

It took a lot of thought. I struggled with a title for this account. I went through several revisions before deciding upon the most sensible title of all: Where it All Went Wrong- An Account of My Career as a Warhost Officer and How Things Could Have Gone Much Better If I Had The Sense to Go To Business School Like My Mother Had Suggested Back When I Was First Leaving Primary School (Part One).

Now, you might forgive me for the rather lengthy title with which I have begun my account. For one, I am not particularly well given to long, drawn-out sentences that both describe things aptly and yet still fail to come to a close at quite the time you expect them. Life is rather more complicated than that. It is rather like throwing a ball about as you did when you were a child. Except, the ball is your professional life, and unlike throwing a ball back and forth between your friends, nobody calls over their neighborhood friends to ask if they want to go to work with them.

My first mistake was in taking on the calling of a star pilot. There seem to be a shocking few space-naval academies that are willing to take on the teaching of what accounts to a giant bipedal-wolf-man. Which is to be frank, insulting and surprising. I should think, if you knew anything about Shistavean people, you know that we are a fierce and oft-times loyal bunch of bipedal-wolf-men.

Then again, some people take some umbrage with the idea of allowing any large, growling, bipedal-wolf-men into the pilots' seat of any vehicle. Which probably has more to do with our tempers when things go awry than anything else. Though, that would also bring to question when it became fashionable for some smugglers to bring those big walking-carpets called Wookies into the co-pilots seat. Though, I am sure that one could conjure one lone, one singular, one solitary example of where that went terribly right, I believe you would be hard pressed not to find at least twenty other times when such a decision would have ended terribly wrong for those unaware. After all, as I am told, some Wookies have been known to pull arms from sockets when they are displeased- at least if rumor is to be believed.

It was not until I began to search for positions in places other than the Core and Inner Rim systems that I really got my first opportunity to fly. I mean, I had heard tell that the Rebel Alliance was taking on pilots these days from all sorts of world. I mean, yes, they are calling themselves the New Republic, and promising to fix the kinds of things that have been wrong with the galaxy for decades. Of course, all one would have to do is to look at the course of events to see that just because a man comes to you to promise the galaxy, does not mean that he has your best interests in mind.

A situation much like that preceded my arrival on the transport which would eventually bring me out to what is better known as the Outer Rim. That is, however a story for another time. And when I say a story for another time, I mean that I have not the slightest intent of telling you the story, at least while we remain the barest of acquaintances. Given the fact that you are reading my account of the first of many mistakes which would eventually find me the pilot of a

would-be-wanna-be-dictator with fancies of something greater than an empire to rival the one which nearly wiped out the Jedi, I seriously doubt that you and I are very close.

Though, if we are, I encourage you to ask me about the further adventures which followed after this particular bit of misfortune, after plying me thoroughly with drink. I mean, you will not likely get any great secrets out of me, but at the very least we can both share a drink like old friends should.

It was about four years ago when I first found myself on the seemingly aptly-named Seven of Nine. Now, it did not make sense to me what the term "Seven of Nine" referred to. The pilot had grumbled something about how kids these days and references, but I haven't the foggiest what he meant. So I left him to his tea as I took stock of the rest of the beaten-up old freighter. The YT-2400 was an old ship, with spots having been taken out from what I assume had been smuggling compartments in the cargo to house a series of bunks. It was on one of these beds, the sort of beds that one can only rest upon when taken over by a great amount of drink or insurmountable exhaustion. Luckily for me, I had suffered from both that day.

While my trip had been quite boring up to this point, I was quite surprised to realize that while I had been dreaming of falling from a large height in my dream, real life had found me being thrown from my bunk without ceremony. Red warning lights blinked in the cargo hold, and I could hear a series of boots rattle the floor panels just outside the cargo hold. This of course put me on edge, as there were only three people besides myself on the boat, and the captain must be at the helm.

it was a well-known tradition that Captains of any notable vessels were always either on the bridge or near it when it came to dangerous situations. That is to say, they are always in a position or place where when danger comes, the Captain and senior officers will be able to jump into action without a loss of dramatic momentum. I believe, in the space corps and even some backwards worlds that are inhabited by smugglers, mercenaries and such scum, it is referred to as the "Prime Directive." Though I could be mistaken there. I believe that the Secondary and Tertiary, and Quaternary Directives have something to do with bedding new species, cultural exchange, and not mucking about with underdeveloped planets. I am sure those directives have more official designations, but I have ranked them in their apparent import by most so-called Captains I have read of, as indicated by their behavior.

It was based on this knowledge that I realized something must be amiss. So, grabbing my beaten up old blaster, I began to slink toward the doorway to the cargo bay. And it was upon sticking my head around the corner that I was quickly informed of what a poor idea this notion truly was. Though, instead of being informed of this by the sharp words of a schoolmaster as in my childhood days, I was instead greeted by a hail of blaster fire which filled the area where my head had once been. Needless to say I was quite thankful I had been of the possession of mind to duck out of the way of such blaster fire.

Gone were all notions of heroism in the light of this newfound wisdom. Clearly, these beings meant the fiercest of business.

And of course, the only way for us to truly get along would be if either I were to take out the lot of them, or if I were to go along with whatever they had planned for the Captain and crew, who as I pointed out above, doubtlessly must be on the bridge, or at least the pilot's compartment which must act as a bridge on so small a vessel as this. However, as I realized that going along with anyone else's plans were the exact sort of things I would not do, and moreover what had kept me out of the Core's space corps to begin with, I decided that now would not be the time to give in to peer pressure.

With a howl, I threw myself out at a sideways angle and opened up fire. Now, I have read a great many novels about men in frontier towns. They always got the jump on those who were sowing mischief in their town. I must imagine that these brigands had not read any of those old books. Because, instead of giving me the proper time to gun them down like the cowards they were, they decided to go off script. Instead of dropping his weapon after an expertly placed shot hits his hand, the largest of the humans shot me!

As I struggled to keep consciousness, I heard them speaking: something about the "Orian System", Red Fury, some Sadow family and how the captain was three days from retirement. And I do not think I have to tell you, I should think, what a jinx that last bit turned out to be. But I shall speak more of that in Part Two.

*--Captain Hayato Runner, Warhost*