

ACT 3

EXT. SPACEPORT - AFTERNOON

The *Polar Pete* is parked on a landing pad along with a mix of different ships. Fox walks up to the cargo door of her ship just as Jade walks up from the other direction. Jade is carrying a box full of parts and has a length of cable slung over one shoulder. Everyone around the space port seems to stop and stare as she walks by. She winks at a bearded man with a cat sitting on his shoulder and then throws a rakish smile at a woman working on a ship's engine. She seems quite pleased with herself when she meets up with Fox.

JADE

How was the meeting with McGarry?

FOX

It was...not what I expecting.

Fox opens the door to the ship and Jade follows her inside. She sets down the parts in the cargo hold and then follows Fox up the stairs to the bridge.

JADE

Awww, did you and the wife have a fight?

Fox sits down in the pilot seat.

FOX

Knock it off, Valdez. But no, not a fight. She just didn't believe me about Sariea. It's alright though. I'm going to go back there and find something to prove it to her.

Fox sounds determined. Jade seems to realize how important this is to her. She takes the co-pilot seat.

JADE

We're going to do something stupid, aren't we?

Fox starts up the ship.

FOX

Probably. I just can't sit back and not do anything knowing those innocent colonists are out there being held against their will.

(MORE)

FOX (CONT'D)

And I have a much better chance of winning with Commander McGarry on my side.

JADE

Fair enough. I just hope it's worth it.

A beat.

JADE

And I hope she's worth it.

Fox pointedly ignores the last comment.

FOX

It'll be worth it.

She hits the throttle and the ship takes off.

JADE

If you two don't at least hook up after all this there's really no hope for either of you.

Fox also ignore this comment, instead concentrating on piloting the ship. After a few moments, Sariea comes into view and Fox steers the ship down towards it.

JADE

So you're really doing this aren't you? Trying to save all those people down there?

FOX

Yeah. It's the right thing to do.

JADE

Since when did you become such a big damn hero?

FOX

I'm not a hero. I just don't think innocent people should be imprisoned.

JADE

And you're set on having McGarry do this with you?

FOX

I am. I can't do this alone and she's my best shot at pulling it off.

Fox elbows Jade playfully.

FOX
You know I love you but you're
useless in a fire fight.

Jade laughs.

JADE
Indeed I am. Best to leave the
thrilling heroics to you and your
lady friend.

Fox sighs and looks on the window, tapping her fingers on the controls.

FOX
I'm not sure we're even friends
right now, much less anything else.

JADE
She'll come around. I've never seen
anyone believe in anything the way
Ellie McGarry believes in you. And
I was raised in a cult.

Fox chuckles.

FOX
Well, when you put it that way...

They're both quiet as Fox lands the ship. Jade seems to be worried about something.

JADE
What happens if this all goes
sideways, Cap? I mean, I know we've
been in tough spots before but if
you're right about this, we'd be
taking on the whole Zion Fleet.

Fox powers down the ship.

FOX
I haven't really thought about it.
I didn't consider what could
happen. I just...acted.

JADE
As usual. I guess we just have to
believe that everything is going to
work out.

Fox stands up and shrugs on her jacket.

FOX

As a group of wise men once said,
don't stop believing.

Fox heads out of the cockpit, collecting her gear. Jade follows.

JADE

Who said that? One of those self-help gurus we saw on the Otarian moon?

Fox grins.

FOX

Journey. 1981.

Jade rolls her eyes.

JADE

Ugh, of course. I should have known it was one of your dumb bands from the dinosaur times.

FOX

That song still holds up. Now come on, we've got a base to break into.

She tosses Jade a pair of goggles. She catches them with a surprised look.

JADE

We? I have to go out there?

FOX

Yeah, we might have to hack into a computer or something which you happen to be quite good at, Ms. Valdez.

Jade huffs.

JADE

Fine. But only if you keep complimenting my hacking skills.

FOX

Deal.

CUT TO:

EXT. SANRIEA - LATE AFTERNOON

Fox and Jade trudge through the sand. Jade is not trying to hide how annoyed she is with this whole situation. They get to the sand dune Fox climbed before.

JADE

Okay, so what's the plan here, Cap?

Fox points to the top of the dune.

FOX

We go up there, stake out the base until it gets dark and then make our move. There should be less guards at night.

Fox starts up the dune, Jade follows, groaning.

JADE

You owe me big time for this.

FOX

If I remember correctly, you still owe me and Ross big time for saving your ass after you started that bar fight on Darvoth last month.

JADE

Hey, that wasn't my fault. How I was supposed to know that I was flirting with both the bartender and his girlfriend?

FOX

Maybe limit yourself to one person at a time?

JADE

What's the fun in that? I know you're content with just one dashing Zion Fleet officer but I like to have options.

FOX

I still have to pull this off to win her back. Now shut up, we're here.

They reach the top of the dune. Fox lays down on her stomach and studies the base. Jade flops down and stretches out on her back, watching the sky instead.

CUT TO:

EXT. SANRIEA - NIGHT

Fox and Jade are still at the top of the sand dune. Fox is laying on her stomach, watching through the goggles. Jade is fast asleep. There's almost not activity coming from the base now. It's quiet.

Fox elbows Jade to wake her up.

FOX
Wake up. I've got a plan.

Jade stretches and sits up, brushing sand off of herself.

JADE
One that won't get us killed?

Fox pulls off the goggles.

FOX
Probably. Especially if you're as good at hacking keypads as I think you are.

JADE
Oh I'm good. Let's do this.

They get up and slide down the other side of the sand dune as sneakily as possible. Jade stumbles at the bottom but Fox catches her. They sneak to the gate...which is locked by an actual padlock. Jade looks at it in annoyance.

JADE
I can't hack a physical lock.

Fox grins.

FOX
No, but I can.

Fox pulls a set of lock picks out from an inside jacket pocket and sets to work. Moments later, the lock clicks open. Jade looks impressed.

JADE
Huh. You never cease to amaze me, Cap.

FOX
I'm a woman of many talents.

She opens the gate just enough for them to squeeze through.

FOX

Follow me.

Fox and Jade sneak over to the hangar and move quietly along the side. When they get to the end, Fox peers around the corner. The next building has a sign that says "ADMIN" and at the end of the way are the barracks. There's no one around and Fox breathes a sigh of relief. She starts to turn the corner when a ZION FLEET SOLDIER comes out of the barracks and takes up a post outside. He holds a rifle and scans the area. Fox dives back around the corner.

FOX

Remember when I said this would be easy?

JADE

(Sighing)

What's about to go wrong?

FOX

There's a guard outside the barracks that will definitely see us if we make a break for the office.

Jade looks around the corner.

JADE

Shit. What do we do?

FOX

Run for it and hope for the best?

Jade gives her a withering look.

JADE

I'm not trying to hack a keypad while being shot at. Try again, Cap.

Fox glances around the corner again.

FOX

I could try shooting him from here but...

JADE

But what?

FOX

But if I miss he'll wake up his buddies and then we're really screwed.

JADE

Well, if you don't try were also really screwed. And you know I'm a terrible shot so you're our only hope.

A beat.

JADE

Man, that's depressing.

Fox rolls her eyes.

FOX

Oh good, no pressure then.

Fox pulls out her blaster and sets it to the lowest setting. She leans around the corner, aims, takes a deep breath. Jade puts a hand on her shoulder.

JADE

You got this, Cap.

Fox fires. A shot hits the guard in the shoulder and he collapses, knocked out but still alive. Fox leans against the wall and lets out her breath. Jade thumps her on the back.

JADE

Nice one.

FOX

That was the most nerve racking few moments of my life.

Jade turns the corner and walks towards the office door.

JADE

(Grinning)

Until you tell a certain Zion Fleet officer how you feel.

FOX

I hate you so much.

They reach the door and Jade sets to work. She pulls a set of small screwdrivers out of her pocket and sets to work on the keypad. Fox keeps an eye out. After a few moments. Jade grins.

JADE

Annnnd, we're in!

She presses a button and the keypad lights up green and the door clicks open. They slip inside and Fox closes the door behind them.

JADE
So, where now?

Fox looks down hallway. It's lined with offices. She looks around until she spots on.

FOX
That one, I think.

The stop in front of a door that reads "HARRISON WHITTAKER BASE LT". She opens the unlocked door and inside is a desk with a computer terminal.

FOX
Bingo.

Jade sits down at the computer and stretches. She hits a couple of buttons and laughs.

JADE
For being the most powerful force
in the galaxy, the Zion Fleet sure
doesn't care about cyber security.
Give me two minutes.

She starts typing. Fox pokes around the office.

JADE
Alright, I'm in the files. What do
you want?

Fox pulls a card from her jacket pocket and hands it to Jade.

FOX
Anything that proves what the Zion
Fleet is up to out here. Plans,
messages, whatever.

Jade slides the card into a slot and looks back at the screen.

JADE
Jackpot! I found all kind of
messages between our pal Lieutenant
Whittaker and the Fleet Admiralty.
It goes all the way back to the
planning stages. And bonus! Plans
of the weapons they're building and
blueprints of the base.

FOX

Perfect. Get all of it and I'll
sort through it back on the ship.

Jade squints at the screen and suddenly looks confused.

JADE

There's battle plans on here too.
Of course. It's only a matter of
time before those bullies in the
admiralty start some kind of war.

FOX

Copy those too.

JADE

You got it, Cap. Give me just a
couple minutes...

Fox starts opening desk drawers. The first couple just
contain office supplies and paperwork but in the bottom
drawer she pulls out a full bottle of whiskey.

FOX

Found something for us to drink to
celebrate making it out of this
alive.

Jade looks up and examines the bottle.

JADE

Desperado twenty years. Our dude
here has good taste. That bottle
probably cost more than we made on
our last three jobs combined.

FOX

Good thing we'll probably enjoy it
more than he ever could.

Jade starts to reply but suddenly there's voices coming from
outside.

FOX

Sounds like they found their buddy.
Our time might be up soon. How we
doing with that transfer, Valdez?

JADE

Just a couple more seconds...

The voices get closer.

FOX
I'll go take a look.

She tucks the whiskey into the jacket and sneaks out into the hallway and to the door. She opens it up just enough to look out. She sees three more ZION FLEET SOLDIERS looking at the one she stunned. One of them looks up and squints and Fox's door. She quickly shut it.

FOX
Shit!

She bounds back to the office.

FOX
So, uh, not to rush you or anything
but we're going to have company
real soon.

Jade sighs.

JADE
I knew this wouldn't be as easy as
you said.

The card pops out of the terminal. Jade grabs it and hands to Fox.

JADE
Good thing we're done!

Fox secures it in a zipped jacket pocket and they scramble out into the hallway. They start running for the door but Jade stops them when she hears the keypad being activated.

JADE
Is there a back way outta here?

FOX
I guess we're about to find out!

She turns and runs the other direction with Jade at her heels. They slide around a corner as the door opens and the Zion Fleet soldiers come in, blasters drawn. They notice the door of the office that Fox and Jade left open in their haste. One of the soldiers points it out and they go to investigate. Another glances down the hallway in the direction Jade and Fox ran and walks towards the corner.

He turns the corner and sees nothing. We turn the next corner and see Fox and Jade at the end of another hallway. Fox is frantically trying to pick the lock on a roll-up loading door. Jade looks nervously down the hallway.

JADE

Uh...Cap? I think they're getting closer...

FOX

I'm going as fast as I can! This damn lock is rusted. You'd think with all the money the Intergalactic Alliance throws at the Zion Fleet they'd be able to afford some decent padlocks...

The foot steps of the soldier get closer.

JADE

Fox...

Fox pulls her blaster from its holster and tosses to Jade who fumbles it a bit but manages to catch it.

FOX

Keep them busy if they come around the corner.

JADE

You know I'm a terrible shot.

Fox goes back to trying to pick the lock.

FOX

Quantity over quality, dude. Just keep shooting long enough that we can get out the door.

Jade looks unsure but takes off the safety on the blaster.

JADE

Okay, but if we die, it's your fault.

FOX

Noted.

A second later, the soldier comes around the corner.

SOLDIER

Hey!

Jade shakily raises the blaster, closes her eyes, and pulls the trigger. The blaster shot hits the wall just behind the soldier's left shoulder. He ducks. He raises his own blaster but Jade lets off another shot that whizzes just over his head.

He gets in one blind shot that hits the door but Jade has hit a stride, letting off shots that pepper the wall and floor all around him. He ducks back around the corner.

He gets in another blind shot around the corner that just misses Jade.

JADE

Fox!

Fox pull the lock free just as another shot from the soldier hits the door.

FOX

Got it! Let's bounce!

She pulls up the door just enough for Jade to squeeze under. She takes the blaster from her as she does and fires a few shot over her shoulder with one hand and she hold up the door with the other. When Jade is through, she hold the door so Fox can get through. Before she can, the soldier leans around the corner and takes a shot that hits Fox in the right shoulder, causing her to drop her blaster.

FOX

Shit!

JADE

Cap, let's go!

He takes aim again just as Fox dives under door, sweeping up her blaster in her left hand as she does. She rolls over, sits up, aims and shoots the soldier, hitting him in the kneecap just before Jade drops the door. They both let out a sigh of relief before Jade pulls Fox to her feet.

FOX

Let's get the holy hell out of here.

They take off running. There's the sound of soldiers shouting and blaster fire far behind them. When they're a few yards from the gate, Fox pulls a metal ball off her belt and presses a button on it. It light up and she tosses it over her shoulder in the direction of the soldiers.

FOX

Enjoy that, my dudes.

Jade and Fox make it through the gate and up the sand dune. When they get to the top, they look back down and see the soldiers have reached the metal ball. All the sudden, it sparks and explodes with fireworks. They all scatter.

Fox and Jade both laugh with relief as the slide down the back of the dune.

JADE
Nice one, Cap.

FOX
And you said I shouldn't play with fireworks.

They both sprint towards the ship.

JADE
I said you should play with them on the ship. Last time you almost set the whole cargo hold on fire.

They make it back to the ship and both bound up to the bridge. Fox rushes to start it up. The ship starts to take off. Jade straps herself in and punches a few buttons on the control panel.

JADE
Good thing I installed that scrambler last week! They won't be able to pick up our signal.

Fox punches the throttle and the ship speeds off.

FOX
Small miracles. I don't think they'll follow though. It would make too much of a scene and they don't want anyone knowing they're down there.

She punches in coordinates on the navigation terminal.

FOX
Still, it's probably best if we lay low at Frazer's for a few days.

JADE
Good idea. I don't need to be shot any more than we already have.

Fox sets the ship on autopilot and pulls the bottle of whiskey from her jacket.

FOX
Hey, at least we made it out alive.

She pulls the lid off the whiskey and raises it.

FOX
Cheers to not dying.

She takes a swig and hands the bottle to Jade.

JADE
I'll drink to that.

She takes a swig of the whiskey and the both stare out the window as Sariea gets smaller off in the distance.

CUT TO:

INT. FOX'S CABIN - EVENING

Fox sits at her desk in front of the terminal. She takes a deep breath and hits a couple buttons. A comm screen pops up and it rings a couple of times before Ellie's face appears. She doesn't look particularly happy to see Fox.

FOX
Ellie! Ellie, wait, don't hang up on me! I have something I have to show you.

Ellie raises her eyebrows, intrigued despite herself.

ELLIE
What is it?

FOX
Evidence. About the, uh, thing we talked about the other day.

ELLIE
I suppose you want to meet up again?

Fox nods.

FOX
Trust me, you want to see this.

ELLIE
Hannigan's again?

FOX
No, the bar's no good. It has to be your place.

Ellie looks unsure but eventually nods her head.

ELLIE

Alright. Come over tomorrow evening.

FOX

See you then.

CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING HALLWAY - THE NEXT EVENING

Fox stands outside a door with the number 508. She runs a hand through her hair and takes a deep breath. She knocks. A few moments later, Ellie opens the door.

FOX

Hey.

ELLIE

Hi. Come on in.

Fox steps inside. Ellie's apartment is spartan, with just a table holding a stack of paperwork, a desk with a terminal, and a couch. The only things on the walls are Ellie's diplomas and Zion Fleet accolades and one family photo. Everything is kind of beige and utilitarian.

Ellie shuts the door behind her and then crosses her arms, clearly still unsure how she feels about Fox. Fox stops to examine the family photo. It features a broad shouldered man with grey hair, a mustache and a Zion Fleet uniforms; a woman with glasses and Ellie's sandy hair; a slightly younger Ellie in uniform; and two young men, twins, one in a Zion Fleet uniform and the other in a suit.

Ellie clears her throat.

ELLIE (CONT'D)

So. What do you have?

Fox turns around and gestures to the terminal.

FOX

May I?

Ellie nods and Fox sits down at the desk. She pulls the data card from her jacket and inserts it into the terminal. The screen jumps to life.

FOX (CONT'D)

I have actual evidence of what the Zion Fleet is up to on Sariea. Plans, messages, everything.

Ellie looks suspicious.

ELLIE
How did you get this?

Fox looks sheepish.

FOX
I may or may not have broken into
the base a couple of nights ago?

ELLIE
Fox! I could arrest you for that!

Fox shrugs.

FOX
You could...or you could look at what
I found.

She grins, she knows Ellie's curiosity will win out. It does.
Ellie leans over to see. She puts a hand on Fox's shoulder
and Fox winces when she leans on her.

ELLIE
What? What's wrong?

Fox rubs her shoulder.

FOX
I kind of got shot when we were
escaping the base.

Ellie looks genuinely concerned.

ELLIE
Shot?! Are you okay? Did you go to
a clinic?

Fox waves her off.

FOX
It's fine. Valdez patched me up.

Ellie doesn't look convinced.

ELLIE
Just because Jade can patch up an
engine doesn't mean she's qualified
to treat a blaster wound.

FOX
Ellie, I'm fine, really. I bounce
back fast.

She stands up and motions for Ellie to take the desk chair.

FOX (CONT'D)

Now would you sit down and look at
this so my injury wasn't in vain?

Ellie still looks concerned but sits down. She turns to the terminal and begins to read, occasionally clicking between things and swiping them away. She looks more and more distraught the more she reads. Finally, she turns to Fox, looking like she's about to cry.

ELLIE

You were right. About all of it.

FOX

I didn't really want to be right
about it, El. Trust me.

ELLIE

But you were and now it changes
everything. The Zion Fleet...it's not
what I thought. It's all corrupt.
We're not the good guys.

Fox kneels down in front of her and put her hands on Ellie's knees.

FOX

Hey, that's not true. Sure, part of
the Fleet are bad guys but there's
still good guys too! Like you! And
that guy that always gives me
coffee when I come into pay my
fines. Oh! And Ensign Andras! He
really saved my ass on Otun that
one time. There's still good
people.

ELLIE

But this is huge, Fox. You said it
yourself. This could start a war.
What am I going to do?

Ellie sounds absolutely devastated. Fox reaches over and lifts her chin up so she can look in her eyes.

FOX

Hey, look at me. I'm not sure what
we're going to do yet but whatever
it is, we're going to do it
together, got it? You're not alone,
Ellie, I'm right here no matter
what happens.

ELLIE

Promise?

FOX

Promise.

Ellie looks a little less devastated. They both hold their gaze for a long moment. Fox runs her thumb across Ellie's cheek and it looks for a split second as if they might kiss...but then the comm on Ellie's terminal rings and they jump apart, Fox falling backwards.

Ellie turns to look at the terminal.

ELLIE

Shit! It's Lieutenant Larsen. You'd better not be in view.

Fox scrambles to her feet and dives around to the other side of the desk.

FOX

If that jackass asks, I've been on a salvage job on Zoltuma for the last few days.

Ellie raises an eyebrow at her but turns to the terminal, answering the call. The face of a weasely looking man with slick-backed dark hair and a sad goatee pops up.

ELLIE

Lieutenant Larsen. What can I do for you?

LT. LARSEN

Commander. Have you see that little freelancer friend of yours? Mutt or whatever her name is?

Ellie glares at him.

ELLIE

Her name is Fox and you know it, Larsen. And no, I haven't seen her. Last she told me she was going to be working a salvage job on Zoltum for a few days.

Larsen makes a show of to look thoughtful.

LT. LARSEN

Hmmm...I don't seem to recall receiving the paperwork for that particular salvage job...

Ellie looks to be a loss but Fox is frantically searching her pockets. Finally she comes up with another data card. She slides it across the desk to Ellie who surreptitiously interests it into the computer.

ELLIE

I think I remember seeing it pop
up. Let me take a look...

A file pops up and Ellie opens. A document appears with FRAZER ROSS SALVAGE AND ANTIQUITIES letterhead. She scrolls through it and we can catch Fox's name along with the name of her ship.

ELLIE

Ah yes, here it is. Let me just
send it over to you.

She swipes it towards the video window. A moment later, Larsen is doing his best not to look as furious as he clearly is.

LT. LARSEN

Well, I guess everything seems to
be in order here. So lucky that you
had that, Commander.

ELLIE

It sure was.

Larsen ends the call.

FOX

Well, look at you, Commander.
Aiding criminal activity.

ELLIE

(Defensive)
I wasn't-

She looks up and notices Fox's grin. Her face melts into a smirk.

ELLIE

Well, it was a hard choice but if
it came down to you or Larsen, you
win out by the slightest margin.

FOX

Good to know where I stand.

They look at each other and then look away, both relieved to have their banter back.