

“The military runs on paperwork and caf,” or so the cliché staff officer joke has gone for millenia untold. But the truth of it was undeniable, one Major Kharoc Garrlan reflected, especially as his desk was covered in memos, inventories, expenditure reports, after-action reports, training records, and so on. Flimsiplast printouts, datapads, and datacards alike covered the surface of the desk to the point where one could suspect that there was in fact no actual desk surface present, but instead that the compiled materials instead had somehow miraculously become a stable support structure themselves.

Major Garrlan sucked down the remnants of caf that were in his mug, grimacing at the beverage that had long since left behind the status of “tepid,” let alone “hot.” Sticking the mug into the small, well-used caf brewer behind his desk and punching a button to start the process of refueling, Garrlan stuck his thumb on the approval box for yet another fuel expenditure report. He tapped a command to save and transmit copies of the form to the appropriate individuals and then pulled up the next file. This one was actually vaguely important; a final armory inventory before weapons were formally distributed to the individual soldiers prior to embarkation. Garrlan punched up the official record of what that unit was supposed to have and had the computer do a comparison of the two lists. A second later a pair of alerts sounded. One came from the datapad confirming that both inventories matched, which resulted in Garrlan thumbing his acceptance of the new inventory and generating an authorization order for the weapons to be distributed. The second alert, though, was far more important, as it signaled that the caf brewer had finished its work and was finished dispensing another cup of the beverage, strong and hot, into Garrlan’s mug. Light glinted off the golden lines of the Imperial Academy crest on the mug as the commando officer lifted the mug to his mouth to sip at the life-sustaining beverage, transmitting documents and calling up new ones.

Garrlan smirked as his mind wandered a bit from the administrative trivia of an upcoming major deployment. What he was doing was what most holodrama directors or fiction writers would shy away from. Namely, the mundane, banal, mind-numbing parts of military bureaucracy that, in reality, made up a large portion of almost every function of a modern military organization. It was necessary, in fact, for most militarized organizations that provided consumables like ammunition, food, and fuel for its members; to say nothing of equipment and vehicles. A quote attributed to a general from times considered ancient when the Old Republic had first been established said that a military moved on its stomach. It was as true today as it was then, Garrlan reflected, but the mind of a military could be found in its paperwork.

*And speaking of...* Garrlan sighed as he refocused back on his datapad. He still had several hours’ worth of work to get through before returning to the Citadel.

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