

Unknown space, 30 ABY.

The enemy was confident they could destroy the ship, perhaps to collect the debris, perhaps as a message to outsiders. The Imperials will never know: the ambusher's forces were dwindling down, their offensive was fizzling out and there were no survivors. Normally, this would have ended in a disaster for an undermanned capital ship, but the TIE Corps had their flagships often loaded with superior fighters and above average pilots.

Or so they believed.

The fighting was intense, considering it consisted of multiple snubfighter squadrons, a few transports and three medium starships against a larger capital ship almost deprived of all of its fighters, save for one squadron at hand.

Still, Alpha Squadron was prevailing.

The intense storm of red and green plasma shots was now almost entirely green, fewer explosions could be seen on the battleground. One of them was dangerously close to one of the Imperial Missile Boats that at last moment managed to barely dodge it.

- *"That was the last of them!"* exclaimed Hopfot.

- *"Hey! You almost got me there as well!!"*

- *"Sorry Milo"*

- *"Yah, no problem. I'm just tired. How long have we been fighting?"*

Horus couldn't help but laugh. The pilots still needed training on the new avionics and control systems. And they needed further physical training indeed - *"Not long enough"* he replied.

Araujo wanted to avoid the point at the moment as he himself was tired - *"Alright, good job everyone. Alpha Commander to Hammer, requesting permission to land"* Araujo just wanted to be back at his quarters. *My back hurts.*

- *"Alphas, this is Hammer: permission granted, we'll jump in 10 minutes."*

The Missile Boats and TIE Defenders of Alpha Squadron entered the hangar of the ISDII Hammer one by one while Narven Task observed the arriving fighters from the flight control - *"Have the commander, and the briefing officer meet me at the bridge"* he ordered to officers controlling the activities from the deck consoles.

Moments later, the ship made its jump into hyperspace, the pilots were debriefed and following the regular post-flight procedures, the two officers met at the bridge with Wing Commander Task and saluted him.

- *"Gentlemen"*, Task returned the salute, *"Thanks to your efforts, after the destruction of the jamming vessel we were able to send a message to the fleet. Admiral Berkana has been*

*informed on the incident as well as high command. We must analyze the data and present him a report as soon as he's back on the ship. He along with the rest of the squadrons are on our way to the rendezvous point with the rest of the battlegroup at entryway of the Kazahlia system, two jumps away from planet Kazah"*

*- "So that's the name of the system." Araujo followed after ensuring the silence was long enough for him to respond.*

*- "Indeed, we've received telemetry from the planet and the fleet forwarded it to us. Basic pertinent information is available now for you to review. Check your emails" indicated Task.*

The men kept talking on mission details, readiness of the fighters, their feedback on the updated control systems and the comparison with the new avionics which Araujo found detrimental to pilots as the A.I.-assisted aiming atrophy a pilot's ability to fine aim. A personal conservative and hardliner opinion that cost him a rivalry with many newer top guns on the TIE Corps. *I don't get the point of this meeting* - Araujo thought, suddenly tired of the talk.

Half an hour later, he was on his way back to his quarters. He was hoping to be able to complete his WSR and his MSE before anything else took place.

Then a hooded figure was standing on his way.

*Ah no, not the Secret Order*

The man stood in front of him, his lips sealed yet he could hear his voice. *Force tricks* he thought *"Something else..."* Then the man called him by his secret alias only known to a few. *- "Either a force trick from Pryde or I'm hallucinating" Araujo said.*