

THE LAST STARFIGHTERS

HBO / Max Original Feature

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ACT 1 – SETUP

EXT. SMALL TOWN, NEVADA – DAY

A quiet desert town. Dust swirls across cracked streets. A neon sign flickers: “Rogan’s Used Cars – Practically Giving Them Away!” A tumbleweed rolls past. The distant hum of a faulty air conditioner buzzes.

INT. USED CAR LOT – DAY

LEWIS ROGAN (Seth Rogen), mid-40s, chaotic energy in human form, sits behind a cluttered desk. Customers wander, confused.

LEWIS No! The hatchback goes that way! Not through the office window!

An EMPLOYEE accidentally slams a car door into a bumper. Lewis groans, throws his hands up.

LEWIS (under breath) Why do I even get out of bed?

MONTAGE – LEWIS’S FRUSTRATION

- A customer opens a trunk; rubber snakes spill out. Lewis jumps.
- A salesman trips over a hose, spraying a car with soda.
- Lewis throws a clipboard at a “SALE” balloon—pop!

EXT. SMALL APARTMENT COMPLEX – EVENING

SAM ROGAN (Jack Quaid), 18, lanky and awkward, pedals his bike up a cracked driveway. Backpack sagging with fast food.

INT. APARTMENT – CONTINUOUS

Cluttered with gadgets, boxes, and failed inventions. Sam drops his bag.

SAM Maybe tomorrow... tomorrow I’ll figure it out.

He heads for the shower.

LEWIS (O.S., snickering) Sam! You ever tired of losing all the time?

Sam rolls his eyes. Lewis enters, hunched over a vintage arcade cabinet, furiously pressing buttons. The sound of mashed buttons continues.

LEWIS Seeing Jaime tonight?

SAM (grinning) Yup.

Lewis ignores him.

PHONE RINGS

LEWIS Sam! Phone!

Sam grabs the receiver, hands Lewis a burger wrapper as a makeshift microphone.

LEWIS (on phone) OK, Jack. I'll get him for you.

He hands the game back to Sam like a sacred baton.

LEWIS Your turn, champ. Don't screw it up like last week.

Sam sits, focused. His jaw tightens. Frustration simmers.

INT. APARTMENT – LIVING ROOM – EVENING

JAIME (Kathryn Newton) enters, small bag of groceries in hand, leaning against the doorway.

JAIME (playful) Wow... still trying to beat Alex, huh?

SAM I'm close... I can feel it.

JAIME (teasing) Or you could just lose gracefully... save yourself the heartbreak.

Sam smirks.

SAM Not today.

JAIME (calming) Breathe, Sam... you're gonna break your own record if you keep going like this.

Sam slows. Focus sharpens.

LEWIS C'mon! Beat it! Beat it!

JAIME (laughing) Or don't. I like living on the edge.

Sam digs in. Fingers flying.

SFX – VIDEO GAME SOUND ON SCREEN: “NEW HIGH SCORE!”

Sam leans back, triumphant.

LEWIS (pumping fist) That’s my boy!

JAIME (smiling) You’re impossible... and somehow perfect.

Sam grins. Jaime bumps his shoulder. Chemistry is playful, teasing, unmistakably warm.

FADE OUT – END ACT 1

ACT 2 – THE CALL TO ADVENTURE / RISING ACTION

EXT. DESERT ROAD – NIGHT

A cool breeze cuts through the stillness. Streetlights flicker. A low hum grows. Headlights appear. A sleek, silver car—brand unrecognizable—glides to a stop. The driver’s door opens upward, futuristic.

RYLA (Kate McKinnon), sharp, smirking, dressed like she raided NASA and Hot Topic in the same day, steps out.

RYLA Hey, boy. You see an old video game around here?

SAM Uh... yeah, it’s in my apartment. Why?

RYLA You know who put the high score on it?

SAM Yeah. Sam Rogan. Me.

RYLA Rogan, Rogan... got good reflexes, Sam Rogan?

SAM What’s this about? A job offer? A prize?

RYLA Biggest prize ever. Interested?

Sam hesitates, then shrugs.

SAM I... guess?

Ryla’s rear doors open automatically. Sam climbs in.

INT. RYLA’S CAR – NIGHT

In the dim backseat, a man in a hood sits silently. Face hidden.

SAM Hi, uh... nice hoodie.

They shake hands. A faint spark.

SAM Ow! Static—

The man slips out. Doors close. Car lurches forward.

EXT. SPACE – RYLA’S CAR – CONTINUOUS

Rockets skyward.

SAM (SCREAMING) WHAT IS HAPPENING?!

The world outside becomes a blur—blue, then black, stars streaking past like comets.

RYLA (over her shoulder, calm) Seatbelt, rookie. Unless you like decorative splatter.

SAM Seat—WHAT SEATBELT?!

The car bursts out of the atmosphere, through a shimmer of light, into deep space.

RYLA (cheerful) Dental and a plasma rifle, by the way.

SAM ...I'm gonna need a minute.

EXT. OUTPOST NINE – HANGAR BAY – NIGHT

The car glides into a well-lit hangar bay. Alien activity buzzes everywhere. A blue-painted uniformed alien directs them like a conductor.

SAM Hey! Where the hell am I, Ryla?!

RYLA Just follow the program, rookie. Trust me, you'll thank me later.

A blue tentacle shoots across, covering his mouth.

BLUE TENTACLE Shhh...

The tentacle retracts. A translator clip snaps onto Sam's collar with a soft chime.

TRANSLATOR (V.O.) You may speak now, human.

Sam blinks at a 6-foot upright squid-like alien.

SQUID ALIEN Sorry, man.

Still stunned, Sam is guided through a DECON chamber. Steam hisses, lights flash, panels scan. A conveyor spits him out at a desk.

Sitting there: a man with a large, abnormal forehead, bald on top, silver-white on the sides. He slides a uniform and helmet toward Sam.

MAN WITH FOREHEAD Sit. Pay attention.

INT. COUNCIL CHAMBER – NIGHT

About twenty different alien species sit at a meeting, listening intently.

PRESIDENT OF RILOS We have lost much. Our colonies, our fleets, our people... all taken or destroyed. And yet, we survive. But survival alone is not enough. We cannot afford to falter again. Not now. Not ever.

He steps closer.

PRESIDENT OF RILOS Every life here matters. Every choice, every move... counts. We will defend what remains, but we will not do so blindly. We will learn, we will train, and we will fight smarter than ever before.

PRESIDENT OF RILOS And to those who doubt... remember: one lost opportunity can doom us all. But one hero, one courageous act, can turn the tide.

The president slams his fist lightly.

PRESIDENT OF RILOS Victory or death! Victory or death!

The room erupts. Alien species scream in unison:

ALIENS Victory or death! Victory or death! Victory or death!

Sam freezes, quiet. His stomach churns. He quietly gets up and slips out of the room.

EXT. OUTPOST NINE – HANGAR BAY – NIGHT

Sam and Ryla stand next to her car.

RYLA So... joining or not? Space, adventure, fancy alien guns. You could be a hero. Or a glorified delivery guy.

SAM Wait... space? Adventure? Guns? Hero? I... I don't want to die!

RYLA Death's optional. Mostly. You've got reflexes, Rogan. Not bad for a burger-eater.

SAM I... I'm not a galactic hero! I barely survive breakfast!

RYLA Oh! So now human potential is measured by breakfast? Fantastic. I resign. You're officially my problem. Get in the car.

SAM Wait... what?

RYLA Get in the car. Let's go home.

ACT 3 – DOUBLE TROUBLE

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET — SUNSET

The desert sky burns orange. Sam Rogan trudges up the cracked sidewalk, exhausted, still fuming from his awful day. He spots Jaime waiting near his building.

SAM Hey, Jaime. Am I glad to see you—

SLAP!

Her hand hits hard. Sam reels.

JAIME I'm going to take my sexual urges home, thank you very much!

She storms off.

SAM What?! What did I do?!

He opens the apartment door quietly.

INT. ROGAN APARTMENT — CONTINUOUS

Dim light. TV static hums faintly. Sam heads straight to his room. Opens the door—freezes.

A metallic replica of his own head lies on the desk—cables snaking into a torso trying to reattach it. The figure looks almost human... except for the flickering eyes.

SAM (stumbling back) WHAT THE HELL?! WHO THE HELL ARE YOU?!

The head turns—half attached, half mechanical. Voice buzzes faintly.

BATEA UNIT I am a Batea Unit. Courtesy replacement for your time away. Function: mimic, maintain, and preserve your social standing.

BATEA UNIT Also: not as loud.

SAM What are you doing back?!

BATEA UNIT Correction. You are not scheduled to return yet.

SAM Yeah, well, schedule changed. Trying to save what's left of my life—

A low vibration hums through the window.

EXT. SKY OVER THE DESERT — SAME TIME

A sleek, dark craft cuts through the clouds, silent. Lands in a clearing near the apartment complex. Ramp lowers. From the mist steps a female terminator-class soldier—sleek armor, crimson optics glowing.

INT. ROGAN APARTMENT — CONTINUOUS

Both Sams stare out the window.

SAM & BATEA (in unison) Oh no.

INT. SAM'S BEDROOM — NIGHT

Chaos—two Sams, one human, one half-robot. Louis Rogan and Jaime stand frozen in the doorway.

LOUIS (voice cracking) It's all true... it's all true.

LOUIS Son, what the hell are you doing here? This place— it eats you up and spits you out.

JAIME (eyes locked on Batea) So you're the replacement? You're an asshole!

BATEA (apologetic, monotone) I'm... so sorry.

JAIME (to Sam) You were in space?!

SAM Yeah. It's crazy up there.

LOUIS It's crazy down here! What's the difference?

SAM Are you trying to get rid of me, Dad?

LOUIS No, no, my boy— I just don't want you to waste yourself. Look at me... I hate my life. I don't want that for you.

JAIME As much as I don't want to lose you... this is your best shot. A real life.

(beat) And would you please ask my brother to come for a visit?

SAM I haven't decided what to do yet—

CRASH!

Front door explodes inward—metal arm punches through the wall, morphing into a cannon. The FATA TERMINATOR steps through the smoke, eyes glowing like molten glass.

Everyone screams.

BATEA UNIT (alarmed) Defense mode engaged!

Sam throws a chair. Louis grabs a broom. Jaime yanks the cord from a lamp—SPARKS!—slams it into the terminator's ear port.

BOOM!

The head detonates. Terminator collapses. Silence. Everyone panting.

BATEA UNIT (flat, urgent) They will keep coming. You have a better shot... up there.

JAIME (whisper) Sam...

SAM If I do this... I'm coming back for you.

He taps the transport device. Jaime pulls him in, kisses him hard.

EXT. APARTMENT COMPLEX — TEN MINUTES LATER

A sleek StarCar drops from the sky—Ryla behind the controls. The wrecked terminator twitches. Ryla hops out, blasts it to dust.

RYLA (grinning) Guess I should've kept an eye on your roommate.

SAM Yeah—next time, just bring snacks.

They exchange a knowing look. Sam glances back—Jaime and Louis framed in the doorway, small in the dust and light. He climbs aboard. Ship rises.

FADE TO BLACK.

ACT 4 – THE ROGAN LEGACY / RISING ACTION

EXT. SPACE — IN ORBIT

Ryla pilots the StarCar toward Outpost Nine. She frowns at her scanner.

RYLA Wait... what the—? The station's gone.

Stars drift past. Debris floats silently where Outpost Nine should be. Ryla punches in new coordinates.

RADIO (V.O.) Rylos 3, please redirect. You are cleared for Landing Pad 9A. Prepare for reception by Ambassador Rogan and family.

RYLA (muttering) Great. No station... just Earth diplomacy. Sure, why not.

EXT. PAD 9A — NIGHT

The StarCar glides down, engines whispering against the dark sky. Dust swirls. Lights from the pad glow softly.

Alex Rogan, Maggie, and their daughter SEREN wait by the landing area. Relief and warmth radiate from them.

ALEX God damn it, boy! Call me Uncle! Come with me—need to talk.

MAGGIE (long smile) About time someone brought you home safely.

SEREN (Grinning, arms crossed—curious but happy.)

Sam blinks, overwhelmed. Ryla leans back, smirking.

RYLA Well... welcome to Earth diplomacy, rookie. Try not to drool.

SAM Earth diplomacy... got it.

They hug—warmth, laughter, relief. Sam lets himself relax for the first time in days.

ALEX C'mon, let's walk to the house. Enough standing around.

They move toward the Rogan home. StarCar hums quietly behind them, Ryla muttering to herself.

RYLA Some people... impossible.

INT. ALEX ROGAN'S HOME — CITY APARTMENT — NIGHT

Warm light from futuristic panels fills a sleek but lived-in home. ALEX ROGAN, older now, weathered but sharp, sets down a tool kit. MAGGIE cooks in a high-tech kitchen.

Door opens—Sam and Seren enter, still in flight suits.

SAM (sniffing) What's this food?

ALEX (grinning) Don't ask. Trust me, it's safe... mostly.

They sit around the glowing table.

ALEX I didn't even know you were here until two days ago. By the time I found out, you were gone. I was overseeing modifications to the three Gunstars we've got left.

SAM (choking on drink) Only three? You're launching an entire defense with that? You're gonna get us all killed!

ALEX You sound just like I did once. Grig and I faced worse—one Gunstar, and we made it count.

Sam leans back, disbelieving.

SAM I'm too young to die out there, man. You need to be leading, not me.

ALEX Too old, too young—everyone's got an excuse.

ALEX Hey, Sam. I heard you beat my dad's score.

SAM That's what they tell me.

ALEX Yeah, but that's just a game! Out there, it's real!

SEREN (slams fork down, fire in her eyes) It's Earth, you moron. You think this is a game? People die because we sit around arguing.

The table goes quiet. Maggie freezes mid-motion. Alex lets silence stretch.

ALEX Enough.

He locks eyes with Sam—firm, steady, commander energy.

ALEX We do this, or we lose everything. Earth has maybe a year before the war hits home.

(leans forward) You in... or out?

SAM (long beat, reluctant) Fine. I'm in. But if I die, I'm haunting both of you.

ALEX Deal.

Maggie places the last dish on the table.

MAGGIE Then you'd better eat. You'll need your strength.

Tension cracks into laughter—uneasy but real. They feel like family again.

INT. GUNSTAR ONE — LAUNCH BAY / COCKPIT — DAY

Massive hangar doors groan open. Gunstar hums, engines glowing blue. Seren stands proud in the cockpit doorway.

SEREN Alright, everyone ready for a shakedown flight?

CREW MEMBER Pretty sure I tightened all the bolts!

SEREN Pretty sure's not good enough in space.

Sam hesitates. Seren slides into Navigator's seat.

SAM Uh... where do I sit?

SEREN Up there, rookie—gunnery chair. Don't puke in it.

Chair rockets upward—WHOOSH!

SAM (screaming) This is not OSHA-approved!

SEREN (laughing over comms) LOL, all the way!

EXT. SPACE — ABOVE GUNSTAR ONE

Gunstar glides through the stars, engines humming.

GRIN TAL'KO (V.O.) Thought you humans were tough.

SAM Who said that?

A shadow ripples across the stars.

SEREN (over comms) Try not to faint, rookie.

EXT. SPACE — RYLON SECTOR

Training sequence. Gunstars scatter. Seren's voice cuts through comm chatter like a drill sergeant.

SEREN Everyone pick a sector and run drills. Rookie—you're with me.

Sam fumbles; shots go wide. Seren laughs.

MONTAGE

- Sam improves.
- Hits more targets.
- Confidence grows. HUDs flash with hits.

INT. GUNSTAR ONE — COCKPIT — CONTINUOUS

Distorted transmission.

V.O. (COMS) MAYDAY... MAYDAY... this is Ambassador Rogan's ship—under attack!

Seren's eyes go wide.

SEREN Dad...

ALEX (V.O.) Hold formation! Protect the data core!

Sam looks at Seren—fear and resolve mixing in his eyes.

SAM Looks like it's time to level up.

Seren flips switches—Gunstar roars.

SEREN We're not waiting for orders.

SAM That's the best thing you've ever said.

SMASH CUT TO BLACK.

ACT 5 — “THE AMBASSADOR’S WAR / HOMECOMING”

INT. THE CRUSHER — OBSERVATION DECK

The fleet hums softly, repairs underway. Stars drift quietly beyond the glass.

ALEX stands beside SAM, both staring at Earth, glowing like a fragile jewel.

ALEX One favor, Sam. (grins) Why don't we bring the family along? I know a Gunstar holds four.

SAM (raising an eyebrow) Seriously?

ALEX Why not? They've earned the view.

Sam reads his father's face, then slowly smiles.

SAM Yeah... why the hell not.

EXT. SPACE — GUNSTAR ONE

The Gunstar One breaks formation, engines glowing, banking hard toward Earth. Plasma trails curl like comets across the void.

INT. THE CRUSHER — COMMAND CENTER

MAGGIE walks in, scanning the room.

MAGGIE Seren... where's your father?

SEREN (checking radar) I don't know... his ship's gone.

Her eyes widen at the viewport as the Gunstar One streaks past like a shooting star.

EXT. EARTH — SMALL TOWN, EVENING

A quiet suburban street. Wind hums through telephone wires. An empty lot shimmers as the Gunstar One roars down, retro-thrusters firing, dust and grass swirling violently.

EXT. STREET — CONTINUOUS

LOUIS, older now, walking home, freezes at the low hum. His eyes widen.

LOUIS (whispering) No... way.

He barrels down the street, almost running.

INT. JAIME'S HOUSE — FRONT DOOR

BANG! BANG! BANG!

JAIME (O.S.) Louis, what—?

LOUIS (shouting) Sam's back!

He grabs her hand, half-laughing, half-crying.

EXT. FIELD — CONTINUOUS

They crest a small hill. A crowd has gathered—phones up, lights flickering. The Gunstar looms like a living legend reborn.

A CONVEYOR PLATFORM descends from the ship, mist hissing, engines humming.

SAM (helmet off, smiling) Boy... Dad's gonna be surprised.

He spots JAIME in the crowd—his face softens. They meet halfway—long, emotional hug.

ON THE CONVEYOR — ABOVE

Another figure steps out: older, confident—ALEX ROGAN, helmet off, surveying the scene.

ALEX Hey, bro.

LOUIS (shocked, then laughing through tears) No call? No letter? Right... F— you, Alex!

They hug in a perfect mix of anger and joy.

ALEX That's why we came back. Needed a reason to leave... now we've got one.

Alex glances at SAM, then LOUIS, a quiet nod of family solidarity.

EXT. FIELD — CONTINUOUS

They step back onto the CONVEYOR—crowd still cheering. The platform rises toward the Gunstar's belly.

SAM (waving one last time) See you soon.

JAIME (tears, smiling) Hurry back...

The hatch seals. Engines flare—thunder rolling across the lot. The Gunstar One lifts, climbing higher, higher.

EXT. NIGHT SKY — CONTINUOUS

The ship pierces clouds, flame fading to a star among stars.

INT. COCKPIT — GUNSTAR ONE

ALEX and SAM, side by side. Earth shrinking behind them, serene.

ALEX Next stop?

SAM (smiling, calm) Wherever the stars take us.

They share a quiet nod—father and son, together again.

EXT. SPACE — WIDE

Gunstar One joins two others waiting—Two and Three. The fleet arcs in perfect formation, engines igniting in synchronized brilliance.

TITLE CARD: THE LAST STARFIGHTERS

FADE OUT.