*Chapter 49 Rae'Ver*

*Rae’Ver came back to consciousness with a splitting headache. He was shocked to be alive. Either the fragments from the planetoid or his own aides should have ended him. His vision focused and he was in his chambers. He rarely came here as he had long ago discarded the need for sleep.*

*One of his attendants sat nearby ready to wait on him. Attendants were female Sylvan who volunteered for the honor to be in his service and raise their social standing. Once they carried his child they would retire from his service and would be replaced with a new volunteer. He hadn’t felt the urge to procreate in decades and he didn’t even recognize this attendant.*

*Children…most of his aides were probably his children. In order to eliminate any sentimental and emotional attachments his children were raised away from his sight as were all those with ‘potential’. The reason was the trait for realizing the internal power was partially genetic. Those that manifested strong roots in the power would become his aides. His aides would help run the city and, if need be, they could remove him from his position as First Citizen. Well not his aides currently. His power was on a scale of a bonfire to their pitiful torches.*

*Those with the power were cherished in Sylvan society…they represented their best hope if the Malevolents ever found them again.*

*He briefly reminisced on the Sylvan’s attempts at cloning millennia ago to produce children with power. A dismal failure. Only one clone in ten thousand exhibited the power and those that did quickly went mad. No one could figure out why. He was very young Aide back then and had to watch dozens of his clones being ‘recycled’. It was a very dark time on the city ship and one of the reasons why he had taken the reigns from the previous First Citizen.*

*He turned to the attendant and asked her for a brief situation report. She hesitated only a second before relaying that 23 scouts and 11 war chariots had been lost, a third of the city ships combat strength. Also 281,622 residents of the city ship died from the impacts but the death toll was likely to rise as the census was completed. Rae’Ver sat up in bed and brought up a holographic computer screen.*

*He studied the damage reports and overlays. Well it could have been much worse. The engines were intact and both shipyards had been spared. The biggest damage was to one of the internal docking bays…five war chariots had been docked there during the impact and the city ships FTL messaging array was adjacent. Damn. He would be limited to sending out scouts to connect to other city ships until he could get that repaired.*

*He turned to the attendant and asked why his aides hadn’t removed him as he led this to this catastrophic event. She said all the aides had lost consciousness at the same time as he did. He started to process this and looked at the preliminary reports from the remaining living scientists on the explosion. The explosion of the planetoid was not overly intense…otherwise the fragments would have obliterated the city ship. It was the wave from the explosion that drained power as it passed…no siphoned it to somewhere. One scientist, Gen’Ver had some wild ideas for the data obtained before sensors lost power. She thought the wave traveled not just in actual space but also in sub space and other layers of space they were not yet aware of.*

*Rae’Ver was starting to put things together. This wave had eliminated his powers, drained him. He could feel his internal energy refilling slowly now but whatever technology had done this would be immensity valuable to the Sylvan people. It could be used as a weapon against the Malevolents.*

*The Malevolents had ripped the Sylvan from their home world and enslaved them on one of their world ships. World ships put the current Sylvan city ships to shame in size. The Sylvan toiled with dozens of other sentient races captured on the world ship and we’re used as toys by their masters. Rae’Ver didn’t know how many world ships there were but the memories passed down by the power among First Citizens showed at least six distinct world ships in their distant past. He dwelled on the memories he had received briefly.*

*The Sylvan didn’t free themselves. It was the other, older enslaved races that attempted to overthrow the Malevolents. The battle lasted months, raging through the city ship, and it looked like the Malevolents were going to prevail. The Sylvan took action at this point. They forced the world ship’s flight toward a sun and escaped in monstrous planetary harvest ships. The harvest ships were what the Malevolents used to pillage worlds they came upon. These harvest ships became the first five Sylvan city ships…*

*Rae’Ver returned his focus to the immediate situation. Two aides burst into his room with heavy pistols…with a thought Rae’Ver ruptured their spinal cords. The attendant looked on in horror as the aides slowly died. Rae’Ver didn’t have time to play today. His aides wouldn’t have killed him, just placed him in stasis with the others for when they were needed to fight the Maveloents. He needed to remain First Citizen and obtain this potentially powerful weapon against the Malevolents. If he found evidence to link it to the Astrarath then he might have to return to that star system. Since that was a likely death sentence he decided to focus his efforts here. He reassigned dozens of craft from emergency repairs to collecting as much debris as possible before it escaped too far into the void of space.*

*He sent scouts to nearby systems to hopefully contact another city ship for assistance. As this was happening he was alerted that they had also captured seven pirate ships with 185 humans on board. He needed to give the Sylvan people somewhere to focus their rage. He decided to put most of the pirates on public trial and execute them for the attack on his people. He would recruit a handful of the more competent pirates and implant biosynths in them to expand the Slyvan’s human spy network. He decided on a whim to put Sha’Lua in charge of this. Seem seemed fond of humans in general and knew how to handle them.*

*Finally was the problem with the Void Phoenix. They had evaded him and it was possible they had some connection to the multi-space energy draining wave. It would months though before he could return to his pursuit. Best to focus his effects here on salvage and send out whatever new spies he could recruit from the pirates. He would catch Devon Wellspring and question him thoroughly.*