

*Hangar Bay Two,
NSD Invicta,
In orbit around Zios,
Esstran Sector
1500 hours, ship time.*

Kalon sat in the dim light of his cockpit, his TIE pilot helmet over his head, attached to the life support system designed to keep him alive in case of a breach whilst in the vacuum of space. His Stealth variant of the X-wing sat in the hangar of the NSD Invicta along with the rest of Void Squadron. Whilst they had already gone over all pre-flight briefings and checks, it was now down to waiting for the order to take off, allowing the Squadron to provide the support their comrades on the ground so desperately needed.

“Phoenix, you all set to go?” Asked a partially distorted voice through the Mandalorian’s comm unit. He recognised the voice instantly as belonging to Invictus, the new Commander of Void Squadron. Ironically, the Chiss had once been Kalon’s superior when the latter had led the Battleteam, and to his own amusement it seemed that this would always remain the case.

“We always remain the same distance apart.” He mumbled, switching on his communication device. “Yes, Commander. Bet Flight is green, just waiting on the order.”

After an acknowledgement from his Battleteam leader, the comm chatter went dead once again. From inside his helmet, Kalon could hear only silence. The vibrations of his starfighter’s engines were the only thing he felt.

His thoughts began to trail to his current predicament. He had spend many months on the BAC Darkest Night, fighting on such planets as Rhelg and Bchargebba. After returning to Eldar, he had been forced to defend the Galerian homeworld from a Death Walker invasion. Transferring to Void Squadron in House Qel-Droma once the fighting was done, he had moved to the NSD Invicta orbiting above Selen. Now he was at Zios, his last challenge to overcome in his tour of duty.

Kalon had experienced dozens of conflicts, from the Battle of Mandalore during the Yuuzhan Vong War to the War of the Three Families during his early days of the Brotherhood. Still, there had been close calls. He had crashed his starfighter twice during the battle of Rhelg, earning himself the ire of its newly risen Quaestor, Cethgus. Scars coated his body, each a badge of honour from a planet he would most likely never see again.

The Mandalorian remembered the beginning of the Crusade. He had been very excited by the fact that he would be once more in the middle of intense combat, striving to hone his skills in the battlefield as

well as in the training rooms aboard the Darkest Night. Gradually however, he had begun to change, becoming more withdrawn and aggressive. This had distanced Kalon from his friends, until he only had himself and his Cythraul, Mirdala, for comfort.

Such drastic changes had also taken place within Clan Arcona during the Crusade. Long-term enemies had put their differences aside to concentrate on battling the One Sith and coming out on top of the other units in the Brotherhood. Whilst this was healthy to most of an extent, it still left a large amount of tension and unease in the air. Kalon certainly didn't trust every member in his Squadron, but he knew that their survival on Ziost depended on teamwork, which was impossible if everyone was attacking each other as well as the enemy.

The Arconan was still unsure why the Brotherhood had decided to attack the One Sith. In his mind, he thought they could have allied against the New Republic and the Jedi instead. Still, it could have been to prove which faction was stronger, as was the Sith way. It could have also been because the Dark Council wanted to expand the Brotherhood's territory and influence, or because they viewed the growing One Sith Empire as a threat to their existence.

Kalon's views on the thought were immaterial though. He had been called upon by his Consul to fight, and that was what he would do. He was a Mandalorian, and fighting was in his blood. Reasoning had never been an option for his people. They fought and died for their own personal honour or for sport, usually nothing else. Anything that he got out of this Crusade would be a bonus, his chance to represent his Mandalorian and Brotherhood Clans in decisive combat, something he would not miss for all the worlds in the galaxy.

Suddenly, a voice crackled over the comm unit. It was much deeper this time and had an authoritative tone. No doubt the speaker was used to being in command and making important decisions.

"All units, all units, this is the Hangar Control. Mission specifics have been approved, you have the green for takeoff, over and out."

"This is it, gentlemen." Said Invictus, a hint of excitement evident in his voice. This would be the Chiss' first combat experience with Void Squadron. A lot rested on his shoulders to ensure it was a success. "Phoenix, you are our lead, confirm?"

"Confirm." Replied Kalon, flicking several switches before pulling back ever so slightly on the joystick. He could feel his starfighter rise from the metallic deck of the hangar, moving along it slowly as nudged the throttle forward.

Flicking another switch to pull up the landing gear, the Arconan aimed his fighter for the large open

hangar door. He could already see the conflict in the distance: a huge battle had swollen like an infected wound until the entire planet was consumed by it, death and carnage on an unimaginable scale not unlike those told in war sagas back home, lost in another time.

Kalon had been sitting dormant on the ship for far too long. But now it was time...

...time to get to work.

End

SW Kalon Tsucyra Entar (Sith) / [Battle Team Void Squadron](#) of [House Qel-Droma](#) of [Clan Arcona](#) [GMRG: I]

SB / SC / AC-ToSL / DC-SP / GN-BL / SN-BL / Cr:2D-2R-9A-7S-6E-3T-1Q / CI-GC / LS-BL / S:1Aff-40Rn

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