**Orbit of Yridia IX**

**Yridia System**

**T/D "Omega"**

"Comms check." crackled the radio. Sith Battlemaster Hades looked around his powered down TIE Defender, it's black Sensor Absorbing Material coating rendering it completely invisible to sensors and the naked eye. But he wanted to be a hole in space. He waited as the others checked in. Bloodfyre was calm, but on edge at the same time. They all were. Telona, Oberst, Scion, Pel, and Havok made up the main force. There were others around too. Dox and Frosty were in sniping positions with long range slug throwers to minimize their detection. Some Journeymen were being used as runners and medics and as fire support to the main force. Oberst had also managed to bring along a company of Rangers to help secure the rest of the compound as well assist where needed.

Hades had pushed for, and then volunteered to be the eyes and ears of the Tarenti. He was alone in his T/D. His job was to provide air support. He would have been planet side, but Farrin's people had detected suspicious transmissions emanating to and from an old Rebel Transport as well as a civilian flagged Corvette. Oberst had ordered Hades to remain in orbit to make sure no un due surprises awaited the ground forces.

"Six?" Hades shook his head and sat up. "Six all in the green."

"Very well. All forces remain in position and await contact. Report any tangos you see." The cold voice of Oberst went silent. Hades twisted his head and tightened up his crash webbing. He checked his flight suit and helmet as well giving his craft a once over. Everyone was ready. Now all they had to do was hurry up and wait.

What seemed like hours passed, but in reality it was only thirty minutes. A newly minted Acolyte had just finished placing a anti-personnel charge when a long range blaster bolt exploded her spine through her chest. The lack of blood was unnerving as Dox quietly announced: "Contact front. 100 meters." The heavy repeater at the entrance opened up, firing highly powerful cannon fire into the suddenly swelling enemy forces. A squad of Rangers began to engage the enemy troops. The darkness filling with green and red flashes from the blasters of both friend and foes. The fire so intense from the Tarenti line that the assault began to bog down. It wasn't long before what remained of the first wave stopped advancing and were, in fact, pinned down.

"Officer, 20 degrees left, 70 yards."Dox whispered.

"Got it. One away." Frosty replied.

"Nice shot." came Dox's approval.

"Frontal assault bogged down. Rangers check your sectors. Journeyman, bring wounded to the medics. Everyone check ammo." Oberst ordered. His tone was that of someone talking to themselves as they clipped their tone nails.

"Six, movement?" Hades checked his sensors. He noticed the transport began to make an approach from atmo as the Corvette moved into orbit directly over the base.

"Affirmative. Target Tango-1 is moving to lower atmo. Target Charlie-1 is moving to direct orbit assist."

"Six, you are a go." Oberst ordered.

"Roger. Engaging." Hades' hands quickly brought his weapons and engines online. His shields powered up to full as the fighter began to quickly move towards his prey. To avoid targeting sensors he lined up his craft with the Corvette, codenamed Charlie-1. He loaded two proton torpedoes into the launchers. He will release closer to target to give the enemy ship minimal time to react. It would really upset him if he had fire twice.

One click left.

The bow of Corvette opened up, to his mild surprise, six Z-95 headhunters exited the ship and began a rapid decent towards the surface. Hades smiled to himself. He depressed the trigger and two blue torpedoes flashed out of his launchers. His aim point was directly in front of the engines, right into the reactor core. The T/D moved down and banked left. The Corvette never saw it coming. The ship was hit amidships. It was quick and painless for the crew. The ship exploded into a bright fireball as Hades settled in behind the Z-95s. His TIE created quite a shadow that one of the enemy pilots must have seen. One fighter broke hard left but the others did not. He began to pour fire into the remaining ships. The first two fighters exploded in rapid succession. The other two banked hard left just like their friend did earlier.

"Lead, Six. Five enemy Z-95s exited Charlie-1. Charlie-1 is down, as are two of the fighters. Engaging remaining forces." Hades pushed the flight stick forward, pitching him forward and back around. The first Headhunter shot through the space he was just in.

"Tisk tisk." Hades lined up and fired. His shots finding the target's belly. The first three drained the shields as the other four found the underside of the cockpit. The fighter exploded. Hades inverted and rolled right as the last two Z-95s tried to bear down on him. Unfortunately for them, the TIE Defender was too fast. He performed a Split-S and was back on their tails. He fired a linked salvo at one on the right. The ship was disabled in its path towards the planet. And while he wanted to toy with the other pilot, he had a job to do. He opened up again and seared the port wing off the old craft. It swirled out of control until it exploded. The T/D then looped around and finished off the helpless fighter as he made his way towards Tango-1.

"Fighters destroyed."

"Tango-1 is preparing to land troops. Engage." Hades gave a double click with his mic to acknowledge the order. He increased speed as best as he could in atmo. Tango-1 had just landed as it came into view and Hades could see whole battalions exiting from her. He almost felt bad for them as he let loose three torpedoes. Two for the ship and one for the enemy troops. Hades pulled up hard before they hit. The detonation was massive. He rolled around to see the bow of the ship fly hundreds of meters away and the troops.. The troops were vaporized when the warhead exploded.

As the T/D provided air cover the Tarenti troops began to make short work of the remaining forces. Hades smiled as he listed to Dox and Frosty attempt to gain the better kill count.

This battle was more costly than he would know. Four journeyman, dead. Two squads of Rangers, dead. Scion and Telona, his closest friends, both wounded. But it was worth it. No one messes with the Tarenti and survive. Whatever happens next, it's time for Tarentum to go on the offensive.

SBM Hades

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