

Independence: The Ancient Trap

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Chapter 9

GTD Independence

Unknown

13th May 2371

The battle outside caused the ship to rock violently. Captain Moloch sat in his Command Chair, directing the battle.

“All weapons, fire at will!” Almino walked onto the Command Deck. He was dirty and had a cut on his cheek from being thrown around too much in his fighter. “Ah, Commander. It’s good to have you back. Enjoy the fight?”

“Not really but I’ll live.”

“Good, because I need you to help Scott and Muhammad to reconfigure the Main Beam Cannon.”

“I’ll get on it right away”

“Good” Almino walked over to the tactical station. It was crowded with people trying to reconfigure weapons and fight a battle all at the same time but they were surviving. “Lisa, where’s the Dice?”

“The Dice is moving towards us but is heavily damaged. They report 9 casualties. Sir. Only 3 people have survived!”

“Oh my God!” The Captain stared wide eyed in horror. Never before had 9 men been killed in a mission that required a team to walk only 27 meters before. This was terrible! “We must get out of here.” Another missile hit and another explosion on the Command Deck “Scott! How long until the modifications are complete?” There was no answer and when he turned, he saw Scoff, lying dead on the floor, covered with multiple burns. Luckily, Almino and Muhammad had got away in one piece.

“Sir! The console’s blown! I can’t complete the modifications from here! I’m going to have to manually reconfigure the Beam. I’ll be back soon ? I hope!” Muhammad left the Command Deck and rushed towards the Main Beam Cannon. The door closed behind him.

“God help him” Moloch said to himself.

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Muhammad walked through the corridors which were quickly filling up with toxic plasma. He held his breath and ran through it as fast as he could. His face went blue but he knew that if he breathed out, he would surely die. He was almost out of air when he ran right into a door with Main Beam Cannon - “Do Not Enter During Red Alert.” The ship was in a battle, so it was definitely at red alert but he had no choice. He opened the door and breathed out as soon as it had closed behind him.

He was in a small room ? a very small room occupied mainly by the Main Beam Cannons Control Matrix. As close as he could get to its Processor without suffering Radiation poisoning. He slid away a small panel from the huge red device and reached inside. He was feeling around for the frequency card. He found it amongst a mass of wires that were to do with its targeting computer. It was very hot inside and Muhammad could only keep his hands inside for short periods of time. When he pulled the card out, he examined it to make sure it had not been damaged. The small,

bright orange plastic card was in top condition. Unlike most other parts of the ship at this time. He pulled a small metal tool from his pocket and began to alter the card. Another explosion rocked the ship, causing a deck plate above him to collapse. It fell to the ground, denting the floor.

“Muhammad. The Dice has docked. We need to go now!”

“Give me one more minute!” The ship rocked again, more violently than before. Something big had just been destroyed.

“We just lost the Solar Panel. Hull integrity is down to 22%! Please hurry up!” The Captains voice was now anxious, angry and scared.

Muhammad made the last alteration to the card and slotted it into the machine. Another explosion made his hand hit the hot metal of the active weapon and he let out a scream.

“Ouch!” He closed the panel and left the room, remembering to take another deep breath in first. “That’s it! Lets go!”

The Main Beam Cannon of the heavily damaged GTD Independence powered up and shot out into space. For a moment, nothing happened but then, slowly, the area around the bright red beam lit up and slowly formed another subspace anomaly, identical to the one in Dubbe. It crackled with blue energy as it stabilised. A few seconds later, the anomaly had settled down.

“Take us in, Navigator!” The Independence’s engines lit up with bright blue energy as they moved the ship towards the anomaly with the Shivans in hot pursuit. Almino, looked worriedly at the Captain.

“Sir, I’m no engineer, but if I understood this data correctly, the anomaly we only stay open for 13 minutes.”

“That’s good enough for us! Move us in!” The ship moved closer to the anomaly and the main monitor flicked on to show its massive body filling the entire screen.

“The anomaly will stay stable for 4 more minutes!” Moloch turned to Lisa.

“ETA, 2 minutes and 43 seconds. We’ll make it ? just.” Moloch grabbed hold of the chair as the ship began to enter the anomaly.

“Sir, I no longer have control of the ship, a beam of some kind has hit us!” The ship was enveloped in cracking blue energy, brighter than a thousand suns. Moloch and Almino closed their eyes before the ship and all in her vanished once again.

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Moloch rose from his char, shaken by their journey. Most of the ship was in ruins but it could be repaired with time. “Where are we, navigator” The navigator worked his half dead controls.

“Establishing a link with GTCR 1103. Sir, 1103 reports our positions as grid 132342 in the Dubbe System!” Everyone sighed with relief.

“Contact GTVA Command, let them know were all right.”

“Yes sir!” Lisa worked her controls and eventually established a link with GTVA Command. She patched it through to the main view screen. A middle aged man with black hair filled the screen. He was wearing an Admiral uniform.

“Captain Moloch! We thought you were goners for sure! What happened?” Moloch chuckled.

“It’s a long story! I’ll tell you when we get back. Listen, do you think I can talk to Admiral James anytime soon?”

“I’m sorry. I thought you had heard. Admiral James died of a heart attack on 12th May, the day you went missing.” The Captain stood in quiet, remembering the lost Admiral. A tear came to his eye. Not only had he lost a comrade, but also a dear friend.

“Admiral.” He wiped his tears away. “I would like you to place this piece of metal in his coffin please.” He held up a small piece of metal he had asked Davis to recover from the Pinecone. “It’s from the Pinecone, his fathers ship.”

“I’m sure that can be arranged Captain. I’ll expect a full report to be ready when you get back to Vega.”

“Of course. Independence out”

Captain Moloch walked over to the main monitor and placed the piece of metal on the monitor. He starred out into space, looked at the stars, the planets and all the other things out there and closed his eyes, along with the rest of the crew, in remembrance of all the men who had died. Not only in the Alternate Dimension, the Ancient Trap, but also those who had died throughout the Universe, giving there lives in service of their people.