
The war for Maelstrom

Spaceport

- *Chaplain, the our scanners show that the heretics landed not far from here. We're also picking multiple life forms coming this way. Some of them are definitely Tau. Probably just traders here to meet with the renegades. As for the rest, probably local fauna. What are the orders?*
- *Deploy the troops, I'll lead them myself. We'll take out two birds with one stone.*
- *Yes sir.*
- *And sergeant*
- *Yes sir?*
- *Bring out the vindicator.*
- *Yes sir!*

- *Shas'el, we've got visual on one of the landing party. It has imperial markings. They're straight ahead. We've spotted Tyranid critters on our left flank.*
- *Thank you Tash'ie. Stay with me here, we'll hold of the tyranids while the rest of the troops take care of those imperial scum. If they think they can come uninvited and retake this colony, they're in for a surprise.*
- *My god Ty'Kaeth, have you seen the size of the gun on that tank!*
- *I have Ste'kavr, I have. Unfortunately we lost our broadsides on that last skirmish with the tyranids. We'll have to take it down as soon as we get the chance.*
- *Shas'el, I've spotted that other ship that landed. It bears imperial marking as well. The main tyranid force seems to be heading straight for them.*
- *Good, it'll be nice for once if those critters could give us a break.*

[Untranslatable cryptic telepathic message from the hive mind]

- *Sergeant Froiskit reporting sir!*
- *Report sergeant.*
- *We've spotted a mass of life forms heading this way. From their speed we can only guess that it is a small tyranid force. Contact is imminent.*
- *What of the heretic ship that attacked us in orbit?*
- *They are also on an intercept course with us. Looks like they'll be here soon. We've also spotted a force of technologically advanced being in the vicinity. What shall we do?*
- *Take the predator, the dreadnaught and 2 squad of marines and wipe those tyranids. I'll hold of the heretics with another squad of marines and the land speeder.*

- *But sir, they have a Vindicator battle tank.*
- *Do as ordered. Once you've finished those puny tyranids, have the predator circle around and give us a hand. Keep the Dreadnaught near the middle of the two forces. We might have need of it's twin link lascanon for the vindicator. May the emperor guide my aim.*

The various troops deployed around the spaceport. The battle was about to begin, but who would be the first to shoot, drawing attention to themself. Attention that could be fatal.

The Librarian of the Crimson Tide Chapter was quick to deploy, moving his troops across the landing pads. A full squad of terminator battle suit protecting the weaker flank of the Vindicator. Unsuspecting the massive firepower that the Tau could have. Thanks the emperor, the Tau had none of their dreaded Railguns. Splitting his forces so he could take a shot at both the Tau and the Stone Fist marines, while heading in the general direction of the Tyranids seemed the best strategy at the moment. Waiting patiently to be within striking distance before bringing mass destruction to every opposing troops present. Suddenly, it all started...

- *Crisis team Alpha here, we have a visual on space marines. They are on our approach vector for the tank. commencing attack.*
- *Roger that team Alpha. We will contain the tyranids. Take out those marines.*
- *That's four down Shas'el.*

- Chaplain, we're taking fire. Requesting permission to engage.
- Permission granted sergeant, fire at will.

- Sir! The Tyranids are coming this way. First wave about to hit us.
- Predator reporting, we're under heavy fire here, we lost a flamer and the twin autocanon.
- Fist one, hold your ground and shred them to pieces. Fist two, go and assist fist one. Predator, the dreadnaught is right behind you to assist.
- Dreadnaught here, I confirm a hit on the huge error of nature in front of the predator. It took the lascanon in the thorax. It is still moving, but am confident that I can take it out soon.
- It has nothing to do with nature... Good shooting, drive it into the ground.
- Fist three here, we have the heretics in sight, opening fire!

- Vindicator speaking, we can't get a clear shot of the Tau. We might have an opening on some heretics pathetically shooting at our troops. Request permission to vaporise them.
- By all means be my guess Vindicator.

And the ground shook from the blast of the Demolisher Cannon. For a split second everyone stood still as the death gushed out of the tank. Unfortunately for some (fortunately for others) the crew of the vindicator misjudged the distance. The stone fist marines looked behind them, where a huge crater had formed. They were there just seconds before... But the distraction costed them dearly, for another squad of the Crimson Tide had taken position on their flank, harassing them without pause. Flames came pouring over the Stone Fists marines from that Crimson Tide squad's flamethrower, burning both their missile launcher and their own flame thrower. If only they hadn't feared the battle tank, if only their

confidence in the emperor's protection hadn't faltered for that second, their comrades would still be among them.

The vindicator having turned around to fire its main canon now had an exposed flank. An opportunity that the Tau commander couldn't pass up. Now that the Tyranids were too far to be an immediate threat, he flew his crisis suit in position and with his blood brothers fired every single weapon they had on the tank. Most of their weapons bounced off harmlessly on the thick armour of the tank, but one of the Tash'ie's missile hit it right over the track. There must have been a weakness near the fuel tank of the vindicator for it went sky high. The explosion rocked the whole space port. The Crimson Tide's terminator squad that was protecting the other flank of the tank wasn't spared. Their armour took most of the damage, but one of them didn't make it.

But the Tyranids hadn't said their last word. Having been driven back by the Tau crisis suits, they fell hard on the Stone fist space marines. A horde of hormagaunt came pouring over the two squads of space marines that were supposed to hold them. It soon became a huge melee. A big creature armed with what could pass off as a Gatling gun, enraged by the lascanon shot it had received shot down the dreadnaught. The Tyranids were overwhelming the Stone fist chapter. But not without cost. Space marines were falling to the mass of Hormagaunts, but not without taking more than their share of kills.

As the battle raged on, the casualty number climbed. Spore mine thrown by the Tyranids were coming down everywhere. Their erratic movement without discernable pattern too confusing to safely avoid them. The stone fist commander had to do something fast. If only he could dispatch those three huge creatures. The whole Tyranid army would collapse.

- Predator, go around that monster, and come back from behind. Take out their leader.
- Yes Sir! Full speed ahead.

As the predator moved over bushes and rubble, one of its tracks caught in a rock. The track dislodged from its rail. It was stuck there. There would be no more moving around the rear. Fortunately, the huge monsters didn't see it as a threat anymore. Instead, they started toward the commander. About then, a missile appeared out of nowhere and struck down the landspeeder. Just a reminder to the stone fists that this was a four party battle. Then everything started moving fast. The Tau's crisis suits started clearing the left flank of the Crimson Tide, while the Tyranid's hormagaunts finished the two squads of marines they had engaged. One of the carnifex charged the commander of the Stone Fists, killing him and 2 of his honour guards. Things were looking grim for the remaining guards, but, as they saw the great beast towering above them, the huge claw that could cut them in half, they saw something strange. In the beast's eye was fear. It looked left, then right, and as fast as it had fallen on them, it ran away. Sensing something unknown, every Tyranid creature was fleeing the battle field. Only seconds later, the first tremor was felt. What had provoked it? Was it the blast of the Vindicator's demolisher cannon? The explosion of the Vindicator itself? Who could tell! But the earthquake was growing in strength. Rubbles came crashing to the ground from the ruined structures. The place wasn't safe anymore. Every army on the battlefield retreated as fast as they could. They would have to finish that fight another day!