



# **BATTLESTAR PROMETHEUS**

## EPISODE 1

In the shadow of evil

Battlestar Prometheus  
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

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

Colonel Nigel Alexander: Commanding Officer, Gunstar Sentinel

Colonel Marco Hall: Commanding Officer, Gunstar Vigilant

Colonel James L. Ryan III: Executive Officer of the Battlestar Prometheus

Major Karla 'Ice Queen' Horvath: Commander, Air Group (CAG) of the Prometheus air wing

Captain David Briedis: Chief Engineer of the Prometheus

Captain April 'Doc' Kaplin: Flight Surgeon, Battlestar Prometheus

Captain Jason 'Slider' Allen: Commanding Officer, Ace Squadron

Captain Joshua Wakefield: Commanding Officer, Knight Squadron

Lieutenant Allain Halloran: Prometheus Operations Officer

Master Chief Petty Officer Thomas Palmer: Senior Petty Officer the Battlestar Prometheus

Petty Officer Theresa Madrid: Communications Specialist for the Prometheus.

## FOE

Primus Marcus Antonius: Supreme Commander of the Alliance Expansionary Armed Forces

Galaxus Lucius Verenos: Commander of the 7<sup>th</sup> Legionary Battle Group of the Terran Alliance Expansionary Fleet.

Executor Tyranus Bane: Special Agent of the Alliance Onyx Brigade, also known as Dr. Hal Creighton

Precentor (I) Rollo Thomasi: Commander of the Terran Alliance Battle Cruiser Kraken.

# PROLOGUE

## TEN DAYS

**Gunstar Sentinel Command Journal,  
Entry # 201  
Entry made by Colonel Nigel Alexander, Commanding Officer**

*It has been ten days since we lost the Prometheus to enemy attack and all but the most minor of repairs to the Sentinel and the Vigilant have been completed. We have managed to refuel and refit the fifteen Vipers we were able to cram on board but, needless to say, without the Prometheus, our stores are on short supply.*

*Commander Turner has made progress in his recovery but he is still unconscious in our med-bay. Doctor Kaplan has done her best to nurse him back to health but with the advanced treatment facilities aboard the Prometheus; we cannot be sure how extensive (if any) the damage is to his brain.*

*A commendation is in order for Captain Allen as he has done wonders keeping the morale of the crew from falling off. He has also proven to be an able bodied right hand man for me these last few days. This has irked Major Tompkins to no end, but he will have to deal with it.*

*We have been using Raptors to track the Prometheus from a distance. It appears that the Alliance has hooked a sympathetic jump system into the Prometheus primary jump coils and is using that system to limp the ship back to their homeworlds. She is under heavy escort. No doubt they are afraid we will attempt to retake the ship.*

*I have a meeting this morning with Colonel Hall, Majors Tompkins and Horvath and Captain Allen to determine our next move. Whatever that move is, we must execute it soon. We are 6 months from home and all alone.*

*Our supplies won't last forever.*

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Jason 'Slider' Allen stifled a yawn as he checked the instruments in his Raptor for what seemed the hundredth time. Since the loss of the Prometheus, he had volunteered most of his time to pull shifts in Raptors doing long range surveillance and recon as the enemy slowly towed the crippled ship back to their homeworlds.

Looking up from his panel, he could see the form of the Battlestar in the distance surrounded by no less than five Alliance Battlecruisers.

"They're spinning up the FTL again." the voice of Lieutenant Alicia "Starkiller" Burke said from behind him.

“Stand by on long range transceiver. And let’s hope our ‘secret friend’ on board isn’t discovered.”

Since the loss of the ship, someone aboard her had been sending out low power radio signals, reporting on the ship’s status and position. No one had dared reply to the signals for fear of being detected and giving away whomever it was who was helping them.

Slider hated it. He desperately wanted to reply, just to say that they had received the signal and to let whoever it was know that they weren’t alone. He knew he couldn’t though and it frustrated him greatly.

“There they go,” Starkiller said as the Prometheus and her escorts disappeared in a flash of light.

Slider nodded. “Send an update to the Sentinel and inform them that battle hand off will take place an hour later than scheduled.”

“Colonel Alexander won’t like that,” Starkiller replied as she began typing the text message into the computer. “You know how he likes punctuality.”

“Yeah, well what we like and what we get hasn’t exactly been the same thing lately, now have they?”

“You ain’t kidding,” Starkiller laughed as she hit the transmit key. “Message sent.”

“Good. Now start scanning the V.L.F. band for our friend’s signal. We should be hearing from them by now.”

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Looking up to ensure that her captors were not watching, Petty Officer Theresa Madrid, known as ‘Maddie’ to her shipmates, tapped the transmit key on her hand held data pad. It sent a simple binary signal to her communications control board which then re-routed it through the navigational array and sent it out with the navigational pulse.

Hidden in plain sight.

*Using the same trick you bastards used on us,* She thought to herself as she glared daggers at the back of her Alliance guard. *Turnabout is fair play.*

The guards around her snapped to attention and saluted as Marcus Antonius, the Primus of the Terran Alliance Expansionary Militia Precentor entered the C.I.C. with Precentor Rollo Thomasi with close on his heels.

“This is a most impressive ship Precentor,” The Primus said as he walked up to the situation table. “Her technology is far beyond what we now possess. Sae’tzar will be most pleased.”

“I can only hope so, your Excellency,” Thomasi replied respectfully.

“Oh, have no doubt Precentor, he *will* be pleased. This news is just what he needs to quiet some of the dissenting voices in the Conclave.”

“Then it will be my pleasure and honor to present it to him when we arrive at Terra.”

“Yes,” The Primus said with a sly smile, “It will increase your stock ten fold to be at my side when *we* present it to him.”

Thomasi was silent for a moment and Maddie could see that he was working hard to conceal his emotions from his superior. “*We*, Primus?” he asked slowly.

“Yes, Precentor, *we*.” The Primus replied with a politicians smile, “I have decided to remain aboard while you travel back to Terra with our latest and greatest prize. I wish to be there when this magnificent ship is given over to Sae’tzar.”

“You *do* realize, Your Excellency, that we have over eighteen hundred enemy prisoners of war on this ship? I cannot vouch for your safety if they should attempt to rise up.”

The Primus smiled and patted Thomasi on the shoulder. “I am sure that our brave men on this ship can keep a few unruly prisoners in line. Besides, even if they cannot, I have my Crimson Watchmen here to protect me.”

“As you wish, sir.”

“Fear not, Precentor,” The Primus said as he stepped up to Thomasi and gestured to his assistant. “This is a great victory, one for which you are to be commended for, which is why I have been authorized by Sae’tzar himself to present you with this new cloak of authority.”

Reaching out, the Primus unlatched Thomasi’s black and silver trimmed cloak which symbolized his Precentor’s rank and replaced it with a red and gold trimmed cloak.

The cloak of a Galaxus.

“Congratulations, Galaxus Rollo Thomasi,” The Primus said as he fastened the new cloak to Thomasi’s shoulder buckle.

Thomasi, never one to show his surprise, kept a neutral face as he saluted his superior. "Hail Sae'tzar!" He said.

The Primus smiled. "Hail Sae'tzar."

Thomasi knew that he was being set up.

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"Well isn't this a fine mess you've gotten yourself into."

Hearing a familiar voice, Jonathan Turner turned around to find his father standing there with his hands on his hips looking at him sternly. Franklin Turner was dressed in his usual weatherproof coveralls and cap, with his pipe resting firmly in the right corner of his clinched mouth.

"Dad," Turner said by way of greeting.

"Well you've really gone and done it this time and you're not going to be able to talk your way out of it like you did when you were young."

Turner shook his head. "What the hell are you talking about, Dad?"

In a flash, the elder Turner's hand flashed out and struck the Commander across his left cheek. "You watch your language young man. Just because you're a big bad Battlestar Commander now doesn't mean you can talk however you like in front of your old man."

Shocked, Turner held his hand up to his still stinging cheek. "I apologize sir."

His Father nodded. "That's more like it. I knew I taught you to have more respect for your elders than that."

Turner nodded as he remembered all of the stinging lectures he had received as a child for smarting off to his parents.

"Good, now that we got that settled, why don't you come over here and sit with me so we can discuss this situation you're in."

Taking a look around, Turner was surprised to find himself on the porch of his childhood home-- a hill overlooking the bay where his father's fishing boat was docked.

"I'm, home." he said.

"Yep," his father replied as he sat down in his rocking chair, "You're home."

“How?” Turner asked.

“Well now, that’s what I was going to ask *you* about, son,” The father said as he raised a glass of sweet iced tea to his lips.

Turner, in shock over the abrupt change in scenery, shook his head and sat down next to his father. “I don’t know how I got here. One moment, I was on the Prometheus trying to board a Raptor and the next I’m, here.”

“Mmm hmmm,” His father said nodding and taking another sip of his tea. “You remember anything else?”

“Yeah, I was--” Turner frowned as he tried to remember, “I was trying to rescue one of my officers who was wounded. We were under attack.”

“Damn heroic thing there, if you ask me.”

Turner waved him off. “No, it wasn’t. He was trying to protect me but he was wounded so I ran out to try and bring him back. And then...”

“And then what?”

“There was an explosion,” Turner said with dread in his voice.

“Now the picture begins to clear up a bit,” his father said with a sly smile as realization began to dawn on his son’s face.

“But that can only mean-- Oh sweet Lords of Kobol!”

“Yep son,” the elder Turner replied, “looks like you went and got yourself killed.”

# CHAPTER 1

## ACTIONS AND CONSEQUENCES

Doctor April Kaplan looked up from her charts as the sound of the sick bay door squeaking open drew her attention away.

“You asked to see me?” asked Major Karla Horvath as she walked into the Doctor’s office and sat down.

“Yes,” Kaplan replied as she pulled the major’s file out and opened it. “I just finished reviewing your latest exam and am pleased to announce that you are fit for duty.”

“Good,” Horvath nodded as she stood to leave. “Thanks Doc.”

“Wait a second, Major, I didn’t say I was done yet.”

Horvath stopped and turned back slowly. “Look Doc...”

“Sit down for a second Major; I need to discuss some of these findings with you.”

Slowly and reluctantly, Horvath returned to the office and took a seat across from Kaplan, who could tell that this was a distinctly uncomfortable situation for her.

“Doc, if this is about emotional counseling--” Horvath began.

“Major, we couldn’t put you through emotional counseling right now even if I wanted to,” the Doctor said, cutting her off. “Our only therapist is aboard the Prometheus and I am terrible at that sort of thing so I’m not even going to try.”

“Okay then, what is it?”

“Look, I know you were abused while in captivity, Major.”

“And I’d rather not talk about it if you don’t mind.”

Kaplan nodded. “Fair enough, but I thought you should know we had to perform an abortion on you.”

“A- a what?” Horvath asked, her face turning white.

“You were impregnated in captivity, Major,” Kaplan said as gently as she could, “but-- there was damage to your uterus and your vaginal canal. Continuing the pregnancy would have put you at risk for serious complications, possibly even death.”

Horvath swallowed hard. "So it's..."

"Gone," Kaplan finished for her. "It was still in the early stages so we used an expulsion medication."

"That explains a lot."

"Yes," Kaplan replied. "Look, I know that it isn't easy to lose a child..."

Horvath shook her head. "I'm *glad* the damn thing is gone."

"Okaaaay," Kaplan replied, taken aback by the rage in Horvath's voice. "Well the procedure itself shouldn't cause any complications for now but we might have to do surgery in the near future to repair some of the scar tissue if you ever want to have children."

"I'm not worried about having kids," Horvath replied stonily, "I just want to know if I am able to fly Vipers."

"Absolutely. I'm restoring you to flight status immediately."

"Good," Horvath said standing, "the sooner I get back into the cockpit, the better."

Kaplan watched as Horvath turned and walked from the room. When she had gone she exhaled deeply and regained her calm.

Follow up report to case # 8761, Major Karla Horvath.  
Kaplan typed into her computer.

Major Horvath's injuries have healed and she is restored to flight status. Recommend emotional counseling as soon as possible to deal with possible Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) regarding her time as a P.O.W.

-April T. Kaplan, Captain, M.D.

~Close Report~

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“Killed?”

“Well not exactly,” Franklin started, “but you’re close enough.”

Turner leaned back in his rocking chair next to his father and rubbed his temples. “Wait a second,” he said after a moment of thought, as he turned to him, “if I’m close to death, then what are *you* doing here?”

“I didn’t raise any stupid kids, boy-o.” Franklin said softly, “You already *know* why I’m here.”

“Yeah...”

“I know I promised that I would be around when you got back but it looks like that was one I just couldn’t keep.”

Turner reached out, taking his father’s hand in his. “What about mom?”

“She’s fine,” Franklin smiled as he patted his son’s hand, “your mom always was the strong one. Besides, Emily’s there with her.”

“Good. She’ll need some help around the place now with you...”

Franklin watched as his son choked up. “Come on now boy-o, chin up. You never were a cry baby so don’t go starting in on me now.”

Turner chuckled as he shook his head. “I was looking forward to seeing you after this mission was over. I have so much to tell you.”

“I know son, I know,” The elder Turner replied sympathetically, “but that isn’t important now.”

“What do you mean, *not important?*”

“Son, I’m going to tell you something and it’s important that you listen.”

“Ok Dad, I’m listening.”

“Are you really?” Franklin asked as he leaned in closer. “Are you really listening to me?”

“Yeah dad,” Jonathan nodded as he looked his father in the eye.

“Good,” Franklin said as he sat his pipe down. “I know about your mission to find Earth and it’s more important than you know that you accomplish it.”

Turner sat back in surprise. “How did you know?”

“I’m dead son,” Franklin replied with a smirk. “You’d be surprised at how much you learn once you stop breathing.”

Jonathan looked at his father for a long moment and then burst out in laughter.

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“Sir, wake up. I have a hit on the V.L.F. radio,” Starkiller said from the back of the Raptor, startling Slider awake.

Blinking his eyes to clear them, Slider sat up and stretched his cramped muscles. “Why did you let me doze off?”

“Because you’ve been awake for thirty six hours and needed the rest. I got a hit on the V.L.F. approximately twenty S.U. away from our current position.”

“Okay.” Slider replied as he activated the Raptor’s main engines. “Spin up the F.T.L. drive and punch in the co-ordinates into the--”

Suddenly, a blinding flash of light from outside the cockpit window and the blaring of the alarm made Slider jump nearly out of his seat.

“Holy frack!” Starkiller exclaimed from behind him. “Capital ship, unknown class one thousand meters ahead!”

“Yeah, I got that!” Slider remarked sarcastically as he throttled up the Raptor’s engines. “Stand by to jump!”

“Attention Colonial Raptor, power down your engines and prepare to dock with our ship,” a sharp voice said over the ships loudspeakers.

“Yeah right,” Starkiller snorted. “F.T.L. spun up and ready.”

Slider didn’t respond.

“Did you hear what I said? FTL is spun up and--”

“Hold jump.” Slider said, his voice distant.

“What?”

“You heard me Lieutenant, hold the damn jump.”

Starkiller shook her head and complied. “Jump clock holding at ten seconds.”

“Attention unknown vessel, this is Colonial Raptor nine seven two. Declare your intentions immediately,” Slider said as he keyed the radio.

“Colonial Raptor nine seven two, this is Free Worlds Destroyer *Liberator*, Centurion Lucas Verenos commanding. We’re not trying to detain you and have no harmful intentions towards you or your ship. We only want to talk.”

Slider’s eyes widened at the mention of the freighter captain they had recently taken aboard their ship. “Captain Verenos, I don’t know if you remember me. This is Captain Allen of the Battlestar Prometheus.”

“Slider! It’s good to hear your voice. I was afraid that you might have been killed in the attack on your vessel.”

“I’m too good to die,” Slider answered turning to face Starkiller. “Cancel the jump and prepare to dock with their ship.”

“You’re kidding right?” Starkiller asked.

“No.”

“But those guys are--”

“Those guys, could be the answer to our prayers. Now cancel the jump and make ready to dock.”

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“You all know why were here,” Colonel Alexander said as he looked around the conference room that was situated at the back of the *Sentinel’s* bridge. “We need to make a decision on our next course of action.”

“I think our next course of action is obvious sir: We have to get the Prometheus back,” Major Horvath said.

“I’m sorry Major, but *are you nuts?*” asked an incredulous Major Tompkins. “We’ve barely enough supplies to live on right now, we have fifteen fighters, two ships and, oh yeah, *the enemy out numbers and out guns us!*”

The sound of Colonel Hall slamming his massive fist down into the table top brought Tompkin’s tirade to a halt but the commanding officer of the *Vigilant* could see that the logic of his argument had already begun to take hold in several of the *Sentinel’s* command staff.

“Thank you, Colonel Hall,” said Colonel Alexander as he inclined his head towards his counterpart. “Major, the next time I hear you say anything like that I will throw you out the nearest air lock *personally*. Is that understood?”

“Sir, you can’t possibly be considering--”

“Major Tompkins, *shut up!*” Alexander snapped. “For the gods sake man, you’re an officer in the Colonial Marine Corps! At least *try* to act like one!”

The X.O. of the Sentinel turned white as a ghost and fell silent as he realized that he had overstepped his bounds with the usually lenient Colonel.

Gathering his composure back, Colonel Alexander turned to Major Horvath. “I agree with you, Major. We cannot leave those souls on the Prometheus to an unknown fate. We’re not Cylons, we don’t leave our people behind.”

“Yes sir,” Horvath replied.

Looking around the room, Alexander found that all of the officers in the room were nodding their heads in agreement-- including the reluctant Major Tompkins.

“Good. Then we’ll need to start work on a plan to--”

It was then that the alarm klaxon began to wail and the voice of Lieutenant Hatfield, the Operations officer of the Sentinel, could be heard. “Action stations, action stations! Set condition one throughout the ship. This is not a drill.”

“Damn,” Alexander said as he reached for the door that separated the conference room from the rest of the bridge. “Man your stations, we’ll take this up again after we deal with this.”

“Sir, new contact just jumped into dradis range, C.B.D.R.. ETA to weapons range is three minutes,” Lieutenant Hatfield reported as Alexander approached her.

“Any contact from our patrol?”

“Yes sir, they’re outbound to bogey and should be in visual range in one minute.”

Alexander turned to Horvath. “Get down to the hangar and launch all of our Vipers. I don’t want our patrol out there by themselves.”

“On it sir.”

“I guess I’m staying here for this one, eh Nigel?” asked Colonel Hall.

“Unless you feel inclined to try and get back to the Vigilant in the middle of a fire fight,” Alexander replied flatly.

“Nah,” Hall said waving off the comment. “Captain Black can handle things.”

“Good to hear,” Alexander said pointing to a spot on the dradis screen. “Contact her and have her assume a flanking position here.”

“Done,” Hall replied as he moved to the communications station.

“All sections report condition one set sir,” Reported Major Tompkins from his post.

“Very well, weapons hold,” Alexander replied.

“Weapons hold, aye sir.”

“Hatfield, any I.D. on that ship yet?” the Colonel asked.

“No transponder codes sir, but based on engine isotope readings she appears to be Alliance.”

“Great, I suppose we had best prepare ourselves to fight then.”

“Wait sir! I have an incoming transmission from the enemy vessel. It’s- its Slider sir!” said Major Tompkins explained looking astonished.

Alexander turned his head slowly, his right eyebrow arched in surprise.

“My dear Major, you *must* be shitting me.”

“No sir, his personal code is confirmed. It’s him.”

Alexander sighed and shook his head. “I do believe I’m going to kill him.”

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## CHAPTER 2

### ALL IS FAIR

Turner took a long sip from his iced tea and enjoyed the view from his father's porch. In the distance, Leonon's star was setting across the horizon casting the waters of the bay in gold and purple hues.

"I can see why you're so happy being here. This is the most peaceful place I have ever been."

"It won't be for long."

"What do you mean?" Turner asked as he faced his father.

The elder Turner wore a sad expression on his face. "Look."

Turner turned back and the bay, which had been bathed in gentle hues from the setting sun was now aflame. Fires burned uncontrolled along the docks and all of the buildings in the small town were gone, blasted to rubble.

Dead bodies lay everywhere.

"My Gods..." The Commander breathed as he stood up and looked out across the scene of devastation. "What happened?"

"Nothing-- yet."

"What do you mean *yet*?"

"Do you remember going to Temple Services as a boy?"

"Of course I do! What the hell does it have to do with this?"

"Holy Scroll of Pythia, Chapter 6 verse 74."

*"Let the sins of the father revisit him in his children."*

"Exactly son. We're going to bring this upon ourselves. Soon."

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“Put me through here,” Colonel Alexander said as he snatched up the headset closest to him. “Slider, this is Sentinel Actual.”

“Sir, this is Slider aboard the Free Worlds ship *Liberator*.”

“Free Worlds?” Alexander asked, confused. “Who the hell are they and kindly explain to me why you are aboard their ship.”

“They’re a resistance group within the Alliance, sir. Our old friend, Lucas Verenos, is in command of this ship and he wants to talk to us about our situation. Provided that you don’t blow us out of the sky first, that is.”

Alexander shook his head in disbelief. “Ok captain. What would you like to do next?”

“Request permission to come alongside, sir. We’ll transfer over in my Raptor after that.”

“I’d recommend keeping them at a safe distance until we can verify their intentions sir,” Major Tompkins whispered as he listened on another headset.

Alexander nodded. “Tell Centurion Verenos to hold position there and to come aboard on your Raptor. We’ll discuss more after you arrive.”

“Very good sir. Slider, out.”

Alexander removed the headset and sat it down in front of him, blowing out a deep breath. “Stay at Condition One until we confirm Slider’s story in person, then step down to Condition Two.”

“Yes sir,” Tompkins replied.

“I assume you’ll want to stay aboard for this?” Alexander said turning to Colonel Hall.

“Wouldn’t miss it for all the cheese on Arelon,” Hall replied with a smile.

Alexander chuckled. “X.O., contact Ice Queen and have her provide an escort for Slider. She’s to join us in the conference room as soon as she is aboard.”

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The room was quiet as Executor Tyranus Bane entered. It was the way he liked it; the calm before the storm.

Lying at a forty five degree angle on a customized table was Colonel Ryan, his Jacket and shirt stripped from him leaving him bare chested. Horrendous looking devices of torture attached to mobile arms were poised for action above him.

Ryan kept his cool as the man who betrayed him and his ship walked around in front of him, his dark robes swishing behind him.

“Hello Colonel,” Bane said pleasantly.

Ryan didn’t respond. Instead he focused his eyes on the lighting above him.

Bane shook his head ruefully. “You see? This is what has gotten you into this situation in the first place. All you had to do was answer the Precentor’s questions truthfully and we wouldn’t have to be here in this uncivilized manner.”

“I did answer the questions,” Ryan replied quietly.

“Yes, but unfortunately for you, Galaxus Thomasi wasn’t satisfied with them.”

“So they promoted him, huh?” Ryan laughed harshly.

Bane smiled coldly. “The Primus saw fit to elevate him for his heroic actions.”

“Yeah, some hero.”

“He *is* a hero,” Bane replied evenly. “He stopped a hostile recon force from entering Alliance space and now he has provided the Expansionary Fleet with the most powerful warship ever encountered.”

“Too bad you can’t use it.”

“Now *that* is why we are in this current predicament,” Bane said holding up a finger. “You see, all of the battle damage has been repaired by your skillful crew and the computers have been restored to operational status. Only, there’s a catch.”

“Wonder what that might be?”

“You already know,” Bane replied flatly. “You see, we need the code to re-establish the networks and get the Prometheus’ weapon systems and FTL drive back on line.”

“And I already told you that I don’t have that code. Only Commander Turner has it.”

“Tsk tsk,” Bane wagged his finger at his captive. “Do you truly think me a fool, Colonel Ryan? I reviewed certain operational files during my stay aboard ship. I know that the code is ten characters long and that only Commander Turner knows the whole code.”

Bane moved in close, almost face to face with Ryan and his smile grew colder. “But I also know that you know the first five digits, the five digits that will unlock the FTL drive.”

“I have no idea what you’re talking about,” Ryan replied with as straight a face as he could.

Bane chuckled and lifted one of his instruments off of a metal cart. It was a long metal cylinder that came to a point. The point had a hole in it and out of the hole a thin microfilament wire came sliding out.

“You see, my dear Colonel, this wire is going to enter your body in your shoulder. It’s self guided so it will follow your nerve pathways around your torso, making sure to contact every nerve cell it can find. A most unpleasant process, to be sure.”

Ryan didn’t respond but Bane could see fear in his eyes.

“Then, I will activate the device which will send electricity through your body in varying degrees and voltages. You will discover a new definition of pain and suffering during this process. However, this can all be avoided if you just give me what I need.”

The X.O. of the *Prometheus* remained silent and stared Bane in the face with a defiant expression.

Bane shook his head and then grinned. “This will hurt you, much more than it will me.”

He activated the machine.

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Slider entered the C.I.C. of the *Sentinel* still in his flight suit with his helmet under his arm. By his side was the tall blonde haired man who wore a black jumpsuit with a red sash of command known to those assembled as Lucas Verenos.

“Seems that you have moved up in the world since we last saw you,” Colonel Alexander said.

“Yes,” Verenos replied simply, “The Free Worlds League was able to capture two Venator Class Destroyers within the last several weeks.”

“A step up in terms of firepower.”

“Yes, but I am not here to boast about our recent gains. I am here to discuss your current situation and how we might help you.”

“I’m listening,” Alexander said as he gestured for Verenos to come closer.

Verenos looked over the assembled officers and then nodded as he stepped forward. Producing a folded map from his breast pocket he laid it out in front of them. It displayed the Terran Alliance in full.

“This is where we are now,” he said pointing to the star system they now occupied. “The Prometheus was last sighted here, in the Argolis system.”

“Our own recon has confirmed that, Centurion Verenos.” Colonel Hall said impatiently as he puffed on his cigar. “You said you had information that would be helpful to us.”

Verenos studied Hall coldly for a moment and then returned his gaze to the map. “The Prometheus is bound for Terra. The Primus wishes to present her as a prize to Sae’tzar.”

“Some prize,” Hall chuckled. “A damaged ship with an inoperable weapons system and jump drive.”

“The damage done to the Prometheus was not as extensive as was first believed.” Verenos retorted. “And the codes required to restore computer function and weapons systems capabilities will soon be in their hands.”

This information brought the group up short.

“How do you know all of this?” Colonel Alexander asked.

“The Free Worlds League has sympathizers all over the Alliance Expansionary Fleet, including the prize crew that is aboard the Prometheus right now. Our informants there say that they have an agent aboard who is working to extract the information from Colonel Ryan as we speak.”

Colonel Hall shook his head. “Ryan won’t crack. He’s top notch, that kid.”

“Anyone can crack,” Verenos replied coldly, “It’s simply a matter of applying pressure in the right places.”

“So what do we do?” Asked Major Tompkins.

Alexander looked at Verenos. "I assume you came with a plan?"

Verenos smiled. "Of course."

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## CHAPTER 3

### THE TURNING POINT

Jonathan Turner was aghast at the scene of destruction laid out before him. The entire town that he had grown up in as a child was in flames, its once pristine buildings were nothing but rubble.

In the harbor below he could see fishing boats shattered like toys, wooden remains burning alongside the bodies that floated in the water.

"How?" he asked breathlessly.

"Why and how isn't important son," his father replied sadly.

"What?" Jonathan asked as he spun on his father. "How can you say that? How can you sit there and tell me that our homeworld is going to be destroyed and then say that how and why it happens doesn't matter?"

"Because it doesn't"

Jonathan was speechless for a moment as his mind attempted to grasp all that he had been told. After a moment, he finally found his voice. "If what you say is true, then why are you telling me this?"

"Because boy-o," Franklin Turner said as he rose to his feet, "You've been chosen to be The Herald."

"The *what*?"

"You are the Herald of Aurora, son-- anointed by the gods as the prophecy has foretold."

"What prophecy?" Turner demanded.

His father shook his head and smiled. "Look into your heart son, and you will know what I am talking about."

He was about to angrily refute his father's words when suddenly, it came to him.

*“And thus did the tribes of man set out across the stars in search of a new home. Away from their shattered lands did they roam, led by a dying leader with the force of the galaxy behind them and the Herald of Aurora to light the way.”*

Franklin nodded sagely as understanding dawned on his son’s face. “Yes boy-o: *You* are the one who will find Aurora. *You* are the one who will show her the way to Earth.”

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Petty Officer Theresa Madrid made her way quietly back to the holding area where everyone who had a key role to play in restoring the Prometheus to operational status was being held.

For her and the crew that worked operations in the C.I.C., it was cargo bay six.

As the door was closed behind her she made her way quickly to several crewmates who were huddled around Master Chief Palmer who lay on his back, propped up against some sacks of sundries.

“How you doing Chief?” Maddie asked as she came close.

“Not, good,” Palmer coughed.

Maddie leaned down and helped the larger man sit up as she pulled out her canteen and held it out to him. “Drink this.”

Palmer waved it away and sagged in her arms. “I think they got me good this last time.” He mumbled.

“What do you mean?”

Palmer smiled ruefully. “They put something in my chest during the last interrogation and now I can’t move. Hell,” he coughed, “It hurts to even *breathe*.”

Maddie took one look at the elder non-com and knew the truth of the situation. Still, she refused to give up on him. “Come on Chief,” she said as she raised the canteen to his lips, “You can’t quit on me now. I can’t do this by myself after all.”

Palmer winced in pain as he tried to smile for her. “Yes you can. You’re a Non-Commissioned Officer of the Colonial Defense Force.”

“But Chief...”

“Maddie,” Palmer interrupted weakly, “I don’t have a lot of time...” his word were cut off as a wave of massive coughing racked the Chief from head to toe. When he was finally done, there was blood coming from the corner of his lips.

“Damn it Chief, stay with me here,” Maddie pleaded as tears welled up in her eyes.

“Maddie,” Palmer gasped as he lay back against the bulkhead and fought against the darkness that was trying to consume him, “when I’m gone you’ll be the senior non-com left. Don’t- let- me- down.”

And then, as Maddie watched through teary eyes, the darkness laid claim to Master Chief Palmer.

For a long moment Maddie continued to look at the man whom she had come to respect as a mentor over the previous months. She then reached out and closed his eyes one last time.

Inside her, her anguished heart began to burn with a rage she had never known before. Its energy built up like a fusion reactor that threatened to explode at any moment.

As her rage threatened to overwhelm her, words that Chief Palmer had once spoken to her echoed in her head: *Never let your emotions rule you Maddie. Your troops will look to you for guidance and calm reassurance when the chips are down. If they see you lose it then they will lose the will to fight and that is something that we as leaders can never let happen. That’s why you must always appear calm and in control, no matter what.*

Getting a grip on herself, Maddie stood and faced the other crewmen who were being held in the cargo bay.

“Ok, listen up!” She said. “The Chief is dead and I’m assuming his position as of now. All of you need to start preparing yourselves and your subordinates for possible action.”

“What do you mean Maddie?” One of the crewmen asked nervously, “Did you receive a message about a rescue?”

“No,” Maddie replied, “They’re working on a plan right now but nothing definite yet.”

“Then we’re sunk,” said another crewman despondently. “We’ll never--”

“Lock that shit up!” Maddie snapped as she stepped out into the center of the group. “I don’t know about you but I am sick and fraking tired of this crap! Get it through your heads now that we *are* going to escape and retake this ship one way or another.”

“How are we going to do that? They took all of our weapons!” Another crewman exclaimed.

Maddie smirked. “Then by the gods we’ll just have to take them *back* now won’t we?”

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“Sae’tzar is planning a triumph to celebrate the capture of Prometheus,” Lucas Verenos said as he began to lay out his plan for retaking the ship. “That is why the ship is bound for Terra. Once there, she will be restored to operational status and studied by our top scientists. Once the study is done they will use Prometheus as the flagship for an invasion of your homeworlds.”

“*Invasion?*” Alexander asked incredulously as shock rippled throughout the assembled officers. “What in Gods name for?”

Verenos sighed. “In the Alliance, the common mythology is that the other twelve tribes turned their backs on the thirteenth and exiled us from paradise. However, our ancient leaders promised us that one day we would return and take our rightful place with our brothers and sisters.”

“That sounds like a dangerous statement,” Horvath commented.

“You have no idea just how dangerous it is, Major,” Verenos replied. “From this doctrine developed two distinct political groups: The Guardians and the Crusaders.”

“What’s the difference between the two?” Slider asked.

“The Crusaders believe that it is the manifest destiny of the Alliance to rule over all of humanity and to punish all those who exiled us in the first place.”

“Nice,” Colonel Hall said dryly, “and these Guardians? What do they believe?”

Verenos chuckled. “*We* Guardians believe that to make contact with the other twelve colonies would be to risk introducing a corrupt and unstable element into our society which could topple our way of life.”

“Excuse me Doctor Kaplan, you’re needed in sickbay,” Lieutenant Hatfield said, interrupting Verenos response.

“Just when it was starting to get good.” Kaplan said as she rose from her place. “I’ll be right back.”

“I thought you didn’t agree with the way things are going here in the Alliance,” Slider said.

“I don’t. I believe that enslaving other cultures and races is abhorrent. It makes us more like, well, *you*.”

“Us?” Hall asked. “Based on what you have told us, your government has been enslaving everyone it comes across since its inception.”

“Yes and it is wrong for us to have done so. We’re the true heirs to the legacy and culture of the Thirteenth Tribe, the ones who set themselves apart from the wars that tore Kobol apart prior to the exodus. We should be setting an example of enlightenment.”

Alexander chuckled. “You really do think yourselves superior to us, don’t you?”

“Colonel,” Verenos said flatly, “we have been infiltrating your society for the last eighty years, yet this is the first you have seen of us. You still have rampant crime, yet ours is a bare minimum. You still murder in the name of greed and set upon yourselves to take what belongs to your neighbor. We have strict rituals and laws which forbid such things and channel our more aggressive nature into something more productive. You’ll learn all of this soon enough though.”

“How so?” Alexander asked.

“Because,” Verenos smiled, “I-f you want the Prometheus back, you will need my help and to accomplish this we will have to go to Terra-- into the heart of the Alliance.”

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“I have retrieved the code you asked for,” said Tyranus Bane as he entered the Flag Suite of the Prometheus.

Looking up from the desk he now called his own, Galaxus Thomasi nodded. “Very good, Executer. How long until the FTL drive is activated?”

“I have set their chief engineer to work on it already. He should be done within the hour.”

Thomasi nodded. “Good, the sooner we are back home the better.”

“Certainly you cannot believe that the Colonials will attempt to retake this ship, Sir.”

“I not only believe it, I am *certain* of it. Would you allow our most powerful warship to remain in enemy hands if you had lost it?”

“Point taken. Perhaps we should remove the Primus to a safer location until we are sure of our security.”

Thomasi shook his head. “No. Not yet.”

Both men looked at each other and the plan was clear. Thomasi nodded slightly and Bane bowed deeply. “As you wish, Galaxus.”

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“You have *got* to be kidding me,” Turner said to his father. “The Herald of Aurora? Me?”

“Yes, son, *you*,” Franklin replied. “You are the one who will show the way, the one who will guard our future.”

“Oh my gods.” Jonathan breathed. “I- I mean I never believed that-. Dad, I’m just a Battlestar Commander, not some holy figure.”

“You’re not a holy figure, son. You’re a mortal man who has been offered by the gods the chance to serve something larger than himself. The question is, *will you?*”

“Will I? “You’re telling me that if I don’t want to do this--”

“Son, the gods don’t tell us what to do. They lay the choices out before us and allow us to decide for ourselves. It’s called free will.”

“Some choice!” Jonathan snorted. “Either I stand by and do nothing and let everything that the Twelve Colonies have ever stood for die, or I set out on a holy quest to find--”

“What you were supposed to find in the first place.” Franklin finished for him.

“Jonathan stood silent for a moment and then chuckled as his father’s logic sank into him. “Yeah,” he finally replied, “I guess you’re right.”

Franklin nodded as lightning began to ripple across the sky. “It’s time for you to choose now boy-o.”

Jonathan shook his head. “I never thought that I would be doing this when I signed up with the C.D.F.”

Franklin laughed. “You think that when I found out that your mom was pregnant, I had any idea that my unborn son would one day be the Herald of Aurora?”

“Probably not. But then again, I believe you were a bit busy fixing up the Galactica after that little skirmish above Caprica when you found out.”

“Little skirmish!” Franklin snorted with a smile, “We were lucky to survive that one.”

“I know,” Jonathan said as he laid a hand on his father’s shoulder. “I’m glad you did, too. I can’t imagine life without you.”

“You’ll be okay son.” His father said as he took his son into a loving embrace. “Just follow your heart.”

“I will Dad,” Jonathan replied patting his father on the back. “Will I ever- see you again?”

Franklin Turner smiled. “Of course you will son. It might not be soon, but we will see each other again.”

Jonathan Turner stepped back and smiled as the image of his father began to transform. Gone was the old man with white hair and a fisherman’s clothes. Instead a young man wearing the uniform and rank of a Colonial Lieutenant and the patch of the Battlestar Galactica now stood in front of him.

“You’ve got a good ship with a good name, boy-o. Treat her right and she’ll always bring you home.”

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Primus Marcus Antonius walked at a brisk pace towards the starboard launching tubes alongside Galaxus Verenos and Thomasi as well as Executor Bane.

“I assume that this will not be a waste of my time?” The Primus asked as they made their way inside the lower hangar deck.

“Of course not, Primus,” Verenos replied with a smile. “Do you think I would have traveled from my flagship to here if this was not something of extreme importance?”

The Primus fixed his subordinate with a laser stare. “I think you would do anything to be seen at my side as I present this trophy to Sae’tzar.”

Verenos chuckled. “You give me too much credit, Primus. I have no desire to be at your side when this ship is presented to Sae’tzar.”

“Really?” The Primus asked as he came to a stop and planted his hands on his hips. “And where else would you rather be?”

“To be honest,” Verenos replied, “I think I would like to be in *your* position when this ship is presented to Sae’tzar.”

As a look of shock crossed the Primus' face, he finally took note of his surroundings. He was in one of the Prometheus' launching areas, just beyond the doors.

There was a flash of light and pain as Tyranus Bane struck out with his boot and kicked him in the stomach. Stars exploded in his head and only then did he realize the depths of the treachery he had been subjected to.

Walking with two of the senior fleet commanders and feeling no threat to himself, he had left his personal guard behind. Now as he lay sprawled on his back watching the vacuum doors close in front of him, he realized the magnitude of his mistake.

"This is the end for you Antonius," Verenos said over the speakers from inside the flight control room.

"Lucius wait!" The Primus shouted as he stood up. "You don't need to do this! I can make you my second in command! Anything you want can be yours!"

"What I want, Marcus," Verenos chuckled, "is to finally get my due. Every time I accomplished something, you were there to take credit for it, going all the way back to our academy days. Now it's time for you to pay the price for your political scheming."

A rage so dark and vile that it threatened to tear him apart overtook the Primus as Verenos casually decided his fate for him. "You bastard!" he shouted, holding out his hand in the typical form used to place a curse on someone. "I curse you and your bloodline to Hades! Let all of your spawn die and your name be forgotten in the dusts of time!"

Verenos laughed as he opened the outer doors. "You first."

After the Primus' screaming had ceased and his body had been forcibly ejected from the launching chamber, Verenos turned to his two co-conspirators.

"Now my friends," he said, "let us talk about the shape of things to come."

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## EPILOGUE

### TANGLED WEBS

“So let me get this straight,” Colonel Hall started, “You want to take a group to Terra and board the Prometheus while they prepare for the triumph. After that you want us to create a diversion so that you can jump the Prometheus out?”

“Basically, yes,” Lucas Verenos replied. “Their guard will be down because of the triumph and the great speech that Sae’tzar is scheduled to give. They’ll be taking a tech crew aboard and we have the contacts to get you there. Once you’re in you can regain control and jump out while everyone is distracted.”

“Sounds too easy,” Colonel Hall said, his arms folded across his chest.

“Sometimes the best things are,” Verenos countered.

“You still haven’t told us what’s in it for you,” Colonel Alexander said.

Verenos expression became deadly serious. “The loss of the Prometheus will set back the Crusaders call for invasion just enough for us to build an effective resistance. It’s vital to the future of the Alliance.”

“That sounds fair to me,” Colonel Alexander replied as he looked his fellow officers in the face to judge their thoughts.

“Sounds good to me too,” A deep voice said from behind him.

Turning quickly Alexander caught sight of Doctor Kaplan holding Commander Turner steady in the doorway.

“Commander on deck!” He said snapping to attention.

Turner waved him away as he slowly made his way over to the group. He wore a bandage around his forehead and his walk was unsteady but his eyes were sharp and clear as he addressed his subordinates.

“Where is my ship?”

# TO BE CONTINUED...