

Freespace 2: The Reunification

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Author: Cpt. Ritter

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Squadron Members (77th Swords)

Commander Amy Junique (Alpha 1)

Captain Louis Alba (Alpha 2)

Captain Jack Johnston (Alpha 3)

Captain Sydney Burkman (Alpha 4)

Captain Kira Hanson (Beta 1)

Lieutenant Emily Hanestock (Beta 2)

Lieutenant Kyle Mitchell (Beta 3)

Lieutenant Mike Cunningham (Beta 4)

Captain Hans Ferganan (Gamma 1)

Lieutenant Kayle Yersban (Gamma 2)

Lieutenant Marissa Gilbertson (Gamma 3)

Ensign Ben Able (Gamma 4)

Others

Chris Manstein (Former Commander of 77th Swords)

Anya Manstein (Formerly Anya Mitchell, Former member of 77th Swords)

Gordon Zimmerman (Former member of 77th Swords)

Franz Albertz (Former member of 77th Swords)

Nick Hothsteen (Former member of 77th Swords)

Ptah Commodore RaNah (Commander of 312th Vasudan Tactical Wing, Former member of 77th Swords)

Admiral Sean Loyde (Commander of GTD Fire Dawn)

Admiral Kristine Loyde (Commander of GTD Fire Dance)

Admiral Richard Yaleson (Commander of GTD Fire Dusk)

Time: 0630 Hours, Galactic Standard Time

Place: Home of Chris and Anya Manstein, Delta Serpentis IV

Location: Near Knossos Subspace Gate Construction Site

The system of Delta Serpentis was a group of five planets, the third and fourth being habitable and the other three being mining planets. They orbited around a single green hued star. Delta Serpentis was the secondary headquarters for the GTVSA, the Galactic Terran Vasudan Shivan Alliance. A pair of shipyards and the Knossos subspace portal construction site were the only objects of significance.

Chris Manstein lived on Delta Serpentis IV, with his wife Anya, in his parents old home. His parents had died during the Capella crisis. The home was a two story house with two landing pads on the flat roof, and two more down in the courtyard. The house was outside the city of New London, a sprawling metropolis that was the largest city in the system.

Two aging Ulysses fighters rested on the roof landing pad. They both had the squadron logo of the 77th Swords, and they both had kill markings painted on their wings. A landspeeder and two airspeeders rested on one of the landing pads in the courtyard. The other landing pad was empty.

The house was metal plated, in the characteristic style that had come about as the Galactic age had begun. The windows were reinforced transparisteel. It was a sturdy material that didn't require cleaning or maintenance.

Chris looked out into the courtyard from the living room of his house. The interior of the living room was carpeted with a deep blue color. The walls were obscured by various portraits. Most of the portraits were artistic depictions of GTVA ships, though several of them were of Chris's parents and himself.

The portrait that stood out the most was Chris's first time near a GTVA fighter. It had been a warm sunny day. Chris's parents had took him on his sixteenth birthday to see the GTVA parade. Chris had even gotten to climb into the cockpit of an ancient Apollo fighter. The portrait was of Chris in the cockpit of that legendary fighter.

He sipped his cup of hot tea. The sun had barely risen, and a thick blanket of dew hung in the trees that surrounded the home. He turned as he heard Anya's quiet footsteps, walking barefoot on the rug. Anya was wearing a set of flannel pajamas, her hair hung loose, just about shoulder length.

"What's on the agenda for today?" She asked.

"Not much." Chris replied. "Amy and Louis should be coming down from the Fire Dawn for dinner."

"Still homesick for the Swords?"

Chris inwardly smiled, Anya could always tell what was on his mind. "Yeah."

"Anyway, let's have breakfast."

Chris was about to follow her into the kitchen, but turned around one more time. He spotted an airspeeder land in the courtyard. He glanced out the window. Two occupants got out, a tall man and a tall woman. Both were wearing large overcoats. "Anya." He yelled into the kitchen. "Come here."

Anya came back into the living room. "What's up?"
"Do you recognize those two people in the airspeeder?"

Anya looked carefully for a second. "They're my parents." She finished her sentence with a sigh.
"We'd better go meet them."

Anya led Chris to the entryway just as the guest alarm buzzed loudly. Anya opened the door. Standing there were the two people from the airspeeder. The tall man had short black hair and a commanding build. The woman, equally as tall, had short brown hair and seemed almost frail in comparison.

Anya regarded them both cynically. "Mom, Dad." She glared at them each in turn.

"Come home Anya." The woman said. "You no longer have a commitment to that accursed organization."

"No Mom." Anya's voice was cold. "You abandoned me because of my decision. I don't need your help."

"Why are you living with this man?" The man said accusingly.

"What do you think? He's my husband."

"You married this... space cowboy." The woman's tone was now accusing.

"In case you haven't noticed, I'm a space cowgirl."

A Perseus fighter chose that moment to race over the house, landing on the empty landing pad. The hatch opened and almost a male version of Anya stepped out. He was Kyle Mitchell, Anya's younger brother. He sprinted across the courtyard. "Sorry I missed the family reunion." He said.

"If you can call it a reunion." Anya remarked.

"Yeah, had an Aketon SDG ready and everything. I was going to disable the transport, but Amy wouldn't let me. Neither would my wingman... stupid reg nut."

"How dare you young man!" The woman was yelling.

"I was trying to spare my sister the embarrassment of having her parents try to come collect her from her home."

"This is not her home."

"That's where you're wrong Mom." Anya replied quietly. "THIS is my home." She emphasized the word 'this'.

"You're not our daughter anymore." The man said.

"Then I'm glad I'm not stuck with your name." Anya spat the words. "Get out of my home." Anya turned and stormed off.

"Want to come in Kyle?" Chris asked.

"Sure." Kyle replied. "Nice going." He mocked his parents.

"I'm sorry your stay couldn't be longer. Maybe you should come back when both you, and Anya, are willing to listen to each other." Chris closed his door, not waiting to see if Anya's parents had left yet.

He walked into the kitchen. Anya was leaning heavily against the sink. He put his arm around her shoulder. "I'm sorry that couldn't have gone better."

Anya stifled a tear. "I hoped they had finally come to reconcile their differences with me. I thought I could actually love my parents again."

"I..." Chris stumbled for the right words.

"It's okay." She leaned into his chest. "I know you don't have a clue what to say right now."

"You're always right, has to do with that feminineness."

Anya smiled weakly. "Yeah."

"You know." Kyle began. "I'm glad my sister met you Chris. Still disappointed you both left the Swords before I graduated but... it's turned out for the best." Kyle sat down on a stool next to the butcher block.

"Want anything to drink Kyle?" Chris asked.

"Nah. Can't fly with that stuff in your system. Amy would kill me."

"Not even some water?"

"Alright, that'd be great."

Chris filled a cup with water, then handed it to Kyle. "How are the Swords doing?"

"Awe.. we're great. Our latest addition, Ensign Ben Able. He's fresh out of the GTVSA academy."

"Uh-oh." Anya commented.

"Anyway, he's the most tight-assed pilot we have. Louis has had a field day."

"I don't doubt it." Chris replied.

"Knossos guard duty is boring stuff."

"So was our post at Alpha Centauri." Anya replied. "It turned into a war zone really quick."

"Yeah, but this is so close to Earth. Alpha Centauri was much farther out there. There are no hidden jump nodes and the Shivans are our allies."

"That doesn't mean it's over Kyle." Chris added. The lights flickered.

"What was that?" Anya asked.

"I don't know." Chris quickly stepped into the downstairs living room. He glanced out the window. Suddenly, he saw five figures come running from the trees, just before the lights went out completely. The figures continued moving. As they got closer, Chris saw that they were carrying high caliber rifles.

He quickly darted back into the kitchen. Kyle already had his pistol out, it's small light illuminating a small area. Anya had the flashlight under the kitchen sink out.

"What's going on?" Anya asked, more insistently.

"Five maybe more possible gunmen, heading straight for us." Chris announced.

Kyle checked the charge on his pistol's battery, then turned the safety off. Chris reached under the counter, pulling another pair of pistols from under the sink. He handed one to Anya, just as a large explosion blew open the front door.

Chris motioned towards the rear entrance to the house. "Let's get out back and get the generator online. Lights off."

Anya and Kyle turned their flashlights off and followed Chris out the back door of the house and into the back yard. Chris crouched down near the generator. He quickly looked it over using his pistol's flashlight. The generator was sabotaged, it's fuel leaking all over the ground.

Kyle leaned over next to Chris. "I can make a distress call from my fighter. We can have Vasudan commandoes here in minutes."

"Do it." Chris replied. "Head around the side of the house. Outside edge of the forest. Stay out of the open."

"What about you two?"

"We're heading for our ships on the roof."

"So take off once I get there?"

"Yes, don't hesitate."

Kyle nodded then headed for the front courtyard. Anya nodded to Chris. Chris lead her along the edge of the house towards a ladder to the roof. They were right next to it when they heard a twig snap nearby. They both froze. Chris raised his gun just in time. One of the gunmen was coming around the corner. Chris fired, at the same instant that Anya did. Their shots both connected with his head, blowing him back several feet.

They both quickly began climbing the ladder. Half-way up, they heard Kyle take off. Two rockets streaked from the woods to try and hit him. They both missed. Chris climbed up to the roof and looked around quickly. There was nobody around. He raced for his fighter, Anya raced for hers.

Years of flying took over. He quickly powered up the fighter. His HUD flickered on. He quickly engaged the shield system and began charging the Subach HL-7 cannons on it, the only weapons he had been allowed to keep. He and Anya lifted off quickly.

Rockets streaked from the woods after them, but they were already racing away. Chris engaged his

targeting system and spotted Kyle, escorting a Vasudan heavy airspeeder to the house.

The Vasudan heavy airspeeder's shields absorbed the weak rocket fire and landed in the courtyard. Twenty Vasudan soldiers and a pair of Shivans disembarked. The Shivans raced into the woods, leaping from tree to tree. The Vasudans raced into the house.

Chris saw several light bursts from inside the house, indicating quick fire fights. It only took seconds for the Vasudans to secure the house. The Shivans came out of the woods a few minutes later, with a four prisoners. Chris and Anya landed in the courtyard.

Chris got out of his fighter and found the Vasudan commander near the base of their airspeeder. "What happened?" He asked.

"As you are no doubt aware," the commander began, "they were trying to kill both you and Mrs. Manstein. As of this moment, we believe them to be mercenaries. We have no information as to who they work for or why they attacked you."

"You'll be investigating, right?"

"Of course. Incidents such as these are taken very seriously. We will station a small group of soldiers to guard the house and will also install a force field barrier with a gate to prevent any unauthorized access. This will continue for the immediate period of time, until we determine you are in no danger."

"Thank you commander. I would appreciate it if you could keep me informed of any progress."

"You are safe, for now. We recommend that you stay in the house for at least today." The commander walked off.

Kyle walked up. "I'd better get back to the Fire Dawn. I'll get Admiral Loyde to investigate as well, not to mention file an incident report."

"Thanks Kyle."

Anya gave her brother a hug. "Be safe."

"Me?" Kyle gave Anya a questioning, but sarcastic look. "Are you kidding?" Then he raced for his fighter.

"Any ideas?" Anya raised an eyebrow.

"I don't know." Chris replied. "I just don't know."