

SEAQUEST
"CHAINS OF COMMAND"

TEASER

FADE IN:

EXT. OCEAN SURFACE - DAY

CHRYON: PHILLIPINE SEA, MACRONESIA.

Tranquil, blue, a gentle wind kicking up soft swells. Picture perfect. That's when FOUR MISSILES burst out of the water and charge towards CAMERA.

THE MISSILES
as they speed along the surface,
turning as they slice through the
air so we can see the distinct UEO
LOGO.

EXT. DYSKTRA BASE - DAY

CHRYON: PALAU ISLANDS, MACRONESIAN ALLIANCE SUB REARMAMENT BASE.

A small, Southern Alliance military settlement on a rocky shore. A sub is docked at port.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - DAY

MARA, 20s, a junior SA officer, sits at a console, talking to BROCK, 50s, her superior, who stands over a coffee pot, pouring himself a cup. His face is as scarred and weary as hers is fresh; he wears a patch over one eye.

MARA
Six months of basic training. A year
studying advanced combat techniques.
And they stick me on this rock.

BROCK
Light duty on an island paradise out
of harm's way. Gotta be rough.

MARA
I need to be tested in battle.

BROCK
Our next battle's gonna be four
seconds of nuclear flash and four
centuries of fallout.

MARA
Easy for you to say. You've seen
combat.

Brock touches his eyepatch thoughtfully.

BROCK
 Yeah, I've seen combat.
 (then:)
 There isn't going to be a war, Mara.

MARA
 We came close over the Nexus Colony.

BROCK
 And both sides pulled back. Bourne
 isn't a madman. Neither are the people
 running the UEO. No one wants a war --
 it would mean armageddon.

Mara looks away from him annoyed -- and sees something on
 her console. She looks up at Brock in disbelief.

MARA
 Oh my God.

BROCK
 What is it?

MARA
 Incoming missiles. Clayton Warheads.
 (then, shaken:)
 Impact in 40 seconds.

Brock and Mara share a long look. He swallows hard and,
 shaking, drops into a chair.

BROCK
 Get me central command.

She hits buttons on her console, and the VIDSCREEN comes to
 life with the visage of SA COMMANDER JACK DALTREY, 40.

BROCK (CONT'D)
 This is Dykstra Base, Palau Island.
 We are under attack by UEO Missiles.

MARA
 Impact in thirty seconds.

INTERCUT WITH:

EXT. ALLIANCE HQ - DAY

CHRYON: Macronesia Central Command, New Australia

INT. CENTRAL COMMAND - DAY

COMMANDER DALTREY, 40 and hard, stares in disbelief at Brock
 on the Vidscreen.

BROCK
 Repeat, we are under attack by UEO
 missiles.

DALTREY

Impossible.

LIEUTENANT ABRAMS checks his sensors.

ABRAMS

Satellite tracking confirms. Four
UEO SSN-52s heading directly for
Dykstra base.

Daltrey looks hard at Brock and Mara, knowing they're about
to die.

MARA

Twenty seconds.

DALTREY

(to Abrams)

Alert the President.

(to vidlink)

We have confirmation. I'm sorry.

MARA

Ten seconds. Nine. Eight.

Brock looks over his shoulder at her, then directly into the
vid-link.

BROCK

Please tell my wife I --

That's when the central command vidscreen goes to SNOW as

EXT. DYSKTRA BASE - DAY

THREE MISSILES hammer the cliff, blowing the base apart.
Another MISSILE hits the docked sub and the wharf, BLASTING
THEM APART. When the smoke clears, nothing but BURNING RUINS
are left... and on the twisted, smoking sub sinking beneath
the oil-slicked, fiery surface, we CUT TO:

INT. CENTRAL COMMAND

Brock stares at the dead vidscreen.

ABRAMS

Sir, I've got the president's chief
of staff on the line. What do I tell
him?

BROCK

Tell him World War III has just begun.

And on Brock's grim visage, we:

FADE OUT.

END OF TEASERACT ONE FADE IN:

EXT. UEO HEADQUARTERS - ESTABLISHING (STOCK)

CHYRON: NEW CAPE QUEST. FORT GROVE

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

McGath sits at the end of a long conference table, alone and deep in thought, as Hudson marches in. Clearly, he has come here in a hurry. He stops, taking in the empty room.

HUDSON

I rode a jump-jet here from the South Pacific because you said we had a status 1 emergency.

MCGATH

We do.

(then:)

Sit down, Captain.

Hudson does. McGath aims a remote at the VIDSCREEN and we see the ruins of Dykstra Base.

MCGATH (CONT'D)

Six hours ago, four SSN-52s destroyed an Alliance sub rearmament base in the Phillipine Sea, killing all 200 people stationed there. It was an unprovoked attack, launched without warning of any kind.

HUDSON

Who's responsible?

MCGATH

We are.

Hudson stares at McGath in shock.

MCGATH (CONT'D)

We told the Alliance that it was a tragic accident -- a computer malfunction caused a remote, automated silo to fire its missiles.

HUDSON

Was it?

MCGATH

That's what you're going to find out.

McGath points the remote at the screen again. Now we see a MAP OF THE MARIANA TRENCH.

MCGATH (CONT'D)

The missiles came from our base in the Mariana Trench, deep in Macronesian waters.

HUDSON

We don't have a Mariana base.

MCGATH

Officially, that's true.

Hudson looks at McGath in disbelief. McGath ignores it and clicks a new picture onto the Vidscreen: The MARIANA BASE, a MISSILE-LADEN STRUCTURE gimbeled on SPIDER-LIKE LEGS which carry it slowly over steep and difficult terrain.

MCGATH (CONT'D)

Unofficially, we dropped a mobile weapons station into the trench a year ago, armed with long-range missiles and nuclear warheads. It was only supposed to be used if tensions with the Alliance flared into a global conflict.

Hudson, disgusted, looks McGath in the eye.

HUDSON

Or to launch a first strike.

McGath turns away...which confirms Hudson's suspicions. Hudson glances at the empty chairs in a new light.

HUDSON (CONT'D)

That explains the guest list. What happened down there?

MCGATH

Six months ago, Mariana missed their first scheduled burst transmission. We've sent two ships to investigate, both never reported back.

Hudson stands up, his disbelief turning to anger.

HUDSON

You're telling me there's someone in that trench with his finger on the nuclear button and you haven't talked to him in six months?

MCGATH

Not just anyone.

A PICTURE of man in his 50s, appears on screen. Patton-esque, he exudes strength of character as well as a strong physical presence.

HUDSON
Admiral Aaron Vanalden.

Hudson is clearly unsettled by the revelation.

MCGATH
We're counting on you to bring him
out.

HUDSON
And if he refuses?

MCGATH
You have 24 hours to take that base --
by whatever means necessary.
Otherwise, SeaQuest is ordered to
destroy it.

And on Hudson, grimly regarding Vanalden's stony visage, we
CUT TO:

EXT. SEAQUEST - (STOCK)

as a SHUTTLE returns to the launch bay.

INT. SEAQUEST - CORRIDOR

Henderson turns a corner to find Dagwood in middle of the
corridor, crouched over something.

HENDERSON
Lose something?

DAGWOOD
Found something.

She leans over him to see... A COCKROACH on the floor.
Disgusted, she raises her foot to step on it.

HENDERSON
Allow me.

Dagwood holds his hand over the cockroach.

DAGWOOD
No!

HENDERSON
Dagwood, it's a cockroach.

DAGWOOD
It didn't do anything to you. Why do
you want to kill it?

HENDERSON
Because it's disgusting.

Dagwood looks at her, not getting it. She sighs and crouches beside him.

HENDERSON (CONT'D)

Cockroaches infest our food, breed by the thousands, and can make us all very sick.

(glances at bug:)

In fact, I'm getting sick just looking at it.

DAGWOOD

Wouldn't it be nicer to put it in a container and set it free when we go ashore? That way we won't get sick and he doesn't have to die.

Before Henderson can answer a BOOT lands on the bug. We PAN UP to find Capt. Hudson standing there.

HUDSON

I want to see you both in the ward room. Now.

He marches on. Dagwood stares at the floor, stunned. Henderson puts a consoling hand on Dagwood's back.

HENDERSON

Sorry, Dagwood.

She hurriedly follows after the Captain. After a BEAT, Dagwood follows. CUT TO:

INT. SEAQUEST - WARD ROOM

Hudson addresses Ford, Brody, Lucas, Henderson, Fredricks and Dagwood. MARIANA BASE is on screen, as well as service photos of Vanalden, and PAMELA LOPER, 30s, trim, fit, and very military in a perfectly-creased uniform.

HUDSON

The base and its 120 people are under the command of Admiral Aaron Vanalden. His XO is Pamela Loper. They are both career military officers with spotless records. We don't know what's happened there, but we can't rule out the possibility they've gone rogue.

He points to the missile tubes on the base.

HUDSON (CONT'D)

With fifty nuclear warheads at their fingertips.

FORD

That's enough firepower to wipe out life on a small continent.

LUCAS

Like Australia, for instance.

(to Hudson:)

That was the idea, wasn't it?

HUDSON

We aren't here to debate politics, Ensign. Our mission is to neutralize that base and prevent a war.

(then, to all:)

I'm taking an assault craft up the trench and relieving Vanalden of his command... if he's still alive.

FORD

Why not take SeaQuest?

HUDSON

Because I need you here to destroy the base if you don't hear from me in--

(glances at watch:)

Twenty hours.

HENDERSON

But there are over a hundred people on the base, sir.

HUDSON

And there are a couple billion who will die if he ignites a world war.

Hudson lets the gravity of the situation soak in among his crew, then:

HUDSON (CONT'D)

Wolenczak and Dagwood, you're with me. I don't know what condition the base is in.

(to Dagwood:)

I may need your strength--

(to Lucas:)

--and your technical skills to get us out of there. Dismissed.

Everyone files out, except Fredricks, who lags behind. Hudson looks at her.

HUDSON (CONT'D)

I didn't realize "dismissed" was a vague term.

FREDRICKS

With the exception of you and me,
sir, everyone who was in this room
spent the last ten years in oblivion.

HUDSON

Your point?

FREDRICKS

There's a reason they're sending you
on this mission that has nothing to
do with SeaQuest. Don't you think
Lucas and Dagwood should know before
they go up that trench with you?

Hudson closes the door and turns, getting right in Fredricks
face.

HUDSON

If I need advice on how to command
my boat, I'll ask for it. Your job
is not to question my orders, but to
follow them.

Fredricks doesn't flinch from Hudson's gaze, meeting it
defiantly.

FREDRICKS

With all due respect, sir, if that
was true, you'd be with Vanalden
today and not Loper.

She steps past him and walks out. And on Hudson simmering,
we CUT TO:

EXT. SEAQUEST - (CGI)

as the ASSAULT CRAFT shoots out of the launch bay and arches
down into THE TRENCH.

INT. SEAQUEST BRIDGE - INT ASSAULT CRAFT - INTERCUT

Ford is at the con.

FORD

Good luck, Captain.

Hudson and Lucas are at the assault craft controls, Dagwood
behind them.

HUDSON

Luck is a luxury we don't have,
Commander. Launch your missiles at
0800 hours, and not one second later.

FORD

Understood.

And on Ford and the bridge crew, sharing a grim looks, we
DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. MACRONESIAN ALLIANCE HQ - DAY

INT. COMMAND CENTRAL

Daltrey comes quickly into the room as Abrams snaps to
attention.

ABRAMS

We've traced the SSN-52s back to
their origin.

DALTREY

A UEO robot installation gone awry,
which Secretary McGath has destroyed
to show their sincerity. A pathetic
gesture, but politics will win the
day.

ABRAMS

It wasn't a robot installation, and
it hasn't been destroyed.

Daltrey is intrigued. Abrams hits a few keys and the VIDSCREEN
plots the reverse course of the missiles to a spot above the
Marianna Trench. There is an OBJECT there.

DALTREY

What is that?

ABRAMS

We've run the data from satellite
tracking, infrared resonance and
sonic imaging against all known
vessels and undersea structures.

Daltrey gives Abrams an impatient look. Abrams hits another
set of keys and the vidscreen shows the SeaQuest. Daltrey's
face tightens in anger.

DALTREY

SeaQuest.

ABRAMS

What do we do?

DALTREY

McGath said the source of their
missiles would be destroyed. If his
people can't handle the task, we
will.

ABRAMS

Attacking SeaQuest could start the
next world war.

DALTREY

They started it. We're just returning
fire.

And on his resolution and Abrams' concern:

EXT. SEAQUEST - (STOCK)

INT. SEAQUEST - BRIDGE

Ford paces around the bridge, tense and on edge, glancing
nervously every few moments at his watch.

FORD

Status, Mr. O'Neill?

O'NEILL

All quiet.

FORD

Weapons status, Mr. Brody.

BRODY

All systems armed and ready.

FORD

Mr. Piccolo?

PICCOLO

Maintaining position, sir.
(low, to Henderson:)
Just like I was when you asked two
minutes ago.

Henderson shares a knowing look with Piccolo and approaches
Ford.

HENDERSON

Is there something wrong?

Ford looks at her incredulously.

FORD

We're hanging on the brink of war
and I've got orders to blow up a
hundred of our own soldiers if I
don't get word in 18 hours.
(then:)
Yeah, something is very wrong.

She speaks quietly to him.

HENDERSON

Checking the status of every system
on SeaQuest every two minutes won't
change the situation. But it will
make the crew even tenser than you
are.

He looks at her. Something about the way she is looking at him makes him soften.

FORD

I know. It's just that I hate the waiting.

HENDERSON

What you hate is being not being able to do anything.

(off his look:)

There's a difference.

FORD

When this is over, and assuming the world isn't just a radioactive asteroid, I'm taking a vacation. As far away from the sea as I can get.

HENDERSON

Champagne powder on a perfect slope.

Ford turns to her, a smile on his face.

FORD

Deep and steep.

HENDERSON

Getting in as many turns as you can before you eat it.

FORD

Finding your skis and going back to the top for more.

She smiles back at him.

HENDERSON

Ajax.

FORD

Aspen, Colorado.

HENDERSON

Carleton Hotel.

She meets his gaze.

HENDERSON (CONT'D)

Maybe I'll see you there.

She returns to her post. And on Ford, watching after her, we CUT TO:

EXT. ASSAULT CRAFT - CGI

The ship whips through the dark trench, over its seemingly bottomless depths, past jagged out-croppings and around sharp corners.

INT. ASSAULT CRAFT

Lucas is studying the schematics of the MARIANA BASE. Hudson is at the controls. Dagwood is looking out his porthole. Lucas steals a glance at Hudson, who is staring ahead, concentrating on the task at hand.

LUCAS

We don't know what we're going to find, sir. Maybe the missiles were launched by accident. The target could have been pre-programmed.

HUDSON

Palau Island wasn't important enough to be a pre-programmed target. Someone chose Palau and fired those missiles for a reason.

LUCAS

The only reason would be to start a war -- and neither side wants that.

HUDSON

Someone does.

DAGWOOD

Look.

They follow his gaze out the window.

EXT. TRENCH (CGI)

The assault craft plays its HIGH-INTENSITY LIGHTS over out-croppings on either side, which are STREWN WITH WRECKAGE.

INT. ASSAULT CRAFT

Lucas studies his console.

LUCAS

Sensors are scanning the wreckage.
(then, looking up:)
Positive ID, sir. We've found the two UEO recon subs.

Hudson takes a deep breath. This doesn't sit well with him.

HUDSON

Long-range scan. Anything out there?

LUCAS

Hard to say. Sensors show the trench narrows 1000 meters ahead. We can't see past it.

HUDSON

How narrow?

LUCAS

We can make it through -- if we hold our breath.

Dagwood takes in a deep breath, but lets it out when he catches Lucas' look.

HUDSON

Arm plasma lasers. We'll have company on the other side.

LUCAS

How do you know?

HUDSON

Because it's what I would do. And I learned everything I know from Vanalden.

Lucas and Dagwood exchange looks.

EXT. TRENCH (CGI)

The walls of the trench narrow until they're barely wide enough to let the assault craft squeeze through.

INT. ASSAULT CRAFT

Dagwood looks at Hudson.

DAGWOOD

Admiral Vanalden is your friend?

HUDSON

I was his XO on the Valiant during the siege of Manihiki Plateau. I disobeyed an order. Pamela Loper replaced me.

Before Lucas can ask for more details, he spots something on his sensors:

LUCAS

Captain -- there's a drone, 500 meters dead ahead.

EXT. TRENCH - INT. ASSAULT CRAFT - INTERCUT

The DRONE, about ten feet by ten feet and

BRISTLING WITH WEAPONS, hovers directly in the assault craft's path, just before the walls of the trench widen.

LUCAS
Plasma torpedoes, lasers, mines.
It's pretty ugly, sir.

HUDSON
Fire lasers.

Lucas hits a few buttons. The LASERS fire, the DRONE EXPLODES.

LUCAS
Drone destroyed.

Then something on the sensor display catches Lucas' eye. He looks up, concerned.

LUCAS (CONT'D)
There are more.

HUDSON
How many?

Dagwood looks out the window.

DAGWOOD
Too many.

EXT. TRENCH (CGI)

DOZENS OF DRONES, identical to the first one, swarm up from the depths of the trench, surrounding the assault craft on all sides. Several of the drones FIRE LASERS at the rear of the assault craft, JOLTING it.

INT. ASSAULT CRAFT

The ship rocks. Lucas checks the sensors.

LUCAS
I don't get it -- that blast was at
least 70% below normal strength.

HUDSON
Barely enough to take the barnacles
off. That wasn't a blast, ensign.
That was a nudge.

The ship rocks again.

HUDSON (CONT'D)
We're being herded.
(then:)
Let's see where. All ahead one-third.

EXT. TRENCH (CGI)

The drones blocking the assault craft's path move ahead, as the ones behind it cluster behind, urging it on with mild LASERS BLASTS through the narrow part of the trench. And as the trench widens out again, our ANGLE WIDENS to REVEAL

EXT. MARIANA BASE - (CGI)

clinging vertically to the rocky face like a giant, mechanical spider, the central section gimbeled so it's perfectly level. The assault craft is "herded" down to a PORT between two "legs" and DOCKS.

INT. MARIANA BASE - LAUNCH BAY

The AIRLOCK hisses open and our heroes step out into NEAR DARKNESS, confronted by half-a-dozen soldiers leveling LASERS at them. But these soldiers look more like post-apocalypse survivalists: strong-bodied, their faces scarred and wild, their uniforms in shreds. Some are even painted in camouflage.

HUDSON

I'm Captain Oliver Hudson of SeaQuest.
I want to see to Admiral Vanalden.

WOMAN'S VOICE

A boy, a freak, and a clown. How generous of the UEO to send us a circus.

The soldiers make way for a WOMAN...hard-bodied, hard-eyed, still beautiful despite her battle scars and her ragged uniform. Hudson stares at her, clearly startled by her appearance.

HUDSON

Loper?

She smiles enigmatically.

LOPER

He always knew you'd come, Oliver.
He knew it from the start.

And on Lucas and Dagwood, uncertain what to expect, we FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

EXT. MARIANNA BASE - (CGI)

Clinging to the side of the trench.

INT. MARIANNA BASE - LAUNCH BAY

Hudson swats a gun barrel away from his head.

HUDSON

Get that gun out of my face, soldier.

LOPER

Nice attempt at asserting yourself, Oliver. But this is Admiral Vanalden's command.

HUDSON

Not anymore.

She shoots a smile at her soldiers.

LOPER

Really?

Hudson looks her right in the eye.

HUDSON

You're relieved, Commander. Hand your weapon to Ensign Wolenczak.

(to others:)

Stand down, put your weapons in the shuttle.

She suddenly PISTOL-WHIPS Hudson across the face. Dagwood flings her across the narrow passage way. A soldier whips out a knife, presses it to Dagwood's throat from behind and is about to slit it when:

LOPER

No!

The soldier freezes, a thin line of blood trickling down Dagwood's neck from the knife's razor-edge. Lucas and Hudson have guns to their heads. She gets to her feet and faces Hudson, who ignores his wound and stands firm.

LOPER (CONT'D)

Look around you, Oliver. The UEO doesn't exist here.

HUDSON

It does now.

Lucas can't believe what is going down here.

LUCAS

This is crazy. We're all on the same side.

LOPER

There are no sides. There never were.
(MORE)

LOPER (CONT'D)
 (to the soldiers)
 Find them a clean cage. The Dagger
 comes with me.

Two soldiers grab Dagwood and, despite his struggling, drag him off, while the others hustle Hudson and Lucas away. CUT TO:

EXT. SEAQUEST - (STOCK)

INT. SEAQUEST - BRIDGE

O'Neill whips around at his station.

O'NEILL
 Sir, I'm tracking two high speed
 contacts launched from the Alliance's
 Balintang silo. Profiles consistent
 with sea-skimming attack missiles.
 Bearing 270 degrees, range 800
 kilometers and closing.

EXT. OCEAN - NIGHT - (CGI)

TWO MISSILES streak low over the ocean. INTERCUT WITH:

INT. SEAQUEST - BRIDGE

Ford moves to O'Neill's station.

FORD
 Track and extrapolate. I need a
 projected target.

O'Neill examines his console, looks up.

O'NEILL
 Us.

FORD
 How long until impact?

O'NEILL
 Two minutes, twenty seconds.

Ford stands up straight, turns to Brody.

FORD
 Mr. Brody -- rig for anti-air warfare.
 Open missile hatches.

BRODY
 Missiles up. Targets locked.

FORD
 Fire.

EXT. SEAQUEST - EXT. OCEAN - NIGHT

TWO MISSILES shoot out of SeaQuest and break the surface, arcing into the air and colliding with the TWO OTHER MISSILES in a TREMENDOUS BLAST that lights up the night sky.

INT. SEAQUEST - BRIDGE

Brody shoots a grin at Ford.

BRODY

Targets down.

Everyone is relieved... when suddenly the SeaQuest is VIOLENTLY ROCKED BY AN EXPLOSION. Our heroes grab hold of their consoles for support.

FORD

What the hell was that?

HENDERSON

Plasma torpedo, deck seven. There's flooding in Hydroponics.

FORD

Evacuate and lock it off.

(to O'Neill:)

Where did they come from?

O'NEILL

Sir, two Alliance warsubs, dead astern.

EXT. SEAQUEST - (CGI)

Two HUGE ALLIANCE ATTACK SUBS, the underwater equivalent of battleships, are right behind SeaQuest and FIRING THEIR TORPEDOES.

INT. SEAQUEST - BRIDGE

BRODY

I've got incoming -- six torpedoes.

FORD

Fire intercepts.

Brody turns to Ford, grim.

BRODY

No time, sir.

O'NEILL

Confirmed. Impact in thirty seconds.

On Ford, as he accepts what's going to happen.

FORD
All decks. Rig for impact.

PICCOLO
Where did they come from?

O'NEILL
Twenty seconds.

FORD
Our wake. The noise from our propulsion system and our anti-missile intercepts hid their approach.

HENDERSON
It was all a distraction.

O'NEILL
Fifteen seconds.

FORD
Oldest ploy in submarine warfare and I fell for it.

Ford and Henderson share a meaningful look. So much to say, no time to say it.

O'NEILL

EXT. SEAQUEST - INT. SEAQUEST BRIDGE - INTERCUT

as the TORPEDOES slam into the ship, throwing crew members across the bridge like ragdolls, wall systems BLASTING with sparks, water EXPLODING out of the MOON POOL. Ford is thrown head-first into a bulkhead. Henderson rushes over to him -- he's out cold, bleeding tricking down his forehead. O'Neill struggles back into his seat.

O'NEILL
Hull breach, decks four, eight and seven.

BRODY
Flooding tubes Charlie 1 and 2, Delta 1 and 2. Prepare subfighters for immediate launch.

HENDERSON
No --

She gets behind the helm and frantically hits a series of buttons.

HENDERSON (CONT'D)
Taking helm control. Diverting all power to impellers. Rig for full-ahead, emergency speed.

EXT. SEAQUEST - (CGI)

The leading edge on the forward hull bends downward. The rear engines shift into position.

INT. SEAQUEST - BRIDGE

Henderson straps herself in.

O'NEILL
Warsubs are firing! Incoming torpedos!

Brody grabs Henderson.

BRODY
What do you think you're doing?

HENDERSON
Getting us the hell out of here.
Strap yourself in.

She pushes Brody aside. Everyone on the bridge straps themselves into their chairs. Brody shoots Henderson a furious look as she slaps a button and:

EXT. SEAQUEST

SeaQuest BLASTS FORWARD in a tremendous burst of speed that creates the illusion of STRETCHING THE SHIP before she disappears into the dark sea ahead ... leaving behind a HIGHLY TURBULENT WAKE that tosses the warsubs, SMASHING one of them to BITS against the ridge.

INT. MARIANA BASE - CELL

The room has been stripped bare, a for a row of EMPTY, IRON RACKS dangling from one wall. An IRON CAGE seperates the room from the corridor. This was some kind of storage area. Hudson prowls the room like a jungle cat probing its cage for weakness. Lucas comes across a black box mounted in one of the racks.

LUCAS
This looks like a recharging unit
for a T-class plasma rifle. This
must have been the armory.

Hudson studies the recharging unit.

HUDSON
We could do some damage with that --
if we had a gun to stick it in.

He walks away. Lucas studies it some more, takes a piece of metal off the floor, and starts to pry at the panel. He steals a look at Hudson, who prowls on, testing the bars, switch panels, anything that might give them an edge.

LUCAS

Sir, what was the order you disobeyed?

Hudson stops and turns to Lucas.

HUDSON

It's not relevant.

LUCAS

If it can help us figure out what happened here, I think it is.

(off Hudson's look:)

Sir.

Hudson thinks. This is a painful subject for him, but Lucas is right.

HUDSON

What do you know about XYZ?

LUCAS

Just that shortly after SeaQuest disappeared, the Alliance over-ran the settlements of XYZ.

HUDSON

XYZ was declared a UEO safe haven. By the time we got there, it was already "annexed" into greater Macronesia at a cost of 15,000 civilian lives.

LUCAS

Didn't the UEO mount a blockade to starve out the Alliance troops?

HUDSON

(nods:)

The Valiant held the northern perimeter for 47 days. On the 48th, a sub tried to break out. It was big, fast, and didn't respond to our radio signals. Vanalden ordered me to destroy it.

Even now, years later, it angers Hudson to think of this.

HUDSON (CONT'D)

But they weren't even trying to evade detection. They were heading straight out -- not making evasive maneuvers of any kind. If they were an Alliance ship, why would they do that? Vanalden wouldn't listen.

LUCAS

(realizing:)

You refused to fire.

HUDSON

He demoted me on the spot, and ordered Loper to launch torpedoes.

LUCAS

Did she?

HUDSON

I pulled my sidearm. I wouldn't give up my station.

Lucas can't believe what he's hearing.

LUCAS

You were willing to shoot your Captain?

HUDSON

Before it could come to that, we picked up a faint signal from the sub.

(then:)

Refugees. They'd hidden in the colony air ducts for seven weeks before stealing the sub and making their break.

LUCAS

You saved their lives.

HUDSON

It was the only thing that saved me from court-martial. The demotion stuck.

LUCAS

But you were right. Vanalden should have put you up for a medal.

Hudson shakes his head.

HUDSON

An order is an order. Right or wrong has nothing to do with it. In his mind, I was a coward.

LUCAS

And in yours?

Hudson motions to the wall panel.

HUDSON

You got a plan or are you just redecorating?

Lucas looks back at the panel.

LUCAS

If we can reverse the polarity in this recharging unit, maybe we can send a plasma energy pulse back through the power conduits and knock out the entire grid.

HUDSON

In other words, you want to stick a fork in the outlet.

LUCAS

Essentially, yes. The tricky part is making sure we don't get killed doing it.

HUDSON

We're dead in eight hours anyway. We'll take our chances. Get to it.

LUCAS

Yes, sir.

Lucas goes back to work, trying to pry the cover off the black box. Hudson stands, still troubled by the story he's just told. That's when FOOTSTEPS approach. Lucas drops the metal and covers the panel with his body. TWO SOLDIERS come in, weapons poised on Hudson.

SOLDIER

Vanalden wants you.

One of the soldiers pushes Hudson out the door. The other one glares at Lucas, then marches out, slamming the door closed behind him, and leaving Lucas totally alone.

EXT. SEAQUEST - (STOCK)

INT. SEAQUEST - SICKBAY

Henderson stands alongside a DOCTOR at Ford's bedside. He's unconscious, his head wrapped in bandages, IV tubes in his arm.

DOCTOR

He's comatose. My guess is a subdural hematoma. I wish I knew more, but med diagnostics have been offline since the attack. We're trying to jury-rig a fix right now.

Henderson nods, she understands. The doctor leaves. Henderson leans over Ford.

HENDERSON

Ever since Hyberion, I've felt something between us. I know you've
(MORE)

HENDERSON (CONT'D)
 felt it, too. We keep trying to talk
 about it, but somehow we can't. That's
 over.

She takes his hand.

HENDERSON (CONT'D)
 When you wake up, and you will, we're
 going face our feelings for each
 other.

She kisses his hand and smiles at him.

HENDERSON (CONT'D)
 We have a date in Aspen, remember?

Brody marches up behind her.

BRODY
 Henderson.

Henderson lets go of Ford's hand before Brody can see it and
 turns to face him.

BRODY (CONT'D)
 You initiated full ahead emergency
 speed without clearing it with me.

HENDERSON
 I got us out of there before they
 could sink us.

BRODY
 You ran. SeaQuest doesn't run from a
 fight, not under my command.

HENDERSON
 You weren't in command, no one was.

BRODY
 We're going back.

He turns to leave, she grabs him.

HENDERSON
 It's not your decision.

BRODY
 Chain of Command, Lieutenant. Hudson,
 Ford, me. This is my boat now, and
 we're taking those warsubs out.

HENDERSON
 Our orders are to stand ready to
 destroy Mariana base in eight hours.

BRODY

And we will, right after we sink
those subs.

He walks out.

INT. SEAQUEST - BRIDGE

Brody settles into the command con.

BRODY

Mr. O'Neill, can you locate those
Alliance bastards?

O'NEILL

The bastards are where we left them,
sir.

BRODY

Fredricks -- get in a Specter. Draw
their fire and bring them to us.

FREDRICKS

Where are you going to be?

BRODY

Lying on the bottom of the ridge.
They won't see us until they are
right above us.

Fredricks leaves, nearly colliding with Henderson as she
marches in.

HENDERSON

You can't do this, Brody.

BRODY

The decision has been made. Man your
station.

HENDERSON

No one wants to avenge Ford and
SeaQuest more than me, but we have a
mission at Mariana Trench.

BRODY

Lieutenant, one more outburst out of
you, and I'll have you removed from
the bridge.

All eyes turn to Brody and Henderson. She takes a deep breath
and takes her seat at the helm.

BRODY (CONT'D)

All head, full, Mr. Piccolo.

PICCOLO

Aye, sir.

And on Henderson's hard look, we CUT TO:

EXT. MARIANE BASE - (CGI)

INT. MARIANE BASE - CONTROL ROOM

A GUARD motions Hudson inside. The room is dark, lit by shafts of light from the cracked panels above. A voice, almost a WHISPER, comes from somewhere in the darkness.

VANALDEN

Have you come to kill me, Oliver?

Hudson moves cautiously into the shadows, following the voice.

HUDSON

I'm here to relieve you of your command, sir.

VANALDEN

Semantics. The cloak of cowards and politicians. Which one are you?

HUDSON

What happened here, Admiral?

VANALDEN

The inevitable.

(then:)

Serving watch on doomsday, alone in the darkest, deepest place on earth, you will find the true nature of man.

Hudson steps around a corner, where he finds Vanalden, his back to him in a LARGE SWIVEL CHAIR. He's muscled and scarred, like the others, his uniform coat cut into a sleeveless vest lined with sheaths for his many crude knives, daggers, spikes. He's hunched over a CONSOLE, the GLOW from the SCREEN he's obscuring bathing him in an other-worldly amber light.

VANALDEN (CONT'D)

The men began to fight among themselves. I tried to put them down with force, but it only got worse. Blood was everywhere. You could smell it, taste it, feel the itch of it drying on your skin.

HUDSON

Isolation Dementia. The same thing that killed everyone on the Jupiter Probe.

VANALDEN

I almost released the grapnels and plunged the base into the abyss.

HUDSON

What stopped you?

VANALDEN

The realization that the men were right -- I was wrong to try and stop them, or anyone, from killing.

HUDSON

That's not a realization, sir. That's a symptom. Paranoia, violence, fear. It's all part of the sickness.

VANALDEN

You want to know what the sickness is? Peace.

Vanalden turns, and that's when we see what's on the screen behind him.

ON THE VIDSCREEN

The SOLDIERS stand in a circle, YELLING AND SHRIEKING. In the center is Dagwood, looking very confused. BURNS, 30s, a hulking, vicious looking soldier, peels out of the crowd. He's holding a WHIP. He circles Dagwood, who never takes his eyes off him. INTERCUT WITH:

VANALDEN

Peace is an unnatural state that I was trying to impose on my men...that this base was meant to impose on the world.

Burns CRACKS THE WHIP on Dagwood, who flinches but stands firm.

HUDSON

What good is torturing him going to do?

VANALDEN

I'm not torturing him. I'm setting him free.

Burns strikes him again and again...the PAIN and the JEERING of the crowd slowly breaking down Dagwood's stony resolve.

VANALDEN (CONT'D)

We exist to kill -- that is what makes us men, that is our only true nature.

HUDSON

End this, Admiral.

Suddenly Dagwood ROARS, grabs the whip, and jerks it out of Burns' hands. Burns throws himself at Dagwood, and they fight furiously.

VANALDEN

We bred it into the Dagers, but deny it in ourselves. But you don't have to bleed much to be freed.

Hudson takes a spike from Vanalden's vest and jams it against his throat.

HUDSON

I said end this.

VANALDEN

That didn't take long. Feels good, doesn't it?

HUDSON

Release my men, send your crew to the escape pods.

VANALDEN

You couldn't kill me then and you won't now.

HUDSON

Don't bet on it.

VANALDEN

Even if you could, do you think they would follow you?

Dagwood grabs Burns from behind and begins to crush him. Burns flails helplessly.

VANALDEN (CONT'D)

Do you think he would?

Dagwood breaks Burns like a twig and lifts his corpse above his head, his own VICTORIOUS ROAR rising above the CHEERS of the soldiers. And on Hudson, dropping the spike, we FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

EXT. SPECTER - (STOCK)

as it slices through the sea.

INT. SPECTER - INT. SEAQUEST BRIDGE - INTERCUT

Fredricks steers the Specter through the ridge. Our bridge crew are as we left them.

FREDRICKS

I'm hugging the ridge line. I don't think the warsubs have picked me up yet.

HENDERSON

It's not too late to bring her back, Brody.

Brody ignores her, talking to Fredricks.

BRODY

Get in as close as you can Freddie, then strafe them. Just get them angry -- don't try to take them on by yourself.

FREDRICKS

I'm not crazy.
(then, to herself:)
At least not with this chip in my head.

END INTERCUT.

HENDERSON

(to O'Neill:)
How much time do we have left?

O'NEILL

Five hours.

HENDERSON

(to Brody:)
And it will take us at least an hour to get back into firing position. We don't have time for this.

BRODY

It's our duty. We'll make time. They attacked SeaQuest. Commander Ford is in a coma. We're not running from this fight.

(to Piccolo:)

Take us to the bottom.

(to Henderson:)

Rig for silent running.

HENDERSON

Our duty is to be at Mariana Trench to destroy the base if Capt. Hudson's mission fails --not chasing after Alliance subs to satisfy a grudge.

BRODY

Mr. O'Neill - rig for silent running.

O'NEILL

She has a point, sir.

BRODY

Which I have considered and rejected.
Now do I have to carry out the order
myself?

O'Neill turns back to his console.

O'NEILL

Shutting down all non-essential
systems.

O'Neill shoots an apologetic look at Henderson. And we CUT
TO:

HUDSON

I'm not going to convince you with
words. Let's do it your way. You and
I. In the arena. Or don't you have
the guts to live by your own rules?

VANALDEN

Very good, Oliver. But the kings
don't fight until their best soldiers
have fought.

Vanalden motions to TWO SOLDIERS. Lucas turns to Hudson.

LUCAS

(low:)

What is this going to gain?

HUDSON

Time. If he's watching a fight, he's
not pushing the button.

(then:)

It's up to SeaQuest now.

Dagwood is pushed into the arena. Loper steps out to face
him -- poised for battle. They collide like two rams, locked
in combat.

Look at the prehistoric cave dLook at the cave drawings in
mesopotamia. I have.

I've seen the cave drawings in mesopotamia -- it was just
another tourist curiosity to me then.

\S15

Get away from what passes for the
real world, and the malignant
indoctrination of society wears off.

war. Even a dog knows that.

urth, the only dignity, is in war.

But it only take a few strikes against the flesh to strip away the fragile veneer of "civilization."

VANALDEN

HUDSON

I saved the lives of those refugees,
just like I'm going save lives today.

VANALDEN

You didn't save them. You delayed
the inevitable.

HUDSON

What are you talking about?

VANALDEN

The refugee camp was bombed by the
Alliance 72 hours later. They still
died.

\s15always were weak. That is why I removed you from duty.

HUDSON

I was right. I stopped us from killing
innocent civilians.

VANALDEN

And the next day, they were all wiped
out when the alliance XYZ. What
difference does it make?

HUDSON

The difference between humanity and
savagery.

VANALDEN

There is no difference -- that's
what we've learned.

\S4

\s15You think if you kill me they
will follow you?

Tell your men to lay down their weapons and go to the escape pods.

SCENE 19 STUFF

BRODY

Is this mutiny?

HENDERSON

No, sir, it's a plea for reason.

Brody mulls it for a moment, then:

BRODY
Freddie, can you shake them?

FREDRICKS
I can lose my own shadow.

That is life. That is reality. that is who we are.

\s15The halls were thick with the stench of blood, decay and excrement.

blood of my men.

blood.

Each of us became a cornered animal.

VANALDEN
It only takes a few slashes of the knife to strip away the thin veneer of "civilization."

\s15 We all became cornered animals.

The corridors were thick with the blood of my men.

(then:)
A distress call was out of the question. The only option was to destroy the base myself.

VANALDEN
It only takes a few slashes of the knife to strip away the thin veneer of "civilization" from out souls.

I came close to destroying the base myself.

ould have revealed I nearly sent

I came close to sending a distress call to the UEO... or destroying the base myself.

HUDSON
Why didn't you?

VANALDEN
almost ssent a UEO a distress call.

I tried to stop it, but that only led to People died. At first, I thought it was a serious problem. I considered scrubbing the mission

We couldn't communicate with the outside world.

THE ISOLATION GOT

HUDSON

It's time for you to go home.

HUDSON

\S15

this is where you must find the soul
of man.

We are serving watch on In the cold, darkness of the deepest
fissure on earth, Serving watch on a doomsday base, alone in
the darkness of the deep, the one thing youyou will the dark
soul of man.

VANALDEN

Do you think I'm insane.

HUDSON

Yes.

VANALDEN

Insanity is the

UDSON

a shaft of light illuminates a
Vanalden, head-shaved, face covered
in camouflage make-up, his It saddens
me that you're resorting to that
already.

HUDSON

NO, SIR.

VANALDEN

Then you are a fool.

\S30END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN: