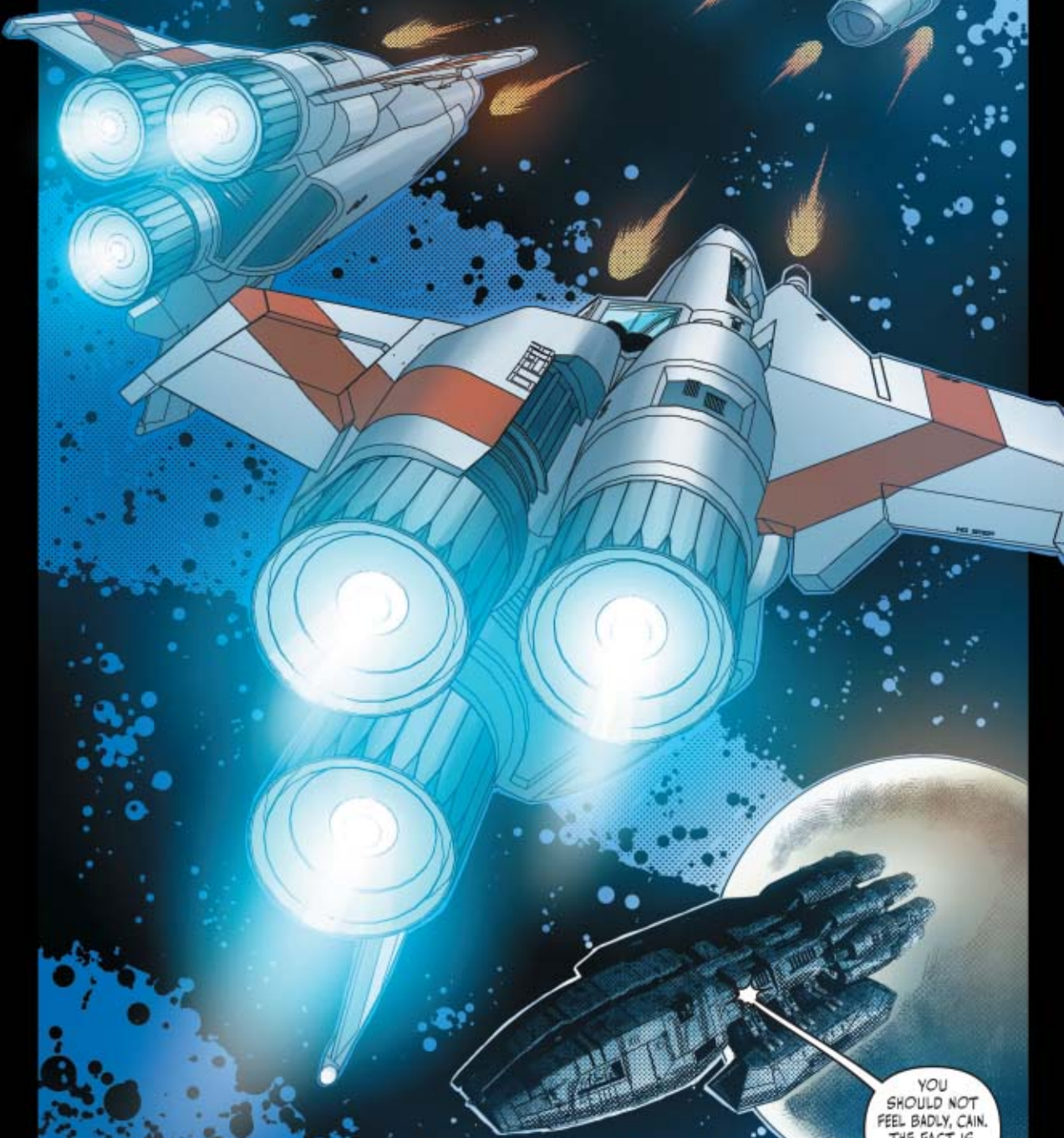


CHAPTER

7



YOU SHOULD NOT FEEL BADLY, CAIN. THE FACT IS, THIS WAS INEVITABLE.



THE TRUTH IS  
THAT HUMANITY  
HAS A FATAL  
FLAW:

IT IS DRIVEN  
TO DESTROY ITSELF.  
THEY ARE THE ONLY  
ANIMALS IN ALL NATURE  
THAT DECLARES WAR  
ON OTHERS OF ITS  
OWN SPECIES.

FOR NO  
REASON!  
NONE!



OH, LESSER  
ANIMALS MAY FIGHT  
OVER TERRITORY, BUT  
THAT IS JUST FOR  
SURVIVAL, FOR FOOD  
GATHERING.

HUMANITY  
KILLS EACH OTHER  
OVER TRIVIALITIES.  
FOR SPITE. FOR  
THE PLEASURE OF  
BATTLE.

BUT I  
WILL SHOW YOU  
A BETTER WAY. A  
WAY TO--



SOMETHING'S  
WRONG.

YES,  
AS I'VE SAID,  
THERE IS A DEEP  
FLAW IN THE  
HUMAN--

NO, I MEAN  
SOMETHING'S  
WRONG OUT  
THERE.



WHAT?  
WHAT DO  
YOU  
MEAN?



NO ONE IS  
HITTING ANYONE.  
THE ANGLES ARE  
ALL WRONG.

THEY'RE  
SHOOTING, YES,  
AND THE SHOTS  
ARE COMING  
CLOSE...VERY  
CLOSE.

BUT  
EVERY SINGLE  
SHOT IS  
MISSING.



WHY?

SOME HOURS/  
CENTARS EARLIER...

COMMANDER,  
GET THE FRAK  
OFF MY SHIP.

I THINK  
THAT'S AN  
EXCELLENT  
IDEA.

THE IDIocy OF  
THAT MAN! TO TRUST  
A CYLON WHILE THEY  
ACTIVELY ATTEMPT  
TO DESTROY HIS  
CREW!

APPARENTLY,  
THEY ALL TRUST  
HER.

STUPIDITY  
FLOWS FROM  
THE TOP.

MAYBE  
THE BEST THING  
TO DO IS JUST  
DEPART THIS AREA.  
STRIKE OFF ON  
OUR OWN.

I'M SURE  
THAT CAIN WILL  
JOIN WITH US.  
HE--

APOLLO?

PERMISSION  
TO SPEAK  
FREELY, SIR?

OF  
COURSE,  
SON.  
ALWAYS.

YOU'RE  
BEING AN  
IDIOT.

WH--?

BUT  
THAT'S OKAY.  
SO AM I.



DON'T YOU GET IT? THIS IS WHAT THEY WANT! KALI AND WHOEVER IS WORKING WITH HER.

THEY WANT THE TWO BATTLESTARS TO BE IN OPPOSITION.

HELL, THEY'RE PROBABLY HOPING THAT WE GET INTO A HUGE FIGHT. DECLARE WAR ON EACH OTHER.

IF THAT HAPPENS...



WE WOULD LIKELY WIPE EACH OTHER OUT. MUTUALLY ASSURED DESTRUCTION.

AND IF BOTH OR EVEN ONE OF THE BATTLESTARS EXPLODES...

THE DETONATION WOULD WIPE OUT MUCH OF THE FLEET.



AND WHATEVER REMAINS WOULD BE EASY PICKINGS FOR CYLON RAIDERS.

WITHOUT HAVING TO RISK A SINGLE ONE OF THEIR SHIPS...



THEY COULD WIPE US OUT.

THEY WANT US TO FIGHT.



FIGURED THAT OUT ON YOUR OWN, DID YOU?

YES, YOU?

I HAD SOME ASSISTANCE FROM A SON WHO'S SMARTER THAN HIS OLD MAN.

SO WHAT DO WE DO?



WE GIVE THEM WHAT THEY WANT.



DON'T THINK THEY'RE GOING TO WAIT FOR US TO DESTROY EACH OTHER.

I THINK THEY'RE PLANNING TO SWEEP IN WHILE WE'RE ACTUALLY IN COMBAT.

THERE WOULD BE SO MUCH FIRING GOING ON THAT WE WOULDN'T EVEN REALIZE THEY WERE THERE UNTIL IT WAS TOO LATE.

THAT MAKES SENSE. SO...



SO WE GIVE THEM A FIGHT. BUT WE DON'T.

TELL ME: DO YOU HAVE AN OMEGA PROTOCOL?



WE DO. IT'S USED FOR PRACTICE WITH THE VIPERS.

THE FIGHTERS FIRE AS CLOSE TO EACH OTHER WHILE MISSING.

IT'S A PINPOINT ACCURACY DRILL.



WE HAVE IT, TOO.

SO YOU RETURN TO YOUR SHIP, WAIT A FEW HOURS, AND THEN ORDER US TO TURN OVER ATHENA.

AND THEN YOU LAUNCH VIPERS...



EXCEPT I TELL THEM WE'RE USING THE OMEGA PROTOCOL.

AND I'LL INFORM OUR FIGHTERS AS WELL.

THEN THEY FAKE A FIGHT...

AND WE WAIT FOR THE CYLONS TO SHOW UP.



SOUNDS LIKE A PLAN.