

From the Hesperides star cluster, the Heliote-class ship *Avalanche* had already come a long way. It had slipped past several border conflicts, wriggled out of at least two revolutions and shot straight through some forty federal checkpoints.

The armed starship was now held safely within the Veil. The Veil: the space between spaces. Nothing could reach them here. Soon, this would bring their long journey to a quieter close, the end of a dangerous four-month trek.

Some might say this success was due to the talent of its captain. That would be boasting, except after learning the name of who did all these silent feats and being one of the few "in the know". In her circles, and despite her young age, her experience as a smuggler had already forged a reputation.

But Captain Nimodia had another opinion about this special journey. It was *luck*, plain and simple. She'd had a great deal of luck, and she fully expected that not to last.

So as she approached the very last stage of her mission, her attention was truly at its peak. Her gaze moved from the tri-scanner to the comm waves. Something inside her whispered that there was *a catch*. That everything was about to snap back into alignment.

That her luck... well... was about to turn. Hard.

And actually.

She was right.

## EXODE

Written by Elindos Phar



*Logbook. New entry. Nimodia Galatan. Class IV Captain.*

*We are nearing the end of our route. I am observing alert conditions. Their nature is disordered. But their number is abundant.*

*These reports are spread across all Federal space. Something has happened. Or is still happening now.*

*Movements all respect patterns of "Type K, large bending". We know these as the ones typical of navy operations. The Federal ones. This indicates very clearly a convergence. Whatever the situation is, there is definitely one, and definitely not something random. Either it concerns us. Or it concerns our destination. It is most likely us they are looking for.*

She ended the first entry of the day there, breaking off as her officer stepped onto the bridge.

Whatever doubts she had voiced in the recording, Nimodia's outward appearance was, on the contrary, completely nonchalant.

To an outside eye, she invariably projected great confidence. Feet stretched out on the console, legs crossed, her left hand playing with an electrum coin, she looked relaxed and almost amused. Like someone waiting for a party to start.

Only those who truly knew her could see the gravity in her eyes, something in her amused pout that suggested something else.

And her second, Sigis, truly knew her. She didn't need to probe her to guess.

Nimodia, for her part, didn't even need to glance at Sigis's tall silhouette to be aware of her presence.

Tall and striking in bearing, First Officer Sigis was a woman of rank but also a double-edged weapon aboard the ship. On one side she was hard; iron discipline, straight and military, intimidating, but fair. On the other, Sigis possessed a beauty that simply triggered admiration, or even wariness. Facing these reactions regularly, Sigis always ignored the first and worked the second down with a strong dedication.

Though she held herself with the tight, composed posture of a soldier, she inspired her peers with ease. It was as if she belonged to another class, a higher tier, a nobility of sorts out of reach for others. She surprised easily with the loyalty she inspired; a useful impulse that she communicated effortlessly. A look or a word from

Sigis, and they were all at full throttle.

Another thing certain is that many joked about her behind her back. Oh, but this was a long-haul ship; people needed to entertain themselves. Nicknames rained down about her, often circling around the idea of a long object going into places it shouldn't. But the truth was that everyone admired her, whether openly or in secret.

Nimodia had often used Sigis in her negotiations, either to intimidate others or to throw them off balance. The officer also displayed a remarkable intelligence, quick and synthetic. All she lacked, in the end, were dubious ambitions, and Sigis could have conquered the universe.

But she contented herself with being second. And as a good second, nothing seemed able to fool Sigis. Least of all Nimodia's relaxed air.

"How long until we reach the station?" the officer asked, in a tone she tried to keep neutral.

Nimodia's lips curled in a faint smile. There it was. The attempt had finally come.

"- ETA four hours and twelve minutes."

"- But..." Sigis added after a short pause.

"- But we should be exiting the Veil in only twenty minutes," the captain replied, still playing with her coin.

There was a brief silence that Sigis used to study the scans. Currently displayed was the farscan, a detection report created and updated from extremely faint noises detected through the Veil. They were always hard to interpret.

"- Is there something abnormal?"

She had obviously picked up on it. There was no usual reason to make an early exit.

In answer, Nimodia made a gesture with her hand, projecting a zoom of the surrounding holocomms. The holographic sphere bristled with multiple red and blue lines.

The red ones were ten times more numerous and accompanied by data streams in heavy motion and saturation. All this information was continuing to multiply in a rapid torrent.

Sigis paused again before exclaiming:

"- No malfunction in the trackers?" she asked, still in that same neutral tone, despite the obvious conundrum.

Nimodia shook her head.

"- Recent tachyon sampling?" Nimodia made a vague *hm-hm*.

"- But that's impossible! There are more than twelve thousand recorded military-class exchanges!" This time, Sigis had raised her voice.

Nimodia nodded. Sigis went on:

"- That's the equivalent of three full fleets!"

Nimodia waited a good three seconds before answering. When she spoke, it was in a slow, amused and almost playful voice.

"Yep. Clearly so. And it's still climbing. And has been for a good ten minutes. We broke a record, by the way."

Nimodia uncrossed her legs, tossed and caught her coin, then sighed.

"- Go get Siren" she said. "I want those cat eyes of hers on this."

"- And the rest of the crew?"

"- Not yet," Nimodia replied, shaking her head very slightly. "I have something else in mind."

The officer did not press her further. She left the command deck at a run to go find the person in question.

... and was stopped two decks later.

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"Careful, careful, CAREFUL!"

The warning froze Sigis mid-stride. Atho, a member of the crew, had literally hurled herself toward her.

Sigis held herself perfectly still. Her eyes shifted, trying to catch from the corner of her eye what she must not do... or must not touch. On a ship, the slightest mistake was often the last. But she was standing in front of a locked hatch and nothing suspicious was in sight.

Atho slowed and came to stand very close to her. Then she began to whisper.

"It's Siren," she murmured, very softly. "She's inside."

For Sigis, that was no surprise. She was standing in front of their Tracker's quarters, after all. But she nodded. And found herself whispering, just as well.

"- She's the one I'm looking for. What's going on here?"

The officer shot her an accusatory look. Atho seemed embarrassed.

Atho was Persean. Usually, Perseans were light-hearted, affable, used to a rich life. Not threatening, not unsettling, and most of the time not important. You could almost ignore them and leave them to their little wicked games. But not Atho. A strong build

and solid muscle composition betrayed training aboard reinforcement stations.

She was a soldier too, a warrior, and maybe formerly a worker. She didn't have Sigis's training. But she was powerful. And clearly, this big, massive warrior was worried.

"- She's doing something. You mustn't disturb her," Atho whispered.

Sigis held her gaze. Then grabbed Atho firmly by the sleeve.

"- You're going to tell me immediately what's going on, Atho," Sigis said. "You have three seconds," she added, her tone firm.

Atho lowered her eyes, clearly not knowing what to say. Sigis sighed. She raised her hand toward the door control. Atho made a gesture as if to stop her, then muttered a curse under her breath and hurried off down another corridor, as if she were expected somewhere else.

When the hatch opened, Sigis saw what they had tried to keep her from seeing. Siren was there. In her usual room crammed with electronics. The woman laid stretched out on a command chair, head thrown far back, eyes wide open.

On one side her hair was shaved, revealing her skull. On the other, it was long, trailing back and almost touching the floor.

Siren was an Achean. She bore all the marks of that world's gangs. Multiple painted symbols, long, stretched runes covered her skin. Sometimes letters, elsewhere arrows, and then spikes or other tribal shapes, a real chaos to an untrained eye. That was her culture. They had pulled her out of there, still a teenager, four years ago, so Sigis knew.

The officer stopped a few seconds to study her more closely. Siren's eyes did not move. Her head did not turn. She had shown no reaction.

On her face, a tear was falling. It traced a path down her white skin, winding toward her neck, then changed trajectory, drifting toward the floor, drawn slightly by the ship's artificial gravity. Once free, the emancipated droplet floated in the ambient air, in search of a wall to burst against.

Siren was no longer there. She was like a dead woman.

Sigis moved quickly toward her. For some instinctive reaction that bears no logical meaning, especially in this setting, she avoided the wandering tear.

Leaning over the other woman's face, she saw the bright eyes, the fixed stare. She listened to her breathing. Slow. Very slow.

Siren was not dead, after all. But for their needs, it was almost the same. She was drugged.

The officer studied her posture and the equipment beside her. A homemade device had been used to administer the molecule. It didn't look like an attack.

Siren had most likely prepared her own dose, combining second-hand products with her usual expertise. Recombining molecular formulas step by step, day after day, for months, must have taken titanic effort, especially if she was to recombine some of these very forbidden achean or syndicate special biostructures and even more from second-hand fragments. And yet for all these efforts, she ended up like this.

There was little time left to bring her back.

Sigis sighed - once, very quickly - and set to work. She swept her gaze over the rest of the room. Electronic gear. Interfaces. Screens. A holographic projection. Siren's holoscanners displayed the same red and blue lines as those on the bridge. But here there was far more detail, far more information and annotations we could see even at a glance.

Dots. Dates. Symbols. Personal notes. All written in an unknown language, probably her own code or something in Acheid tongue. She was onto something. But that wasn't useful now. There was no time to find out more.

Sigis checked Siren's condition as best she could. Then she closed the young woman's eyes.

With one motion she disconnected her from the device, and with the other she lifted her up into her arms. She activated her communicator in emergency mode. No point sending the signal to her captain; no time. She summoned someone else nearby: Atho.

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"Hold her. Here."

Atho obeyed as Sigis issued orders. They had turned Siren onto her stomach, stripped her arms and torso. They were moving fast, but Sigis remained precise.

Following the latest instructions, Atho held Siren's arms spread. She was anxious. Sigis watched the Medscan while giving clear, sharp, rapid instructions. Her words cutting, but precise.

Once their Tracker was properly secured, Sigis changed tone and subject.

"- Did you help her?"

Atho hesitated, stammered, mumbled. "No... I mean... yes..."

"- When and how?"

"- I... do you really think this is the time t-"

"- When. And. How."

Sigis spoke to her without even looking at her. She had her back turned, working the

Medscan. Several organs were highlighted in red: the brain, the heart, the liver, and others.

"- I... it started at our last stopover... I was always going out with the others but I was also... running little errands..."

"- You wanted her to kill herself?"

"- What?"

"- Did you. WANT. Her. To KILL. Herself?" Sigis repeated.

"- No, no! No, it's not that kind of stuff."

"- Then what is it?" said the officer, insistent.

Atho swallowed.

"- Listen, I wasn't sure. Siren..." she pointed at the young woman's body. "She knows all this. She knows why. I think it's some kind of thing for the brain."

"- Hm. You 'think'. And you 'think'... that this will be enough of an explanation?" Sigis said firmly, still adjusting settings.

"- But..."

Sigis broke off and stepped toward her, fast, almost violently. Her gaze was bright, razor-sharp, her tone implacable.

"- Do you KNOW what THIS is?"

Atho held her gaze, but it was hard.

"- No... no, I swear I don't."

Sigis watched her for a moment. Then she nodded quickly, stepped back, and moved over Siren, then got back to what she was doing. She took a long breath. She placed her hands on the bare skin of the young woman's back.

"- Why are we doing this here?" Atho asked. "Why don't we put her in stasis? We've got four hours in the Veil and..."

Sigis's fingers were now tracing the runes and symbols along Siren's back, palpating to locate her organs and prepare her next move.

"- Because," Sigis replied, in a firm tone.

She pressed other buttons; the Medscan beeped multiple alerts. She lifted her eyes to other screens for three seconds before bringing her attention back to Siren's body lying before her.

"- Because we exit the Veil in exactly six minutes," she stated.

She turned back to the screens, made several quick gestures on the Medscan interface, grabbed an injector. Then she signaled Atho to step back and positioned herself over the young woman's back, injector poised against her skin.

"- Because in six minutes," Sigis went on, moving the injector slowly while watching

the Medscan, running it up along the spine...

"...in six minutes... we have to confirm to our captain that our Tracker and camouflage expert is fully aware of our... operational situation and..."

She stopped moving. Pressed the injector. The tool hissed as compressed air was released, then gave a higher-pitched sound as it loaded a new dose. Sigis shifted the injector. Pressed again. Then another movement, another pressure.

"...operational and on the job. In six minutes, her entire program has to be fully executed. And flawlessly."

She set the injector down on a nearby table; the metallic clink echoed her words in the intimate silence of their Tracker's cabin. The silence held for a moment, broken only by their breathing.

Sigis placed her hands back on Siren's skin, palpating the organs again and massaging to help spread the product in whatever meager way she could. She looked again at the Medscan and seemed not happy with what she saw.

"In six minutes, we have to hide from a ton of military ships," she continued.

Atho's eyes widened. The announcement that military vessels were present and hunting them had taken her by surprise.



"If Siren doesn't do her job," Sigis said at last, "the Avalanche will be identified."

"- But we won't last two seconds if we're discovered... and Siren will never be able to..." Atho began.

Breaking that conversation, the officer took Atho's hand firmly and showed her where to hold the young woman. Atho obeyed at once.

Then everything followed. Everything followed quickly. Sigis pressed a point of the inert body's back, then punched it quickly. She took another quick breath. Then struck one of the vital points with her joined fingers. The technique was that of "vascular strikes" taught in the navy to quickly wake a body coming out of stasis. It was used to quicken the process or when regular unstasing was failing naturally and the body along with it. She had to target organs in a precise order, ending with the most important one. She struck, then massaged.

Seconds passed, each bringing a new blow in a precise rhythm. They turned the body over, and Sigis continued toward the final phase. The technique was calculated, the blows strong but exact. Something else could be felt: not the power released by such violence, but also an underlying emotion. Maybe a thread of despair, immaterial but palpable, contained, but creeping out of the situation.

Sigis stopped. Silence fell. A silence broken only by the officer's ragged breathing. Atho, herself, even forgot to breath.

At last, Sigis shook her head. She looked at Siren, then at the Medscan. Atho looked at the officer.

"- What, it didn't work?" said Atho.

"- Oh, she's saved," Sigis said, nodding quickly.

Atho let out a breath, happy and relieved. A smile spread across her face.

"- Perfect then! But why..." started Atho, then Sigis raised a finger to cut her off.

"- No. No. Atho, this is not perfect." Sigis paused, then resumed.

"Siren is lost for now. She has her life, I think, but her coma could be long. Or even permanent."

The officer fell silent for a moment, as if pondering the situation, while Atho was simply paralyzed. Then Sigis nodded to herself, as if she had already decided.

"- Atho, you stay. I'm giving you one objective. Just one."

Atho was looking at her, her expression lost.

"You identify what she took. I want to know why she took such a risk. Or why she abandoned us."

"- Alright, but you... you'd be better able to.."

Sigis shook her head again.

"- No. Contact Alesta. Call Myrelte's team. They'll help you. I'm going back up. We have three minutes left before exit. And... we don't have our Tracker."

That last sentence sounded like a grim conclusion. No longer mentioning her by name, she was wording it as if taking note of an absence in a job list.

Yet before leaving, Sigis casted one last look at Siren's annotated holoscans. She singled out something among the notes. Something in Achean tongue then followed by something in clear wording - maybe intended for others.

"THIS IS THE END," Siren had written.

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Barely moments after leaving the cabin, Sigis's communicator shrieked with a piercing tone. She was already sprinting through the ship's decks. And she did not slow.

"- SIG! What in all hells is going on?"

It was a clear sign of the danger ahead that Captain Nimodia Galatan was this agitated on comms.

"- I'm on my way, Captain!" the officer replied.

She burst onto the bridge at the very next instant and gave her report in a breathless voice.

"- Siren is out of commission."

"We're trying to get her back."

"Camouflage is impossible."

"- Out of commission how?" Nimodia demanded aloud.

"- Coma. Long. Or permanent." Sigis paused.

"We've lost her," she then said, shaking her head.

"- Lost her to what?" Nimodia pressed.

"- Drug. Synthetic. Unknown effects."

"And... catatonic," Sigis finished.

In response, Nimodia pointed to a screen. A countdown she had started was running. It was displaying forty-three seconds.

"- Alright. To your station. Sound the alert," Nimodia ordered, discarding everything else.

The captain spun her command chair and confirmed instructions on two separate screens, stretched herself to give instructions to two others. She turned her head in several directions, taking in all the real-time scans that were updating at a frantic pace.

"Thirty-seven seconds. Three two eight military-class craft identified in range," Nimodia called.

This calm was contrasted when Sigis activated the communicator.

"ALL PERSONNEL! RED ALERT! IMMEDIATE EFFECT. RED ALERT. BATTLE STATIONS. NOW!"

The captain's eyes were detailing the scans.

"- Nineteen seconds," Nimodia went on.

"We have..."

This time, the captain's eyes widened. "Damn. WE HAVE NET CRUISERS ON SCAN!"

Sigis raised her eyebrows, visibly shocked.

But the scans were telling, and there was no doubt it was true.

The technology, and module weights, the power signatures, all were very specific.

A "Netty", or "Net", was the affectionate nickname for a heavily armed warship equipped with a special interdiction module. They were supposedly secret. Only a handful of these ships existed. The real little jewels of the Space Federation. For smugglers, merely crossing paths with one was the stuff of legend. And, if the rumors in their circles were true, it was often the last thing they ever saw.

So they always shared the supposed technicals and made sure to avoid them, but it was like a joke or a hazing theme among their groups.

Netties, if even confirmed, were also reserved for preys more substantial than a few system dropouts like them.

"- Netties?" said Sigis. "But..."

The captain shook her head, shelving that argument for later.

"- Thirteen seconds," Nimodia resumed. She moved to another station.

"Twelve, eleven... Activating field differentiators... NOW."

The ship roared with force. The whole bridge shook. Nimodia used the lurch to slide quickly to a third station. There was no Siren, after all.

"- I'm bypassing emergency procedures," she said, not stopping her movements.

Then she checked another lower screen. The lights confirmed that all other officers had taken their respective posts and were all ready. They were trained for this.

Nimodia slid back the other way, jolted by another lurch caused by the emergency procedure and the imminent exit from the Veil. Used to these surges, she slipped easily back into her captain's chair.

"Twelve craft at close range. Confirm?"

Sigis nodded.

"- I'm arming the delta missiles," the officer announced.

Nimodia turned her head toward Sigis.

"- You don't" she said firmly.

Sigis froze mid-gesture. Her mouth opened, but no sound came out. So she stayed there, mouth agape.

The ship gave one last jolt, more violent than the previous ones: an emergency exit from the Veil had the drawback of causing shocks and sometimes even destroying ships. But the Avalanche was built for such extreme measures; it held up well under the strain. In fact, that was one of the essential criteria for the kind of covert missions they ran. But also factually, if it could not sustain this, it would have spaghetti'd into little pieces already a so long time ago. Which was, maybe, the best and the worse way to confirm it was able to hold.

"- So... what do we do?" Sigis asked.

This time, Nimodia answered only with a smile.

The countdown had reached zero.

Then, after a short pause, the captain said in a cheerful tone:

"- Well then... we talk!"

"Open external communications. Destination: all. Frequency: maximum."

The first officer complied without thinking.

"- And you do it... NOW," Nimodia added as the counter ticked past minus five seconds.

At this point in time, all short tactical weapon radars - the tacscans - were certainly starting to light up. Sigis activated the ship's long-range calls.

At the very instant the Avalanche emerged from the Veil, Captain Nimodia Galatan - fugitive for ten years, wanted in fourteen independent systems and a good portion of the Federation's two hundred and forty-four planets - appeared without camouflage.

And at that same instant, she addressed the entire military fleet surrounding her.

"- THIS IS NIMODIA GALATAN, CAPTAIN OF THE AVALANCHE," could be heard on both public and military frequencies.

Enemy crafts, no doubt surprised by her sudden appearance at close range, were already priming their weapons and moving into attack vectors.

"- HI GUYS!" was added brightly.

Nimodia sank back into her seat and calmly deactivated the shields.



She waited a few seconds before adding.

"- WE SURRENDER."

Sigis froze.

She turned her head toward her captain.

Then looked back at the tri-scan and the military ships.

They were in space.

And yet...

And yet she had the sensation that an entire world was collapsing.

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(Author's note: The following chapters are part of sections that may not be retained later.)

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The next few minutes were the most paradoxical of all her recent years on the run.

Sigis watched Captain Nimodia, once again relaxed as usual, pouring herself a simkaf.

The bitter, pleasant aroma of the drink was already filling the bridge, and its delicate scent seemed completely at odds with the frantic movements visible on the tri-scan.

The captain was not in the least alarmed by the armed fighters closing in. Nor by the fact that she was ending her career - one of the most illustrious among smugglers, and certainly the most illustrious of all female captains in that category... with a defeat, an imprisonment.

And, very likely, a summary execution.

The Space Federation, after all, was not all that forgiving.

As Sigis was still weighing this, one of the enemy ships passed only a short distance from them; then slowed down. Something made the Avalanche vibrate. A disturbance no doubt caused by a tractor beam.

But apart from the trembling of her cup and a subtle pause to avoid spilling her scalding drink, like a seasoned tightrope walker might, Nimodia seemed completely indifferent.

Sigis was perplexed. She opened and closed her mouth. She didn't quite know what to say for this situation. They were probably living their last minutes and for once she had no instruction, and no plan.

Nimodia was genuinely savoring her simkaf. Sigis wondered if this was some kind of sacrament, like a last meal. A solemn, frugal moment. The officer was moved. How could Nimodia remain so calm? How was she handling the end of everything?

There was no more fight to consider, apparently not even a struggle. No grand epic moment to live on in the minds of other independents like them. No big tale to share in thaves or taverns.

As the tension ebbed, emotion seeped into Sigis's voice. Perhaps to keep control, she changed the subject.

"Siren had written something..." the first officer finally said, thinking of it. She cleared her throat before continuing.

Nimodia paused mid-sip and gave her a questioning look.

"THIS IS THE END" said Sigis.

"That's what she wrote. In Achean tongue."

Nimodia nodded, as if that confirmed something, and turned her face back to the scans.

Then she sank into her seat again and closed her eyes.

"- That's all?" the captain asked calmly.

Sigis answered with a look, clearly ill at ease. Siren's premonition was alarming, but obviously there was more to it than that.

Sigis wondered if Nimodia was at the end of her strength.

The officer did not understand, and her face betrayed her confusion.

But she was also loyal, and her natural resolve soon resurfaced.

"Yes," Sigis confirmed. "But also, not exactly. The rest of her annotations were encrypted in the jargon she uses."

Nimodia took a sip of simkaf. Then a long breath. She studied her cup.

Then suddenly, the captain straightened.

"- Bring me those readings!" she said.

"- Do we have time?" Sigis asked. The officer didn't really understand why Siren notes mattered now.

In answer, Nimodia pointed, precisely and without even looking, at one of the red dots on the holoscanners.

"- Behold. Allow me to introduce... our executioner."

Sigis studied the reading and needed only a moment to analyze its vectors.

"- Anderion-class cruiser," the officer said.

"- He and us will become very intimate in about..." said Nimodia.

"- Twenty-four minutes", Sigis concluded.

None of this was yet calculated on the scans. But the officer's experience, her grasp of speed and other related data, and above all her familiarity with Federal military methods allowed her to determine with certainty what class of Federation ship this was and the time before the final confrontation.

An Anderion cruiser was far beyond their own combat capabilities and in addition their shields were down, their weapons not primed, and that's even without adding all the fighters around them.

"- Is there a reason they're waiting?"

Sigis asked, indicating the fighters swarming around them.

"We don't have our shields. If even one of them loses his temper, we're done."

"- Maybe the officer in charge wants to deliver the killing blow 'all by himself?'"

Nimodia suggested, making grand gestures almost playfully.

But she didn't really seem to believe it. For a moment her face was rather perplexed.

She seemed to be thinking something else.

She had that look she wore before some of her boldest ideas and most glorious actions. Except this time, there was no glorious ending. Still instead of speaking, Nimodia let the expression fade, her features settling into a more determined cast and she even turned her attention away from the scan. As if considering that her final executioner had no particular importance, after all.

"- OFFICER SIGIS!" called the captain, all of a sudden.

Sigis snapped to attention at once.

"Go get Siren readings, immediately. Oh, and... get ready to welcome our first guests," she added, tossing the rest of her drink into the dispenser.

Sigis checked her screens. Indeed, six other people were approaching the bridge; almost certainly their current passengers.

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*Logbook. Supplemental entry.*

*Sigis Astona. Class III Officer.*

*Captain Nimodia Galatan is in conference with our distinguished guests. I have been tasked with completing today's information.*

*Initial objective: reach station Z-3; deliver our package.*

*Complications: military density at destination point.*

*Solution: exit from the Veil planned closer to the station; continue the route using method A, stealth trajectories, and method B, maneuvers against incoming contact.*

*Additional complications:*

*Number One: military density one hundred and thirteen times higher than expected by even pessimist programs.*

*Number Two: Tracker officer out of service.*

*Interpretation: Inability to employ camouflage or maintain effective approach vectors.*

*Solution:*

*A new approach has been determined and adopted.*

*By order of the captain, the Avalanche has declared its surrender.*

Sigis paused before adding a new entry.

*The surrender proceeds so far as follows:*

*Tactical considerations:*

*34 Dagger fighters are permanently surrounding us.*

*An Anderion cruiser is also en route.*

*The entire opposing tactical setup is backed by a Net cruiser if needed.*

*There is, currently, a 0% chance I see to exit.*

*Additional note:*

*This is almost certainly the last entry in this log.*

*Personal note:*

*The Avalanche was a prodigious ship.*

*The captain has never fallen short.*

*It was an honor to serve.*

*Until the end.*

*Officer Sigis Astona.*