

[Shattered union arc] [7] [Omen] [9619]

Rev 1.1

Prerequisite stories

[Shattered union arc] [6] [Fraser's Regime] [9614]

[Kain and Suu arc] [5] [He who stands alone] [9616]

Fraser was in the Ark house chambers which was rare. The President of United Sol didn't generally attend the house discussions. But this time, he had a reason to attend the discussion.

It began with Len handing over a report that Andromeda union was preparing for a second invasion. At first, the Ark as well as Fraser dismissed the report. The source was deemed unreliable.

However, over past few seasons, several reports came in from different sources which began to worry Fraser as well as some members of the Ark house. He was currently attending a meeting regarding the report.

He and Len were seated in a special guest area which was located on a side, far away from any of the Ark house members. It was also shielded.

"We have several reports regarding Andromeda union's possible second invasion." An Ark house majority leader, Feafur Bau, began the discussion with his statement. "None of the sources is reliable but the sources have little connections to each other."

"It could mean a lot of things," An ark house member responded from his seat. "It could mean someone with enough political powers is having fun by spreading a false rumor. It could also mean the reports may really be genuine."

Another house member argued, "Can we even take their 'invasion' serious? Their so-called first invasion was nothing more than a mockery."

"Mockery or not, an invasion is an invasion. We need to take the reports seriously," Feafur insisted.

Yet another house member stood up from his seat and exclaimed, "The only reason we were unable to respond properly the last time was because we were in middle of an emergency. Tell them to come. We don't fear them and never will."

"I agree," Another house member spoke out. "Earth defense fleet has been reinforced. Their number is now eleven thousand strong. There is also Emuel who has ten thousand. Let them come."

Another house member chipped in, "Perhaps we should go ahead and invade them instead."

Some of the house members burst into laughter.

At this point, Fraser stood up from his seat, turned around and proceeded to leave. Len quickly followed him out.

"They aren't taking this seriously. I am not wasting time in there," He remarked as he and Len walked through a hallway.

"They do have a point though, sir. We've reinforced our fleets," Len responded indifferently.

"We reinforced by going deeper into debt!" Fraser exclaimed with frustration. "We are into 220 trillion debt. That is not acceptable. We can't just keep printing money."

Len had no answer to that. Therefore, he kept his mouth shut.

"I haven't had good news for as long as I can remember," Fraser continued to complain and grumble.

"I do have rather positive news for you, President, although I am unsure whether you'd rate this news highly."

"Oh? What is it?"

"I have a report from Magenta. It is a comprehensive report regarding Uranus outpost and deputy administrator Kain."

Fraser took a deep breath. "Alright, I will read it at my office."

"As you wish."

Narrowing eyes and slightly amused, Fraser spoke while holding onto a piece of paper. "... A paper report."

"Yes, she sent a paper report."

“Are you kidding me... In this day and age..., she could have sent an electronic report and it would have arrived here in few hours.”

Len shrugged. “I suppose she is being Magenta.”

Fraser chuckled. “Guess you are right. Alright...” And then he went onto reading the report.

Mr. President

“Will she ever call me uncle, ever?” Fraser wondered.

“I am afraid I don’t have an answer for that, sir.” And Len answered indifferently.

“Fine.”

Deputy Administrator Commodore Kain has been doing exceptionally well. He connects to local residents smoothly and heeds their ideas. I did read a history of the outpost prior leaving to the outpost. And from what I can tell, the commodore would be the first administrator who is actually working for the good of the outpost.

The situation wasn’t all so rosy however. The commodore ran out of funds provided by the 2bn aid package two years after he took the charge, but he worked tirelessly to source funding. His solution was turning the outpost into a commercial hub. The traffic is booming and the colony is very lively at the moment.

However, I am unsure whether you are aware of this but the commodore has established some connections with Freedom colony.

“I have not heard of this,” Fraser remarked as he turned the paper toward Len and pointed at the line. “Or did I miss something? Len?”

After he bent down to get a closer look at the report, Len shook his head. “I don’t think I’ve ever received any reports from him about working with Freedom colony. However, Mr. President, I don’t think any of previous Uranus outpost admins ever reported anything.”

Historically, the seat of Uranus outpost administrator had been a position to be held prior retirement. It had been a very low profile position where no one with ambitions wanted to have.

Fraser quickly pulled up a holographic monitor and did a search on the matter and did find no, absolutely none, report from previous Uranus outpost administrators.

“This is intriguing, negatively, I mean. It’s hard to believe this.”

“Sir, Uranus outpost seat has been historically more or less an exile. I don’t think anyone cared.”

Fraser argued, “That may be true in the past. But right now the outpost is the first defense barrier.”

“Still,” Len shrugged. “Nobody seems to care about that little fact, sir.”

Fraser frowned. He felt that nobody in heart of United Sol was sensing the great danger that was approaching them. The power scale had been altered. He wanted the Ark, subsequently the Bau, to accept that Andromeda union had become a formidable foe that wasn’t just a rebellion that broke free. He also did not like the fact that the Ark cared only Inner Sol.

Regardless, he continued to read Magenta’s report.

It was a shock for me, Mr. President, to be able to see ads that came from Freedom colony in United Sol territory. Granted, this is Uranus outpost, a place which the Ark couldn’t care less.

Still, I found myself enjoying my time here as an ambassador although I still wonder what my role as an ambassador is because Commodore Kain has never talked to me. In fact, I am positive that he doesn’t know my presence even.

“Len.”

“Yes, Mr. President?”

“Did you inform Commodore Kain about Magenta?”

It took Len a while to answer. “I don’t think so, sir.”

“Which means...” Fraser clicked his tongue. “If she doesn’t declare who she is, nobody is going to know her.”

“Well, she should have declared who she was upon her arrival...” Then Len’s eyes opened widely. “Sir...., are you saying...”

It’s a little funny that an ambassador is renting a hotel room for years and that no officials from Commodore Kain has visited me.

“Oh, for Fuck’s sake...” Fraser sighed. “Excuse my language, Len.”

He beamed a smile. “It’s understandable, sir. So, the commodore is not aware of Magenta’s presence.”

Fraser nodded.

“On a bright side, Mr. President, her report should be accurate then.”

Len had a point and Fraser's face lightened up. "Yes, you do have a valid point there..."

Is my presence really needed here? I didn't think so. Therefore, I chose to keep a low profile. From what I can tell, sir, Kain is not a man you should be worried about. He is not worth of assassination. The man is working hard to bring prosperity to the little outpost.

You should reward him in fact. I recall that he is merely a deputy administrator. You should make him the official administrator.

-Magenta

Fraser placed the report on the desk and took a deep breath as he looked up to see Len.

"She wants Kain to be promoted. She says we can trust him fully," Fraser stated.

"That is good news then. Isn't it, sir?"

Fraser's face darkened. "Maybe. Maybe not. I am not entirely sure of this. First of all, Kain is with the Maeka. And the Maeka is also with Gaer. The Maeka is becoming a little too powerful."

As long as Kain remained only as a "deputy" administrator, Fraser could easily dismiss him without too much discontent. If Kain were to become the official administrator, it would become harder for Fraser to dismiss him. Gaer was the perfect example who refused to step down but promised loyalty.

"Sir, the Maeka is what is holding the snake in its place. If the Maeka sides with Emuel, United Sol is done, sir," Len stated gravely.

"Yes, yes." Closing eyes, Fraser sighed deeply. "I am painfully aware of that, Len."

Placing one of his hand on his belly, Len bowed slightly. "My apologies."

Fraser sighed once more and struck his back deep into his chair. Relaxing in his chair, he inquired Len. "Any reports from Venus and Mars? They've been awfully quiet as of late."

"As you are aware, we have been unable to properly plant spies on both planets. We have some men stationed on Venus outpost, but that's as far as we've been able to go. As for Mars, we have spies on the planet but they haven't been able to dig out any valuable info."

Fraser sighed yet again and remained silent. He eventually called it a day and went back to his home.

His house, or rather a manor, was located in outskirts of a major urban area. He drove his shuttle down on a private landing pad in his backyard and casually left the shuttle where a maid welcomed him.

“Hello, sir.”

“Is Jessica home?”

“No, sir. I believe she went out for shopping.”

“I see. Get the sauna ready.”

The maid bowed weakly. “As you wish.”

After soaking himself in the heat, Fraser was in his boxers by an indoor pool. He was relaxing on a pool chair with a shot of whisky. There was no one else in the area. He was enjoying the quietness until someone approached him with loud high heel sound.

“You are home early.” A woman in a revealing exquisite red dress spoke to him stoically.

Fraser looked up. “Hey, Jess.”

“Problems at work?”

“Nope. I just wanted a break.”

She reached out behind her neck and something clicked and her dress simply slid down, leaving her in her underwear. Then she dove into the pool and casually swum around, eventually coming back to Fraser. Her red dress at this point was already collected by a standing-by maid who had prepared a black gown and a towel.

Jessica asked as she exited the pool and took the towel from the maid. “When is Magenta coming back? I haven’t seen her in years.” She took off her underwear and put on the gown.

“She can come back now if I give the order.”

“Well? Tell her to come back then.”

Fraser inhaled a deep breath and subsequently Jessica narrowed her eyes. “Chair,” She stoically ordered the maid and she promptly readied a chair which she sat down. “What’s on your mind?”

“Any suitors for her?”

“Whiskey with lemon,” She ordered the maid and responded, “A fair amount. After all, she is your relative and a Bau insider. I was thinking of getting her settled down once she comes back.”

Fraser's face became troubled.

"So, I am going to hate what you are going to say," Jessica assumed. "And I assume it involves Magenta."

With clear hesitation, Fraser eventually spoke, "I was, well, of arranging her marriage with someone else." There was more and Jessica knew it. Thus, she waited for him to continue. "With someone who isn't a Bau."

"Well..." She relaxed on the chair and the maid came back with her whisky. "As long as the man's powerful, I don't see why not. Of course, unless you are thinking a man from the O'ren. That would be automatically a resounding no."

"The man I am thinking isn't an O'ren."

"Good. Now who is it?"

"Commodore Kain."

She didn't recognize the name at first. "Who is Ka-" She frowned immediately. "You are kidding." However, Fraser's silence spoke otherwise. She immediately stood up, dropping and breaking the whiskey glass. She exclaimed, "You are joking!"

"The man has a future, a bright future," Fraser explained. "And, if this can go through, I will promote him to-"

"She is a Bau insider!" She repeated. "A Bau insider! You are wanting her to be a mistress?!"

As if he had the same concern as her, he gritted and growled weakly. A Bau insider becoming a mere mistress had occurred before, in fact countless times. However, the men were powerful and were also Bau insiders.

"It's complicated, Jessica. It's ..." He looked as if he was trying to come up with a better word. "It's ... political."

"Political?!" She yelled. "The Bau rules the Ark and United Sol!"

"The Bau rules only Earth!" Fraser yelled back as he stood up from his chair. "On surface the clan rules United Sol but our influence doesn't go far beyond Earth! Hell, we have no control of Outer Sol! And lost half of Inner Sol to rebellion!" Panting, he lowered his voice. "I am trying to establish an ally in Outer Sol and there is only Kain who is ideal for this."

"I don't fucking care!" She shouted back. "I promised her parents that I would get her married to a powerful man!"

"He IS powerful! Perhaps not as powerful as what you have in your mind, but he has a good future! And I am willing to promote him to Commander if Magenta marries him!"

“So what?! She would be only a mistress!”

“Magenta is a skilled assassin! She could in theory assassinate Kain’s current wife!”

Jessica became speechless and took few steps back. “Are you out of your mind?! We are the Bau... and you want to resort to such tactics?!”

Fraser tried to explain in a calm manner. “Do you even realize what situation we are under? The Bau’s glory days are over. In fact, such days passed a long time ago. We don’t have Venus, Mars, and Jupiter. Saturn and Uranus outpost are basically not on our side... What do we have? It’s Earth and Moon, neither of which is a practically resourceful planet.”

However, for Jessica who never even left Earth in her whole life failed to understand the gravity of the whole situation which Fraser felt alarming and she firmly refused to let such a deal stand.

“I don’t care whatever the crap you are spewing,” She said with a strong tone. “Magenta is not becoming a mistress and that is final!”

Fraser understood what she was so mad about. He perfectly understood her. A Bau insider, who was the current President’s close relative, becoming a mistress of a man who didn’t even belong to a clan or even have a powerful background was mind-bogglingly outrageous. At the same time, he understood the current situation the nation was under. National unity as well as stability were dangerously low and, as the President, he had to do something. But it seemed using Magenta was out of luck, and he went back to his office a day later.

“Len, send an order to Magenta. Tell her to come back to Earth,” Fraser ordered behind his desk. “If this war is really going to happen, I am not risking her life on frontline.”

Len nodded firmly. “Yes, sir.”

“I also want you to talk to Feafur about the 2bn aid package.”

“Sir?”

“It’s clear that the commodore needs more aid. Besides, Uranus outpost is our first line of defense. I want to reinforce it. Talk to Feafur about it.”

Fraser did initially refuse Kain’s request for more aid some years ago. The situation changed and he was ready to give him more aids.

However, his idea of increasing the 2bn aid package was dead on arrival as Feafur fiercely opposed it, explaining that there was no need to spend money on non-Bau territory.

Fraser was obviously angry and disappointed by the decision but it wasn't unexpected.

"Where is the 'united' in United Sol, I wonder...," He said with a sigh. "Len, I may be the last President of United Sol."

Len was silent. It wasn't his place to say anything. Despite of Fraser feeling hugely negative, he still didn't give up entirely and decided to do what he could to reinforce Uranus outpost.

His next idea was to send a small fleet to the outpost and assist Kain. He sent Len to Feafur with his idea. Feafur became annoyed that Fraser was trying too hard to help someone who wasn't a Bau and came to see him in person instead.

With Len standing just outside of Fraser's presidential office, Feafur stood in front of his desk.

"Mr. President," Feafur spoke with a firm and deep voice. "You do realize we have bigger matters to attend to."

Fraser crossed his fingers and responded. "What is more important than reinforcing our border?"

"We have Venus and Mars who could invade us at any moment. Your idea of weakening Earth defense fleet does not please me."

"Neither Venus nor Mars is going to attack us. They declared independence to choose their own destiny. They have no desire to conquer other planets," Fraser argued.

Feafur insisted, "The O'ren and the Dietrich are both our fierce rivals, Mr. President. They will attack us given enough opportunity."

Frustrated, Fraser sighed as he responded back, "Feafur, why are you worrying over things that are not our immediate danger? There are numerous reports that Andromeda union is preparing to attack us. That should be our priority."

Feafur's face twitched and he approached the desk. Placing his hands on the desk, he slowly lowered his upper body. "Mr. President, we don't fear those little colonists," He said gravely as if he was warning him. "As soon as Emuel is taken care of, we plan to take Venus and Mars back. That is our first priority."

Fraser gritted and stood up slowly and Feafur's eyes followed his. "Uranus outpost has been running on loss. Reports say that Commodore Kain hasn't been able to reinforce ships he has lost. His fleet is down to fifteen hundred. Our border is being guarded by only fifteen hundred cruisers."

Feafur took few steps back from the desk with a crooked grin. "He is not a Bau. Let the outpost fall. We shall replace him with someone who is a Bau."

Fraser smashed his desk weakly and raised his voice. "Bau this. Bau that! We are running a country here! We are not running the clan!"

"United Sol is the Bau!" Feafur exclaimed.

"That is exactly why," Fraser smashed his desk harder this time, "The O'ren, the Klisis, the Dietrich, and the Vues left!"

Len rushed into the office after hearing a loud verbal argument followed by smashing. "Sirs!" He quickly dashed to separate the two men.

Sneering loudly, Feafur turned around and left the office.

"Are you alright, sir?" Len inquired Fraser who was glaring fiercely at Feafur who was already out of the office.

"Mark my words, Len. This nation is over. It's only a matter of time."

"Sir, I have more bad news."

Sighing and shaking his head weakly, Fraser responded, "What now?"

"It's Magenta. She... refuses to return."

"What?!" Although he looked clearly agitated at first, he calmed down in an instant. "Fine, what is her excuse?"

Len cleared his throat. "Borrowing her exact words, she said there were too much formality on Earth and that she'd rather stay on the outpost."

Fraser took a deep breath as he attempted to understand her words. He nodded along as he spoke. "Ok, fine, I see what she is trying to say. It's not like coming back here is beneficial for her anyway. I am sure Jessica will get her married to some man if she comes back." He sighed. "So be it. Let her stay."

"Are you sure, sir? What if the outpost becomes a war zone?"

"She is old enough to take care of herself, and she is a good assassin. I am sure she will find a way to get out of there if must. If not then..." He shrugged. "That's it. Either way, she is an adult and has decided to stay. I am not going to say much on this matter."

"If you say so, sir."

Len was about to leave the office but Fraser stopped him. "Do send her a message for me."

Turning around, Len responded, "Yes?"

“Tell her to work with the commodore as it seems she will be the only reinforcement I will be able to provide.”

“Yes, sir.”

Once Len left, Fraser fell into his chair and loosened his body and then he whispered to himself vaguely, “Mr. Kain, you are on your own.”

Fin