

## The Alutian/Verdatian Alliance

### Chapter One: Monday

By Byl

(Revision: 2)

#### **Monday**

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"Come'ere, bitch!" Gart had a rough day. His commanding officer was being a bastard, he just found out today that Aurora had killed his best friend on the five-mile battle cruiser the other day, and now this little Terran bitch was making him chase her before he raped her. Imagine the gall of the bitch!

The dirty alleyway wasn't the most romantic place to rape a woman, but it would have to do. He needed some well-earned self-indulgence and she was the first unlucky bitch he saw. As he finally grabbed her arm, the anticipation of tearing her apart with his climax was driving him wild.

He thought he heard the clink of metal behind him, and turned. It was only the fire escape. Must be the wind. He turned back to the woman, and heard the sound boots make when someone lands after about a ten foot drop. He turned again, this time scared. Could it be Aurora? Was she here to stop him?

Nope, no one there. He even scanned with tachyon vision, nothing. The woman was screaming by now, and he put his hand over her mouth so he could listen.

Nothing.

"Is someone there?" He asked. Then behind him, from the opposite direction that the landing sound came from, he heard the distinctive *swish-vwoom* of a pair of energy swords charging up. He turned to the sound, and saw a figure so immersed in the shadows of the alley that only the glowing swords showed up, and a bit of highlights from the arms of the figure.

"Hey now, who are you?" Aw shit, this whole thing ruined the moment. He let the bitch go, and she darted out of sight faster than she had ever run in her life. In high heels, no less. "Hey, answer me! Who the fuck are you?"

No answer. The figure barely moved, except for the glowing swords which almost seemed to hover in the air on their own because the alley was so dark. "Look, I'm Lieutenant Gart, a Prime. Now step out of the fucking shadows and put down your flashlights. Are you a Kintzi?" The Kintzi liked the energy swords, and knew how to use the shadows, but something was wrong...

"*Artis gomman, nickt prommad. Olan tis a-van. Mis Gall!*" Gart had no idea what that meant, but he knew the language. He'd heard it before, years ago.

"Hey, that's Vendorian! Nobody speaks Vendorian anymore, not since Vendor was turned into a stripped-down wasteland. Who the... Aaaarrgghh!"

Gart's words were cut short by a sharp slash down his back. He never heard the second figure approaching behind him. He only caught a glimpse of him jumping into the shadows as he turned around. "Shit! That fucking HURT!!" When he turned back, the first figure was gone too. "All right you fucks, come out into the open!"

Gart tried his tachyon vision again, but was forced to shut his eyes immediately. "Shit! Who's got the tachyon emitter?" The effect was like having a spotlight shined in your face after you just adjusted yourself to the darkness. Gart blinked a few times.

Gart groaned three more times as energy swords bit into his nearly invulnerable flesh in rapid succession. "Fuckin'..." When he brought himself back upright from the pain, he felt the first real pangs of fear grip him. There were three of them, each with a pair of energy swords mounted on their wrists. "Oh shit."

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Gart's body landed in a heap on Thesan's office floor. The two Primes who carried him in stood at attention. Thesan barely looked up from his computer console. "Well, that explains why he didn't check in this morning." He clicked a few more keys and saved his progress so far. "Looks like energy sword burns. Did he get some Kintzi pissed at him again?"

"We questioned the Kintzi, no one knows anything about it. Of course, they'd say that anyway. But forensics says it couldn't have been them. These energy signatures and the level of cauterization aren't right. They're too high. There were five, maybe six different blades used on him, and the Kintzi settle their differences one-on-one. In other words, it wasn't the Kintzi."

"Another Prime then? Who else uses energy swords?"

"Well that's another problem. The residual energy signatures register far too high. We're dealing with advanced technology here, no one we know of has energy swords this powerful. We have no idea who did this."

"Well, put the base on yellow alert, spread a notice warning about the new swords, and get back to me with any new information. And get him off my floor please." The two Primes carried Gart back out of the office, and Thesan turned his attention back to his computer. "Interruptions..." He reopened the file he saved and continued from where he left off. "Now if I remember there was a secret door if I shoot the wall with the glowing rune. Yes! Extra life."

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"Thesan's always working so hard on the computer. You have any idea what he's doing in there?"

"No clue." Warrel responded. "He's the on the R&D team, so I know he's not working on the problems with the Earthquake device."

"Probably high-level military stuff." Ardy guessed. "Discovering secrets, finding new weapons, planning modes of attack. Stuff like that."

They continued dragging Gart through the halls of the Arian base for a while in silence. "Hey wait a second..." Warrel and Ardy stopped. "Where are we taking this guy anyway?"

"I thought you knew."

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High in geosynchronous orbit around the Earth, a meeting was taking place in a small but powerful alien star cruiser. "You should've seen it! My men surrounded the Prime and hacked through him like he wasn't even invulnerable! This S.H.I.T. really works! We can start kicking Arian butt all over the planet."

"Hold on there, it's that kind of enthusiasm that gets the greatest armies into big trouble. And we'd be lucky if we could be called a platoon. First we have to find out how many Arions there are. Then we have to find out how spread out they are, whether or not they're in high government offices yet, what kind of weapons they brought, if they brought the Kintzi..."

"Dammit, you know you're an incredible stereotype? Hey Fen, how many Vendorians does it take to screw in a light bulb?"

Fen answered, "Just one, but first he has to measure the ladder, test the socket, buy insulated gloves, and draw up blueprints for a new and improved bulb-changing machine."

"Look Dolo, when you signed on with us I expected a little more respect on my own ship!" Malohr considered it his ship, even though it had parts from Dolo's integrated with it.

"Malohr, I'm just saying that if we spend all our time preparing we'll lose our window of opportunity. Maybe we can even get some of the indigenous people in on this."

"You're being brash and impulsive. There are undoubtedly far more of the Arions than there are of us. We need strategy, planning..."

"Both of you cut it out!" Jenya had a forceful voice for a woman, and when she wanted to she could silence a room. "You've been doing nothing but getting on each other's nerves since the alliance started. And I think you're both doing it on purpose to try to prove your way is better. Well need I remind you that *both* our races got our butts kicked by the Arions and the Alliance is our only hope for survival!?"

Both men knew that Jenya was right. They were getting on each other's nerves on purpose. Altutians and Vendorians just can't get along, and Dolor and Malohr were prime examples of both races.

While Malohr was slow to action, he thought things out in great detail. If he ever missed something, you could rest assured that was only because the detail was so small that it didn't really pose much of an obstacle. His only problem was that he didn't understand people very well, and never could figure out why they became impatient with him.

Dolo on the other hand was his polar opposite: impulsive, quick to action, dealing with problems as they came his way. He who hesitates is lost, and Dolo never intended to lose. And while Dolo understood people, he usually used that ability to push their buttons.

Unfortunately, sheer Arion muscle was enough to bring down both Altus and Vendor. Few races had ever put off the inevitable victory of the Arions as well as the Altutians and the Vendorians, but like everyone else they still fell. Both races had been able to send a small ship filled with escapees into space to preserve their race in any way they could, and when they found each other they had sworn to join forces and maybe, with their combined talents and experience with the Arions, win a planet back to call their own.

The Alliance fell apart within the first week. It became clear that the Vendorians saw themselves as dignified, the greatest engineers and inventors in the galaxy, and no one surpassed them in the areas they prided themselves in. The Altutians were more laid back, they knew how to have a good time, and they thought the Vendorians were wasting their lives away pouring over their silly machines all day. Like oil and water, they simply did not mix. And here fifty Altutians and fifty Vendorians were cramped in the same small ship to offer each other endless opportunity to annoy each other.

Some got along with the other race better than others though. Jenya was one of them, she walked the delicate line between the two stereotypes, and although she was Vendorian she had fallen in love with Dolo, the leader of the Altutian refugees.

Unfortunately this did nothing to help relations between the two races. Before the mass exodus, she and Malohr were lovers. The Vendorians had no marriage as other races understood it, it was more of an unspoken agreement between a man and a woman to live together and be reasonably faithful. "Divorce" could occur in a heartbeat, and when she left Malohr for Dolo, he was hurt. Hurt but too stoic to show it. Instead he simply took his anger out on Dolo every chance he got, and when the leaders of an alliance don't like each other there are problems.

The Alliance was not a complete flop so far, though. The Altutians and Vendorians did have much to share with each other. While the Vendorians made weapons so powerful the Arions use them to this day, they limited themselves by rarely acting when the opportunity presented itself, preferring to take the war slowly and carefully. The more opportunistic Arions took advantage of every little hole they saw, every flaw in planning, and every split-second advantage they could muster. It proved too much for Vendor, and the battles they won and the Primes they killed only made their ultimate fate that much more painful.

Altus on the other hand had little in the way of weaponry heavy enough to actually hurt an Arion Prime. They did, however, know a great deal about the Arions, the Velorians, and the Elder Ones. They worshiped the Elder Ones when they took them to Altus, and in appreciation the Altutians were granted great knowledge that no other races held. Some of them even practiced Elder magic, but none of these escaped. They were the first targets of the Arions.

Jenya spoke again. "It's obvious we can work together if we try. Look what we've accomplished so far, this ship is far more than the sum of it's parts. When we took apart our ship and your ship to build this one, look what we did! The Vendorian engines are faster than anything else in the galaxy! The Altutian bridge is so efficient we've got every tactical advantage anyone can think of! And this new weaponry we have neither one of us could ever have designed on our own. Our strength comes from our differences."

"So does our irritation."

"And it's that kind of thinking that is going to keep us at each other's throats. We're fighting a war here, people! We have to put up a united front!"

It seemed like the silence lasted for hours before anyone spoke. "So what do we do?"

"We keep our real enemy in mind."

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