

Tales of Brave DeVeeber

by VA Hav Antiel

In orbit near Blerthmore, the Greeop System

Vice Admiral Hav Antiel of the Emperor's Hammer TIE Corps had brokered an uneasy peace accord with members of the Rebel Squadrons. From the bridge of the mighty Star Destroyer *Warrior*, Antiel surveyed the rebel strike fleet. An MC-80B Star Cruiser appeared on the targeting screen with the name *Ad Astra*. It was followed by the Nebulon B2-class Escort Frigate *Idiot's Array* and various alphabet fighters flying under the Redemption Squadron moniker.

"Is the payload ready to deploy?" Antiel asked his newly-appointed bridge officer, Lieutenant Commander DeVeeber, a pale young officer a head shorter than the Commodore.

"Ready and awaiting your launch, Admiral," said DeVeeber. Much was resting on the success of this exploit. DeVeeber, anxious to prove his mettle, had proposed the mission as a ploy to gain intel on the RS. Antiel, feeling pressure from the recent successes of the *Hammer*, was eager to earn points with top brass. Information about the RS would certainly help his standing.

"Make it so," said Antiel. "Er, um, I mean, you may deploy."

Through the viewport, Antiel saw three tugs from Agamemnon Squadron squirm into view. Behind them, unseen tractor beams dragged a giant, rough object reminiscent of an animal. Its craggy, uneven surfaces were clearly made from old containers and bulkhead parts. Antiel squinted at the thing.

"I guess it kinda looks like a Porg if you squint," said Antiel.

DeVeeber exhaled. "Thank you, sir. I've had my best men working nonstop."

Antiel rubbed his chin. "You're sure they're going to go for this?"

"Absolutely, sir," said DeVeeber. "I have it on good authority that the RS loves Porgs."

As the tugs slowly towed the Porg-like structure toward the RS fleet, Antiel began pacing the bridge. *This had better work*, he thought. *It would be so much easier to just vaporize them.*

"Sir," said an officer in the bridge pit. "They're ready for you."

"Right," said Antiel, moving to face the holoprojector. He cleared his throat and ran a hand through his hair.

“Members of the Rebel Squadron. Or is it ‘Squadrons’ plural? I can never remember. Anyway, I, Vice Admiral Hav Antiel, hereby offer this hand-crafted, artisanal Porg sculpture as a peace offering from the Emperor’s Hammer. I hope that this beautiful, exquisite, and very expensive item can serve at the impetus—the olive branch, if you will—of a long-lasting friendship. Enjoy.”

Antiel nodded and spun on his heel, giving the comms officer the cut-the-feed signal. “That’ll do,” said Antiel.

Antiel waited impatiently for the tugs to draw within range of the *Ad Astra*. “This would be a lot easier with time acceleration,” said Antiel. Finally, the tugs released the payload. The Porg sculpture hovered in space before the *Ad Astra*. No one on the *Warrior* bridge dared breathe. The three Agamemnon tugs began the long trek back to the *Warrior*.

Many minutes passed before a lone Heavy Lifter exited the *Ad Astra* and began hauling the giant sculpture into the hangar.

A cheer came over the *Warrior*’s bridge.

“They went for it!” cheered LCM DeVeeber.

“Excellent work, Lieutenant Commander.” Antiel grinned at the young officer. “What happens now?”

DeVeeber rubbed his hands together in devious glee. “That’s the best part,” he said. “You, a stormtrooper battalion and I wait until nightfall and then leap out of the Porg, taking the Rebel Squadrons by surprise!”

Antiel stared at the Lieutenant Commander.

“Who leaps out?”

“Er, we do sir, you, me, and a stormtrooper battalion...”

Antiel stared at him in disbelief. A collective sigh heaved through the *Warrior* bridge.

“Sir, I can explain,” said DeVeeber.

Antiel, head in hand, cast a glance at the young officer.

“Suppose we built an even bigger Porg...”