(Every character depicted in the story below is a consenting legal adult over the age of 18)

A/N: Checking in on Ahsoka! Her plans are going swimmingly, of course~

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Its rather funny… Ahsoka doesn't really care if the Republic wins the war anymore. Her priorities had been changed the moment she became Darth Varice, her true master's apprentice. The big picture was whatever her Master wanted to make it at this point and all she could do was follow his final orders.

You will hide your true nature. You will play the dutiful and obedient Jedi Padawan until I tell you otherwise.

On the face of it, those orders might have seemed simple enough, really. But while Ahsoka might not care about the Republic defeating the Confederacy anymore, she did have to pretend to care about the more personal matters. And she had to stay alive.

In the weeks since they'd left Coruscant behind, Ahsoka had found herself on a number of battlefields. She wasn't just Ahsoka Tano, Jedi Padawan to Master Obi-Wan Kenobi either. She was Commander Tano of the Grand Army of the Republic now. Though her Fall to the Dark Side and apprenticeship to her true master gave Ahsoka some perspective on that front.

Just how 'Grand' was the Republic's Army really? There simply weren't enough Jedi or Clones to possibly fight the Separatists off on every

battlefront across the galaxy. They were being stretched impossibly thin day after day.

Frankly, it was a wonder that Master Kenobi and Master Unduli had been allowed to combine their forces for as long as they had so far. Even as they moved from battle to battle, they had yet to be split up… which allowed Ahsoka to focus on her real mission, her self-imposed task until such time as her true master deemed it prudent to send her further orders.

That's why Ahsoka finds herself slipping into the medbay of the Tranquility, a Venator-Class Star Destroyer under the command of 'General' Luminara Unduli. Cajoling her own Master to let her travel aboard the other Jedi Flagship hadn't been too difficult, fortunately. Ahsoka was keeping up with her training and her studies and while it wasn't her main goal, as a byproduct of her work ethic, she'd been impressing Master Kenobi quite a bit recently.

Enough so that when she'd asked if she could travel to their next destination alongside her fellow Padawan instead of on Kenobi's own flagship, the Negotiator, he had given his approval without much fuss. Which was good, because while Ahsoka had no intentions of trying to corrupt Luminara at this time, she also knew it would be easier to corrupt Barriss under the nose of one Jedi Master, rather than two.

She finds her fellow Jedi Padawan right where she expects her to be too, hard at work in the medbay, doing her best to help along the healing of injured clones. Ahsoka watches Barriss from out of her line of sight for a time, staying quiet and allowing her to do her duties in peace. After all, deep down she knew that there was no true peace to be had here. Only pain… and suffering.

Eventually, even Barriss has to stop. Eventually, the Mirialan Padawan pulls away from the last in a long line of patients she's helped to the best of her abilities… and flees. Oh, she does a good job of pretending that's not what happening. In fact, Barriss doesn't even fully quit the field, so to speak. No, instead of leaving the medbay, she makes an excuse to the medical droid about going and getting more supplies and then heads into the backrooms to seemingly do exactly that.

Ahsoka knows better and feeling the Dark Side pulsing within her with greedy desire, she follows after Barriss while holding herself together, hiding her Dark to the best of her abilities. Truth be told, if nothing else traveling and fighting alongside Master Kenobi and Master Unduli these past several weeks has been excellent training in that regard.

She's not sure how she's done it really, but neither of them seem to suspect a thing. They don't know her true nature even now. If they did, they wouldn't let her so close to Barriss. They wouldn't let her do anything at all, really.

Regardless, slipping into the medbay's backrooms, Ahsoka isn't surprised to hear the sounds of quiet sobbing and muffled crying. She follows them to find a certain Jedi Padawan hunched over a shelf, her face buried in her arms as tears streak down her cheeks.

Only then does Ahsoka make herself known, wrapping her arms around Barriss in a warm embrace. At first, the Mirialan freezes up in response, jolting at the touch… but then she relaxes, all but melting as Ahsoka gently but firmly pulls them both down to the floor, holding Barriss in her arms.

Barriss turns her face into Ahsoka's chest and sobs brokenly, shuddering as she lets her pain and fear and horror out into the Force. Ahsoka is quick to swallow it all up of course, feeding on the powerful emotions before

Bariss' Master can sense them and come running. As she's been doing… for weeks now.

Even as Barriss' grief and sorrow strengthen Ahsoka's connection to the Dark Side and make her all the more powerful… Ahsoka isn't actually happy about it. Oh, she's glad for the extra strength. Especially if her true nature ever comes out and she's forced to fight for her very survival as a Sith embedded in a Jedi Military Operation.

However, if she could change it, if she could take away Barriss' pain permanently… she'd do so in a heartbeat. Barriss doesn't deserve this. She doesn't deserve any of it. And yet… in the end, this is all Ahsoka can offer her… even as she works to turn Barriss to their side and show her the true path forward.

To that end, eventually Ahsoka reaches down and tucks a couple of fingers under Barriss' chin, lifting her head so they might look one another in the eyes. The Mirialan's sobbing has abated, her breathing slowly evening out. However, the tear tracks on her face are still very present, as is the glossiness of her eyes.

"Feeling better, Barriss?"

Biting her lower lip, the Jedi Padawan slowly nods.

"A... a l-little... I'm sorry Ahsoka."

Ahsoka is quick to shake her head.

"Don't apologize. You have nothing to be sorry for."

But that just provokes an ugly little laugh from Barriss.

“D-Don’t I? You should be on the Negotiator, learning from your Master, Ahsoka. But you find yourself having to cajole him just to be allowed to travel with us instead. All because of me. All because I can’t… because I’m a terrible Jedi. You spend all this time helping me hide my weakness from Master Luminara…”

Yes, she did do all that. And she did do it for Barriss as well. Of course, what Barriss doesn’t know is that Ahsoka doesn’t have entirely selfless intentions. She wants Barriss. She wants her by her side, serving Darth Varice’s true master together. Whatever her Master really intends for the galaxy, Ahsoka selfishly wants Barriss to come out the other side intact.

And yes, she wants Barriss to Fall. Truth be told, the Mirialan Padawan feels like she’s already halfway there. The Dark Side skitters along the edges of Barriss’ Force Presence, and the Jedi’s inner light grows just a bit dimmer each and every day.

Barriss’ Fall is a slow one, brought about by all of the death and suffering they’ve been forced to witness since they took to the field alongside their Jedi Masters. Every battlefield she is forced to fight on, every clone she can’t heal, every sapient being she can’t save… Barriss understands, deep down in her soul, that this entire war is nothing but a farce. More than that, she understands that the Jedi are weak for having been led into all of this like they were.

… But she’s not ready to accept that just yet. And Ahsoka knows to be careful not to push her too hard too fast. After all, they wouldn’t want Luminara to catch on to what is happening, now would they? Not that the Mirialan Master seemed to be much use in that department.

Truthfully, while Ahsoka was doing everything in her power to keep Luminara Unduli in the dark about her Padawan's slow descent, sometimes she wondered if she even needed to. Master Unduli just seemed so… oblivious sometimes.

But never mind that. Right now, Barriss is staring at her with big, soulful eyes, having just explained in exacting detail why she needed to apologize to Ahsoka for taking up so much of her time. Ahsoka needs to respond… but words don't feel like the right answer here.

Instead, smiling at the Mirialan Padawan, Darth Varice leans in and takes what is hers by right of conquest. She captures Barriss' lips in her own, kissing her fellow Padawan right there on the spot. Barriss' surprise filters through the Force. Along with it comes several other emotions, not all of them positive.

But the one emotion that Ahsoka doesn't feel as she kisses Barriss deeply and passionately… is disgust. There's not an ounce of revulsion or aversion towards Ahsoka, though there is some self-loathing directed at herself from how much she's enjoying the physical affection."

Ahsoka considers going further than this, pushing Barriss harder and showing her the pleasures of submission… but she catches herself. Her natural impulse as a Sith is to take, take, and take… but not only is Barriss a self-imposed mission, she would break the Mirialan if she went too far, too fast.

Pulling back instead, Ahsoka smiles as Barriss looks at her with wide eyes.

"You are not a burden, Barriss Offee. Everything I do for you, I do because I care. And maybe that's not the Jedi way… but I'm not going to let that stop me."

There. A small hint, a breadcrumb to whet Barriss' appetite, but nothing more. Barriss' wide eyes go wider still, but before she can respond they both feel it… Master Unduli's Force Presence, approaching the medbay. Letting out a curse that's not very Jedi-like, Barriss scrambles to her feet. Ahsoka does the same at a more casual pace, watching in amusement as Barriss fixes up her robes.

For one final touch, Ahsoka reaches out as Barriss turns to her and wipes away the tear tracks from the Mirialan Padawan's face with her thumb. Barriss goes still, blushing hard at the action, only to jump when the door to the backrooms slides open at long last.

"Barriss? Ahsoka? Are you two in here?"

"Y-Yes Master Unduli! Ahsoka was just helping me gather s-some supplies!"

As Luminara Unduli turns the corner and looks at them both, there's a fond smile on the Jedi Master's face, her gaze flicking between the two of them without a hint of suspicion as she nods her head.

"Very good. Though keep in mind that you must worry about yourself as much as our soldiers, Barriss. When was the last time you slept?"

Ahsoka can't help but jump on that opportunity.

"I was just telling her the same thing, Master. I think she's been in here for hours now!"

The betrayed look Barriss shoots her is honestly comical all things considered and it takes everything Darth Varice has not to laugh. But really,

what did her fellow Padawan expect? Treachery was the way of the Sith… or something.

Luminara, meanwhile, smiles softly, her eyes glittering with amusement as she shakes her head.

“I’m glad to have you on board then, Ahsoka. Otherwise, I don’t know what might become of my dear Padawan.”

… Yeah, Master Unduli didn’t suspect a thing.

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As Luminara Unduli teases her Padawan with the help of young Ahsoka Tano, she’s very careful to hide her true nature from both of them. Neither Barriss nor Ahsoka would react very well to learning that a Fallen Jedi Master was in their midst, after all. Nor that she was capable of hiding her Force Presence and had actually been watching their tender moment just now before finally making herself known.

If the Mirialan had to say when her Fall started, it would have to be the Battle of Geonosis. Truthfully, even now Luminara couldn’t believe that more of the survivors of that Battle hadn’t Fallen along with her. That she seemed to be the only Jedi who gave in to the temptation of the Dark Side during the fighting… well, she’d always known she was weaker than most of her fellow Masters.

The Battle of Geonosis was, all in all, an unmitigated disaster. It was the greatest gathering of Jedi that the Order had committed to in centuries. They all thought that just the showing of hundreds of lightsabers would be enough to make anyone stand down.

… Instead, they were massacred and the true weakness of both the Jedi Order and the Light Side had been exposed. To survive, Luminara had found herself dipping into the Dark Side. To try and protect as many of her fellow Jedi as possible, she'd taken her emotions and utilized them in direct defiance of the Jedi Code.

Fortunately, as ironic as using that word was, there'd been enough death and destruction that day to hide Luminara's slip down a very slippery slope. Everyone was too busy fighting, too busy mourning, to notice what had happened to her.

Unfortunately, she couldn't just turn herself in. If she hadn't already had Barriss at the time, she probably would have admitted to the Fall and let the Order do what they needed with her. But due to an ancient tradition and special agreement between the Mirialans and the Jedi Order, only a Mirialan Jedi could train another Mirialan Jedi.

As such, the moment Barriss was of the right age, Luminara had taken her on as her Padawan. They'd had many good years together as Master and Apprentice, and if not for the break out of the war, Luminara would have recommended Barriss for knighthood in just another few months.

... As things stood, she could not in good conscience do that now. Not when it was clear how much the war was taking from Barriss. Nor could she turn herself over to the Council for leaning on the Dark Side when her Padawan needed her now more than ever before.

Thank the Force for Ahsoka Tano though… Luminara isn't sure what she would have had to do if Barriss' fellow Padawan hadn't stepped up. She didn't want Barriss to follow in her footsteps if possible. But the Dark seemed to permeate through every inch of the Tranquility, these days.

Luminara could only hope that Ahsoka Tano's Light would be enough to keep Barriss from Falling just a little while longer, until they could hopefully bring an end to this war…

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A/N: Remember to go back and VOTE!