

Dark Jedi Brotherhood

# New Orders

A Nighthawk Open Prompt



Arcia Cortel, 3463  
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*With Admiral Cortel's recent transfer to the Nighthawk, the DIA would now have a working arm to extend through the galaxy at large. The ship's ability to travel under stealth and its state-of-the-art communications systems would offer not only the Intelligence Director the ability to gather information at the farthest reaches of the Outer Rim, but also give the Arconan Summit much needed intelligence on potential dangers threatening the Dajorra System. Working hand-in-hand, Admiral Cortel, now serving as Deputy Director and Chief of Analysis within the DIA, and Captain Qurroc remain vigilant in their efforts to protect Arconan interests and ensure proper channels of communication to their superiors. For now, however, there are new orders to discuss...*

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## **Location Data Classified**

The lift doors hissed open, allowing Admiral Cortel to enter the CIC, datapad in hand holding a secure connection to the newly installed intelligence array in port Observation. Almost as soon as it had powered on, streams of data became available to Cortel, to which she quickly analyzed, rechecked and validated with her contacts aboard the *Last Light*. After confirming her findings, the Director authorized movement for open talks with the *Nighthawk's* Captain to act on the gathered information. Her presence in the CIC was the first step.

Not even five steps out of the lift, Cortel scanned the CIC and locked eyes with Captain Qurroc, who had just emerged from the cockpit corridor. He waved off an approaching Yeoman and made his way to the Admiral with haste. Instead of greeting her, however, he strode past and made his way towards the secure compartmented information facility, or SCIF, behind the lift. Cortel, still knowing her ship and where he was likely headed, followed without a word.

"What do you have, Admiral?" Qurroc broke the silence after the security doors latched and hissed, sealing the room from any outside influence.

Cortel placed her datapad on the tabletop between the two and the various screens around them flashed to life with telemetry, geospatial coordinates, rumored theories and more. "As you can see here, this is all that remains of the Hosnian system. Approximately three months ago, something with massive power destroyed every planet within the system. With no resistance. The only things left are scattered chunks of rock and fragmented pieces of ship debris."

Qurroc leaned forward to study one of the view screens, his fingers lightly tapping his chin when the Admiral cleared her throat and spoke again. "Initial reports state that the area is charged with an intriguing power residue resembling a star. However, the data does not match the Hosnian star. It could have been Hosnian Prime — its destruction caused the system to become binary, if only temporarily."

"That's very peculiar. Do we have any idea where the residue originates from?"

"Unclear until we gather samples. We've been given authorization by the Director to travel to the Hosnian system, what's left of it, and gather any additional information that we can. We need to find out what exactly happened to the system and report back with our findings. When we leave, of course, is up to you," Cortel sounded rather dry when finishing her statement.

With a simple nod, Qurroc turned to the secured door and keyed in his passcode to unlock it. "No time like the present."

As soon as the door hissed open, the two were out and onto the CIC floor. Qurroc relayed orders to begin stealth checks and preparations for a jump to the Hosnian system while Arcia set herself up at one of the communications consoles, patching a direct connection to her equipment in port Observation.

The crew worked together seamlessly. Within ten minutes, the stealth check was completed and showed one hundred over one hundred on all checks and the cockpit chimed in as ready for their jump.

"Alright, ladies and gentleman. We're heading to the Hosnian System to check things out. Our mission is to gather any information our forward recon teams may not have snagged themselves and bring it back home. We need to find out what exactly happened to the system and we need to do it quickly. Understood?" Qurroc spoke loud and clear.

"Yes, Sir!" the bridge crew rang out in unison.

With the resounding confirmation, the deck rumbled and lurched as the stars around the *Nighthawk* elongated, blurred and blinked out of existence, replaced by a pulsating corridor of blue, black and white signifying their jump to hyperspace.

The *Nighthawk's* new orders were now in full effect.

### **Hosnian System Core Worlds**

Karth Orsai proved to be, yet again, one of the best helmsman in the DDF. With his expert use of hyper-lanes and previous knowledge of the more unsafe routes, he managed to shave some time off their journey, much to Cortel's relief. The ship had exited the hyper-lanes and held position near the remaining debris of one of the celestial bodies on the far rings of the system. The readings operations that Cortel was receiving were eerie. All of the planets in the system were simply — gone. Whatever had caused this was surely a force to be reckoned with, and the Admiral hoped that Arcona would never have to face anything like it as long as she lived.

"Admiral. Captain. Receiving encrypted holo-communique from Eldar. Feeding it to the SCIF," Senior Operative Nami Dalros at the communications console informed.

Qurroc and Cortel both made their way back to the secure chamber to see the holo-representation of Braecen Kaeth standing before them. He looked to both as the door hissed and latched shut, but remained otherwise quiet. After a few brief moments of silence, Cortel rolled her eyes and scoffed.

"Did you summon us to bask in our beauty, Kaeth, or do you have something for us? We haven't all day."

With a chuckle, Braecen nodded. "Yes, I was just reviewing the recent reports from the *Hawk*. You've made your way to the Hosnian System, I see. What have you discovered?"

Before the Captain could respond, the Admiral cut in. "We've only just arrived, as you would know if you would read the report in detail. Which I assume you have. In which you obviously have something of importance, otherwise you would have left us to do our job instead of calling us away before getting any work done. So, *my Lord*, do you have anything for us?"

Braecen's eyes narrowed at the woman's display of hostility. "Yes. I do, as it happens, have information for you. The initial readings sent back showed an interesting residue. Some of our analysts have already determined it to be left over phantom energy. Something was fired at near light-speed into this system. You need to be wary."

"Understood, my Lord," Qurroc managed to speak up before Cortel could, causing her to grit her teeth and turn her back to the two men.

"Report back your findings as soon as you have something, Captain. Admiral, nice to see you again."

The Quaestor's image shimmered and vanished as the secure connection was terminated. Qurroc turned to face his mentor and frowned. She seemed abnormally annoyed at the sight of the Adept, but he wasn't about to press things. Instead, he keyed in his codes and opened the door, allowing Cortel to storm out of the room with him in close pursuit.

"Operative Legain, keep an eye out for phantom energy in the area. We have reason to believe that whatever did this is related to such," the Captain relayed orders to his Ops and Sensors tech who responded with a salute.

Qurroc turned to the Admiral with a small smile on his face, happy to have a mission to complete, but she wasn't there. The lift doors had just closed and secured before beginning its descent into the lower decks and the Captain watched it lower, shaking his head lightly.

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"El, I need you to do this for me."

"Arcia. Why. Why are you so invested in this?"

"He *knew* about it, Elequin. He knew about it and didn't say a thing. I won't sit by and do nothing."

"You are not that stupid, Arcia. He is a powerful Force User. You are great, yes, but you are no match for a Force User. I am no match for a Force User. Of his caliber, at least. We will be outed in two seconds if we try and stick our noses where they do not belong. Why would I risk my life on an unproven theory?"

"I'm the one that saved the life I'm asking you to risk."

There was pause.

"*Haar'chak*...Fine! I will verify your stupid theory. You and I are going to have a talk when I get back, though."

"Thank you El, that's all."

A sharp ping rang out through port Observation signifying the termination of the communications link. With a sigh, Cortel threw herself into her chair and rubbed her temples, trying to rid herself of the headache that plagued her. She had just sent her best and most loyal friend into the fire to prove something she already knew to be true. She had nothing concrete, physical, though. If she could prove what she knew to be true, then the Shadow Lord may just want to have a less than pleasant conversation with the Quaestor of Galeres...

Pulling a small, metal square from a drawer of her desk, the Admiral pressed a button on the side which caused a picture of a dark haired man to populate the screen. She ran her fingers across it, taking in a deep breath.

"Soon, Jericho...soon..."