

Remembrance Of Seher

Outer rim

The noise was terrific in the hanger as the chaos began. The stress in the Brotherhood had met an unexpected and previously unreached high. Amongst the clans themselves, there was a calm tension. Within, fear and testiness was king. Odan-Urr was no exception; fear tempered with courage and testiness challenged by daring. The plan was simple: take out the heavy forces of the Collective currently covering the cruiser *Braga*. Tyraal Bitshiver, newly knighted, faced his first knighthood task: take out fighter cover. Principally, take out the rumored Rose Squadron. Led by the notorious, if unknown among Brotherhood sources, Emery Rose.

"Rose and Rose Squadron," Tyraal muttered. "How original. How perfectly non-egocentric of her."

He made his way in the far corner where his wing was idling: a squadron and a half to his command. A mismatched outfit of alien, human, and other, selected for him from Odan-Urr uniforms and local system pilots recruited for the war against the Collective. He scanned each of them for a moment, memorizing faces. 7V-LN rolled up beside him and beeped.

"Welcome to Wraithe Squadron, ladies and gentlemen," Began Tyraal, and the Odanites snapped to attention while the locals glanced up at him. "Our mission is quite simple: eliminate the Collective's prime fighter squadron, Rose Squadron."

A Bothan raised an eyebrow as Tyraal swallowed back a grimace. "*Prime Fighter Squadron..... Nice, Tyraal, nice....*" He thought disgustedly.

"We're expected to take the entirety of this attack in destroying Rose Squadron, so let's make sure we take them down. Should we succeed with the attack still ongoing, you are each ordered to rejoin your normal--"

The ship jerked heavily as the stars outside the hanger slowed to a halt. The ship began rocking mightily as cries rose around.

"The Collective is attacking!" Was the general cry given.

"Wraithe Squadron, get to your ships. Looks like we're in the air!"

Tyraal turned and rushed for an X-wing, painted in an eclectic blue-yellow-orange pattern. He vaulted onto the side and dragged himself into the cockpit while 7V was dropped into the astromech slot behind him.

"Ready back there, Seven?" He asked, as he revved up the engines and tested his controls. An answering beep gave him his confirmation. He launched into the air and burst through the space lock, into the cold reaches of the stars surrounding the dreadnaught-class cruiser, *Braga*.

"Wraithe Squadron, form up," Called out Tyraal.

"Wraithe three inbound."

"Wraithe seven launching."

"Wraithe two on your flank."

"Wraith thirteen launching."

"Wraith sixteen bringing up the rear."

The rest of the squadron sent in their callsigns. Tyraal glanced over his shoulder towards Wraith two: an orange and red A-Wing with a semi-unwrapped female Tusken Raider. He frowned slightly. He must've been given the worst of the litter with his flyboys.

"How many of you have actually flown before?" Tyraal asked.

Flak and defensive fire from the dreadnought-class saved his wing from answering him.

"Alrighty boys. Break into forms. Let's pluck these roses. Wraith two, three, five, with me."

"Your call, boss," Shot back the Bothan from earlier, Wraith four, as he and several others pulled away.

Wraith Squadron dispersed while the Odan-Urr cruiser bore down on the *Braga*.

"How are we supposed to crack that egg?" Muttered Wraith eleven.

"Take a hammer and smash it," Sarcastically snapped Wraith fifteen.

"Keep your eyes peeled boys, watch for--" Tyraal was cut off as a flare in the Force struck him. He dove and rolled as a barrage of blaster fire whistled past him.

"Rose Squadron engaged!" Shouted Wraith eight, seconds before his B-wing erupted in a fireball.

"Herd them in!" Called Tyraal. "Keep to your groups and stick near each other. Wraith two on me, three and five pull them away."

The dogfight erupted heavily. A handful of T-70 X-wings dove from above while the remainder were split into two groups and had flashed in like lightning from behind. Wraith Squadron was scattered, and Wraith eight, twelve, thirteen, and six were destroyed within seconds of laser cannon fire opening on the group. Tyraal yanked around and opened fire on a pair of X-wings before him. A perfect shot shattered the s-foil of one, sending it spiraling into the cockpit of the other. They both exploded as Tyraal and Wraith two whizzed by.

"You're all clear, Wraith sixteen!" Tyraal radioed.

"Thanks! I was getting too hot in here!"

Tyraal rolled as cannon fire whizzed past him. He dove as Wraith two dropped away. She zeroed in on the pursuer's tail and pulled the trigger. A barrage of red laser cannon bolts streaked through the dead of space, hammering the X-wing pursuing Tyraal. It erupted.

"I've got your tail, Wraith Leader," She called, her voice unexpectedly musical and smooth. Tyraal grimaced.

"Thanks Wraith two, but watch your tail," He returned. "They like to come in pairs."

Wraith fifteen, sixteen, seven, and eleven erupted in hideous fireballs as Rose Squadron converged together and began systematically targeting Wraith Squadron. Tyraal looked over at the grouped X-wings. His moral begin sinking as he counted eight fighters. He noticed a particular gold-black X-wing in the middle of the pack.

"Eyes on the leader," He called. "Wraith Squadron, reassemble into two flights. Two, three, five with me, four lead nine, ten, and fourteen."

"Copy that bossman." Growled Wraith four, as his B-wing pulled back to assemble with his new flight.

"Line up, finger four formations." Called Tyraal, pulling his X-wing around to charge Rose Squadron. "Wraith four, keep your flight on the right, we'll take the left. Let's see if we can cut them apart head on. Stay in pairs boys."

"Finger four will get us killed!" Cried Wraith nine.

"Only if you do right," Snapped Tyraal. "Form up!"

7V whistled in the back, and Tyraal muted his squad-wide comm to answer.

"Yes, Seven. I'm counting on my pilots' inability to fly to keep them from being massacred right now."

He opened his comm back to his squadron and opened the throttle wide. His X-wing charged, flanked by his other Wraiths: Wraith two and five on his right, trailing behind, and Wraith three on his left, level with Wraith Two.

"Just like a standard finger four..." Tyraal muttered, uneasily.

Maybe he had drastically underestimated his pilots' abilities. Or maybe he was seriously, *seriously* underestimating Rose Squadron's handle on the situation. In a panic he looked back up and recounted. Only five now.

"Wraiths, watch behind!" He shouted.

Too late, as the other three fighters dove on the two flights of Wraiths from behind.

"Evade!" Shouted Wraith four. "Break the formations!"

The second flight shattered as all four ships broke away singularly, hotly pursued by one X-wing. Three from ahead turned around sharply and dove after the fleeing Wraiths.

"Blast!" Snarled Tyraal. "Wraith three and five, get over there. Wraiths, keep in pairs!" He slammed his yoke downward. "Wraith two, stick tight. We've got a greedy leader behind us."

A scream over the comms erupted as two more Wraiths erupted in flame. Wraith four was desperately trying to regain order among the panicking Wraiths. Tyraal rolled around and opened fire as Wraith four shot past him. The two X-wings pursuing swerved away.

"Wraith two, take the left, I got the right!"

He yanked around and chased the X-wing on the right as it bobbed and weaved.

"Wraith four, get me eyes on Rose Leader." He snarled.

"She's hot on your tail, Wraith Leader. I'm coming to assist," Was the Bothan's response.

"Negative!" Tyraal shot back. "Force her towards our cruiser. Get the big guns to help you out!"

A barrage of fire rippled at Tyraal.

"Blast!" He roared, yanking his yoke around. He throttled towards the *Braga*, weaving around Emery Rose's fire. 7V wailed as several shots of hers blew out starboard engine number 1.

"It's gonna be tight, little buddy!" He grunted. "Hold on back there!"

"Wraith leader, what are you doing?!" Shouted Wraith four. "You're heading straight for the Collective's dreadnought-class!"

"I am WELL AWARE!" Thundered Tyraal, as he desperately dodged. "You all focus on taking out the rest of her fighters while I've got her busy! Wraith two, could you come by and give me a hand?"

"Let me finish this one off, Wraith leader," Radioed a strained Wraith two. "He's giving me a hard chase."

"Quickly please," Muttered Tyraal, sweat touching his brow as another two Wraithes fell from the fight.

"Converge at point 2-4!" Snapped the Bothan over the comms. "I'll have a clean shot!"

Tyraal swore as more of Emery's shots clipped his fighter.

"This is getting way too tight," He grunted.

The giant form of the *Braga* loomed humongus in front of him. A dozen or so cannons began firing on him. He waited for the last second and rolled away.

"Boss, the hell are you doing over there?!" Called Wraithe two. "Those guns'll tear you apart!"

"Maybe they'll take her with me!" Tyraal yelled.

"Hold on, Wraithe leader, I'm coming in--"

"NO!" Tyraal roared. "Wraithe two, pull away, pull away now! Your A-wing won't be able to take this kind of fire!"

"I'll be fast enough to keep ahead of them," She returned coolly, rushing onto Emery Rose's tail.

"Wraithe two, disengage now!" Tyraal shouted. "That's an--"

Wraithe two screamed. Tyraal felt her go. His heart thudded. He was all alone over here. And he had just lost his best pilot. He was trapped between an ace and a heavy cruiser. Emery rose continued firing, and he rolled away, rage climbing in his chest. Wraithe four gave a whoop over the comms, as his B-wing fire blasted apart a trio of fighters.

"We're coming, Wraithe leader!" He shouted over the comms.

"Negative, Wraithe four," Snapped Tyraal. "There's one more fighter out here. Destroy it before you take on Emery Rose."

"You sure?"

"DO IT!" Thundered Tyraal.

"Your call boss," answered the disappointed Wraithe four.

Tyraal found himself alone once again as Wraithe four and Wraithe five both pulled away after the last X-wing.

"Just you and me," Tyraal muttered to Emery, glowering at the dreadnought-class beside him.

"Let's dance."

He pulled his X-wing tightly around, dropping under the massive cruiser. He looked up at the hulking ship above him.

"I can't do both." He murmured, as he rolled away from Emery's fire. "One or the other."

He yanked around and surrendered himself to the Force. He felt his senses slowly begin to trickle away as he gently banked around the fire from the *Braga*. He felt a great weight lift off him as his senses faded away. His grip on the yoke relaxed slightly, as a different force took a hold of the controls through his hands. His X-wing gently weaved around the terrifying storm of laser and blaster fire from the dreadnought-class. Emery's fire began to aim wildly off from the X-wing. Wraithe leader pulled up around the side of the behemoth, and curved tightly around the hull of the ship. The X-wing flew so tightly to the surface that it could have extended the landing skis and been in contact. Tyraal opened his eyes for a moment, and saw it.

The massive hulk of the cruiser extended before him. He peered over the edge of his cockpit transparisteel and saw the guns rotating to fire at him. In slow-motion it all seemed.

Everything was silent except for the quiet hum of the starfighter beneath him. He looked back forward and noticed an explosion in a moderate distance ahead of him. He dimly heard Wraithe four whoop.

"We've got him boss! We're coming around for you!" The voice sounded an eternity away.

Tyraal blinked and tightened his grip on the yoke. His vision cleared, his hearing returned, his senses flooded back. He exhaled, and returned his attention to the moment at hand, reality back in his control. He gripped the yoke and gently banked away from the heavy cruiser. His precognition was fired up, highly attuned to the slightest. He felt tingles as fire erupted beside him.

"How we holding up back there, Seven?" He asked. The astromech whistled. "Oh good. Nothing lost. Where's Emery at?" Several beeps answered. "Good. Let's get her against our carrier. Wraithe four and five, converge at point 3-7, and then head for our cruiser. I'll have Emery Rose right in front of you."

Tyraal chuckled. Emery Rose must be seething in fury at his piloting. Well he had the Force with him, and she would just have to deal with it. Let her try and take him down. Good luck to her. Her blaster fire became suddenly much more accurate. Tyraal hummed discontentedly. No more aura of Force keeping her shots wide.

"Back to work I guess," He muttered. He glanced to the side, towards the Shan-Odanite cruiser up to trade blows with the *Braga. Remembrance Of Seher*, the large MC40a cruiser that had carried Wraithe Squadron and the infiltration team to take on the Collective *Braga*. He tightened his curve and rocketed towards the *Seher*.

"Wraithe Leader to *Remembrance of Seher*," He called.

"We've got you Wraithe Leader. You seem to have company."

"I've got Emery Rose on my tail. Fire up the tractor beams, let's try to take her alive."

"If you think that's a good idea, Wraithe Leader....."

The comms went silent, and Tyraal pressed on. Emery Rose was falling slightly behind. Tyraal felt a moment of concern. She pulled away. Emery Rose disengaged and pulled back towards the *Braga*.

"Oh no you don't!" Grunted Tyraal, pulling tightly around to engage Emery Rose.

The black and gold T-70 streaked back towards the protective cove of the *Braga's* turret fire, racing for the hanger doors. Tyraal flew in, in hot pursuit. The two racers made their way closer and closer to the dreadnought-class, and Tyraal opened fire. His shots peppered the X-wing. One engine blown out. Two engines. She rolled away, under the cruiser. He weaved after her, keeping his fire going. He blew off a laser cannon, and accidentally overshot her, as she abruptly slowed and turned for the hanger. He pulled off another dozen bolts, blowing out a third engine, and damaging a fourth.

"Blast." He growled, glaring at the smoking X-wing. He pulled away, and throttled for the *Seher*.

"Did you get her, boss?" Asked Wraithe four.

"Nope. She got in the hanger." Replied a heated Tyraal.

He felt cheated. He had given so much, and she had survived only because she hid behind the skirts of her cruiser.

"Coward," Mutter Tyraal. He fumed for a moment and then spoke: "We'll get her next time boys. She can't hide from us. Let's get home boys."

The B-wing of Wraithe two and the X-wing of Wraithe five ducked into the *Seher's* hanger. Tyraal flew in behind.

"Damage, Seven?" He asked. The droid gave a weary whirr. "Seven, I'll get you plugged in as soon as we get in the *Remembrance*. I promise."

He glanced over at the *Remembrance Of Seher*, which was currently pounding the dreadnought-class with everything they had. He landed in the hanger and hopped out. The Bothan Wraithe four and the Duro Wraithe five met him, and made their way to the hanger manager.

"What's going on?" Tyraal asked. "Why are we decimating that ship?"

"The infiltration team failed," Replied the manager. "We've been ordered to the destroy the ship."

Tyraal and the two Wraithes looked at each other and then rushed to the space-lock. They looked at the *Braga* just in time to watch it leap to hyperspace.

"Damn," Muttered Wraithe five.

7V-LN rolled up beside Tyraal and blipped tiredly.

"We lost." Groaned Tyraal.