Slover allowed himself to relax for a moment as the assembly arms switched out the damaged components of his MS. McNeal and Lopez had everything under control as the last of the attacking Watchers were being destroyed.

The Starlight’s collision alarm sounded, and Lt Cmd Barnabas’ voice crackled over the com. “Too Close! You son of a bitch! Starlight, get out of here!” Slover tensed up and quickly brought up an eternal image of the ship, just in time to see the mosquito Barnabas was piloting smash into a Type-3 hovering over the engines, the power indicator in its chest menacingly flashing.

Slover instinctively gave the Launch command, and the MS computer buzzed in protest – another estimated 15 seconds until the rebuild was complete. He quickly flicked through his options, and issued an override command. The assembly arms pulled to the sides as the MS lurched forward towards the sortie tube, deck crew scattering in all directions. Anchoring pins, shredded metal and busted MS parts scattered across the flight deck ripped loose of Slover’s machine. Hydraulic fluid sprayed from a heavily damaged assembly arm.

Slover found himself halfway down the sortie tube in time to see the starlight’s engines flare to life as the mosquito and watcher cart wheeled into the engine wash, cutting off Barnabas’ scream. Slover cleared the sortie tube and turned around just in time to see the crushed wreckage careen away from the ship and disappear in an explosion.

“Mos-1183, reply.” Slover said, over the comm.

“Mos-1183 report! REPORT! MOS-1183 REPORT!” called out the increasingly frantic voice of the air controller. “DAMMIT BARNABAS, SAY SOMETHING!”
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Conclusion:

After careful consideration of all of the evidence at hand, it has been determined that the incident that occurred 15 July 2915 at 1935 was unavoidable and not the result of negligence on the part of Lieutenant Slover or the Alexander pilots under his command. Let the record show the pilots had, in fact, performed admirably in the engagement to that point, and the appearance of an enemy ship directly over the *Starlight* was unexpected and uncharacteristic of enemy action in previous engagements.

Let the record also show that Lieutenant Commander Trevor A. Barnabas made the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty, putting himself and his ship in mortal danger, and in the process, saving 137 souls aboard the *Starlight*. As a result, it is Commanding Officer’s decision to promote posthumously the officer to Commander, effective 15 July 2915.

Signed,

Commander Helene Langer Captain Aaron Stobulous
Executive Officer, *UES Starlight* Commanding Officer, *UES Starlight*