

The Book of Transmission

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The Book of Transmission

by [projectcyborg](#)

Summary

She shakes your hand, and your skin knows hers.

Notes

Spoilers: mostly just for "Epiphanies" and "Downloaded" (and vaguely so)

A/N: getyourtoaster:Six for voleuse, who requested Roslin with manipulation, a disk, and hope (without Baltar). I took some liberties with the timeline, but I don't think we have to assume that the events of "Downloaded" in the fleet and on Caprica are happening simultaneously.

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The attendant's fingers brushed yours as he took your ticket. It was the first time you ever touched a human.

You'd been through this a thousand times in emulation drills. Your base-state programming is good, better with every model, but it's no substitute for the subtle, evolving proficiency that comes of experience. There were mock colonies on the Homeworld, whole blocks of Caprica City in duplicate. You'd lived there for weeks among your kind, eating human food, drinking in human bars. Every night out you'd caught the gaze of a different Three, or Nine, or Five, licked the ambrosia off your upper lip, took them home to a human apartment and made love to them in a human bed. It was what I made you to do.

Still, none of this could quite prepare you for the moment when you arrived at the resort outpost, serviceable as a staging ground for infiltrators because of its remoteness and transitory population. The moment when you stepped off the covert shuttle, and the world around you was no longer a simulation. Every face was different, an infinite variety, and a human touched your hand as you boarded the transport to Caprica City. The enemy was real, and you were no longer pretending.

Laura recognizes you. When she walks into your suite and finds you waiting, she inhales audibly. She squares her shoulders, and Lieutenant Katraine's hand goes to the gun at her hip. Laura says, "Where's Jahee?"

You hold your arms up to affect surrender, signal your guard to lower her weapon. "If you're going to entertain the idea of peace with the Cylon," you say, "you're going to have to talk to a Cylon."

After Gaius liberated you from Pegasus, you came to this room and never left it. You curled into a ball on the bed and got up only to retrieve the meals you ordered -- steaks and chocolate and fresh fruit, the best Cloud 9 has to offer. One day, a flier for Demand Peace was tucked under the tray.

Laura shifts her weight from one foot to the other. "You're telling me you represent Demand Peace?"

Both of you prayed for healing, independently but in tandem, and both of your prayers were answered. Both of you rose from your deathbeds and rededicated yourselves to your calling.

"No one wants peace more than I do," you say. You stand up, extend your open palm. "I'd like to discuss that with you, woman to woman."

It's a challenge as much as an invitation. Laura stares you down, reading the history on your face. Both of you are killers. She shakes your hand, and your skin knows hers.

You tell your sentry to wait outside. She squeezes your shoulder as she exits, winks at Katraine. Laura leans into Kat, whispers to her, and Kat follows.

"Can I offer you a drink?" you ask Laura. Your fingers brush hers as you pass her the glass.

Caprica City was a riot of sound and color -- unruly, stimulating, and nothing like the sterile streets of the replica. It echoed the memories, the foggy traces of a linked life that you'd downloaded while you slept. But the reality was vivid to your senses, the original of a copy. You booked a room and waited for Six to contact you, leaning over the balcony railing to watch the diversity of passerby below. The phone rang and you answered it, catalogued the accent of the voice announcing your visitor.

You'd had contact with a thousand Sixes, but Caprica-Six was special. You felt it from the moment she walked through the door, radiant in her fluency. She'd been living on Caprica for almost two years.

"Welcome," she said. She knew you, as you knew her. "It's been some time since I met another Six." She smiled. She approached you, untucked a dirty-blond lock from behind your ear and examined it.

"They altered the color," you said, "an extra precaution." Six tugged out the elastic tying your hair in a ponytail, combed it between her fingers. She studied you intently, her eyes wide with wanting. It was your own seductiveness, as familiar to you as breathing -- but this was Caprica-Six, the vanguard. Her caress held the sureness of a virtuosic humanity, and you leaned into her hands.

There's a resonance effect when two of the same model touch each other. You trailed your fingertips up Six's spine, left bare by her dress, and the thrill of your overlapping consciousness vibrated through you.

Laura holds her ambrosia, and doesn't drink it. She says, "Give me one reason why I shouldn't have you apprehended immediately."

You grasp the hem of your shirt, lift it gracefully over your head. Your skin is pocked with scars. "If we don't change," you say, "we'll live this, over and over again. The Cylon are ready for a new beginning. Are you?"

Laura still glows with divine physic, more vital than she can harness. Like you, she's struggling to make sense of her evolution, her transformation by the species she knows as her enemy. You don't presume to understand My will, but you've learned, perhaps, that humanity's salvation and its destruction aren't antithetical.

Laura taps her fingernail against the tumbler. She puts it down, raises her hand toward the fading bruises that transect your collarbone. She trembles slightly, and doesn't touch you. "I would have killed her," she says, "if you hadn't. Even if I had to pull the trigger myself."

You catch her wrist, press her palm to your sternum. She draws it back, but not before she feels your heartbeat, the prickle of recognition that sparks between your bodies.

"You're part of us now," you tell her. "We need you."

Laura flinches. "This conversation is over," she says. Her heels snap against the carpet as she heads for the door. "I'll negotiate with domestic activists, but not with the perpetrators of a holocaust."

"Is that what I am, to you?" When she turns, you're holding out a data disk. "I have intelligence," you say. "About the occupation of Caprica."

Your name is Gina. You're a soldier. You know how to disassemble a gun, how to polish your boots, how to address a superior officer. You were born in a small town on Picon, the only child of a mechanic and a schoolteacher. You like green, and shellfish, and pop music.

As Six stripped off your tank top and jeans -- as her teeth marked out duty and kinship on your cloned body, from breast to hipbone to inner thigh -- you came to remember these things. You absorbed them through her skin, through the walls of your engineered cells, and you revelled in the transmission. You thrust your fingers inside each other with matching ardor, like and unlike as twins, sharing the awareness of what you would become.

There was an infiltrator on every Battlestar, charged with sabotage and mayhem if it survived the assault. These were the elite assignments, but even as one of the chosen you didn't wonder at the paradox of a species that rewards assimilation into the culture it seeks to destroy. You looked back on her, though -- Caprica-Six -- with reverence. You thought of her, in the months to come, and in your thoughts, she spoke to you.

Laura stands frozen between you and the doorway. She puts her hand on her hip. "How do you have intelligence from Caprica?"

You walk toward her, stop when you can feel the current arc between your bodies. She holds her ground. "Let me show you," you say, and kiss her.

The transmission is faint, impressions without pictures. She tastes passage through the stars and reappraisal on a cosmological scale. You grip her lapels when she pulls back, and feed her love on your tongue -- love for all My creatures, love between human and Cylon. She falls into the flowering of it, kisses you like she's hungry for prophecy. Then she gasps and wrenches away, balls her fists to quell the tingling.

Laura is poised at the pivot of two worlds, drawn toward her destiny through the murk of unformed futures. You watch the pulse beat in her neck as she breathes, see the imperatives clash within her -- reaper or sower. You were at the same crossroads every morning when you looked at your wounds in the mirror, and as the mutilated edges knitted together the need for vengeance receded with them. At heart, both of you yearn to be peacemakers, in the most apocalyptic register. Six taught you that, from afar.

"This is only a trace of things to come," you say. "If I can be healed through God's love, than so can we all."

Laura stretches out her fingers, and this time she touches you, outlines the marks that chart the atrocities of war. "Tell me what's on the disk," she says.

"The Cylon have a new purpose, and new leaders." She lets you take off her jacket, undo the buttons of her shirt. "We will no longer murder your people."

Her hands encircle your hips, enthralled. They remake you, pushing down your pants, finding the broken places and consecrating them. You cup her breasts inside her bra, marvelling at their unfamiliar ripeness, and arch into her caress.

"What will you do to us, then?" she says. You've backed her against the wall, hooked one knee around her waist, and she coaxes you open with excruciating gentleness. You answer her with your fingers, awakening her from the inside out.

"You don't need the disk," you tell her. "You already know that you'll be the one to show humanity their true path." You thought that Gaius would be My chosen, but he never touched you like this.

She leaves with the disk, nevertheless. She plots her course circuitously, but she never stops watching the skies. When you sit naked before the signal, with your farewell to Gaius lingering on your skin, you'll think of her, how she smelled like earth. And you'll hear Caprica murmuring, "I love you."

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