

THE ABYSS

AN ORIGINAL SCREENPLAY BY

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DIRECTOR'S REVISIONS

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IDENTIFICATION # _____

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THE ABYSS

A B I I I

- 1 THE SCREEN EXPLODES with motion as we hurtle in POV through moonlit clouds tearing past at insane speed. We are descending rapidly. Speed over Mach four. The rush of wind is thunderous. We emerge over the moonlit ocean. Dive toward it. A dark landmass below... we pass over the horn of the Yucatan. Tiny islands dot the black Caribbean, which rushes up to meet us. The screen fills with the surface of the sea, a flashing blur, and the pulsing roar of our passing reaches a peak as we...

CUT TO:

- 2 EXT. OCEAN/ OFF LIGHTHOUSE REEF, BELIZE - NIGHT (PREDAWN) 2

The sea quiet and calm, moonlit. Diamonds on oil. A 40-foot fishing boat, EL FALCO, is an island of light and activity. At the horizon, heat-lightning pulses in a cumulus cloudbank. In the east, a wash of predawn light.

ON DECK, the captain glances over his shoulder as a single peal of THUNDER rolls in from the horizon. *Strange thunder*, like a sonic boom... The routine of hauling in the nets is broken as the spotter up on the pilot's platform starts yelling in Spanish, pointing out across the dark water. The fishermen run to the port rail in time to see a glow moving rapidly toward them *beneath the water*. Then all the lights on the boat flicker and go out. The glow rushes toward them. They're all yelling in Spanish.

From a HIGH ANGLE we see a glowing form, larger than the trawler, gliding soundlessly beneath the boat. We get only a tantalizing impression refracted through the waves. Its glow silhouettes the boat. The fishermen run to the starboard rail to watch the glowing object recede from them. The Falco is lifted and rocked by upwelling turbulence in the thing's wake. Thirty yards out they see the object veer to the left and dive, its glow receding into the depths until it has vanished, without a trace. The captain slowly crosses himself as the boat's lights flicker back on.

FADE OUT.

TITLE: THE ABYSS -- ON BLACK DISSOLVING TO COBALT BLUE

- 3 EXT. OCEAN/ UNDERWATER - DAY 3

Blue, deep and featureless, the twilight of five hundred feet down. PROPELLER SOUND. Materializing out of the blue limbo is the enormous but sleek form of an Ohio Class SSBN ballistic missile submarine.

A B I I I

In the attack center, darkened to womb-red, the crew's faces shine with sweat in the glow of their instruments. The SKIPPER and his EXEC crowd around BARNES, the sonarman.

CAPTAIN

Sixty knots? No way, Barnes... the reds don't have anything that fast.

BARNES

Checked it twice, skipper. It's a real unique signature. No cavitation, no reactor noise... doesn't even sound like screws.

He puts the signal onto a speaker and everyone in the attack room listens to the intruder's acoustic signature, a strange THRUMMING. The captain studies the electronic position board, a graphic representation of the contours of the steep-walled canyon, a symbol for the Montana, and converging with it, an amorphous trace, representing the bogey.

CAPTAIN

What the hell is it?

EXEC

I'll tell you one thing it ain't, and that's one of ours.

BARNES

Sir! Bogey changing heading to two-one-four, diving. Speed eighty knots!

EXEC

Eighty knots... Jesus!

BARNES

Still diving, depth nine hundred feet.

A B I I I

Tension builds in the attack room as the Montana surges to intercept the intruder. The exec tensely watches the vector-graphic readout from the side-scan sonar array. The sub is running uncomfortably close to the cliff walls.

EXEC

We shouldn't be in here. It's too tight at this speed.

CAPTAIN

We can still give him a haircut. Set planes down twenty. Come to oh six nine.

(CONTINUED)

4 (CONTINUED)

NAVIGATOR

Port side clearance forty yards. I have a proximity warning light.

EXEC

That's too damn close! We've gotta back off.

BARNES

Range to bogey, two hundred. Sir, bogey just jinked to bearing two six oh and accelerated to... uh... to one hundred thirty knots, sir!

EXEC

(really freaked now)

Nothing goes one thirty!

Suddenly the control room lights dim almost to blackness.

5 EXT. U.S.S. MONTANA

We see only the effect, not the source, as a large diffuse light passes rapidly under the sub's hull. Moments later a shockwave, like an underwater sonic boom, impacts the sub, slamming it sideways.

6 INT. U.S.S. MONTANA

The bridge crew are knocked off their feet, as the ship is buffeted.

EXEC

Turbulence! We're in its wake!

SIRENS. Everyone shouting at once. The power flickering low.

CAPTAIN

All stop! All stop! Full right rudder!

HELMSMAN

Helm is not responding, sir!

Power returns in time for the exec to get a glimpse at the side-scan display...
AS A SHEER CLIFF WALL LOOMS BEFORE THEM.

7 EXT. U.S.S. MONTANA

The cliff wall materializes out of the blue limbo off the port bow with nightmarish slow-motion. The sub slams into it with horrific force, scraping along and bouncing off. One tail stabilizer is sheared off and the big screw prangs the wall with an earsplitting K-K-KWANG!

8 INT. PORT TORPEDO ROOM

With the outer tube-doors torn off, seawater slams in, bursting the inner hatches. Two-foot thick columns of water, like fire-hoses of the gods, blast into the room. Everything vanishes instantly in white spray.

9 INT. CONTROL ROOM/ ATTACK CENTER

Everyone is hurled off his feet. The planesman is tossed from his chair and fights to recover control of the yoke.

EXEC

Port torpedo room flooded! Main forward tanks ruptured...

CAPTAIN

BLOW EVERYTHING! MAINS. TRIMS. SAFETIES! ALL BACK FULL! ALL BACK FULL!

10 EXT. MONTANA

The great sub is being hauled down by the mass of its flooded bow section, its flanks rushing past us like a freight train headed for Hell. The big screw stops and reverses direction, using its enormous power to slow the ship's plunge... but it's already too late.

11 INT. MONTANA

VARIOUS ANGLES as crewmen are tossed about, some falling the length of now vertical corridors and rooms. IN THE CONTROL ROOM the command crew fights futilely for control, everyone shouting and terrified. The captain locks eyes with the Exec amid the din...

CAPTAIN

We're losing her. Launch emergency buoy!

12 EXT. MONTANA

A tiny transmitter is ejected from the sub's hull and begins its long ascent to the surface. A second later the sub slams down like a piledriver onto a ledge, tearing open its pressure hull.

13 INT. MONTANA

VARIOUS QUICK CUTS, just flashes and impressions, as...

Seawater blasts down the corridors--

Explodes across the control room, hurling men like dolls--

13 Floods the cavernous missile bay in seconds--

ABC Bursts through hatches into the reactor room--

Blasting men OUT OF FRAME in a microsecond.

13
ABC

14 - EXT. OCEAN/ UNDERWATER

14

In the cobalt twilight we see the Montana slide down the sea cliff, its hull SCREECHING like the death agonies of some marine dinosaur. Descending in an avalanche of silt, it finally disappears into the blackness below... a blackness which continues almost straight down, 20,000 feet to the bottom of the Cayman Trough. The abyss.

15 EXT. OCEAN SURFACE - DAY

15

Above, in the world, the Caribbean rolling gray under a stormy sky. The Montana's emergency buoy pops to the surface, transmitting.

CUT TO:

16 EXT. OCEAN/ TWENTY MILES AWAY - DAY

16

LONG LENS SHOT: three massive Navy Sea King helicopters thundering straight at us, FILLING FRAME.

REVERSE, as they barrel OVER CAMERA toward a lone civilian ship... an ugly but very sophisticated deep-sea drilling support ship, the BENTHIC *A16 EXPLORER. It is a twin-hulled monstrosity with a central opening in its deck, around which crouch enormous cranes, winches and other arcane equipment. A16*

The first Sea King settles onto the helipad, disgorging a contingent of Naval officers, technicians and a squad of armed seamen. A pantomime in the rotorwash, we see the Benthic Petroleum "company man" KIRKHILL greeting COMMODORE DEMARCO, the on-scene commander.

17 INT. BENTHIC EXPLORER/ BRIDGE - DAY

17

The bridge is state-of-the-art, with computers and sophisticated navigation and communications gear, looking like mission control with its bank of video monitors. The Drilling Operations Supervisor, LELAND MCBRIDE, and BENDIX, the crew chief, watch the invaders swarming the deck below.

MCBRIDE

Does not look at all good.

A17 TIGHT ON VIDEO SCREEN (MINUTES LATER) showing divers working in total blackness around some sort of installation on the bottom of the ocean. They move through harsh floodlights in dreamlike slow motion, looking like space-suited figures with their helmets and umbilical hoses.

A17

DEMARCO (V.O.)

No light from the surface. How deep are they?

MCBRIDE (V.O.)

Seventeen hundred feet.

17 **WIDER**, showing the Navy contingent crowding the control room. DeMarco is 17
hardcore military, brusque and efficient. Kirkhill is a small man with
pinched features, wearing a shirt and tie, which on a drill ship means
company man and/or dickhead.

DEMARCO

I need them to go to over two thousand.

KIRKHILL

They can do it.

(to McBride)

Get Brigman on the line.

CUT TO:

18 **EXT. UNDERWATER - DAY (TOTAL DARKNESS)**

18

* 1700 FEET BELOW. A submersible oil-drilling platform, DEEPCORE II, an
* island of light in the vast blackness. Its main framework connects two "tri-
* modules" consisting of three cylinders each. These contain living and work
* areas in a pressurized environment. An umbilical cable, thick as a man's
* thigh, runs up from the rig into the darkness, to the Benthic Explorer at the
* surface. In a bubble-like dome port window we see the rig foreman, or
* "toolpusher," BUD BRIGMAN. He's talking (via headset) with two divers
* working outside... 'CATFISH' DE VRIES, AND LEW 'BIRD-DOG' FINLER.
*

* Hey, you guys are milking that job.

* **CATFISH**

* (Kentucky drawl)

* That's cause we love freezin' our butts off out here
* sooo much, boss.

*19 **OMITTED**

19*

20 **INT. DRILL ROOM**

20

* Bud turns from the window and crosses the drill floor. The working heart of
* the rig. **THUNDEROUS MECHANICAL ROAR.** The drill crew, in hardhats
* and mud-plastered overalls, tends the massive spinning turntable in the
* center
* of the chamber. The semi-automated system requires only five men to
* operate. The others are LUFTON MCWHIRTER, DWIGHT PERRY,
* JAMMER WILLIS, and TOMMY RAY DIETZ. Bud hears his name called
* above the din by Jammer, a massive roughneck/diver who stands a good head
* taller than the rest.

(CONTINUED)

20 (CONTINUED)

20

JAMMER

(yelling)

Bud! Hippy's on the bitch-box. It's a call from topside. That new company man.

BUD

Kirkhill? That guy doesn't know his butt from a rathole. Hey, Perry!

One of the roustabouts, a wiry Texan, turns to him.

BUD

Do me a favor and square away that mud hose and those cable slings. This place is starting to look like my apartment.

Perry chuckles and sets to the task cheerfully.
Bud EXITS, ducking his head through a low watertight hatch.

21 INT. CORRIDOR/ TOOLPUSHER'S OFFICE

21

Bud tromps down the narrow corridor, his work boots gonging on steel.

P.A. (HIPPY'S VOICE)

BUD, PICK UP THE TOPSIDE LINE URGENT.

BUD

I'm coming. Keep your pantyhose on.

He enters his office, a tiny cubicle with stacks of paperwork, dust-gathering tech manuals and waterstained Penthouse foldouts. He picks up the phone... punches down a line.

BUD

Brigman here. Kirkhill? What's going on?

(pause)

I am calm. I'm a calm person. Is there some reason why I shouldn't be calm?

HOLD ON Bud's expression, darkening, as he listens.

22 INT. CORRIDOR/ CONTROL MODULE

22

The control module is a long narrow cabin like the inside of a Winnebago, packed with instrumentation. At the end is a small bay with multiple viewports. Outside, at a 'Christmas tree' pipe installation, a lone diver can be seen welding. He is accompanied by a large submersible, FLATBED, and by a Remotely Operated Vehicle, or ROV, called BIG GEEK. Big Geek is an underwater robot which operates on the end of a cable-like control TETHER. It has a single video 'eye' in front, by which the operator pilots the little machine. The rig's ROV pilot is ALLEN 'HIPPY' CARNES, who stands by the window twiddling his joysticks and drinking coffee. His pet black rat, BEANY, crawls contentedly around on his shoulders. The door BANGS OPEN.

Hippy jumps, slops his coffee. Bud strides in. *Not calm.*

BUD

Son of a bitch.

He kicks a chair out of his way and slams his palm down on a switch marked DIVER RECALL. A SIREN, blasting through the water from a big hydrophone loudspeaker.

BUD

All divers. Drop what you're doing. Everybody out of the pool.

*A22 EXT. DEEPCORE/ CHRISTMAS TREE

A22*

Flatbed's pilot, LISA 'ONE NIGHT' STANDING, can be seen clearly behind a bubble canopy. She is a no-nonsense lady who holds her own in the mostly male environment by being one of the best submersible drivers in the business. She controls a hydraulic manipulator arm, assisting the diver, ARLISS 'SONNY' DAWSON, in his work. Big Geek hovers around them like a tiny helicopter. Hippy has painted shark teeth and eyes on it, giving it the look of a goofy World War II fighter plane with no wings. They react to Bud's recall, looking toward him up in the control module.

ONE NIGHT

Dammit, we just got out here.

SONNY

There was a time when I would have asked why.

One Night makes a grab for his butt with the manipulator claw, which he narrowly avoids.

CUT TO:

23 EXT. DEEPCORE/ UNDER SUB-BAY

23

* Flatbed moves underneath the rig, a few feet above the seafloor, with Sonny
* riding on its top deck. It passes under a lit opening and rises toward the
* surface of the water in the chamber above. Big Geek follows like an obedient
* dog.

24 INT. SUB-BAY/ MOONPOOL

24

The opening is called the moonpool, and Deepcore's submersibles are
launched through it. From inside the sub-bay it looks just like a swimming
pool. Flatbed surfaces, nearly filling it. The chamber also contains CAB ONE,
a smaller submersible. Jammer, Perry, and some of the other drill-room boys
are helping the divers out of the water. The water at this depth is only about
six degrees above freezing, and these folks are cold and prune-fingered. Finler
pulls off his demand-helmet, revealing a round, boyish face.

FINLER

What's goin' on? How come we got recalled?

SONNY

Hell if I know.

* One Night jumps 'ashore' from Flatbed's broad deck and joins them. Catfish
* is unzipping his bulky dry-suit.

(CONTINUED)

A B O I I

24 (CONTINUED)

24

CATFISH

Just follow standard procedure, will ya... flog the dog till somebody tells us what's happening.

JAMMER

Hey, Catfish, I'll sell you my October Penthouse for twenty bucks.

ONE NIGHT

Save your money, darlin'... the pages are all stuck together by now.

Bud enters, approaching the group.

JAMMER

What's goin' on, Boss?

BUD

Folks, I've just been told to shut down the hole and prepare to move the rig.

SONNY

She-hit.

BUD

We're being asked to cooperate in a matter of national security. Now you know exactly as much as I do. So just get your gear off and get up to control. There's some kind of briefing in ten minutes.

CUT TO:

25 INT. DEEPCORE/ COMMAND MODULE

25

The whole rig crew is somehow jammed into the room for the video briefing. DeMarco is on the main monitor, with his aides and Kirkhill visible b.g.

A25

DEMARCO

A25

At 09:22 local time this morning, an American nuclear submarine, the USS Montana, with 156 men aboard, went down 22 miles from here. There has been no contact with the sub since then. The cause of the incident is not known.

25 PAN AROUND the reactions of the various drill crew members... shocked, hushed, curious. 25

A25

DEMARCO

A25

Your company has authorized the Navy's use of this facility for a rescue operation. The code name is Operation Salvor.

25

ONE NIGHT

25

You want us to search for the sub?

A25

DEMARCO

A25

No. We know where it is. But she's in 2000 feet of water and we can't reach her. We need divers to enter the sub and search for survivors, if any.

25

Bud's scowl has been deepening since DeMarco started to talk.

25

*
*
*

BUD

Don't you guys have your own stuff for this type of thing?

*
*
*

A25

DEMARCO

A25

By the time we get our rescue submersibles here the storm front will be right on us. But you can get your rig in under the storm and be on-site in fifteen hours. That makes you our best option right now.

25

Hippy, born suspicious and recently graduated to paranoid, leans forward..

25

HIPPY

Why should we risk our butts on a job like this?

A25

KIRKHILL

A25

I have been authorized to offer you all special-duty bonuses equivalent to three times normal dive pay.

25

CATFISH

25

Hell, for triple time I'd crawl through razor blades and shower off with lime juice.

*

FINLER

I'm here to tell ya', you could set me on fire and call me names.

*

(CONTINUED)

25 (CONTINUED)

25

*
*
*
**
*
*
*

BUD

Look, I don't know what kind of a deal you guys
worked out with the company, but my people are
not qualified for this... they're oil workers.

A25

DEMARCO

A25

A four-man SEAL team will transfer down to you
to supervise the operation.

A B O I 1 1

A B O I 1 1

25

BUD

You can send down whoever you like, but I'm the toolpusher on this rig, and when it comes to the safety of these people, there's me... then there's God. Understand? If things get dicey, I'm pulling the plug.

25

A25

KIRKHILL

I think we're all on the same wavelength, Brigman. Now let's get the wellhead uncoupled, shall we?

A25

CUT TO:

26

INT. DEEPCORE/ COMMAND MODULE AND CORRIDOR

26

Bud stands beside the hatchway as the others file out toward their tasks. They comment gravely as they pass...

JAMMER

When Lindsey finds out about this, it's not gonna be a pretty sight.

ONE NIGHT

They're going to have to shoot her with a tranquilizer gun.

CUT TO:

27

EXT. OCEAN - DAY

27

A single Navy Sea King churns through the rain under massive thunderheads. The sea below is whipped by the storm.

28

INT./ EXT. SEA KING

28

PANNING ALONG BOOTED FEET, four pairs of black military size twelves lined up, onto... a pair of Charles Jourdan fives under shapely ankles.

WIDER, revealing the four-man team of Navy SEALs. And a slender woman in her early thirties. She's attractive, if a bit hardened, dressed conservatively in a skirt and jacket. Meet LINDSEY. Project Engineer for Deepcore. She's a pain in the ass, but you'll like her. *Eventually.* She's holding on grimly, sitting crammed in with the SEALs and a bunch of gear, getting tossed around by the storm. The SEALs are dressed alike in black fatigues. They are muscular, finely-tuned and extremely dangerous special-forces types. The leader of the SEAL team, LIEUTENANT COFFEY, makes his way forward to the cockpit.

(CONTINUED)

28- (CONTINUED)

28

The pilot is white-knuckling his sticks, trying to hold the great beast of a helicopter in position. Through the windshield, the deck of the Benthic Explorer can be seen below, pitching in a violent sea.

PILOT

No way I'm putting her down. I shouldn't even be flying in this shit.

COFFEY

(cool)

Just hold it over the deck

Coffey goes back to the crew deck, moving easily in the bucking craft. He nods to the other SEALs, MONK, WILHITE and SCHOENICK. In the open side door, Wilhite clips a 100-foot nylon rope to the airframe and throws out the coil. One by one they shoulder their gear-bags, grab the rope, and step out. Lindsey stands swaying in the chopper door, watching the SEALs fast-roping to the deck. One, two, three. Coffey looks at her.

COFFEY

You want to be on that ship, there's only one way it's going to happen.

He's sure she won't go for it. It's his certainty that gets her. She sets her jaw. Opening her purse she takes out a small plastic bag, puts her shoes and purse in the bag, and grips the bag in her teeth. Then she grabs the rope and slides down.

29 EXT. BENTHIC EXPLORER/ HELIPAD

29

Swinging wildly in the wind like a human pendulum, Lindsey fast-ropes forty feet to the deck. She steps away an instant before Coffey hits behind her. Lindsey crosses the rainswept deck with athletic strides. Her nylons are ruined. An air-crewman in the chopper lowers two additional equipment cases using the rescue sling. The SEALs catch them as they swing radically across the deck. The Navy chopper banks and seems to scurry away before the mounting storm.

CUT TO:

30 EXT. OCEAN BOTTOM

30

BLACKNESS. Then shafts of light become visible, above a ridge of rock. Flatbed appears, trailing two heavy tow cables. Behind it, the mass of Deepcore emerges from the darkness, its forward lighting array blazing. Flatbed is towing it like a tug, aided by Deepcore's own mighty stern thrusters.

31 INT. DEEPCORE/ CONTROL MODULE

A B I I I

31

Bud, his feet propped up, uses joystick controls to 'fly' Deepcore, maneuvering against currents and around seafloor obstacles. He is guided by the side-scan sonar display, with Hippy assisting in the sonar shack. Through the front viewport, Flatbed can be seen out ahead.

McBride appears on the bridge monitor, holding a sheet of weather-fax.

A31

MCBRIDE (on screen)

A31

Well, it's official, sportsfans. They're calling it Hurricane Frederick, and it's going to be making our lives real interesting in a few hours.

32 INT. EXPLORER BRIDGE - DAY

32

Bud replies via video.

BUD

Fred, huh? I don't know. Hurricanes should be named after women.

McBride looks up as the bridge door opens. Lindsey enters in a blast of wind, wet as a wharf rat and twice as pissed off. Maybe Bud is right.

CUT TO:

33 INT. DEEPCORE/ CONTROL MODULE

33

Bud is surprised to see Lindsey's face appear on the monitor screen.

A33

LINDSEY

A33

I can't believe you let them do this!

33

BUD

33

(unperturbed, almost cheerful)

Hi, Lins. I thought you were in Houston.

A33

LINDSEY

A33

I was, but I managed to bum a ride on the last flight out here. Only here isn't where I left it, is it, Bud?

33

BUD

33

Wasn't up to me.

A33

LINDSEY

A33

We were that close to proving a submersible drilling platform could work. We had over seven thousand feet of hole down for Chrissake. I can't believe you let them grab my rig!

33

33

BUD

Your rig?

A33

A33

LINDSEY

My rig. I designed the damn thing.

33

33

BUD

Yup, and Benthic Petroleum paid for it. So as long as they're holding the pink slip, I go where they tell me.

A33

A33

LINDSEY

You wimp. I had a lot riding on this. They bought you... more like least rented you cheap--

33

33

BUD

I'm switching off now.

A33

A33

LINDSEY

Virgil, you wiener! You never could stand up to a fight. You--

33

33

Bud hits the switch and the screen goes dead.

BUD

Bye bye.

Hippy looks over at him, trying very hard not to crack up.

HIPPY

Virgil?

BUD

God, I hate that bitch.

HIPPY

Yeah, well you never should have married her then.

Bud nods fatalistically.

CUT TO:

34

34

EXT. EXPLORER DECK/ LAUNCH WELL

Ten foot waves crash through the launch-well, sending up geysers of spray. Next to the launch-well, crewman have attached a lifting cable to CAB THREE, 18 feet of ugly yellow submersible. It slams violently in its steel cradle as the drill-ship rolls. Coffey and Schoenick hand the gear bags in to Wilhite and Monk through the hatch under the rear of the submersible.

(CONTINUED)

34 - (CONTINUED)

Lindsey approaches, wearing a borrowed roustabout's coverall. She looks down at the larger of the two equipment cases brought by the SEALs, lying on the deck. Stencilled on it are the words: F.B.S./ DEEP SUTT / MARK IV. Coffey and Schoenick push past her to pick it up.

LINDSEY

Let's go, gentlemen! We either launch now or we don't launch.

Coffey looks up in surprise as she nimbly climbs the side of Cab Three and grabs the lifting shackle, circling her raised hand to signal the crane man.

LINDSEY

Take her up, Byron!

Cab Three, with Lindsey riding its back, is pulled up out of its cradle and starts to swing violently as Explorer pitches. The submersible is then swung out to the center of the launch well. It sways and gyrates above the furious water below. Lindsey drops into the upper hatch.

*35 INT. EXPLORER BRIDGE / D.O.C.

Kirkhill leans suddenly over the console to look out the window.

KIRKHILL

What the hell is she doing out there? Son of a bitch...

(into microphone)

Lindsey... get out of Cab Three. Bates is taking her down.

36 INT. CAB THREE

Lindsey pulls on her headset as she dogs down the inside locking levers of the hatch.

LINDSEY

Bates is sick. Besides I've got more hours in this thing than he does.

(to Coffey)

A little change of plan here.

The little sub is swinging like a pendulum on the cable, and the SEALs, jammed in with their equipment in the tiny space, are getting slammed into the walls. Lindsey is calmly flipping switches as she talks.

(CONTINUED)

36. (CONTINUED)

COFFEY

Lady, we better fish or cut bait.

LINDSEY

Just hold your water, okay?

(to Kirkhill)

So Kirkhill, we gonna do this or we gonna talk about it?

37 INT. EXPLORER BRIDGE / D.O.C.

37

The plug is pulled on DeMarco's patience.

DEMARCO

I don't care who drives the damn thing. Just get my team in the water.

KIRK HILL

Alright, alright. 'Christ Almighty!

He gestures dismissively to McBride.

MCBRIDE

Cab Three, you are cleared to launch.

38 INT/ EXT. CAB THREE

38

Lindsey reaches up and grabs a red lever.

LINDSEY

Roger.

(to Coffey)

There's only one way it's going to happen...

She pulls the lever hard. CLUNK-CLANG!

The shackle-release drops the sub.

It freefalls ten feet to the water with an enormous splash and keeps right on going as Lindsey floods the trim tanks. Coffey et al have been slammed hard.

LINDSEY

Touchdown. The crowd goes wild. Explorer...

Cab Three. We are styling.

MCBRIDE (filtered)

Roger, Cab Three.

(CONTINUED)

38 (CONTINUED)

A B I I I

17
38

Lindsey cuts on the floodlights and maneuvers the descending submersible so that the umbilical cable is a few feet ahead of her front port. Moving up through her lights, it will guide her down to the rig. Cab Three free-falls into increasing darkness. Soon it is a candle far below us in the indigo.

39 EXT./ INT. FLATBED

39

One Night is driving the tug one-handed, pouring coffee from a thermos and rocking out to the great truck-driving song "Willing" on the beat-box she's got propped up on the sonar rig. Fighting white-line fever in the best tradition.

40 INT. CONTROL MODULE

40

Bud and Hippo come in for a rousing chorus.

BUD/HIPPO

...I've driven every kinda rig that's ever been
maaaaaade...

41 EXT. DEEPCORE

41

Lit up like a proud Peterbilt, the rig crosses the trackless wastes. We hear them singing, carried OVER.

42 EXT. OCEAN DEPTHS/ CAB THREE

42

In total blackness, the submersible descends along the rigorous line of the umbilical cable. Two hundred feet below it, the lights of Deepcore resolve out of the darkness. Now we can see the rig crawling over the ocean bottom like some monster lawnmower.

LINDSEY (V.O.)

Deepcore, Deepcore... this is Cab Three on final approach.

HIPPO (V.O.)

Gotcha, Cab Three. Who is that? That you, Lindsey?

43 INT. DEEPCORE/ CONTROL MODULE

43

Bud stops singing and snaps around at the mention of her name.

LINDSEY (V.O.)

None other.

Bud's expression is nothing less than stricken.

(CONTINUED)

43 (CONTINUED) 43

BUD

Oh no... you gotta be kidding me.

44 EXT/ CAB THREE / DEEPCORE 44

Lindsey executes a 180° turn and cruises over the control module, back through the A-frame toward the docking hatch. The flange of Cab Three's lockout hatch settles over a pressure collar on the rig's back. There is a CLUNK as it mates up.

45 INT. DEEPCORE/ COMPRESSION CHAMBER/ GAS CONTROL STATION 45

Lindsey drops down from the hatch into the small cylindrical pressure chamber. The SEALs drop down behind her, passing their gear through hand-over-hand. The chamber is spartan, with steel benches, a folding card table, breathing masks, and medical supplies. Catfish greets them through the tiny porthole at one end.

CATFISH

Howdy, y'all. Hey, Lindsey! I'll be damned! You shouldn't be down here sweet thing, ya'll might run ya stockings.

LINDSEY

Couldn't stay away. You running mixture for us?
Good. Couldn't ask for better.

CATFISH

Okay, here we go. Start equalizing, y'all.

HISSSS of inrushing compressed gas. The pressure in the chamber rises. The breathing mixture is composed of helium, oxygen and nitrogen. Catfish monitors it carefully from a station outside the chamber, watching the gauges with a practiced eye. Lindsey and the SEALs all grab their noses and start making funny faces... popping their ears with the familiar diver's 'equalization' technique. They continue as:

LINDSEY

Get comfortable. The bad news is we got six hours in this can, blowing down. The worse news is it's gonna take us three weeks to decompress back to the surface later.

COFFEY

We've been fully briefed, Mrs. Brigman.

(CONTINUED)

45 (CONTINUED)

45

LINDSEY

Don't call me that, okay... I hate that. Alright ,
from now on we watch each other closely for signs
of HPNS...

MONK

(as if by rote)

High-Pressure Nervous Syndrome. Muscle
tremors, usually in the hands first. Nausea,
increased excitability, disorientation.

LINDSEY

Very good. About one person in twenty just can't
handle it. They go buggo. There's no way to
predict who's susceptible, so stay alert.

COFFEY

Look, we've all made chamber runs to this depth.
We're checked out.

LINDSEY

Oh... chamber runs. Uh huh, that's good.

(Coffey turns away)

Well, hey... you guys know any songs?

They ignore her. Start going over some diagrams of the Montana's interior.
It's going to be a long six hours.

46 INT. GAS CONTROL STATION - HOURS LATER

Catfish checks his watch, then reaches over and adjusts a valve on the trim manifold, watching the gauges. Satisfied, he leans over to the pressure window in the door, checking out the SEALS. Hippy has come down from the control deck for an advance look at the interlopers. Jammer is in a chair, reading a Louis L'Amour paperback.

CATFISH

Those guys ain't so tough. I fought plenty of guys
tougher'n them.

HIPPY

Now we get to hear about how he used to be a
contender.

Catfish holds one calloused fist up in front of Hippy's face.

(CONTINUED)

46 (CONTINUED)

CATFISH

You see this? They used to call this the *Hammer*.

JAMMER

Hippy wasn't born then.

ABO 1 1 1

47. INT. PRESSURE CHAMBER

47

It looks like the end of a long bus trip. Everyone silent... leafing through beat-to-hell magazines or just staring. Lindsey has her feet propped on the smaller of the SEALs' two equipment cases. She casually toes open one of the latches, then the other. Glances at Coffey. He's reading. She begins to lift the lid with her toe. Gets a GLIMPSE INSIDE, of packing foam, and what looks like a SMALL BLACK METAL BOX. Then... WHAM! Coffey's foot comes down on the lid, slamming it shut. Startled, she looks up into his cool gaze.

COFFEY

Curiosity killed the cat.

48 INT. GAS CONTROL STATION/ CHAMBER DOOR - LATER

48

TIGHT ON CATFISH'S hands... closing valves... spinning the wheel on the chamber hatch. CUT WIDER as it cracks open with a virgin's sigh and swings aside.

~~CATFISH~~

~~Y'all'er done to a turn and ready to serve.
Everybody okay?~~

The SEALs nod peremptorily and shoulder their gear. Lindsey exits first, followed by Monk, Wilhite and Schoenick. Coffey bends to re-latch the small equipment case. He is alone for one moment in the chamber. He raises his hand and stares at it. The fingertips are trembling the slightest bit. He clenches them into a fist and walks out.

49 INT. CORRIDOR

49

As Lindsey emerges into the main corridor of the rig, she bumps into a large, dark mass.

LINDSEY

Hey, was there a wall here before? I don't remember a wall here. Oh, Jammer! Hi.

The 'wall' grins down at her.

JAMMER

Howdy, there, little lady.

Coffey emerges behind them and, ignoring Lindsey, faces Jammer.

COFFEY

(to Jammer)

Show us the dive prep area.

(more)

49

(CONTINUED)

COFFEY (continued)

We need to check out your gear.

49

*

Jammer scowls, turns and leads the SEALs into the sub-bay. Catfish and Lindsey exchange a look.

LINDSEY

Those guys are about as much fun
as a tax audit.

CUT TO:

50

INT. COMMAND MODULE

50

TIGHT ON HIPPY, bathed in the light from the sonar displays. He is making kissing sounds at Beany, who has his inquisitive nose right up to Hippy's lips.

~~LINDSEY (V.O.)~~~~Hippy, you're going to give that rat a disease.~~

WIDER, as Hippy and Bud turn to see Lindsey leaning in the doorway. She and Bud size each other up. He opts for a jovial approach, his eyes wary.

BUD

Well, well. Mrs. Brigman.

LINDSEY

Not for long.

Lindsey crosses past him, her eyes scanning the banks of equipment, almost unconsciously checking, checking... getting the pulse of her big iron baby

BUD

You never did like being called that, did you?

LINDSEY

Not even when it meant something.

(looking through front port)

Is that One Night up in Flatbed?

BUD

Who else?

Lindsey leans past Bud to the gooseneck mike on the console.

LINDSEY

Hi, One Night, it's Lindsey.

51 INT. FLATBED

51

One Night mimes a puking motion, finger down her throat. Then she replies with sickening sweetness...

ONE NIGHT

Oh hi, Lindsey.

*52 INT. COMMAND MODULE

52*

Lindsey gives the sonar shack the once-over. She tweaks some knobs.

BUD

I can't believe you were dumb enough to come down. Now you're stuck here for the storm... dumb, hot-rod... dumb.

LINDSEY

Look, I didn't come down here to fight.

~~She crosses past Bud and exits into the corridor. Bud bolts out of the chair to follow her and Hippy scrambles in to take over.~~

53 INT. CORRIDOR/ LADDER-WELL / LEVEL ONE LANDING

53

Bud catches up with Lindsey in the corridor, and through the following keeps pace with her as she makes her inspection.

BUD

Then why'd you come down?

~~She stops abruptly to look at a leaky pipe. He almost slams into her. She moves on, climbing down the ladder to the lower level.~~

LINDSEY

You need me. Nobody knows the systems on this rig better than I do. What if something was to go wrong after the Explorer clears off? What would you have done?

BUD

Wow, you're right! Us poor dumb ol' boys might've had to think for ourselves. Coulda been a disaster.

On the lower level landing, Lindsey opens a hatch into one of the machine rooms. ROAR OF PUMPS AND COMPRESSORS.

54 INT. MACHINE ROOM

Lindsey enters and moves expertly through the dark labyrinth of pipes and roaring machinery. Her eyes rove constantly over fittings, gauges, circuit panels.

BUD

(yelling)

You wanna know what I think?

A B I I I

LINDSEY

Not particularly. Jeez, look where this is set!
Morons.

She scowls at a pressure gauge and turns a valve minutely.

BUD

I think you were worried about me.

LINDSEY

That must be it.

Lindsey's on the move again, and Bud scrambles through pipes to keep up.

BUD

No, I think you were. Come on, admit it.

LINDSEY

I was worried about the rig. I've got over four years invested in this project.

BUD

Oh, yeah, right... and you only had three years with me.

She looks up at him.

LINDSEY

You've got to have priorities.

CUT TO:

55 INT. BUD'S ROOM

Darkness. The door opens and Bud snaps on the light.

BUD

My bunk's the only one I can guarantee won't be occupied. You can grab a couple hours before we get there.

(CONTINUED)

55. (CONTINUED)

55

Lindsey slips past him into his tiny stateroom, the only private bunk on the rig. Rank has its privileges. His hand on the door is just level with her eyes. She notices his wedding ring, a massive band of pure titanium (something your fiancée might pick out if she had a degree from M.I.T.).

LINDSEY

What are you still wearing that for?

BUD

I don't know. Divorce ain't final. Forgot to take it off.

Bud stays in the doorway. Lindsey takes a heap of Bud's clothes off the narrow bunk. Starts unconsciously straightening up the room.

LINDSEY

I haven't worn mine in months.

BUD

Yeah, what's-his-name wouldn't like it. The Suit.

LINDSEY

Do you always have to call him that? The Suit? It makes you sound like such a hick. His name is Michael.

Lindsey taking off her borrowed tennies and socks.
Bud eyeing her, sounding too casual.

BUD

So what about "Michael" then... Mr. Brooks Brothers... Mr. BMW. You still seeing him?

LINDSEY

No, I haven't seen him in a few weeks.

BUD

What happened?

LINDSEY

Bud, why are you doing this? It's not part of your life any more.

BUD

I'll tell you what happened... you woke up one day and realized the guy never made you laugh.

(CONTINUED)

55 CONTINUED: (2)

LINDSEY

A B I I I

You're right Bud. It was just that simple. Aren't you clever? You should get your own show...Ask Dr. Bud, advice to the lovelorn from three hundred fathoms.

She closes the watertight door, forcing him out. Locks it. She turns and throws her shoe hard at the far wall.

LINDSEY

AAAARRRGH!

She flops down on the bed, sitting... staring at the wall. Her armor is gone. She looks small and vulnerable. A long beat. She reaches over to the tiny sink. Amid the clutter is a bottle of Bud's aftershave. She unscrews it and takes a sniff. Catches herself. Tosses it.

LINDSEY

Shit.

56 INT. QUARTERS / HEAD

56

Bud barges into the tiny head and puts some soap on his ring finger. He pulls the ring off roughly and throws it into the toilet. He reaches forward to flush. Can't do it. Now really pissed off at himself he reaches into the toilet bowl, wrist deep in the chemical-blue water, and salvages the ring. He puts it on and washes his hands. The right hand stays faintly blue no matter how hard he scrubs.

BUD

Shit.

CUT TO:

57 EXT. DEEPCORE

57

The platform is stopped, hovering in place. Like a great spacecraft setting down on a barren planet, the rig settles into the bottom ooze. Flatbed releases its tow lines and heads back to its berth inside.

CUT TO:

58 INT. SUB-BAY

58

CLOSE ON A PHOTOGRAPH, actually a computer-composited down-looking scan from a towed LIDAR (laser imaging sonar) rig. It shows a faint, blurry outline of the Montana lying on her side on a ledge partway down the canyon wall. There is no detail. A finger points to a flat ledge nearby. An "X" has been put on with grease pencil.

(CONTINUED)

58- (CONTINUED)

COFFEY (V.O.)

* This is us. We're just on the edge of the Cayman
* Trough. The Montana is here, on its side, 300
meters away and 70 meters below us. We think
she slid down the wall, and lodged against this
outcropping.

* CUT WIDE, showing the rig crew gathered around a worktable in the sub-bay.
* The divers, Bud, Catfish, Sonny, Finler, Jammer, and the four SEALs have
their dry-suits on. The pre-dive briefing. Lindsey, One Night, and Hippy will
crew the submersibles. Wilhite is going around clipping DOSIMETER
BADGES on everybody.

SONNY

This tells us how much radiation we get?

HIPPI

Hey, whoah... I can't handle no radiation, man.
Forget it! Include me out.

CATFISH

Hippy, you pussy.

HIPPI

What good's the money if your dick drops off in six
months?

COFFEY

We'll take readings as we go. If the reactor's
breached or the workends have released
radioactive debris, we'll back away. Simple.

BUD

Okay...Hippy's not going... McWhirter, you can
run Little Geek.

* Bud pats the top of a small ROV, sitting next to its larger brother, Big Geek.

(CONTINUED)

58. CONTINUED: (2)

58

HIPPY

No way! No way! He can't fly an ROV worth shit.
I'll go. Shit!

COFFEY

(to all)

On the dive, you will do absolutely nothing without direct orders from me, and you will follow my instructions without discussion. Is this clear?
Alright, I want everyone finished prep and ready to get wet in fifteen minutes.

The rig crew disperses, picking up helmets and diving gear. Some are studying diagrams of the Montana's interior layout. Bud takes Coffey aside as the others prepare.

BUD

Look, it's three AM. These guys are running on bad coffee and four hours sleep. You better start cutting them some slack.

COFFEY

I can't afford slack, Brigman.

BUD

Hey, you come on my rig, you don't talk to me, you start ordering my guys around. It won't work.
You gotta know how to handle these people... we have a certain way of doing things here.

COFFEY

I'm not interested in your way of doing things.
Just get your team ready to dive.

End of discussion. Coffey is walking away. Burning, Bud crosses to his gear locker. Picks up his helmet. Finler is suiting out next to him.

FINLER

Hey, you know your hand is blue?

BUD

Shut up and get your gear on.

NEARBY, Monk comes over to pick his helmet up off the worktable. Hippy points to the heavy equipment case that says F.B.S. DEEP SUTT/ MARK IV.

HIPPY

I've been meaning to ask you what this thing is.

(CONTINUED)

58 - CONTINUED: (3)

Monk opens the case and shows them an unfamiliar diving suit, what looks like a space helmet, and a large back pack.

MONK

Fluid breathing system. We just got them. We use it if we need to go really deep.

HIPPIE

How deep?

MONK

Deep.

(shrugs)

It's classified... you know. Anyway, you breathe liquid, so you can't be compressed. Pressure doesn't get you.

Catfish is grappling with the concept.

CATFISH

You're saying you got liquid in your lungs?

MONK

Oxygenated fluorocarbon emulsion.

Monk takes a clear plastic box full of O-rings off the shelf and dumps them out. He opens a valve on the backpack and allows some of the fluid inside it to drain into the box, filling it. Then he takes Beany by the tail off Hippie's shoulder.

HIPPIE

Hey!

MONK

Check this out.

He drops Beany in the box and, before Hippie can protest, closes the lid. Beany is forced under the surface. He struggles for a second, and bubbles come out of his mouth. Then he casually swims around in there, completely submerged... *breathing liquid*. Catfish and the others stare into the box, amazed.

MONK

See? He's diggin' it.

(CONTINUED)

58

CONTINUED (4)

58

Monk takes Beany out and holds him by the tail for a few seconds to drain his lungs. Then hands him back to Hippy. The rat is annoyed, but otherwise alright.

CATFISH

That is no bullshit hands down the goddamnedest thing I ever saw.

CUT TO:

59- EXT. DEEPCORE / DROPOFF

Three sets of moving lights move outward from Deepcore.
 * Cabs One and Three, with Lindsey and Hippy at the controls respectively, and
 * One Night in Flatbed. Lindsey is in the lead. She approaches the cliff-like
 drop-off and starts to descend.

LINDSEY (V.O.)

Bearing 165. Going over the wall. Everybody stay
 tight and in sight.

ONE NIGHT (V.O.)

Starting our descent. Divers, how're you doing?

60 EXT. FLATBED

* Nine divers ride the back of Flatbed like itinerant workers on the way to the
 * fields. Bud and his civilian crew, Catfish, Sonny, Finler and Jammer... sit
 * across from the SEALs. They are in their gear and breathing from umbilicals
 hooked into Flatbed's low-pressure manifold.

BUD

Okay so far.

JAMMER

How deep's the drop-off here?

CATFISH

This here's the bottomless pit, baby. Two and a
 half miles straight down.

COFFEY

Knock off the chatter. Cab One, you getting
 anything?

61 INT./ EXT. CAB ONE

Lindsey consults her array of instruments.

LINDSEY

The magnetometer is twitching. Side-scan is
 showing a big return.

BUD (V.O., filtered)

You should be almost to it, ace.

* She turns her submersible and...
 * The spotlights flare back from the great brass screw of the Montana.

(CONTINUED)

61 (CONTINUED)

61

* It dwarfs Cab One, FILLING FRAME.

*

* LINDSEY
* Uh, yeah... Uh, found it.

*

*

*62 EXT. MONTANA / SUBMERSIBLES

62*

*

Cab One maneuvers along the flank of the enormous sub, while Flatbed and Cab Three move above it. Wilhite takes readings with a hand-held neutron-counter.

COFFEY
Wilhite, anything?

WILHITE
Negative. Nominal.

(CONTINUED)

62 (CONTINUED)

62

The great black hull of the Montana recedes into darkness beyond the puny beams of their lights. It seems bigger than the Titanic and just as eerie in its final resting place. On its side, the sub's top deck becomes a wall along which the tiny submersibles are moving. Ahead in the lights, is a white painted circle.

COFFEY

That's the midship hatch. You see it, Flatbed?

ONE NIGHT

I see it. How d'you want me?

COFFEY

Just hold above it. Alright, A team.

Wilhite, Schoenick and Monk unhook their short whip-umbilicals from the central manifold and roll off the side of Flatbed. They maneuver down toward the sub's hatch. Hippy guides Cab Three in closer to the hatch area.

63 INT. CAB THREE

Hippy turns to Perry back in the lockout chamber, ready to launch Little Geek. The ROV has a handheld neutron-counter gripped in its manipulator arms.

HIPPIY

Sorry about this, little buddy. Better you than me, know what I mean?

Hippy nods and Perry drops Little Geek through the hatch into the water and feeds out a length of tether. Hippy picks up the control box and watches the video screen, guiding the ROV toward the Montana's hatch.

64 EXT. MONTANA HATCH AREA

64

The three SEALs have unlatched the deck cover and revealed the hatch. They open the outer hatch and Monk swims down into the narrow escape trunk. He bangs on the inner hatch with a wrench, listening carefully with his helmet pressed against it.

MONK

It's flooded. Alright, I'm opening her up. Stand by on the ROV.

Straining hard in the confined space, he gets the lower hatch open, then swims back out immediately. He gestures to Hippy, via Little Geek's video, and Hippy flies the ROV into the hatch.

65. EXT./INT. CAB ONE / MISSILE DECK

65

Meanwhile Cab One and Flatbed have proceeded forward along the hull. Beyond Lindsey's front port, the great hatches of the Trident missile tubes roll toward us in procession. Several of the hatch covers have been forced partway open by warping of the hull.

COFFEY (V.O.)

Radiation is nominal here. The warheads themselves must still be intact.

LINDSEY

How many are there?

COFFEY (V.O.)

24 Trident missiles. Eight MIRVs per missile.

LINDSEY

And how powerful are they?

COFFEY

Your MIRV is a tactical nuke, 50 kilotons nominal yield. Say five times Hiroshima.

LINDSEY (V.O.)

Jesus Christ... this is World War Three in a can, we're next to here.

66 INT. CAB THREE

66

TIGHT ON VIDEO SCREEN- LITTLE GEEK'S CAMERA. Passing through a dark corridor, through a hatch, into a large grotto filled with pipes and machinery. The engine room.

MONK(V.O.)

Getting a reading?

HIPPY

It's twitching but it's below the line you said was safe.

*67 EXT. MONTANA MIDSHIPS HATCH

67*

Monk moves into the opening.

MONK

Alright. Let's get in there.

Wilhite and Schoenick follow him through the escape trunk, into the dark corridor beyond.

68 EXT. MONTANA SAIL / BOW SECTION

Out of the darkness ahead emerges the trailing edge of the sail, big as a five story building. Far below her, Flatbed moves along the edge of the ledge which supports the vast sub. Its lights, and Lindsey's strobes, reveal the tremendous damage to the forward section as they pass the sail. The torn and twisted hull looms above Flatbed as it sets down.

Coffey indicates an enormous rent where the bow section is almost torn away from the rest of the hull.

COFFEY

We'll go in through that large breach.

BUD

Let's go guys.

Bud's team leaves Flatbed, swimming forward. The opening is a black mouth in their lights. Coffey moves inside. Bud attaches one end of an orange nylon line to a piece of pipe and moves into the wreck behind him.

BUD

Take it slow, stay on the line, and stay in sight. Watch for hatches that could close on you, or any loose equipment that could fall.

Jammer, Catfish, Finler, and Sonny follow him inside.

69 INT. MONTANA / FORWARD BERTHING SECTION

They find themselves in the forward berthing compartment with its rows of bunks. The room is twisted and disheveled with bedding hanging from the bunks like the lolling tongues of dead dogs. Papers float in gentle eddying currents, letters, pages from paperback novels, photos of girlfriends. Bud pays out the line and follows Coffey forward. As they pass sealed doors, Coffey pounds with a tool, listening. All flooded.

70 INT. ENGINE ROOM

Monk leads his team along a corridor, following Little Geek's tether. Through a hatch into the engine room. Their lights play over flooded machinery.

71 INT. COMPANIONWAY/ CONTROL ROOM AND ATTACK CENTER

From berthing Coffey's team swims up a companionway toward the attack center. He pulls at a buckled watertight door.

COFFEY

It's jammed. Give me a hand.

(CONTINUED)

71. (CONTINUED)

Jammer and Bud squeeze in around Coffey. Together they wrench the door open on its squealing hinges. It gives way suddenly, flying open. The suction pulls SOMETHING THROUGH. It slams Bud's shoulder. He turns. A FACE... RIGHT IN FRONT OF HIM! He jerks back, gasping. Face to face with Barnes, the sonarman. The ensign seems unmarked, merely dismayed at his own mortality, judging from his wide eyes and mouth. Coffey reaches past Bud and pushes the ensign's body out of the way.

COFFEY

Alright, let's keep moving. We knew we were going to see this.

They enter the control room. Their lights play over the high-tech wreckage. Floating debris and bodies of the crew make shifting shadows on the walls as they swirl in the currents. A languid, weightless waltz.

They move through the carnage. Their lights pick out tableaux... the planesman still strapped in his chair, someone jammed into the ceiling pipes hanging down. Dead faces, pale in the lights. Still. We see only glimpses. Coffey locates the captain's body and rolls it over. Removes the missile arming key which hangs on a chain around the dead man's neck. Moves on. All business. Bud turns back to his guys. Checking them. He notices Jammer is breathing so rapidly he's fogging his helmet. Catfish Finler, and Sonny aren't much better. A wave of panic seems imminent.

BUD

How you guys doing?

SONNY

I'm alright, I'm dealing.

CATFISH

Triple time sounded like a lotta money, Bud. It ain't. I'm sorry...

BUD

We're here now. Let's get her done.

We see Bud working, calming them, talking them through it. He's sweating rivers in his helmet, not looking too steady. His projection of calm to the others is his own salvation.

Coffey pauses in the doorway to the communications room.

COFFEY

This part I do alone. Brigman, take your men and continue aft. Split up into two teams of two. Let's get moving... we head back in fourteen minutes.

Bud leads his team into a narrow corridor.

72

72 INT. CORRIDOR / ROOMS

They search the rooms along the corridor with their lights until they come to a vertical hatch, open. A pit of darkness below.

BUD

Okay, Cat, Lew, Sonny. You guys stay on this deck. Hook your line onto mine. Any problems, you tug my line. Two pulls. Jammer, you're with me.

Bud drops down through the hatch to the level below, followed by Jammer, who barely fits through. Catfish hooks his safety line onto Bud's with a carabiner and moves on along the corridor with the others.

73 EXT./ INT. CAB ONE

Lindsey circles the hull, documenting, photographing. Her strobes sear the darkness, giving glimpses of the dead leviathan's form as her tiny submersible circles it like a bee.

74 INT. COMMUNICATIONS CENTER

Working from a plastic card, Coffey spins the dial on the wall safe and opens it. He removes several plastic binders. *the code books*. He also grabs handfuls of classified documents and orders, and a set of missile arming keys, all of which he places in a pouch at his waist.

75 INT. CORRIDOR

Bud leads Jammer through a long, claustrophobically narrow corridor, tapping on the walls and hatches periodically. After five taps, he waits a few moments. There are no answering taps. They open doors and shine their lights into the rooms. There are bodies, but they seem anonymous. Crumpled shapes in khaki or blue. They undog and open a hatch. Beyond it is the largest chamber in the sub, the...

*76 INT. MISSILE COMPARTMENT

* The missile compartment is a large gallery a hundred and twenty feet long and forty feet high, filled with two rows of vertical launch tubes, 24 in all. The chamber is divided into three levels by a floor of open steel grillwork.

JAMMER

Where are we?

BUD

* Missile compartment. Those are the launch tubes.

(CONTINUED)

A B I I I

They sweep their lights around the chamber. Jammer turns... his beam illuminating a body just behind the door. A coveralled seaman turning slowly in the eddying current. *Small albino crabs crawl slowly over the man's face. One scuttles out of his gaping mouth.*

JAMMER

Lord Almighty.

BUD

Hey, you okay?

Bud goes to him. Gets up close to his face. Sees that he's not. That he's hyperventilating. Fighting nausea. Bud grabs him by the shoulders.

BUD

Deep and slow, big guy. Deep and slow. Just breathe easy.

JAMMER

I... they're all dead, Bud. They're all dead. I thought... some of them... you know...

BUD

I'm taking you back out.

JAMMER

No! I'm okay now. I just don't... I can't go any further in.

Bud sees that the big diver's breathing has stabilized. He looks at his watch. Checks Jammer's pressure gauges.

BUD

Okay, Jammer. No problem. You stay right here. I have to go down there to the end... you'll see my lights. We'll stay in voice contact. Just hold onto the rope. Five more minutes. Okay?

JAMMER

Yeah, okay. Okay.

He moves off through the center aisle of the gallery swimming between the huge cylinders. He pays out the lifeline as he goes.

77. INT. COM-ROOM

77

Coffey is working rapidly and efficiently, moving from one rack of electronics gear to the next, setting thermite grenades at vital points. As the thermite ignites, it generates an intense arc-bright light and tremendous heat. The circuit chasses melt. Coffey works calmly in the infernal glare.

*78 INT. MISSILE COMPARTMENT

78*

Bud negotiates his way through a tangle of wreckage near the far end of the missile compartment. He goes down a stairwell to the lower level. A HUNDRED FEET AWAY, Jammer loses sight of Bud's dive-lights. He starts to get nervous. Suddenly his own lights begin to DIM, flickering lower and lower. They become little orange candles, the filament barely glowing. The darkness closes in.

JAMMER

Bud? BUD?! You readin' me? BUD?!

BUD, at the same moment, is fiddling with the connector cables on his helmet lights, which are dimming and flickering. He hears nothing from his helmet transceiver.

JAMMER, smacks the side of his helmet. Shakes the transceiver on his belt. Nothing... just static. Then the static dies. Panic time. He grabs the safety line and pulls twice. Hard. It is snagged on a sharp metal edge ten feet from him. He pulls twice more, harder, hauling on the thing. The line severs. Jammer stares at the frayed end floating toward him. His eyes bug.

He looks all around in the darkness. Can't see Bud. Can't decide what to do. We can see hysteria revving up inside him like a flywheel.

Then he becomes aware of a faint radiance flickering over the walls. It is a cold and ethereal light, unlike the warm-white of their dive lights.

It grows brighter. He turns slowly toward it.

The glow is moving beneath the steel-grille of the deck, sending shafts of cold light flickering upward hypnotically, coming toward him.

JAMMER

Bud? Is that you?

C.U. JAMMER, shielding his eyes, staring into the radiant source.

Guess what, Jammer? It's not Bud.

In the brightest center of the glow, SOMETHING is moving, a figure casting a strange inhuman shadow across the walls. Jammer blinks against the glare, his face registering total, outright astonishment melting into terror.

The glare pulses subtly, hypnotically. The shifting shadow falls across Jammer. He finally snaps out of his fixity...

Screaming and gulping air he spins away and starts clawing hand over hand through the treacherous wreckage.

(CONTINUED)

78 (CONTINUED)

His harness catches on a twisted pipe.
 He struggles, totally out of control...the big man reduced to blind panic.
 Jammer heaves forward with all his adrenalized strength.
 He tears free of the entangling debris.
 Launches like a torpedo... slamming his backpack full force into the top sill of the hatchway. His tri-mix regulator takes the full brunt of the impact.

ON BUD, swimming furiously back toward Jammer's position. The strange radiance is gone. His dive lights flare back to full brightness.

BUD
 Jammer? Answer me, buddy. JAMMER!?

He reaches Jammer only to find him thrashing violently in place. A seizure. Bud grapples with him.

BUD
 Hang on, big guy. Hang on!

* Catfish, Sonny, and Finler arrive from the corridor a moment later. They leap into the fray. *

BUD
 He's convulsing!

CATFISH
 It's his mixture! Too much oxygen!

Then they're all yelling at once, grappling with the big man, struggling with the valves on his breathing gear.

* FINLER
Crank it down, man!
 We're gonna lose him....

* BUD
SHIT, it's stuck...
goddamn it!

* SONNY
 You got it?! You got it?

* BUD
 Yeah, yeah... yeah.
 It's turning.

Jammer's convulsion ends. He goes limp.

BUD
 We gotta get him out of here. Come on!
 (to Jammer)
 Hang on, buddy.

(CONTINUED)

78 (CONTINUED)

78

They drag Jammer's slack form into the corridor, hauling their way rapidly back along the lifeline.

79 INT. / EXT. CAB ONE AND MONTANA SAIL

79

Lindsey is approaching the monolith of the sail, maneuvering to clear the horizontal diving plane. Then her lights go dim and her thrusters lose power.

Suddenly a bright corona breaks around the bulk of the sail and SOMETHING appears right in front of her, a glowing object moving like a bat out of hell right at her! It is slightly smaller than her submersible and we get only a glimpse. What we think we see in the diffuse glow is a translucent ovoid, open at the front with a spinning vortex of light inside... like some hallucinatory jet engine. And it's hauling ass.

Lindsey jinks left. The object jogs right. She fights the controls as her sub slews around, slamming broadside into the sail. K-BAM! Her power comes back up. Righting Cab One, she spins to look through the aft viewport in time to see the object racing away in a broad arc. It pulls a high-G turn and dives straight down.

We see the object zip across behind Flatbed. One Night can't see it. The thing spirals down into the darkness like a hit-and-run drunk, diving along the wall into the abyss until it is lost to view.

HOLD ON Lindsey excited, amazed... dazed. Her hands are shaking. Suddenly Bud's voice blares out over the open frequency.

BUD (V.O.)

CAB ONE! CAB ONE! Meet me at Flatbed! This is a diver emergency!! Do you copy? Lindsey?!

She has a hard time focusing on what he's saying. Finally...

LINDSEY

Copy you, Bud. On my way.

CUT TO:

80 INT. DEEPCORE INFIRMARY - AN HOUR LATER

80

Jammer is unconscious on a folding cot set up in the tiny cubicle of the infirmary. Monk, who was cross-trained as a medic as well as a demolitions man, has hung an IV of something. Bud and the Seal are in the room, the others hovering outside.

BUD

Whattya think?

(CONTINUED)

80- (CONTINUED)

MONK

I'm a medic, which is mostly about patching holes. This type of thing... there's not much I can do. The coma could last hours or days.

* Bud, torn up by guilt, gazes at the big man lying pathetically on the cot. *

CUT TO:

81

81 INT. CONTROL MODULE

The SEALs, minus Monk, are all gathered inside, debriefing with DeMarco via closed-circuit video.

A81

DEMARCO (video)

Did any of you see it?

A81

81

COFFEY

Negative. But there was definitely a Russian bogey. The Brigman woman saw it.

81

A81

DEMARCO

CINCLANTFLT's gonna go apeshit. Two Russian attack subs, a Tango and a Victor, have been tracked within fifty miles of here... and now we don't know where the hell they are. Okay, I don't have any choice, I'm confirming you to go to Phase Two.

A81

81

Wilhite and Schoenick glance uneasily at each other. Coffey is silent. He is vibrating with tension... his fists clenched to prevent the shaking. He is wrestling with the moment, knowing it is, in a way, a point of no return.

81

A81

DEMARCO

Is there a problem?

A81

81

COFFEY

Yes...I mean no. Negative, sir.

81

Coffey takes a deep breath. Lets it out.
Phase Two is clearly a big deal.

CUT TO:

82

82 INT. MAINTENANCE ROOM B/ DARKROOM

The maintenance room doubles as a camera workstation. An adjoining head serves as darkroom. Lindsey is glumly re-assembling Cab One's camera housings.

82

(CONTINUED)

BUD

Did you get anything on the cameras. Video or anything?

LINDSEY

No. Look, forget it. I don't want to talk about it.

BUD

Fine. Be that way.

LINDSEY

I don't know what I saw. Okay? Coffey wants to call it a Russian submersible, fine. It's a Russian submersible. No problem.

BUD

But you think it's something else. What? One of ours?

LINDSEY

No.

BUD

Whose then? Lindsey? Talk to me...

Lindsey is wrestling with a feeling which is somehow also certain knowledge.

LINDSEY

Jammer saw something in there, something that scared the hell out of him.

BUD

His mixture got screwed up. He panicked and pranged his regulator.

LINDSEY

But what did he see that made him panic?

BUD

What do you think he saw?

LINDSEY

I don't know. I DON'T KNOW!

Hippy comes pounding up, sticks his head in, gesturing animatedly.

(CONTINUED)

82 (CONTINUED)

HIPPIY

Hey, you guys... hurry up, check this out! They're announcing it.

They follow him into the corridor, trotting down to the mess hall.

83 INT. MESS HALL

General melee as they rush in, everybody focused on the TV.

CATFISH

Quiet! Quiet!

HIPPIY

Turn it up, bozo.

83

A83

A83

...the Kremlin continues to deny Russian involvement in the sinking of the Trident sub USS Montana. The Navy has not released the names of the 156 crewmembers, who are all presumed dead at this time., Civilian employees of a Benthic Petroleum offshore drilling rig--

83

HIPPIY

Hey that's us!

CATFISH

SSSSHHH

83

A83

A83

ANCHORMAN

--are apparently participating in the recovery operation but we have little information about their involvement. On the scene now is--

83

FINLER

BOOOOH! We want names!

83

SONNY

Hey, hey! There's the Explorer.

B83

A LONG LENS VIDEO SHOT of the Benthic Explorer and the other vessels in a stormy sea CUTS TO a shot of BILL TYLER, the on-scene reporter, in rain gear, clutching his microphone. He is on the deck of a Navy support ship, being used as a staging area for the press, well away from the center of the operation.

B83

C83

TYLER

--there is a tremendous amount of activity. With Cuba only 80 miles away, the massive buildup of US ships and aircraft in the area has drawn official protest from Havana and Moscow and has led to a redirection of Soviet warships into the Caribbean theater.

C83

A83

ANCHORMAN

How would you describe the mood there?

A83

C83

TYLER

The mood is one of suspicion, even confrontation. A number of Russian and Cuban trawlers, undoubtedly surveillance vessels, have been circling within a few miles throughout the day, and Soviet aircraft have repeatedly been warned away from the area...

C83

83

HIPPY

This sucks.

83

84

INT. CORRIDOR / SUB

Bud, Lindsey and Hippy walking along the corridor, Hippy in a black mood of incipient paranoia.

84

BUD

What's the matter with you?

HIPPY

Now we're right in the middle of this big time international incident. Like the Cuban Missile Crisis or something.

LINDSEY

Figured that out for yourself, did you?

HIPPY

We got Russian subs creeping around. Shit! Something goes wrong they could say anything happened down here, man. Give our folks medals, know what I mean?

BUD

Hippy, just relax. You're making the women nervous.

LINDSEY

Cute, Virgil.

HIPPY

No, I mean it. Those SEALs aren't telling us diddly. Something's going on.

BUD

Hippy, you think everything's a conspiracy.

(CONTINUED)

84 (CONTINUED)

HIPPY
Everything is.

One Night is pounding down the corridor from the sub bay.

ONE NIGHT
Hurry up! Coffey's splitting with Flatbed! He got
me to show him the controls, then his guys suited
up and they're rolling.

Bud breaks into a run, passing her.

BUD
Goddamn it! D'you tell him we need it right now?

ONE NIGHT
I told him we had to get the umbilical unhooked
ASAP.

85 INT. SUB BAY

Bud clears the door in time to see an empty moonpool, roiling with turbulence.
He runs to the edge and looks down. Flatbed is a vague shape moving off.

BUD
Unbelievable.

CUT TO:

86 EXT. EXPLORER BRIDGE - DAY

The sky is charcoal, the sea is a mountain range of gray shapes. Waves
thunder over the foredeck, whipped by eighty-knot winds. Men in life jackets
scurry like insects. Off the port bow, the ASW destroyer OWENSBY vanishes
and reappears among waves sixty feet tall. McBride screams orders that can't
be heard to the crewmen on deck. He staggers back along the bridge railing.

87 INT / EXT. BENTHIC EXPLORER BRIDGE - DAY

McBride steps into the quiet of the control room. He turns on De Marco.

MCBRIDE
We're trying to get unhooked and get out of here...
and your boys go sightseeing!

DEMARCO
They'll be back in two hours.

(CONTINUED)

87 - (CONTINUED)

MCBRIDE

Two hours?! We're gonna be getting the shit
kicked out of us by our pal Fred in two hours!

De Marco's expression is infuriatingly calm... icy. McBride looks at his watch
and swears under his breath.

CUT TO:

88 EXT. USS MONTANA WRECK SITE

88

For a second time the black hull of the ballistic missile sub is illuminated by
divers' lights. Tiny figures, the divers move like moths around a distant
streetlight. Wilhite, Monk and Schoenick are clustered around an open
missile hatch. Using a large lift bag, they are removing the frangible
fiberglass cover, or 'diaphragm'. Coffey pilots Flatbed with increasing
deftness, deploying the big arm to aid in the work.
DOWN ANGLE as the diaphragm lifts away... revealing the blunt nose of the
TRIDENT C-4 MISSILE. Like looking down the barrel of a gun at the bullet
aimed right at you.

A B O 1 1 1

CUT TO:

89 INT. DEEPCORE MESS HALL

89

A89 TIGHT ON VIDEO SCREEN: A HELICOPTER SHOT of a warship burning,
rolling ponderously as it sinks in stormy seas.

A89

B89

NEWS ANCHOR (V.O.)

B89

Little is known at this hour about the events
leading up to the collision. The US Navy guided
missile cruiser Appleton apparently struck the
Soviet 'Udaloy' class destroyer in low visibility
conditions...

C89 VARIOUS CUTS of men in life jackets among huge waves.. Rescue
helicopters hovering. Shaky camera work. Wind blasting.
89 INTERCUT WITH REACTIONS of the rig crew watching.

C89

89

B89

NEWS ANCHOR (V.O.)

B89

In violent seas little hope remains for over a
hundred Russian crewmen still missing after the
sinking an hour ago.

D89 SHOT OF AMERICAN CRUISER, burning, listing to one side in heavy seas.
Replaced by SHOT OF NETWORK ANCHORMAN.

D89

B89

NEWS ANCHOR

B89

Soviet military spokesmen have claimed that the
collision constituted an unprovoked attack. This
was denied--

89 It continues. Bud looks at Lindsey. She turns to him, expression grim. 89

LINDSEY
Bud, this is big time.

CUT TO:

90 EXT. MONTANA WRECKSITE 90

The divers are working head-first in the missile's launch tube. Monk reads from a plasticized card, directing the other two step by step. The arcane litany is punctuated by the hissing rasp of their breathing.

* WILHITE (filtered) *
* Separation sequencer disconnected. Next? *

* MONK (filtered) 1! *
* Remove explosive bolts one through six in *
* counterclockwise sequence. *

* SCHOENICK (filtered) *
* Check, removing bolt one. *

91 INT. DEEPCORE 91

ON THE RIG CREW, watching. Bathed in the light of the video screen.

A91 NEWSCASTER (V.O.) A91
... just learned that Soviet negotiators have
walked out of the strategic arms limitation
summit in protest over the incident this morning.

91 Bud switches the channel. 91

B91 ANOTHER NEWSCASTER B91
...US and NATO military forces have been put on
full alert worldwide this morning in the wake of...

91 BUD 91
It's on every channel.

Bud switches again. Reception is getting worse as the storm affects the satellite down-link to Explorer. THE SCREEN shows a reporter on a city street, stopping people at random. Their answers are edited together.

C91 YOUNG WOMAN C91
You just feel so helpless. You can see it coming,
but what can you do? What can anyone do?

CONSTRUCTION WORKER
Hey, they don't want a war any more than we do.
You think about it, you say... hey, they love their
kids too. So why are we doing this?

(CONTINUED)

C91 (CONTINUED)

He is replaced by a self-righteous, middle-aged woman.

WOMAN

If the Russians sank that submarine, they deserve what they got and a lot more, if you ask me, and you did. I think we've been pussyfooting around with them long enough.

92 EXT. USS MONTANA

92

It is now clear what the SEALs are doing. Using large lift bags and Flatbed's big arm, they have pulled one of the Trident C-4 missiles partway out of its launch tube, and have partially disassembled the nose-shroud, exposing several of the MIRV warheads within.

Moving *very carefully*, Wilhite and Schoenick ease one of the individual MIRVs out of its bracket. Hanging under a lift-bag in a jerry-rigged harness, the three-foot long warhead is moved gently by the divers to the back of Flatbed.

93 INT. DEEPCORE / VIDEO SCREEN

93

Another man in the street interview, *disturbed by static.*

A93

MAN

Scared? I'm scared *less.* But if it happens it happens, nothing I can do about it. Right? So why think about it?

A93

CUT TO:

94 INT. SUB-BAY

94

Flatbed surfaces in boiling foam. The rig crew are all waiting. Like a crack pit-crew Bud's people leap onto Flatbed while its back is still awash and start to work on the Navy divers, unsealing their helmets and uncoupling their umbilicals. Hippie and Bud start to untie a cylindrical object wrapped in one of the SEAL's gear bags. Coffey emerges from the hatch.

COFFEY

Don't touch that. Just step away. Now!

HIPPY

Excusez moi.

BUD

Coffey, we're a little pressed for time.

(CONTINUED)

94 (CONTINUED)

COFFEY

Monk, Schoenick... secure the package.

The two SEALs unleash the object in the black bag. Bud and Lindsey exchange a glance. He glares at Coffey as they pass each other. One Night nimbly climbs the hatch-tower and drops in. Bud swings the heavy hatch up, balancing it, and grins down at One Night.

BUD

This ain't no drill, slick. Make me proud.

ONE NIGHT

Piece a cake, baby.

He swings the hatch closed with a CLANG.

CUT TO

95 EXT. DEEPCORE

95

The big A-frame, massive as a railroad bridge, to which the umbilical from the Explorer is attached. Flatbed rises INTO FRAME, arcing around the coupling mechanism F.G. One Night deploys the big hydraulic arm. It unfolds from Flatbed like a huge steel spider leg, its claw-like 'gripper' opening.

96 INT./ EXT. BENTHIC EXPLORER BRIDGE - DAY

96

An ALARM sounds stridently on the dynamic-positioning console.

BENDIX

We're losing number two thruster. Bearing's going.

97 INT. THRUSTER ROOM TWO

97

Deep in one of the catamaran hulls, the positioning-thruster motor is SCREAMING like a steel banshee above its usual roar. It EXPLODES with smoke and shrapnel. A roaring fire erupts. Crewmen run shouting in the smoke.

*98 INT. EXPLORER BRIDGE

98*

Now a KLAXON is going off as the ship begins to slew in the high winds.

BENDIX

It's not holding. We're swinging out of position!

99. EXT. EXPLORER'S DECK/ LAUNCH WELL 99

* As the ship slews, the umbilical is drawn off vertical. It goes tight as a bowstring. Pulled to the edge of the launch well, it rips down the side with a godawful screech, tearing loose ladders and floats. *

100 EXT. DEEPCORE / A-FRAME 100

Flatbed's manipulator has gripped the de-coupling mechanism when the cable suddenly pulls taut. The sub is jerked sideways, its grip dislodged. We see One Night get tossed around inside.

101 INT. DEEPCORE 101

Lindsey is in the corridor with a cup of tea when the whole rig BOOMS LIKE A GONG and lurches sideways. She's wearing her tea when Bud tears through a doorway and goes pounding past her. The intercom blares...

HIPPY (intercom)

Bud to control! Emergency! Bud to Control!

Bud claws his way up the ladder to level two. The rig BOOMS and shudders as...

102 EXT. DEEPCORE 102

The rig begins to move. The enormous ~~side~~ breaks loose. Start to slide, plowing furrows in the bottom. One Night jinks the controls, pivoting her submersible as the A-frame looms toward her.

103 INT. DEEPCORE / CONTROL MODULE 103

Bud runs in, past Hippy, and grabs the mike.

BUD

Topside, topside... pay out some slack, we're getting dragged!

104 EXT. EXPLORER DECK 104

The winch man staggers along the railing, blasted by 80-knot winds. He sprints for the base of the enormous crane which supports the umbilical winch. A wave blasts him into a bulkhead. He half-crawls to the ladder going up to the winch-house. As he climbs, the winch's heave-compensator slides up and down, FILLING FRAME behind him. It is bottoming-out with a sound like a piledriver, overloaded by the strain on the cable. It chooses that moment to fail. GRINDING CRASH OF METAL.

105 INT. / EXT. DEEPCORE CONTROL MODULE 105

Lindsey has joined Bud, looking out the front viewport.

LINDSEY

We're heading right for the drop-off!

106 EXT. EXPLORER DECK 106

The deck is ripped upward as the entire 40-ton crane is pulled over by the weight of Deepcore. It topples into the launch well with a roar of tortured steel that rivals the storm. An EXPLOSION OF WATER.

A106 UNDERWATER, the crane tumbles between the twin hulls. Trailing a vortex of foam and metal debris, it roars down on us, FILLING FRAME WITH BLACKNESS. A106

107 INT. EXPLORER BRIDGE 107

McBride stares in shock at the churning cauldron of the launch well. Grabs the underwater telephone.

~~MCBRIDE~~

~~Bud! We've lost the crane!~~

~~BUD (V.O.)~~

~~What? Say again.~~

~~MCBRIDE~~

~~THE CRANE! WE'VE LOST THE CRANE! IT'S ON ITS WAY TO YOU!!~~

108 INT. DEEPCORE CONTROL MODULE 108

Everyone is stunned by what is happening. Lindsey fires up the sonar.

LINDSEY

Got it! It's dropping straight to us.

She puts the signal over the speakers and the room fills with eerie PINGING. Bud shouts over the intercom.

BUD

Rig for impact! Seal all exterior hatches. Move it!
Let's go!

A108 VARIOUS ANGLES, QUICK CUTS, as everyone runs to comply: A108
The rig crew pounding down the narrow corridors. Diving through the low hatchways. Hatches are closed and the wheels spun down. Hippy puts Beany into a ZIP-LOK BAG and seals it.

A B I I I

50

109

109 EXT. DEEPCORE

The umbilical drops down in slack loops out of the blackness above, draping itself over the habitat in large coils. One Night pilots her submersible feverishly among the falling loops. She banks and twists. A length of the heavy umbilical slams onto her deck, tipping the sub. She manages to get out from under it and keep going.

110 INT. CONTROL MODULE

110

Through the front viewport they can see the coils of cable piling up in front of the rig. The hull booms with impacts as the massive stuff hits. Everyone holds their breath as the sonar return-pings get closer... and closer. And closer... An ENORMOUS SHAPE plunges into the floodlights in front of the rig. K-WHAM!! The 40-ton crane hits like a flatiron thirty feet in front of them. A clean miss.

Much WHOOPING AND CHEERING. Then... The crane topples slowly over the bank. It rolls down the slope of the drop-off, gathering speed. Then tumbles over the cliff into the abyssal canyon. The coiled umbilical starts to pay out after it like rope after a harpoon. *And they're still attached.*

LINDSEY

Oh shit.

An agonizing few seconds. Then... the cable pulls taut. K-BOOM!! The rig is slammed by the shock. Everyone is knocked off his feet, into walls and equipment.

111 EXT. DEEPCORE

111

The rig begins to slide. It tilts over the embankment and grinds down the slope of the drop-off in a cloud of silt. The cable pulling it inexorably toward the cliff. The framework twists as it slams into rocks. SCREECHING AND GROANING of tortured steel.

112 INT. DEEPCORE / CORRIDOR / LADDERWELL/ MAIN CORRIDOR

112

All hell has broken loose. SIRENS SCREAMING, a KLAXON HOOTING moronically. Bud sprints from Control, bouncing off the corridor walls as the rig lurches and tilts. The lights go out. Emergency lights come on. He trips and falls, scrambles up, running on.

IN THE LADDERWELL of trimodule C, Lindsey runs toward the machine rooms. K-BOOM! A searing bright EXPLOSION in the electrical room. Flames roar through the doorway. She dashes to a seawater hose hanging nearby and starts to unroll it. She sees Coffey and Schoenick in maintenance, lashing down the mystery package.

(CONTINUED)

112 (CONTINUED)

112

LINDSEY

Hey! Get on this hose, you turkeys!

113 INT. TRIMODULE C / COMPRESSOR ROOM

113

Monk is working in a spray of seawater, turning valves to stop the flow from ruptured pipes. Behind him, a wall of flame blossoms through the door from the electrical room, driving him back with the heat. A reservoir-tank breaks loose from one of the compressor assemblies. It rolls at him, crushing his legs against machinery. The fire roars into the room.

114 INT. SUB BAY

114

Hippy runs in. The place is going nuts. Water floods from the moonpool as the rig tilts. Wilhite is dancing across the deck, leaping over compressed-gas cylinders which are rolling around loose. Cab One jumps clear of its cradle and slides SCREECHING across the deck.

Wilhite, running before the 12-ton juggernaut, has no place to go. The SEAL dives into the churning moonpool. Cab One slams into the end wall, then spins and rolls toward Hippy.

He starts to run. Drops something. Looks back.

Beany, in his zip-lok bag, is lying in the path of the sliding submersible. Hippy runs back. Scoops up the baggie.

Cab One FILLS FRAME behind him. He makes it through the door an instant before the thing hits behind him, buckling the steel doorframe.

Wilhite is clawing up the sheer skirting of the moonpool. He gets his fingers over the top. Pulls himself up...

A steel helium tank slams against his fingers, crushing them, and he falls back. More tanks bounce over the lip of the pool, hammering Wilhite down into the foaming water.

He doesn't surface.

115 EXT. DEEPCORE

115

The rig is sliding to the edge of the cliff. Beyond it... the bottomless pit of the Cayman Trough. It slams, crushing and twisting, into a rock outcropping and stops, hanging over the precipice.

*116 INT. TRIMODULE A / QUARTERS

116*

Perry is trapped as the trimodule floods with stunning swiftness. He makes it through an emergency hatch between floors but can't get it closed. The intruding tide blasts it open. He scrambles upward to the next hatch. Spins the wheel. No time. He is slammed up against the ceiling by the force of the water.

*A116 OMITTED

A116

B116 INT. DRILL ROOM

B116

* Lew Finler, Tommy Ray Dietz, and Lupton McWhirter fight their way toward the door as the drill room floods rapidly. Ahead, the big automated watertight door is closing like a motorized bank-vault. They reach it just as it is closing, but can't prevail against the strength of the motors. FROM THE FAR SIDE, we can see them screaming soundlessly at the tiny pressure window in the door. We can hear the dull THUNK of their pounding.

117 INT. TRIMODULE C / LADDERWELL AND COMPRESSOR ROOM

117

Coffey and Schoenick, in emergency breathing masks, are fighting the fire with a seawater hose and fire extinguishers. Smoke and steam choke the dark chambers. Nearby, Lindsey grabs Hippy's arm as he is running past and drags him into the blazing compressor room. Handing him her seawater hose. Wide-eyed, he starts blasting everything in sight with water.

LINDSEY

No! Hold it on me!

She rushes into the teeth of the fire as Hippy blasts her with a spray of water, following her into the intense heat. She grabs Monk, who is semiconscious, and drags him out of the blazing room. Hippy dancing back with the hose, tripping, blasting her in the face. But it works. They get Monk clear.

118 INT. DRILL ROOM CORRIDOR

118

Bud comes pounding down the flooding corridor in time to see the water in the drill room swirl above the pressure window, obscuring the faces of the trapped men. He claws futilely at the door. The motors and the fail-safe latching mechanism are on the opposite side. Through the pressure window he watches helplessly as they drown. We don't see what he sees, but we know what he sees. Suddenly the bulkhead next to him gives way and a freezing torrent thunders in. Bud is blown off his feet and hurled along the corridor.

He scrambles up somehow, splashing waist deep toward the opposite end of the corridor where another of the hydraulic doors is closing inexorably. He's not going to make it. He reaches it a moment too late to squeeze through. Grabs the edge of the door and desperately tries to stop it from closing with the strength of his arms. It doesn't work. The steel door closes on the fingers of his left hand, pinning them in the doorframe.

But something amazing happens.

His wedding ring lodges between door and frame, preventing his fingers from being crushed and the door from sealing home and locking.

It resists the tons of pressure, denting but not collapsing.

The freezing sea pours in until only his head is clear.

(CONTINUED)

118 (CONTINUED)

118

BUD
Heevv!! HEEHEEYYY!!!

ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DOOR, Catfish and Sonny come pounding up. They see his face at the tiny window and his hand jammed in the door. Sonny wedges a crowbar in the narrow opening and starts to pry. Catfish whips open his jackknife and slashes the hydraulic hoses on the door actuator. He is sprayed with red hydraulic fluid, machine blood.

A B O
(CONTINUED)

118 (CONTINUED)

118

- * Together they force the door open. Bud is blown through in a torrent of water.
- * Sonny is thrown back into some pipes. Breaks his arm.
- * Together they somehow heave the door shut manually, cutting off the flood.
- * Catfish hammers the fail-safe hatch home with the crowbar.

Bud lies gasping and shivering... staring at the tiny band of metal that saved him.

DISSOLVE TO:

*A118 EXT. DEEPCORE / ONE HOUR LATER

A118*

LOOKING DOWN THE WALL of the canyon as Big Geek moves beneath us, tilting up to show Deepcore perched at the very edge of the abyss. The rig is twisted and dented, covered with loops of umbilical trimodule, a mass of wreckage.

The ROV passes across in front of the control module. Through the front port, two figures can be seen in the light of a single emergency lamp.

SONNY (V.O. static)

Mayday, mayday. This is Deepcore Two calling Benthic Explorer. Do you read, over?

*B118 INT. CONTROL MODULE

B118*

Sonny flips some switches on the UQC acoustic transceiver. Tries again.

SONNY

Benthic Explorer, Benthic Explorer. Do you read, over? This is Deepcore--

BUD

Forget it, Sonny. They're gone.

*119 INT. TRIMODULE C

119*

Bud walks down the corridor from control, slowly... as if carrying a great weight. The air is still thick with smoke. The power off... everything lit by emergency lights.

Makeshift quarters have been set up in the mess hall, with blankets laid out on the tables, and with folding cots in the storage room across the hall. Jammer is still unconscious. Coffey and Schoenick bring Monk in on a stretcher, and set him up on a table. He is conscious but dazed with painkillers, his leg splinted.

BUD

Did you find Wilhite?

(CONTINUED)

119 (CONTINUED)

119

COFFEY

No.

He and Bud lock eyes. Bud bites back on his recriminations, but his gaze blames Coffey. He turns away.

Brigman

(Bud turns)

I was under orders. I had no choice.

Coffey's manner is subdued, contrasts a marked contrast to his previous brusque arrogance. He's wrestling with his own loss, a severe blow to the tight brotherhood of a SEAL unit. Bud's anger is not dispelled. But he can't address it now. He moves on.

- * PAST THE INFIRMARY, where Sonny Dawson is rigging a sling over his
- * own broken arm. He cries out with pain, cursing at himself.
- * LOOKING DOWN THE CENTRAL WELL as Bud crosses. Down through the grille decking we can see the bottom level of the module is flooded. Catfish is down there welding, sending shivering reflections through the chamber.

*120 INT. MACHINERY ROOM

120*

Lindsey is working, up to her knees in water. She is covered with grease, tools scattered around. Bud puts his hand on her shoulder. She looks up, blows some hair out of her eyes.

(CONTINUED)

120 (CONTINUED)

120

BUD

What's the scoop, ace?

LINDSEY

I can get power to this module and sub-bay if I reroute these busses. I've gotta get past the mains, which are a total meltdown.

Rather than trigger anger and invective, the disaster seems to have affected her in a different way. She's accepted the situation, now that it's done, and is immersing herself in technical tasks, which are for her therapeutic.

BUD

Need some help?

A B O 1 1 1

LINDSEY

Thanks. No, I can handle it. Bud... there won't be enough to run the heaters. In a couple of hours this place is going to be cold as a meat locker.

BUD

What about O₂?

LINDSEY

Brace yourself. We've got about 12 hours worth if we close off sections we're not using.

A B O 1 1 1

BUD

The storm's gonna last longer than 12 hours.

LINDSEY

I can maybe extend that. There're some storage tanks outboard on the wrecked module. I'll have to go outside to tie onto them.

She goes back to her task, working efficiently with a socket wrench.

BUD

Hey, Lins...

(she looks up)

I'm glad you're here.

LINDSEY

Yeah? Well I'm not.

121 OMITTED

121

*122 OMITTED

122*

123 INT. SUB BAY / R.O.V. STATION

123

The sub bay is still a mess. Dark. A few battery-operated lights. Flatbed is back, floating in the moonpool.

One Night and Hippy are in deep concentration, piloting the two ROVs in a damage survey of the rig. Bud comes up behind them, checks her screen first. BIG GEEK'S MONITOR shows a view of the aft section of the rig. The drilling derrick has collapsed across Cab Three, totalling it. A girder is jammed through its acrylic front dome.

ONE NIGHT

Right through the brainpan. Deader'n dogshit, boss.

BUD

(to Hippy)

Where're you?

HIPPI

Quarters. Level two.

*A123 INT. TRIMODULE A / QUARTERS

A123*

* Little Geek rises up through the open central hatch, pivoting in a circle to scan the flooded interior.

*
*

*B123 INT. SUB BAY / R.O.V. STATION

B123*

*C123 TIGHT ON VIDEO SCREEN, LITTLE GEEK'S POV. The interior of the structure is a shambles. The lights of the little robot fall upon a figure... Perry. Lying on the deck, almost looking like he's asleep.

C123*

HIPPI

That's Perry.

BUD

(lets his breath out slowly)

That's it then. Finler, McWhirter, Dietz, and Perry. Jesus.

HIPPI

(gestures at the screen)

Do we leave him there?

BUD

Yeah, for now. Our first priority's to get something to breathe.

CUT TO:

124 EXT. DEEPCORE

124

* Catfish and Lindsey, in suits and helmets, drop down from the glare of the
 * moonpool onto the dark sea floor under the rig. Walking, they pull their
 * umbilicals behind them and head out through the twisted wreckage. Little
 * Geek follows along like a dog at their heels. They settle beside a valve
 * assembly at the base of the wrecked module.

LINDSEY

* Cat, you tie onto this manifold. There's some
 * tanks on the other side; I'm gonna go check them
 * out.

CATFISH

Watch yourself

* He begins to attach one end of a coiled-up high-pressure hose to a manifold.
 * She takes the other end of the hose and moves off into darkness. Little Geek
 * goes with her faithfully.

125 INT. SUB BAY

125

* Cab One is hanging from the overhead crane while One Night works to repair
 * it. Bud is nearby, tending hose for the divers and handing her tools. Talking
 * while they work. Hippy is across the moonpool running Little Geek.

ONE NIGHT

Gimme a three-eighths socket on a long
 extension.

(he hands it to her)

So there you were—

BUD

There we were, side by side, on the same ship, for
 two months. I'm tool-pusher and we're testing
 this automated derrick of hers. So, we get back on
 the beach and... we're living together.

ONE NIGHT

Doesn't mean you had to marry her.

BUD

We were due to go back out on the same ship. Six
 months of tests. If you were married you got a
 stateroom. Otherwise it was bunks.

ONE NIGHT

Okay, good reason. Then what?

BUD

It was alright for a while, you know. But then she

(more)

125 (CONTINUED)

125

BUD (continued)
got promoted to project engineer on this thing,
couple years ago.

ONE NIGHT

* She went front-office on you. Tighten that for me,
* right there. That's it.

BUD

Well, you know Lindsey, too damn aggressive--
Son of a-- !!

He's jammed his fingers with a wrench torquing down 1 bolt. Whips his hand
out.

BUD

She didn't leave me... she just left me behind.

She puts her arm around his shoulders, somehow managing to be fraternal,
maternal and suggestive all at the same time.

ONE NIGHT

Bud, let me tell you something. She ain't half as
smart as she thinks she is.

* She smiles and pretends to kink Lindsey's air-hose.
* ACROSS THE CHAMBER, Hippy scowls as Little Geek's screen starts to go
* haywire with interference.

HIPPY

* Hey, Lindsey. You reading me? Over.
*

*126 OMITTED

126*

127 EXT. DEEPCORE / TRIMODULE A

127

* Catfish is working on one side of the wrecked module while Lindsey is on the
other, out of sight. She is standing on the bottom at the base of the wreckage,
checking valves on a rack of oxygen bottles amongst the wreckage. Right at the
edge of the canyon wall. Behind her is a sheer drop to nothingness.

(CONTINUED)

127 (CONTINUED)

127

LINDSEY

Yeah, Hippy, I read you. What's the matter?

The reply is GARBLED by a wash of static.

Then, for no apparent reason, Lindsey's helmet lights begin to dim out.

* Little Geek's lights fade. His motors whine to a stop. *

* ON CATFISH, as his lights drop to candle-glows. *

*A127 INT. SUB BAY

A127*

The emergency lights are dimming, like a brownout. Bud grabs the diver intercom mike.

~~_____~~
~~_____~~
~~_____~~ BUD A B O 1 1 1
~~_____~~
~~_____~~
~~_____~~

Lins, how're you doing? Lindsey?

128 EXT TRIMODULE A

128

ON LINDSEY, as she fiddles with her lights and transceiver pack.

~~_____~~
~~_____~~
~~_____~~ LINDSEY A B O 1 1 1
~~_____~~
~~_____~~
~~_____~~

Catfish... I got a problem here. You there?
Catfish?*Behind her, SOMETHING rises from the depths.*

It is the little vehicle she almost collided with at the Montana wreck.

It comes right up behind her. She doesn't know it's there. It hovers sideways like a hummingbird, as if curious, trying to get a better look. She becomes aware of the pulsing glow on the ground around her. She turns slowly. We see her react as the glowing, pulsing apparition is reflected in her faceplate. A more powerful glow washes up onto her from below. Her eyes go down. She gasps, absolutely stunned...

Above the edge of the wall, AN ENORMOUS SHAPE RISES SILENTLY OUT OF THE DEPTHS. Over sixty feet across. It is the object which passed under the fishing boat, now seen clearly.

It looks like a blown glass manta ray, its transparent outer hull housing interior structures of great delicacy and complexity, pulsing with a blue-violet glow.

Lindsey stands before it, unable to move. Absolutely rapt.

Captivated by its ethereal beauty.

It begins to turn, majestically, one rounded wing passing only a few feet above her. She reaches up. Touches it as it passes over her.

Lindsey is without fear, completely mesmerized.

The thing completes its turn and dives gracefully down along the wall.

She is gently lifted by a backwash of turbulent water.

About that time Lindsey remembers she has a still camera, a little Nikonos.

(CONTINUED)

128

(CONTINUED)

128

She fumbles to set focus and exposure with her bulky gloves as the beautiful machine glides into the depths. Gets all set for a shot and... WOOOSH! The little 'scoutship' whizzes past her from behind, startling her. She completely misses the shot of the 'manta ship'. She pivots, trying to get a shot of the little one as it zig-zags down along the wall, fast as a meteor. CLICK She gets a shot a second before it disappears.

From around the flank of the rig module, Catfish appears. Their com-sets come back to life, along with their lights.

(CONTINUED)

128 (CONTINUED)

128

LINDSEY

You better not say you missed that.

CATFISH

Missed what?

CUT TO:

129 INT. DEEPCORE / MESS HALL

129

TIGHT ON SLIDE STRIP, Lindsey's fingertip in for scale. The shot is black with a little squiggle of light in the center. Pathetic.

BUD

Nice shot, Lins.

SONNY

What is that? You drop your dive light?

WIDER, SHOWING THE GROUP huddled around Lindsey who has her freshly-processed slide roll laid out on the pinball machine, using it as a light table.

LINDSEY

Come on, you guys... look, this is the little one right here. You can see how it's kind of zigging around.

BUD

If you say so. It could be anything.

LINDSEY

I'm telling you what it is. You're just not hearing. The impulses somehow aren't getting from your ears to your brainpan. There's something down there. Something not... us.

She looks around. Sees a lot of skepticism in the eyes around her.

CATFISH

Ya'll could be more specific.

LINDSEY

Not us. Not human. Get it? Something non-human, but intelligent...

HIPPI

You mean like Coffey?

(CONTINUED)

129 (CONTINUED)

Lindsey is reddening. Despite her conviction, this is really hard.

LINDSEY

A non-terrestrial intelligence.

HIPPY

Non-Terrestrial Intelligences. NTIs. Yeah, I like that better than UFOs. Although that works too... Underwater Flying Objects.

Hippy is not really mocking her. He's actually into it. But it has that effect. Catfish is eyeing Lindsey like he's never seen her before.

CATFISH

Are we talkin' little space friends here?

HIPPY

Right on! Hot rods of the Gods. Right, Lins? Hey, no really! It could be NTIs. The CIA has known about them for years. They abduct people all the time. There was this woman I knew in Albuquerque who--

LINDSEY

Hippy, do me a favor... stay off my side.

Bud takes her firmly by the arm... Heads her out into the corridor.

BUD

Lindsey, will you step into my office for a minute...

130 INT. CORRIDOR / LADDER WELL

130

He propels her along the corridor, away from the mess hall doorway. They face each other in the narrow space.

BUD

Jesus, Lindsey--

LINDSEY

Bud, something really important is happening here.

BUD

Look, I'm just trying to hold this situation together. I can't allow you to cause this kind of hysteria--

(CONTINUED)

130 (CONTINUED)

LINDSEY

Who's hysterical. Nobody's hysterical!

They're talking across each other, not connecting. Bud weary and frustrated. Lindsey is cranked up with the afterglow of her encounter.

BUD

All I'm saying is when you're hanging on by your fingernails, you don't go waving your arms around.

LINDSEY

I saw something! I'm not going to go back in there and say I didn't see it when I did. I'm sorry.

BUD

God, you are the most stubborn woman I ever knew.

LINDSEY

I need you to believe me, Bud. Look at me. Do I seem stressed out? Any symptoms of pressure sickness, any tremors, slurred speech?

BUD

No.

LINDSEY

Bud, this is me, Lindsey. Okay? You know me better than anybody in the world. Now watch my lips... I saw these things. I touched one of them. And it wasn't some clunky steel can like we would build... it glided. It was the most beautiful thing I've ever seen.

Bud is stilled by her intensity. She moves close to him. Eyes alive and luminous.

LINDSEY

It was a machine, but it seemed almost alive. Like a... dance of light. Bud, you have to trust me... please. I don't think they mean us harm. I don't know how I know that, it's just a feeling.

BUD

How can I go on a feeling? You think Coffey's going to go on your 'feeling'?

(CONTINUED)

130 (CONTINUED)

LINDSEY

We all see what we want to see... Coffey looks and he sees Russians, he sees hate and fear. Bud, you have to look with better eyes than that.

Bud has been taking this all in. His eyes tracking her face. He closes his eyes, taking a deep breath. It's so hard for him to do this, but...

BUD

I can't, Lindsey. I'm sorry. How can I?

A B O C U T TO 1

131 INT. MESS HALL - LATER

131

Coffey has Bud, Lindsey and ~~several of the rig crew~~ gathered for a little summit. Lindsey is withdrawn, sitting far from the others, a self-imposed exile. They're all wearing warm clothes and hugging themselves. Their breath shows in the air.

COFFEY

A B O 1 1 1

I want 'round-the-clock manning of the sonar shack and the exterior cameras. We need early warning if the Soviet craft try another incursion.

LINDSEY

(rolling her eyes)

Gimme a break! Coffey, those things live three and a half miles down on the bottom of an abyssal trench! Trust me... they're not speaking Russian.

Coffey looks at her for a moment, then goes on as if she hadn't spoken.

COFFEY

(to One Night)

Why haven't you finished repairs on the hydrophone transmitter yet?

ONE NIGHT

I was having my nails done.

Coffey is sweating, despite the chill. Keeps his hands clenched in fists so they won't see how bad the tremors have gotten.

COFFEY

Get something straight. You people are under my authority--

(CONTINUED)

131 (CONTINUED)

131

CATFISH

Look, podner...we don't work for you, we don't take orders from you, and we don't much like you. In addition to which your momma dresses you funny.

Coffey's eyes are straight razors. He slashes them from face to face. You can see him tightening up like a clockspring, losing control of the situation in front of his own men. Bud defuses it.

BUD

Fish?

~~CATFISH~~

Yuh?

BUD

Take the first watch in sonar. Hippy, you handle the exterior surveillance. One Night, see if you can get that transmitter working for me, okay?

ONE NIGHT

Gimme a couple of hours.

HOLD ON COFFEY as everyone leaves. Winding tighter.

CUT TO:

132 INT. MAINTENANCE ROOM B - LATER

132

Coffey and Schoenick are bending over the warhead. They have a small port removed and are attaching waterproof leads from an ELECTRONIC DETONATOR. The black box Lindsey glimpsed earlier. As the two SEALs work like surgeons, we see past Coffey's shoulder to a hemispherical window behind him, which looks out into the perpetual blackness. *Something appears... a goofy shark face.*

Big Geek rises silently in front of the port. It moves a little, trying to get a peek over Coffey's shoulder.

*133 INT. CONTROL MODULE / ROV SHACK

133*

Hippy is twiddling his joysticks, watching the screen like a ferret.

HIPPIY

Come on... move to the left... just a little more... come on, A.J. Squared Away... that's it--

A133 ON THE SCREEN, Geek's POV. Coffey is blocking Hippy's view of whatever it is they're working on. Abruptly, he moves. The warhead is lying there in plain sight, detonator wires hooked up. Hippy's eyes bug out. He knows exactly what it is. A133

133 HIPPY
Pretty radical, guys. Pretty radical.

133

He hurries to the VCR and puts it into RECORD.

*134 INT. CONTROL MODULE / ROV SHACK - MINUTES LATER

134*

A134 Video image of the SEALs working. It FREEZES on a clear view of the warhead. A134

134

HIPPY(V.O.)
Say hello to MURV.

A B O I I I

134

Bud has his face right into the screen. He frowns, skeptical.

HIPPY
Come on, man. What else could it be?

BUD
Why bring it here?

A B O I I I

HIPPY
It's gotta be like, an emergency plan to keep it away from the Russians... Hotwire one of the nukes with some kinda detonator, put it back in the sub, and fry the whole thing, slicker'n snot. Oh, uh... hi, Lins.

Bud whips around. Lindsey, standing quietly in the doorway. It's apparent from her expression she's been watching them for some time. She looks ready to kill somebody. Then she's gone.

*135 INT. CORRIDOR

135*

Bud catches up to her in the corridor, trying to put the brakes on her.

LINDSEY
Look, goddamnit, if you won't do something about it, I will.

BUD
Lindsey! Wait a second--

She reaches the watertight door to Maintenance Room B. It's locked.

(CONTINUED)

135 (CONTINUED)

135

Before Bud can stop her she grabs a fire-extinguisher off the wall and pounds on the steel door like a big gong. BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!
Needless to say, it opens.
She pushes past Schoenick, sees the bomb lying there naked.

LINDSEY

You've got some huevos bringing this...thing ...
into my rig! With everything that's going on up in
the world, you bring a nuclear weapon in here?
Does this strike anyone as particularly psychotic,
or is it just me?

COFFEY

You don't need to know the details of this
mission... you're better off if you don't.

LINDSEY

You're right... I don't. I just need to know that
this thing is out of here! You hear me, Roger
Ramjet?

COFFEY

Mrs Brigman, you're becoming a serious
impediment to this mission. I believe the stress is
affecting you.

(to Schoenick)

Escort her to quarters and have Monk prepare a
tranquilizer.

* Schoenick takes her arm in a tight grip. *

LINDSEY

Bullshit, you can't do that. Oww... goddamnit!

Lindsey goes bananas, trying to get Schoenick's big hands off her
arms. Bud slams his hand down on the intercom button.

BUD

Emergency! Maintenance room B. Emergency!

He pulls the fire alarm for good measure and spins on Coffey... warning him
with a look that is not to be messed with. Coffey is braced back against the
worktable... an odd stance, with one arm behind his back.

* Suddenly there's a crowd outside the door as Catfish, Hippy, One Night, and
Sonny come running up. Confrontation time. *

Sirens going. About a million volts in the air. Bud braces Schoenick.

BUD

Let her go. Do it... right now.

(CONTINUED)

135 CONTINUED: (2)

135

He does. Lindsey jerks away. Rubs her arms.

LINDSEY
You dumb jarhead motherf--

BUD
Chill out, Lindsey!!

CATFISH
What's the problem?

Everyone is frozen in place. Bud and Coffey... snake and mongoose, glaring.
Bud pulls Lindsey back into the corridor.

BUD
Nothing. We were just leaving.
(to her)
Weren't we ?

A B I I I

ANGLE FROM BEHIND COFFEY, as Bud's group moves out of sight up the corridor. Hand behind his back. In his hand, cocked, finger on the trigger, is the .45. He turns and sets it on the table, steadying himself as if in a wind. He seems to sag. When he looks at Schoenick, his eyes are wounds. A hunted animal, Voice shaky.

COFFEY
They can't be trusted. They're turning against us.
We may have to take... steps.

136 INT. CORRIDOR

136

Lindsey, Bud, Hippy. Bud slows, letting them trail behind the others.

BUD
Lins, stay away from that guy. I mean it.

HIPPY
Yeah. The dude's in bad shape... you see his hands?

LINDSEY
He's got the shakes?

BUD
Look, the guy's operating on his own, cut off from chain of command. He's exhibiting symptoms of pressure-induced psychosis. And he's got a

(more)

136 (CONTINUED)

136

BUD (continued)
 nuclear weapon. So, as a personal favor to me...
 will you put your tongue in neutral for a while?

HIPPY

Man, I give this a sphincter-factor of about nine
 point five.

137 MAINTENANCE ROOM B

137

Coffey goes to the dome port. Looks past his shrunken and twisted reflection
 into the void. Eternal night.

ANGLE FROM OUTSIDE. Coffey's face in the window. Stuck to the acrylic
 bubble beside him is one of those Garfields, suction cups on its paws. Coffey
 stares out. Behind his eyes, his brain is like that cat, just hanging on,
 spreadeagled and screaming.

CUT TO:

138 INT. SUB-BAY / DIVE-PREP AREA

138

Under a single worklight, a couple of conspirators. Lindsey and Hippy hunch
 over Big Geek. The ROV grins maniacally with goofy shark teeth.

LINDSEY

Look, you can just punch into his little chip where
 you want him to go, and he goes, right?

HIPPY

Well, yeah, but with the tether off it ain't gonna be
 fancy. When he gets down there he'll just sit, like
 a dumb-shit. Unless something wanders
 through the camera, you'll get nada.

LINDSEY

Let's go for it. We could get lucky.

139 INT. CONTROL MODULE

139

ON SURVEILLANCE MONITOR. Lindsey and Hippy next to Big Geek. Their
 voices are tinny but intelligible.

A139

HIPPY (V.O.)

A139

I don't know. I really oughta talk to Bud about
 this.

139 E.C.U. COFFEY. Watching them in the dark. Alone.

139

A139

A139

LINDSEY (V.O.)

No. Just you and me. We get some proof, then tell them. Hippy, look...if we can prove to Coffey it's not Russians, maybe he'll ease off the button a little.

HIPPY(V.O.)

I gotta tell you, that guy scares me a lot more than whatever's down there. A.J. Squared Away goddamn jarhead robot. Okay, gimme a couple hours on this.

139 Coffey watches, his jaw clenched.

139

140 INT. QUARTERS / MESS HALL

140

The lights are down. Those who can are grabbing some sleep. Snoring comes from one of the bunkrooms as Lindsey passes. In the mess hall, Catfish and Bud are crashed out on the tables, wrapped in blankets. The cold has gotten intense. Water drips. The walls sweat with condensation. Lindsey can see her breath as she makes coffee. She carries a cup over to Monk, who is a face in a pile of blankets. A hand comes out, takes the coffee.

MONK

Thanks

Lindsey sips hers, staring. Her thoughts are far away... in the bottomless pit. She is leaning up against the table where Bud is sleeping. His soft snoring downshifts into a loud rasp. Lindsey touches him gently on the shoulder.

LINDSEY

Virgil, turn on your side.

Bud grunts and turns without waking, an automatic response. The snoring stops. It is a quiet, intimate moment, a reminder of the mileage these two have logged together.

CUT TO:

141 INT. SONAR SHACK

141

* Sonny has made himself comfortable in front of the screens. Too comfortable. He's asleep, chin on his chest. On the main passive-sonar screen, an almost imperceptibly faint trace appears. A HUM, which is by now familiar, becomes audible. Sonny shifts in his seat. Doesn't wake. *

142 INT. SUB BAY

142

Hippy puts his tools away, finished with the modifications to Big Geek.

(CONTINUED)

142 (CONTINUED)

HIPPY

All set, big guy. Hey, I told you to wipe that grin off your face.

He yawns as he shambles across the chamber to the corridor door. Switches off the lights. Goes out.

Quiet lapping of water in the moonpool. A beat. Then...

A cold luminosity suffuses the water beneath the moonpool opening, sending shadows shifting across the top of the chamber. The surface of the pool begins to pulsate.

Suddenly, the water itself rises, forming itself into a shifting, shimmering pseudopod as big around as a man's body.

The transparent form... an amoebic mass shivering in the air.

It stretches, becoming a more refined form.

Like a blindly probing glass python, it elongates and weaves across the room.

It extends and extends, stretching out from the moonpool, a shimmering tentacle. The 'head' or tip, a featureless liquid bulb, seems somehow to be scanning as it moves forward, as if it can see where it's going.

143 INT. CORRIDOR

Hippy trudges along the dark corridor. He reaches the man's head and goes in. As the door closes, the tip of the liquid pseudopod extends into the corridor. B.G. It 'looks' left and right. Then it extends the length of the corridor, holding itself a couple feet off the floor like a weightless snake.

144 INT. TRIMODULE C / LADDERWELL / BUNKROOM / MESS HALL

LOOKING DOWN three levels through the central ladderwell between the cylinders. The pseudopod enters and undulates upward.

A144 FROM INSIDE THE MAKESHIFT BUNKROOM, we see its tip extend inside. Sonny and One Night are snoring, oblivious. Jammer is still unconscious. The pseudopod, taking its time, checks them out and then moves on.

B144 IN THE MESS HALL, it's dark and quiet. Lindsey has even fallen asleep in her chair, her head buried in her arms on the table. The shimmering tentacle enters the room in total silence. It sways gracefully in the air, searching. It undulates across the room, hanging about five feet in the air, surveying everything. It moves past Lindsey. Sensing something, she lifts her head, turning... sees the apparition next to her. Her eyes go wide. Amazement, but not fear. The tentacle is moving on, still searching. Lindsey shakes Bud awake, clapping her hand over his mouth. Bud blinks twice, then freezes. When she lowers her hand his mouth is hanging open like a total goon.

(CONTINUED)

Bud chucks his pillow at Catfish, on the next table.
Catfish cracks one eye open. Turns away. Turns right back... both eyes open now. Sensing movement, the thing turns back toward them. It seems to recognize Lindsey. It doubles back on itself in a loop and comes right up to her. She holds her ground, fascinated.

The bulbous tip forms suddenly into *a human face... her face*. It is water, still clear and undulating... but definitely Lindsey. She gasps in surprise. The liquid-Lindsey gasps soundlessly... a perfect mimic of her expression. Lindsey laughs involuntarily. It laughs... without sound.
Lindsey makes a face, sticking out her tongue... testing it.
The liquid-Lindsey does the same.
Bud has just had the rug jerked out from under his sense of what is possible and what isn't, but he's taking it pretty well, considering.

BUD

(whispering)

I think it likes you.

LINDSEY

It's trying to communicate.

Her liquid face suddenly transforms into a likeness of Bud's.
She reaches out her hand slowly.
Gingerly, her fingers touch the surface. Ripples expand outward from the contact, across Bud's features.
Her fingertips break effortlessly through the surface, just like she's dipping her hand into a bowl of water, except sideways. She draws her wet fingers out and studies them, amazed.
Touches one fingertip to her tongue.

LINDSEY

Seawater.

The pseudopod pulls back from her. It loops in the air dramatically, full circle... and ties itself in a knot. As the knot tightens down, it melts back into the body. The 'disappearing knot' trick.
Lindsey laughs, grinning with the open wonder and delight of a child at a magic show. She is *transported*.

LINDSEY

Show off.

She looks at Bud. He grins broadly. *He's with her now*.
The stunned group watches as the thing moves on across the room.
Out into the corridor.

145 INT. SUB BAY.

145

Coffey and Schoenick enter the back way, through the dive-prep area. They see the pseudopod arching from the moonpool big as a tree trunk. Coffey's mind is blown. We can smell the insulation burning. He just stares.

146 INT. CORRIDOR/ MAINTENANCE ROOM B

146

The water tentacle enters and moves toward the hot-wired warhead. It studies the device for a few seconds. Bud and Lindsey enter through a side door, in time to see the tentacle divide into four tendrils which wrap around the warhead. They begin to lift it off its cart.

147 INT. SUB BAY

147

Coffey finally jump-starts his brain. In a flash of insight, he runs to the big sliding door through which the pseudopod stretches into the corridor. He and Schoenick heave on the door. Like a guillotine blade it slices effortlessly through it.

147 VARIOUS ANGLES- CORRIDOR, MESSHALL, LADDERWELL, 147
AB MAINTENANCE... as the body of the pseudopod collapses, splashing to the AB
CD floor. It reverts to nothing more than a long puddle of simple seawater. As CD
147 the tendrils dissolve, the warhead slams back down onto the cart, unharmed. 147
ON COFFEY'S SIDE OF THE DOOR, however, the "stump" rears back like a
cobra. It withdraws rapidly into the moonpool. The glow fades away.

148 INT. SONAR SHACK

148

* Sonny wakes up with a start as the HUM revs up into a LOUD WHINE and *
then fades away. He scrambles to track it. Too late.

149 INT. CORRIDOR

149

Hippy emerges from the can and looks down, puzzled, at the puddle running the length of the corridor. He missed the whole thing.

150 INT. MESS HALL

150

Lights on. Everybody there. Lindsey is really strutting, high on life, now that she's been proven right.

LINDSEY

Okay, raise your hand if you think that was a
Russian water-tentacle. Lieutenant? No? Well, a
breakthrough.

Coffey is looking out from under his eyebrows like Nicholson in "The Shining".
Bud gives her a warning look. Don't poke at the rattler.

(CONTINUED)

150 - (CONTINUED).

BUD

You done impressing yourself, ace?

ONE NIGHT

No way that thing could be just seawater."

LINDSEY

They must've learned how to control water... I mean at a molecular level. They can plasticize it, polymerize it... whatever. Put it under intelligent control.

BUD

Maybe their whole technology is based on that. Controlling water.

* Coffey is hunched over, elbows on his knees. His hands are out of sight. His
* arm is moving in a slow rhythm. We can't see what he's doing. *

HIPPIE

That thing was probably their version of Big Geek... like an ROV.

CATFISH

Just checking us out, huh? How come?

* ANGLE UNDER TABLE, showing what Coffey is doing. He has his K-BAR
* KNIFE gripped white-knuckle in one hand. He is drawing it slowly and
* repeatedly across the skin of his other forearm. Neat chevrons of blood from
* wrist to elbow.
* C.U. COFFEY -- He doesn't flinch. His eyes are hard and bright as diamond
* drills. No one notices. He's keeping the edge. *

LINDSEY

They're curious, maybe. We could be the first people they've seen up close.

SONNY

Hope they don't judge the whole race offa us.

CATFISH

Maybe I oughta shave.

Coffey stands abruptly, snags Schoenick with his eyes, and leaves, walking through the group as if they were smoke.
This cold behavior brings the mood down a notch.

151 INT. CORRIDOR / MAINTENANCE ROOM **A B I I I**

Outside the mess hall, Coffey pauses, listening to the conversation resume. Bright speculation, a few jokes. Coffey is visibly shaking. Breathing hard. Pupils dilated. Schoenick looks at him with concern.

COFFEY

It went straight for the warhead. And they think it's cute.

SCHOENICK

You need to get some sleep.

Coffey walks away without hearing him. Schoenick catches up.

152 INT. MAINTENANCE

152

The door opens in the dark room. Coffey enters, moving with purpose. He pulls his gear bag out from under the work table. Unzips it. Pulls out a short-barreled CAR-15 assault rifle.

COFFEY

We have no way of warning the surface. Do you know what that means?

Schoenick doesn't know. He hopes Coffey knows. Because he's a fearless man who's discovering what it is to be afraid. Coffey inserts the magazine with a CLACK! Snaps the bolt. Tosses the rifle to Schoenick.

COFFEY

It means... *whatever happens is up to us.*

A B I I I OUT TO:

153 INT. CORRIDOR / MAINTENANCE - LATER

153

Hippy passes the maintenance room. Looks in. The warhead and its cart are missing. He looks around. Heads toward the sub-bay.

154 INT. MESS HALL

154

The discussion, still in progress.

ONE NIGHT

You think they're from down there originally? Or from... *you know.*

She jerks her thumb toward the ceiling.

(CONTINUED)

154 (CONTINUED)

A B I I I

154

LINDSEY

I think they're from 'you know.' Some place that has similar conditions...cold, intense pressure. No light.

CATFISH

Happy as hogs in a waller down there, prob'ly.

155 INT. CORRIDOR / SUB BAY

155

Hippy freezes in the corridor as he hears a loud ratcheting sound echoing from the sub-bay. He edges forward slowly, trying to keep his feet silent on the steel floor. Slides up along the wall next to the door. Inches his eye around the doorframe.

Across the room, Schoenick is working with a chainfall, lowering Big Geek onto the MIRV warhead, which is still on its cart. He begins to attach them together with a sling of tie-down straps.

Hippy lets his breath out slowly. His expression is *Holy Shit*.

He slides back along the corridor wall, silently. Away from the door. Then turns quickly to go... WHAM!

Coffey slams him up against the wall! .45 pressed to Hippy's temple. Hippy gulping air as Coffey ears back the hammer.

COFFEY

Sniff something did you, rat boy?

156 INT. MESS HALL

A B I I I

156

The meeting breaks up as the door CLANGS open and Hippy is thrust inside. His hands are taped behind his back and he stumbles onto his face. Coffey steps through smoothly, straight-arming the .45. Schoenick flanks him with the assault rifle aimed at the group.

COFFEY

FREEZE! Don't move. That's it.

(to Monk)

Here, hold this a second. We're going to *phase three*.

He hands his gun to Monk, with the assumption of absolute loyalty from a team member. Monk's eyes move between Coffey and the pistol. We can't tell what he's thinking. Coffey grabs Hippy and shoves him onto a chair.

HIPPIY

They're using Big Geek to take the bomb to the NTIs! We set it up to go right to them.

Lindsey looks stricken. Her plan betraying them all.

(CONTINUED)

LINDSEY
Oh my God... Oh no...
(steps toward Coffey)
Please, you can't. Coffey, think about what
you're doing... for God's sake--

Coffey lets her approach him, his eyes glittering.
Without warning he grabs her by the hair and hurls her against the Coke
machine, pinning her there with one hand. Bud leaps forward.

SCHOENICK
GET BACK!

Bud freezes. The rifle's muzzle is aimed for a heart-shot.
Coffey moves up close to Lindsey.

COFFEY
This is something I've wanted to do since I first
met you.

His hand reaches down, OUT OF FRAME.
We hear something RIP.
His hand comes back up... holding a piece of *gaffer's tape*.
He slaps it over her mouth. Then pushes her down hard into a chair.
Hippy looks at Monk and Schoenick.

HIPPY
Your boss is having a full-on meltdown. Guy's
fixing to pull the pin on fifty kilotons and we're all
ringside!

MONK
What's the timer set for?

SCHOENICK
Three hours.

COFFEY
Shut up. Don't talk!

MONK
We can't get to minimum-safe-distance in three
hours. The shockwave will kill us. It'll crush
this rig like a semi driving over a beer can.

COFFEY
Shut up. SHUT UP! What's the matter with you?!

(CONTINUED)

156 CONTINUED: (2)

156

Everybody is twitchy and hyper. Schoenick is white-knuckling his assault rifle... looking from Monk to Coffey to the group.

COFFEY

Just stay calm. The situation is under control.

Coffey backs out quickly with Schoenick.

157 INT. CORRIDOR

157

Coffey dogs down the watertight door and wedges a piece of steel pipe into the mechanism so it can't be opened.

COFFEY

Stay here.

Schoenick takes up a position in front of the door. Coffey turns and runs through the corridor like demons are chasing him.

158 INT. MESS HALL

158

Their only hope is to sway Schoenick. But the SEAL's fear is making him the perfect machine, totally dependant on external orders. And his orders are clear. They can see him through the tiny window in the door. Lindsey rips the tape painfully off her mouth.

LINDSEY

Schoenick... your Lieutenant is about to make a real bad career move...

HIPPIE

The guy's crazier'n a shithouse rat!

BUD

We have to stop him! Schoenick!!

They pound on the door. Schoenick turns and hangs his cap over the tiny window.

159 INT. SUB BAY

159

Using the chainfall, Coffey maneuvers the completed Geek/MIRV package over the back of Flatbed, obviously preparing to use the submersible to take it out and launch it.

160 INT. MESS HALL

160

Lindsey is up next to the door, with Bud.

(CONTINUED)

LINDSEY

... he's about to declare war on an alien species,
Schoenick, just when they're trying to make
contact with us.

(to Bud)

I think I'm reaching him.

There is a CLUNK-CLATTER and the door unlatches.

LINDSEY

See?

The door opens. Jammer is standing there. Schoenick is in a heap against the far wall, meaning. Jammer hands the rifle to Hippy as he walks in. Hippy turns to cover the other SEAL. Monk puts his hands up, passively.

MONK

I'm the least of your problems.

Bud appraises Jammer, who seems a little weak and dazed but basically okay.

BUD

Thanks. How you feeling, big guy?

JAMMER

Figured I was dead, there, when I seen that angel
comin' toward me.

They all look at him for a second. *What?*

BUD

Uh, okay, right. You can tell us about it later.
Let's go.

CUT TO:

161 INT. TRIMODULE C / LADDERWELL

161

Bud drops down the ladder, INTO FRAME, followed by the others.
He tries the door into the main corridor. The wheel won't turn. The others get on it. Won't budge.

BUD

He's jammed the mechanism.

LINDSEY

Now what?

(CONTINUED)

161 (CONTINUED)

~~ABIN~~
 They're locked into trimodule-C. No other doors give access to the ~~subway~~ corridor. Bud's mind is racing. He drops down the ladder to Level One, into about two feet of water. He reaches down and opens the emergency lockout hatch. Takes off his boots.

BUD

Okay, I'm gonna free-swim to hatch six.... get inside, get the door open from the other side.

LINDSEY

Bud, that water's only a couple degrees above freezing.

BUD

Then I guess you better wish me luck, huh?

Catfish is pulling his boots off as well.

CATFISH

Wish us luck.

(hands his wallet to Hippy)

'Case I don't die. Okay, Bud... let's go, podner, I ain't got all day.

Bud claps him on the shoulder and starts hyperventilating. He drops into the water.

162 EXT. DEEPCORE / TRIMODULE C

162

Bud shoots down through the hatch. The cold hits him like a fist, becoming instantly paralyzing. He starts kicking in powerful strokes through the dark water, maneuvering around tangles of umbilical cable and twisted tubular steel. Catfish is behind him, swimming like hell. They reach hatch six. Together they spin the wheel and heave upward, opening it.

163 INT. TRIMODULE D / LEVEL ONE

163

Bud surges up into the lock. Catfish jams into the tiny airspace with him. They try the upper hatch. Jammed. They're both panting with the exertion and intense cold.

BUD

Hafta... go on to... the moonpool. Only way.

CATFISH

I can't... make it... podner.

Bud looks at Catfish, shivering and heaving, wide-eyed.

(CONTINUED)

163 (CONTINUED)

BUD
 Okay, Cat. You head on back.

~~A B I I I~~

Bud hyperventilates rapidly and pikes over, diving back out through the hatch.

164 EXT. DEEPCORE

164

Bud is stroking rapidly through the tangle of pipes and conduit. He sees the lit rectangle of the moonpool far ahead.

165 INT. SUB BAY

165

In the moon pool, Bud surfaces with an explosive gasp beside the hull of Flatbed. His wracked breathing is masked by the WHINE of HYDRAULICS as Coffey uses the external controls to extend Flatbed's big hydraulic arm, locking the Geek/MIRV in its gripper.

Bud strokes to a point where Coffey can't see him and heaves up out of the water onto the deck of the pool. He lies gasping behind Cab One's cradle. His limbs are wooden and unresponsive from the cold. His fingers completely numb. He hugs himself, putting his hands under his armpits. Scans the situation. He can't get to the door, which is across the room, without Coffey seeing him.

166 INT. CONTROL MODULE

166

A166 Lindsey watching the whole thing going down. ON THE SCREEN, a high angle of the sub bay... Bud moving up on Coffey.

A166

166

HIPPIE

166

He can't get to the door... I think he's going to try and take him himself.

LINDSEY

He couldn't be that dumb. The guy's a trained killer. Bud's idea of a fight is arm-wrestling One Night over laundry duty.

A166 ON THE SCREEN, Bud picks up a piece of pipe. Hefts it. Moves forward, crouched... stalking. Lindsey yells at the screen in frustration.

A166

166

LINDSEY

166

BUUUUD!!

167 INT. SUB BAY

167

Bud chucks a tool across the chamber, creating a clattering distraction, then wades in with the pipe in a vicious swing to the back of Coffey's knees, taking

(CONTINUED)

167 (CONTINUED)

167

him down. Coffey spins even as he falls, catching Bud in a scissor kick that topples him.

Grappling, they fall together into the freezing water.

Coffey is momentarily stunned by the cold, giving Bud time to haul himself out, hoping to make it to the door.

Coffey launches from the water and grabs his legs.

He pulls himself up as Bud kicks out. Claws his way viciously over Bud's body until he has him pinned to the deck. Then he pulls the .45.

Puts it unceremoniously to Bud's forehead.

168 INT. CONTROL MODULE

168

LINDSEY

NOOO!!

169 INT. SUB BAY

A B I I I

169

Coffey pulls the trigger... CLICK.

Bud flinches, then opens his eyes, staring cross-eyed at the muzzle of the .45.

Coffey cocks it and tries again. CLICK. Nothing. Really pissed off beyond description, Bud hurls the commando off him with a powerful heave, sending him clattering against a rack of equipment. They face off, panting.

170 INT. CONTROL MODULE

170

The rig crew turn from the screens at the sound of Monk's voice.

MONK

I took the liberty of removing this before I gave it back to him.

Monk pulls his hand out from under his blanket and hold up the magazine from the .45.

171 INT. SUB BAY

171

Even so, Bud is getting his ass kicked. Coffey's really trying to put him out of business. It's mostly duck and dodge on Bud's part. Throw a few things.

When Coffey connects, Bud goes down hard.

Give him credit, though. He manages to scramble back up.

The fight wrecks the room, scattering tools and gear.

Compressed air cylinders roll dangerously around the floor.

Coffey slips on one and Bud gets in a couple of good licks.

Slams the SEAL's head in an equipment locker door.

But the Navy man is just too intense. Bud is hammered back into a wall.

Coffey has his fist cocked back for a coup de grace.

Spins at the sound of a VOICE.

(CONTINUED)

171 (CONTINUED)

171

CATFISH

Hey!

Catfish is right behind him. Dripping wet.

A trail of water goes back to the moonpool a few feet away.

CRACK!! Catfish's "Hammer" punch comes in so hard and so fast, Coffey is knocked right on his ass. He doesn't get up. Just sort of flops around.

Catfish helps Bud to his feet. They advance on Coffey, who crab-scuttles sideways, his eyes rabid.

He picks up a helium tank and hurls it at them. As they duck he sprints to Flatbed and drops through the hatch and slams it down.

BUD

(to Catfish)

Get the door!!

Bud leaps across the water to land on Flatbed. The hatch is already sealed. He grapples with Geek/MIRV, trying to free it from the steel claw.

172 INT. FLATBED

172

Coffey crawls along the access tunnel to the pilot's compartment. He claws his way into the control seat and starts rapidly flipping switches.

173 INT. CORRIDOR

173

Catfish pounds down the corridor like he's never run before, his beer gut doing a rhumba. He reaches the door, tears out the piece of pipe and spins the wheel. Hippy pushes it open so fast the wheel hits Catfish in the stomach. Hippy tears past him, running with the assault rifle. John Wayne.

174 INT. SUB-BAY

174

Flatbed is submerging, with only the hatch tower still above the water. Bud is being dragged down, still struggling to free the ROV. He gives up when he sees Hippy run in, waving the assault rifle around like a 130-pound Rambo. Bud climbs the hatch tower and leaps to the deck of the moonpool. Hippy clumsily aims the unfamiliar rifle at Coffey, visible inside his viewing bubble beneath the swirling water. Coffey looks up, stares at the gun... doesn't seem to care.

CATFISH

SHOOT!

Hippy's squeezing the trigger and nothing's happening. Flatbed's hatch tower goes under.

(CONTINUED)

174 (CONTINUED)

174

CATFISH

Safety's on! On the side... the lever! Up, push it up!

Hippy fumbles with the selective-fire lever.
BLAM-BLAM-BLAM! He puts three quick rounds into the ceiling.

HIRPY

SHIT!

CATFISH

Give me that!!

He grabs it out of Hippy's hands and aims it at the sub. He rakes the water with a long burst. BENEATH THE SURFACE, the rounds rip nasty contrails through the water. They barely scar the front port.

LINDSEY

Forget that... go for Big Geek!

Catfish rakes the descending sub with more bursts, trying to hit the shimmering shape of the ROV on its back. UNDERWATER we see the rounds arcing wild, a few hitting the ROV but causing little damage. Coffey completes his descent to just above the seafloor. ABOVE, Catfish empties the weapon.

BUD

Gimme a hand!

They all turn. Bud is fumbling into his wetsuit like a madman. The others rush over to help him.

BUD

Get the rest of my gear. Grab that hat right there... let's go guys! Come on, come on!

Catfish slams a backpack onto Bud's shoulders, grappling with the straps and hose connections. Hippy and Sonny (with one hand) are clipping, zipping and buckling all over him. This is a world-record suit-up time. Bud pulls the rubber neck-dam of the helmet's lower ring down over his face.

BUD

Helmet... helmet! Work fast.

175 EXT DEEPCORE UNDERSTRUCTURE

175

Beneath the habitat, Coffey is maneuvering Flatbed through the twisted pipe and debris left by Deepcore's slide to the edge. Bloodied, his fatigues ripped half-off, he looks like a feral animal. His eyes burn with the determination of his mission.

176 INT. SUB BAY

176

Jammer expertly works the crane controls, moving Cab One out over the moonpool from its drydock cradle. Lindsey and One Night are scrambling like monkeys over the port side crash bars of the swinging sub, clambering up to the hatch tower.

ONE NIGHT

I'll unhook.

(Lindsey hesitates)

GO! You're better in these than I am.

Lindsey recognizes this for what it is... a sign of respect, a reconciliation. She nods and drops through the hatch.

177 EXT. DEEPCORE

A B I I I

177

Coffey passes under the twisted wreckage of the big automated derrick and makes a tight turn beneath the drill-floor module. Flatbed scrapes through between twisted conduit, metal screeching on metal.

simpliciter

178 INT. SUB-BAY

178

Bud has his 'hat' locked down and his air cut on. He takes two quick strides to the edge of the pool and just drops in.

179 EXT. DEEPCORE

A B I I I

179

Bud rockets DOWN INTO FRAME in a column of bubbles. He looks around. Through the lattice of conduit under the rig he can see Flatbed moving forward from its exit point under the stern. Bud sees a shortcut under the platform.

He kicks along a lattice of pipes, heaving himself along in frantic hand-over-hand strokes. He reaches for Flatbed's stern as it passes. Misses the last hand-hold... but just manages to seize a tie-down strap trailing behind it. He is jerked along behind the sub.

Bud holds on with both hands as he is buffeted in the wake of the powerful thrusters. Flatbed gathers speed, moving out toward the edge of the abyssal wall. The current slams him, spinning him like a fishing lure. He pulls himself forward slowly until he can grip the stern rail of Flatbed's platform.

LOW ANGLE, looking up the wall. Flatbed appears over the edge and stops. Hovering.

ON THE BACK OF FLATBED, Bud has the break he needs. He scrambles up onto the deck and opens an equipment locker. Nothing in it but one of the yellow nylon safety lines. The big arm begins to unfold, lifting Geek/MIRV.

180 INT. / EXT. FLATBED

180

Coffey works intently. His eyes are the cool ice of lethal madness in a face streaked with blood. He brings the ROV into view with the boom arm. ~~Geek/MIRV~~ has a passenger. Brigman. The diver is holding Geek's skid with one hand, doing something with the other. He turns to look at Coffey.

181 EXT. FLATBED / DEEPCORE

A B I I I

181

Coffey releases the ROV with the gripper and makes a grab at Bud with the steel claw. Bud dives. The gripper hits his helmet a glancing blow. Bud kicks away rapidly, letting the nylon rope pay out. We see he has managed to tie one end to Geek's skids. Coffey hits the button to activate the ROV, sending an acoustic pulse to Geek's transponder. The little robot, pregnant with its load of death, turns nimbly and dives out and down toward the void.

Coffey pivots his big machine toward Bud.

Bud strokes rapidly to a large jumble of wreckage. He loops the rope around a twisted pipe. Big Geek is hauling ass away from him. The line snaps taut an instant later. The ROV strains, like a Rottweiler on a leash... trying to go. The rope is slipping as Bud fights to make a knot.

Flatbed slews around, thrusters whining.

As it banks, it hurls up clouds of sediment from the escarpment face.

Through the front port we see Coffey jerking on the controls.

The big arm extends menacingly. The smaller front manipulators open. An enormous predatory insect, its lights blazing.

The big machine roars forward. Straight at Bud.

Bud gets his knot partly done. Sees Flatbed looming.

Glare-lit in its lights, Bud grabs a handhold and pulls himself downward as Coffey closes the last few feet.

One manipulator slams into his backpack, tumbling him, and the sub's underside rakes across his legs as it passes over.

Flatbed crushes into the tangle of pipework.

K-CRUUUNCH!!

182 INT. FLATBED

182

Coffey is slammed hard over the controls, up into the front dome port. He gets back in the seat. Strains to free his machine.

183 EXT. DEEPCORE / BIG GEEK / FLATBED

183

Bud swims clear, diving down at an angle along the wall, hoping to stay in Coffey's blind area. Flatbed backs out of the wreckage in a cloud of debris. It pivots toward Bud. Moves after him.

(CONTINUED)

183 (CONTINUED)

Nearby, the ROV is whining mindlessly, trying to please. Trying to GO. DETAIL OF ROPE attached to wreckage, as Bud's knot begins to slip. The nylon line starts to play through the knot slowly.

BUD has gotten himself into a bad position. Along the bare rock face of the cliff wall he is naked, nailed in the spotlights like a rabbit in front of a truck. Coffey puts the hammer down, thrust levers all the way forward. Flatbed surges forward, multi-limbed and demonic. There's no cover, side to side, up or down.

A B I I I

Coffey has him dead in his lights.

Suddenly a brilliant glare blasts in, blinding Coffey. He looks up to see Cab One rushing down upon him, full throttle.

At the last moment Lindsey slams the thrusters full-lock and the submersible slews sideways, slamming its heavy skidplate into Flatbed's cab. Coffey is smashed sideways by the shock. He fights to control his vehicle. Lindsey looks up to see Coffey's sub gun it up over the wall, out of sight. She cruises up over Bud.

LINDSEY (V.O.)

Get in!

Bud gets the lockout hatch open and clambers up into Cab One's belly.

184 INT. / EXT. CAB ONE

184

Bud flops over the lip of the hatch and slams it shut. He ditches his helmet. Lindsey raises her vehicle warily above the wall. Through the front port there is no sign of Coffey.

LINDSEY

You owe me, Virgil.

BUD

Can we negotiate later? There's Big Geek.

He points. Through the front port, they can see the ROV still straining at its leash. Lindsey dives toward it, simultaneously working the controls to open her own small manipulator claw.

185 EXT. DEEPCORE / WALL, ETC.

185

The last few feet of the rope slips through the knot. Big Geek happily surges forward. It dives gracefully down into the void, trailing the yellow rope like a kite tail.

ON CAB ONE, Bud and Lindsey through the front port.

(CONTINUED)

185 (CONTINUED)

185

BUD

Go after it! We gotta catch it!

FLATBED DROPS INTO FRAME BEHIND THEM, dwarfing little Cab One. They are slammed viciously as Coffey's submersible hammers into them. She hits full throttle.

Coffey floors it after Lindsey, ramming her from behind with his more powerful vehicle. With difficulty Lindsey maintains trim.

She arcs back toward the rig.

Flatbed slams her again, from the side. She fights for control.

186 INT./ EXT. CAB ONE

186

Bud is tossed around, ricocheting off the walls. Lindsey flies with her jaw set. Fighting hard for control. The A-frame of the rig looms before her. She shoots through at full throttle.

187 EXT. DEEPCORE AND OPEN TERRAIN

187

Now the fight is really on.

The two subs are dodging between the cylindrical modules at full throttle, slamming into each other and the steel pressure hulls.

Coffey sideswipes the smaller sub, jamming it sideways. It screeches along the flank of one of the trimodules.

They head out over empty terrain in a flat-out speed run.

Lindsey is jinking and dodging as Flatbed roars along behind her, tearing up the bottom with its powerful backwash.

Lindsey carves hard around a rock pinnacle, finding herself running parallel to the edge of the abyssal canyon.

Coffey is ramming, hammering from behind, then from the side.

Lindsey snarls. He's pissing her off. He shouldn't do that.

Ahead, out of the blackness, another outcropping.

Lindsey rises, cuts right.

Smashes down onto Coffey's craft. Timing it just right.

His skids catch in the rocks.

Flatbed slews violently, nosing down. Crunching into the rocky bottom.

Pressing the advantage, Lindsey hammers into Flatbed from behind.

It smashes full force into a second spire, spinning out of control.

Tangled together, the subs slide down an embankment toward the edge of the wall. With her one remaining thruster she jerks clear of Flatbed and grounds her crippled sub. Flatbed tumbles over the edge.

ANGLE DOWN THE WALL as it falls, trailing a cloud of sediment like a comet's tail, down into the unfathomable blackness below.

188 INT. FLATBED

A B I I I

87

188

Inside the machine, Coffey is fighting for control. He has no bouyancy or motors and the craft continues its mad plunge. As the pressure intensifies the hull begins to groan, and steel fittings scream with the enormous load.

A tiny silver fracture shoots partway across the front bubble. Grows. Coffey gives up fighting. Just stares, wide eyed, at his death. A damned soul dropping into the bottomless pit.

The fracture line arcs rapidly across the dome port. Suddenly, a scythe-like curtain of seawater, under tons of pressure, slashes into him. A moment later the bubble implodes, and Coffey disappears in a bloody froth of churning water, air and glass shards.

189 EXT. CANYON WALL

189

Flatbed looks like a toy, tumbling away down the wall. Soon its lights vanish.

190 INT. CAB ONE

190

They're both going to have a lot of bruises... Lindsey is surveying the damage. Water is spraying down on them like a shower, and the lights are flickering.

LINDSEY

You did okay, back there. I was fairly impressed.

BUD

Not good enough. We still gotta catch Big Geek.

LINDSEY

Not in this thing.

Lindsey is flipping switches. Nothing works.

BUD

You totaled it, huh?

LINDSEY

Yeah. So sue me.

Bud looks down. There's already about a foot of water sloshing around the floor at their feet.

BUD

It's flooding like a son of a bitch.

(CONTINUED)

190 (CONTINUED)

LINDSEY
You noticed.

She picks up the hand-mike of the underwater telephone.

LINDSEY
Deepcore, Deepcore, this is Cab One, over.

She waits. No response.

BUD
Try again.

LINDSEY
Deepcore, this is Cab One. We need assistance,
over. Deepcore, this--

With a SEARING CRACKLE of arc-light, a power panel shorts out and everything goes black.

LINDSEY
Well, that's that.

BUD
Wonderful.
(looking around)
There's some light from somewhere...

A faint illumination, dimmer than moonlight, washes in through the front port. Lindsey scrunches up against the acrylic and scans the darkness.

LINDSEY
Over there. It's the rig.

A glow, beyond a rock promontory... like the lights of a town just over the hill in the desert.

BUD
Good hundred yards, I'd say.

LINDSEY
They'll come out after us.

BUD
Yeah, but it's gonna take them a while to find us.
We better get this flooding stopped.

(CONTINUED)

190 CONTINUED: (2)

He picks up his helmet and clicks on the light. Uses the thing like a bulky flashlight. The water is really pouring in, spraying them like a shower... almost two feet deep already.

LINDSEY

You see where it's coming in?

BUD

Somewhere behind this panel. Hold this.

She takes the light and he tries to reach the burst weld, which is blocked by a steel switch panel and a bunch of conduit.

BUD

Can't get to it. Have to pull this panel off. You got any tools?

LINDSEY

I don't know, look around.

Bud scans the cramped interior, feels around under the water. It's up past his knees.

BUD

Nothing. Son of a bitch. All I need's a goddamn crescent wrench.

He grabs the panel in both hands and starts torquing on it, trying to wrench it off the wall. Heaves on it repeatedly. Finally stops, panting. He's breathing hard now, and it's not just effort.

BUD

Son of a bitch!!

LINDSEY

Calm down, Bud.

A nervous edge in her voice now. Bud's turning all around, looking around for anything, trying to think fast. Water up to their waists. The sea closing in.

BUD

Okay... okay. We gotta get you out of here.

LINDSEY

How?

BUD

I don't know how!

(CONTINUED)

190 CONTINUED: (3)

LINDSEY

We've only got one suit.

BUD

I know! I know! But we better come up with something.

LINDSEY

Aaargh!! I'm freezing!

A B I I I

She climbs up on the pilot's seat, scrunching right up against the ceiling, keeping as much of herself as possible out of the frigid water. She's shaking all over with the cold, and getting drenched from above by the water pouring in.

LINDSEY

Okay, look, you swim to the rig and come back with another suit.

BUD

Seven, eight minute swim each way... not enough time. Look at this...

(the rate of flooding)

Time I get back you'll be--

A B I I I

That stops the conversation for a second.

About two feet of airspace left.

Bud can't believe what this is coming down to.

They both stare at each other for a long moment.

He makes a decision. Starts pulling off his backpack.

BUD

All right, put this on.

LINDSEY

What, you growing gills all of a sudden? You got it on, keep it on.

BUD

Don't argue, goddamnit, just--

LINDSEY

No way! Forget it. Not an option.

Bud has the pack off, uncoupling it. She keeps fighting his hands, stopping him, hooking it back up. The desperation of the situation fuels the struggle.

(CONTINUED)

190 CONTINUED: (4)

BUD

Lindsey, just put the thing on and shut up--

LINDSEY

NO!! Now be logical, Bud, you're--

BUD

FUCK LOGIC!!

A B I I I

They're both right up against the ceiling, water up to their chests. Lindsey's lips are blue and trembling from the cold.

LINDSEY

Listen... will you listen to me for a second!?
You've got the suit on and you're a better swimmer than me. Right? So I got a plan...

BUD

What's the plan?

LINDSEY

I drown, you tow me back to the rig--

A B I I I

BUD

WHAT KIND OF A PLAN IS THAT!??

Lindsey's gut-scared... shaking violently, her eyes wide. But she's keeping it together. Thinking it out. Bud sees the bottomless pit opening to take her and he can barely think.

LINDSEY

Look, this water's only a couple degrees above freezing. I drown. I go into deep hypothermia... my blood goes like icewater. I can maybe be revived after ten, fifteen minutes. You got all the stuff to do it on the rig.

Bud stops moving and looks into her face, inches from him. The water is up to their necks. He knows that, as always, infuriatingly, Lindsey is right.

BUD

This is insane.

LINDSEY

It's the only way, Bud. Now trust me.

She takes a deep breath. Before her nerve fails she busies her hands on his suit, rehooking everything.

(CONTINUED)

190 CONTINUED: (5)

BUD

Jesus. I don't believe this is happening.

She raises his helmet. Water up to their chins. They lock eyes, inches apart. He can feel her breath on his face... maybe for the last time.

BUD

Oh God, Lins... I--

LINDSEY

Tell me later.

He grabs her head in both hands and pulls her mouth to his. They lock together in a fierce kiss, fueled by passion and terror... the naked realization of love hanging over the abyss of death.

She breaks away at the last possible second and quickly pulls the helmet over his head. Seats it down over the neck ring. Locks the bail-out handle, sealing it. Even with her head pressed up into the highest point of the ceiling, Lindsey's mouth is barely above water. She gives a scared little laugh.

LINDSEY

This is maybe not such a great plan, is it?

She is half-paralyzed with the cold, shaking pathetically. Puts her face to the glass of his helmet. Seconds to go.

LINDSEY

Hold me. Hold me, Bud... *I'm so scared...*

He can't hear her, but he reads her lips. They clutch each other desperately. The embrace lasts while the water rises over her mouth and nose. She starts to choke. Her hands grip his shoulders like claws. She bucks and thrashes. Bud holds her, and a scream tears loose from him, a pure agony of the soul.

BUD

NOOOOOO!!!

The freezing seawater races into her lungs. Her fingers go slack, and her hands float lifelessly. Bud stares, transfixed, as the last tiny bubbles trickle out of Lindsey's open mouth. He kicks himself into gear, fingers frenzied as he spins the wheel of the lockout hatch.

CUT TO:

191 INT. DEEPCORE / COMMAND MODULE

191

A191 TIGHT ON VIDEO SCREEN, one of the outside cameras.
A ghostly figure swims out of the darkness, towing something.

A191

191 ONE NIGHT 191
 It's Bud. Oh my God... that's Lindsey!

A191 BUD (V.O./ faint) A191
 Deepcore, Deepcore, do you read?

191 HIPPY 191
 Read you, Bud. We're here.

192 EXT. DEEPCORE 192
 Bud swims with long, powerful kicks, towing Lindsey. Her arms and legs float as gracefully as seaweed waving in a gentle current. Bud's voice comes in short rasps, breathing hard, but icy with control.

BUD
 Go to the infirmary... get the cart... oxygen... the de-fib kit... adrenaline in a... ten cc syringe... and some... heating blankets. You got all that?

HIPPY (V.O.)
 Got it. Over.

BUD
 Meet me at the moonpool. Move fast.

193 INT. INFIRMARY 193
 The door crashes open and Jammer thunders in. He picks up the CPR cart, meant to roll on its wheels, and carries it out past Hippy, Catfish, and One Night, who are crowding in to get the rest of the equipment. They ransack the place in about ten seconds, grabbing everything they might need and half of everything else.

194 EXT. DEEPCORE / UNDER THE MOONPOOL 194
 Bud moves up toward the rectangle of light, towing Lindsey to the diving platform. Through the surface we can see the others arrive at the edge, looking down.

195 INT. SUB-BAY 195
 Hippy and Catfish are setting up the cart and the oxygen kit, dropping things, making mistakes. One Night is teaching herself how to fill a syringe from a bottle of adrenaline.

* SONNY *
 Here he comes!

(CONTINUED)

195

(CONTINUED)

195

Jammer and Sonny leap into the freezing water, waist deep on the submerged diving platform. Bud bursts to the surface. Together they haul Lindsey across the platform, out of the water, and onto the deck. Her skin is blue-white, her chest still.

Bud rips his helmet off in a near-frenzy, like a man possessed, a man with a mission. The others are galvanized by his energy even though all they see is Lindsey dead, a corpse... cold and inert. Water flows from her mouth and nose and her lips are blue, her limbs completely limp. Hippie peels back one eyelid, to find the pupil fixed and dilated. But when Bud shouts for them to move, they move.

BUD

Turn her over!

They flip his wife's body over. He straddles her, pushing down hard with both hands in the middle of her back. Seawater gushes from her slack lips. He does it again until the flow stops, then flips her onto her back.

BUD

Come on, hurry! Gimme the de-fib...

One Night and Catfish are fumbling with the emergency cart equipment. They've all been trained in CPR and use of the gear but that was years ago, and this is a friend they're working on. They're all thumbs. Catfish drops the electrodes, picks them up quickly, hands them to Bud...

CATFISH

Here, here, here... no, you got to have bare skin, or it won't...

Bud rips into her clothing, opening her jumpsuit, literally tearing away her tee-shirt, revealing her bare chest... bony and still.

BUD

Jesus. Gimme those, come on, Catfish, move it, man! Come on... come on!

He slaps the things onto Lindsey's bare skin, one on the sternum and one on the side of the rib cage.

BUD

Is that it? Is this right?

HIPPIE

Yeah! I mean, I don't know... it looks right.

(CONTINUED)

195 CONTINUED: (2)

BUD

All right. Do it!

One Night hits the switch and Lindsey's body convulses. It is pure muscle reflex, and when it is over, there is not a hint of life. Hippy pushes him back and puts a black rubber oxygen mask over her mouth. He opens the valve on the cylinder and starts pumping the squeeze bag. They start packing electric blankets around her to fight the intense hypothermia.

BUD

Do it again, One Night. Zap her ~~again!~~

A B I I I

The current hits Lindsey again and her back arches. Bud doesn't wait for a result... he's in his own reality now, driven. He's doing it all at once, somehow, in a senseless frenzy... pumping on her chest with his hands, squeezing the oxygen bag, placing the electrodes.

BUD

Aw, Christ... come on, baby. Again! Do it again!

Lindsey's back arches. Her body relaxes, inert.

BUD

Come on, One Night... what are you waiting for?

A hush seems to have fallen over the group. They know instinctively that it's over. But Bud can't accept it. He looks at them, beseechingly, like they are somehow intentionally holding out on him. One Night starts to cry, quietly.

CATFISH

(gently)

Bud, it's over, man. It's over.

There is a beat of silence. Bud stares down into Lindsey's half-open, motionless eyes.

TIGHT ON LINDSEY EYES, moving in until the pupil FILLS FRAME, a black void.

REVERSE, HER POV. SILENCE. A distant, distorted image, we see Bud, One Night, Jammer, Hippy, Catfish, staring down. It is like the circular top of a dark well, their faces shimmering as if through the surface of water. It is as if we are in a well, descending, looking up at a circle of faces growing smaller as we drop away... smaller and smaller, receding until it becomes a point of light in the void, like the fading bright dot at the center of a turned-off TV.

(CONTINUED)

TIGHT ON BUD; rigid, staring.

Catfish puts his hand gently on Bud's shoulder. Suddenly Bud tears Catfish's hand away and sets upon Lindsey like a madman, renewing his efforts in spades...totally manic.

BUD

No! NO! She's not... her heart is ~~from~~ from she wants to live... can't you see that? Come on, Lins. Come on, babe! Zap her again! Do it... DO IT!

They do. And Bud works, feverishly. He locks his lips over hers and starts mouth-to-mouth. It is frantic, passionate... the kiss of life.

BUD

Come on, breathe! Goddamn it, you bitch, you never backed down from anything in your life... now fight!

He slaps her face, hard. Her head lolls. He smacks her the other way.

BUD

Fight. Goddamnit!

LINDSEY'S POV, from the bottom of the great well. The circle of faces and light rockets toward us in the blackness, as we soar upward from the pit. We see Bud yelling, but his voice is distant, windlike.

BUD

FIGHT!!

TIGHT ON LINDSEY, still. Then something ~~incredible happens~~. Something they will never forget as long as they live. ~~Lindsey laughs once, weakly, and her hands clench in a spasm.~~ Bud sees it and his expression becomes beatific.

BUD

Come on, Lins. You can do it... fight your way back, baby....

The others look on in wonder as Bud *wills* this woman back. She starts to cough, weakly at first... then more violently as she draws air into her lungs. Bud crouches over her, rubbing her limbs... trying to re-establish circulation.

It is like a difficult birth. Lindsey comes hacking and howling back into the world, wet and naked and fighting for breath.

Bud puts the oxygen mask over her face and she draws breath after agonized breath. He pushes her wet hair back from her face with his trembling hands,

(CONTINUED)

195 CONTINUED: (4)

and watches her breathe. Color is returning to her skin as she lies there, gasping weakly..

ON THE GROUP... Catfish, Hippy, One Night, Jammer, the others... they're all grinning, crying, beaming,... gazing at the miracle of her rebirth.

ON BUD... tears are streaming down his face.

BUD
(a whisper, fierce and hoarse)
You did it, ace.

DISSOLVE TO:

196 INT. DEEPCORE/ QUARTERS - LATER

196

TIGHT ON LINDSEY, sleeping peacefully. WIDER shows Bud hovering over her, attentive. They are alone in Bud's tiny cubicle. Perhaps twenty minutes have passed. She is completely swaddled in blankets, except for her face, and looks like a waif.

Lindsey's eyes flutter and open. The first thing she sees is Bud, bending over her. He can't help himself. The tears break again and roll down his cheeks. She seems terribly fragile, but bright and aware. She smiles, faintly... touches his cheek.

LINDSEY
Hey... big boys don't cry, remember?

BUD
Hi, lady.

LINDSEY
Hi, tough guy. I guess it worked, huh?

BUD
'Course it worked. You're never wrong, are you?
How d'you feel?

LINDSEY
I've been better. Next time it's your turn, okay?

Bud's expression turns inexplicably grim.

BUD
Well, you got that right.

CUT TO:

197 INT. SUB-BAY

197

TIGHT ON BUD'S EYES, as Monk's fingers insert acrylic scleral lenses under his eyelids so he can see in the fluid helmet.

WIDER reveals Bud is wearing the SEALs' deep suit. Everybody is grouped around, buckling and zipping. He is hyperventilating with an oxygen mask, part of the procedure for transitioning from air to fluid breathing. Monk, on his stretcher, is presiding. The resident expert. Lindsey is wrapped in a blanket, still looking wan and frail. She doesn't have the strength to resist Bud's will, but she's trying.

LINDSEY

No, Bud, no... not you.

BUD

Who then?

She looks around at the others. Sees their eyes. The fear. Has her answer. He lowers the helmet over his head. Cathish clamps it down. We see what's driving him... his sense of responsibility for these people, for not being able to prevent this situation.

He touches her cheek, one last time. She sees his fingers are trembling. Then he pulls on the gloves. Cathish is strapping a **KEYPAD UNIT** onto Bud's forearm. Lindsey wants to scream... to stop this madness.

BUD (muffled)

So I'll hear you, but I can't talk?

MONK

The fluid prevents your larynx from making sound. It'll feel a little strange.

BUD (muffled)

Warning you now, folks, I'm a lousy typist.

(a beat)

The moment of truth, huh?

His breathing is shallow and tense. He looks at Lindsey. The eyes of a condemned man. She squeezes his hand. He takes a deep breath.

BUD

Okay. Let's rock and roll.

Monk gently cracks a valve on the suit's feed line. The breathing fluid (3M fluorocarbon emulsion FX-80), swirls into the helmet. Bud reflexively raises his chin. The liquid fills toward his mouth.

(CONTINUED)

197 (CONTINUED)

MONK

Relax now, Bud. Just keep breathing as it fills...
don't fight it. Take it in. Just let yourself take it
in.

Suddenly, there's nothing in there for him to breathe but liquid. His eyes go
wide, instant panic. He starts to thrash. Chest heaving.

MONK

Hold him. Hold him. This is normal... it'll pass
in a second. You're gonna be okay. We all
breathe liquid for nine months, Bud. Your body
will remember.

Lindsey grabs Bud's shoulders, steadying him. He finds her eyes, the look
calming him. He's passed into a realm from which she has already returned.
His spasms subside. He begins to "breathe" normally.
He gets a goofy look of wonder on his face, not really believing what he's
experiencing. He is alive, alert and quite completely *drowned* inside the FBS
helmet. He grins. Gives a big thumbs up. Lindsey picks up a microphone.

LINDSEY

Can you hear me okay?
(another thumbs up)
Try the keypad.

Bud taps out a brief message. **FEELS WEIRD - YOU SHOULD TRY THIS**
prints out on their portable monitor.

LINDSEY

I already have, moron.

They help Bud to the edge of the dive platform. Jammer and Hippy lower Little
Geek into the water and Bud grabs onto it. Hippy yells right up next to his
helmet.

HIPPIY

I redid Little Geek's chip the same as Big Geek!
He should take you right to it. All you gotta do is
hang on!

Lindsey crouches at the edge to watch Bud submerge.
He looks up at her as he drops away.
In a few seconds, she can't see him.
Her chin quivers, minutely.

198 EXT. DEEPCORE / THE WALL

FROM FAR BELOW, Deepcore is a faint tiara of lights. above in the blackness.

(CONTINUED)

198 (CONTINUED)

198

A single moving light appears above, at the edge of the cliff, and starts down. It grows larger, resolving into Bud, free-falling down the wall. He gathers speed as Little Geek's vertical thruster drives them down.

Bud looks down. Between his feet he can see a short way down the wall in the glow of his single light, and beyond that an unfathomable blackness. The wall unrolls upward out of the darkness like a convoluted gray drapery. He looks up. The lights of Deepcore are gone. He feels more alone than he has ever felt. He types out: **CANT SEE YOU**

LINDSEY(V.O.)

We're right here with you, Bud. Your depth is
3800 feet. You're doing fine.

= A B I I I

Bud comes upon the twisted wreckage of the crane, hanging against the wall like a forty-ton yo-yo at the end of the umbilical.

199 INT. COMMAND MODULE

199

Everyone is grouped around the monitor screen, watching Bud's telemetry. Bud types out: **GOOD DEAL ON SLIGHTLY USED CRANE**. They watch the depth meter counting down.

MONK

4800 feet. It's official.

LINDSEY

Bud, according to Monk here, you just set a record for the deepest suit dive. Bet you didn't think you'd be doing this when you got up this morning.

The screen prints out: **CALL GUINNESS**
They laugh. So far so good. Seconds later...

HIPPIE

One mile down and still grinnin'.

200 EXT. THE WALL

200

WIDE SHOT, Bud is a tiny spider dropping down the wall in a pathetic little pool of light. The wall is a sterile brown-gray, devoid of life at this depth. **LOOKING DOWN**, as the light shrinks to a star and vanishes in the vast blackness yawning below.

201 INT. COMMAND MODULE

201

Lindsey has the microphone gripped tightly, and the lightness in her voice is a bit brittle.

(CONTINUED)

LINDSEY

8500 feet, Bud. Everything okay?

MONK

Ask him about pressure effects. Tremors, vision problems, euphoria.

LINDSEY

Ensign Monk wants to know how you feel.

ON THE SCREEN, printing out: COLD.

LINDSEY

Big baby.

Then: HANDS SHAKING. HARD TO TYPE

MONK

It's starting. It hits the nervous system first.

ONE NIGHT

Keep talking, Lindsey. Just let him hear your voice. It doesn't matter what about.

LINDSEY

Don't forget Bud, you're being graded on spelling as well as sentence structure, so concentrate, okay?

(long pause)

Bud, I... uh, there's some things I want to say. It's hard for me. I'm not one of those soft, gooey-center-type people. It's not easy, you know, being a cast-iron bitch. It takes discipline and years of training. A lot of people don't appreciate that.

Lindsey has somehow tuned out the others in the room. In her mind she is with Bud, out in the darkness.

LINDSEY

But it wasn't all bad, I know that. You remember that bike trip... we rode the Honda up through Oregon? It took me a week to get my hair untangled, but I've never been happier. It was the most... free... I've ever felt. I'm sorry I can't tell you these things to your face.

202 EXT. THE WALL

202

Bud is visibly trembling, gritting his teeth... holding on as the vise-grip of pressure takes him.

LINDSEY (V.O./filtered)

It's pitiful. I have to wait until you're freezing in the dark and there's ten thousand feet of water between us. I guess I'm babbling. I'm sorry.

Bud struggles with his keyboard.

203 INT. COMMAND MODULE

203

ON THE SCREEN: YOU ALWAYS DID TALK TOO MUCH

Somehow she's smiling and on the verge of tears at the same time.

HIPPY

Two miles down and still grinnin'. Comin' up on the big ten thou'.

ONE NIGHT

Bottom's still a mile and a half down.

204 EXT. THE ABYSS

204

BLAM! Bud jerks as his dive light implodes. He still has Geek's floodlights. He falls.

205 INT. CONTROL MODULE

205

HIPPY

12000 feet. Jesus, I don't believe he's doing this.

LINDSEY

Shut up, Hippy. Bud, how you doing?

He types: **SE LUMINUS THINNGS**

Everyone snaps suddenly alert.

HIPPY

Uh, oh..

LINDSEY

What kind of luminous things, Bud?

CATFISH

Maybe it's... you know... *them*.

(CONTINUED)

205 (CONTINUED)

205

The screen prints out: **ITS OK. SQUID. GLOWING SQUID.**

206 EXT. THE ABYSS

206

Bud is in an enormous school of bioluminescent squid, graceful, attenuated creatures less than a foot long. Thousands of them glide in ghostly arcs around him, filling the black void as far as the eye can see. He stares at them in wonder. Reaches out and touches one, catches it, lets it go. Are they really there? He can no longer be sure of his own perceptions.

207 INT. CONTROL MODULE

207

Another message from Bud: **THINK THEY'RE REAL**

MONK

He's losing it. Talk to him. Keep him with us.

LINDSEY

Bud, it's the pressure. Try to concentrate.
Concentrate on my voice. Just listen to my voice.

208 EXT. THE ABYSS

208

Bud emerges from the school of squid. As he falls, they form a luminous plane of swirling colors above him. He stares upward, transfixed.
BUD'S POV, the ghostly blizzard of luminescence above him. A spectral form takes shape in the patternless glow... resolving into Lindsey's face, a hundred feet wide. Gazing down at him, her expression sad. Her image recedes away from him into the darkness above as he falls.
DOWN ANGLE ON BUD, reaching up in anguish.

209 INT. CONTROL MODULE

209

Lindsey watches as Bud haltingly types out: **YOUR GOING AWAY**

LINDSEY

I'm not going away, Bud. I'm right here, right here with you. This is Lindsey, Bud. I'm right here.

ONE NIGHT

Signal's fading.

HIPPY

We're losing juice... kill everything we don't need.
Catfish, knock out those lights.

(CONTINUED)

209 (CONTINUED)

209

Everyone hustles to comply. The room is plunged into darkness, the faces of the group lit only by the ghostly CRT screen.

ONE NIGHT

Run it through the digital processor, cook it as much as you can.

CATFISH

Seventeen thousand feet. Good Christ Almighty, this is insane.

210 EXT. THE ABYSS

210

Bud is shaking violently, as if with palsy. His eyes keep rolling back, and he's having a hard time staying conscious. He tries to type a message and he can't. The tons of pressure per square inch are short-circuiting his nervous system. Suddenly K-BAM! Little Geek's pressure hull explodes. Its lights go out. BLACKNESS.

211 INT. CONTROL MODULE

211

ONE NIGHT

Little Geek just folded.

HIPPY

Bye, little buddy.

MONK

He can still make it.

LINDSEY

I know how alone you feel... alone in all that cold blackness... but I'm there in the dark with you, Bud, you're not alone...

Lindsey seems not to be in the room, but to be with him, seeing what he sees. She is oblivious to the others now.

212 EXT. THE ABYSS

212

Blackness.

Then a bright light appears... he's lit a MAGNESIUM FLARE. Its fierce, flickering glare lights his plunge. Bud discards the stalwart little ROV and free-falls like a skydiver without a chute. Out of control, he hits a ledge and rolls off. Tumbles forward in a cloud of debris. He hits another outcropping, limp as a rag doll. Rocks and sand rain down with him as he continues his descent.

(CONTINUED)

212 (CONTINUED)

Bud is quivering, teeth locked in a tetanic rigor.
 He pulls his arms and legs slowly into a fetal position.
 In the plunge toward death he has gone full circle, returned to the womb in which we all breathe the water of life before we know the world of air and light.
 Still, there is Lindsey's voice, faintly in his helmet.

LINDSEY(V.O.)

You remember that time, you were pretty drunk,
 you probably don't remember... the power went
 out at the old apartment, the one on Orange
 Street... and we were staring at that one little
 candle, and I said something real dumb like that
 candle is me, like every one of us is out there alone
 in the dark in this life...

213 INT. CONTROL MODULE

TIGHT ON LINDSEY as she ~~rips~~ ^{grabs} the microphone. Her voice has become a hoarse whisper. Her eyes are intense, focused on a point far beyond the walls of the room.

LINDSEY

...and you lit another candle and put it beside
 mine and said "that's me"... and we stared at the
 two candles, and then we... well, if you remember
 any of it, I'm sure you remember the next part.
 Bud, there are *two* candles in the dark. I'm with
 you. I'll always be with you.

214 EXT. THE ABYSS

A tiny flickering light moves down along a vast black wall.
 Bud falls on in dream-like solitude, a candle in the dark.

215 INT. CONTROL MODULE

Catfish gently takes the microphone from Lindsey's hands and leans close.

CATFISH

How you doin', podner? Still with us, come-back?
 Talk to us, Buddy boy.

They watch the screen, expectantly. Nothing. Hippy and One Night start checking the equipment. Lindsey tries unsuccessfully to keep the terror out of her voice.

(CONTINUED)

215 (CONTINUED)

215

LINDSEY

Bud? You hangin' in there? Talk to me, Bud. Are you okay?

There is an agonizing pause, then letters appear slowly: **SHAKING STOPED. FEEL BETER. SOM LITE BELOW.**

LINDSEY

What kind of light?

LIGHT EVYWHERE. BEAUTFULLL

MONK

He's hallucinating badly.

216 EXT. THE ABYSS

216

Bud is no longer in pain. His expression is rapt. **LOOKING DOWN**, past him to a ghostly landscape. His last flare sputters out, but there is light. Bioluminescent algae carpet the wall of the canyon below him. And he's right... it is beautiful.

The water is so clear we can see down 500 feet past Bud's tiny, silhouetted figure, to a vast landscape faintly revealed in spectral pastels. Barren as the moon but exquisite, serene. Changeless. A place unseen by human eyes. Like a firefly below, the lights of Big Geek are visible. Bud descends toward the ROV, which has grounded on a narrow shelf. Below the shelf, the wall slopes out, suggesting we are near the bottom of the canyon but can't see it.

ON BIG GEEK/MIRV, sitting there like a dumbshit. Bud's feet thump into the sediment next to it, stirring up luminous particles. Touchdown... three and half miles of water over his head. Bud leans over the warhead in a swarm of fireflies.

217 INT. CONTROL MODULE

217

AT GEEK prints out. Monk takes the headset gently from Lindsey.

MONK

Okay, Bud, we'll go step by step. Take the cover plate off the firing box.

A long pause. Then... **PLATE OFF**

MONK

All right, Bud, you have to cut the ground wire, not the lead wire...

218 EXT. ABYSSAL LEDGE

Bud is peering into the detonator unit. How bad is he? We can't tell.

MONK (V.O.)

It's the blue wire with the white stripe, not... I repeat... NOT the black wire with the yellow stripe.

Bud is staring. Blinking. The two wires look big as sewer pipes, and they're miles away... way down there where his hands are. The only light he has left is a CYALUME STICK. He pulls out the little plastic tube. Breaks and shakes. It starts to glow, a tiny wand of green light. He fumbles with his tool pouch, takes out a pair of side cutters. **CUTTING NNOW** he types to them. He reaches into the detonator.

DETAIL, THE WIRES... in the green Cyalume glow, they look identical. The cutters go over one wire. *A long beat.* They withdraw, then go over the other wire... He cuts--

219 INT. CONTROL MODULE

219

Everyone is frozen. Waiting. It's very quiet.

LINDSEY

Would we see the flash?

MONK

Through three miles of water? I don't know.

They're holding their breaths. Then... **STILL HERE**
A cheer goes up. Rebel yells.

CATFISH

Quiet, quiet! Save your air, goddamnit.

MONK

Bud, give me a reading off your liquid oxygen gauge.

TEN MINUTES WORTH ID SAY

Lindsey goes white.

HIPPY

It took him over an hour to get down there--

It's hopeless. Lindsey grabs the headset from Monk.

(CONTINUED)

219 (CONTINUED)

219

LINDSEY

Drop your weights and start back now! The gauge could be wrong...

220 EXT. ABYSSAL LEDGE

220

Bud is on his knees beside the dead warhead. His expression is enigmatic. He looks around slowly at the luminous canyon. Starts to type.

221 INT. CONTROL MODULE

221

The message comes in: **NO. THINK ILL STAY A WHILE. BEAUTIFUL HERE. WORTH ADMISSION**

LINDSEY

No! You can make it! You hear me? Drop your weights... you... can breathe shallow... you... it could be wrong--

Lindsey's voice has twisted into a sob. She begins to weep, quietly.

LINDSEY

Oh God, Virgil, please--

DONT CRY BABY

A pause. Then the words...

WE KNEW THIS WAS A ONE WAY TICKET WHEN I PUT THIS THING ON. BUT YOU KNOW I HAD TO COME.

Lindsey sobs at the mike. The others look away. The signal is weakening. One Night boosts it and the screen clears briefly.

LOVE YOU WIFE.

She stares at the printout.

LINDSEY

Love you.

There is no reply.

CUT TO:

222 EXT. THE ABYSS

222

A tiny figure lies slumped beside the inert ROV, an Indian dying with his horse in the desert.

Bud's eyelids close. His chest is barely moving.

(CONTINUED)

222 (CONTINUED)

222

A strange illumination bathes his face and his eyes open. He blinks. Weakly, he raises his head, facing the source of the radiance.

BUD'S POV... A glowing figure hovers before him, like a vision. It seems to be an angel. Seen closer, as it drifts toward him, we see that it is an extraterrestrial being, bio-luminescent like some deep-sea fish.

Its body and limbs are transparent, and it resembles a figure made of blown glass. A delicate mantle or veil billows out around it like a corona, which pulses gently, propelling the being with the hypnotic grace of a Spanish dancer. The head is refined and strangely anthropomorphic, with large eyes that convey a cold, dispassionate wisdom.

It is stunningly beautiful.

The creature settles toward him. Unafraid, Bud extends his hand.

Its slender, blown-glass digits grasp his bulky glove.

It pulls him up from the benthic ooze and they glide together down the slope, deeper into the abyss.

At the limit of visibility we see faint, glowing forms moving below. They resolve into NTI ships. Tiny ovoids, like the little scoutship that Lindsey nearly collided with at the Montana wreck. The larger manta-ships. And others, strangely configured, moving in the darkness below like luminous fish.

Suddenly the darkness explodes with light. A vast, reticulated pattern of brightly glowing lines, like some enormous circuit diagram, appears below them, covering the floor of the abyssal trench. It sweeps outward from the center, as if the light were surging through channels. The NTIs are revealing their home to Bud. The ships move among the spires like air traffic over a major city.

223 EXT. N.T.I. STRUCTURE

223

Bud and the creature descend until, between the lines of light, we see a dark surface of inhuman design. The shape extends beyond the limit of visibility. Towers hundreds of feet high stretch upward from the curving surface. It dwarfs their figures as they descend toward it, approaching an opening that soon yawns like a vast mouth.

They are picking up speed, swept along by a powerful current, into the mouth-like opening.

224 INT. N.T.I. STRUCTURE

224

Bud stares around in awe as smooth, pearlescent walls blur past him. It is a curving three-dimensional maze of tunnels, like a vast circulatory system, where controlled currents of water become freeways in three-dimensional space.

Tunnels divide, narrow, reenter main-routes hundreds of feet across, as the pair race through in a dizzying blur.

225 INT. FINAL CHAMBER

225

Entering a smaller chamber they settle to the floor, and the NTI moves back a few feet.

A shimmering plane or surface appears like a vertical curtain bisecting the chamber. The seawater divides, like the Red Sea, into two rippling walls. They move apart. Leaving Bud standing in a short, shimmering hallway.

Weakly, he uncouples his helmet and pulls it free. Drops to his knees. Doubles over as spasms wrack him. Breathing fluid explodes from his lungs. He lies gasping and coughing on the floor, dragging in deep breaths of what he can only hope is air.
It is.

Bud slowly recovers, sitting up. His head is clearing. This *really* is happening. Beyond the shimmering, vertical surface of the water he sees the NTI being joined by others, more or less identical, until a group of seven is gathered watching him.

BUD

Howdy. Uuuh... how you guys doin'?

His voice echoes metallically in the strange chamber. Soft lap of water from the 'walls'. In the air a pattern of glowing lines appears, a series of what appear to be circuit diagrams. Bud staggers back from this strange 'screen' hanging in mid-air. The image is about twenty feet across.

A225 There is a rolling jumble of static and interference which resolves into... *the face of Dan Rather, doing the evening news.* A225
STATIC, then another newscast. And another. Fragments of the same story. The world on the brink of war.

225

BUD

You watch our TV? That what you're trying to say? That you know what's been going on up there?

225

The NTIs are impassive. Static...then another newscast.
B225 This time, we're allowed to focus on the story. An on-the-scene interview outside a high-tech seismology lab. There is an air of hysteria about the scene... technicians running across the background of the shot, people shouting, the reporter jamming his mike at the harried-looking scientist. B225

REPORTER

... a Caltech scientist who is among those reporting an unprecedented disturbance in the world's oceans. Dr. Berg, can you give us a clearer explanation than we've been getting?

(CONTINUED)

B225 (CONTINUED)

B225

Berg is edgy and distracted. People keep handing him pieces of paper, computer hardcopy. The biggest thing in his life is happening...

BERG

They're acoustic shockwaves, like tsunamis, but with no seismological source. The waves are propagating toward the shoreline of every continent---

A B T I I

An assistant runs up, face shiny with fear, beckoning. We see that Berg is running scared. The impossible bringing the greatest terror to the rational mind.

BERG

Yeah, I'll be right there... I have to go. Look, we don't know what it is! Okay? Not the slightest goddamn idea!

225 The image dissolves into static, fades out. Bud turns to the NTIs.

225

BUD

You're doing it! Right? That's what you're telling me. Yeah, you can control water... that's your technology. But why?

Static again, then a brilliant flash.

C225 Grainy stock film of a hydrogen bomb test in the Pacific. The film repeats, and then again, faster, and again until it merges into an unbroken white glare. Bud gets the message.

C225

225

BUD

Hey, you don't know ~~they're really gonna~~ do it. Where do you get off passing judgment on us, when you can't be sure? How do you know?

225

The screen explodes into a staccato series of searing images, stark moments from recent history...

DE US soldiers fighting in Vietnam, street warfare in Beirut, a car bomb in
FG Belfast, a suspect shot in the head in the streets of Saigon, burned and
HJ bleeding children, grainy footage of corpses bulldozed into mass graves at
KL Auschwitz, Wermacht soldiers marching in goose-step review, a 13-year-old
225 contra with an AK-47...

DE
FG
HJ
KL
225

Just glimpses, strobing... a few frames of each. But enough. The images continue.

225 HOLD ON HIM, as the light flickers on his face, the ongoing indictment of humanity.

225

CUT TO:

226 EXT. OCEAN FRONT WALK, SANTA MONICA, CALIFORNIA - DAY

226

A video news crew leaps from a Jet Ranger helicopter in a parking area and runs to set up near the railing, facing the ocean.

Pandemonium reigns around them, people running, driving, evacuating inland.

On the horizon, out to sea, a dark line has appeared.

It grows in height as it comes closer, a wall of water stretching across the horizon, already hundreds of feet high and growing.

227 EXT. NEW YORK - DAY

LONG LENS SHOT, looking seaward past the Statue of Liberty, out past the Verazzano Narrows. Stacked up by perspective, the distant wave is a wall of water impossibly high, still miles out.

228 EXT. NAVAL BASE, KAMCHATKA PENNINSULA, U.S.S.R. - NIGHT

228

The scene repeats on the eastern coast of the Kamchatka Penninsula in Russia, where a full moon shimmers along the crest of a vast wave.

SIRENS wail as Russian sailors run from the docks of Petropavlovsk Naval Base. Some stand rooted as the black glacier of water, a thousand feet high and growing, thunders toward them in nightmarish slow motion.

229 EXT. OCEAN FRONT WALK, SANTA MONICA - DAY

229

The minicam crew reporter is speaking rapidly, faltering with emotion, his voice cracking like the famous broadcast from the scene of the Hindenburg disaster.

REPORTER

The horizon has gone dark... the crowd is starting to run... some are just staring, unable to move... the wave... the wave is... it's... I don't know... maybe a thousand feet high already... getting bigger as I'm watching... still miles out... oh my God, oh Jesus... I can hear it...

A roar fills the air, a thunder which drowns out the people's screams, even the rotors of the news chopper as the camera team scrambles aboard. They leave the announcer standing transfixed, his face blank, eyes tracking upward and upward as the ground begins to shake.

230 EXT. NEW YORK - DAY

230

The Statue of Liberty looks like a souvenir figurine as the afternoon sun is blocked out by the cresting tsunami, an escarpment of water 2500 feet tall.

231 EXT. SAN FRANCISCO - DAY

231

LONG LENS SHOT - The Golden Gate Bridge and the hills of the city, the buildings of downtown. Beyond, FILLING FRAME is a wall of sea green which defies our comprehension. The image shakes with the THUNDER.

232 EXT. MALIBU - DAY

232

A diehard surfer looks over his shoulder at the mountain of water which transcends his worst nightmares. He lies paralyzed on his board.

233 EXT. MIAMI - DAY

233

Downtown Miami crouches in terror at the feet of the shimmering monolith. In a penthouse office suite, an executive watches the wave towering above him, blocking out the sun, a line of raging foam appearing as it arches over, about to break upon the teeming city.

And then...

The wave slows as it crests...

And stops.

IT SIMPLY STOPS.

2600 feet high and motionless except for a shimmering undulation of its surface in the bright sun. There is quiet, a faint wind and the calling of confused gulls.

Various reactions, as the thunder fades and people recover, only to stand awed before the vast, inexplicable manifestation.

A news helicopter passes in front of it like a dragonfly.

234 EXT. MALIBU

234

The surfer just blinks, staring.

235 EXT. NEW YORK - DAY

235

On the East Coast it's the same, as the World Trade Centers are dwarfed by a shimmering blue wall which stands...waiting.

236 EXT. PETROPAVLOVSK NAVAL BASE, U.S.S.R. - NIGHT

236

Russian seamen, lining the harbor breakwall at Petropavlovsk Naval Base on the Kamchatka Peninsula, stare upward at the monolith of water, undulating in the moonlight. It seems poised to crash down, inflicting inconceivable devastation...but it doesn't.

237 EXT. OCEAN FRONT WALK, SANTA MONICA

237

When all have seen...

The wave soundlessly subsides, slowly slipping back and down until the surface of the sea is normal again.

A237 VIDEO SHOT, HANDHELD, of a crowd of people watching the sea. Moving from face to face. Various reactions as people respond to what they can only understand as a miracle. The faces... awed, stunned, tear-streaked... laughing. The cameraman is just walking. Some people turn to him and smile, or laugh, or whoop.
 A woman is collapsed on a bench, crying.
 A man is on his knees, shaking. Total strangers hug each other.
 A black guy, tears pouring down his face, turns to the camera with a beatific grin.

A237

GUY

Somebody just laid it down to us, man. Things ain't never gonna be the same!

PULL BACK to reveal that we are in the...

238 INT. FINAL CHAMBER

238

Bud sits, shaken, watching the screen, as people react to their deliverance. He turns to the NTIs.

BUD

Why? You could've done it. Why didn't you?

The screen darkens. Then letters appear on it, slowly printing out, as if someone was clumsily typing them.
WE KNEW THIS WAS...

And we've seen this before so we know the rest...
**WE KNEW THIS WAS A ONE WAY TICKET WHEN I PUT THIS THING ON.
 BUT YOU KNOW I HAD TO COME.**

A pause, then:
LOVE YOU WIFE

This last message expands to fill the entire screen.
 Bud stares at the screen, at his message of self-sacrifice, then at the aliens. They bow their heads, just for a moment. A sign of respect.
CLOSE ON BUD as he begins to realize what has happened.

CUT TO:

239 INT. DEEPCORE / CONTROL MODULE

239

Lindsey is slumped in a chair, just staring. Withdrawn.
 The others are conserving oxygen and heat, huddling in the dark.
 The air is looking pretty thick. The speaker of the hydrophone transceiver crackles to life.

A239

MCBRIDE (V.O.)

A239

Deeptime, do you read? This is Benthic Explorer, over.

239

CATFISH

Hell yes, we read! Good of you to join us. How's that storm doin'?

115

239

A239

MCBRIDE (V.O.)

Well, it's strange... it just kind've blew itself out all of a sudden. We're up here in a flat sea with no wind. But then a lot of wierd things've been happening.

A239

239

CATFISH

Well, hell, son. You better get us a line down here, we're in moderately poor shape.

239

LATER. Hippy, Catfish and Monk are confering. B.S. on how to get a new umbilical hooked on. One Night is talking to McBride on the hydrophone.

A239

MCBRIDE (V.O.)

They figure it was over half a mile high.

A239

239

ONE NIGHT

I wish I could have seen it--

239

She glances down at the telemetry screen, seeing movement.

ONE NIGHT

Hey. Hey! HEY!! Look... it's Bud!

MONK

That's impossible.

Lindsey bolts to the screen. Stares at the message printing out. A huge grin wraps around her face.

LINDSEY

No it's not.

A239

MCBRIDE (V.O.)

What's it say?

A239

Lindsey takes the mike and sits before the screen. During the message, her voice will go through an emotional spectrum from confusion to wonder, to a childlike joy.

239 INTERCUT BETWEEN DEEPCORE AND EXPLORER BRIDGE DURING THE FOLLOWING: 239

LINDSEY

It says...

"VIRGIL BRIGMAN BACK ON THE AIR/ HAVE SOME NEW FRIENDS DOWN HERE/ I GUESS THEYVE BEEN HERE AWHILE/ THEYVE LEFT US ALONE BUT IT BOTHERS THEM TO SEE US HURTING EACH OTHER / GETTING OUT OF HAND LATELY"

Lindsey grins as she reads the next part...

LINDSEY

"THEY SENT A MESSAGE/ HOPE YOU GOT IT"

CATFISH

I'd say that's a big 10-4, jack.

LINDSEY

"THEY WANT US TO GROW UP A BIT AND PUT AWAY CHILDISH THINGS/ OF COURSE ITS JUST A SUGGESTION."

240 INT. BENTHIC EXPLORER BRIDGE - DAY

240

Beyond the windows the ocean is calm. The sky steel-gray but placid. McBride turns to Commodore DeMarco and the Navy contingent, his eyebrow cocked.

MCBRIDE

Looks like you boys might be out of business.

BENDIX

Something going on down there. I'm getting some big readings...

Bendix is hunched over the sonar, and we can see the screens lit up like a Wurlitzer.

241 INT. DEEPCORE

241

In Deepcore the crew becomes aware of a strange subsonic rumbling. The sonar is going crazy. One Night puts the headphone of her passive sonar rig up to her ear, then jerks it away.

ONE NIGHT

Whew! Whatever this is, it's major.

(CONTINUED)

241 (CONTINUED)

241

The rumble increases and a glow suffuses the water.

The glow intensifies until a blinding shaft of light blasts through the viewport, bathing the whole interior in a cold white radiance.

A last message appears on the screen:

KEEP PANTYHOSE ON/ YOU'RE GONNA LOVE THIS

The radiance intensifies. Everyone covers their eyes. It flares to WHITE-OUT.

CUT TO:

242 INT. / EXT EXPLORER BRIDGE - DAY

242

Bendix and the bridge crew are going nuts.
All their instruments are pegged.

BENDIX

Active is turning back something big... it's enormous. Coming up right under us.

BEMARCO

Where?

BENDIX

Where? EVERYWHERE!!

(looks out the window)

Over there! Port bow.

243 EXT. BENTHIC EXPLORER AND OCEAN

243

A depression appears in the surface of the sea a hundred yards off, not swirling like a whirlpool, just dimpling down.

A243 It gets wider. Deeper. Rapidly becomes a yawning pit.
The ocean is OPENING.

A243

Now the surface is churned by turbulence. Slow massive roils of tremendous power boil up from the depths.

243 McBride leads a mass exodus onto the decks to see better.

243

The opening becomes a roaring maw a hundred yards across.

A243 The ships are like toys on the shimmering rim of the maelstrom.

A243

B243 SOMETHING RISES IN THE CENTER OF THE OPENING.

B243

A massive spire. Smoothly curving and iridescent. Off the starboard beam, a quarter mile away, another spire rises. Tons of seawater fall from its sides with a THUNDEROUS ROAR, the energy of Niagara.

Off the port bow... another spire.

And another, beyond the destroyer Owensby, dwarfing it.
Six towers... plus one larger, in the center. Rising.

243 On Explorer's deck, a shadow engulfs them as the nearest spire blocks out the sun. The air, the sea, the deck... all vibrate with the THUNDER OF CREATION. 243

C243 And now for the payoff shot:
WE'RE HIGH, LOOKING DOWN. THE SPIRES FORM A PERFECT RING A MILE ACROSS. A VAST DARK FORM, LIKE A GREAT SHADOW, RISES FROM THE DEPTHS BENEATH THE SHIP. THE SPIRES ARE CONNECTED. IT IS ALL ONE. THE NTI ARK. C243

It surfaces with slow majesty, gently beaching all the ships on its broad back. We recognize it as the structure into which Bud was led by the angelic being which we assumed was a city. The Explorer rocks gently on its flat hull, clunking massively to one side as it settles.

The bridge crew watch millions of tons of seawater streaming off the back of the vast, slightly curving hull. The missile cruiser rocks back and forth nearby, high and dry...its props whining futilely.

243 ON EXPLORER'S DECK, McBride, Bendix, DeMarco, the rest of the Navy contingent... they're all standing there open-mouthed, in a dream-like daze. Touched by the hand of God. 243

Look...

D243 WHAT THEY SEE-- Fifty yards away, between them and the Owensby, sits Deepcore Two. It looks like a particularly ugly and unwanted toy, sitting on the glistening plain of the NTI Ark's hull. D243

E243 CLOSER, ON TRIMODULE C, as the hatch at the bottom opens. Catfish's feet appear, bicycling. He swings down to the pearlescent 'deck'. Stands there blinking in the sunlight, mole-like. Jammer plonks down behind him. He turns, lifts Lindsey down. Hippy, Sonny, and the rest, emerge into the light of the sun. A deliverance from the blackest night they will ever know. E243

LINDSEY

We should be dead. We didn't decompress.

CATFISH

Our blood oughta be fizzin' like a warm, shook-up Coke.

HIPPY

They must've done something to us.

Lindsey has tears streaming down her cheeks... for the sun, for life, for their deliverance and the larger one she knows has happened, an epiphany for the whole human race.

(CONTINUED)

E243 (CONTINUED)

LINDSEY

Oh, yes. I think you could say that.

She blinks. Seeing something not far away. She gives a little laugh, or something between laughing and crying.

REVERSE, as Bud walks up the curving incline of one of the mouth-like entrances to the NTI structure. His suit is casually unzipped and the FBS helmet dangles from one hand jauntily.

She starts toward him. Breaks into a run. Then stops a few feet from him. Watching him come to her. His smile, his eyes illuminating her. He stops and she touches him, lightly. Is this real? They look at each other, wonderingly a moment. Then laugh. She sniffs loudly.

LINDSEY

Hello, Brigman.

BUD

Hello, Mrs. Brigman.

Their lips meet.

CUT TO BLACK