

Prime Effect

Von Leonis-Prime

Kapitel 3:

CHAPTER III

The Reapers are coming. That one sentence kept repeating in Jack's mind as he was surrounded by darkness. Usually he would be at peace with nothing around him while he slept, but this time was different. He had just been given a vision by an artefact that was built by an ancient race called the Lithone who had been wiped out 100,000 years prior by giant black ships which he assumed were the Reapers that the vision warned him of. But he found that the darkness around was not comforting, but cold and fearful and he wished that there was someone there to banish the loneliness he was feeling at this time, to tell him that everything was going to be alright.

He wished Arcee was with him. If there was one person in this life that could make him feel better, that could reassure him with the simplest of actions, such as smile it was his partner. But she wasn't there and that was his fault. Again he was reminded of that which he had pushed away all those years ago when he left. He wouldn't make that mistake again. He would fight to have her back in his life if necessary, and fight this new threat any way he could. But first he had to wake up. He willed himself to break free of the darkness around him and slowly but surely the darkness rescinded, replaced by light as he slowly opened his eyes and took a breath.

The brightness of the lights in the room dimmed as he eyes readjusted giving him chance to view his surroundings. He looked around and found himself to be lying on a bed in a room he did not recognize. A woman walked over to his bed side and looked down at him and smiled.

"I see your back with us Commander." she said in a friendly tone. He reached up with his left hand and rubbed his eyes as he tried to sit up, but then felt a hand on his shoulder gently stopping him.

"Easy, you have been unconscious for nearly four hours since you were brought on board"

Jack listened to her and lied back down. The woman went over to a work station and activated the com link.

"Captain Anderson, Darby is awake." she said. "You can come and see him now"

"Acknowledged Doctor Chakwas, I'll be down right away" came Anderson's voice over the com. The Doctor then returned to Jack who was starting to feel fidgety.

"Can I get up now?" he asked a little irritably.

"So you are one of those sort of patients then are you?" she asked jokingly. Jack looked at her confused. Now that his eyes were focused again, he could see the woman more clearly. She was a Caucasian woman in her mid fifties, but looked like she looked good for her age. Obviously she had taken good care of herself through her life. Jack could only hope that when he, or rather if he ever got to that age that he would look at least as healthy as she did.

"What kind?" he asked curiously.

"The kind that I will have to strap down to this bed to make sure that they don't move until I say that they can." she remarked.

Jack shrugged and looked at her.

"Can I at least sit up, it feels like I have been lying down for long enough." Chakwas looked at him and then finally admitted defeat.

"Fine sit up, but don't get off that bed."

Jack then raised himself into a sitting position with his legs hanging off the side of the bed.

"Now that's better." he said feeling a little better. Chakwas then activated her holo-tool and ran it over the Commander, taking readings.

"So I take it your Doctor Chakwas, the ship's head physician." he asked, to which she nodded back whilst continuing to take scans.

"Yes, and you are Commander Jack Darby, the Captain's new XO. It's a pleasure to finally meet you. I thought you would have at least seen me before you had gone off on a mission first mind you."

Jack smiled at her.

"Sorry Doctor, when I looked around the ship earlier I would have seen you, but I was told you weren't here at the time."

"No, I was in the cockpit, treating Hotrod's headache." she replied, the irritation evident in her voice.

"Wait, Hotrod gets headaches, but he's Cybertronian. How does he get headaches?" he asked, his curiosity now peaking.

"Well the Cybertronians may be using pretender bodies now, but those bodies are bio mechanical in nature and were designed to mimic human physiology perfectly. So they are now susceptible to most none lethal ailments that we deal with everyday."

Jack was about to reply with another question when Anderson entered the Infirmary and stood next to him.

"How are you Jack?" he asked, once again in the informal way that Jack himself was still trying to get used too.

"I'm fine si....Anderson"

He did it again, but if the Captain had noticed, he didn't let it show.

"No self diagnosis please, let the Doctor do her job if you can?" Chakwas jumped in. She had just finished her scans and deactivated her Holo-tool as both men looked at her.

"Sorry Doctor, how is he?" Anderson asked.

"Well he is fine, physically and mentally. Whatever that energy was that hit him, has not damaged or effected him in any way that I can detect."

"Thank you Doctor." Anderson replied. Chakwas nodded and turned to Jack.

"You may return to duty Commander." she told him before turning and walking away.

"It was nice meeting you Doctor" Jack said with a smile, making her turn to him and return the smile before she carried on to her station. Jack then looked back at Anderson, who had a look of worry on his face.

"What happened to you when the Artifact hit you with that energy?"

Jack looked at Anderson and shook his head.

"I'm not entirely sure, I believe it showed me a vision, if that's the best way to describe it."

The Captain didn't take his eyes off Jack, listening to his every word.

"What did it show you?"

Jack closed his eyes and tried to remember the images that it showed him.

"I was standing in the ruins of a city with thousands of bodies lying around me, and then I saw a number ships that looked like that unknown ship that attacked the colony with the Geth. Then I heard a voice, and it said that I had just witnessed their end and ours was getting closer. The Reapers are coming. And then that was it."

Anderson saw Jack's face go slightly pale as he described the vision.

"You think that giant black ship is what the vision was warning you of?"

"I'm not sure, but whatever it was, it was certainly powerful." Jack concluded.

"Well we will be arriving at the Citadel in the next few hours. The Council has requested us to give them a report on the Eden Prime incident. I think it is because one of our people has pointed the finger at Saren Arterius, the Council's most famous Spectre." Jack gave Anderson a determined look.

"Hey, I may not have known Private Verner long, but it was long enough to know that he is no liar. If he said that it was Saren working with the Geth, then I believe him."

"Agreed, but we just have to hope that we can convince the Council of that." Anderson replied before turning to leave.

"Anderson, how are the others?" Jack asked, gaining the Captain's attention again.

"Gunnery Chief Nakadia and Wheeljack are over in the common room. They have been quiet ever since we brought Ultra Magnus's body onboard. As for Lt. Cmdr Alenko, he was last seen down on the cargo bay. I had told them not to visit you until you had been checked out, but since there is nothing to worry about, maybe you should see them before we reach the Citadel."

Jack nodded and got off the bed and walked out of the Infirmary with Anderson before heading to the common room.

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Jack entered the Common room, it wasn't much really, just some tables with chairs as well as two sofas, one at each end of the room. He saw Miko and Wheeljack sitting opposite each other looking rather sullen.

"Hey guys" he said sheepishly as he walked over to them. Miko's face lit up as she darted over and gave him a hug.

"Jack, thank god you are alright, we thought you would never wake up."

After the embrace, they both sat down with Wheeljack.

"Yeah well some of us weren't so lucky." Jack replied sheepishly.

Wheeljack's eyes narrowed at the Commander's comment.

"Yeah well that will change as soon as I see that Turian bastard again. I'll carve Magnus's name into his chest as he dies."

Jack knew that Wheeljack and Ultra Magnus had a long history that started long before the war for Cybertron, but he could see where this was heading.

"Yeah, all we need to do is wait for that Turian to show his ugly mug and then put a bullet through it." Miko added enthusiastically.

Jack looked down at the table annoyed.

"Yeah because that worked well the last time didn't it." he muttered under his breath.

Miko having heard that looked at Jack.

"What did you just say?"

The Commander looked up to see both of them staring at him.

"Well remember Bulkhead and Hardshell." he said.

Both sets of eyes widened at the mention of Bulkhead's name and then narrowed at him as anger started to appear on their faces. Jack knew that Bulkhead was a sore subject, even after all these years, but he also knew he had to put an end to what ever they had planned so he continued.

"You killed Hardshell for what he did to Bulkhead, but what did it accomplish? It didn't help him did it, Bulkhead still died."

Wheeljack clenched his fist and slammed it into the table as his finally let his anger get the better of him. But rather than let the wrecker scare him, Jack stared directly at him. His face stoic and his eyes determined.

"Anger will not change that fact Wheeljack. Now if you want to remain on this ship and help me bring Saren to justice for what he did then I will happily accept your help. But I don't need nor want anyone on my team who as score to settle."

Wheeljack suddenly felt small in front of the human staring at him. God did this guy remind him of Prime. Jack then turned to Miko who was just staring at him, eyes wide, mouth slightly open. She had never seen Jack like this. She could now see why he now held the rank of Commander, and she suddenly felt a little better for realizing it.

"Same goes for you too."

Miko nodded as Jack got up, slid his chair back under the table and walked out the room.

When Jack reached the cargo bay he found Kaidan leaning against the shuttle with a bottle of what looked like whisky.

"I hope you are not planning on drinking all of that now, especially since we are still on

duty." Jack asked. Kaidan looked down at the bottle and then back at Jack with a slight but sad smile on his face.

"Na, I was actually waiting for you to turn up. Glad to see your up and about." he said.

Jack stood beside him, arms crossed.

"So I'm here, what's up Kaidan?"

Kaidan bent down to a box he had next to his feet and pulled two glasses out of it and handed them to Jack.

"Well I thought we should share a drink in honour of Conrad."

Jack held the glasses as Kaidan opened the bottle and poured a small amount into both glasses, before putting the bottle down and accepting one of the glasses from Jack.

"He was certainly an interesting guy wasn't he? With the motion sickness and his strange ability of attracting bugs to bite him." Kaidan said, earning a chuckle from the Commander, reminding him of those particular moments.

"Yeah, as well as his fascination with me." Jack replied.

"Well the guy had a good taste in role models didn't he." Kaidan said casually.

Jack rolled his eyes at the comment. Again it made him feel uncomfortable, Kaidan noticed again and chose now to voice his concern.

"That really bothers you doesn't it?"

Jack looked back at Kaidan and nodded.

"I guess that maybe I just don't feel like I deserve it." the Commander replied as he looked down at his drink.

"I mean there are plenty of other people out there that deserve that kind of attention."

Kaidan looked at his friend who was still looking away and thought about what he was going to say next, then smiled.

"Well its not every day that you discover an alien race, befriend them and then help defend the planet. Or even all the things you have done after you joined the defence force. But I tell you now, I know you deserve it. There aren't many people out there with the ability to inspire those around them the way you can Jack, and Conrad knew that too. Your exploits inspired him to join up and become part of something that was bigger than himself. You inspired those young men back at New Terra. Hell, you even inspire me Jack and I know you." he said with a smile on his face. Jack looked back to

his friend, a lopsided grin growing on his face.

"Thanks Kaidan." he replied. He then raised his glass.

"To Conrad Verner."

Kaidan raised his too.

"To Conrad." he replied, before both men then downed their drinks in one go. Jack started coughing as the strength of the whiskey hit him.

"That's good stuff." he coughed.

"Yeah it sure is." Kaidan replied chuckling at his friend's discomfort.

"It's the Doc's, I sort of borrowed it while her back was turned. I intend on giving it back."

Jack having recovered, looked at him and shook his head at his friends confession.

"Still the same old Kaidan."

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The Normandy exited the giant green portal of the space bridge and flew towards the colossal Citadel station as it sat nestled inside the gases of the serpent nebula. Jack observed the station from his room's window. He had seen many wonders during his life, and yet found he could still be surprised. The station was a marvel to behold, the nerve centre of galactic politics for the last several centuries as well as a massive city, home to over thirteen billion people from all over the galaxy.

Now he was there to see the council and hopefully convince them that one of their most trusted Spectres had betrayed the values that they had entrusted him with. Jack knew that this was going to be a tough pill for them to swallow. Not only was it unthinkable, but the fact that it was humans pointing the finger too was not something they could tolerate. After all the Council saw humanity as a very young and brash race, not unlike Ratchet when he first met Jack and his friends. But they had managed to change the medic's view and Jack hoped that he could do the same for the council.

After the Normandy docked. The crew disembarked, Miko and Wheeljack heading for a club called Purgatory, obviously wanting to have a drink after the scolding the Commander had given them. Jack though was heading for the Council Embassies with Anderson and Kaidan. They had been told by a C-Sec officer that the Earth's political representative wanted to speak to them before he took them to meet the council.

After an elevator ride that felt like it lasted forever, they found themselves in the

office of Donnel Udina. He had been chosen to be Earth's voice at the Citadel. Optimus Prime had not been in favour of this choice due to the man's obvious ambition for power. A trait that Optimus saw in Megatron when they used to be friends, but he let it pass due to Earth's leaders having the right to choose who should speak for them.

Jack saw the man standing next to the large windows that showed the rest of the presidium below them. Udina looked like a man that always had a lot on his mind. He turned to the three of them and he did not look happy.

"So Captain Anderson, I would say that it is a pleasure to see you again but that is not the case is it. Especially with the shit storm that you have brought with you." he said in dry tone underlined with a hint of anger.

"No I guess its not Donnel, but what we have to say to the Council is nothing but the truth." The Captain responded. Udina then looked at the Jack and Kaidan.

"So this is this must by Commander Darby. The one pointing the finger at the Council's precious Spectre."

Jack looked at him, the Commander's remaining stoic and calm.

"it's the truth, Saren attacked Eden Prime with the Geth and murdered two of our friends."

Udina looked like he was having none of it as he waved off what Jack had just said.

"You do know that those alien arse-holes will not believe you, and I would rather keep my position if it is all the same to you."

Anderson walked right up to Udina and looked down at the old fool.

"I don't particularly care for you Donnel, I never really have. But if you are through with all the self whining, we would appreciate it if you took us to the Council now."

Udina did not know where to look, but shrugged and beckoned them to follow him.

PRIME EFFECT

Elsewhere on the Citadel, Optimus stood and looked out at the cityscape before him. Whenever he visited the station, he would always take the time to visit this spot and take in the view. After all it reminded him of Iacon, the city where he lived before the war that destroyed Cybertron all those millennia ago had happened. Back then he was a young clerk that went by the name of Orion Pax. Sometimes when remembering how simple life was back then, he found himself wishing that his life was still the way it was before he became a Prime. But unfortunately for him, fate rarely calls at a moment of their own choosing and what followed was meant to happen. The war that

ultimately led to the fall of Cybertron and the exodus to Earth. And then only for the Decepticons to follow in their wake and prolong the war, with the future of the planet's original inhabitants at risk.

But Optimus had found that the humans of Earth were not as easy targets for the Decepticons to conquer as Megatron himself foolishly believed. Because from that fateful day that the Autobots had met the three teens that had become like family to them in so short a time, Optimus could see what humans were capable of. There was Rafael who though was still very young, was so smart for his age, that he even gave Ratchet a run for his money though the medic never liked to admit it. Then there was Miko, she had an energy that never seemed to stop. She was impulsive and quick to action without a second thought. That many times caused the Autobots problems, but she had a strong and caring heart and still offered much to earth's newest residents.

Then there was Jack, if ever there was a person who the Prime would be proud to call a son it was him. For the young man was very much like Optimus, compassionate and courageous. He was always on hand to help whenever the Autobots had needed him. Then there was his friendship with Arcee, Optimus's SIC. Optimus had heard that she was not one for company after she lost her partner Tailgate. But when Cliffjumper had brought her to their base on Earth, he noticed that the femme had started to soften around the young Autobot warrior. Then that changed the day he was killed by Starscream. And she closed herself off from her family again, until she met Jack. And slowly but surely Jack's caring and compassionate nature managed to bring Arcee out of the dark and back into the light and their friendship strengthened as a result. Yes Jack was indeed a Prime in the making, even if the young man did not want to accept it, just like Optimus hadn't.

"Well I knew I would find you up here." a female voice said that caught Optimus's attention, making him turn to where it was coming from. There he saw a young woman walking up to him. She had pale soft skin and electric blue eyes. Her hair was blue with pink highlights that came down to halfway down her neck, and she was wearing a pair of jeans and a black T-shirt that complemented her athletic figure. Unlike most Cybertronians, Arcee did have a liking for human clothing. She stopped next to Optimus and looked out at the view, a happy smile on her face. Obviously she was happy and looking forward to seeing Jack after having received his message a few hours before that said they would meet up and she sure wasn't going to hide it.

"Well I like the view up here" the Prime answered.

"I can see why." she replied as she looked out at the city in front of her with the cabs flying past, going too an fro. Optimus then noted the time on his holo-tool and turned to the femme.

"Well now that you are here, we can head to the Council chambers in the presidium tower. Jack and Captain Anderson will be presenting their case against the Spectre Saren Arterius to the council members."

"Yeah sure." she replied happily. And the two of them made their way to the nearest elevator. As they walked through the garden like area around them, Optimus noted

how this was the first time in years that he had seen his SIC this happy. He still did not know the reasons for her and Jack's uneasiness with each other and why the young man had chosen to take up the Prime's suggestion all those years ago. But he wasn't going to pry, he would wait for them to open up to him when they felt ready to do so. Of course their seeing each other here on the station could also bring their problems to a close and that would also be good.

"So how are you Optimus? Ratchet told me that the Quarian situation had gotten a bit strenuous." Arcee asked seeing the thoughtful look on his face.

"I wish I could say that it was a minor misunderstanding Arcee. But one of our transports had gotten too close to their Flotilla and they sent out some of their patrol fleet to warn our ships away. It would seem that they still do not trust us."

Arcee looked at him confused, trying to read the Prime's thoughts.

"But why, we are nothing like the Geth. Those robots were built by them, we didn't have the same kind of origin as them, hell we weren't built by anyone." she questioned, irritation evident in her voice.

"I tried to reason with them as such when I spoke to Admiral Raan over the com channel back at New Iacon. But she wouldn't have it, she said that if one of our ships ever happened to be in the same system as their flotilla, then it would be destroyed. I fear that we may never be able to gain their friendship."

Arcee saw the disappointment in the Prime's face and thought it was best to try and cheer him up.

"Come on, let's go see Jack and watch him show those Councillors whose boss."

The Prime looked down at the femme and saw the infectious smile that had appeared on her face and could not help but smile back. He nodded and the two of them entered the elevator and headed up to the Council Chambers in the tower above them.