

Vindicator-class cruiser '*Limbo*'

Lyra 3K-a system edge

"I understand you need support with an attack on the mutineers' fleet, but seeing as I consider it a dumb idea, I can't say I support your decision," Morgan replied to the holographic visage of the new Fist of the brotherhood, Alaris Jinn. The Twi'lek's expression changed only slightly, annoyed as he was with the pirate. They had been debating the issue for the past ten minutes in Morgan's cabin, away from the curious ears of the crew.

"This is not a discussion, Sorenn. Your ship is still Iron Navy and I still have operational command over it," Jinn pulled the rank card as a last ditch effort to force her into compliance.

"You seem to have a flawed understanding of your situation, Jinn. I report to the Grand Master. This is his ship and I do his bidding, not yours." Her reply was punctuated by her posturing, clearly not willing to budge.

"Force help me with stubborn women. You're worse than Selika." He sighed. "We need that ship, Sorenn. I will talk to the Grand Master if I have to but I'm getting that ship in the fight."

Morgan rolled her eyes once more. She didn't doubt he'd do it either, she doubted even less that Telaris would be pleased by her refusal. She didn't need the ire of the Grand Master now that her plan was underway.

"Fine, Jinn, send me your battle plan. But I'll remind you, this boat isn't one of your navy ships. We don't follow orders well and we do whatever we want." She crossed her arms and waited.

The Fist smirked with mild satisfaction. "That's agreeable. I have just the job for you anyway."

Hyperspace

Lyra 3K-a system, outer planets

"T-minus-ten seconds to exit," the mechanical voice announced through the ship's speakers and Morgan squeezed the armrest of her chair. She stared into the viewport as the mesmerizing

swirls of hyperspace imploded into bright white lines and into nothingness. The blackness of the void was lit up by a multitude of laser fire emanating from two large flotillas engaging each other.

The small Iron Navy force of star destroyers and escorts engaged the 5th Fleet of the Severian Principate head on and, by the looks of things, the battle had been dragging on for the past ten minutes. Capital ships bombarded each other from miles away while escorts and fighters charged in front to intercept incoming bombers.

The Limbo jumped into the battle directly behind the enemy fleet. Jinn's plan was simple: while the majority of the fleet held the enemy's attention, the Limbo and a smaller flotilla of fighters, bombers and gunships would attack from behind, utilizing the Star Destroyers' blind spot just behind their engines, or forcing them to turn and split fire.

"All crews, engage the enemy," Morgan ordered and tapped several keys on her chair, activating her contingency plan.

"Incoming starfighters, two o'clock." She heard one of the wing leaders say through the comm system. *"IFF identifies Rose squadron, captain!"*

"Well, well, if it isn't queen schutta herself." Morgan pondered. "They were waiting for us. Covering their bases. Basilisk squadron escort the bombers and gunships, Hera squadron engage Rose. Blow her out of the sky."

"Yes, captain!" the squadron leaders for Hera and Basilisk repeated in unison.

"Helm," Morgan looked at the Kel Dor officer piloting the Limbo. "Match their course, Split Rose squadron. Weapons and systems." She gave the other two officers a confident look. "All power to point defense batteries and shields. Blast them out of the void."

The Limbo's massive bulk twisted as it followed Hera squadron into combat. The ships' prow ran through Rose squadron's formation like a dagger, blasting laser fire as it did. The whole bridge shook when a stray torpedo from one of the X-wings hit the bridge tower, near the deflector array. Rose squadron ignored Hera and like a tidal wave crossed the surface of the Vindicator,

aiming for the bridge itself. Morgan realized their plan just in time. "Rotation to port, full thrusters!"

The Vindicator's massive thrusters burned with intensity as they struggled to push the ship to its structural limits. The torpedos flew straight and true and hit the starboard part of the bridge deck. The thunderous blast slammed Morgan against the floor and threw all the bridge crew on their backs. Limbo rotated and managed to avoid catastrophic damage, just in the nick of time.

"Blow that schutta out of the void, now!" Morgan barked from her prone position on the floor, her nose bloody from the hit.

"Captain, hera squadron are mowing down rose. They have only four fighters left!" The comm officer exclaimed.

"Those four fighters are some of the best in this battle. We can barely keep them off our tails." Hera leader called out through the comm.

Morgan wished she could jump in a fighter and do it herself, but knew Emery Rose was one of the best dogfighters in the galaxy. No, no, she'd let her pilots deal with her while she gave her own allies the opening they needed.

"Aim the ship towards the fleet. All turbo-lasers fire at will!"