

Wagglehorn Awakes

A resounding boom shook the shack with a clap of thunder so loud it seemed the very ground would split apart. Wagglehorn snapped awake and shook himself out of his reverie as another loud crash shook the tiny building he called home. Adrenaline surged through his veins as he grabbed his pistols in a scramble and slammed the metal plate he called a door open.

The view burned itself into his memory in an instant. Twin fighters screeched through the sky above him delivering their lethal payloads into seemingly random targets in Eos City. It was impossible to mistake the profile of T-70 X-wing fighters in the sky. Acrid smoke burned Wagglehorn's nostrils as he surveyed the ground scene in front of him. Civilians were scrambling, screaming to get away from the firebombs recently delivered by Collective fighters.

The ground shuddered again as distant artillery thumped. Anti-air batteries filled the sky with dangerous bolts of fury as the batteries attempted to defend their besieged city. The clatter and hum of armored vehicles resonated in the far distance. The air was filled with the cacophony of a dying city. Desperation hung in the air, almost palpable yet it seemed there was no thought or care to be found for slums that Wagglehorn called home the last two years.

His reverie was cut short as a stream of rapid blaster fire cut line in the gravel road in front him towards his feet. He dove to safety behind a broken speeder slumped in front of his shack. The fire ricocheted off the metal surface he hunkered behind and stopped for a moment. Wagglehorn's shack was the only building opening onto an alley two blocks long. The other shops, dealers, and storefronts that lined the alleyway were filled with boarded up doorways, shattered windows, and abandoned shelves.

The alley itself emptied onto a main route that was well paved and led to downtown Eos. A small speeder service and repair station occupied the corner where the alley teed into the main route. There were two troopers in Collective uniforms operating an E-WEB rapid fire blaster set up an open repair bay at the service station.

Wagglehorn guessed that these two troopers were assigned to guard the service station as a potential refitting zone for Collective vehicles in the area, but these troopers were clearly bored and decided to take that boredom out on the small neighborhood.

Losing interest in the hard-to-hit prey of Wagglehorn, they turned their blaster up the main route and were attempting long range pot shots at some target Wagglehorn couldn't see. He used this opportunity and left his hiding place. Quietly creeping alongside the decrepit buildings and alleys, Wagglehorn slowly unsheathed the vibroblade he always wore on his hip. As he passed a small group of ragged war-torn civilians, he put a single finger to his mouth to signal his intentions. Exchanging a look with the local shopkeeper, he continued his silent journey to the service station.

As he approached the Collective troopers, he could hear them laughing as they poured blaster fire indiscriminately towards a mix of civilian craft attempting to escape the besieged city. Anger flashed through Wagglehorn as he rapidly slid the vibroblade under the shooter's helmet. The trooper fell dead without a sound as the blaster fire abruptly ceased. The other trooper immediately attempted to swing his carbine towards Wagglehorn.

Wags swung his armored gauntlet pushing the muzzle away and slammed his fist into the troopers stomach. Adrenaline surged and fury raged as Wags grabbed the doubled-over troopers throat with both hands and slammed him back against the wall of the service station. Dying eyes locked contact with angry eyes as the life bled from the soldier slumped against the duracrete floor.

Wagglehorn came to and felt the mix of emotions that comes from a close kill. Stumbling away from the grisly scene, he thumbed his commlink to a frequency he hadn't used in a years, and hadn't planned to ever use again.

"Blacksmith, Blacksmith – this is Wagglehorn. Looks like I need to reconsider your previous offer. Can I get a lift?"

His datapad buzzed as a set of coordinates appeared on screen. Wagglehorn clicked the commlink twice in acknowledgement and immediately set off to rendezvous with his new employers – Battleteam Tavros.