

When we arrived at our destination the next morning, I had recovered enough to make my way around under my own power. I still felt a little well done around the edges, but it faded more the longer I was awake. Frequent healing and Respite spells helped the process.

We spent a few minutes approaching the station at sublight speeds, dropping out of hyperspace far away from our destination. Omega Station was now the center of a lot more activity, which meant approaching it took more time and a lot more communication. While we were gone, several ships had arrived with more personnel, including a few repair ships that floated along the hull of the station and around the Munificent. As we came in to land in the same massive hangar bay as before, I could see people inside thick, bulky space suits, sealing up holes by welding plates over them. Quite a few droids worked alongside them, walking around the hull, carrying supplies, and assisting in the welding.

When we finally touched down and I made my way down the boarding ramp, I was immediately greeted by Miru, who had a hug for each of us. She was clearly excited, though I couldn't tell if it was because of something that had happened or if she was just that excited to see us. When I asked, she laughed and told me to wait for the meeting.

With that bit of information, I immediately started getting everyone together. It took about twenty minutes for everyone to make their way to the hangar and then to the *Chariot* lounge. Once we were all there, I gave everyone who stayed behind a look and a gesture.

"Well? You're all clearly extremely pleased with something, so lay it on us," I said expectantly. "Tell us the good news."

"We completed our primary inspection of supplies," Nal said, reading from a datapad. "The results are encouraging, to say the least."

"We found three hundred tons of foodstuff spread between several different storage locations," Julius explained, reading from a datapad. "Our cut of that is a bit over one and a half million credits."

I looked at Julius with wide eyes. We had expected a pretty large payout from the supplies, but hearing that we had just made that much money... it was still rather mind-boggling.

"That is not all. We located two intact large-scale armories," Nal added with a smile. "All Clone War era arms and armor, but all fully functional. Our cut of that is just over eight hundred thousand credits."

My surprised look switched over to Nal, who was smirking, his sharp teeth exposed. After a long moment, I shook my head, focusing on the moment and what he had said.

"We should see if we can't convince them to let us keep some of the weapons and armor," I suggested, rubbing my chin. "The armor is far below anything we have, and the

weapons are basic, but a solid stockpile of weapons would be nice. I'm sure there are probably things like grenades and other stuff, which we desperately need a source of."

"They seemed pretty interested in it, Boss," Julius responded. "But I can check. How bad do you want it?"

"Not that bad. We can always buy some if we need it."

"That's not all, Boss!" Miru said, practically bouncing in her seat. "Nal, tell him!"

"We found the hangar where the station's starfighter complement resided," Nal explained. "It was along the side opposite the collision sight and was sealed with blast doors."

"Then... It still contained the starfighters, I'm guessing?"

"Nearly two full squadrons," Nal answered. "The hangar bay contained twenty-one [Nimbus-class V-wings](#) and two [LAAT Space variant gunships](#)."

"What kind of state were they in?"

"There was damage from the impact and some drifting after the artificial gravity failed... and then more when it kicked on again," Miru explained. "But if I sacrifice two, maybe three of the worse-off V-wings, I could get the rest working. The LAATs were mostly fine, save some minor hull damage. Everything needs a thorough look over and testing before they are used, but as far as I can tell, everything looks good!"

"Wait... Why didn't the clones take them?" Tatnia asked as I tried to visualize what the V-wing looked like in my head. "They were stuck here. Did they not know about them?"

"Cause neither of them have hyperdrives," Miru explained. "The V-wings also don't have shields."

"Damn... I forgot about the know shield thing," I admitted, shaking my head. "I don't think I'm willing to put people in them if they don't have any shields."

"Even if we don't keep them, Boss, they should fetch us another million credits, at least," Julius explained. "I don't know about the LAATs. Didn't know they even made a space version."

"Holy shit," I said, my eyes wide, looking down at the datapad that Nal had passed me with all the information we had just discussed. "That's more than 2.3 million credits and then another million worth of military hardware."

"Do not forget we also gain any intact droids, plus whatever the rebellion salvage," Vaz pointed out. "They have been surprisingly useful so far."

"All while securing a solid base of operations for ourselves that, apparently, we won't have to staff or fund the upkeep ourselves." Julius finished.

"...And you doubted that we could find a way to profit from our next mission in multiple ways," I said, looking over at Tatnia, who rolled her eyes in response. "I'm going to go ahead and divide up another hundred thousand credits and distribute them to everyone. Everyone has more than earned another chunk of credits. When we get paid our share, I plan on doing that again."

Everyone cheered, slapping shoulders and sharing high fives at my announcement. While Julius grabbed some drinks for everyone to celebrate with, I made the first transfer, prompting another round of cheers. When we finished toasting each other, Vakim pointed out that we had a new mission.

"Right, so the deal I struck with the Rebellion was for them to use the Munificent as a droid repair or production area. As I mentioned, I also separately convinced them to pay for and supply fully repairing the station," I explained. "The cost was that they would be using a good chunk of it for their own people, as a safe haven and distribution center. The station would still be ours, meaning that, at the end of the day, we get the final say. This is our home. They would just be tenants."

"That... seems like a remarkably one-sided deal for them," Dazem pointed out, confused as to why they would accept.

"Which is why I had to sweeten the deal," I explained. "We are going to steal a nice big ship for them, something that they can show off as compensation for investing so many resources into something they technically wouldn't own."

"What sort of ship?" Miru asked. "Do you have a target?"

"Nope," I admitted, popping my "P" deliberately. "The first step will be selecting our target. It will have to be something of significant tonnage, bigger than the *Intervention* for sure."

"How much bigger?" Julius asked. "The Imperial Navy doesn't have that much in the way of variety."

"That is not entirely true," Vaz said, shaking his head, gesturing to Pola.

"That's right, I was serving as an engineer on a CR70," The young Ex-Imperial pointed out. "Coreward, sure, variety is low, but out around the mid-rim, the ships get more varied."

"Older as well," Nal pointed out. "Though that is not necessarily bad."

"They keep most of them up to date with refits," Pola pointed. "The Empire is terrible, but they take their navy seriously."

"Well... Let's start by looking through some of the patrols around the Mid and Outer Rim," Tatnia suggested. "We might get lucky."

We spent the rest of the day, and into the next morning, looking through news reports, planetary gossip, and any other resource of information we could get our hands on, trying to find a suitable target for us to steal. It was also an excuse to relax from the constant movement and work over the last few days. The entire crew had essentially been working and doing things nonstop for nearly a week, so sitting down and doing some simple research was good for everyone.

As we did our research, we quickly realized that gleaning the kind of knowledge we wanted, while not impossible, was definitely not simple. We started by choosing worlds with smaller populations, scanning their news for stories about their patrol fleet landing. After the seventh lead burned out because the patrol fleet didn't have anything worth taking, I finally realized what the problem was.

"If we are looking for ships that are landing on the planet, we are never going to find anything bigger than the *Intervention*," I pointed out, putting my datapad down on the table.

Miru, who was the only other person at the table with me, looked up. She scrunched her face as she was thinking, eventually nodding in agreement.

"I've been ignoring anything I learned about ships that didn't frequently land planetside," She admitted, confirming my suspicions. "But you're right. The *Intervention* is already pushing its size, at least for ships that can frequently land for maintenance. If it was any larger, you would start running into more issues than it solves."

"So what, are we looking to disable a ship in a space battle?" Julius asked from the couch, sitting beside Tatnia.

"No, this is supposed to be compensation," I said, shaking my head. "Handing over a damaged ship isn't going to go over well."

"What about commandeering a shuttle?" Tatnia asked, still looking intently at her datapad. "I found something that might fit the bill."

We gathered back around the table so we could go over Tatnia's suggestion, the crew of the *Intervention* tuning in through the holoprojector. They were still in the same hangar as us, still inside their ship, but they had been working on finding a target as well, sitting in their lounge space. When we were all set, Tatnia sent us what she had found.

Her suggested target was a small Imperial patrol fleet made up of four ships. [Two Imperial Gozantis](#), an [IPV-1 System Patrol Craft](#), and one [Bayonet-Class](#) light cruiser.

"I'm guessing the *Bayonet-Class* is our target?" I asked, getting a nod in confirmation. "What is it like? I don't recognize the class name."

"It's a bit of an older ship, but quite a bit younger than the *Intervention*," She explained, finding a picture and showing it to me. "It's also got about sixty meters on it."

The ship followed the usual Imperial design of being vaguely triangular, though not nearly as drastic as the Star Destroyer. It had three raised sections on the back top of the ship, with a command tower behind that. The central raised section was a small hangar.

"It's heavily armed, armored, and shielded for its size," Tatnia added. "Eight heavy turbolasers and lighter laser cannons... It would definitely beat the *Intervention*, though its upgrades would give it plenty of time to escape."

"So what makes this ship a solid option?"

"Well, its patrol is stationed over a planet called Lipsec," She explained. "The IPV and the *Bayonet-class* stay in orbit permanently, while the two Gozantis ferry supplies and people to and from the surface. According to local gossip, Commodore Distani, the young officer in charge of the patrol, takes a shuttle down to the surface every two weeks to see his mistress."

"That's... damn."

"Yeah. He rides down on his ship's shuttle, spends two days at her large home mansion, and then flies back up to his ship."

"So, our plan would be to commandeer his shuttle, use it to get on board the *Bayonet-class*, take over the ship, and then escape?" Allum asked with a frown. "There's an awful lot of firepower around that ship. If they realize we're trying to commandeer their ship, even a ship like the *Bayonet-class* won't last long. *Especially* if we are inside it, taking out the people in charge of keeping it alive."

"We would only need to take over the bridge," Miru pointed out. "From there, it would be much easier for Racer to take control of the systems. Right buddy?"

Racer warbled and beeped, ending with a long whistler. His top spun, shiny, and unblemished. Miru had been working on some upgrades and repairs and had finished off with a fresh coat of paint. After a moment of listening to the energetic droid, Miru frowned but nodded in understanding.

"With the right codes, he could do it. Otherwise, he doesn't think he could beat modern Imperial digital security, at least not consistently and quickly," She explained. "We would need to get them from someone high up, probably the Commodore."

"Well... we can try my Calm spell trick, but no guarantees it will work," I admitted, making a mental note to check if my Grimoire had any info on making my Illusion spells harder to beat. "We could also try good old-fashioned threats of violence. Depending on how much of a dirtbag he is, they might not even be empty threats."

I could tell a few of my crew weren't exactly up to the idea of torturing for information, so I held up my hands. Pola, Dazem, and Miru specifically did not look happy about it."

"I'm not saying we break out the interrogator droid and go to town," I assured them. "But a few shocks and the right words could make the process much easier. I'll even heal him up when we are done. And again, that's only if my Calm spell doesn't work."

That seemed to appease them, at least slightly. Tatnia, blessed second in command as she was, quickly brought our attention back to the topic at hand.

"Okay, so we show up, abduct the Commodore, get him to give us the codes, then take over the ship through force and slicing," She listed. "How do we keep the other three ships from taking us apart as we try to take control?"

"The *Intervention* and *Talos Chariot* would be sufficient to distract them," Vakim pointed out. "We wouldn't even need to engage. Simply jump in with weapons charged and begin targeting them actively. That will light up their sensors, and as long as we remain out of weapons range, they won't be able to do anything but shout at us over the comms."

"Okay... It seems like we have the foundation work for a solid plan," I said, putting my hands on the table. "Let's start refining it until it is fully fleshed out. Let's start by finding out more about this guy's mistress and what her house looks like. In the meantime, Calima will start working on a jump plan to the CIS base. We are going to need the *Starcaller* to infiltrate the planet."

Calima nodded and stood from the table, making her way to the bridge, where she could start the astronavigation calculations. Meanwhile, all of us started pouring through the local Lipsec net sources, connecting through the Holonet. Pouring over gossip rags of a small, lightly populated planet wasn't exactly my idea of a good time, but the more information we had, the better.

We just had to sift through all the bullshit first.