

TYTHON SQUADRON DECK LOGS

ENTRY 0: FOUNDATION

Sky Breach Base
Daleem
Kiast System
D-1

The *Havoc's Tether* was packed to the brim with unruly, boisterous patrons. Not a single table or barstool in the dimly lit cantina remained empty. Returning soldiers, pilots, mechanics, and mercenaries drank and caroused to celebrate the recent victory against the forces of the Collective. Many drank to dull the pain of losing comrades and to forget the horrors of battle. Others chased their vices with wild abandon to escape the memory of the closing of the last war. That was a *different* time. That was a *different* place.

Far in the rear of the establishment, nestled in a corner booth sat three very *different* men. Millions of miles and lifetimes of regret and hard choices had brought them together. The heavily bandaged man, early thirties and compactly built slowly pushed his glass around the table. Clank. Clank. Clank. He was as silent and inflective as the grizzled Jedi and the stout Chiss seated to either side of him. They took turns chasing the shadows in the corners of their mind as a gaudily dressed barmaid came over to refill their slowly evaporating drinks.

Mauro Wynter should *not* have been at the *Havoc's Tether*. If it were not for the men seated with him, his corpse would lay crumped next to the bodies of the Shikari on the bleached sands of Nancora. Perhaps none of them should have been *here* at all. The same question that had haunts every soldier in every war stalked the Human's mind. "Why are we alive when so many better men are dead?" he asked.

Director Maximus Alvinus and Executor Len Iode looked up from wherever their minds had wandered to. Mauro's rhetorical question, his aching survivor's guilt was answered by the literal and methodic Chiss. "Mauro, you know the way the cards fall in war. As soldiers, we simply do what we must and hope that..." he was cut off. "He isn't talking about Nancora." Maximus stated dryly. They returned to the exhaustive work of staring at their glasses.

Commander's Quarters
Sky Breach Base
Daleem
D-Day

Standing at attention did not come easily to Mauro Wynter *these* days. Once he had been a fanatic Imperialist with Clan Scholae Palatinae. He recalled that the Director seated in front of him had often stood by his side in those days following orders mercilessly and efficiently. New Tython *had* changed that.

TYTHON SQUADRON DECK LOGS

Satele Shan's Director and Executor were somberly reviewing the Odan-Urr's casualty lists. Even in victory, the butcher's bill had come due at a steep price. Mauro remembered the Harakoans of New Tython. He recalled an ancient civilization eradicated due to hatred.

Len signaled for Mauro to stand at ease, a lifetime of military bearing and etiquette radiating off of his blue skin. "Director Alvinus has brought you here because of your shared history and because he *trusts you*. To be blunt, claiming victory in this recent war has shaken Odan-Urr to its core. We were prepared to die fighting in the skies above Kiast and on the fields of Daleem as the Collective bombarded our cities and slaughtered our people" he stated calmly.

The Chiss turned to Maximus who eyed his old friend sullenly. "We have a dilemma. Victory has brought us a windfall of recruits and credits. We are being flooded by strangers seeking asylum and former enemies seeking alliance. For our *resistance* to truly become a *rebellion* we must take this help at face value. The question becomes how can we protect our bastion of Kiast from *without* when we no longer are assured from *within*?" he asked.

BOOM. As if on cue, the holo projector built into the Director's desk began playing newsreels of events none of them could ever possibly forget. *New Tython*. The death of a planet. The genocide of a people. The shattering of a dream. Mauro shook, startled from the trauma freshly awakening in his shattered psyche. Maximus reached across the table and steadied him. A look of compassion and understanding was shared.

The Director held Mauro by his shoulders and locked his gaze. "With so many new faces we simply do not know who to trust. The Iron Throne has agents everywhere. Jedi are tempted to the Dark Side. With wealth and victory, sycophants and vice always follow. Never again shall we allow our pride and frailties be the reason for a planet to burn and a people experience genocide." Maximus was now the one shaken, if only ever so slightly.

He regained his composure. "You are to recruit an internal security force with the authority to investigate any and all members of our resistance, rooting out corruption as you find it and thwarting it from planting a seed. Furthermore, to provide the ability to launch such operations we will secretly provide you with military assets. You are to become an independent arm of the defense of the Kiast System. This is not a request, *Commander Wynter*, it is an order."

Control Cloister

Sky Breach Base

Daleem

D+1

The task of clearing out the offices previously inhabited by Garza's Pathfinders gave him no pleasure, despite his recent promotion. *Pathfinders* had a storied tradition, and had sacrificed much in the service of Odan-Urr. He hoped his erstwhile internal security force would live up to such a legacy. *Different times. Different people.*

Director Alvinus' pledge to secretly provide assets was more literal than Wynter might have envisioned. He was given no support staff and only granted

TYTHON SQUADRON DECK LOGS

access to the Cloister. The question of where to begin organizing a secret police force eluded him for many hours.

Mauro was jarred back to his senses as the doorway of the Control Cloister opened, allowing a petite, porcelain skinned Zabrak woman to enter. Wynter looked up from the console he was brooding over, puzzled by the apparition defiantly sauntering towards him. Her vestigial horns were shorn close to her scalp, covered by her wildly flowing platinum hair. She might have been mistaken for one of those angels Deep Core explorers often fabled if not for the crisp uniform she wore bearing the insignia of the O.E.F. Navy.

Wynter slowly released the blaster he had seated on his lap. *Looks could kill*, he thought to himself as the woman stood firmly at attention in front of him and rendered a crisp salute. He rose and returned the salute as best he could.

"Major Silvia Tanos, Intelligence Officer, *Remembrance of Seher*, reporting for duty as by orders of Director Alvinus," she declared smartly. A slight tone of disdain registering in her voice. She glared at Mauro as she waited to be put at ease.

"At ease, Major Tanos. Tell me, what were your orders exactly?" asked Wynter. He motioned for her to be seated as she set down a stack of dossier files. It appeared her orders included not to leave a digital footprint.

"Director Alvinus had me personally *removed* the *Seher* to serve as your Liaison Officer. I was briefed that while this mission is classified, the O.E.F. Navy will have nominal OPCON over it. I am unaware of *what* exactly the O.E. F. Navy thinks it will be controlling," she answered.

Wynter eyed the stack of dossiers. *Service records*. That is a start, he thought to himself. "Major Tanos, my mandate was to provide Odan-Urr an internal police force to suppress any corruption within our ranks while also being able to credibly support the defenses of Kiast. How I can do both with no funding or equipment is beyond my grasp," he answered ruefully.

The Zabrak sat emotionless, staring at Mauro. The thought occurred to him that Alvinus providing him with an Intelligence Officer may have been a mocking gesture. *No, it must be a clue*. He counted the number of dossiers. Eleven, including Tanos' own. He keenly scanned her service record. Much had been redacted but he noted she had previous experience as the Training Officer with *Sigma Squadron*.

"Major Tanos, please use the Cloister's comically advanced communications array to get a hold of all of the service members contained in those dossiers. Schedule a meeting as soon as possible and see if we can't reserve a hanger bay on the orbital side of Sky Breach. Meet me topside in six hours," he ordered, "I have some crates to move."

TYTHON SQUADRON DECK LOGS

Hanger Bay Delta-Seven
Sky Breach Orbital Platform
Daleem Mesosphere
D+1, 1800 Hours

Several lights flickered in the cavernous hanger bay as a faulty klaxon hummed defiantly in the distance. Mauro sat idly, waiting for Major Silvia Tanos to arrive. His desk was a drab metal alloy, shabbily constructed and showing years of abuse. So too were the four benches arranged nearby.

The Zabrak arrived punctually, as expected. Saluting crisply, she took a seat on the bench in front of him. "All recruits will be arriving tomorrow. I have scheduled a briefing at zero nine-hundred hours," stated Major Tanos. She eyed the large crates laid out symmetrically along the length of the hanger bay.

Wynter smiled, "I have reviewed the dossiers you provided earlier, if you will?" he implored her, pointing towards a display board. Twelve spots were clearly defined. *A squadron.*

They took turns going over the roster, all the pieces falling into place. In truth, they had a remarkably skilled group of individuals in their midst. Mauro Wynter was humbled. "Now then, *what* will they be flying?" asked Tanos.

Mauro picked up two crowbars hidden below his desk, handing one to the Zabrak. They walked over to the nearest crate and began dismantling the planking. When finished, Tanos stepped back with a startled gasp. "You have got to be joking!" she exclaimed.

"Far from, I am afraid. We don't have any fighters yet, so I cashed out my credits to afford these. War spoils don't come cheap," answered Mauro.

The two worked feverishly into the night, breaking down the crates of the makeshift training squadron. Tanos shook her head repeatedly. Finally, a crack in her façade appeared as she let out a laugh. "Quadjumpers, why does it have to be Quadjumpers?"

Hanger Bay Delta-Seven
Sky Breach Orbital Platform
Daleem Mesosphere
D+2, 0900 Hours

The curious sight of Quadjumpers preparing for launch was made ever more absurd by the ramshackle podium set between them. Commander Wynter and Major Tanos had spent the entirety of the morning performing pre-flight diagnostics. The recruits reported in punctually.

They were composed of a smattering of races. An alabaster toned Twi'Lek. A grey skinned Pau'an. A blue skinned Togruta. A pair of Miraluki. The group were halted by Major Tanos, who ordered them to be seated as Mauro Wynter clambered up the podium.

Mauro scanned the faces of these veteran pilots. He thought of New Tython. The silence lingered for an eternity as Wynter gathered his thoughts.

TYTHON SQUADRON DECK LOGS

"Odanites, thank you for coming here today. Many of you were there when New Tython burned. Some of you, like myself, helped bring about that destruction. After Odan-Urr found its way to Kiast we all swore there would never be another New Tython. To that I say, we are New Tython. This *is* Tython Squadron," he paused.

He scanned the crowd. "Make no mistake, Tython Squadron will be a dedicated part of the defense of the Kiast System. Yet, we have another mission. Director Alvinus has ordered the creation of a secret police force to safeguard the internal security of Odan-Urr. We will root out the corrupt and traitorous in our midst. And I promise that if we find any among us that are aiding the enemy we will be as merciless," he declared.

Low cheers rang out from some of the recruits, while others nodded with approval. Major Tanos called for silence. "Upon review of your service records postings are as follows. When your name is called please rise and go to your assigned ships."

"Vanguard Skrumm, Mystic DeMorte, and Reaver Daegella," she paused, "in light of your piloting aptitude you are appointed temporary flight leaders." The three rose. "Knight Martes, due to your colorful smuggling history you are hereby appointed squadron navigator." The young Jedi's excitement was visible as he approached the leading craft.

Major Tanos waited. "Seer Sul, due to your leadership abilities you are appointed as squadron Tactical Officer. Raider Chrome, due to your mastery of weapons systems you are hereby appointed as the squadron Weapons Officer." The two veteran warriors nodded approvingly.

"Savant Aaleeshah, in light of your slicing skills you have been appointed as squadron Electronic Warfare Officer. Seer Junazee, you are appointed as flight surgeon and squadron Medical Officer. And finally, Vanguard Korroth, due to your wealth of knowledge in sapientology and anthropology, you would serve as Scientific Officer." Tanos finished and preceded Wynter off the podium.

The hanger blast doors retracted. The energized field holding the artificial environment of the orbital platform strained as pressure stabilized. All pilots were ready for tasking.

"You are all experienced combat pilots. However, can you fly cohesively? Until we can prove our aptitude in squadron tactics we will train. Based upon the performance record, we will see what platform Tython Squadron will be commissioned to fly," Wynter declared, "all pilots prepare to launch."

NO FURTHER ENTRIES THIS PAGE

TYTHON SQUADRON DECK LOGS

ENTRY 1: BASIC FLIGHT TRAINING

**Daleem
High-Orbit
Kiast System
1300 Hours**

The harsh darkness far above the pastoral landscape of Daleem was a lonely and somber place. The beautiful, vibrant, and well-preserved Vitali stronghold was a bastion of justice and tranquility within an ever more dangerous and complex sector of space. Most who glimpse the world from this vantage are either longing to make landfall or suppressing the bitterness of leaving such a paradise.

Not so for Tython Squadron. The darkness was a blessing. The darkness meant they had purpose and more importantly time. The absence of burning cities below or of silent debris in the vacuum of space was a welcomed reminder of what normalcy could and should be for these wayward veterans. And so, they flew, nine Quadjumpers against innumerable simulated scenarios and demonstrating synchronized maneuvers. Waiting, ever waiting, for the day training would conclude and they would be deemed worthy of protecting the Kiast System.

Three tiny formations, miniscule against the backdrop of lumbering freighters and passenger liners scurrying about the system, flew with the hunger of men and women looking to satiate an itch. They were getting better. They were becoming good. Three flights of Quadjumpers, the hope of a system and the retribution of a lost dream.

"Alpha Flight, loose formation, Tython-Five to high post, Tython-Six cover bandit low," ordered Flight Leader Kasula Daegella. Instantly the two pilots obeyed the command, spreading out above and below Daegella's Quadjumper. The tight line formation became a staggered diagonal in seconds, deftly avoiding the cluster of asteroids before rapidly reforming up and increasing velocity. Six more vessels followed in suit, executing the same maneuver.

"Asteroid field cleared, all fighters proceed to zone delta-rho-delta bearing two-two-eight," Ethan Martes, Squadron Navigator declared, "Tython-Nine, assign targets at will."

The squadron did as they were told, and took up position in a tightly coordinated dance of maneuvers and jockeying of position. Upon entering their designated zone the squadron Tactical Officer began scanning down the area, ready for the simulation about to be thrown their way. Incoming messages from Daleem alerted them of their simulation. "Tython, brace for impact." Stated Mar Sul as he pulled up on the throttle. Massive holo projector feeds came to

life in the distance, illuminating a hulking, ghostly apparition of a Victory-II class Star Destroyer. And in an instant, dozens of tiny dots began to empty from the belly of the behemoth.

TYTHON SQUADRON DECK LOGS

The Victory-II opened up with its turbo-laser batteries, lancing ephemeral lights beyond the squadron and into the blackness of space. Behind them, another holoprojection crackled to life, in the guise of a Nebulon-B frigate. Instinctually the flight leader's issues orders to form up and prepare to engage the incoming projections of TIE fighters. The battle had begun.

Central Cloister Sky Breach Base Daleem

Mauro Wynter sat next to Major Silvia Tanos and the newest members of Tython Squadron, Tyraal Bitshiver and Vanguard Ranarr Kul-Tarentae. The group was busy studying the displays in front of them, monitoring the progress of the simulation above Daleem. Wynter punched in a few commands on his display, and the training craft changed to the visage of B-wing Starfighters. Major Tanos' eyes widened.

"Three dozen TIES against a squadron of B-wings? They will get torn apart." She stated, the certainty of her voice belied her tactical knowledge.

Wynter nodded slowly and eyed Bitshiver who was intently following the conversation. "Indeed. But perhaps not. Let us see if Chrome and Mar Sul can figure this training scenario out. Firstly, the Nebulon-B has powerful frontal shields and dozens of anti-starfighter cannon. If they stay in close formation their superior firepower and shielding will have its effect on the TIEs. The enemy craft will not last long."

Tyraal perked up, ready to give his analysis. "Sir, you are forgetting the fact that the Vic-II can blast the Nebulon out of the sky." Major Tanos nodded in approval. Mauro chuckled softly to himself. "Perhaps. If she stands still. The Vic is slower than a Dewback. Hopefully Tython can work together and figure out what they should be doing."

The monitors registered several TIEs being slagged by the multitude of lasers firing from the frigate. "That is their chance. I hope they take it." Offered Mauro, watching with a new intensity. He smiled as the squadron formed up in a tight formation and increased speed, breaking off from the Nebulon-B which was now diving planet-side in an attempt to get below the firing arc of the much larger capital vessel. The TIEs did not give chase to the B-wings. "They took the bait." Stated Tanos, reluctantly.

The nimble Imperial craft scored several hits on the Nebulon-B's poorly shielded central axis, attempting to sever the vessel in two. Yet, many flickered out of existence as the laser

batteries scored crippling hits. The B-wings closed into attack formation on the Vic-II, launching their payloads of proton torpedoes.

"Sir, Chrome has ordered all craft to switch to ion cannons. They are trying to lock the Vic down." Stated Tyraal.

The diagnostic displays recorded each hit. The proton torpedoes had caused moderate damage to several of the weapons platforms on the massive vessel,

TYTHON SQUADRON DECK LOGS

allowing the fighters to get in closer and target vital systems. "Tractor beams and forward propulsion have been damaged." Offered Tanos.

Wynter smiled yet again. They all watched as the Nebulon-B maneuvered below the enemy ship and prepare to jump to light speed, its path no longer blocked and receiving little direct fire. Tanos and Bitshiver gave a small round of applause as Tython Squadron formed up and followed the Nebulon-B's lead. Ranarr Kul-Tarentae nodded in approval.

"They did it, Commander. The Vic-II is incapacitated and the Nebulon-B is effecting its escape from the system." Tanos stated, preparing to signal all fighters to return to base. She was cut off by the laughter of Tython Squadron's leader. He rapidly keyed in a sequence of codes. A new holoprojector flickered to life.

"That isn't fair," Tanos laughed as well, "That isn't fair at all." They all stared wide-eyed at their displays. The shape of an Interdictor glowed menacingly as it too began to discharge TIE fighters. "Indeed, nothing in this life is fair. Let the training now begin." Wynter turned and went to fetch a carafe of strong coffee.

Deep Space
Kiast System
0900 Hours

The squadron was deeply tired. They had lived in their cockpits for weeks. Early novelty and excitement had died off after repeated simulations of no-win scenarios and numerous missions that ended in nothingness. Boredom.

They had patrolled the commercial lanes entering and exiting the system. They had ran convoy duty for passenger liners between Daleem and Kiast. They had scrambled for sorties against merchants to check their cargos and passenger logs. Mainly, though, nothingness and boredom to stunt the nerves of the pilots.

Aaleeshah studied her console, scanning down transmission snippets and anomalies. Out on the empty side of the system, no lanes or orbital bodies, there should have been nothing emanating. "Sky Breach, we have a coded transmission coming through. Stand by for transfer."

The twelve Quadjumpers fanned out by flight, looking for anything in the vast bleakness of space. Junazee called it out first, "There is something out there." They all studied their displays and fanned out carefully.

Ethan Martes clicked on his comms, "There, nine o'clock high bearing two-seventy. There is an old smuggler's route emanating from an asteroid field out that way." His previous illicit activities clearly paying dividends for the team.

TYTHON SQUADRON DECK LOGS

Their quandary was answered by the massive glow of engine fire burning to life in the distance. The hulk of a modified Gozanti-class cruiser lumbered forward, engines bleeding red to blue in preparation to jump.

"That's a C-Roc...we don't have much time to race her down," Ethan added, Quadjumpers forming up in attack formation. Mar Sul provided an approach plan and site picture to buzz the vessel, hoping to divert it and disrupt the jump.

Chrome waved Mar Sul off, "Negative Mar, that thing is gonna cut and run we only have one chance to stop her. Alpha Flight, buzz her bridge and buy us a few seconds and keep her guns busy. Bravo and Charlie Flight, deploy tow cables. Aaleeshah, alert Sky Breach we are taking in a hostile tow. We have one chance to do this right. Going to need fancy coordination to bring that ugly beast in."

Alpha Flight did as ordered, blasting by the helm of the C-Roc, forcing her to adjust her heading ever so slightly and reducing her speed. The two remaining flights formed up in precision-infiltration formation, nearly touching two abreast and three deep. "When we deploy, Jedi, going to need your help in a big way," barked Chrome, "Lets see if this works."

Hanger Bay Delta-Seven
Sky Breach Orbital Platform
Daleem Mesosphere
1300 Hours

Commander Wynter and Major Tanos ran to Tython Squadron's hanger, barely outpacing a tactical team of security forces. The radio transmissions were odd to say the least. They entered the hanger to see the massive frame of a C-Roc cruiser barely clearing the ceiling and the Quadjumpers parked neatly against the bulkhead. The pilots stood in ranks, beaming ear to ear.

Major Tanos got to the pilots first, "That was entirely out of line. You had no orders to engage a fleeing smuggling ship. You were unarmed and flying tugs. This is outrageous!" Wynter was taken slightly aback by the woman's tone. "Fancy flying be damned, you are lucky none of you got killed."

Mar Sul, Chrome, and Aaleeshah stepped forward, as did the Flight Leaders. It was Mar Sul who spoke, "Major, we had a viable plan and actionable intelligence showing encoded transmissions were headed across the system. We had to act."

It was Wynter's turn to browbeat his pilots, "Indeed, but by doing so you jeopardized all of the pilots and their craft for an unknown benefit." The pilots all stepped back into line, as Wynter and Tanos followed the security team to inspect the C-Roc's cargo hold. Minutes later they came back out, appearing stunned. "Aaleeshah, were you able to analyze those transmissions?"

The blue skinned Togruta stepped forward. "Commander, yes sir. I was able to verify two transmissions were sent out when we came into vicinity of the

TYTHON SQUADRON DECK LOGS

unknown craft. One was sent out of the system. Another came directly to....Sky Breach Base."

Wynter nodded and pulled Major Tanos aside. "Lock down this hanger and get the Director and Executor on the horn. They will want to know a smuggling vessel loaded with military contraband sent coded transmissions to someone here at Sky Breach before we pounced on them. Oh, and we need to see what we can do about the contraband...I think we can put it to good use."

Commander's Office

Sky Breach Base

Later

Director Maximus Alvinus and Executor Len Iode sat incredulously at the small, ornate, cedarwood conference table. Commander Wynter and Major Tanos had spent the remainder of the afternoon and early evening using the Central Cloister's advanced computers and data analysis capabilities to track and modulate the coded transmissions from *Raxanna's Remorse*. The impounded C-Roc cruiser had slipped into the Kiast System from an unknown vector and had remained hidden for some time transmitting coded missives.

Wynter allowed Major Tanos to explain the specifics. The vessel was crewed by a skeleton team of advanced droids and slaver circuits. Korroth and Aaleeshah had been working non stop to try to figure out just where the vessel was being controlled from. The only information they could as yet glean from the droid brain navigation was that Arx was a preprogrammed destination.

"In so many words, Major, the Iron Throne may have smugglers working for them that know ways in and out of our system, and better yet they may have infiltration teams working for them within Sky Breach itself?" asked Director Alvinus.

Len Iode's face perked up a slight tick. "Sir, you are forgetting that the cargo vessel was moving advanced weaponry and starfighter craft with no escort and no sentients. That is equally puzzling. What was the ship's purpose, and to what end?"

"We need to know those things as well, Iode. The who and the why are just as important as the destination and origination. For the time being we must put our forces on alert and bolster security measures at the vectors into Kiast. If we lock down Sky Breach it will alert the collaborators that we are on their tale, forcing them to ground. No, we must act as all is normal within these walls. Commander, is your team ready to do some investigative work and earn their commissioning? I can see from their fancy flying they are good in the cockpit but what about with a blaster?" asked Alvinus.

Tanos and Wynter looked at each other for a split second, not wanting to divulge that they had spent as yet no time training the squadron for ground tactics and infiltration. *Too much time in the air, and still no ships*. Wynter pushed the thought aside. "Sir, with the equipment in the Cloister and the current manpower at my disposal we can certainly take lead and run this to ground. However, sir, I believe it is time to ask for some assistance. Our team has been flying training craft for weeks now and have shown they can do

TYTHON SQUADRON DECK LOGS

the near impossible. This contraband capture has been great for morale, but they still are not commissioned and still are flying Quadjumpers. We need dedicated fighters. We are lucky no one died in that stunt with the C-Roc."

Executor Len scowled somewhat, it was in poor taste to ask so brazenly of a superior. Director Alvinus belied none of the same thinking, and sent a smile to his Chiss counterpart. "Perhaps it is my old friend. They have done well in training, and now we see Tython is needed. Our space lanes are exposed and we indeed may have enemies in our midst. I will talk to our Consul and see what OEF may be able to pry loose. In the meantime, you have several commendations for me to sign?"

Major Tanos placed a docket on the desk, pushing it towards the Executor and Director. "Yes, everyone in Tython Squadron has proven to be an adequate to spectacular pilot, and their teamwork has allowed them to rise above even crack front-line units. But these three have proven themselves admirably throughout this basic training cycle and were instrumental in their own right in capturing the *Raxanna's Remorse*."

Alvinus read the dispatches and nodded approvingly. Very well, please give my regards and thanks to Raider Chrome, Seer Junazee, and Vanguard Ranarr-Kul Tarentae for their performance. They are hereby entitled to the title of Trainee Ace and upon commissioning of the unit may wear a half chevron on their helmets...once we get them helmets...and ships...dismissed you two. I will let you know about your ships once you get us some leads on our insider threat."

CONFIDENTIAL

NO FURTHER ENTRIES THIS PAGE

TYTHON SQUADRON DECK LOGS

ENTRY 2: OPERATION ENIGMA

**Orbital Platform
Sky Breach Base
Daleem - Kiast System**

The members of Tython Squadron were on high alert. Their commissioning ceremony had been cut short due to the ongoing intelligence gathering they were conducting on the commandeered Raxanna's Remorse C-Roc Cruiser. The question of where she had originated from still eluded JTF Satele Shan. More importantly, who were the cargo of advanced weaponry intended for and what persons within Sky Breach Base was she corresponding with?

Commander Wynter walked the flight line of hanger Delta Seven. The immaculately maintained Tie Defenders sat in two neat rows arranged along the bulkheads to either side of him. The mechanics, standby pilots, and ground support staff had arrived from JTF Satele Shan earlier in the day and were busy moving in and setting assignments. He had allowed Major Silvia Tanos to handle this work, being more adept in military organization and squadron administration. He was worried by the clear security breach within JTF Satele Shan. The fact that Tython Squadron had personally investigated each and every member of this crew had done little to reassure him.

He continued to make his way towards the new command center, the recently vacated bridge of the platform. Here most of his crew were busy working on analyzing data and designing the new layout of the platform itself. He encountered the imposing Miraluka, Mystic Talis Demorte. "Talis, how goes the renovation plans?" he asked.

Before he could answer, excitedly, Knight Zeline Nemesis ran into the command center and darted from console to console striking up conversations as she went. Talis smiled ruefully. "It is good to see Tython getting its first knightdom. Between Zeline's energy and the excitement of this renovation, morale has not taken a hit as we struggle to find the Raxanna's secrets."

Wynter nodded, appreciating Talis' candor. "But, with any luck the ready room and our flight cantina will be completed within the week. The interrogation center and prison complex is proving more difficult. Can we relax the contractor requirements by a Bantha hair?" asked Talis.

"Sadly not. We can only trust those we have vetted for our ground support staff. I will see if Major Tanos can rotate more mechs away from preventative maintenance and into steel working and masonry." answered Wynter. He pressed onward to the main bank of data processors and the team of pilots devouring fragments of code.

Some of the most senior and brilliant members of Tython Squadron turned to face him from their screens. Vanguard Korroth and Savant Aaleeshah did not turn, busy as they were trying to re-engineer the code by looking at alien languages and physiological cues. Vanguard Jafits Skrumm, Reaver Kasula Daegella, and Seer Junazee awaited his orders.

TYTHON SQUADRON DECK LOGS

"Commander, any word from JTF Shan? Surely official channels have picked something up?" asked Seer Junazee. Wynter shook his head sadly. "Chrome and Mar Sul are hounding them as we speak, and you know how persuasive Chrome can be when he is agitated."

Pilots shuffled in and out over the next few hours, as the patience within the squadron whittled down to a hacked stub. They could not fail in their first mission. Wynter was confident that with the assembled talent he could muster within the team they would find something. Anything.

And then it happened. The ephemerally shimmering, porcelain skinned Major Silvia Tanos marched into the command center ringed by Knights Ethan Martes, Chasse Ordin, Tyraal Bitshiver, and the newest member of the team, Yeoman Tex. She saluted smartly as Wynter waved her off. "By the looks of this dangerous bunch we have found something?"

Ethan and Tyraal looked at each other slightly, then averted their gaze. Tex and Chasse simply looked at Major Tanos, awaiting their cue. "Indeed. I believe this team of investigators have done their job admirably if not...too eagerly. They were able to run some financial forensics to see what personnel planetside had been receiving large sums of credits off payroll cycle. One name kept popping up. Sure enough, by the time they got to his quarters they found him beaten nearly to death. Whoever the insider threat is they know we are on to them." answered Tanos.

"And? Did we receive any names of accomplices or feedback on what the hell that C-Roc Cruiser was doing smuggling advanced weaponry into system?" asked Wynter.

Ethan stepped forward, slurring his words slightly, before he could be restrained by Tyraal and Chasse. "Commander, it wasn't our fault. We didn't know how badly he was beaten. We only smacked him around a little bit. Plus, we were at the cantina when we caught on to him and." He was curtly silenced by a stern look from Chrome and Mar Sul as they walked into the room.

Major Tanos took her cue. "What this inebriated Jedi is trying to say is that the suspect died before they could get the full story but were able to beat some information out of him. He gave up an encoded crypto-currency token and babbled about some minor functionary on Arx. If we can break this code and track the funding we might be able to cross-reference it with the fragments of a location that the Raxanna was transmitting to."

Now the entire squadron was standing up, the anticipation and excitement palpable. From the back of the room the monotone voice and measured cadence of Korroth was heard. "Let Aaleeshah and I see that token. You might want to fuel up the fighters we should have coordinates within an hour."

Hanger Delta Seven
Orbital Platform
Sky Breach Base
Daleem

TYTHON SQUADRON DECK LOGS

Exactly one hour later, the dozen Tie Defenders were finishing pre-flight checks as the mechanics scurried about and flight control ran diagnostics. Hyperdrive coordinates had been programmed and extra field rations had been stored throughout the cockpits. The pilots donned their flight suits in the open, not letting modesty get in their way. They all knew time was essential. Soon the news of the death of Ensign Yon Keto would be public knowledge and the co-conspirators that had silenced him would be sure to have covered their tracks. If they learned of the missing token word might back it to back to Arx and the Iron Throne to scuttle whatever plans they had.

Tython Squadron could not afford to let this trail die off. It was their first and best chance to compromise the Iron Throne's assets within JTF Shan and to learn what other operatives it may have within Odan-Urr as a whole. The Raxanna's Remorse could have been the first step in a greater plan or it could be the near culmination in a far greater threat.

The pilots were huddled around a newly unpacked holo projector table as Major Tanos and Commander Wynter began to address them. Aaleeshah and Korroth stood in front, looking content with their findings. "Tython Squadron, this is to be our first official mission. We do not have clearance from JTF Shan, we have not run this by higher headquarters on Kiast, and only Director Alvinus and Executor Iode know what we are doing." Wynter paused to let the pilots shout out loudly, letting their bravado and pride swell.

Major Tanos stepped forward and continued the briefing. In the distance the Tie Defenders were being decoupled from their restraints and engines fully engaged. "Here is what we know. Ensign Yon Keto of JTF Shan was being paid by the Iron Throne and received the coded messages from the Raxanna's Remorse. We do not know how long the ship was in system or who her cache of weapons were for. We do know that Ensign Keto was badly beaten and left for dead by his accomplices to silence him before we got to him. Luckily, some of our brain trust were able to decode some actionable intelligence." She clicked on the holoprojector to display an uncharted sector of the Unknown Regions.

Commander Wynter continued the briefing. "We have tracked financial transactions and communications from the Raxanna and Ensign Keto to Arx, where they were transmitted to this sector, Gamma-Delta-Delta-Seven in the Unknown Regions. We have no data on this system except there are no planets and several asteroid fields. Our mission is to scout out this system and find out who or what is out there and how it relates to our Ensign Keto, the infiltrators within JTF Shan, the Iron Throne, and the Raxanna's Remorse. We will be flying nearly blind and have no backup support from the JTF. I repeat this is a scouting mission only, we are not the Odan-Urr military proper. We are not to start a war with the Iron Throne unilaterally." He finished his briefing, seeing the eyes of his pilots downcast before finishing, "Tython Squadron, scramble all fighters."

Uncharted System Sector Gamma-Delta-Delta-Seven Unknown Regions

The Odanite forces entered the system from the deep outer edge. The ships all maintained communications silence and cut their engines. They knew not what they would find in the cold recesses of the system, so it was best to be careful.

TYTHON SQUADRON DECK LOGS

Tython Squadron were hungry from answers and revenge. It had only been a few days since the Raxanna's Remorse was impounded and knowledge of an insider threat was uncovered. This was a probing mission, to be sure, but much depended upon Commander Wynter's success. Such a brazen and bold move could not go unpunished.

From the fog of war facts were known to Commander Wynter and the leadership of House Satele Shan. First, it was assumed that the Iron Throne was testing the resolve and the defenses of the Clans after the devastating recent war. Secondly, they had resorted to sending in mercenary and criminal elements to do their dirty work as Arx marshalled their own forces. And finally, the Raxanna's Remorse had originated here.

The system was hard to trace, as it appeared on no star charts. It had taken them a long time to get here, manually plotting jump points along hyperspace to reach it. Wynter was troubled by the meaning of it. Why would the Iron Throne take such precautions and such secrecy to launch mercenaries by making them stage so remotely? Something else was going on and he was not sure he liked it. The victory against the Collective was a triumph, but perhaps it was too easily won.

Scanning down the system, Wynter picked up massive asteroid fields yet no inhabited planets. The interference from the asteroid field was making a full spectrum scan difficult. It was clear they were not alone. Eyeing his console he could make out several large vessels dispersed around the system and a multitude of smaller attack craft.

With perfect precision the Battleteam Leader navigated a section of the asteroid field to get a better resolution, his wingmates following close behind. In the distance the bright flashes of laser fire was evident, and the faint blue afterglow of ion engines could be seen. A battle was occurring. Wynter threw back the throttle, as the rest of his team did likewise. The telekinetic Force users communicating rapidly, trying to piece together the puzzle.

Finally, Seer Mar Sul broke the silence and opened comms. Wynter was upset by the break in protocol, but the Squadron Tactical Officer must have his reasons. "Commander, it appears the mercenaries are being assaulted. Do we engage?"

Wynter was taken by surprise and had to compose himself. "Indeed, Savant Aaleeshah open comms with the forces assaulting the larger ships. Mar Sul and Chrome, get us a tactical picture of the situation, and Ethan plot our attack vector."

He did not say, nor would he say, that this was not a real mission. At least, not officially. This was a training mission concocted by Wynter and Silvia Tanos to test the squadrons operational proficiency in planning and executing a mission. The fact that they had actually found hostiles in this sector and could be instrumental in turning the tide of battle was a prize he could not turn away. Perhaps he would run more of these training missions to keep the squadron on its toes.

TYTHON SQUADRON DECK LOGS

Uncharted System
Sector Gamma-Delta-Delta-Seven
Unknown Regions

Tython Squadron roared out of the asteroid field blazing laser fire in all directions, taking the hostile forces off-guard. Heavily engaged with the smaller, more nimble Nighthawk piloted vessels the mercenaries' own fighter craft wilted away like blades of grass before a scythe. Savant Aaleeshah had established comms with the leader of the Arconan forces, Constantine and patched him through.

"Thank you for the timely arrival Tython. Seems like we both have a score to settle here. How should we play this out?" asked Constantine. Wynter deferred to his Tactical Officer, Mar Sul. "Sirs, if I may, with our arrival we are hammering down the enemy's interceptor and support craft. It appears we took them unaware and we have a small window to wreck havoc before friendly forces arrive on station from across the system. Our main problem is that damn Nebulon-B that is directing all counter-fire."

Wynter considered this information carefully as he lead his flight towards a group of old but efficient Z-95 Headhunters and Y-Wing bombers. "That must be the flagship of this flotilla. Someone of importance must be on her bridge. If we can infiltrate her we can find out who these bastards are working for. Constantine, if I put my fighters under your operational control can Nighthawk buy my strike team some time to insert and gather intelligence?" asked Wynter.

Constantine offered in the affirmative, as Savant Aaleeshah networked a joint comms between the friendly craft. In moments a command and control element was established and joint tactical displays were illuminating inside each fighter craft. "Good hunting ladies and gentlemen. Tyraal, Chrome, Zeline, Junazee, and Arcia on me. Prepare for hostile landing inside that Nebulon's hanger bay. Mar Sul, assist Constantine in any way possible. Major Tanos has temporary command of Tython in case we do not make it out."

In an instant the designated pilots formed up in tight formation and wheeled off from the melee. Nighthawk and Tython vessels dispersed widely, tasking the laser batteries on the Nebulon-B and straining the vessels targeting systems. Wynter and his team now came in for the kill, flying as close together as they dared to present the smallest sight picture to the enemy. "Hang on ladies and gentlemen, crashing through that energy field is going to take a drastic toll on our shields." Chrome offered gruffly.

The lead craft, piloted by Tyraal Bitshiver made contact with the energy field first. Sparks illuminated his craft as it skittered lifelessly to the deck inside the Nebulon B's hanger bay. The temporary delay in the status field allowed the other craft to fly in and drop their propulsion instantly, inertia smashing the craft to the deck and taking out equipment and ground crew wildly. As the pilots stumbled out of their cockpits, enemy fire was sporadic and disjointed. The mercenaries had not prepared for such a rouse. "Constantine, we are in. If we are not out in fifteen minutes or if you can't disable this big bitch be prepared to launch without us." Wynter declared. For the strike team, it was truly do or die.

TYTHON SQUADRON DECK LOGS

Hanger Bay
Defiant II
Unknown System
Unknown Region

Within minutes the fighting for the hanger bay was over. The small security team, aided by mechanics and reserve pilots were easily dispatched by the ferocious Jedi and officers of the strike team. The Jedi, however, exchanged uneasy looks. "What? Something is wrong. Why aren't they rushing security forces to cut us off?" asked Wynter.

The female Miraluka turned to face her commanding officer as Zeline and Tyraal looked at each other wearily. "Commander, they wanted us to land. This ship has a skeleton crew as it is, but they are not pushing forces to stop us. They have pulled forces to the bridge but have left the access points unguarded. There is a Sith aboard. I feel her presence."

Wynter swore loudly to Junazee. "Well, if we are forced to deal with a bad hand lets at least see if we can't make fine ale out of rotten fruit. Arcia, Chrome, the way to the engineering bay is wide open. Take down the ships propulsion system and hold it down. Jedi, on me. Looks like we need to take the bridge."

Tython Squadron's commander did not like splitting up his scant forces, but presented with the opportunity of disabling the craft he had no choice. Mentally, he took stock of the reprimand Mar Sul and Major Tanos might give him for doing so. "This goes against every rule of military tactics, but under the circumstances I cannot disagree." Offered Colonel Cortel as she lead Chrome towards the engineering bay. Luckily, the odd design of the Nebulon-B presented them a short hike to the propulsion systems in the rear of the craft. With any luck, they would have dispatched the guards and have control of the ships engineering plant within minutes.

"Be efficient but not too good Chrome, we don't want the bridge to know the ship is compromised, yet." Wynter gave the order hesitantly as the Junazee and the Knights prepared to move forward. "Good hunting Tython."

The Jedi and Wynter methodically moved down the axial ray that divided the fore and aft of the Nebulon-B. It was a kill zone, and they all knew it. The fact that the enemy had not erected strongpoints, emplaced laser batteries, or closed blast doors let them know they were indeed walking into a trap. It was both a blessing and a curse that the economical and efficient design of the Nebulon-B gave them a clear path to the bridge. They neared the bridge and Wynter gave the order to hold fast. "Juna, you said this vessel had a skeleton crew but their laser fire against our craft was blistering. How is that possible?" asked Wynter.

"Droids sir, the sentient crew are spread out along the laser batteries. I sense only a handful of sentients on the bridge itself." Answered Zeline before Junazee could respond.

Wynter ordered them forward, as the Jedi ignited their sabers and cautiously approached the bridge. As they walked into the cramped but multi-level command pod Wynter cursed his team's luck. Droids indeed. A squad of Magna-

TYTHON SQUADRON DECK LOGS

Guards stood erect, surrounding a single crimson robbed human Twi'Lek female. Her blood red hue and snarling face let out a dangerous laugh. "Greetings Jedi, welcome to my ship." The Magna-Guards pounced, making contact with the Knights and Junazee. "I am glad you made it Grand Inquisitor Wynter. I have been expecting you for a long time."

Bridge

Defiant II

Unknown System

Unknown Region

Knights Zeline and Tyraal engaged two Magna-Guards each as Seer Junazee entered battle meditation, directing the efforts of the athletic and young Jedi, giving them strength and radiating Force energy. Wynter slowly approached the Sith combatant. "Taril Hron. It has been a long time since we crossed paths." The Twi'Lek smiled, not yet igniting her deadly blade.

"Indeed. If I recall, you left me to die on Belsavis. I thought that our time together meant more to you than that. You must know the Inquisitorius does not take lightly to its top agents defecting to the enemy."

Wynter made no move to his blasters. He sensed the rage and scorn within the Twi'Lek. "It was nothing personal Taril. I admit you were a hard habit to break. Did you know? Were you aware of what would happen to New Tython? And yet you stayed on?" asked Wynter.

That blood curdling laugh echoed against the singing dance that was lightsaber on Force pike raging in the background. "Not that it matters, but I did not. Still, many of us remained loyal. Did you know that I was assigned to guard you? Assigned to turn you? Why have you blocked out the Force for so long? You could have been one of our best assets in the Inquisitorius but your weaknesses and fear have blinded you."

Wynter walked slowly towards the Twi'Lek, and offered an embrace. They hugged for a moment before she pushed him away forcefully. "I will admit seducing you was easy enough. But your betrayal cut me deeply. If it was up to me I would stab your heart out and deliver your head to Arx. Alas, that is not my mission." She declared.

"And what is your mission?" asked Wynter politely. She laughed yet again. "No, not so fast or so easy my old friend. Tell your men to stand down and come with me." Junazee warned him telepathically, alerting him that Arcia and Chrome had made contact with a team of Magna-Guards and were fighting for control of engineering.

"Even if I did, they wouldn't listen to me. You aren't leaving this ship alive Taril." Stated Wynter bluntly, with a sigh of sadness.

Her gaze pierced him, this time she did not laugh. "These Jedi trust you and have faith in you. Order them to stand down or you will watch them die in front of you. Give in to the power of the Dark side and come home with me. I will let them live and join the Inquisitorius."

Before he could answer, Junazee stepped forward and ignited her lightsaber. "Commander, get what we came here for. I am not afraid of this evil bitch."

TYTHON SQUADRON DECK LOGS

Wynter reluctantly ran towards the data console and began to slice into the databank. He heard the hiss of blade on blade.

The Magna-Guards were efficient Jedi killing machines, but they were ancient and not well maintained. In the distance Wynter saw that Zeline and Tyraal were finishing off the last pair. "Clear the bridge, help Cortel and Chrome. If we do not make it scuttle this ship and launch." The two Knights hesitated, not wanting to leave their Miraluka and human comrades. Reluctantly, they ran off dutifully.

Wynter sliced as fast as he could, gathering any data that was readily available. He looked back, and saw Junazee fighting with a grace and tranquility he had never before witnessed. The Sith Twi'Lek attacked aggressively and filled with hate. She was gaining ground slowly, pushing Junazee away from the egress points and towards a bulkhead. He had no time to think.

Rushing forward, he ran to Junazee's aid. He doubted she needed it, truthfully, but his sense of duty overtook him. Taril was slashing ferociously, her superior strength evident. Finally, Wynter let his own rage, and bitterness over New Tython overcome him. "Enough!" he screamed, as Taril was pushed backwards. Junazee did not miss the opportunity, and plunged her blade deep into the Twi'Lek's midsection. She fell, sliding a few meters across the deck.

"Commander..." she was at a loss. Taril laughed, coughing up dark clumps of blood. "Then my work here is done. She dropped her saber and tried to regain her feet. Wynter ran to her. "Junazee, take the helm! Report to Constantine and our forces to land. We need extra hands to clear out the gunnery crews." The Seer did not want to leave her commander alone with the dying Sith. She reluctantly took a seat at the helm and made contact. Wynter took hold of the Sith and carried her dying body to the medical bay.

Medical Bay
Defiant II
Unknown System
Unknown Region

In an hour it was all over. Taril Hron was dead, and the remaining sentient crew were in custody. They had given up with little bloodshed. The intelligence gained from the *Defiant II* was little, sadly. Wynter could now confirm that the Inquisitorious was funding the corruption of junior officers within the OEF and that the Shipwright's Guild was funneling resources to this mercenary force. How deep the corruption ran, they did not know. Something big was in the works however.

Constantine and the members of Nighthawk had established communication with Arcona high command, and capital ships would be inbound to clean up the system shortly. Savant Aaleeshah was establishing a coded connection back to Daleem.

Wynter approached Constantine and held out his hand. "Congratulations sir, your men put on a fine show. Your command of a joint force was brilliant. My compliments to Arcona."

TYTHON SQUADRON DECK LOGS

Constantine shook Wynter's hand swiftly and came in for a forceful hug. "Indeed sir. Your pilots are some of the best I have ever seen. Your Jedi were spectacular in clearing this vessel. What now?"

Wynter paused, thinking for a moment. "Arcona has had its revenge for the assault on your home system. We leave this system to your care. We learned enough here to know there will be significant problems back home for us. This mission was never sanctioned and here we have commandeered an enemy warship. The repercussions will be dire.." he was stopped by a brash look from Constantine.

"Well then, comrade, it is best no one knows about it then?" The two locked eyes and smiled. "Indeed, we will be leaving immediately. Several of our Tie Defenders are badly damaged. We will need to take this ship as a war prize and hide it somewhere for safe keeping."

Wynter turned to see Aaleeshah, who was flanked by Chrome, Mar Sul, Korroth, and Major Tanos. "And I need to make a call to Maximus and Len immediately. They will need to make a call on the Shipwright's Guild sooner than later. As for Tython Squadron...I think we may be grounded for a time..."

He turned to leave, and slowly made his way to the bridge. He stopped to look at Taril's lifeless body. He was deeply saddened. Junazee still sat at the helm, and began to pilot the craft home. Ethan Martes soon relieved her of her duties.

"Commander...what happened back there...how did you?" she asked without saying. "I don't want to talk about it. *Ever.*" He sank down in a chair and pondered the implications.

NO FURTHER ENTRIES THIS PAGE

TYTHON SQUADRON DECK LOGS

ENTRY 3: SHADOW OF THE KESARET

Guildmaster's Quarters
Shipwrights' Guild
Daleem
Kiast System

Glav Valenforge sat uneasily in his luxurious hardwood chair, behind a well appointed matching desk. His view of the skyline of Daleem was unimpeded, myriad airships and space faring vessels leisurely flew by. *They* were late. As the leader of the largest commercial enterprise within the Vitali Empire, Valenforge was not accustomed to waiting. The Imperial family never made *him* wait.

The Sephi's secretary knocked on the door hesitantly. "Guildmaster, your noon appointment has arrived." The woman's voice was high pitched, giving away her unease. "Very well. See *them* in. Please inform *them* that they are late." Director Maximus Alvinus and Executor Len Iode strode in purposefully, men not used to being fetched by mere industrialists. As *guests* of the Vitali Empire, however, the forces of Satele Shan were public servants and had to adhere.

"Guildmaster, good afternoon. Our apologies for being detained. We humbly seek your forgiveness. We thank you for sharing your information with us regarding the Maelstrom Corsairs and the lost cargo of the *Kesaret*. We had initially assumed our assault on their stronghold had crippled the pirates, but you have evidence to the contrary?" Director Alvinus stated as contritely as he could under such conditions.

The Sephi glared at his secretary as she slinked out of the office. He reluctantly turned to face the Human and Chiss, trying to avert his look of disdain. "Yes, all that we have been over. You have killed many a corsair. Yet, my cargo ship has never been returned and its valuable cargo is missing. The question lies in this conundrum. Where exactly is my cargo and where is my cargo ship?"

Len Iode cut off his Director before tempers could flare. The methodic Chiss was accustomed to using logic to his advantage. "We too have pondered this. It appears that the Maelstrom Corsairs could have sold your cargo and moved it off-system. However we have our best pilots scouring the system in our best fighter-craft. If anything can be..." he was cut off abruptly by an upturned hand of Glav Valenforge.

The Sephi glared defiantly at the Chiss. "Iode, do me the favor of honesty. I know that your men detained a vessel earlier this year containing my prized cargo of advanced fighter-craft. You impounded it, and have failed to find any intelligence. What exactly are your forces doing in the Kiast System if you cannot assist the Empress and her subjects? This is unacceptable."

Director Alvinus rose, rage seething. "You forget yourself *Guildmaster*. You indeed helm a conglomerate of three-hundred thousand workers and have the

TYTHON SQUADRON DECK LOGS

Empress' ear. However...we own the skies. Therefore, how did you hear of a classified detention of a pirate craft that only the most trusted of *my* forces are aware of?"

The Sephi smiled and laughed slightly to himself. Len and Maximus looked at each other incredulously before the Guildmaster answered. "Why, gentlemen, because we both have the same problem. Your trusted JTF Satele Shan is woefully compromised as my Guild. They have become a den of thieves and traitors. Find my cargo ship and return my cargo, and perhaps we can begin to apprehend our turncoats and fix our leaks."

Shipwright Guild

Factory Complex

Daleem

Kiast System

Commander Mauro Wynter and Major Silvia Tanos strode through the narrow corridors of the factory city. It was a hellish maze of cramped alleyways and putrid industrialized streets in an otherwise pristine and majestic landscape. They were one of many small strike teams sent by the Quaestor and Aedile of House Satele Shan to investigate the Shipwright's Guild holdings. The sheer volume of factories, shipyards, wharfs, warehouses, and industrial complexes were staggering. The task of investigating over a quarter of a million employees was straining the resources of JTF Satele Shan to its core.

Wynter and Tanos had expressed their unease at their current mission. Most of the best pilots and operatives of Tython Squadron were airborne, patrolling the area where the Kesaret was last seen and maintaining a presence over where the Corsairs were last encountered. It had occurred to the pair that the Corsairs they had dispatched earlier had been only a small portion of the overall organization. The question of was pulling their strings and what their true intent was alluded them.

"So, say your theory is right. The guild stole their own cargo and funneled them to the Corsairs. I can follow that logic that Valenforge may be trying to overthrow the Empress by arming elements of the Vitali Empire and bringing in pirates. But, if so, why draw our attention to it?" asked Major Tanos.

Wynter looked at her sympathetically. "Major, the Guildmaster most certainly is not involved, he has too much to lose if a change of regime was to occur. However, with so many members within the guild and the political power it enjoys the Imperial family, the Iron Throne, hell even Black Sun could be behind this. We know for a fact now that us seizing the Raxanna's Remorse and the taking of the Kesaret are linked. We simply do not know..." he was cut off by the sound of rapid laser fire.

Tanos knocked him to the ground, shielding him from the blaster fire. "Damn, I knew it was a mistake not to take in an armed escort." Offered Tanos. The Director himself had ordered no military assets were to molest the guild's holdings. JTF Satele Shan did not want the suspicions become widely known. The pair looked around, and saw many hostile looking workers scurry to their homes and places of work. Commander Wynter keyed on his comms. "This is Bravo cell. We are under small arms fire. How copy all?"

TYTHON SQUADRON DECK LOGS

Savant Aaleeshah answered immediately. "Commander, monitoring your position from deep space. Alpha, Charlie, and Delta cells have made contact with hostiles as well. Their comms are being jammed. It is a small miracle I was able to amplify our signal to reach you. We have dispatched a call for JTF ground forces to come to your aid but you are alone for the next few hours. We have company ourselves and..."

Garbled static roared through his comms. "This is madness. The Shipwright's Guild is trying to kill us?" asked Major Tanos. Wynter shook his head. "Factory workers aren't killers. A coordinated take-down like this? No, something else. We need to make it back to Sky Breach Base. We need to pull our men out. Hopefully we can make it back while JTF Satele Shan still exists."

Their talk was silenced as a large crowd of gunslingers descended from an alleyway taking aim and firing coordinated but hurried fire. The two locked eyes and nodded. They had prepared for an ambush. "Suppressive burst?" asked Tanos. Wynter nodded as he began to charge directly into the enemy fire, firing blindly. In an instant, Tanos lobbed a satchel of grenades into the alleyway as hard as she could. Wynter veered right and dove hard to the deck, shielding himself behind a low wall as the grenades went off with a massive bang. The alleyway was shredded, the enemy had not seen it coming due to training their fire on the quickly running Human. The blast had scared many curious onlookers and would be partisans away.

"Tanos, run. Lets hope most of the other cells make it back too. With limited comms we cant counterattack. We cant fight our way out. Run."

Central Cloister Sky Breach Base Daleem

Raider Chrome sat angrily behind his console within the Cloister. As a matter of protocol several members of Tython Squadron had to remain behind at Sky Breach when operations were being conducted. Chrome had drawn the short straw. Knights Ethan Martes, Zeline Nemesis, and Chasse Ordin ran in, spattered in blood and thoroughly out of breathe.

"What the hell is this?" asked Chrome. No words were uttered, the assembled Knights sharing a look of shame. "Chrome, we made it out but..." Zeline looked down, hiding a pained look.

Chrome, a renown and experienced veteran knew *that* look. He was so busy monitoring the fighters in orbit that he failed to follow the ground teams. He saw the rapid movements of the cells in the streets of Daleem and the growing hordes of those chasing them. "Should we call in JTF Shan security teams?" asked Martes. Chrome shook his head. "We can only trust our own on this. Get Alvinus and Iode, *now*."