

[Scene 4A]

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.

It's a good thing that you managed to get the Tursan bioweapon down from IMS-10. If you hadn't, the government wouldn't have given you those lucrative contracts and cash under the table, all of which you've plowed back into Blue Phoenix. You thought that the bioweapon would have purchased you a little more time, but clearly Parliament has caved to greed and Tursan pressure. There are commercial enemies who want to get at your technical expertise, the military wants your spacecraft to carry the bioweapon as a threat, and the Tursans don't like that idea one bit, threatening crippling economic sanctions. The government thinks they can handle this better if they have it all under their control. Fools! Morons! *Rething* idiots! A wet kestrel still flies!