

VOYAGE TO THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA

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Written by

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"VOYAGE TO THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA"

FADE IN:

Super: "Circa 300 A.D."

INT. PRIMITAVE GRASS HUT - NIGHT

A single shaft of moonlight exposes a man sleeping on the ground in an otherwise dark room. Huge leaves make his bed. Stone tablets with inscriptions are stacked neatly nearby.

A closer examination of the man divulges a brow of sweat, several drops already collecting in a pool on one of the leaves of his bed. His face contorts, he thrashes about.

The man's dream is filled with quick images of violent explosions, massive flaming boulders raining down on his village, then spreading across the sea, causing it to boil.

He awakes, wipes his brow and gazes at his hand. The moisture in his palm glistens off the moonlight. He grabs one of the tablets and dashes outside.

EXT. CAMPFIRE OUTSIDE THE GRASS HUT - DAWN

An occasional splash of water can be heard through the sound of the crackling campfire. The man sits on the ground in front of it, dipping a rag into a clay pot of water.

He wipes the edges a stone tablet propped on his lap. Beside him, three bowls of colorful liquid sit next to a feather, its tip coated with one of the colors.

He gently blows across the wet inscriptions then repositions it for a better gaze in the sunlight now peering over his shoulder.

Behind him a young boy emerges from the grass hut and walks to the campfire. The man sits the tablet down, reaches out and pulls the boy in for a hug and kiss on the forehead.

An ascending view from the sky reveals the campfire to be in a village. The village on top of a densely forested mountain. The mountain next to an oceanic coastline.

Credits and music roll as the view travels along the coastline, then out into open sea. The sun rises, illuminating a horizon slowly filling with white mountains.

Closing in on the white mountains, occasional chunks of ice float into view, eventually morphing into an entirely new scenery.

EXT. ANTARTICA - DAY

Ice mountains litter the snowy landscape. The setting sun silhouettes against a cloudy blue sky. The calm sea fills the foreground then begins to bubble.

The glass nose of the submarine Seaview burst through the bubbles reaching skyward. It's slender hull almost vertical to the horizon.

The sub slows its climb until becoming momentarily motionless. The nose falls, the stern bobs into view. A slender glistening now hull floats on the surface.

Super: "Antarctica 2012"

INT. SEAVIEW - CONTROL ROOM

A well groomed news anchorman makes his delivery.

ANCHORMAN

Tonight's top story comes from the bottom of the world. The USS Seaview, a remarkable new submarine has just set an unbelievable underwater speed record during its trial run. Utilizing 'Slipstream Propulsion', a carefully guarded secret developed by scientist and former navy admiral Hiram Nelson, the Seaview made the journey from its port in San Francisco to the coast of Antarctica in less than five days. During the next two weeks the unique glass-nosed sub will be testing several new deep water systems in the Southern Pacific. They will determine if Congress will give the green light to a lucrative naval contract with the Nelson Institute for Marine Research, the Admiral's privately owned company. Opponents claim unmanned subs could do the same job at a fraction of the cost and have dubbed the project "Nelson's Folly." In an exclusive interview last month Nelson defended the one billion dollar...

The picture of an interviewer and Admiral Nelson freezes. The words PAUSE cross his face.

Gathered around a bank of overhead video monitors watching the newscast is the sub's control room crew. Among them is 57 year old Admiral HIRAM (HARRY) NELSON.

Standing beside Nelson is the Captain of the Seaview, 39 year old LEE CRANE. The duo turns to address the crew.

NELSON

Gentleman, my 'modesty' simply won't allow me to watch any further. So instead, I'll congratulate you again on a job well done. We've made history.

The crew claps with pats on the back and handshaking.

NELSON

Now it's on to our next task. A game of hide and seek with the Pacific forces.

Nelson pauses a moment and gazes at his audience.

NELSON

And from what I've seen of this crew's performance, I'm confident that by the time those Navy boys find this sub, we'll be back in San Francisco drinking with Tennessee whiskey.

The sailors begin to clap and cheer.

NELSON

Stations if you please.

The crew take their post. Nelson gestures to Crane.

NELSON

Captain.

Crane turns to ROBERT "CHIP" MORTON, the 34 year old Executive Officer.

CRANE

Mr. Morton, prepare to dive.

The three men take their seats, barstool like chairs with consoles at their side, arranged in a semi-circle in the middle of the control room. Crane occupies the center seat.

CRANE

Make depth one hundred feet.

Morton presses buttons on his console.

MORTON

Depth, one hundred feet, aye.

The klaxon sounds. His voice reverberates throughout the sub.

MORTON

Diving stations. Diving stations. All hands prepare to dive.

On every deck, the crew methodically scrambles to get to their stations. Morton watches his console. Several red lights, one by one, turn green.

MORTON

Ballast control reports all green, Captain.

CRANE

Take us down Chip. Helm, all ahead two thirds. Prop speed.

The helm is occupied by 26 year old DONNA RICHTER, a blond haired blue eyed beauty with a soft German accent.

RICHTER

Aye sir. Props ahead two thirds.

Water begins churning against the bow, then the glass nose. The sky slowly disappears while the churning is replaced with clear sea. The Seaview vanishes beneath the waves.

CRANE

Navigator, come to course three five four degrees.

The Seaview's Hawaiian born navigator, 26 year old DAVID KENO, responds.

KENO

Aye sir. Three five four degrees.

CRANE

Execute.

The Seaview makes a graceful banking turn as it descends into the dark water. A bright searchlight, nestled in the sub's bow, flickers to life.

MORTON

Depth, one hundred feet, Captain.

CRANE

Very well Mr. Morton. Zero angle on the planes.

MORTON

Aye, sir.

Crane turns to Nelson.

CRANE

On course, Admiral.

Nelson pushes himself up from his chair.

NELSON

You should get some rest. The Seaview will need its Captain alert and ready when the simulations begin.

CRANE

I will, sir. Just have a couple of things to take care of first.

NELSON

Fine. I'll be in my quarters.

Nelson disappears up a spiral staircase near the sub's nose. Crane follows but stops at one of the huge glass panes. He gazes at the panoramic view. Morton joins him.

CRANE

(still gazing) Incredible, isn't it?

MORTON

Yes sir. That it is.

CRANE

Maintain this course and speed for twelve hours, Chip.

MORTON

Aye sir.

CRANE

(sarcastically) Then the fun begins.

MORTON

(returning the sarcasm) I can't wait.

INT. SEAVIEW - NELSON'S QUARTERS

Nelson rummages through a desktop littered with paperwork. He uncovers a picture of a lovely lady. He picks it up and gently sits it on an uncluttered corner of the desk.

He looks fondly at the picture then moves some paperwork aside uncovering several of the desk's many buttons. He presses one.

A pleasant bell sounds. Nelson clears his throat, loosens his tie and leans back in his chair.

NELSON

Continuation of personal log. We've reached Antarctica and surfaced just off the Getz Ice Shelf. I can't describe how proud I am of the Seaview and its crew. The Slipstream has performed superbly, and I'm anxious to see if the other systems fair as well.

Nelson leans forward and unties his shoe.

NELSON

Now it's on the part I'm really not looking forward to, war games. 'Battle simulations' as the brass likes to refer to them now. And the Seaview is the bait. All we have to do is evade the entire Pacific Fleet for seventy two hours.

Nelson's shoe hits the floor.

NELSON

Actually, sounds pretty easy knowing what this sub is capable of.

Nelson's other shoe drops to the floor.

NELSON

And finally the last leg of the trials. What I AM really looking forward to, ten days of ocean bottom exploration of the Pacific..

Nelson is interrupted by a chime.

NELSON

Computer, stop recording. (to the door)
Come in.

Crane enters.

CRANE

Admiral, Long Range Scanners will be operational again in a couple of hours.

NELSON

Very good Captain. Did you find the cause of the failure?

CRANE

Not yet sir, but we're working on it.

NELSON

I'll expect a full report when you find out.

CRANE

Of course sir. Anything else Admiral?

NELSON

No. Dismissed.

Crane takes a couple of steps then turns back.

NELSON

Something else on your mind Captain?

Crane slightly bites his lower lip and takes a breath.

CRANE

I just wanted to thank you for allowing the men some time to enjoy the fanfare.

NELSON

My pleasure. The men deserved a little time off. They're a fine crew and that's a reflection of their commanding officer.

CRANE

Thank you sir, I'll pass on the compliments.

Nelson returns his attention to his desk.

NELSON

Anything else on your mind Captain?

CRANE

No sir.

NELSON

Then that'll be all. Goodnight

CRANE

Good night, sir.

Crane exits. Nelson leans back in his chair and props his feet on his desk.

NELSON

Computer. Resume recording.

INT. SEAVIEW - SICK BAY

Crane enters. A nurse, MICHAEL, is buzzing between several diagnostic beds, treating holographic patients, all appearing injured and vying for his attention.

Through a glass door, the sub's doctor, 30 year old ELIZABETH HILLER, has her attention focused on her computer monitor. Crane steps into her office.

CRANE

Expecting trouble Doctor?

Elizabeth looks up.

ELIZABETH

I wanted be prepared in case we have 'simulated injuries' during our little bout with the Navy. Who knows, we might get bonus points.

CRANE

That's quite possible.

Elizabeth stands and slowly strolls over to Crane.

ELIZABETH

(playfully) Now Captain, you wouldn't be giving away any secrets about the simulation would you?

CRANE

Only if I'm tortured.

Elizabeth moves close to Crane.

ELIZABETH

Just what kind of torture are we talking about, Captain?

Crane smiles.

CRANE

I don't know. I'm sure you could come up with something original.

ELIZABETH

Say something really slow, maybe start with...

A chime rings from the cabin's speakers. Morton's voice follows.

MORTON

Captain Crane, could you report to the control room sir?

Crane begins to speak but Elizabeth cuts him off with a finger to her puffed lips. She steps to her desk and pushes a button.

ELIZABETH

Mr. Morton, this is Doctor Hiller. Captain Crane is resting and shouldn't be bothered right now. Unless, of course, there's an emergency that you can't handle.

The speaker remains silent a moment before Morton's voice returns.

MORTON

Uh, no ma'am. It's not an emergency. I'll leave the Captain a wake up memo.

ELIZABETH

I'm sure he will appreciate it XO. As a matter of fact, I believe your watch is over as well, isn't it Mr. Morton?

Again a moment of silence. Crane grins.

MORTON

Yes ma'am you're correct. However, regulations do allow me to continue into...

ELIZABETH

Mr. Morton, please go to bed before I have security issue a sedative with your name on it. Hiller out.

Both giggle slightly.

CRANE

I really need to go up there...

Elizabeth glares at Crane.

ELIZABETH

Captain Crane, I'm aware that you've been staying up half the night for days studying battle simulations with Mr. Morton.

CRANE

I want to be prepared.

ELIZABETH

The best way to do that is to get a full night's sleep. If you like, I can issue you a sedative as well.

Crane takes a couple of steps back.

CRANE

No ma'am. That won't be necessary. I'm sure I can sleep without it. Goodnight.

Crane makes it to the door.

ELIZABETH

Lee. I'm not trying to spoil your fun, I just don't want to see 'killing' yourself to impress the Admiral...

CRANE

Impress the Admiral? Doctor, I'm performing my duties the best I know how under the circumstances.

ELIZABETH

What circumstances?

CRANE

Off the record?

ELIZABETH

You have my word.

CRANE

The unusual circumstance of having a C.O. on board my boat. In the Navy I joined the captain of a submarine was the master and commander of his boat.

ELIZABETH

Your forgetting this is a special branch of the Navy and these ARE the trial runs of a submarine he designed. The Admiral is expected to be here.

CRANE

I know, but if the he intends to be anything more than a VIP passenger once this sub's on mission status, I won't be her captain.

Elizabeth raises an eyebrow.

ELIZABETH

I think your crazy. It's a great job,
great pay and great benefits.

CRANE

And a boss that has the annoying habit
of peeking over my shoulder and
questioning me in front of the crew.
It's frustrating. If he's going to
countermand half of my orders then what
does he need me for?

ELIZABETH

The other half?

Crane grins then rubs his blood shot eyes.

CRANE

It's like I've always said, Admirals
don't belong on submarines.

ELIZABETH

This one thinks he does.

INT. SEAVIEW - CONTROL ROOM

A pair of legs belonging to 32 year old Lt. KEVIN KOWALSKI,
crawl out from under a console. With tools still in hand he
pulls himself up to face Morton.

MORTON

Give me some good news Kowalski.

KAWALSKI

It's definitely not this hardware, sir.
If you consider that good news.

MORTON

Actually, no, but it does give us
something to eliminate. Let's see the
playback again.

Kowalski presses buttons. Multiple overhead video monitors
begin displaying technical data and images.

KAWALSKI

There it is, sir. For one point two
seconds the readings go off the scale.
Then the fuel cell blew and the
scanners went dead.

Kowalski presses more buttons and the images freeze. Morton
steps back and scrutinizes the data.

MORTON

And this happened while we were surfacing?

KOWALSKI

Yes sir.

MORTON

(to himself) Could be a software glitch. How long to bring the scanners back online and run a complete diagnostic?

KAWALSKI

About two hours, sir. We're running the startup routine now.

MORTON

Well, we can certainly continue on without long range scanners.

Morton takes one more look at the monitors.

MORTON

Go head with the diagnostic. I'll hold off on that memo to the Captain until you're through.

KAWALSKI

Aye, sir.

MORTON

I'm going to take the good Doctor's advice and get some sleep. Wake me the minute you have the results.

INT. SEAVIEW - NELSON'S QUARTERS

The exhaled smoke from a cigar billows past an ashtray filled to the brim. The fiery end of the cigar plunges into the ashes and with a last puff of smoke, is extinguished.

Fingers grasping a glass filled with ice, CLINKS as it hits the still untidy desk. A golden brown liquid is poured in.

Nelson takes a hefty drink. He sits it down in front of the lady's picture and gazes at her smile.

NELSON

I wish you could have been with me. The ice shelf was breathtaking.

Nelson guzzles down the last of his drink. He stands and stretches. Then moves over to his bunk and pulls back the covers. He begins to undress.

INT. SEAVIEW - CRANE'S QUARTERS

Crane sits on the edge of his bunk, his head bowed and eyes closed.

Adorning his cabin are several artifacts, ranging from stone tablets to spear points.

He motions the sign of the cross, tucks himself into bed and turns out the lights.

INT. SEAVIEW - CONTROL ROOM

Kowalski leans back in his chair reading a paperback novel. A light accompanied by a chime flashes on his console. Sitting his book down he begins studying the monitor.

A pleasant voice narrates as the Monitor reads: DIAGNOSTIC COMPLETE. NO ANOMOLIES FOUND. LONG RANGE SCANNERS FUNCTIONING WITHIN DESIGN SPECIFICATIONS.

Kowalski shakes his head.

KOWALSKI

That eliminates a software problem.

After pressing several more buttons the monitor reads: RESTARTING LONG RANGE SCANNERS - QUATUM SONAR PINGING. Kowalski drums his fingers on the console.

The monitors come to life displaying a map of the pacific oceans. Colored outlines depict north, central and south America.

A flashing light at the bottom of the map denotes the Seaview's position and heading. In the sub's path, stretching the width of the map, is a u-shaped red arc.

Kowalski's eyes widen as he presses several more buttons. The map redraws and the red arc spreads like a wave on a pond. Kowalski swings around in his chair.

KOWALSKI

Helm, are you picking up anything dead ahead.

RICHTER

No sir.

KOWALSKI

You will. Increase your range to maximum. (into his console) Mr. Morton please come to the control room.

Kowalski jumps up, trots to the command chair and presses a button. The klaxon sounds. His voice reverberates through the ship.

KOWALSKI

General quarters, general quarters. Captain Crane, to the control room please.

RICHTER

Shock wave ahead, closing fast! Range, sixteen hundred nautical. Speed, seven eight six MPH. Magnitude...off the scale, sir.

KOWALSKI

Hard to port. Heading two seven zero degrees. Props, all ahead full. Execute.

Richter repeats Kowalski's commands while quickly pressing buttons. The Control Room crew hangs on as the Seaview banks into it's turn.

INT. SEAVIEW - CRANE'S QUARTERS

Crane, his shirt half on, holds on to the edge of his bunk until the sub levels. He trots to his desk and presses a button.

CRANE

Crane here. What's going on?

KOWALSKI

(through speakers) Captain, there's a massive shock wave flanking us, sir.

CRANE

I'm on my way. Standby to engage the Slipstream.

KOWALSKI

Aye, sir.

INT. SEAVIEW - CONTROL ROOM

Kowalski is back at his console pushing buttons. Morton stands behind him studying data on the overhead monitors. Crane enters and joins them.

CRANE

Report.

MORTON

A super massive earthquake southwest of Central America created a super massive tsunami. We've changed course and are traveling laterally to the leading edge of the shock wave. But even at full prop speed the wave will overtake us in about two minutes.

Crain studies the monitors a moment, then takes the command chair. Pressing a button on his console his voice reverberates through the ship.

CRANE

All hands prepare for Slipstream velocity.

Morton moves to Crane's side. They exchange gazes. Crain turns off the intercom. Nelson steps in and joins them.

MORTON

Sir, even at Slipstream we can't out run this wave. It will hit us long before we reach New Zealand with nowhere to hide in between.

CRANE

At least it will buy us some time to look at other options Chip. We can't just wait here and let it hit us.

KOWALSKI

One minute thirty seconds to impact.

NELSON

You're both right gentlemen. We can't sit here and we can't out run it either.

Nelson directs his attention to Richter.

NELSON

Helm come about. Steer our bow into the wave.

Wrinkling his brow Crane stiffens and gawks at Nelson.

CRANE

Admiral, what if...

NELSON

Captain, we've got to punch through it.
It's the only way.

CRANE

Sir, we're still close to Antarctica.
We could get washed against the ice
shelf with a force even this sub
couldn't withstand.

NELSON

Which is exactly what will happen if we
try to outrun it.

KOWALSKI

Sixty seconds.

Crain ponders a moment before glancing at Nelson.

CRANE

Helm, carry out the Admiral's orders.
Come about and engage the Slipstream
sequence. Stand by for maximum velocity
on my mark.

RICHTER

Aye, sir. Turning to starboard.

The Seaview makes its turn.

RICHTER

Activating Slipstream sequence.

The Seaview's props come to a halt and disappear into the
hull. Two large panels retract, each revealing what looks
like the nozzle of a jet engine. The ends glow blue.

A faint burnt orange glow encapsulates the sub. As it
slowly brightens the sea is pushed away from the hull. A
thin force field now separates the sub from the sea.

RICHTER

Slipstream engaged. Plasma-Jets are
hot, Captain.

CRANE

Time Mr. Kowalski?

KAWALSKI

Twelve seconds, sir.

CRANE

All hands, brace yourselves. Mr. Kowalski countdown from five. Helm ten degrees up plane and put your finger on that button.

Richter positions her finger.

RICHTER

Aye, sir.

KOWALSKI

Five, four three..

The Seaview's bow tilts upward as the huge wave closes in. Mud and debris collected from the seafloor churn at it's edge like a giant sideways tornado.

KOWALSKI

...two, one...

CRANE

Engage Slipstream.

KOWALSKI

...contact!

The Seaview lunges forward as the wave impacts. But the sub loses momentum, lodges in the cross currents and is dragged backward by the waves forward momentum.

The men hold on as the sub rocks side to side. The intense roaring sound of the wave force the crew to yell.

CRANE

Helm, status.

RICHTER

Sir, the wave is pulling us backward. Forward velocity is negative.

CRANE

Increase power to the Plasma-Jets.

RICHTER

Aye sir, reactor to one hundred ten percent.

The blue glow of the Plasma-Jets brighten as the Seaview begins creeping slowly forward out of the swirling edge of the wave.

RICHTER

We have forward motion, Captain.

Suddenly the glass nose lunges upward and the sub begins to rock, port to starboard and back.

The crew is pulled against their safety harnesses as the sub tumbles like an amusement ride.

RICHTER

Encountering de-compressive vortices at
the trailing edge of the wave.
Attempting to stabilize rotation.

Small turbines along the sub's length begin to spin,
slowing the rocking and lowering the nose. But the wave is
still slowly dragging the Seaview backwards.

RICHTER

Forward motion negative...Correction,
motion is now to stern. We're being
dragged back into the leading edge of
the wave Captain.

CRANE

Increase reactor output to one hundred
fifty percent.

NELSON

Captain, that's too much...

KOWALSKI

Sir, we're getting dangerously close to
the ice shelf.

NELSON

That means the shock wave will be
slowing, weakening.

CRANE

Admiral, we've got to...

NELSON

Captain. Please believe me. We can get
out with less power and not risk a
meltdown.

Crane studies Nelson a moment. The sub continues to rock.

CRANE

Helm, increase power to one hundred
thirty percent. Execute.

Again the Seaview begins to slowly move away from the
violently churning water.

RICHTER

Forward motion detected. Fifty FPS...one hundred FPS. We're moving out of the wave front, sir.

The nose of the sub moves downward, leveling as it travels toward the calmer waters on the back side of the wave.

MORTON

Captain, we've been slowly pushed toward the surface since encountering the shock wave.

CRANE

Understood Mr. Morton. Adjust our ballast to compensate. I don't want to be slammed against an ice berg at the last minute.

The Seaview is now in the trailing edge of the wave, the surface just beyond the up-current of water feeding the wave's surfing edge.

Through the glass nose the crew can see the sun reflecting off the ocean's surface on the other side of what looks like an upward flowing waterfall.

CRANE

Steady as she goes Helm. Just ease us out of here.

The Seaview pops through the smooth up-current of water at the trailing edge of the wave and into the conical shaped wake left behind. Then, into smooth water.

CRANE

All stop.

RICHTER

Answering all stop, sir.

The orange glow of the Slipstream field fades and the sub glides to a halt, the giant wave continuing on it's way behind them.

CRANE

Mr. Morton. Damage report as soon as possible.

MORTON

Aye, sir.

CRANE

Mr. Keno, I want to know exactly where we ended up.

KENO

Aye, sir.

NELSON

I'll get on the horn to Washington, see if they know...

An alarm begins to sound in tandem with warning lights on Kowalski's console. Nelson and Crane step back to their monitors.

KOWALSKI

Sir, the wave front just hit the Getz Ice Shelf.

NELSON

My God, it's over eight hundred feet tall.

CRANE

That's unbelievable.

KENO

Captain, we are located half a mile due north of the Getz Shelf. Latitude...

Nelson slaps his hand against the console.

NELSON

We've got to dive. Now! Sailor, takes us down, right now.

CRANE

Sir?

NELSON

Switch on the stern camera.

Kowalski pushes a button. One of the monitors switches to a view behind the sub.

NELSON

Magnify.

Kowalski works his console. The monitor zooms in on a huge wave, carrying large ice boulders with it, rumbling toward the Seaview's stern.

Crane jumps back to the command chair and activates the klaxon. The men scurry to their stations and strap in.

KOWALSKI

Captain. The wave has rebounded against the shelf. Another shock wave bearing...

CRANE

Helm, re-activate the Slipstream. Plasma Jets to maximum speed.

Nelson begins pushing buttons at his console. He studies the readout as the rest of the crew busies themselves at their stations.

RICHTER

Aye sir, sequence activated. Velocity set.

KOWALSKI

Fifty three seconds till contact.

CRANE

Mr. Morton takes us down to fifty feet.

MORTON

Aye, sir, z minus fifty.

CRANE

(to himself) I KNOW we can outrun this one. (to his console) All hands prepare for Slipstream velocity...again.

The Seaview descends in a sea of bubbles. The orange glow forming around the hull quickly vanishes beneath the sea.

MORTON

Fifty feet Captain.

RICHTER

Sir, Plasma-Jets are hot. Slipstream is ready.

CRANE

Execute.

The Seaview shoots away from the approaching mayhem of ice water barreling toward them.

Far ahead of the sub, the Slipstream field gently moves the marine life to the side, allowing it to pass without smacking any of them.

Nelson studies the readout of his console. His eyes widen and leans over to Crane, speaking in a low tone.

NELSON

Captain, we've got to crash dive...

CRANE

Admiral, we'd have to disengage the Slipstream to crash dive. We can't afford to stop...

KOWALSKI

Captain, the wave is gaining on us.

CRANE

What?

NELSON

Captain, listen to me. As we head into deeper water the wave will get smaller but it's speed will increase. We can't outrun this one either.

KOWALSKI

Sir, distance to the wave is closing by two hundred feet per second.

CRANE

(low to Nelson) But Admiral, we'll get pounded by the ice...

NELSON

Remember, ice floats. The ice will sink only so far before it'll float back to the surface. If we take her deep, go under that mess, we can handle what's left of the wave.

A reluctant realization comes over Crane's face. He directs his attention to the helmsman.

CRANE

Helm, all stop. Disengage the Slipstream. Mr. Morton, prepare for crash dive.

MORTON

Aye, sir.

CRANE

Props.

The orange glow disappears. The Seaview glides to a stop. The props re-appear and begin churning, moving the sub forward.

CRANE

Mr. Morton blow ballast. Set depth to
five hundred feet. Helm, all ahead
full. Bring polarized shielding online.

The Seaview descends, trailing a blast of bubbles. The hull
begins illuminating a dull silver glow. The wave closes in.

Locomotive size chunks of ice ferociously churn at the
waves edge plummeting them deep into the sea before bobbing
back to the surface.

The wave begins overtaking the stern. Ice boulders slam the
hull. A silver sparkle accompanies each hit as the
polarized shields attempt to repel the blows.

The crew yell their reports over the noise and shaking.

MORTON

Shields holding. Minimal damage to
hull. Depth, one hundred fifty feet.

CRANE

Helm, close crash doors.

Richter presses buttons. Large doors with scalloped edges
shut over the glass nose.

CRANE

Mr. Morton, can we sink any faster?

MORTON

Not and maintain a safety factor.

The shower of ice boulders now rains down on the Seaview.
The entire hull sparkling silver as the shielding tries to
resist the pounding.

KENO

Captain. Polarized shields are
weakening.

CRANE

Mr. Morton. Forget the safety factor.
Dive this boat.

MORTON

Aye sir.

Morton presses buttons. Crane and Nelson exchange glares.

MORTON

One seventy five, two hundred, two
twenty five..

The sub slowly descends beneath the churning of the bobbing ice boulders. The shaking and pounding subsides. The control room returns to its usual hum.

MORTON

Three hundred...

CRANE

Stop decent. Hold this position.

MORTON

Aye, sir. Helm, all stop. Thrusters at station keeping.

Morton presses buttons on his console, slightly jerks his head, and tries again.

MORTON

Captain, ballast control is non-responsive. I can't slow our decent.

CRANE

Please don't tell me that, Chip.

Morton continues to press buttons, each time getting a red light accompanied by a monotone buzzing.

MORTON

I'm sorry sir. Apparently another fuel cell failure. Re-routing, switching to back-up.

CRANE

Kowalski, how close are we to the bottom.

KOWALSKI

It's only about two hundred feet below us sir.

NELSON

We've got to slow our decent or even with polarized shielding this sub will crack like a egg when it hits the bottom.

Crane looks over the readouts on his console then turns to the helmsman.

CRANE

Helm. Maneuvering thrusters. Down angle. Maximum velocity.

RICHTER

Aye sir. Thrusters to full.

The side thrusters spin furiously. Albeit slower, the Seaview continues falling toward the ocean floor.

RICHTER

Decent speed reduced sir. However not enough to resist implosive impact.

CRANE

Mr. Morton.

MORTON

I'm working on it Captain.

Morton, focused on his console, presses buttons quickly. A green light flashes accompanied by a pleasant chime. He spits out his next sentence as if it were one word.

MORTON

Ballast control restored slowing decent.

Bubbles blast from the Seaview's side, rapidly slowing its fall. The side thrusters begin blasting dirt from the seafloor as the sub nears the bottom.

Some of the crew are knocked from their chairs as the sub hits bottom. Sparks fly from consoles but fire suppressant quickly snuff them out.

MORTON

We're down.

Exhaust fans remove the smoke. Crane looks over the control room.

CRANE

Anyone need medical attention?

No one takes up the Captain's offer. He turns his attention back to Morton.

CRANE

Report.

MORTON

We're resting on a stable part of the seafloor. Hull pressure is minimal. Life support is fully functional. Damage appears minimal right now, however reports are still coming in.

KOWALSKI

Sir, the wave has moved to a safe distance. We have still waters above.

CRANE

What about it, Chip?

MORTON

No reason to stay here.

Crane nods his head. Morton presses buttons. The klaxon sounds again as Morton's voice echo's through the sub.

MORTON

Surface, surface, surface. All hands the sub is surfacing.

With another puff of bubbles the Seaview lifts off the ocean floor.

Nearing the surface, the sun illuminates the bottom of the countless ice boulders floating above.

Bubbles form, pushing the boulders aside. The Conning Tower, followed by the rest of the sub, surfaces to a sea surrounded for miles by floating ice.

The crash doors open. One by one the crew stop what they're doing to gawk through the glass nose at the ice spectacle.

Morton notices, taps Crane and Nelson and points with his head.

MORTON

Captain...Admiral.

Crane and Nelson step up to the glass nose and as well stare in disbelief at an ocean of 'ice cubes' stretching to the horizon.

NELSON

My God...

KOWALSKI

Captain.

Kowalski presses buttons then points to the overhead monitors. Crane and Nelson step back to look.

KOWALSKI

Sir, the Getz Ice Shelf, it's...it's...gone.

Crane and Morton give each other a quick glance.

NELSON

I'm going to make that call to
Washington.

INT. SEAVIEW - NELSON'S QUARTERS

Leaning back with his stocking feet propped on his desk
Nelson lights a cigar. After a quick puff, a chime rings.
He presses a nearby button.

NELSON

Nelson here.

A voice with a definite southern accent belonging to
Communications Officer EDMOUND SPARKS announces through the
cabin's speakers.

SPARKS

Admiral, Washington on the line for
you. Secretary of the interior,
Reynolds waiting to speak to you sir.

NELSON

(under his breath) It's about time.

Nelson drops his feet while dousing his cigar in a ashtray.
Scooting his chair close to his desk he assumes a proper
posture.

NELSON

Alright Mr. Sparks, pipe it down here.

SPARKS

Transferring sir.

Nelson's desktop monitor flickers on. A gray haired man,
with a very serious expression comes into focus. His voice
is subdued.

REYNOLDS

Harry, good to see you and the Seaview
are still in one piece.

NELSON

Franklin, what's happened? We haven't
been able to make contact with the
fleet or San Francisco..

REYNOLDS

Harry, San Francisco has been destroyed.

NELSON

My God..

REYNOLDS

The tsunami you encountered flooded the our entire west coast, as well as those of Mexico, up to twenty three miles inland. The Baja peninsula is completely submerged. Millions Harry, millions of people, are dead.

Nelson, slack jawed, quickly glances at his wife's picture.

NELSON

What's being done?

REYNOLDS

The President's issued a state of National Emergency. Coast Guard and what's left of the Navy...

NELSON

What do you mean 'what's left?'

REYNOLDS

Harry, the biggest part of the Pacific Fleet was lost on their way to the battle simulations with you.

NELSON

Lost?

REYNOLDS

It gets worse.

Nelson leans in toward his monitor.

REYNOLDS

The earthquake was caused by the subduction of the Cocos and Pacific tectonic plates. It created an eighteen mile long crack along it's border the size of the Grand Canyon that's getting bigger every minute. Harry, if it follows the current projections the Cocos plate will continue to rise along it's boundaries and will ultimately dislodge, crating a volcano the size of Australia. I'm sure you realize what happens next.

NELSON

It's unimaginable. The earth essentially becomes uncorked.

REYNOLDS

And we need you to push that cork back in. Seaview is the only sub that can reach those depths. The President wants you to asses the situation and report to Washington as soon as you can.

NELSON

Why Me?

REYNOLDS

Because you've been a walking brain since we were kids and right now the Earth could use all the brains we can gather. The United Nations has called an emergency summit in New York. Germany, France, Russia, are all sending their top scientist. Some have already arrived. The President needs your input fast, before speculation turns into panic.

NELSON

Understood. We'll get underway immediately.

REYNOLDS

I'm sending you a all the information we've gather so far, but it's not much. We need a up-close assessment.

Reynolds leans in close to his monitor.

REYNOLDS

Harry, if we don't fix this, the earth will be past the point of being habitable in less than a month. We can't fail.

NELSON

We won't.

REYNOLDS

Good luck and God Speed.

NELSON

I don't believe God is going to be offering us any miracles.

REYNOLDS

Well Harry, if he doesn't, we're all screwed. Reynolds out.

Nelsons monitor goes blank. He presses a button and clears his throat.

NELSON
Helm. This is Nelson.

INT. SEAVIEW - ENGINE ROOM - FUEL CELL COMPARTMENT

Crane squats down and looks at a fuel cell through a device resembling a pair of binoculars. Watching him are Morton and 40 year old Chief TERRY SHARKEY.

SHARKEY
See the puncture mark sir?

CRANE
I do now.

Crane stands.

CRANE
You've examined them all?

SHARKEY
With a fine tooth Captain. I personally guarantee you sir, these two were the only ones affected.

Crane hands the 'binoculars' back to Sharkey.

CRANE
Thank you chief. How long before the repairs are complete?

SHARKEY
We can get underway whenever you're ready sir.

CRANE
Very good, thank you.

Sharkey exits for the main area of the engine room, where a pulsing reactor hums. Crane and Morton stay behind.

CRAIN
I want a full forensics of the puncture mark. I want to know what kind of device was used to inject the hydrazine into the cells.

MORTON
Pretty clever. A few cc's of hydrazine and the hydrogen becomes inert, making the fuel cell useless.

CRANE

Too clever. And whoever it is, may still onboard this boat.

Crane gazes at the rack of fuel cells and wrinkles his brow.

CRANE

I can understand the ballast control, but why sabotage the long range scanners?

MORTON

Apparently they weren't selected by system. 'Whoever,' just started at one end of the rack. It was fuel cell one and two that were injected.

A chime rings followed by Sparks' voice.

SPARKS

Captain Crane. Admiral Nelson wants you to join him in his quarters immediately, sir.

Crane steps to a wall panel near the door and presses a button.

CRANE

Acknowledged.

Morton joins him.

CRANE

Chip, I need answers. But keep it quiet. I don't want the crew to start accusing each other.

MORTON

We'll just call it a 'manufacturer's defect' for now.

CRANE

Yea right. Hydrazine in a hydrogen fuel cell. Pretty stupid manufacturer.

Crane makes his exit. A realization comes over Morton's face. He focuses on a tag attached to the rack of fuel cells that reads: MANUFACTURED BY NELSON INDUSTRIES.

INT. SEAVEW - CORRIDOR

Elizabeth rounds a corner and spots Crane walking briskly. He disappears down another corridor. She chases after him.

ELIZABETH

Captain. Wait up.

Elizabeth catches up and keeps pace with Crane.

CRANE

Doctor. I'm sorry, but I can't stop. I've got a briefing with the Admiral right now.

ELIZABETH

I heard we almost didn't get off the bottom. What happened?

CRANE

Besides being slammed by the biggest tsunami ever recorded, we've have a few hardware glitches. Nothing major.

ELIZABETH

What kind of glitches?

CRANE

The kind that would bore you. I'll fill you in...

Crane and Elizabeth sway.

CRANE

(indignant) We've underway?

He takes is gaze off Elizabeth and cocks his head to the left.

CRANE

Tracker on. Control room.

A light embedded in Crane's left shirt collar begins flashing. Kowalski's voice responds from a speaker embedded in his right collar.

KOWALSKI

Yes Captain?

CRANE

Kowalski, just WHERE are we going?

KOWALSKI

New destination sir, the epicenter of that earthquake. Admiral's orders.

Elizabeth looks at Crane with arched eyebrows.

ELIZABETH
The earthquake?

CRANE
Thank you, Crane out. Tracker off.

The light in Crane's collar extinguishes.

CRANE
(pondering) Must of got through to
Washington.

ELIZABETH
Why are we headed to where the
earthquake happened?

With a wrinkled brow, Crane locks eyes with Elizabeth.

CRANE
I don't know. (indignant) But he could
have waited until he filled me in
before sending this boat... Look, Doctor,
I really need to go. We'll talk later.

With a half hearted smile Crain trots away. Elizabeth
stands in an empty corridor, watching, until he disappears
around a corner.

INT. SEAVIEW - NELSON'S QUARTERS

In the corridor, Crane presses a button next to the door.
Through a small speaker, Nelson responds with "come in."

Crane enters to find Nelson studying a holographic image of
the earth on a built in console. A nearby computer monitor
continually scrolls text and scientific data.

CRANE
Admiral?

NELSON
Captain. Come take a look at this.

Richter's voice reverberates through the speakers. Crane
pauses to listen.

RICHTER
All hands. Prepare for Slipstream in
sixty seconds.

CRANE
OK, so we ARE going somewhere AND in a
hurry. Admiral, I can't be an effective
skipper of this boat if you keep...

NELSON

Forgive me for stepping on your authority, Captain. But serious circumstances dictated our immediate departure. Captain, the west coast of the United States has been destroyed.

Crane's angered face melts to puzzlement.

CRANE

What?

Crane joins Nelson at the console. The holographic earth rotates displaying a small red line in the Pacific Ocean southwest of Mexico.

Nelson points at the monitor screen. Crane reads the data and too, becomes slacked jawed and pale.

CRANE

A volcano the size of Australia? Is that...even possible?

NELSON

Not only is it possible but it's going to happen if we don't stop it. The President has ordered us to the epicenter to investigate and come up with a plan to seal off the rupture.

CRANE

Sir, this may be a powerful submarine, but it's no match against a volcano that will grow to almost half the size of the United States.

NELSON

That's the point. We need to stop it while it's still relatively small.

CRANE

How?

Nelson looks away from the holographic earth and stares out his portal, the dark ocean reflecting the deep concern on his face. He rubs the back of his neck.

NELSON

I don't know. But we must find a way or every living creature on this planet will die in less than a month.

CRANE

Admiral, are you sure there's not some kind of mistake? A giant tsunami is one thing, but the END of the world?

NELSON

Nelson pivots, locking eyes with Crane.

NELSON

There's no mistake Captain. We've better become experts on SAVING the world, or in seventy two hours it won't matter.

CRANE

Seventy two hours?

NELSON

After that, the magma pressure will pop that tectonic plate like a cork from a champagne bottle. Nothing will survive for long.

Crane stares in disbelief, considering the Admiral's words.

NELSON

You and I will begin going over this information at zero six hundred. Try and get a head start some plan of action before we get there. Mr. Morton can run things for a while.

The speaker booms with the Helmsman's voice.

RICHTER

Attention all Hands, engaging Slipstream propulsion.

Nelson and Crane sway slightly with the acceleration. The portal now glows orange.

CRANE

Actually I've got Mr. Morton working on another problem Admiral. We might have a saboteur on board.

INT. SEAVIEW - ENGINE ROOM - FUEL CELL COMPARTMENT

Morton, on one knee, holds a small analyzer over one of the fuel cells. The device beeps and the display reads:
ANALYSIS COMPLETE: GENERATING LIST.

Morton stands, continually reading the display. Another beep and the display reads: PROBABLE ORIGIN OF PUNCTURE: ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING NEEDLES.

Morton looks up, his face revealing nothing. He moves to the other fuel cell and bends down on one knee.

INT. SEAVIEW - CRANE'S QUARTERS

Crane leans against his desk. Elizabeth examines the text and data on his computer monitor. She shakes her head.

ELIZABETH

This is...absolutely incredible.

With an astonished look, she faces Crain.

ELIZABETH

Does the rest of the crew know about this?

CRAIN

Not yet. The Admiral and I thought it best to maintain a communications blackout until we gathered more information...

Elizabeth gets agitated.

ELIZABETH

Lee. Some of the crew have family on the west coast. They have a right to know if they survived or...

CRAIN

Lizzie, according to the Admiral, we have less than seventy two hours to find a solution or no one on Earth will survive. However heartless this may sound this crew has to be focused on their jobs and...

Elizabeth's collar flashes.

SPARKS

Dr. Hiller, this is Sparks. You're wanted in Sick ma'am.

ELIZABETH

(to Crain) I hate these things. (to her collar) Tracker on - Hiller here. Is it an emergency Mr. Sparks?

SPARKS

No ma'am. They seem to be having a little trouble with one of the diagnostic beds.

ELIZABETH

Alright, I'm coming - Tracker off. (to Crain) I'd better get down there.

She leans toward the door.

ELIZABETH

By the way, did you find the cause of those 'hardware glitches' as you called them?

CRANE

That's another depressing story.

ELIZABETH

What could be more depressing than the end of the world?

CRANE

How about a saboteur on board?

Elizabeth's eyes widen.

ELIZABETH

A saboteur? Do you have any idea who it is?

CRANE

Not yet. I'm having Chip run a forensic analysis, try and find out what kind of instrument was used. But with everything else going on I really need him in the control room, not running around playing Sherlock Holms.

Elizabeth re-positions herself a couple of steps in front of Crane. She gazes in his eyes, her voice full of sincerity.

ELIZABETH

Lee, I have a background in forensics. I can take over. It will help to keep my mind off our dilemma.

Crain ponders.

CRANE

I appreciate it, but remember, you have keep this confidential. Involve as few of the crew as you can, I don't want the rest distracted by suspicion and rumors.

ELIZABETH

I understand.

Crane escorts Elizabeth to the door.

CRANE

I'll send Chip by in the morning.
Thanks Lizzie.

Elizabeth takes a moment to gaze into Crane's eyes, then slips out the door.

INT. SEAVIEW - CORRIDOR

Morton greets several crew members with, "morning," accompanied with a head nod as he walks through a congested corridor. He enters sick bay carrying the analyzer.

INT. SEAVIEW - SICK BAY

Elizabeth is having a conversation with her assistant MICHAEL and acknowledges Morton's entrance only with a quick head turn.

ELIZABETH

Thank you. I'll look in to it.

Michael disappears into the adjoining lab. Elizabeth turns and half-heartedly smiles at Morton.

MORTON

The Captain asked I turn over the information I've gathered about the fuel cells.

Morton hands her the analyzer. She begins studying the readings.

ELIZABETH

So it was fuel cells that what were sabotaged?

MORTON

That's right Doctor. And by the way, thank you for the help.

ELIZABETH

Mr. Morton, I think your talents would be better used by saving the world than solving a mystery.

MORTON

We may need to solve this mystery to be able to save the world, Dr. Hiller.

Elizabeth stops and gives Morton her undivided attention.

MORTON

Right now, we're not sure who it is or what their motives are.

She continues her attentive stare a moment before speaking.

ELIZABETH

Of course you're right, Chip. I'll do everything I can to point you in a direction as soon as possible.

MORTON

I'm already pointed in a direction Doctor. You'll see the list of projectiles used to create the puncture wound is quite small.

Elizabeth presses buttons on the analyzer.

MORTON

I've narrowed it down to three devices. Two are common industrial tools used aboard this sub. The third is a heart injection needle used in emergencies to resuscitate heart attack victims.

ELIZABETH

I see that.

MORTON

Doctor, are you missing any such needles?

Elizabeth keeps looking at the analyzer's display.

ELIZABETH

Uh...No...

She makes a face at it then looks at Morton.

ELIZABETH

I mean...I'll have to look.

Elizabeth makes her way to her desk. Morton follows and stands attentively. She presses a few buttons on her computer terminal and stares at the monitor.

ELIZABETH

No, it looks like they're all here.

Morton's collar begins flashing.

RICHTER

Mr. Morton, target destination approaching, sir.

MORTON

Tracker on. On my way. Alert the Captain and Admiral.

RICHTER

Aye, sir. Control room out.

MORTON

So. I suppose we can rule out someone taking one from your inventory?

ELIZABETH

Looks like it.

Morton offers a forced smile.

MORTON

Thank you Doctor. Good luck.

Elizabeth watches until Morton leaves her office and Sickbay. Immediately she finds Michael and begins an unheard conversation.

INT. SEAVIEW - CONTROL ROOM

Nelson and Crane make their way from the spiral staircase to an alcove in the back of the control room. Centered, is a waist high console, the 'situation table.'

Morton is studying the holographic images floating just above the table's surface. Crane inserts a disk. A monitor reads: DOWNLOADING TO NAVIGATION.

NELSON

Good morning Mr. Morton. I hope you slept well.

MORTON

Actually, I did sir.

NELSON

Good. This morning, Captain Crane and I have been working on a plan of approach. Captain.

CRANE

The lava discharge is along the north and south boundaries of the Cocas plate.

Crane presses buttons. The holographic display changes, depicting his description.

CRANE

We're coming up from the southwest. We'll creep along in a series of pre-programmed waypoints first, then along the northern boundary.

MORTON

I hope not too close. If the currents change we'd get pelted by molten lava.

NELSON

(confidently) We can divert power from non-essential systems to shore up the Seaview's polarized shielding, Mr. Morton.

Morton gives Crain a quick glance.

CRANE

Admiral, I believe it would be prudent to keep the Slipstream sequence activated, just in case. We can maneuver on thrusters well enough to conduct the analysis.

Nelson shrugs his shoulders.

NELSON

Certainly Captain, I agree. We may need to make a quick get away.

Morton shakes his head in acknowledgement. Crane presses more buttons. The holographic images continue.

CRANE

What we really need is to know is the exact conditions deep in the lava gorge surrounding the tectonic boundaries.

NELSON

Once we've determined the lava flow rate, we'll know how much time we have left.

MORTON

Before what sir?

NELSON

Before the cork pops from the bottle and a genie destroys this entire planet, Mr. Morton.

CRANE

The corner of the Cocos plate is continuing to be lifted. When it reaches more than twelve thousand feet...

MORTON

The cork pops. I understand, sir.

CRANE

I want every sensor we have directed at that gorge, Chip. We need data, lots of it and fast.

NELSON

Once we gather enough information, we'll move off to a safe distance and evaluate.

MORTON

Understood, sir.

NELSON

I'll want to take the Flying Sub to Washington as soon...

Richter's voice sounds through the alcove's speakers.

RICHTER

Waypoint one, dead ahead Captain.

NELSON

Gentlemen, I believe that's our cue.

On their way to their chairs and consoles, Morton paces Nelson.

MORTON

I'll have the Flying Sub ready for you, sir.

NELSON

Thank you XO.

Above them, the bank of video monitors begins displaying information. Everyone takes their seat.

CRANE

Helm, disengage the Slipstream, but keep the sequence activated.

RICHTER

Aye, sir. Slipstream answering all stop.

The orange glow around the Seaview fades and the sub slows to a crawl. Ahead, in the distance, an eerie red glow illuminates churning water.

CRANE

Mr. Keno, position please.

Keno presses buttons, flashing information on the overhead video monitors.

KENO

We are a half a mile southwest of the lava flow, holding at z-minus twenty thousand, sir.

CRANE

Mr. Keno, activate the pre-programmed course.

KENO

Course plotted and laid in, sir.

CRANE

Execute.

A mass of bubbles discharge from the Seaview's side. The sub begins to descend.

CRANE

Helm, engage maneuvering thrusters, ahead one third. Activate polarized shielding.

RICHTER

Aye, sir. Ahead one third. Shields online.

The Seaview moves forward, descending into an ocean that flickers like a fireplace. The water below churning ever more feverously.

CRANE

Mr. Kowalski, terrain ahead?

Kowalski pushes buttons on his console causing the overhead monitors to display new information.

KOWALSKI

We're approaching a large V-shaped mountain protruding roughly thirty eight thousand feet from the seafloor and extending for eighteen miles in both directions from the... 'point,' sir.

NELSON

Caused by the lifting of the Cocas plate no doubt.

MORTON

Edge of the cork Admiral?

KOWALSKI

The lava is spewing from a gorge that varies in width from five hundred to twelve hundred feet. It runs along the northeastern boundary for eight miles, and along the southeastern boundary for seven miles, sir.

Through the glass, red sparklers begin dancing about in the bubbling water, now churning violently.

KOWALSKI

Captain, water temperature raising. Outer hull beginning to heat. Adjusting shields to compensate.

CRANE

Very good, Mr. Kowalski. Keep an eye on it.

KOWALSKI

Aye, sir.

Nelson moves to the front of the nose, starring through the glass. The flat top of a giant mountain comes into view above and behind the churning red water.

NELSON

Incredible.

The Seaview continues down the mountain, to the top of the lava wall, spewing like geysers. Water currents are depositing most of the lava along the mountain's cliff.

KENO

Captain, we've reached the coordinates to begin the pre-programmed course.

CRANE

Alright Mr. Richter, start the tour.

The Helmsman presses buttons.

RICHTER

Aye, sir. Engaging maneuvering thrusters.

The small turbines begin pushing the Seaview along one side of the lava wall, keeping a safe distance from the spewing flames.

MORTON

All scanners starboard, Captain. Beginning analysis.

Nelson returns to his console and studies his monitor.

MORTON

Receiving data stream, correction...data stream breaking up.

NELSON

The lava is causing a solar flare effect. We're going to have to move in closer to establish a signal lock.

CRANE

Admiral, just a few hours ago you said this is as close as we dare get.

Nelson rubs the back of his neck.

NELSON

I know that Captain, but I must have the lava's flow rate. That will be a crucial measurement in my calculations.

Crane thinks a moment.

CRANE

Mr. Morton, prepare to launch the search-bot we configured for the trials. It has rudimentary instruments and polarized shielding. Might hold long enough to get the information the Admiral needs.

Morton responds with 'Aye, sir' and begins pressing buttons.

MORTON

Bot ready for launch, sir.

CRANE

Execute.

The search-bot pops from a small hatch that opens in the belly of the Seaview. After flipping on its search light, the bot engages its small prop and speeds off.

MORTON

Bot is away. Fifteen seconds to contact, sir.

The little bot speeds toward the lava, it's polarized shielding sparking, protecting it from the occasional lava hits. Suddenly, it starts losing control.

MORTON

The bot is experiencing cross currents, sir. It's adjusting course and heading to compensate.

The bot swaggers before correcting its position, then continues on its journey.

Nelson and Crane watch its progress on the overhead monitors. A red light flashes.

MORTON

Sir, the bot just entered the gorge. Receiving telemetry. Temperature, twenty six hundred Fahrenheit, depth, seven point three miles...

NELSON

Seven miles?

MORTON

Affirmative, sir. Lateral magma pressure increasing down the length of the boundaries. Pressure gradient is... Sir, the bots shields are failing. Data stream breaking up... We've lost it, Admiral.

Morton presses a few buttons then looks at Nelson.

MORTON

Flow rate analysis, incomplete, sir.

Nelson leans in to Crane and Morton.

NELSON

Gentlemen, I *have* to know that flow rate.

CRANE

Chip, get down to Engineering and prepare another bot for launch.

NELSON

No, it will take too long to configure another one. We need to take the Seaview in closer, use the instrumentation on board.

Crane leans in toward Nelson, lowering his voice.

CRANE

Admiral, it's foolish to risk...

NELSON

Captain we can divert additional power to the shields.

CRANE

Sir, we don't have any more to spare. We're diverting the remaining power to keep the Slipstream active.

NELSON

Then divert power from the Slipstream. I guarantee the shields will hold.

CRANE

Admiral, I'm not going to risk...

NELSON

You don't have to Captain. I'll take the responsibility. Now, take us closer. That's an order.

Crane's jaw tightens as he and Nelson have a momentary stare-down.

CRANE

Mr. Morton. Deactivate the Slipstream sequence and divert the power to the shields.

Crane sits back in his chair and stares directly ahead.

MORTON

Helm, deactivate Slipstream sequence, deploy props. Bring polarized shields to one hundred fifty percent.

The faint orange glow dissipates from the Seaview's hull. The Plasma-Jets retract, replaced by the props, slowly coming to life.

MORTON

All ahead one third.

CRANE

Chip, close to within five hundred feet of the gorge.

Crane locks eyes with Nelson.

CRANE

Is that close enough for you Admiral?

NELSON

Let's hope so.

The Seaview moves closer to the fiery wall, the lava continuing to drift away from the sub.

RICHTER

Mountain range, nine hundred feet to starboard, sir.

MORTON

Data stream still sporadic.

RICHTER

Eight hundred feet and closing.

A chime rings on Morton's console.

MORTON

I've got it, data lock confirmed.

CRANE

Helm, hold this distance from the gorge.

RICHTER

Aye, sir. Holding at seven twenty two. Continuing on course.

The Seaview straightens her turn and begins running alongside the massive spewing chasm.

MORTON

Receiving telemetry. All scanners functioning. I'll transfer the data stream to your station Admiral.

NELSON

Thank you, XO.

Nelson studies the readouts. Morton steps over and hovers behind him.

NELSON
Just what I suspected.

MORTON
How's that Admiral?

NELSON
For years geologist have been prepared for a shifting of the North Pacific plate to occur off the coast of Canada, just north of Washington state.

A graphic of the Pacific Ocean, appearing on Nelsons monitor, piques Cranes interest. He steps beside Morton.

NELSON
But myself and a few others have predicted the shift to occur exactly where it did. Down here, where one of the worlds largest tectonic plates, namely the North Pacific, butts up to the worlds smallest tectonic plate, the Cocos. In the past few years the area has been extremely unstable...

An alarm sounds on Kowalski's console.

KOWALSKI
Captain, water temperature above raising rapidly. It's beginning to boil, sir.

Crane and Morton return to their stations.

CRANE
Talk to me Kowalski, what going on.

Kowalski frantically presses buttons. An astonished look covers his face.

KOWALSKI
Sir, the water current has changed.

RICHTER
Multiple contacts above, closing fast. Range, fifteen hundred.

KOWALSKI
Captain, the current is now carrying the lava flow directly overhead.

Explosions in the gorge sling the lava around like a wild back yard sprinkler, sending some of its debris hailing down on the Seaview.

CRANE

Helm, hard to port. Ahead full.

Glowing chunks of lava produce silver/white flashes as they bounce off the Seaview's polarized shielding. The sub rocks with each impact.

Sparks fly from the Helmsman station, knocking Richter from her chair. Crane jumps to her aid as another barrage of hits cause other consoles to shoot fireworks.

MORTON

Dr. Hiller, to the control room.
Emergency.

Another barrage knocks Morton to the deck as he tries to man the Helm. Fire suppressants snuff the flames.

KOWALSKI

Captain, some of the lava is penetrating the shielding. Sir, it's sticking to the hull and hardening.

Morton has managed to get himself in the Helmsman's position.

CRANE

Chip, get us out of here before we become part of that mountain.

Morton presses buttons. Nelson squats down beside Crane. Richter looks at him through narrowed eyes. Crane shoots Nelson an angry look.

NELSON

It's going to be alright, the Doctor is on her way.

A huge blob of lava hits the sub's stern, violently forcing it toward the ocean floor. Crane hangs on to a chair as Nelson and Richter slide backward.

CRANE

Chip, emergency stabilizers, try to get us level.

MORTON

Unresponsive Captain. There's too much weight.

Another blob sticks to the first. The Seaview rocks as it continues forward at a forty five degree angle.

CRANE

Direct the forward thrusters upward,
try to bring down the nose.

MORTON

Captain, unless we shed this weight we
won't make it out of the debris field.

Another hit rocks the sub. Crane pulls himself toward Morton.

CRANE

Chip, I want you to send a twelve mega-
joule power surge from bow to stern
through the shields.

Morton presses buttons.

MORTON

Ready.

CRANE

Now!

A white electric pulse starts at the nose and travels along the hull until it slams into the lava, knocking some of it off.

MORTON

It cleared some of the debris, sir.

CRANE

Again.

Another white pulse and more debris falls off. With a third, the remaining lava is blasted away from the hull, bringing the sub completely level.

MORTON

We're gaining speed. Ten seconds to
clearing.

Elizabeth enters and is directed to where Nelson cradles the head of a barely conscious Richter. She loses her balance slightly as the sub receives several more hits.

NELSON

Doctor, over here.

Elizabeth squats down beside Richter hovers a medical diagnostic instrument over her. A few more hits thwart her effort to read its display.

MORTON

Five seconds to clearing.

KOWALSKI

Ocean currents changing Captain. The lava is now floating away from us again, sir.

Only a few small chunks graze the stern as the Seaview makes it into open water. The pandemonium subsides.

MORTON

We're in the clear.

CRANE

Keep going Chip, I want to be WAY in the clear in case mother nature changes her mind.

MORTON

Aye sir, maintaining course and speed.

Crane steps over to Elizabeth, who just gave Richter a hypo. Richter slowly begins coming to. Nelson looks on.

CRANE

How is she doing?

ELIZABETH

She sustained a huge electrical shock.

NELSON

That's impossible. There are safeguards to prevent...

CRANE

(sarcastically) Apparently they didn't work, Admiral.

ELIZABETH

I need to get her to sick bay.

Richter sits up.

RICHTER

I'm alright, sir...I think.

ELIZABETH

Are you experiencing any dizziness?

RICHTER

A little.

ELIZABETH

Can you stand?

RICHTER

I believe so.

Elizabeth helps Richter to her feet. She leans against the Doctor as the two disappear through the back exit. Crane steps over to Morton manning the Helm.

CRANE

Chip, how far?

MORTON

Almost a mile, sir.

CRANE

OK, all stop and hold this position. I want a full damage report as soon as possible.

MORTON

Aye sir.

Crane steps to his chair and presses a button.

CRANE

Damage teams, to the control room, on the double.

Nelson intercepts Morton making his way to his station after a replacement helmsman relieves him.

NELSON

Mr. Morton were we able to finish the analysis?

MORTON

I don't know sir, I'll check.

Morton sits at his console and presses buttons. Crane glares at Nelson.

CRANE

We're certainly not going to get that close again if we didn't.

Nelson and Crane engage in a brief stare-off as damage control teams begin pulling off panels around them.

MORTON

Sorry, sir. Flow rate analysis is incomplete.

NELSON

Join me in my quarters, Captain. In five minutes.

Nelson exits. Crain and Morton exchange glances.

INT. SEAVIEW - NELSON'S QUARTERS

Nelson sits at his console, his nose buried in the monitor's display of information. Behind him, a half empty drink sits on his desk. His door chimes.

NELSON

Come in.

Crane enters and stands stiffly in front of the Admiral's desk. Nelson shuts off the monitor, stands and looks Crane in the eyes.

NELSON

Captain, you were out of line with your comment. That's insubordination and I won't stand for it.

CRANE

Permission to speak freely, sir.

NELSON

Granted, as long as it's civil.

CRANE

Sir, since this mission started, you've countermanded my orders or issued new ones without my knowledge on more than one occasion.

NELSON

Captain, I have full authority of command on this mission. I don't need...

CRANE

Admiral, you haven't commanded a submarine in over twenty years. Although you may have designed and built it, this is still a Naval vessel and I'm still in charge of it's crew.

NELSON

Is that what this is about? You think I'm a threat to your command?

CRANE

No sir, I'm concerned you may be a threat to this sub and its crew.

Nelson gets visibly upset. His words sarcastic.

NELSON

Would you mind sharing how?

Crane keeps his cool.

CRANE

How about if I give you an example? A little while ago you were more worried about getting your precious data than you were about the lives of this crew.

NELSON

Captain, need I remind you? If I don't get that data there won't be any lives left in the WORLD, let alone in this crew.

CRANE

And need I remind you, sir, that without this crew you'll never get it. You can't save the world by yourself, Admiral. Keep jeopardizing this crew with un-necessary risk, and there won't be anyone left to help you.

NELSON

Un-necessary risks? I've never given an order...

CRANE

Sir, there are still eleven search-bots left on this boat. It takes less than ten minutes to reconfigure their instruments. Ten minutes Admiral. We've got six injured, two of whom are in critical condition right now. They could have easily died, sir. Died to give you your ten minutes. We'll spend more time making repairs.

Nelson stares at Crane a moment with a clenched jaw, then sits. He speaks calmly.

NELSON

Alright Captain, you've made your point. But as I said, you were out of line and I won't stand for it. Any disagreements you have with me will be taken up in confidentiality, not in front of the men. Those are the rules Captain. Do you understand?

CRANE

Yes sir, I do understand. But apparently those rules don't apply to everyone.

Nelson glares at Crane.

NELSON

Just what do you mean by that Captain?

Crane glares at the drink.

CRANE

Drinking while on duty. Isn't that breaking the rules, Admiral?

Nelson glances at the drink. His tone completely ignoring Crane's comment.

NELSON

Don't bother me with damage reports. Just get this sub patched up and on to the next waypoint as soon as possible. Dismissed Captain.

Crane stiffens.

CRANE

Aye, aye, sir.

Then bolts for the door.

NELSON

And, Captain.

Crane glares at Nelson, emphasizing each word.

CRANE

Yes sir?

NELSON

Let's use this time to get those remaining bots ready. You're right, I should have checked the alternatives. And I didn't. If you will kindly continue to remind me, I will endeavor to listen and consider it.

Crane eases his posture.

CRANE

Yes sir, Admiral. Anything else, sir?

NELSON

No, that will be all.

Nelson buries his face in his monitor. As soon as Crane leaves Nelson looks up and stares at the drink. He steps to a lavatory and pours it out.

INT. SEAVIEW - SICK BAY

Elizabeth notices Crain's entrance into a sick bay buzzing with patients. He nods to her office. She makes a quick check of patient then follows him in.

CRANE

How are the patients?

ELIZABETH

I've discharged Richter and Alvarez. It looks like the rest will pull through. I've taken them off the critical list. How are you holding up?

CRANE

I'm OK. It's the Admiral I'm worried about. He's exposing this mission to un-necessary risk and I may be forced to put a stop to it.

ELIZABETH

Jesus Lee, your talking about mutiny.

CRAIN

I'm talking about saving what's left of our home. And I can't do that with Nelson taking un-warranted chances with our only hope, namely this sub and its crew.

ELIZABETH

Are you positive you're still not just frustrated with having the Admiral on board?

CRAIN

This has gone way beyond that, Lizzie. If he hadn't overridden my orders, you wouldn't have a sick bay full of injured sailors right now.

Cranes collar begins flashing.

MORTON

Captain, this is Morton. We are ready to get underway.

CRANE

Tracker on. Very well Mr. Morton. Take us to back to the original pre-programmed course and let's try this again.

MORTON

Aye sir. I'll alert the Admiral. Control out.

Crain's collar light extinguishes.

CRAIN

I may need your help if the Admiral keeps up this irrational behavior. Mr. Morton is already aware of the situation and will back me up if it becomes necessary.

Elizabeth ponders.

ELIZABETH

I've known the Admiral for some time. He's brilliant, but, he's not always right.

She eyes Crain.

ELIZABETH

If you and Mr. Morton are absolutely sure, you'll have my support, if the time comes.

CRANE

I hope we won't need it.

Crain heads for the door, then snaps his fingers and stops.

CRAIN

Oh. Have you had a chance to look over the data on the fuel cells?

ELIZABETH

No, with all that's been going on... Why? Do you think our last round of accidents was more sabotage?

CRANE

No, they were caused by a bad decision, not equipment failure.

ELIZABETH

Do you think the saboteur is still on board?

CRANE

I'm not sure. You would think someone trying to sabotage our trials wouldn't stop at two just fuel cells. But, so far, they're the only evidence of sabotage we've found.

ELIZABETH

It must have been done before we left port.

CRANE

Or our saboteur is laying low, waiting to strike another system. Lizzie, I need you to carry on with the investigation.

ELIZABETH

Lee, I...

Crain looks through the glass at the bustling sick bay.

CRAIN

Before you say it, I know you're busy. But we must get whoever this is in the brig before they destroy our only hope of saving anyone.

ELIZABETH

Sure. I'll let you know if I find anything.

Crain gently caresses her shoulders and smiles.

CRAIN

Thank you, Lizzie. I'm hoping, given our current situation, whoever this is will realize that the survival of our planet is more important than making a political statement.

After a moment of gazing into Elizabeth's eyes, Crain awkwardly takes his hands off her shoulders, drops them to his side and takes a couple of steps back.

CRAIN

Well, I better get to work. I'll talk to you later.

Elizabeth keeps her eyes fixed on Crain as he disappears from her office. She drops her head and rubs her eyes.

INT. SEAVIEW - CONTROL ROOM

The Seaview glides a safe distance along side the spewing lava.

Morton and the control room crew busy themselves at their stations. Crane steps in.

KOWALSKI

Approaching waypoint seven, sir.

MORTON

Very well, Mr. Richter, lay in the course heading for waypoint eight. Inform the Admiral.

RICHTER

Aye sir.

Crane lowers himself in the command chair while Richter carries out her duties.

CRANE

How long has he been at it Chip?

MORTON

Almost eleven hours. I'll bet he's sifted through terra-quads of data by now.

CRANE

How many bots do we have left?

MORTON

We're down to our last two.

Nelson's voice announces through the control room speakers.

NELSON
Mr. Morton, I've lost contact with the
bot.

Morton gives Crane a dry look.

MORTON
Make that our last one.

Then presses buttons.

MORTON
Understood Admiral. Just a reminder
sir, only one bot left after this..

Nelson's voice booms with excitement.

NELSON
Never mind...forget it.

MORTON
Sir?

NELSON
I won't need the bot, Mr. Morton. I've
know the answer. Find the Captain..

CRANE
I'm right here sir.

NELSON
Captain, please, come to my cabin
immediately. Mr. Morton, I'll need the
Flying Sub and a co-pilot in an hour.

MORTON
Aye sir.

CRANE
On my way Admiral.

Crane vanishes up the spiral staircase while some the crew
quietly celebrates. Morton puffs a breath of relief.

MORTON
Helm, take us up to Flying Sub launch
depth.

With a burst of bubbles, the Seaview floats upward and away
from the lava mountain.

INT. SEAVIEW - NELSON'S QUARTERS

Crane enters to find Nelson rummaging through his closet in his stocking feet.

CRAIN

Good news, sir?

Nelson steps from behind the closet door and throws a pair of shoes across the room. He's almost giddy with excitement.

NELSON

It checks. It checks on the nose. I don't see how we can miss.

CRANE

A solution, sir?

NELSON

I'm sure of it. It's radical, but I know it'll work.

Nelson turns back to his closet and sifts through his selections of dress uniforms.

NELSON

This is something I've puzzled over for years, but I was never able to get the last bits information I needed to propose a solution. Until now.

He pulls out a dress uniform and throws it on the bed, then puts a hand on Cranes shoulder. His demeanor sincere and fatherly.

NELSON

Capt... Lee, I know it's been difficult having a commanding officer on your sub, but I want to thank you for helping me get those last bits.

CRANE

Your welcome sir, but you also have this crew to thank.

Nelson speaks while he gathers up his shoes and sits at his desk.

NELSON

I would love to, but unfortunately there's no time right now. Washington needs this information immediately.

CRANE

I understand sir, I'll pass on the compliments.

Nelson opens a drawer, pulls out a cloth and begins buffing one of his shoes.

NELSON

As soon as the Flying Sub is launched, take the Seaview to the coordinates you'll find in your encrypted orders and wait for my return.

CRANE

Aye sir. Admiral, if it's not too complicated, just what is the solution?

Nelson stops buffing, rolls his eyes to meet Crain's and grins.

NELSON

The Seaview is the solution.

INT. SEAVIEW - CONTROL ROOM

Standing opposite the spiral staircase, Nelson and Sharkey wait in front of the access door to the Flying Sub. Crane steps up.

CRANE

We're at launch depth sir.

NELSON

Chief?

Sharkey presses buttons on a panel next to the door. It slides open. Inside, waits a circular elevator large enough for four people. Nelson and Sharkey step in.

CRANE

Good luck gentlemen.

The men nod their heads as the door closes.

The glass enclosed elevator descends a few feet vertically into the huge hangar deck, the Flying Sub poised below them.

The elevator moves simultaneously downward and diagonally through a clear shaft leading to a hatch on the top-center of the Flying Sub.

NELSON

Thank you for volunteering, Chief.

SHARKEY

Oh no, thank you, sir. Any chance to sit behind the wheel of the Flying Sub, uh, not that I didn't want to help or anything, sir.

Nelson smiles and thinks a moment.

NELSON

But the Flying Sub doesn't have a wheel, Chief.

The men reach the end of the clear diagonal tube and descend vertically again, directly through the Flying Sub's hatch and into the flight deck.

The elevator glides to a stop. A pleasant female voice announces "Flying Sub Flight Deck." The door opens. Sharkey motions to Nelson.

SHARKEY

After you sir.

The men move up to the pilots and co-pilots seats. Behind them, the elevator retracts and the hatch seals.

SHARKEY

Beginning power up sequence, Admiral.

Nelson and Sharkey strap themselves in. Sharkey begins pressing buttons and flipping switches. The Flying Sub comes alive with lights and sounds.

SHARKEY

(to his console) Wake up sleepyhead.

Sharkey grabs the joysticks on the arms of his chair, Morton's voice enters the cabins speakers.

MORTON

FS one, this is Seaview. Do you copy?

SHARKEY

(to his console) Computer, activate Tracker - Seaview, this is FS one. We are powered up and ready for launch.

MORTON

Flooding hangar deck.

A pool of water quickly forms beneath the Flying Sub. Within seconds the entire deck is submerged. Gigantic hangar doors slide open below.

MORTON

Releasing mooring clamps.

Two large arms, release their grip the Flying Sub and retract.

SHARKEY

Activating maneuvering thrusters.

The Flying Sub slowly floats vertically through the hangar doors until it clears the Seaview's underside.

SHARKEY

Engaging Plasma Jets.

The stern of the Flying Sub glows blue, then whisks away.

MORTON

FS One. You are clear and free to navigate. Enjoy the trip gentlemen. Seaview out.

Crane and Morton watch through the glass nose as the craft climbs and disappears into dark waters.

SHARKEY

Slipstream initiated.

The burnt orange glow of the Slipstream force field engulfs the Flying Sub. The Plasma Jets glow brighter as it accelerates toward the surface at great speeds.

SHARKEY

(happy) Here we go.

As with the Seaview, far ahead of the Flying Sub, the conical shape of the Slipstream field gently moves the marine life from the path of the speedy ship.

Nelson and Sharkey are pressed against their seats. Through the glass nose, the sunlight of the surface slowly becomes visible. Sharkey grips the joysticks and smiles.

SHARKEY

I just love this part, sir.

Nelson grabs on to his harness. Through the glass nose the bright surface rockets toward them.

The sub leaps from the sea and momentarily hangs in mid-air. As it falls jets ignite, blasting it skyward leaving a trail of blue haze following its path into the clouds.

SHARKEY

(joyous) Boy, am I glad we've got us
one of these...uh...sir.

Nelson rubs his neck and forces a smile.

NELSON

I'm happy you enjoyed it Chief. Are you
just as enthusiastic about landing?

INT. SEAVIEW - CONTROL ROOM

Crane and Morton watch the overhead monitors track the
Flying Subs progress. Crane presses buttons on his console
then turns his attention to the Navigator.

CRANE

Mr. Keno, activate pre-programmed
course, Nelson one.

RICHTER

Course laid in, sir.

CRANE

All ahead one third. Execute.

The Seaview begins to raise and spin about her length in
one graceful motion. Crane leans over to Morton.

CRANE

Chip, this might be a good time to give
the crew a break, now that we've lifted
the communications blackout. It'll give
them a few hours to relax before the
Admiral returns.

MORTON

I'll see to it sir.

Morton leans over to Crane. He speaks quietly.

MORTON

Captain, I know Doctor Hiller has her
hands full right now. Since I have a
little extra time, I'd be happy to take
over the investigation again.

CRANE

That's generous of you Chip, but you've
worked two shifts straight through.
Wouldn't you like a little time off?

MORTON

Not really, sir. I'd rather stay busy,
rather than pondering the apocalypse.

CRANE

That's funny, that's what the Doctor
said. And to be honest, I don't blame
either one of you. I'm trying not to
think about it myself.

Crane pauses to reflect.

CRAIN

Alright Chip, I'll talk to Dr. Hiller,
see if she could use the help. The
faster we can get, whoever this is, in
the brig and off my mind the better.

MORTON

Sir? I'm reasonably confident the
saboteur is no longer on board.

CRANE

We can't be sure of that, Chip.

MORTON

Unless the saboteur vaporized the
needle, we can be ninety nine percent
sure.

CRANE

What are you talking about? We don't
even know what kind of needle was used.

MORTON

Captain, I narrowed down the
possibilities before turning the
investigation over to Dr. Hiller. She
didn't tell you?

Crane leans forward.

CRANE

No...she didn't. Go on.

MORTON

During the manufacturing process a unique seam is created along the length of the needle. It leaves a specific groove in the puncture mark. There are only three needles in our database that leave that particular groove. Two are industrial, the third is medical and used for heart resuscitation. But we eliminated the medical needle after Dr. Hiller told me she had none missing.

CRANE

That's strange. She didn't mention any of this to me. What about the industrial needles?

MORTON

Same story there. Chief Sharkey conducted a thorough search and found everything accounted for. We assumed the saboteur must have finished his dirty work before we left port.

Crane lowers his voice.

CRANE

Or the saboteur could be a member of this crew and brought it in with their gear. A needle is pretty small, might get past our scanners if concealed well enough.

MORTON

Captain, I personally scanned the entire sub, including the refuse, searching specifically for those needles and found nothing missing or gained. Besides, they'd still need something to deliver the hydrazine, a syringe or plunger...

KOWALSKI

Captain, I'm picking up something unusual on the seafloor directly ahead.

Crane and Morton promptly turn their attention to the overhead monitors.

CRANE

What do you have, Mr. Kowalski?

After Kowalski presses buttons, one of the monitors displays a video image of a long narrow formation of flat rocks, resembling a road.

CRANE
What is that, Chip?

MORTON
Looks like the Biminy Road.

Crane studies the data pouring in on the other monitor.

CRANE
Does it lead back to the epicenter?

KOWALSKI
It also leads away from the epicenter.

CRANE
Chip, take us down. I want a closer look.

MORTON
Aye, sir. Blowing ballast.

A blast of bubbles and the Seaview descends, slowly rotating, following the rock path.

CRANE
Mr. Kowalski, increase scanner range.
I'd like to know what's at the end of this road.

Kowalski issues an "Aye, sir" and presses buttons. The monitor information changes. Crane studies intently. The Seaview now hovers only a few feet above the rocks.

KOWALSKI
There appears to be a large symmetrical structure several miles ahead, sir.

MORTON
What kind of structure could be at this depth?

KOWALSKI
I don't know sir, but it has four exact equal sides, scanners classify it as non-geological.

MORTON
How can that be? A human made object at this depth is impossible.

CRANE

Helm, increase speed to full.

Crane steps down from the command chair and moves up to the glass nose. He gazes through it, then turns to Richter.

CRANE

Increase forward lighting to maximum.

The nose mounted searchlight glows even brighter. In the distance, a huge, triangular dark shadow begins to take shape.

RICHTER

Maximum lumens Captain.

KOWALSKI

Analysis coming in. Composition, stone. Size, four hundred square feet at the base, to one hundred square feet at the top. Height, one hundred feet.

Through the glass nose the familiar outline of a four sided pyramid begins to take shape. It grows ever larger as the Seaview closes in. Morton joins Crane at the glass.

CRANE

Helm, take us to one hundred feet of the structure.

The rock road leads directly to the base of the pyramid. The Seaview slows its approach then stops. The searchlight illuminating markings on the structures side.

CRANE

What else can you tell me about it Mr. Kowalski?

KOWALSKI

It's appears to be a solid object, no chambers or hollow areas inside. No mechanical or biological features. There appears to be writing, or inscriptions chiseled in its side.

Crane and Morton stare in disbelief.

MORTON

Incredible. Isn't it?

CRANE

Yes sir. That it is.

KOWALSKI

The age of the structure is on the magnitude of around one thousand years.

Crane gazes through the glass at an inscription illuminated by the Seaview's searchlight. His eyes widen.

CRANE

Chip, I want you to hold this position. Gather as much information as you can.

MORTON

And you're going to...

CRANE

Take a mini sub and get a closer look. I think I've seen those markings before.

EXT. NEW YORK HARBOR - DAY

The Flying Sub glides a few feet above the water before gently skimming the surface. Its hull drops into the sea as it slows and taxis into the harbor.

SHARKEY

Admiral, has anyone ever seen this craft before? I mean, outside of the Seaview's crew, that is.

NELSON

Well, come to think of it Chief, I believe very few.

Sharkey gazes out the windows.

SHARKEY

Looks that way.

Two Harbor Patrol boats escort the Flying Sub, it's crew staring from the decks at the unusual flying boat.

Through the speakers, a gruff voice announces his presence.

HARBOR MASTER

FS One, this is New York Harbor Patrol. Do you read? Over.

SHARKEY

Affirmative Harbor Patrol. Go ahead.

HARBOR MASTER

FS One, please follow the escorts to Dock Fourteen. The President has a car waiting.

SHARKEY
Roger, Harbor Patrol.

INT. SEAVIEW - CREW'S QUARTERS

Sailors gather around a video monitor watching a newscast. Some sit on the edge of their bunk with pen and paper while others type into their laptop computers ignoring the news.

NEWSCASTER
We've just received word that Admiral Hiram Nelson is in the building and is walking through the lower hallway. Excitement has been at a fevered pitch since last night's report from the submarine Seaview that the Admiral had conceived a plan to reset the dislodged tectonic plate and extinguish the wall of fire brewing beneath the sea. Several theories are already under consideration by the UN...

INT SEAVIEW - SICK BAY

Elizabeth, Michael and patients watch the same newscast from their wall mounted video monitor.

NEWSCASTER
...in fact yesterday Dr. Jacques Pierre, the emanate physicist of Paris, presented his own plan. Which in essence says 'hands off, it will fix itself.'

Elizabeth steps closer to the monitor, watching intensely.

NEWSCASTER
Unofficial sources tell us Dr. Pierre's argument has swayed the scientific body enough to give his plan their stamp of approval. However, in view of Admiral Nelson's tremendous scientific achievements, we're told that the international scientific committee will make no decisions until Nelson's plan can be evaluated.

INT. UNITED NATIONS BUILDING - MEETING CHAMBER

The room is a mixture of chaos and calm. Some are sitting, quietly listening to a member giving an outspoken and quite animated speech in German. Others are milling and talking.

Suddenly, a lady jumps up and begins yelling at the speaker, who responds in kind. An argument ensues as more members join in. The Chairman pounds his gavel.

CHAIRMAN

Order, order.

Military policemen enter the room, calming and reseating the offenders.

CHAIRMAN

The chair will stand for no more such outburst.

The room returns to a low murmur as the German speaker continues uninterrupted. Two military policeman escort Admiral Nelson and Chief Sharkey to their seats.

Nelson makes himself comfortable, opens his laptop, then gazes at the crowd. The room quiets, except for the German, who now notices no one is listening to him.

The entire crowds attention is now quietly on Nelson. The German abruptly stops speaking and sits down. The Chairman pounds his gavel.

CHAIRMAN

We thank the German delegate for his remarks and will take them under advisement. We acknowledge the arrival of the distinguished scientist from the United States, Admiral Hiram Nelson. The Chair will now listen turn the floor over to Admiral Nelson.

Nelson presses a few buttons on his laptop, stands and gazes around the room.

NELSON

Mr. Chairman, distinguished scientist, ladies and gentlemen. This planet is coming unglued from the inside out. The worlds largest tectonic plate has slid under the worlds smallest tectonic plate releasing a lava flow that will eventually cover the earth. If this flow isn't stopped, our planet has a life expectancy of about three weeks.

The room becomes excited again. The Chairman pounds his gavel. Nelson waits until the room quiets.

NELSON

Therefore, if we are to avoid our
destruction we must act at once.

Nelson sits and types on his laptop. Monitors at each of
the delegates table begin displaying information.

NELSON

In order to stop the flow of lava we
must seal off the rupture by re-seating
the tiny Cocas plate. And we have less
than three days to do it.

Dr. Jacques Pierre, sitting across from Nelson leans
forward.

PIERRE

(sarcastically) And just how do you
propose to do THAT Admiral?

NELSON

By splitting the Cocas plate, Doctor.
The western edge of this plate has been
lifted more than seven miles, allowing
the magma cauldron below to spew up
through the cracks. By fracturing it in
the middle, the plate will break off
and fall back into place, sealing the
ruptures.

PIERRE

Again I ask Admiral, just HOW do you
perform this act of GOD?

NELSON

By the firing two nuclear torpedoes
from the submarine Seaview.

In Sick Bay, Elizabeth looks startled by Nelson's
announcement.

NELSON

These torpedoes, delivered
simultaneously at precise locations
will have enough explosive force to do
the job, Doctor.

At the UN, Nelson turns his gaze to the Chairman.

NELSON

To simplify, take a wooden ruler. Bore a couple of holes around the six inch mark and snap, the ruler breaks in two. Blast a couple of holes in the Cocos plate and...

Dr. Pierre stands and claps his hands together loudly.

PIERRE

Snap! No world!

A man in the crowd stands and shouts in French. The room turns chaotic again. Pierre slams his fist against his table.

PIERRE

Insanity! It's absolute insanity. This lunatic scheme will destroy us all.

NELSON

Doctor, may I direct your attention to your video monitor. Our calculations clearly show...

PIERRE

I have seen all I need to see. I tell you all, Nelson's plan is suicidal insanity. I have calculations too, Admiral. And they show the lava flow from the rupture will seal itself in four days. By fracturing the plate you will only open up a bigger gorge that will never close.

NELSON

Alright Doctor, what if the flow doesn't seal itself?

PIERRE

You have your plan Admiral, and I have mine. Time will judge which one is right.

NELSON

Doctor, my plan can't wait four days. If the rupture isn't sealed within seventy two hours, it never will. The lava will continue to spew eventually covering the Earth after first burning everything in its path to a cinder and filling our air with toxic fumes.

PIERRE

Then this scientific body must decide
which one of us is right.

NELSON

(indignant) I'm not going to sit here
and watch the world burn to a crisp.

Pierre continues speaking to the crowd. Nelson leans over
to Sharkey as he closes his laptop.

NELSON

Let's go Chief.

Nelson gathers his things. Sharkey steps over to the
military policemen. Pierre waves his arms to the crowd.

PIERRE

I demand the Admiral's plan be referred
before a committee.

The crowd murmurs. The chairman slams his gavel.

NELSON

There's no time.

PIERRE

Then I call for a vote. All those in
favor of the Admiral's scheme.

A small portion of the crowd cheers.

PIERRE

All those opposed.

A large cheer comes from the crowd. Pierre points to Nelson.

PIERRE

There's your answer Admiral.

Nelson stands.

NELSON

Not mine, yours. My answer comes only
from the President of the United States.

The room turns chaotic with people talking and shouting
over one another. The chairman pounds his gavel, Nelson
heads for his escorts waiting at the exit.

In Sick Bay Elizabeth looks disturbed as she turns off the
newscast.

EXT. NEW YORK HARBOR - DOCK FOURTEEN

A black SUV pulls up. The driver and passenger, men dressed in dark suits wearing earphones and dark sunglasses, get out. They open the back doors.

Nelson and Sharkey step out and immediately start briskly walking toward the end of the long dock. There, the Flying Sub is moored with a military policeman standing guard.

The dark suited men casually watch Nelson and Sharkey when suddenly the driver cups his hand over his ear. His expression quickly changes. He motions to his partner.

The men pull their weapons. The driver yells.

DRIVER

Admiral Nelson, stop!

Without looking back Nelson and Sharkey start running down the dock. The dark suited men chase after them.

DRIVER

Admiral Nelson, you must stop, sir!

The military policeman realizes what's happening and goes for his gun. Before he draws Sharkey sprints ahead, pushes him off the dock while Nelson un-moors the craft.

Sharkey trots up the gangplank and opens the hatch. Nelson joins him and both men disappear into the Flying Sub amid the ricocheting of bullets off its hull.

Nelson and Sharkey climb down the ladder leading to the flight deck. They trot to the pilot and co-pilot's positions.

SHARKEY

Would you like for me to take the wheel again sir?

NELSON

Please, Chief.

They assume their positions and strap in. With several button pushes the Flying Sub powers up.

Video monitors flicker to life, one revealing the suited men on top of the craft trying to open the hatch.

NELSON

Warn them off Chief.

Sharkey flips a switch.

SHARKEY

Attention. Clear the deck. This craft
is launching.

Nelson and Sharkey watch as the men ignore the warning,
shooting their guns in a futile attempt to open the hatch.

NELSON

Get us out of here Chief.

SHARKEY

Aye, sir.

A blue glow forms at the exhaust. The Flying Sub quickly
pulls away from the dock, knocking the dark suited men into
the water.

Nelson can see in his monitor all three men bobbing in the
wake.

NELSON

Good. At least they can swim.

The Harbor Master's voice booms through the speakers.

HARBOR MASTER

FS One, this is Harbor Patrol. You are
ordered to return to the dock
immediately. Your craft is not cleared
for takeoff.

Nelson flips a switch.

NELSON

Harbor Master, I have authorization
from the President of the United
States. Please clear the Harbor for our
immediate departure.

SHARKEY

That ought to work, sir.

NELSON

Let's hope so.

Through the glass nose the men watch as two patrol boats
pull into their path. They begin approaching at breakneck
speeds, their guns locked on the Flying Sub.

SHARKEY

I...don't think it worked, sir.

HARBOR PATROL

FS One. We have been instructed by the United Nation Security Council to detain your departure. Under regulations, we must comply. Please, return to the dock, or we will disable your craft.

One of the patrol boats fire shots across the Flying Sub's bow as the three vessels lock a course for a imminent, head-on collision.

NELSON

I've had enough Chief. Forget the regulations, let's get airborne.

SHARKEY

Aye, sir.

Just as an impact was certain, the Flying Sub noses up and rockets away at fantastic speeds. It quickly disappears into the thick white clouds.

SHARKEY

Leveling off at forty thousand, sir.

NELSON

Best sub-orbital speed to the Seaview, Chief.

SHARKEY

Aye sir. (pause) Admiral?

NELSON

Yes Chief?

SHARKEY

I think you left your laptop behind.

EXT. PYRAMID SITE - PACIFIC OCEAN

Doors open in the Seaview's belly and a small sleek craft with a clear bubble top emerges. In its cockpit, Captain Crane engages the prop. The Mini-Sub motors away.

INT. MINI-SUB COCKPIT

Crane guides the sub toward the pyramid. He presses buttons and hears a pleasant female computer voice.

COMPUTER

All scanners online. Beginning analysis.

The Mini-Sub now floats only a few feet from the structure.

CRANE

Computer, actuator left, spotlight.
Actuator right, recorder.

Two mechanical arms emerge from hatches on each side of the Mini-Sub. One holds a spotlight while the other, a video camera.

CRANE

Computer. Three hundred sixty degree systematic scan and record. Silent mode. Execute.

The Mini-Sub backs away from the structure and slowly begins circling around it.

CRANE

Now, let's have a good look at you.

The instruments flood with data as the tiny sub stops momentarily at each side, scanning the markings thoroughly. Crane studies the video images.

CRANE

I know I recognize those markings from... somewhere.

He uses his sleeve to wipe the condensation from the bubble. Gawking through it, he peers at the structure. Then, his face loses all expression.

CRANE

No. It can't be.

EXT. FLYING SUB - DAY

The Flying Sub speeds by in hot pursuit by two American jet fighters.

INT. FLYING SUB - SECONDS LATER

Nelson and Sharkey study their consoles. One of the pilots voice booms through the speakers.

PILOT

FS One. This is the United States Air Force. You are ordered to return to New York Harbor, immediately. Do you read? Over.

Nelson flips a switch.

NELSON

Air Force pilot, this is Admiral Hiram Nelson. Were your orders issued by the President herself?

PILOT

No sir. My authority comes from Fleet Commander...

NELSON

Listen to me Air Force. My authority comes from the President of the United States. And I will continue this heading until she and she alone resends it. Now stand down.

PILOT

I'm sorry, sir, but my orders are clear. You must return to New York, or I am authorized to use deadly force, sir.

Nelson looks at Sharkey.

SHARKEY

Shall we go sub-orbital sir?

NELSON

No Chief, that's the wrong direction. We'll loose them..

An alarm rings. Sharkey speaks fast.

SHARKEY

Sir, one of the fighters has a missile lock.

PILOT

FS One, this is your last warning.

NELSON

Air force, you're in violation of..

SHARKEY

He's firing, sir!

NELSON

Evasive Chief.

The Flying Sub noses up and shoots skyward. The missile and fighters follow.

SHARKEY

It must be a plasma seeker sir.

NELSON

Cut the jets.

The blue glow disappears and the Flying Sub starts a nose dive. The fighters chase after the it while the missile continues skyward.

Alarms and warning lights flash as the Flying Sub continues its free fall. The flight deck starts shaking.

SHARKEY

Admiral, we don't have any decoys, or flares, or anything like that, do we sir?

NELSON

Sorry, Chief. I design this craft for just about everything except dog fighting.

SHARKEY

I was afraid of that, sir.

The second fighter launches a missile. The Flying Sub speeds toward the ocean.

Another warning signal blares.

NELSON

Chief...

SHARKEY

I hear it sir. These guys just don't give up, do they?

The Flying Sub restarts its jets a few feet above the water and again, launches skyward. Behind it the missile plunges into the sea and explodes.

SHARKEY

I know I said this was fun sir, but I'm getting a little woozy.

NELSON

There's only one way to end this, Chief.

SHARKEY

Understood sir. Activating diving sequence. Hold on Admiral, this is going to be a rough one.

NELSON

I'm sure you'll have fun, Chief.

The Flying Sub levels off and begins another nose dive. But this time, the fighters drop to sea level and skim just above the water on an intercept course.

On the fighters display a graphic reads: TARGET LOCKED. A gloved finger presses a button. The graphic now flashes: MISSILES FIRED.

The missile hugs the oceans surface rocketing toward its explosive rendezvous. But the Flying Sub plunges into the ocean before the missile can reach its target.

The missile noses down, trying to correct its course, but hits the water, causing it to skip end over end, until it too, explodes. The fighters head back for the sky.

Through its glass nose bright flashes illuminate the dark water in front of the Flying Sub as it continues to dive. Nelson and Sharkey glance at each other in relief.

SHARKEY

The fighters have moved off, sir.

NELSON

I'm glad you were 'behind the wheel' Chief. I certainly can't match those flying skills.

SHARKEY

Thank you sir. But, to be honest, I didn't even know I HAD those flying skills.

NELSON

Take her deep and let's locate the Seaview.

SHARKEY

Aye, sir.

NELSON

We'll give it a little time, then take to the sky again when it's safe.

INT. SEAVIEW - CRANES QUARTERS

Crane studies the rotating holographic image of the pyramid structure floating above his desk. Then, checks his monitor gazing at the enlarged images of the pyramid's markings.

His door chimes. He offers a "come in" while continuing to study the monitor.

Elizabeth stands at the door.

ELIZABETH

Lee?

Crane looks over his shoulder.

CRANE

Lizzie...please, come in.

Elizabeth slowly strolls in. Crane return to his examination.

ELIZABETH

Why don't you come up for some air?
You've been in her for over four hours
now.

CRANE

Not yet, I've still got at least a half
hour before the Admiral gets back.
Here, take a look at this.

She looks at Cranes profile a moment before turning her attention to the monitor.

CRANE

The pyramid is definitely Mayan, the
placement of the stones, the flat top.
But there are no steps.

ELIZABETH

Meaning?

CRANE

It wasn't sacrificial or meant to be
climbed. And those markings, I'm sure
those are the exact same markings I saw
on a Mayan codex tablet that was
discovered a few years ago.

ELIZABETH

How did it get there? The Mayans
couldn't have built it at the bottom of
the ocean.

CRANE

Maybe they didn't. They could have
built it on land and somehow floated it
out to sea, then sunk it.

ELIZABETH

So do you think this pyramid has
something to do with the earth cracking
up?

CRANE

I don't know. But I think it's more than coincidental that all we had to do was follow that rock path and it lead us straight to it, as though it were meant to.

Elizabeth steps away from the monitor and gazes blankly around the room while Crane continues his examination.

ELIZABETH

Lee, Have you heard what happened at the U.N.?

Crane's face remains glued to his monitor.

CRANE

(half-heartedly) No.

ELIZABETH

Well, the U.N. took a vote to oppose the Admiral's plan.

Crane snaps his head toward Elizabeth.

CRANE

What?

His collar begins flashing. Sparks' southern accent speaks from the other.

SPARKS

Captain Crane, this is Sparks sir. There is a priority one communications from the Secretary of State, a one Mr. Henry Gardell.

CRANE

Route it to my console.

SPARKS

Aye, sir.

Crane's collar light extinguishes.

CRANE

How do you know the U.N. voted down...

ELIZABETH

Lee, while you've had your head buried in that data, Admiral Nelson has been in New York making headline news.

CRANE

That's probably what this call is about.

ELIZABETH

And you need to take that call.

Elizabeth heads for the door. Before leaving, she locks eyes with Crane.

ELIZABETH

Lee, remember, the Admiral is not ALWAYS right.

Elizabeth exits. Crane pushes a button on his desk.

CRANE

OK Sparks, go.

SPARKS

Transferring sir.

Crane's video monitor fades in on GARDELL, a well groomed red haired man in his thirties.

CRANE

This is Captain Crane.

GARDELL

Captain, we've got a problem.

CRANE

Mr. Secretary, the Seaview is standing by...

GARDELL

I'm referring to Admiral Nelson and the incident he just caused at the U.N.

CRANE

Incident?

GARDELL

For starters, he proposed a plan that more than half of the scientific council has already voted against. Then he thumbed his nose at most of the member nations and left in that, flying contraption of his. We feel going to try and take matters into his own hands without U.N. approval. We can't allow that to happen. Now can we Captain?

CRANE

'We,' sir?

GARDELL

Please Captain, don't be coy. You and I have to work together...

CRANE

Begging your pardon sir, it's my understanding that this submarine's mission is under the jurisdiction of the President...

GARDELL

Captain, I'm in charge and representing...

CRANE

I don't believe so, sir. The orders I've received are encrypted and authenticated with the President's security code, not yours. So why am I not speaking with her?

GARDELL

We've been unable to locate the President since she and the Vice President went to the west coast to inspect the damage. A decision that more people than myself advised against.

Gardell takes a breath and forces a smile. He speaks mildly.

GARDELL

Captain. Certainly you can understand the delicate world view predicament we're in right now. Most nations believe the United States let loose a madman that's about to destroy this planet.

CRANE

Quite frankly Mr. Gardell, I don't give a damn about the 'world view' or what the United Nations thinks of America. I believe the President entrusted this situation to Admiral Nelson for a reason, sir. To prevent this very thing from happening.

GORDELL

To allow one man to decide the fate of the world? I hardly think...

CRANE

No sir, to keep political correctness from doing what's necessary, when it's necessary.

GORDELL

And who decides WHAT is necessary?

CRANE

Right now, that would be the President or the Admiral, sir.

GARDELL

Captain look, certainly we can come to some understanding...

CRANE

Mr. Gardell, understand this. I will not alter this mission until told by either the Admiral or the President of the United States. Is that clear? Now if you will excuse me, I have a schedule to keep.

GARVELL

Captain, you can't let that maniac...

CRANE

Good day Ambassador.

Crane switches off the monitor.

CRANE

Tracker on - Mr. Morton.

MORTON

Morton here, Captain.

CRANE

Chip, how long before we rendezvous with the Flying Sub?

MORTON

Twenty two minutes, sir.

CRANE

Have Sparks put in a call to the White House. Use the Admiral's priority channel. I want to find out who's really in charge there.

MORTON

Aye, sir.

EXT. PACIFIC OCEAN - DAY

The Seaview surfaces to the Flying Sub whizzing by overhead. It circles ahead of the Seaview, takes a nose dive and plunges into the sea.

Beneath the waves, the hangar doors open and the Flying Sub nestles itself away.

INT. SEAVIEW - CONTROL ROOM

Crane and Morton wait at the access door. A light flashes. Nelson and Sharkey step out.

CRANE
Welcome back Admiral, Chief.

NELSON
Thank you Captain. We must get underway immediately.

Nelson walks straight to the navigator and bends down. He puts his hands on the console, then stops and looks at Crane.

NELSON
With your permission, Captain?

CRANE
Certainly, sir.

Nelson pushes buttons.

NELSON
I'm glad I remembered this. Please bring us to this course, Mr. Keno.

KENO
Aye, sir.

CRANE
Depth and speed Admiral?

NELSON
Our voyage takes us to the bottom of the sea, Captain. Make it a straight line and as fast as she can go.

CRANE
Aye, sir.

Crane gives a quick glance to Morton, who walks over to his station. He presses a button, the klaxon sounds.

MORTON
Diving stations, diving stations. Stand by for Slipstream propulsion.

CRANE

Admiral, I need to have a word with you, sir.

The Seaview slips beneath the waves. The orange glow forms around hull and the sub speeds away.

INT. SEAVIEW - NELSON'S QUARTERS

Nelson, standing behind his desk, looks at Crane with a shocked expression.

NELSON

My God Lee. How can the President of the United States be missing?

CRANE

Apparently she and the vice president..

NELSON

The vice president too?

CRANE

Sir, both were on Marine One inspecting the damage when it went down somewhere in a Mexican jungle. A search has been underway, but nothing has turned up yet. It's possible they could be stranded like millions of others anywhere along the coast of Mexico or even Central America.

NELSON

Who's in charge, the secretary of the senate?

CRANE

The secretary of state also claims that right.

NELSON

Sounds familiar.

CRANE

I don't think anyone knows who's in charge, Admiral.

Nelson looks out his portal. The concern on his face reflecting off the orange glow.

NELSON

Captain, we must continue on course. And I may have to make a decision that some might not want to follow.

Nelson faces Crane.

NELSON

I need to know where you stand, Lee.

Crane fidgets.

CRANE

Admiral, what about the rest of those scientist? Are they all wrong?

NELSON

Lee, no one but myself has had the opportunity to take the measurements I have. Pierre's flow rate is off by ten percent alone. And God forbid if he'd even look at my figures. Believe me, they're just a bunch of elitist fools.

CRANE

Are you sure you're right Admiral? We don't get a second chance at this.

Nelson locks eyes with Crane.

NELSON

Captain, if I believed not firing those torpedoes would bring my beloved wife back from the grave, I would still do so. That's how much I'm sure.

CRANE

What about presidential authority?

NELSON

As far as I'm concerned, we already have that permission until the President or her legal successor takes it away.

CRANE

I agree sir.

NELSON

Thank you Lee, I needed to hear that.

CRANE

Admiral, there is something else we need to discuss.

INT. SEAVIEW - SITUATION ROOM

Nelson and Crane study the holographic images of the rock road and the pyramid floating above the situation table.

NELSON

Captain, are you trying to tell me this pyramid, or whatever it is, has something to do with our volcano's?

CRANE

I was hoping you could help with that, sir. But I do find it more than coincidental that we run across a nine hundred year old structure at the bottom of the ocean with a path leading directly to the volcano's.

Crane presses buttons. The hieroglyphics chiseled in the side of the pyramid appear.

CRANE

And then there are these hieroglyphs. I know I've seen them before, I just haven't been able to find where.

Crane's collar flashes.

RICHTER

Captain, objective ahead, sir.

CRANE

Take us out of Slipstream, helm.

The orange glow fades from the Seaview's hull. The props appear and the sub continues on her way.

Crane and Nelson enter the control room.

RICHTER

We'll reach the objective in twelve minutes...

KOWALSKI

Contact ahead. Bearing two seven two degrees. It's another sub, sir.

Nelson and Crane take their positions. Morton presses buttons and studies the new information on his monitor.

MORTON

It's Russian, Captain. Typhoon class. On an intercept course. Attack posture.

NELSON

I thought we made friends with the Russians?

CRANE

Maybe the French made better friends.

KOWALSKI

Sir, she's flooding her torpedo tubes.

CRANE

Evasive maneuvers. Battle stations.
Bring Plasma weapons online.

Morton throws the switch to sound the klaxon. Throughout the sub the crew scrambles as Morton's voice echoes in the background.

MORTON

Battle stations, battle stations. All hands to general quarters.

CRANE

Why didn't we detect her earlier Mr. Kowalski?

KOWALSKI

I don't know sir. She just appeared after we dropped out of Slipstream.

NELSON

It's possible the sensors were blinded by the Slipstream field.

KENO

She's firing sir. Two fish away.

CRANE

Counter measures.

From the rear of the sub spit two glowing balls of energy. One attaches itself to the nose of a torpedo making it spin off course. The other torpedo sidesteps its energy ball.

KENO

One countermeasure ineffective Captain. Torpedo still closing fast.

CRANE

Get a lock on it with the Plasma Laser.

NELSON

Lee, it's too close...

Crane makes a quick glance at Nelson...

CRANE

There's no time, sir.

And back to Keno.

CRANE

Take it out Mr. Keno. Now!

Keno presses a button. Two narrow red beams shoot from the Seaview. It hits the torpedo, which explodes, sending a shock wave hurtling toward the sub.

MORTON

Concussive wave. Brace for impact.

The shockwave broadsides the Seaview, slamming it against the side of a cliff. The control room shakes, as lights dim and sparks fly from Kowalski's console.

KENO

Sir, all weapons offline.

MORTON

Re-route to backup.

KENO

By passing. Sir, weapons still unresponsive. Computer core malfunction.

CRANE

Switch to manual control.

KENO

Re-routing.

KOWALSKI

Sir, she's flooding her tubes again.

CRANE

Keno, get us out of here. Mr. Morton, take over re-routing of the firing controls.

The Seaview pulls away from the cliff only to find she's trapped inside a U-shaped canyon, with the Russian sub closing in on the only way out.

CRANE

Mr. Morton, how about those weapons?

MORTON

I'm trying sir...too many systems damaged...

KOWALSKI

She's locking a firing solution.

NELSON
We're sitting ducks.

KOWALSKI
Captain. New contact, bearing one four
four degrees. It's the U.S. attack sub,
Dallas, sir.

The Dallas comes up from behind the Russian sub, now poised
at the canyon entrance.

SPARKS
(through speakers) Admiral Nelson, this
is Sparks. Sir, the Captain of the
U.S.S. Dallas is hailing.

Nelson gives Crane a quick glance.

CRANE
Are they here to help us or them?

NELSON
Shall we find out?

CRANE
Put him through Mr. Sparks.

DAVENPORT
Admiral Nelson, this is Captain Richard
Davenport of the U.S.S. Dallas. Do you
require assistance sir?

Nelson sits up.

NELSON
Yes Captain. It would be nice if you
could stop that Russian sub from
destroying us.

DAVENPORT
Already done Admiral. I don't think
they'll bother you anymore.

Crane studies his monitor. He turns to Nelson.

CRANE
The sub is moving off.

DAVENPORT
The President sends her regards and
apology for what happened in New York.
It was a terrible handling of crisis
management. I'm pretty sure some heads
will be on the chopping block for it.

NELSON

How is the President?

DAVENPORT

Shaken up a little but back in control. Admiral, she's approved your plan and has mobilized the Navy to form a blockade in case anyone decides to stop you.

NELSON

Then I assume the majority of the U.N. still favors Pierre's plan.

DAVENPORT

On the contrary. Pierre's plan is loosing steam fast. Many have switched sides after re-examining his data and yours. I understand you made a quick exit and left your laptop. Hope you don't mind the intrusion.

NELSON

Not at all Captain.

DAVENPORT

Whether intentional or not, leaving it gave the scientist time to study the plans side by side. But France, Germany, the Russian states, are still holding out. They may try to stop you again, but it's doubtful. However, our orders are to stick around and provide protection until the blockade firms up.

NELSON

That's good news Captain. I'll send my compliments to the President personally when all this is done. But for now we have a job to finish.

DAVENPORT

I understand, sir. Don't worry, we'll be watching your back. Good luck Admiral.

The Dallas and the Seaview move off in different directions.

NELSON

Mr. Morton, how long will it take to get the target beacons in place?

MORTON

Approximately thirty minutes, sir.

NELSON

Gentlemen, I'll be in my quarters double checking my figures. I want to know the minute they're done.

MORTON

Aye, sir.

Nelson disappears up the spiral staircase. Crane jerks his head slightly as if hit by an idea.

CRANE

Chip, see to the deployment. I've just thought of something I want to double check as well.

EXT. NUCLEAR TORPEDO TARGET SITE

Through a burst of bubbles three divers emerge from hatches on the top of the Seaview. Small jets in their modified flippers shoot them away from the sub.

Encapsulated by an orange glow, the crushing water is kept several inches from suits, creating a dry area around their hands. Each carries golf club size rods.

After a brief swim, the divers reach their target. They begin pushing the rods in the ocean floor. As each is inserted a light on the top begins flashing.

INT SEAVIEW - CRAIN'S QUARTERS

Paperwork and open books are scattered about. Crain has his face buried in the text scrolling across his monitor.

He shuffles through some loose paperwork on the floor and exposes a hard back book. He snatches it, lays it on his lap and leafs through its pages.

A pleasant female voice reports through the cabin's speakers: "TRANSLATION COMPLETE." Crain drops the book and begins reading the text on his monitor. His eyes widen.

EXT. NUCLEAR TORPEDO TARGET SITE

The diver inserting the last rod gives the rest a thumbs up. They fall into formation and jet for the Seaview.

INT. SEAVIEW - CONTROL ROOM

Nelson and Morton are returning to their seats. The control room speakers come alive with a male voice.

VOICE

Control Room. The diving team has returned. Target Beacons in place.

MORTON

Acknowledged. Prepare to get underway.

NELSON

Where's the Captain?

Morton checks his console.

MORTON

Still in his quarters, sir.

NELSON

Let's get him up here.

EXT. NUCLEAR TORPEDO TARGET SITE - SEVERAL MINUTES LATER

The Seaview floats motionless just above the ocean floor, it's glass nose pointed toward several flashing lights far in the distance.

INT. SEAVIEW - CONTROL ROOM

The crew are poised behind their consoles, hands at the ready. The only sound is the normal hum of the control room. Many eyes occasionally glance at Crane's empty chair.

Nelson drums his fingers.

NELSON

We can't wait any longer.

He presses a button.

NELSON

Attention all hands. Nuclear torpedo launch in sixty seconds. Stand by.

Crane skips down the spiral staircase.

CRANE

Admiral, wait sir. I have something you MUST look at before we fire.

NELSON

Captain, now is not the time...

CRANE

Admiral, two minutes. I know we can spare the time. Sir, please, just two minutes.

Nelson glances at the crew, then back to Crane.

NELSON

Alright, what have you got?

CRANE

Mr. Morton, join us at the situation table.

Nelson and Morton follow Crane to the back of the control room where he brings the situation table to life with holographic images and data.

CRANE

I knew I had seen these inscriptions before.

A 3D image of the pyramid rotates above the table. The image zooms in on one of the pyramid's sides revealing a close up of the chiseled hieroglyphs.

CRANE

Admiral, the Mayans had an extensive language that's been deciphered using the Mayan equivalent of a Rosetta stone. They created thirteen of them. Up until a few months ago only four had been discovered. Then, a fifth one was found in Guatemala, deep in an underwater cave. I remember reading about it and was able to download the decipher code. Our computer just used that code to translate the inscriptions on the pyramid. Listen to what it says, Admiral.

Crane pushes a button and the 3D image overlays the English translation of the stone inscription. He reads.

CRANE

For those who come after. To-Mira Goddess of the future, bestows this gift. May the wise among you understand its meaning, so your children may live to see the new sun.

NELSON

Goddess of the future? What new sun?

CRANE

Admiral, the Mayan calendar ends this year, or shall I say a new cycle begins. A new cycle of the sun.

Nelson rubs his neck.

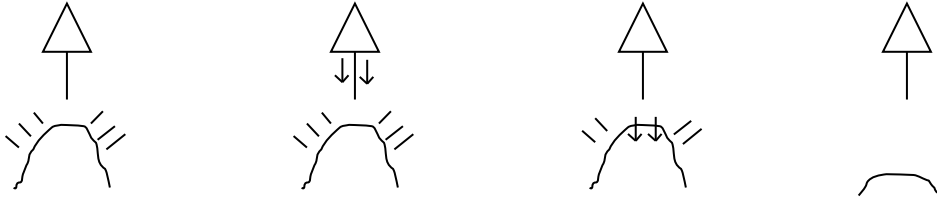
NELSON

Lee, what does this have to do...

CRANE

There's more, sir. Look at these inscriptions.

Crane presses buttons and four symbols appear:



CRANE

The triangle represents the pyramid, the straight line, a path. Presumably the rock one that lead us to the pyramid. The mound at the bottom represents a mountain and the diagonal lines shooting out of it, fire.

This new information intrigues Nelson. He looks closer at the display.

NELSON

I believe the arrow are...

CRANE

Spears. According to these inscriptions very exceptional spears. They 'carry the lives of all who come after, so each must be hardened to four times the square of the crest.' Sir, that number works out to precisely one hundred thousand.

MORTON

The exact megaton yield of each of the torpedoes.

CRANE

And we're the only submarine on Earth that carries that type of torpedo. You said it yourself Admiral. The Seaview is the solution.

Crane continues to read. Nelson ponders.

CRANE

'The crest will steady your spear, the path will guide your aim.'

Nelson is beginning to look slightly impressed.

CRANE

The spears penetrating the mountain, turning it into rubble. The fire vanishing, it all fits, Admiral.

Nelson studies the data, then shakes his head.

NELSON

I don't know, is there anything else? Something more scientific?

CRANE

No sir. It ends basically saying 'here's what you need to save yourselves. Hope you're smart enough to figure it out.' The rest of the inscriptions talks about how the volcanic activity will 'swallow the world in fire' unless we follow the words of To-Mira.

Nelson takes a couple of steps back.

NELSON

Lee, this is all very fascinating but you're suggesting we turn the fate of the world over to a thousand year old prediction about the future? That's some leap of faith, let alone totally un-scientific.

Crane turns back to the situation table and presses buttons.

CRANE

How about this Admiral? A geological survey we recorded less than twenty four hours ago of ground zero.

The 3D image zooms on the pyramid's symbol and traces an outline of it. Then, overlays the outline on top of the of geological survey depicting the mountain, path and pyramid.

They match exactly.

CRANE

I don't know how, divine intervention, extraterrestrials, or just a lucky guess. But I do believe a thousand years ago some genius did predict this event. The Mayans, or someone, built this pyramid in hopes future generations would someday use it to save themselves.

NELSON

But Lee. We have the best scientific equipment in the world, and we couldn't predict it. How could anyone possibly have known about tectonic plate movement a thousand years ago.

CRANE

How could anyone have possibly built a pyramid at the bottom of the ocean a thousand years ago? But there it stands. How do you explain that, Admiral?

NELSON

I can't, at least not without more data, which is exactly my point. I need time to study this plan to make sure Pierre's prediction doesn't come true. This could cause irreversible damage.

CRANE

Admiral, I've already calculated a firing solution using the hieroglyphs' translation.

The holographic pyramid dissolves and is replaced with text, numbers and graphics. Nelson studies them closely. His face turns expressionless.

NELSON

Captain, are you sure you're showing me the right data?

CRANE

Yes, sir. Why?

NELSON

Because this precisely matches my first choice for delivery location. Although it has the perfect firing solution, the Seaview would be too close to endure the aftershocks.

CRANE

But according to the inscriptions, if our 'chariot' is fast enough, we should be able to out run the wave. The simulations give it an eighty eight percent chance of success.

The holograph now dissolves into a 3D animation of Crane's description, the Seaview outrunning a shock wave. Nelson ponders.

NELSON

Your opinion Mr. Morton?

MORTON

Seems more than coincidental to me, sir. Especially in light of the fact that this was your first solution.

CRANE

I know it's a leap of faith Admiral, but for me, it's just too persuasive to ignore. You told me to keep reminding you of the alternatives. Well, sir, here's mine.

Nelson steps away and rubs his neck. After a couple of paces he returns and glares at the holographic data.

NELSON

Alright Captain, takes us back to your pyramid as fast as she can go. We have very little time left.

EXT. NEAR THE PYRAMID SITE

The Seaview slows from Slipstream to prop speed as it closes in on the pyramid. In the distance, the lava geysers are now spewing the top of the mountain.

Multiple small explosions from the gorge hurtle shock waves and lava in all directions.

INT. SEAVIEW - CONTROL ROOM

The sub shakes, the crew is jostled.

RICHTER

Encountering phase three buffeting Captain.

CRANE

Compensate Mr. Richter.

The maneuvering thrusters come to life and soften the rocking.

CRANE

Mr. Keno, distance to target?

KENO

Half a mile ahead sir, at z-minus two thousand.

Nelson makes his way to the glass nose and gazes at the volcanic spectacle.

NELSON

(to himself) It's grown larger than I expected. It shouldn't be at this magnitude until...

Suddenly, a giant explosion illuminates the ocean. A shock wave carrying tons of red-hot boulders hurtles toward the Seaview.

KOWALSKI

Brace for impact. Compressive shock wave bearing down. It's carrying debris.

MORTON

Shields to maximum.

CRANE

Close Crash Doors.

Nelson stands firm as his view of the eminent collision is obscured by the scalloped edges of the Crash Doors.

The giant doors smother the glass nose as the wave rushes by, hammering the hull with huge glowing globs of lava. The sub rocks and sparkles, the shields repelling the hits.

KOWALSKI

Shields holding, sir. Minimal hull damage.

The Seaview settles as the last of the hot boulders bounce off the hull's silver glow.

KOWALSKI

Wave dissipating. Debris is clearing.

MORTON

No mission damage, Captain. All stations reporting ready, sir.

Crane consults his console. Nelson takes his seat.

CRANE

Very well. Maintain course. Ahead full.

EXT. PYRAMID SITE

The Seaview slowly descends while aligning itself with the rock path. Small shock waves continue to quake the sub as it glides toward a landing on the flat top of the pyramid.

INT. SEAVIEW - CONTROL ROOM

Crane stands behind Keno, swaying as the sub encounters the shock waves. The rest of the crew is intensely monitoring their consoles.

KENO

On glide path.

RICHTER

Speed, ten FPS.

CRANE

Slow our decent helm.

KOWALSKI

Distance to target. Thirty eight feet.

The thrusters churn dirt around the pyramid as the Seaview closes in on the crest, two horseshoe shaped protrusion at either end of its flat top.

Keno concentrates on his display as he regulates the Seaview's decent toward a perfect landing.

RICHTER

Fifteen feet, sir.

CRANE

Sit us down, Mr. Keno.

The Seaview gracefully makes a landing.

RICHTER

Contact sir.

The underside of the Seaview fits the crest perfectly. The occasional shock wave throws the sub off balance, lifting it slightly. The thrusters labor to keep it down.

KENO

Thrusters at station keeping.

The shaking subsides. A graphic appears on Kowalski's monitor.

KOWALSKI

At the moment, aim is true. Ready to commence firing sequence, sir.

Crane takes the command chair, giving Morton and Nelson a quick glance.

CRANE

Gentlemen.

Crane, Nelson and Morton press their pinky finger against oval slots on their consoles, then enter passwords. Their display screens flash in unison: TORPEDO CONTROL ONLINE.

CRANE

Mr. Morton.

Morton steadies himself as another small wave thwarts his button pushing. A green flashing graphic soon appears on his monitor.

MORTON

I have torpedo firing control Captain.

CRANE

Very well, flood tubes and activate firing sequence.

Morton responds with "aye sir" and presses buttons. His monitor displays the progress. A small wave hits. The crew hangs on until it passes.

MORTON

Tubes one and two flooded sir. Firing sequence activated. Nuclear detonation at contact plus one thousand feet. Outer doors opening...

Morton gawks at his monitor which appears to be frozen.

MORTON

Outer doors are suppose to open...

Morton presses buttons, another wave shakes the room.

MORTON

Captain, outer doors are not functioning.

CRANE

Over ride the sequence. Go to manual.

MORTON

I've tried sir. Still non-responsive.

Morton concentrates on his console trying different button combinations and getting the same annoying beep with each attempt. Nelson studies his monitor.

NELSON

It's been re-routed at the torpedo room.

MORTON

Or it's a computer glitch.

Crane presses a button on his console.

CRANE

Torpedo room.

The speakers remain silent. Another wave shuffles the crew.

CRANE

Torpedo room, this is Crane. Respond.

KOWALSKI

Sir, level three compressive wave.
Brace for immediate impact.

A big wave hits, this time lifting the Seaview several feet off the crest. The sub struggles against the force until finally completing a shaky landing.

MORTON

Captain, Tracker reports two crewmen in the torpedo room. Neither is moving.

Crane presses a button.

CRANE

Dr. Hiller, meet me in the torpedo room. We may have injured.

The speakers again remain silent as another wave rocks the sub.

CRANE

Dr. Hiller? Do you read? This is Crain.

No response. Morton works his console.

MORTON

Captain, Dr. Hiller is already in the torpedo room.

Crane and Morton exchange quick stares.

CRANE

I'm going.

Crain springs from his chair. Another wave hits. Nelson heads for Kowalski's console.

NELSON

I'll try to override the firing controls.

CRAIN

Have the Chief meet me there and Chip, don't wait, fire those torpedoes as soon as you have the green light. Then get us the hell out of here.

MORTON

Understood.

INT. SEAVIEW - CORRIDOR

Crane is tossed against the walls as the sub shakes. He rounds the corner to see an open door to the torpedo room.

INT. SEAVIEW - TORPEDO ROOM

Crane enters and notices two crewmen laying motionless on the floor. He checks their pulse. The sub rocks again.

He looks up to see Elizabeth, her back toward him, standing in a glass enclosure housing the torpedo control panel. He steps toward her.

CRANE

Lizzie, what are you doing in there?
These men are injured. They need help.

Behind Crain, the door to the torpedo room slams shut. He spins around but sees no one, then steps over to a door in the glass enclosure.

CRANE

Lizzie, we've got to fire those torpedoes. Open the door.

Elizabeth is frantically pressing buttons. Crane types into a keypad. A red light flashes, the door remains closed. Another wave rocks the sub.

Crane pounds on the door. Elizabeth looks over her shoulder. Her eyes widen. A hand from behind grabs Crane and twirls him around.

Michael hits Crane in the face. He stumbles back against the glass and slides to the floor. Elizabeth returns to her frantic button pushing.

Michael pulls a gun, but Crane kicks his feet out from under him, knocking Michael to the deck. The gun slides next to the glass door.

Michael scrambles for the gun. Crane tackles him sending both men tumbling across the room. They get to their feet and start boxing, each landing solid punches.

Nelson's voice echoes through the room.

NELSON

Captain Crane, can you respond? Lee, if you can hear me we've got less than a minute to fire those torpedoes. What's happening down there?

Nelson's voice begins breaking up amid another round of shaking. Both men stumble away from each other. Michael falls by the glass door and grabs the gun.

Crane jumps to his feet and makes a run toward Michael who sits up and points the gun at Crane. He slides to a stop.

MICHAEL

That's far enough, Captain.

Crane raises his palms. Michael eases himself to his feet, constantly keeping the gun and his eyes on Crane.

MICHAEL

You're not firing those torpedoes.

CRANE

If we don't, this planet will be destroyed. Is that what you want?

MICHAEL

I'm trying to SAVE the planet. Firing those torpedoes is what will destroy it. Dr. Pierre is right. The Earth knows how to heal itself.

Crane notices over Michael's shoulder Elizabeth moving toward the glass door.

CRANE

Listen to me. Within the last hour the U.N. has unanimously approved the Admiral's plan. Even Dr. Pierre himself now supports it.

MICHAEL

That's a lie! Dr. Pierre is brilliant!
He could never be wrong about something
as important...

The door opens. Michael wheels around. Elizabeth whacks him with a fire extinguisher. He hits the deck, out cold.

ELIZABETH

Hurry Lee. I don't know how to fire the
torpedoes...just get in here.

Crane springs through the glass door and straight for the console.

CRANE

What were you doing in here, Lizzie?

He quickly pushes buttons.

ELIZABETH

Trying to stop Michael.

The sub rocks. The couple grab what they can to regain their footing. Nelson's voice crackles through the speakers. Crane again concentrates on the console.

NELSON

Captain Crane we MUST fire those
torpedoes...

He presses buttons. A green light flashes. Another wave hits. Elizabeth stumbles. Crane catches her. They gaze into each others eyes as he gently helps her to her feet.

INT. SEAVIEW - CONTROL ROOM

The sub shakes. The crew hangs on. Morton's undivided attention is on his console. His eyes widen, his voice raises.

MORTON

Firing Control restored. Outer doors
opening. Firing torpedoes in three,
two, one. Torpedoes away.

The torpedoes shoot from beneath the Seaview's glass nose.

MORTON

Mr. Keno, activate escape course.

KENO

Aye, sir.

The maneuvering thrusters raises the Seaview off the crest. In one fluid motion the nose lifts, spins on its tail and eases off in the opposite direction.

The torpedoes rocket for their target, encountering shock waves trying to knock them off course. But they regain their heading, tracking perfectly alongside the rock path.

RICHTER
Slipstream initiated.

The Slipstream's orange glow engulfs the Seaview's hull. Behind it, the torpedoes barrel through the spewing lava, hit the mountain cliff and burrow in.

RICHTER
Plasma Jets igniting.

The Seaview speeds away - the torpedoes detonate.

The point of the V-shaped mountain cliff dissolves, sending an avalanche of debris crashing into the gorge and creating a giant shock wave that gives chase to the Seaview.

The initial explosion caused a chain reaction along the opposing ridges of mountain's V-shape. Like dominoes falling, debris cascades into the raging moat of lava.

MORTON
How are we doing Kowalski?

KOWALSKI
Sir, initial compression wave is gaining on us. Secondary waves are forming.

The Seaview sprints through the ocean, its hull glowing bright orange. The wave follows, obliterating the pyramid in its pursuit.

MORTON
Helm, increase speed. Push her as hard as you can, Richter.

With an "Aye, sir" Richter presses buttons. The lights dim, the normal background hum of the Control Room increases.

The wave is now nipping at the Seaview's stern. Chunks of glowing lava mixed with pieces of the pyramid strike the hull.

The control room rumbles. Morton swings toward Kowalski.

MORTON
Shields, Mr. Kowalski.

Kowalski presses buttons.

RICHTER
Reactor at one hundred fifty percent,
sir.

KOWALSKI
Shields at maximum.

The hull sparks silver, repelling the debris chasing it. The bright orange glow now pulsates and slowly increases the distance between the Seaview and the tailgating wave.

The pounding subsides. Morton stands in front of the command chair.

KOWALSKI
We're pulling away from the compressive edge at seventy two MPH, and slowly raising to the surface.

RICHTER
Sir, reactor temperature is climbing.

MORTON
Maintain speed, helm. Increase angle on the planes. Five degrees.

The Seaview, now pulsating white-orange, zooms through the sea, heading for the surface with the wave now lagging behind. The debris in the leading edge has thinned.

KOWALSKI
The primary wave is beginning to dissipate. We're above the compressive edge of all secondary waves.

RICHTER
Sir, reactor temperature is approaching tolerance.

MORTON
Reduce speed. Set reactor to one hundred percent, Mr. Richter.

KENO
Surface ahead Mr. Morton.

MORTON
Mr. Kowalski?

KOWALSKI

We are out of the danger zone, sir.

MORTON

Take us out of Slipstream Mr. Richter.
Engage prop sequence.

The white-orange glow fades. The Seaview slows as the props re-appear and begin churning.

MORTON

Zero angle on the planes.

The bright sunlight illuminates above as the sub skims just below the surface.

The conning tower is the first to break through as the Seaview raises into calm waters. A small surface wave breaks the sub's wake and scoots around the hull.

KOWALSKI

What's left of the initial shock wave just passed us, sir.

MORTON

All stop.

The crew gaze through the glass nose at the remains of the wave, gently rolling to the horizon.

KOWALSKI

We finally outran one sir.

MORTON

Too bad the Captain wasn't here to see it.

Nelson, having been all this time intensely studying his console, suddenly jumps up.

NELSON

My God it's working!

He presses buttons on his console. The overhead monitors begin displaying graphics and text. Morton and Kowalski step over and raise their heads for a look.

Nelson exuberantly addresses the crew.

NELSON

Congratulations all. The Cocas plate is reseating itself.

The control room explodes with applause and jubilation. Nelson quickly scans around the room, then leans over to Morton.

NELSON

Have we heard from the Captain?

Morton presses a button.

MORTON

Torpedo room. Captain Crane, please respond.

INT. SEAVIEW - CORRIDOR - TORPEDO ROOM DOOR

Sharkey has his hand inside an opened panel. Wires spill from around his wrist. Men with guns are poised at the door.

He clenches his jaw and gazes over his shoulders at the men.

SHARKEY

Here we go.

Sharkey twist his body as if reaching for something. The door opens. The men dash in. He pulls his hand from the panel, blowing and shaking it as he follows them in.

INT. SEAVIEW - TORPEDO ROOM

A couple of men are tending to the injured crewmen, now conscious and sitting up. The rest are taking Michael into custody. Sharkey steps in and looks around the room.

He narrows his eyes gazing at the open door on the glass enclosure. Cautiously, he walks to it. Nelsons voice blares through the speakers.

NELSON

Captain Crane, can you respond?

Sharkey peers through the glass. Crane and Elizabeth are sitting on the floor, kissing. He steps back and looks away.

SHARKEY

Tracker - control room. Admiral, this is Sharkey in the torpedo room. The Captain's ...uh... being treated by Dr. Hiller right now.

NELSON

Is he injured?

Sharkey timidly peeks again through the glass. They're still kissing.

SHARKEY

I'll have to get back with you on that one, sir.

Listening from the control room, Nelson and Morton share a puzzled glance.

INT. SEAVIEW - SICK BAY

Crane sits on the edge of a diagnostic bed. Elizabeth stands over him administering first aid.

CRANE

You should have said something, Lizzie.

ELIZABETH

I know, Lee. But after what you said about the crew being suspicious of each other, well, that's what I thought I was doing when I suspected Michael.

She applies a cotton swab to a cut on his forehead. He flinches.

CRANE

Well, this is the one time I'm glad you didn't listen to me. What changed your mind?

ELIZABETH

I found the 'needle in the haystack' we were looking for. He'd used it, then put it back into stores. I found traces of the hydrazine right before we were supposed to fire the torpedoes.

CRANE

You should have called security right then and there. Why did you follow him to the torpedo room?

ELIZABETH

I thought I could talk him out of it, but believe me, he wasn't listening. By the time I got there, he'd already clobbered the crewmen and was busy doing something with the with one of the panels across the room.

CRANE

Re-routing the firing controls.

ELIZABETH

He threatened to shoot me if I tried to stop him. I saw the control booth and managed to make it in there before he did. But, about the best I could do was to lock him out. That's when you showed up.

She applies a bandage.

ELIZABETH

What still puzzles me is, why the fuel cells? He sabotaged them BEFORE he became convinced that you and the Admiral were about to bring civilization to an end.

CRANE

Industrial espionage. A rival company for the Naval contract paid him a tidy sum of money to make sure the Seaview failed the trials.

ELIZABETH

How do you know?

CRANE

He tried to bribe his way out of the brig with the name of the company that paid him.

Nelson strolls in looking very relieved.

NELSON

Congratulations Captain, it worked. The Cocos plate has been reset with a new seal around it's edges. Your ancient friends were right after all.

Crane returns the smile.

CRANE

They're not really considered, ancient, sir.

NELSON

Is he all right Doctor?

Elizabeth finishes up her first aid.

ELIZABETH

A fractured rib, a few cuts and bruises.

She smiles at Crane.

ELIZABETH

If he takes it easy and listens to his Doctor's advice, I'm sure he'll live.

She hands Crane his shirt. He puts it on.

NELSON

What happened in the torpedo room?

CRANE

I found our saboteur trying to short circuit the firing control.

NELSON

Who was it?

ELIZABETH

My assistant. I'm really sorry Admiral, I had no idea...

NELSON

It's alright Doctor, he wiggled past our background check as well. Why was he trying to stop us?

CRANE

Let's just say he wasn't convinced our plan would work.

Crane straightens. A small hint of pain crosses his face.

CRANE

You'll have a full report as soon as I can prepare it, sir.

He stumbles slightly stepping off the bed. Elizabeth helps him regain his footing.

ELIZABETH

You need rest, Captain.

NELSON

I agree. That report can wait.

Crane looks at Nelson then Elizabeth.

CRANE

Seems like that's what everyone been telling me for the last three days.

Morton's voice pipes in through the cabin's speakers.

MORTON

Captain, repair crews report minimal damage. We can get underway at any time, sir.

CRANE

Very well, Chip. Take us...

Crane looks at Nelson and smiles.

CRANE

Take us wherever the Admiral wants to go. I'll be in my quarters.

Nelson glances up.

NELSON

Engage the Slipstream, XO. Best speed to San Francisco.

Then, returns the smile.

NELSON

Take us home.

EXT. PACIFIC OCEAN

The Seaview glides gracefully through a calm sea toward a new California shoreline. The sun is setting, showering the hull in its own burnt orange glow.

INT. SEAVIEW - CONTROL ROOM - GLASS NOSE

Crane, his injuries healing, looks out the large glass panes at the carnage on shore. What was the San Joaquin Valley is now an inland sea. Debris litter its shores.

Nelson steps up and shares Crane's view.

NELSON

Remarkable.

CRANE

The new California, or the fact there still is a California?

NELSON

Both.

Nelson takes a seat.

NELSON

What did you say the Mayans considered this year to be the start of?

CRANE

A new, thirteen hundred cycle of the sun.

NELSON

Then I suppose we should be celebrating a happy new year, or should I say happy new years.

Crane grins.

CRANE

I hope we make it through another cycle.

NELSON

I have high hopes for humanity, Lee. As long as we learn from our past and have faith in our future, I'm sure we'll make it.

He pats Crane on the back in a fatherly fashion.

NELSON

In the meantime there's certainly a lot of rebuilding to do. I'm sure the Seaview will be a big part of it.

Backing out through the glass nose, a climbing birds eye view reveals several Navy ships escorting the Seaview toward the new coastline.

Marine helicopters hover overhead airlifting the stranded to safety and helping to remove the tons of debris from the water soaked land.

Hundreds of people speckle the shore. Some are hugging, some are crying, some sift through rubble in solitude. But most are helping one another.

THE END