



BATTLESTAR PROMETHEUS

BY RYAN A. KEETON

DUST AND BONES

Based on the Sci-Fi Original series

Battlestar Galactica

Created by Ron Moore and David Eick

BATTLESTAR GALACTICA

CREATED BY GLEN LARSON

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Friend

Admiral Jonathan Turner: Commanding Officer of the Prometheus Battlestar Group

General John Connors: Commander, Lobo Negro Station

Commander Tajalle: Commanding Officer, Battlestar Eternal

Dr. Kevin Grazier: Governor, Copernicus Colony

Colonel Karla Horvath: Executive Officer, Battlestar Prometheus

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

Major Jason "Slider" Allen: Captured, presumed dead

Major David Briedis: Chief Engineer of the Prometheus

Major Stacie Percival: Executive Officer, Battlestar Ares

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

Captain Allain Halloran: Prometheus Operations Officer

Captain Rose "Tiger" Hohensee: Commander, 101st Viper Squadron

Lieutenant Brad "Tiny" Allen: Squadron Commander, 32nd Viper Squadron

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

Foe

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

Eve (Six): Cylon Infiltrator

Gabriel (Leoben): Cylon Battle Group Commander

Lucifer (Cavil): Cylon 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

**THIS EPISODE IS DEDICATED TO
DANNY RICHARDS FROM LONDON
ENGLAND
WHO, BY THE GRACE OF THE GODS
IS STILL FIGHTING THE CYLONS
ALONGSIDE US TODAY
&
THE LOVING MEMORY OF BRIANNA
LYRIC SMITH OF BOSSIER CITY
LOUISIANA:
A BEAUTIFUL GIRL WHO IS GONE
FROM THIS WORLD FAR TOO SOON.**

PROLOGUE

Seven Days

CYLON PRISON CAMP
BAGHERA CITY, LEONIS
7 DAYS AFTER THE BATTLE OF THE VEIL

Jason Allen awoke with a start as he felt the transport he was riding in land with a thump. Immediately his body sent a jolt of pain up his spine, reminding him of what he had recently been through.

After punching out violently as his viper had exploded around him, he had been captured and brought aboard a Cylon Basestar. There he had endured three days of continuous questioning from a skin job he remembered as Tyranus Bane. As if the mind twist hadn't been enough Bane had graciously decided to compliment the question and answer session with various forms of physical coercion that had left both bones in his right forearm broken and the rest of his body bruised, burned and cut.

Next to him Hygiena stirred and began to awaken. Her eyes, still bruised and swollen from her own interrogation sessions with Bane, tried to open but Slider placed his hands on her shoulder. "Keep 'em closed, there's nothing to see."

"Still in the dark, sir?" She mumbled, pain coloring her voice.

"Yeah," Slider replied as he began to hear noises from outside their darkened chamber. "Just get some rest, kiddo. We're probably going to need it later."

Hygiena nodded, the memories of what she had endured causing her to shudder involuntarily.

Slider felt this and put his arm around her, pulling her close. "We're going to be okay, Ensign. Just keep your chin up."

He felt her nod weakly as a crack of light suddenly illuminated them and grew wider to reveal two Cylon Centurions, both of them the old 005 models them with weapons trained on them.

Between the two robots stood a tall black man that Slider instantly recognized as another one of the Cylon skin jobs.

"Welcome to Leonis," the skin job said as he folded his arms over his chest. "My name is Simon and I'm the commander of this camp. The rules are simple here— do what you are told,

when you are told to do it and you will not come to any harm. Resist and you will die. Am I understood?"

Slider glared at him in response.

"I will take your silence as agreement. Besides, you have no other choice in the matter," Simon said as he turned towards the Centurion at his right hand. "Process them."

"By your command," The Cylon replied in its monotone robotic voice as it moved forward to grab them.

"Don't touch her," Slider growled. "I'll help her up. Just show us where to go."

The Centurion looked back at Simon who nodded his approval, then stood back as Slider helped Hygiena to her feet. Together the two wounded pilots limped out into the sunlight of a well kept town that was surrounded by a ten meter tall wire fence. Around the fence, other 005 Centurion models patrolled and watched outside of the compound while Cylons in guard towers observed the inhabitants of the town inside the wire.

"This is your new home," Simon said from behind them. "From here you will help us unite our two nations into one. This is the beginning of the new Cylon Empire."

PILOTS READY ROOM BATTLESTAR PROMETHEUS 7 DAYS AFTER THE BATTLE OF THE VEIL

"I've called you all here because I wanted to personally tell you how proud I am of all of you for your actions in the recent battle," Admiral Turner said to the assembled pilots of the *Prometheus* as he stood tall and proud behind the lectern at the front of the room.

"All of you showed exceptional courage and devotion to duty and your fellow soldiers during the fight. Ordinary people would have run when faced with the odds you were up against," he smirked, "but then again, you guys are *far* from ordinary."

"Always looking for creative ways to get killed, Sir!" someone shouted from the back.

Turner smiled as the other pilots laughed. "Truer words have never been spoken. However, I am glad most of us made it home."

He paused for a moment as the somber memory of the many that had been lost made its way through the minds of those assembled. "Let's not mince words: We lost a lot of good people including Major Allen and while he can never be truly replaced, I need a new C.A.G. All of my squadron commanders are more than qualified and each of them deserves the job. However, there is only one billet for a C.A.G. and therefore I had to make a hard choice. After all, it's not easy to choose between the best damn pilots in the fleet."

Heads nodded in the crowd as their pride filled them up with confidence and Turner was pleased to see his pilots' morale returning after the bruising it had taken in the recent fight. Smiling down at them he motioned for a pilot to step forward.

The pilot took his place beside the Admiral and smiles broke out across the room as they group realized what was about to happen.

"This pilot took command after the death of the C.A.G. lead the charge that saved the ship and gave us all time to escape the Cylon trap." Turner turned to the pilot and said "without your actions, we would probably have lost the *Prometheus*. For this and our demonstrated leadership potential, I hereby promote you, Mister Wakefield, to Major and assign you as Commander of the *Prometheus* Air Group."

The crowd came to their feet as one and began to applaud as the admiral pinned Wakefield's new rank on his collar and stepped back.

The new C.A.G. smiled and saluted and Turner returned it. "Congratulations, Major. You've more than earned it."

Shooter nodded and stepped to the podium where he waited several long moments as the applause rang out from his new subordinates. Finally, he held his hand up. "Okay, okay pipe down will ya?"

His pilots chuckled and took their seats as Shooter cleared his throat. "I," he began, his voice faltering a bit. "Sir, I thank you for this honor and I will always be grateful for it, however," he paused as his voice caught again, "I would give it up in a heartbeat just to have Slider walk back through that door."

Turner smiled gently and placed his hand on the new C.A.G.'s shoulder in understanding.

Shooter nodded and continued. "Slider was more than my commanding officer, he was my friend and I will always remember him that way. Life has to go on. We lost a lot of good pilots throughout the fleet several days ago. That means we're going to have to train new ones. Many of you will be asked to help in that process. I'll also be moving people around to fill in the holes in some of our squadrons. In short, we have a lot of work ahead of us."

"We've got your back sir!" Tiger called from the back row.

Shooter nodded in acknowledgement. "Then let's get to work. *On your feet!*"

The assembled pilots stood to attention and Shooter smiled. "Dismissed."

"Short, sweet and to the point. Good work, Major." Turner said.

Shooter smiled sheepishly. "Slider was always better at the grand speeches than I was."

"Leadership comes in many forms, Major. Find the one that's most comfortable for you and run with it."

"I'll remember that, Sir."

CHAPTER 1

Rebuilding

FLAG SUITE
LOBO NEGRO STATION
6 WEEKS AFTER THE BATTLE OF THE VEIL

Commence station log: Entry number one-one- five-nine, Brigadier General John Stewart Connors commanding.

It's been three weeks since we arrived back here at Copernicus but this is the first opportunity I've had to record a log entry. Since we've returned we've been busy repairing the damage we sustained during the battle and the subsequent fights we had en route here.

They attacked us three times and almost got us on the last one. We had five inbound nukes that Commander Tajalle was able to shoot down just in time. I don't mind saying that I was scared shit less.

That aside, we've begun to put ourselves back together and we should be ready to begin full service operations within a month. That will be good since we have two Battlestars with major combat damage.

The Prometheus is still serviceable. Her outer hull has been sealed but her guts are still a mess. Fives decks totally vaporized. Fortunately, it was just the crew quarters which were mostly unoccupied during the fight. This cut down on the casualties considerably.

Not so for the Celestial.

Her entire portside flight pod is gone along with the three hundred and sixty four souls who were working in it at the time. The only thing that saved the ship was that someone had a momentary stroke of luck and hit the emergency disconnects to the main fuel storage sumps inside the main hull. Had that explosion hit with the supply lines to the fueling stations in the flight pod still active we would have lost two ships instead of just one.

On the brighter side, we returned to Copernicus six weeks after leaving to find that our new capital city is almost complete, almost three months ahead of schedule. When the Admiral and I asked Dr. Grazier about it, he informed us that the Cylons aboard the Ares had volunteered to help. He said they felt it was the least they could do since it was their 'misguided brethren' who had destroyed so much.

When I asked about tensions between the colonists and the Cylons he said there had been a few incidents to begin with but when the Cylons didn't respond and then redoubled their efforts to build homes for the colonists, the grumbling had stopped and the cooperation had begun.

I guess everything changes when you're struggling to survive.

“General Connors?”

The voice of Major Meia Langley, Connors Executive Officer aboard the station, shook him from his thoughts. Rubbing his eyes he paused the recording and sat up to press the comm button.

“What is it Major?”

“Sir, the *Nova* just jumped back in system and is requesting to dock,” Langley reported.

“Clear them for a berth and inform the Admiral,” Connors replied.

“Yes sir,” Langley said closing down the line.

Connors exhaled and sat back in his chair, closing his eyes and allowing the last moments of the battle to play out before his eyes.

The streaks of gas as the nuclear missiles had rocketed toward the *Prometheus*. The sudden flash of light as the *Sentinel* had jumped into their path.

The next flash that had heralded the Gunstars’ doom.

Connors opened his eyes and looked back down at the unfinished log.

“Frak it.”

SANCTUARY CITY COPERNICUS

Jon Turner awoke to the smell of fresh air and warm sunshine on his face for the first time in years. He couldn’t help but smile.

It was a simple creature comfort, but one he hadn’t been able to experience since he had left the Colonies on his ill fated mission to Earth. Now, with the Lobo Negro station in stable orbit and their enemies behind them, he finally felt like he could relax for a moment.

That feeling lasted all of three seconds before he remembered the price they had all paid to get here.

He shook his head and rubbed his eyes to clear them. Then he stood and pulled on a pair of running shorts and his old Fleet Academy T-shirt, one of the few remaining items he had left from his time before the fall of the Colonies.

Slipping on his shoes, he made his way out of the small one story building that he had called home for the past week and jogged for a while around the fledgling city. An hour later and lost in his own thoughts, it took him a long moment to realize that he had been joined by Commander Ryan who, like himself, wore an old pair of shorts and a gray t-shirt with the letters C.D.F. emblazoned across the chest.

“Good morning Admiral,” Ryan said, a smile on his face as he kept pace with Turner.

“When did you get here?” Turner asked breathlessly.

“About an hour ago,” Ryan replied without breaking stride. “My X.O. decided that I needed some R&R so she volunteered me for an overnigher to the planet. It’s mutiny, I tell you”

Turner smiled wryly. “Executive Officers are good for that you know.”

“I wouldn’t have the slightest idea what you’re talking about Sir.”

Both they slowed their pace to a walk and finally, after a few feet, they came to a stop and began to stretch their tired muscles.

“Your crew did a really good job while we were gone,” Turner said after he had caught his breath.

Commander Ryan wiped the sweat from his brow and nodded. “Thanks. Alpha and his boys will be happy to hear it.”

“Will they?”

Ryan fixed him with a withering glare. “They *have* emotions Sir.”

Turner held his hands up in a placating gesture. “I didn’t mean to imply otherwise. I just— well I don’t know much about the Cylons other than the old war stories. I have no idea whether they have the ability to feel emotions or anything else, for that matter.”

Ryan nodded. “I understand. Alpha had to explain it to me too.”

“Well maybe you can pass it along to me sometime.”

“I’d be glad to Sir.”

Suddenly, a sonic boom split the sky and both officers looked up to see a Colonial Raptor on a high speed approach to the city.

Frowning, the Admiral looked at his friend. “Who the frak is playing grab, over a populated city, in one of *my* Raptors?”

Ryan shook his head. “Don’t know sir, but I think we’re about to find out.”

As he spoke the Raptor closed on their position until it hovered over them. Finally, it moved to a clearing not far away and sat down gently as Turner strode over to confront the pilot with Ryan following closely behind.

The Admiral mounted the wing just as the outer hatch opened to reveal Splashdown stepping out, her helmet tucked into the crook of her elbow.

“Admiral Turner, beg to report!” She said, snapping to attention and saluting.

Turner frowned again and looked at Ryan who shrugged. Turning back he hastily returned her salute. “You better have a good explanation for scaring the hell out of the civilian folk, Lieutenant.”

“Yes sir,” Splashdown replied. “General Connors sent me here to find you post haste. I am to inform you, sir, that the *Nova* has just made port and that Commander Hatch has something very interesting to report.”

“That’s all you have? *That’s* why you did a low level strafe on the city? For something *interesting*?” Turner shook his head. “Why didn’t General Connors just radio me?”

“He tried Sir,” Splashdown replied sheepishly as she tried her best to keep her military bearing.

“And?”

“You forgot to take it with you.”

“Oh,” Turner raised his eyebrows.

Behind him Ryan turned away and stifled a laugh.

“Well I wonder why I did *that*?” Turner asked rhetorically. “Okay Lieutenant, fire up the engines and let’s get back to the station.”

“Yes Sir!” Splashdown said as she climbed back into the cockpit.

“Well Sir, have fun with your *interesting* meeting,” Ryan said with a lopsided grin as the Raptors engines began to wind up in the background.

“The hell you say, Commander, you’re coming with me.” Turner replied.

“But I just got here,” Ryan mock protested.

“Come on, Commander. Misery loves company.”

Ryan laughed and climbed into the passenger area next to the admiral where the both buckled themselves in.

“Seal check,” Splashdown called out as the door hissed shut next to them.

“Check,” Turner replied.

The air became quiet as the sound dampening insulation shut out the roar of the Raptor’s engines and the ship began to rise from the ground.

Ryan sniffed the air and said, “One of us needs a shower.”

Turner smirked. “Yes, Commander, *you do*.”

CYLON PRISON CAMP BAGHERA CITY, LEONIS

Hobbling along at a slow pace, Hygiena by his side, Slider made his way into the small two bedroom apartment that was deemed 'home'. Closing the door behind him, he sat down heavily in the padded chair that rested in the center of what passed for their living room.

Behind him, in the small kitchen that they shared, Hygiena unloaded the small basket of meat, fruit and vegetables that they had acquired at the marketplace in the center of the camp.

"Looks like we got a little better quality than last time," she called out. "No dark spots on the fruit, at least."

"I hope so," Slider replied breathing hard as pain shot up his leg. "I'm getting tired of the anti-radiation meds we have to take every time we take a bite from an apple. Sometimes I think the cure will kill us before the fallout does."

They both remained silent for a long moment. They had learned quickly that the Cylons tended to monitor the small apartments they had set up for their captive population. People who talked about escape or resistance tended to go missing fast.

"Are we still meeting with Steve for cards tonight?" Hygiena asked, using the code phrase they had devised for a meeting with other local dissenters.

"Yeah," Slider replied nonchalantly. "He wants us to bring a bottle of something strong." Another code phrase to indicate that there was something important going on.

Hygiena laughed, keeping up the pretense. "You would think that he has enough bottle of strong stuff with that still he has in the house."

"I guess he's tired of the same old, same old," Slider shrugged. "I'll hobble on over to Tom's and get a bottle or two of that purple swill he's got. That should teach Steve a lesson about appreciating what he has."

"The hell you will," Hygiena protested as she came back to the living room and sat across from him. "That leg of yours is still infected. *I'll* go see Tom. He likes me so I can get it cheaper."

"As long as you don't wind up paying for it on your back," Slider warned.

Hygiena arched an eyebrow as she stood to depart. "With him? I'd rather frak a Cylon."

"Be careful what you wish for," Slider retorted.

She nodded and left without another word, leaving Slider alone in the house. Only then did he exhale sharply and allow the real pain he felt to contort his face into an expression of agony.

Lifting his leg he rolled up his pant leg to reveal the flesh beneath. It was angry with red blue and black discolorations running up and down the limb like a haphazard patchwork of color.

After the Cylons had interrogated him they had done nothing more than splint his leg so that he could move without their assistance. Nothing had been done to stall the infection growing inside his leg or to help promote the healing process.

He had been careful to limit how much Hygiene knew about his condition. Her own morale after being interrogated by the Cylons was fragile at best. He didn't want to burden her with his own physical shortcomings.

One thing was certain though— if Slider didn't find a way to control the infection in his leg, he would probably wind up losing it. He had seen firsthand how the Cylons treated and injured and needless to say he was less than impressed.

They tended to treat humans like organic machines, simply hacking off whatever was damaged and replacing it with a prosthetic as best they could.

That was something Slider didn't want.

His leg wasn't aching now. A small mercy that meant he might be able to get some sleep. He leaned back in his chair, closed his eyes and allowed exhaustion to overtake him

**COMMAND OPERATIONS CENTER
LOBO NEGRO
COPERNICUS**

Admiral Turner entered the command center and promptly returned the salute of Colonel Langley who was sitting at the watch officer's station and smiling. "Informal today, Sir?"

Turner snorted. "Wouldn't be if your boss had given me time to get some clothes."

"Sorry Admiral, I felt like this couldn't wait," General Connors said as he entered from his office door.

"Well if it's important enough for you to send a Raptor..."

"It is," Connors replied as he activated the central display screen. "The *Nova* picked this up two days ago on her long range scopes."

On the screen, a giant gas cloud could be seen. It seemed serene and peaceful.

"Nice nebula," Turner said dryly, arching an eyebrow. "Is *this* why I'm standing here in sweaty P.T. gear stinking up your Ops Center?"

Connors smiled. "Just watch."

Turner looked back at the screen and a moment later he saw a flash of light. On the border of the screen, numbers appeared as energy readings were taken.

"Freeze," Connors commanded, bringing the image to a standstill. "Now look at the energy readings and tell me what you see."

Turner looked closely and then blinked his eyes in surprise. “That’s not natural.”

“No,” Connors replied, “it’s not. That’s an FTL burst, specifically a Colonial FTL signature.”

“The only thing that could make that big of bang is a Battlestar,” Commander Ryan said.

“That’s what Commander Hatch thought too. He didn’t want to send in a recon by himself though especially not knowing what could be on the other side of that Nebula.” Connors said.

Turner nodded. “He made the smart call,” he said while stroking his chin thoughtfully. “Still, we need to find out what’s in there. If there are other Colonial ships that survived the attacks, it could only help our cause.”

Connors nodded in agreement. “Who do we send though? The *Prometheus* isn’t in any shape to travel, nor is the *Celestial*.”

“We send the *Ares* and the *Eternal* along with the *Vigilant*, the *Saber* and the *Crossbow*. That should be enough to hold the line if we find any nasty surprises on the other side,” Turner said.

“Think this could be a Cylon trap?” Ryan asked.

“Better to assume *that* than to assume its safe,” Turner replied grimly. “Return to your ship and get her prepared for departure. I want to leave in thirty six hours.”

“You’re coming with us?” Ryan asked.

“Yes,” Turner nodded, “I’ll be temporarily transferring my flag to the *Ares* for this mission. You’ll still retain command of the ship, though. I will just supervise the overall operation.”

“Very good Sir,” Ryan saluted. “We’ll see you when you get there.”

Turner returned the salute and watched as Ryan left and then turned back to Connors. “While I’m gone I’ll need you to—”

“I want to come with you on this one,” Connors interrupted.

Turner paused for a moment, taken aback by the firmness in the General’s voice. “General, are you sure about this? I don’t like having us both gone at the same time.”

“I know, and normally I would agree but I need to see this through for myself.”

Turner leaned forward on the display table. “Okay General, you want to fill me in on *why* this is so important to you?”

Connors took a deep breath. “My last orders from Admiral Nagala were to rendezvous with the *Galactica*. When we found the debris in orbit of Ragnar I thought she was destroyed. Now that our teams have discovered that she probably survived the attack there *and* we discover this evidence...”

Turner nodded as he stood straight. “I understand your feelings, General, but I am still inclined to ask you to stay. If the Cylons find us and attack—”

“With our only two operational Battlestars off on maneuvers, if the Cylons attack then we’re frakked either way,” Connors countered.

“True but—”

“Admiral, let me tell you something— when I first joined the Colonial Marines I was an enlisted man from Sagitaron. I applied for OCS three times and was turned down each time because of where I came from. I was finally accepted because my X.O., Major Nagala, pulled some strings for me. After that he always checked up on me and made sure I was doing well. I wouldn’t be a General now if he hadn’t started me down this path. I *owe it* to his memory to carry out his last orders.”

Turner paused, and then nodded understandingly. “Okay General, you’re in. You can tag along on my ship. Bring some Marines too, in case we have to land anywhere.”

Connors smiled. “I’ll see to it, and thanks.”

“Anytime,” Turner replied with a smirk. “Now, I’m going to go find a shower before I kill everyone with my stench.”

CHAPTER 2

Hard Time

**CYLON PRISON CAMP
BAGHERA CITY, LEONIS**

Slider moved slowly but steadily down the path toward the small building that housed Steve Layton and Shelly Omega. Beside him walked Hygiena, the bottle of wine she had procured from Tom clutched tightly in her hand.

After what she had done to procure it, she wasn’t going to allow it to slip and break on the hard ground. She also wasn’t going to admit to Slider the price she had paid for it because, while it hadn’t put her on her back, her knees were definitely sore.

The door it opened before they could knock to reveal Steve waiting with a smirk on his face. “We heard you hobbling down the road,” he said pointing at Slider’s injured leg. “You know you better get that looked at before the Cylons take you to the chop shop.”

“Yeah yeah,” Slider said. “Just point me toward a chair, okay? This frakking thing hurts.”

Hygiena rolled her eyes and shook her head. “Here’s that bottle you asked for,” she said as she moved past Steve and guided Slider to a chair.

Steve smiled. "A bottle of Tom's finest I see. Thank you so much."

Hygiena nodded and helped prop Slider's leg up. "So are the cards all set up?"

This was the code phrase that asked if they had disabled the Cylon listening devices.

"We're good to go."

Suddenly there was a knock at the door. She looked up in alarm but relaxed as Steve raised a calming hand. "I'm expecting company, someone I'd like you to meet."

She and Slider watched as the door opened to reveal two young men. One had an olive complexion and short black hair. He was thin but not gaunt and had a familiar face. The other one, a young light skinned black teenager with strong features and a muscular build, had a strong presence about him, like he radiated authority.

"I'd like to introduce two very special people to you," Steve said as he closed the door behind him, "This is Matt, and his friend here is Alex. They're with the resistance."

Slider arched an eyebrow, his mind pushing the pain away. "How did you guys get in here?"

Campagna smiled. "We have our ways. Steve here has told us a lot about you guys."

"He's told us about you too," Slider replied cautiously.

"And just *what* has he told you?" The boy named Alex asked as he did his best to look imposing.

Slider sat up straighter and took a sip of his booze. "He told us that you need help. He says you've scored some small victories over the Cylons but you took heavy losses, too."

Campagna nodded. "Go on."

"He gave me the run down on your last two engagements."

"And?"

Slider chuckled. "To be honest, your tactics sucked. You brought a large force into a frontal engagement with the Cylons, lost twenty people and for what? Two crates of food and a barrel of fuel? Not the best way to manage your forces."

"Those were important victories—" Alex began to say.

"They were crap, kid. The only reason the Cylons didn't bother retaliating is because to them you're just a pack of animals who pose no real threat. Better to let the radiation sickness wear you down than waste ammo and resources to do it."

Alex snorted. "And who are *you* to judge *us*? You some kind of tactical genius or something?"

"No, but it doesn't take one to see that you're making mistakes," Slider replied taking another swig. "I did learn a little some things from someone who *is*, though."

“And who would that be?” Alex asked with scorn.

“You’re dad.”

Alex stiffened. “How do you know—”

“For one, you look *just* like him and two, I’ve seen the pictures your dad keeps of you in his office,” Slider replied.

“That’s a load of shit,” Alex scoffed. “His ship was destroyed with all hands somewhere out past Ragnar.”

“That’s what you get for listening to the Cylons,” Hygiena smirked.

“You’re dad is alive and well and the *Prometheus* is now the flagship of what’s left of the Colonial Fleet,” Slider explained.

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

Slider took a large gulp of his drink. “Because I was the *Prometheus* C.A.G. up until we were captured six weeks ago.”

Alex and Matt looked at each other for a long moment, then tensed as the sound of heavy metallic footfalls began crunching toward them.

“Relax,” Slider said calmly as he passed his glass to Hygiena for a refill, “it’s their hourly patrol.”

“How do you know that?” Alex hissed. “What if they’re on their way to—”

Slider chuckled. “Boy, if they were coming for you then I *guarantee* one thing,” he said as he raised his now full glass in silent salute. “You would *never* know it.”

COMBAT INFORMATION CENTER BATTLESTAR ARES OUTBOUND FROM COPERNICUS

It had been thirty six hours since he had given the command to mobilize the fleet and as ordered, they were underway with a minimum of fuss. As usual, Admiral Turner was impressed with the people under his command.

Moving in standard formation, the two mighty Battlestars plowed through the vast emptiness of space with their Gunstar escorts following closely behind them. All were fully manned and ready for combat.

Beside him, Alpha, the Cylon yeoman who served as Commander Ryan’s Operations officer, stirred as he double checked his readings. “X.O., we have reached the outer marker.”

“Thank you, Alpha,” Sheba responded. “Contact Captain Rex and tell him to have his Raiders stand by.”

“By your command,” Alpha responded dutifully.

Turner winced at the all-too-familiar response. He knew it was a pre-programmed response to commands from superior officers left over from the original Graystone programming package given to all Cylons before the first war. Still, it rankled him to hear the words.

“Orders, Admiral?” Commander Ryan asked.

Turner spoke quietly as he continued to stare at the star chart in front of him. “Prepare for combat jump.”

“Aye sir,” Ryan said as he turned to Sheba. “X.O., start the clock. Alpha, copy to all commands: Stand by to jump.”

“Understood sir,” Sheba said as she picked up her handset. “Attention all commands: sync jump clocks on my mark and stand by for combat jump- *Mark!*”

“Sixty-seconds until combat jump,” Alpha reported.

“Jump drives charging, all stations secure and standing by,” Sheba announced.

“Very well,” Ryan said as he noticed something from the corner of his eye. “Check that red light on cooling manifold three.”

“I’m on it, Sir,” Captain Margaritell replied as he examined the readout. “False indicator, Sir. All lines read nominal.”

Ryan nodded.

“Trouble?” Turner asked.

Ryan shook his head. “No Sir. She’s just a bit older than most so she needs a little extra attention when we ask her to step up.”

Turner chuckled. “We call that a ship having ‘personality.’”

“I call it being old as dirt,” Alpha quipped.

Turner, Ryan and Sheba all looked at Alpha for a long moment and then started laughing.

Alpha, his metallic face expressionless, shrugged. “And they say Cylons have no sense of humor.”

This caused them to laugh more, so much so that they were caught by surprise as the wave of energy generated by their jump drives washed over the fleet and carried them to a distant region of space.

Turner blinked hard, letting the dizzy feeling of nausea that always comes with a jump fall away from him. "Report."

"All ships accounted for and in formation, Admiral," Alpha dutifully replied. "Raiders are launching now to establish a screen."

Turner nodded. "Very good, Alpha. Copy to all commands: Assume delta formation and proceed at half speed."

"By your—"

Turner held up his hand. "I'm not your master, Alpha. 'Yes Sir' will do just fine."

"Yes Sir," Alpha replied.

"Get me the *Nova*," Turner commanded.

"Aye Sir," Sheba responded as she pushed a button. "You're on."

"*Nova* Actual, this is the Admiral- Launch your Vipers and have them hold back behind the line of Raiders from the *Ares*."

"Yes Sir," Commander Hatch replied. "What about our Raptors?"

"The Raiders have better shielding on their equipment and we don't know what kind of EM that nova is putting out yet. Until I know it's safe, I want them to stay in the barn."

"Sir, if it's safe enough for the Cylons, it's safe enough for us."

"Negative, Commander. The Centurions volunteered for this mission because they knew the risks. Hold your people back until I give the order."

Hatch was silent for a moment then responded. "Understood Sir."

"*Ares* out."

Ryan nodded his thanks to the Admiral. They had discussed Captain Rex's request that they lead the mission into the nova and both had agreed that the Centurions volunteering like that would go a long way to cementing a trust between them and their human counterparts.

"Sir, message from Rex," Sheba said, "They're into the nebula. Dradis is useless and comms are spotty at best."

"Have them form a conga line to relay comms," Ryan ordered.

"Aye Sir."

COLONIAL CYLON RAIDER 35 NEBULA 7414

The light gleaming off of Cylon Commander R3X, known informally to his commander as Rex, didn't faze his two subordinates that piloted their Cylon Raider at the lead of the Colonial formation. Not that he expected them to notice since aesthetics weren't a priority in the programming of a Cylon Centurion.

They had been inside the nebula for an hour now slowly and methodically probing for the enemy and while radiation levels were elevated to the range of mild danger for a human, Rex hadn't even noticed it on his internal monitoring array.

"Report status," the gold plated Cylon commanded.

"Status unchanged. All fighters maintaining formation, course and speed," the pilot replied in his robotic monotone.

Rex processed the information at the speed of light and made a command decision.

"Very well, increase speed to—"

"Alert, dradis contact ahead," the second Centurion announced.

"Define and extrapolate," Rex commanded as he tapped into his own data feed.

"Multiple dradis contacts," the pilot replied. "Erratic flight pattern suggests debris field ahead."

"Commander, the nebula is clearing. Now getting readings from a planet within the cloud."

Rex examined his own data feed and confirmed his pilot's initial readings. "Are there any signs of enemy activity?"

"Negative, however there are signs of a recent conflict in the vicinity of the planet. Radiation signatures indicate reactor breaches from both Cylon and Colonial sources," the pilot reported.

"Understood," Rex said as he opened a channel. "*Ares* actual this is Raider three five..."

COMBAT INFORMATION CENTER BATTLESTAR AREA NEBULA 7414

At flank speed it only took fifteen minutes for the *Ares* and her flotilla to punch through the nebula cloud that surrounded the habitable planet in front of them. Like a well coordinated procession the fleet moved from the clouds as the purple and red gasses flowed along their hulls.

"Sir we have cleared the nebula and are free to navigate," Alpha reported.

"Launch all wings," Ryan commanded as he studied the static riddled dradis display. "I want a thorough recon of the system."

Sheba nodded and set to work issuing the orders as Turner and Ryan continued to study the situation.

“Sir, I’m picking up two Colonial signals,” Alpha announced.

“Where?” Turner asked.

“One is coming from the planet and the other is coming from a location three hundred clicks off our starboard bow,” Alpha replied as he studied the signal pattern on his display. “It appears to be a Colonial class four auto-distress beacon.”

“Class four?” Ryan asked. “Only Battlestars carry those.”

“And they are only activated if the ship has been destroyed,” Turner added with finality. “Can you get a read on the I.D. code?”

“Yes Sir,” Alpha answered as he checked the code against the Colonial Registry of Ships. “Code reads Battlestar *Pegasus*, Sir.”

Ryan and Turner locked eyes. “Cain.”

CHAPTER 3

Dust in the eyes of men

CYLON PRISON CAMP
BAGHERA CITY, LEONIS

Slider flexed his leg enjoying the minimal amount of pain he felt. It had been several weeks since the meeting with Alex and Matt and the antibiotics they provided had finally begun to cure the infection in his leg. Now he could walk on it and use it with only a slight limp.

Today he would meet with them again but in a different location. He had important information for them but security had been tightened due to a recent escape attempt. Seven people had tried to flee beyond the perimeter fence only to be gunned down by the Centurions in the guard towers.

Now, more than ever, they would have to be cautious.

The door creaking open caused Slider to sit upright as his hand reached for the metal bar he kept hidden by his chair. His eyes narrowed as a tall broad shadow fell across him.

“Jumpy today, aren’t we flyboy?” Tom said with a smirk as he entered the room.

Slider let out the breath he had been holding and relaxed. “Yeah, well with the way people have been disappearing at night...”

Tom nodded as he took a seat. “Jackie and Antony were taken last night.”

“That’s seven in a week,” Slider replied.

“Something has to be done,” Tom sighed, “or else none of are going to survive.”

“Something’s going to be done,” Slider replied.

“Like what?” Tom asked.

Slider smirked and shook his head. “Not yet, my friend. The less you know the better.”

“For who?” Tom asked. “I’ve lost my friends, my family and damn near everyone else I’ve ever frakkin’ loved to this hell hole. I’m tired of it and I want it to be over!”

Slider nodded and patted him on the shoulder reassuringly. “Soon enough buddy, soon enough. In the mean time just be patient. I have something in the works that’s going to get us all out of this.”

“What an interesting little petting zoo you’ve created here, Simon,” Lucifer said as he stared with disgust down at the prison camp below. “Now tell me why this was so important that I needed to leave my ship and travel to this dirtball.”

“As you know, the experiment with Number 8 to interbreed with a human was a success,” Simon began.

“Oh yes, it was such a marvelous success that we haven’t been able to recreate it,” Lucifer snarled. “And what’s even better? The bitch turns traitor to her own people and runs off with her human lover. Yes, I think we can call this experiment an unqualified success. It still doesn’t explain why I’m here.”

Unfazed Simon continued as if Lucifer hadn’t spoken. “Before she abandoned her mission with her lover we were able to get some interesting findings from the genetic samples she gave us.”

“And?” Lucifer demanded impatiently.

“We’ve found that Agathon carried a unique genetic marker, something that 99% of other humans we have tested didn’t have. We believe it was this marker that allowed Number 8 to successfully conceive with him.”

“Well that’s wonderful,” Lucifer scowled. “You brought me all the way here from The Veil just so you could tell me that you figured out how this *one in a billion human*, that we no longer have access to by the way, could knock up a Cylon? Well *that* was certainly worth the trip.”

Lucifer turned to leave shaking his head. “Next time you have something to tell me, send a letter.”

“We’ve found someone in the camp with the same genetic marker.”

This stopped Lucifer in his tracks. “You’ve found another?”

“Yes.”

Slowly Lucifer turned around. “Okay, maybe you aren’t as useless as I thought. Elaborate for me.”

“We brought her in several weeks ago, after the battle with the *Prometheus*. She carries the genetic marker needed for interbreeding and moreover, we think we can transfer that marker to other humans without rejection by use of a specific gene therapy.”

“So you’re telling me that we can create an entire race of human/Cylon hybrids?” Lucifer asked.

“Not only that—we have the technology and ability to engineer them to be superior to both.” Simon stated proudly.

Lucifer nodded approvingly. “Then by all means, proceed.”

**PORTSIDE HANGAR
BATTLESTAR ARES
IN ORBIT OF AN UNKNOWN PLANET
NEBULA 744**

Admiral Turner fought to keep his emotions in check as he stared at the large rectangular box laying before him. It was scorched and dented but the compressed duranium plating had held against, what must have been the hellish forces that had destroyed the Battlestar *Pegasus*.

That the core log resembled a coffin was an irony not lost on the Admiral as he kneeled down and touched it. Slowly he ran his fingers along the lettering that had been nearly burned off and rested his hand where it said 'BG 62'.

"Get this thing opened and start the download as soon as possible," he commanded.

"Right away Sir," Captain Margaritell answered. "C'mon Chief, let's get this thing down to Bay Five where I can get a crack at it."

Turner watched for a long moment as the data core was led away before turning back to Commander Ryan. "What the frak was Cain doing way the hell out here?"

Ryan shrugged. "Who knows? This nebula provides good dradis cover and the planet below is semi-habitable. Maybe she was using it as a base to stage raids on the Cylons."

Turner nodded. "That *would be* something she would do. Have the scout teams departed for the planet yet?"

"Yes sir," Ryan replied. "They should be reporting back any time now."

"Let's get back to—"

"Pass the word throughout the ship: Admiral Turner, Commander Ryan: Please report to C.I.C."

Turner shrugged. "Looks like they beat us to the punch."

It only took a few moments for the two to reach the C.I.C. which was buzzing with activity when they arrived. "Admiral on deck," a Centurion announced.

"Report," Ryan commanded.

Turner fell back as his old X.O. took charge of the C.I.C. After all, it was *his* ship and he was just along for the ride.

"Report from the ground team, sir," Alpha announced. "It seems there was a fledgling human colony on the ground."

"That would go along with what we were thinking," Ryan said as Turner approached.

"There's something else though, sir. It appears that this colony had been occupied by Cylons for some time, at least three months."

Ryan arched an eyebrow. “Maybe Cain was on a rescue mission?”

“Then where are the Cylons? Did they bug out?” Turner asked shaking his head. “Something doesn’t make sense here.”

“There’s one more thing sir,” Alpha said. “The ground team has reported finding a survivor and she’s putting up quite a struggle. It seems she won’t let any of the Centurions near her.”

“We need to find out what the hell is going on here,” Turner said as he made for the hatch. “Have a Raptor waiting for me in five minutes.”

“The frak you say,” Ryan said. “That’s a hot landing zone and you’re a flag officer.”

“One of the nice things about being a flag officer is not having to answer to anyone, *Commander.*”

“And one of the nice things about being a friend is that I don’t give a damn. You’re not going down there— unless you take an armed escort.”

Turner fixed Ryan with a skeptical expression. “Are you giving me an order?”

“Consider it a very *strong* request,” Ryan said before adding, “Sir.”

Turner shrugged. “Fine, give me a squad of your best Centurions.”

Now it was Ryan who looked shocked. “You sure about that?”

“You say I can trust them and that’s good enough for me,” he said fixing his gaze on the Centurion standing closest to him. “Besides, these are our allies now. Time we started working together.”

“You’re the Admiral,” Ryan said.

“Yep,” Turner smiled. “I am indeed. Now let’s get moving before this survivor hurts someone.”

CHAPTER 4

On the bones of those before us

UNKNOWN HUMAN SETTLEMENT
UNKNOWN PLANET
NEBULA 7414

“C’mon you frakkin toasters, I can do this all gods damned day!” the woman said as she fired off another burst from her machine gun.

In front of her the old style Cylon Centurions took cover from her fire but refrained from answering in kind. This puzzled her more than the fact that it was old toasters and not the newer bullet head models that Leoben had sent to bring her in.

“Alright, fall back,” a voice said from behind them.

A *human* voice... or at least is sounded like one.

“Hello?” the voice was rich and baritone but not one she recognized.

It’s got to be a Cylon trick she thought as she watched the Centurions began to withdraw.

“Are you okay?” the same voice asked.

She remained silent for a long moment, before finally deciding to answer him. “Yeah, I’m fine. Send more toasters, the first ones were delicious!”

The voice chuckled. “The Centurions aren’t trying to harm you. They’re trying to help.”

“Yeah right,” she snorted. “Maybe you haven’t seen all of the decaying bodies lying around? It was the fraking Cylons who did that.”

“I know, I’ve seen the dead Centurions as well as the skin jobs,” the voice replied. “These Centurions are different though. They have chosen to work with us against their own.”

The female was silent for a long moment as she considered his words. All of her training warned her not to trust this voice but something else that she couldn’t put her finger on was urging her to. “What the hell?” she said to herself as she rose up and put the weapon down at her side. Besides, ff Sharon could turn, why not a Centurion?

“I’m coming out!”

“Okay, you’re safe.” The voice replied.

Moving from behind the stacked crates she had used as cover, the female in her dirt stained colonial greens and knitted cap cautiously made her way toward where the voice had originated from.

Rounding a corner she expected to see one of the Cylon skin jobs there. Instead what she saw made her eyes widen in surprise.

A tall black man with close cropped salt and pepper hair in a Colonial Blue officer's uniform and Admiral's rank stood before her with his arms crossed and behind him stood a squad of Centurions as well as several other humans.

"Holy frak," she whispered.

"Indeed," the Admiral said arching an eyebrow as he pointed to the captain's rank on her collar. "Is that legitimate or did you just find it somewhere?"

Snapping out of her surprise, the female came to attention and rendered a smart salute. "One hundred percent legitimate, sir. I'm sorry, I just... yeah."

The Admiral returned the salute. "At ease, Captain."

The woman relaxed visibly and Turner could see the signs of exhaustion on her face. "How long have you been here?"

"We got here over a year ago and settled on the planet. Three months ago, the Cylons came," she said her lips twisting into a snarl. "We frakking surrendered without a fight."

"That doesn't sound like the Admiral Cain I knew," Turner commented.

That brought the female back to life. "You knew Admiral Cain?"

Turner smiled. "I was her X.O. before I took over the *Prometheus*."

The woman's eyes widened. "*Prometheus*?" she practically gasped. "We got word that the entire fleet was lost."

"We were," Turner paused as he chose his words carefully, "on long range recon out beyond the red line. We got back as fast as we could but it was all over by then."

"Admiral?"

Turner moved to look as another man in Colonial greens wearing a General's rank approached. "Scouting parties have finished their sweep. We found a lot of bodies and only a few survivors, including our gun slinger here."

"What the hell? Did the entire brass escape the attack?" the female said with a scowl on her face.

"This is General Connors," the Admiral explained. "He was in command of the Copernicus expedition when the attack happened."

"What's Copernicus?"

"It's a new colony we were setting up. Now it's the last refuge for humanity," Connors said.

“Damn, if only the Admiral had known about that we might not have ended up in this shit hole.”

“Not much could be done, especially with Cain hiding out here—” Turner started.

“Cain was never here,” the woman said shaking her head. “I’m talking about Admiral Adama,”

“Adama?” Turner asked. “William Adama?”

“Of the Battlestar *Galactica*, yeah,” the woman said. “He was promoted after Admiral Cain died.”

Turner was silent for a moment as he processed this new information. Finally, he found his voice again saying “Obviously there’s a lot I need to catch up on Captain...?”

“Thrace, sir. Kara Thrace. Call sign is Starbuck.”

“Well Starbuck,” Turner said offering her his hand. “Welcome back to Colonial Fleet.”

She took his hand and shook it with a smile. “Thank you sir. Welcome to New Caprica.”

CYLON PRISON CAMP BAGHERA CITY, LEONIS

Hygiena watched intently as Alex and Matt entered the hut she shared with Slider. After making sure they hadn’t been seen, she closed the door and secured it with a piece of wood. It wouldn’t hold long if the Cylons decided to bust in but it might give them a crucial few seconds.

“Glad you made it,” Slider said as he gestured them to a seat.

“So are we,” Matt replied. “We dodged two patrols trying to get here. Seems that the Cylons are catching on to us.”

“They learn fast,” Slider said. “But I think I have a way to get some help here.”

“How?” Alex asked.

“Something you said during the last meeting about a tower north of here,” Slider said. “I did some checking and it’s a Cylon hyperpulse station.”

“A what?” Alex asked.

“A hyperpulse station,” Slider repeated.

“It’s a way to send messages faster than light,” Matt explained. “If we didn’t have those, communications between the colonies would take years.”

“If we could get to that station and send a message to your dad, we could get some help here,” Slider said.

“If you even knew where to find him,” Alex snorted. “He’s probably forgotten about this place.”

Slider shook his head. “He doesn’t know about it or else he would have already been here. The Jon Turner I know doesn’t leave anyone behind.”

“Okay, let’s just say that you’re right-- How do we operate it? I don’t know how to use something like that.”

“I can help there,” Matt spoke up. “Basic hyperpulse operation was a required course at the university.”

“I thought you might know a little something,” Slider said with his trademark smirk. “Now we need a plan to get out of here.”

“We can work on that another night,” Hygiena said suddenly. “I’m seeing movement from down the block.”

Alex and Matt were on their feet quickly. “Fastest way out?”

“Through the back window,” Slider pointed. “Return here in two days and I’ll have a plan for us.”

“You got it,” Matt said shaking Slider’s hand. “Good luck.”

“You too.”

Slider and Hygiena watched them go and then sat down, relaxing as much as they could.

“You really think we can get out of here?” she asked.

Slider nodded, taking a sip of his hooch. “We have to. All these people are counting on us.”

**FLIGHT OPERATIONS DECK
ALLIANCE WARSTAR PANDORA
SECTOR 7- G**

Precentor Julian Titus watched calmly as *Accipiter* class fighters flew patrol past the observation port he currently occupied. His heart beat steady as a fire built inside him, a fire that burned as bright as the ones that had consumed Terra not but six months before.

He had watched in horror as the Alliance Expeditionary Fleet had been methodically broken down like a child breaking apart its toys for amusement. He had watched on a ship that was running, *running* from the fight as fast as it could while in the distance the capital world of the once mighty Terran Alliance was bathed in nuclear fire by the abominations that the Twelve Colonies had deigned to call Cylons.

This mechanical plague that had descended on them like ghosts from the mists of space had managed to roll over the entire Alliance Military within a week. It angered him to no end that he and the

small fleet that had accompanied his ship had been forced to run from these monsters but what choice had they?

Sixteen worlds deliberately sterilized of every single living being on them. Only Carollon had been spared because the insectoid Ovions had welcomed the Cylons as liberators from their human oppressors.

Now the Ovions were rebuilding their world that had been shattered during the attack by the *Prometheus* not but eighteen months prior while the rest of the Alliance lay in ruins.

A quiet noise from behind him brought his thoughts back to the moment as he turned to face his superior officer and the now de-facto leader of the Alliance.

“Primus,” he said by way of greeting.

Primus Rollo Thomasi, the last surviving leader of the once powerful Terran Alliance nodded his greeting as he moved to stand next to Titus. Beyond the viewport, a desolate world surrounded by a nebula lay before him.

“Have the recon teams returned yet?”

“Yes Primus,” Titus replied. “They have recovered everything they could but not much was left. The colonials stripped the place bare before they left.”

“Have we confirmed the jump trace on the Raptor they left as rear guard?”

“Yes sir. It seems they jumped to a system that Bane visited during his outbound flight on the *Prometheus*.”

Thomasi nodded. “Recall the patrols and prepare to jump to that system.”

“Yes Primus,” Titus replied.

Thomasi smiled grimly. “Time for the *Prometheus* to meet her offspring.”

EPILOGUE

Guess who's coming to dinner

COMBAT INFORMATION CENTER
BATTLESTAR PROMETHEUS
COPERNICUS SYSTEM

Admiral Turner nodded approvingly as he surveyed the C.I.C. of his flagship and patted Captain Halloran on the back. “Seems that you’ve been busy while we were gone.”

“Yes sir,” Halloran replied. “All hull breaches are sealed and the affected sections have been repaired. We even managed to upgrade our systems with some of the experimental software from the Wolf.”

“Good work, all of you,” he said to the repair crews who had stopped to watch the exchange. “When can we put to space again?”

“We finished primary fueling this morning Sir,” Colonel Horvath replied with a smirk as she approached from the gunnery station. “All ordnance is loaded and ready as well. All we need is to get our birds back on board from your little field trip—”

“ALERT!” a voice shouted from one of the sensor stations.

“Report,” Horvath commanded as she moved to the command table.

“Multiple dradis contacts at the edge of the system, Sir,” the technician announced. “I count fourteen capital class power signatures, CBDR. Range: seven fifty.”

“Who do we have out there?” Turner asked.

“Two of General Connors picket ships,” Horvath answered.

“Never a dull moment,” Turner said. “Actions stations, all ships set condition one and stand by for orders. Halloran, get my ship free of the dock.”

“Preliminary I.D. coming in now,” Horvath said, a puzzled expression on her face.

“How many Cylons am I dealing with Colonel?”

“Not Cylons Sir,” Horvath said looking up from her display. “These power signatures are Alliance.”

Turner shut his eyes. “You have got to be frakking kidding me...”

**CYLON PRISON CAMP
BAGHERA CITY, LEONIS**

Slider, Hygiena, Matt and Alex studied the sand table before them intently as two others kept watch for Cylon patrols in the footpaths between buildings of the camps. It was a perfect replica of the prison camp down to the footpaths and fences surrounding it. Hygiena had done well memorizing the layout and reproducing it accurately.

“So we start by taking out the guards over here with grenade launchers,” Matt said as he pointed to a guard tower on the south east fence. “We wait for the Cylons to react—”

“Which they won’t do,” Slider interjected.

“Correct,” Matt agreed as he pointed to a location on the west side fence. “Which is why we have a small team detonate a charge here.”

“The Cylons *will* react to that,” Alex said proudly.

“Because they’ll think the first attack was a decoy for the escape attempt that they’ll *think* is going down right there,” Slider said pointing to Matt’s finger.

“Which is when our real extraction team will quietly cut a hole over here,” Matt said pointing to the eastern fence. “And you guys slip out, hopefully undetected.”

Slider nodded approvingly. “Good use of deception and force. Who’s idea?”

Matt patted Alex on the back. “He came up with it, right down to the operational details.”

“Not bad kid,” Slider said. “I suggest you add another fire team to the feint on the west side though just to convince the Cylons that they’re really onto something.”

Alex nodded. “We can do that. Now, when does this go down?”

“The sooner the better,” Slider said. “We need to get a message off to your dad ASAP.”

“Tomorrow then?” Hygiena asked. “That Cylon Simon has been testing my blood a lot more the last few days. It’s giving me the creeps.”

“Tomorrow,” Slider said. “0200 local time so we don’t risk any collateral casualties.”

“Sounds good,” Matt agreed. “Tomorrow night, you guys are getting the frak out of here.”

Slider took a sip of his booze and smiled. “Not one damn moment too soon either.”

BONUS

The Future Part 2

HARVARD UNIVERSITY
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
JAN 13TH, 2005

Dr. Albert Parker rubbed his tired eyes as he read the horrible work in front of him that pretended to be a term paper on Greek Mythology. Shaking his head, he leaned back and stretched as the door opened behind him.

Turning he stifled a yawn only to see a face he hadn't in many years. She was pretty, with a radiant smile and playful eyes that were framed by long blonde hair.

"Doctor Carrie Thayer," he said as he stood up to greet her.

"Doctor Parker," she replied with a genuine smile. "Long time no see."

"Indeed," Parker said as he shook her hand and offered her a seat. "I tried finding you a couple of years ago but it seemed like you just dropped off the face of the planet."

She smiled wryly. "I guess I did. I'm back though and I need your help with something."

Opening her briefcase, she presented a folder to the doctor who perched his thin glasses upon his nose and read the outer label.

N.S.A. FILE 2001/07/26-5417579 TOP SECRET

"You work for the government?" he asked looking up at her.

"Yes," Thayer replied.

"After what they did to us in Central America?"

"*Because* of that actually," she said. "They hired me last year to reopen the case."

"But they've had it all this time," Parker said recalling that fateful day in July of 2001 when his entire research team had been sequestered for a week and all of their equipment and data confiscated.

"Well September 11th changed things for us," she said. "They're just now getting back to it."

"Ah," Parker said looking at the folder again. "What have you found?"

"That's the problem," Thayer said with a sheepish expression. "We haven't been able to decipher any of the information we found."

Parker opened the folder and the photos that greeted him were nothing short of amazing. “Is that... a spacecraft?”

“We think so,” Thayer replied. “We can’t tell anything about it though because all of the information is written in a language we can’t even begin to comprehend. That’s where we need your help, if you’re willing.”

Parker smiled as he looked up. “Of course I’m willing to help,” he said as he held up a photo of a boxy looking golden craft with stubby wings. “I have *got* to see this.”

“You’re going to,” Thayer replied. “Pack your bags. We leave for D.C. as soon as you’re ready.”

Parker stood taking another look at the photo in front of him. A grand mystery left behind in a Mayan tomb and he was the one they had picked to solve it.

Shrugging, he left the boring mythology report behind and followed Thayer out the door, all the while chuckling at the irony of it all. *Maybe* he thought to himself, *the alien conspiracy mongers were right after all. Now what would be the odds of that??*

Special Thanks to all of the BSP fans out there who have waited so very patiently for this Episode. The Barge is on the move again so let’s finish this fight!