

AD Stryker's Almighty Pile of Paperwork. By General Master – Typhoon Squadron #6252

Admiral Stryker was typically a patient man, in fact he prided himself on his restraint in stressful situations – it was almost a requirement in his choice of profession after all. But today was clearly not one of his better days. His face, which had been a mask of mild irritation just moments before, was now a mask of pure frustration. With command finally giving their green light he had been working for hours on the paperwork that was required to finalise the return the *MC-90 Renegade* to service and the new home of *Wing XXII* and *Infiltrator Wing* Reborn.

"Dammit!" he shouted, "How can they expect me to organize & manage these damn mountains of paperwork? It's impossible! There's just too much to do!"

Lt. Colonel Denys Elara, Wing Commander of Wing X, sat in amused silence as Stryker fumed. She sympathized with the Admiral's plight but knew better than to speak lest his anger be turned towards her.

Stryker finally sat down in his chair somewhat dejectedly, after taking a deep breath to calm himself he muttered, "You know this isn't the first time I've been given the short end of the stick. I know what this is. It's to keep me busy and delay the process, damn politics".

Denys nodded, not quite sure what to say so instead taking a sip from her drink, Stryker's special *Chalqilla Reserve*.

"You see," the Admiral continued, "even if I could get through all the paperwork, even if I could get the reports and the records in order, even if I could get the signatures and the stamps, it still wouldn't be enough. There must be an inspection, and then another inspection, and then yet another..."

He shook his head in resignation.

"It's like a never-ending circle," he said. "And it's all just bureaucracy and red tape. I'm used to that! The *Renegade* is a fine vessel, and will be a fine flagship for *Infiltrator Wing*, but the hostility and resentment towards the idea becomes tiresome."

Denys couldn't help but agree, though she was not one to tend to such matters herself due to her own duties she had to admit the Admiral had merit to his complaints.

While it was true the *TIECorps* flag officers, from *HA Plif* to *AD Berkana* as well as several of the EH Command Staff such as *TAC-FA Pickled Yoda* & *TO-VA Syllas Pitt* publicly supported the endeavour there was a growing minority even among the higher ups that did not.

While the large costings involved of refurbish & rebuild of the *Renegade* as well as limited available trained personal were the loudest & most logical of reasons for the descending voices of politician Senator and Envoy alike, despite no evidence to support such a rumour there was a small but steadily increasing section of the population that believed all Imperial vehicles would eventually be phased out & replaced with ones favoured by the *New Republic*. Some misguided attempt to bring about unification and make us all Rebels.

Stryker's voice showed his frustration as he continued, "If that wasn't bad enough! Despite my constant warnings, I still receive an endless stream of requests from pilots who seem to think they absolutely need something. Some of them want the most unnecessary things!". He stopped and sighed, feeling pulled in opposite directions between fulfilling the requests and ensuring his own sanity.

Denys sighed, she agreed that the Admiral, there had been an increase in unnecessary requests and like many others before him he was simply overwhelmed by the great amount of it incoming. But she knew that he needed to focus on the most important, getting the *Renegade* ready for service.

"I don't suppose you have any suggestions"? the Admiral asked the hope clear in his voice for a simple answer.

Denys was silent for a moment pondering his question. She knew she had to be careful here otherwise the paperwork would fall to her to complete, although at this point it almost seemed inevitable.

Taking another sip of her drink and savouring it for a moment she answered. "You need to concentrate on the *Renegade*. It's essential for a morale that it launches without further delay. Who has had the most absurd demand or request?"

The glare on her superior's face took Denys by surprise, it wasn't aimed directly at her, but it was clear there was some ire towards her. "It seems the good *General Master* seems it amusing to request items for, as he calls it, fleet morale".

Denys sighed and took another sip of her drink. "What's he requesting now"?

The Admiral grabbed a nearby piece of flimsy and started reading the list of requests. "Let's see, request for daily *Chalquilla* drinking contests, acquisition request for a *TIE Praetorian*, another request this time for raiding HA Plif's 'Secret Stash' as he calls it, request to reopen *Tornado Squadron* for the hundredth time. Oh and my personal favourite, he asked if we could replace the *Renegade* with a *MC-120*. He even has a name picked out I won't even mention in-case the SO is listening in. That's just one sheet! I have a dozen of them"!

Denys couldn't help but chuckle at some of the absurd ideas that Master liked to come up with. She has seen her own share of requests from him over the last few months, they always seemed to be more amusing than the last. When asked why he just mysteriously smiled and said something about making people laugh so in the end it didn't really bother her, but Stryker needed some help.

She polished off the rest of her drink in one swift motion before placing the glass on the table. "Alright, this is what we'll do," she declared. "Give me all your requests, leave them to me. I'll handle them".

Stryker looked on in amused disbelief before placing the very large and slightly teetering stack of requests upon the side of his ginormous desk for her to collect when she left before she continued.

"You go get the *Redemption* launched. You're an Admiral. Go do Admiral stuff"!

He couldn't help himself but laugh at her request. "I think I can manage that. Are you sure you're ok with all this"? gesturing to the large stack.

The smirk on the Wing Commander's face said it all as she picked up the pile and turned to leave, though finally she did speak just as she was leaving "I have the perfect person in mind".

Two hours after she had delegated the miscellaneous paperwork task to her chosen pilot and with a smirk on her face, she entered the *BG3 Cantina* (which still needed a name) intent on having another drink or five. As she was halfway across the room, she stopped suddenly somewhat dumbfounded. There at the *Sabbacc* table was *General Master of Firebird Squadron*—the same person she had presented with the privilege and honor of assisting in completing Stryker's stack of paperwork.

With a deep sigh (she seemed to be doing a lot of those lately) she marched over to the table intending to give Master a dressing down for shirking the duties he was ordered to do.

As she reached the table she took stock of the game being played. There was a pilot from *Lambda Squadron* looking extremely disappointed with how things were going, *CPT Cupcake from Eagle Squadron* had a look of resignation and a tech from engineering who looked rather murderous. All the while GN Master held his glass of *Chalquilla* he was drinking with one hand and that signature smirk of his stretched across his good-looking features.

The game had clearly been going on for some time given that Master held most credit chips which had grown to quite a pile over the games played. "General, I thought I ordered you to complete a task not play cards and drink.

If it was possible the smirk on the General's face only grew wider at his superior's words. The game quickly ended with the poor Lambda's pilots' victory being snatched away with a Fool's Array over Pure Sabacc before Master stood thanked his opponents for their credits and turned to the Wing Commander.

"It's great to see you Denys, fetching as always. You look like you need a drink, let me help with that" Master said clearly amused with himself. Catching the eye of the bartender droid and ordering for them without pause, he then took WC by the arm and led her towards an empty booth near the back.

Denys sat down and took her first sip of the drink that had been served to her. She looked at one of her favourite pilots (although she would never admit it) with a disappointed expression. She wanted him to show remorse or guilt, but he simply smirked and returned her gaze with the same silence as always.

The quiet became almost unbearable until she broke it with an exasperated sigh, "For the goddess's sake Master, I only asked you to do one task - sure, it was a terribly mundane job - but I normally don't ask much except fly where I tell you, follow Boliv's orders and don't torment the new recruits. This wasn't a huge ask"!

She took another drink out of exasperation all the while he just returned that smirk. After a moment, and another sip of his drink he answered, "Never fear oh mighty Wing Commander I have processed and filed all of Stryker's requests, acquisition requests and other useless items you rested me to.

Denys knew how many pieces of flimsy she had handballed to the General, there was no way he had managed to review, process and file all of them prior to wandering down to the cantina and beginning his profitable evening. She was about to voice this when his next comment cut her off as he began to laugh.

"Three years as a WC and don't tell me you haven't learned the secret of paperwork yet?" was his amused reply. Her confused look only spurred on his amusement before he took pity on her and explained.

After another sip and a nod to suggest she take her own, Master explained, "It wasn't until I was the mighty TAC of legend did I truly understand but the secret to processing all these wonderful and outrageous requests. Would you like to know the secret"?

Her look of unimpressive disbelief was the only answer he received. Laughing again Master continued, "You see, if you deny every request then you capture all the stupid and idiotic ones".

Deny's was flabbergasted with his response and was about to comment before he spoke again, "You're wondering about the important requests that should be approved, yes"? There was a nod in reply before he continued, "That's the beauty of it, if it's something important then you'll get a follow-up request which you can then approve. Form AA-1B-1138, best thing ever implemented".

Master took a swig from his drink, smiling at her. He subtly motioned to his two colleagues in Firebird Squadron, *Colonel's Boliv* and *Locke Setzer* to come over Denys felt overwhelmed; could it really be that straightforward? It couldn't be, right? It couldn't possibly be that easy? Could it?

Once the two officers had approached and Deny's had collected her thoughts Master continued to speak, "Gentlemen you should know that *Project Typhoon* was approved today. Once the *Renegade* is in flight it will proceed" Smiles from both Boliv and Locke were his response as well as a raised glass toasting the approval. But Master wasn't finished, "Additionally it would seem the good Admiral has approved construction of a new class of TIE fighter, the *TIE Typhoon* for the squadrons use. Isn't he a generous chap, even has the TAC's signature for extra surety".

Denys frowned; she was familiar with *Project Typhoon* and had even given it her own blessing, but the timing of the new fighter's entry into the Squadron use was strange and clearly not a coincidence.

Her look at *General Master* was clear, 'you will explain'.

"You be surprised on what approvals I found while processing Stryker's almighty pile of paperwork, like I said rejected across the board. However, I did find a couple of requests from a very concerned pilot who felt the Wing needed some 'morale', so I couldn't help but feel compelled to help him in his plight".

The sound of laughter and Denys' head hitting the table was his response.

"Don't worry Commander, I promise I won't have too much fun".

The laughter continued into the night.

A few days later

Admiral Stryker stood on the bridge of the mighty *MC-90 Redemption*. He had succeeded, it was finally ready. The naysayers would be shown the folly of their ways, the IW would remind the Rebel Scum that they were not safe, even in their most protected of places.

As he watched the entire battlegroup jump to hyperspace, he couldn't help but smile and think to himself, 'For the IW and for *The Emperor's Hammer*'.