

Strike Back

SAV Kordath Bleu
#13593

The green and blue orb of Gethsemane floated against the backdrop of the gas giant it orbited, Ereboros. Above the moon hung an expanse of stars that seemed to be slightly off, blurred as it were. This was due to the presence of *Nighthawk*, an Agave class picket ship bearing the symbols of Arcona. Aboard the vessel was a crew of tired, annoyed, and war weary men, women, and aliens of questionable sexual alignment.

"How did they even make it this far in system? What kind of security do we bloody well have?" ranted the Captain of the *Nighthawk*.

"Sir, we...we don't know how they managed it. Pirates and smugglers use Gethsemane all the time, so maybe they just slipped by unnoticed. We don't exactly crack down on the scum that comes through system, we need them for supplies and information more often than not, Sir."

"Smugglers, pirates, those are my kinda folks, Rulvak. This? This is the bloody bastards that have made the crew's lives hell for the last month. They've been a pain our collective arse's, not to mention what they've cost the House in resources and the Clan in bloody standing! The scoutin' patrol report back yet?" The Ryn was unusually irate today, standing on the bridge with his Executive Officer, Rulvak.

The Commander was worried about his superior. Kordath had a history of being either catatonic or violently ill when presented with views of open space. Which mattered less than one would figure on a vessel such as the *Nighthawk*, the crew kept the viewports of the cockpit opaque most of the time and he generally used the holo display to track their movements. It was all very tactical, honestly. Today though, the Captain was either so angry, or so tired of it all, that he was standing on the bridge glaring at the garden moon below. Hands clenching the railing as he leaned forward, knuckles almost white with pressure, were the only indication that the Ryn was feeling discomfort from the view.

"Not...not yet, Sir. They should be checking in any moment, though. What are you intending to do? As far as you've told me, our orders were simply to scout out this possible base and report back."

"Nominally, yes. If the place is heavily fortified, we're to let the grunts go in and try and blast it from inside, eh?"

"Soulfire, Sir?"

"Aye, them," grumbled the Ryn.

"What if it's not?"

"Wot?"

"What if it's not heavily defended?"

"Well, then we have a much more satisfyin' day, Commander Quorroc," stated the Captain with a vicious grin. Rulvak glanced at the Ryn, the man's moustaches were drooping and his hair was even more disheveled than usual. He looked as tired as many of the crew probably felt at this point, the *Nighthawk* had been at the front of this whole little war. The joys of being the forerunners of stealth and information gathering in both the fleet and the Clan itself.

"Sir, I have to--" began the Commander, before an aide rushed up beside him and began whispering in the Sephi's ear. "Captain! We've heard from the scouting party, they're transmitting now to the tactical display."

"Grand, bloody grand," growled the Ryn, turning away from the viewports with a shudder and walking to the holo unit set in the center of the bridge. "Talk to me, Arcean. What ya seein' down there, lad?"

"Sir! It's definitely a forward operations base! They're setting up shop still, I think. Fuel reserves are present, they look as if they're working on clearing an area for spacecraft as well. Big enough for a transport or two, or a squadron of fighters. They might be turning this into a staging area to raid further in on the system, Sir."

"Well that's bleedin' great, mate. How's the defenses lookin'? Anything that looks shield generatory?"

"Generatory? Umm, no, no Sir. Mostly just ground personnel and some worker droids."

"Great, keep an eye out on the place, but dinnae get too close. *Hawk* out," Kordath tapped a button and turned to Rulvak, "Get me the Commandant, eh?"

"Yes Sir."

A few moments later the comm crackled to life, "Sir? Got the Talons on station and prepped, as you requested, Captain."

Rulvak gave his CO a quizzical look, and received another toothy grin in reply before the Ryn responded to the communication, "Copy that, Mako. Go make sure we don't get any stragglers dirtyin' up our pretty little moon, eh?"

"Roger that, Talon drop commencing."

"Sir, what are you planning?"

"Ya mean what did I already do?"

"Sir."

"Hah, don't look so put out, Rulvak," stated the Ryn, patting his XO on the shoulder and turning to yell at the helm, "proceed as planned!"

"Sir!"

"Captain?"

"Well, we got the coordinates for the base when it first got sighted, yeah? No defensive shielding...the *Hawk* innit the most heavily armed ship in the fleet, eh? But a little patch of land like that?"

"We're going to bombard it with the ship's turbolasers, Sir? We really don't have that much--" the ship shuddered violently for a moment before smoothing out, though a background noise was gained. "What the hell?"

"Ship always runs a bit louder in atmosphere, eh? Mako and his Talon's are gonna make sure we don't miss nobody, Rulvak, after we get in range and blase the bloody place to bits. Got the gun cameras transmittin' to ever screen on the ship, as well. Should give morale a little kick in the tail, eh?"

"Sir!"

"Now if they'd just leave all their little hidey holes this poorly defended," grumbled the Ryn, staring out the viewport, hands clenched behind his back. Someday he'd be able to enjoy this view, instead of fighting not to throw up in front of his crew.

Again.