In the silent darkness of space, the Arconan Expeditionary Force prowled forward, the enemy fleet closing on them like a pod of leviathans. As the fleet of Arcona moved to join battle, the Odanites joined them, the fleets of a pair of Clans forged together to one task.

Nikola Valtiere watched all this through a holoscreen on the flight deck of the *Invicta,* taking a moment from prepping to get an update on the situation. The Rollmaster had been busying himself with his Stealth-X since they had launched, the Consul electing to use his piloting skills rather than his aptitude for the graceful dances of capital ships. It had been a long time since he had flown the fighter, but the Sith quickly fell into his habits again, and with it, a rarely seen smile, a ferocious thing, harbinger of a time when he was nothing but a seething mass of undirected rage.

*Of* *course, that's what the Odan-Urr thought of most Dark Jedi anyway*, he mused, bringing up data on the two ships joining the fray. The VSD *Endor's Triumph* and the NSD *Fey'lya's Last Stand.* A formidable pair of capital ships alone, but without escorts, they were vulnerable out there, alone and unsupported.

"Arrogant." Valtiere sneered.

Everywhere in the Brotherhood was marred by arrogance. Even the 'Light Jedi' of Odan-Urr. The lack of escorts was a microcosm of an overall problem. The gifts of the Force made them all superhuman, meaning many didn't keep their feet grounded. And when a true threat presented itself...

The chirruping of an astromech shook Valtiere from his thoughts. He grunted, sealing his flight suit. The fighter was ready, in good time for launch. He clambered up the ladder, settling into the cockpit, the sensation like pulling on an old glove. He kept his helmet in his lap, not wanting to waste the air supply needlessly. He watched a deck hand pull the ladder away, rushing off to another task on the busy flight deck. A single individual acting seamlessly in concert with others towards a common goal. A model of efficiency.

If a true threat presented itself, the Brotherhood spent time reeling. How could something challenge their omnipotence? How could the all-knowing leaders be outwitted? In that time, lives were wasted, advantages pressed, infighting bloomed. It was happening here. Odan-Urr, in their arrogance, had not built up defences enough to ensure New Tython was theirs. They assumed the power of their Force users and infantry would be enough. It was a foolish notion. They focussed on the power of the individual. Power was achieved through the power of many, ably wielded by one, like a deck chief with his crew. Arcona represented this. The new Consul may not act appropriately at times, but at least she didn't suffer from the myopic arrogance some of her predecessors were cursed with. He would allow her that, albeit begrudgingly. She sought gain power for Arcona, not herself. The path of a true leader. He wished she would at least act with some decorum, however.

His eyes cast about. Still, the order to launch hadn't been given. He hated this. The waiting. Caged up. He wanted to be out there, to fight, to struggle, to demolish, shatter-

He stopped himself, clamping down on the building aggression. Using the dark side of the Force meant accessing your passions, and doing so regularly could make it very hard to keep any self control. Nikola had learnt that the hard way. And now, these dark siders had cast their lot in with the light siders of Odan-Urr. The only in the Brotherhood. It was likely due to their new Consul's relative lightness compared to previous leaders of Arcona. Arcona had been becoming more 'grey' recently, especially with a few former members of Odan-Urr joining, bringing their own beliefs and philosophies to the melting pot. Valtiere didn't care for them. The light side of the Force was about denial, restricting oneself. Distancing an individual from what they were. Life was struggle, fighting for dominance, grabbing power where one could. Not living in harmony with one another. Peace is an artificial state: a lie.

The launch order rang through the bay, the huge hanger doors beginning to gape open. Deck crews fled out of the way of fighters, leaving the way clear for some of them to leap out through the forcefield into the void. Valtiere pulled on his helmet, tapping service studs as the suit sealed fully, a habit from his days in Void Squadron. He gripped the control yoke, smile pulling as he lurched off from the ground.