

Red Fury: Two Roads to Glory
Anima - 11708



Temporary Command Centre
Red Fury Pirate Base
Beginning of Initial Assault

"To put it plainly, you aren't exactly front lines leadership," Locke stated in front of those who had gathered.

While the entirety of Naga Sadow's leadership gathered, it was the Rollmaster that held the Consul's attention. Cethgus let out a small grunt of agreement from where he stood, behind and a little bit to the side of being adjacent to Locke. Anima turned his head slowly so his mismatched eyes met Sonjie's gaze, the corruption of the Dark Side all but glowing within his left iris. Sanguinius didn't bother paying attention, knowing the disapproval would show on his face too readily if he allowed Anima to catch sight of him. Instead, the Quaester of Marka Ragnos returned his attentions to the deployment of his own House's troops.

"Not exactly rocket science there, *Boss*," came Anima's response as his gaze promptly dropped to the confirmation reports that the Journeymen and Black Guard had reported as requested.

Cethgus' reaction was as immediate as the strength of his intolerance for insubordination. The only thing quicker was Locke as he put up a hand in warning to stave off the Proconsul's advance. "Then there should be no arguments," Locke continued, "in your immediate assignment to head up the infiltration team."

Anima was already midway through contorting his face into a mocking visage towards Cethgus when he finished processing Locke's command. His face fell back to a more neutral visage, flicking his gaze back to Locke before nodding. "We both know that's the way I like it."

"Good, then get moving."

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Behind Enemy Lines
Red Fury Pirate Base
45 Minutes After Initial Assault

Much can be said of the horrors of conflict. Destruction, desperation, and the loss of life paint a rather terrible tableau in most cases. However, to Anima's eyes, the ever changing colours painted across the landscape from the unceasing exchange of deadly streaks of energy and fiery explosions, was as

calming as a day at the spa. He paused a moment as the strike team he had assembled moved through the doorway at his back. The Rollmaster wasn't in a hurry to get inside, after all there wouldn't be any doormen to speak of as it was one of his own making. Flicking the switch just beside his thumb, Anima deactivated his saber and returned it to one of the many belts that adorned his waist.

"Sir, all units accounted for."

Anima glanced over his shoulder, giving a quick nod to the soldier at his back. That was probably for the best, considering how long it had taken them to make their way to the base on foot, let alone unnoticed.

"It's a thing of beauty, isn't it, Sir? The Warhost in full swing." Despite the helmet, Anima knew that Sergeant Veers was grinning ear to ear. "Sure glad I'm not one of the other guys."

"Be sure you have the proper greeting ready for those *other guys*," the Rollmaster stated evenly, "got it?"

Veers was no stranger to what they referred to as *Foxtrots*, the Dark Jedi that made up the Clan proper and served alongside the soldiers of the Warhost. The Sergeant himself had attained his rank fighting in the seemingly never ending conflict against the supposed One Sith. Still, even the most experienced of men could be put off by the sheer unnaturalness each of the Sadowans exuded in their own way. In Anima's case, for Veers at least, it was his mismatched eyes. It had made it difficult for the Sergeant to focus ever since the Rollmaster was paired with the strike team. "Of course, Sir. Let's move out."

Again, Anima nodded and turned to follow Sergeant Veers. He had no issues with the man barking orders. In fact, he appreciated Veers' experience and would be the first to admit that leading a team of soldiers wasn't exactly in his job description, nor his repertoire. No, killing was what Anima did best, and it was there he would allow his focus to remain. Veers would see to the team.

As the Rollmaster stepped through the roughly carved opening, careful not to touch the softly glowing edges that formed the rim, he took in a deep breath through his nostrils. The air was somewhat stagnant, not exactly surprising considering it would be hard for the Pirates to get top of the line air purifiers way out in this region of space. Still, he had half expected that a force with the audacity to attack not one but two Clans of the Brotherhood would have a bit more... class.

Before another thought could cross his mind, klaxons began to blare alongside a chorus of blaster fire. It would seem that despite the carnage outside, the Pirates still had forces in reserve. At least they weren't entirely undeserving of his attentions after all. Veers was already barking orders into his communicator and charging down the hallway. Even with the newfound conflict inside, the team had done their jobs and set up a series of radar beacons. They were already hard at work constructing a

map of the inner layout of the base, displaying a slowly constructing holo projection above their main terminal. Anima glanced it over, trying to commit it to memory.

A tremor scurried its way up his spine, causing him to tense immediately. Anima tapped into the threads of the Force and allowed them to pull his body like a puppet, not entirely giving over his self-control but giving in just enough to get a head start. A vibroblade hummed through the air where he once stood, his body already spinning out of the way of the attack. Cerulean light filled the corridor as he activated *Vestigium of Duriel* once more, holding the weapon in a high guard. He relaxed his grip slightly and spun his wrist, neatly decapitating the Pirate that had dared to strike from behind. As the smell of burnt flesh and singed hair filled his nose, Anima's baser instincts couldn't help but swell in disappointment.

While unquestionably effective, the one detractor of using a lightsaber to kill was how infuriatingly civilized it was. No blood splatter to speak of; just a clean, cauterized wound.

Then again, that's why he always brought other options, and there were always willing participants.

Anima spun about and slashed, cutting another oncoming blade in two before deflecting a blaster bolt with a deft flourish. He dashed forward, carving through two more men before coming to a stop in front of his final attacker and quite literally disarming him. With a reluctant hiss, his saber deactivated once more before returning to his side. The Rollmaster knelt down beside the wounded man - who, based on the ringing in his ears, was screaming like some sort of wounded animal - and slid the vibroknife from the dagger at his boot. He grasped the man's head with his taloned left hand and tilted it back, holding it firmly against the ground.

"Try not to move, they tell me this hurts." Anima's monotone voice held no emotion whatsoever as he positioned the blade just above the Pirate's left eye. He pressed it forward, feeling the man start to squirm and that subtle pressure that flesh seemed to exude just before it split open. A stomach churning howl of pain echoed down the corridor towards the far off sounds of fighting as the blade moved deeper, Anima's hand the only thing keeping the man from thrashing and causing more permanent damage. "Yeah, that's what they usually say... So what you're gonna tell me now is which direction those gentlemen with the explosives back there need to go in order to reach your defensive controls."

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Strike Team Combat Zone
Red Fury Pirate Base
1 Hour After Initial Assault

Sergeant Veers let out a long sigh, making a mental count of how many members of the team he had just lost and - assuming he survived - how much paperwork was going to be waiting for him. He placed

his hand reassuringly on the shoulder of one of the remaining soldiers before kneeling down to retrieve a demo kit from one of the still warm corpses.

"Sergeant."

The sudden voice ringing out in the otherwise silent corridor would have caused lesser men to jump out of their skin slightly. For soldiers of the Warhost, it was just part of the job. He turned with a nod towards the Rollmaster of Naga Sadow, giving him a quick up and down glance as it was obvious Anima had been busy. Blood coated his right arm, a shocking amount of it in fact, and... were those crimson stains at the corners of the Umbaran's lips?

"You've been busy, Rollmaster," the Sergeant stated in a matter of fact tone.

"I was gathering intel," Anima replied as he tossed a datapad to Veers - the updated map with the defensive system's location marked - and turned his gaze down a side corridor for a moment. "I had a snack in the process... You do what you do best, Sergeant Veers. They're saving me a seat at the buffet."

Veers raised an eyebrow, thankfully unseen behind his helm, as he could swear a ravenous grin flashed on the man's face for an instant. "Roger that, Sir."

Anima didn't waste even a second more time with the Sergeant, dashing down the corridor towards the waiting Pirates. Veers tossed the demo kit he had retrieved towards one of the other soldiers and readied his blaster rifle. "Don't really think it gets more clear than that, boys. Let's do what we came here to do and blow some stuff up!"

The soldiers moved in unison, a well oiled machine that had trained for war their entire adult lives. The carnage may have only been visible outside on the front lines of the assault, but that didn't mean there wasn't more going on under the surface, and that's what they aimed to be. The base was the body, and they were the virus... It was time they made their entrance known with a bit more flash, and take down the defenses in the process.