



# BATTLESTAR PROMETHEUS

BY RYAN A. KEETON

## PEGASUS

Based on the Sci-Fi Original series

*Battlestar Galactica*

*Created by Ron Moore and David Eick*

**BATTLESTAR GALACTICA**

CREATED BY GLEN LARSON

# DRAMATIS PERSONAE

## COLONIAL ALLIANCE

Fleet Admiral Jonathan Turner: Commanding Officer of the Colonial Alliance Defense Force

Admiral James Ryan III: Commanding officer, 2<sup>st</sup> Fleet, C.A.D.F.

General John Connors: Commander, Task Force Eternal

Admiral Julian Titus: Commanding officer, 1<sup>st</sup> Fleet, C.A.D.F.

Sae'tzar Rollo Thomasi: Supreme Leader, Macedon Colony

President Kevin Grazier: President, Copernicus Colony

Commander Karla Horvath: Commanding Officer, Battlestar Prometheus

Major David Briedis: Chief Engineer of the Prometheus

Colonel Stacie Percival: Executive Officer, Battlestar Ares

Major Joshua "Shooter" Wakefield: C.A.G., Prometheus Air Group

Major Allain Halloran: Executive Officer, Battlestar Prometheus

Master Chief Petty Officer Theresa Madrid: Chief of the Boat, Battlestar Prometheus

Lieutenant Ashley "Splashdown" Klave: Pilot, Raptor Support Squadron

Ensign Melody "Hygiene" Moody: Captured, presumed dead

Major Jason "Slider" Allen: Captured, presumed dead

## CYLON

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 Garrison Commander, victor of the Battle of Leonis

Simon: Cylon Prison Camp Commander

Lilith (Sharon): Cylon Basestar Commander

Tyranus Bane(Doral): Hero of the Alliance Campaign

# PROLOGUE

## BRIGHT AND SHINY

THERMOPYLAE STATION  
OUTER ORBIT OF CAPRICA  
HELIOS ALPHA SYSTEM  
FOUR YEARS BEFORE THE FALL...

Jonathan Turner made for an interesting sight as he walked the corridors of the station fingering the newly pinned Colonel's rank on his collar. He tried not to let his nervousness show but today was his first day aboard a new ship in a *very* long time and the new ship had big shoes to fill.

*Huge* shoes in fact.

For five years he had served aboard the *Atlantia* as the X.O., one of the first Mercury class ships out of the barn when the class had been commissioned some twenty years prior. She carried a huge legacy, having served as a primary ship of the line for her first ten years of her life before being named fleet command ship. Now she had been retired and Turner had been her last X.O.

Many in the C.D.F. had anticipated that it would be his last assignment. After all, it was commonly accepted that being assigned to the senior command crew of a retiring ship was the admiralty's subtle way of saying you wouldn't be going anywhere else and that it was time to think about retiring.

But Turner was nothing if not stubborn, a trait he had inherited from his father and that he had further developed under the tutelage of a man named Bill Adama, someone he considered both a mentor and a role model.

Now, after numerous heated confrontations with fleet command, he was rotating to a new Battlestar.

The Admiralty had offered him the command of one of the new *Saber* class Gunstars but he had turned them down flat because he knew what they were- career dead ends. It didn't surprise him considering the flak he had dodged throughout his career but he was a pilot and as such he belonged on a Battlestar and as nice as the new Gunstars were, it would never be a place he could call home.

Thinking back he smiled as the twenty years he had spent in the Colonial Defense Force came back to him in a flood of memories. His career had been an uphill struggle from day one simply because of his birth. After all, while Leonites were renowned as fierce soldiers with some of the best training academies in the colonies, they were also notorious pacifists, believing that they should only draw their swords in self defense.

It wasn't a surprising development considering Leonis' violent past. Long wars with their neighboring world of Virgon had left deep societal scars on the people of Leonis. Once they had been aggressive and arrogant, believing that they alone could bring about the enlightenment of humankind.

They had launched many crusades to subdue other colonial worlds and bring them into the light of what they had once called the *new age*. Then the Leonis Spring had come along and the warmongering leaders that had once guided Leonis through time and been overthrown.

From that time on, the people of Leonis had focused on a more peaceful way of life.

That hadn't stopped other colonies from attempting to exact revenge on the people who had once oppressed them but they had learned quickly that just because the Lion had put away its claws, it hadn't forgotten how to use them.

Three full-on invasions had been violently repelled before the other colonies had learned to leave the Leonites alone.

Over time, relations between the colonies had somewhat normalized but Leonis always remained ready. It had been that readiness that had saved many lives when the Cylons had turned against their human masters.

It had taken the brutality of the Cylons attacking Baghera, the capital of the colony, to rouse the Leonites into taking arms against the metal titans that had been created on Caprica, a fact that many still held against them.

Still, it was the Leonite way to try and avoid conflict unless absolutely necessary.

Turner having been born and raised on Leonis, suffered from that stigma just like others from his world. The fact that Leonites were a rare sight in the Colonial Defense Force didn't make matters any easier, nor did the fact that, back home, he was looked down upon for donning the CDF uniform in defiance of his pacifist roots.

He had worked hard to get where he was though. Attending the officers' academy on Caprica, he had graduated number two in his class. He had expected a choice assignment upon graduation but had instead found himself attached to a ground squadron on Virgon.

He'd served two years there, earning a promotion and high marks from his commanding officer yet when the time had come for reassignment his request for service on a Battlestar had been denied.

Fed up, he'd taken leave and traveled to the reassignment section at the Octagon on Picon where he found the major in charge of not only his denied request, but his assignment to Virgon as well.

When confronted, the major, who flaunted his Caprican heritage proudly, stated that the fleet didn't need *tame lions* piloting Vipers.

Needless to say, that hadn't gone over well with the junior lieutenant from a small fishing village on Leonis and had ended even worse for the conceited major from the Greystone Heights of Caprica City.

Turner spent two weeks in hack for that but, once the situation had been thoroughly investigated, his charges, including striking a superior officer (and breaking his jaw), had been dismissed and the major had been quietly shuttled to a desk assignment on Aerilon.

Turner himself had been posted to the Battlestar *Orion* where he had served with distinction before being promoted to Captain and assigned to his first tour of duty aboard the Battlestar *Atlantia*. There he had served as a squadron commander until his CAG had been promoted and reassigned.

It was also there that he had met a promising young pilot named James Ryan.

Turner and Ryan had become fast friends as he learned the ropes of managing an entire air group, as well as mentoring the junior officer in military leadership. Eventually they had both been promoted and reassigned to the *Valkyrie* where Turner, now a major, served as the CAG and Ryan as one of his squadron commanders.

Both of them had benefitted from the knowledge and experience of their commander, a veteran of the Cylon War named Bill Adama, though neither had been overly fond of his X.O. Saul Tigh.

Together they had weathered Tigh's blistering tirades and learned from Adama's quiet, father-like wisdom until Turner had received another promotion to Colonel and been reassigned back to the *Atlantia* once again to oversee her last cruise and retirement.

After twenty years, Turner could have called it quits and lived off of a nice income as a retired Colonel, but he had long since been divorced and the small village of his birth held no appeal for him in the long term.

What he wanted was command of a Battlestar.

Turner had waited for over a year, serving as the chief instructor at the fleet academy flight school for a year, all the while quietly pushing to be assigned to a Battlestar once again because a desk just wasn't the place for him. Finally, tired of his unending requests, the admiralty had relented and assigned him a new posting.

The ship he was going to was prestigious and had a reputation for being lucky. Her commander was a razor and a rising star in the Colonial Defense Force.

As he reached the observation deck, a bright flash caught his eye and drew him from the shroud of memories he had floated about himself. Turning to the source, he saw a beautiful sight.

Not possessing the elegant curves of the *Jupiter* class nor the sleek angles of the *Odin* class, the *Mercury* class was a behemoth of muscle and power that spoke to the awesome destruction she could unleash if called upon.

Turner watched closely as he saw her angle in and align with the docking port below him. Her maneuvering thrusters fired as the ship rotated a few degrees to mate with the docking arms that gently took hold of the ship.

In his mind he imagined the commands being given in the C.I.C. as the helm officer, his eyes glued to his readouts, deftly piloted this monster of a ship gently into port.

Finally quieting her engines, work crews in EV gear began to hustle about as they hooked up hoses and lines to begin the refueling and rearming process.

Turner nodded with approval and let the moment of excitement work its way up through his spine as he drank in the sight of the ship that would be his home for the next few years-

A Battlestar named *Pegasus*.

# CHAPTER 1

## THE LONG ROAD AHEAD

COMBAT INFORMATION CENTER  
BATTLESTAR ETERNAL  
WAYPOINT FOUR, ORBIT OF NEW CAPRICA  
TWO YEARS AFTER THE FALL...

General John Connors entered the C.I.C. of the *Eternal* yawning and stretching and made his way to the situation table where Commander Tajalle and Captain Thrace awaited him. The two ladies were talking quietly as they studied a star chart on the table while the rest of the crew buzzed around them.

“Good morning, Commander- Captain,” Connors greeted them. “What’s the story?”

“Morning sir,” Tajalle replied. “All quiet here.”

“Good,” Connors said. “Who do I have to promote to get some coffee?”

“That would be me, sir,” a young crewman replied. “Two sugars per your orders.”

Connors took a sip and nodded approvingly. “Keep making it *this* good and you’ll be an officer before we get back.”

“No thank you sir,” the crewman replied drily. “You can keep the shiny rank.”

Connors chuckled. “Carry on crewman. Starbuck,” he said turning to Captain Thrace, “what’s our next step?”

Starbuck frowned as she studied the charts and pointed to a star. “This was the rally point after the operation. If we go there we should be able to find some debris or trash from their overboard waste dumps.”

“It’s been a while though- finding this particular trail could be like a needle in a haystack” Commander Tajalle said as she studied the chart.

“Well the Admiral gave us a mission and we have to make it happen,” Connors replied. “Commander- plot the jump and let’s do this.”

“Yes sir,” Tajalle replied. “Ops- get over here.”

Connors turned and walked away from the commander as she got to work and found Starbuck by his side following along quietly. “Something on your mind, Captain?”

“Just a gut feeling, sir,” Starbuck replied, distracted. “Like something’s not right.”

“How so?”

Starbuck shook her head. “I don’t know. I just feel like we’re heading the wrong way- like something has changed.”

“Well you’re the chief navigator on this mission Thrace,” Connors replied. “You’re the one pointing the way.”

“I know, I just-” Starbuck stopped for a moment to consider her thoughts. “Like I said, I feel like something has changed.”

“How so?”

Starbuck rolled her eyes in frustration. “Hell, I don’t know sir,” she paused for a long moment looking at the chart. “I need a drink.”

Connors stopped and watched the captain walk away shaking her head while she muttered to herself. Turner had assigned her to the mission of finding the *Galactica* and Connors had learned to trust the admirals’ instincts.

Yet now he found himself hoping like hell that Turner had known what he was doing when he made the decision.

**CYLON PRISON CAMP  
LEONIS  
Two years after the Fall...**

Slider watched as nonchalantly as he was able to as Simon made his way through the camp population. The ebon skinned Cylon looked each person up and down as if he were studying a specimen as he moved slowly through the walkways of the camp.

Suddenly, Simon’s eyes caught his and he began to move in a direct, yet casual manner to where Slider sat. “Oh frak me,” he grumbled taking a hard swig of his drink.

“Major Allen,” Simon’s rich voice said. “It’s good to see you up and about during the daytime.”

Slider fixed him with hard glare as he turned to see the object of his dislike standing silhouetted in the rising sunlight. “What are you talking about?”

“Oh come now,” Simon said with a sly smile. “You don’t *honestly* think that you haven’t been seen skulking about at night, do you? Always watching like a predator.”

“Hah!” Slider barked. “You must be mistaken- I wouldn’t come out at all if I could help it. Unfortunately, the room service here sucks.”

Simon chuckled. “Indeed it does,” he said leaning down so that he was only inches from Slider’s face. “You should know that Melody is *not* going to be coming out. Not for a while anyway. She has important work to do.”

Slowly, Slider turned his head until he was face to face with his nemesis. “What the frak are you doing to her?” he growled, his fingers twitching.

“You really need to calm down, Major,” Simon replied with a smile. “We wouldn’t want anything *unfortunate* to happen out here, now would we?”

Slider chuckled. “Like what? Me breaking your fraking neck before you can blink?”

As his fists began to ball up slowly the metallic sound of Cylon weapons being deployed made him stop.

“If you even flinch, my Centurions will start to randomly shoot into the marketplace,” Simon gloated, his voice almost a whisper. “Look at all of the faces that will die.”

Slider glanced around to see men, women, even some of the few children that occupied the prison complex, gathered in blissful ignorance in the marketplace, picking out food items and exchanging pleasantries, all unaware that their lives hung on his next actions.

“Melody is *mine* now,” Simon said as he slowly rose up to his full height. “The sooner you accept that, the happier you will be.”

Slider watched as Simon strode away, back to the gate that admitted him to his research building. As the door shut behind him, Slider glanced at his watch. *0844* he thought to himself. *Two more hours and I’m gonna make you eat every one of those fraking words.*

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**CYLON BASESTAR 155  
ORBIT OF CAPRICA  
Two Years After The Fall...**

Jezebel lay back on her couch enjoying the sensations that were flowing along her skin. With her eyes closed he could almost believe that all was right with the universe but she knew that wasn’t true. Even as a lithe Six caressed her body with her sensual hands making her body feel like melting butter, her mind still wandered back to the one thought she couldn’t escape.

She was the *last* three.

D’Anna was gone, a victim of Cavil’s treachery somewhere out amongst the stars, and the rest of her line had been boxed aboard the primary resurrection hub. Because she was the only Three that had

stayed behind with Lucifer and his band, she was now the last of her kind and even she had only survived by performing one of the best works of deception that a Cylon had ever done.

For months Jezebel had been acting the fool and playing at being dangerously unstable. She had to in order to motivate Lucifer to murder her. When she had died, however, instead of being lost to oblivion, she had been downloaded to a Basestar that had sneaked away from the main fleet back to the Colonies with the vital information that D'Anna had died for-

The identity of the Final Five Cylons.

Now Jez knew everything that D'Anna did and even more. She knew why Cavil had killed their creators, why he had launched the attack on humanity, even why he had felt it necessary to destroy the Alliance.

"It was all for *him*," Jez had explained to the brothers and sisters who had joined her. "He wanted to prove a point to our creators and so he killed them, sent them to the colonies without their memories and then gave them front row seats to the destruction of humanity."

"So everything he ever told us was a lie," a Six said, her voice trembling with anger and disbelief. "The humans didn't need to die to satisfy God's will."

"Gods will had *nothing* to do with it," Jez said angrily. "I believed everything he said too. I let him sweep me up in the bloodlust and desire for glory but it was all a lie. In the end our brother One's are nothing more than spoiled, petulant children lashing out at their parents."

"And we murdered humanity in their name," an Eight named Selena said. "God will never forgive us."

"It's not about forgiveness now, sister," Jez said. "We've sinned beyond redemption. Now it's about stopping it from getting worse."

Gabriel, a Two, nodded in agreement. "If Lucifer succeeds in his plans of merging the Cylon and human bloodlines he will create an empire to rule over and his destruction of humanity will be complete."

Eve nodded. "As much as that would benefit our race, if we *force* the humans into this we will earn a special place in hell."

"That's why we have to stop him," Jez said, turning to a holographic image of an Eight. "Lilith-are you ready to execute your plan?"

"Yes," Lilith's distorted electronic voice said. "I've made contact with the humans here and we will be breaking out Simon's experiment today."

"Good," Jez replied. "We've delivered the supplies you will need to assist in your operations. The coordinates for the caches are being relayed now."

Lilith looked down for a moment and then nodded. "We have them."

“Good luck then,” Jez said cutting the link. As the hologram faded away she turned to Eve. “Are you ready for your part of this assignment?”

“Yes,” Eve replied cautiously. “How do you know that they won’t just destroy us before we can communicate with them?”

“They won’t,” Jez replied. “We’re going to use someone close to Turner to pave the way for us.”

## **CHAPTER 2**

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### **A LUCKY SHIP**

**COMMANDERS SUITE  
BATTLESTAR PEGASUS  
THERMOPYLAE STATION  
FOUR YEARS BEFORE THE FALL...**

The Battlestar *Atlantia* had been the second Mercury class ship ever commissioned so the layout was nothing new to Colonel Turner as he made his way from the starboard flight deck to the commander’s suite where his new commanding officer awaited him.

Still, the *Pegasus* was a newer ship with all of the upgrades and new equipment that went with her more recent vintage, so Turner enjoyed seeing the improvements that had been made over the older models of the class.

Following the major who had been assigned to meet him, a broad shouldered man named Fisk, Turner watched as the crew quietly and efficiently made their way about the ship and attended to their duties.

“It seems that the Commander runs a tight ship,” Turner commented.

“Yes sir,” Major Fisk replied stiffly.

Turner eyed the back of the major who continued to march in front of him suspiciously. “Is there a problem, major?”

Fisk continued to march. “None at all, sir.”

Turner continued to walk but kept his eye on Fisk as they made their way into the senior officer’s section of the ship. Something wasn’t right with the man and the ghosts of Turners past began to creep into his consciousness.

“What’s the demographic breakdown of the crew, major?” Turner asked.

Fisk turned his head slightly to the side, as if the question had caught him off guard, but he answered without missing a beat. “About seventy percent of the crew are from Caprica, Virgon and

Picon. We have a small portion from Geminon and Aquaria as well as a few from Tauron, the Commander being one of them.”

“Any from Leonis?” Turner asked.

“You’re the only one,” Fisk replied. “*Sir*,” he added, almost as an afterthought.

“Mister Fisk,” Turner said coming to a halt.

Fisk continued walking and Turner’s anger began to rise. “Mister Fisk, *halt!*”

Fisk froze and then slowly turned to face Turner, his body ramrod straight as he stood at attention. Turner took two steps and came face to face with the major, his mouth set in a grim line, his eyes steely and hard and his voice low and menacing.

“Mister Fisk, is *this* how you run your ship?” Turner asked. “Is *this* how you treat a superior officer? Is *this* the way Commander Cain conducts her operations on this ship?”

“No sir,” Fisk replied quietly, his face blank.

“Let’s get one thing straight,” Turner said, looking Fisk in the eye. “I *know* that you and Major Belzen were both up for the posting I now hold. I also know that you were both passed over on the last promotion list, which is why I am now the X.O. of this ship.”

Fisk opened his mouth to speak but Turner held up a finger to forestall him. “I have read both of your service jackets and I *know* your quality is better than what you are demonstrating right now.”

Fisk closed his mouth and nodded.

“I don’t care if you like me nor do I care if you have a chip on your shoulder because I have the job you wanted. We are both here to serve and I will expect you to give nothing less than one hundred percent professionalism in your duties at all times. Anything less is absolutely unacceptable. Do you agree?”

“Yes sir,” Fisk replied. “My... apologies, sir.”

Turner nodded. “Think nothing of it, Major. We all have bad days. Now let’s get to the commanders office. I’m sure she’s not fond of waiting.”

Fisk shook his head. “No sir, she’s not.”

The situation defused, both men continued on until they reached a door guarded by two armed marines with a plaque at head level that read COMMANDING OFFICER.

At a nod from Fisk, the marines pressed a switch that caused the doors to slide open. Fisk stepped in first and Turner followed closely behind.

The first thing he noticed was the absence of chairs in the room, followed closely by the racks of ancient weapons and books that were prominently displayed along the walls.

Turning his eyes to a lectern, he caught sight of his new commander.

Her blue fleet uniform was immaculate and her Commander's rank sparkled brightly in the light of the room. Her dark hair fell down in waves across her shoulders and her eyes were razor sharp as they studied a report.

Coming to attention, Fisk saluted. "Commander, allow me to present Colonel Turner."

Turner himself came to attention and saluted.

Slowly, Commander Helena Cain raised her head to lock eyes with Turner.

He didn't flinch.

She returned the salute and both men returned to the position of attention.

"Major Fisk, this report is wrong," Cain said handing a sheet of paper to the Major. "Give this back to the CAG and tell him I want a recount on his ammunition reserve. Tell him to make sure it's accurate this time."

"Yes sir," Fisk replied as he stepped back and made his way out the door leaving Turner and Cain all alone.

"At ease, colonel," Cain commanded as she opened a file folder. "I've been reviewing your file, Mister Turner. It's an interesting read to say the least."

Turner made no reply but remained standing with his hands now clasped behind his back.

"You've received high marks from all of your superiors, yet at twenty years, you're still a colonel. Why is that?"

"Fleet politics, sir," Turner replied. "I've never been good at it."

Cain nodded. "Just a 'do your jobs' kind of guy are you?"

"Yes sir," Turner said. "I don't have time for political games."

Cain closed Turner's dossier and looked at him sternly. "You should know, colonel, that you were *not* my first choice for X.O. of this ship."

"I assumed as much, sir," Turner replied. "I know you have served with Major Belzen for a long time and that you personally recommended him to become your X.O."

"And how would you know *that*?" Cain asked, cocking her head to the side.

"I did some research on this ship and her crew when I was notified about the assignment, sir."

Cain looked him over, her eyes taking stock of him. "It seems that the stories about you are true."

"Hopefully they're good stories," Turner said.

Cain was silent for a long moment. “They say you’re very book smart, colonel. They even say that you spend more time reading manuals on shore leave than you do relaxing.”

“I like to know what I’m talking about when I’m asked to give advice or make a command decision,” Turner replied. “You can’t mentor someone if they know more than you do.”

Cain nodded. “I agree. In fact, I’m reading the latest tactics and strategy update right now.”

“It’s a good read, sir,” Turner said remembering his own study of the text. “However, I wouldn’t put too much stock in the Viper tactics update.”

“Really? Why?”

“The captain who wrote it had a good idea but he failed to take into account the stress that high G maneuvers put on the ammo feed system,” Turner explained. “If you try that at combat speeds, your guns will lock up and leave you a sitting duck.”

“How did you find that out?”

“I re-created the experiment at the Saturn range three weeks ago,” Turner stated.

“So you read this, hopped into a Viper and re-created the experiment,” Cain said, her voice questioning. “Why?”

“Because what works in theory doesn’t always work in practice, sir,” Turner said, his voice firm with resolve. “I’m not going to allow my pilots to get bad information; it gets them killed.”

Cain stood silent for a moment as if appraising his answer and then nodded approvingly. “I think you’ll do, Colonel,” she said offering her hand.

Turner took it and shook firmly. “I’ll do my best, sir.”

“That’s all I ask,” she said. “Welcome aboard the *Pegasus*, Colonel Turner. Now go stow your gear and report back to me at 1400 hours to go over the duty roster.”

**COMBAT INFORMATION CENTER  
BATTLESTAR ETERNAL  
WAYPOINT 77, OPEN SPACE  
3 YEARS AFTER THE FALL...**

“I’ve found some debris,” Starbuck announced, her voice distorted through the speakers by the random electromagnetic fluctuations found in open space. “A couple of Viper hulls and a burned out Raider hulk.”

“Roger that Starbuck,” Commander Tajalle replied. “What about black boxes or com buoys?”

“Nothing yet but I’ll keep looking,” Starbuck responded.

“Starbuck, this is the general-” Connors said, activating his headset. “I want you to push out from your current position and move to the outer marker. Take Turtle with you as wingman.”

“Roger that, sir,” Starbuck replied as the icon representing her Viper joined up with another and began to move away from the ship.

“Are you thinking-” Tajalle began.

“Yes,” Connors nodded. “That irregular signal has showed up at the outer marker seven out of the last twelve jumps. If it’s a ship then I want to flush it.”

**CYLON PRISON CAMP  
LEONIS  
Two years after the Fall...**

Melody Moody opened her eyes hoping that she would wake aboard the *Prometheus* and that the last few months would be nothing but a bad dream.

That wasn’t the case.

She was still surrounded by softly humming lab equipment, tubes filled with bodily fluids, some hers, some not. More distressingly, however, *he* was still there- that same damned smile on his face.

“Good morning Melody,” his rich bass voice echoed in the small room. “You’re looking wonderful today.”

“Go to hell,” Melody snarled.

Simon chuckled. “Seriously, you look radiant- glowing even.”

“Frak you,” Melody spat.

Simon looked over here with hungry eyes and smiled. “If wouldn’t pose a serious risk wo what we’re trying to accomplish here, I *might* take you up on that.”

“Maybe you should,” Melody said, switching tactics. “Gods know it’s been a while for us both.”

Simon looked at her for a moment, considering the change in her demeanor, then stepped closer to her. “Why would you say such a thing? You’ve had nothing but hatred for me since you were brought in here so what’s changed?”

“Nothing has changed,” Melody said. “But right now *any* change of pace would be better than this. Any pleasure would be,” she paused for a moment as her eyes softened, “*welcome*.”

Simon leaned close and inhaled deeply, the scent of her arousing his every sense and his fingers traced a soft line across her bare shoulder. “I will admit: the prospect is extremely appealing.”

“So why don’t you unbind my hands and lets have some fun?” Melody said with a smirk.

Simon leaned close to her ear; his breath felt warm upon her neck as he spoke. “Because the moment I did you would try to kill me and destroy everything we’ve worked so hard to create.”

Abruptly he stepped back and smiled. “You really didn’t think that I would be so easily seduced, did you?”

Melody smirked cruelly. “Actually, I thought it might be easier.”

Simon shook his head. “I have my pick of any woman I want in this camp, Cylon or human, married or not. If I want sex, I have it. I don’t need *you* for that.”

Simon turned and walked back to his instruments. After studying them for a moment he nodded approvingly. “You’ll be happy to know that everything is proceeding on schedule. Because of you our races will united again soon.”

“Again?” Melody asked. “What the frak are you talking about?”

Simon sat on a tall stool and leaned forward, his hands on his knees as he eagerly explained.

“You’ve been to Kobol, the world from where we *all* sprang and you’ve been to Earth where our life evolved,” he said. “The Thirteenth Tribe was the ultimate expression of perfection. Synthetic and natural life united in common purpose for the glory of God.”

“What are you trying to say?” Melody asked, her fear rising in her.

“The Thirteenth Tribe was Cylon- artificial life, but not like us,” Simon explained. “They were better than us- able to procreate like normal humans as well as download into fully grown bodies or different genotypes, but without the inherent human weakness so common to your species. “

“I don’t believe you,” Melody said firmly.

Simon laughed. “Your belief is irrelevant. The science speaks for itself and soon, with your help, that true expression of perfection will be possible again.”

“I still don’t understand. What about *me* is so damned important?”

Simon stood and grabbed a chart off of his table as he made his way over to where Melody was shackled. “Your genetics were the key. You see, when the Thirteenth Tribe left they took almost everyone with them. However, a small group, about one hundred, stayed behind and left Kobol with the other tribes. Over time, their genetics were lost as they interbred with normal humans.”

“Are you saying that I am descended from the Thirteenth Tribe?”

“Exactly!” Simon replied excitedly. “When we began planning the assault on the colonies, one of the directives we received was to seek out any descendents of the Thirteenth Tribe. Imagine our surprise when we discovered that there were only sixteen still in the colonies with the identifiable genotype.”

“What happened to the other fifteen?” Melody asked.

Simon’s expression dropped. “Unfortunately, only two survived the attack- your cousin, Lieutenant Agathon, and *you*.”

“How do you know my genes will allow your experiment to succeed?”

Simon smirked as he looked at her. “I think the evidence speaks for itself. Besides, your cousin has already fathered a child with a Cylon mother. An Eight named Sharon Valerri, if you’re wondering.”

Melody remained silent as the impact of his words bore into her mind.

“Very soon, you will give us the key to perfection,” Simon said proudly. “After that we will be able to determine our own destiny. We’ll be able to shed these bodies for new ones and more importantly, we will unite our bloodlines into one perfect, master race.”

He smiled and turned away from her as he began to walk out the door.

“Together, we will conquer the stars.”

**CYLON BASESTAR 155  
ORBIT OF CAPRICA  
Two Years After The Fall...**

“The Raider has returned,” Gabriel said entering the command chamber. “It’s relayed the coordinates of the human settlement.”

Jez nodded. “And the *Prometheus*?”

“Right where we expected her to be,” Eve replied.

Jez took a deep breath and sighed. “It’s too soon but we have no choice. If we’re going to maintain the initiative we have to act now.”

“But what about the *Prometheus*?” Eve asked.

“The best way to deal with that situation is to deal with the human colony *first*,” Jez said. “Order our ships to jump and tell Lilith to spread the word to our friends on the ground. When Lucifer hears about this he will act swiftly.”

“Agreed,” Gabriel replied placing his hand into the liquid control system. “The hybrid reports that all ships are ready to jump.”

“Good,” Jez said turning to Eve. “Are you ready to do your part?”

Eve nodded. “I am.”

“Then let’s do this,” Jez commanded. “All ships- *jump*.”

# CHAPTER 3

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## INSTINCT

**COMBAT INFORMATION CENTER  
BATTLESTAR PEGASUS  
THERMOPYLAE STATION  
FOUR YEARS BEFORE THE FALL...**

“Weapons Officer- what’s the status of the ammunition rotation and loading?” Colonel Turner asked as he read the latest report from the engineering deck.

“We’re magazines one through five are loaded and ready, sir,” Major Fisk replied from his post behind the helm officer. “Six and seven will be loaded within the hour.”

“What about the missile magazines?” Turner asked.

“Fully loaded but they’re still having trouble with the feeder for tubes five through ten,” Fisk reported.

Turner frowned. “Have Major Garner get up there and figure out what’s wrong with it.”

“Sir, he’s supervising the refueling operation,” Fisk replied.

“I don’t care, Major,” Turner said fixing his eyes on the reluctant major. “He’s assigned two different tech teams to try and fix it and neither one has managed to get the job done. I want *his* eyes on it, *now*.”

“Yes sir,” Fisk replied as he activated his headset and set about his task.

“Sir, we have flash traffic on secure net,” Major Belzen suddenly announced.

Turner’s head snapped up. “Verify and print.”

“Yes sir,” Belzen replied. “Shall I summon the commander?”

“What’s the security rating?” Turner asked.

“Five, sir.” Belzen said.

Turner considered it for a moment. Level five was only one step below eyes only which meant that it could only be shared with senior staff. He made a decision. “No, don’t summon the commander. Notify her that I’m coming down with flash traffic and then shoot a BRTD order to the senior officers and department heads.”

“Yes sir,” Belzen replied.

Turner waited patiently and just a few moments later he held a black folder in his hand which contained the print outs. “Status of the ship?”

“BRTD has been acknowledged by all section leads. Pre-deployment operations are in progress sir.”

“Very well, Major Belzen- you have the deck.” Turner commanded.

“I have the deck, aye sir,” Belzen replied.

Turner stepped out of the C.I.C. and pointed to a Marine who was standing guard. “Corporal, you’re with me.”

“Yes sir,” the corporal replied moving to Turner’s side.

Together they moved quickly to Cain’s quarters. The Marines there saluted and opened the door immediately for Turner who turned back to his escort. “Return to your post.”

The corporal saluted and moved quickly back down the corridor toward the CIC as the doors closed behind Turner.

“What’s the situation, colonel?” Commander Cain asked as she buttoned her tunic.

“Level five flash traffic from fifth fleet command, sir,” Turner reported.

“Read it yet?” Cain asked as she finished buttoning her tunic.

“No sir,” Turner replied.

Cain nodded. “I know its protocol, colonel, to let the C.O. read the message first but in the future, unless it’s eyes only, I want you to read all messages before they get to me.”

Turner was surprised. “Yes sir.”

“We lose valuable time waiting for me to read this,” Cain explained as she took the folder and opened it. “Status of the ship?”

“We’re almost ready to put to space, sir,” Turner reported. “Refueling is at ninety five percent and ammo rotation and loading will be done within the hour.”

Cain nodded as she continued to read. “Good, because we have orders to move out as soon as possible.”

“I’ve already issued Be Ready To Deploy orders to section leads and senior officers,” Turner said.

“Very good,” Cain replied closing the folder and reaching for the intercom. “Who has the deck?”

“Major Belzen.”

“Combat,” the voice Ensign Hoshi replied.

“This is the commander,” Cain said. “Put me through to Major Belzen.”

The line beeped and then Belzen’s voice came through. “Operations, go ahead.”

“Major Belzen, this is the commander. Secure the ship for deployment and have all department heads report to the senior staff conference room for mission briefing.”

“Yes sir,” Belzen replied.

“The X.O. is on his way down to take command,” she said before ending the call and turning to Turner. “Get us under way as soon as possible and then join me here for the senior staff briefing.”

“Yes sir,” Turner replied. “Course heading?”

“Get us to the outer marker,” Cain said. “We’ll hold there until after the brief. Also, as of this moment, we’re under a comms blackout. Nothing other than mission essential traffic goes out as of now and it goes through you first. Clear?”

“Absolutely,” Turner nodded.

“Good. Let’s make it happen.”

**COMBAT INFORMATION CENTER  
BATTLESTAR ETERNAL  
WAYPOINT 262, OPEN SPACE  
3 YEARS AFTER THE FALL...**

“Recon Raptors reporting in sir,” Commander Tajalle announced. “They’ve surveyed as close to the nebula as they can and found no evidence that *Galactica* was ever here.”

“Of course not,” Starbuck scowled. “The nebula took care of any debris or trash that might have been left behind.”

“So where is the landmark, Starbuck?” General Connors asked. “How do we know where *Galactica* went from here?”

“It’s got to be here, sir,” she replied studying the video display as the pictures of the nebula came in from the Raptor teams photographing it.

“I don’t see how-” Tajalle began.

“Wait! Bring up that last shot,” Starbuck said suddenly.

On the screen an image of the nebula had Starbuck transfixed. “I-” she said quietly, “I remember this place.”

As if in a trance she reached out and touched the screen, her fingertips lightly brushing the surface. “Sam,” she breathed, her lower lip trembling. “Lee...”

Connors and Tajalle looked at each other, the unspoken question in both of their eyes.

“Captain, are you alright?” Connors asked as he turned back to her.

Starbuck smiled. “Yes,” she said. “*This* is the sign. Quick, can you bring up a library image on the screen two?”

“Yes,” Tajalle said. “What are you looking for?”

“The Eye of Jupiter.”

Tajalle looked skeptically at Connors who nodded his approval. It took only a moment and then an artist’s rendition of the artifact appeared on the screen next to the image of the nebula.

“You have got to be fraking kidding me,” Tajalle breathed.

“*That’s* our sign?” Connors asked.

“Yes,” Starbuck replied. “You can’t tell me its coincidence.”

“Okay, so they look alike. That doesn’t mean-”

“Look alike? They’re identical!” Starbuck exclaimed. “Look at the image. There’s a star directly in the center. Plot a course for that star and I’ll bet you we find something there.”

“How far would that jump be?” Connors asked.

“About eighty S.U.” Tajalle replied.

Connors nodded. “Send a recon in force- Six Raptors. Have them report to me when they get back.”

“Yes sir,” Tajalle said as she set about issuing the orders.

“Starbuck, take a walk with me,” Connors said turning toward the hatch.

Starbuck turn to protest but the look on Connors face froze her resistance. “Yes sir,” she replied following him.

They walked for a few moments until they arrived in a deserted corridor where Connors turned to her, his expression pained. “Look Kara, I’ve taken a lot of things you have done on faith and so far you have been right but I need to know how you know these things; how you know exactly where to go.”

“I, I don’t know sir,” Starbuck sighed. “I just *feel* it. Almost like-”

“Like what?” Connors pressed.

Starbuck remained silent for a long moment, her eyes glued to the floor as her mind swam with the possibilities. Finally she looked the general in the eyes. “It’s almost like I’ve been there before.”

**CYLON PRISON CAMP  
LEONIS  
Two years after the Fall...**

Slider paced impatiently in his quarters as he waited for word from the Cylon he knew as Lilith. He didn’t want to admit it but the conversation with Simon had shaken him up and he was now very worried about Hygiena’s well being.

The door flew open and he spun, ready to fend off an attack, but quickly lowered the crowbar he carried as Lilith closed the door behind her.

“We have to move quickly,” she said without pre-amble.

“I’ve been waiting on you,” Slider replied. “My contacts are ready outside the camp.”

Lilith opened her satchel and handed Slider a pistol and two full magazines. “Explosive tipped so be careful with those.”

Slider nodded as he loaded and chambered the weapon. “Got it.” Holstering the weapon he pulled on a heavy jacket. “Are you ready?”

Lilith nodded. “As ready as I’m going to get.”

Running through his mental checklist he reached over to his wood stove and tossed in an envelope filled with chemical granules.

“What’s that?” Lilith asked.

“The signal,” Slider replied moving to the door. “The smoke from my chimney will be purple.”

“Subtle,” Lilith commented drily.

“Hey, it works. Let’s go.”

Moving quickly Lilith and Slider moved down the walkways to the central area of the camp that looked out on Simon's lab.

"There he goes," Lilith said as Simon exited and made his way down to the central command area. Watching as the doors closed behind him she turned to Slider. "Now, or never."

Slider pulled his pistol. "Let's roll."

They moved fast, both of them knowing that at any second the diversionary force would begin their assault to free the camps' prisoners.

"Two Centurions on the north tower," Slider said, his voice a low whisper.

Lilith nodded. "Wait until they completely look away. They have a one hundred and forty degree field of vision."

Slider nodded and watched as the Centurions scanned the crowd below. Suddenly, they noticed something beyond the wall and their heads turned away from the humans they had been watching.

"Now's our chance, *go- GO!*" Slider hissed.

Moving quickly the two made their way down the stairs that led into the central courtyard where Simon's office stood before a loud WHOOMP! Made their heads turn.

Across the compound a column of smoke was rising.

"Right on time," Slider said grimly.

"Let's go get your friend," Lilith said.

All along the watchtowers, shots rang out as the diversionary battle began. Explosions punctuated the rifle rounds as screams of pain and terror wafted through the air above the prison compound.

Slider and Lilith reached the door to the clinic at the same time with the pilot taking a cover position while his Cylon compatriot worked on the controls to the door. After a moment the panel beeped twice and the door lock clicked.

Slider was through the door in a second making his way through a eerily quiet outer room where computer terminals and books rested in a haphazard manner. He paid them no mind though as he pushed through to the second door on their path which was also locked.

Lilith was on it quickly and again, with the same two beeps, the door lock clicked. Slider pushed through...

And what he saw horrified him.

# CHAPTER 4

## THE RIGHT LEFT

### SENIOR STAFF CONFERENCE ROOM BATTLESTAR PEGASUS FOUR YEARS BEFORE THE FALL...

Commander Cain was waiting patiently as Colonel Turner entered the conference room to report. “Sir, the ship is holding at the outer marker,” Turner announced. “All comms are black and the FTL is spun up and awaiting your orders.”

Cain nodded approvingly. “For those of you who haven’t met him, this is Colonel Jon Turner- my new X.O. You can consider his orders *my* orders, clear?”

“Sir, yes sir!” the senior officers replied in unison.

“Good,” she said activating the overhead projector. Behind her an image of the *Pegasus*’ current position in the Helios Alpha system appeared. “Gentlemen, we have been handed a rescue mission and it’s a dozy.”

On the screen behind her the image changed to display Ragnar, the world located near the center of the Cyrannus star system. “Colonial One has suffered a massive system failure and gone dark. The Admiralty thinks that terrorists connected to the criminal Tom Zarek have sabotaged the ship and that they intend to kidnap President Adar. Our orders are clear- Jump to Ragnar and render whatever action is necessary to safeguard the President. However,” she said pausing for effect, “we are to do whatever we can to limit the knowledge of this incident.”

“Does that mean hiding it from the crew?” Major Belzen asked.

“Yes,” Cain replied. “You can tell them that we are rescuing a high ranking official but you are not to tell them who it is.”

“What about the rescue team? They’ll know who it is.” Major Fisk said.

“Lieutenant Thorne and his team will be making the extraction,” Cain said.

A still silence followed at the mention of Thorne and his team and Turner wondered briefly as to why before clearing his thoughts.

“X.O.- plot a hyper-light jump to the Ragnar system, and inform me when we’re ready to go” Cain commanded.

“Yes sir,” Turner replied.

“Mister Belzen, set condition one throughout the ship and have all defensive batteries at standby. I want us to be ready in case the kidnappers have already jumped in,” Cain continued.

“Yes sir,” Belzen replied.

“Major Fisk- have your pilots locked and loaded in the tubes before we jump.”

Fisk nodded silently.

“Alright gentlemen,” Cain said firmly. “Let’s get to work.”

**COMBAT INFORMATION CENTER  
BATTLESTAR PEGASUS  
FOUR YEARS BEFORE THE FALL...**

“Major Belzen, can you bring up the latest gravimetric survey for Ragnar for me?” Colonel Turner asked.

“That’s the most recent one right there, sir,” Belzen replied.

“Two years old?” Turner frowned. “Damnation. Alright- we’ll have to plot this out the hard way. Specialist,” he said turning to the young ensign at the navigation station. “Bring up the FTL tables on the display here and bring me the most current chart we have.”

“Yes sir,” the ensign eagerly replied as he quickly transferred the information to the main viewer. “Tables are up sir.”

Turner nodded and accepted the star chart from him. “Thank you mister-?”

“Hoshi, sir. Ensign Hoshi.”

“Very well Mister Hoshi,” Turner said bringing his attention back to the chart. “We need to find a way to jump in close to Ragnar so that her E.M. field shields us from detection.”

“It’s a super bitch to jump in that close, sir,” Major Fisk commented.

“Yeah,” Turner sighed. “The gravity well of the planet shifts randomly, that’s why the Ragnar anchorage is built with flexible joints and centrifuged storage compartments.”

“Sir, I think that’s your answer,” Hoshi spoke up.

“What do you mean?” Turner asked.

“Well sir,” Hoshi explained as he brought up the display of the anchorage, “the anchorage has a remote system to help guide ships in trying to dock. It takes gravity readings and forwards it to incoming ships.”

“There’s a *but* in there somewhere,” Turner said, arching his eyebrow.

Belzen nodded. "It takes several minutes for the computer to come online and then it uses a high powered pulse to break through the E.M. interference."

"Which means it could be detected," Turner said.

"But if we don't, we risk jumping into a gravimetric shear that could rip the ship in half," Major Fisk added.

Turner considered all of the information and made his decision. "Mister Belzen- fire up a remote link to the anchorage and get us the information on current conditions."

"Yes sir," the major replied.

"Hoshi- once we get that information I want you to start a plot to bring us into geosynchronous orbit of the anchorage," Turner commanded. "However I want you to bring us in low, just outside the ionosphere."

Hoshi blanched.

"Can you do it?" Turner asked.

"Y-yes sir," Hoshi said, swallowing hard. "I've just never plotted a jump that tight before."

"Don't worry, Major Fisk and I will double check your numbers," Turner said patting him on the shoulder. "Ok, let's get started and I'll inform the commander."

**COMBAT INFORMATION CENTER  
BATTLESTAR ETERNAL  
WAYPOINT 537, OPEN SPACE  
3.5 YEARS AFTER THE FALL...**

"I don't understand it," Commander Tajalle growled in frustration. "We were following their trail just fine and then BAM, we just lose them?"

General Connors took a long sip from his glass and leaned back in his chair. "We knew that it was going to be a tough road after we got to Earth and found them not there."

"Yeah, especially when Starbuck freaked out on us," The commander replied.

Connors shook his head. "I know you don't want to hear this-"

Tajalle fixed him with an expression that could freeze a star but the general was undaunted.

"We need to bring her out of hack," Connors said. "It's been a month since we left Earth behind."

"She tried to kill one of my pilots," Tajalle said coldly.

"Your pilot called her a crazy bitch," Connors replied.

"Has it ever crossed your mind that he was right?"

Connors smiled and took another sip from his glass. "Once or twice," he said. "However, she has always been right too. We didn't lose the trail until we locked her in a cage."

Tajalle sighed and slowly sat back in her chair and Connors knew his point had hit home. "I'll have her brought out but I want her under escort at all times," she said.

"I'm good with that," Connors said pouring a glass for Tajalle and refreshing his own. "You know, sometimes I think we should just turn around and head back."

"Give the order sir and we'll be on the way," Tajalle said raising her glass in mock salute.

"I wish it were that easy," Connors sighed. "We have to find out what happened to *Galactica*."

"I know, I know," Tajalle said. "I just wish we had something more to go on than the instinct of a crazy woman."

"One thing is for certain," Connors said pulling out a report from his desk drawer. "The last transmission from Doctor Z confirms what we found on Earth- the life that was there was indeed artificial."

"So the entire thirteenth tribe was Cylon?"

Connors nodded. "Yep."

"What does that mean about the Alliance?" the commander asked.

"I couldn't say," Connors said taking another long pull from his glass. "All I know is that whenever we get home, they'll have a lot of questions to answer."

**CYLON PRISON CAMP  
LEONIS  
Two years after the Fall...**

"Fraking hell!" Slider swore as the scene in front of him unfolded in his mind.

In front of him, Melody lay strapped to a table with no clothes on her body and tubes running in and out of her arms. Looking away quickly he found a sheet hanging over a chair and covered her body with it.

"Mel," he said looking into her face. "Mel it's me, it's Slider."

Her eyes remained closed and Slider began to fear the worst.

"She's sedated," Lilith said from beside him as she studied the bags of fluid that were connected to the tubes in her body.

"Get these fraking tubes out of her," he snarled.

Lilith nodded, her eyes reflecting the sympathy she felt for them both, as she began to gently remove the tubes from Hygiena's arms. It took several minutes to finish but soon enough the tubes were removed and Lilith had bandaged the puncture sites to prevent bleeding.

"When will she wake up?" Slider asked.

"Should be anytime now," Lilith said as she worked furiously to download information from the bank of computers at the back of the room. "You need to set the charges so we can go."

Slider nodded, casting a concerned look at Hygiena before pulling out several improvised explosives and planting them around the room.

"Ungh, what hit me?"

Slider snapped around to see Hygiena struggling to sit upright on the table.

"Hey, easy there kiddo," he said moving quickly to her side to assist her. "You've had a busy day."

Hygiena blinked hard to clear and focus her eyes before noticing his face. She smiled. "Is that you Jason?"

Slider nodded, "Yeah it's me. I told you I wouldn't leave you behind."

Melody threw her arms around his shoulders, almost falling off of the table in the process. "Thank you," she whispered in his ear.

Slider held her close as he assisted her onto her feet. "Can you walk? We need to leave quickly."

"I wouldn't count on *that* just yet."

Slider turned to see Simon, his face covered in blood from a large cut on his forehead, standing in front of them holding a pistol in a shaky hand. "You're not going anywhere," he growled heavily.

Slider stepped in front of Hygiena to shield her. "It's over Simon- you've lost."

Simon smiled and shook his head. "It's not over until *I* say it is."

"Wrong again."

A loud crack followed by an explosion of blood and bone from Simon's right temple signaled the end of Simon's experiment as Lilith stepped out from behind a bank of computers and fired point blank into the side of his head.

Slider nodded approvingly. "Nice shot."

"Thanks," Lilith said drily, "now let's go."

**COMBAT INFORMATION CENTER  
BATTLESTAR PEGASUS  
FOUR YEARS BEFORE THE FALL...**

The Battlestar *Pegasus* flashed into existence and immediately began to vibrate and buck as the vicious winds of the upper atmosphere of Ragnar began to buffet the ship.

“Jump complete,” Ensign Hoshi announced as he checked his instruments. “We’re right where we’re supposed to be.”

Commander Cain nodded. “X.O.- launch the Raptors.”

“Yes sir,” Turner said picking up the handset in front of him. “CAG- this is the X.O: Launch the recon.”

Turner hung up the handset and looked up to the main display screen just in time to see the Raptors launching from the *Pegasus* flight pods. “All Raptors away.”

“Very well,” Cain replied. “Major Fisk- all ahead one third, fifteen degree up on the bow.”

“Ahead one third, fifteen degree up on the bow, aye sir,” Fisk replied.

“Anything on the emergency channels?” Cain asked as Turner studied the comm panel.

“No sir,” he shook his head. “All I’m getting is the background static from Ragnar.”

Cain nodded. “Prepare-”

“Sir!” Hoshi shouted excitedly, “Raptor four seven one reports eyes on the target vessel.”

Turner and Cain both spun to face the excited ensign who was reading the text report from his terminal.

“Report,” Turner said stepping to the screen.

“Poncho reports he has eyes on the target,” Hoshi explained. “He also says that there are several other ships in escort formation around it.”

“Does he have a read on those ships?” Cain asked stepping up to Turner’s side.

“Yes sir,” Hoshi replied. “He says they’re *Arrowhead* class assault shuttles.”

Cain turned a questioning eye to Turner. “What’s the run down on those?”

“*Arrowheads* have a normal crew compliment of ten plus capability for a platoon of soldiers,” Turner recited from memory. “They have two rail gun turrets- one up top, one on the bottom. Both have 360 degree arcs of fire and are designed to fight off small ships.”

“In other words they’ll give our Raptors and Vipers hell,” Cain said as she twirled a pen between her fingers.”

“Exactly,” Turner replied. “And if they are packed in tight around the target vehicle...”

“We can’t risk using *Pegasus*’ big guns,” Cain nodded. “Alright, we do this the hard way. Tell Poncho to hold position and have the rest of our Raptors get back aboard ASAP.”

“Yes sir,” Turner said as he moved to issue the orders.

“Mister Fisk,” she said turning to the security chief, “have Lieutenant Thorne and his team standby for launch.”

“Raptors on en route back now, sir,” Turner reported.

“Good,” she said turning to Major Belzen. “Get our Vipers in the air and have them get ready to do a high speed run on the shuttles.”

“Yes sir,” Belzen replied.

“Zeus’s bolt?” Turner asked.

“Exactly,” Cain said. “Have the Vipers dash in, hit the shuttle hard and then jump the Raptors in close so they can board the ship.”

Turner nodded. “Is Lieutenant Thorne and his team up for the task?”

Cain smirked. “Let’s just say that he is uniquely qualified for this.”

# CHAPTER 5

## CRUNCH TIME

COMBAT INFORMATION CENTER  
BATTLESTAR ETERNAL  
WAYPOINT 1027  
6 YEARS AFTER THE FALL...

“Are you sure?” General Connors asked.

Starbuck nodded, her face stoic. “That’s where they went.”

Connors ran his hand through his now gray hair. “What have the recon birds reported?”

“Massive life readings from the surface, but that’s not the interesting thing,” Commander Tajalle said. “We’ve found debris on the dark side of its moon. There’s no doubt- *Galactica* has been here.”

Connors shook his head. After three years of following *Galacticas*’ trail, sometimes with disastrous consequences, at last they had found her final destination. *I just hope we haven’t found their graves.*

“Sir,” the operations officer said with a curious expression, “we’re picking up a signal from the planet. It’s a homing beacon.”

*This* grabbed Connors’ attention. “A homing beacon?”

“Yes sir. Looks to be coming from location above the equator.”

Connors studied the readout of the map and saw that the signal light was glowing red was in the northeast area of a boot shaped peninsula that was located at the bottom of one of the northern continents.

“Get a Raptor ready,” he said making a decision. “Starbuck, you’re with me.”

“What are you doing?” Commander Tajalle asked.

“I’m going down there,” Connors said. “If we have people on this planet we have to make contact.”

Connors turned to Starbuck and for the first time since their journey had begun all those years before, she looked uneasy. “What’s wrong?” he asked.

“I don’t know,” she said, “I just have a feeling that we shouldn’t go down there.”

“Captain Thrace, we’ve been looking for your comrades for over three years now. I’m not about to just turn around and go home now that we’re on the brink of making contact with them.”

“I know,” she said, her voice distant as she stared at the pulsing dot on the screen. “I just have a bad feeling about what we’re going to find.”

An hour later, Connors and Thrace were on a Raptor making a choppy descent through the blue skies of the alien world. Below them, green fields and mighty mountains appeared as they plunged through the cloud layer.

“The signal is coming from two o’clock at about fifty clicks,” Connors said from the co-pilots seat.

Starbuck nodded and adjusted their course. Soon they were flying low over a ring of seven hills. Below them in the valley, they noticed a small village made of wood and stone.

“Definitely pre-industrial,” Connors said taking notice of a group of people in the center of town. “Humans!” he gasped. “Are *these* the survivors of the colonies?”

Starbuck smiled as he looked at her. “Some,” she said.

Connors eyes went wide with surprise. “How the hell did you know that?”

Starbuck giggled. “It’s all coming back to me now, the whole thing.”

“*What* is coming back to you, captain?” Connors said, his sense of unease growing.

“Calm down, General,” she replied easily. “You’ll have your answers soon.”

Connors watched, his mind in a fog of disbelief as Starbuck brought the Raptor down to hover over a hilltop where a log cabin stood. As the ship gently touched down, the front door opened and an elderly man with a thick gray beard and soft blue eyes stepped out.

“Adama,” Connors breathed as he turned to look at Starbuck.

“Go on sir,” she said with a warm smile. “He’s waiting for you.”

Connors continued to glance back and forth between Starbuck and Adama for a long moment before finally unbuckling his harness and moving out through the rear hatch.

As he stepped out onto the wing he noticed the rich smell of fertile soil in the air.

“Smells good doesn’t it?”

Connors turned toward the husky voice and made his way slowly to stand in front of him where he rendered a smart salute. “Admiral Adama, sir.”

Adama shook his head and smiled. “Not an Admiral anymore, General. Bill will do just fine.”

Connors nodded. “Bill, then. I’m General John Connors, Colonial Alliance Defense Force.”

Adama arched an eyebrow. “What’s the Colonial Alliance?”

Connors took a moment to explain all that had happened since the fall of the colonies. Adama listened patiently and smiled from time to time.

“So Jon survived? That’s good news. How is he?” Adama asked.

“I really couldn’t tell you,” Connors replied honestly. “We’ve been gone for so long now.”

The word *we* made Connors remember that someone else had accompanied him. “In fact, I think you know one of our compatriots. Starbuck, come out!”

Connors turned to find the cockpit empty though and Starbuck nowhere to be found.

“What the-”

“Starbuck’s mission is finished, John,” Adama said. “She’s gone back home now.”

“What do you mean?” Connors asked as he turned back to face Adama. “What’s going on here?”

“This is humanity’s second chance,” Adama said ignoring the question. “We’ve abandoned technology and we’re going to rebuild ourselves from the ground up so that all that has happened before doesn’t have to happen again.”

Connors nodded. As ludicrous as the notion was, he somehow understood and even condoned it.

Suddenly, Adama turned his head and smiled. “Wait here,” he said moving back into the house.

Connors, still trying to process everything, only nodded absently as he sat down on the Raptor’s wing. Soon the sound of footsteps drew his attention to a path leading up to the cabin. There he saw a man in cut off shorts, an old undershirt and heavily worn boots making his way up. His long brown hair flowed over his shoulders and a scruffy beard his face.

“Hello,” Connors said.

The man looked up from the path and dropped his walking stick. “Who the hell are you?”

“General John Connors of the Battlestar *Eternal*,” he replied.

“Battlestar?” The man asked incredulously. “Are you saying that there’s a Battlestar parked in orbit?”

“Yes,” Connors nodded. “Who are you?”

“Lee,” the man said. “Lee Adama.”

Connors eyes widened in surprise. “I should have realized you would be here. I was just speaking with your father.”

Lee looked puzzled at the mention of the elder Adama. “That’s impossible,” he said.

“I’m telling you,” Connors said with a smile. “As I live and breathe I was just speaking to him right here not more than five minutes ago.”

Lee shook his head. “That’s can’t be,” he said. “My father died over a year ago.”

**COMBAT INFORMATION CENTER  
BATTLESTAR PEGASUS  
FOUR YEARS BEFORE THE FALL...**

“We sure pissed off the hornet’s nest.”

Turner only nodded as Major Fisk whispered in his ear, his attention stayed riveted to the tactical display monitor above the situation table. “Those shuttles are holding put,” he said.

“Send Red team,” Cain commanded, her eyes never leaving the screen.

“Yes sir,” Turner replied, activating his headset. “Red Team you are cleared to engage.”

“Copy that *Pegasus*, Red Team in bound,” came the distorted voice of the Red Team flight leader.

Turner and Cain watched apprehensively another wave of Vipers drove in hard and fast toward the shuttles guarding *Colonial One*. “We can’t risk sending in the strike team until some of the shuttles break off,” the Commander said.

“I have a thought about that, sir,” Turner said. “We’ve been using a scattered attack pattern for the last two waves. Let’s have Red Team concentrate their fire on one target. That should shake them up a bit.”

Cain agreed. “Have them target the shuttle *here*,” she said pointing to the icon closest to *Colonial One*.

“CAG, this is the X.O.-” Turner said speaking into his headset, “Have Red team concentrate their fire on shuttle designated Sierra three.”

“Sierra three, roger that,” the CAG’s voice replied. “Red Team, form on me and follow me in.”

Cain and Turner both watched as Red Team’s Vipers dove in on the target and mercilessly poured fire into its hull.

“Heat spike in the engineering section,” Belzen announced as he studied his display intently. “I think she’s going to blow.”

“All Vipers- clear the area now!” Cain commanded.

The Vipers of Red Team kicked in their afterburners and peeled away just in time as the shuttle split down it’s bulkhead seams and flew apart from the uncontrolled explosion within her engine compartment.

“One down!” one of the pilots crowed victoriously.

“Cut the chatter,” the CAG snapped. “*Pegasus*, CAG- the other shuttles are starting to put some distance between them and the target vehicle. I can also see markings on the sides of the ships. They’re red skulls with lightning bolts through them.”

“Frakin *Son’s of Sagitaron*,” Fisk growled. “Tom Zarek’s favorite band of terrorists.”

“Even behind bars the man’s a menace,” Belzen added.

“Alright, keep it down,” Turner said silencing the two. “Focus on the job at hand. We’ll worry about the ancillary stuff after it’s over.”

Both men glared at Turner and then looked to Cain for support. Her face was impassive and for a moment Turner thought that she might countermand him.

“You heard my X.O.,” she finally said fixing both men with her laser like eyes. “Focus on the job at hand.”

“Yes sir,” both men mumbled.

Turner acknowledged her support with a nod and returned his own focus to the battle. “The shuttles are starting to move away.”

“All except one,” Cain countered.

Turner looked and noticed that the one shuttle that had hard docked with *Colonial One* was stubbornly staying attached. “I think we need to send Thorne and his team.”

“Agreed,” Cain said turning to Fisk. “Tell Thorne to go.”

“Yes sir,” Fisk replied with enthusiasm. “Black Team- you are a go.”

Within fifteen minutes it was all over.

Thorne’s team had entered through the service hatch on the lower part of the ship and swept the inept terrorists like leaves in the wind. In the end they had killed fourteen terrorists and captured six along with the shuttle they had attacked from.

Yet it hadn’t been Thorne who had saved the President, but an undercover agent within the terrorist cell.

As Turner shook her hand he couldn’t help but admire her beauty as well as the tough demeanor she exhibited.

“Agent Howell,” Turner said smiling, “you’ve done a good deed today.”

“Thank you,” the brunette said in return. “but it was just my job.”

“Well you did it well,” Commander Cain added. “I have no doubt that the President is in good hands with you.”

“I do my best,” the agent replied. “I’d better get back to *Colonial One*. I’m going to have to make a formal report to the head of the detail.”

“I understand that,” Cain said. “Best of luck to you, Agent Howell.”

“Please,” Howell said with a smile, “call me Jez.”

Cain nodded. “Jez it is then.”

The agent turned away and joined the protection detail that surrounded the president as he was looked over by the *Pegasus*’ chief surgeon as Cain and Turner walked away from them all.

“Where to now, sir?” Turner asked, his mind already turning to the next task at hand.

“Plot a jump to Sagitaron,” Cain replied. “Let’s see what Zarek thinks when the *Pegasus* shows up over his home world after foiling one of his plots.”

“I’ll get Belzen on it right away,” Turner said with a smile. “It was lucky that Agent Howell was in a position to protect the president. From what Thorne said, the group leader had a direct bead on the president.”

“Just goes to show you,” Cain said with a shrug. “Never underestimate the value of unexpected help.”

**CYLON PRISON CAMP  
LEONIS  
Two years after the Fall...**

“Home sweet home!” Matthew Campagna announced as he entered the small cave that he and his comrades lived in.

Slider looked around noticing the communications equipment located in a corner. “That work?” he asked as he gently set Melody down on an old chair.

“Yeah, but we don’t have the codes to get us through to anyone,” Alex Turner replied.

“Guess it’s a good thing that *I do*,” Slider replied. “Can you get it fired up?”

Turner nodded. “Give me a few minutes to make sure all of our people got back.”

Slider nodded in agreement and smiled. “You know- you’re a lot like your dad.”

Alex frowned. “I’ll try to take that as a compliment.”

Slider watched as Alex went to work checking on his troops before turning to Campagna who was taking a liberal drink from a bottle of wine he had found. “What is his problem with his father?”

Campagna finished his pull and smiled. “What every teenage boy’s problem is when their dad isn’t around.”

Slider shook his head. “He can’t blame the admiral for being sent away on a mission outside known space.”

“Can’t he?” Matt retorted. “Alex says his dad was due for retirement but extended just so he could command that *Prometheus*.”

Slider didn’t reply and Matt took another pull from the bottle. “He was really looking forward to his father returning home,” the former journalist said. “Then he goes through the mourning process thinking his father died with the rest of the fleet and now he finds out that he’s alive.”

“That should be a reason to celebrate,” Melody said faintly from her improvised bed.

“You’re right, it should,” Matt said putting the cork back into the bottle. “But do you know what his first question to me was after you told him his dad was alive? He said *Why hasn’t he tried to find me?*”

And at last Slider understood.

“Radio’s up,” Alex said walking back into the group area. “We’ve also got a fire going deeper into the cave. It might be a bit more comfortable for your friend there.”

“Thanks,” Slider said looking at Matt. “Can you help her back there?”

Matt nodded and assisted Melody onto her feet. Slowly they made their way into the distant part of the cave.

“Now let’s see if those codes of yours work,” Alex said starting for the radio.

Slider caught him gently by the arm. “Wait a minute guy, there’s something you need to know.”

Alex frowned. “What?”

And Slider told the boy about his father- how he had carried a photo of him in his wallet all of the time; how he proudly spoke of him whenever he was asked.

But more importantly, he told the boy how his father had wept when they had received the word of the colonies destruction and how he’d wept not for the loss of his home or for the destruction of humanity.

But how he’d wept for the loss of his only son.

Alex listened quietly, his face impassive, until Slider finished.

“Do you think that he might be the one to answer our call?”

Slider smiled. “If he’s not then I can damn well bet you that whoever is on the line will patch us through fast.”

Alex nodded, grim determination on his face. “Then let’s make that call- I have some catching up to do.”

# **EPILOGUE**

## **IMAGINE MEETING *YOU* HERE**

**COMBAT INFORMATION CENTER  
BATTLESTAR PROMETHEUS  
IN ORBIT OF ZEUS  
HELIOS ALPHA SYSTEM  
TWO YEARS AFTER THE FALL...**

“DRADIS contact!” Maddie announced.

“Where?” Commander Horvath asked as she studied the display screen above the situation table.

“Three Cylon Baseships just jumped in on top of us,” Major Halloran reported.

“Launch alert! Cylons have launched missiles and Raiders,” Maddie said.

Turner and Horvath locked eyes for a moment, each realizing the terrible truth in the same instance.

It was a trap.

“Launch all Vipers,” Turner commanded. “Gun batteries to air defense configurations.”

Horvath echoed his commands and the *Prometheus* went to war.

“Wait a second,” Halloran said, his voice tinged with curiosity. “The missiles, they aren’t coming for us.”

“What?” Horvath and Turner asked simultaneously.

“He’s right,” Maddie added. “The Raiders and the missiles they’re chasing are on a vector that will take them over us and into the planet’s atmosphere.”

Horvath shot Turner a worried glance. “I’ve *never* known the Cylons to botch a firing solution that badly.”

“They didn’t,” Turner said grimly. “Halloran- focused scan on our port flank. Look for low power EM signatures.”

“What do you think is there?” Horvath asked.

“Enemy ships moving at low speeds on just thrusters and momentum,” Turner explained. “It’s a trick we used back on the *Pegasus* about six years ago to maneuver two teams of Vipers into attack range on some terrorist shuttles.”

“I’ll be a son of a bitch,” Halloran breathed. “I have them sir, right there! Cylon Raiders creeping up on us.”

“Shall I open fire?” Horvath asked.

“No,” Turner said quickly. “They don’t see the incoming fire from the other Cylons yet. If we lock on them we’ll lose the advantage of surprise. Helm-” he said turning to Maddie, “make ready a full power negative Z axis thruster burn on my mark.”

Maddie nodded and issued the orders.

“Ten seconds,” Horvath said as the clock ticked away.

“Stand by....”

“Five seconds...”

“Now, Maddie!” Turner commanded.

Suddenly the ship lurched as the maneuvering thrusters fired full and slammed the ship downward.

The Cylons, caught unawares as the ship moved out of the way, died in place at the hands of their own weapons.

Horvath shook her head. “Something new every day.”

“Sir,” Halloran announced. “I have a communication for you personally from the Cylon commander.”

Turner arched his eyebrow as he activated his headset. “This is Admiral Turner. Who am I speaking to?”

“Hello Admiral, it’s been a long time,” a suddenly familiar voice said through the loud speakers.

“Howell?” Turner asked in disbelief.

“Please, Admiral,” the voice said. “Call me Jez...”