



## **Sentient Australia - Pilot Beat sheet and summary**

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### **Summary – About Sentient**

Sentient is a new Sci-fi TV series being developed by Presence Global Entertainment. The same story is being developed by teams in Germany, Russia and Africa for production in those countries.

### **Inciting incident**

An alien life form wipes out most of humanity in just one night leaving the survivors to face the, 'Sentient.'

### **Australian Synopsis**

Royal Australian Navy diver, Lt. Commander Michael Dowd wakes in a barometric chamber to discover his base has been attacked by an unknown force. Dowd takes command of the survivors and prepares to fight-back. Dowd is a patriot, a man of action and an Indigenous Australian.

### **Season one**

Season one features a sixty minute pilot plus five, forty minute episodes.

### **Pilot beat sheet**

Each act is labelled.

## Pilot Beat sheet - Sentient - DAY ONE

### Teaser Act

#### Opening scene

- **LT. COMMANDER MICHAEL DOWD** looks out over Sydney harbour. The harbour is filled with bodies, (a ghost of his Xmas future).

#### Inciting incident - Australia

- Dowd and junior officer, **LT. AIDEN FRANK** undertake a Navy ordinance dive outside of Sydney harbour. Their mission is to find and destroy a WW2 bomb discovered in a shipping lane.
- Frank thinks he has found the bomb and goes to lay charges. The bomb turns out to be a mine which detonates killing Frank and wounding Dowd.

#### Dowd's nemesis and intro of theme

- As Dowd is rushed through a base hospital to a recompression chamber, **COMMODORE LAURENT FRIESNER** warns him he will be made to pay for his failure. The tone and approach forewarns us that Friesner is gunning for Dowd.
- The theme of flawed leadership and the patriot betrayed is hinted at.

#### Day One – The storm

- Dowd wakes up in a recompression chamber to discover the power is out and the storm of the century is tearing apart the building but there's more.
  - His phone glows and hums like Tibetan singing bowl
  - He discovers a pile of dead bodies stacked in front of an exit door
- Dowd FLASHBACKs to a training event. Dowd lectures a room of ENTRY LEVEL OFFICERS including Aiden Frank. Aiden's father, **VICE ADMIRAL J. DEAKIN FRANK** and the Admiral's dog, **HEC WALLER** observe from the rear of the room.
- Dowd drills the Entry level officers about what to expect in a chemical or biological attack. Most importantly he cautions them, 'Ready for war, someone is coming to kill you.'
- When we, RETURN TO THE PRESENT, Dowd is convinced he has woken up in the middle of a chemical or biological attack and that Australia is at war.
- Dowd expects an invasion any moment and goes into leadership mode. This shapes his decision-making and course of action. He does not realize that the invaders are already here or who they really are.

- Dowd comes into the presence of an alien life form for the first time in the hospital hallway. 'Dowd stares into the abyss and the abyss stares back.' Dowd, fearful, backs into an office and locks the door.
- Dowd discovers opponent-ally, **DR. AMON TEICHER**, (a second set of eyes). Neither of them share what they have seen but the audience sees it all.
- Dowd ends the Teaser, looking out over Sydney to discover the angry red storm has enveloped Sydney.

## Act One

### The new world

- Dowd realises that the storm of day one is at least, Sydney-wide.
- Dowd resolves to get to the Navy command bunker.
- Dowd discovers the pile of bodies has disappeared but doesn't share the information with Teicher.
- Whilst Teicher seeks to survive the storm, Dowd wants to get to the command bunker to 'get in the fight.' Teicher figures it is safer to go with Dowd.
- The storm defeats them both. They collapse in the hospital foyer.

### Intro D Story

- Later that day, **Power PASTOR HUBERT HESTON**, blinded by the storm, wanders, lost on the road to Bankstown.
- Dowd and Teicher are woken by the arrival of the Admiral's dog. Hec Waller has come to retrieve Dowd back to the Admiral. Dowd resolves to find the Admiral and get in the fight.
- Dowd and Teicher discover Sydney is abandoned.
- The city is silent with the exception of a humming sound.
- A red haze hangs in the air.
- Dowd and Teicher are both afflicted, punch-drunk, as a result of the storm.

### Intro C Story

- American visitor, **HEIDI FISK** wakes up in a hotel room after the storm. Not realising what has happened, Heidi panics. She believes she has missed her plane and that she will be taken to a detention centre. She frantically packs her bags, whilst voicing her lament over her lost Australian love. She's shocked when she sees her face in the mirror. She's covered in blood.
- Teicher discovers an human ash shadow, burnt into the wall

- Hec Waller, (the Admiral's dog), leads Dowd and Teicher to the Command bunker which is also the source of a mysterious banging sound.
- Pastor Hubert Heston is joined by a figure with a machete. The audience see the threat. Heston cannot.
- Heidi explores the abandoned world starting with the hotel foyer. She discovers a wallet with a photo of the Stamm family and in particular, a young women, **'SAMMY.'**
- Heidi reveals herself as a person who has lost out in love and who is down and out in life. She takes the wallet but promises to return it.
- Dowd tricks Teicher into revealing information about himself. We discover Teicher is a defence contractor and judging from his chemical and infectious diseases outfit, works with toxic substances.
- We discover Hubert Heston's 'man with the machete' is Arab-Australian Police officer, **SENIOR CONSTABLE WASIM SABBAN** of the NSW- Tactical Operations Unit. Sabban passes out with anaphylactic shock. As he passes out we see another clue, a flock of jet airliners circling over Sydney.
- The Admiral's dog leads Dowd and Teicher to the Command bunker. Dowd picks up a fire axe along the way, 'just in case.'
- Dowd and Teicher discover the Admiral, banging his head up against the Command bunker door. Dowd is shocked to see the Admiral, bloody and disoriented. The Admiral does not recognise Dowd.
- Whilst Dowd is focused on the Admiral, Teicher makes a gruesome discovery, the command bunker is covered in freeze-frame, ash figures, burnt, 'Hiroshima style' into the wall. Dowd is so focused on the state of his hero, the Admiral, Teicher has to drag him back to see the discovery.

## Act Two

### Intro the B story – The nemesis

- Dowd barely has time to take in the meaning of the Hiroshima style, 'wall of human ash shadows', when Commodore Freisner turns up with two base security guards, (**BABIC** and **EID**) armed with automatic rifles.

- Freisner takes one look at Dowd, axe in hand, standing over the bloody faced and disoriented Admiral and orders base security guards, Babic and Eid to arrest Dowd and Teicher.
- Dowd makes it crystal-clear to Friesner, 'We are at war and must act now, advance enemy forces will be landing any moment.'
- Friesner, gripped by paranoia, won't hear a word of it and is convinced Dowd poses a threat.
  
- Babic and Eid escort Dowd and Teicher to a holding cell at the armoury
- Dowd makes a, 'reasonable case' to the security guards to, 'Run for your lives.' When reasonable doesn't work, Dowd overpowers them and detains them in the armoury. During the fight, Dowd knocks-out Babic's front teeth.
- Dowd and Teicher encounter **ABLE SEAMAN CHE AMIRI** in the armoury and bring her on side. They need to make contact with Command or the Executive branch of government. Step one, Dowd seeks out his fellow commandos at HMAS Penguin but how to get there?
  
- Friesner enters the outer Command bunker but is denied entry to the inner sanctum.
  
- Heidi Fisk searches the empty city for life. It's a ghost town.
  
- Hubert Heston saves Sabban's life with a Epinephrine shot
- Sabban sees the circling planes. Heston and Sabban speculate it's an evacuation and resolve to get to the airport.

### Act Three

#### The plan

- Dowd, Teicher and Amiri
  - Dowd locks Babic and Eid in the holding cell and takes their kit.
  - Dowd declares Friesner afflicted by the storm and takes command, albeit of only Amiri and Teicher.
  - Dowd resolves to get to his base and round-up some 'hard-bodied sorts' to take on the invaders, not knowing yet who the invaders really are.
  - Dowd states he expects the communication equipment on his base will allow them to report on events and sort a plan of action with command or the executive branch of government.

- They make their way to the wharf, seeking a sailboat to cross the harbour.
  - They spot the circling jetliners. Dowd makes it clear, 'time is running out.' He believes an invasion force is hidden within, 'The perfect hiding place for an invading army.' 'When those planes land, it all begins.'
  - They face off against **CAPTAIN 'JIMMY' JAMES RAMOS**, a Philippine Navy Captain, staggering forward, from the wharf, delirious, waving a pistol.
  - Ramos tells them his ship, a Philippine frigate was hit. They don't believe him. He tells them to 'See for yourself'. Dowd encounters the view from the opening scene, 'A harbour of bodies for as far as the eye can see.'
  - There's no power and cars, boats and all electrical equipment seems to have been disrupted by the storm.
  - They find a catamaran and make sail across the harbour to Dowd's base.
- **Friesner, the Admiral and Base security guards, Babic and Eid**
    - A hard-bodied female Base Security Guard, **AGUILERA** finds the guards locked in the Armoury and berates them as limp-dicks.
    - Aguilera arrives back with the guards to Friesner to advise Dowd has their guns and kit. They don't know where they went to, only that they now have, 'some Arab chick with them.' The lead guard has had his front teeth knocked-out and is champing at the bit to take down Dowd.
    - Friesner demands the bunker inner doors open. They do, whereupon we meet **KAIDEN**, a lone, foreign IT contractor on a 457 visa.
    - Friesner instructs the security guards to, 'Get my son' and despatches them to a hospital to collect him.
    - Friesner believes Sydney has been hit by a WMD, (weapon of mass destruction) and that this is a terrorist event. He resolves to establish order in the city until outside help arrives.
  - **Heston and Sabban**
    - Sabban leads Heston, (still blind) along the road to the airport whereupon they encounter **RABI**, a muslim in full prayer gown waving a baseball bat. Rabi is batshit-crazy with angst, demanding to know where his wife and children are.
    - Sabban tries to calm him down but Rabi won't trust a cop, especially a muslim one.
    - Sabban points to the circling planes and tells Rabi, his family must be at the airport waiting for evacuation. They head to the airport

- **Heidi**
  - Heidi seeks out someone, anyone, in a deserted shopping centre whereupon she discovers **SAMMY**, the young woman and the daughter from Dr. Stamm's family photo. Heidi wants to know where her family is but Sammy does not speak.

## Act Four

### The plan defeated

- **Dowd, Teicher, Amiri and Ramos**
  - Night - They sail the cat across the harbour to Dowd's base. The floating bodies begin to glow then sink out of sight.
  - They discuss the circling jetliners. Dowd explains how you could hide an army within, the guns are here, the infrastructure and hardware is waiting, all they have to do is turn up.
  - They arrive at Dowd's base. No one is home.
  - The communication equipment is dead but there is plenty of kit to take. They procure supplies.
  - There is no way to contact command. Teicher explains how the storm has disrupted communication equipment but a valve radio set may still work. Dowd tells them he knows where they can get hold of a ham radio.
  - Ramos observes the jet liners are coming in to land
  - They rush out to observe the jets, one by one, they flame out and crash into the city, setting it on fire.
- **Heidi and Sammy**
  - Heidi tells Sammy, 'We're going to find your daddy.'
  - Heidi, asks her about her family but Sammy does not reply.
  - Sammy seems to be searching for something of someone.
  - Sammy enters an open jewelry store. Heidi follows her.
  - Necklaces, diamond rings, it's all there for the taking
  - Sammy becomes lost, staring into a mirror.
  - Heidi places a necklace on Sammy, trying to cheer her up
- **Friesner, the Admiral, Kaiden and the Base Security Guards**
  - Kaiden reveals they have lost all contact with command and the outside world, 'We're blind.'
  - Friesner makes it clear to Kaiden, Sydney has been hit by a weapon of mass destruction, this is a terror attack and you will get that equipment working.
  - The guards go to the Sydney Children's hospital to pick-up Friesner's son, Tobias.

- Babic and Eid whine all the way. Babic tells how he is going to beat Dowd to a pulp when he sees him next. Aguilera berates them as a selection of soft cocks. They discover Sydney is empty.
- **TOBIAS FRIESNER**, the 14 year old son of Commodore Friesner, wakes up alone in a cancer ward for children. The room begins to vibrate. A blue glow fills the hall outside. Something approaches. A hum like a Tibetan singing bowl fills the ward. Tobias drags himself upright to see. He's terrified.
- A door outside opens. He hears Base security guards, Babic and Eid's voices. The light and the humming abruptly stops.
- Tobias doesn't look like he can walk but he is a very resilient young man, ready to take it on. Tobias says nothing of the blue light and the hum.
- Kaiden joins Frieser on the roof of the bunker. Friesner is watches the planes line up to land. Kaiden wants to know, 'Are they for us?' when one of the planes flames out and crashes into the city.
- **Heston, Sabban and Rabi**
  - Rabi is suspicious of Sabban. The feeling goes both ways
  - Heston, still blind, tells them he can hear the planes coming into land. They need to pick up the pace. They witness the planes start to flame out and crash into the city.
- **All**
  - The jetliners come in to land.
  - Everyone is watching with different expectations.
  - One by one, they fall from the sky setting Sydney on fire.

## Act Five

### Resolve and cliffhanger

- **Heidi and Sammy**
  - Heidi is distracted when the first plane crashes.
  - Heidi discovers Sammy is gone.
  - Heidi searches for Sammy.
  - A huge man stands at a window staring out at a city on fire. The man is a shadow with a shimmering blue aura.
  - Sammy approaches, still wearing the necklace.

- The man turns and looks dead-pan, down at Sammy. A blue light ripples over his eyes. Sammy has just encountered the Sentient, the humans survivors will call the, **'BEAST.'**
- Heidi runs out to discover both of them at the window. She takes one look at the Beast and knows this is dangerous.
- Sammy takes the Beast's hand. A blue light travels up his arm.
  
- The Beast FLASHBACKs to Heidi's hotel foyer.
- Sammy stands in the busy hotel, looking out of the foyer window at a concert going on in a nearby park. A red snow descends upon the city, seemingly unnoticed.
- Outside the hotel foyer, workmen undertake nightwork with jackhammers.
- Sammy's father, **DR. STAMM** is trying to pay his bill but the machine will not accept his card. He puts his wallet on the counter to pay. A delightful young hotel staff member assists him. She will later become known as the Sentient, **'QVB'**
- The Beast before becoming Sentient, is sitting on a seat observing the concert. He rises, alarmed by what he sees happening outside.
- Dr. Stamm berates Sammy's sister, **VERA** to watch over Sammy. Instead, she sends an SMS on her phone.
- The lights go out. The lights go out all over the city. The jackhammers stop. The crowd inside panics. The workmen run past. Sammy is drawn closer and closer to the window. Something is coming.
- **BAM!** Bodies start bouncing off the glass window from outside
- **RETURN TO PRESENT**
- **THE** Beast looks to Sammy. A determined Sammy has just let the alien life form know the cost of the Sentient's arrival for humanity.
- The city burns.
- Credits - Sentient

Did you know?

- Sentient pays homage to, 'On the beach' and 'The Walking dead.'

## Contact

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