

Aeolus

Originally Posted on March 30th, 2003

Author: Starfury1

Chapter 1 Transmission primary: 1 of 2

Priority ...Epsilon Red, Trans-stellar transmission

Transmitter ...3rd Fleet Capella Headquarters

Date ...02/12/36

Author ...3rd Fleet Command, Capella System, Assignments Division

Receiver ...Commander Hadrian, GTC Aeolus (Aeolus – Class)

CC ...2nd Fleet Vega Headquarters, GTVA Command Delta Serpenta

Subject ...Transfer orders for GTC Aeolus

Attached ...ram.13/dynamo/loc

...ram.14/convoy/detail

...ram.16/coo/loc

Commander Hadrian, the GTC Aeolus is now relieved of patrol duty in Delta Serpenta. You are hereby ordered to make best possible speed to the Vega system (see attached file ram.13/dynamo/loc), where you are to rendezvous with the GTCv Dynamo and several support vessels (see attached file ram.14/convoy/detail). The Aeolus and the Dynamo are then to escort these vessels through the Vega and Capella systems and see them delivered to GTVA forces at given co-ordinates (file ram.16/coo/loc). From there you will receive new orders via inter-system transmission.

As of this notice, you are transferred from the 2nd Fleet, 4th Squadron to the 3rd Fleet and are now under the direct command of Admiral Petrarch. Your duties will involve operations in both Gamma Draconus and the Nebula beyond, as well as possible actions against NTF forces as needed.

Signed;

Captain Holdi, GTVA Command

Transmission tertiary: 2 of 2

John,

Things are hotting up out here. I'm pressed on two fronts and the Shivan's seem to be throwing everything they've got at us. Our situation is tenuous as it is, and there seems to be no end in sight. Command's putting the best spin on things, but we're losing one ship for every two Shivan cruisers we take down – I don't know about the Shivan's, but we're running out of ships! Between the NTF rebellion and the Shivan attacks, I'm down to 60% of what I should have, and that includes fuel and missiles.

Don't come here expecting a picnic, John. The Shivan's aren't letting us walk over them and I get

the feeling that something big is coming. I'm calling every favour I've got to get extra ships assigned but it may not be enough.

Sorry to drag you into it, but I need your help with this.

Signed;

Petrarch

"Fuck" muttered Danny from over my shoulder.

"Aye, fuck indeed" I replied, putting down the datapad. "Better pass on the word to the bridge that we're heading out – get the ship ready for subspace"

"Aye aye sir!" answered Danny with a grin. "Dammit, and there I was looking forward to sitting in the arse end of nowhere pulling combat pay without getting shot at!" She left my cabin laughing.

Chuckling to myself, I turned back to my desk and looked down. The pad looked back.

Dammit, I wasn't look forward to this.

"Captain on the bridge!" Bawled Ensign Actar as I stepped passed through the hatch. 18 and on his first cruise, his voice just broke at the end of his yell. Guess he was a late developer. Trying to hide a smile, which I guess from the blush creeping up his neck I failed at, I strode to the centre of the bridge and sat in the centre chair, just behind the Nav console and overlooking the gun-pit.

"Commander, what's our status?"

I sensed Danny straighten up behind me, and could almost see her unconsciously tugging at her uniform. "We're ready to go Captain. Engines are primed for the jump to the node, all weapons are checked and locked. She's ready"

"Alrighty then – Navigation! prime engines and set course for the node. Weapons! I want a full tactical options available as soon as we emerge from the node. I don't want to be surprised by anything!" I barked at the crew and sat back as they leapt into action. Within seconds I heard the subspace engines begin to roar, pushing the Aeolus forward into subspace. The view screens filled with the glittering blue of subspace and...

...star's blossomed into life through the viewports.

"Jump completed successfully sir. Welcome to the Vega system" called Actar from the navigation console in front of me, his duty station for this shift. Mercifully, his voice didn't crack this time.

"Good job Actar. Sensors, anything showing up?" I called out stiffly from my chair, feeling the aches of the 2 hour watch beginning to set in.

"Reading two weapons platform above and below us, Cerberus-class. IFF confirms them as friendlies. Also reading several cargo vehicles moving towards and away from the node"

"Ok then. Tactical, power down weapons but do not disengage the power lines. Lets keep them hot for now. Comm, lets start..."

"Sir, incoming signal from the GTCv Dynamo" called across the comm officer, cutting me off mid-sentence.

"Well someone's in a hurry. How did they know we were here?" muttered Danny, leaning over from behind my command chair.

"Probably hacked into one of the Cerberus's and had a live video field going. Comm, bring it up on my chair-vid" I replied to both Danny and the comm tech, while simultaneously popping up a video screen set into the armrest of my chair. Within a minute I sat face to face with a man half a solar system away.

"Captain" intoned the man facing me. "Captain Athan here. Good to see you. I've attached my coordinates to this transmission, one frequency below this" I glanced up and to the left of me, and got a nod from the comm tech letting me know that we had the co-ordinates.

"Aye Captain, I've got them. I'll be jumping momentarily to them once the engines are primed" I told Athan, speaking directly in to the monitor in front of me.

"Excellent – I'll have the convoy ready to move by the time you arrive".

The convoy turned out to be a collection of about 15 vessels, ranging from GTVA medical carriers to troop transports. The most common ships were, surprisingly, Science vessels, all headed for the research project at the Knossos portal. Grouped together they formed a rough ovoid around which a wing of fighters formed an outer shell. Within the patrol crafts flight path, the Dynamo and the Aeolus formed a secondary inside shell guarding the valuable ships inside.

The Dynamo was a Deimos-class Corvette, a long black ship with deep chinned prow and a stubby engine block at its rear. Weapons turrets and beam cannons studded its hull, the darkened pits of the gun muzzles contrasting against the star filled back drop.

In comparison, the Aeolus was a far different ship. The original test bed for the Aeolus-class warship, the Aeolus itself was a ship with a dark history. Originally built as the prototype and test-bed, the Aeolus became the model for the GTVA's new line of Light Cruiser aimed at replacing the ageing Fenris-class cruisers. However, 6 months in to the Aeolus's maiden voyage, a failed subspace jump and an uncharted comet combined to devastate the ship, near ruining the ship when it jumped off course in to the path of the comet. The captain, Fernstram, and his bridge crew, along with 27% of the ships crew were killed instantly and more than 30 compartments were opened up to the vacuum of space by the impact.

Recovered by the GTVA, the Aeolus spent a further 6 months in a dry dock while decisions raged in high offices over what to do with the vessel. The Aeolus design had fallen out of favour and while the class was still being produced several design flaws had meant its usefulness in the near future was limited. Eventually, the ship was set to be rebuilt, after the dry-dock commander pulled several favours.

Redesigned to his personal specifications, the Aeolus became an entirely new type of Light Cruiser. Fitted with improved Vasudan reactors, the power available to the ship was doubled while experimental automation techniques halved the number of crew members needed to man the ship. The outer hull was reinforced, making up for the originals lack of armour and additional compartments were added in to the ship, allowing for sections to be easier isolated and sealed.

Overall, when the Aeolus left the dry dock a year later she was a new ship. She had new computers,

new weapons, new reactors – and most importantly, a new captain.

The dry-dock commander, John Hadrian.