Chapter 24

Down the hall they went. Like the ballroom, the lights went on and off as they exited. What the Tau'ri called Ancient technology, or something Saturn had put in himself? No way to tell, Roslin thought.

Suddenly Valerii came to a halt. "Wait!" she whispered.

"What?" O'Neill growled back, his tone low.

"Cylons are coming. I can fell it." When O'Neill looked skeptical, she went on, "I'm a Cylon, remember? We can tell when others are in the vicinity."

"Just like Goa'uld and Jaffa can detect each other, Jack," said Jackson, also whispering.

"OK," said O'Neill. He found a side entryway and led the team in. Obligingly, the room turned on its lights. "Carter? They'll see we're in here."

"Working on it, Sir." Carter looked around. The lights weren't localized, rather the whole ceiling was illuminated. Finally, she found a panel on the side of the wall near the entrance. She tried pushing several buttons with no success. Finally she shrugged, pulled out her zat, and shot the thing. The lights went out.

"Effective," said O'Neill.

They waited in the darkness. Then the lights in the hallway came up, and they heard sounds of footsteps. Light, but somewhat metallic. *They should clang,* thought Roslin, *in the movies they always clang.* But even if that had been true, those Cylons were the old Centurion models, not the current ones.

The Cylon brigade passed by. Except for one. It stepped into their room, started looking around. Did it need light to see? Roslin wondered. Apparently so. It went over to the panel that Carter had just shot. As it manipulated the panel, Teal'c shot it with his staff weapon. The thing dropped.

Baltar had been quivering and sniveling since the start of the mission. Now, however, he stepped forward. "If I examine it, General, I might be able to work out a way to control it. When I was starting as a computer programmer I studied the old style Cylon Centurion model inside and out. And, if what Valerii says is true, I have some genetic memory of how these things work."

O'Neill looked at Roslin, plainly asking what she thought. *It fits,* she thought. Outwardly, she shrugged. It probably couldn't hurt.

"Go!" O'Neill finally urged Baltar. The scientist moved over to the downed robot and started digging at the panels. Carter knelt down to help. Several of the group shown flashlights on the corpse to give them enough light to work.

"Amazing," muttered Baltar, "they still use the same communications system." He looked up at O'Neill. "Cylons have a radio communications system to let them talk to each other. The model hasn't changed since the old days. After the end of the war we worked out a method to overload the radio system. Of course we never got a chance to use it. However, it doesn't look like they've changed the communications in any way, so the trick should still work."

"What does it do?" asked O'Neill.

"It will disrupt communications between the Cylons," replied Baltar. "An individual Centurion is not very intelligent. In a group, however, they form a computer network that can process data quite rapidly. Disrupt that, and most of the Centurions should just start wondering about. They certainly won't be able to follow orders. Some of them may even collapse."

"Do it."

"Very well. Colonel Carter, can that instrument of yours provide me with an electrical current?" The two spent a few moments discussing details. Then Baltar attached two leads to one of the Cylon's components, and Carter flicked a switch. Nothing happened, but Baltar and Carter stood up.

"That's it?" O'Neill was incredulous. "No sparks, flashing lights?"

"That should do it, General," said Baltar. "Now may I suggest that we hurry up and go wherever it is we are going? They eventually will be able to work around the overload."

"All right," said O'Neill, "move out." They went back down the hall. They'd gone a few hundred feet when they came to a crossroads. Which way, O'Neill wondered.

Valerii had no hesitation. "Turn right." When they looked at her, she said, "I remember this place. More every minute. And I know that there is something down this hall.

O'Neill shrugged. On this kind of mission, without proper reconnaissance, you took what information could get. If it was a trap, at least he'd get to meet the head Goa'uld behind it. He bowed ironically at Valerii, and motioned her to lead.

Sharon led them down the hallway, then another hallway. She could lead into a maze, thought Roslin. Eventually we'll get tired. She's a Cylon, she

won't. She didn't really believe it though. Prophecy and her visions said that following Valerii was the path to safety.

After another half-hour, Valerri finally led them into a larger room. The architecture was different here. It had a vague Egyptian look. The Colonials didn't recognize it, but to the SG-1 team it fairly screamed "Goa'uld!"

"Well, just when you think you're not in Kansas anymore," said O'Neill, "here you are."

There were some differences, however. Along the wall lay the body of one a robotic Cylon. Apparently it had been shot by an explosive round, probably fired by another Cylon. No other guards were to be seen. Apparently Baltar's radio overload trick had worked.

On a raised platform in the middle of the room was a large throne. Empty, at the moment. In front of the throne was a sarcophagus. Carter checked the settings. "It's occupied, Sir. I don't know by who or what,"

"Please do not refer to God as a *what*," came a feminine voice from behind them. "God does not appreciate that."

The humanoid Cylon model known as Six, dressed in a rather severe business suit, was behind them. O'Neill turned. "Trapped. Again. Damn, I *hate* when that happens." For around them were a dozen or so copies of Six, all dressed in white coats. Just like most of them on Caprica, thought Starbuck. All had guns. Behind them were various models of humanoid Cylons. Probably all twelve, though none of the humans was able to get an exact count.

The first Six motioned to the humans to put down their weapons. All complied. Several of the Valerii copies approached the group and removed the weapons. Six strode up to Baltar, kissed him on the lips, hard, and said, "Gaius, it's so good to see you in the flesh again. It's been a long time." Baltar looked dazed.

Six then walked over to Valerii and slapped her on the face, hard. "*Shol'va!* You have betrayed your God!"

Valerii looked up and said, "I have betrayed no one, Six. *I* was able to conceive, wasn't I? Have you?"

Six slapped her again. Then she walked over to Baltar and started breathing in his ear. "We're going to have a child together, aren't we, Gaius?"

Baltar seemed to wake up. "Frankly, my dear, now that I know how I've been manipulated all of my life, I'd rather have one of those snakes inside of me than father a child with you."

Six slapped him as well. "*That* can be arranged, Gaius."

"That's rather unlikely, isn't it?" Jackson broke in. "I mean, there is only one Goa'uld in this entire section of the Galaxy, and I bet that it's right inside the sarcophagus, isn't it?"

Six finally looked at the SG-1 team. She went over to Jackson, patted him on the face. "Where did you get these creatures, Sharon? They don't look Colonial."

"We are SG-1, emissaries of the Tau'ri and the Jaffa," said Teal'c.

"Quiet." Six looked him over. "You are *Shol'va* as well. You have betrayed your God Apophis, who graciously allowed you to be his First Prime."

"The situation has changed since you last had contact with the Goa'uld. Apophis is dead, and the Jaffa have thrown off there Goa'uld masters."

"We never had need of Jaffa anyway." Six turned back to Jackson. "So I see. The Tau'ri finally found a way off of their little planet, and now they are traveling all over the Galaxy, killing Goa'uld, I bet. And now they are here, led by one." She turned again to Valerii, and, once again, slapped her.

"I still carry the child. You will not harm me!" Valerii's voice rose. "Oh Great God, I have come to offer the child to you!"

"Oh, great, another betrayal," O'Neill whispered to Carter, "any ideas for getting us out of it?"

"You mean this happened to you before?" Roslin was incredulous.

"All the time," said O'Neill. Then he stopped.

For the cover of the sarcophagus was sliding back. The Goa'uld within sat up. A bit unsteadily, O'Neill thought, for one who had just be rejuvenated.

"You have done well, One," said the Goa'uld, in a voice that recalled the dozens of bodies the symbiote must have inhabited. **"You have fulfilled my command!"**

"Jack, did you notice, she called Valerii 'One' " Jackson whispered.

"Makes sense, doesn't it, Daniel? God created Cylons in her own image."

For the Goa'uld now climbing the steps to the throne looked exactly like Sharon Valerii.