

AGENTS OF THE EMPIRE

written by

Justin Nearing

justinfnearing@gmail.com

FADE IN

EXT. AKEEN CITY, PLANET GULON II - HIGH NOON

Camera opens to the cityscape of a vaguely Middle Eastern city. Sun-bleached brick slums dominate the majority of the frame, with impossibly high glass skyscrapers in the background. As the camera pans over the city, three militaristic troop transports fly past.

CUT TO:

EXT. SMALL MARKET, AKEEN SLUMS - SAME TIME

The ships land in the clearing of an abandoned open-air market in the slums. The ship doors open and soldiers with intimidating armored bodysuits storm out, heading down one of the cramped alleys.

CUT TO:

EXT. TENAMENT BUILDING, AKEEN SLUMS - SAME TIME

The soldiers come to a door, surrounding it "SWAT" style. They breach and the camera follows as they clear room by room. Empty.

CUT TO:

INT. CREW SAFEHOUSE, AKEEN SLUMS - SAME TIME

From a second story window across the street, DORUN watches the raid. Specks of grey in his hair, he looks like he belongs in a classroom. He turns away from the window.

DORUN

We have to get off this planet.

Before anyone can answer, TARSIS enters the room. Blaster in hand, nondescript armored vest, scars peppering his grizzled face. He closes the door, leaving it slight ajar to keep watch through.

TARSIS

We got out just in time. We're safe for now.

Hands clasped in front of him, ELLIS sits nearby deep in thought. Younger, well dressed, handsome if a bit naive.

ELLIS
Dorun, if they're raiding our
safehouse it means-

DORUN
It means we have to get off this
planet.

Pensively watching the scene below, EKELLE stands close to the window. Middle Eastern descent; pretty in a determined, makes-the-hard-choices kind of way.

EKELLE
This is a setback, yes, but you
can't run now.

TARSIS
Ekelles is right. If we run now we
trash months of work setting up to
cripple the Empires' control on
Gulon Two.

EKELLE
The Empire that took my family. The
Rebellion can help-

DORUN
The Empire has taken something from
all of us. And we're not part of
your Rebellion.

ELLIS
Do you know how much we'll be
losing if we run now? Not even
counting bribes, we'll be
abandoning contacts its taken
months to establish.

TARSIS
I'm finally making headway with my
black market connections.

DORUN
None of which matters if we're
dead. Look I don't want to run any
more than you lot do, but we just
got very lucky. It's only a matter
of time before they connect the
dots. I don't plan on being here
when they do.

Dorun pulls a small handheld communicator out of his pocket.

DORUN (CONT'D)
Arianne, get the ship ready. We're
leaving.

CUT TO:

INT. SHIP: WINDSWIFT; COCKPIT - CONTINUOUS

Cables, tools and hardware are strewn about the run-down cockpit of the Crew Freighter. ARIANNE's head pops out from under the console she was in the process of fixing.

Arianne curses as she tries to find the communicator amid the mess. Picking it up she attempts to sound calm and composed.

ARIANNE
Yes, Dorun. Right away.

She looks around at the mess.

ARIANNE (CONT'D)
I'll get right on that...

DORUN
(From Communicator)
Have you been sleeping on the job?

ARIANNE
Excuse me? I haven't slept in days.
I barely got the ignition coil
working again and now the Nav
console keeps losing power.

DORUN
You better not be breaking my ship.

ARIANNE
I'm the only reason this junker can
even get off the ground.

ARIANNE flips several switches. A negative sounding "wump" responds.

ARIANNE (CONT'D)
Or not.

She tries again. Same negative Wump.

ARIANNE (CONT'D)
"Wump"? You're not supposed to
"Wump". When I start primary
ignition you go "Dee-Dee-Deep".

ARIANNE taps at the panel looking for the issue.

ARIANNE (CONT'D)
It can't be the Nav causing this.
We have enough fuel. Ignition coil
OK. Oh. Oh that's not good.

CUT TO:

INT. CREW SAFEHOUSE, AKEEN SLUMS - SAME TIME

EKELLE
You said you would help us!

DORUN
I said I *could* help you, there's a
difference.

ARIANNE
(From communicator)
Dorun, we have a problem. Something
is blocking engine startup.

Pause

ARIANNE (CONT'D)
All ships on the planet are
affected.

Worried look shared by DORUN/ELLIS

ELLIS
Imperial Inhibitor Tech.

DORUN
The situation is worse than I
thought.

EKELLE
What's going on?

ELLIS
The Empire has overridden control
of all ships on the planet.

DORUN
Only authorized Imperial ships are
able to fly.

EKELLE
That means-

DORUN
It means that the Empire knows all
about your revolt.

EKELLE
Thats... That's not possible.

DORUN
Our safehouse gets raided the same
day all ships on the planet are
grounded? The Empire is making
their move.

ELLIS
What do we do?

DORUN
What I've been saying all along. We
have to get off this planet.

[ROLL TITLE CREDITS]

INT. AKEEN SLUMS SAFEHOUSE

DORUN
So we have a planet about to tear
itself apart, a ship that can't
fly, and the most dangerous troops
in the galaxy between us and
freedom. What do we do?

Silence.

DORUN (CONT'D)
Well don't everyone speak at once.

TARSIS
Can we hack in and clear our ship
for launch?

ELLIS
I have access codes that can get us
into the Imperial Network.

DORUN
Too suspicious. They'll have
cruisers patrolling, we'll be shot
down before we get into orbit.

EKELLE
I have to warn the others.

TARSIS

I say we go in blasters blazing.

ELLIS

Tarsis, we won't get far if we just start shooting. We still have those Imperial uniforms from the Ikketar job. We could get into the Restricted Zone without firing a shot.

TARSIS

Ellis, The last time we used those uniforms I nearly got blasted at the first checkpoint!

ELLIS

Well if you hadn't called him a drunken Telosin maybe it wouldn't have blown our cover!

EKELLE

We can still save the rebellion but we have to act now!

DORUN

OI!

Everyone's attention snaps to Dorun

DORUN (CONT'D)

I've made my decision. And we're doing it your way.

ELLIS

Uh. Who's way?

DORUN

All of yours.

TARSIS

Huh?

DORUN

We won't get far if we try and shoot our way in, but those uniforms will only get us so far. Tarsis, that means you get to shoot something today.

Tarsis looks pleased.

EKELLE

But the rebel-

DORUN
(interuppting)
-The rebellion can help us help
them. I assume whatever plan you
had for this uprising includes
having flyable ships?

Ekelles reluctantly nods.

DORUN (CONT'D)
Then taking down that Inhibitor
helps us both.

TARSIS
So... what are we gonna do?

DORUN
Ekelles, contact the rebellion. Tell
them that if they want to be useful
to meet us North of the Bazaar in
one hour. We're going back to the
ship to get ready.

ELLIS
Ready for what, exactly?

DORUN
The Empire's made their move, it's
time we made ours.

TARSIS
There's an intergalactic army
between us and that Inhibitor.

EKELLE
The rebellion doesn't trust you.

ELLIS
We have no time to prepare for this
plan.

The camera closes on Dorun, totally confident.

DORUN
Perfect.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SHIP: WINDSWIFT; MAIN ROOM
The main room is cramped, lived-in, with a small cluttered
table on one side and a cylindrical console on the other.
Open to see Dorun dressed in an officers uniform.

He looks slightly uncomfortable. Ellis beside him is dressed in Imperial soldiers armor. They size each other up.

ELLIS
You look terrible.

DORUN
These uniforms never did fit me.

Enter Tarsis, also in soldier uniform. He is heavily armed, comically so.

ELLIS
You must be joking.

TARSIS
What?

DORUN
One gun, Tarsis. You'll raise suspicion.

ELLIS
He'll raise hell.

Tarsis sniffs, but accepts. He pulls out the CAMO ENERGY SHIELD and SENSOR DISRUPTION MINE, laying the equipment out on the table.

TARSIS
(Petuently)
Fine, but I am bringing these. Camo energy shield, sensor disruption mine, and *this*.

Tarsis pulls out an UNKNOWN GRENADE

ELLIS
What is it?

TARSIS
(with a child's wonder)
I have no idea. I got it off a arms dealer back on Ungvar Four.

ELLIS
And he didn't tell you what it was?

TARSIS
He... didn't get the chance.

ELLIS
You stole it.

Tarsis sputters thinking of a lie

DORUN
He stole it.

ELLIS (CONT'D)
He stole it.

Enter Ekelle with KURDEER, a Middle Eastern man who looks like he's endured a hard life.

DORUN (CONT'D)
How did you get on my ship? How did you even know where my ship was?

EKELLE
Perhaps you should give the Resistance more credit.

DORUN
(To Kurdeer)
We'll see about that. I don't like strangers on my ship.

KURDEER
I am Kurdeer.

DORUN
Well Kurdeer you can call me Dor-

KURDEER
You are Dorun Pepsis Ryzer, owner of the cargo freighter *Windswift* and the legitimate trading business you run from it. Of course, that's a front for the blackmarket and mercenary outfit you run.

DORUN
You know my middle name. Ellis didn't even know my middle name. Perhaps I *should* give your little rebellion more credit.

KURDEER
We know much, Captain Ryzer-

DORUN
I'm no captain. Call me Dorun.

KURDEER
As you wish, Dorun. Although now that I see this ship, I do not think *Windswift* is an appropriate name.

DORUN

She's faster than she looks.

KURDEER

I doubt that. Regardless, Ekelle has convinced me to meet with you.

TARSIS

Too late, the Empires already sprung their trap.

DORUN

I assume our safehouse wasn't the only one raided?

KURDEER

Many of our comrades have been captured. What's more concerning is our grounded ships. Ekelle says you can help us.

DORUN

We can help each other. Come.

Dorun motions for everyone to gather around the cylindrical console. After punching a few buttons a 3D hologram appears suspended from the base of the console. The hologram shows 3D blueprints of a large facility. Different sections highlight in a loop, notes pointing to different rooms/sections.

DORUN (CONT'D)

This is the Governor's Fortress. Since the Empire took control, this facility has become the center of government administration for the entire planet. If the Inhibitor is going to be anywhere, it will be here.

EKELLE

That complex is huge. The Inhibitor could be anywhere in there.

DORUN

An inhibitor that can stop ships planet-wide is going to be large. Very large. Also, it would have to be installed quite recently, or we would have seen the signs.

ELLIS

Has there been any large construction efforts near the Fortress?

DORUN

I don't know. We could only get blueprints from the initial construction.

TARSIS

So we don't know about any changes since it was built. Great.

KURDEER

But we do. We have been watching the Fortress for some time. On the west side, here **[points to blueprint]**, an extension to the spaceport is underway.

EKELLE

Security is high there. Too high for simple construction.

DORUN

That has to be it. I think I might be impressed after all.

TARSIS

So how do we get in?

DORUN

(To Kurdeer)

You're not going to like this.

Kurdeer eyes Dorun suspiciously.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. IMPERIAL INHIBITOR; GOVERNORS FORTRESS; PLANET GULON II

The camera shows a commanding woman in a sharp Imperial uniform, hair pulled back in a severe ponytail. With an aura of absolute authority, Imperial Adjunct STEELA POLIS stands at a console, aides bustling around her. Hologram projections flank the Adjunct showing supply rates, troop positioning and other logistical information.

She is in the Planetary Ship Inhibitor room, a vast cavernous hanger with a complex machine spanning the length of it. Engineers huddle near open compartments of the machine at various locations of the machine. A low, recurring "WUMP" sounds from the Inhibitor, indicating the Inhibitor is working.

Steela has a desk setup to the side of the room. Uncluttered, albiet with small cylindrical emitters that support floating holographic panels. She taps at the holograms, dismissing some, highlighting others. An Aide, HARPER, approaches with a holographic tablet in hand, saluting Steela.

STEELA

Status Report.

HARPER

Troop positioning planet-wide is underway, as per your orders. The Inhibitor is running sufficiently, but Engineering continues to report facily-wide system failures due to the power required to operate it.

STEELA

Tell them to work with what they have. It is imperitive the Inhibitor stays active.

HARPER

Yes, sir. Also, raids against rebel safehouses are complete, but were less successful than projected.

STEELA

Explain.

HARPER

Many were empty by the time we got there.

Steela waits a beat, considering.

STEELA

Bad intel?

HARPER

We're interrogating our informants now, but it appears the targets were warned by an outside source.

Steela frowns.

STEELA

(to herself)

There's an unknown variable here.
(To Harper) Get me the raid debriefings. Something is off, and we can't afford any surprises.

HARPER
Yes sir, right away sir.

Harper retreats. As she leaves through the door, GOVERNOR KASSUS enters. A belligerent man with a receding hairline and a glib demeanor.

AIDE
Atten-HUT!

Everyone snaps to attention, not Steela. She closes her eyes, gathering strength to deal with another distraction.

GOVERNOR KASSUS
Everyone out!

STEELA
Everyone stays.

Everyone in the room shifts uncomfortably, unsure of the protocol. No one leaves, and Kassus snarls- not used to be outranked. He stalks towards Steela.

GOVERNOR KASSUS
Do you have any idea the danger
you've put us in? Your orders have
put my entire defense force in
disarray. Hell the Fortress is
nearly undefended, rebels could
walk right in!

Steela wait a long beat before answering. Aides and attendants in the room strain to appear uninterested.

STEELA
Kassus, you are simple, weak,
coward.

Kassus face flushes, rage building. Seeing this, Steela's head of security, OTIB, steps forward. He gives Kassus a threatening look. As the Governor regains control of his emotions, Steela dismisses Otib with a lazy hand gesture.

GOVERNOR KASSUS
(tightly controlled)
I had hoped, Steela, we could have
a civil discussion-

STEELA
You refer to me as Adjunct, Kassus.
Imperial Adjunct. The only one on
this backwards planet that outranks
you.

GOVERNOR KASSUS
I am not disputing that, but I have
several concerns-

STEELA
I am not disputing that *sir*. You
don't seem to be getting the point,
Governor.

GOVERNOR KASSUS
Apologies... *sir*.

STEELA
Kassus, I have full authority over
this planet. Troops, supplies, even
you. I could order you to the front
line if I wanted to.

Kassus blanches at the prospect.

GOVERNOR KASSUS
You wouldn't dare!

STEELA
Try me.

Kassus waits before answering, his anger subsiding as he
swallows his pride.

GOVERNOR KASSUS
With respect... *Sir*... It is my
duty to raise concerns about your
coming offensive. My... Our troops
are stretched too thin. This
Fortress is barely defended.

Steela lightens slightly hearing his tone.

STEELA
Your concerns have been noted,
Governor. The troops guarding this
facility have been moved to
reinforce key positions. This
Inhibitor protects the Fortress
now. Without ships no enemy can
approach in force.

GOVERNOR KASSUS
And if the rebels do find a way to
attack the fortress?

STEELA
Governor, attacking this Fortress
would be a suicide mission.

GOVERNOR KASSUS

But-

STEELA

That is quite enough, Governor. You are dismissed.

Kassus nearly chokes at the abrupt dismissal.

GOVERNOR KASSUS

Yes, sir.

Kassus leaves, walking quickly while snapping at his attendants. Steela smiles, squashes it, and returns to her reports, all business.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CREW FREIGHTER: MAIN ROOM

Establishing shot of the Windswift in a crowded public shipyard. Cut to inside the main room of the ship.

KURDEER

(hostile)

You want us to do what!?

EKELLE

This is a suicide mission!

DORUN

It's the only way.

EKELLE

It's lunacy.

DORUN

It will work!

KURDEER

Let me get this straight. You want to us to march up to the Restricted Zone checkpoint and *get arrested*?

DORUN

Well, I'll be the one arresting you, but yeah that's the jist.

KURDEER

Who do you think you are?

DORUN

The only one on this planet that
can get your ships off the ground.

A long beat. Kurdeer and Ekelle share a look.

EKELLE

We'll do it.

KURDEER

What? Ekelle! He can't be trusted!

Kurdeer pulls Ekelle aside. A hushed, heated conversation ensues, words indistinguishable. Body language shows Ekelle getting the upper hand. It's obvious they're "together".

Kurdeer acquiesces, turns back to group.

KURDEER (CONT'D)

(begrudgingly)

Fine. We will be at the Bazaar as
you ask. If this is some trick-

DORUN

It's not a trick. (To Ekelle) Thank
you.

EKELLE

Tell me, truthfully. Will this
work?

DORUN

It has to.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CHECKPOINT BAZAAR - AKEEN SLUMS; GULON II

Open to show Dorun, Ellis, and Tarsis walking through an abandoned bazaar. Stalls are fully stocked, animals feast on unguarded foodstuffs, it looks like the area was abandoned in a hurry. The trio are on edge as they make their way through the bazaar.

TARSIS

Where is everyone?

ELLIS

People smell trouble. Only fools
would be out here when the Empire
cracks down.

TARSIS
Including us?

ELLIS
Especially us.

As they pass through the bazaar they nearly miss Ekelle and Kurdeer standing inconspicuously near one of the stalls.

EKELLE
Psst.

The trio spin nervously, raising their weapons.

KURDEER
I would ask you to not shoot us.

TARSIS
You scare me like that again I'll shoot you out of principle.

DORUN
Ekelle, Kurdeer. I do hope there will be more joining us?

EKELLE
You do not see them?

Ekelle motions with her hand. Several poorly dressed rebels appear from nowhere, evidently blended in with the area.

DORUN
Very good. Alright, my alias should get us through the checkpoint. With any luck we'll walk right through.

ELLIS
And if we don't have any luck?

Dorun gives Ellis a look.

DORUN
We improvise. Tarsis, show them how it's done.

Tarsis takes on the demeanor of a drill sergeant.

TARSIS
MOVE IT YOU SLOVENLY LOT. I HAVEN'T SEEN A SADDER DISPLAY OF SLUMRATS IN MY ENTIRE LIFE. MOVE IT!

The rebel group is surprised, some taking offence.

TARSIS (CONT'D)
 (conspiratorially)
 This won't work if it looks like
 you're going to jump me, put your
 heads down and play the part... AND
 IF I SEE SO MUCH AS A FINGER OUT OF
 PLACE I'LL PERSONALLY RIP YOUR
 THROAT OUT.

ELLIS
 (privately to Dorun)
 He enjoys this a bit too much...

The group, led by the Imperial-disguised crew march towards
 the checkpoint.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. RESTRICTED ZONE CHECKPOINT - LATE AFTERNOON

The group arrive near the end of the bazaar. Abruptly the
 bazaar ends and the scene opens up to a fortified military
 complex.

The "checkpoint" turns out to be very large gates surrounded
 by heavily armed soldiers. Watchtowers, gun nests, barbed
 wire, a small army defends the area. The gates are closed,
 guards dot the various watchtowers surrounding the area. A
 main guardhouse sit behind fortified heavy weaponry.

The disguised trio march the rebel group through to the
 checkpoint proper, a small outpost in front of the massive
 metal gates. Soldiers watch the group pass with a range of
 looks ranging from boredom to confusion to apathy.

Tarsis stops the group in front of the outpost.

TARSIS
 HALT!

An imperial trooper rushes towards the crew. He salutes
 Dorun.

CHECKPOINT GUARD
 Sir! Apologies sir, we do not have
 your arrival on the order sheet,
 Officer ___?

DORUN
 (haughty, a bit forced)
 Never mind, soldier. I assume our
 transport is ready.

Ellis and Tarsis share a look. "Really, that's your Officer voice?"

CHECKPOINT GUARD
Uhh... sorry sir... uhh... let me
check with the Duty Officer.

Dorun shares a look with Ellis/Tarsis

DORUN
Very well.

The soldier turns away and calls it in. Ellis turns to his companions.

TARSIS
A lot of troops here for a simple
checkpoint.

ELLIS
It must be a staging area for
whatever the Empire has planned.

DORUN
This was a mistake.

TARSIS
Too late now.

The guard turns back to the group.

CHECKPOINT GUARD
One moment, the Officer is on his
way.

A rotund officer steps out of the Checkpoints main office. Red cheeks snarl as he tucks his top into his trousers and marches towards the group. He barks some orders at some nearby troopers as he makes his way to the group.

CUT TO:

EXT. RESTRICTED ZONE CHECKPOINT - CONTINUOUS

Dorun sees the Officer heading his way. He turns quietly to Ellis.

DORUN
(quietly)
We have a problem. He outranks me.

Ellis doesn't have time to react as the officer reaches the group.

CHECKPOINT OFFICER
What the hell is this?

Dorun snaps to attention.

DORUN
Sir. Junior Dominant Reese Karsor reporting.

CHECKPOINT OFFICER
Junior Dominant Reese Karsor what the hell are you doing at my checkpoint? And why the hell do you have these stinking slumrats with you?

Dorun looks at the rebels, seeing flashes of anger from the group he puts his hand on the officer's arm.

DORUN
(quietly, respectfully)
Perhaps sir, it would be best if we chatted in private.

The officer casts a look of disgust across the rebels

CHECKPOINT OFFICER
Come.

The Officer leads Dorun his private office in the main guardhouse.

CUT TO:

INT. CHECKPOINT OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

The office is tastefully furnished. The warm, inviting room is decorated with cultural artifacts and emits a warm glow-stark contrast to the efficient functionality of the rest of the checkpoint. Hand-sized native statues stand on a cabinet on one of the walls. As the officer leans on his main desk, Dorun goes to the statues.

CHECKPOINT OFFICER
Well?

DORUN
These are original Gulonese ritual statues, aren't they?

CHECKPOINT OFFICER
Cut the crap, Junior Dominant.

Dorun turns toward the Officer and leans back against the cabinet.

DORUN

Sir, my orders are to publicly arrest and transport those informants.

CHECKPOINT OFFICER

Informants?

DORUN

Yes sir, rebels considered assets by the Intelligence Division.

CHECKPOINT OFFICER

If they're "assets" why arrest them?

DORUN

My guess, sir, is to maintain their cover.

CHECKPOINT OFFICER

Just like Intelligence to waste my time.

DORUN

Yes sir.

CHECKPOINT OFFICER

So you've come to my checkpoint with a dozen rebels on some halfbaked plan to arrest them?

DORUN

Thats... Exactly right, sir.

CHECKPOINT OFFICER

Wasted effort. These Gulon's are cattle. I was posted at Hyrus Seven. Now *they* were something.

DORUN

I heard about Hyrus Seven. Violent.

CHECKPOINT OFFICER

These fringe planets are all the same. Get the natives under the heel of your boot. Then squeeze.

Dorun shakes off the disgust. Checkpoint Officer frowns, smelling weakness. He shifts off the desk he was leaning against and shifts towards Dorun suspiciously.

CHECKPOINT OFFICER (CONT'D)
(menacingly)
Where are you stationed out of,
Junior Dominant?

DORUN
(hesitant)
Central Planets... mostly... This
is my first tour on the Outer Rim.

CHECKPOINT OFFICER
You soft Centralites. That's what I
hate. I've been out here for years.

DORUN
Yes... Sir-

CHECKPOINT OFFICER
I'm not finished! You Centralites
are all the same. Cozy posts on
safe planets, only coming out here
to sniff out a promotion. I'm
bringing civilization to these
savages. What have you done?

DORUN
I'm just following orders, sir.

CHECKPOINT OFFICER
Well I'm giving you an order to get
out of my sight!

DORUN
Sir... I'd be happy to, as soon as
you give us a troop transport.

CHECKPOINT OFFICER
(exploding)
WHAT? You think I'm going to give
you one of MY transports?

The officer gets closer to Dorun.

CHECKPOINT OFFICER (CONT'D)
You impetuant little man. Do you
have any idea who I am?

The officer is getting closer. A closeup shot shows Dorun's
hand groping for one of the statues, his eyes remaining on
the Officer. The officer is breathing down Dorun's neck.

CHECKPOINT OFFICER (CONT'D)
I'll have you buried Junior
Dominant, you hear me, buried!

Dorun swings the statue across the head of the Officer in one smooth motion. He's dead before he hits the ground.

DORUN
Looks like you'll be the one
getting buried.

Dorun rushes to the door, listening to see if anyone outside heard. Satisfied, he goes to the console on the main desk, authorizing a transport.

Task complete, Dorun moves to the Officer, taking a keycard and a communicator. He takes a moment to compose himself before leaving the office, closing the door behind him.

CUT TO:

EXT. RESTRICTED ZONE CHECKPOINT - CONTINUOUS

DORUN
The transport is being readied now.

Dorun moves to the checkpoint guard.

DORUN (CONT'D)
The good officer says he's not to
be disturbed. He didn't seem to be
in a very good mood, I suggest you
listen.

The guard is well aware of his Officer's temper.

CHECKPOINT GUARD
Yes sir.

The guard leaves and returns to his post, giving the order to open the gates. As the large doors open, Dorun returns to the group.

ELLIS
(quietly)
What happened?

DORUN
(quietly)
I improvised.

CUT TO:

EXT. CHECKPOINT LANDING PAD - CONTINUOUS

Behind the gates a landing port for small ships sits with a number of troop transports. One is being prepped for launch. The group approaches the ship.

DORUN

We don't have much time. You still know how to fly those things right?

Dorun motions to the transport.

ELLIS

Well I'm no ace fighter pilot like Arianne, but I can fly it.

DORUN

You'll have to. We can't afford to land in the main spaceport. We won't be able to slip away.

ELLIS

So what do we do?

DORUN

What do you have to do? Deal with it.

Ellis blanches, but covers it up quickly. Dorun nods for Ellis to put the ruse back up as the group approaches the ship.

CUT TO:

EXT. TROOP TRANSPORT - CONTINUOUS

Ship technicians check the ship as the group approach. They ignore the group as they disconnect hoses and tap at diagnostic panels. Tarsis pushes the rebels towards the large main door of the transport.

TARSIS

Move it!

The rebels file in and Tarsis orders the doors to be closed. He joins Dorun and Ellis as they make their way towards the cockpit entrance.

CUT TO:

INT. TROOP TRANSPORT COCKPIT - CONTINUOUS

The cockpit features four seats two by two, with the entrance to the rear of the cockpit. The pilot is in the left front seat, Ellis takes the seat beside him, Dorun and Tarsis sit in the backseats.

PILOT
Destination?

DORUN
Governor's Fortress.

PILOT
Strap in.

CUT TO:

EXT. TROOP TRANSPORT - CONTINUOUS

The ship technicians scatter before the ship takes off, turning in a smooth arc away from the landing pad.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. TROOP TRANSPORT - EARLY EVENING

The transport flies in the air, breaking through light clouds.

CUT TO:

INT. TROOP TRANSPORT COCKPIT - CONTINUOUS

We see an indifferent pilot, a self-conscious Ellis, an impatient looking Dorun, and a snoring Tarsis.

Ellis is quite busy not looking at Dorun. Fed up, Dorun leans forward and tugs Ellis' shoulder. Ellis gestures "who me?", Dorun "Get on with it". Ellis "Ok, ok, I'll do it.". Dorun "I'm watching you." All this without a sound.

ELLIS
Ah... We... We need you to land
somewhere else.

PILOT
What are you talking about?

Dorun shoots Ellis with a "Not good enough" expression. Ellis considers his options.

He moves to speak again, but stops before saying anything. He grows frustrated, then realizes what he's going to do. He looks to Dorun, then the Pilot.

ELLIS
Sorry about this.

PILOT
What?

Ellis punches the Pilot hard, then brings his hand back and shakes it off, realizing the stupidity of punching a man with a helmet on in the head. The Pilot looks at Ellis confused. Seeing his gambit failing, Ellis punches the Pilot again, this time on the jaw.

The punch is enough to lurch the transport, a quick camera shot in the main compartment shows the rebels falling over with the unexpected shift in direction. Tarsis wakes abruptly.

TARSIS
(half-dreaming)
What? Aww yeah GUT HIM!

The Pilot tries to grab Ellis, who attempts to strike the pilot again. The Pilot fends off the attack, getting a decent hold on Ellis and pulling him down. From his viewpoint, Ellis sees a red "Eject" lever on the pilots chair. Ellis breaks from the Pilots grip, strikes again, then puts both hands on the lever. The pilot looks down, realizing what Ellis is going to do. He looks back up to Ellis.

PILOT
(sad and scared)
Please no.

ELLIS
I said I was sorry.

Ellis pulls the lever. The Pilots chair explodes laterally from his side of the ship with awesome force. The other seats are unaffected, and Ellis flails to catch his grip. The room roars as air rushes in the cockpit.

Ellis manages to get back into his seat, and struggles to get the ship back under control. The ship is roaring with a rising pitch like a WWII dive bomber. Pulling up, he finally gets the ship back on course and puts on the comm helmet.

CUT TO:

INT. FLIGHT CONTROL CENTER, GOVERNORS FORTRESS - CONTINUOUS

Flight Control isn't a hard job, mostly tedious, but the last several weeks have been particular bad with long days and few breaks. The message that a Troop Transport has just had an ejection event sparks mild interest in an otherwise exhausted Flight Controller.

FLIGHT CONTROLLER

Transport Three-Seven-Two this is Flight Control. We just detected an ejection event on your ship, please respond.

[Intercut between Flight Control Interior and Transport Cockpit Interior]

Ellis is startled, not exactly sure what to do.

FLIGHT CONTROLLER (CONT'D)

I say again, we've detected someone ejecting from your ship. Please respond.

ELLIS

Uh... Everything is fine here, I don't know what you're talking about.

FLIGHT CONTROLLER

Transport Three-Seven-Two your ship has clearly logged an ejection event. You're also showing significant yaw drag.

ELLIS

No, no ejection here. Your sensors must be off.

The Flight Controller scoffs.

FLIGHT CONTROLLER

Our sensors are working just fine. You-

ELLIS

Look I don't know what to tell you. I would know if someone ejected.

FLIGHT CONTROLLER

Your ship must be logging bad flight data.

Ellis struggles at the controls, the ejection hole has produced significant drag.

ELLIS

If you say so, she's running smooth on my end.

FLIGHT CONTROLLER

Transport Three-Seven-Two you're hereby ordered to Shipyard B-Nine-Alpha for immediate diagnostics and repair.

ELLIS

Oh kay.

FLIGHT CONTROLLER

Transport Three-Seven-Two correct your flight trajectory to Shipyard-

ELLIS

I have, your sensors must be off again.

FLIGHT CONTROLLER

Why I have never- Transport Three-Seven-Two I will have you written up so fast-

Ellis pulls off the helmet. As he speaks he alternates the helmet from close to far from his mouth.

ELLIS

Sorry... breaking up... Can't... hear you.

Ellis tosses the helmet out the ejection hole.

DORUN

What the hell was that?

ELLIS

Improvising.

Dorun looks towards Tarsis, who nods his head agreeably.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. IMPERIAL INHIBITOR; GOVERNORS FORTRESS - EARLY EVENING

Steela continues to sift through her hologram reports. She appears more stressed than before. Harper approaches.

HARPER
Sir, you asked to be alerted if
there was any odd reports?

STEELA
Yes?

HARPER
A transport has gone AWOL.

STEELA
Oh?

HARPER
We're attempting to determine the
cause, it looks like equipment
malfunction.

STEELA
Where is the transport headed?

HARPER
At it's current course it will
arrive here in minutes.

STEELA
Continue monitoring the transport,
and find out where it came from.

HARPER
Already on it, sir.

Steela dismisses Harper with a hand wave. As Harper leaves,
she puts a hand to her ear as she receives a report. She
frowns, realizes the relevance of the report and looks to
Steela. She approaches Steela again.

HARPER (CONT'D)
Sir, the transport was found to
come from a checkpoint near the
grand bazaar. The officer who
ordered the transport has been
found dead. It can't be
coincidence.

STEELA
Agreed.

HARPER
I'll alert the Fortress Defenses.

STEELA
Wait.

She closes her eyes, doing the math in her head.

STEELA (CONT'D)
I won't give that sniffing
Governor the satisfaction of
knowing he was right. Otib, take
your men and deal with it.

OTIB
Yes, sir.

Otib gathers his troops with a hand gesture and leaves in a hurry.

STEELA
Harper, are troop deployments
completed.

HARPER
Not yet, sir.

STEELA
This purge can end the resistance
on this planet tonight. We need
those troops in place before we can
start.

CUT TO:

INT. TROOP TRANSPORT - EARLY EVENING

ELLIS
There it is.

CUT TO:

EXT. GOVERNORS FORTRESS - CONTINUOUS

The ship breaks through the clouds and reveals the magnitude of the Governors Fortress. With a length and width that measure in kilometers, the Fortress is massive.

Near the west side construction is underway, and ships buzz to and fro from the Fortress as bees from a hive. The transport speeds towards its destination.

CUT TO:

INT. TROOP TRANSPORT - CONTINUOUS

DORUN

There, you can see the construction
on the west side.

TARSIS

We can't fly right in, security
will be too high.

ELLIS

He's right. Looks like there's an
empty service bay just outside the
construction zone.

DORUN

Do it.

CUT TO:

EXT. LANDING SITE; GOVERNORS FORTRESS - CONTINUOUS

The landing site turns out to be a minor service bay for the
major construction effort underway on the Fortress. While
outside the construction zone proper, is littered with
construction equipment, open panels and other errata.

Usually used as a shortcut for providing/retrieving
equipment, the area is currently empty. Two large service
doors are closed beside a small console coloured with
distinct red "no entry" message.

The edge of the landing site is a sheer dropoff, a small
outcropping on the massive structure.

The ship lands, a bit sloppily, and the main doors open.
Dorun and the others meet with the shaken group of rebels.

EKELLE

Who the hell was flying that thing.

ELLIS

It's harder than it looks.

DORUN

Kurdeer, get your men behind cover.
Tarsis, go with them. We'll have
company soon enough. Ellis, let's
get this door open.

The rebels spread out, taking cover near equipment and the
transport. Dorun and Ellis run to the console. It's mostly
red, with bright letters stating "AUTHORIZED ACCESS ONLY"

ELLIS
Can you get in?

Dorun taps at the console, entering an authorization code.
"ACCESS DENIED" responds.

DORUN
My access code isn't good enough.

ELLIS
Let me try.

Ellis takes over at the console. He taps for a bit, then reaches behind the console between the panel and the wall. Something short-circuits and the console goes black.

DORUN
What did you do?

ELLIS
Just hold on.

The console sputters to life. Instead of the brightly colored graphical interface seen before, a much more primitive terminal spews text. Ellis taps at the console.

DORUN
Hurry up.

ELLIS
Hold on, hold on.

DORUN
We don't have much time!

ELLIS
Would you let me concentrate? Just have to reroute power and...

Sirens start blaring as an alarm is tripped. Dorun and Ellis take a moment looking to look at each other.

DORUN
Did you just trip the alarm?

ELLIS
I don't know, that should have worked!

DORUN
Did you just trip that alarm?

ELLIS

Well maybe if you had let me concentrate.

DORUN

I gave you one job.

ELLIS

What? You've given me like seventeen jobs, and pile more on before I can finish any. You don't show me any respect, you micromanage everything, and I always get the smallest room!

DORUN

Really, you want to have this conversation now?

Tarsis approaches.

TARSIS

What the hell is going on here?

DORUN

Ellis is dissatisfied with my management decisions.

TARSIS

What does that even mean? You know what, I don't care.

Tarsis shoots the wailing siren, it stops.

TARSIS (CONT'D)

We're sitting ducks out here.

Suddenly several troops, led by Otib, burst forth from around the corner. Blasters fire and several rebels go down.

TARSIS (CONT'D)

INCOMING!

Tarsis pushes Ellis towards some construction equipment and follows, shielding Dorun like a bodyguard as he follows. Both the rebels and the crew are pinned down by the suppressing fire.

Tarsis look past the cover, takes aim and fires. A trooper goes down. The rest of the troops scramble to get to cover themselves.

Otib slides towards some cover. While Imperial Troopers and Rebels exchange fire, Otib takes out a small sphere.

He presses a button on it then throws it in the air above him. Mid-air, the device snaps open along its seams, revealing a small jet and a camera.

Otib expands a holographic screen from his wristband. We see the flying devices camera perspective on the screen. From it's vantage we see the rebels and crew fighting. Enemies become highlighted in red, able to be seen even behind cover.

Pleased, Otib closes the tablet. On the back of head we see a helmet base (as part of his armor), Otib presses a button on the helmet and it expands to cover his face. Once fully covered, Otib looks towards the rebels. From his perspective, we see that he sees the red highlighted enemy generated by the flying device.

OTIB

You won't be getting away from me.

Otib fires. With his extended vision he's able to hit several rebels. Other rebels stop firing back, once again pinned by the troopers fire.

Tarsis sees the rebels go down. He looks at Dorun and Ellis, also trying to stay out of the line of fire. Expression firming with resolve, he jumps out from his cover. He fires while running towards the transport.

DORUN

Cover him!

As Tarsis charges, Dorun and Ellis lean out from their cover to help lay down suppressing fire, giving Tarsis a chance.

Tarsis makes it to the transport. He gets in and quickly turns the ship on. We see the transport hover, then turn towards the enemy troops.

ELLIS

What the hell is he doing?

We see Tarsis push the acceleration level all the way, then jump out of the ejection hole, rolling into a crouch. The transport speeds toward the enemy troops, who scramble to get out of the way. We see Otib realize whats coming and barely jump out of the way of the oncoming ship.

This ship takes out a few troopers, then continues to fly past. We follow the transport as it arcs towards a far tower on the Fortress. It collides in a massive explosion.

CUT TO:

INT. GOVERNORS OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Governor Kassus sits at his desk tapping at holographic reports. The building shakes around him as he holds on for dear life. The shaking stops.

GOVERNOR KASSUS
What the hell is going on?

He points to a confused attendant.

GOVERNOR KASSUS (CONT'D)
Find out what happened. Quickly
man.

CUT TO:

EXT. LANDING SITE - CONTINUOUS

Tarsis and the rebels continue shooting, several Troopers going down. We see Otib nearly get hit.

OTIB
Fall back! With me!

The troopers follow Otib, firing as they retreat around the corner they had originally come from.

DORUN
We need to get those doors open!
They'll be back with
reinforcements.

The crew and the rebels huddle by the door. Ellis taps at the console. He throws up his hands in futility. Suddenly, with no one touching the console, it lights up in a bright green color showing the words "ACCESS GRANTED". The doors open.

ELLIS
I... I didn't do that.

EKELLE
No time for standing around.

DORUN
Get in!

The group files into the Fortress proper. Tarsis keeps an eye out as everyone files in, before bringing up the rear. Tarsis takes out the SENSOR DISRUPTION MINE, activates it, and tosses it behind him.

TARSIS

This will hide our tracks for a while.

From Otib's perspective, we see he sees the red outlined rebels are in the building from his vantage point.

OTIB

They've gotten in, follow me!

Otib charges around the corner and after the rebels. As he reaches the SENSOR DISRUPTION MINE an electric shock bursts forth. The troops squirm in pain momentarily. We see the red outlined targets Otib could see are gone. Otib deactivates his helmet.

OTIB (CONT'D)

Damn!

INT. INHIBITOR ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Harper quickly approaches Steela.

HARPER

Sir, the transport we were tracking has collided-

STEELA

I know, Otib has failed to prevent the rebels from getting into the Fortress.

HARPER

What do we do?

STEELA

Order all remaining guards to rally here. The Inhibitor must be protected at all costs.

HARPER

Yes sir.

STEELA

And order the Purge to start.

HARPER

It's too early-

STEELA

Early be damned! We need to take back the initiative.

HARPER
Yes sir.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ACCESS TUNNELS; GOVERNORS FORTRESS - EVENING

The crew and rebels enter a junction room with hallways leading in several different directions. They stop, unsure of which direction to choose.

EKELLE
Where do we go?

ELLIS
Where are we?

KURDEER
Bad time to get lost.

TARSIS
They won't be far behind, we need to move.

Dorun pulls up the holographic Fortress Blueprint from his wristband. Several levels zoom in to find the exact floorplan of their location.

DORUN
We're close to a small armory. They should have explosives. We get the explosives, blow up the Inhibitor, get back to the ship and off this planet.

All eyes are on Dorun as he starts down one of the hallways.

DORUN (CONT'D)
This way.

All eyes continue to follow as he turns around and heads for the exact opposite hallway.

DORUN (CONT'D)
This way.

The others share an amused look before falling in after Dorun.

CUT TO:

INT. GOVERNORS OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

An attendant approaches the Governor. No longer sitting, Kassus leans over the desk imposing.

ATTENDANT

Sir, the Fortress is under attack.

GOVERNOR KASSUS

I knew it.

ATTENDANT

Insurgents are responsible for the explosion and we've confirmed they've penetrated the fortress.

GOVERNOR KASSUS

How many?

ATTENDANT

Unknown, sir. The Imperial Adjunct sent her personal guard, who lost them. Officially our orders are to rally at the Inhibitor.

GOVERNOR KASSUS

What? We should be hunting the enemy, not cowering as the enemy let's loose in my Fortress. As if the Inhibitor is the only thing here worth defending.

The Governor raps the table, coming to a decision.

GOVERNOR KASSUS (CONT'D)

It's time I paid the Adjunct another visit. She's over-extended herself.

The Governor moves to exit.

GOVERNOR KASSUS (CONT'D)

With me!

Attendants and troopers fall in behind the Governor as he confidently strides out the room.

CUT TO:

INT. ARMORY ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Dorun carefully looks around a corner. Two guards flank a door marked "ARMORY". Dorun turns back to the group.

DORUN
Tarsis, Ellis, you're with me.
We'll deal with the guards. The
rest of you follow.

The three round the corner, Dorun in front with Tarsis and Ellis flanking him. Dorun looks imperious in the officers uniform. The two guards snap to attention.

DORUN (CONT'D)
Any trouble here?

No sir. GUARD 1 No sir. GAURD 2

DORUN
You're in trouble now.

The guards looks confused. Ellis and Tarsis take the butt of their blaster and knock the guards out.

DORUN (CONT'D)
We're in!

The rebels follow down the hallway and the group enter the armory.

INT. ARMORY - CONTINUOUS

The armory contains rows of blasters, grenades, armor and explosive devices. The group wander slightly awed by the display. Tarsis rounds a corner and squee's in excitement.

TARSIS
It's so beautiful.

The camera reveals the object of Tarsis's delight. A large HEAVY REPEATER with attached backpack. Tarsis puts it on, laughing manically. Dorun and Ekelle share a look.

EKELLE
I wonder what he's compensating
for.

Dorun laughs, shaking his head.

DORUN
There must be explosives here.

ELLIS
Over here!

Ellis inspects a rack of small square explosives.

DORUN
That'll do the trick. All of them.

Dorun opens a bag and starts pulling explosives into it. The others follow suit. While doing this, a small grenade scatters across the floor through the armory entrance.

KURDEER
GET DOWN!

The bright light of a flashbang explodes in the room. Blinding white light, the room ringing with burst eardrums, words and noises subdued momentarily as imperial troopers charge through the armory entrance. Tarsis is the first to react.

TARSIS
Oh no you don't.

Tarsis sets himself in a strong stance and pulls the trigger of the HEAVY REPEATER. The violent rate of fire is remarkable as troopers fly back from the force. Large rents in their armor is seen as they get hit with ship-grade laser fire. Weapon racks and other objects are torn asunder as the weapon rips the room apart.

TARSIS (CONT'D)
WHOOO! WHOOO! GET SOME! GET
SOOOOME!

The HEAVY REPEATER finally goes quiet, even though Tarsis still has his finger on the trigger. A message on the gun stock blinks "CHARGE DEPLETED". Tarsis' disappointment is clear. Laser fire resumes from the armory entrance and Tarsis jumps for cover, pulling the large weapon off.

DORUN
Feel better?

TARSIS
That was magical.

ELLIS
Well I hope you enjoyed it, because
we're trapped.

EKELLE
That's the only entrance to the
armory.

Laser fire from the troops outside makes it impossible to approach. Rebels take potshots out the door.

DORUN
But it's not the only exit.

The three look to Dorun confused. Dorun takes out the explosives.

DORUN (CONT'D)
Take these and place them around
the room.

The three carefully place the explosives along the edges of the room. They meet back together.

DORUN (CONT'D)
This is going to be loud and
painful. Do it.

Ellis tosses a bag of explosives out the door. A large explosion is seen as laser fire hit the bag.

DORUN (CONT'D)
Everyone in the middle of the room!

Rebels and the crew huddle together in the middle of the room. Dorun closes his eyes.

DORUN (CONT'D)
Hold on!

Dorun presses the small trigger in his hand. The room around them explodes. The explosives blow holes in the floor and the floor below the group falls to the level below. Dust and debris scatter as the group picks themselves up from the rubble.

CUT TO:

INT. ARMORY ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Otib pulls himself from the floor, shaking off debris. He looks around at the dead and injured troopers around him. Other troopers also pick themselves up and check on their injured comrades.

OTIB
This prey is clever.

Otib walks up to the entrance, which is deformed and covered with large debris.

OTIB (CONT'D)
Fall in. We will not allow them
slip away again.

Otib jogs down the hallway in search of his prey. Troopers fall in behind him.

CUT TO:

INT. ARMORY REMAINS - CONTINUOUS

Dust covered and dazed, the group gets up, patting themselves off and checking for wounds.

DORUN
Everyone OK?

TARSIS
Ellis isn't.

ELLIS
What?

Ellis's armor is clearly ripped.

ELLIS (CONT'D)
Good thing I was just borrowing
this.

EKELLE
Where are we?

DORUN
Good question.

Dorun pulls up the blueprint, searching for their current position.

DORUN (CONT'D)
Hmm. There's a detention center
that way.

Dorun point down a hallway.

DORUN (CONT'D)
But the Inhibitor is this way.

Dorun points to the other direction.

KURDEER
We're close to the prison? Our
comrades are there.

EKELLE
We must free them.

Dorun thinks for a moment, then nods.

DORUN
Go. We'll destroy the Inhibitor.

Dorun points to a section of the blueprint.

DORUN (CONT'D)
There's a small landing bay here.
We'll meet you there once the
Inhibitor is down.

ELLIS
Let's go.

DORUN
Not you. We need to blend in, your
armor is a dead giveaway.

ELLIS
You can't-

DORUN
Ellis, we don't have time. Go with
them, they'll need your help.

ELLIS
What about you?

Dorun pauses. He doesn't like this.

DORUN
We'll muddle through.

It pains him, but Ellis accepts the logic.

ELLIS
We better get to it then.

DORUN
Remember, if anything goes wrong,
improvise.

Ellis smiles, then turns towards the rebels.

ELLIS
We don't have much time. Come on!

The rebels leave, leaving Dorun and Tarsis alone.

TARSIS
I'm surprised we've made it this
far.

DORUN
Let's go.

The two head in the other direction.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. INHIBITOR ROOM - EVENING

Kassus enters the room imperiously. Attendants and aides flanking him.

GOVERNOR KASSUS
Imperial Adjunct.

Steela looks up from her console.

STEELA
(cooly)
Governor.

GOVERNOR KASSUS
I can only assume that your mishandling of this situation is due to your inability to accept I was right.

STEELA
The situation is under control.

GOVERNOR KASSUS
Adjunct, I am shocked how out of control the situation has become. Insurgents able to infiltrate our defenses, explosives ripping the Fortress apart, and what few troopers we have defending the wrong target.

STEELA
The Inhibitor must be the target!

GOVERNOR KASSUS
Adjunct, please. Their target is the prison. It has been all along.

STEELA
How would they escape even if they did free the prisoners?

GOVERNOR KASSUS
You give these rebels too much credit. They are a simple people with simple motivations.

STEELA
They've been quite effective for
"simple people".

GOVERNOR KASSUS
Yes, Adjunct. They have. Something
I intend to put a stop to right
now.

The Governor steps away and addresses the troops in the room.

GOVERNOR KASSUS (CONT'D)
ATTEN-HUT!

The troops snap to attention.

GOVERNOR KASSUS (CONT'D)
(speaking to room)
Enemies of the state have attacked
us. As we speak they are
infiltrating the detention center,
and if successful, will release
some of the most dangerous enemies
on the planet. I am going to stop
them. Anyone who values the careful
peace we have brought to Gulon Two
is welcome to join me, else show
your true colors.

Troopers look uneasily at each other, then to Steela.

GOVERNOR KASSUS (CONT'D)
Now, who's with me.

Nothing at first. Then, a brutal-faced veteran steps forward.

VETEREN
I'm with you, SIR. And so is
everyone else.

Kassus looks at Steela, daring her to overrule him. Steela
holds his gaze, calculating. She relents, assenting with a
hand wave. Kassus looks supremely pleased as he turns.

GOVERNOR KASSUS
Do not stop until we have killed
every one of them.

The veteran smiles as the troops form up.

VETEREN
On me!

The troops file out. Kassus eyes Steela as the troops pass. Steela folds her arms, not giving Kassus a thing. As the last of the troops file out, Kassus gives a triumphant chin raise as he follows. Alone, Steela grabs a communicator from her workdesk.

STEELA

Otib, get back to the Inhibitor room. Now.

CUT TO:

INT. GOVERNORS FORTRESS HALLWAY 1 - CONTINUOUS

OTIB

Yes, Adjunct. On my way.

Otib puts down the communicator. He flashes to rage, punching and breaking a nearby door console. His squad backs away slightly, well versed in his violent outbreaks- not so much to draw attention, but enough to not be within striking distance. Otib returns to normal as quickly as he exploded. Without a word or a look to his squad, he turns around to head back to the Inhibitor Room.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. GOVERNORS FORTRESS HALLWAY 2 - CONTINUOUS

Dorun and Tarsis walk down the corridor rigidly. Troops, officers, and various staff walk by without giving the two any notice.

TARSIS

Looks like it's working.

DORUN

Yes, but I don't have any idea where we're going. This section differs from my blueprints.

TARSIS

We don't have much time.

DORUN

I know.

Dorun pulls out his communicator.

DORUN (CONT'D)
Ellis, what's your status?

CUT TO:

INT. PRISON ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Ellis is behind cover, shooting at soldiers in a large room marked "DETENTION CENTER CONTROL ROOM". Rebels are spread out behind cover, also trying to blast their way through. Dead troopers are seen behind the rebels, they have obviously cut a bloody path through to the Control Room.

ELLIS
We've hit resistance getting to the control room. We're almost in but they're not making it easy.

CUT TO:

INT. GOVERNORS FORTRESS HALLWAY 2 - CONTINUOUS

DORUN
Well hurry up, you have trouble coming your way.

Dorun and Tarsis snaps to attention as Governor Kassus and his troops run past.

TARSIS
There's no way they can survive that.

DORUN
All the more reason we need to figure out where that Inhibitor is.

Rounding the corner Otib runs with his squad. Tarsis and Dorun snap back to attention. Otib doesn't notice them as he travels down the corridor and round the next corner.

TARSIS
I'd put credits on where he's going.

DORUN
Come on, let's follow.

The two jog after Otib.

CUT TO:

INT. PRISON CONTROL CENTER - EVENING

We see a trooper go down, Ellis overtop him. Rebels stream in from the entrance door behind Ellis.

ELLIS
Open the cell doors, and arm the
prisoners. We don't have much time.

EKELLE
Here.

Ekelles taps at console.

CUT TO:

INT. PRISON CELLS - CONTINUOUS

Cell doors open, and cheering prisoners rush out. Kurdeer and rebels pass out extra weapons among them. Ellis and Ekelles meet Kurdeer and the larger group of rebels/prisoners.

ELLIS
We need to go.

Laser fire flies past Ellis, nearly hitting him. He jumps to cover. Troopers storm in from the entrance, blasters firing. The rebel group fires back.

ELLIS (CONT'D)
We can't stay. Fall back, fall
back!

Rebels start falling back to the far door. As they file out the door Ellis lays down fire from his position. Kurdeer is near him, also firing from cover.

KURDEER
Go. Go now!

Ellis looks back at the rebels, most of them have gotten through the door. Ellis nods, then runs to join them. He reaches the door and looks back at Kurdeer.

ELLIS
Kurdeer, let's go!

Kurdeer looks back, then runs towards the door. Laser fire hits him several feet from the exit. Ellis curses and Ekelles screams.

ELLIS (CONT'D)
Kurdeer!

EKELLE
NOOOO!

Ellis rushes forward shooting at the troopers, who are now swarming the detention center. Ellis grabs the wounded Kurdeer and pulls him back to the door. Ekelle lays down suppressing fire as the two return to the door. They get through as the Detention Center is totally overrun.

CUT TO:

INT. GOVERNORS FOTRESS HALLWAY 3 - CONTINUOUS

Ellis and Ekelle support Kurdeer as they continue their retreat.

KURDEER

Stop... Stop... I can't-

The group sets Kurdeer down. Ellis looks at the wound.

ELLIS

This looks bad.

KURDEER

It feels bad. I am not going to make it, I think.

EKELLE

No. Don't you dare say that.

KURDEER

You must go. Leave me here.

ELLIS

They're right behind us.

EKELLE

I don't care. You're all I have left. They've taken so much from me, I won't let them take you too.

KURDEER

I love you.

Ekelle is reduced to tears.

EKELLE

I love you.

Troopers are heard coming around the corner. Kurdeer pushes Ekelle towards Ellis.

KURDEER

Go. I will hold them off.

Ekelles resists, but Ellis pulls her away. He gives a nod of appreciation to Kurdeer, who smiles. Ellis throws an explosive to Kurdeer.

ELLIS
Last explosive. Take as many of
them as you can.

Kurdeer nods as Ellis pulls a devastated Ekelles away. Kurdeer lays his head back as he primes the explosive device. Humming softly, troopers reach the hallways.

CUT TO:

INT. EXIT HANGER ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Ellis drags Ekelles around the corner. Ekelles breaks from Ellis's grip.

EKELLE
No. NO! I won't leave him.

Ekelles turns to go back, but a blast is heard from the hallway they just exited. Ekelles stops. Her head drops, then shoulders, until she crumples to the ground, sobbing. Ellis, at first moving to restrain her, consoles her instead.

ELLIS
I'm so sorry.

EKELLE
(to herself)
What am I going to do? What am I
going to do?

ELLIS
Ekelles, listen to me.

Ekelles looks up at Ellis.

ELLIS (CONT'D)
I know this pain is raw, I know it
all too well. There will be time to
mourn him, but right now we need to
move.

Ekelles shakes her head, unable to move. Ellis grows slightly frustrated.

ELLIS (CONT'D)
Kurdeer just sacrificed everything
to give you a chance. Don't
disrespect him.

Ekelles shoots Ellis with a dangerous look.

ELLIS (CONT'D)
Lean into that anger. Honor him by
killing them.

Ekelles closes her eyes and nods her head, pulling herself together.

EKELLE
Let's go.

Ellis pulls Ekelles up and they retreat after the rebels.

CUT TO:

INT. INHIBITOR ROOM ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Otib runs through the Inhibitor Room entrance. Behind, Dorun and Tarsis follow carefully. Dorun pulls Tarsis to a stop.

DORUN
There it is.

TARSIS
What's the plan? There's a lot more
of them than there are of us, and
you're a terrible shot.

DORUN
I'm not that bad.

TARSIS
Dorun, you haven't hit a single
target today.

DORUN
Well... I'm more of the idea guy.

TARSIS
So then what's your big idea for
getting near that thing?

Dorun pauses, thinking. He lightens when he gets an idea.

DORUN
We tell them to leave.

Tarsis drops his head, tired of hearing the same terrible idea over and over again.

DORUN (CONT'D)

What? No, this will work. You have the explosives, right?

Tarsis shows the satchel he has with him.

DORUN (CONT'D)

Good. I go in and I tell them that rebels are approaching. The explosive blows, they believe me, they run out to kill the rebels, we get to the Inhibitor.

TARSIS

That's not a very good plan.

DORUN

Do you have anything better.

Tarsis does not.

DORUN (CONT'D)

Then let's get to it already. Set the charge, then hang back as I approach.

Tarsis sets a charge. He looks at Dorun, nodding his head. Dorun steadies himself to attempt the ruse.

CUT TO:

INT. INHIBITOR ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Dorun steps through the entrance and turns into the room. As he approaches we see Otib and his squad milling about. The few squad troopers that notice Dorun don't seem to give him any mind as he walks steadily, if nervously. Steela is hard to make out with her back turned away, talking to an Aide.

We see Tarsis moving to a column behind Dorun. Switching back to Dorun's perspective we see Steela dismiss the Aide and turn towards Dorun. Dorun, getting his first good look at her, stops dead in his tracks. His face is set in a stunned expression, a mixture of shame and regret.

DORUN

Steela.

We see a close-up of Steela as she lays eyes on the approaching Dorun. She squints, trying to place him. Eyes widen, recognition. Recognition to love. Love to confusion. Confusion to betrayal. Betrayal to hatred.

Without saying a word, she pulls the gun out of Otib's hands. Amid Otib's confusion, she points the weapon at Dorun. We see Tarsis rush towards Dorun. Steela shoots as Tarsis collides into the still stunned Dorun.

Tarsis cries out in pain as the laser fire hits him, barely getting Dorun out of the way. The milling troopers don't waste any time readying their weapons and firing at the two.

Tarsis pulls out the CAMO ENERGY SHIELD and tosses it in front of them. It expands into a rectangle a few feet squared, the area see-through but with a slight color tinge. In the center of the rectangle a circular status bar appears along with an easy-to-read "100%". As the laser fire hits the shield, it ripples like a pebble in a pond. Each hit of a laser reduces the the circular status bar and the number slightly.

From Steela's perspective we see the device expand. On her side, the two disappear completely as the rectangle expands.

TROOPER

Where'd they go?

Otib activates his helmet. Once his face is covered, he presses another button near the helmet viewport. The viewport changes from a dull, uninteresting color to a red glow. From his perspective we see a world colored by heat-signatures. Dorun and Tarsis go from invisible in regular color to clearly visible heat-signatures.

OTIB

Activate Heat-Seeking Sensors!

The troopers comply, and as their helmets activate with the same reddish glow, they resume firing at the two.

The shield is degenerating quickly, in the mid-thirties percentile.

TARSIS

I don't think we're going to make it.

DORUN

Honestly, I didn't think we'd make it this far.

Tarsis smiles, then looks through the sheild again. He pulls out the UNKNOWN GRENADE.

TARSIS

Well, if I'm gonna die, I may as well figure out what this thing does.

Tarsis activates the grenade, then tosses it at the group of enemies. They get behind cover, but nothing happens. Seeing this, they continue firing.

TARSIS (CONT'D)

What? I'm going to kill the guy I stole that from!

Suddenly, the grenade 'pops'. Bright purple arcing lighting surrounds an expanding deep purple sphere. Loose objects shoot into the sphere. We see as the sphere fully expands, troopers have trouble standing their ground. The troopers start getting pulled into the sphere. They don't actually enter the sphere, but hover around it in a jumble. Steela and Otib are also caught.

Tarsis and Dorun are far enough away to not be affected. Seeing the display, Tarsis jumps up despite his wound. Awed by the interesting way to inflict pain, he gloats.

TARSIS (CONT'D)

YEAHHH! HOW YOU LIKE THAT? GET SOOOOME!

The sphere subsides quite quickly, and the enemies drop to the ground. It takes a moment to register that they have not been injured. Dorun realizes it, and starts pulling Tarsis towards the entrance they arrived through. Tarsis resists, not quite understanding the point of a grenade that doesn't kill things.

TARSIS (CONT'D)

They're not dead.

The enemy troopers have shaken off the experience and start picking up their guns, realizing themselves they haven't been killed. Dorun picks up the pace pulling Tarsis away.

DORUN

No, no they are not.

The two round the corner and leave the Inhibitor Room. Steela speaks to the troopers.

STEELA

Get them. I want them alive!

The Troopers, still slightly shaken, rush out hesitantly at first, then with more confidence.

CUT TO:

INT. INHIBITOR ROOM ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Dorun is supporting an injured Tarsis. Tarsis is starting to slump against Dorun.

DORUN
You placed that charge?

TARSIS
Uh-huh.

DORUN
Have we passed it?

TARSIS
Uh-huh.

DORUN
Can you trigger it?

TARSIS
Uh-huh.

Tarsis pull up a detonator and clicks it without any hesitation. Dorun is taken by surprise as the explosion at the door makes him stumble.

CUT TO:

INT. INHIBITOR ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Troopers fly back as the explosion hits them. Seeing this, Steela whirls to Harper.

STEELA
Lock down the Fortress. Highest level.

HARPER
Ma'am, our troops won't be able to get to the other rebels at highest level.

STEELA
Do it!

Harper speaks into a communicator. Steela addresses the Troopers.

STEELA (CONT'D)
Go around, they're not going
anywhere. I want him alive!

CUT TO:

INT. INHIBITOR ROOM ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Dorun rights himself from the blast, Tarsis still leaning on him, and continues on. The Inhibitor Room Entrance is covered in debris. Dorun leads them down the hall, and as they reach the open door, it suddenly closes. The console to the side turns red: "AUTHORIZED ACCESS ONLY"

CUT TO:

INT. EXIT HANGER - SAME TIME

Ellis and the rebels are fighting off the approaching troops. They don't have anywhere else to retreat to, and every trooper they kill two more appear from the entrance.

Suddenly the entrance door slams shut, console going red. The troopers that just passed through turn and slam on the door, unsure why it's closed. They die as laser fire cuts them down. The other troopers look concerned as they continue fighting.

INT. EXIT HANGER ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

From the other side of the entrance door, we see confused looking troopers looking at the door. Governor Kassus approaches the door, angrily pushing and pulling troopers out of the way.

Kassus types in a key code on the door. "ACCESS DENIED". Kassus hits the console, now enraged. He turns to the troopers.

GOVERNOR KASSUS
Open this door. I don't care how.
Rip the walls out if you have to!

TROOPER
Yes sir!

Kassus stalks off.

INT. INHIBITOR ROOM ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Dorun tries to enter a code for the door. Nothing is working. Tarsis is leaning against the wall, nursing his wound. Dorun tries a locked down door beside the one he just tried. Also fails. Dorun throws up his hands in frustration.

DORUN

Well, that's it. We're finished.

Suddenly, the door he tried last clicks green. Dorun spins, looking at the console.

DORUN (CONT'D)

This isn't the first time today
this has happened.

TARSIS

It's going the wrong way.

DORUN

We don't have much choice.

Dorun supports Tarsis as the door opens and they pass through.

CUT TO:

INT. FORTRESS HALLWAY 4 - CONTINUOUS

Dorun and Tarsis walk down another hallway. All doors are locked as they go by. As they pass by another door, it clicks green.

TARSIS

It's gotta be a trap.

DORUN

They already had us trapped.

Tarsis looks doubtful as they turn towards the door. It opens into a waiting elevator. The two get in, the door closes, and before any button can be pressed, it's moving.

TARSIS

What the hell is going on?

DORUN

I don't know.

The elevator stops, and the door opens. A small hallway with a single door at the end.

TARSIS

I have a bad feeling about this.

The two approach the door cautiously. The console doesn't click green.

DORUN

Well don't stop now.

After another pause, the console clicks green and the door opens. We see a small room, filled with consoles. Only two people are inside, a trooper and TENNA. She is a young, short, slightly squat woman. White with tattoos, with blue hair. Despite the alternative look, she holds herself slightly awkwardly.

The trooper turns to the two, frowns. He realizes they're enemies and pulls out his gun. Dorun is faster as he shoots the trooper down. He trains his weapon on TENNA.

TENNA pulls away raising her keyboard in front of her for protection. Dorun pauses.

DORUN (CONT'D)

Is that, is that a *keyboard*?

TENNA hugs the keyboard defensively.

TENNA

I'm old school.

DORUN

How old are you?

TENNA

Younger than you, old man.

Dorun is shocked, it's the first time someone has called him an old man. He's not exactly sure how to react.

TARSIS

I like her.

Tarsis groans and slumps lower.

TENNA

Is he gonna die?

TARSIS

I've survived worse. I think.

DORUN

Who are you?

TENNA

Names Tenna, and I just happen to be the best damn hacker this side of the galaxy.

DORUN

I've never heard of you, "best damn hacker this side of the galaxy".

TENNA

The best hackers are the ones you don't hear about.

DORUN

Then what are you doing working here for *them*?

TENNA

Ah. Right. I crossed that blonde officer you've been pissing off.

DORUN

Ah.

TARSIS

Who the hell is she, anyways?

DORUN

My wife.

Tarsis bridles, Tenna whistles.

TENNA

You're telling me you're married to *Imperial Adjunct Steela Telomar*.

DORUN

She's an Adjunct now. Of course she is.

TENNA

Well unless you want to stick around for a family reunion, I brought you here for a reason.

DORUN

Oh, and what's that?

TENNA

To deal with him, mostly.

Tenna points to the downed trooper.

TENNA (CONT'D)

They don't leave me alone for a minute. Scared of what I might do with the access I have.

TARSIS

If you're as good as you say you are, I would have killed you.

DORUN

Steela has a penchant for using dangerous tools.

TENNA

I'm no tool, but I am dangerous.

DORUN

Dangerous enough to shut down the Inhibitor?

Tenna smiles

TENNA

With the elevated privileges they've given me, I going to bring this Fortress to its knees.

CUT TO:

INT. INHIBITOR ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Otib and Harper flank Steela at her desk. Steela leans against the table with both hands, head down.

STEELA

What do you mean you lost them?

OTIB

We got into the hallway from the other side. They weren't their.

Steela shoots a murderous look at Harper.

HARPER

I've triple checked, the lockdown is at the highest level. Only people you've authorized should be able to unlock doors.

Steela and Otib look at eachother.

STEELA

Tenna.

OTIB

Tenna.

OTIB (CONT'D)

I told you she couldn't be trusted.

STEELA

Who says I ever trusted her. Go to the control room-

As she speaks alarms start sounding.

Steela looks at the Inhibitor. The Engineers that continue to work on it are now scrambling, running to and fro, upset. Steela stops an Engineer running past her.

STEELA (CONT'D)

What's happening?

ENGINEER

We don't know, the Inhibitor's power consumption is rising.

Steela looks at the Inhibitor. The steady "WUMP" of the Inhibitor is increasing pace. The Engineer is horrified.

ENGINEER (CONT'D)

It's going to overload!

The Engineer runs. We see other engineers running out of the room as well.

OTIB

Sir, we're leaving.

Otib grabs Steela by the arm. She looks at him, then nods.

OTIB (CONT'D)

Move out, double time!

Steela, her aides and Harper, along with Otib and his squad run down a different entrance than the one usually used. A troop transport is the only thing in the room, doors already open.

Otib goes to a console and taps at it as the rest of the group files into the transport. Steela stops by Otib.

STEELA

Always have a quick escape planned, don't you?

OTIB

It's been useful more than once.

Otib finishes tapping at the console, and the ceiling opens above the transport to allow it to exit.

Otib gestures Steela to enter the transport. With everyone in, the transport doors close and it takes off.

In the Inhibitor Room proper, the WUMP sound has reached dangerous levels. It suddenly seizes.

As the transport flies off, we see a giant explosion that destroys the entire west wall of the Fortress.

CUT TO:

INT. EXIT HANGER - SAME TIME

Ellis and the rebels see sparks flying from the door the Imperial Troopers are behind. They sit behind cover apprehensively. Suddenly, the room shakes and goes dark.

EKELLE

What was that?

ELLIS

I hope it was the Inhibitor.

CUT TO:

INT. WINDSWIFT COCKPIT - SAME TIME

Arianne taps at the pilots console of the ship. Suddenly, the console lights up and Arianne squees with excitement. She starts ignition and a "DEE-DEE-DEEP" sound is made.

ARIANNE

DEE-DEE-DEEP, music.

Arianne picks up the communicator.

CUT TO:

INT. FORTRESS HALLWAY 6 - SAME TIME

The hallway shakes as Dorun, Tarsis and Tenna make their way down the hallway. The lights go out and the hallway is pitch black. Tenna and Dorun activate flashlights.

DORUN

It's a good thing you cleared a path for us before overloading the Inhibitor.

TENNA
Unlike you people I plan my escape
in advance.

DORUN
We've had to improvise.

TENNA
I was watching the entire time.
Your plan was to improvise.

Before Dorun can respond his communicator squaks.

ARIANNE
(from communicator)
Dorun, we're in business, I'm in
the air and heading your way.

DORUN
Perfect. Lock on to Ellis's signal,
we'll meet you there.

ARIANNE
On it.

DORUN
Ellis, Arianne's on her way. We'll
meet you at the hanger.

CUT TO:

INT. EXIT HANGER - CONTINUOUS

Sparks fly from the entrance the troops are behind. All
troopers that were inside the hanger are dead.

ELLIS
Well you better hurry, we don't
have anywhere else to run. Our ship
won't hold all the rebels we've set
free.

[Intercut to Dorun]:

DORUN
Arianne, you hear that?

CUT TO:

EXT. WINDSWIFT; MIDFLIGHT - CONTINUOUS

We see the Windswift mid-air. It's revealed several other ships are flying with the Windswift.

ARIANNE
Way ahead of you. Looks like the
Resistance was ready for us.

[Intercut to Dorun]:

DORUN
This might actually work. Come on!

The three pick up the pace as they make their way through the dead Fortress.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. EXIT HANGER - EVENING

The sparks coming from the door stop as the door falls away, now a hole. Troopers charge through as the rebels start firing.

Dorun, Tarsis and Tenna are seen running in from an opposite angle. Ellis sees them.

ELLIS
(into communicator)
Arianne we need to go now!

CUT TO:

EXT. EXIT HANGER - CONTINUOUS

The Windswift and other ships break through the clouds, approaching the Governor's Fortress. Windswift is in the lead as it heads towards the Exit Hanger.

CUT TO:

INT. WINDSWIFT COCKPIT - CONTINUOUS

Arianne deftly handles the controls as the ship hurtles toward the hanger.

ARIANNE
I'm coming in now.

CUT TO:

INT. EXIT HANGER - CONTINUOUS

The troops continue filing in and have started to spread out to find cover. Ellis tries to fire, but the blaster beeps. A small holographic message appears above the blaster handle blinking "CHARGE DEPLETED".

Ellis curses, throwing down the weapon. He looks at Ekelle, who also is out of charge. The both cower under cover as laser fire passes overhead.

As the trooper begin to overrun the hanger, the Windswift pulls into the hanger bay and lands gracefully near Ellis and Ekelle. Troopers turn their fire to the ship as the doors open.

The other ships follow suit, landing near the Windswift. Rebels storm out of the ships, firing on the Troopers. The troopers head for cover, now outnumbered.

The freed prisoners start running to the transports. Tarsis, Dorun and Tenna head towards the Windswift. Ellis looks to Ekelle.

ELLIS

I guess this is goodbye.

Ekelle looks to the rebels, and back to Ellis.

EKELLE

I'm coming with you.

Ellis is obviously surprised.

EKELLE (CONT'D)

Your crew, Dorun... This is what you do. You're trying to bring them down.

Ellis hangs his head.

EKELLE (CONT'D)

You're trying to get revenge.

Ellis looks at her intently, revealing an undercurrent of rage. He gives a slight nod of his head.

EKELLE (CONT'D)

Then I'm coming with you. Come on.

The two rush from behind their cover and run to the Windswift. Dorun is waiting as Ekelle enters.

He gives Ellis a queer look. Ellis nods his ascent and Dorun rolls his eyes as Ellis enters. Dorun follows in and closes the hatch.

CUT TO:

INT. WINDSWIFT COCKPIT - CONTINUOUS

The crew find seats or stand around the cockpit. Dorun is the last to enter.

DORUN
Everyone's in, let's get off this rock.

ARIANNE
What about those rebels?

EKELLE
Do not worry about them, Kurdeer taught them well.

DORUN
Where is he? I owe him one.

The adrenaline that had distracted Ekelle melts away. She closes up, the loss flooding back. Dorun looks confused. The look Ellis gives him tells him all he needs to know.

DORUN (CONT'D)
Ah. I'm sorry.

Ekelle pulls her legs up and crosses her arms around them. Dorun turns back to Arianne.

DORUN (CONT'D)
Let's go.

Arianne nods, taps at the console. The viewport from the cockpit shows the hanger shifting, light laser fire passing by.

CUT TO:

INT. EXIT HANGER - CONTINUOUS

As the rebels start pulling back to their own ships, we see the Windsift lift, hover for a moment, then raise and turn towards the exit. Light laser fire follows.

The Windswift pulls out of the hanger and away from the Governor's Fortress.

CUT TO:

INT. WINDSWIFT COCKPIT - CONTINUOUS

ARIANNE

Ships have been fleeing the planet in droves once the Inhibitor came down. Many have been hit by Imperial Cruisers.

DORUN

I knew it.

ARIANNE

As soon as they break orbit they get fired on. Looks like they're trying to only disable ships from leaving the system, but many have been outright destroyed.

TARSIS

This ship can't outrun an Imperial Cruiser.

ARIANNE

It can with me flying it.

CUT TO:

EXT. GULON II LOW ORBIT - CONTINUOUS

The Windswift has broken orbit and is flying through space. We see a larger ship, an Imperial Cruiser, follow in short order.

CUT TO:

INT. WINDSWIFT COCKPIT - CONTINUOUS

ARIANNE

They're on us!

The ship shakes from laser fire.

DORUN

Watch the ship!

ARIANNE
Watch this!

CUT TO:

EXT. GULON II LOW ORBIT - CONTINUOUS

From the Cruisers perspective we pursue the Windswift. Lasers fire just as the ship does a wide arcing barrel roll, barely missing the laser fire.

CUT TO:

INT. WINDSWIFT COCKPIT - CONTINUOUS

ARIANNE
We need to jump, now!

Dorun and Ellis move to the Nav console. The panel is still open, wires and hardware exposed. Dorun and Ellis jostle at the panel.

ELLIS
The Nav is a mess!

DORUN
(To Arianne)
I told you not to break my ship.

Arianne doesn't register, focusing on flying the ship. Ekelle sits nearby, still dazed as Kurdeer's death sets in. Tenna looks at Dorun and Ellis apprehensively, clutching her keyboard. Tarsis is doubled-over in pain.

ELLIS
(To Dorun)
You can't do that or you'll overload-

The console sparks and Ellis/Dorun shield themselves. The console looks dead.

DORUN
(To Ellis)
What did you do?

ELLIS
What did I do?

ARIANNE
What's going on? We need to get out of here!

Tenna, without saying anything sets her keyboard down and pulls up a holographic monitor projected from the keyboard. She quietly starts typing away.

Tarsis stumbles towards the Nav console, intent on helping as Dorun pushes pass Ellis. They start pulling at the hardware underneath the Nav console. Neither knows what they're doing. Ellis watches, throwing his hands up in frustration.

The cockpit shakes as more laser fire hits the Windsift.

ARIANNE (CONT'D)

I don't know how much longer I can hold them.

CUT TO:

INT. IMPERIAL CRUISER BRIDGE - CONTINUOUS

A Cruiser Captain in a sharp uniform watches the Windsift on the viewport. Bridge crew work at their stations. The clean efficiency of the Imperial ship is in stark contrast to the chaos on the Windsift Cockpit.

In the viewport, we see the Windsift dodge another volley of laser fire. The Captain frowns.

CRUISER CAPTAIN

A decent pilot on that ship. Shame.
Fire a missile, end this game.

BRIDGE CREW

Yes sir, missile locked... and away.

The MISSILE appears as a bright white light that fires from the Cruiser and heads directly towards the Windsift.

CUT TO:

INT. WINDSWIFT COCKPIT - CONTINUOUS

A notification blinks in front of Arianne.

ARIANNE

Missile locked. Hold on.

The three men at the Nav console look up. They've turned the console into an absolute disaster. Tenna continues to type determinedly at her keyboard.

Intercut to Windswift Exterior: As tge MISSILE speeds closer, the Windswift pulls up. Both the MISSILE and the Cruiser follow.

DORUN

Do we have any countermeasures?

ARIANNE

It's not that kind of ship.

Arianne gets an idea.

ARIANNE (CONT'D)

The cargo.

TARSIS

What? No! Do you know how much that cargo is worth?

DORUN

Do it!

Arianne taps at the console.

CUT TO:

INT. CRUISER BRIDGE - CONTINUOUS

From the bridge viewport, we see the Windswift continue to pull up, the MISSILE gaining ground. The cruiser is also pulling up, keeping the Windswift in it's viewport.

As the MISSILE reaches the Windswift, the rear cargo doors of the ship open and small cubed boxes file out. The MISSILE hits the boxes and explodes in a bright flash that fills the entirety of the viewport.

CUT TO:

INT. WINDSWIFT COCKPIT - CONTINUOUS

The crew are propelled by harsh G forces, pinned to their seats as the explosion rocks the ship.

Arianne is the first to recover, laying into the controls to get the ship back on course.

CUT TO:

INT. CRUISER BRIDGE - CONTINUOUS

The Captain scowls seeing the Windswift recover.

CRUISER CAPITAIN
Lock all lasers. FIRE!

The viewport shows a synchronized volley of laser fire from the many laser cannons equipped to the ship. Just as they're about to hit the Windswift, the Windswift snaps out of existence.

CRUISER CAPITAIN (CONT'D)
Damn!

BRIDGE CREW
Shall we pursue, sir?

The cruiser captain considers.

CRUISER CAPITAIN
No. Our orders are clear. Log the ship type and trajectory. And find me another target.

CUT TO:

INT. WINDSWIFT COCKPIT - CONTINUOUS

All is quiet. Everyone still bracing for the coming impact. Ellis opens his eyes, realizing the impact never came.

Dorun slowly gets up, looking around.

DORUN
What... happened?

ELLIS
We should be dead.

ARIANNE
We managed to jump.

DORUN
How? We don't think we fixed the Nav console.

The console is smoking, wires and hardware from its compartment ripped apart.

TENNA
The Navigation systems are fine.

All eyes snap to Tenna.

TENNA (CONT'D)
I mean, that console is destroyed,
but the Nav itself is fine. I just
had to reroute controls to my
keyboard.

ARIANNE
We're being hailed.

DORUN
Who from?

Arianne looks at Dorun bleakly. Dorun turns back to Tenna.

DORUN (CONT'D)
Where did you jump us to?

TENNA
I just picked the last jump
location.

Dorun drops his head. A viewport near the front of the cockpit blinks on, showing MARCELLA, sitting back in a chair. Her brunette hair is perfectly set, bright red lips set in a coy smile.

MARCELLA
Well, well, well. You have a lot of
nerve coming back here, Dorun
Ryzer.

DORUN
(To himself)
This has been a very. Long. Day.

Fade Out.