

BATTLESTAR GALACTICA

Script for Eight Pages

NOTE TO THE ARTIST: Clear storytelling is very important to me. Simple presentation is best. Please use rectilinear panels simply arranged, i.e., no overlapping, interlocking or odd-shaped panels. Make it exciting visually without sacrificing clarity. Also, some white space and light values where possible would be appreciated.

PAGE ONE:

Panel 1 (2/3 page):

Scene: In the distance, coming right at us is Viper Red Three, damaged, smoking and being pursued by many Cylon Raiders. Several of the Cylon ships are firing at the crippled Viper, perhaps scoring a glancing hit on a fin. In the foreground, headed directly toward the oncoming Cylons is Starbuck's Viper. He's not firing yet. Do not crop Starbuck's ship—show the whole thing. It should look like he's making a headlong, suicidal rush right into a small armada of enemy fighters.

TITLE

“Fear of Flying”

LOGO

BATTLESTAR GALACTICA

CREDITS

Written by Jim Shooter

Illustrated by (artist's name)

CAPTION

Ambushed by a Cylon flotilla while on long range patrol, a lone Colonial Viper runs a losing race toward home and safety. As lasers slash its spaceframe, damage mounts, power ebbs and systems fail. Death is closing quickly.

(More)

CAPTION

Suddenly, the young pilot's flickering instruments detect another Viper on intercept, at full turbos! The lead ship of a squadron...?

CAPTION

No. Only one. As quickly as it flared, the ember of hope in her heart turns to ash.

RED THREE (Female Pilot)

Red Three to approaching Viper -- whoever you are, turn around! Forget about me, there's no chance! Get **out** of here!

STARBUCK

Aw, c'mon, I just **got** here!

STARBUCK

Hey, Red Three, **Starbuck**, here. Haven't I seen you around the Officers' Social Deck? You're the new cadet with the great legs, right?

Panel 2 (1/3 page horizontal with an inset, upper left)

INSET:

Scene: Close up of Starbuck in his cockpit. He's concentrating, timing his move.

STARBUCK

Keep your head low, gorgeous, and dive hard when...I...say...

MAIN PANEL:

Scene: Red Three arcs abruptly downward, narrowly avoiding Starbuck's blazing lasers which destroy two of the Raiders. That is, by her sudden maneuver, Red Three dives out of the way allowing Starbuck to waste two of the pursuers who were right on her tail. Make it clear.

STARBUCK

...now!

PAGE TWO:

Panel 1 (1/6 page):

Scene: Starbuck banks hard, avoiding Cylon lasers.

STARBUCK

Yahooo! Two down and, what, only fifty or so to go!

Panel 2 (1/6 page):

Scene: Close up of the young, pretty pilot of Red Three, her head slightly turned as if trying to look back over her shoulder at Starbuck. She's heroically worried for his safety.

RED THREE

Lieutenant Starbuck, they'll kill you too! **Run!**

STARBUCK ("Electric" balloon from her radio)

Try to stay in among 'em, Red Three, so they can't shoot at you without hitting each other. Ah! **Three** down!

Panel 3 (1/3 page horizontal):

Scene: Establishing shot of the Battlestar Galactica and the rag-tag fleet. Do not crop the Galactica.

CAPTION

Far away, the mighty Galactica, last of the Battlestars, shepherds a rag-tag fleet bearing the tattered remnants of humankind in search of a new world and safety from the Cylons who devastated the once-proud Twelve Colonies.

CAPTION

The Galactica -- home to the Viper Squadrons that are the fleet's first and most important line of defense, and all those who service, supply, support and command them...

(More)

Panel 4 (1/6 page):

Scene: Establishing shot of the Galactica's psychiatrist's office. Seated at her desk is Doctor Ishtara (new character), an attractive forty-something woman. She wears her hair up in a professional, businesslike style. She's looking up from some paperwork at her assistant, Vesta (new character), who has just entered. Vesta carries a futuristic-looking equivalent of a clipboard. Ishtara looks mildly annoyed. Vesta is in her twenties and is pretty. Please give each of these women a distinctive physiotype, not the usual cookie-cutter comic book female body. For instance, Ishtara might be tall, thin and delicate and Vesta might be petite and more voluptuous. Or vice versa. Whatever. No mannequins, please.

CAPTION

...including Psyche-Med Doctor Ishtara.

ISHTARA

Don't tell me Lieutenant Starbuck is late again, Vesta...

VESTA

Yes, Doctor Ishtara. He hasn't returned from his patrol yet. He should have landed forty centons ago. Apparently, there's some delay...

Panel 5 (1/6 page):

Scene: Vesta is now standing in front of Ishtara's desk, reacting with mild shock at what she's hearing. Ishtara is rising. She looks as though the weight of the fleet is on her shoulders.

ISHTARA

Just as well. I'm dreading this session. I'm going to have to **ground** him, Vesta.

VESTA

But...he's one of our best pilots!

PAGE THREE:

Panel 1 (1/9 page):

Scene: Close up of Ishtara, looking troubled. Her back is to Vesta, who we see over her shoulder, clearly upset by the news. (This is our identifying face shot of Ishtara and Vesta. Make sure we have a good look at both of them.)

ISHTARA

I know. It's one of the hardest decisions I've ever had to make...but the psyche-exam results are clear. He's not fit to fly.

Panel 2 (2/9 page):

Scene: Back to the battle. Cylon laser bursts are flashing all around as Starbuck cuts right across Red Three's bow, missing collision by a hairsbreadth. Starbuck's guns are blazing.

RED THREE

You're **crazy**, Starbuck!

STARBUCK

Frak! That reminds me...! I'm supposed to be on the Med-deck right now getting the results of my annual (NOTE: Jeff, is there a BG word for "annual?") head-check...

Panel 3 (1/6 page):

Scene: Angle on Starbuck coming more or less towards us. We see two Raiders in formation close behind him, lining him up in their sights. In the background, Red Three's Viper is visible.

STARBUCK

I think ol' Doc Ishtara's part Cylon. Seriously! She's downright **robotic**...! All cold and rigid and mechanical.... I've got a feeling I'm in real trouble with her.

RED THREE

Two on your tail, sir!

(More)

Panel 4 (1/6 page):

Scene: Close up of Starbuck. The Cylon ships, partially visible behind him are firing, their laser beams barely missing. Starbuck is musing about Vesta.

STARBUCK (Muttering under his breath. Small lettering)

She has a **luscious** assistant, though...mm-**mmm**...

RED THREE ("Electric" balloon, from his radio)

What? Sir, I didn't copy that.

STARBUCK

Oh...nothing, Red Three. Uh, still got some pop left in your lasers?

Panel 5 (1/6 page):

Scene: From Red Three's cockpit as she locks her lasers onto the ships pursuing Starbuck.

RED THREE

Barely, but affirmative. Locking on...

Panel 6 (1/6 page):

Scene: Red Three blows away the two Raiders on Starbuck's tail.

RED THREE

Got 'em!

STARBUCK

Nice shooting, babe! Now, come around to vector nine-oh, we got another wave coming...

PAGE FOUR:

Panel 1 (1/6 page):

Scene: Back in Ishtara's office. Ishtara is dictating her final report on Starbuck into a futuristic recording device. Somewhere in the background establish a large video monitor screen, blank at the moment.

ISHTARA

...Starbuck, rank: Lieutenant. Psyche-exam evaluation. Note that because Starbuck failed to appear for his final session, he is unaware of my decision to restrict him to non-combat duty. He will be informed as soon as possible.

ISHTARA

Starbuck is a skillful pilot with an excellent combat record...

Panel 2 (1/6 page):

Scene: Close up of Ishtara, dictating her report, looking like she's performing a painful but necessary duty.

ISHTARA

Squadron Command has informed me that, at this very moment he is in harm's way, engaged in a daring attempt to assist a scout ship under attack by a large enemy force.

ISHTARA

That is, of course, very commendable. But there is much that is disturbing as well...

Panel 3 (1/9 page):

Scene: Even closer on Ishtara, grim, steeled to her task.

ISHTARA

Starbuck has been repeatedly cited for conduct unbecoming an officer, minor

(More)

insubordination and reckless behavior. He is justly renowned for excessive gambling, imbibing and womanizing in a manner that suggests obsessive-compulsive behavior...

Panel 4 (2/9 page with an inset, lower left):

MAIN PANEL:

Scene: Red Three and Starbuck are rocketing through the Cylon formation. Red Three's wounded ship can't go as fast, so she's traveling more or less in a straight line, and Starbuck is protectively "corkscrewing" around her—flying above her, beside her, below her, on the other side then back above—as they go along. Starbuck is blowing away a Raider. Other Cylon ships are firing at the two Vipers, but missing.

STARBUCK

So, Cadet...I've got a private thermo-tub reserved for later. You can join me -- **if** you promise to follow orders!

RED THREE

Sir, with all due respect, this isn't the time for...

INSET:

Scene: Inside Red Three's cockpit. We see her (cropped) and her instruments, which show a phalanx of Raiders moving toward them.

RED THREE

Frak! Incoming, vector six-one-eight...lots of them!

Panel 5 (1/6 page):

Scene: Ishtara's office again. Vesta enters carrying several video disks.

VESTA

Here's the documentation you requested -- security cam videos of Starbuck gambling, drunk...and the time he was caught in Commander Adama's private study with the two rec lounge hostesses.

(More)

ISHTARA

Thanks, Vesta. Set the vid-view to copy those clips to my report tape.

Panel 6 (1/6 page):

Scene: Angle on Vesta and Ishtara. Vesta is racking the video disks. She's clearly troubled by the decision to ground Starbuck. We sense she has more than a professional interest. Ishtara looks firmly resolved.

VESTA

Doctor, I know I'm just an intern, but...everybody knows Starbuck behaves like a bad little boy sometimes.... What's that got to do with him flying?

ISHTARA

“Bad little boys” generally are seeking attention because they feel alone and afraid. They want someone -- an adult -- to take control, take responsibility for them...

PAGE FIVE:

Panel 1 (1/6 page):

Scene: Angle on Ishtara, watching one of the clips of Starbuck playing on a video screen. The image on the screen is one of Starbuck gambling.

COPY AT TOP OF VIDEO SCREEN (Supered over the image)

Surveillance Cam 15102

COPY AT BOTTOM OF VIDEO SCREEN (Supered over the image)

(Date and time. Help, Jeff!)

ISHTARA

...or, said another way, someone to take responsibility **away** from them. I believe that Starbuck's bad behavior is a subconscious cry for help. He **wants** to get into trouble.

ISHTARA

But he's a skilled pilot -- a **hero** -- so, superiors look the other way...peers cover for him...and women put up with him.

Panel 2 (1/6 page):

Scene: Ishtara watching the video, her resolve growing. The video image is one of Starbuck embarrassingly drunk.

COPY AT TOP OF VIDEO SCREEN (Supered over the image)

Surveillance Cam 10016

COPY AT BOTTOM OF VIDEO SCREEN (Supered over the image)

(Date and time. Help, Jeff!)

ISHTARA

He tries desperately to live up to what's expected of him. I suspect he's always

(More)

testing himself -- deliberately plunging headlong into danger, trying to prove to himself he's not afraid. But he is.

ISHTARA

Inevitably, he's going to crack under the pressure, or just freeze up in combat. When he does, we may lose him, and others who are counting on him...

Panel 3 (1/6 page):

Scene: Angle from the video screen looking toward Vesta and Ishtara. (We're not showing the rec lounge girls.) Ishtara's firm, Vesta's upset.

ISHTARA

The safety of the entire fleet depends on our brave, few Viper pilots. If even one pilot cracks under the stress of combat, it could bring the whole Cylon armada down upon us. It's my job to make sure that doesn't happen.

VESTA

Doctor, please...! You can't ground him. I've, um...gotten to know him a little, and...he's a **Warrior**. You can't take that away from him. It'd destroy him.

Panel 4 (1/6 page):

Scene: Two shot of Ishtara and Vesta. Ishtara's citing the most damning evidence. Vesta, head down, knows this is a trump card.

ISHTARA

Vesta...have you ever heard any other Warrior admit he or she was afraid? Even jokingly?

VESTA

No.

Panel 5 (1/6 page):

Scene: Ishtara presses her point. Vesta fires back, defensively, a little angrily. Don't

(More)

over dramatize this. This is two women, one of whom is somewhat emotional, having a disagreement. Good acting, please.

ISHTARA

But Starbuck does it all the time. Even in front of me, though he **knows** I can ground him. He's begging me to do it, Vesta.

VESTA

No, he isn't. Everyone in this whole fleet is scared to death. Maybe he's the only Warrior who's **honest** about it.

Panel 6 (1/6 page):

Scene: Vesta leaves, upset. Ishtara looks deeply troubled. She doesn't want to admit it to herself, but Vesta's last words got to her a bit.

PAGE SIX:

Panel 1 (2/9 page):

Scene: The two Vipers are boxed in by formations of Raiders.

RED THREE

Starbuck, they've got us hemmed in! What do we **do?!?**

STARBUCK

Ahh...I...I don't know...I'm trying to think of something...

Panel 2 (1/9 page):

Scene: Close up of Starbuck, looking a little scared and confused. (NOTE: Artist, you *must* carry this in the picture. There's no dialogue to underscore it.)

RED THREE ("Electric" balloon from his radio)

Why are you slowing down?! You can't just **stop!** Starbuck, they're **locking on!**

Panel 3 (1/6 page):

Scene: Close up of Red Three, also a little confused and nervous. Shoot this from the side of her ship so that, past her, through her canopy glass, we can see in the background a few of the Cylon Raiders poised to destroy her and Starbuck.

RED THREE

Why aren't they **firing?** We're sitting fen-hens!

STARBUCK ("Electric" balloon from her radio)

Yeah...but they're **robots.** Do something they don't expect, and sometimes they get confused and can't pull the trigger. Sometimes...

(More)

Panel 4 (1/6 page):

Scene: Long shot, though the Vipers may be fairly close. Clearly show that the Cylons are turning and starting to withdraw.

RED THREE

They're **turning!**

Panel 5 (1/6 page):

Scene: Side by side shot of the two Vipers so that we can see both Red Three and Starbuck. They look relieved. Okay to crop the ships.

RED THREE

They're **running!** Almost forty of them, running from two Vipers -- make that one and a half!

STARBUCK

Who-ee! Let's get out of here before they learn to count.

Panel 6 (1/6 page):

Scene: Tight close up of Red Three. Her admiration and respect for Starbuck are clear.

RED THREE

Sir...? Starbuck? That was...incredibly brave.

STARBUCK ("Electric" balloon from her radio)

Brave? Ha. I was scared out of my **mind**, gorgeous.

STARBUCK

Frak, I am **so** late for my head-check session...!

PAGE SEVEN:

Panel 1 (2/9 page):

Scene: In the landing bay of the Galactica, Starbuck has climbed out of his ship and is running to get to Doctor Ishtara's office. Crewpersons flock around his Viper and Red Three (seen in the background), beginning their maintenance. Red Three's Cadet pilot calls to Starbuck as she's getting out of her ship. A crewperson laughs at Starbuck's joking (or is it?) remark.

CAPTION

Later, in the landing bay of the Galactica...

STARBUCK

Maybe if I convince the doc I'm nuts she'll prescribe a nice, long **vacation** for me!

CREWMAN

Haw! Good luck, Starbuck!

RED THREE

Starbuck! We have a date later, right?

Panel 2 (1/9 page):

Scene: Ishtara's office. Starbuck is striding in. Ishtara looks up from her work, and indicates a chair.

STARBUCK

Hi, Doc. Sorry I'm late. I was busy risking my life to pick up a girl.

ISHTARA

Please sit down, Lieutenant.

(More)

Panel 3 (1/6 page):

Scene: Though he undoubtedly knows where Ishtara meant for him to sit, Starbuck flops down on the psychiatrist's couch, a futuristic version of what we know.

STARBUCK

Plenty of room here on the couch, Doc, if you want to join me.

ISHTARA

No, thank you.

Panel 4 (1/6 page):

Scene: Ishtara paces, beginning her verdict speech. Starbuck is lounging on the couch, all smiles. He may even be lighting or smoking a cigar.

ISHTARA

First, I want you to know, I understand the stress that you're under, Lieutenant, and...

STARBUCK

You know, Doc, I was just thinking the same thing about you. I mean, dealing with everybody else's problems all day...

Panel 5 (1/6 page):

Scene: Two shot, featuring Ishtara's reaction to Starbuck's utterly unexpected comments. He's caught her as much by surprise as he did the Cylons. Again, no overacting please. Starbuck is absolutely sincere in his Good Time Charlie philosophy, and Ishtara is just a little brushed back—especially in light of what Vesta said before.

STARBUCK

...and you never even crack a smile. I don't know how you do it. Man, if I didn't fool around and have a little fun I would have gone over the edge a long time ago.

(More)

STARBUCK

I guess everybody copes in a different way...but don't you **ever** let your hair down, Doc?

Panel 6 (1/6 page):

Scene: Reacting to the General Quarters alarm, Starbuck is suddenly all business. He's getting up in a hurry to answer the call to arms. Ishtara looks the way people look when a fire alarm goes off in their building, startled, apprehensive.

SOUND EFFECT

Vrrroot-vrrroot-vrrroot...

STARBUCK

Scramble alarm...! Got to get to my Viper!

PAGE EIGHT:

Panel 1 (1/6 page):

Scene: As he's rushing out the door, Starbuck pauses for a moment, looking back at Ishtara. She might not be shown here.

STARBUCK

Oh... I **am** cleared to fly, right, Doc?

Panel 2 (1/6 page):

Scene: Close up of Ishtara having one last second thought.

Panel 3 (1/6 page):

Scene: Ishtara, foreground, relents. In the background, Starbuck is already racing off.

ISHTARA

Yes, Lieutenant. Of course.

STARBUCK

Thanks, Doc.

Panel 4 (1/6 page):

Scene: Ishtara speaks into her recording device.

ISHTARA

Erase tape.

Panel 5 (1/6 page):

Scene: Vesta enters carrying some papers and disks. Ishtara is standing in front of a

(More)

reflective surface—a mirror or some glass or chrome surface—looking at herself a little quizzically, as if seeing herself with new eyes.

VESTA

No more patients today, Doctor. Should I update the psycho-files and load in the data for tomorrow's cases?

ISHTARA

It's late.

VESTA

I don't mind. We always work late.

Panel 6 (1/6 page):

Scene: Close up, foreground, looking in the mirror, Ishtara is letting down her hair. Behind her, background, we can see Vesta looking content, happy. Possibly, you may wish to show Ishtara and Vesta's reflections in the mirror instead of them in the flesh.

ISHTARA

Maybe tonight...we won't.

The End