



SUBMITTED IN ENTRY TO GJW XIV PHASE I FICTION -
IN OPPOSITION:

Operation Dynamic Entropy

Author:

General ZENTRU'LA (5951)

Clan Taldryan

NOTE: Option 2: Purge The Platform selected

June 13, 2020

1 Nesolat Station

Major Nuy Vexus had seen more than most, at 122 years old, although most found it difficult to age the Pau'ans, their skin was so drained of all colour it looked almost on the verge of decay, the first thing most people noticed before the bizarrely jagged teeth and sunken eye sockets containing a natural silver left eye in contrast with the black cybernetic right. In his century of life that spanned a tumultuous era, he saw the Galaxy plunged into war the first time during the Clone Wars - a result of the Jedi plot to take over the Galactic Senate. They were little more than war criminals. He lived through the Galactic Civil War, and witnessed the devastation unleashed on the Galaxy by the reign of Darth Vader and Darth Sidious. Two galactic wars - one caused by the Jedi and the other by the Sith. They were no different from each other. The sooner the Galaxy was rid of their childish power squabbles, the better things would be.

The answer was in front of him. He knelt before Rath Oligard. "You summoned me, Lord Superior?" Oligard stood tall, with a broad, powerful frame and fiery orange hair matching the colour of his intense, focused eyes. A thousand games of Dejarik were being played behind them, and he was winning in all of them. He was barely a third of Nuy's age, but a visionary, a natural leader. The Collective was the first true, organised resistance against the evils of the Force and its worshippers. Nuy had joined as soon as he heard about the growing organisation ten years prior.

"Preparations have been proceeding according to schedule," said Oligard, as if they could possibly have been going any other way with him at the helm. "Gwendolyn's Hive Mind troops have surpassed all expectations at every phase of testing. The fleet has never been stronger. The time for proxy wars is over. It is time for us to strike the Dark Brotherhood where they live, at their homeworld... on Arx."

It was the moment Nuy had been waiting for. No more messing around on Nancora or Lyra Colony, no more fighting to help the Meraxis Empire on Seraph for minor gains against one Brotherhood clan. He trusted Oligard's strategy, and understood these proxy wars were smaller parts of a bigger puzzle, but he was glad that the pieces were all coming together for a real attack. For as important as the outer pieces are, the real fun of any puzzle came in the middle. "Show me where to go," he said, his voice trying to mask the murderous passion in front of the master strategist.

Rath waved a hand. Between them, the hologram of a space station flashed into life,

the blue hue forming a torus with a large, castle-like structure on one side and turbo-laser batteries protruding outwards. “Nesolat platform,” Oligard said as the hologram began to rotate. “The home of the so-called Shadow Academy.” His disgust at the name was almost palpable. “This is the centre of everything we fight against. This is where their Jedi and Sith train. This is where they study their dark secrets. Without the Shadow Academy... they cannot train new recruits. They cannot continue to use their... mysticism... against us. This is their greatest weapon. We’re going to take it from them.”

“You will be leading a strike team of Liberation Front Partisans. Nefarious, dark secrets are held on the Nesolat. Make sure none live to pass them on. Purge the platform. Leave *none* alive.”

“Acknowledged,” said Nuy, steeling himself for battle. It had been too long since his axe had tasted Dark Brotherhood blood.

“Clearly, they may be anticipating an attack. Our men on the inside tell me they have hired the services of a private military company to protect the platform, the Vornskr Battalion.”

“Mercenaries?” Nuy scoffed. “No challenge?”

“Only a fool goes into battle without understanding the enemy,” Oligard snapped before regaining his composure. “The name of their leader is General Zentru’la.”

“Is that a name I should know?” Nuy said, in the back of his mind imagining a man with interest only in credits, with no integrity, honour, or passion for the fight.

“He assassinated one of our most valuable hostages on Lyra. An old Scholae war hero. Gwendolyn barely got out alive after fighting him on Nancora.”

“So what’s the plan?” Nuy asked. He was perfectly capable of coming up with a battle plan by himself, but there was no need when working with Oligard, he already had everything planned out ten steps ahead.

“Battlegroup Scargill will drop out of hyperspace here,” Oligard said as a formation of red ships flashed into existence, bearing down on the cyan hologram of the Nesolat. The Lancer-class frigates will open fire on the enemy defences. That’s where you come

in.” Another red ship appeared on the other side of the station. “Once we’ve got their attention, the *Ziera* and the *Grixxo* will appear here.” A swarm of starfighter holograms flooded out of the hangar bays of the Cruisers, boarding the Nesolat. “You will be supported by 40 Partisans. Your helmet has been fitted with a state-of-the-art artificial intelligence called Serena, programmed to analyse information from our informant to advise on the best course of action. You’ll know the enemy’s position better than they do. The Hive Mind Marines will provide reinforcements when the space battle has been won.”

“Understood. I will proceed to the *Ziera* immediately, Lord Superior.” Nuy rose to his feet and saluted Oligard.

“Exercise *extreme* caution,” Oligard warned as Nuy exited the room. “General Zentru’la is to be taken seriously. They call him the One Man Army. His men will charge through hardened durasteel for him.”

2 The Ziera

The crew of the *Ziera* were calm for a warship about to go to battle. Not being the spearpoint of the attack for a change had instilled a relaxed atmosphere among the crew, knowing they wouldn’t be the first to be shot at as they lay in wait in deep space beside the *Grixxo*. Heads turned to face Nuy as he approached the bridge. The Pau’an stood out at the best of times, but at the dawn of war, it wasn’t his physical features drew attention, it was his axe. An Arg’garok: a colossal, two handed weapon strapped to his back that would have given most men trouble even walking. His grenade launcher and pistol completed a bizarre weapon set.

“Major Nuy Vexus,” Nuy saluted to a human woman, whose sharp, deep brown eyes contrasted with her bright complexion, and her black hair was matched by a black and gold cloak with standard-issue blaster rifle signifying her as a Partisan.

“Lieutenant Magners, sir,” she responded with a voice that echoed with confidence and power. “Welcome aboard the *Ziera*. I’ll be your second in command for Operation Dynamic Entropy.”

“It’s Major Axeman!” blurted out a young blue-skinned twi’lek beside Magners, earning herself an admonishing glare from the Lieutenant.

“Private Seela is a new recruit,” said Magners. “She will be flying your U-Wing Shuttle onto the Nesolat, and *she will remember to address her commanding officer with respect,*” Magners growled and Seela huffed petulantly.

Nuy could immediately tell he would enjoy working with Magners. While he personally was known to take some degree of creative liberty with his instructions, he would not tolerate the same of those under his command. A firm executive officer made things so much easier. Especially when Seela looked like she belonged on a cantina table, not a military ship. The blaster pistol at her hip covered more skin than her clothing did. Sometimes it was hard to find good recruits. “I hope your talents outweigh your ability to follow military etiquette. Or I’ll show you how I *really* earned the name Major Axeman,” Nuy warned and Seela notably recoiled backwards.

The only thing common to the Partisan army was the colour scheme of black and gold. Humans, Rodians, Zabraks, men, women, large, small, armed with blaster rifles, pistols, heavy weapons, swords, vibroknucklers. Even on a mission like this, recruitment was tough. They didn’t have much, but they had something to believe in, and that’s all they needed. That is why they would be victorious. It was the one thing that kept them all together, the belief in Rath Oligard’s ideals.

A bleep sounded in Nuy’s ear, followed by the synthetic female voice of Serena. “Scargill has engaged with Dark Brotherhood forces. Commence Operation Dynamic Entropy immediately.” It seemed he would not get the pleasure of getting to know his whole team personally, although he wasn’t sure the wookiee with two Ryyk blades had a lot of wisdom to share.

“Captain, make the jump!” Nuy ordered. “Partisans, to the hangar bay!” The dead blackness of space outside the viewports erupted into life with the sapphire hues of hyperspace travel as Nuy’s troops followed him to the *Ziera* hangar, murmuring as they went, with battle-hardened veterans reassuring the new recruits.

The usual X-Wing squadron had been deployed elsewhere, with a U-Wing shuttle taking its place alongside the twelve B-Wing starfighters. “The plan is simple,” Nuy said strongly above the low rumble of chatter, causing a moment of silence other than the distant droning of the *Ziera* hyperdrive. “Private Seela will take a squad into the Nesolat aboard the U-Wing. The B-Wings will cover us and land shortly after. On the inside, we stick together at all costs. On the inside we will face heavy resistance. But in narrow

corridors, their numbers count for nothing!” he shouted, brandishing his axe above his head followed by cheers from his troops. “Follow me, and we will strike them where they are most vulnerable! Death to the Brotherhood! Move out!”

Right on cue, the *Ziera* dropped out of hyperspace alongside the *Griixo*. The sound of the battle was deafening even from the other side of the station, as Collective capital ships battled Dark Brotherhood Star Destroyers, a tumultuous racket of turbolasers, missile launchers and bombs clashing against shields. Seela took the pilot’s seat in the U-Wing. Nuy and Magners boarded the shuttle, alongside 6 other Partisan soldiers.

“My simulations predict 2 minutes before enemy engagement,” said the smooth artificial voice in Nuy’s ear as the shuttle’s engines began to screech into life.

“We’ve got two minutes. There’s no time to lose, private,” Nuy said, his grenade launcher already in his hand. “Get us there, now.”

3 The Approach

Seela wasted no time in getting the ship into space, flanked by the squadron of B-wings in the neatest formation that the Partisan pilots could manage.

The hologram in Rath’s office failed to prepare Nuy for the imposing structure of the Nesolat as he approached it for real, with colours black as death and blood red, turbolaser batteries protruding from the ring in every direction that looked like giant spears ready to impale intruders. They approached from the giant castle-like structure from behind. In the distance, Battlegroup Scargill’s forces battled with the naval defence of the Dark Brotherhood, the flashing of turbolaser batteries bathing the station in a red hue.

“Fly under the castle, then loop up into the hangar,” Nuy ordered as they approached the Nesolat. “And keep out of their firing arcs.” Out of the shuttle viewport, he saw a similar detachment disembark from the *Griixo* hangar bay - a shuttle flanked by fighters in a ragged formation.

It felt like the calm before the storm as the convoy approached the Nesolat. The tension on the ship was palpable as all passengers in the shuttle awaited combat to break out at any moment. Nuy was grateful to have the wookiee in his shuttle, a giant mass of power and rage. Nuy constantly heard the AI in his ear, revising estimates for how long

they had.

“A TIE Defender squadron is approaching your position,” said Serena.

“Enemy ships incoming! starfighters, prepare to engage!” Nuy shouted down a comm-link. The B-wings broke from formation to intercept the oncoming fighters.

Dogfights broke out between Collective B-Wings and Brotherhood TIE-defenders. Nuy had seen enough battles in his life to know a losing one when he saw them. One by one, the Collective ships were destroyed by the superior organisation of the well-trained Dark Brotherhood military.

“We need to move faster!” barked Lieutenant Magners.

“It won’t go any faster, it’s a U-Wing!” Seela yelled back from the cockpit.

Nuy could only watch as a swarm of Brotherhood fighters converged on the *Grixxo’s* detachment. They never stood a chance. Within seconds, the shuttle was destroyed in a blaze of fire, picked apart with surgical precision. Immediately, they turned on Nuy’s shuttle and opened fire.

The ship rocked under heavy impact. “We’ve been hit!” Seela shrieked in a voice as shrill as the lasers. The shuttle started to spiral out of control, the temperature rose as the left engine erupted in flames. Nuy felt his stomach jolt as the ship spun in an barrel roll. He had no idea what was happening until there was a deafening crunch of metal on metal and the ship ground to a halt.

Somehow, Seela had managed to control the U-Wing into a crash landing inside the Nesolat hangar bay, a spacious bay with the same black and crimson colour scheme as the outside. They were shortly joined by a mere six starfighters.

There was no time to lament the loss of over half the boarding party as defence forces in the hanger immediately opened fire on the U-wing. “Six Vornskr mercenaries. Expected casualties: two.”

“We outnumber them three to one. Move out!” Nuy roared above the blaster fire and fire of the engine. He led the charge on the heavily armoured mercenaries, his grenade

launcher in his hands, firing a barrage of explosives. A direct hit from Nuy. A headshot from Magners and their numbers were down to four.

As they scampered for cover behind another docked shuttle, Nuy threw his grenade launcher to the ground and hoisted his axe off his back. This is where the real fun began. “With me!” he shouted, charging down the mercenaries with his axe high above his head. The wookiee joined him with his twin blades, roaring a deafening battlecry while Magners and the other ranged fighters cut them off from the other side.

Nobody survived Major Axeman’s attacks once he got into melee range. No sooner had the target raised his blaster rifle to defend himself had Nuy already built momentum with the gigantic axe, sending the rifle flying to the floor. In the same motion, Nuy swung the blade around at his neck. It didn’t matter what their armour was made out of when his axe found its mark. He felt the plasteel crunch under the brute force of the strike and the mercenary fell to the ground, lifeless.

Between Nuy’s axe attacks and the wookiee’s twin Ryyk blades, the remaining mercenaries were killed in seconds. With the fight over, Nuy took a moment to catch his breath, a rare moment of calm in an operation like this, and observe the surroundings. The AI was right. Two Partisans were killed in the assault. They died for a good cause, but every ‘death for a good cause’ made his force weaker and weaker. And Nuy wasn’t sure how many more he could afford to lose.

“Error. Error,” said the synthetic voice in his ear. Great. Now his inside information was lost too. He was about to turn off Serena completely, before more she spoke again. “Redirecting redirecting you have five new messages, message one of fifty seven. Protocol drill sixty seven has been activated. Advised not to proceed further from the sun.” and then a moment of static before “Serena systems resumed.”

“Are you back online?”

“All systems operating as normal, Major Vexus.” Nuy had no idea what had just happened. He wasn’t a slicer. He was just glad to have Serena back again. Against overwhelming numbers, any advantage was precious.

“What’s the situation?”

“General Zentru’la is mobilising his forces,” said Serena. “Exit the hangar and turn left to avoid the bulk of them. The medical bay is the easiest target. Eliminate everyone,” said the synthetic voice in his helmet. Alarms began to blare out through the station, announcing intruders in the hangar bar.

“There’s no time to lose!” Nuy ordered. “Everyone with me!”

4 The Medical Bay

Nuy led the charge through the blast door with Lieutenant Magners on one side and the wookiee on the other. They scanned right. A patrol of three mercenaries. Nuy fired a series of grenades at them, sending them sprawling to the floor. “This way!” He led the squad, with Seela and the other Partisans behind him, down the empty corridor on the left.

“Take the second right hand door,” said the AI in Nuy’s ear over the sounds of his team’s footsteps.

The medical bay was a modest size, brightly lit in contrast to the rest of the station, with a mere 12 beds, only half of which were occupied. Wounded soldiers were hooked up to a bacta infusion while two military doctors watched over them, dressed in white overalls. Magners wasted no time in shooting both of them in the head.

Seela screamed in horror as the unarmed doctors dropped to the ground dead. “They were innocent!”

Magners lifted Seela by the neck, “Our orders were to purge the station,” she said matter-of-factly, with not even a hint of sympathy in her direct tone. Nuy let Magners take care of the discipline, while driving his axe blade into one of the wounded soldiers as if he were splitting wood.

“But... but... we’re supposed to be the good guys...” she mumbled, her bottom lip quivering as she saw the wookiee slash the throat of another.

“There are two kinds of people,” Magners snapped. “Those that fight evil, and those that don’t. You need to decide which you are, Private. NEVER question the Lord Superior’s orders again!” she dropped the young twi’lek to her knees, who never said another

word.

“Hold your position and await reinforcements,” said the synthetic voice in Nuy’s ear-piece.

“There’s only one way in here,” said Nuy to the team after all of the wounded were killed. “Which gives us an advantage.” He flipped one of the medical tables, sending the corpse on it unceremoniously flying across the room. “Find something to take cover behind. And prepare to fire.”

Nuy crouched down behind the table he flipped, his grenade launcher in his hands. The rest of his team assumed defensive positions, ready to fire at whatever came through the door with whatever blaster weapon they happened to be carrying. Everyone except the wookiee. He growled defiantly, wielding his twin blades. Nuy didn’t speak the wookiee language, but his intention was clear. “Get. Down.” Nuy ordered as he heard the sounds of guards in the distance.

“He says the way of the warrior is to stand and fight, not hide and die,” Magners translated. “Skirmir does what he wants. You’re not going to win this argument, Major.”

There wouldn’t be any more argument. A flurry of blaster fire announced the arrival of more mercenaries. Skirmir howled with pain as he was struck in the shoulder, the leg, then the arm by blaster bolts. It seemed to only unleash the monster. The tornado of unbridled murderous rage slashed left and right, destroying his opponents before he was finally taken down by a knife to the heart. Another brave soul who died fighting for what he believed in. Surely the way Skirmir would have wanted to go.

Nuy raised from behind the table and fired a grenade through the doorway, but was quickly forced back into cover by return fire. From behind cover he saw one of his team attempt the same, but was struck between the eyes by a precise shot the moment he raised his head.

From their defensive positions, the Partisan squad had the advantage, but they were vastly outnumbered. Despite scoring significant blows on the enemy, they began to fall one by one until Nuy, Magners, who had scored a number of fatal shots with her rifle, and Seela, who quivered in catatonic terror behind cover, were the last three left alive when there was a break in fire.

5 Gundark Squad

“We’re going to die here aren’t we?” Seela sniffed, clutching at a pistol so hard it looked like her fingers could break off.

“Pull yourself together girl,” snapped Magners.

“But I don’t want to die.”

Nuy knew that the odds of them getting out alive were minimal. But a sobbing little girl getting in the way made those chances even smaller. “None of us want to die, Seela,” he said in the most understanding tone he could muster. “We can get through this,” he said, not even believing his own words. “But only if you stay brave. They fight only for money. We fight from the heart. And that is why we will win.”

Seela took a deep breath. “Okay.” she said quietly.

Two people entered the med bay - a beauty and a beast. Nuy recognised them from a briefing. Lilina Mirin carried an aura of peace about her, a Miraluka with a lively complexion whose electric purple hair was the brightest thing in the room, with a navy blindfold covering her eyes, carrying a double-bladed lightsaber. Behind her was Masakado. A Collective defector. The cyborg shistavenan was almost entirely machine, with sharp, black cybernetic limbs and a wolf-like head, short fur, a gaunt face framed by a mane of black hair and a mechanical lower jaw.

Magners raised her rifle, firing a series of shots at the Jedi, who flashed her cerulean blade into motion, redirecting the shots at the wall with unerring calm and precision. There was no frantic, sudden movement, just smooth, controlled Soresu defence, using both blades of her weapon to block Magners’ blaster bolts. She crouched back into cover.

Seela unclipped a thermal detonator from her belt. She looked at Nuy for assurance. Nuy nodded back in her direction. The young blue twi’lek stood up and threw the detonator at Lilina with all the energy her small body had. It was all too easy for the Jedi. An invisible hand grabbed the detonator mid-flight, and a swipe of Lilina’s arm sent it into the wall with a deafening and blinding red explosion.

Seela grunted and fell to the floor. A throwing dagger was embedded in the side of her neck. The work of Masakado. Blood spurted from the wound, she gasped for air as the life faded from her youthful eyes.

Magners never struck Nuy as the protective kind, but she must have felt something towards Seela, for something flipped in her upon seeing her die. She vaulted over the cover and charged, firing at Lilina as she ran towards her. An invisible shield protected the mercenaries, and as soon as Magners entered close range, Masakado struck, swift as the wind, cleaving her in half with his sword.

“There is still hope for you,” Lilina said serenely to the last survivor. “We are not the evil you have been told.”

“I know what you are,” Nuy spat. “And you will die. We have the greatest leader, the greatest technolog-

“Like Serena?” Masakado said with a cold, hollow, synthetic rasp.

“How do you know about Serena?”

“You think you’re the only one with a mole?” said Serena as her voice turned coarse and harsh. “We’ve controlled this device from the moment you arrived on the Nesolat.”

“Thank you for following Serena’s directions and backing yourself into a corner,” said Masakado. “You made our job much easier.”

6 The bit where the Hive Mind Marines come to save the day, and Nuy bleeds out

“They’ve got reinforcements!” shouted a voice from outside the med bay.

“What are blast they?!”

“They’re too fast!”

Nuy felt a white-hot searing pain from his abdomen. He looked down to see Masakado's dagger dug deep into his gut. The cyborg turned and walked away without another word.

Nuy's left hand clutched tight against his blood-soaked abdomen as he shambled towards the fight, his right barely able to keep a grip on his pistol.

The main Collective attack force had finally arrived. The Hive Mind Marines fought like demons. The perfect soldiers. Each team of four operated with the efficiency of 10 Vornskr mercenaries.

"Fall back!" said a booming voice that almost rocked the entire station. "Fall back!" Nuy moved towards the voice. He found a figure bigger than Skirmir, in shining white armour, holding his own in battle with a team of four marines. General Zentru'la. The One Man Army held off the Hive Mind Marines single-handedly, protecting his retreating troops.

Nuy mustered all the strength he could to raise his pistol, still stemming the blood flow with his other hand. His arm wavered as he lined up the sights. His strength wavered. His consciousness wavered... and his vision turned to black.