Kenath Zoron scanned the ruin-littered field below him from an elevated ridge overlooking the Academy. From his hiding spot, he could see the loyalist troops that had dug in to protect their foothold on the structure. He counted the bodies he could see through the HUD on his helmet and swore under his breath. “There’s a lot of them set up in there. I counted at least two dozen troops supported by heavy weapon nests. I’d guess there’s probably double that based on the areas we can’t see. Ideas?”

Beside him, the commanding officer of Darkfire 9, Captain Ruondo, echoed the curse. The special forces captain took a deep breath before letting it out in an explosive burst. “Nothing that’s terribly good. The heavy weapons are the concern for me. My men can handle a firefight with regular troops, but if there’s more than one or two crewed laser cannons and mortars, we’re outgunned.”

Zoron grimaced. That had been his first impression as well. He knew that he might be able to get some air support or orbital bombardment, but he needed perfect coordinates to prevent major damage to the Academy’s artifacts. That wouldn’t be easy to get without some serious losses. This was war, however, so he knew he couldn’t be tied to sentiment here, even though he’d worked side-by-side with these special forces troopers for months now.

“Alright. We need to eliminate those emplacements. If we can get some accurate fixes on where they are, we should be able – “

Zoron’s words were cut off by the scream of a concussion missile as it streaked across his vision and hammered into a loyalist position. His head snapped around to where the missile had come from and he saw a horde of troops flooding out of hiding positions in the ruins toward the loyalists. More missiles lanced away from the shadows towards the fortifications. “What the… Who the hell are they?”

One of the troopers beside Zoron brought his head away from his rifle’s sights and spoke up. “Sir, it looks like One Sith troops. I recognize some of their armour designs.”

Zoron focused on the newcomers and zoomed in. After a second he could make out the markings on some of the armour that clearly identified them as One Sith. He smiled. “Perfect. Let them soften up those loyalist bastards for us. Captain, have your scouts watch the loyalist positions to get a lock on where they have their heavy weapons. The rest of us can enjoy the show for now.”

The attacking One Sith vastly outnumbered the loyalists, but they were exposed, even when considering the ruins and rubble they were running through. Zoron watched as mortars rained down onto the advancing line while the laser cannons cut through bodies as if they were paper. Still, some One Sith were able to make it close enough to effectively return fire. He could see loyalist positions falter as they took losses. The crewed weapons were still active, but became much more ineffective as the One Sith got closer in to their positions.

One of the scouts’ voice came across the comm channel. “Sir, we have a fix on the crewed weapons now. We’re confident that we’ve got all of them located. They should be marked on the map for you now.”

“Excellent. I also need a field of fire marked that will cover these One Sith bastards.” Zoron switched his comm channel over to the Taldryan command circuit. “Pyre 9 standing by for fire support request.”

After a moment a voice crackled through. “Pyre 9, this is Stormwind Actual. Provide details for request.”

Zoron checked his HUD and saw that the scouts had finished marking a wide swath of ground that the One Sith were occupying. “Coordinates and fields of fire uploading now. Require precision strikes on locations marked as weapons nests. All else can be glassed.”

There was another slight pause while his request and the accompanying data was uploaded. “Stormwind Actual copies, get cover.”

Zoron flipped back to the unit’s comm channel and quickly spat out, “Everyone down!” As he and his troops rolled away from the ridge, he caught a glimpse of a familiar figure striding onto the battlefield; a tall, thin Bpfasshi in black robes with a handful of droid bodyguards.

*Synin Torin. It* is *One Sith for sure.*

He looked up at the sky and watched a stream of green light flashing down from the heavens. Turbolaser bolts hammered down into the One Sith troops, leaving massive black scars on the landscape where men had just been. If any of the soldiers screamed, they were drowned out by the body-shaking screeches of the lasers. More rounds fell and melted the weapons emplacements into nothingness. In a matter of seconds, the entire field was empty except for a few stones. The silence was only interrupted by intermittent pops as some of the rocks exploded into shards from the heat.

A light flashed on Zoron’s HUD advising him that he was being paged on the command circuit. He toggled over. “Pyre 9 here.”

“Pyre 9, this is Stormwind Actual. Fire mission complete. Do you need any further assistance?”

Zoron chuckled as he looked over the field. “Negative, Stormwind. I think you’ve about done it. We owe you some drinks when we get back.”

“Copy. Remember, this is all recorded. I will hold you to that offer. Stormwind Actual out.”

One of the Darkfire troopers spoke up hesitantly, “So, are we going down there to hold that?”

“Absolutely not. We’re going to keep an eye on it until reinforcements get here. Anything that we can do to take that area can be done back to us, so I’m happy staying well out of the field of fire until we get a lot more resources.” Zoron lay down onto the ridge again and made himself comfortable.