

Chapter 113: EVA Scuffle

“There’s a ship that’s—”

As our pilot, Priya’s, warning was cut short by the violent shaking of the hull, I immediately commanded my Argus to perform a scan of our vicinity.

The scan returned a dozen results, with them all on the exterior of the ship. It didn’t take a genius to figure out that they were hostile.

At least they weren’t shooting us down, which means they couldn’t, or they aimed to board us instead.

Whatever I saw, my team saw as well thanks to our shared connection, so I didn’t need to explain to them our current situation.

“Let’s all head to the cockpit to regroup. We can’t let them take control of that place, no matter what.”

They all nodded, and we wasted no time rushing toward the front of the ship. As soon as we walked into the cockpit, Priya spoke in a commanding voice without hesitation.

“They’re coming in. Your men need to split up into three teams to defend engineering, life support, and a mobile strike force to clear them out.”

“We’ll need someone here as—”

“No! I’ll lock down the cockpit right after you leave. It should hold them off for quite some time if they try to come. You guys prioritize eliminating all of them. Hurry!”

As we left, I watched the door to the cockpit slide close before several more layers sealed the room.

I turned toward the enemy we had been keeping track of with our scans for a moment and found that they had almost breached the ship.

Once I took stock of the situation, I swiftly turned to my men.

“Andrew and Peng defend life support. Brian and Mark go to engineering. Thorne and I will go clear them out.”

“Yes, sir!” They shouted in unison before rushing off to their assigned post.

I then pulled up the map of the interior of our ship to find all the places we could reach the exterior from.

“You ready?”

“For some EVA action? We do have the power armor,” Thorne muttered, and shrugged.

The ship violently shook again, notifying us they had successfully broken in. Our scans showed a dozen figures rushing in while another dozen remained outside, standing guard outside.

“Our guests have arrived. Let’s go.”

Nightingale - Quantum Flavors

“Get ready to chuck the sensor blockers and any other evidence out of the airlock as soon as we board them. They’ve done their jobs already.” A tall woman commanded from within a black power armor.

She watched as her men took action and finally regarded the captain of the mining ship they had hijacked once she was satisfied.

“How much longer until this ship is close enough to board their ship?” She asked as she shoved her weapon into the captain’s face.

“Umm....about a minute and a half if you use those pods you have...”

As the captain spoke, one of his crew took the opportunity while their coercer was busy to sneak up on the lone woman in power armor. He took out the emergency glass breaker from his vest and readied a screwdriver in his other hand.

Nightingale suddenly scoffed before abruptly throwing a backhand that landed perfectly on the face of the man who had been creeping toward her. She then slowly turned around to find the man struggling on the ground while holding onto his broken nose. She slowly walked toward him without a care, not stopping even when she reached him. The metal feet of her power armor soon made contact with the man’s leg as it continued to press its impressive weight down onto him.

The man shrieked as his legs were crushed.

His suffering didn’t end there as the woman continued to step forth onto his arms this time.

The man’s crew members all watched on along with their captain with a grimace. No one dared to speak up, fearing they would be next, and could only listen to their comrade’s scream in silence.

Just as she was about to step on the man’s torso, one of her subordinates returned from the airlock, interrupting her move as she listened to their report.

The captain stared straight at the sensors and brightened up as the readings changed.

“Ma’am, we’re close enough for boarding action!”

Having heard his words, Nightingale finally stepped off from the poor crew member and moved to organize her men. Once she was done, she leisurely watched her men set off to board the ship as she stayed back with her guards. She nodded contently when she saw her men successfully gain access to the interior of the ship.

If only we could get ahold of explosives or a gunship to simply destroy them, this would have been much easier. Damn those spacer corps and their strict regulations. It’s not like we would bring them onto any of their stations.

She then turned her gaze back toward the captain of the mining hauler and his crew members. They had outlived their usefulness and were only liabilities now. As she contemplated which method would be the best to erase them, one of her men’s voices rang out through their comms.

“Watch out! They can see through our stealth tech somehow! We’re pinned down over here!”

“I told you idiots to watch out for their active scanners! What are you doing getting caught off guard?”

“Ma’am...they haven’t used any active scans yet! They must have some other way to find us!”

“Never mind that, concentrate on fighting conven—!”

Before she could finish her sentence, another voice rang out in their channel.

“We need backup! Marcus and Devy are both down! We’re about to get wiped out soon!”

The call for backup didn’t end there.

“Ma’am! A power armor emerged from the ship! We need your backup!”

Nightingale directed her gaze to the optical sensor showing the hull of the enemy ship they were boarding. She watched as her men uselessly tried to fire upon the suit of armor in question, failing to leave a scratch on the opposing power armor.

“Jake, Rai, time to go.”

They rushed over to one of the escape pods they had hastily repurposed as boarding pods and set course for the opposing ship where the battle was taking place. The impact against the hull was anything but gentle, and they awkwardly exited the pod, carefully placing their feet on the hull of the enemy ship until they were magnetically affixed to it.

The power armor they wore was never designed for space in mind, so their maneuverability was poor. Still, it would have been enough when taking on a G-Class corporation that shouldn't own any power armors at all.

With gritted teeth, Nightingale ordered her two subordinates in the power armor to spread out and surround the lone enemy unit to lay down a crossfire. The enemy shot a slow-firing rifle that had impressive penetration toward them, but their armor was able to tank the few shots that did hit before they closed into their optimal range. The mini-guns on their power armor began to spin, spewing out large caliber rounds.

With them surrounded, it should just take a minute or so until we breach their armor!

As the three-on-one played out exactly how Nightingale had imagined it, she couldn't help but smirk. However, it didn't last long, as one of her allies suddenly screamed into their communication channel.

"It hurts!!! Help me stop the ble—"

Nightingale quickly turned to find her subordinate had been bisected, with his upper body floating away in a different direction from his arm. The lower half was still magnetically attached to the hull, with a trail of blood spewing out of it.

It took her a full second to react.

"Unleash all the paint cans at once! There's something in stealth around us!"

At her command, her last remaining subordinate unleashed the paint canisters all around them. The entire hull was repainted with a splash of different colors.

They were properly equipped to fight the up-and-coming corporation that was known to have impressive stealth tech, so they had these paint canisters prepared as a last resort when their sensors had failed.

Nightingale observed her surroundings as they continued to fire upon the lone power armor in sight. The paint had spread as far as it could, but she still couldn't catch sight of the invisible lurker.

Just as she was wondering if they had retreated back inside the ship, she caught sight of the moment when her last remaining ally got abruptly decapitated.

How? Where did they come from? There's no way they could counter a foolproof method like our paint canisters...

I watched as the last opposing power armor refused to give up and released another cloud of paint throughout the surroundings again. Our exchange of gunfire pushed aside some of it, but the paint cloud reached quite a large radius around the enemy.

Still, it wasn't able to reach where Thorne was, though. The enemy was fighting in 2D while Thorne was fighting in 3D. I looked up at the outline of his power floating around as it prepared to once again charge down to skewer the last foe.

The customized jetpack worked surprisingly well despite the lack of testing I had done. Whoever we were fighting didn't seem experienced in fighting in space at all, as they all succumbed to our superior mobility and stealth.

With the three power armors defeated, it only took me a short time to wipe out the remaining remnants. It was just too difficult to fight against power armors without heavy weaponry. The only way they had a chance was to use vibro blades up close, but that wasn't very viable when we had adequate mobility and the ability to turn invisible.

Once we cleaned out the enemies on the exterior of our ship, we moved to hunt down any remnants of the enemy throughout the ship. I also noticed the enemy ship a distance away, but it just floated around without any movement, and it wasn't the time to investigate it. We had no idea how many more enemies were on it, and our current priority was to safely get away.

Not long after we secured our ride, it began to accelerate and the distance from the mining ship grew larger and larger.

Seeing how our job was complete, Thorne and I proceeded back to the cockpit.

The door was still sealed shut as our men continued to show up. We were forced to wait outside, and several minutes went by with the doors still shut, with no signs of it opening. Thorne got impatient and began knocking on it. To my surprise, it worked.

He immediately rushed in.

"What took you so long? Did you fall asleep in here?"

Priya ignored his teasing and continued to flip several switches before focusing on the terminal before her.

"We have a serious problem. Whoever boarded us didn't forget to damage what they could before they were eliminated. Our fuel tanks have been leaking this entire time, and I'm not sure how much we have left. I already readjusted our heading, but we have no idea what speeds we can safely travel."

"Is that a huge problem? I mean, can't we just accelerate as much as we need and cruise until we reach our destination?" I asked.

She stared straight at me for what felt like an eternity before replying.

“...We can, but without knowing how much fuel we have left, we may not have enough to decelerate. So we might come crashing into our destination with no way to stop if that’s okay with you.”

“Okay...maybe not... Got any professional ideas for us instead?”

“Call for help and wait.”

“And how long will that take?”

“About half a day.”

“...I have a very important meeting in...an hour and a half. Let’s see if we can physically check how much fuel is left before we make our decision.”

“The sensors are busted...And we have to fix the leakage first.”

“...Let’s get to it, then.”