What if Emperor Palpatine decided to intervene during the *Tyderium*’s flight to the Forest Moon of Endor?

Battle of Endor

The Battle of Endor was a critical turning point in the Galactic Civil War. It resulted in the near complete destruction of the Alliance to Restore the Republic, whilst the Galactic Empire remained firmly in charge of the galaxy.

# Prelude

After its defeat at the Battle of Hoth, the Rebellion’s forces were scattered throughout the Outer Rim. During this time, Luke Skywalker, the hero of the Battle of Yavin, disappeared after helping rescue Han Solo from the clutches of Jabba the Hutt, an incident that resulted in the Hutt’s demise.

Thanks to the Bothan Spynet, Alliance High Command discovered that the Empire were constructing a new Death Star, one that was both more powerful and lacked the fatal flaw that resulted in the destruction of the original superweapon. According to the Spynet, the new Death Star II was under construction in the Endor system, a backwater thousands of light years from the core.

With the information gained, the Rebellion quickly resolved to attack the Death Star II before its completion.

Unbeknown to the Rebels, Emperor Palpatine had his own plans. Secretly a Sith Lord known as Darth Sidious, the Emperor was fully aware of what the Bothans were doing, allowing the transmissions to the Rebellion to go ahead.

# Preparing For Battle

The leaders of the Rebellion quickly put together a plan of action. Their larger ships would engage the Empire’s Star Destroyers, allowing the starfighters to fly into the unfinished battlestation’s superstructure. Once inside, the fighters would head for the main reactor and destroy it with proton torpedoes.

However, the Death Star was protected by a powerful deflector shield. This shield, projected from the Forest Moon of Endor, would need to be destroyed from the ground before any kind of attack could be made against the Death Star itself.

To make the strike on the shield generator, the Rebels acquired the Lambda-class T-4a shuttle *Tyderium,* along with an access code that would allow them passage onto the Forest Moon’s surface.

# The Attack Begins

General Han Solo was given the role of piloting the *Tyderium.* On discovering their friends’ role, Leia Organa and Chewbacca volunteered to join the strike team, and were joined by Luke Skywalker, who had just returned from witnessing the death of the Jedi Master Yoda on Dagobah.

General Solo offered his personal ship, the *Millennium Falcon* to his old friend, Lando Calrissian, to help clear the Imperial fighter screen during the battle. Calrissian was the previous owner of the *Falcon* and was delighted to accept the offer.

Once the *Tyderium* arrived in the Endor system, Solo began communicating with the *Executor*, Darth Vader’s flagship.

At first, the code appeared to work. Admiral Firmus Piett, despite being warned that the *Tyderium*’s access code was old, was eventually ordered to allow the shuttle through by Darth Vader, who had sensed his son, Luke Skywalker, was aboard. Vader had his own agenda; he planned to turn his son to the dark side and assassinate Emperor Palpatine.

At the last moment, Emperor Palpatine himself broadcast on a priority channel. He too had sensed Skywalker aboard, and, after much consideration, decided that he could not risk allowing Vader to meet with his son. The Emperor had originally hoped to turn Skywalker, himself, in the hope of replacing the broken man that Vader had become. However, as a result of his meditations on the subject, Palpatine began to feel conflict within Vader.

Ordering the *Executor* to fire on *Tyderium*, Palpatine was able to relax as he saw the shuttle, which was already beginning its landing sequence, be easily destroyed, wiping out Skywalker and the rest of the Rebel strike team.

Darth Vader was devastated by the event. He immediately attacked Piett and the rest of the *Executor*’s bridge crew, easily killing them before they could even lay hands on a blaster. Vowing to kill the Emperor next, Vader began to turn the massive Star Destroyer towards the Death Star, in spite of the deflector shield. As the massive ship began to approach the unfinished battle station, Palpatine gave his apprentice an ultimatum: he was to stand down for further orders, or face the consequences of his betrayal. Vader, still fuming at the death of his son, pressed on.

At that moment, Palpatine revealed yet another surprise. The Death Star II’s superlaser was already operational. Without hesitation, the Emperor commanded Moff Tiaan Jerjerrod to fire on the *Executor*. The Moff did as he was told, wiping out the *Executor,* its remaining crew, and the broken man who had once been the Emperor’s enforcer.

# The Rebel Fleet Arrives

The Alliance fleet jumped from its massing point near Sullust as planned, without any knowledge as to whether Solo had succeeded or not.

On arrival at Endor, Calrissian, in his role as Gold Leader, scanned the Death Star II to check the status of the shield. His attention was briefly drawn to the remains of the *Executor*, but he quickly realised that the Rebels’ scans were being jammed.

Panicking, the General ordered his fighters to scatter before they could hit the shield, a move followed by Admiral Gial Ackbar.

# The Trap Springs

As the Rebel fleet rearranged itself, a large Imperial fleet came into view, having hidden itself behind the Forest Moon. Even though the *Executor* had been destroyed, the fleet, now lead by Vice Admiral Rae Sloane aboard the Star Destroyer *Vigilance*, was still much larger than the Rebel fleet.

Originally, Palpatine’s plan had been to use the fleet merely to contain the Rebels, whilst the Death Star II, which was already fully operational, slowly picked off the enemy ships. Meanwhile, the *Tyderium*’s strike force would be allowed to capture the shield bunker, only to be ambushed by a full legion of the Emperor’s best troops. All of this was to allow the Empire to slowly grind the Rebels down, all in front of Luke Skywalker, who, the Emperor hoped, would fall to the dark side and become Palpatine’s new apprentice.

With the Emperor’s last minute change of plan, however, there was no longer a need to toy with the enemy. The Imperial fleet closed in, its superior numbers and firepower quickly taking control of the battle.

The Rebels, with determined leadership from Calrissian and Ackbar, did not back down. Although the Rebel fleet was crushed, the Imperials took nearly three times as many losses as originally estimated.

The Alliance to Restore the Republic was no more. Their fleet had been destroyed, their entire military leadership killed, and the would-be Jedi Knight Luke Skywalker was dead. Mon Mothma, who did not attend the battle itself, was all that was left.

# Aftermath

The Empire was quick to announce their victory. With the Rebels defeated, local resistance efforts across the galaxy were in two minds. Some, fearing for their own lives, surrendered to the Empire, whilst others simply stepped up their efforts.

Meanwhile, the Imperials began reprisals. Planets such as Chandrila, Lothal and Mon Cala were completely cut off from the rest of the galaxy, whilst Palpatine decided how best to make an example of those planets that had fought so hard against his New Order.

With both Vader and Skywalker dead, the Emperor had no apprentice. He started to make more public appearances, ostensibly because there was no longer a threat of assassination. In reality, he was starting the search for a new apprentice.

The Imperial military continued to grow, eventually becoming large enough to allow a garrison on every major planet in the galactic core. Palpatine saw little point in restoring the Imperial Senate, claiming that it had spawned the Rebellion.

Once completed, the Death Star II tested its superlaser by destroying the Forest Moon of Endor, killing the primitive and largely insignificant Ewok species.

With his enemies all dead or in hiding, Emperor Palpatine ruled on for decades. Eventually, as he grew too old to rule, a new civil war broke out between factions over who was to succeed their aging Emperor.