

# **Strike Team Nryghat**

**A short Story**

**Written, Directed and Starring:**

**TuQ'uan Varick as Strike Team Nryghat leader, TuQ'uan Varick**

**And some other people...**

**Enjoy**

## **The Star Destroyer Ascendancy Nancora System:**

“*What have I gotten myself into,*” TuQ’uan thought to himself, as he strode towards the *Ascendancy’s* hangar bay where a shuttle was currently fueling up for the mission ahead. The entire area was abuzz preparing for war, the Kel Dor glanced around at all of the faces he didn’t recognize and would probably never see again. Towards him came the familiar prim and proper blue form of his former trainer, Laren Uscot, recently di Plagia. The two met in the hall outside the hangar, Plagueians pushing past them in both directions.

“Good Luck, TuQ,” the Pantoran spoke as he shook the mercenary’s hand with a firm grasp.

“You mean you aren’t coming along?”

“The Dread Lord has other plans for me, though I’m sure you can handle this.” Laren turned and continued on his way.

“Promise me if I die, you’ll avenge me,” TuQ’uan shouted at the only Plagueian he even remotely considered a friend. “Laren? I know you can hear me, Laren!”

The Di Plagia simply continued on.

The Kel Dor finally arrived at the hunk of a shuttle that he had been given to use for this mission, barely large enough to hold 6 passengers and a pilot, which he decided would be called *The Bantha Fodder*. Starfighters all throughout the hangar were preparing to take off and join the fray.

The fellow members of *Strike Team Nryghat* had arrived ahead of the Taskmaster and were currently in disarray, lounging around on various crates a few of which were filled with a few extra explosives that had yet to be loaded on board their transport. The five members of the team were hand picked as the best and most promising Non-Force users *The Circle* had to offer.

The team consisted of: Lieutenant Buio, a young, pale Zabrak loyalist who was a good infiltrator, though TuQ’uan wasn’t entirely sure whether Buio was his first or last name. Next was Nora Shim, a bothan slicer TuQ’uan only trusted enough to get the job done and no further. Ker Laa, a rather short Ryn with a proclivity for explosions. Ranna Salan a human weapons specialist whose trusty heavy blaster has been know to get her out of a few tough spots. And rounding out the team was the Taskmaster himself TuQ’uan Varick.

TuQ’uan pulled his blaster pistol from his holster and fired a single shot into the ground, bringing the attention of the members of *Strike Team Nryghat*, as well as every being currently in the ship’s hangar. The mercenary immediately regretted his decision.

"False alarm people, go about your business," TuQ'uan shouted across the hangar as he holstered his pistol hoping the soldiers all around him would do the same. The Kel Dor returned his ire to his strike team.

"Now, could someone please explain to me why these crates have yet to be loaded?"

"We figured that would be a task for the slaves," the Zabrak spoke up.

"That would be 'Sir' to you, Lieutenant, and as far as I'm concerned, it is a task for you. Get it done immediately, we are wheels up in three minutes whether you're on board or not. And let me tell you if you're not, you'll have Selika do deal with." This concerned the Strike Team who got to work right away. TuQ'uan made his way up the shuttle ramp.

### **The Bantha Fodder**

#### **4 minutes later:**

Battle raged as TuQ'uan stood at the front of the shuttle, looking out the window at the chaos that was currently consuming the Nancora system. There was a wall of ships surrounding the planet itself and another wall appeared to be enclosing around that one. The pilot assigned to transport the strike team had launched the ship in the midst of a squadron launch to mask the *Bantha Fodder*. They would slowly make their way towards the *Braga* keeping the element of surprise and awaiting their opportunity.

He turned to address his team, all eyes were on him.

"From here on out we are on our own, until we make our escape there will be absolute radio silence with the rest of Plagueis. There is no emergency extraction, it is succeed or die here," The Kel Dor let his words hang in the air a moment. "Once on board we will have to split up, Lieutenant Buio will be in charge of Bravo team, who will work their way towards the ship's weapon controls. If for some reason we are unable to take down the whole ship at least we can dismantle their weapons."

The tension was thick in the air, but these five had been chosen for a reason, or so TuQ'uan thought. Plus it was too late to turn back now.

"I will lead Alpha team towards engineering where we will copy as much data as possible before setting charges which, if calculations are correct, will overload the system and start a chain reaction of explosions throughout the ship. Then, and only then, will we break radio silence between teams, giving everyone five minutes to get back to the ship for extraction. If you aren't there on time, I'm sorry, but you're on your own."

Peek, TuQ'uan's recon droid whistled and beeped rapidly drawing all eyes towards the *Braga* looming ahead of them. The ship's weapons began to glow green briefly.

"This is it, if you're not ready, you'll be dead."

He turned his attention back to the *Braga*, all at once the glow became a green beam that cut across the void of space and ripped straight through a Brotherhood vessel, leaving an ugly explosion in its wake.

"This is where the fun begins," the pilot muttered grimly.

That was to be their cue to board the *Braga*, the ship couldn't fire that weapon and keep its shields up at the same time. A stunned silence filled the shuttle, the team knew what they had to do.

Weaving through the space between the *Ascendency* and the *Braga*, the shuttle seemed to go miraculously unnoticed amidst the chaos of battle all around. Starfighters flew all around them, the space all alight with explosions.

Approaching the *Braga* the pilot cut power to the engines and flew forward on the momentum they had gained, they had to wait for the opportune moment for entry. Without a sound in the shuttle the view of the battle was eerie, no one dared speak.

It only took a few more minutes before the green glow returned to the Collective's terrifying new weapon. Without wasting a moment, full power was thrown to the engines, the shuttle aimed directly at the port side docking bay of the monstrous ship ahead of them. Straight as an arrow the shuttle hurtled through space, closing in quickly.

The shields shimmered as they went down and a split second later the shuttle was in and braking hard to avoid a crash. Thanks to the skilled pilot they stopped just short of the wall of the hangar and an early end to their mission.

### **Braga hangar Bay:**

With a heavy thud the *Batha Fodder* landed in the cramped port side hangar, there were a few small crafts within the bay, but other than that the room seemed eerily quiet. TuQ'uan looked around at the members of *Strike Team Nryghat* and nodded before activating the ramp controls.

The Strike Team checked its weapons one final time before moving out. Peek, took the lead ensuring the coast was clear. Once the team leader heard the go ahead beep, it was time to go.

The team moved quickly across the cold durasteel floor towards a door across the hangar. Peek quickly found a port to plug into and had access to ship schematics.

The team made it past the door and down the hall with ease before coming to a junction. Clapping Lieutenant Buio on the shoulder, the Kel Dor nodded and the two teams went their separate ways, Ker Laa and Peek remaining with TuQ'uan the rest went with Buio. Bravo team went a little ways down the hall to the left before coming to a stop in front of a maintenance access hatch, with a little bit of muscle from Ranna combined with a slice from Nora the hatch opened and Buio led the way through to a set of tight hallways running throughout interior of the ship. Replacing the hatch behind themselves, Bravo Team was gone.

"My man," TuQ'uan whispered to himself.

Peek took point, scouting ahead for wandering enemies. Alpha team didn't have the luxury of hiding in the walls. Thanks to Peek, TuQ'uan and Ker spent the next few twists and turns through the *Braga* narrowly avoiding collective soldiers. According to the schematics they had, Alpha team was roughly 20 meters away from their objective when Peek let out a twitter.

"Kark!" TuQ'uan hissed under his breath. "We have to move faster, they found the ship, which means they will be looking for us."

Without a second thought the mercenary made a beeline for the engine room. 15 meters. 10 meters. The smell of ozone filled the air as a blaster bolt whizzed through the air past his head. Catching him off guard the Kel Dor pulled his weight back causing him to go sliding feet first down the hall. They had been so preoccupied with what was in front of them, they forgot about what might be behind them.

"I don't think you're supposed to be here," the silky smooth voice of their pursuer carried down the hall.

Rolling over onto his stomach left TuQ'uan facing back the way he had come. Ker hadn't been far behind when they were so rudely interrupted, now she had come to a stop with her hands in the air. Behind the demolitions expert stood a shorter, red and white Togruta, calmly holding his blaster pistol, aiming from the hip.

"Neither of you move." The sound of boots could be heard echoing down the halls. "What a pathetic attempt."

TuQ'uan let his arms relax at his side, he would have to move carefully here. The Togruta slowly began moving forward, keeping his blaster pointed forward, eyes moving back and forth between his quarry. TuQ'uan found the Sonic Grenade secured to his belt and slid it into his right hand.

A blaster bolt hit the ground just short of the Taskmaster.

"I thought I told you not to move. I want to see your hands"

TuQ'uan moves his right hand away from his body, careful not to reveal the grenade right away. Their attacker was still a good five feet from Ker. TuQ'uan primed the grenade and with all of his might slide it down the hallway. Ker saw the small black cylinder roll down the hall past her and immediately dove to the ground beside the Kel Dor, the two of them covered their ears as best they could and buried their faces in the ground. With a deafening explosion the Sonic Grenade went off at the Togruta's feet, driving him to the ground.

TuQ'uan hopped back to his feet, drew his blaster and put a well placed shot into their would be captors chest.

"Well, now they know where we are! Time to move," he spoke a little louder than intended but with the ringing in his ears he didn't really have a sense of volume.

Now full out running it took them no time at all to reach the door they were looking for, this one wasn't going to quite as easy as the first. They could hear the sounds of boots on the durasteel and soldiers shouting down the hall and it sounded like they were closing in fast.

"Cover me." TuQ'uan pried the door control cover off and plugged his datapad in. This wouldn't take too long but he'd rather not get shot if he could avoid it. Ker had her first shot off and TuQ'uan began typing faster.

With a hiss the door slid open, a none too soon, he could see at least a dozen collective soldiers in their prim grey uniforms making their way towards them. Grabbing Ker by the shoulder he pulled the two of them through the doorway, closing it from the other side. TuQ'uan put a bolt into the door controls to make sure they wouldn't work again before looking around the room they now found themselves in.

"Well I guess we'll need to find another way out." The Kel Dor turned around to see three Collective engineers staring at them, stunned. "First person to move dies."

The one furthest to the left glanced quickly to the others with him before falling to the ground, a hole in his chest.

"Just to be clear, I count that as a movement. You don't have to die here, at least just yet," TuQ'uan muttered the last bit under his breath. "All you have to do is help us out and make our jobs easier."

"Frak you!" shouted the engineer who was now furthest left.

“Just to clarify, do you agree with her,” he asked the remaining engineer who didn’t say a word.

“Well, you know what they say, silence is consent.”

Two more quick shots and all of the engineers in the room were dead. Banging had started ringing from the door behind.

“Let’s get to work, I’ll find a terminal, you find something that will make the engines go boom.”

The two split up. It didn’t take long for TuQ’uan to find the terminal he needed, pulling out his computer spike kit he got to work.

He hit the motherload, the information on their cloaking system was here as well as a few experimental projects they had been working on and testing on the *Braga*. This would surely earn him some points, and credits, with Selika. As if on cue the door he thought he had sealed was blown open. Grabbing a datadisk with all of the information he had found loaded onto it he ran to find Ker, Peek right at his feet the whole way.

Ker was just a little ways away behind a set of cylinders near the wall that appeared to be fuel containers, cursing away.

“Are you sure you know what you’re doing?” a hint of concern crept into the Taskmaster’s voice as he knelt down beside her.

“Don’t worry. I saw this in a holo once.”

TuQ’uan shot Ker look that said she’d pay for then if they made it back to the circle alive.

A blaster bolt pinged off the bulkhead near their heads.

“Well if you could get that done soon, that would be great.”

Popping up from behind their cover the Kel Dor blindly returned the fire that was coming their way. Ducking back down he activated his wrist link.

“Bravo Team, this is Alpha, what’s your status?”

“We are taking heavy fire here but we almost have what we came for,” Buio’s voice crackled through the speaker.

“Alright, well this is your five minute warning. Good luck, I hope to see you on the shuttle.” Shutting off the comm he turned to Ker. “Set it and let’s get the frak out of this place.”

It looked to TuQ'uan that their best bet would be to fight their way back out the door they came in, luckily most of the soldiers had spread out through the large room in order to flush the saboteurs out.

Taking a deep breath TuQ'uan and Ker jumped up from their cover and bolted to the right, firing a volley of shots as they went, injuring at least three Collective soldiers as they circled back around to the door.

One of the soldiers had thought to place themselves in front of the doorway. Getting lower down as he ran TuQ'uan rushed right towards the unfortunate soldier and barrelled right into him, sending the two of them flying into the hallway and crashing into the hard durasteel wall. The soldier threw a punch catching the Kel Dor in the side of the head. As the soldier wound up for a second blow TuQ'uan nimbly spun with the punch sending the soldier off balance. Seeing his opportunity TuQ'uan drove his foot into the back of the soldiers leg, snapping it as he crashed to the ground.

Wasting no time, Alpha team was back on the move, firing their blasters behind them as they went.

### **Braga Hangar Bay:**

Alpha team came running through the hangar door at full speed to see Nora alone and pinned down behind a crate. TuQ'uan, Ker, and Peek slide down beside her, there were five soldiers blocking their way to the shuttle.

The three Plagueians fired at the soldiers from behind the cover of the crate but they all seemed miss their targets. TuQ'uan jumped from behind the relative safety of the crate to get a better shot, as he unleashed a volley of fire in the direction of the soldiers he saw a second volley coming at them from just off to their side. The combination of the two flurries of blaster fire was enough to finish off the entire group. Ranna had saved the day here.

"Where's Buio?" TuQ'uan inquired of the present members of Bravo Team as they all made their way back to the shuttle.

"He got caught up in a fire fight a little ways back and ordered me back here," Ranna explained to the group with a hint of regret creeping into her voice. "Nora has all of the information we were able to gather."

Shouts came echoing through the hangar behind them, more soldiers were coming. Ranna turned, feet planted firmly on the ground.

"Go, I'll hold them off long enough for you to get off the ship." Ranna began opening fire as the rest of the team quickened their pace, they were running out of time to get to the shuttle.



The ramp of the shuttle had already been lowered and laying at the bottom was the body of the pilot who brought them here. It looked like TuQ'uan was going to have to fly them home. The Kel Dor hopped into the pilot's seat and started the shuttle up, he was going to wait for take off as long as possible.

On the floor below, Ranna was putting up an admirable fight. More and more soldiers were filling into the hanger and despite the fact that she was getting hit with blaster bolts at an increasing rate, Ranna refused to hit the floor without a fight.

An explosion rocked the *Braga*, that was the cue that told TuQ'uan he had waited long enough. Slamming his hand against the controls, the shuttle lifted up off the durasteel deck and the boarding ramp snapped shut.

TuQ'uan spun the shuttle around as a second blast rocked the ship, the shield would be down now. The Taskmaster aimed the shuttle out of the hangar bay and went straight to full throttle. Once they were out in the void of space they were weaving through an absolutely chaotic battlefield, the hunks of dead ships littering the space all around them. TuQ'uan got on the comms to *The Ascendacy*.

"Ascendency, this is strike team Nryghat. We are coming home, please have the welcoming party ready."

A massive explosion erupted behind them sending a shockwave through the shuttle, now it was just a straight shot to home. TuQ'uan knew he should be happy with the mission's success, but he couldn't help but feel the weight of those he lost under his command.