

## A Special Kind of Challenge

LT Sylas Pitt

The silence of his quarters echoed in Sub-Lieutenant Pitt's ears, as he laid in his bed, staring at the dark ceiling. The only light source in the room came from a small window, currently overlooking the planet of Aurora Prime. The blue marble slowly turned on its axis against the black backdrop of the universe, orbited by the *SSD Avenger*. With a low grumble to himself in annoyance, he sat up, rubbing what little sleep he had out of his eyes. He stood and made his way to the window, looking down on the quiet scene.

After months of stowing away on New Republic ships, jumping from system to system, he had finally made it to Aurora Prime from Coruscant. Immediately, he signed up for the Imperial Academy and began his training. Although he was not the brightest student, or the best pilot, he managed to graduate. Now, he awaits his assignment. For years he had dreamed of joining the Emperor's Hammer Strike Fleet in the hopes to strike back at the murderers of the New Republic. *"They claim to advocate for peace and prosperity among the systems"*, he thinks to himself. *"But they are no different than the Empire."*

Lost in thought, his eyes gaze up beyond the planet, into the inky void of the universe. Though he was sure to be facing the wrong direction, his thoughts swam towards Coruscant. There, his mother remained. Running her humble little shop in the lower slums of the city. Eventually, he hopes, he will earn enough credits to purchase a lot of land in Aurora and bring her here. Bring her away from those savages who would not think twice to kill her, should they find out she was a retired Imperial Officer. The thought gripped him by the throat, tightening its grip with each vivid scenario that ran through his impulsive mind.

The light taps at the door pulled him out of his drowning thoughts, making him jump for a moment. He quickly composed himself, pulling on a pair of lounge pants, before opening the door. There stood a young female Cadet, possibly gaining extra credit by assisting an Officer. She stood in cordial attention, extending a manilla envelope to him. Puzzled, he reached out and grabbed it, giving her a befuddled look.

"What is this?" He asks her.

"Correspondence from High Admiral Plif to Sub-Lieutenant Sylas Pitt." She responds curtly.

He nods and thanks her, before shutting the door. Walking back to the window, he opened the folder and pulled out its contents, which were only a few pieces of paper. Confused, he sat on the windowsill, reading the papers. As his eyes made their way through the words, they widened in both surprise and understanding. He smiled and stood, bringing the papers over to the desk by his bed. He set them down and stared in disbelief.

"So, I've been assigned a squadron," he talks to himself. "An X-Wing Squadron..." His voice soured towards the end, as bile rose in his throat. The last time he had been anywhere near an X-Wing was when he was a child, when Brolsan was seized by the New Republic. When his father died protecting him and his mother. Sylas' hands had become fists as he stood there, glaring down at his assignment. He had sworn he would never touch an X-Wing out of pure resentment, but now... Now he has no choice.

He huffed in anger and walked back to the window, looking down on Aurora Prime again. Leaning against the windowsill, his thoughts swam back to the papers on his desk.

*“Of all the Wings in the TIE Corps, it had to be the Infiltrator Wing”*, He thought to himself. He sighed and lowered his head, staring at the ground. After a moment, he stood up straight and looked at his desk.

“Guess I better start packing...”

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