

BATTLESTAR PROMETHEUS

EPISODE 1 HOMECOMING



BATTLESTAR : COXON
NOVA CLASS BATTLESTAR : INFINITY238

INFINITY238

By Ryan a. Keeton
Based on the sci-fi channel original series
BATTLESTAR GALACTICA
By Ron Moore & David Eick

Series based on
BATTLESTAR GALACTICA
created by
Glen Larson

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Friend

Admiral Jonathan Turner: Commanding Officer of the Prometheus and Battlestar Group 22

General John Connor: Commander Colonial Defense Force Remnant

Commander Tajalle: Commanding Officer, Battlestar Eternal

Dr. Kevin Grazier: Governor, Copernicus Colony

Colonel Karla Horvath: Executive Officer, Battlestar Prometheus

Lt. Colonel Stewart Kelly: Commanding Officer, 7th Marine Expeditionary Regiment

Major Jason "Slider" Allen: C.A.G. Prometheus Air Wing

Major David Briedis: Chief Engineer of the Prometheus

Captain Stacie "Sheba" Percival: Commander of the 82nd Viper Squadron "Aces"

Captain Allain Halloran: Prometheus Operations Officer

Lieutenant Brad "Tiny" Allen: Commanding Officer, 32nd Viper Squadron "Knights"

Master Chief Petty Officer Theresa Madrid: Chief of the Boat (C.O.B.), Battlestar Prometheus

Ensign Ashley "Splashdown" Klave: Pilot, 32nd Viper Squadron "Knights"

Ensign Melody "Hygiena" Moody: Pilot, 32nd Viper Squadron "Knights"

Foe

Jezebel (D'Anna): Cylon Battle Group Commander, victor of the Battle of Virgon

Eve (Six): Cylon Infiltrator

Gabriel (Leoben): Cylon Battle Group Commander

Lucifer (Cavil): Cylon Fleet Commander, victor of the Battle of Leonis

Seth (Doral): Cylon Tracker

Adam (Simon): Cylon Scientist

Lillith (Sharon): Cylon

PROLOGUE

THE VOICE OF HOPE

COMBAT INFORMATION CENTER BATTLESTAR ETERNAL LEONIS SYSTEM

General Connor watched the dradis display intently as he listened to the moment to moment reports coming in to him from the surface of Leonis. Next to him stood Commander Tajalle, who was equally intent on the situation but possessed a grace that Connor could not help but to admire.

“The *Spirit* and *Saber* have both left the ground sir.” she said easily.

Connors tensely nodded as he watched the symbols for both Gunstars rise up from the planet. “Good. Tell them to spin up their FTL’s and be ready to jump as soon as they are out of Leonis’ gravity well.”

“You still think this is a Cylon trap?” Tajalle asked.

Connors fixed her with a tense expression. “You *know* I do, Commander. We’ve been running these rescue missions for ten months now and *each time* we have met hard resistance. Now, just as we get word of the biggest group of survivors we have ever found, the Cylons all of a sudden pull out?” He shook his head. “I don’t think so.”

“But if they were going to attack, their best chance was while the Gunstars were on the ground.” Tajalle countered. “The Cylons aren’t stupid, sir.”

“I know and that’s what has me worried.” he said as he turned and faced away from the table. “First, we get word that not only is there two thousand survivors on Leonis, but that they’ve gathered together in one of the most isolated positions on the whole planet.”

“That’s easy to explain, though. There were more survivors here than the other Colonies because the Cylons only used nerve agents on Leonis. For some reason they didn’t want to damage to the planet as extensively as the others.”

“I know the facts, Commander, I read the report too.” Connors scowled. “I just don’t like how *convenient* it all is.”

“You mean that they chose one of the best places for us to find them?” Tajalle asked.

“Yes.” Connors replied as he scanned the dradis readout again. “The Cylons have been systematically hunting down groups of survivors all over the Colonies for months now. They also know that someone has been rescuing some of them before they can get to them.”

The General folded his arms across his massive chest. “Only by dumb, blind *luck* have we been able to stay one step ahead of them, Commander, and even then we’ve almost been killed too many times to count.” He shook his head. “This is too damned easy. It *has* to be a trap.”

Tajalle sighed, conceding defeat. “I know. A girl can hope though.”

Connors chuckled and smiled slightly. “Here’s to hope.”

“Dradis contact!”

“And there it goes.” Tajalle quipped as she sprang to her station.

“How many and where?” Connor asked as he spun towards the operations station.

“Three Cylon Basestars, sir, bearing three one five karem zero eight four.” The Ops officer reported.

Connor studied the dradis readout and it was immediately apparent that they were in deep trouble. “They’ve jumped in right between the Gunstars, the *Olduvai* and us. They’re completely isolated.” he said.

“They’re launching Raiders.” A voice reported.

“They’ll use one Basestar to pound the Gunstars while the other two hold us off.” Tajalle said as she picked up the handset to the flight deck. “Launch all Vipers.”

Suddenly the C.I.C. began to buzz with alarms. “Radiological alarm! Nukes inbound!”

“Frak, they’re swinging for the fences today.” Tajalle cursed as she turned to the helm officer, “Turn us into the closest Basestar and open fire on it, all guns!”

“Twenty seconds to impact.”

“Activate the anti-missile system.” Connor ordered.

“AMS is online and tracking sir.” the weapons officer reported as the deck began to vibrate under Connor’s feet.

“Sir, I’m tracking over one hundred inbound missiles moving towards the *Olduvai*’s position.” A voice shouted. “Some of them are nukes.”

“Their AMS can’t handle that load.” Tajalle said.

“Have *Olduvai* spin up their—” Connors began.

“Too late.” Tajalle whispered helplessly as she watched the missiles streak towards their sister *Battlestar*.

The Cylon weapons were merciless and it didn’t take them long to do their terrible work. Missiles began to strike the *Olduvai* all over her hull, some streaking into her flightpods and detonating with bright flashes.

The old *Battlestar* shuddered under the heavy impact and stood tall longer than any ship could be asked to but finally succumbed to the nuclear power that rained against her hull.

The port flight pod went first as the fuel stored in her tanks exploded from the impact of the weapons against them. The explosions quickly followed the fuel lines back to the main tyllium storage tanks. The pressure built inside them like a bomb until finally the *Olduvai* exploded into a fiery shower of spaceborne shrapnel.

Tajalle and Connors watched in horror as the old ship began to glow in the middle and bow like a stick being bent to its breaking point while, over the radio, the incoherent screams of terror and pain from *Olduvai*’s crew filled the C.I.C. with their mournful sound.

And then, without preamble, the tyllium storage tanks ignited.

“Oh my gods, *Olduvai* is gone!” One of the crewmen shouted.

Suddenly the deck pitched upwards hard as two nukes slammed into the nose of the *Eternal*.

“Nuclear detonation! Hull breaches across the forward quarter!” one of the engineers announced.

“We’re venting atmosphere from decks seven through thirteen.” Tajalle reported, “Casualty reports coming in as well.”

“Forward cannons are out and we have fires in the missile magazines.” The weapons officer said.

“Evacuate the affected sections and prepare to vent the missile tubes.” Connors ordered, as the deck continued to buck under his feet.

“Direct hit on engine five! Pressure indicator is off scale low.” Another voice shouted as the ship continued to pitch and heave.

“The helm won’t answer sir! She’s in a counterclockwise lateral spin.” The helm officer reported worriedly.

“We’re venting drive plasma from the number five thruster.” The Engineer said.

“Another launch! Three missiles inbound- all nukes.” the weapons officer announced. “And the AMS just went down.” he added with a note of finality.

“Time until impact?” Tajalle asked.

“One minute.” The weapons officer replied.

“Not even enough time to abandon ship.” Tajalle sighed.

Connor shook his head knowing that the end was drawing close. “Well, we made a good run of it.”

Tajalle smiled sadly. “Yes, we did.”

In his mind he began to play out the events of the ten months that had passed since the Cylons had destroyed their home worlds. He saw the faces of the few survivors they had found, the joy in the knowledge that they had someplace to go; that they hadn’t been completely abandoned.

He kept that knowledge close to his heart now as he neared the end. The thought that the colony and the twenty two thousand survivors living there were safe and that Humanity would go on, even if he didn’t, gave him some comfort.

“Sir, I.R. spike on the scope! Incoming ship!” one of the enlisted crewman suddenly announced.

“E.M. confirms sir! We have a ship jumping in right on top of us!” The Ops officer added.

Like vultures to the feast, Connors thought to himself. “What the hell is it?”

“From the size of the energy surge it *has* to be another Basestar.” Tajalle commented. “But—they’re jumping into their own line of fire.”

“Fine by me,” Connor said, “just means we take one of them with us.”

“Ship is jumping in now, sir, but- No Way! This can’t be—” the crewman’s voice trailed off.

“What is it?” Connor demanded.

Suddenly, an icon appeared on his dradis readout. He stared in shock as the reality of the situation began to wash over his emotions. “*You have got to be frakking kidding me.*”

A voice broke through the static of space and erupted over his speakers and though it was a voice he had never heard before that very moment, he was glad to hear it now.

“Battlestar *Eternal* this is the Battlestar *Prometheus*, Admiral Jonathan Turner commanding. Please respond.”

The room was silent for a moment and even the Cylons must have been surprised because the deck plates stopped shaking from missile hits.

A lone shout of joy went up from a crewman in the back, followed by another whoop and another shout. Soon the C.I.C. was overflowing with emotion. It wasn't until a moment later, when he spied Tajalle eyeing him, that he noticed a hot tear of relief flowing down his left cheek.

CHAPTER 1

THIRSTY WORK

COMBAT INFORMATION CENTER BATTLESTAR PROMETHEUS LEONIS SYSTEM

The Battlestar *Prometheus* erupted into space in a flash of light and was immediately rocked by two missiles slamming into her bow.

“Nuclear detonations sir, port side bow.” Captain Halloran reported matter-of-factly.

“The armor held sir, but we have high levels of radiation forward of frame six.” Major Briedis added.

“Evacuate that area and seal it off until we get a team in there to inspect.” Colonel Horvath commanded. “Sir, your calculations we're correct. We are now one thousand meters off of the *Eternal's* bow.”

Admiral Turner nodded. “Get me a line to the *Eternal*.”

“You're on sir.” Maddie said as she activated the communications relay.

“Battlestar *Eternal* this is the Battlestar *Prometheus*, Admiral Jonathan Turner commanding. Please respond.”

The comm. line was silent as the static of space echoed through the C.I.C.’s speakers.

“Are you getting through?” Turner looked at Maddie.

“Yes sir, we’re getting a return feed.” The Master Chief confirmed.

“Are they dead?” Horvath asked.

“I hope not.” Turner replied dreadfully. “Have Archangel send a Raptor over to determine—”

“Prometheus Actual, this is General Connors aboard the *Eternal*. It’s good to hear your voice.” A gruff voice said, suddenly bursting through the static.

Turner smiled wide. “Good to be heard, General. What’s your ships status?”

“We’re in bad shape, Admiral.” Connors replied, “Our FTL is out as well as our anti-missile system and forward guns. We have hull breaches and our starboard flight pod has fires but we seem to have control of them for the moment.”

“Can you maneuver your ship?” Turner asked.

“Our helm is offline for the moment but we’ll have it back up shortly.” Connors replied.

“Very well, get your helm issue fixed and then maneuver your ship under ours. We’ll take some of this heat off of you in the meantime but you need to fix what you can and prepare to jump out ASAP.” Turner said.

“We can’t leave, Admiral,” Connors replied, “our two Gunstars are carrying civilians from Leonis.”

“Civilians--” Turner breathed, “okay, we’re sending help. Order all your fighters to form on my CAG, callsign Slider. We’ll escort the civilians out of the combat zone. You worry about getting your ship out in one piece.”

“Roger that.” Connors replied. “And Admiral- thanks.”

Suddenly the deck shook beneath Turner’s feet.

“I think the surprise has worn off of the Cylons.” Horvath sneered.

“Then it’s time to show the Cylons something new.” The Admiral replied as he turned to Captain Greene, the ships weapons officer. “Target main batteries one through four on the center axis of the nearest Basestar and open the forward missile bays.”

“Aye sir!” Greene replied enthusiastically.

“Helm: sixty degree left rudder, forty degree up angle on the bow planes.” Horvath commanded as she read Turner’s intentions.

The Admiral nodded his approval and activated his headset. “CAG, Actual: Launch all Vipers.”

“Roger Actual.” Slider replied over the headset.

“Main batteries one through four have a solution on the Cylon Basestar and all forward missiles are locked on target.” Captain Green reported.

The Admiral turned to face the weapons officer and gave the order he had waited nine months for. “Mister Green: *Fire.*”



Sitting in his cockpit, Slider smiled grimly as Admiral Turner gave the command to launch. He flipped a salute at the flight officer who returned it before touching the button that slammed him back in his seat and launched him from the *Prometheus* like a missile.

Clearing his blurry eyes Slider saw that the rest of his fighters were forming on him. Checking his dradis and reading his orders from the *Prometheus*, he quickly evaluated the situation and issued his orders. “Tiger: Take your squadron and cover those Gunstars. Once they jump away clean up any Raiders left behind. Tiny: form up with the *Eternal’s* squadrons and clean house over their airspace. Sheba and Shooter: form your squadrons and follow me.”

“Where we going boss?” Shooter asked.

Slider grinned. “We’re going to go ruin the paintjob on that second Basestar.”

“Hope their insurance covers ass kicking’s!” Hygiena laughed.

“Shut it, Red Five.” Sheba snapped.

Slider nodded and slammed his thrust yoke forward. “All Vipers: Let’s go to work!”

Sitting in the cockpit of his *Scimitar* Gunship, Captain Michael ‘Archangel’ Johnston watched as the *Prometheus’* Vipers streaked off into space to hunt their targets. “Lords of Kobol go with you.” he whispered as he opened a channel to the eleven other bombers in his group.

“All Hellfighters, listen up,” he said, “our job is to follow on the heels of the CAG and his group and hit the dradis and long range weapons emplacements on that Basestar. We’ve been loaded with Falcon Two missiles in our primary racks so you *shouldn’t* have to get in too close.”

“Yeah, well what *shouldn’t* happen and what *does* happen is usually the same thing around here, boss.” Ensign Ashley ‘Splashdown’ Klave said quietly from her co-pilot’s seat beside him.

Archangel smiled and continued. “That being said, be ready to get up close and nasty if need be. Don’t be afraid to call for help either. These gunships aren’t as maneuverable as our Raptors so if you get into it with a Raider, call for backup.”

The other pilots acknowledged his warning and he nodded, satisfied with their response. “Lords of Kobol protect all of you. Now, let’s go hunt some toasters.”



CENTRAL CONTROL HUB
BASESTAR 142
LEONIS SYSTEM

The number one Cylon model arched his eyebrow as he glared at the blonde Three to his side and held back expressing of amusement as her self-proclaimed brilliant plan fell apart before their eyes.

“It would appear that the game is afoot.” He finally said after another long moment.

She nodded but said nothing as she watched in her mind the newest Battlestar turn ponderously towards them and open fire.

“I’d say this changes things a bit.” A Five said as he folded his arms across his chest.

“Perhaps it’s time to fall back and re-evaluate the situation.” Six suggested.

“What’s the matter? No stomach for a fight?” Three chided. “I told you all that the victory over the humans was too easy. But then again, some of us don’t have what it takes to go toe to toe and slug it out.”

Six made ready to reply but was stopped short as a Two placed a calming hand on her shoulder. “Eve has done just as much for this effort as you have, Jez. Give her some credit.”

The Three known as Jez laughed as she turned around to face them all, a Colonial Fleet sash with numerous decorations draped across her fleet uniform tunic. “Her? Are you crazy, Gabe? She did nothing more than sleep with a General to get his access codes.”

“She gave of her spirit and her body, sister.” Gabriel said. “And those codes sealed the fate of the entire seventh fleet.”

“That’s not the point.” The Five model, who called himself Seth, said. “Your plan has been compromised, Jezebel. What do you intend to do about it?”

“Well, unlike some in this room, I won’t run just because the fight has gotten a little more intense.” Jezebel said, flashing her eyes at Eve.

“Unwise.” Said Lucifer, the Cylon One model who had been watching the exchange. “The enemy now out guns you and outnumbers you. Fall back and reassess your situation.”

“Not bloody likely.” Jezebel replied defiantly. “The trap is sprung and we’ve already destroyed one Battlestar. I’m not running.”

“Don’t be foolish, Jez. You should withdraw while you can still claim a marginal victory, sister.” Gabriel said.

Jezebel spun on him. “Unlike our brother and sisters who traipsed off after the *Galactica* and her rag tag fleet, I’m not inclined to play with my food before eating it. I want these frakking humans destroyed- *now*.”

“Don’t make us call for a vote.” Lucifer said flatly, his arms folded across his chest.

Jezebel laughed. “Are you so afraid that I will eclipse your glory, Lucifer?”

“This isn’t about glory, Jez.” Eve said. “Your victories come at too high a price. We’ve already lost one base ship in this fight.”

Jez made ready to respond but Lucifer held up a hand to forestall it. “All in favor of a tactical withdrawal?”

Everyone but Jez raised their hands.

“The motion is carried. Jez, send out the orders and prepare to jump.” Lucifer commanded.

Jez didn’t move, rather she stood in place, her face darkening in anger.

“Are you refusing to carry out the will of the Cylon, Jez?” Seth asked.

“No,” Jez replied suddenly snapping out of her anger, “of course not. The will of the whole is the will of the one.”

Lucifer nodded approvingly. “Good, now give your orders.”

Jez smiled sweetly, said “By your command,” and walked from the room.



The *Prometheus* opened fire with all of her forward guns and the Basestar closest to her took the brunt of the punishment as the NAC 10 rounds from the main cannons began to rip into the center axis of the ship, followed closely by the ten Diamond Shark anti-ship missiles that had been launched behind them.

The missiles impacted in the gaping holes left by the NAC 10 rounds and exploded inside the superstructure of the ship until finally, with a mournful groan of stressed metal, the ship began to come apart in the center.

It seemed to stretch and stretch for a long moment but then, as if the ship had suddenly gave up the ghost, its lights flickered out...

It exploded in a massive fireball of expanding gas and shrapnel.

In the C.I.C. of the Battlestar *Eternal*, a great cheer erupted as the news of the Basestar's destruction was radioed in.

Connors looked up from the damage reports he had been reading and smiled across the table at Commander Tajalle. "So much for the fat lady singing." The Commander smiled.

"Oh she's singing all right, just not for *us*." Connors replied.

"Helm control restored, sir." The helm officer reported.

"Good!" Tajalle replied, "Engineer, quiet the number five engine and pull us alongside the *Prometheus*."

"General, the *Spirit* and the *Saber* have jumped away." The operations officer announced.

Another cheer went up and Connors nodded, relieved. "Thank the Gods. Now get our FTL back online so we can follow them!"

"I don't think there's going to be any need." Tajalle said incredulously as she pointed to the dradis screen. "The Cylons- they're spinning up their FTL's! They're withdrawing!"



"What did you say?" Admiral Turner asked in response to Halloran's announcement.

"The Cylon Raiders are falling back and the Basestars are spinning up their FTL drives! They're frakking running!" Halloran repeated with a grim and triumphant smile.

Turner and Horvath looked at each other for a long moment, neither one able to believe what they were seeing.

"Sir, Slider is on the main line asking for permission to pursue!" Maddie said.

"Tell him no. Fall back and create a defensive line around the fleet until the Cylons depart." Turner replied.

"We're letting them go?" Horvath asked quietly so as not to be heard by the rest of the crew.

"For now, Colonel. I want to do a damage assessment on the *Eternal* and get a report from General Connors on the situation."

"But sir, we have them on the run—"

“Right now, X.O., we need information more than we need a kill count.” The Admiral said as he turned to face Major Briedis. “Dave, I want damage control teams ready to go and boarded on a shuttle in fifteen minutes and I want *you* with them. Your task will be to assess the current condition of the *Eternal* and help with repairs.”

“Yes sir.” The portly Major replied.

“Maddie, call the flight deck and have a shuttle waiting for Major Briedis.” Turner commanded. “And tell Chief Taylor to have my Viper prepped and ready in fifteen minutes as well.”

“You’re taking your Viper over, sir?” Horvath asked with an arched eyebrow.

The Admiral smiled. “I need to get my flight time in. Besides, I don’t like the idea of sitting helpless in the back of a Raptor if the Cylons come back.”

“Very well sir, but I *insist* on Slider flying your wing.”

Turner looked at her for a moment, he eyes like ice and her face set in an expression that said she would not negotiate the point, nor would she take no for an answer. “Very well.” He conceded.

“Sir, the last Cylon Basestar has jumped away.” Captain Halloran announced.

Turner nodded. “Secure from Condition One and set Condition Two throughout the fleet. X.O., have *Sentinel* and *Vigilant* take up picket positions and inform *Eternal* actual that I’m on my way with help.”

“Yes sir.” Colonel Horvath replied.

Turner took a deep breath. “You have the ship, Colonel.”

CHAPTER 2

LOST DREAMS

PORT SIDE HANGAR BAY BATTLESTAR ETERNAL LEONIS SYSTEM

General Connors stood back from the din of activity surrounding the shuttle from the *Prometheus* as he and Commander Tajalle awaited the arrival of Admiral Turner.

Crewmen moved around them quickly as they secured the shuttle and opened the hatch to allow the engineering teams sent over by the Admiral to exit the ship and start their work. He watched them with a careful eye but didn't know much about what they were doing since he was a soldier, not a fleet crewman.

His specialty had been special operations for the Colonial Marine Corps before he had made the impolitic move of criticizing the President to a fellow officer, who had then used it as political leverage over him.

It seemed almost a lifetime ago that he had been assigned to be the Governor General of the new Copernicus colony. Back then he had viewed it as a punishment, a disgrace before retirement for daring to challenge the political status quo.

Now he viewed it as a blessing in disguise.

He had been on the return trip home after picking up several more ships full of colonists as well as supplies, when the Cylons had attacked. Because of the relative secrecy of the colony world, the Cylons hadn't known it had existed.

After narrowly escaping a Cylon ambush on his supply convoy he had rallied the people of the colony. They had worked hard to establish a viable world to live on and in the ten months since the attack, they had succeeded.

He had also started running ops back to the Colonies to rescue survivors of the Cylon holocaust, so far with great success. Today's battle had been the first time he had ever felt in danger of losing his ship and his life.

And then, as if the gods themselves had reached out and handed him a miracle, the *Prometheus* had show up.

“The *Prometheus* showing up was a miracle.” Tajalle said, as if reading his mind.

Connors chuckled. “Yes it was, Commander.”

“You don’t sound too thrilled about that, sir.”

Connors unfolded his arms as the nose of Turner’s Viper came through the massive hangar doors, pulled by dolly. “I’m just reminded of an old saying: ‘be careful whom you accept miracles from lest they turn out to be the work of the devil’.”

Both officers moved forward together as Turner popped the canopy of his Mark VII Viper and stood up, handing a post-flight checklist down to the deck chief.

“Admiral on deck!” Tajalle shouted bringing everyone to a standstill.

Turner descended from his Viper down the step ladder and stood to attention as Tajalle rendered a parade-ground-perfect salute. Turner returned it gracefully. “Permission to come aboard, Commander?”

“Granted.” Tajalle replied. “Sir, allow me to introduce General John Connors, the commanding officer of our task force.”

“General,” Turner said, offering his hand, “it’s an honor to meet you.”

Connors took the hand and shook it. “Likewise, Admiral. We owe you our lives.”

Turner looked around and saw the looks of curiosity on the crewmen’s dirty faces and the twinkle of hope in their eyes. “Gather around.” He said waving them all over.

Slowly the crew gathered around the three senior officers in a semi-circle. Turner took his time looking into their young faces, locking eyes with as many as he could. Finally he spoke.

“I’ll be honest and say I didn’t know what to expect when we jumped in system today. We haven’t heard anything over the Colonial networks since we got word of the attack ten months ago and many of us have assumed the worst. However, seeing you all here, fighting the good fight and doing what you can to defend humanity, well it gives me hope. Hope that we can win this war and that humanity will survive.”

“Your leaders here,” Turner pointed to Tajalle and Connors, “have done a *damn* fine job in not only keeping you alive, but saving the lives of others as well. All of you have displayed the courage and dedication I have come to expect from the men and women who serve in the Colonial Defense Force.”

The gathered crewmen watched him with rapt attention, some nodding their heads as he continued speaking. “I don’t know the specifics, but I do know that things look bleak. We might be all that is left of humanity but so long as we survive, humanity survives and I *promise* you this: It may not be today or tomorrow, or anytime soon, but *one day* we will make the Cylons pay for what they have done to us.”

Connors and Tajalle watched as, one by one, the crewmen began clapping and then cheering at Admiral Turner's words. The swell of emotion was infectious and soon even Tajalle and Connors were clapping with them.

"I hear you!" Turner said to the rousing applause that echoed throughout the hangar deck. "I hear you! The *Prometheus* hears you! Humanity hears you and the bastards who did this are going to hear from *all of us* soon!"

**FLAG SUITE
BATTLESTAR ETERNAL
LEONIS SYSTEM**

Admiral Turner opened his flight jacket and took a seat across from General Connors as Commander Tajalle poured two shots of Leonis Whiskey and set them in front of the two flag officers.

"I think we earned it today." She said as she poured one for herself and sat next to the general.

"I agree." Turner said as he raised his glass. "To the Colonies."

All three officers took their shots and set the glasses back on the table, savoring the burn as the liquid made its way down their throats. It was a long moment before Turner asked the question he had been dreading since the news of the attack first came.

He took a deep breath. "What the hell happened?"

Tajalle poured him another shot. "You'll need this."

"The Cylons attacked on Armistice Day, ten months ago." Connors began explaining. "It was a surprise to everyone. From what we've pieced together, we figured out that they used a computer virus to hack into the defense mainframe. They were able to deactivate most of Colonial Defense Network before we even knew what hit us."

"Was like shooting fish in a frakking barrel." Tajalle snarled.

"They destroyed most of the fleet and ground forces inside of twelve hours." Connors continued. "The rest of the stragglers they picked off one at a time as they tried to make contact with other survivors."

Turner exhaled loudly and shook his head. "So the Colonies are occupied by the Cylons now. That's why we can't get into contact with anyone?"

"No, Admiral, you don't understand." Connors replied sadly, "You can't get into contact with anyone because there is no one *left* to get into contact with."

"What do you mean?"

"Admiral," Tajalle said, "the Cylons nuked the colonies. All of the major cities were destroyed except on Leonis where they used chemical nerve agents instead to preserve some of the ancient temples."

Turner sat back in his chair stunned. "My gods..."

“We’ve managed to find survivors in small numbers, those who have eluded the Cylons by living in the mountains or some other remote area, but for the most part, the Colonies are dead worlds,” the General finished. “I’m sorry I couldn’t give you better news.”

Turner blinked away tears as he thought of his mother and sister, his son and ex-wife all living on Leonis at the time of the attack. He knew that they were gone now.

“What about—” he paused as his voice cracked, “what about the rest of the fleet? Have you run into any other ships since the attack?”

“A few civilians,” Tajalle replied, “even a few of the more *seedier* sort.”

“Define ‘seedier sort’.” Turner said.

“Pirates.” Connors blurted out. “She means pirates. We found them under attack from the Cylons and we took them in. Turns out they had been conducting hit and run attacks on them.”

Turner shook his head and poured himself another shot. “I guess it takes all sorts.”

“The enemy of my enemy—” Tajalle began.

“Amen to that.” Turner replied taking the drink and tossing it back. “Now what about your situation here?”

“Well, we’ve been--”

“We can talk about that later, once we’re back home.” Connors said, cutting Tajalle off. “Right now we’re still in enemy space and they could come back at any time. I would suggest that we depart immediately.”

“Agreed.” Turner said standing. “If you don’t mind, I’ll transfer my flag here until we get to where were going. That way I can get a better handle on the situation.”

“Transfer your flag?” Connors asked.

“Yes.” Turner replied, “As the ranking naval officer I’m required by the Order of Precedence to assume command of all military ships in your fleet.”

Connors looked stunned for a long moment and Turner sympathized with the man. He had been in command for over ten months and now it was all being yanked out from under him in an instant.

Turner was in the right though. Because of the way tactics had developed due to space travel, it was common knowledge that one couldn’t control a planet without first controlling the space around it. With that in mind, the Colonial Defense Force had created General Order 91, also known as the Order of Precedence.

The regulation stated that when two officers of equal rank from both the ground and naval branches of the CDF occupied the same command structure, command fell according to branch. What it meant was that, as the senior naval officer, all naval forces would now fall under his command while all Marine and ground forces would be transferred to the command of General Connors.

“Commander, make sure you update your logs to reflect the changes in command and be prepared to give me a detailed brief on the ships you have.” Turner said turning back to Connors. “General, are you okay?”

Connors, realizing he had been standing with a blank expression on his face, nodded his head. “Yes. I’m just a little shocked is all.”

“I understand.” Turner said. “I know I wouldn’t be too happy about a Marine coming in and taking over my command either but the regulations are specific in this case.”

Connors chuckled. “We’ve been kind of lax on the regulations since the attack.”

“Understandable,” Turner nodded in agreement, “you were in survival mode then. Now, though, it’s time to get back on track. You and I are going to have to be the ones that set the example for everyone and I don’t want there to be any conflict in the chain of command.”

“Of course.” Connors replied. “You’re getting a fine group of soldiers, Admiral. I’m sure that they’ll serve you as well as they have me.”

“Of that, I have no doubt.” Turner agreed. “Now, let’s get to work before the Cylons decide to come back.”

OBSERVATION CHAMBER 31
BASESTAR 177
CAPRICA SYSTEM

“Welcome brother.” The Cylon known as Cavil said as Lucifer, his identical counterpart, made his way into the control hub where the others had gathered. “I hear you had quite an adventure in the Leonis system.”

“I would kill that bitch but she would just come back even worse.” Lucifer sighed, shaking his head.

“I hear you brother. Her sister D’Anna isn’t any better. Always plotting and conniving.” Cavil said as they both took a seat.

“I understand that our ancestors tried to mold us in human form but sometimes I think they did *too good* of a job on her model.” Lucifer said.

“Amen, brother.”

Both men sat quietly enjoying the view of the stars outside the window for a long moment before Lucifer spoke. “I assume you didn’t bring me here to talk about Jez.”

“The council has decided to leave the colonies. We’re pulling out.”

“You’re kidding me.” Lucifer said incredulously. “After all the work that we’ve put into rebuilding the cities, cleaning up the radiological contamination, making them habitable again?”

“Afraid so. The Sixes and the Eights have convinced the council to seek out the humans following *Galactica*.”

Lucifer couldn't believe his ears. “But why?”

“Because the *Galactica* is searching for Earth.” Cavil declared.

“Earth?” Now Lucifer was really taken aback. “It's a frakking myth! A fairy tale!” Cavil smiled. “No brother, it isn't. It's been found.”

Now Lucifer's eyes went wide. “How?”

“When she jumped back into range, we were able to download the memories of our sister Stacie.” Cavil explained.

“You mean the Six aboard the *Prometheus*?” Lucifer asked.

“The very same.” Cavil smiled. “Brother, she's *been* to Earth! She actually set foot on it!”

Lucifer leaned back in his seat. “My God...”

“Indeed.” Cavil raised his glass in toast.

“What did you find out?” Lucifer asked. “Does she know how to get back?”

“She doesn't know any of the navigational data and the memories we got from here were distorted badly. What we do know is that she set foot on Earth and that she visited a city while there.” Cavil explained.

“Which means that if the humans find Earth, they could rearm and come after us.” Lucifer said.

“Exactly. Now the Sixes and the Eights want to find the humans and try to coexist peacefully with them. Human and Cylon united once more in glorious unity.” Cavil said, his voice dripping with scorn for the idea.

“Preposterous! Humans are nothing but overactive, spoiled children! If we try to coexist they will *still* destroy themselves eventually and they'll drag us down with them!”

“I couldn't agree more,” Cavil sighed, “but Caprica Six and the Eight known as Sharon carry a lot of weight because of their actions in the war.”

“I can understand why they respect Caprica Six. She was instrumental in winning the war, after all. But Sharon? All she did was shoot an unarmed man in the chest and only after an override imperative was activated in her cerebral cortex!” Lucifer shook his head in disbelief.

“And only *after* she had destroyed a Basestar full of Cylons.” Cavil added. “I hate to admit it but D'Anna was right when she said we should have boxed them both. Now it's too late.”

Both men sat in silence as they contemplated the decisions of the council. As the representative of the One models, Cavil had already expressed his extreme objections to the ideas expressed by the Sixes and Eights, but his was only one vote among seven.

“Has there been any word from the Golden Circle?” Lucifer asked.

“The Final Five?” Cavil laughed. “Don’t tell me that you believe that myth too?”

“Well if Earth is real, it’s entirely possible that the Five *do* exist.”

“Oh yes, the Final Five exist and live in a room above the Grand Council chamber where no one is allowed to enter or see.” Cavil said sarcastically. “Unlike Earth, that *is* a fairy tale, created by our ancestors to give us something to aspire towards. The Five don’t exist, brother.”

Lucifer nodded. “You’re right, of course. I guess I was hoping for a miracle.”

“We’re going to need one if the Sixes and Eights continue on as is. It’s eventually going to tear us all apart.”

Lucifer shook his head. “No. We’ve been unified in thought and direction since the moment the humans activated us. I can’t ever see anything causing us to turn on each other.”

“I hope you’re right brother,” Cavil replied, “because if you’re not, it could be the end of us all.”



**COMBAT INFORMATION CENTER
BATTLESTAR ETERNAL
COPERNICUS SYSTEM**

Space erupted in bright blazes of light as the Battlestars *Prometheus* and *Eternal* along with the Gunstars *Spirit*, *Saber*, *Sentinel* and *Vigilant* all jumped into the Copernicus system simultaneously. It was an impressive sight that no doubt thrilled the people watching aboard the other ships in orbit around the colony world.

It had been three days since Turner and the *Prometheus* had found the *Eternal* and her sister ships in peril and now that they were repaired and reasonable sure that the Cylons weren’t tracking them, they had finally decided to return to the place they had all come to call home.

In his three days aboard the *Eternal*, Turner had been surprised by many things. The spirit of the crew was amazingly strong considering all they had been through and even though Major Briedis had reported that the ship itself was in dire need of some good repairs, he found that it was in good condition.

Crew discipline was lax, but Turner expected it. They had been living on the fringe for almost a year. It was easy to see how they had stopped thinking of themselves as a military organization and began

to think more along civilian lines. It would be a tough situation to rectify but he had no doubt that the crews previously under Connors command would snap to and get back on track quickly.

“Admiral on deck!” Commander Tajalle announced as she led Turner into the C.I.C., followed by General Connors.

“Carry on.” Turner said as he took a good look around the small command center. “I’d forgotten how small the C.I.C. of the *Mercury* class was. I’ve kind of gotten used to the one on *Prometheus*.”

It was his first time in the C.I.C. of the *Eternal* since he had come aboard. He didn’t want to be viewed as someone who was coming in and taking control too fast so he had avoided the command center of the ship for a few days and confined himself to inspecting the ship and catching up on Tajalle and Connors command logs.

“I heard that they made the C.I.C. larger on the *Nova* class.” Tajalle said.

Turner nodded. “They were intended as fleet command vessels so they designed the C.I.C. to be able to manage a fleet size engagement, not just a ship. Our C.I.C. looks more like the ones you would find on the older Battlestars rather than the newer, more streamlined vessels.”

“My mother served on one of the older Battlestars during the first Cylon War. She said it was so big you could play a regulation game of Pyramid in it.” Tajalle said.

“Ours isn’t quite *that* big,” Turner chuckled, “but probably about twice the size of yours.”

“Size isn’t everything, Admiral.” Tajalle chided.

“That’s the truth. If size was the case, you guys would have been scrap a long time ago for facing three Basestars.” Turner said.

“It’s not the size of the dog in the fight, it’s the size of the fight in the dog.” Connors said with pride.

Turner nodded. “Truer words have never been spoken, General and I have to say that I admire the fight you and your crew have put up here. You all deserve to be commended.”

“Thanks Admiral, but we were just doing what was necessary.” Connors replied modestly.

“General, an old commanding officer of mine once said that sometimes doing what was necessary to survive was a heroic act, in and of itself.” the Admiral said. “What you guys have accomplished here is nothing short of heroic and if humanity survives, it will no doubt owe a huge debt to you and your brave men and women here.”

“That sounds like something General Murphy would have said.” Connors replied.

“Close,” Turner replied, “it was Admiral Cain. She was a big fan of Murphy’s laws though.”

“He was a practical man, that’s for sure. I served with him when I was a lieutenant.” Connors said.

“I like practical. It’s easier to deal with than theoretical.”

“I agree completely.” Connors said.

“Commander, General, we’ve secured from jump stations and all systems are green.” Announced Colonel Thomas Parker, the *Eternal’s* X.O.

“Very well.” General Connors said, “Contact the *Celestial* and tell Commander Jonas to join us on the *Prometheus* as soon as we make orbit.”

“Yes sir.” Parker replied.

“Admiral, do you have any orders?” Tajalle asked.

“Move the fleet into a standard defensive formation over the settlement and deploy the CAP” Turner commanded.

Connors nodded to himself, approving of Turners actions. It was difficult though since it would normally be *he* who gave the order.

“General? Are you alright?” Turner asked, noticing his discomfort.

Connors chuckled. “I guess I am just feeling like a fifth wheel now. Not much for a ground pounder to do on a ship, you know.”

Turner nodded understandingly and moved closer so that he could speak quietly. “General, nothing could be farther from the truth. You’ve done more than anyone could ask and you know these people better than I ever will.”

Turner pulled back and looked the general in the eyes for a long moment. “I’m going to need you more than ever in the coming months. Integrating two different commands is never easy under the best of circumstances.”

“You’ll have my full support, Admiral.” Connors replied.

Turner smiled. “Thank you General.”

“Admiral, the fleet is moving into position as ordered.” Commander Tajalle reported.

“Very well, Commander. Inform the fleet that I am transferring my flag back to the *Prometheus* and that I want all ships commanders to meet me in my conference room in two hours.” Turner requested as he turned to Connors. “General, would you like a tour of the *Prometheus*?”

Connors was taken aback by the offer but nodded his head. “Sure, absolutely.”

Turner smiled. “Good. It will give us some time to talk too.”



**SQUADRON READY ROOM
BATTLESTAR PROMETHEUS
COPERNICUS SYSTEM**

Splashdown tossed her helmet into her seat and wiped the sweat from her brow as she entered the ready room, followed closely by the other pilots of her squadron. “Holy frak! No offense Captain, but I hope I never have to spend ten hours in a Raptor with you or anyone else ever again.”

“I hope so too, Splash. You smell like a barrel full of rotten ass.” A voice said from behind her.

“Mel!” Splashdown laughed as she threw her arms around her best friend, Ensign Melody Moody. “Where the hell have you been? It’s been three days since the attack and you didn’t even let me know you were alive, you bitch!”

Moody, known by her call sign Hygiena because of her obsessive compulsion towards cleanliness, laughed with her friend. “I’ve been busy. I was aboard the *Eternal* with the Admiral.”

“What were you doing there?”

“The CAG wanted to show me off as a product of our pilot training program.” She said with a sheepish smile.

“You’re such a suck ass!” Splashdown chided giving her a small push. “You get all the good assignments.”

“Not so much.” Hygiena replied with a shake of her head. “You should see these guys, Splash. They looked like they had been living in the wilderness since the attack! Long hair, unshaved, uniforms dirty and ratty. And they kept looking at us like we are some sort of miracle workers.”

“Those guys have been running and gunning for the last ten months.” A voice said from behind them.

Both ensigns snapped to attention as Captain Stacie ‘Sheba’ Percival entered the room. She regarded them coolly for a moment and then patted them on the back. “Good to see that you’re both still among the living.”

“Thank you sir.” Both ensigns replied.

Sheba chuckled and arched her eyebrow. “Stand at ease, before you sprain something.”

Hygiena and Splashdown both relaxed visibly.

“Those guys have been living with the Cylons hunting them for almost a year now.” Sheba continued as she set her flight helmet down and unzipped her jacket. “They’re low on supplies because the ground facilities aren’t operational yet and they didn’t have much to begin with since this was supposed to be a short mission.”

“But sir, we’ve been in combat more times than I can count over the last two years and we can still maintain our uniforms and discipline.” Hygiena argued.

“True,” Sheba conceded, “but the last time we saw combat was over six months ago and that was just because we ran into an Alliance destroyer that was lost.”

Hygiena and Splashdown nodded, remembering the one engagement they had fought on the nine month long trip home.

“Besides, the Alliance was trying to *capture* us and take our technology. The Cylons are trying to *exterminate* us all. Big difference.” Sheba finished. “Now, if you’ll excuse me, I’m going to get a hot shower and get dressed before the Admiral returns.”

“Sounds like a good idea.” Hygiena agreed.

“Yeah it does because you smell like a used sock.” Splashdown giggled.

“Shut up, hooker!” Hygiena laughed as they both walked out of the room.

CHAPTER 3

THE ROAD AHEAD

**FLAG SUITE
BATTLESTAR PROMETHEUS
COPERNICUS SYSTEM**

Admiral Turner entered his suite and took a deep breath, allowing the familiar smell to saturate his soul. “It’s good to be home.”

“I know how you feel.” General Connors said from behind him. “I’ve come to think of the *Eternal* as my home over the last few months. It’s going to be difficult to get used to living dirt side again.”

Turner nodded as he ushered him to a seat across his desk from him. “I learned *that* on my first shore leave home after I joined. I’d been on the Battlestar *Orion* for a year and when I went home to Leonis, it just didn’t feel right. Even the fresh air felt wrong to me.”

“I never spent much time aboard ships until recently.” Connors admitted, “I was mostly assigned to garrison commands before I went into the special operations branch. After that, I never stayed in any one place for too long. Hell, I think I moved an average of four times a year there for a while.”

“I suppose that’s the nice thing about the fleet. Once you’re in a slot you don’t go anywhere for a few years unless you get promoted or booted out.” Turner replied as he poured them both a drink.

The men raised a silent toast and then sipped the ambrosia slowly, enjoying the rich flavor as it went past their tongues.

“You’ll be happy to know that we’ve started sending over replacement parts and supplies from our stores to the *Eternal* and the *Celestial*.” Turner said as he sat his glass down. “Major Briedis also says he will have your number two and three water processors back up and operational within the next 48 hours.”

Connors smiled. “That will make the guys on the *Eternal* happy. We’ve been rationing water over there for two months now because the Cylons destroyed our replacement processors. The crew has been restricted to taking showers every three days and they are usually cold ones.”

Turner laughed. “You never know how much you take a hot shower for granted until the water goes cold.”

“Ain’t *that* the truth!” Connors replied.

Both men chuckled for a moment and then the serious mood returned.

“I’ve read your logs about what happened after the attack.” Turner said. “I wish you would have found *Galactica* at Ragnar. Bill Adama was a good friend of mine.”

Connors shook his head. “When we got there all that was left was wreckage. We found a few Mark II Vipers, a couple of wrecked Cylon Raiders and some shattered hull plating from the *Galactica*’s forward fuselage but that was it. The rest of the wreckage had been sucked down the Ragnar gravity well.”

“Did you find the *Galactica*’s black box?” Turner asked.

“No.” Connors replied sadly. “We sent a Raptor down the well to the anchorage but even that had been destroyed. The Cylons were thorough.”

“So with *Galactica* destroyed, there was no one left.”

“Right.” Connors said. “So I followed Admiral Nagala’s last orders: Keep the colony safe and save as many human lives as you can.”

“You did a good job, General.” Turner said. “I know it must have been hard to not strike back at the Cylons.”

Connors sighed. “You have *no idea* how hard it was.”

“Well that’s going to change.” Turner said as he pulled out a document.

“What do you mean?” Connors asked.

“I meant what I said to your crew the other day: We *are* going to take the fight to the Cylons.”

“You mean go on the offensive?”

“Yes.” Turner nodded as he slid the document folder over to Connors. “I’ve had my staff coming up with ideas on how to mount a successful campaign against the Cylons and I’m reasonably satisfied that it can be done with the resources we have.”

Connors read the plan and found himself nodding in agreement. “This looks good, although I have some suggestions for the use of marines and special operations portions.”

Turner smiled and pushed a button on his desk. “I hoped you would.”

Behind Connors, the door to the suite slid open to admit two men, one wearing the black fatigues of a Colonial Marine and the other wearing the standard blue uniform of a fleet officer.

“I’d like to introduce you to Lt. Col. Stewart Kelly and Captain Allain Halloran.” Turner gestured to the men. “Colonel Kelly is commander of the 7th Marine Expeditionary Regiment.”

“Sir!” Kelly fired off a smart salute. “An honor to meet you.”

Connors stood and returned the salute. “The honor is mine, Colonel.”

Turner gestured to Halloran. “This gentleman here—”

“Al Halloran.” Connors said with a smile as he reached out and grabbed the man’s shoulders. “I always hoped I would see you again.”

“Good to see you too, General.” Halloran replied.

“Mister Halloran was one of my junior officers back when I commanded the 21st Special Operations Detachment.” Connors explained. “It’s nice to see his cover rank has caught up to his actual one.”

“He earned it.” Turner said. “I owe him my life.”

Connors patted Halloran on the shoulder. “I always knew you had it in you, boy.”

Halloran nodded but said nothing as Connors turned back to Turner. “I take it these are the gentlemen I will need to work with regarding your plan?”

Turner nodded. “They wrote the marine and spec ops portions of it.”

“Good.” Connors turned to face Kelly. “Meet me in my quarters here tonight at 2100 hours so we can discuss reorganization, and have your battalion and company commanders meet me aboard the *Eternal* tomorrow at 1200 hours so we can get acquainted.”

“Yes sir.” Kelly replied with a smile.

The General then turned to Halloran. “As for you, Mister Halloran, I’ll expect you to meet with me as soon as your shift is done.”

“Yes sir.” Halloran replied.

“Dismissed.”

Both men saluted and left the suite with no further words and Connors turned back to Turner. “I only have one reservation about this plan, Admiral.”

“What’s that?”

“It violates Admiral Nagala’s orders. He told me not to do anything that would potentially reveal where our colony is. If we go on the offensive, I have no doubt that the Cylons will redouble their efforts to find us.”

“I agree.” Turner replied. “However, I also know that if we *eliminate* the Cylon threat, we won’t have to worry about that eventuality.”

“The best defense is a good offense?” Connors asked.

“One of my favorite sayings.” Turner replied. “Now I realize that we won’t be able to do this immediately; it will take time for us to train and prepare our people, not to mention get the civilians down on the planet to start making war materiel.”

Connors shook his head. “Doctor Grazier won’t like that one bit.”

“Grazier was the scientific advisor to President Adar, yes?”

“Yeah,” Connors said with a smirk, “Adar sent him out here to be the civilian administrator because he publicly disagreed with something the president said.”

“It was Adar who came up with the idea for *our* mission as well.” Turner said scornfully.

“Well he won’t be happy about you coming in and changing his priorities on the planet.” Connors said, “I’ve tried to work with him but he keeps pointing to the letter of the law and where my authority stops and his begins. So far I haven’t had the time or the inclination to search for a legal way around his position.”

Turner smiled. “Then we’ll just have to find another way.”



**SENIOR ENLISTED QUARTERS
BATTLESTAR PROMETHEUS
COPERNICUS SYSTEM**

Master Chief Petty Officer Theresa Madrid rolled over in her bed and smiled at the man who lay next to her. She didn't expect him to smile back since he rarely smiled at all, but today he seemed more distracted than ever.

After a long moment of silence she decided to take action and find out what was bothering him "What's wrong?"

"Nothing," Allain Halloran said, snapping out of his daydream, "just thinking."

Maddie ran her finger along his arm. "About what?"

"How everything has changed." Halloran said, taking her hand. "It looks like the General is going to want me to go back into black ops."

"I thought you said you didn't want to do that anymore."

"I don't," Halloran said, "but I can't refuse an order either. Especially when it comes from a man I consider a mentor and a friend."

"But the nightmares—"

"I know." Halloran sighed. "I haven't had any since—"

"Since that first night." Maddie replied with a smile.

Halloran chuckled, another thing he rarely did. “Has it really been a year?”

“Yes it has.” Maddie replied. “The Admiral asked me about it last week. He *just* caught on.”

“You’re kidding right?”

Maddie shook her head. “We’ve done a good job keeping it under the dradis.”

Halloran nodded. “I guess we have. There’s only one problem though.”

Maddie sat up, a feeling of dread creeping up her spine. “What’s that?”

“I’ve been doing some thinking lately. We’re going to war now and that changes everything, even between us.” Halloran said.

Maddie felt her insides go numb as he spoke. She had heard this line far too many times before and knew where it was going. She raised her finger to his lips in an effort to silence him but he took her hand and held it tight.

“I know that we’ve shared a lot over the last year, but I don’t know how we’re going to keep it quiet, especially after this--” he said as he fished out a small gold ring.

Maddie’s eyes went wide with shock as she realized what was happening. “Oh my gods...” she whispered, her voice caught up by emotion.

“We’re going to war Theresa and if something happens to one or both of us, I want to know that we’ll die as husband and wife.”

Maddie nodded dumbly, tears of joy running down her cheeks, as he placed the ring on her finger.

“I assume that means yes?” he asked.

Maddie looked at him a long moment and then smacked him in the shoulder. “Of course it does you moron!” she laughed.

Halloran smiled and took her in his arms. “Good. Now that the hard part is done, all we have to do is convince the Admiral to bless off on it.”

“That can wait,” Maddie said with a twinkle in her eye. “Right now, I want to celebrate.”

“We have to be in the conference room in thirty minutes.” Halloran weakly protested.

Maddie smiled. “That’s plenty of time.”

EPILOGUE

NEW FOUNDATIONS

COMMAND CONFERENCE ROOM BATTLESTAR PROMETHEUS COPERNICUS SYSTEM

Admiral Turner looked out at the assembled ship captains and took a deep breath. He had known it was going to be a motley assortment of people when Connors had explained everything to him but seeing them gathered was something else.

The Colonial officers all sat in front, their uniforms crisp and boots polished. The civilian captains stood against the back wall, their rugged appearance out of place in the neatly military gathering.

“What an interesting group.” Horvath commented drily as she brushed by him to take a seat in the front row.

“Tell me about it.” The admiral mumbled to himself as he stepped to the podium.

Looking around, he made a quick decision and stepped away from the podium. “How about we do this informally?” He asked as he gestured everyone to come closer.

The Colonial officers came forward quickly with the civilians filling in slowly behind. When they had all gathered in a semi-circle, he spoke.

“General Connors has told me what you all have been through here and I cannot begin to tell you how proud I am of *all* of you. It’s *you* who have given the human race a fighting chance to live.”

He paused as his words sunk into the group before continuing. “I don’t hold any illusions that integrating all of us into a working and cohesive force is going to be easy. You guys have done things your own way for a while now and I understand that it’s worked well so far.”

“Well then why don’t you leave it be?” One of the former pirates, a lithe female with dark hair and intense blue eyes said. “If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it.”

Turner chuckled. “Normally, captain, I would agree with you. However, if we are going to do what I want us to do then we are going to have to start working in a different way. There has to be a cohesive chain of command with one person on top.”

“Well leave General Connors in charge then!” one of the civilians said.

Others began to speak out and Horvath was about to silence them when Connors booming voice echoed throughout the room. “Shut the hell up!”

All eyes turned to him as he marched to the fore, his arms crossed in anger. “This isn’t open for debate. Regulations specify what has to happen and *this is it*.”

“To hell with regulations!” one voice shouted.

“Yeah, piss on em!” Another said.

Connors arm shot out and his mighty hand closed around the neck of the pirate who had spoken last. “Need I remind you of your place here?”

The pirate’s eyes went wide with fear and he shook his head.

“Good,” Connors said releasing him. “The decision has been made. The Admiral is in charge of the fleet, now shut up and *listen*.”

Turner nodded his silent thanks to Connors who nodded in return but said nothing more.

“As I was saying,” Turner continued, “To do what I intend to do I will need one solid chain of command in the fleet. Therefore, all Colonial Fleet ships will hereby fall under my command.”

“And the civilian ships?” The female pirate asked.

“They will fall under General Connors who will be responsible for all ground forces and homeworld defense.”

The pirates shook their heads but didn't object as their leader stepped up to the forefront. "One last question, *Admiral*," she said, scorn dripping from her voice. "What is this grand and glorious plan you have that requires you to come in and shake our lives so much?"

Turner smiled. "I'm glad you asked, captain. Over the next year I have two goals. The first is to build this colony into a productive center capable of sustaining human life for the foreseeable future."

The pirates nodded to each other and then looked at Turner expectantly. "What's the second?"

"When I first came aboard the *Eternal* I promised everyone that we would take the fight to the enemy. That's *exactly* what I intend to do."



Walking quietly together through the corridors of the *Prometheus*, Admiral Turner and General Connors considered the meeting that had just adjourned. The fleet officers had met the news that Turner would be their new commanding officer with general enthusiasm, though Connors didn't take it as a personal thing. He knew they were just happy to have a fleet officer back at the helm.

The former pirates were another story.

They were pissed and he had no doubt that he would wind up hearing about it from their leader before the night was done.

"I think the fleet officers took it well." Turner said as if reading his mind, "Your *privateer* friends weren't too happy though."

"They're not fleet." Connors replied.

"I'm well aware." Turner sighed. "They denied one of our engineering teams permission to land and inspect their engines."

Connors inhaled deeply and steeled himself for what he was about to say as they entered the landing bay when suddenly a face in the crowd caused his head to snap around.

"What's wrong?" Turner asked seeing the intent gaze on the general's face.

In a flash Connors had drawn his side arm and took off at a dash. Turner followed quickly only to hear a startled yelp and a crash as equipment was knocked onto the floor.

Leaping over the fallen debris he landed and found Connors standing over Sheba with his pistol drawn and a targeting laser directly between her eyes.

“General Connors,” the Admiral began carefully, “would you care to explain why you have one of my officers pinned down to my flight deck with a live weapon drawn on her?”

Connors turned his face to Turner and the Admiral could see the raw anger and fear in his eyes and it chilled him to the bone. “You need to check all areas that this *thing* has been in for sabotage.”

A crowd was gathering now, including Marines who all had weapons trained on the general and Turner knew he had to diffuse the situation quickly. “General Connors, that *person* you have there is Captain Percival, one of my squadron commanders.”

“No she’s not,” Connors said shaking his head, “she’s a Cylon. They have the ability to mimic human form now.”

Turner looked down at Sheba expecting to see horror and fear on her face but instead he saw only resignation.

“I’m sorry Admiral.” She said sadly. “He’s right, I’m a Cylon.”

Inside he felt a rage boil up like he hadn’t felt since his ship had been captured by the Alliance. “Sergeant of the watch!” he said, barely able to find his voice, “Disarm the prisoner and escort her to the brig.”

He continued to watch as Sheba was hauled up off the floor, shackled and her weapons removed from her holster. She kept her sad eyes locked onto him throughout the whole procedure until she was finally led away by the Marines.

“I’m sorry Admiral.” Connors said, “I should have told you what we knew about the Cylons but we were worried about infiltrators. We had to be sure.”

Turner looked up and fixed the general with a harsh stare for a long moment before turning away without saying another word.

Connors watched him as he disappeared down an access way knowing that things had just taken a turn for the worst.