

StarGate SG-1 - Dawn Of Thunder

When Earth is threatened, the USA and the UK join forces to protect our world...with help from an old friend.

CHAPTER 1

A muted purr echoed across the runway as the large craft slipped slowly out of the hanger, looking to all like an oversized U2. With its long thin, almost perfectly cylindrical body, its oversized straight sharp edged wings, and with the engines affixed to the wing tips, making the wings bend slightly under the weight. The craft moved slowly to the runway on its tall and stilt-like undercarriage, its bulky under slung load barely clearing the ground.

Pilot Officer Reynolds glanced at the camera image of the runway displayed on his heads-up display. Carefully he lined the craft up with the runway, its oversized undercarriage making him too high to look directly at the runway.

“Airhead 1-4-niner requests permission to launch.”

“Permission granted, flight path has been cleared and your escort is orbiting”, the controller added “Good luck with The Beast.”

“Roger that.”

The large craft accelerated in a manner that would make a bat out of hell proud, lifting well clear of the end of the runway, and heading up. The ship was quickly joined by an escort of Tornado fighters and a lone Eurofighter Typhoon dogfighter.

“&”£\$-#’@” The escorts pilots glanced across at the big plane, amused by the litany of curses, always accompanied by some ungainly movement of the massive craft, that were heard at regular intervals.

The Typhoon pilot couldn’t stand it any more “Airhead 1-4-9 be advised we are hearing every curse, sorry *word* you say.” she drawled, amused.

“Bugger” the curses cut-off, the erratic movements didn’t.

“Hey Reynolds, you think we should pass your assessment on to engineering?”

“Smart-ass fighter pilots.” Reynolds muttered as he fought with the controls, the bulky under slung load making the craft difficult to control.



The escort slowly peeled off, the jets screaming for air in this high altitude as Airhead 1-4-9 boosted upwards, quickly leaving earth's fragile atmosphere behind.

"Control, this is Escort detail, the first egg has left the basket, please vector to BP for a top-up and tell mother goose to prepare the second egg."

"Roger that, drop to 2,000 and head..."

StarGate Command (SGC), Cheyenne Mountain, Colorado Springs

Klaxon's roared throughout the base as the PA system blared with the duty tech-sergeants voice;

"Hammond to the control Room, Hammond to the control Room!"

SG-1 looked at each other surprised, alert sirens, no teams off world, and no shout of 'off-world activation'. Something was up. Almost simultaneously, they dropped their cutlery and left the cafeteria at a dogtrot, heading for the control room.

General George Hammond stepped out of his office and into the control room just as SG-1 arrived from the mess hall.

Tech Sergeant Harriman, hearing their clattering footsteps turned to General Hammond;

"Sir, NORAD just reported an unidentified contact leaving atmosphere"

"Goa'ulds?" Colonel Jack O'Neill asked, just beating Hammond to it.

"NORAD says a definite No, sir."

"Any ideas, airman?"

"I think it might be a 'local' craft sir."

"Local, wait a minute, you mean Earth Human built?" said Daniel surprised, "well obviously not one of ours or you wouldn't have called Hammond."

"What makes you say that, son" Hammonds voice was calm as always but tinged with worry.

"Sir, every time we've seen an alien spacecraft they have tended to leave atmosphere vertical or very near vertical, this contact acted like an atmospheric craft up till the point it left atmosphere which is why we were not called earlier, NORAD was watching it because it was Galaxy sized yet didn't

match any known aircraft in design, they just thought it was something new the limeys had cooked up”

“Limeys?!?” Major Samantha Carter stepped over to the console to see for herself, while Daniel Jackson moved back out of the way.

“O’Neill, I am not familiar with these ‘Limeys?’”

“Slang for the English” O’Neill absentmindedly informed the big Jaffa.

“I see”

O’Neill stopped and did a rapid double take “Whoa, did you say England, as in the UFO came from England?”

“A joint RAF/Army base in South Wales to be exact”

CHAPTER 2

Southern Wales, United Kingdom

Lieutenant Peters strode quickly into Admiral Thompson’s office, her voice calm and confident as she voiced her report; having lost the shyness she had shown when she first met the admiral three years ago.

“Sir, Airhead’s 9, 8 & 7 are now on route to Mars with the Hull segments, 6 & 5 have lifted the tugs to orbit and are re-entering now, 3 is boosting with another hull section, 1 is delayed and 4 has been declared an engineering causality.”

“Damn!” Thompson cursed, shoving his chair backwards from the desk, the sun from the window behind him glinting off his 4 stars “that’s 2 down already! And we can’t afford to replace any”

“Admiral, I have started a new schedule to compensate, but it will cause delays, they are breaking up number 4 for spare parts now, but it’s doubtful anything will be salvageable from 2 sir, the fire caused too much damage”

“Okay” he signed, running his right hand through his hair in an unconscious gesture of frustration “get the updated schedule to me by 2100 hours please”

Nodding, the Lieutenant turned and briskly left the room, leaving the admiral to his thoughts. He turned to the window, looking out over the hanger where about 20 of the best brains in the Queens Armed Forces had were being shown the new craft, by the children who had developed them.

A 5 billion budget in the hands of some kids, he turned from the window, amused, and grinning.

SGC

Hammond entered the briefing room, and almost stopped in sheer shock. All of SG-1 was there, on time. He hid a small smile as his mind began to play “that’s great it starts with an earthquake....”

He moved to his chair quickly and sat down.

“So...” O’Neill asked

“NORAD says at least 7 of these unidentified craft have left RAF St Athan so far, 2 of which are now re-entering our atmosphere having left a pair of what appear to be tugs behind, the CIA are not happy, they had an agent on the base, but they turned up unconscious at the US embassy in London, with ‘better luck next time’ tattooed on their forehead.”

SG-1 looked away, trying hard to hide their smirks.

“The President got in contact with the British Prime Minister, who claimed ownership of the craft, and then told the President that they would share as much technology with us as we have with them, nothing, or Damn near it.”

Hammond looked around the briefing room table, making eye contact with each member of SG-1, StarGate command’s premier team, before continuing.

“SG-1, you are going to Wales, recon RAF St Athan but don’t do anything that might cause an incident, understood?”

RAF St Athan

The lieutenant knocked and entered “Sir, SG-1 just boarded a plane to Cardiff-Wales.”

He looked up from the paperwork and raised a sardonic eyebrow “Cutting it fine aren’t they? I would have landed a bit farther away.”

The lieutenant grinned as she looked out of the corner window, at a 747 descending to Cardiff-Wales “Like outside of visual range, sir?” her voice and expression would have fooled a Angel into thinking she was an innocent, the admiral smiled, he wasn’t fooled, he knew she occasionally displayed a mischievous streak a mile wide. “London perhaps?”

The admiral just shook his head, "This will have to be handled very carefully. Right now the Yanks could shut us down without too much trouble."

Peters nodded, "Just park a ship in orbit, shoot anything we try to launch into orbit, and laugh at us because we can't complain due to the secrecy of this project."

"And Thundersdawn will never get built." Thompson said, agreeing.

"What do you plan on doing sir?"

"Simple, I plan on overwhelming them, dominating the situation and stopping them thinking too much."

CHAPTER 3

Cardiff-Wales International Airport

As the plane taxied to the gate, the 'reception committee' charged their rifles, and waited. The plane stopped, and the Air Hostess opened the hatch and quickly stepped to one side, the crew having been warned whilst on approach. The soldiers quickly stepped through the door and moved to SG-1's seats, their rifles pointing at the ground. All sound within the plane was cut off as the passengers eyed the soldiers and their guns, thoughts of September the 11th filling their minds.

Jack O'Neill was not happy; the guns that were not quite pointing at him and his team-mates just screamed 'leak', and the corporal who seemed to be in charge confirmed this.

"O'Neill, Carter, Jackson, and" he quirked an eyebrow, his eyes knowing "Murray, such a surprise to find you here" his voice indicated it was anything but a surprise "Would you be so kind as to come with us please?"

O'Neill glared at him as soldiers grabbed their hand luggage and led them off the plane.

SGC

Hammond glanced up from his reports as a knock came from the door, "Come In."

The tech sergeant stepped through the doors, and reported, reading from a clipboard in his hand;

“Sir, SG-1 has failed to check in, and we are receiving reports that their plane was met by armed soldiers.”

An SF rushed in before Hammond could say anything, “Sir, A foot patrol just witnessed an armed man getting into a car and leaving the area, he appeared to have been watching the mountain entrance”

Hammond grimaced “any ID?”

“Just that he appeared to be wearing an SAS uniform, and it appeared that he *wanted* to be seen, sir.”

“Well, now we know how they knew SG-1 were coming.” the tech sergeant muttered.

“Quite.” Hammond replied, motioning them both out before reaching for the red phone.

RAF St. Athan

SG-1 fidgeted, restless and annoyed, the guards had escorted them to the very place they wanted to be, but strangely enough they weren't happy about it. The corporal who had met them off the plane entered the room; waving the guards out as he did so, this time he was wearing an Admirals uniform with 4 stars clearly displayed.

“Maybe I should transfer to the Royal Navy if promotions are that quick” Jack said, sarcastically.

The admiral replied, his voice even more sarcastic “Nobody promotes that quick, I was in disguise hum? You have heard of disguises right?”

It worked, Jack shut up, surprised, just glared stonily at the admiral.

The admiral sat down in his chair, and turned to face SG-1, offering them drinks, “So let me guess, you've seen the Airheads, and want to know what's going on, hum?”

“Well, yeah”

“Then we can start off with the lecture then hum?”

“Ah, we are aware of security.”

“Obviously not, or we would not have known about the StarGate until you told us.”

SG-1 looked at each other surprised, was he admitting to compromising SGC's security?

"Not the lecture I was on about though, and this one you can consider to come from the very top, it's about treatment of allies..."

Through out the lecture SG-1 kept wincing, it wasn't that he raised his voice, the Admiral was cool, calm and collected throughout, but he kept making some very harsh assessments.

"...The only reason you give Russia anything is because they have you over a barrel, we have been a loyal ally for years, first to send troops to help you against Al-Qaeda and Saddam, hell we even lent you our AWACS birds on 9/11, but we are expected to keep quiet, expected to send troops, and not have any control over our own men, or hear reports from them once they reach SGC?"

O'Neill rubbed his eyes and glanced at the closed window blinds again, he could have *sworn* he saw a faint ball of light pass through the blinds, entering the room, then leave again. He glanced at his team-mates; Daniel was also staring at the blinds, a surprised expression on his face. Teal'c had raised one eyebrow in surprise, so subtly that if O'Neill didn't know Teal'c so well, he would definitely have missed it, and Carter just did a rapid double-take, alerting Thompson to the ball of light. Thompson just glanced at it, and raised his eyes to the sky in supplication, calling upon the heavens for patience before raising his voice. Carter and Jackson's heads snapped around to Thompson so fast O'Neill wondered if they had whiplash.

CHAPTER 4

Ground Control - RAF ST Athan

"Control, this is Airhead 1-4-9, we are RTB, ETA 14hours, the components are now in a stable Martian orbit." the voice of Pilot Officer Reynolds came blaring through Lieutenant Peters's headset, degraded by static and the frankly excessive encryption that was being used

"Roger that, be advised Shunter's 1-5-1 and 1-5-2 will pass by close approx. 3 hours and will be loaded."

"Roger."

Peters turned from the console, "Its confirmed sir, the first components are in place and more are on route, the Quarters for the construction crews are being loaded onto 1-4-6 and 1-4-5 now and the next 2 tugs are ready to be loaded once 1-4-1 and 1-4-3 land."

“We should be online within a fortnight, sir.”

“Good, have SG-1 sent to my office please.”

“Yes, sir.”

The admiral turned and left the room, flicking his digital ID card through the reader by every set of doors he passed through to open them. Security was tight here, you couldn't go anywhere without ID or an escort, 'good thing too' Thompson thought.

He arrived at his office to find SG-1 already waiting; he quickly motioned the guard out before moving around and sitting at his desk, laying his arms on the varnished mahogany.

“SG-1, you have several space going warships don't you.”

A cautious “yes”

“And Russia?”

This time O'Neill gave a suspicious “yes”

“Any Space docks or repair facilities?”

“No, but as the Prometheus class is fully atmospheric.” Carter began.

“And what happens when you receive damage that prevents you from re-entering an atmosphere?”

“Hammond attempted to procure funding for such a facility, but he failed.” Teal'c intoned.

“We didn't fail, Right now we have begun lifting pre-constructed components for a large space station into Martian orbit, before the day is out the construction crews and their habitat modules will join these components in Mars orbit and begin to put the pieces together. Within a fortnight we will have an operational base which will include Space dock facilities capable of taking 4 Prometheus class vessels at a time, and then we will begin asteroid mining operations to provide resources for these facilities”

SG-1 shot up in their seats, shocked. This was *not* what they were expecting. The admiral didn't fail to notice this.

“You were expecting construction of more warships perhaps?”

“Well yeah, we are at war, more warships are...”

“Useless. Colonel, without decent support behind them, a hundred or more ships are useless without support facilities behind them. You see, while

you and Russia have been building ships and reacting to the Goa'ulds, we have been planning. You are needed out there, but we intend to make damn sure you and your ships have the support they need, and it is much easier to build spaceships in orbit, away from prying eyes."

"How are you powering everything?" Carter asked, curious, the reply shocked her.

"Zero-point Energy Extraction"

"Buts that's impossible, you can't..."

"Not impossible, merely difficult, requiring a lot of expensive materials, and the collector also has to be designed for the solar system it is set-up in, the collector shape, we have been reliably informed, is different in every star system, which is were you come in."

"Naquadah Reactors." said Carter.

"Yes"

"Ah..." Jackson suddenly found himself the centre of attention, "reliably informed? By whom?"

"Oh, just an out-of-towner we know."

Teal'c raised an eyebrow, whilst Carter and O'Neill glanced at each other, 'who did they know?'

CHAPTER 5

Outer Space – 3 Months Later

The Prometheus limped slowly back to the sol system, its drives damaged, most of the weapons off-line and a corona of debris, hull fragments and bodies surrounding the heavily damaged vessel.

"Prometheus to SGC, come in SGC."

"Prometheus to SGC, come in please SGC."

"No response, sir."

"Very well, keep on trying."

"Prometheus to SGC, come in SGC."

“HMS Thundersdawn to Prometheus, we are reading you signal strength 2.”

‘HMS Thundersdawn? What the hell?!’

“HMS Thundersdawn, this is a restricted” Colonel Ronson glanced at the readouts on the comm. panel “and *encrypted* channel, please identify yourself.” It wasn’t a request.

The reply sounded amused, but stunned the Prometheus’s bridge crew “Roger, this is Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Second’s Spacedock Facility Number 1, call-sign Thundersdawn, in Mars orbit, do you require authentication at this time?”

“Negative, bounce message to Sierra-Golf-Charlie please.”

“Repeat please, you are signal strength 1.”

“Bounce transmission to SGC please.”

“Roger, you are signal strength 2 at this time, re-transmitting now.”

SGC

“Sierra-Golf-Charlie, this is Thundersdawn; we have a bounce transmission from Prometheus for you.”

Cheers filled the control room, SG-14 had witnessed Prometheus being ambushed from an observatory on PX-239, but had been ‘encouraged’ to leave before they could tell if Prometheus had survived or not.

“Sierra-Golf-Charlie, This is Prometheus.”

The cheers grew louder, the Prometheus was safe. O’Neill looked at Hammond and said “Why a bounce transmission?”

A look of concern crossed Hammond face, but before he could call Prometheus up, another message came through.

“This is Prometheus, we are declaring an emergency.”

The cheers stopped, dead.

HM Spacedock *Thundersdawn*

The comm. Officer's hand smashed down on a protective glass covering to the right of his console, then he jabbed at the red button within. Instantly alarms sounded through out the base, and the lights throughout the base dimmed as power was diverted to weapons. A slight thunder could be felt coming through the comm. Officers chair as the stations crew rushed to their battle stations, he thumbed the intercom.

"GQ, all hands man General Quarters, this is not a drill, all crews to rescue stations, all crews to rescue stations, this is not a drill."

The airlock behind him thudded open, and crew came crashing through, racing to their GQ stations.

"Report!" Lieutenant Peters, now a Captain, and Officer in Command of Thundersdawn barked as she strode through the airlock, throwing a uniform top over her head.

"Ma'am, USS Prometheus is inbound, and she just declared an emergency."

"Captain has the bridge." she announced to the room at large as she tried in vain to tie her auburn hair up out of the way, disgusted she gave it up.

Turning quickly to the comm. Officer she asked "any idea of the nature of the emergency?"

"Coming through now."

"On speaker please."

"...Lost at least 20 crew, some compartments still not responding, someone could be in there, we just don't know."

She reached over the comm. Officer and opened the channel,

"Thundersdawn here, any sign of a tail?"

"Negative on that, not picking anything up, but sensors are compromised."

"Roger that" she closed the channel, and turned to the comm. Officer appraisingly. She had been looking for a competent Executive officer (Exec) after the last one failed medical, maybe she didn't have to look any further?

Her mind made, she said "Good work and right decision taking us straight to GQ, rescue stations. You're now Exec, now tell me what we have available."

"Ah, yes, ah" the comm. Officer was surprised but he quickly rallied "Tugs 1-5-5 and 1-5-1 are docked, all 1-4 series craft are down for bug-fixes

and won't be available for at least 48hours, all bar 1-4-7 are on earth anyway, 1-5-2 and 1-5-4 are inbound with Priority 1 supplies, ETA is only an hour, and 1-5-3 is immobile, providing power to the asteroid mining facility that's under construction."

"As soon as they arrive, I want 1-5-2 and 1-5-4 unloaded and ready to go, get the crews into 1-5-5 and 1-5-1, and move them to a suitable rendezvous ASAP!"

"We still have one of the life support modules the construction crews used here, what about loading Med-evac equipment into it, and using it as a lifeboat, ma'am?"

"Do it!"

CHAPTER 6

Prometheus, Just inside Sol System.

The two tugs slowly closed on the now drifting Prometheus, the ungainly mass of a temporary habitat module slung underneath tug 1-5-5.

"1-5-1 to Thundersdawn, we are in visual range of Prometheus, definite dry-dock job here, no sign of any hostiles."

"Prometheus to 1-5-1, glad to see you!"

"Roger, please prepare all non-essential personnel for transfer to 1-5-5's habitat module, status of docking ports please?"

"Topside and front docks are good, all others compromised"

"Roger that, we will dock the module with the topside docking port"

SGC

"Yes sir, a rescue team from Thundersdawn has already arrived at the Prometheus."

"No sir, as yet we have not received a damage assessment, but we have been informed it's a dockyard job."

"Yes sir, we will confirm that."

"Yes sir, goodbye sir." Hammond sighed as he put the red phone down.

An unhappy president was not a good thing, especially when he had such good reason to be unhappy. The Prometheus was not repairable by any means available to the SGC, not without calling in some *major* markers, but Thundersdawn not only had the capability, but Prometheus as well, which could be considered 'stacking the deck'. Worse Prometheus had a lot of technologies no other vessel of her class did, especially not the Russian built ones, and these technologies were now in British hands. They could either tell Thundersdawn and her crew how to repair Prometheus, or could insist on the return of Prometheus, and wonder exactly how many technologies Thundersdawn got a nice look at, either way, the SGC's advantage, gained through the blood, toil and tears of the SG teams had been compromised, and...

"Signal from Thundersdawn sir, 112 saved sir."

..... They couldn't really complain about it. Well, Kinsley would try to, no one else would.

Ground Control RAF ST Athan

"Admiral! Signal from Thundersdawn sir!"

The admiral rose from the duty officer's desk and strode over to the cramped and messy comms desk, which showed evidence of many hurried refits, and hasty repairs.

"Thundersdawn to Ground Control, 1-5-5 reports an ETA of 5 hours for the Prometheus survivors sir, and Medical assistance has been requested on arrival, 1-5-1 and 1-5-2 have begun towing operations, it's going to be slow, ETA estimated at 2 days, 1-5-4 is monitoring, Peters requests status on the 1-4 series craft please."

The admiral smiled, he at least had anticipated this need, the 1-5 series tugs were not atmospheric capable, the 1-4 series, big and ungainly as they were, could re-enter safely, apart from the minor issue the heat-proof tiles coming off all the time.

"I had 1-4-7 crash refitted with the new tiles, its passenger re-entry module too. Lift off in" he checked his watch "1 hour, all the other 1-4 will be significantly delayed though, don't expect them to start becoming available for another 48 hours."

Thompson quite rightly imagined Captain Peters wincing as she heard those words, Thundersdawn was already low on several critical supplies, which the emergency situation with the Prometheus had only made worse; this additional delay could be a problem. Those sodding tiles had grounded the only craft the royals had capable of exiting and re-entering earths

atmosphere, the only source of a number of very important supplies, air and water to name just two.

CHAPTER 7

Thundersdawn

3 days later

The Captain and Exec hurried from the bridge and headed towards the docking ports. Not one, but two category 'A' passengers were now arriving for a perfect simultaneous docking. One left from Colorado Springs, one from ST Athan, both were more than capable of calculating the odds of simultaneous dockings occurring (when they weren't set-up) but she knew who would get the answer first, and it wouldn't be Samantha Carter. The Exec turned off down a separate corridor to meet Major Carter, the Captain hurried on, seeing her destination ahead, the airlocks already cycling, preparing to open.

Soon, the passengers started to come through, mostly transfers heading for the mining station project. She waited nervously; one of the design team was here.

Soon a young girl comes through the airlock, looking at most fifteen. The Captain hurries forward, smiling as she pictured Carters face once she found out who their 'expert' was.

"Welcome aboard, I'm..."

"Captain Peters! A mutual friend told me all about you." her eyes momentarily glazed over, then she snapped back to the present "He's showing off a load of his paintings at the moment, his Italian Exhibition he calls it, 55 paintings and he still hasn't visited."

Peters was amused, "Does he ever go somewhere he paints?"

"True."

The Exec arrived at the airlock just as Carter left it, a small group of SGC engineers and scientists following behind her. This wasn't a 1-4, 1-5 or even the delayed 1-6 series craft, this was an SGC shuttle. He quickly motioned the guards to their posts in front of the air lock then greeted Carter.

"Welcome to Her Majesty's SpaceDock 1, Thundersdawn"

"Thanks, what's the status of the Prometheus?"

“Sealed in Dry-dock 2, gravity is off in that section, but we were able to pump atmosphere in, there don’t appear to be any kind of contaminants leaking from Prometheus, but we are monitoring. Her reactor is cold, and all systems are shut down. You should be able to work without full spacesuits, though you will be required to wear basic protection and air”

SGC

Hammond was in a much better mood, he managed to convince his superiors of the inevitability of Thundersdawn and by extension the United Kingdom getting a good look at Prometheus technologies, a task made easier when it was agreed Carter could look at the Zero Point Generators, a technology that Carter pretty much said she would believe once she saw it, for once with the complete agreement of the Tok’ra, who didn’t believe Earth capable of developing such advanced technologies, the Prometheus’s survivors had arrived and most were out of the infirmary already, the others would not be far behind them, and even better, Kinsey had cancelled an appointment with him. That alone was enough to make his day.

A knock sounded at his door “Enter.”

“Sir, Carter is on the radio for you.”

“Coming.”

He moved quickly down to the control room and the radio.

“Carter, you’re early, any problems?”

“Sir, I just got a look at the Zero Point Generators, and they are genuine sir, it will take me a while to understand all the maths behind them but they are genuine.”

“That’s good news Carter, our Naquadah use was getting a little high.”

“I just met their expert sir, you are not going to believe this.....”

CHAPTER 8

SGC

Hammond grabbed the nearest chair and sat down in it heavily, rubbing his forehead. He could feel another headache coming on; luckily he was used to SG-1’s reports by now and had come prepared. He reached into a pocket and withdrew 2 tablets; the duty airman just looked at him sympathetically, and passed his cup over. Hammond nodded his thanks, and swallowed the tablets, washing them down with the airman’s coffee.

“Let me get this straight.” Hammond said, keying the radio on again “Since 1984, way before we opened the StarGate, the British have had classified proof that at least one race of aliens existed AND has been sharing technologies with a group of kids. Advanced technology at that, the sort of stuff all our ‘allies’ have refused to give us.”

“Yes sir” the voice over the radio could be described 2 ways, very meek, and sounding like they wished they had some triple strength headache tablets handy. Hammond rubbed his forehead again, he could certainly sympathise.

“Even worse, they could have had these technologies and been in space along time ago, but a NID type operation scuppered that” Hammond’s mind started screaming about NID and Ammunition to use the next time they came an knocking, “Not only that, but their visitor is generally seen as a glowing ball of light, with something of a superior attitude.”

“Ah, yes sir.”

“Ah... it gets better sir.”

‘Gets Better?’ Hammond was, he had to admit, dreading this, how much worse could it get?

“Ah, well you remember those two motherships we blew up in orbit?”

By this time, whenever Carter spoke, the duty airman was wincing in sympathy, it looked to Hammond like a nervous twitch. He wondered if Doctor Frasier should be told...

“Well, their out of town friend was not fooled by the asteroids story sir”

Hammond shrugged that off, any alien, or human for that matter was unlikely to be fooled by the cover story.

“Which is when they decided to approach the British government, or rather Admiral Thompson, then Vice-Admiral, whom they believed could be trusted”

“Are you saying the British have all those technologies, their craft and spacedock because of *us*?”

“Ah, yes sir”

Hammond grabbed the airman’s coffee again and reached into his pocket, he knew he had some more headache tablets in there somewhere...

CHAPTER 9

Thundersdawn

“Captain Peters!”

The fifteen-year-old genius strode confidently onto Thundersdawn’s command centre, followed closely by Carter. She had, by this time, managed to lose the shell-shocked and amazed look she had gained when she realised exactly who the Royals expert on Zero Point Energy Extraction was, and was hurriedly shifting through her notes, trying to organise them, ready to transmit to the SGC.

“Michael says he has done a nice painting of Thundersdawn with Mars in the background, he says you have first dibs if you want it.”

The Captain turned, and talking to the entire bridge she said, her voice amused and slightly sarcastic “Geez, I don’t know, do we really want a valuable painting in this midst of all this artistry and colour?” she gestured at the drab grey walls and the exposed pipes and cabling, “It might be overshadowed by the sheer luxury of this facility.”

As her eyes uncrossed, the Genius Kalinda giggled, “Michael says it’s a risk he is willing to take, anyway he’s packing it now.”

“Tell him Thanks for us, Comm.’s, Carter needs a data and audio channel to...”

An excited shout interrupted Peters, “**Conn,- sensors, New Contact! Designate Master 1!**”

Captain Peters cursed, “**General Quarters, man Battlestations!**”

A master designated contact, trouble. The master designation was reserved for hostile or potentially hostile contacts, mainly used by the submarine service; the convention had stuck here too.

“Conn, sensors, contact just appeared 2 light seconds from Earth, contact does *not* match known Goa’uld craft, but is definitely an advanced craft”

SGC

“Morning campers” O’Neill was in a good mood, “any word from Carter?”

“No, sir” the duty airman replied, “she’s due to report in within the next 5 minutes.”

“Sweet”

The airman was listening carefully to the channels normally used by Thundersdawn and the SGC to contact each other. O'Neill was watching him carefully for any sign of a signal from Carter, so he was first to notice when the airman stiffened, then smashed his hand down on the alarm.

Jack jumped up, surprised, “Airman, repo...”

The airman turned to answer his unfinished order in time to see a glowing outline of Colonel O'Neill fade from the room.

When O'Neill re-materialised aboard the Asgard vessel he was not surprised to find Thor there, what he did find surprising was the look of shock on Thor's face.

“Thor! What's up?”

“Colonel O'Neill, I was not aware you had acquired Zero-point technologies.”

“Neither was I, Carters getting our first look at them now.”

“How can it be your first look at them? These are Earth built craft, are they not?”

“Long story, so why the visit?”

Thundersdawn

The captain grabbed Carter and led her over to the sensor station.

“This look familiar to you?”

“Asgard, but not a ship I recognise.”

The captain nodded, they did not have sensor profiles for the Asgard yet, “How sure are you?”

“Asgard design definitely.”

“Stand down from GQ, set condition 2, sensors, lock that profile into the computer.”

CHAPTER 10

Thundersdawn

Captain Peters sipped her tea slowly, as she carefully watched the Asgard ship through the small flat screen monitor built into the arm of her station. To say she was worried was to call the Arctic 'slightly chilly'. The impression she had from all the reports on the Asgard she had spent the last 5 hours skimming through was that, when the Asgard come to Earth, trouble either follows, or is waiting for the Asgard on arrival, an impression Carter hadn't tried too hard to refute.

Unfortunately they weren't ready for trouble. Thundersdawn was the only operational station in the Sol system, and her weapons when compared to the Goa'uld's could be classed as laughable. The several test firings they had performed had shown a considerable number of flaws in their pulse laser design. Replacements had been designed, but until the next financial year, there wasn't enough money to build them. Their missiles had nuclear tips, which had proven ineffective against normal Goa'uld shields before, let alone the upgraded shields of Anubis's vessels. The 1-4 and 1-5 series craft were unarmed, and could easily pass muster as 'sitting ducks' to any serious opposition, hell *any* opposition, the 1-6 series craft had been delayed again, but they at least would have some weaponry when they became available in about 3 months. The Lancer Class Star fighters had also been delayed, they were just waiting on the redesigned pulse lasers. They had actually been ground tested already and apart from the weapons they were finished, ahead of schedule.

Captain Peters tossed her head back and mulled over that thought, ahead of schedule, not something you often hear in government work, she thought with a wry grin.

That left only the Asgard to provide any serious opposition if trouble chose then to come a-knocking, Prometheus didn't even have a reactor at this point, it had been removed ready for replacement. Peters reviewed her stream of thought, and didn't like it, but maybe...

"Kalinda, report to command please!"

Trouble might be coming, or it might not be, but either way she intended to be ready, and she was sure the Royal Naval Academies top graduate, and a telepath whose IQ required a whole new scale could come up with something.

CHAPTER 11

Thundersdawn

The captains thoughts were interrupted as the airlock at the back of the command deck thudded open, allowing Kalinda and Carter to enter the bridge, Peters listened to them for a few seconds then made the all too accurate deduction that they were so wrapped up in their discussion of some incredibly complex scientific theory that neither of them even realised they had arrived at command.

“Kalinda! Carter!”

Their heads snapped around, startled, their expressions quickly becoming sheepish as they realised where they were.

“Sorry” they said almost simultaneously.

Peters quashed the thought that Kalinda and Carter were related, but only because their records said otherwise. Those two acted so alike at times, except, Peters noted, when Soldier Carter came to visit. Kalinda had never entered military service, so did not have that aspect to her.

“Major, we could use your help on this one too” she added, trying to keep it informal for Kalinda who still wasn’t used to military procedure, and was a bit young to join up anyway “Kalinda, thanks for coming so fast.”

Curious, Carter and Kalinda approached Captain Peter’s duty station.

“As you know, an Asgard vessel arrived some hours ago, unfortunately an allied vessel arriving in this system usually means trouble is coming, trouble we are not ready for. There are only two armed craft in this system, the Asgard vessel and us. The problem is our weapons; specifically our pulse lasers and missiles are *not* up to scratch. We need to get them up to scratch, and fast. I’m not waiting until the next financial year for some weapons to defend this base with!” Peters thumping her hand on her desk punctuated her last word.

Carter nodded straight away, her military mind allowing her to quickly asses the danger of being on an under gunned space station, Kalinda took a few seconds longer, but by this time Peters and Carter had already moved to a large clear area, on the command deck, meant for a fighter control station when the Lancers eventually arrived, and were spreading schematics across the deck, she hurried to join them and they began bouncing ideas back and forth.

CHAPTER 12

Thundersdawn

Kalinda was attempting to walk down the corridor through all the debris of the hasty refit and the extra cabling that had been set up to boast the power

of the Pulse lasers. In reality, what she was mainly doing could best be described as exercising her vocabulary, swearing every time the debris almost made her fall. The young ensign who was accompanying her was taking notes; he hadn't even heard some of those before. Kalinda eventually made it to the end of the corridor, and poked her head into the electronics suite at the end of the corridor.

"Carter, the bypass cables are up and the circuit test checks out. We'll have to send a team to start clearing the corridors out though; this corridor alone must break at least 20 health and safety regs."

Carter looked up from her monitor, the new software seems to be okay, I think we may be done."

"Good, then we had better let the captain know."

Kalinda turned to the ensign, "Get a team up here to get these corridors cleaned up before someone has an accident, we'll be in command if needed."

The Ensign nodded, and Carter and Kalinda left, moving swiftly through the corridors to command, arriving in time to hear the comm. officer of the watch speak;

"Incoming transmission from Master 1, captain."

"Put it through."

"This is Captain Peters of Her Majesty's space station number 1, call-sign Thundersdawn, to whom do I have the honour of addressing?" she tried to keep her voice calm, and it mostly worked, this was after all, the Royals first contact with an alien craft, sure the SGC had made first contact, and the Asgard were allied, but even so she couldn't entirely suppress her nerves.

"Captain Peters, this is Colonel O'Neill." She quirked an eyebrow, yep definitely there first contact, someone with his record could hardly be described as 100% human after all...

"Thor here says we have inbound, a pair of Hatak's just registered on his sensors."

"How long?" Peters snapped out, her manner suddenly all business.

"15 minutes, they are coming in fast, must have acquired a faster engine from somewhere."

"GQ!" she snapped out, her head turning to the duty comm. Officers station.

"Will our friend fight?" she snapped, turning back to her microphone.

“I will try Captain Peters, but 2 upgraded Ha’taks and their fighters will prove difficult to destroy, this is not a top of the line vessel, assistance would be required.”

Peters glanced at Kalinda and Carter, who nodded, speaking simultaneously,

“We’re done.” Kalinda said.

“Upgrades complete and online Captain” from Carter.

“Send the fighters our way, our pulse lasers are more than a match for them and fire rapidly enough to really sweep clear, but the big boys are beyond us.”

“I will try to do as you suggest.”

The channel closed, but Peters was already barking orders out
“Comms, send general alert signal ‘cave’, tell all the 1-4’s, 1-5’s, and the construction crews over at the mining facility to go quiet, shut down all non-essentials and make like a hole in the water! Weapons, set pulse lasers and targeting computers to rapid fire mode, assume hostile fighters inbound, comms, begin dumping our logs to ground control, and get me ship-wide!”

“Ship-wide up, Captain!”

“All hands, this is the Captain, we have hostile craft, a pair of souped-up Ha’taks inbound and we expect to engage within 15 minutes. This is not a drill people! An Asgard vessel will be fighting with us, but they will be outmatched if we don’t do our part. Hopefully we will be able to distract all the enemy fighters long enough to give them a chance, but if that doesn’t work we will be next. Good luck and God bless.”

“Weapons! Lock the Asgard vessel into the targeting computer and label it as a friendly”

She sat back at her command console with a sigh, “Now, we wait.”

CHAPTER 13

Ha'tak

In the grand scheme of things he was not an important Goa’uld, he had never reached system lord status, acting only as a servant of Apophis before he was killed. With the death of Apophis he had gained a, he snorted sardonically, *loyal* following of Jaffa and his two ships and began planning for revenge on those who brought his master down. In this he was unique, most

Goa'uld have little, if any loyalty to those they call master, but not this Goa'uld. His chance had finally come when he had discovered an abandoned mothership on the edge of what little space he controlled, it was damaged, mostly beyond repair, but its cargo, a trio of advanced Hyper drives were intact. Two went into his Ha'tak's; the third was being built into a new mothership he was constructing. With these new drives he felt he could catch earth totally by surprise, before any of their allies could intervene, and then leave.

"My Lord, we have arrived."

"My Lord" a dark skinned Jaffa said, his voice strangled with suppressed laughter, "We are picking up a number of unarmed craft; they are ballistic and powered down. They think they can hide from us!"

The Goa'uld snorted with contempt, unarmed they were no threat; he would deal with them later.

"My lord, the Tau'ri have built themselves a spacedock!"

He perked up, a spacedock, such facilities were always heavily defended with the best weapons and ships available, it might actually be a threat. He was interrupted in his thoughts by the Jaffa bursting into outright laughter, he glared at the Jaffa, such conduct was unbecoming the servant of a God such as he, but the Goa'uld noted, considering the crew of mutinous dogs, dregs and banished Jaffa he had as a crew, hardly surprising.

"My Lord" the Jaffa added, not bothering to even say My Lord with respect, "the spaceyard, it has no heavy weaponry, nothing that could challenge us!"

"These Tau'ri defeated the great Apophis!" he said, disbelief echoing through his voice.

The Jaffa spoke again, this time all laughter and disrespect was gone from his voice, "My Lord, we have a sensor contact you should see!"

He glared at the Jaffa as he turned to the sensor display, and mentally began cursing.

"Order the fighters to engage that facility, we will engage the Asgard!"

"Yes, My Lord"

Within minutes swarms of Udajeet fighters left the Ha'tak's, and moved with deadly grace towards Thundersdawn, the Ha'taks moving aggressively towards Earth, and the waiting Asgard vessel.

CHAPTER 14

Thundersdawn

“Is it just me or did that Goa’uld just do exactly what we wanted them to?”

“It’s not you, Captain.”

“Hmm, All hear this! All hear this! We have bogies inbound, ETA 2 minutes, we are now running weapons free.”

“Diagnostics confirm, all weapons batteries green”

“All airtight doors are sealed, Captain.”

“The Asgard vessel has engaged both Ha’tak’s!”

“Weapon’s locked! Contacts will enter long range in 5 seconds!”

“Captain, engineering confirms all generators on line.”

“Bogies in Long range!”

“Commence Firing!” Peters shouted. The response was instantaneous.

Thundersdawn began shuddering as volleys of laser light left the jury-rigged Pulse Laser cannons. Most missed, at that range it was inevitable, but the Jaffa in their fighters came on relentless, despite the stabbing bursts of energy seeking to atomise their craft, despite the occasional blaze of light as a direct hit was scored.

“Medium Range! Re-setting Lasers!”

The lasers stopped for a second, then restarted anew, the closer range meaning less energy was lost before reaching the Gliders and so Thundersdawn’s cannons could fire faster and with greater accuracy. It showed. More gliders were destroyed every second, every meter closer they got. It wasn’t enough, the Jaffa were too many...

“Short range!”

The pulse cannons reset again, at this short range they were able to fire almost continuously, but then, so could the Goa’uld.

Thundersdawn rumbled almost continuously as the Gliders fired repeatedly into her armoured hull. Half of the gliders were gone now, but those that were left were causing significant damage. One enterprising glider pilot had found a blind spot in the pulse laser coverage and had stopped dead in space firing at the same piece of armour again, and again, and again. It

gave. Peters was thrown of her seat as Thundersdawn gave an almighty groan and shifted in space, blown backwards by the force of air escaping from her hull.

“Hull breach! Corridor 34E and Hold 1 are open to vacuum.”

The glider pilot grinned; satisfied by the damage he had caused, and moved to a new section. Thundersdawn had yet to stop her uncontrolled movements however, and the Jaffa got a temporary reprieve as the targeting computers failed to lock onto their targets, thrown off by the wild movements of the station as the largest compartment in Thundersdawn, Hold 1, vented its atmosphere to space.

Thundersdawn shuddered again, and with a bang of escaping energy the environmental control console behind Peters exploded, the body of the operator smashing into Peters, forcing her to the ground. She crawled out from underneath the man, and checked his pulse. Nothing, she cursed and got back to her feet, she had a station to look after.

“Jesus!”

The softly spoken moan from the damage control console grabbed Peters attention.

“Report!”

“A Glider just hit Dry-dock 4, Captain, it’s gone, it’s broken off totally”
The Captain stood stunned for a moment, but Thundersdawn shuddered again bringing her to her senses.

“Control, get working on those thrusters, we need to stop this venting now”

“Venting is about done Captain, we should regain control momentarily.”

“Sensors just picked up a big explosion captain, someone just died but sensors are to damaged to tell who”

“That had better be the Ha’tak’s.”

‘Either that’ the Captain thought to herself ‘or we’re dead.’

Static filled the bridge as the overloaded intercom burst into life;

“Engineering to command, we just lost pulse laser batteries 4 and 9, they’re slagged, total loss, we need to shut down the rest now!”

“We still have about 20 gliders out there; we can’t afford to stop firing, you’ll just have to keep those lasers going a little longer” Peters shouted back through the microphone.

“No guarantees captain!” The intercom clicked off.

“Captain, signal from the Asgard, Scratch one, must of been that explosion tactical couldn’t identify”

“Captain! The gliders!”

Peters turned to the sensor officer, surprised by the jubilation in his voice.

“They’re leaving!”

“Why?” the question was out before she could suppress it.

“Looks like a retreat Captain, as far as sensors can tell they are not regrouping.”

Peters nodded, relieved.

“Cease firing!”

CHAPTER 15

Approaching *Thundersdawn*

The Asgard vessel slowly approached Thundersdawn, its transporters sparkled all around the ship as battle debris was shifted into a safe orbit that would cause it to enter the fiery heat of the sun, but some debris was collected by the Asgard and stored on their ship, Bodies, the inevitable remains of any major battle, far too many bodies. O’Neill and Thor gazed upon the remains of the once proud space station and were silent. They had both seen battle damage before, that wasn’t what silenced them, what silenced them was the volume of determined repairs being carried out, crew in spacesuits were crawling over the hull fixing the myriad hull breaches, rebuilding antenna arrays and retrieving supplies blown out from the number 1 hold.

“Thundersdawn to Asgard vessel, do you require assistance.”

Captain Peters face appeared on the main viewing, the command centre behind her showing evidence of at least one fire, and several consoles were dark, dead, but Peters and her crew were proud, defiant, refusing to be defeated by the damage the Jaffa had caused them.

“No, Captain Peters, repairs are proceeding as expected, do you require any assistance?”

“Our long range comms are down, could you please bounce a transmission for us please?”

“Of course.”

Ground Control, St Athan

“Sir, we’re picking up a transmission, it appears to be a bounce from Thundersdawn Admiral.”

A sigh of relief filled the room, as, for the first time in hours, many of the personnel started to relax. The Admiral looked up from his desk, his face showing the strain of waiting, but a tired smile just managed to show on his face, Thundersdawn had survived, at least for the moment.

“Well? The transmission?”

“Sorry Admiral, it’s a recall notice, sent all the 1-4 and 1-5’s.”

“Try and contact Thundersdawn, and get a damage and casualties estimate as soon as possible.”

“Yes, sir.”

CHAPTER 16

Ground Control, St Athan

“Latest CasRep, sir.”

The admiral sighed, and rubbed his forehead. He was quite aware that casualties were inevitable in any battle, but it didn’t make it any easier. Ultimately he was responsible for every death, doubly so because he had hand-selected every member of Thundersdawn’s large crew.

“What’s the latest?” he asked quietly.

“105 KIA, 185 WIA and 45 MIS, Admiral”

The admiral winced, MIS, Missing In Space, about the worst fate imaginable.

“The Asgard vessel has picked up a number of bodies, no exact numbers yet, but most of the MIS are probably there, Admiral” the ensign added quietly.

“At least their families will have something to bury” the admiral mused as the Ensign left, small comfort to those left behind, but still....

He sighed again, and returned to the report he was writing.

Thundersdawn

With the Asgard vessel actively assisting, all the minor repairs to Thundersdawn were finished in days, leaving a largely operational but exhausted space station. Number 1 hold was still exposed to vacuum, a

number of Pulse Lasers were so much slag and Dry-dock 4 had burned up in the Martian atmosphere, a number of crew rescued by Asgard transporters mere seconds before it broke up.

Thor had left, promising to return with better weapons and some shields for Thundersdawn, Carter had left too, returning to SGC, Kalinda had stayed, determined to stay, she was now Chocky's semi-official representative on Thundersdawn.

The station was wounded, but alive, and holding it's breath. This was just the first battle, they had shown their mettle now, and more challenges would come. Peters found herself looking forward to it.

Authors Notes

For the Record: I do not own, nor do I claim ownership to characters, devices, places or situations from StarGate SG-1 or Chocky's Challenge.

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