

AGENTS OF THE EMPIRE

written by

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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 soliders 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.

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 (CON'T) (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 a number of odd devices, 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 beautiful, statuesque blonde with a clean, commanding uniform. 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 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 facility-wide system failures due to the power required to operate it.

STEELA

Tell them to work with what they have. It is imperative 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.

Steele 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.

Steele 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
Halt! 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
Let me be clear, I have full
authority on 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.

A wall to the Adjuncts side is revealed to be part of a very
large, complex machine. The Planetary Ship Inhibitor.
Engineers huddle near open compartments of the machine at
various locations.

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

STEELA
I don't want to be on this planet
any longer than I have to be,
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 is briefly pleased before returning to her reports.

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.

EXT. GULON II - RESTRICTED ZONE CHECKPOINT

Dorun, Ellis, and Tarsis meet Ekelle and Kurdeer in a large bazaar. Despite fully stocked stalls, the bazaar is abandoned.

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.

DORUN

Ekelles, Kurdeer. I see you're here
but where are your rebel friends?

EKELLE

You only see them when we want you
to see them.

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

DORUN

Very good. Alright, the alias I
have for this uniform 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. The heavily entrenched area features several
imperial soldiers and very large gates. The gates are closed,
guards dot the various watchtowers surrounding the area. A
main guardhouse sit behind fortified heavy weaponry.

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 puts his hand to his ear communicator and calls it in.

CHECKPOINT GUARD

(To communicator)
Officer here... looking for transport... didn't give me his name. (to Dorun) One moment sir, the officer is on his way.

A rotund officer steps out of the main guardhouse. Red cheeks snarl as he tucks his top into his trousers and marches towards the group. Dorun 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. The office is well furnished. 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 (CONT'D)
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. You just need to get the natives under the heel of your boot. Then you squeeze.

Dorun shakes off the disgust. Checkpoint Officer frowns, smelling weakness. He shifts off the desk he was leaning against and moves slightly closer to Dorun.

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 (CON'T) (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 (CON'T) (CONT'D)

I'll have you buried Junior
Dominant, you hear me, buried!

Dorun swings the statue across the head of the Officer. He's unconscious before he hits the ground. 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. Dorun moves to the Officer, taking a keycard and a communicator. He takes a moment to compose himself.

DORUN

Looks like you'll be the one
getting buried.

Dorun leaves the office, closing the door before returning to the group.

DORUN (CONT'D)

The transport is being readied now.
(To guard) Oh, private, your
officer says he's not to be
disturbed. He didn't seem to be in
a very good mood, so 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. As the large gate
doors open, Dorun turns to the group.

ELLIS

(quietly)
What happened?

DORUN

(quietly)
I improvised.

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 (CON'T) (CONT'D)

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 pilot like Arianne,
but I can fly it.

DORUN

You'll have to. We'll need this
transport to get back our ship.

ELLIS

The pilot assigned to fly the
transport won't like that idea.

DORUN

You'll have to convince him
otherwise.

ELLIS

Me?

Dorun nods. Tarsis directs the rebels into the rear section, closing the doors. Dorun, Ellis and Tarsis get in the front.

INT. TROOP TRANSPORT COCKPIT

The cockpit features four seats two by two. 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
Ay ay.

The ship takes off. Well into the flight, Ellis looks back at Dorun, his expression "do I have to?". Dorun replies with a "Get on with it" expression. Tarsis frowns with a "what are you two talking about?" expression. Ellis turns to the Pilot.

ELLIS
Ah... We... We need you to wait for
us once we land.

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
(To Pilot)
Sorry about this.

PILOT
What?

Ellis punches the Pilot hard. The transport lurches, a quick camera shot in the back shows the rebels falling over with the unexpected shift. 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 an "Eject" lever. 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, giving him a pleading look.

Ellis pulls the lever. The Pilots chair explodes laterally from his side of the ship. 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. He finally gets the ship back on course and puts on the comm helmet.

CUT TO:

INT. FLIGHT CONTROL CENTER, GOVERNORS FORTRESS

Flight Control on Gulon II has always been lacking, but the last several weeks have been particular bad with long days and few breaks. Flight Control isn't a hard job, mostly tedious, so 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.

[For the remainder of the conversation, the camera cuts to Flight Control and Transport Cockpit]

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.. This is transport Three-Seven-Two... 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
Right after I finish this flight.

FLIGHT CONTROLLER
Sir when Flight Control gives you
an order, you follow it
immediately.

ELLIS
Sorry maam, I've got work to do.

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

ELLIS
You know what, write me up. You
people are always-

FLIGHT CONTROLLER
You People?

ELLIS
Yeah. You People. You think you can
just tell me whatever you want me
to do and I'll do it. Well guess
what Lady-

FLIGHT CONTROLLER
(incensed)
Oh you do *not* refer to me as Lady.

ELLIS
I just did!

Tarsis leans to Dorun as Ellis continues to tell the Flight Controller off.

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

ELLIS
So deal with it.

To punctuate his point, Ellis pulls off the helmet communicator and tosses out the ejection hole.

DORUN
What the hell was that?

ELLIS
Improvising.