking as she did. The blonde closed her eyes for a split second, channeling her strength one last time. "Alright, ready yourself," she agreed, turning her fighter around to face her incoming friend. Shoving the lever for her thrusters forward, the vehicle was catapulted into the direction, leaving the enemy no choice but to do the same.

"Tilt in three," Catra's voice sounded as they got closer and closer to each other, both of them seeing their opposite grow in front of their cockpits. "Two," Adora answered, putting one of her hands on the throttle lever and the other one on her wheel, ready to flip her fighter into a vertical position. Her heart stopped as her friend yelled, "One!"

Time slowed down around them as they looked each other in the eyes, not needing to say the command, neither which way to choose but relying on the force to tell them when to turn. And with a sudden jerk of their wheels, both of the Sith apprentices positioned their fighters parallel to each other, only centimeters parting the bottoms of their feet as the raced by. The clueless republic fighters couldn't even scream before their crafts crashed into each other, igniting in a giant explosion that sent shrapnel to every side.

"Woohoo, I call that a hell of a kill!" Catra cheered and spun through the air in celebration. Adora laughed at the boasting feline, turning around to follow her back to the station. 

"Let's not get fed up with it you hear me, the fight's not over yet!" she said into her headpiece with a smirk before returning to her friend's side. The feline looked at Adora trough the quartz of her window, showing her small fangs as she smiled widely. "Oh, I never said it was. This is where the fun begins!"

The space station towered above them as they spun circles around it, sometimes meeting one of the orange republic fighters and taking it down in a last blaze of glory before leaving the scrap floating in space. Both of them sensed a presence inside the metal construct, the strong aura of someone in bond with the light side of the force. Catra growled into the intercom, "Jedi." "I sense them too," Adora answered while damaging another one of the turrets trying to shoot them down from the surface of the station. The tower lightened up red when the energy split its protective shield in two, leaving the gun in an irreparable state.

"All squads heads up, Lord Vindican and his apprentice are paying the station a visit," the voice of an imperial trooper sounded from their headsets, sending shivers down their spines as they felt the cold dark presence of the Sith lords approaching. Their craft was much bigger than the two girl's fighters, the interceptor being one of the more versatile ships of the imperial fleet, some even considering it the best there was.

"Let's go in!" the feline said, her voice sparkling with excitement as she used her thrusters to rush to the interceptor's side. "Catra, I don't think-" her friend tried to respond, her voice being cut off by the cold voice of someone saying, "Stand down, the Jedi are ours." Catra and Adora both immediately slowed down as if bitten by a tarantula, letting the craft pass them.

"Was that-" "-Malgus..." the blonde explained, her heart still beating up to her throat. The apprentice of Lord Vindican was feared for his extreme violence; once he had killed an imperial officer for simply not greeting him quick enough. His master wasn't kind, in no world he was but...
he at least showed a certain kind of respect even towards the younglings at Dromund Kaas, making him seem hard but rewarding. Malgus however had nothing of that, he hated everyone with passion, his presence was sickening even for members of the high council.

"Let's just, uhm, forget this happened, alright?" Catra mumbled, turning her ship towards the still raging battle, her cheeks burning with embarrassment. "Oh yeah? I think this will be a great tease for later," the blonde mocked, grinning widely as her friend pretended to bump her ship into Adora's. Then, both of them started blasting the remaining republic fighters to shreds, leaving nothing behind as they had promised.

The battle was almost over when they heard something that got their attention. "Attention, we've got a Corellian XS freighter starting from bay six!" Lonnie remarked, her voice sounding tinny and far away through the connection.

"Isn't bay six where Vindican and Malgus are?" Catra asked, her ears fluttering in confusion. Adora waited with her answer as she curved around the bottom of the structure to get another look onto the shielded area the two Sith had just entered. And the feline had been right, the big number six was imprinted on the battle-scarred metal of the station.

"Looks like they left us something to eat too," the blonde answered, a grin splitting her dry lips as she saw the shape of the big ship emerge from the landing bay, its side scraping along the Sith interceptor and damaging its side extensively. Then, with a flash of blue light, it started from the hangar, quickly closing in on the two apprentices' fighters.

Adora steered her ship right at the enemy before ripping her eyes open and yelling, "Watch out for those Ion-Cannons!"

The blonde was merely able to dodge the incoming ball of blue light, a part of the energy hitting the bottom of her fighter. Her control board flashed with red lights, telling her how big the damage was. "Adora!" Catra yelled, a lump of fear and pain bursting in her stomach, slowly forming into a solid ball of anger.

"I'm fine, it just scraped the hyperdrive!" Adora replied, blasting herself into position behind the armored freighter, "Let's blow up this hunk of metal!" She pressed her triggers, earning a satisfying hit on the retractor shield of her enemy. What she also earned was the sudden feeling of nausea as she realized she had been suppressing a feeling the force sent her.

"There's a Jedi on that ship," she hissed towards Catra, flinging her ship to the right as another burst of bolts was fired her way. The feline just growled in response, she felt it too, the weak and puny essence of light inside the metal hull. With a yell of anger, she unleashed a series of hateful shots on the freighter, the ship only being able to dodge a couple of them. It was steered towards one of the empire's great star destroyers, taking fire from its forward laser batteries.

Catra dodged one of the metal parts of the destroyer with a shriek before noting, "Whoever is steering that ship has to be absolutely delusional." "Yeah no shit!" Adora said, spinning once more to avoid the incoming cold blue fire. But she was too slow this time.

With a loud crack, something broke in the machine underneath the blonde as one of the bolts hit the bottom of her fighter again, leaving her steering wheel dangling on the console without being able to maneuver.

"Fuck, I'm hit!" she yelled, unable to do anything about her situation. Another ball of energy hit her
wing, ripping the entire structure out of its socket but miraculously leaving the cockpit unscathed.

Catra's voice cracked as she screamed, "Adora, no!" and spiraled away from the fleeing corellian ship to save her friend. The console lightened up, multiple lights flashing as the blonde lost altitude, quickly gaining speed as she raced towards the red surface of the planet below. She knew this was it, she had lost and this first battle would be her death. Tears streamed into her eyes, "I'm not going to make it Catra, save yourself!"

Above her, the dark shape of the feline's ship raced along, trying to keep up the pace as not to lose the falling fighter. Adora wasn't able to see anything through the blurred vision of her eyes when Catra croaked, "No, I won't leave you! There has to be a way, what about your landing gear?" The blonde shook her head, a sob leaving her sore throat, "I have no heat shields and you know that, at this rate I will get cooked when I enter the atmosphere. GO!"

"I won't! Think, Adora, focus, I beg you! Don't give up on me!" the feline answered, her voice not being able to hit any tone right as it came out like the scraping of metal on metal. Inside the spinning cockpit, Adora's heart ached as she realized that she'd never be able to see Catra ever again, never to lean against her shoulder nor hear her cute giggle one more time. But in her mourning, a thought popped up in her head. She stared at the console in front of her, seeing only one light not flickering: The hyperdrive.

"Catra listen, I have an idea. But you won't like it," she said over the comlink, soon after getting the reply, "Anything that can save you!" She sighed, channeling her last strength resorts, "I will overload the hyperdrive, that's my only option."

"What?! That could kill you!" Cara answered, frantically trying to win the battle against time as she saw the parts of her friend's fighter facing the planet slowly start glowing in a red light as they got nearer to the atmosphere. "I will die anyway but it's a plan! I can't use the computer in here so I have no clue where I'll jump to. I'm completely blind," the blonde Sith apprentice responded, putting her hand on the switch for the hyperdrive. Tears entered her eyes again, "Do you trust me?"

The feline above couldn't keep up the speed anymore, slowly getting passed by the now burning wreckage of her friends, an uncontrollable sob building up in her throat, "I do Adora, I'll find you anywhere you go, I promise." Adora closed her eyes, shutting out the curtain of salty water streaming down her cheeks, "Thank you Catra, I know you will keep that promise."

A sudden jerk rocked the falling aircraft, ripping the blonde's hand forwards and activating the hyperdrive for her. "No! Not yet, Catra I l-!" she screamed in pained horror as the stars above her morphed into spears of light and her body was ripped towards the opening portal. She could hear Catra's voice one last time, yelling something unintelligible before her head hit the back of her seat, sending hot pain to her brain until darkness ripped her out of reality.
Her eyes were quollen when she extended the landing gear with the flick of her finger, earning a light shake in response as the metal legs touched the steel floor of the hangar. Catra wiped away the tears one last time before opening the cockpit and letting her feet dangle over the ledge. The cold water on her face started to form a slight irritating crust but she wasn't in the state to notice. With a rumble the construction beneath picked up the fighter, slowly lifting it up into the storage compartment it belonged into. The feline took a deep shaky breath to help her cope with the pain occupying her heart. She had given Adora a promise, and she would keep it at all costs.

The ground underneath her partially bare feet was cold, almost colder than she liked it but Catra couldn't care less. Crossing her arms in front of her chest she started rubbing the bare skin of her arms, trying to feel anything but the throbbing of her eyes, the burning of her head and the screams of agony coming from her chest. All she wanted now was a comfy bed, a blanket and her best friend there to comb her mane but she knew she'd have to spare out on one of those things.

"Catra, where is Adora?"

The dark shape of Shadow Weaver floated out of the main hallway, inky darkness following her on each invisible step. Catra felt her presence, however, she didn't even dare to look up into her master's eyes. What she did feel was the cold fear being irradiated by her, the cold claws of despair slowly gripping around her chest and making it hard for the feline to breathe. Shadow Weaver grew impatient, her hand waving around in the cold air, "I will not ask again, child. Where is Adora?"

"Gone. She was shot down by the Jedi," Catra whispered, tears filling her eyes once more as she remembered the rain of sparks Adora's fighter had shed like blood when the ion cannon had ripped off its wing like a sadistic little child would rip out the wings of a fly. A long silence arose, settling into her skin like ashes, slowly marking her with pain for everyone to see. Her master remained silent for that same moment, only staring at Catra with her mask hiding her widely opened eyes.

With a sudden jerk, the feline was lifted off her feet, her face being painfully squished by Shadow Weaver's gloved hand. The dark clouds around them started forming a bubble around the two Sith, the light from the outside being completely diminished in the process. "Insolent child, what have you done? It is surely your fault she was hit; it always is! I should dispose of your unnecessary existence right here and now!" the dark woman yelled, her voice echoing off the seemingly solid darkness.

Catra's eyes widened as she extended her hand, her fingers crackling with blue energy as they came nearer towards her face. The feline's heart was beating so loudly that it felt like the organ had moved its way up her throat in a very unnatural way. She was unable to scream; the tone being swallowed by whatever dark power Shadow Weaver was using on her.

"Wait," Catra managed to croak out, leaving her master's hand stop just centimeters away from her face in hesitation. The bolts of energy still crackled and hissed like a whole armada of snakes, their heat slowly singing her cheek and making it feel like it was about to burst into fire at any second. She had been through this treatment so many times before, enduring the pointless and tyrannical
rule of her master since years. But even though she had felt like this more than a hundred times already, the raw strength and the face of death terrified her nonetheless.

"What is it? Any last words, maybe a reason why I shouldn't incinerate you in this very second?" Shadow Weaver asked, her voice cold and filled with hate, anger and disappointment. The feline's tail whipped around, her head furiously trying to find a way to escape her impending doom. What could she say that would prove her master wrong in her belief she didn't need her own apprentice anymore? Anything could help, she had to think what the dark woman's goals were now after what had happened to Adora.

"Adora is not dead, she managed to jump into hyperspace before she would have been obliterated in the atmosphere. Her track records should reveal where she is right now. I can and will find her, I promise master! You need me," the brunette explained, her feet still trying to reach the safe ground below. The dark Sith master stared at her apprentice struggling to survive, her mask leaving the feline in her claws no clue what she was thinking.

Her heart stopped for a short second when her master moved again, slowly withdrawing her hand from her face and letting her feet down to the ground again. With a relieved sigh, Catra patted her neck to search for any injury, the small marks underneath her fingers burning only slightly. But Shadow Weaver wasn't finished with her yet how she had to learn after the woman's hand hit her face out of nowhere with the strength of a Rancor. Burning pain ran through the feline's entire face, evoking a shriek of agony as she hit the floor, not having expected any further punishment. Her watery eyes wandered back to her master, the dark red robes of the woman slowly turning as she prepared to walk away.

"Begging for mercy? You're a miserable failure, do you know that? Go, find Adora and get out of my sight. The next time you walk in here, you better have her with you or it'll be the last time such a disappointment like you walks on Sith property," the dark master told Catra, her head being tilted sideways in a slight angle symbolizing she wasn't joking at all. It had been a close call this time and next time, Shadow Weaver wouldn't hesitate, the feline knew that. All she could do in response was form a shaky nod, her face still stinging with unbearable pain.

"Good, good," her master mumbled, dissolving the dark bubble around them with the wave of her hand, leaving Catra's crumbled form lying on the ground as she took the same way she had come from. The feline stood up, trying to ignore the stares from the troopers in the hangar around her. A sudden sting in her chest made her flinch, Adora had unknowingly brought her into a great risk, she took a little part of the fault Catra had to endure this treatment. With a shake of her head the Sith apprentice brushed away the feeling of betrayal, knowing it was wrong to think something like this. She would find her friend and then they would together again, this time without taking unnecessary risks that could tear them apart. This time they would remain at each other's side forever.

The space around her was cold, a slight breeze blowing through the stone door on her left. A comfortable blanket was wrapped around her body, lending its warmth to the shivering blonde lying on the rather soft mattress of a wooden bed. With a groan she rubbed the back of her head, noticing the soft linen wrapped around it. A bandage, very similar to the ones the empire used. Adora smiled as she smelled the whiff of food somewhere in the distance, reminding her of the good old times before everything that had happened.

Then with a sudden jerk of her head, she remembered why she was here. The invasion, her fighter being shot down, the hyperspace jump, Catra yelling after her with pain in her voice. Where
exactly was she and why was she not dead? And if she had survived the crash anyway, why wasn't she somewhere in midst a field filled with scrap?

"Hello?" she asked out aloud, her voice brittle and dry from not having drunken anything in a long time. Adora immediately cursed herself for being loud, she didn't need her captors to know she was awake. With her heart in her mouth she waited for a response, someone to walk through the stone doorway that was covered with merely a cloth to protect her from the sun's light. But fortunately, no one followed her call, leaving her some time to straighten up in bed and look around the room.

The furniture was nothing too much different from the one she was used to in the imperial cruisers, recognizing one of the weirdly shaped silhouettes as a wardrobe. She took a quick look downwards at herself, noticing her jacket as well as her light saber were missing. Whoever took her into hospitality wanted her to be defenseless. Adora felt exposed without her weapon, she had grown up with it as part of her body, as a second soul you could say. "Okay Adora, let's stand up," she whispered to herself, putting one of her legs on the ground, adding the second one just seconds after. With one last deep breath she shifted her weight.

The ground greeted her face with a soft thud as her legs refused to work, all the strength drained from them. A loud groan left her mouth as a sudden wave of nausea overcame her, her mouth instantly filling with an unpleasant taste of old vomit. Everything in front of her eyes seemed to liquefy, the hard shapes of the furniture disappearing into incomprehensible blurred lines.

"I think our visitor is awake father," a voice sounded from the outside of the hut, a slight bit of concern intertwined with the tone of it.
"Well then, let's see how she's doing then," a different voice answered, way deeper and more pleasant to listen to, Adora's back suddenly becoming stiff as she compared it to her father's, finding many striking similarities. But she knew he was dead; she had been found next to his and her mother's corpse so she tried to suppress the upcoming feeling of dread in order to concentrate on who her captors were. And her wish was soon fulfilled when a big, threatening looking and robed figure threw its shadow on her face.

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"Hello there," the man said, his voice sending a shiver down Adora's spine once again as she laid on the cold dusty ground. His dark eyes dwell upon her with a look of kindness in them the Sith had never seen, warm joy and devotion mixed into the two glowing orbs. She was suspicious however, who knew what he was hiding from her. The man's shape definitely told a different story, muscular with a more olive shade of skin, he looked like had been working hard out on the fields every day. His hands just fitted that style, rough with long scars running down the palms like small white rivers.

Behind him, the silhouette of a girl emerged from behind the small curtain. She looked different than the man, only few similarities were visible enough. The biggest were her eyes, the same glow irradiated from them, however, her glare didn't look as inviting as his. She was dressed in all shades of purple, a small robe flowing off her shoulders and touching the ground beneath.

"Uhm, hello?" Adora replied, her eyes still darting between them like she was a timid antelope, trying to analyze the danger these two were posing. The man laughed, "I see you've tried to explore your room a little? Now now, you haven't rested enough, back to bed you go."

Stepping forwards he took Adora beneath her arms, easily lifting her back onto the mattress and pulling out a weirdly shaped bottle of water from one of the drawers nearby. He gave it to the young Sith who couldn't help but greedily empty the whole bottle in a few thirsty gulps, earning herself a disgusted look from the girl on the other side of the room.
After having put the bottle on top of the drawer again she looked the man in the eyes, seeing a slight glimpse of worry in them as she asked, "Who are you and where am I? What happened?"
Before he could say anything, the girl on his side opened her mouth, "We shouldn't answer questions of Sith scum, you know that dad. And why are we even giving her water and medical supplies, she could kill us at any moment!"

The man turned around to her, the corners of his mouth pointing downwards, "Glimmer, haven't I taught you that you treat everyone good, even your enemies? This is the true Jedi way, and you should follow it."

Adora's head jerked up in surprise and shock, her hand frantically touching the empty part next to her waist where her light saber should have been. Fear flooded her mind as she couldn't even feel the presence of the weapon in the room. What she instead felt was the brute force of the light side in the two persons surrounding her, making her stomach turn upside down.

"You are Jedi?!"

Chapter End Notes

Sorry guys but today's update on my story won't be happening. Due to my grandfather having passed away recently, I have had a pretty hard time and way too little time to write BUT I promise, tomorrow I will give my best to finish the next chapter!
Rescue

"You are Jedi?!"

Adora's eyes darted between the girl, Glimmer, her father, the supposed Jedi, and the small cloth-covered entrance. Her heart was jumping in her chest like a captured animal trying to escape its bonds. The man in front of her raised his hands in a defensive way, trying his best to calm the Sith down. The Jedi's coat was slightly raised by the gesture however, revealing the smooth hilt of a light saber hanging down his belt.

"We are not going to harm you in any way! I swear by the order," he said, slowly coming closer to the bed, his arms still in the same position as before. His eyes were focused on Adora, their big brown iris having a certain kind of mesmerizing effect on her, drowning her in their calmness and focus. But she knew this was some sort of trick, the girl felt how the force around her was smoothly manipulated to mess with her head. But no mind trick would work on the Sith, she was a person of pure focus and sheer will.

"Oh yeah, why are you trying your dirty little brainwashing on me, huh? I don't trust you and you know damn right why," the blonde said, jumping up from the soft bed and ignoring the singing pain in her head. Taking up her fists she yelled, "Step out of the way and you will not be harmed!"

The Jedi seemed to fall for the trick, his eyes glazing over just for a split second as the dark side tried to enter his mind. He took a step back, only to be stopped by his daughter.

"Of course we will! Should we maybe give you a blaster to shoot us down right here too? You're outnumbered two to one, just sit back down so we can explain," Glimmer replied, her hand held out in front of her body, slowly manipulating the force to let it glow in a weird shade of pink. Adora understood she was trying to seem intimidating but hell, she was failing miserably at it.

The Sith grinned, "You mean one and a half against one. I like those odds." The Jedi's daughter blushed as she heard the insult, her face not looking as pleased and arrogant as before. The next thing that happened surprised Adora immeasurably. The Jedi stepped back, leaving her free passage through the narrow door towards the lightened-up exterior. His daughter gave him an angry glare but he simply replied it with a stare of his own, making the girl flinch and follow his example.

"You are free to go, as I said, we pose no threat," he explained, pointing towards the entrance in a swift manner. Adora cocked her head in disbelief, still keeping her hands up in case they tried to make a move. "I swear if this is a trap," she mumbled, her back feeling uncomfortably exposed as she walked in between the two supposed enemies of the Empire, not taking her eyes off any of them while simultaneously trying to watch the entrance. Her head however wasn't in the state to cope with so many distractions at once; a stinging pain arose in her temple, causing the young Sith to flinch and hold her head. The Jedi took a step forward, real worry flaring up in his orbs but Adora quickly backed away out of the hut.

The soft cloth over the entrance caressed her back as she took another step backwards into the sunlight. A soft breeze slipped through her hair, carrying the sweet smell of an unknown plant. Warmth streamed through her stiff limbs as the sun above the planet started affecting her skin and the toned muscles beneath. A soft groan left her lips as Adora closed her eyes to enjoy the sensation, taking her sight off the small house in front of her for a quick second after no one emerged to follow her.
It was strange to see the two Jedi really let her go, something was definitely fishy about this. The Sith used the force to expand her senses, seeking the cold hilt of her light saber somewhere around. Turning around she gasped as she realized where she was. She was standing in the middle of a small village, humans walking all around ignored her suspicious behavior completely. Most of them looked like normal farmers, others however had a shadier appearance. Their jackets were lined with strange symbols, horned nightmarish creatures from the greater regions of space; smugglers. A man walking by stared at the Sith apprentice with a disgustingly hungry look that made her blood freeze in her veins. Taking a quick step backwards she concentrated on the cold aura of her saber again, listening to its silent whispering in order to make out its location.

She followed the invisible line through the entire village, past old women washing clothes, past men screaming to sell their goods on not very sturdy looking stands and a small town center with an open yard. Adora stopped as she heard the excited giggling of a child. Turning around she faced the yard’s middle in which, protected by a couple of trees with strange reddish leaves, stood a Punch and Judy show. A small group of children sat in front of it, their mouths opened in awe and their eyes glistening with excitement. It sent a shock wave through the girl's body, seeing them sit there without any worries on their mind.

Their giggling made Adora remember the days before everything had gone down the drain. She pictured herself and Catra sitting in the middle of their old village playing Jedi and Sith, one of their favorite games at that time. The feline had always wanted to be the "bad guy", taking on the role of the Sith while Adora took her stick to defend the Jedi order. Both of them were very young then, no worries, no idea about the conflict building up around them, no idea where their allegiances would lie in the future.

A sad smirk laid on her face as she saw one of the children, a little girl, take the hand of another only to lightly pinch her, evoking an amused shriek from her friend. The Sith's heart hurt even more when she saw them chase each other through the narrow streets, wishing she could turn back time to feel like them one more time. Then she shook her head; Adora wasn't here to drown in silly memories of a past that had been filled with lies and the pain that followed it. She was here to find her light saber and hope for some kind of rescue from Catra. Giving the bridge of her nose a quick massage to push away all the distractions she stepped out of the yard and followed the main road towards the savanna-like landscape where she felt the presence of her weapon.

The ground was getting mushy after she left the road to follow her inner compass. Large trees similar to the one Adora had seen in the village started to line her way, their red leaves rustling in the wind and creating a nice shady place to cool down from the hot sun. The blonde had started to grow even more nervous, suspecting the Jedi to jump out from behind every tree, stand in the shadow of a nearby giant flower or simply walk behind her when she couldn't see it. God, how much she missed having Catra walk next to her knowing she'd defend her friend with her life and the other way around.

"What the-" the Sith mumbled as she spotted a pushed over tree, its bark still smoking slightly as blue resin oozed from the jagged wound. The earth next to it was similarly messed up, a long trench with parts of metal still sticking out of the scorched soil.

"Another happy landing," Adora sighed before jumping down into the freshly opened scar trying not to step on anything sharp that could burrow into her footing. Following the trail of destruction, she noticed the damage she'd done to the environment, spotting one of the giant orange and red flowers having been severed right through its stem and lying on the ground like a big beautiful but lifeless carcass. She did feel somewhat sorry for damaging something this beautiful, turning it into
a patch of darkened soil and dead plants, but after all it wasn't her fault she had crashed.

Her fists were clenched when she remembered feeling the Jedi's presence on the freighter, the impact of the ion blast ripping her fighter to shreds. Immense pain and anger flowed through her body fueling the dark side in her as the memories flashed before her eyes, making her sight slightly reddish in color.

Adora had been so focused on her smoldering rage that she didn't notice the debris in front of her feet growing larger, parts of what had been the console lying scattered between gravel and kicked up soil.

"Ow," she bellowed as she walked face first into a large hunk of metal in her way. Rubbing the top of her forehead the blonde took a step back to examine the obstacle. The once black color had started melting off the silver steel compound of the fighter, the shining metal piercing through the darkness in several spots. Red stains of molten paint vaguely resembled the hexagon of the Empire, the Sith laid her hand on the symbol with a look of sadness on her face. Seeing her fighter in this state was sad, she and Catra had spent hours lying underneath the strung-up ship, trying to modify and fix various parts on it.

"Looks like we won't get off this planet together old friend," she said, giving the hull of the cockpit a light pat before climbing up the slope to get around it. The cold feeling of her saber was very close now, she could hear whispers emanating from the engraved hilt.

Her first look on the other side fell onto the smashed window of the cabin, sharp quartz crystal lying all over the ground. They crunched underneath her feet as she stepped closer towards the smashed console, some of the buttons actually still blinking by unknown power surges through the leaking generator. It wasn't hard to get through the big hole in the middle of the glass, it had seemingly been cut to the right shape for someone to enter by an incredibly hot tool.

"Huh, looks like the Jedi actually cut his way in here to get me out..." Adora told herself while touching the blackened edges of the oval lines the light saber had drawn. She shook her head, why did he even care? He had seen the emblem of the Sith Empire on her fighter and had the perfect opportunity to dispatch of her when he had the chance. Why didn't he? The blonde brushed aside some of the metal parts and wires hanging down from the ceiling as she stepped into the broken fighter still lost in confusion, not noticing one of the shadows behind her moving slowly.

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The first item Adora found was her red jacket. She picked it up thinking it was some kind of cloth the Jedi had used to make sure he didn't hurt himself but it turned out to be the remains of her coat. The red fabric had been shredded in multiple places, making some of the bandaged wounds on her body sting as she realized where they'd come from. Even though the girl didn't want to she threw the rag away, so many memories were connected to it but she couldn't just carry it around like an old doll.

She sighed as the fabric floated through the air and settled in the dust before the Sith turned around to follow the silent cries of her saber. Brushing through a small pile of quartz beneath the right side of her seat Adora felt the cold metal of her saber touch the tips of her fingers. With a relieved shriek she picked it up, examining the material for any mayor flaws. But thankfully, the metal was not scratched at all.

The Sith's excitement rose when she pressed the button to unleash the destructive energy in the weapon's core. She earned a satisfying hiss when the red blade unfolded, the humming of the kyber crystal making her heart rate slower as the missing part of her body returned to her hands. But the
silent screams in her head continued.

Surprised Adora bowed down once more as she saw the small metal tip of an object still sticking out of the glass pile. Picking it up she realized what it was. "What is the holocron doing here...? I didn't take it with me or did I?" she asked herself, slowly turning the quartz and steel hybrid in her hands. Red light flowed out of its middle, making the Sith's hands tremble as the coldness spread through her entire body.

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It took the blonde several seconds to stare at the still mysterious pyramidal object in her fingers, pulling all her concentration onto it. That was the reason why she didn't notice the threat in her back, the shadow behind her seemingly growing larger and slowly extending its grasp. The worm-like tentacles crept up on her, slowly slithering through the wreckage and pushing away parts of debris. The loud "ting" of metal hitting the ground finally made Adora turn around and her eyes widened as she spotted the thing sitting in a bush up the slope. But it was too late.
Peace was never an option

She could do nothing against it, the large predator approached Adora without any sound, giving her no clue it was there. She wanted to scream but her throat wouldn't work as she saw how the tentacle wrapped itself around the blonde's foot. Even running towards her didn't work, every step she took was like running on a conveyor belt, constantly keeping her in the spot she had been in the whole time. The large creature picked up her friend and she could hear her scream in pain and fear, making tears rise up into her eyes as she desperately tried to save Adora. Extending her claws she slashed at the monster from afar, salty water streaming down her face as her attacks had no effect. The girl collapsed, her knees touching the ground beneath her as a last cry of despair left her mouth, "Adora, no!"

Catra awoke to the blaring of an alarm. Her heart was still beating from what she had just witnessed, real dried tears lining her face as she wiped it off in order to clean herself. She felt as if she had just run for miles on end without a break while not having slept for days but her spirit was yet unbroken, the hope of finding and bringing Adora back still dwelling on her mind.

Red lights flashed above her head as she peeked out of her door to see what was going on. Everyone seemed to be in a hurry, squadrons of troopers quickly making their ways to their battle stations. The feline spotted Lonnie running down the hallway, Adora's and Catra's squad mates Rogelio and Kyle right behind her. Even though the Sith couldn't stand their presence she couldn't resist her urge of her confusion to yell, "Hey Lonnie, what the hell is happening again?"

The female trooper stopped on the spot, her friends following her example as they almost bumped into their unofficial leader. Lonnie turned around, her face completely dislodged from any emotion than cold hardness. "There's a gunship of the Republic approaching the fleet, it is unarmed and the senators inside want to negotiate," she explained. Catra could feel the boiling disgust and hatred underneath the trooper's skin, making her even more bitter than she was already. The feline's hetero chromatic eyes dwelt on her opposite, trying to find a chink in her mental armor and make her feel her own inner rage she had developed in her childhood. She had always been the one in the background, the weakling, the quiet kid. Adora had been the only person to explore her feelings and make her feel accepted in the Empire's ranks while Lonnie, Kyle and Rogelio had acted distant and uninterested.

With a sneer the Sith said, "Alright, dismissed soldier." Letting a small amount of her anger echo in the sentence, Catra got the reaction she wanted from the trooper, her eyes opening slightly wider and a scent of fear slithering into the tensed air. Kyle and Rogelio looked way more intimidated, their distance to the Sith increasing as they started to slowly back off whilst their scent polluted the space in between even more. With a tight nod, Lonnie backed off too, quickly rounding the corner to escape the feline's glare.

Catra moved her hand upwards to restrain her mane, stroking the brown hair to the back of her head with a long exhale. She tried to cleanse her soul from the smoldering rage, right now she didn't need it to use the force but she was easily able to dig it back up again if she had to. Now she had to get to the bridge in case that cruiser was just a set-up trap. Shaking her head the feline turned around to ask Adora about her opinion before flinching as she realized her friend wasn't there. Her eyes wandered back to the place the two had slept on together, the blankets still slightly messed up from the last time they had been there. Catra closed her eyes, she would get back Adora at any price, she didn't have to mourn as long as she didn't know the blonde wasn't dead. Still, the fear remained creeping in her heart as she ran towards the bridge, the pictures of her weird dream flashing in her mind.
She arrived at the command structure relatively quickly, none of the dark soldiers in her path had even grumbled to make place for her, making the hallways almost completely clear for the feline. Catra stepped towards the big window facing space, thousands of stars twinkling in the cold blue vacuum up front. Once again she was reminded of the misleading beauty when she saw how the Republic cruiser approached, its turrets glistening in the red light of Korriban below. The white and orange outer hull were painted with the emblem of the enemy nation, the feline could almost smell their weakness and fear.

"I see you had the guts to come up here," a voice behind her said, the hate and disgust clearly edged into its tone. Turning around she was greeted by the pale skin of someone she had not expected to meet. Malgus approached Catra with slow but menacing steps, making her heart jump with each one. The Sith's eyes dwelt on his opposite whose tail was just as tensed as the air around the two. The feline gulped, her throat barely being able to swallow down her fear, "Malgus, where's Lord Vindican?" He grinned viciously, his white teeth blending in perfectly with the sickishly milky white skin of his face and the yellow ring around his iris glowing like a destructive star. Something had changed in him, he seemed more independent, less restrained like an animal set loose from its bonds.

"Have you not heard the news? Lord Vindican is dead."

The room seemed to spin in a confusing loop as Catra realized what this meant. Malgus was not just any Sith apprentice anymore, he was now a full fledged Sith with the priorities the rank of his old master had brought with them. Before she could even think about it the feline fell to her knee, shivering in fear of being struck down by her opposite's blade. "I apologise for my rude greeting Master Malgus, I was not aware of the situation," she explained, the floor in front of her eyes disappearing as she closed them to suppress the shivers running down her spine. The Sith in front of her seemed to let out a slight laugh filled with his superiority, "Rise apprentice, you have served the Empire well today, I shall be forgiving about your ignorance. Come, I want to show you something."

Catra, still shivering but less concerned, rose, her gaze wandering to the back of Darth Malgus standing at the reinforced window facing the enemy vessel. Her tail was still whipping in uneasiness as she stepped to the man's side, his eyes fixed on the distant shimmer of the armored cruiser. Giving him a quick look from the side she noticed that it wasn't just the edges of his eyes that had turned into an orange, almost red color, it was in fact his whole iris. She knew that this was a sign of the dark side user having fully embraced the destructive force of his hatred and anger, Malgus had completed his training with the biggest task there was.

"You killed him, didn't you master?" the feline asked, a small bit of regret and mourn in her voice as she remembered the powerful yet somewhat gentle Lord watching her and Adora's training sessions. Malgus nodded without giving Catra another look, "Yes, he failed to accomplish his mission. He was injured by one of the Jedi while the other escaped, he had to be put down." The girl nodded in understanding, she hated the methods of the Empire at that part, failures were to be put out of their miserable and puny life at any cost" and Catra had been on the edge of getting removed many times before. In Shadow Weaver's eyes, everyone apart from Adora was somewhat of a failure, the feline had never fully understood why her best friend was so special in her master's eyes.

"I understand. What did you want to show me master?" the brunette asked, her eyes scanning the distant ship while her senses told her the level of fear in its passengers. It was easy to see their blood boiling in their veins, listen to the beating of their hearts and smell the sickening scent of their sweat. She sneered at the weakness of the Republic, they hadn't even tried to attack and yet
they had sent a committee to negotiate for peace. Disgusting.

Malgus grinned as he turned around, his yellow eyes reading Catra's feelings like an open book. "I want to show you what happens to failures," he said, his presence setting a big weight on the feline's chest, her breath quickening under the pressure. The dark Sith nodded towards one of the officers, receiving a similar response. With a quick turn the man ran towards one of the lowered command posts next to him, telling the men inside what to do. Catra could hear the hull of the star destroyer around her creak loudly as one of the engineers pressed a couple of buttons and used a joystick to shift something on the exterior of the battleship. Her mouth opened into a gap of confusion as she watched one of the big ion cannons being focused at the incoming cruiser.

"What do you want to do with that...?" the feline asked even though she knew the answer already. Her opposite laughed out loud, the viciousness in his voice making a shiver go down Catra's spine and puff her tail. "Those cowards have had enough time to see the strength of the Imperial fleet and send images of it back to the Jedi, now they will experience the real power of our forces."

He raised his hand, a claw of steel forming a fist of iron, raised and ready to unleash destruction upon his enemies. Catra didn't know how to respond, even though she despised the weakness of the Republic she had no intention of killing many innocent and unarmed men and women who had been promised safe passage. But all she could do was watch as the Sith let his fist fall, giving the destroyer's commander the signal to fire. And he got his wish. A giant ball of red energy rushed forward, quickly followed by a whole volley of twins as they rushed towards the helpless vessel. The feline watched with horror as the first shot hit the cruiser, the energy merely being deflected by the shield generators inside. She could hear the people inside scream as a rumble ran through the ground they were standing on and the lights flashed off as the power was redirected to the forward shields. They stood no chance to the second shot, the bolt penetrating the whole shield and hitting the top of the cruiser, ripping open a giant hole in the steel. A single tear slipped down Catra's cheek as one voice after the other was snuffed out, even the lonely voice of a little boy. She felt his pain as he was exposed to the cold of space, his eyes glazing over as his body was quickly covered with ice crystals. It was as if millions of voices suddenly cried out in terror and were suddenly silenced.

She wiped away the small drop before Malgus turned around, his face filled with pleasure of his success. Then he looked down at the feline in front of him, "Failures are to be exterminated. I have heard from you and your friend's little accident out there and that you abandoned her. From what Shadow Weaver told me, she is an important part in our plan to destroy the Jedi order. Do not disappoint me and you shall live, bring this girl back and I will spare you. If not, well then I will not be able to help you anymore." Catra backed off, slowly targeting the exit of the bridge with her eyes darting around the whole room.

"I will set off right now master, I will be successful, I promise," she said and earned a vicious smirk from Darth Malgus in response. Rounding the corner she stopped and turned around only to break into a run. Rushing down the hallway hot tears streamed down her face like small rivers.

"Adora, where are you when I need you?"
"Let me go!" the blonde yelled. Her golden hair was ripped around as the world spun upside down. The ground suddenly found its way to the top of her eyes while the sky glided underneath her feet. All Adora could do was wiggle and yell as she was picked up, the large tendril of whatever beast had gotten a hold of her wrapped around her ankle. With a loud thud, her head hit the dark remains of the fighter's cockpit. Sharp waves of pain rippled through the Sith's entire body, the light in front of her eyes died out for just a quick second. Unconsciousness tried its best to enter Adora's mind but her defenses held the invisible creeping enemy at bay. She was raised higher and higher off the ground, the grip on her leg tightening until it felt like it was crushing her bones to dust.

Another agonized scream left her mouth as she buckled up and tried to punch the large beast on its nonexistent fingers, earning only a slight rumble in response. The girl was facing the opposite side, away from the predator about to consume her. Its gigantic limbs towered above her dangling feet, the shadow of the unknown being reflected onto the wreckage beneath. "Leave me alone you stupid-" Adora bellowed, using the momentum of swinging to turn around, the words suddenly having a hard time to come out clearly as she understood what she was about to be eaten by. "Uhm...flower...?"

Whether the monster had a conscious intelligence or not, it did not seem to like the name the blonde had given it. The orange and red leaves that had looked like regular petals opened to reveal a gaping oval mouth, saliva dripping from the green fangs that, even though being composed from the same rather soft green material of its stem, seemed to be extremely sharp. A sickening smell of decomposition and sweet death reached Adora's nostrils, her stomach violently rebelling against the exposure. She plucked her nose with two fingers, letting out a sickened groan.

"Urgh, have you ever heard of mouthwash?" she asked with a croaking voice and a crooked smile, hoping for the creature to at least show some kind of intelligence she could use against it. Unfortunately, the Sith wasn't that lucky.

With another roar the carnivorous plant stretched out another limb, the gelatinous mass wrapping itself around her chest and squeezing it. The world in front of her eyes went dark once more, the wound on her scalp burned as blood rushed to her head, desperately trying to keep her alive. She felt the a low trickle of the red liquid pour down, seeing a single drop fall down to the ground beneath where it was immediately sucked up by the thirsty soil. Adora gasped for air while trying to get the pressure off her chest by hitting the plant once more. Going as far as scratching the thing with all the remaining force she had, the girl finally got the effect she had wished for. Green slush with blue streaks streamed out of the scratches, evoking a long shriek from the plant as it weakened its grip.

Time slowed down to a nauseating crawl as her opponent let out a roar before pulling Adora closer to its gaping mouth. The thoughts in her head were racing, there had to be something she could use to escape from the weakening beast. Her eyes searched the ground beneath, desperately looking for an answer to her question. And there it was, the sliver hilt laid half buried in the earth, a silent whisper telling the blonde what to do. The Sith closed her eyes, calming her heart and slowing her blood as she did. A feeling of coldness reached her heart, much like in the arena when she had fought Catra. But this time, she felt peace instead of simple anger or passion. This was no way of the Sith, this was not the just the dark side. Without really realizing, Adora tapped into the light side of the force, harmony and calmness flooding every inch of her body.
The light saber rattled as it was dug free from its earthly restraints, small stones were flung into a different direction as it bolted towards Adora's hand. The engraved weapon reached the blonde, its cold metal frame finally touching her palm after what had felt like eternity. With a simple squeeze of her hand, the red blade unfolded with its characteristic hissing as energy was bundled through the kyber crystal inside. She felt some sort of hesitation from the plant, a small shudder running through its green veins as it looked into the destructive force.

"Not so hungry now, are you?" the Sith said with a determined smirk before lashing out at the limbs still wrapped round her. The whirring of her saber was cut short as it reached the olive flesh, burning it to the point of melting. Like a knife through butter, the hot blade split the tendril in two, freeing Adora from the monster's grasp in an instant. It roared in what she assumed was pain and bolted back to avoid the heat of her weapon. That was just what she had hoped for, but one problem still remained: Adora had forgotten where she was... About six feet in the air.

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"Woaaaah!" she shrieked as gravity took its toll. The blonde plummeted towards the ground and tasted the fresh taste of newly dug up soil as she hit it face first. Spluttering for air and trying to spit out the rough material in between her teeth, she turned around to face her adversary one more time. The beast was wounded, yet she could feel that it was not ready to give up with an empty belly. She had to dodge one of its furious attacks, the green limb racing down on her like an oversized bat. Earth was whirled up when the tendril hit the spot Adora had just stood in, a small rumble running through the entire trench beneath her feet.

With a quick slash she cut into it again, leaving a jagged black scar where tissue melted and blood boiled. The smell of sizzling meat reached her nostrils just moments after, the scent making her stomach rebel. Pulling the wounded part of its body away from the danger, the carnivorous plant seemed to hesitate before raising all its limbs at once to finish the job. The Sith knew there was no way of dodging this but she wouldn't give up. With a fierce battle cry she raised her saber to cut through the tendrils as soon as they bolted down on her. With what looked like a grin, the plant did just that and the light was cut off by the size of its body when the air parted to make way for the attack. Adora closed her eyes, trusting in the force to lead her in these hard times and awaited her doom.

But the strike never arrived. The loud crack of a gun violently cut off the roaring of the beast, its limbs falling next to the young Sith without hitting her at all. When she opened her eyes, she was surprised to see all of them cut clean off by someone. The plant layed still, slumped over with a big wound edged into its center. Her heart raced, could it be her?

"Catra? Is that you?" she asked with excitement and passion in her voice as she spotted a dark silhouette standing in the shadow of a nearby tree. The person lowered their weapon, slowly approaching the slope Adora was standing on.

"Uhm, I have been called much but Catra is none of those words," her savior said as he emerged from the tree line. It was a boy, his broad-shouldered appearance told her that he seemed to have worked hard his entire life. His dark afro was cut back into a buzz style, perfectly matching his dark, almost black eyes and brown tanned skin.

"I..." the Sith stuttered as the excitement in her throat diminished, her hopes of seeing her friend shattered by the boy's sudden appearance, "I'm sorry, I was expecting someone else..." He smiled, pure optimism and happiness being radiated by his gesture. But it was too little to save Adora's dropping mood. Her eyes darted to the ground, her chest aching as she thought about still being far away from Catra.
"Do you mean us?" another voice called out, this one was more familiar than the one of her savior. The girl's eyes shot upwards, instantly recognizing the form of the Jedi and his apprentice. Her hand was once more clutched around the hilt of her weapon, fear creeping into her mind as she expected them to make a move.

"What do you want from me?" Adora growled, hate and suspicion swinging in her tone and mirroring the confused clash of feelings in her heart. The Jedi raised his dark brow and crossed his arms in front of his chest before pointing at the dead plant in front of the Sith.

"It looked like you needed some help there. And I think Bow's marksmanship was just the right thing to take with us, right Bow?"

The boy scratched the back of his head and laughed, "Well it wasn't even really moving, I bet you would have done it better than me anyway."

The man shook his head with a smile. Adora was more confused than ever about the friendliness of her supposed enemies. Now they had saved her life twice in just a couple of days, why would they do that? Hesitating for a second she put her light saber away, clipping it to her belt and earning a suspicious look from the girl, Glimmer. She seemed less pleased to meet Adora again, her face still showing the cold hostility from when they'd first met.

"Th- thank you I guess..." she muttered, using her hands to caress the cloth over her shoulders. This was so weird, Shadow Weaver had displayed the Jedi as brutal force users who never hesitated to achieve their goal by misusing the force, bending it to their vicious will. But these people were nothing as she had expected them to be.

"You're welcome," the Jedi said before he walked towards the slope and extended his hand towards the Sith apprentice in order to help her to get out of the trench she was standing in. She hesitated, first about to accept the help but then quickly pulling her hand back. The man smirked, "Hey, I don't bite. You don't have to be afraid."

"Me? Afraid? Pfft, no I would never..." Adora huffed tilting her head in an offended way. She earned a laugh and an amused headshake in response when she took the Jedi's hand and was heaved back onto the grassy ground.

Bow came over, shouldering his strange crossbow-like weapon and shaking Adora's hand in greeting before asking, "What's your name by the way?" The girl didn't know if it was a good idea to reveal her name but even though she was still suspicious she answered, "It's Adora... Thanks again for the help back there," she pointed the direction with her thumb, "Wouldn't have made it without it." He nodded, the corners of his mouth still turned upwards. Then he turned around to the Jedi apprentice, waving at her to come over. She looked at him with a scowl before making her way towards the small group.

"Adora meet Glimmer, Glimmer meet Adora," he explained with joy, choosing not to notice her arrogant attitude towards the Sith.

"Hello," she said, her voice so cold it sent a shiver down Adora's spine. "Uhm, hello back...?"

The Jedi eyed the two with an eyebrow raised before stepping in to say, "And I am Micah, pleased to meet you."

The blonde smiled, even though he was supposed to be her enemy she found a liking in him. His positive energy was something she had only encountered once in her life and that in a person very close to her.

"It's Master Micah for most of the people around here but you can just call me Micah," he said and
shrugged, the cape hanging down his back mirroring the movement. The sentence earned him another scowl from Glimmer, her attitude still not changing at all.

Adora laughed but the sound died in her throat as she remembered the gnawing question that burned on her soul. With a timid look into his eyes she asked the Jedi, "Why are you helping me...?"
He hesitated, the same look of worry like in the hut glowing in his dark eyes. "That's an appropriate question... but one I won't answer just now. How about we patch up that cut of yours and sit down somewhere in private to discuss it, hm?"

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