

Flying Shotgun Fiction Submission #1 – GN La’an (#10540)

The cockpit displays dimmed for a moment as the shields took a hit, the exercise lasers triggering a realistic interruption to the engines that made La’an’s current manoeuvre a little more difficult. Taking the calculated risk that his shields could take what the target was throwing at him he banked hard to starboard before dropping the nose to whip under the hull of the Nebulon-B. He hadn’t stopped to check its IFF, it was enough to know that it was one of the Hammer’s task group and it presently stood between him and freedom.

Having dropped out of hyperspace on another recon mission, this time with a single wingman in the form of a sensor fitted Lambda shuttle, everything had seemed to be going smoothly. The shuttle’s sensors had captured a number of older ion trails that suggested fleet movements, all useful data to be fed into the Warrior’s strategic calculations, before picking up a transition out of hyperspace. The shuttle was now 2km astern of La’an and about 10 seconds away from jumping to safety, the newly arrived frigate having taken an age to realise enemies were in its midst. La’an had taken the only real course of action and driven hard straight at it, peppering its shields with simulated warheads and targeting its own sensors with volleys of emerald laser fire. This close in its main weapons struggled to traverse, but the frigates point defence weapons were making his life awkward for the moment.

“Son of a...” La’an felt another substantial hit, noting the simulated damage to his shields take their strength down to 15% - another hit or two and he would start losing major systems. He glanced at his chrono, noting that 120 seconds had passed since the enemy ship’s sudden arrival, sparing another glance he confirmed the shuttle had escaped and he was free to try and do likewise. His only hope at the moment was running the gauntlet of weapons and escaping in the stern arcs of the frigate before it could bring its turbolasers or own warheads to bear, or worse launch any fighters.

Realistically the frigate was unlikely to be carrying more than a squadron, usually a mix of TIEs and shuttles due to the tight confines of the hangar and the lack of Star Destroyer style launch cradles. As if on cue a pair of TIE Interceptors emerged out into the void from the starboard side of the frigate, his sensors projecting a screech that rattled his teeth with its proximity and intensity. Checking his now empty warhead load on the off chance that a reload had mysteriously appeared he switched to paired lasers with a flick of his thumb, using his right hand to adjust the range setting on his targeting scopes – setting them for a short range, snap shot. He was relying on the fact that the TIEs seconded to an ageing frigate would be 2nd or 3rd rate and unshielded, a theory he would test quickly.

Turning back towards the frigates port side he dove again to keep its bulk between him and his new foes, hoping to gain a moments confusion if nothing else. Keeping the stick moving he weaved back underneath the frigate, quickly picking out the opposing TIEs coming the same way with no confusion apparent. Before his brain could register his hands had found the trigger, a half-dozen shots snapping from his main weapons and squarely striking the left hand Interceptor. The target immediately fell behind its comrade, registering as a kill, as La’an slashed past both craft and beyond the frigate once again.

“Not today I’m afraid, I’ll get you later.” La’an resisted the urge to turn back and finish the other TIE, knowing that doing so was little more than petty spite with the risk of death, in exercise terms at least. Hitting the navicomputer in the hope of speeding up its calculations he dumped shield energy into the engines as well as weapons, boosting away from the combat and keeping his rear deflectors lit. The computer trilled twice – the first a threat warning showing a warhead lock, the second his computer signalling readiness to jump. While the Interceptors were lacking shields it would appear they had at least been fitted with basic warhead launchers, a cheeky addition that made them far more dangerous.

Smiling inside his helmet he reached for his hyperdrive and pulled back the lever as the stars turned to white streaks and he microjumped away, destination unknown...