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'LITTLE ICARUS'

TEASER

FADE IN

EXT. CAPRICA - CAPRICA CITY (FLASHBACK).

The city of CAPRICA, a futuristic metropolis, burns. Fires rage across the city, and pillars of black smoke choke the sky. Silver crescent-shaped RAIDERS streak through the air, raining down havoc on the hapless humans. TRANSPORT SHUTTLES, trying to escape the constant bombardment, launch from platforms around the city. Most are shot down before they make it off the ground. A few clear through the chaos in the sky and jump out of the system. In the distance, a mushroom cloud rises from a nuclear attack.

CUT TO:

INT. CAPRICA - ICARUS' FAMILY HOME - CLOSET (FLASHBACK).

ICARUS, a young and wiry teenager, hides in his closet. Explosions rock the house, sending small waterfalls of plaster raining down from the ceiling. Panicked VOICES can be heard from outside the closet. Suddenly, the door opens. DANIEL, Icarus's forty-year-old father, grabs his son and yanks him from the small hiding place.

CUT TO:

INT. CAPRICA - ICARUS' FAMILY HOME - LIVING ROOM (FLASHBACK).

Daniel and Icarus race down the stairs into the living room. The walls are adorned with beautiful paintings and sculptures. Icarus's MOTHER, a frail but attractive woman in her thirties, and his two SISTERS, young twins, wait anxiously.

DANIEL

Come on, we need to leave now!

A sudden flash blinds the family. Daniel throws his family to the ground as a tremendous explosion blasts the windows to pieces. The mother screams. Daniel lifts his family and pushes them toward the door.

MOTHER

(in tears)

Oh gods, what are we gonna do?

DANIEL
(gruff)
Come on.

Daniel forces the family out into the streets.

CUT TO:

EXT. CAPRICA CITY - STREETS (FLASHBACK).

Icarus and his family run through a MOB of panicked Capricans, each trying to escape the attack. A few people stare into the sky, unable to pull themselves from the terrifying image. Daniel shoves these frozen pedestrians aside as he leads his family to safety.

CAPRICAN
They came back...oh gods have
mercy. They came back!

A raider swoops low and fires a salvo into nearby streets. The houses burst into flames. Icarus stops to stare at a PRIEST shouting at passersby near his burning church.

PRIEST
Make your peace with the gods. The
end is here.
(beat)
Make your peace with the gods. The
end is here.
(beat)
Make your peace with the gods.

Daniel gives the priest a dirty look and keeps his family moving.

CUT TO:

EXT. CAPRICA CITY - SHUTTLE PAD #1 (FLASHBACK).

Icarus and his family reach the first shuttle pad. A single transport rests on the ground, engines warming up. The thrum from the craft's engines reverberate through the air, pulsing like a beating heart. A group of SOLDIERS, lightly armed, try to keep an ever growing MOB at bay. Rocks are thrown and a few people fall down under the stampeding crowd. Daniel pushes his family forward, shouting at the mob to move.

DANIEL
Get out of the way!
(to family)
Stay together!

Daniel grips Icarus's hand tight, trying to keep everyone in line. They are fifteen feet from the door when the shuttle begins to launch. The door slides shut and the rockets ignite, propelling the huge craft skyward.

Everyone on the ground cowers from the shower of debris and smoke from the fiery engines. As they watch from the ground, a single raider makes a beeline for the shuttle and plants a missile clear through the center. The shuttle veers to the right, spins out, and explodes. Icarus's sisters scream and cry, clutching their mother close.

Daniel gathers his family and moves them toward another shuttle pad. Icarus falls down, dropping his father's hand. He looks around, trying to find his family in an endless sea of legs and torsos. Suddenly he is grabbed from behind. His father drags him up and toward another shuttle.

CUT TO:

EXT. CAPRICA CITY - SHUTTLE PAD #2 (FLASHBACK).

Daniel halts his family only fifty feet from another shuttle.

DANIEL
Come on. Run!

People shove and push, trying to get into the craft.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
Stay together! We're almost there!

The family runs, holding hands, toward the shuttle. The mob is all around, racing to escape the planet. Icarus pulls slightly ahead, trying in vain to drag his entire family with him. One of his sisters trips, halting the line. Icarus flies forward, losing his father's hand again, and he falls into the transport. He turns and sees his family struggling to move past the mob. Suddenly a door closes in front of him. The shuttle begins to launch.

CUT TO:

INT. CAPRICA - TRANSPORT SHUTTLE (FLASHBACK).

Icarus pounds a fist against the glass window. He watches his family drop away as the shuttle rises.

CUT TO:

EXT. SPACE - CAPRICA (FLASHBACK).

The shuttle clears the debris and chaos in space and jumps out of the system. A trio of raiders fly into the planet, launching salvos of nukes. The flashes of light grow until they consume everything.

CUT TO:

INT. GALACTICA - CADET DORMITORY.

Icarus, now an athletic young man, sits up in his bed as he wakes from the nightmare. Sweat drips down his forehead as he catches his breath. He looks at his surroundings and wipes a hand across his face. HOTDOG pulls open the curtains to Icarus's bed and looks inside.

HOTDOG

You OK?

Icarus nods. Hotdog hits him in the shoulder, smiling.

HOTDOG (CONT'D)

Well, I hope you got some sleep.

Training starts

(looks at watch)

In about forty minutes. Get suited up. Dress uniforms.

Hotdog pounds on the walls, waking the other NUGGETS, each young and eager pilots.

HOTDOG (CONT'D)

Wake up! Mess call is in five minutes!

Icarus rubs his eyes and watches the other cadets get out of bed. He lets out a sigh and begins to dress.

CUT TO:

INT. GALACTICA - CIC.

ADMIRAL ADAMA and COLONEL TIGH stand around the central console in the CIC, reading through the morning's briefings. Tigh scratches the back of his head and subconsciously checks the patch over his eye. Adama hands Tigh a piece of paper.

ADAMA
(reading)
It's going to be another one of
those days.

TIGH
(grunts)
When is it anything else?

Adama smiles and continues reading his paper. LIEUTENANT DUALLA walks into the room. She hands Adama a slip of paper.

DUALLA
Message from the Jericho, sir.

Adama reads the note. He looks troubled.

TIGH
What is it?

Adama hands the paper to Tigh. He nods to Dualla and she leaves.

ADAMA
Another report.

TIGH
Gods be damned. This is becoming a
circus. Some civilian sees a flash
in space and all of the sudden the
sky is falling.
(beat)
Can't they go one day without some
sort of hysterical outburst?

ADAMA
Doesn't seem likely.

Tigh snorts and crumples the note. He tosses it aside and paces around the central table.

TIGH

There's hasn't been so much as a sniff from the Cylons in three months and these people are itching for something. It's probably a pulsar or some damned comet.

ADAMA

Still, can't be too careful. Maybe we should get the CAP to look at it.

TIGH

(snorts)

I can't believe this. We're running the Vipers dry as is. We make them run further out and we're gonna be towing them home.

An alarm blares for a moment. Adama looks over to the RADAR TECHNICIAN, a young man of twenty.

ADAMA

What is it?

TECHNICIAN

We have a contact on Dradis. It's moving near the moon.

ADAMA

Launch alert Vipers.
(to the technician)
Where is it moving?

TECHNICIAN

Heading is two-one-zero. Wait.
(beat)
It's gone.

The technician looks at Adama. He shrugs. The CIC is silent as everyone looks at the now empty radar screen.

ADAMA

What the hell?

TIGH

It's a frakkin' You-Eff-Oh.

FADE OUT.

END TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN.

INT. GALACTICA - DINING HALL.

CADETS file through a breakfast line, holding trays in front of them. The nuggets all appear exhausted, having slept very little the night before. Icarus appears alert, his eyes darting around the room.

As they go through the line, CHEFS, middle-aged men with stained white uniforms, take the trays and dump piles of algae protein and egg-substitute onto the plates. SHOEHORN, a young female cadet, makes a disgusted face as the slop is shoveled on.

SHOEHORN

What is this?

CHEF

Eggs and Vegetables, minus the eggs
and vegetables.

SHOEHORN

Do you have anything else?

The chef stares deadpan at the cadet.

CHEF

An empty tray.

He holds the tray just out of reach.

SHOEHORN

(sulking)

Sorry, sir.

CHEF

Sir?

The chef looks at the assembled chefs and calls out to them.

CHEF (CONT'D)

Are we officers?

CHEFS

(shouting)

No. We work for a living.

The chef hands over the tray and Shoehorn moves on to a table. Icarus takes his mess and sits down next to her. A few other cadets eat quietly, until BACKDRAFT, an energetic and athletic young man, sits down.

BACKDRAFT
How'd everybody sleep?

No one speaks.

BACKDRAFT (CONT'D)
I slept like a baby. These bunks
are way better than anything on the
Polaris.

He looks around at the cadets.

BACKDRAFT (CONT'D)
So where are ya'll from? Come on,
we're gonna be a nugget class, we
have to be a family.

He looks at Shoehorn.

BACKDRAFT (CONT'D)
What's your name?

SHOEHORN
I'm Yana.

BACKDRAFT
Not your name, your *name*.

SHOEHORN
(after a beat)
Shoehorn.
(beat)
When I tested for flight status, I
rolled a wheel over the
instructor's foot.

The cadets burst into laughter. Icarus leans into his food, eating quietly. LONE WOLF, a heavyset young man, leans over.

LONE WOLF
And you passed?

SHOEHORN
I didn't say that was the only time
I took the test.

Hotdog walks over to the cadets, his plate covered in the same mess, but with a single roll.

He sits down and waits for the cadets to quiet down. They see the wings on his chest and clam up.

HOTDOG

Glad to see you all found the galley.

BACKDRAFT

Good morning, sir.

Hotdog glances sideways at Backdraft. The kid seems a little too eager to please.

HOTDOG

We won't always get to eat this well, so don't get used to it.

Shoehorn lifts her spoon and lets the "eggs" drizzle back down.

SHOEHORN

Is that a bad thing?

The cadets giggle. Hotdog digs into his meal.

HOTDOG

Are you ready to train?

BACKDRAFT

Always, sir.

STINGRAY, an older male cadet, slides his tray to the side.

STINGRAY

What's on the roster for today?

Hotdog stares at the man for a moment before recognition hits.

HOTDOG

Stingray? Gods, it's been a while since you've been on board.

(beat)

You never finished training on the Pegasus?

STINGRAY

I had two weeks left before she went down.

HOTDOG

Then you get to help me teach these nuggets.

The cadets glance around at each other, the idea of training causing their stomachs to flutter. Backdraft, still grinning, looks at Icarus.

BACKDRAFT

Hey, what's your name?

ICARUS

Icarus.

Icarus spoons another mouthful of algae into his mouth and leaves the table.

Across the room, CHIEF TYROL, and three DECK HANDS, all in orange coveralls, eat their breakfast.

TYROL

I just think it's ridiculous.

DECK HAND 1

And I think you're being close minded.

TYROL

You really believe the civilians?

DECK HAND 2

Chief, it's a mathematical probability. There are trillions of stars, and millions of star systems. Even if one in a million has a habitable planet, you have thousands upon thousands of possibilities for alien life.

TYROL

Don't. Don't even say that word. Gods, you'll have the whole ship talking about little green men and all that nonsense.

(beat)

I'm tired of breaking up these idiotic discussions. You want to jabber like frakheads on your own time, be my guest, but we can't let that interfere with work.

DECK HAND 3

I've been in space my whole life, and the only creatures I've seen are Cylons and us.

(beat)

And the XO.

CALLY walks over to the table and sits down next to Tyrol, giving him a quick peck on the cheek.

CALLY

What are you guys talking about?

TYROL

Nothing, these guys are sucked in by the new hysteria from the civvies.

CALLY

The UFOs?

TYROL

Yep. Tell these guys there is no such thing as a UFO.

CALLY

But there is.

Tyrol looks at his wife incredulously.

TYROL

Excuse me?

CALLY

My mother told me about them. When she was a little girl on Aieron, she saw a UFO fly over her farm. She said it was shaped like a giant cigar and hovered in the air without making a sound.

(beat)

She said it was the most beautiful thing she'd ever seen.

TYROL

(laughing)

I think your mother was a little moony, if you ask me.

Cally frowns and eats her meal in silence. Tyrol winces, realizing how callous the remark was.

TYROL (CONT'D)

Cally...I'm sorry. I've been running on fumes for the last few weeks. The Union's been dragging me from ship to ship trying to improve living conditions.

CALLY

And?

Tyrol puts a hand on her shoulder and squeezes.

TYROL

And that's no excuse to take it out on you.

CALLY

Thank you. Apology accepted.

Icarus walks passed the table. Tyrol glares.

TYROL

We've got bigger things to worry about. Namely a bunch of rookie stick-jockies about to wreck every one of our Vipers.

CUT TO.

INT. GALACTICA - HALLWAY.

Icarus and Hotdog walk down the hall toward the briefing room. They pass TECHNICIANS and PILOTS and CREWMEMBERS, each busy with their daily tasks.

HOTDOG

Why so quiet?

ICARUS

Didn't sleep well.

HOTDOG

You've been having those nightmares long?

ICARUS

(no answer)

HOTDOG

I know what it's like to be a pilot-in-training. You can't turn a cold shoulder to the other cadets. These guys are going to be your brothers and sisters for the rest of your life. If you don't get along with them, it's only going to get harder.

ICARUS
I just...I'm warming up.

HOTDOG
Looked more like crashing and
burning.
(beat)
What did you think of the other
cadets?

ICARUS
They seem OK. Backdraft certainly
has a nose for this.

Icarus looks at Hotdog and smiles.

HOTDOG
I had a kid like him when I was a
cadet. Wanted to be the favorite of
every instructor. He had all these
posters in his bunk of famous
pilots and action movies.
(beat)
Dreams of being a hero and flying
daring missions. He was washed
after a week. It's not the
loudmouths you'll need to worry
about.

ICARUS
Then who should I worry about?

STARBUCK (O.S.)
I swear, the only flights any of
your are taking is a trip out the
airlock if you don't shut the frak
up!

Hotdog and Icarus pause at the door.

HOTDOG
You're instructor.

They walk into the room...

CUT TO:

INT. GALACTICA - TRAINING ROOM.

LEE and STARBUCK stand at the front of the room by the
podium, looking over the training schedule.

LEE

I wish I could help. Anything to get out of this trial.

STARBUCK

Still hitting the books?

LEE

I haven't read this much since the Academy. I've gone through fifteen of my grandfather's books this week.

STARBUCK

Poor Lee, always the show-off.

LEE

(grinning)

That's *Major* Show-Off to you, captain.

Starbuck makes a face and smiles. Lee's gaze lingers for a moment before he pulls away.

LEE (CONT'D)

So, are you going to play nice or try and scare them?

STARBUCK

(raising an eyebrow)

What do you think?

STARBUCK (CONT'D)

(shouting at the cadets)

You have ten seconds to be in your seats before I start washing out frakheads!

The cadets drop like rocks into their seats.

LEE

Well done.

Lee walks toward the exit. Hotdog nods respectfully. Shoehorn stares at Lee, her eyes locked on his rank. Lee glares at the cadet and points at Starbuck. Shoehorn immediately shifts in her seat.

LEE (CONT'D)

They're all yours, captain.

Lee walks out of the room. Starbuck smiles and files through her papers. Hotdog bites his fist to avoid laughing.

STARBUCK
OK, let's begin.

CUT TO:

INT. GALACTICA - HELO AND ATHENA'S ROOM.

HELO paces around the room, his arms crossed. ATHENA stands in the center, rocking HERA in her arms. She glares at Helo as he passes.

HELO
What's not to understand?

ATHENA
Besides all of it?

HELO
Sharon, you knew how I felt. I've been losing my mind the past few weeks.

ATHENA
Is that what this is about? You're bored?

Helo lets out a deep breath and stands still.

HELO
It's not that simple. I'm a good pilot, a great pilot. But when I walk through the halls, I feel like...I don't even know. Like an outsider. Like I don't belong.

ATHENA
Karl, that's ridiculous.

HELO
Not to me. I'm stuck here, on this ship, cooped up in a room while my friends die out there.

ATHENA
Cooped up?

Athena sits down on the bed, her anger barely held in.

ATHENA (CONT'D)
Is that what Hera and I are to you?
A burden?

Helo deflates. He walks over to his wife and sits on the bed, taking her hand.

HELO
I'd never think of you as a burden.
(beat)
It's just...I feel neutered. I feel
like I've lost the respect of the
other pilots.

ATHENA
You've got the Admiral's respect.

HELO
And that's enough?

Helo looks at the clock on the wall.

ATHENA
I can't do this without you, Karl.
I can't raise Hera alone.

Helo runs a hand over his head.

HELO
I have to check in at the See-Eye-
See. The Ex-Oh wants me to check up
on those civilian complaints.

Helo walks to the door.

ATHENA
Karl.

Helo stops in the door.

ATHENA (CONT'D)
Your family needs you too.

HELO
I'll be back later.

Helo walks out. Athena shuffles over to the door, her eyes wet with tears. Hera starts to cry as Athena shuts the door.

CUT TO:

INT. GALACTICA - TRAINING ROOM.

The cadets sit in the dark and watch a VIDEO. On the screen, a RAIDER flies in behind a VIPER and fires its weapons, destroying the human ship.

The clip changes to another, from a gun-camera, that shows another VIPER falling to a trio of RAIDERS. The cadets' eyes widen as each ship explodes. Shoehorn looks away. Starbuck stands in the corner, watching the video.

STARBUCK

This is how you'll die.

Starbuck stops the video on a still of a RAIDER flying into the camera.

STARBUCK (CONT'D)

Not in some blaze of glory. Not saving the Fleet. Not in a coffin with medals and ribbons on your chest.

She lets the video play and the RAIDER runs through the camera, the video ending in static.

STARBUCK (CONT'D)

You'll die in a puff of smoke and fire, screaming the last idiotic thought that crosses your mind before everything goes black.

Hotdog, sitting in the back, kicks Shoehorn's seat and motions for her to pay attention. Icarus, front and center, leans forward intently.

STARBUCK (CONT'D)

Pay attention, nuggets. This is usually where I tell you how noble our cause is, and how different you all are from the rest of the frakheads in the civilian ships.

(beat)

But that's not the truth. If you make pilot, you will be loathed by the civilians as being cocky and militaristic. Your peers will constantly judge your every move, and your death will mean nothing.

She crosses the room, looking each cadet in the eye.

STARBUCK (CONT'D)

But when--not if but when--the toasters decide to show up, we are the *only* line of defense Galactica has. And if Galactica falls

(beat)

It's game over.

Icarus has been drawing something on a sheet of paper. He looks down and admires his work. On the sheet, a VIPER flies majestically through space, twin guns firing. As he adds more detail and shading, the sheet is ripped from his hands.

Starbuck looks at the paper, crumples it up and tosses it to the ground.

STARBUCK (CONT'D)

Do you know what the average life expectancy is for a Viper pilot?

No one answers.

STARBUCK (CONT'D)

Four months.

CUT TO:

INT. GALACTICA - MEMORIAL WALL.

The cadets and some MOURNERS stand around the hallway, staring into the thousands of photographs on the walls. AURORA, a petite and excitable cadet, starts to cry when she sees a picture of someone she knew.

AURORA

He...he was in my class on Geminon.

Shoehorn comforts the girl. Icarus walks passed, barely interested.

Helo walks into the hall and stands near Starbuck.

HELO

These the new nuggets?

STARBUCK

Yep. Aren't they cute?

HELO

What style are you using?

One of the cadets looks over at Starbuck. Starbuck glares and the cadet quickly looks away.

STARBUCK

What do you think?

HELO

Would you mind if I...

STARBUCK
Go right ahead.

Helo smiles, takes a breath, and wades into the crowd of cadets.

HELO
What in holy frak is this?

Everyone stares at Helo.

HELO (CONT'D)
Aren't you people supposed to be learning how to fly? What in gods' names do you think you're doing?

SHOEHORN
Sir, we were on break?

HELO
Do you think you have free time?
Did your Oh-Eye-See not give you enough to do? Cause I can find some frakkin' deck work for you all if this is what we're training you to do.

Starbuck laughs into her hand, composes herself, and walks over.

STARBUCK
Sir, are you harassing my cadets?

HELO
Calling this gaggle "cadets" is an embarrassment.

STARBUCK
You'd better watch your mouth, sir.

Starbuck and Helo face off, each trying to keep a straight face. Finally Helo breaks and walks off so the cadets won't see him laugh.

HELO
Just...keep them in line.

Starbuck looks at her nuggets.

STARBUCK
OK, class is back on in five.

No one moves.

STARBUCK (CONT'D)

Seconds.

The cadets scramble back to class, followed by a smug Starbuck.

Icarus stares at the wall, gazing into the picture of a LITTLE GIRL with short blonde hair and a toothy smile. The sound of a SHUTTLE taking off rises.

CUT TO:

INT. CAPRICA - SHUTTLE (FLASHBACK).

Young Icarus rises to his feet, shaken by the tumble into the shuttle. He looks around for his family. Behind him a FATHER shouts for his daughter.

FATHER

Helena! Come on, get on the ship!

HELENA, the blond girl from the photo, tries to get through the door. The door shuts before she can get back on. Icarus watches her through the window of the shuttle.

A RAIDER rushes past the window and Icarus falls back into the crowd.

FADE OUT.

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN.

INT. GALACTICA - SIMULATION ROOM.

Cadets stand around a gyroscope in the middle of a large, gray room. A small target hangs on the wall fifteen yards away. Aurora stands in the contraption as Starbuck starts the spin.

After a few seconds she stops the machine and Aurora falls out, unconscious.

STARBUCK

If you can't take this, you'll
never survive in a Viper.

Backdraft gets into the gyroscope and Starbuck starts the spin. Icarus and Shoehorn look on.

SHOEHORN

I can't believe this. I mean, what
does that train us for?

ICARUS

Zero axis.

SHOEHORN

Can you say more than two words at
a time, or is the concept lost on
you?

ICARUS

(sighing)

In space, there is no up or down.
You're going to be chasing an enemy
that doesn't feel g-forces and
can't get dizzy.

(beat)

If we want to last out there, we
need to be the same.

Starbuck overhears the conversation and smiles. She stops the gyroscope and hands Backdraft a pistol. She starts a stopwatch.

STARBUCK

Fire!

Backdraft fires six shots and falls to his knees. Starbuck walks over and pulls the target off the wall. She shows the class.

STARBUCK (CONT'D)

(to Backdraft)

If I was your wingman, I'd fly
directly in front of you. It's the
safest place to be.

Backdraft reddens and walks dazed to the other side of the room to lean against a wall. Icarus gets into the chair next, his face calm. Starbuck starts the spin.

STINGRAY

Come on, Icarus.

CADETS

You can do it. Come on. Right in
the center.

The spin stops and Starbuck hands over the pistol. Icarus takes a split-second to aim before firing six shots in rapid succession. He lurches but stays on his feet and hands the pistol over.

Starbuck collects the target and shows the class. The shots hit in a circle on the wall around the target, save one that pierced just off the center. The cadets cheer and clap Icarus on the back.

SHOEHORN

Knew you had it in you.

BACKDRAFT

(grinning)
Show off.

Starbuck allows a curt nod.

STARBUCK

And it appears you suck the least.
I guess if that's what you want to
be proud of--

She walks to the other side of the room.

STARBUCK (CONT'D)

Come on, it's time for a little
workout.

Cadets groan and follow. Icarus stays behind with Shoenhorn.

SHOEHORN

It was one hell of a shot.

Shoenhorn leaves. Icarus holds the paper up and puts his finger through the small whole.

CUT TO:

INT. GALACTICA - SHOWERS.

Cadets fill the locker room, puking into toilets and leaning against shower walls, letting the steaming water cleanse them. Icarus stands near a fogged mirror, sweat dripping from his face. He watches Shoenhorn towel off. Stingray walks over, wipes the mirror, and splashes water from the sink onto his face.

STINGRAY

A little workout, huh?

ICARUS

(grinning)

Gets the blood going.

Starbuck walks in, barely winded from the intense workout. Her training uniform is hardly darkened from sweat. She smacks a few cadets on the back, sending them tumbling into benches and sliding to the ground.

STARBUCK

I used to be like you.

(beat)

Well, I was never as lazy, fat, uncoordinated or stupid, but other than that I was just like you.

(pushes Stingray aside)

Did you all think the machine would do the work for you?

(dabs at face with towel)

Did you think a Viper flew itself? I swear, until you can keep up with me on an easy workout, I'm not even letting you near a real fighter.

ICARUS

(quietly)

How did you do it?

STARBUCK

What was that, nugget?

ICARUS

How did you go from being like us to--to you?

STARBUCK

(smirking)

I had an instructor when I was a cadet. Went by Windmill. Old salt, an ace from the first Cylon War.

(to all cadets)

Now, I was the top of my class and didn't think I needed to listen to the advice of some dried of pilot from the stone age. But he knew what he was talking about.

She begins to pace the room. Cadets, exhausted and filthy, stand in rapt attention.

STARBUCK (CONT'D)

One class he stopped mid-lecture
and just spoke to us. He said,
heroes aren't the pilots who make
ace alone, flying mad runs through
fleets of enemy ships. Heroes are
the pilots who work together and
come back home.

(her eyes darken)

He had another name for cocky
pilots that fly off to play hero.

(beat)

Martyrs.

She walks to the door, hiding a sudden pain behind a stern
gaze.

STARBUCK (CONT'D)

This war has had enough "heroes."

She exits to...

CUT TO:

INT. GALACTICA - HALL.

Starbuck runs into Adama and stops short.

ADAMA

Afternoon, captain.

Starbuck snaps off a limp salute. Adama smiles and returns
it.

STARBUCK

How are you, sir?

ADAMA

Would be doing a lot better if I
could get some sleep. I can't go
twenty minutes without some
civilian captain calling the damned
fleet to alert.

STARBUCK

(laughing)

If you want to trade places, I'm
always available.

ADAMA

(smiles)

How are the nuggets treating you?

STARBUCK

They can't find their asses with both hands and a detailed field manual, but they're coming along.

Shoehorn, Icarus and Aurora step out with three other cadets. They freeze when they see the admiral.

STARBUCK (CONT'D)

(to cadets)

Do you all need a frakkin' invitation to stand at attention!?

The cadets snap to attention. Adama puts his back to them and whispers in Starbuck's ear.

ADAMA

You always have to play it rough.

STARBUCK

Teach me another way, and I'll probably still do this, sir.

Adama grins, then puts on a sour face and turns to the cadets.

ADAMA

(slowly pacing)

You are the most dangerous people in the fleet, do you know that?

SHOEHORN

Sir?

ADAMA

When I ask a rhetorical question you keep your mouth shut!

(beat)

In less than a week, you will all be training in *my* Vipers, flying around *my* ship and *my* convoy, wasting *my* fuel and *my* ammunition.

(beat)

And I'll be watching. If I think, for one second, you present a danger to this fleet or this crew

(beat)

I'm gonna kick your sorry ass out an airlock and save us the trouble of wiping your carcass from the hangar deck.

(turns to Starbuck)

As you were, captain.

Adama walks off, the first signs of laughter breaking across his face.

STARBUCK
Everyone back to the briefing room.
(beat)
You have three minutes.

Cadets run off.

CUT TO:

INT. GALACTICA - CIC.

Tigh stares at the radar screens as an ENSIGN, a man in his twenties, fiddles with the controls.

TIGH
This is unacceptable, ensign. How
the hell are we supposed to protect
the fleet if we can't see a
godsdamn thing?

He looks over and sees Dualla talking on a phone at her desk. Tigh gives the radar one more dirty look and walks over to Dualla.

TIGH (CONT'D)
Anything?

Dualla holds up a hand and keeps talking. Tigh scowls.

DUALLA
I understand, but saying you saw
"something" doesn't really narrow
it down for us.
(beat)
Of course I'm taking this
seriously, we take every sighting
seriously.
(she sighs)
All right, I'll make sure it's on
the Admiral's desk.

She hangs up the phone.

DUALLA (CONT'D)
And that makes our grand total
(beat)
Three sightings for today. This was
the Tilium Refinery.
(MORE)

DUALLA (CONT'D)

The captain says he saw a flash
from behind the broken moon.

TIGH

Well that's just great. We're
sitting here blind and the Cylons
could be gearing for a frakkin
attack.

Lee walks into the room carrying a law book. Tigh waves him
over.

LEE

(sighs)

What can I do for you, colonel?

TIGH

We've had another sighting. I think
it's time we extended the CAP.

LEE

So you're buying into too, now?

TIGH

(sneers)

Don't get smart with me, *major*. One
or two sightings means sleepy
captains. Eight in a weeks means a
real problem.

LEE

(grins at Dualla)

Could it be little green men? With
big heads and tiny little hands?

Tigh gets in Lee's face, leering over him.

TIGH

When I want to hear jokes, major,
I'll ask about your marriage.

Lee fumes.

TIGH (CONT'D)

I want the CAP extended. I want two
more Vipers out on patrol.

(beat)

And I want it done before the next
rotation.

Tigh walks back to the radar. Lee gives Dualla a quick
glance.

LEE
(to Tigh)
Yes, *sir*. I'll see that it gets
done.

Lee walks off. Tigh watches him leave, glaring with his one
eye.

CUT TO:

INT. GALACTICA - HALL.

Lee storms out of the CIC. Helo, walking through the hall,
sees Lee and jogs to catch up.

HELO
Lee!

Lee stops.

LEE
(calms himself)
What can I do for you, Helo?

HELO
(walking again)
I want to get my flight status
back.

LEE
(staring quizzically)
Have you talked to Athena about
this?

HELO
(rolls eyes)
She has her reservations.

LEE
Which means she won't be happy you
came to me like this.

HELO
(stops Lee)
Look, Lee. I need this.
(beat)
I need to be back out there. I feel
like I'm a decoration, some
frakkin' plant behind a desk.
(beat)
Just put me on patrol, I know guys
have been complaining about hours.

Lee glances at his watch.

LEE

We just added two Vipers to the rotations, so Fifth Shift is gonna be light.

(beat)

Show up at the hangar at 1900.

HELO

(excited)

Yes! Thanks, Lee.

Helo jogs off. Lee watches him go, shakes his head, and continues down the hall.

CUT TO:

INT. GALACTICA - LOCKER ROOM.

The cadets rest against the lockers, some dozing, some reading field manuals. Icarus and Shoenhorn sit off to the side, talking quietly.

ICARUS

I always thought there was a chance they'd show up on one of the civilian ships. You know, just out of the blue.

(beat)

I feel so stupid saying this.

SHOEHORN

No, don't say that. I can't even remember the last time I saw my parents. Maybe it was before I left for the Pegasus, but that was months before the attack.

(places her hand on his)

I'm glad you're opening up, finally. You were such a popsicle the first week.

Icarus smiles and starts to say something. Suddenly, Aurora, sitting nearby, seizes up and starts to shake violently. Cadets shout in alarm.

Icarus kneels next to Aurora and places a towel under her head.

He see Backdraft holding a novel and standing uselessly to the side. Icarus pulls the bookmark from the novel, folds it, and places it between Aurora's teeth.

CUT TO:

INT. CAPRICA - ICARUS' HOUSEHOLD (FLASHBACK).

A young Icarus watches his mother gently treat his younger sister as she has an epileptic seizure. His mother slides a thin wooden slip between the girl's teeth and cradles her head.

MOTHER

Don't worry, she'll be fine.

Icarus smiles at his mother, watching everything she does.

CUT TO:

EXT. SPACE - GALACTICA

The Fleet continues on.

CUT TO:

INT. GALACTICA - LOCKER ROOM.

Starbuck watches Aurora pack her things. The girl cries openly as she dumps the contents of her locker into a small duffel bag.

STARBUCK

Did you think we wouldn't find out?

AURORA

I'm sorry, sir. I didn't mean to disappoint you.

STARBUCK

What if this had happened while you were flying wing? What if you were trying to land?

(beat)

Do you want someone's death on your conscience?

AURORA

(sobbing)

No, sir.

STARBUCK

And neither do I. Report to the sergeant outside, he'll get the paperwork for your dismissal.

Aurora finishes packing, gives one last look at the cadets, and walks out of the room. Starbuck glares at the heartbroken cadets.

BACKDRAFT

Sir, can't you give her another chance?

SHORT FRY

Yeah, it was one attack.

STARBUCK

Do you think this is a frakkin' debate? It only takes one attack, one little slip.

(beat)

She's unfit for flight, end of story. Now, unless anyone else has some medical illness that needs to rear up it's time for bed.

The cadets file out, sullen and angry. Icarus is the last to go. Starbuck stops him.

STARBUCK (CONT'D)

Icarus, I'm bumping you up to first rank. Sleep in your flight suit. You go tomorrow.

Icarus stares at her as she leaves.

FADE OUT.

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN.

INT. GALACTICA - ATHENA AND HELO'S ROOM.

Helo enters his room in a rush. He walks over to his closet and pulls out a suit bag. Inside is his flight suit. Athena sits on the bed, rocking Hera to sleep.

ATHENA
Where are you going?

HELO
(frozen midstep)
They need another pilot in the CAP.

ATHENA
What?

HELO
It's the sightings. Colonel Tigh is
worried its the Cy--he's worried it
could be something bad.

Athena puts Hera down in her crib.

ATHENA
And you're the only person aboard
who can fly now?

HELO
Sharon, I don't have time for this.
I have to report.

He grabs his helmet from inside the closet and walks to the
door. Athena stands in his way.

ATHENA
You need to stop and talk to me.

HELO
What is the problem with me flying?

ATHENA
(pointing to the crib)
Her.

HELO
Don't use Hera. If you have a
problem, tell me.

ATHENA
Fine. I have a problem with you
flying. I have a problem with you
taking these kinds of risks. I have
a problem with you flying out there
when god knows how many are dying
every week.

HELO
Sharon, it's the CAP. I'm not
flying a combat mission.

ATHENA

It's the fact that you're flying at all. If you flew a shuttle run with a crate of food, I'd still be worried sick.

Helo gives up trying to get past her. He paces the room.

HELO

I can take care of myself. I'm a good pilot.

ATHENA

(advancing)

This isn't about you, Karl. This is about us. Me and Hera.

HELO

I'm not leaving you.

ATHENA

Then why are you going out to fly?

HELO

Because I'm tired of watching them fly.

(beat)

Look, I need to be out there. They need me out there, Sharon.

ATHENA

And we need you in here.

Helo steps around her and grabs his gear.

HELO

I'm flying tonight, Sharon. And you can't stop me.

He walks out of the room. Athena curls to the floor and cries.

CUT TO:

INT. GALACTICA - HANGAR DECK.

Cadets mill around a VIPER, standing a respectful distance away as Chief Tyrol explains the mechanics. Icarus stares with particular fascination at the weaponry.

TYROL

The Viper Mark Two was the best fighter in the Colonies for almost twenty-five years, taking the maneuverability of the Shiva and the firepower of the original Condor.

(beat)

For those of you who paid attention in history class, that was the first rail-launched fighter ever used.

He paces around the Viper, patting it down.

TYROL (CONT'D)

Unlike the Mark Seven, which we're fresh out of at the moment, the Deuce only has two Thorsen thirty millimeter cannons. If those don't get the job done, you just can't shoot.

Starbuck glares at her cadets.

TYROL (CONT'D)

(bending to show the underbelly)

The Javeline launcher tube only holds eight Lightning warheads, but they'll scrap a Raider easy. Try and use them sparingly, though. It's a lot easier to make bullets from old bolts than a new set of missiles.

(beat)

Now, who wants to get inside this bird?

CUT TO:

INT. GALACTICA - ADAMA'S QUARTERS.

Adama stands over his sink, shaving with a straight blade. He takes his time, using the moment to mumble through his tasks for the day.

ADAMA

(muttering)

Check on the see-eye-see. Give Lee the rest of dad's books.

(MORE)

ADAMA (CONT'D)
(knicks his neck with the
blade)
Stop bleeding.

Tigh walks in from the outer room, a cup of coffee in his hand.

TIGH
I don't know how you do it. Gods, I
can't imagine waking up to that
ugly mug every day.

ADAMA
(smiling)
You forgot to knock?

TIGH
If I knock, you know I'm coming.

ADAMA
And I can use the heads-up.
(taps the blade on the
sink)
Can I do anything for you?

TIGH
Let me put some of these civilians
out an airlock.
(beat)
I was looking at the flight logs,
trying to figure out why Raptor
five is back in for a routine
check. You've been to Colonial One
four times this week.

ADAMA
...

TIGH
(grins)
Did they install a card table since
I've been there?
(beat)
You're not planning to run for
office someday, are you? You'd be a
terrible politician.

ADAMA
Don't you have something you could
be doing right now? Outside of my
room, maybe?

TIGH

Sorry. I'm in a good mood. Got to yell at a few of the nuggets this morning.

ADAMA

It's the little things in life, as they say.

TIGH

So stop dodging the question, Bill. Do I need to order you up a larger bed in here?

Adama puts down the blade, washes his face, and turns to Tigh.

ADAMA

A gentleman never tells.

They laugh.

CUT TO:

INT. GALACTICA - HANGAR DECK.

Icarus eases himself into the Viper. Tyrol watches closely, making sure Icarus places his feet correctly. He shows him the strap and where they connect to the seat. Hotdog grins as Icarus shifts around in the cockpit.

TYROL

Comfortable?

ICARUS

Surprisingly.

HOTDOG

Try flying for twenty hours in that thing. You lose feeling in your legs.

Hotdog pulls out a camera and takes a picture. Icarus makes a goofy face.

HOTDOG (CONT'D)

Ahh, a face only a Cylon could love.

ICARUS

And the last face that Cylon would ever see.

The cadets laugh. Icarus closes his eyes.

CUT TO:

INT. COCKPIT - FLIGHT 7582 (FLASHBACK).

Young Icarus stands behind his father in the cockpit of a civilian spaceship. He marvels at the wide array of controls. His father points to the different dials and consoles.

FATHER

This is the odometer, so I'll know
how fast I'm going. That's the
altimeter. What's that do?

ICARUS

So you'll know how high you are?

FATHER

Right. And this is the throttle.

CUT TO:

INT. GALACTICA - HANGAR DECK.

Icarus touches the various buttons and consoles in the Viper.

ICARUS

(under his breath)

This is the stick, to help you
steer. This is the navigation
control, so you know where you are.

CUT TO:

INT. GALACTICA - CIC.

Adama and Tigh mill around the central console, watching the screens. Suddenly the alarm sounds.

DUALLA

Contact on Dradis.

ADAMA

Report.

DUALLA

It's not Colonial.

TIGH
(anxious)
Cylons.

Adama watches the blip on the screen for a moment. It disappears a second later.

DUALLA
The contact has vanished.

ADAMA
Enough of this game. Launch the
alert Vipers. Track this son of a
bitch down.

CUT TO:

EXT. SPACE - GALACTICA.

Vipers shoot out of the launch tubes. They fly off in formation toward the broken moon in the distance.

CUT TO:

EXT. SPACE/INT. VIPER COCKPIT.

Helo steadies his controls, remembering the sensation of flight. His grin grows with each passing moment.

HELO
This is Helo, I've got the lead.
Everyone keep your eyes out for
flying saucers.

Laughter ripples over the radio.

CUT TO:

INT. GALACTICA - CIC.

Adama looks at his watch. He turns and paces around the console. Tigh stands in silence, watching the movement of the Vipers on Dradis.

TIGH
This is a frakkin joke.

ADAMA
But I'm not laughing.
(picks up the radio)
Helo, this is the Admiral.

HELO (O.S.)
Admiral, I read you.

ADAMA
It's a wash. Bring the alert Vipers
in.

HELO (O.S.)
Are you sure, sir? We can take
another pass.

ADAMA
No. No point in wasting fuel.
There's nothing out there.

CUT TO:

EXT. SPACE - GALACTICA.

The Vipers move in to land. One by one they slide onto the landing pad, gliding to a halt. One Viper wobbles as it enters the landing area and scrapes against a wall.

FOCUS ON VIPER as the ship spins to a stop. Smoke rises from the damaged side.

CONTROLLER
One three, are you all right?

VIPER PILOT
I'm OK. Systems are all up. Just a
little scrape.

CONTROLLER
Stand fast, we'll send out a
recovery team.

FOCUS INCREASES until the damaged console fills the view. Next to the damaged panel is a scorched number 13.

FADE OUT.

END ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN.

EXT. SPACE - GALACTICA.

Cadets fly around the Galactica, learning the basics of dogfighting. Icarus, Shohorn and Backdraft fly in a loose V formation, their ships jerking around awkwardly.

Starbuck's VIPER circles the cadets, watching their technique. She shakes her head.

FOCUS ON ICARUS' VIPER as it flies past. The number 13 is etched on the side. The DAMAGED PANEL has been hastily repaired and bulges out.

STARBUCK

All right, nuggets. I'm releasing
four unarmed drones. Wing One,
you're up first.

Four small PODS launch from Starbuck's VIPER, flying toward the cadets.

CUT TO:

EXT. SPACE/INT. VIPER COCKPIT.

Icarus flexes his hands over the controls and pushes the throttle forward.

ICARUS

Let's do this.

CUT TO:

EXT. SPACE - GALACTICA.

Icarus and his two wingmates fly toward the DRONES. Shohorn fires wildly, her rounds shooting in all different directions. Backdraft fires off a salvo, but hits nothing.

STARBUCK (V.O.)

Come on. Stop, think and shoot.

Icarus lines his VIPER with the DRONE and fires. After a few stray salvos he nails the target. The DRONE explodes into smoking fragments.

ICARUS (V.O.)
YES! WOOOOOHOOOO!

BACKDRAFT (V.O.)
Nice shot!

Icarus performs a barrel roll in his VIPER.

STARBUCK (V.O.)
Icarus, you just wasted 30 rounds
to hit a single target. That is
unacceptable. Regroup with your
wing and try again.

CUT TO:

EXT. SPACE/INT. VIPER COCKPIT.

Icarus frowns, regains composure, and maneuvers his ship into position.

ICARUS
All right, guys. Let's show her how
it's done.

CUT TO:

INT. GALACTICA - CIC.

Adama reads the debriefing reports from the CAP flight. Tigh paces in circles around him.

TIGH
It's gotta be the frakkin' Cylons.
(beat)
I don't believe this You-Eff-Oh
garbage for a second.

ADAMA
(nodding)
It's pretty strange. We have all
these sightings but no one's seen
anything.

TIGH
Then why are we sitting here with
our thumbs up our asses waiting for
an attack? Let's jump to the next
system and bid that broken moon a
fond farewell.

ADAMA

We're low on fuel as it is. I don't want to risk stranding the fleet because of some jumpy civilian captains.

An ALARM sounds. Adama looks at the radar.

FOCUS ON RADAR where a DOT appears and dances around the screen.

TIGH

(anxious)

Gods, not again.

ADAMA

Lieutenant Dualla, launch the alert Vipers.

TIGH

The Cap is on the other side of the fleet. Helo's the only one out there.

Adama glares at the screen, rubbing his hands together.

ADAMA

(into the mic)

Starbuck, this is the Admiral.

STARBUCK (WIRELESS)

This is Starbuck.

ADAMA

Take your cadets to grid seven-two five-four. Investigate another contact and report back.

(to Tigh)

We're not letting them hide anymore.

CUT TO:

INT. GALACTICA - CORRIDOR.

Athena wanders through the hall holding Hera. She seems in a trance, following her thoughts through the hall without looking at where she is going. She finds herself outside the CIC and opens the door.

CUT TO:

INT. GALACTICA - CIC.

Athena walks into the CIC. Adama and Tigh look over but don't say anything. Athena stares at the Dradis screen.

CUT TO:

EXT. SPACE/INT. VIPER COCKPIT.

Starbuck adjusts her straps.

STARBUCK

All right, nuggets. You heard the Admiral. Form up on me, we're going in slow and steady.

(beat)

Icarus and Hotdog, take my right.
Shoehorn, Backdraft, take my left.
Willow and Leo take the rear.

(beat)

Everyone else, you're sitting tight. Better luck next time.

CUT TO:

EXT. SPACE - GALACTICA.

Icarus and Hotdog shoot forward, afterburners roaring. Starbuck and the rest race toward the broken moon. The other cadets float in a pattern near the Galactica.

Icarus fiddles with his controls, causing the Viper to strafe left and right. Hotdog flies closer.

HOTDOG (WIRELESS)

Your looking a lot better, Icarus.

ICARUS

Thanks. I don't know, it just came easy to me.

HOTDOG

Dad was a pilot?

ICARUS

(distant)

Yeah. Back on Caprica. He flew commercial jets, sometimes corporate silver bullets or Vee-eye-pee shuttles.

HOTDOG
Sounds...pretty boring to tell the truth.

ICARUS
Well, it's not as fun as shooting unarmed drones, but what do I know?

FOCUS ON ICARUS' SHIP as it flies off toward the broken moon. The PANEL is breaking open, and wires are starting to slip out. They freeze instantly and frost begins to grow inside the ship.

CUT TO:

EXT. SPACE/INT. VIPER COCKPIT.

Inside his Viper, Helo notices movement and guns his ship toward it.

HELO
I've got eyes on. I'm moving in.

STARBUCK (WIRELESS)
Helo, hold back.

HELO
No time, it's moving behind the moon.

STARBUCK
Damnit, stay with the pack.

Helo flies off.

CUT TO:

EXT. SPACE/INT. VIPER COCKPIT.

Inside Starbuck's viper.

STARBUCK
Frak.

CUT TO:

INT. GALACTICA - CIC.

Athena moves closer to the radar screen. Adama walks over.

ADAMA
Sharon, you can't be here right
now.

ATHENA
I heard them. I needed to see.
(she comes out of a
trance)
Where's Helo?

ADAMA
He's flying the Cap. Now leave.

ATHENA
Admiral, I need to be here. I need
to see this.
(beat)
Please.

ADAMA
...
(sighs)
Don't speak.

ATHENA
(mouths the words)
Thank you.

Adama nods and walks back to the radar.

CUT TO:

INT. GALACTICA - LEE'S QUARTERS.

Lee studies behind a pile of law books. Dualla enters and
grabs a new jacket. She starts changing.

DUALLA
So...how are the books?

LEE
Boring.

Dualla nods and slips into her jacket. She places the old one
in a hamper.

DUALLA
We had another sighting.

LEE
(without looking up)
Oh?

DUALLA
(pacing the room)
Yeah. The Admiral sent Starbuck and
the nuggets to investigate.

LEE
(stops and looks up)
What?

DUALLA
Helo was the only Cap pilot in
range, so the Admiral sent the
cadets.

LEE
Is he out of his--
(beat)
Son of a bitch.

Lee jumps up, grabs his uniform and races out of the room.
Dualla watches him run off, smiling.

CUT TO:

EXT. SPACE - BROKEN MOON.

Icarus and Hotdog round the debris field and come face-to-face with a strange group of SHIPS. The four silver vessels are shaped like biohazard symbols with oblong bulges in the front. They fly in a dizzying pattern, flashing blue light from their engines.

HOTDOG
Gods have mercy.

ICARUS
What are they?

The ships stop and form a line facing Hotdog and Icarus.

CUT TO:

INT. GALACTICA - CIC.

Adama watches the scene unfold on Dradis. Lee storms into the CIC, making a beeline for Adama. Dualla is close behind and assumes her position near the consoles.

LEE
Did you send the trainees to
investigate the sightings?

ADAMA
Not now, Major.

LEE
No, sir, we need to talk now.

ADAMA
(wheeling around)
Lee, we're in the middle of something.

LEE
You sent untrained pilots to investigate a possible Cylon ambush?

ADAMA
The Cap was too far out, we needed eyes on immediately.

LEE
Are you out of your mind?

Adama grabs Lee and drags him off to the side.

ADAMA
(fuming)
If you ever talk to me like that in here I will have you court-martialed.
(beat)
Do you understand?

LEE
(rattled)
Yes, sir.

ADAMA
This is *my* ship. I decide what risks to take and who takes them.
(beat)
You don't have the right or the weight on your collar to walk into this room and question my decisions.

DUALLA
(shouting)
Admiral! I think you need to see this.

Adama walks over to the console and looks down.

FOCUS ON THE CONSOLE, where the new ships' code dances across the screen.

DUALLA (CONT'D)
 These new ships...there's something
 about this code that feels very
 familiar. It's like I've read it
 before.

Adama and Dualla share a look.

FOCUS ON ATHENA who looks into the Dradis, wide-eyed.

ATHENA
 (distant)
 The Sentinels.

CUT TO:

EXT. SPACE - BROKEN MOON.

Starbuck and the other cadets arrive behind Hotdog and Icarus. The scene resembles a Mexican Stand-off.

Suddenly a familiar red dot appears on the lead unknown ship. The dot slides back and forth. These are CYLON SENTINELS.

STARBUCK (WIRELESS)
 Frak me.
 (beat)
 Cylons! All ships, evasive action!
 Take them out!

The ships fly in all different directions. One of the Cylons fires at Hotdog, clipping his ship.

HOTDOG (WIRELESS)
 I'm hit. I'm hit.

Smoke and debris spit out of Hotdogs Viper. Icarus flies in, firing at the Cylons. The Sentinels scatter, using the moon's debris as cover. Icarus weaves in and out of the rocks, trying to get a bead on the Cylons.

STARBUCK (WIRELESS)
 I've got one on my six. Shoehorn,
 give him something else to think
 about.

CUT TO:

EXT. SPACE/INT. SHOEHORN'S VIPER COCKPIT.

Shoehorn flies in toward Starbuck.

SHOEHORN
I'm coming, ma'am.

Shoehorn fires at the Cylon, missing every shot. One of her bursts hits Starbuck's wing.

CUT TO:

EXT. SPACE/INT. STARBUCK'S VIPER COCKPIT.

Starbuck jerks her craft to the side.

STARBUCK
Are you frakkin' kidding me?
(beat)
Shoot them. Shoot them. I'm on your
side, damnit.

CUT TO:

EXT. SPACE - BROKEN MOON.

Starbuck lines up behind one of the Sentinels and fires. The ship tumbles into a large hunk of rock and explodes.

STARBUCK (WIRELESS)
Woohooo! Same toaster, different
shell.
(beat)
Take them out!

FOCUS ON ICARUS as he races toward another Sentinel. He fires, the flash of cannons creating a strobe light inside his cockpit. The Sentinel erupts into flames before exploding.

The remaining two Cylons chase Icarus toward the broken moon.

ICARUS (WIRELESS)
I can't shake them.

CUT TO:

EXT. SPACE/INT. ICARUS'S VIPER COCKPIT.

Icarus looks over his shoulder as the Cylons fire tracers at him.

ICARUS
I could use some help.

HOTDOG (WIRELESS)
Where are you, Icarus? I lost you
in the debris.

ICARUS
(panicked)
I...I don't know.

A round hits his wing.

ICARUS (CONT'D)
Frak. I'm hit!
(beat)
Shoehorn, anybody, help!

CUT TO:

EXT. SPACE/INT. HELO'S VIPER COCKPIT.

FOCUS is behind pilot, hiding his face. Helo flies toward Icarus.

HELO
Need a hand?

FOCUS shifts to Helo's face. He's smiling wide as he fires into the Cylons.

CUT TO:

EXT. SPACE - BROKEN MOON.

Helo fires into the Cylons. One explodes immediately, pieces flying in every direction. The last Cylon tries to escape.

STARBUCK (WIRELESS)
He's bugging out.

Helo slows down, almost stopping in the middle of the debris field.

HELO (WIRELESS)
Not fast enough.

Helo fires a missile.

FOCUS ON THE MISSILE, flying toward the Cylon craft.

FOCUS ON ICARUS'S SHIP as the Cylon explodes off to the side.

CUT TO:

INT. GALACTICA - CIC.

The room bursts into applause. Adama nods, satisfied.

ADAMA
(whispers)
Thank the gods.

He shares a sour look with Lee as the Major exits the room.

FOCUS ON Tigh as he walks over to the Dradis screen.

TIGH
(to himself)
Gods...they're back. The Cylons are
back.

CUT TO:

EXT. SPACE/INT. STARBUCK'S VIPER COCKPIT.

Starbuck smiles, fighting a cheer.

STARBUCK
All right, cadets. Let's bring it
in. Nice and slow, just like we
practiced.

CUT TO:

EXT. SPACE - GALACTICA.

The cadets fly back toward Galactica. One by one they land in the hangar, sloppily but safely.

FOCUS ON Icarus as he flies in.

FOCUS ON THE DAMAGED PANEL. The panel rips off. Fire spews from the hole and the Viper jerks into a violent spin.

STARBUCK (WIRELESS)
Icarus! Pull out! Pull out!

ICARUS (WIRELESS)
Can't--get--any--control--

Icarus's engines explodes, rocketing him forward. His ship slams into the hangar decks, exploding. Fragments fly in every direction. The cockpit burns.

Hold on WRECKAGE.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. GALACTICA - HANGAR DECK.

Tyrol walks around the burnt husk of the Viper, letting his hand trail along the once smooth edges. His CREW stands around him, their heads low in shame.

TYROL
(quietly)
This is what happens when we don't
pay attention.
(beat)
This is what happens when we get
distracted.
(at the crew, louder)
This is what happens when people
frak off during work!
(shouting)
This is what happens when we fail
our frakking jobs.

He stops, looking at the empty cockpit. The canopy looks as though pried open with a can opener, as the body had to be carved out.

TYROL (CONT'D)
This cadet's blood is on our hands.
And we'll have to live with that.

CUT TO:

INT. GALACTICA - HELO AND ATHENA'S QUARTERS.

Helo sits on the bed next to Athena. He looks down at his shoes and rubs his hands together. Icarus's death hit him hard.

HELO
(shaken)
You were right. I'm needed here.
(beat)
You...Hera...you need me. I can't
take the same risks anymore.

Athena smiles and pulls him into a deep hug. She doesn't cry.

CUT TO:

INT. GALACTICA - DEBRIEFING ROOM.

Adama and Tigh watch the gun-cam footage from the skirmish. The room is dark except the flickering light of the projector.

TIGH
I knew they'd come back eventually.
(sighs)
I just didn't want it to be now.

ADAMA
It doesn't change anything, Saul.
We still have the same mission, the
same duty to the fleet.

TIGH
(looks at Adama)
And what do we tell *them*?

ADAMA
(after a pause)
Well, I suppose I could go ask the
President.

Tigh gives Adama a sly grin. He sips at a glass of whiskey.

TIGH
You do that, Bill. You do that.

CUT TO:

INT. GALACTICA - LOCKER ROOM.

Starbuck wipes the roster clean, changing the flight status of the cadets. Hotdog cleans out Icarus's locker, dropping the gear into a box marked "Free to a Good Home."

Starbuck hands Hotdog a small object, but we cannot see it. Hotdog looks down at the item in his hand, back at Starbuck, and nods solemnly.

CUT TO:

INT. GALACTICA - MEMORIAL WALL.

Hotdog walks past mourners, toward the far wall. He looks up at a PICTURE of a young Caprican girl. He places a hand on the wall and puts up the PICTURE of Icarus in the Viper. Icarus smiles at the camera. Hotdog walks away.

Hold on the picture.

Off this.

FADE OUT.

END OF EPISODE