

From the Ashes of Cocytus

A Submission to the Competition:
Always Two



Written by
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35 ABY

Reiden was still reeling from the cruel revelation that the Cocytus system, which he had called home for eight years now, had been attacked and was no more. He and the other members of Scholae Palatinae were aboard the *IMS Tipoca II*, the Clan's medical station. They had been evacuating from the system and heading to the station under the pretense of a drill. Little did they know that the Iron Fleet would assault their planets from orbit as they made their way to the rendezvous point at the medical station. Rage flared through Reiden like a stoked fire. But he knew that would do little to help him in the present situation. He tamped it down for the moment and saved it as fuel for his actions later.

With only the *Tipoca II*, the *ICN Sidious*, some smaller ships, and a handful of fighters and older ships to the Scholae name, the entire clan was in a rather precarious position. They needed to get more firepower, and they needed it quickly. Fortunately, the long-range scanners of the medical station had picked something up. There was a ship not too far away; a *Venator*-class Destroyer, according to the readings. With time being of the essence, Emperor Xen'Mordin issued orders to take the ship for their own use as part of their fleet. Everyone had begun to put their heads together to formulate various plans.

A direct firefight between the Destroyer and the *Sidious* could not be risked since the goal was to bring the ship under their banner as part of the new Scholae fleet. Another important factor to consider was that the *Venator*-class ship had larger hangars to accommodate more fighters than their own *Victory*-class *Sidious*. As such, attempting to engage in a dogfight between fighter squadrons could prove to be a mistake in the end. The objective called for another tactic to be used in order to keep their current assets safe.

Reiden came up with an idea that seemed like it might work. They would use some of their transports and have them send out a distress beacon, using it as bait to lure the Destroyer in. It hinged on the hope that the crew aboard would get curious and move in, perhaps in search of some cargo they could take as their own. It would be the moment they docked with the ship that an assembled strike force would slip onto the Destroyer and wrest control of it from the inside. Another part to the plan was in making use of the *Sidious*, but in a more controlled manner.

Once the *Venator*-class ship approached the bait, the *Sidious* would fire its ion cannons to disable the enemy vessel. The timing of this had to be precise. The *Sidious* would fire the ion cannons at the same time that the strike force would make their move onto the ship, hoping to create chaos and distract the crew enough that they would be hindered from making repairs to their systems to regain functionality. Of course the Scholae forces would have their fighters on standby in case they were needed, but hopefully that would not be necessary.

A consensus was reached that this would be an acceptable plan. Reiden relayed the information to his Quaestor Lexiconus Qor. The Quarren stroked his tentacles as he listened carefully. When Reiden had finished, Lexic voiced his support of the plan and accompanied Reiden to inform Emperor Xen'Mordin.

"Are you certain that you can carry out this mission successfully?" Xen'Mordin inquired, looking from Lexic to Reiden.

"Yes, I do. I feel that this is the best course of action to take, given our current situation and the overall objective, Xen," Reiden answered.

Xen looked pensive for a moment before nodding, "Very well, I trust your judgment, Reiden. Put together the teams you feel that you'll need for the mission." Having worked with Reiden for years, he knew that the Warrior was capable of following through with his plans, and that little could stop him once he had set his mind on something.

"Thank you, sir. I appreciate the opportunity," Reiden said as he bowed. He turned and left to rejoin the others of the Clan where they had gathered.

Reiden was going to need some of their best fighters for the task at hand, but luckily he had a few people in mind already. He knew that Alara Deathbane of House Excidium would be up to the challenge. Jorm Na'trej, also of Excidium, was another that was always willing to cause some mischief, and has even been known to steal things from time to time. The young Derek Cinn was most likely eager to prove his worth in a major way to the rest of his Clan-mates. One of Reiden's fellow House-mates in Imperium, Jurdan Krennel, would also be a good fit. He had known the man's brother Delak for years and had heard that Jurdan was a fierce warrior in his own right, and the current leader of the Shadow Guard battleteam within Imperium's ranks. A recent return to the Clan, Reiden had learned, was Rasilvenaira Isatri'Zara StormRaven. Despite not having worked with her before, even he knew of her reputation as a skilled fighter, and he would need all the help he could get.

Reiden went to each of them in turn and asked for them to meet with him in a separate area from the rest of the group. Once they had all arrived, he began to inform them of the plan he had in mind. As he looked at the team assembled before him, he could see the mischievous glint in Jorm's eyes.

"Reiden, are you sure about this plan? Do we really have a chance at pulling this off?" Derek questioned.

"Yes, Derek, I'm sure. I chose each of you for a reason. I know that you're all skilled and competent fighters, and you wouldn't mind getting your hands dirty if needed. It may still be a difficult task ahead of us, but I truly believe that, together, we can make this work." Reiden

made sure to choose his words carefully. He believed in his plan, and he wanted to instill confidence in his clan-mates. He was not used to being in a role such as this, but he tried his best to give the appearance of being composed and in control. Derek simply nodded at the explanation.

Reiden looked at the rest of the group, and determination shone through their features. He gave them time to prepare while he went to brief a group of pilots about the plan. He would need their help just as much as that of his clan-mates. After everyone was filled in, Reiden went to make sure his own gear was in working order and to prepare himself for the battle that was about to come.

With the plan in place and the necessary people briefed, everything had come together as quickly as could be managed. The team was ready and had boarded the Action VI transport ship, hidden in the shadows behind crates of cargo. The most valuable cargo had already been unloaded onto the medical station and now all that was left were things that could be easily reacquired; nothing of significant value. Luckily, the crew of the *Venator*-class destroyer obviously had no knowledge of this fact. They were using a DP20 Corellian Gunship as an escort for the transport ship due to its lack of armament, and the Clan's EF76 Nebulon-B frigate the *Venture* was waiting just outside of sensor range, along with the *Sidious*. Reiden used his comlink to check in with the pilots of each ship.

Once they all gave reports of green status, he gave the signal to begin the mission. The Action VI transport shut down its systems and began to send out the distress signal. The DP20 gunship powered down as well, to make it appear as though it had also run into some mechanical problems.

It didn't take long for the *Venator*-class destroyer to arrive on the scene. It remained at a safe distance, likely scanning for signs of life and any other ships that would be nearby. Once it had detected that it was safe to move in, it approached slowly before docking with the transport.

Reiden tensed up slightly as he stared at dock's doors, waiting for them to open. He glanced to a datapad he had next to him. Earlier they had affixed a small camera onto the outer hull of the transport. The datapad displayed the feed from that camera, showing a group of six men about to open the doors.

"All units move in, now!" Reiden shouted into his comlink.

The doors opened. He and his team leapt into action, and engaged the boarding party. Reiden took the man farthest from the doors intending to cut off any chance of the enemy making a break for it back to their own ship and raising the alarm. He pulled out his blaster and quickly shot him in the knees. He holstered the blaster and unclipped his lightsaber from his belt and thumbed the activator. The weapon gave a *snap-hiss* as the emerald blade erupted from the hilt. He brought it around and slashed it across the chest of his opponent, who then crumpled to the floor. He glanced at his team.

Derek had pulled out his blasters and made quick work of one of the men. Alara and Jorm both toyed with their opponents, lightsabers whirling. Jurdan and Rasilvenaira had engaged their men, but dispatched them quickly and efficiently. The first group of men had been handled. Now the hard work of taking control of the ship would begin. Reiden was about to issue orders when an alarm rang out through the ship. He glanced around and spotted the man that Derek had taken on. Seemingly with his last bit of strength, the man had pushed the button of a device located on his belt, tripping the alarm system.

“Fwec...this just got more difficult. Okay people, you know what the plan is. Jorm and Alara, I want you to make your way to the reactor room and try to hold it for as long as necessary,” Reiden ordered. He turned to face Jurdan and Rasilvenaira. “Jurdan, Ras, you two sweep through the ship and take out any opposition you find along the way. Derek, you and I will be heading for the bridge to seize control from there. Move out!”

“I thought I had him...” Derek said softly. “I’m sorry.”

Reiden shook his head, “Don’t worry about it, things happen. What’s important now is that we push forward and don’t look back. You can do this.” He watched as he team departed and activated his comlink, connecting to the *Sidious*, “Heads up, Xen. One of the men was able to set off an alert throughout the ship. They know that they’re under attack now. Be prepared.”

“Very well,” the Emperor replied after a slight pause. “Just get this done, Reiden. I have faith that you and your team will accomplish our goals. We’ll take care of things on our end. The *Sidious* and the *Venture* are already moving into position to assist.”

“Understood, sir,” Reiden said. “We’ll continue our assault. I’ll be making my way to the bridge with Derek now. Reiden out.”

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Out in space, the *Sidious* and the *Venture* were beginning to make their move. The DP20 Gunship was also powering its systems back up and preparing for battle. The *Venator*-class destroyer was now on full alert, and the dorsal hangar had opened. A squadron of fighters was making its way out of the bay and set its sights on the Gunship. The fighters opened fire, and the Gunship responded in kind with a volley from its turbolaser cannons, even launching.

The *Sidious* finally reached weapons range and locked onto the destroyer. Once the ion cannons were fully charge, they unleashed the energy at the enemy vessel. The shockwave rippled across the ship. The ship’s weapons that had been firing at the Gunship suddenly stopped as each system aboard the destroyer was disabled. The *Venture* pulled out ahead and launched its own squadron of fighters to help combat the enemy’s. Laser fire filled the obsidian void of space as the battle raged on.

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The fight inside the destroyer was in full swing. Reiden and Derek made their way along the path leading to the bridge. After dispatching another two crew members, the sound of an explosion could be heard above the blare of the sirens. Reiden couldn’t help but smile.

“Well, it seems like Jorm is certainly having fun during our time here,” the Warrior noted aloud.

“Does he know that we need the ship in one piece, or else this mission is scrapped?” Derek asked.

Reiden nodded, "Don't worry about it. He knows what's at stake here. But if he wants to let loose and cause a little mayhem while seizing control of the ship, I'm definitely not going to get in the way of that crazy fwecker."

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Jorm's face held a feral smirk as the smoke from the thermal detonator explosion cleared. He ignited his lightsaber and swiftly approached the next wave of opponents. He would narrowly avoid blaster bolts fired at him only to leap into the air and flip over one of the crew members, slashing the plasma blade across his opponent's torso. He weaved through the corridor like a fierce maelstrom, flipping and spinning in jumps and dodges as he worked, his yellow lightsaber illuminating the path of destruction.

Alara let out a roar as she rushed at the crew of the Destroyer that stood in her way. The twin yellow blades of her lightsabers lashed out with savage fury as she used her rage and the Force to propel her onwards. Wrecked bodies lay in her wake as she flowed through the hall. One blade would strike an opponent before quickly being followed by the second in an overwhelming display of power.

The two Equites continued their mad dance of death and destruction as they made their way to where the reactor core was located. Any foe that dared step in their path was swiftly brought to its knees. Jorm tossed another thermal detonator down the hall and grinned even wider as it exploded. After having seen their home attacked, everyone needed a good release. Lucky for Jorm, he liked to make things go boom, and due to his past as a pirate, stealing things was also fun. He was getting the best of both worlds now.

Rasilvenaira turned a corner in the hallway and was met with the sight of a group of three crew members. She retreated to the other side of the corner and gathered the Force around herself like a cloak. She winked out of visible sight and rounded the corner once more. She pulled her double-bladed dagger *Arashi-Kumori* from its sheath and took up position behind the farthest crewman and dropped her cloak. As she reappeared, she plunged the dagger into the man's back before kicking him off of the blade and onto the ground.

The other two men spun around in confusion, not sure what had just happened. They fumbled to remove their blasters from their holsters. Ras took advantage of this momentary lapse to send out tendrils of the Force towards the two men and enveloped them in a swath of darkness. She returned her *Arashi-Kumori* to its home and drew her lightsaber. With a smirk, she ignited the burning silver blade and leapt over the men, twisting in mid-air. She landed on her feet and quickly followed up with a strike to the first man's neck, beheading him. The second man stared in terror at what had just happened. Seeing the opening, Ras plunged her saber into his chest. The bodies crumpled to the ground. Ras dropped the shroud she had created and continued on.

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Derek and Reiden pressed on, advancing towards the bridge of the ship. Derek let loose a volley of blaster bolts from one side of corner before ducking back for cover. Reiden stepped out and wove the emerald blade of his lightsaber through the air to deflect some of the bolts that were being shot at them.

"Derek, can you take care of these guys if I keep them busy?" the Warrior asked.

"Sure thing. Just let me get close enough and it'll be done," the Knight responded. "I've got something special in mind this time."

"Okay. Cover me for a moment; I know how to get you the distraction you need." Reiden pulled back into cover as Derek took his place and fired off another volley of shots. He took a moment to center himself and tapped into the rage he kept boiling beneath the surface and allowed it to fill him. He summoned the Force into his hands and quickly spun around the corner, firing lightning at the nearest opponent. The man seized up and fell to the floor. "Now, Derek!" Reiden ordered.

"Coming right up!" The Knight came out from around the corner and ran at the men. He fired up his jetpack and launched himself forward. His head slammed into the man's chest and knocked him backwards, falling on top of one of his companions. The two took a moment to untangle from each other. Derek pulled out his lightsaber and thumbed the activator, the silver blade humming to life. He brought it down in a vicious stab as he skewered both men. Their once moving limbs slumped and fell to the floor.

Reiden watched the scene unfold before him and grinned at the bold display the young Knight had put on. While the two remaining men gawped in disbelief, the Warrior swiftly closed the distance between himself and his enemies. He brought his lightsaber up and swung it down in a chop, severing the arm of one man that held a blaster rifle. The man let out a scream of agony. Before he could react further, Reiden switched his saber to his left hand. He balled his right hand into a fist and pulled it back. He launched it forward, crunching it into the man's face and sending him sprawling. He spun on his heel as he switched opponents and took hold of his saber on his right hand once more. He ignited the blade and slashed it across the man's chest.

Reiden turned on the man on the floor and held the blade of his saber near the crewman's throat. "Take out your comlink and give the clear signal for this section," he ordered. "Now."

The man's eyes went wide in terror and he nodded quickly, fumbling for the device. Judging by the difficulty he was having, it must have been his main hand that Reiden had severed. But the man managed to pull it from his belt and raised it to his lips. "This is Section 11-38 reporting. The area is all clear, no signs of the intruders here. We'll continue on and report back shortly." He turned to face Reiden, his face pleading.

"Thank you. You did well," the Warrior told him. Reiden then brought the blade back and slashed it down across the man's neck. "Good work, Derek. Let's keep moving," he told the Knight as they stepped over the bodies and rushed through the corridors.

Bridge of the *ICN Sidious* Outside the Destroyer

The battle in space raged on. The Scholae forces traded blows with those of the *Venator*-class Star Destroyer. The first wave of enemy starfighters had been easily taken care of by Scholae's own, with the assistance of the DP20 Gunship and the *Sidious*. The second squadron of enemy fighters was just leaving the dorsal hangar of the enemy craft.

Xen'Mordin watched on, his jaw tense. He knew that they needed this ship, and he felt as though it was just within his grasp. "Fire another volley from the ion cannons! Unleash fire from all batteries next," he ordered the commander of the *Sidious*. "Their ship has superior numbers when it comes to fighters. We cannot allow them to get the upper hand."

The *Sidious* fired its ion cannons at both the *Venator*-class Destroyer and its fighters as well. A massive salvo of laser fire quickly followed suit. The lasers seared through the fighters, eating away at the enemy's supply. Another squadron of Scholae fighters leapt out of the hangar and joined the fray. The fighters swarmed into formation and assaulted those of the enemy.

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Jordan Krennel shoulder-barged into a small group of crew members that had their back turned toward him. He let his rage fuel him as he sent out tendrils of power within the Force and summoned it to his aid. He sent out waves of electricity from his fingertips, spreading it among the three men. He kept his assault brief before switching to his lightsaber, the amethyst blade sparked to life. He brought the blade to bear upon his enemies as he quickly dispatched their writhing bodies on the floor.

He pressed on, making his way toward his target of the starfighter command bridge. He knew that the *Sidious* had a disadvantage in the number of squadrons available to it, and any captured fighters would only aid in the Clan's forces. If he could wrest control of that tower, he could prevent any additional enemy craft from launching.

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Jorm continued his intricate dance of mayhem through the corridors. His grin widened as he found himself before the entrance to the reactor room. "It looks like we're here 'lara," the Kiffar said, with almost a touch of sadness.

The half-Sephi looked ahead and nodded. "It would seem so, my dear Jorm. But this is where the real fun will begin. Now they'll all be coming to us."

"Yes, that is an excellent point," Jorm replied.

The pair began to walk inside the room when a crewman suddenly popped up from behind the control console and unleashed a quick burst of blaster bolts at them. Jorm and Alara ducked

for cover behind the bulkhead of the blast doors. Another burst of rounds came forth from the room.

“Could you cover me, Alara? I’ve got a plan,” Jorm asked as he turned to face his partner.

“Certainly, Jorm. It should be simple enough,” Alara replied.

The Sephi stepped out from the door frame and moved her lightsabers into a defensive pattern, deflecting the blaster bolts as the crewman fired at her. He would duck down again before springing up and unleashing another burst of fire. Alara kept up her defense, waiting for Jorm to make his move.

Jorm watched carefully, waiting for the right opportunity. He deactivated his lightsaber clipped it to his belt. He drew his .48-caliber Enforcer Pistol from its holster. He took aim at the console. Once the crewman popped up again, he squeezed the trigger, unleashing a three round burst. The rounds struck home, hitting the man in the chest. Their opponent slumped back against the console and slid to the floor.

The pair strode inside and made their way to the console. Alara took up a defensive position, glancing around cautiously in case any other crew members were laying in wait for them. Jorm took a brief look around as well before pulling out his comlink.

“Reiden? This is Jorm. Alara and I have taken control of the reactor room. Ready to proceed to the next phase,” the Kiffar reported.

“Great work, Jorm,” Reiden replied from the other end. “Jurdan should be nearing the starfighter control bridge by now. Ras is making a final sweep before heading to the fighter bay. Derek and I are within sight of the command bridge now, so hopefully we won’t need Ras to make her way to the hangar.” There was a brief pause before he continued, “Go ahead and attach the explosives to the reactor. Hold the room and wait for me to contact you next.”

“Copy that. Watch your back out there, Reiden. Jorm out,” the Kiffar replied.

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Reiden ended his conversation with Jorm and put his comlink away. He had his reservations about putting this plan into action himself before they had left the *Tipoca II*, but he was glad to see that their efforts were paying off well thus far. However, their job was not quite finished yet. They still had to take control of the command bridge.

Reiden quietly advanced with Derek down the corridor. There was a corner up ahead, and they should lead them to the bulkhead that sealed off the bridge from the rest of the ship. Reiden silently held up a clenched fist to signal Derek to stop. He cautiously peered around the corner to see what lay in wait before them. He spotted two guards armed with blasters. But the real

annoyance was that the blast doors were sealed shut behind them. It was something that could be taken care of, but it would take time for their lightsabers to cut through the metal. They had already spent enough time getting to this point as it was, and he wanted to get the mission over with. However, he was willing to wait to ensure that the job was done right and the mission was a success.

Reiden moved back into cover and faced Derek, speaking in a low voice, "There are only two men guarding the bridge. But the blast doors are closed, so we'll have to cut through them with our sabers. Unfortunately, we have no idea what may be waiting for us inside, and they'll know we're coming in. Be prepared for anything."

"Understood. I'll be ready," the young Knight replied with conviction.

"Good," Reiden said with a nod. "You take the one on the right, and I'll take the one on the left. Let's move."

The duo swiftly rounded the corner and rushed at their respective targets. Their lightsabers snapped to life. Reiden went for the more direct route and faced the crewman head-on, deflecting blaster bolts as he charged, and plunged his saber blade into the poor man's chest. Derek used ran at his opponent and slid on the floor to evade the burst of blaster fire coming at him. He then sprang up as the shooter adjusted his aim and sidestepped to the left as he unleashed a vicious slash that sliced across the crewman's torso. They both removed their sabers from the men before stabbing them into the blast doors and began the slow process of cutting through the metal.

After a couple minutes, the green and silver lightsaber blades met together. Reiden and Derek deactivated their sabers. Reiden reached deep within himself at the tendrils of power that were coiled and waiting to be used. He sent them into his hand and pushed it forward. The section of door they had carved out flew into the bridge room and crashed onto the floor.

The two Sith leapt into the room, their sabers raised and ready before them. Reiden glanced around and saw several stunned faces staring at them. He located the man that appeared to be in charge and moved in quickly. He brought his saber around and swiped it across his eyes, blinding him. Taking advantage of the situation, he then plunged his saber into the man's chest and kicked him away and onto the floor.

"Listen up, everyone. We're taking control of your ship. If you don't want to die immediately," Reiden announced, looking down at the commander with disdain, "Throw down your weapons and vacate your posts."

Derek deactivated his saber and exchanged it for his dual DC-17 blaster pistols and pointed them to the left and right. "Don't even think about trying anything, or you'll end up like your friend there on the floor."

Reiden grinned, "And in case you thought your shipmates could help you, I wouldn't count on it. We've taken precautions against that." He turned to the communications officer, "You. Get me on a ship-wide channel; I have something to tell your friends." The man nodded quickly and punched a button on his terminal, activating the communication system.

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Jurdan had finished carved his way through the blast doors blocking his entrance into the starfighter control bridge. He extended his hand and sent the door crashing into the room with an invisible force. He was met with a minimal crew, which he promptly dispatched. They were too scared of the muscular bald man that had appeared before them to even put up a fight. He went to the control station and tapped in a command to seal the dorsal hangar. He glanced out the viewport in front of him and saw the doors slowly close shut.

Just then, a beep was heard over the speakers and a familiar voice issued forth. "Attention, all crew members. We have raided your ship and seized control of the bridge. We are taking your ship for our own use. Any resistance will be met with lethal force. Surrender yourselves and we will take that into consideration." Reiden's tone was firm as he continued, "As an added security measure to ensure our desires are met, my team has placed explosives in the reactor room. We will bring this ship down if we can't have it."

Jurdan listened to the words and smiled. He spun on his heel and began to make his way to the command bridge. He knew that Reiden was bluffing. But even if the crew had such a suspicion, it would be unwise for them to resist anyway. The crew members were clearly outmatched, despite having the superior numbers.

Reiden Karr stood on the bridge facing the viewport. He watched as the Scholae fighters cleaned up the few remaining Destroyer fighters that had escaped the hangar bay before it had been sealed. He heard heavy footfalls coming from the corridor behind him and turned to see Jurdan Krennel enter the bridge.

“Ah, Jurdan, your timing is excellent. I suppose we have you to thank for closing that hangar?” Reiden said with a smile.

The bald man nodded, “That’s right. There wasn’t too much trouble once I reached the bridge. So I quickly took care of it, sealed off the hangar, and made my way here to join you.” Jurdan gave Reiden a grin before continuing, “After all, somebody has to fly this thing for you.”

“That’s certainly true. I haven’t heard from Ras yet, but I’m sure that she’s off having some fun with the rest of the crew. She did love Ptolomea, and now she’s got some anger to work out. Can’t say I blame her, really. Most of us feel that way now,” Reiden lamented.

Derek balled up a fist and punched the nearest crewman. “Sorry...had to let that out.”

Reiden held up a hand, “It’s quite all right, Derek.”

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Jorm and Alara had just taken care of another three stragglers from the crew that had proved to be particularly stubborn, despite Reiden’s warning about the explosives. Perhaps they chose to call what they thought was a bluff. But that made no difference to the pair as they made quick work of the intruders.

Jorm pulled out his comlink and contacted Reiden. “This is Jorm. The reactor room is now secure. A few more just stopped by for a visit, but they’ve been dealt with. I don’t think we’ll have any further problems, though.”

“Thank you, Jorm,” Reiden replied from the other end. “I’ll make contact with the rest of the fleet.”

## **Aboard the *ICN Sidious***

Xen'Mordin watched his fighters begin to return to their hangars. They had performed well in this battle, holding their own easily. His attention was diverted by a chirp coming from the comm. channel.

He accepted the transmission, and a blue-hued image of Reiden sprang to life from the holoprojector. "Reiden. It's good to hear from you. I was beginning to wonder if, perhaps, we should send another team over."

A smile played on the corner of Reiden's lips, "That won't be necessary, Xen. We have successfully taken control of the enemy vessel and are in the process of rounding up the surviving crew members into one area as we speak." He paused a moment in thought before continuing, "Nothing much of note to report. However, we will need to replace the blast doors from the two bridge structures, at the very least. Jorm used a couple explosives, but I made sure to tell him from the start not to cause too much collateral damage. He knew what was at stake here; we all did."

"Yes. That we did. Stay aboard the ship for now and keep a firm grip on things there. We'll send people over to deal with the prisoners in short order. Well done, Reiden," the Emperor said.

"Thank you, sir. I appreciate your vote of confidence throughout this mission. I'll be sure to keep things in order until the teams arrive," the Warrior responded. Xen nodded and ended the communication. Reiden's image flickered and disappeared.

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Reiden spun away from the terminal in front of him to face Derek, "I want you to make your way to Ras and assist her in rounding up the crew members. I'll have Alara join you. If anyone resists, you know what to do. This is our ship now."

"You got it, Rei. I'll take care of it," the young Knight said as he turned and hurried down the corridor.

Reiden nodded and glanced out the viewport again. He folded his arms across his chest and smiled. *I love it when I good plan comes together*, he thought to himself. Though he was initially uncertain he was the right choice to lead the mission, he was glad he managed to pull it off. The Scholae fleet now had a new warship under its control. They were one step closer to rebuilding their former strength. Scholae would not be held back for long. They were all a determined bunch, and nothing was going to stand in their way as they moved forward.