

= Precipice (Battlestar Galactica) =

" Precipice " is the second part of the third season premiere and 35th episode of the re @-@ imagined American science fiction drama television series Battlestar Galactica . The episode was written by re @-@ imagined creator Ronald D. Moore , and directed by Sergio Mimica @-@ Gezzan . It first aired on October 6 , 2006 on the Sci @-@ Fi Channel along with the preceding episode " Occupation " . In " Precipice " , the Cylons respond to the suicide attack in the previous episode by rounding up several civilians believed to be affiliated with the resistance , and later decide to have them executed . Meanwhile , Galactica is to send a squadron to meet with the resistance on New Caprica . Unlike most episodes , it does not include a survivor count .

Since " Occupation " revolved around the resistance , " Precipice " focused more on the New Caprica Police and Jammer 's role in it . The producers also decided to release the Sharon model imprisoned on Galactica . During the writing process , Moore included references to Seinfeld and The Great Escape . The episode was seen by 2 @.@ 2 million viewers and received universal acclaim from critics . In addition , Moore 's writing of the episode was nominated for an Emmy and Writers Guild of America awards .

= = Plot = =

In response to the suicide bombing of a New Caprica Police (NCP) ceremony , the Cylons order a crackdown against the insurgency . Many resistance members start to disagree about the legitimacy of the suicide bombings , but leader Colonel Saul Tigh (Michael Hogan) continues to orchestrate them . Meanwhile , in an attempt to get Kara " Starbuck " Thrace (Katee Sackhoff) to love him , Leoben Conoy (Callum Keith Rennie) presents her with a toddler named Kacey (Madeline Parker) , of whom Leoben claims Starbuck is the mother , as a result of her time on Caprica in " The Farm " . Leoben leaves her alone with the toddler , but Starbuck refuses to play with her . When she leaves Kacey unattended , however , Kacey injures herself falling down the stairs . As Kacey is recovering , Starbuck has a change of heart and prays to the Lords of Kobol not to let her die .

In a move against the insurgency , the Cylons decide to have the NCP arrest 200 civilians they believe to be affiliated with the resistance . Headed by Jammer (Dominic Zamprogna) , most of the arrests take place during the night . Those being arrested include Laura Roslin (Mary McDonnell) , Tom Zarek (Richard Hatch) and Cally Henderson Tyrol (Nicki Clyne) . After another suicide bombing at a power station , the Cylons decide to have the prisoners executed , but require President Gaius Baltar 's (James Callis) signature . When he refuses to sign , an Aaron Doral (Matthew Bennett) copy forces him to at gunpoint . Caprica @-@ Six (Tricia Helfer) attempts to stop him , but Doral shoots her in the head . Baltar signs the document . Meanwhile , Ellen Tigh (Kate Vernon) learns from Cavil (Dean Stockwell) that he only released her husband Saul (Michael Hogan) because the Cylons know he is leading the resistance . He informs Ellen that unless she tells the Cylons where the resistance leaders will be meeting next , he will imprison Saul once more . Reluctantly , Ellen discovers where the resistance plans to meet with members from the colonial fleet .

On board Galactica , Admiral William Adama (Edward James Olmos) appoints their Cylon prisoner Sharon Agathon (Grace Park) a Colonial officer and sends her to the planet to liaise with the resistance . When she arrives to meet with resistance members , Centurions attack , having learned of the meeting place from the intelligence Ellen provided . Simultaneously , the 200 human prisoners are being transported to a location by the Cylons and NCP . A masked Jammer , realizing they are to be executed , saves Cally by releasing her in secret and telling her to run . As she runs away , the sound of gunfire is heard .

= = Production = =

Since the previous episode " Occupation " focused on the resistance , writer Ronald D. Moore wanted the second part to focus more on Jammer 's role within the NCP , as he wanted to

personalize somebody working for the police force . He also wanted to make Tigh know he 's wrong with launching suicide bombers , but has to do so if he believes doing so will defeat the Cylons . This is also Tigh 's principal trait and role in the series . Moore stated " why is Colonel Tigh on Galactica ? Why does Adama keep him around ? Because when the chips are down , and they are way down , baby , in this situation , when you are in a foxhole , who do you want next to you ? You want Colonel Tigh ' cause he is gonna get your ass out of there . " The scene where Baltar speaks to an imprisoned Roslin about the suicide bombings was one of Moore 's favourite scenes , as he wanted the audience to be unsure who to " root for , " since Baltar is the biggest Cylon collaborator among the humans , but Roslin seemingly supports the bombings .

After a Number Eight (Sharon) Cylon model was imprisoned onboard Galactica for the majority of the second season , the producers decided they needed to have her released , as they believed the storyline ran its course , and make her worthy for Adama 's trust . " The swirl " , a sex position Ellen Tigh uses , was a reference to Seinfeld , a comedy series Moore was a fan of . The sequence leading up to the Cylon Centurions lining up to execute the prisoners was an homage to The Great Escape , particularly the scene featuring the death of Richard Attenborough 's character from the Nazis after stopping the truck he was in , and telling him to take a break , at which point he was executed .

Madeline Parker was cast as Kacey Brynn . Parker 's performance impressed the producers , as they believed she was " one of the better child actors " they ever worked with , since casting them , especially at a younger age , was not easy . The one problem they had with Parker however , was filming her lying injured on the stairs . In the scene where the NCP arrest civilians at night , the idea of using night vision , which did not come from the original script , came from director Sergio Mimica @-@ Gezzan . Real night scopes were used to ensure the authenticity of the effect . One of the main visual effects of the episode was another suicide bombing which was caught on camera . Moore stated to have " tortured the visual effects guys about [it] quite a bit , " because the camera footage was in black and white and the visual quality of the explosion had to be degraded to match the footage .

Much like " Occupation " , " Precipice " also features scenes filmed on the Colonial One set featuring several copies of the same Cylon models . Furthermore Mimica Gezzan decided to shoot a 360 degree angle around the set , requiring additional digital duplication . The actors had to change their clothes between every take , which normally took as long as 30 minutes , after including time for touch ups on hair and makeup . The countryside of New Caprica was featured more towards the end of the episode . The producers found it a challenge to differentiate New Caprica from Caprica , the name of the planet New Caprica was named after following the holocaust from the miniseries , and featured extensively again during the first season , and both planets were filmed on location in temperate British Columbia forests .

= = Reception = =

" Occupation " and " Precipice " were originally meant to be released as two separate episodes , however the producers decided to merge them together to be released as a two @-@ hour broadcast . The reasoning was partly due to the third episode " Exodus " , which became too long and split to a two @-@ part episode , and the producers did not wish to stretch the New Caprica storyline to several weeks . The two @-@ hour season @-@ three premiere was first broadcast on the Sci Fi Channel in the United States on Friday , October 6 , 2006 between 9 pm and 11 pm . After its original broadcast , the two @-@ hour episode attracted a household rating of 1 @. @ 8 , equaling a total of 2 @. @ 2 million viewers . Ratings were an increase of two per cent in total viewing from the average of the second half of the second season .

" Precipice " received positive reviews from critics . Keith McDuffee of TV Squad felt that Sharon Agathon coming to the fleet was a " surprising development " and the cliffhanger was " unbelievable " , adding " are the writers actually crazy enough to mass kill so many main characters to the series ? Is it possible at all that they can actually get out of this ? " Eric Goldman of IGN rated the episode a " masterful " 10 out of 10 , stating " watching the season premiere of Battlestar Galactica is a great

reminder that this is truly still the best show on television . " Ian Berriman of SFX reacted positively towards the episode , stating " Although there are a couple of great surprises in this episode ? Casey , the Great Escape @-@ homaging finale ? the highlights are a fistful of fabulous face @-@ offs : Baltar discussing the bombing with Roslin ; Roslin questioning Tigh 's methods ; Apollo telling Adama that his plan is madness . James Callis 's performance as the haggard , tortured Baltar is outstanding . " Berriman rated the episode five stars out of five . Patrick Sauriol of UGO felt that although it was set a year since " Lay Down Your Burdens " , it " hasn 't lost a thing by jumping ahead , " and that the episode , along with " Occupation " , " confirm that it 's still the best show on television . " Sauriol graded both episodes an A- . Television Without Pity gave the episode an A + , a higher grade than the previous episode .

In 2007 , the episode was nominated for a 59th Primetime Emmy Awards for " Outstanding Writing in a Drama Series " , but lost to HBO 's The Sopranos series finale " Made in America " . " Precipice " was also nominated for a Writers Guild of America Award for best Episodic Drama . However , the episode lost out to the pilot episode of Big Love .