

Statement of Poe Dameron

My name is Poe Dameron. I am proud to be a pilot in the Resistance. I was born into the Republic and the Resistance, as my parents both served the Rebel Alliance. My mother, Shara Bey, was an ace pilot for Green Squadron. My father Kes Dameron was a member of the Alliance Special Forces unit known as the Pathfinders. I could never imagine any other life, and am proud to say that I am one of the best pilots in the galaxy.

My current rank is Captain. I was formerly Wing Commander, and was demoted by General Leia Organa after the evacuation of D'Qar. After I destroyed Starkiller base, and during the evacuation of D'Qar, I single handedly confronted the First Order Fleet. When the opportunity came to take down a Dreadnought, I gave the order to proceed. I heard General Leia Organa order me to disengage, but we had the chance to take out a Dreadnought. They are fleet killers, and when you start an attack, you follow it through.

When I returned to the *Raddus*, General Leia Organa slapped me across the face and demoted me for disobeying orders. While we were discussing our losses, the First Order attacked us. General Organa was severely injured when the bridge was destroyed. I did not raise the issue of the demotion with Vice Admiral Holdo or request a court martial.

I first met Vice Admiral Holdo on the *Raddus*, following her designation as our new commander. The First Order had tracked us through hyperspace and were pursuing us with a superior fleet. The Resistance had been reduced to 400 people on board three capital ships. We were vastly outnumbered. Vice Admiral Holdo was dismissive of my concerns about our chances of survival, and refused to share information about her plans for the Resistance. I was not questioning Holdo's orders at first; I am one of the Resistance's senior military officers, and I wanted to help. But privately, my fear kept gnawing at me. What if Holdo was actually another hostile?

I want to do my part to bring freedom to the galaxy, just like my parents. Both my mother and father fought at the Battle of Endor. My mother even went on a mission with Luke Skywalker to Vetine. She also fought with General Organa in the defense of Naboo against Operation: Cinder. My mother taught me to fly over the gas giant Yavin in her A-Wing when I was very young. I was 8 when my mother died. She did not like talking about her war experience, other than that her own actions were not important; what mattered was that they and other Rebels stood up to the Empire and answered the call to help free the galaxy. I did not learn about all of her service until years after her death when I became a pilot. Those lessons have stayed with me.

I believe in our mission to stop the First Order. Kylo Ren murdered Lor San Tekka in front of me and then ordered the deaths of civilians on Jakku. I have seen their evil in person. Given our extreme stakes with the First Order armada chasing us, I believed I had to help the Resistance escape. Together with my friend Finn, Maz Kanata, and a new ally, Rose Tico, we planned for Finn and Rose to find a hacker to infiltrate the lead First

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Order ship, and then disable the hyperspace tracking system. It was a risky plan. This time the gamble did not pay off, and both Finn and Rose were captured. But, knowing only what I did at the time, it was the best plan we could come up with.

When I learned that Holdo planned to continue running from the First Order fleet until our ships ran out of fuel, and then escape through smaller ships, I took action. If we ran out of gas, we'd be sitting ducks for the First Order. I truly believed at the time our best chance to survive was for Finn and Rose to disable the hyperspace tracking system, allowing what remained of the fleet to escape into hyperspace.

I do not deny that I planned with others to take command of the Resistance so that we could survive. I wanted to trust Vice Admiral Holdo, but she wouldn't talk to me, and it seemed like she didn't want my help. Later, as I learned to trust in Vice Admiral Holdo's leadership, I saw that her plan could work. In the end, she sacrificed herself in order for the Resistance to escape. I regret that I called Vice Admiral Holdo a coward and a traitor. She saw the big picture and was more concerned with saving the light over personal glory. I understand now there are more ways to be a hero to the Resistance than by blowing up ships. If I had to do it all over again, knowing what I do now, I would have acted differently. Knowing only what I knew at the time, and believing the Resistance was about to be lost forever, I had to try to save it. We are the spark that will light the fire that will burn the First Order down.