

THE RIG

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FADE IN:

EXT. DEEP SPACE

A bolt of light arc across the sky, traveling at unimaginable speed. It slows down. It's a space craft. Alien in design. It banks erratically. A noiseless explosion aft. Then another, and another. All internal injuries. A large explosion. One piece disengages as the remnant explodes. The surviving fragment shoots past the moon Earthward.

EXT. RIG - NIGHT

The rough sea waves slam mercilessly into the gigantic concrete struts of the oil platform. Above the roaring, hostile winds, tuneless singing can be heard. The structure stands tall, illuminated within and without by fluorescent lights. The party spirit defies the diabolical weather.

INT. RIG LOUNGE - NIGHT

Dozens of bottles of alcohol litter the lounge. JONES, too well groomed for his own good to be a rigger, hugs MANNY, whose grinning face reveals his gold tooth, hugs YOMOTO, her lanky frame attempting to sway in time with DAVIS, looking awkward, too youthful to be singing shanties with this experienced team.

The weathered WELLS, SIMON SHAW a rough-hewn boulder of a man, and the bespectacled CARTER lean stoically against the wall.

CARTER

Hey, Palmer. You 'n' Fritz oughta chip in a few bars to get 'em in tune.

PALMER pats her Alsation's fur and kneels beside the dog.

PALMER

What d'you think, Fritz?

Fritz licks his mistress's face and begins to howl. Startled, AMAR turns from the upright computer game and quickly goes back to it. BARTHOLOMEW STEADMAN, contrastingly suited and booted, raises a champagne glass.

STEADMAN

I promised you refreshments. Don't blame me for the entertainment.

Shaw turns his back unsmiling. He downs a shot.

STEADMAN

A toast, to the finest crew it's ever been  
my pleasure to... wait where is she?

INT. E-LAB - NIGHT

CASSANDRA (CASSIE) PRYOR taps away at the computer, chemical compound wire-frames reflected in her spectacles. She leans forward chin in hands, examining the computer models. She's startled by the interruption.

WILLIAMS

You've been at that for six days straight.

CASSIE

Don't do that! You're always creeping up  
on me.

Williams tries to hide his embarrassment.

WILLIAMS

Are you going to make an appearance? I  
can't party with a roomful of just men.

CASSIE

What about Palmer?

WILLIAMS

I might cut myself on her stubble.

CASSIE

(distracted)

I'm working.

WILLIAMS

You've had six years. Do you think six  
more hours are going to give you the  
results you're after.

She looks at him, then the console, then back to him shaking her head.

CASSIE

I have to try.

WILLIAMS

A couple of drinks?

She turns back to the computer.

Williams puts a hand on her shoulder. Hesitating, he leans forward, his face to hers. She slowly turns to his.

CASSIE

Simon!

Simon Shaw stands in the doorway.

SHAW

The big boss wants to make his speech.  
 (looking at Cassie)  
 He wants you there.

Shaw and Williams exchange hard stares. Shaw turns and leaves.  
 Cassie brushes past Williams and follows.

WILLIAMS

Damn.

EXT. CORRIDOR 1 - NIGHT

Shaw strides purposefully, Cassie jogging behind him.

CASSIE

Simon. Wait! Can we talk?

Simon continues to walk briskly. He spots a number of discarded  
 bottles and tumblers.

SHAW

Look at this mess. Manny and Davis. The  
 Laurel and Hardy of boozing. Jokers!

CASSIE

The project's bearing fruit. Steadman will  
 shut us down in six hours. We can't just  
 let him take it all away from us.

He picks up the discarded tumblers, tipping the dregs into the  
 bottles.

SHAW

How old are they? You think they'd know  
 better. Show some respect for the working  
 environment.

CASSIE

Everything I've worked for. Everything...  
 we've worked for.

He stacks the tumblers into each other, carrying the bottles by a  
 finger each.

SHAW

So we leave here in seven hours. That  
 don't mean we, treat this rig like a  
 rubbish tip.

CASSIE

Steadman listens to you. But you just  
 don't give a shit, do you?

Shaw stops. He leans over to kiss CASSIE. She nervously steps away.

SHAW

(venomously)

Sometimes, you just don't know who anybody really is.

EXT. SPACE: EARTH'S ATMOSPHERE - NIGHT

The alien ship hits Earth's upper atmosphere. The scorch marked craft suddenly turns red and bursts into flames. It arcs as gravity reels it in.

INT. RIG LOUNGE - NIGHT

All the crew are assembled.

STEADMAN

(slightly tipsy)

It has been an incredible six years. To take this decommissioned oil rig---

CARTER

Oil platform ---

STEADMAN

Thank you Mister Carter - Oil platform ---  
How many years have I been getting that wrong?

JONES

How many years you owned this turkey?

STEADMAN

An incredible six years, I'll have you know Jones. And for what? To investigate. To understand the meaning of life. To seek out new life and new civilisations---

Manny and Davis start humming the tune of Star Trek. Steadman smiles as they get the joke.

Williams sidles up to Cassie whispering in her ear

WILLIAMS

What do you think? Possible reprieve?

Cassie shrugs hopelessly.

STEADMAN

When I first invested--- when I first created Steadman Life Laboratories, people, friends, family, the media, all thought I was a lunatic to sink three million Euros into a venture that I didn't truly understand. They called me foolish, ignorant, stupid, even arrogant. They said I would end up losing everything and become a laughing stock, of not only the business community but the scientific fraternity. Well I am no scientist, I am a businessman first a realist second. And

six years on, I have come to the conclusion, they were all correct. But what's life if you can't laugh at yourself every once in a while ---

He sits down tripping up on an empty bottle of Champagne.

STEADMAN

I salute you all.  
(holding up a bottle)  
Enjoy the party.

He falls over drunk.

The lights black out. Emergency low-lights go on.

A low but loud rumbling sound.

A bright light floods the lounge.

Shaw presses the alarm klaxon. All crew head towards the upper deck.

EXT. DECK - NIGHT

The trail of fire arcs low, shooting past the rig. It ignites as it hits the water many miles off.

The gathered throng stare, mouths agape.

PALMER

What the fuck?

JONES

Tell me we're not just going to let that go.

STEADMAN

(amazingly sober)  
Thirty-six hours. You got thirty six hours to earn me at least some of my money back.

EXT. SEA - NIGHT

Burning debris litters the sea. On one large piece of metal flotsam an alien CREATURE clings on for dear life with five of its six limbs. It turns its bulbous head, as if pondering the wreckage, then turns towards the rig. Using its free arm to paddle and the flat end of its long spiky tail as a rudder.

EXT. DECK - NIGHT

Palmer and Carter steady the autonomous underwater vehicle (AUV) as it rises to deck-level. Jones and Yomoto, wet-suited up, check their equipment.

AMAR

This is ridiculous. You can't let them go down in their state.

CARTER

Hey, what do we know, Amar? We're just deck hands.

AMAR

They're barely able to stand.

YOMOTO

Lighten up kid, we're pros.

JONES

(laughing)

Hop in. Room for one more.

AMAR

(to Williams)

Can you talk some sense into them?

WILLIAMS

You heard the man. They're pros.

Yomoto pulls the lid down on the ship as Manny pushes the lever, lowering the AUV. Jones gives the thumbs up.

AMAR

Madness!

STEADMAN

Haven't you got a deck to swab or something?

Shaw watches silently. He lights a cigarette and walks away.

INT. E-LAB - NIGHT

Cassie taps away wildly. The chemical models spin and shatter.

CASSIE

Shit!

AMAR

You're not interested if those men get killed out there?

CASSIE

They're grown men. Profe...

AMAR

Professionals. Yes, yes I know. But what Steadman is allowing is beyond stupidity. They could just as easily investigate in the morning. When they've sobered up.

CASSIE

Omar, is it?

AMAR

Amar.

CASSIE

Amar, you're a sweet boy. And you're right. But I don't care. I have thirty hours. That's thirty hours more than I had ten minutes ago. It's a life line. Now if you'll excuse me.

Amar stares at the computer over her shoulder.

She presses a series of keys and the compounds once again forms around each other.... and shatter!

CASSIE

(irritated)

Will you just... go.

AMAR

You know that's always going to happen. The corpuscles you're trying to enhance will never be as efficient as you expect. Despite what your calculations tell you.

Cassie looks around at him, shocked.

AMAR

You're looking in the wrong place. The error is at the beginning of the calculation, not at the end.

INT. AUV - NIGHT

Yomoto pilots the craft as Jones checks the monitors. Bright infrared, high-pitched audio and other feedback is returned. Yomoto alternately peers through the glass and keeps his eyes on the monitor.

JONES

So, in a fight, Wolverine or Captain America?

YOMOTO

Come on! That's not even a real question. Cap is handing Wolverine his head.

JONES

Fuck off! Wolverine's indestructible. Practically immortal. He's got unbreakable adamantium bones...

YOMOTO

...but Cap's practically immortal too. His indestructible shield's tougher than adamantium, he's got the super soldier serum running through his veins and he's smart.

Jones wipes condensation from the window.

JONES

Dream on. Wolverine's taken on the Hulk---

YOMOTO

---and lost. Cap could probably take on all the X-Men by himself---

JONES

C'mon! We're supposed to be having a grown-up discussion here.

Yomoto clicks on the transmitter.

YOMOTO

(switching on the radio)

Ground control to Major Tom, it's a big mess out there. You copy that?

(to Jones)

It's just poor writing that's making Wolverine so powerful. You kids need to check your X-history.

He toggles the switch on and off rapidly.

Static then silence. The two men look at each other.

JONES

Is this two way working?

YOMOTO

(tapping the screen)

Instruments are working, bro. Maybe they ain't switched on yet?

JONES

Shall we wait for a radio check? Or just keep going?

YOMOTO

Were almost half way there.

INT. COMMUNICATIONS ROOM - NIGHT

Williams and Palmer look at each other. Williams flicks the switch up and down

WILLIAMS

No, visual or audio. We're deaf and blind and dumb to the world.

PALMER

Accent on the dumb.

EXT. SEA - NIGHT

A line of fire burns intently. The AUV approaches slowly. The hatch opens. Jones surveys the area with a pair of night-vision goggles.

JONES

Fuck me.

YOMOTO

What d'you think.

Judging from what's left of the debris,  
looks like some kind of experimental  
aircraft. Military most likely.

YOMOTO

Armed?

JONES

Unlikely. The fire would've set the whole  
thing off.

The two men survey the surrounding area. Jones sees something.  
Flicks around quickly but it's gone.

YOMOTO

Any survivors you think?

Suddenly the CREATURE leaps out of the water grabbing Jones and  
pulling him into the water.

INT. E-LAB - NIGHT

Wells follows Cassie inside. Amar's sitting at the computer.

WELLS

This better be good young lady.

CASSIE

(to Amar)

Tell him what you told me.

Amar looks embarrassed.

AMAR

It was just a thought.

Wells looks confused.

AMAR

I took a look at her data---

WELLS

(adjusts his posture)

What did you just say? You? You took a  
look at her data?

AMAR

Uh, yes sir.

WELLS

(sarcastically)

Oh, excuse me. I thought I might have just

dreamt that. Please continue.

Amar looks at Cassie. She nods at him to continue.

AMAR

Everything she's doing is spot on. Her calculation are correct. The red corpuscles behave exactly the way they should until they hit formula and then---

He clicks the button---

AMAR

Whamo!

The model breaks up again.

CASSIE

You know I've been checking the integrity of the corpuscle batch like you told me---

AMAR

When she should have been checking the integrity of the formula.

WELLS

You really think that's the key?

AMAR

Definitely.

Wells grins shallowly.

WELLS

Tell me again who you are.

AMAR

Amar Prasha.

WELLS

Facilities Manager, yes?

AMAR

Facilities Assistant.

WELLS

Responsible for changing light bulbs, stocking paper clips, making sure the toilets don't get blocked by turds, things like that, yes?

AMAR

Things like that.

CASSIE

He's also a double phd. Harvard and Cambridge. Applied bio-chem.

WELLS

Well.

CASSIE

I never bothered to check the formula. It was water tight from the off.

WELLS

We did a good job on it.

CASSIE

I just tested it. It's compromised.

Wells looks at Amar.

WELLS

Maybe you should check your results again, Dr Pryor.

CASSIE

I've double checked it. It's bad.

The klaxon alarm starts again.

WELLS

We'll continue this conversation later.

He turns to leave. Cassie grabs him by the arm.

CASSIE

Why did you do it Bob?

WELLS

I said, we'll continue this conversation later.

(beat)

We need to be on deck.

EXT. DECK - NIGHT

Rain lashes down. Manny and Carter are furiously trying to steady the AUV onto the deck. Davis is clicking the controls but it jerks suddenly upwards knocking Carter to the floor.

PALMER

Watch what you're doing you idiot.

CARTER

It's okay. I'm alright.

DAVIS

None of the controls are working right.

Shaw grabs the controller from Davis. He steadies the AUV.

MANNY

Gently. Gently.

SHAW

Feels like they've put on a bit of weight.

Amar, Cassie and Wells are on deck. The AUV comes to rest. The lid slides open.

Fritz starts barking wildly.

PALMER

Easy boy. Easy.

The Creature falls on the deck. Dead.

YOMOTO

Look what we found.

INT. PATHOLOGY LAB - NIGHT

The withered remains of the Creature lies lifeless on the operating table. Gathered round in masks and gloves: Wells, Cassie, Steadman, Yomoto and Jones. At the door the other crew members are fighting to get a view through the glass.

YOMOTO

That's right. Just jumped right out of the water.

WELLS

It was alive?

JONES

Briefly, yeah.

STEADMAN

Could this be a new species we've discovered, Bob?

WELLS

Well it's certainly unknown. Unregistered. I--- I don't know. A six limbed amphibian? A mutation of some sort--- residing in these waters--- perhaps the heat of the explosion forced it to the surface---

YOMOTO

Maybe it was on the plane?

JONES

Some sort of experiment---

STEADMAN

Can we all just stop guessing. How about some hard facts? Cassie?

Cassie opens the door.

CASSIE

Amar. Can you come in here?

DAVIS

How come he gets to go in?

Amar enters. Cassie slams the door behind him and pulls down the blinds.

CASSIE

What do you think?

Amar goes right up to the creature.

AMAR

It's big.

Amar reaches out to one of the creature's arms.

STEADMAN

Don't touch anything.

Amar points at a 'hand'.

AMAR

Look at the hands.

YOMOTO

They're big too. So what?

WELLS

No claws. Fingernails might almost have been--- manicured.

Cassie moves over to the head. She prises its mouth open.

STEADMAN

Do you think you should be doing that.

Two rows of perfectly clean, yellow molar teeth.

AMAR

I guess it brushes too.

EXT. CORRIDOR 1 - NIGHT

The remaining crew stand around.

WILLIAMS

What do you think it is?

SHAW

Who knows. That's what the boffins in there get paid to figure out.

Fritz is very agitated. Whimpering and barking in equal measure.

SHAW

What the fuck's wrong with your dog?

PALMER

(trying to calm it down)  
I don't know. Ever since that thing came on board it's been acting weird.

DAVIS  
It's like there's three classes on this rig.

CARTER  
Platform. And we sit firmly on the bottom of the food chain.

MANNY  
You get paid, don'tya?

CARTER  
You ever hear me complain?

DAVIS  
You all forgotten, as off tomorrow we're all unemployed.

SHAW  
Okay. Enough.

DAVIS  
It's alright for you guys, you got experience. Maybe you're gonna sail straight into a new job. What've I got? Nothing. And three months here don't even get me redundancy money.

SHAW  
I said: Enough!

DAVIS  
Fuck you! You ain't the boss of me now.

Shaw grabs Davis by the throat.

SHAW  
Until we're off this wreck I am your boss.

MANNY  
Hey man, we're all a little upset. The future don't looks so bright for some of us. Y'know?

Steadman emerges out of the shadows.

STEADMAN  
(grinning)  
Oh ye of little faith.

INT. RIG LOUNGE - NIGHT

All but Cassie, Amar and Wells are present.

STEADMAN

They're not sure what it is but more than likely it was on the plane that crashed.

MANNY

So it's American military property?

YOMOTO

Well, we didn't check the wreckage---there wasn't much left of it--- could be Russian, Chinese, could be anything.

PALMER

Might be from outer space.

Jones joins them, lighting up a cigarette.

JONES

(laughs hard)

Right!

(regains composure)

We figure the best thing to do is to transport it back to shore first thing in the morning.

Fritz starts barking wildly at Jones, Palmer struggles to hold the dog back.

WILLIAMS

Even the dog thinks that's crazy. With comms out you'd be flying blind.

JONES

(to Steadman)

Or we could wait for whoever it belongs to to come calling for their property.

SHAW

I thought the reason we were here in the first place was so none of those Animal Rights terrorists could get to you. What's going to happen when you set up shop in the middle of Milton Keynes.

STEADMAN

Look. I know you're all worried about jobs. With this--- discovery I can make you a--- let's call it a tentative promise--- that you'll have one until the end of the month. We'll store the creature on shore for a couple of weeks, then bring it back here with you guys as skeleton staff.

(beat)

I'll figure some way to finance the operation in the meantime.

MANNY

Now that's what we wanna hear, eh Davis?

INT. PATHOLOGY LAB - NIGHT

Cassie, Amar and Welles are slicing tiny samples of the creature and cataloging with notepads and jars.

AMAR

This is fascinating  
(beat)  
and ridiculous. We don't have the  
equipment to properly preserve the body or  
the samples.

WELLES

We endeavor and make do Mr Prasha, or  
didn't they teach you that at Cambridge or  
Harvard? But you're right: this is a  
remarkable piece of bio-engineering.

CASSIE

This is wrong.

WELLES

What?

CASSIE

This. Stripping away at someone else's  
work.

WELLES

Perhaps. But whoever created this creature  
had the luxury of possibly billions of  
dollars. We, if I might juxtapose, have  
had a poor hand played to us. An empty  
budget on a venture capitalist's whim.

CASSIE

Is that why you did it?

WELLES

What are you talking about?

CASSIE

You're the only one who had access to my  
data. What was your agenda? To steal six  
years of my blood, sweat and tears and  
sell it to the highest bidder?

WELLES

Cassie you're paranoid. Perhaps your lack  
of sleep these last few days is clouding  
your judgment.

CASSIE

Don't fuck with me Dr Welles. You're my  
senior but stealing my life's work, I take  
really fucking seriously.

WELLES

Don't use that tone of voice with me young lady! Nothing's been stolen. Nothing!

EXT. DECK - NIGHT

Two alien hands, very similar to the dead creature's, grabs the deck railings. CREATURE-2 pokes its head above the railings. Almost invisible in the dark, it springs on deck. It cocks its head towards the pathology lab. Using its tail it grabs an overhead rail, swings upward onto the deck above. It is directly over the Pathology lab. It lowers its head, peaking through the slits in the half-closed blinds. It reaches its scaly hand towards the handle.

INT. PATHOLOGY LAB - NIGHT

CASSIE

You admit the formula was correct before testing began.

WELLES

Dr Pryor--- Cassie, the formula was pure genius. You're as bright as you are brilliant, unfortunately I needed to make precautions to safeguard you from yourself.

The handle turns.

CASSIE

What are you talking about?

WELLES

If that formula got into the wrong hands---

AMAR

I don't mean to break things up but I think you both ought to take a look at this.

Amar points to the base of the creature's throat.

EXT. DECK - NIGHT

The creature quietly opens the door. It lowers itself gently. Its head is through the door.

INT. PATHOLOGY LAB - NIGHT

WELLES

What is that?

AMAR

I'd call that an exit wound. But from something inside it.

The door slams shut.

The three scientists whirl around! Nothing there.