**MC80 star cruiser *Solari***

**Briefing Room One**

Though he had spent many years in a cockpit, Andrelious had never found himself in the briefing room of a ‘Rebel’ ship like the *Solari*. The Sith sat nervously in a front row seat, inches from pilots that he was sure he had traded shots with in previous engagements.

A female dressed in a uniform that Andrelious thought resembled that of an Imperial officer entered the room.

“And what are you supposed to be? Judging by those, I’d guess you’ve never seen combat,” the Sith announced, having noticed the woman’s perfectly manicured fingernails.

“I didn’t think it would take you long to start trying to cause in-fighting. You are a Sith, after all,” the woman responded.

“I very much doubt you know anything about me. I’ll assume you’re Miss Archenksova? Is it true that your mother is from Alderaan?” Andrelious questioned.

“Yes on both counts. And you’re Andrelious Mimosa-Inahj. We know all about you and your actions back when you served with Arcona,” Alethia replied icily.

“That was a long time ago, now. Not that I’m remotely surprised that someone with Alderaanian ancestry has difficulty in letting the past go,” the Taldryanite shot back.

“You should be thankful that the Council of Urr didn’t decide to pursue you for what you did on Sukhur. That little betrayal of yours wasn’t easily forgiven,” the female answered. “In fact, it’s only because of your Commander’s request that we’re even letting you onto this ship,”

“Don’t expect me to be grateful. Are you going to tell me what you need me to do?” Andrelious queried.

“You have been selected to lead the frontal assault. We need you to eliminate the Golan platform in orbit of the planet Edrien. The pilots assembled here will be part of your strike team. As for how you’re going to do that, that’s up to you. We’re giving you the tools, but the method is yours,” Archenksova explained.

The Sith looked unimpressed. “Not giving me much to work on here. I don’t even know any of these pilots. I’d need some support from Taldryan’s forces. There’s not many of them left, but I know a fair few that would be up for this kind of mission,” he answered.

“Of course. There’s three squadrons worth of pilots from Taldryan. As well as another three squadrons worth of ours. Six squadrons against a Golan. Our estimates suggest that will be enough. So long as you’re as good as your reputation suggests. Now, I suggest you get started. Your pilots will be here shortly,” Alethia continued.

Sure enough, a throng of familiar faces entered the room. They were talking among themselves, but the murmuring slowly died into near silence as they took seats towards the back of the room. A few of the older pilots nodded respectfully in Andrelious’ direction.

The Sith could sense that the Urrite leader was awaiting him to begin his briefing. He moved briskly to the front of the room, quickly finding the controls to the room’s tactical display.

Alethia either hadn’t bothered to say, or hadn’t known, what sort of starfighters were being made available. However, the tactical display told Andrelious exactly what he was working with. There were two squadrons of TIE Defenders, two of the newest type of X-Wing, the T-70, and finally, two squadrons of B-Wings to act as bombers. The Taldryanite also noticed that the Golan platform’s two fighter squadrons were TIE/FO starfighters.

Time was not on Andrelious’ side. Planning such an assault usually took hours, but the generous amount of intelligence available made things a little easier.

“Welcome, pilots. For those of you that don’t know me, I am Andrelious Mimosa-Inahj. I’ve spent a large part of my adult life in the cockpit of a starfighter. I’m not particularly big on motivational speeches, so I’m going to keep this briefing as short and to the point as possible. Now. I want to know, which of you are my squadron leaders?”

A couple of the Urrite pilots looked annoyed at the way that Andrelious had referred to the squadron leaders as ‘his’ as the squadron leaders stepped forward.

“Right. The six of you, listen carefully. I’m going to keep this fairly simple, because we need every minute we can get out there. First off, I’m going to give you new squadron designations. I don’t want a mixed up jumble from both our Clans,” Andrelious explained.

“With respect, sir, I don’t think changing our squadron’s name is what you’re supposed to be doing. We need plans, not admin work,” one of the squad leaders, a Human female, answered.

“Uniformity is just as important as knowing what is going on. Just because I’m apparently a rebel now doesn’t mean I’m going to forget my Imperial training. The new squadrons will be *Alpha* and *Beta* for the X-Wings, *Gamma* and *Delta* for the Defenders, and *Epsilon* and *Zeta* for the B-Wings. As for what I’m going to do, I’m going to have *Alpha* and *Gamma* approach from here,” the Sith continued, pointing at a position on the map.

“I get it. And you’ll get the other X-Wings and Defenders to come in here,” a Twi’lek male added, pointing at a position on the other side of the target.

“Excellent. Now, I want the B-Wings to come in a little later. The Golan platform itself is going to be a hard enough target, so I want its fighter cover eliminated before the bombing runs begin. Do you know what you’ve got to do, *Epsilon* and *Zeta* leads?”

Two pilots, including the female that had queried the renaming of squadrons, nodded and headed off to explain the situation to their pilots. Andrelious noticed that each Clan had provided one of the B-Wing squadrons.

“Now, we’ve only got one job out there. We need to get space clear for the B-Wings. I know that most of you haven’t faced this particular model of TIE Fighter before, but I’m confident that we can do it. Besides, I’ll be out there with you, in my own TIE Defender. We have them outgunned, outnumbered and outclassed. Now, let’s get to it! I want your squadrons ready in ten minutes!” the Rollmaster ordered.

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Andrelious did not get that many chances to fly his personal starfighter. The Rollmaster was usually travelling with his family aboard their shuttle, but with Kooki busy on another mission, the TIE Defender was called into action. Andrelious had installed a number of modifications onto the ship, upgrading its laser cannons, increasing the amount of power available, and increasing its warhead capacity. Inside the cockpit, however, things were unchanged other than for a small picture of Kooki and the twins affixed to one corner of the control panel.

Either side of Andrelious’ TIE, the four squadrons of fighters were forming up into groups as directed by their squad leaders. Andrelious watched as the last few pilots moved seamlessly into formation.

“All fighters, hit it! *Epsilon* and *Zeta* squadrons, see you in five minutes!” the Sith ordered, pressing his own ship’s hyperdrive. The TIE lurched forward as it entered hyperspace, the stars becoming streaks of light.

**Edrien Orbit**

A pair of TIE/FO Starfighters maintained a combat patrol a few klicks away from the Golan Platform. The pilots had been told to expect an attack soon, from several squadrons of enemy fighters, but the exact details of the enemy forces was unknown. Rumours that the attack was from elements of the so-called ‘Lotus’ left many aboard the Golan platform feeling very nervous indeed.

“Command, this is *Aurek Three*. Seems like there’s nothing happening out here,” one of the pilots declared.

“Just keep an eye out. Our contacts told us the attack was coming. Once they’re here, we’ll be getting everyone in the air. Lotus pilots don’t have the same quality of training. Or the same class of ship,” a voice from the Golan replied.

The pilot frowned underneath his helmet. “That’s assuming the rumours about Taldryan’s demise are true. Even we’ve heard of the legends. If we’re facing Halcyon, or even Inahj-“

“All of the veteran members are too busy trying to get Keirdagh Cantor back from Lord Cotelin! Besides, you’ve all dealt with Force sensitive pilots. That’s why you were all called here!”

“Twenty-five signals detected! They’re trying to bracket us!” the second pilot declared, his sensors filling up with red dots.

“I see them, four. Two dozen plus one Defenders, two dozen X-Wings! We need support out here, now!” ‘Three’ yelled.

“Golan platform, this is Andrelious J. Mimosa-Inahj. On behalf of Clan Taldryan, I ask you to stand down. You can’t win here,”

“Forget it, Inahj! Without that wife of yours, you’re nothing!” came the reply from the Golan.

“We’ll see about that. All forces, target the fighters. We’ll do this for Karufr!” Andrelious cried.

“And for New Tython!” another few voices chorused.

The comm chatter quickly died down as the pilots readied themselves for battle. Andrelious was straight into the fray, targeting the nearest of the two enemy TIEs. Using his Defender’s speed, he closed on his prey in almost no time at all, followed by several of his colleagues.

The enemy TIE did not back away; instead, it bore down on Andrelious, completely unfazed by the approaching squadron.

Firing his lasers, Andrelious cursed under his breath as his enemy jinked away. The squadron behind him scattered, trying to cut off as many paths as possible, but the enemy pilot somehow managed to evade every single burst of green laser fire.

“They’re launching the rest of their fighters! All pilots, pick your target and engage!” the Sith ordered.

Sure enough, the remainder of the Golan platform’s fighters were flying out of its two hangars, remaining in a perfect formation. Andrelious peered at a small timer to the left of his targeting computer: they had another four minutes before the B-Wings arrived.

Around Andrelious, the battle was now in full swing. Hyphens of green plasma zipped through the vacuum, many making contact with their respective targets. Shields flickered and starfighters exploded, filling the area with increasing amounts of debris. The Taldryan Rollmaster was forced to dodge the remains of an X-Wing that had been unfortunate to fall victim to a pair of enemy TIEs.

“Taking more losses than we’d like, sir!” one of the pilots said, his breath heavy from the effort of hauling his starfighter around.

*Yes. More losses. Less people to oppose me when I make my move*. Andrelious thought to himself.

Firing on and destroying a TIE that flew straight in front of him in its attempts to avoid one of his colleagues, Mimosa-Inahj immediately engaged another enemy, guessing from the way it was flying that it was attempting to gain a missile lock.

With a flick of a switch, Andrelious activated his own warhead launchers, which immediately began formulating a lock on his target. As soon as his targeting systems announced that he had a lock, the Sith squeezed on the trigger. A missile sped away from his Defender, immediately baring down upon his target. Moments later, the missile hit, ripping the enemy TIE into pieces.

Destroying another enemy with apparent ease, the Sith checked the timer again.

“Thirty seconds until the B-Wings get here! Let’s make sure they have a clear run!”

One or two of the enemy were proving particularly troublesome. Andrelious guessed that they were the squad leaders; he could tell from the way that they were flying that they had seen years of space combat.

“I’ll try and get their squad leaders away from the rest of you. Just focus on the remaining forces!” the Sith ordered, targeting the nearest squad leader. He again switched to missiles, but this time his targeting computer would need to work a lot harder. The enemy ace rolled his craft around, making it nearly impossible for Andrelious to draw a bead on them. The second squad leader, aware of what was happening, was trying to get behind the Rollmaster, forcing him to take evasive action even as he gave chase.

As he steered his craft away from laser fire, Andrelious called out to the Force. He couldn’t focus on the enemy; their ships were far too fast to allow such an action, but he was able to get an inkling on his target’s next move. Trusting his instinct, the Sith prepared himself to match the move. Sure enough, the enemy squad leader moved exactly the way the Force had suggested they would. Straight into a dumb-fired warhead.

The timer in Andrelious’ cockpit had finished its countdown. The friendly B-Wings began to hyper in, the first few pilots cursing angrily that their allies hadn’t finished clearing the fighter screen. Nonetheless, they fired dozens of high payload warheads at the Golan platform.

The platform began firing its turbolasers, trying to both shoot the B-Wings down and eliminate the incoming warheads. The gunners were clearly well trained, getting rid of three B-Wings and a portion of the warheads, but the sheer amount of incoming firepower had been timed almost to the millisecond. Overwhelmed, the platform’s shields failed and its hull began to buckle. Another salvo of warheads, carefully aimed at the centre of the target, began to split the massive structure into two.

“That’ll be enough! We only had to disable it! Everyone, hyper away, now!” Andrelious ordered, secretly enjoying seeing an Odan-Urr X-Wing get destroyed by enemy fire.

With a quick look at the family photo, the Sith pushed forward his hyperdrive lever.

His mission was complete.