

Book IV

# SOLAR WARS

## THE DAWN OF TWO SUNS

A long time ago, in unmeasurable eons of time... not in some distant galaxy, far, far away... but right here, in our own cosmic backyard... in our solar system... there was no earth!

Chapter 13

### The Final Mission, Part 3



**Kael'Ryn**  
MERCURY



**Princess Lysara**  
VENUS



**General Vaelor Krynn**  
MARS



**VX-17 (Vex)**  
Combat-Droid  
JUPITER



**The Shallit'Biru**



**Xal'Zirath**  
MERCURY

**DEE DOWNING**



## Chapter 13: The Final Mission, Part 3

The twins, the princess, the general, and Vex had found a safe haven deep inside the forest. The dense canopy above shielded them from prying eyes, and the air was thick with the scent of damp soil and wild foliage. As they caught their breath, **Xal** finally voiced the question that had been gnawing at him.

*"Of all the impossible to imaginable trios," he said, exasperated, "what are the three of you doing on Pheldhor?"*

**Lysara** took a deep breath, steadying herself. *"We probably got the same intel about missing ships and crews. Whoever is responsible does not discriminate. Some of the missing were Venusians."*

**Krynn's** voice was grim as he added, *"And some of them were from Mars."*

**Lysara** nodded. *"Venus accused Mars... Mars accused Venus... We were about to go to war over this."*

Krynn stepped forward, walking over to Lysara and pulling her intimately close. His presence was both commanding and protective. Vex, standing nearby, remained on guard.

*"But we couldn't let our two worlds go to war over this," Krynn said. "So we decided to come out here ourselves and find out what's really going on."*

**Lysara** continued, her voice quieter but no less urgent. *"And we did. None of us suspected Mer'Kuri would be involved."*

**Xal's** eyes narrowed. *"The Eclipse."*

**Lysara** nodded. *"Yes. The Eclipse. But that doesn't directly implicate Mer'Kuri... After all, they sent the two of you to investigate. Whoever the Eclipse are working for has a very big and well-equipped outpost here on Pheldhor."*

Kael and Xal agreed. The implications were unsettling.

**Lysara** exhaled sharply. *"After we discovered it... they discovered us. That's why we were running. Oh... and that big hungry reptile that we disturbed while fighting our way out... was a lot of motivation... Although... we didn't expect to... literally... run into the two of you."*

Kael and Xal exchanged glances, lowering their heads slightly as though giving it more thought.

**Xal** suddenly erupted, *"Wait a minute... Wait a minute... Wait one minute! What is going on between the two of you?"* He gestured between the general and the princess.

**Kael** continued, his voice dripping with sarcasm, *"I heard all the rumors... Mars is an all-male dictatorship that abhors the very idea of females."*

**Xal** added, *"Yeah... And Venus is the same way and feels the same way..."* He stumbled slightly over his words. *"But the opposite... Women... hate... men... That sort'ov thing."*

**Kael** shook his head in disbelief. *"So how in the great name of Ra are the two of you so cozy?"*

**Xal** smirked, *"Yeah... I had my designs on Princess Lysara."*

**Kael** turned to him, looking surprised. *"I had **my** designs set on Princess Lysara... After she gave me her bracelet... I didn't know she gave you a necklace."*

**Xal**, somewhat disappointed, sighed. *"She was just being friendly... I thought we were lying to the general... back at the mansion."*

Lysara glanced between them, a small, amused smile playing on her lips.

**Vex** interjected, *"OK... Now what? We've got two choices. We make our escape, go back to our respective worlds, try to convince everyone to form a coalition, work together, and come back here with one big-ass cavalry."*

**Krynn** arched a brow. *"Vex... You've been practicing your contractions and euphemisms."*

**Vex** continued, *"or... we stay here, go back to that outpost... this time with the Twin Suns... and blow the hell out of it."*

**Xal** stepped forward and bowed respectfully. *"I'm with you on that last one... Master Vex."*

For the first time, something shifted in **Vex's** usually emotionless face. His voice returned to its usual precise tone. *"I am not a master."*

**Kael** walked up beside Xal and bowed as well. *"Yes, you are. The Solari could not have taught us the things that you taught us... Because of you, we completed our trials early... in record time."*

Vex regarded them for a moment, then returned the bow.

**Lysara** looked up at Krynn; an amused smirk playing on her lips. *"Talk about bromance... I did not see that one coming."*

**Krynn** tilted his head slightly, *"Not to correct you, my love... but Vex is only simulating a 'Bro.'"*

Lysara let out a soft chuckle before playfully punching Krynn in the shoulder. In a swift motion, he grabbed her by the waist and pulled her close. The warmth of his embrace contrasted with the cool forest air, and for a moment, the tension of their situation faded.

**Xal** groaned, rubbing his temples. *"In the name of Ra... If you two were anything other than a Venusian and a Martian..."*

**Kael** folded his arms, shaking his head. *"Yeah... You feel like our parents right now. Seriously, get a room."*

**Vex** glanced between them, his tone flat. *"Excuse me... did we make a decision?"*

**Lysara** sighed, breaking away from Krynn's embrace. *"If we leave and try to convince our respective worlds that there's a big enough threat to warrant cooperation, form a coalition, and send a combined cavalry..."* She exhaled sharply. *"That could take weeks... months... years."*

They all exchanged knowing looks before nodding in reluctant agreement.

**Lysara** crossed her arms. *"So the way I see it... it's up to us five to take out that outpost."*

Kael and Xal exchanged glances before nodding in agreement.

**Lysara** raised an eyebrow, glancing between them expectantly. *"What?... I don't get a bow?"*

**Kael** and **Xal** exchanged another look before sarcastically bowing in exaggerated unison. *"Yes, your Royal Highness."*

**Lysara** smirked, rolling her eyes. *"That's more like it... Now let's get out of here."*

They all followed Princess Lysara in the direction of the outpost... with Krynn the last to depart...

**Krynn**: *"Wait... Do we even have a plan?"* He rushed to catch up... following up in the rear.

## A Funny Thing Happened On The Way To The Outpost

The quintet had been treading the dense forest terrain for an hour, their movements careful but steady as they pressed forward.

**Xal** suddenly broke the silence. *"Drakars, Vornaks, and Xelphs..."*

**Kael** grinned. *"Oh my!"*

The **twins** then chanted in unison, *"Drakars, Vornaks, and Xelphs... Oh my!"*

To their surprise, **Vex** joined in, his voice perfectly monotone. *"Drakars, Vornaks, and Xelphs... Oh my!"*

**Lysara** spun around, fixing them with a fed up glare. In a loud whisper, she hissed, *"Will you three knock it off?!"*

Krynn couldn't help but laugh, his deep chuckle breaking through the tension of their trek. But amusement was short-lived. By then, they had arrived at the crash site where Kael and Xal had previously battled the Eclipse.

The aftermath was grim. The forest floor was scorched and torn; the remnants of Eclipse equipment scattered like debris from a storm.

Nearby, the Eclipse soldiers had met a gruesome fate. Their bodies were shredded and strewn across the battlefield; deep claw marks carving through their armor like it was nothing more than cloth. Blood splattered the charred ground, and thick, gnarled trees bore the scars of powerful impacts.

The true culprit of the carnage was unmistakable. Large, deep tracks were imprinted in the dirt, leading away from the wreckage. A stifling scent of reptilian musk still lingered in the air.

**Xal** exhaled. *"Looks like the Rezzak got to them before we could."*

The Rezzak; a monstrous, apex predator of Pheldhor, was a nightmarish fusion of reptile and brute force. Its massive, black-scale body was built for both speed and destruction, with razor-sharp talons and a maw lined with rows of jagged teeth. It was known to be relentless once provoked.

**Kael** knelt beside one of the bodies, nudging a cracked helmet with the hilt of his blade. *"We did some damage... but this? This was something else entirely."*

**Lysara** tightened her grip on her weapon. *"If the Rezzak is still nearby... we need to keep moving."*

**Krynn** exhaled sharply, his eyes scanning the wreckage. *"Now we have two enemies to fight... One who will torture and kill us... and other will kill and eat us!"*

**Lysara** suddenly halted in her tracks, a spark of realization flashing across her face. *"It doesn't have to be that way,"* she murmured, turning back to the group.

Kael and Xal exchanged wary glances, but **Krynn** leaned on the wreckage, intrigued. *"I'm listening."*

**Lysara** took a step forward. *"I suspect the Rezzak has an incredibly strong sense of smell... strong enough to recognize and track specific scents. We can use that against the Eclipse."*

**Xal** scoffed, raising an eyebrow. *"Oh... You have pet Rezzaks back on Venus, Your Royal Highness?"*

**Lysara** smirked. *"No... But I think I want one"*

Everyone looked on in silence.

**Lysara:** *Anyway... we can make this Rezzak our ally when we attack the outpost."*

**Kael** frowned. *"And what's to stop it from attacking us?"*

**Lysara** gestured toward the fallen Eclipse soldiers. *"The Rezzak will think we are the Eclipse. We camouflage ourselves in these Eclipse uniforms. The scent will mask ours, and when the Rezzak picks up the familiar smell, it'll think we are the Eclipse."*

**Xal** wrinkled his nose in disgust. *"Ew! These dead Eclipse uniforms?"*

**Lysara** nodded, undeterred. *"Yes. And I'm willing to bet there's more than one Rezzak out there. We stir them up... get them riled... and then lead them straight to the outpost."*

A moment of silence hung between them as the weight of her plan sank in.

**Krynn** finally smirked. *"Using the enemy of our enemy... Clever. Reckless, but clever."*

**Vex**, who had been silently observing, finally spoke. *"Logical. If executed correctly, it will cause maximum disruption to the outpost's defenses."*

**Kael** sighed, rubbing the back of his neck. *"I can't believe I'm about to say this, but... I'm in."*

**Xal** groaned. *"Fine. But if I get eaten, I'm haunting all of you."*

**Lysara** grinned. *"Then let's get to work."*