

FROM THE AVENGER LOGS...

BATTLE SEQUENCE

By Alex Rosenzweig

"Captain's Log, Stardate 8805.22:

The Avenger is maintaining standard patrol course through this sector. Nothing unusual to report at this time."

The doors slid open and Captain Vosseller stepped onto the bridge. He nodded as the specialist to his right glanced up at him. At Sciences, Captain Lane was gazing intently into one of his viewers.

"What is it, Jon?" he asked, crossing to the station. He leaned over the side console, which Lane had pulled out from the wall. He hoped it might prove of some interest. Things had been quiet, and the crew was getting, so to speak, "itchy".

"I'm not sure," Lane answered. "Take a look at this." He indicated the viewer. Vosseller moved behind him, in order to get a better look at the screen. The readings which Lane had put up were indicating an abnormal amount of radiation at the extreme limits of sensor range.

"What does it mean?"

"I've got no idea."

"Admiral!" Both Vosseller and Lane turned toward the Communications station, where Ensign Lubar was on duty. Rear Admiral Rosenzweig, in the center seat, had swiveled toward her. "I'm picking up a signal from the U.S.S. Amiens. They're requesting aid. They say they've been attacked by several alien vessels, type unidentified."

Rosenzweig glanced at Vosseller. "Amiens is another heavy frigate." He turned back to Lubar. "What's its position?" Lubar read off the coordinates. Lane quickly turned back to his console. A moment later, he looked up again.

"Alex, that's the location of that radiation anomaly I found. It's probably the explanation."

"Let's make sure." Rosenzweig touched a switch on the arm of his chair. "Engineering."

"Newcome here," came the voice of the Chief Engineer.

"Are your engines up to some action?"

"Yes, Admiral. We're ready for anything."

Rosenzweig smiled. "Good, John. Bridge out." He looked at Vosseller, who nodded agreement. Turning to the Navigator and Helmsman, the Admiral ordered, "Ensign Buonocore, lay in a course for the Amiens. Ensign Martinez, warp factor 6." The two set to work, and the crew felt the acceleration rumble through the ship. Rosenzweig turned toward the Ordnance Specialist. "Ensign Colon, sound red alert. Energize phasers and arm photon torpedoes." Colon touched controls. Indicators changed color, klaxons sounded, and the crew rushed to their battle stations.

The klaxons still blared as the Avenger approached the Amiens and the 3 attacking cruisers. All the stations on the bridge were now manned by anxious, waiting crewmen.

"Shields up," ordered Rosenzweig. "Weapons officer, report."

Colon turned. "All weapons readied. Shields up. Internal divisions report status red."

"Thank you, Ensign. Jon, do you have anything on those vessels yet?"

"It's coming in," said Lane. "All three ships are identical. Length is 114 meters. Beam-61 meters. Mass-74,300 metric tons. Weaponry looks like a disruptor-type weapon, but it's got unusual power for how big the generators must be. We'll need to be careful going in."

"Okay. Helmsman, slow to warp 1." The heavy frigate slowed and approached the embattled starships.

"Transmission from the Amiens," reported Lubar.

"Put them on," Rosenzweig said.

The main viewer lit, displaying an image of a harried-looking Captain on the Amiens' bridge.

"This is Captain Maretta. We're sure glad to see you guys. We can use the help." The image jolted, and a voice behind Maretta cried, "Another hit, sir! We're losing maneuverability." Maretta looked back toward his pickup, and Rosenzweig leaned forward.

"We're coming, Captain. Mr. Martinez, let's go." The Helm Specialist nodded, and Rosenzweig glanced at Weapons/Defense. "Ensign Colon, you may fire when ready."

"Aye, sir." Colon's fingers tensed over the controls.

The Avenger closed on the alien ships. Colon stared into the targeting viewer. As the words "IN RANGE" appeared on the read-out, she pressed switches. Two glowing spheres leaped from the ship, followed by the dual beams of the phaser banks. The phasers raked the enemy vessels, battering up against their shields. The torpedoes swept in immediately afterwards. Bright flashes marked their impact points.

One of the aliens veered toward the Avenger, firing as it came. The beams struck the heavy frigate's shields. In engineering, the light from the intermix chamber flared brighter for a moment and the room shook. Chief Engineer Newcome gripped the sides of his control console. Then, tapping Lt. Commander Young on the shoulder, he pointed toward the dilithium reactor room.

"Check the seals. We don't want a rupture." Young nodded and moved off. Newcome returned his attention to the main panel.

The battle continued. The heavy frigates had an edge on the alien vessels, which could not match their speed or maneuverability. With the pressure off, Amiens was able to do better, too. After a short time, one of the alien vessels was damaged and fled the area.

With the numbers now even, the Federation vessels pressed the attack. A second enemy ship was damaged, and it too fled. The third, although clearly out-matched, would not give up. Finally, a phaser barrage from both the Avenger and the Amiens shattered its shields and tore gaping holes in one of its engine pods. Powerless, it drifted helplessly.

"No power at all?" asked Rosenzweig, wanting to make sure of the vessel's condition.

"Only bare minimum for life support," Lane reported, "and residual energy in the systems."

Rosenzweig nodded. He glanced at Vosseller, who had stepped down next to the command chair. "Should we talk to them?" the exec asked.

In answer, Rosenzweig swung toward the Communications station. "Ensign Lubar, tie in the universal translator and hail the aliens. Ask them if they wish to surrender."

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