

## ***PREMONITION***

CARGO BAY

SIXTEEN MINUTES UNTIL JUMP

Music in background

Dire Straits, Ride across the River

It was decided that Kesas Pengot would go with Androcles because of his familiarity with Ch'eldo and the Onab people. They had been good friends before leaving Cerath, which is one of the reasons that Ch'eldo and his family had been chosen to lead those Onab selected to leave with the Kirek Pack. Kesas tried to remain out of the way for the most part, knowing that the battles to come were now for the young. He was still armed with a Pralor Pulse Magnum and a Pralor Assault Rifle, but he most likely would not have use for them, but Kesas Pengot would not turn away from his duty. Lylor would be traveling on the King's ship in order to retrieve his beloved Kelia, Reva Mahanlo with them as well. She was not about to be left behind and Martin was not going to argue with her. He simply told her she was confined to the TYPE TWO and he would have his Queen For'mya's dragon sit on her if she attempted to leave. It had actually been quite humorous to watch that exchange, the King of their people towering over his staania by a foot at least, his fangs fully extended and his yellow gold eyes very prominent. Reva Mahanlo had stood there stoically, her own dual fangs fully extended, staring into his yellow gold eyes and telling him exactly what she was going to do. Martin finally won out with his statement and Reva had nodded.

Kesas and Lylor had nearly broken into laughter as they watched, even given their situation, and many of the hundreds who had witnessed the showdown in the transport bay on Pakar Six looking at them in utter shock. It brought back memories for both of them of the exact same thing happening in another time and another place.

As he made his way into the main cargo bay, one story above the floor of the bay, his eyes detected that everyone was preparing. Some were adjusting equipment, some were discussing with each other what they would do, but no one was idle. Kesas lifted his head slightly as he heard the music filtering through the internal ship's speakers. At least he thought it was music. He had never heard such sounds before but they were smooth and the sounds blended incredibly well to his Lycavorian senses. Kesas stood on the upper level and just watched for a moment. The charge in the air was a palpable thing, even he could sense that, but there was also a calm unlike anything he had ever felt before. He moved to the small monitor that showed him the smaller cargo hold one deck up that would hold those Onab that they rescued. The upper cargo area was connected to the main cargo bay by an interior staircase he had discovered, and all the Onab would have to do is walk up the ramp into the main cargo bay and keep moving back until they came to the stairwell. Now he could see Tiag, his daughter Yasha and his son Caylt standing with Marda and a dozen or so Kirek Pack members as they listened intently to six of Androcles' team members. He knew them now by name, Daio, Ridor, Jomann and the half breed Mahanlo-Leonidas Prince Kalis. The fifth one was the huge fur

covered man called Cowen and then the female half Lycavorian and half elf who was called Sherice. It was obvious that she was wife to the huge, fur covered man Cowen, and Daio was husband to the Kavalian female Kameka who was in the cockpit with the Crown Princesses. The mix of men and women was incredible Kesas thought to himself. So many distinct species and only a few of them were represented here among Martin's people. He had to almost chuckle to himself as he remembered what Chiron had told him only a few hours ago. Elves were the second largest in population in the Union and all of them were astonishingly beautiful. Even the male elves were beautiful to an extent. Female elves were many times drawn to the Lycavorian men because of their prowess and strength and they were cherished as wives and mates because of their beauty and intelligence. Many Lycavorians, Alpha, Beta and Gamma, took female elves as their mates. Chiron had told him to insure that the young Alphas of the Kirek Pack were very careful about approaching a female elf they saw among these men and women. Many of them were already mated and even those that were not had lived among Lycavorians for all of their lives and they knew what was appropriate and what was not from a Lycavorian male. It would not be a good thing to cause tension because a young Alpha followed his instincts more than his brains, especially with these men and women from the Union. Kesas smiled a little wider as he remembered Rothan making his way away from them after the conversation to pass the word. Throughout the rest of the cargo bay, Kesas saw Kirek Pack members sitting with these men and women that were called Durcunusaan. Wolves of the Blood. They were speaking in soft whispers and most of them were running through firing point procedures for their new weapons.

Kesas turned his head away from the monitor and stepped to the railing before he looked directly into the main cargo bay below. He saw three of Martin's daughters standing together on the deck below. Lisisa, Eliani and Nara he knew their names to be. Nara, Kesas now knew, was the twin to the son Deion, and both of them were like burning points of bright light within the Etheric realm because of their Pralor abilities. This was another note that Chiron had told all of them over the course of the last hours. The Praetorian Gene it was called. It gave those who carried the active gene the ability to be so much more.

Kesas had felt it within Martin and Androcles, so powerful and pure. Being around such men and women had already begun to simulate the normally minor Etheric abilities within the Lycavorians on Pakar Six and many were now beginning to sense this different power within their King and his bloodline easily enough.

Lisisa and Eliani were far less than Nara in this regard, at least in the Etheric power that they radiated, but both of them were off the charts compared to others from what Kesas could tell. Far more than any among the Kirek Pack could ever hope to achieve unless they married into the Mahanlo-Leonidas bloodline. Their brother Denali was like his brothers and sister, the pure Lycavorian blood within their bodies being more of a stable conduit for this active Etheric power and the abilities it could give someone. It appeared that all of Martin's children with his Anome and pureblood Queen Aricia carried the active gene like him. He also detected this active gene from Eliani's husband and mate Jomann as well but according to Chiron, that is where the active gene stopped. At least with those out

here with Martin. There were others back within the Union that were intent on finding more with this Praetorian Gene and bringing them into the fold.

It was still almost too much to really take in for Kesas Pengot, and it was happening so fast. Acki had been the one to focus him, as she always had, just before he boarded this ship and they departed to rendezvous with the hidden monstrosity in orbit above the planet. All of them had tried to steal a glimpse of this ship as they approached and Kesas had been one of the lucky ones standing in the cockpit as he had been. While the size of the ship was not surprising to him, the fact that this was a warship and not a huge transport like he would have first thought is what stunned him. This SPARTA'S WRATH equaled the size of the Onab ships they had come to Koltar Four on, but he had never seen so many gun turrets on a single ship before and it was frightening just to look at the ship even for the brief moment he had seen it from the outside.

Kesas' eyes finally came to rest on the three that sat lotus style near the ramp that could open the rear of the ship into oblivion. Androcles, Dorian and Laren sat in a triangle on the deck of the ship, Elynth, Ryner and Ladur behind them. They ignored the activity all around them and Kesas saw that no one moved to interrupt them in any way. Even the other dragons that were below were calm and quiet. Jeth and Tharua rested on the deck beside one another, Jeth quietly caressing Tharua's wings with his large snout. Aradace, Marux, Jeru, Mayla and Majeir were speaking to one another openly, further advancing their voice ability skills. Anthar rested with Caydren and Cinol, actively instructing the twins on their duties. While still growing and nowhere near their full size, Caydren and Cinol were the perfect dimensions for protecting the ship when it was on the surface. While they were just learning how to carry Sadi and Ne'Veha in flight, the brothers were already very well skilled in ground combat from their father Vollenth and the Elder Mother's instructors at Dragon Mountain.

The power he could feel coming from Androcles and the others was unlike anything he had ever felt before and Kesas was quite sure that he was nowhere skilled enough to truly sense what they could do. While he knew Androcles and Dorian were Martin's sons, the young woman, Laren Ti'shara, was quite the exotic beauty. Her long, raven black hair surrounded an enchanting face that her soft, scale like outer skin only enhanced to ravishing proportions. Her normal skin, closer to the center of her beautiful face was deeply tanned. Her eyes he found unique as one was cobalt blue and the other azure blue. Her petite body was lush and firm and Kesas knew that many young Alphas would not hesitate to pursue this elivonth ber woman for her beauty alone. Kesas doubted it would be that simple since she was considered a daughter to Martin Mahanlo-Leonidas and a beloved sister to the Mahanlo-Leonidas children. She was also never far from Androcles or Dorian and her dragon always seemed to be beside her. Whoever chose to court this young woman, Kesas hoped he had large nor, for he would need them.

Kesas took this time to let his eyes linger on the Arwa rie vada Tarivuos that each of them wore. The cowls were not fully up around their heads, but Kesas easily remembered the day that he saw the four sets of armor so long ago. No one knows why the Onab built the armor, for Daniho Mahanlo was not skilled enough within the Etheric realm to even wear the armor at that time. Looking back, Kesas now

believed that Daniho and Ashten knew exactly who the Onab had built it for. They had known even back then what was coming, perhaps not everything or how it would happen through the many thousands of years, but they knew their descendants would need this armor.

Kesas didn't know why he picked it up right at that moment but the words of the music playing all around him reached out to him for some reason and he lifted his eyes above him to stare at the ceiling of the ship for a moment.

***I'm a soldier of freedom in the army of man  
We are the chosen, we're the partisan  
The cause it is noble and the cause it is just  
We are ready to pay with our lives if we must***

Kesas Pengot brought his eyes back down and focused them first on where Androcles and the others sat, then they moved around the interior of the cargo bay slowly, touching everyone who was present as they went about their duties. Finally, he turned and looked at the monitor that showed the others in the attached cargo bay. That is when Kesas realized there was no doubt or hesitation in their movements or their actions. They were here to get their family and their blood back and nothing else mattered. And with this intense focus brought clarity the likes of which Kesas had never felt. And this clarity spread even to those from the Kirek Pack among them. It was a natural osmosis that was occurring, reinforcing everything that the Kirek Pack had taught through the years to all of their children from the day they were born. This is what naturally brought the Kirek and Mahanlo Packs so tightly together and even after all of these millennia that had passed, it was still there. The same closeness and values that had their Packs so tightly woven together for millennia was still very much present and he would even dare say, far more powerful than it had ever been.

Kesas blinked several times as he felt the rush of air to his side and then he saw Deion's body hurtling the railing into the lower cargo bay, his young wife and mate right behind them, and then Kesas' eyes grew wide when he saw Liita Nenay right behind them.

"*Fervon!*" Deion barked as he hit the deck below with barely any effort and only a slight bending of his knees.

Androcles opened his eyes and turned to look at his brother as he began getting to his feet. "Deo?" He asked him.

Deion held out Mari's portable P9 to his brother. "Andro... I give you Lady Nystai Arhtai. Youngest sister to Yelma Arhtai."

Andro's azure eyes were wide as he took hold of the computer and looked at the face of the much older woman on the screen. There were tears rolling down her cheeks and she wore a smile that Andro doubted could have been removed by explosive.

"My Lord... *Orwara Indalfrid* Androcles." Nystai stammered the words. "*Una coi... cyn vada carians forn sey heuhly chevsh.*" (Crown Prince) (It is, thank the gods you have finally come.)