
The war for Maelstrom

Heretics!

Somewhere in the warp, on the main bridge of the “Flame of righteousness”, one of the imperial’s overlord class battlecruiser, from the Crimson Tide Chapter:

- *Admiral, we’re about to reenter conventional space. The astro-navigator reports that we are near The Maelstrom system. Everything is as planned.*
- *Good job force commander Antwoine. Order the librarian of the Meadow cruiser to go ahead and mount a scouting party to explore the chosen landing zone.*
- *As you wish admiral. The emperor’s will shall be done and this system cleared of Tau heretics.*

As the force commander Mark Antwoine left the admiral to see the order carried on, the admiral return to his charts. The emperor once had this system mapped, and looking at the map he was still confident that their chosen landing zone was the most strategic place. Is orders where to utterly destroy the Tau colony, and the means to do it had been left to him. Unlike some other admirals he knew, orbital bombardment had never been his thing. If he was to kills heretics, he’d prefer to do it face to face... Suddenly everything went black, and for a second time stood almost still. They were out of the warp. Soon he’ll crush those Tau heretics with his powerfist... He was lost in his thoughts when the force commander returned

- *Admiral, we’ve just detected a lone imperial cruiser headed for Maelstrom prime. It is too far for us to intercept it before it reaches the planet. It is not responding to our astro-telepaths.*
- *From our orders, there is not supposed to be any other imperial troops in this sector. Send a message right away to the librarian, make him change his landing zone to that of this cruiser. If they’re dealing with Taus, they are heretics as well. We shall cleanse them.*
- *Yes sir! I’ll transmit the new landing coordinates of that renegade cruiser to our scouting party.*

Near Maelstrom prime, aboard the Luminous, an imperial dictator class cruiser of the Stone Fists Chapter, Force commander was accessing the damage his vessel had taken during the fight against the tyranid rear guard.

- *Captain Cassius, what’s our status.*
- *Sir, we came out of warp ahead of the fleet. We’ve lost communication, and have no way to reach the fleet admiral. We’ve got minimal sensors, and can’t detect anything pass the planet. The twin suns of this system interferes with our navigation system, and the astro-navigator needs more time to figure out where we are. Most of our weapons are still online, but our missile tubes are not responding. The main deck and the communication room took the most damage, we’ve still got the troops unarmed.*
- *What about the tyranid ship we where pursuing?*
- *I can’t say for sure, but we’re picking out lifeforms on the planet that may be them.*

- *In the emperor's name captain, can you be more vague.*
- *Sorry sir, but until we repair those scanners we can't say much for certain.*
- *Then we'll land to make the repairs. Prepare the troops to secure a landing area.*
- *Yes sir!*
- *SIR, Sorry to interrupt you, but Im picking up another imperial cruiser on intercept course. They're firing on us!*
- *Damn the Tyranids must have contaminated that ship. Lieutenant, engage evasive maneuvers. We're in no shape to fight them. Get us down on the planet NOW!*

Meanwhile, aboard the Meadow, an imperial gothic class cruiser...

- *Sir, incoming transmission for you from force commander Mark Antwoine of the Flame of righteousness.*

Librarian,

It seems that the will of the emperor has guided us well. There is a renegade imperial cruiser controlled by heretics. You must not let them escape. You should have them on your sensors as soon as you pass the 3rd moon of the planet. Destroy them and any of their crew that you encounter. If they succeed in landing on the planet, just secure an area so that we can drop troops there. We will cleanse this planet for good.

- *Sir I'm picking up a imperial cruiser on our sensors. It looks damaged. It is a dictator class.*
- *Excellent, Sergeant, change course, We need to intercept it and destroy it at once.*
- *YES SIR! Engaging enemy now!*

On the planet surface, in the town of Hism'kline, Shas'el Ty'Kaeth was looking over topographic maps of the region. They had saved the citizens and stopped the advancing Tyranids, but reinforcements weren't here yet, and whatever value this town had for the Tyranids, they had the duty to make it impossible for them to take. The little spaceport that was next to the town, a relic of a previous imperial colony, was their fastest way to get the troops they desperately needed to repel the tyranid assault. They had to keep it a while longer. At least until the main colony could dispatch the promised regiment.

-*Shas'el, I have the latest report on enemy troop movement.*

Ty'Kaeth raised his head. Tash'ie, his blood brother entered the room with yet another tactical report. The third in less than an hour. Damn these critters moved fast.

- *Tash'ie, my friend, my brother, how are our defences coming up?*
- *I'm afraid the critters might be here before our defence turrets are up and operational Shas'el.*
- *How much time before they get here?*
- *Not much more than an hour. And still no news from the reinforcements.*

They heard someone running in the corridor. Seconds later, Ste'kavr entered the room, panting...

- Shas'el, good news, there are two ships in approach coming in fast. They might get here before the tyranids.

- Two ships? HQ only talked about sending one. Did we get their Ids yet?

- No Shas'el, we only have limited radio range. Since the communication outpost has been taken out we can't transmit very far.

- I've got a bad feeling about this. Come with me, I need to see this outside.

They got out on the roof of the little hospital they had taken as temporary headquarters. Ty'Kaeth took out his hi-power binoculars. The ships were hard to see at that distance, only a line of trailing fire from the atmosphere reentry.

- What the.... They're shooting one another. This doesn't smell good at all. Tash'ie, Ste'kavr Assemble the troops, get the hammerheads ready. At least one of them is hostile. Met me in the street after, we're going to the spaceport. We need to be there before they land.

- What of the tyranids? According to our last report they might pass through the spaceport.

- Then we'll attack them there.

Back in the luminous...

- Sir, we're hit... The landing gear is not responding. I'm not sure we can survive reentry.

- Captain, get that ship down on the surface, in the state of the ship, we have more chance to survive reentry than a one on one fight with another cruiser.

- Sirs, I'm picking up an old imperial beacon signalling a landing pad nearby. We may have more chance of survival if we head that way. Landing will be smoother, and if there is an imperial colony down there, they may have turrets to protect us.

- Then what are you waiting for, head for that spaceport right now.

- Yes sir!