

[Scene 4B]

C. J. Orkney

Reth this. You hate losing your last chance to launch, your last chance to prove to those fools in the Parliament that you were right all along, your last chance to prove Blue Phoenix's viability in space - which would bring in the money you need to continue. You would give anything to finally finish what you started so many years ago. Almost anything; you are **not** going to lose Taylor on a rushed rookie flight on untested equipment, no matter how much expertise is sitting in the other seats.

The problem is that you made that deal with the Dribians about the Tersan bioweapon from IMS-10, even though you knew it could come back to haunt you. It was a gamble, one that brought in some money you really needed to keep Phoenix One on schedule. Now the Parliament has caved to greed and Tursan pressure. There are commercial enemies who want to get at your technical expertise, the Dribians are using the bioweapon as a threat, and the Tursans don't like that idea one bit, threatening crippling economic sanctions against Emera. The government thinks they can handle this better if they have it all under their control - and they're looking for a scapegoat.

That's going to be you and Blue Phoenix. The call made it clear - they're coming with overwhelming military firepower and overwhelming legal firepower - big guns and warrants for everyone's arrest, for treason. Fools! Morons! *Rething* idiots! A wet kestrel still flies!