

# The Eagle Has Landed

---

*Form the line and hold it.* The half-Echani thought to himself as his gloved hands took hold and tightened his pitched hood, framing his face in shadow as it protected him from the ash and debris that still remained on the fell winds of the volcanic eruptions. Silver eyes focused on the field ahead, a narrowed valley chosen to bottleneck their forces and disseminate the gasses that had settled in the lower valley. Those who tried to go on high could easily be picked off from a distance, those who rushed the valley faced insurmountable gunfire. The rest... Masahiro stared at his lightsaber. The rest were on the assembled Force-sensitives to combat.

There was an unease in the air, not only from the uncertainty of what they were facing but also from the unique alliance that had been crafted in this situation. Ideological differences between the forces that were standing shoulder-to-shoulder were *high*, to say the least. Masahiro stood, sandwiched between riflemen from the OUSC and DDF, his hand pressed against the lightsaber on his hip and the retaining pin rattled against his belt. The faces of the soldiers surrounding him were grim, twisted in determination, the stench of sweat, scorched plasteel, and volcanic brimstone filled the air.

Masahiro placed his hand on one of the OUSC Soldier's shoulders and shook his head as he saw the man begin to shiver.

"We're here to keep their home safe. Death and destruction march, it's on us to hold the line as long as we can, whether it's minutes, hours, or days, to get as many of the villagers behind us to safety. We hold here as well as we would on Kiast." The Jedi soothed.

Truth be told, the words came hard to him. Those they were facing were not simple opponents, they were ancient Sith, older than those who had brought the Galaxy to near ruin in recent years, and they were focused on holding this singular bastion. That refinement and tenacity, working together, was dangerous. Their cult and the forces that marched under the alchemical beasts' control only worsened matters. This battle was going to be drawn out, and bloody, there would be many losses on both sides. While his forces may be lucky from their positioning at the mouth of a valley, not all of them shared their vantage point, and many civilians would die from the toxic fumes and cultists along the roads, attempting to flee.

He felt the calling voice of Tiexsema growing louder the closer he got to the valley, the closer her cultists drew to them, and the more intense the battles grew across the entirety of the region. She played on the chaos to spread her influence. She was fractured, and mad, insanity pulled at her mind and those of her followers, and this allowed Masahiro's inner resolve to win over her as the chaos loomed ever nearer.

"We cannot progress any further. Their leader is employing The Force to weevil into the minds of others, spreading her insanity. Her voice is quiet just beyond this ridge, but, I cannot say, for certain, how long that peace will last. We've all received the threat assessments from the forward units. We know what to look out for. Tiexsema, Alla'su, and Chicyiot have a cult worshipping, which the local Selenian population has sought to overthrow through the years, they also employ alchemically altered wildlife, Caxquettes. If caxquettes are spotted, they are the primary threat, they pose a much greater threat than the cultists because of their ability to turn us against ourselves, and swell their numbers *using* our injured and dead." Masahiro rallied the combined corps., but he didn't appreciate giving these speeches, it made him feel like something he was not, a soldier.

But in this situation, could any of them say they were not? They all deployed to fend off an invasion of allied territory. They fought to protect innocents, civilians, women, children, and those too weak to fight for themselves. In this moment he was a soldier as well as any of them, whether he relished the fact or not.

Hours passed and the soldiers grew complacent, several bucked at orders to sit and hold, wanting to push forward against an enemy that had taken friends, comrades, and places they had known from them. Others were just tired of waiting, waiting for the inevitable, waiting for the war that had been waging but wasn't in their hands yet. It was a dangerous place to be, and the Jedi recognized it.

That's when the first figure broke the horizon, amber and crimson set behind them as the sun began to set, they walked with a caxquette beside them, an axe in hand. The scouts recognized the creature, and following orders, immediately opened fire, consigning the creature to the grave, and enraging its owner. His axe raised high, in a charge, he shouted, and many more figures appeared from the valley.

"It begins." Masahiro mouthed as he stepped forward and pulled a pair of macrobinoculars, viewing the amassed forces before them.

There were others with armor similar to Chicyiots amid the field. There would be melee combat. A head solemnly bowed as he lowered the binoculars and handed them back to the soldier he had borrowed them from.

“Some have got Alchemical Armor. If you’re capable in melee combat and have sabers or Beskar weaponry like the Mandalorians, prepare for it.” He commanded as he turned to the incoming marauders.