

A LIFE AT WAR: TWILIGHT

Chapter 8: Raiding

It only took about a week before we had the volunteers needed for the two frigates. Thank goodness they only needed about sixteen hundred crew in total, I don't think I could manage many more people without needing to delegate half the duties of the Little Revenge. A further surprise was that somehow two Mon Cala Merchant fleet captains decided to join as the Junior Captains of the two new ships.

These two new Captains were Lekarg Endat of the 'Prince's Duty', a young male Mon Calamari who wanted a more active role in the war and Ocka Lix of the 'Lucky Kelp' an equally young male Quarren who wished to prove himself. Their crews were about sixty percent Mon Calamari, thirty percent Quarren and the remaining ten being from the small human populace, transferred clones from Hope Company and a few Non commissioned officers from the remaining fleet that had been shuffled around. Meanwhile a few newer NCOs had found their homes within the other ships of the fleet. I had replaced my transferred Comms officer for a middle aged Mon Calamari female named Ulgug Slas, she was quite professional and from what I could tell had transferred from the Merchant Fleet for a chance at promotion.

The reformed 347th Outer Rim Section could now probably manage three enemy Munificents with good positioning and an incompetent enemy officer with minimal casualties. I was having these estimates rely on enemy incompetence, which with the droids would hopefully not be much of a problem. I was still trying to avoid a large enemy force, as I was secretly not confident in our future prospects. Dac was surrounded by Separatists and Hutt territories and while the Hutts were currently allowing Republic convoys through their space I was going to trust them as far as I could throw a member of their council.

Meanwhile I had the Buckler and Dagger placing the newest sensor buoys on a few different areas of enemy shipping lanes, hopefully we would now be able to see the enemy coming if they attempt to support one of their convoys when we next assault them.

According to Intelligence we should expect a convoy of transports holding cargoes of battle droids, tanks, small arms, and a chunk of raw materials to be heading through one of the lanes we had targeted with sensor buoys. The main problem was that Intel was uncertain what type of ships would be transporting the cargo and what the escort would be. However based off of the amount of cargo Intel was certain we ought to be able to handle it. The final nail in the coffin was that high command had ordered us to intercept the convoy.

I was not pleased by this. This mission had too many variables I did not know and that was making me increasingly uncomfortable. If I didn't know better I

would think someone in High command wants the Republic to loose more. That was ridiculous though, high command had been specifically ... re-adjusted when the war had begun, retiring any members with uncertain loyalties.

Despite my misgivings, orders were orders and we would need to head out in less than a day. I had already forwarded the required information to my direct subordinates, who would forward any needed intelligence onto their subordinates.

The Fleet assembled on the outskirts of the Mon Cala System before jumping to Hyperspace. We would head to our point of interception about a minute out of where the enemy force would need to adjust their vector to continue on their journey. We would hit them there.

"Thirty seconds out sir." I hear navigations say.

"Full power to shields, until we know what we're facing. Prepare to launch fighters, but hold off until I give the order. I want an immediate sensor report once we've entered the area." I order.

I looked at the tactical display. The buoys had sent us info the enemy was about to enter the area, but they had not managed to get a precise readout by

the time we entered comms silence. I would not risk the enemy getting spooked and us losing our targets.

“Ten seconds,” I hear.

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“Break comms silence.”

“-seven, six ...”

“All ships, prepare for combat. Get me our latest sensor readings.”

“-four, three ...”

“One Munificent two Hardcells, but there could be more.”

“Exiting.”

We left the swirling of hyperspace to be greeted by the enemy convoy. I glanced at the tactical display. It updated to show the Munificent and two Hardcells. A moment later the Little Revenge was joined by the Dagger, Buckler and Bastard Squadron, followed shortly by the duo of MC30cs.

“Launch all fighters. Have the Dagger and Lucky Kelp join us in a frontal assault. Have Bastard Squadron target the enemy Munificent’s engines. I want the Prince’s Duty to begin targeting the closest Hardcell and the Buckler to screen the main advance.”

“Sir enemy ships changing heading. The Munificent is coming about and it’s not alone, Two more Gozantis hidden by her gravitational shadow.” I hear from Sensors.

“All forward batteries Fire at will, prioritize the Munificent. Prince’s Duty and Lucky Kelp, open fire on respective closest Gozanti. Buckler is to begin targeting the enemy transports. Have the Dagger open fire on the Munificent, target the bridge. Little Squadron, join Bastard Squadron in the attack of the Munificent. Focus power on our frontal shields.”

The Republic ships begin rushing towards the enemy formation. The first shots of this skirmish emerging from the Munificent’s forward heavy

turbolaser. One impacts the frontal shields of the Little Revenge, causing them to shudder. Shortly after the prow turbolasers of the Little Revenge fire in answer. Halfway to the Separatist convoy they are greeted in turn by a full volley of Separatist turbolaser fire. The shields of the Little Revenge shudder once more. Finally with the distance between the two forces closing the ion cannons of the Dagger and the proton torpedoes of the Lucky Kelp and Prince's Duty join the fray. The respective munitions impacting the enemy ships, a few lasers flying past their targets.

"Sir, enemy Munificent's shields are failing. Gozantis have evaded a couple torpedoes, but most have impacted." sensors calls out.

"Take out that heavy turbolaser." I bark.

The bombers and fighters finally arrive to their target and begin unloading their payloads of laserfire and proton torpedoes upon the Munificent's engines. They impact and one of the three engines explode in a flame of orange any yellow. Meanwhile The two MC 30cs have begun dueling the Gozantis, both getting a decent chunk closer than they need to, their shields are holding and the enemy Gozantis' shields have both already gone down, the Buckler has raced behind the enemy lines and has already destroyed one of the Hardcells. A turbolaser blast rips into the Munificent's heavy turbolaser cannon and hits part of the exposed structure, causing a detonation and breaking the weapon from the ship.

“Sir our shields are dangerously low”

“It won’t matter. Intensify forward fire, focus it on the bridge.”

The shields of the Little Revenge finally go down as a volley impacts her hull. A returning volley punctures the Munificent’s bridge. Another ping on the tactical display alerts me to the destruction of another Hardcell. I looked closer at the tactical display to see the fighters and bombers making another attack run on the engines of the Munificent. An explosion later and the remaining engine block of the enemy ship had been turned into slag.

“Sir, Lucky Kelp reports their Gozanti is dead in the void.” I hear from Lieutenant Slas.

“Tell them to join us in the destruction of the Munificent.”

“Sir, energy signatures from the remaining Gozanti and Hardcell indicating imminent Hyperspace jump!”

“Bring us to starboard for a broadside against Munificent, all ships target any transports in range” I bark

Another explosion and a Hardcell is left drifting through space, this would be the last ship caught in our net, as the lone surviving Gozanti jumps into hyperspace. The Munificent continues to pound turbolasers into our hull, but the enemy droid crew seem unable to prioritize anything important.

“Kark. All ships finish off the Munificent and get started on the calculations to get back to Mon Cala. Little Squadron return to hangar. Helmsman bring us out of enemy range.” I order.

The Little Revenge moves away as the smaller ships of the Republic Section circle the Munificent and continue to pound into it, like a pack of scavengers descending on a dying animal. Eventually the Munificent is dead in space, a final explosion from her reactor breaking her spine in half. As the Republic ships re-assemble into formation the calculations for the return ship are finally completed and they leave for Dac.

The after action report took a tad longer than usual, as I had to correlate my subordinate Captain’s reports with my own to ensure it would stand up to any closer investigation. I had not forgotten general Fisto’s mentioning of concern High Command had for the 347th and the loyalty of her officers. It had rattled me more and more the longer I thought about it. About five weeks after the

Jedi had implied I was a traitor I was going to show High Command that the 347th was without scruple.

I also had to keep up with logistics and manpower for a full Section now. It was essentially at full strength and the crew alone numbered almost five thousand and the supply chain had only increased with the inclusion of my strategically vital sensor buoys. Luckily we didn't need any replacement starfighters or bombers, or else I would need to cut back on the buoys. Instead I could increase our sensor knowledge of the Separatist shipping lanes near Dac and feed that information to Republic Naval Intelligence.

That may have earned me a few brownie points, but it clearly hadn't completely thrown off someone's suspicion of my loyalties. The Intelligence reports I received almost entirely left out anything happening in any area other than the immediate area surrounding Dac unless it had something to do with the mission. Normally the reports would include necessary intelligence on neighboring sectors, but those were left completely blank.

It made me worry, and when I worried in the past few years I would ask my parents for advice or go to a dive bar. Since my parents weren't available, I think I'll use my next shore leave to utilize my second option. Until then however I had paperwork to file and battles to plan.