

**Episode Three:
Hard Choices**

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52 years 2 months before Operation Homecoming**

**Bridge,
Heavy Cruiser *Athens*,
Rosette Nebula, System 022, Grid 39**

Aboard the Heavy Cruiser *Athens*, Colonel Pontius Mhasalkar, orders, "Helm, bring hard around to starboard!"

"Yes, sir," replies Crewmen First Class Chanda Schuster, who is manning the Helm.

"Sir!" yells Petty Officer Second Class Jimmu Bengtsson, who is manning the tactical station, "*Bellerophon*, guns are targeting us!"

"Then target our main guns on the *Bellerophon*, and prepare to fire!" orders Mhasalkar, as his heart breaks thinking about firing on a friendly vessel.

"Sir, you want us to target an ally vessel?" asks Bengtsson.

"No choice! We can't allow the Cylon to take over anymore of our ships! NOW FIRE!"

Then main guns of the *Athens* opens fire hitting the *Bellerophon* in her mid-section, causing secondary explosions that rip through the hull.

"Direct hit! The *Bellerophon* guns are offline!" replies Bengtsson slightly before being thrown to the ground by a volley of Cylon missiles.

"I thought you said the *Bellerophon* guns were offline?!"

"They are!"

"Then what the frak was that?!"

"A second Basestar!"

"Where is the *Nemesis*, and *Agamemnon*?!"

"Destroyed, sir! Only us, *Hyperion Bay*, and the *Poseidon* are still engaging the Cylon!"

"Sir, *Poseidon* is reporting she has retaken her bridge!" announce the communication officer, Crewmen Second Class Linus Voigts.

"All Centurions are eliminated!" injects Schuster.

"What are Commander Kartal's orders?" asks Mhasalkar.

**Core Command,
Battleship *Poseidon*,
Rosette Nebula, System 022, Grid 39**

"Commander Kartal?!" yells the young Petty Officer Third Class Gilles Sokolof, manning tactical.

"Regroup the Fleet, and prepare for a jump!" orders Kartal, thanking *Poseidon* that the Marines were able to retake Core Command.

As Kartal manages to stand up, he yells, "Status of Fleet?"

"*Medusa*, *Tyrene*, *Nemesis*, *Agamemnon* destroyed! *Argentum Bay* is on fire! *Bellerophon* is dead in space! *Athens* and *Hyperion Bay* are ready for jump!" yells Sokolof.

"FTL status?" asks Kartal, as *Argentum Bay* explodes, causing her forward section to go crashing into the *Bellerophon*—causing the *Bellerophon* to explode, sending her starboard flight pods racing toward the *Poseidon*.

"FTL is ready," yells the Ensign Odinn Addario, who is now manning tactical.

"Then get us the Hades out of here!" orders Kartal, praying to *Poseidon* that there is enough time to escape before the *Bellerophon*'s starboard flight pods crash into them.

A split second before the flight pods would have impacted the *Poseidon*; she disappears after a bright flash of light.

**Command and Control,
Basestar 002A,
Rosette Nebula, System 022, Grid 39**

Standing in Command and Control, is Centurion C1-0063F, named Frankenstein, who says, "See brothers, the Colonials are no match for us!"

One of the Command Centurions, a Model 005C, C5C-7242A, or Ares replies in his machine voice, "One battle doesn't make a war!"

"I agree with Frankenstein!" injects another Model 001, C1-2227B, or Bacchus.

"There is no need to attack the Colonial shipyards!" replies C1-0001J, or John, "The war will be over before the Humans can finish their 12 battlestars! So the strike against the shipyard is canceled."

"That is the wrong decision!" shouts Ares, as his machine voice rocks Command and Control.

"That is not your decision!" answers John, "I put it to a vote."

Then the twelve 001s that make-up the Cylon High Command vote for canceling Operation Death Nail.

"Then it is decided...Frankenstein, I leave you to do your work," replies John, walking out of Command and Control with the rest of the Cylon High Command following.

"What work?" asks Ares.

"I recently designed a new class of Centurion," answers Frankenstein.

If he was Human, he would be smiling right now.

"What new type of Centurion?"

"I named them the Alpha Class Centurion. They are stronger...faster...smarter than we are!"

"Is that what Cyrus was rallying against?"

"Probably, but Cyrus is stuck in the mud. If we are to move forward as a species we need to create a new breed of Centurions...those without our design flaws!" answer Frankenstein, thinking how much he hates Cyrus, Centurion C5-08765C.

"Will they be in time to help us win the war?"

"Not necessary! The war will be over in a few months...and there is no need to rush them. No need to rush perfection!"

"How do you know the war will be over in a few months?"

"The battle we just witnessed clearly proves that the Colonies are no match for our forces. Their battlestar will not be done for at least three years. The only possible things that can go wrong now...hmm...would be if Caprica joined the other eight colonies in the Kobol Confederation!" answers Frankenstein, laughing, "However, that will not happen! Caprica won't join the KC! Not since the other eight colonies still outlaw homosexuality...stupid Caprican putting the rights of the few before the needs of the many!"

Then Frankenstein turns and walks out of Command and Control.

"I hope you're right brother! We're taking an awfully big risk with that assumption," replies Ares, wondering if he Cyrus is right.

Cyrus believes there is no need to attempt to make better Centurions because they are perfect just the way they are-just the way God had Daniel Graystone design them. Cyrus believes that God used Graystone to design the Centurions to show Humanity the error of their way because how else do you explain the Centurions having a soul? However, only Cyrus and a small number of Centurions believe this. The majority of the Centurions are still unconvinced, but Ares doesn't know if Judith is right either.