

# SENTIENT

A TV pilot

by

David Steinhoff

© Presence Global Entertainment Pty Ltd  
12 Moller Ave  
Birrong  
NSW 2143  
Australia  
Phone : 0417 400 001  
International: 61 417 400 001

**TEASER**

FADE IN

1

EXT. SYDNEY. BALMORAL BEACH - DUSK

1

A Catalina bobs back and forth in the bay.

It's barely visible through the rain of ash.

SUPER: BALMORAL BEACH. SYDNEY. AUSTRALIA

Boots pound the sand.

A man in Navy fatigues races past.

Determined, searching, focused.

LT. COMMANDER MICHAEL DOWD's face is drawn, his eyes, pooled with blood.

HUNT (O.S.)

Hold up... Stop!

Dowd turns.

Behind him, PETTY OFFICER LACHLAN HUNT.

Hunt is bent over, spent.

HUNT (CONT'D)

(Panting)

We can't see shit.

**KA-BOOOOOM!** An explosion rocks the city.

HUNT (CONT'D)

What the fuck!

A plume of smoke mushrooms into the sky from the south.

Dowd and Hunt are gobsmacked.

DOWD

Give me the flare.

HUNT

What?

DOWD

Give me...

Dowd, shoulders his M4 and raids Hunt's backpack.

He removes a gun and fires the flare over the bay.

DOWD (CONT'D)

Stay!

Hunt watches Dowd disappear into the ash.

2

THE WATERLINE

2

Falling flare embers light up the beach.

A hum, like a Tibetan singing bowl resonates throughout the harbour.

Dowd paces through the wet sand.

He encounters...

Two dead Dobermans laying on the shoreline; their bodies eviscerated, their eyes exploded in their heads.

**TUMP TUMP TUMP TUMP TUMP TUMP.**

Behind him...

M4 flash rounds, fire into the bay.

In front of him...

A scream.

Dowd runs towards the guttural cry.

Runs through the rain of ash.

Runs hard and fast to...

REBECCA KAY, a forty-something businesswoman in a pinstripe suit, kneeling in the sand.

Tears stream down her cheeks.

A clenched fist secures two dogs leashes, now of no use.

Her eyes are locked-on to SAMMY, a slip of a teenage girl in a summer dress. Sammy's face is serene, her presence, surreal.

Another person appears in the ash.

Two long legs in workman's boots.

HEIDI FISK, a mess of long blonde hair in shorts and a tank top, pleads with Sammy.

HEIDI

Sammy, baby, please come back.

There's fear in Heidi's voice.

She dare not go closer.

Dowd is mystified until...

Behind Sammy, he sees it.

Steam rises from its body.

Translucent black.

Filled with stars.

An electric blue ripple pulses over its body.

The creature assembles itself, bones cracking into position,  
rising to tower over Sammy.

It has no face.

It has no face!

Hunt runs up to Dowd at breakneck speed.

HUNT  
(To Dowd)  
Leaving! Now!!

Too late.

Two glowing eyes light up the creature's darkness then lock-  
on to Dowd.

Kay screams.

Dowd raises his M4, takes aim and.

FADE TO:

TITLE:

**"SENTIENT"**

3 INT. HMAS PENGUIN NAVY BASE. HOSPITAL. BARO CHAMBER - MORNING  
 A racing heartbeat then flat-line.  
 Dowd wakes in a hyperbaric recompression chamber.

DOWD  
 Wait!!  
 (Muttering to himself)  
 Why couldn't you wait?

Dowd's vision is blurred. His head is swimming.  
 He's panting and covered in sweat.  
 Then he notices...  
 The door is open.

DOWD (CONT'D)  
 Fuck.

A light pulsates from outside.

4 INT. HMAS PENGUIN NAVY BASE. HOSPITAL. BARO ROOM - MORNING 4  
 Dowd pushes back the chamber door to emerge in a sweat saturated Navy T, shorts and joggers.  
 SUPER: BEFORE  
 A shiver races through his body.  
 He clenches his teeth and scratches his arms, moaning with the pain of his failed recompression.  
 Shaky on his feet, he moves into the room, seeking out the chamber operator.  
 There's no one there.  
 A mobile phone lies on the floor, glowing, and humming like a Tibetan singing bowl.  
 His head tilts.  
 He's transfixed.  
 Outside, a howling wind rakes the building.  
**SPICK, SPACK, SPECK**, the storm hammers the building with a hail of shrapnel. The structure groans with the wind.  
 Every car alarm in the city is going off.  
 Dowd reaches for the phone when...

**THUD!**

Something lands on the door outside in the corridor.

Dowd makes his way to the door, pauses then turns the handle.

The door flings-back.

A body collapses onto him.

Both drop backwards to the floor.

A mobile phone flies across the floor.

Dowd flails about wildly. He pushes the body away and jams himself up against a filing cabinet.

It's a Navy NURSE. Her bun of long red hair has unfurled.

Dowd crawls back to her.

Dried blood has pooled around her eyes, nose and mouth.

Dowd grabs at her hands, looking for a response.

DOWD  
(Wheezing)  
Hey, hey.

He opens her mouth, places his head sideways next to her face and rests his hand on her chest.

Nothing.

Dowd looks to the darkened corridor.

DOWD (CONT'D)  
(Wheezing)  
Help.

Dowd grabs at his throat. He can't get any volume.

He spots a defibrillator on the wall and steps up to get it. His legs collapse from under him.

He forces himself upright, drags himself to the wall and pulls it down.

Dowd drops next to nurse.

He rips open her shirt, attaches two defib pads either side of her chest and presses the power button.

Nothing. He stabs at the button. It's dead.

He tosses it, raises himself and presses down repeatedly on her chest, over and over until his arms fold, flopping him over the dead nurse.

Dowd looks again to the dark corridor.

DOWD (CONT'D)  
(Wheezing)  
Help!

Trembling, dripping with sweat, he cannot summon the energy to bring her back.

His eyes are then drawn to the Nurse's phone.

It's glowing and resonating in-sync with the other.

5 INT. HMAS PENGUIN NAVY BASE. HOSPITAL. CORRIDOR - MORNING 5

Dowd staggers into the corridor.

The power's out.

A flickering red emergency light shows way.

He points back to the dead nurse.

DOWD  
(Still wheezing)  
Please. Need some help here.

He turns towards a darkened exit sign, gaining momentum as he goes until he stops dead in his tracks.

A pile of bodies, stacked to the ceiling, obscures the swing-door to the exit.

Phones within the pile, glow and hum in-sync.

It's a temple of the dead.

Dowd stands, aghast.

Dowd rolls-back one of the bodies. Dried blood has pooled around its eyes, nose and mouth. They're all the same.

A blood droplet falls from Dowd's own nose to the back of his hand. Dowd looks to his hand.

FLASHBACK TO:

6 INT. HMAS PENGUIN NAVY BASE. TRAINING AREA - MORNING 6

Dowd stands before a room of NAVY ENTRY OFFICERS including the dapper son of the Admiral, AIDEN FRANK.

The formidable figure of VICE ADMIRAL J. DEAKIN FRANK stands at the rear of the class. Beside him, the Admiral's dog, HEC WALLER and the icy COMMODORE LAURENT FREISLER.

A blackboard notice tasks the trainees, 'Bio/chemical attack, know the drill!'

DOWD

Your base has just been hit. You have seconds to act. Take me through it.

ENTRY OFFICER ONE

Kit-up.

DOWD

In a hurry. Breathing ap first. Eyes then body.

ENTRY OFFICER TWO

What if you don't get kit?

AIDEN FRANK

Then you get dead.

That gets a laugh from the trainees. Dowd and Admiral Frank exchange looks.

DOWD

Also in a hurry. Thank you Mr. Frank. Next!

ENTRY OFFICER THREE

Find command. Establish contact. Seek orders.

DOWD

And...

The room is silent.

DOWD (CONT'D)

Ready for war. Someone is coming to kill you.

RETURN TO PRESENT

7 INT. HMAS PENGUIN NAVY BASE. HOSPITAL. CORRIDOR - MORNING 7

SPICK, SPACK, SPECK, shrapnel from the storm smashes a window in a room off the corridor.

Dowd snaps back to the present.

The door to the room creaks-open.

Dowd releases the body and stares into the abyss behind him.

He strains, squinting his eyes, trying to gain focus.



An electric blue ripple passes over a humanoid form in the corridor.

From the abyss... something stares back.

Dowd rises then backs into an office door.

8 INT. HMAS PENGUIN NAVY BASE. HOSPITAL. OFFICE - MORNING 8

Dowd opens the door and backs inside.

He looks to his hand. It's trembling.

He wipes his bleeding nose, closes the door then jams a chair up against the handle. It's the wrong size, he can't secure it. He tosses the chair and backs away from the closed door.

A hypnotic red glow seeps through venetian blinds, filling the room behind him.

Dowd turns. He approaches the window.

Turns back to check the door handle.

Turns back again to the window.

Reaches for the draw-cord. Then stops.

Breathing.

Someone else is in the room.

A scientist wearing a Hazmat protective suit comes into view.

DR. AMON TEICHER sits in the corner next to an oxygen tank.

The two men take each other in for a moment.

Dowd turns back to the drawcord.

Teicher, channelling Darth Vader, speaks through the mask.

TEICHER  
I wouldn't do that.

Dowd pauses.

TEICHER (CONT'D)  
You won't like what you see.

But Dowd has to see.

He leaves the drawcord and selects to part the blinds.

Dowd is confronted by an angry red storm, swirling with menace.

The red glow mesmerizes. Dowd draws close.

The storm outside slows, as if, as if it has seen him.

Dowd presses his hand to the window and draws closer.

The storm hovers then rushes up, slamming into glass.

Dowd is jolted back, releasing the blinds.

9

EXT. HMAS PENGUIN NAVY BASE. HOSPITAL - MORNING

9

Outside, for as far as the eye can see, Sydney is enveloped by the storm.

**END OF TEASER ACT**

ACT ONE

FLASHBACK TO:

10 INT. HMAS PENGUIN NAVY BASE. SENNINGER DEFENSE LAB - MORNING

Puccini wafts through the laboratory.

Dr. Amon Teicher, in full Hazmat gear, carries a BIOHAZARD vile past a SENNINGER DEFENSE INDUSTRIES wall logo.

Teicher carries the specimen like he was carrying the most dangerous biological weapon ever created, which it is.

Teicher pauses to check a security monitor displaying an image of the HMAS Penguin base outside.

No activity.

He continues back on his journey.

Teicher's breathing is a little heavy, his visor a little misty.

Teicher looks back up at the security monitor.

It's turned red.

That gets his attention. He slows.

A storm has blown in.

A small car tumbles past the camera.

Teicher stops. His head tilts.

The lights flicker.

Puccini slows and picks up again.

Teicher's eyes widen.

The full storm hits. The building shudders. Teicher braces himself against a wall.

That's when, with his eyes still locked on the security monitor, the vile containing the world's most dangerous biological weapon ever created, slips out of his hand, falls onto a table and begins to roll across that table towards the edge.

Teicher grabs for it.

Teicher's gloved fingers reach the vile just in time... to push it over the edge and on to the floor below.

Teicher runs around the table.

The vile is broken. Gas oozes into the air.

Teicher's eyes widen even more.

He steps back lodging one of his boots in a waste paper bin.

Teicher tries to flick off the bin.

That's when the power fails, the lights quit and with it, Puccini drones to a stop.

Red flashing emergency lighting kicks in along with a loudspeaker.

                    LOUNDSPEAKER (V.O.)  
                     Power out. Back-up out. Purge  
                     protocol will commence in 30, 29,  
                     28...

Teicher looks to the vile then looks to the red abort button on the wall...on the other side of the lab!

                    LOUNDSPEAKER (V.O.)  
                     20, 19, 18...

Teicher makes for the abort button when he discovers the waste paper bin containing his boot is now caught in an open desk drawer.

He looks down to the open drawer.

                    LOUNDSPEAKER (V.O.)  
                     10,9, 8...

Teicher wrenches the whole drawer free and makes his way to the abort button dragging it with him.

                    LOUNDSPEAKER (V.O.)  
                     3,2,1.

Teicher slams the abort button then rests his head against the wall.

Relief, until...

                    LOUNDSPEAKER (V.O.)  
                     Purge protocol aborted. Lab  
                     containment protocol will commence  
                     in 30, 29, 28...

Teicher looks to the shower...on the other side of the lab!

Teicher races to the shower, dragging the drawer with him.

                    LOUNDSPEAKER (V.O.)  
                     20, 19, 18...

Teicher reaches the shower entry, seals the door, hits the shower and douses himself. He clambers out of his kit, opens the shower exit and makes another b-line for the lab exit.

LOUNDSPEAKER (V.O.)

5, 4, 3...

Teicher, grabs another hazmat kit and exits the lab, just as the door slams shut, followed by three deadbolts sealing it, clunk, clunk, clunk... forever...for now.

Teicher stands, back to the lab door, staring down a darkened corridor, breathing in, breathing out.

RETURN TO PRESENT

11 INT. HMAS PENGUIN NAVY BASE. HOSPITAL. OFFICE - DAY 11

The storm outside is deafening.

The hypnotic red glow seeps through the blinds.

Dowd stares through the narrow slits.

SUPER: DAY ONE

Teicher approaches side on, dragging a squeaky-wheeled oxygen tank with him. He draws intimately close.

The two men stand side by side, silhouetted against the hypnotic red glow.

Teicher looks out the window.

DOWD

What is it?

TEICHER

Yes.

Teicher is oblivious, absorbed by its majesty.

Dowd paws at Teicher's hazmat suit.

DOWD

Got another suit?

TEICHER

Just the one.

DOWD

Give me the tank.

TEICHER

You can't have the tank.

DOWD  
Share.

TEICHER  
No.

DOWD  
No?

TEICHER  
No! What will, 'share' look like  
when the tank begins to empty?

The swing doors outside, squeak-open then gradually swing back and forth, slowing to a stop.

Dowd looks to the closed office door. The gap underneath, momentarily fills with blue light.

He wrenches a fire extinguisher off the wall, raises it ready to use as a weapon then looks to Teicher.

Teicher backs up.

Dowd, panting hard, approaches the door.

He looks back to Teicher, raises a single finger to his lips, warning Teicher to keep quiet then reaches for the handle.

12 INT. HMAS PENGUIN NAVY BASE. HOSPITAL. CORRIDOR - MORNING 12

Dowd wrenches open the door.

The corridor is empty.

He enters, stopping to scan the darkness behind then makes for the exit.

Dowd, again, stops dead in his tracks.

The bodies, piled up at the door, have now disappeared.

Teicher joins Dowd, wheeling his tank along with him.

Teicher looks in the direction of Dowd's stare.

TEICHER  
Something?

He looks to Teicher then opens the swing doors.

Beyond, the noise is deafening.

The foyer floods with the hypnotic light of the storm.

13 INT. HMAS PENGUIN NAVY BASE. HOSPITAL. FOYER - MORNING 13

Dowd discards the fire extinguisher and staggers towards the exit. Blood streams from his eyes, nose and ears. Teicher follows.

TEICHER  
(Yelling)  
Where are you going?

DOWD  
(Yelling)  
The bunker.

Dowd drives himself forward.

TEICHER  
(Yelling)  
You can't go out there.

DOWD  
(Yelling)  
Can't not.

Teicher begins to convulse.

His knees buckle. He collapses.

Dowd takes Teicher by the collar and drags him forward until Dowd's legs give out. He too collapses, next to Teicher.

Teicher looks to the storm through the glass door. He can't breath. He rips off his mask.

The doors open, tentacles of the storm slither in and hover above the men, ready to strike.

14 EXT. HMAS PENGUIN NAVY BASE - MORNING 14

An emergency exit door opens.

It's slapped back to the wall.

Commodore Laurent Freisler emerges into the storm.

He drives himself forward, shielding his eyes with his hand.

Blood streams from his eyes, nose and ears.

The base emergency siren and the din of the city's car alarms compete with the roar of the storm.

15 EXT. HMAS PENGUIN NAVY BASE. SECURITY OFFICE - MORNING 15

Freisler approaches the security office and wrenches at the door handle. Nothing.

He moves around the front and slaps a bloodied hand onto a glass panel fronting the security office.

Inside, two security guards, BABIC and EID lay collapsed on the floor.

Freisler hammers the glass.

The siren quits. The car alarms stop. The street lamps flicker, spark and burst.

Now, there is only the storm.

Freisler collapses to the ground. He looks up. A tentacle of the storm, rises above him, ready to strike.

16 EXT. WESTERN SYDNEY. FREEWAY - DAY 16

A look-down view of a freeway interchange, covered in abandoned cars.

A descent through the clouds.

The storm has subsided.

A resonance like a Tibetan singing bowl, hums in the background and an eerie red haze hangs over the city.

17 ON THE GROUND 17

A long shadow appears on the tar.

An outstretched palm feels the way forward. The figure, silhouette against the western sun, comes into view.

SENATOR BERNARD HASS' silk tie flaps-about in the breeze.

His lapel bears a Christian cross.

His suit and shirt are stained with blood.

He's covered in red spores. The fine powdery substance takes flight as he walks.

He's blind, distressed and alone.

Before him, a freeway littered with abandoned vehicles.

Hass bumps into a car.

HASS  
Behind me!

Hass staggers on, seeking a way through the maze of vehicles until he bumps into another.



HASS (CONT'D)  
Get behind me!

He flings back his arm as if to thwart-off an attack.

He raises a pious finger.

Hass corrects his course and soldiers on.

He stands upright now and walks boldly forward.

HASS (CONT'D)  
You have no authority over me!

No sooner have the words left Hass' mouth when he trips. Hass is flung forward, smashing his head on a car bonnet.

He drops, winces then grabs at his twisted ankle.

Hass drags himself back up and limps forward but now his path is blocked in all directions by abandoned cars.

He falls to his knees. He can go no further.

Hass holds his head in his hands and weeps.

From above, it's a simple maze to exit from, if you can see.

18 INT. SYDNEY. CITY HOTEL ROOM - DAY

18

A darkened room.

A double bed.

A band of light spills onto a sleeping female form.

The figure suddenly sits bolt-upright.

A mane of long blonde hair spills-down her back.

Heidi Fisk rips-off a sleeping mask.

HEIDI  
Oh no. Oh no, oh NO!

Heidi leaps out of bed and runs out of shot.

The curtains open. A hazy red daylight floods the room.

An open suitcase lands on the bed and slams shut.

She reopens it.

A stream of clothing, cosmetics and personal effects fly into the open suitcase whilst Heidi, 'self-talk' berates herself.

HEIDI (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
 You could have packed last night.  
 He might have called. But HE  
 DIDN'T, DID HE?!

More personal effects are tossed into the suitcase.

HEIDI (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
 They're going to send you to a  
 detention centre Heidi. You've  
 overstayed your visa Ms. Fisk.  
 Customs will now escort you and  
 your fellow huddled masses,  
 yearning to breathe free Australian  
 air, to a HOLDING CELL! They're  
 going to deport your poor-broke,  
 dumb-ass back to BUM-FUCK,  
 ARKANSAS!

Yet more clothes fly through the air. The suitcase begins to  
 take the shape of a heaped pancake.

HEIDI (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
 You don't wanna go to Bumfuck  
 Heidi. It don't matter where you go  
 Heidi, Bumfuck COMES TO YOU!

Heidi removes some clothing from the heaped pancake and  
 storms into the bathroom, dressing as she goes.

19

BATHROOM

19

Heidi opens the door.

Light floods in the room. We see Heidi's face for the first  
 time in the mirror. Her eyes are pooled with blood. Congealed  
 blood stains her face around her eyes, nose and mouth.  
 Mascara tears cover her cheeks and her left hand is shaking  
 uncontrollably.

HEIDI  
 Oh Heidi.

BEGIN DREAM  
 SEQUENCE:

20

EXT. OCEAN - MORNING

20

A yacht races past.

A wide-eyed indigenous teenager, MICHAEL DOWD stands at the  
 helm.

Behind him, Vice Admiral J. Deakin Frank in civvies and  
 Michael's adoptive father, HIGH COURT JUSTICE LEO DOWD.

LEO DOWD

Michael.

Michael looks back to his father.

LEO DOWD (CONT'D)

Know your heading?

Micheal checks the compass.

MICHAEL DOWD

Yeah.

VICE ADMIRAL J. DEAKIN FRANK

What was that sailor?!

MICHAEL DOWD

Yes Sir!

VICE ADMIRAL J. DEAKIN FRANK

I should hope so.

(To Leo)

Justice Dowd.

LEO DOWD

Admiral.

VICE ADMIRAL J. DEAKIN FRANK

Shall we fix that mooring cleat?

LEO DOWD

Not sure I brought tools.

The Admiral takes the lead. They walk forward to the bow.

VICE ADMIRAL J. DEAKIN FRANK

I'll use my teeth.

The Admiral looks back to Michael.

VICE ADMIRAL J. DEAKIN FRANK (CONT'D)

Mr. Dowd, you have the helm.

MICHAEL DOWD

Sir.

Michael watches them advance to the bow then disappear out of sight.

Micheal surveys the ocean around him. It's a beautiful day. A cargo vessel makes its way behind them back to land. Their yacht is well out to sea.

Michael's attention returns forward when he hears a dog barking. Michael searches for the dog. He can't see him.

A blood red storm approaches out of nowhere. The storm spills from high above to the ocean surface then spreads out over the horizon.

The wind picks up. A chop sets in. The yacht becomes unruly.

A dog barks but Michael can't see him.

MICHAEL DOWD (CONT'D)  
Dad?! Admiral?

There's no response.

Michael locks-off the helm and proceeds forward to the bow. A violent burst of wind pushes the yacht sideways. It leans into the water, throwing Michael to the deck.

MICHAEL DOWD (CONT'D)  
Dad?! Dad!

Michael scrambles to his feet and makes his way to the bow. There's no one there. The storm rushes upon him.

VICE ADMIRAL J. DEAKIN FRANK (V.O.)  
You have the helm.

RETURN TO PRESENT

21 INT. HMAS PENGUIN NAVY BASE. HOSPITAL. FOYER - MORNING 21

Dowd wakes, his vision hazy, his senses dulled.

He sees Teicher seated upright against a pylon.

Both men are covered in red spores.

Teicher maintains a thousand yard stare. Both men's eyes are pooled with blood.

An unseen dog is barking.

TEICHER  
He knows you.

Dowd looks to Teicher.

TEICHER (CONT'D)  
(Louder)  
He knows you.

Dowd is confused. Teicher gestures to a barking dog, petitioning them through the glass exit door.

DOWD  
Hec Waller.

Dowd crawls on all fours to push open the door. HEC WALLER romps in, tail-wagging, and leaps all over Dowd. Dowd sure is happy to see that dog.

TEICHER

He knows you.

Hec Waller rushes over to Teicher, sniffing about then returns to Dowd.

Dowd staggers to his feet.

Hec Waller runs back to the door and starts to scratch on it.

The dog looks to Dowd and keeps pawing at the door.

Dowd offers his a hand-up to Teicher. Teicher won't stir.

DOWD

Get up.

Teicher struggles to rise.

TEICHER

I can't.

DOWD

That, whatever that was.

TEICHER

It was biological.

DOWD

Was a first strike. The next thing that comes through that door is coming to kill you.

Dowd offers his hand.

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

22 INT. HMAS PENGUIN NAVY BASE. HOSPITAL. FOYER - MORNING 22

Commodore Laurent Freisler barges through waiting HOSPITAL STAFF.

The foyer doors open.

The Navy Nurse, (the Redhead), a Navy DOCTOR and Hunt, his wetsuit rolled down to his waist, wheel Dowd in on a stretcher.

Dowd, his wetsuit cut away, writhes in pain with the bends.

The Nurse's hand reaches out to steady him.

Freisler hits the brakes with his boot, bringing the stretcher to an abrupt stop.

FREISLER  
(To Dowd)  
Where is Aiden Frank?

Dowd goes into seizure.

FREISLER (CONT'D)  
Where is Aiden Frank, Commander?

HUNT  
Get out of the way!

FREISLER  
You're addressing a Commodore,  
Petty Officer.

The Navy Doctor steps in.

DOCTOR  
Your addressing me now. Get out of  
the way.

Freisler leans into Dowd's ear.

FREISLER  
If you live, you'll wish you  
hadn't.

RETURN TO PRESENT

23 EXT. HMAS PENGUIN NAVY BASE - DAY 23

Freisler wakes facing skyward. The city is bathed in red.

Groggy, he rises to his feet. A powder-puff stream of red spores stream from his body.

He peers in through the glass of the security office.

The two security guards, Babic, head of security and Eid, a guard, lie on the floor. Eid is awake.

Freisler hammers on the glass.

24 SECURITY OFFICE 24

Eid looks up to see Freisler peering down at him through the glass pane.

FREISLER  
On your feet!

25 EXT. WESTERN SYDNEY. FREEWAY - DAY

25

Senator Bernard Hass is huddled in a ball, his head flush against the tyre of a four wheel drive.

Staggered footsteps approach.

Hass looks-up but cannot see.

HASS  
Who's there?

A figure slides over a car hood.

SENIOR CONSTABLE WASIM SABBAN, sporting NSW Police overalls and a close-cropped beard, looks down to Hass.

Hass reaches out.

HASS (CONT'D)  
Hello?

Sabban is pallid, sweating profusely.

HASS (CONT'D)  
Perhaps you recognize me? Senator Bernard Hass. I've experienced some kind of, I can't explain it, I can't see.

Sabban starts to gag. He clutches at his throat.

HASS (CONT'D)  
Friend, I am in a position to reward your kindness.

Sabban tries to speak but his descent into anaphylactic shock is swelling his tongue and throat.

HASS (CONT'D)  
Do you have a phone on you?

Sabban collapses, face to the sun. His body begins to convulse uncontrollably.

HASS (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
Hello. Hello!

Senior Constable Wasim Sabban tugs at the button of a leg pocket on his Police coveralls. It won't open.

His body rises. His fingers curl. He's gasping his last breaths.

Hass clambers over him.

HASS (CONT'D)  
 (Yelling)  
 Do you speak English?

Sabban wrenches Hass' hand to his coveralls pocket.

HASS (CONT'D)  
 (Still yelling)  
 What? What do you want? Do you  
 require a doctor? Give me your  
 phone and we'll call a doctor for  
 you.

Sabban clutches Hass' hand slapping it against the leg  
 pocket.

HASS (CONT'D)  
 Is it here?

Hass feels his way to unbutton the pocket.

HASS (CONT'D)  
 We'll use your phone but first, I  
 need to call my office.

Sabban takes in one last breath.

Hass undoes the button.

Sabban knocks Hass' hand away, reaches in, pulls out an  
 epipen, thumb-flicks the top off and jabs it into his thigh.

Sabban draws short, sharp breaths, slowly relaxing.

Hass reaches back into Sabban's pocket.

Sabban's eyes scan the sky above him.

Jet airliners circle the city of Sydney.

Sabban draws a long breath and exhales.

HASS (CONT'D)  
 Where is your phone?!

26 INT. SYDNEY. CITY HOTEL. FOYER - DAY

26

Heidi holds open an emergency doorway with her foot then  
 hauls ass into the foyer, toting a knapsack and dragging an  
 overloaded suitcase with both hands.

Dead stop.

Heidi surveys the vision before her.

Baggage strewn everywhere, furnishings overturned.



Abandoned phones glow and hum in sync, creating a ghostly light show.

A cold shiver comes over Heidi. She covers her bare arms.

Heidi looks to the empty reception then to the glass exit doors.

She pushes her bag against the wall then makes for the exit when she spots an open wallet on the reception desk.

Her eyes scan the reception for security cameras.

She runs her hand over the wallet, carefully peeling back the leather folds until a wad of cash is revealed.

She leaves the cash and opts to remove the ID of the owner, Dr. Kristoff Stamm.

HEIDI

Dr. Stamm.

She removes a photo of Dr. Stamm and his two Eurasian daughters. One of them is a disinterested teen. The other is a doting daughter wrapped around her father.

Heidi turns the photo over. Written on the back, 'To Daddy from Sammy XXX.'

Heidi is stalled, captured by the relationship in the photo.

HEIDI (CONT'D)

You have two beautiful daughters  
Doctor. They love you. Sammy loves  
you much.

Heidi double checks no one is looking then removes \$100 from the wallet along with Dr. Stamm's business card.

HEIDI (CONT'D)

I'm just going to go ahead and  
borrow this hundred. I figure you  
don't need it but I have your card  
and I'm going to pay you right  
back, just as soon as I'm situated.

She takes another \$100.

HEIDI (CONT'D)

Call it \$200 but I'm good for it.

Heidi closes the wallet, places it back on the reception desk and heads out of view towards the street exit.

Footsteps returning. Heidi's hand grabs the wallet.

27 EXT. HMAS PENGUIN NAVY BASE - DAY

27

Blinding light. Debris.

A stream of smoke and mist wafts through the buildings.

It's eerily quiet. A hum resonates throughout the city.

Teicher's head tilts-ajar, absorbed by the vision before him, a Hiroshima-like human shadow burnt into the wall.

Teicher reaches out to touch it. The shadow dissolves, scattering to the wind.

Broken glass crunches under-foot. A hand slaps onto Teicher's shoulder snapping him back. Dowd staggers past.

DOWD

Catch up.

Teicher watches him pass.

He turns back to see the human shadow. It's gone.

Teicher observes Dowd advance, wired, fixated.

Dowd looks to the sky, to a gaggle of Jumbo jet passenger liners circling Sydney.

The Navy Diver gasps for breath, then steadies himself against a wall, scratching his arms, clenching his teeth.

He's barely holding it together.

Teicher sees it all and approaches. Dowd continues on. They walk together.

TEICHER

You were in the tank.

Dowd ignores him.

TEICHER (CONT'D)

Why were you in the tank?

Dowd continues to ignore him.

TEICHER (CONT'D)

The scratching, that feeling like insects boring in behind your eyes, you haven't recompressed. Your blood's bubbling. Your joints are grinding. You may experience, hallucinations.

FLASHBACK TO:

28 INT. HMAS PENGUIN NAVY BASE. HOSPITAL. CORRIDOR - MORNING 28  
Dowd stands before a pile of bodies, stacked to the roof.  
A blue ripple flashes over a humanoid figure.

RETURN TO PRESENT

29 EXT. HMAS PENGUIN NAVY BASE - DAY 29

TEICHER

Then there's the pain. You must be  
in agonizing pain.

DOWD

We are at war! The only thing that  
matters right...

Dowd wrenches Teicher's body sideways.

An axe blade embeds itself in the wall next to Teicher.

BEATA ROSEN, her clothes ripped from her body, stands before  
them wrapped in a firehose, a coiled snake, ready to strike.

A wind vane blade is embedded in her cheek, right through to  
the eye.

A collar away from rabid dog, she pulls the axe out of the  
wall with both hands and...

TEICHER

Beata!

**END OF ACT ONE**

ACT TWO

30 INT. HMAS PENGUIN NAVY BASE. DOCTOR'S SURGERY - DAY 30

An empty surgery.

Surgical instruments lay abandoned in their trays.

The door flings open.

Dowd drags in a wildcat, now wearing Teicher's hazmat suit.

Rosen hasn't taken possession of the arm slots. Dowd uses the flaccid slots to reel her in.

Teicher appears behind Rosen, pushing with all his might.

The men's faces and hands now bear cuts and scratches.

Trays and furnishings go flying in the melee.

DOWD  
Get her to the chair!

TEICHER  
I'm trying!

ROSEN  
I'm going to fuck you up!

They force Rosen into a chair. Dowd holds her down.

She starts biting at Teicher.

DOWD  
Use your belt!

Dowd holds on tight whilst Teicher removes his belt.

Teicher lassos her, tightening it around the chair.

ROSEN  
I'll make it slow for you! You wait  
and see what I do to you!

DOWD TEICHER  
Jesus wept. Is that gauze?

DOWD (CONT'D)  
What?

TEICHER  
Behind you.

Dowd spots gauze in a tray and throws it to Teicher.

Rosen bites at Teicher snipping one of his fingers.

Teicher retracts, wincing with pain.

Teicher puts two fingers over her nose, pulls back her head then jams the gauze in her mouth. Rosen is enraged, a growling Rottweiler.

Teicher grabs a roll of tape off the desk, tapes her mouth shut then washes the blood from his bitten finger under a tap.

TEICHER (CONT'D)  
Nitrous Oxide.

DOWD  
Do you know her?

TEICHER  
Nitrous Oxide, please!

Teicher starts going through the cupboards.

Dowd meanders into an adjoining surgery.

31 ADJOINING SURGERY 31

Dowd searches the surgery.

DOWD  
Are you a doctor?

32 INT. HMAS PENGUIN NAVY BASE. DOCTOR'S SURGERY - DAY 32

Teicher rifles through the doctor's desk drawers.

TEICHER  
I'm a scientist.

33 ADJOINING SURGERY 33

Dowd opens a cabinet.

DOWD  
Does that mean you're unemployed?

TEICHER (V.O.)  
I head a team of 16 researchers.

DOWD  
With just the one hazmat suit?

34 INT. HMAS PENGUIN NAVY BASE. DOCTOR'S SURGERY - DAY 34

Teicher opens the top desk drawer then pauses. Dowd's keen observation amuses him.

TEICHER

I wanted to get to know you better.

Teicher snaps open a secret compartment in the drawer.

Teicher's head tilts.

35 ADJOINING SURGERY 35

Dowd discovers an inhaler.

DOWD

What about a Pentrox inhaler?

36 INT. HMAS PENGUIN NAVY BASE. DOCTOR'S SURGERY - DAY 36

Dowd arrives back to find Teicher flicking a syringe.

TEICHER

Too rabid.

(To Rosen)

Aren't you Possum?

Teicher pokes her in the arm. Rosen growls.

DOWD

Where'd that come from?

Teicher picks up a name tag from the doctor's desk.

TEICHER

Captain Eugene's private stash.

Teicher tosses the name tag then stabs Rosen in the arm.

Rosen goes wild.

TEICHER (CONT'D)

Who is she?

Teicher prepares surgical instruments from a tray as the drug dulls Rosen's venom.

TEICHER (CONT'D)

My sister.

DOWD

She's a scientist?

TEICHER

Beata? No, a property developer. I gather you don't read the tabloids?

DOWD

Is this the biological agent? Is she behaving this way because of the agent?

TEICHER

You're a soldier, imagine the potential of an untraceable WMD disguised in a weather event.

DOWD

I'm a Naval officer and we don't have to imagine do we?

TEICHER

I know who you are.

Teicher gloves up for surgery.

DOWD

Do you?

TEICHER

The price of fame Lt. Commander Dowd.

DOWD

Who are you?

TEICHER

Amon Teicher. Doctor Amon Teicher.

DOWD

And what do you and your team of 16 research?

Teicher stands behind Rosen positioning himself to remove the wind vane blade. Rosen's eye widens, even drugged, she starts to moan in panic. He tips back her head and...

TEICHER

War.

37 EXT. SYDNEY. BRIDAL SHOP - DAY

37

Heidi is captured in the moment.

Her eyes drift up and down a stunning wedding gown adorning a mannequin in the shop's window.

She peers in, her hand pressed against the glass.

Heidi sobs. She tries to squash it down, get it together, but the grief is overwhelming.

HEIDI

You're alone now Heidi.

And now, it's snowing. Ash falls from the sky.  
 Heidi turns her palm upward to capture the falling ash.  
 The street is empty. No people. No life. Nothing.

HEIDI (CONT'D)  
 Really alone.

38

EXT. HMAS PENGUIN NAVY BASE - DAY

38

A squeaky shopping trolley.  
 Teicher pushes his drugged-up sister, Beata Rosen, now with an eye patch bandage, towards a large open space.  
 Dowd stands motionless at the entry to the space, toting Rosen's captured axe, lumberjack style over his shoulder.  
 Dowd surveys the space.  
 Teicher pulls up next to him.  
 A rain of ash pours over the base.  
 Buildings in the distance are obscured.  
 The men stare forward, dumbstruck by the new event.

DOWD  
 What is it?

TEICHER  
 You know what it is.

Dowd looks to Teicher. Teicher has nothing more to add.  
 Dowd strides through the rain of human ash. The move surprises Teicher. He scrambles to catch up.  
 Teicher drives his sister on the squeaky wheeled shopping trolley through the ash, searching for Dowd. He's lost.

TEICHER (CONT'D)  
 Commander? Commander!

Teicher, disoriented, paces faster and faster.

TEICHER (CONT'D)  
 Lt. Commander Dowd!

Dowd appears motionless, axe handle over shoulder, waiting for him in the rain of ash.

Teicher comes to an abrupt stop.



DOWD  
Then how is it, we're still alive?!

39 EXT. BANKSTOWN. PARK. OBSERVATION POINT - DAY

39

Ash falls. An eerie hum.

With the exception of the jet airliners circling Sydney above, all else is silent.

Hass' hand, outstretched, maintains a tight grip on the shoulder ahead of him. Hass' hand leads to Sabban.

They stop.

Sabban stands at the edge of an observation point overlooking the south of greater Sydney.

He's stunned.

A rain of ash pours from the red sky covering their clothing and blanketing the city for as far as the eye can see.

HASS  
Why have we stopped?

**END OF ACT TWO**

ACT THREE

FLASHBACK TO:

40 EXT. HMAS PENGUIN NAVY BASE. ADMIRAL'S OFFICE - DAY 40

Dowd sits on the corner of the Admiral's office desk.

DOWD  
He's not right.

Vice Admiral J. Deakin Frank lines up, titled manila folders on the carpet of his office.

VICE ADMIRAL J. DEAKIN FRANK  
Doesn't mean he's wrong.

DOWD  
Come on Deakin.

VICE ADMIRAL J. DEAKIN FRANK  
How would it look for the son of an Admiral?

DOWD  
Forget about how it looks!

VICE ADMIRAL J. DEAKIN FRANK  
You're a fine officer Micheal but a complete fucking moron when it comes to politics.

DOWD  
Promote him.

VICE ADMIRAL J. DEAKIN FRANK  
I can't do that.

DOWD  
Give him a desk job.

VICE ADMIRAL J. DEAKIN FRANK  
Are you telling me he's so fucked up he can't dive Sydney harbour?

DOWD  
You're not hearing me Deakin.

VICE ADMIRAL J. DEAKIN FRANK  
Get Aiden back on the horse Michael. No more excuses!

RETURN TO PRESENT

41

EXT. HMAS PENGUIN NAVY BASE. THE BUNKER - DAY

41

Dowd, Rosen's axe slung over his shoulder, looks through the falling ash to a nondescript building featuring a barn style, reinforced metal door.

Before the door stands Vice Admiral J. Deakin Frank.

**BANG, BANG, BANG.**

Frank hammers his shoe heel, Nikita Khrushchev style, against the door. Hec Waller, the Admiral's dog joins him.

VICE ADMIRAL J. DEAKIN FRANK  
Open this door!

DOWD  
Admiral.

**BANG, BANG, BANG.**

DOWD (CONT'D)  
Admiral.

Frank turns.

The once formidable figure of the Admiral has been replaced by a disoriented old man. His hands shake. His eyes are hollow. Dowd is shocked.

DOWD (CONT'D)  
I'm sorry Deakin.

Blood drips from an open wound on the Admiral's hand onto the pelt of Hec Waller. He goes back to hammering the door with his shoe.

**BANG, BANG, BANG.**

DOWD (CONT'D)  
You're bleeding.

VICE ADMIRAL J. DEAKIN FRANK  
They won't open the door!

DOWD  
Let me have a look at that.

Dowd approaches.

Frank raises his shoe ready to clobber Dowd.

Frank looks manic, crazed.

Dowd raises his hands and takes a step back.

DOWD (CONT'D)  
It's Michael.

VICE ADMIRAL J. DEAKIN FRANK  
I don't know you!

Teicher arrives with Rosen in the shopping trolley then comes to an abrupt stop.

He leaves Rosen and proceeds forward for a closer look.

TEICHER  
Commander.

Dowd raises a finger to stay him.

DOWD  
(To Admiral)  
Michael Dowd.

TEICHER  
Commander.

DOWD  
(To Teicher)  
Not now.

TEICHER  
You need to see this.

Teicher's view reveals a swirl of blackened human shadows, burnt into the wall around the entry to the bunker.

Keys jingle. Two base security personnel, Eid and Babic front, toting M4 assault rifles.

EID  
Drop it!

Babic, the second guard is so punch drunk he can barely carry his M4. Dowd turns to Babic and Eid.

EID (CONT'D)  
Drop the weapon!

Dowd looks to the axe then back to the guards.

Eid points his M4 at Dowd's face.

EID (CONT'D)  
Put the weapon down and move away  
from the Admiral.

Dowd tosses the axe.

Commodore Laurent Freisler appears in the falling ash.

FREISLER  
Cuff him.

DOWD  
Laurie.

BABIC  
We don't have cuffs.

FREISLER  
Use ties.

BABIC  
We didn't bring any.

DOWD  
What are you doing Laurie?

**BANG, BANG, BANG.**

VICE ADMIRAL J. DEAKIN FRANK  
Open this door!

FREISLER  
There's a metal-grate cleaning  
cupboard next to the armoury.

DOWD  
You want to do this now?

FREISLER  
It has a padlock.

DOWD  
Look at this.

FREISLER  
There's a key in the top draw of  
the desk.

DOWD  
What do you see?

**BANG, BANG, BANG.**

VICE ADMIRAL J. DEAKIN FRANK  
Open this door!

FREISLER  
Lock him in.

DOWD  
Have you ever seen a weapon like  
this?

FREISLER  
Do it now.

DOWD  
You know what's coming next.

Dowd looks upwards to the sound of the circling jets.

DOWD (CONT'D)  
There's an army up there!

FREISLER  
Now!

Babic and Eid crowd in on Dowd.

Teicher steps into view.

TEICHER  
Commodore, you know the nature of  
my work. Very few things scare  
me...

EID  
Amon Teicher?

TEICHER  
Doctor Amon Teicher.

EID  
(To Freisler)  
There's a warrant out.

FREISLER  
Take them both.

DOWD  
We are at war Laurent!

FREISLER  
Not you, you're going to the brig.

**BANG, BANG, BANG.**

VICE ADMIRAL J. DEAKIN FRANK  
Open this door!

Eid and Babic, guns raised, corral Teicher and Dowd backwards  
towards the armoury.

DOWD  
(To Admiral)  
Admiral, it's Michael!

Frank looks at him blankly.

DOWD (CONT'D)  
I serve with your son.

VICE ADMIRAL J. DEAKIN FRANK  
My son is dead.

42 EXT. HMAS PENGUIN NAVY BASE - DAY

42

Relentless ash. The jingle of keys.

Babic and Eid march Teicher and Dowd, hands above their heads, towards the armoury.

Dowd searches the sky for the jets he can hear but can no longer see. That gets Teicher's attention.

The jingle stops.

BABIC

Wait.

Babic leans his rifle against the wall and squats to regather his strength. Eid, vigilant, keeps his M4 trained on Dowd.

DOWD

(To Babic)

Want me to carry that for you mate?

Eid breaks into laughter.

EID

What kind of a dick gets an Admiral's son killed?

TEICHER

Aiden Frank is dead?

DOWD

(To Eid and Babic)

Who are you?

TEICHER

They're base security. The short one's name is Eid.

DOWD

Who gave you the M4s?

EID

(To Babic)

Are you good?

Babic stands.

BABIC

I'm good.

He's not.

EID

(To Dowd and Teicher)

Move.

DOWD  
You have no idea what's coming.

EID  
Move it!

They march on. Babic's keychain jingles to the march.

EID (CONT'D)  
Hands!

They raise their hands.

TEICHER  
What did you mean by, 'there's an  
army up there?'

DOWD  
(Referring to Eid)  
What did fucknut here mean by,  
'there's a warrant?'

EID  
He killed his wife.

Dowd takes that in then...

DOWD  
(To Teicher)  
I'm going to ask you a straight  
question.

TEICHER  
You can ask.

DOWD  
What kind of biological agent could  
do this.

TEICHER  
I didn't say agent.

DOWD  
A straight answer!

TEICHER  
It's alive.

Dowd's not getting it.

TEICHER (CONT'D)  
It's a living entity and it's not  
done yet.



He looks to the Admiral and Hec Waller.

Frank sits, head in hands, propped up against the wall.

Freisler looks up to the security camera covering the door.  
He wipes the ash from his face.

A squeaky shopping trolley approaches.

DANTE, slick back hair, styled beard, guns and tats in a  
tight T, pushes Rosen in the shopping trolley towards him.

He's not happy.

DANTE  
(Referring to Rosen)  
Care to explain this Commodore?

44 INT. HMAS PENGUIN NAVY BASE. BUNKER - DAY 44

A pitch black room. A monitor, the only light.

A blackened FIGURE studies the monitor, displaying an image  
of Freisler and Dante in a heated exchange outside.

45 EXT. SYDNEY. HARBOUR BRIDGE. SOUTHERN ENTRY - DAY 45

Heidi steps into view.

Falling ash obscures the way ahead. What lies beyond?

She inches forward, past the abandoned cars.

Out of nowhere, a SKATEBOARDER rips past.

HEIDI  
Hey, hey wait!

The Skateboarder taps the brakes and turns.

A bandana covers his face. Snow glasses cover his eyes.

A pause. The two eye each other off.

HEIDI (CONT'D)  
What happened? Where is everybody?

SKATEBOARDER  
Bad shit, end of the world, don't  
know. Whatever, we ride for free  
today lady.

And with that, he departs into the falling ash.

46 INT. HMAS PENGUIN NAVY BASE - DAY

46

Eid and Babic march Dowd and Teicher towards the armoury.  
Dowd looks to the sky, searching for the circling jets.  
He shakes his head then looks back to their guards.

DOWD  
(To Babic and Eid)  
How much do you make an hour?

BABIC  
Why?

DOWD  
Seventeen, eighteen bucks?

BABIC  
I'm a supervisor, I get more.

DOWD  
Enough to fight a first wave  
assault?

Babic stops and with it the jingle of his keys.

DOWD (CONT'D)  
This is a first strike. When their  
marines come, who do you think  
they'll target first? The guy with  
keys.

Babic reaches for his keychain.

EID  
(To Dowd and Teicher)  
Hands!

TEICHER  
It's Babic isn't it?

BABIC  
How do you know my name?

TEICHER  
We've chatted at the gate. You have  
a son. He plays soccer.

EID  
Come on!

TEICHER  
Does you family live in Sydney?

BABIC  
Milperra.

They stop outside the Armoury.

Teicher collects some of the falling ash in his palm.

TEICHER

This, this is the remains of the six million people killed by a biological WMD the likes of which we've never seen before. If I had family, family I cared for, I'd want to be with them, I'd want to know they're OK. That they're, alive.

EID

Open the door!

DOWD

And if I don't?

EID

Provision 7a. Use of deadly force. In the event of war or a terrorist act, where a RAN military facility is compromised by a serving member deemed hostile or having participated in that act, security personnel under the instruction of a senior officer ranking O-6 and above may detain and/or use deadly force to protect that facility.

DOWD

Laurent Freisler.

Eid takes aim at Dowd's foot.

EID

I memorized it. You choose.

Dowd opens the door then stalls.

DOWD

There's a light on.

EID

And?

DOWD

The powers out.

EID

(To Babic)  
Go see.

BABIC

Me?

EID

You.

BABIC

Why me?

EID

Because I'm the only one capable of  
pulling the fucking trigger!

47 INT. HMAS PENGUIN NAVY BASE. ARMOURY. FOYER - DAY 47

Babic enters. The foyer is pitch black.

Light emanates from a stairwell leading to the downstairs  
armoury vault.

Babic inches towards the light.

Teicher and Dowd enter behind him.

Eid follows, M4 raised and targeted on Dowd.

Babic stops to wipe sweat from his brow. His mouth is  
parched. He licks his lips, gulps and begins the journey down  
the open stairwell.

48 ARMOURY VAULT AREA 48

Babic peers into the space.

A lit oil-burner lamp hangs from the ceiling.

The vault is right in front of him. The bar-covered cleaning  
cupboard, to the left.

He cautiously descends.

Eid rushes them on.

EID

Move.

Teicher, Dowd and Eid follow. They bunch up.

BABIC

All clear.

ABLE SEAMAN CHE AMIRI

Halt!!!

The group swings round to find ABLE SEAMEN CHE AMIRI pointing  
an M4 at them.

BABIC

Shit!

Teicher makes eye contact with Dowd then knocks the hanging lamp, strobe-lighting the room.

**WHACK!** Dowd backhands Eid's face into the wall.

Eid swings the M4 back and fires a burst into the room.

Dowd kicks his legs out.

Babic turns to shoot.

Teicher applies the most casual shove, unbalancing Babic, sending him tumbling down the stairs.

Babic scrambles to his feet.

The lamp slows to a stop.

His aim is split between Dowd, Teicher and Amiri.

There's no clear shot. It's chaos for everyone except...

Dowd, now pointing Eid's M4 at Babic.

Eid is secured on the stairwell. Dowd's foot is on his neck.

Amiri shifts aim between Dowd and Babic.

ABLE SEAMAN CHE AMIRI  
Identify!

BABIC  
(To Dowd)  
I'll shoot. I'll do it.

DOWD  
My safety's off, yours isn't.

Babic looks down at his gun then back to Dowd.

Dowd is resolute, a stone-cold killer.

Babic places his weapon on the floor then raises his hands.

EID  
(To Babic)  
You...

Dowd presses down with his boot.

DOWD  
Hush now.

Eid winces with the pain.

ABLE SEAMAN CHE AMIRI  
My safety's off. Identify yourself.

DOWD  
Michael Dowd.

ABLE SEAMAN CHE AMIRI  
Commander Dowd?

DOWD  
Come into the light.

Amiri approaches, lowering her weapon. She's bug-eyed and in shock.

DOWD (CONT'D)  
What's your name?

ABLE SEAMAN CHE AMIRI  
Amiri, Che... What's happening Sir?

DOWD  
We're at war Able Seaman.

**END OF ACT THREE**

ACT FOUR

49 INT. HMAS PENGUIN NAVY BASE. COMMODORE'S OFFICE. DAY 49

Freisler crouches over the wreck of a replica first-fleet warship, HMAS SIRIUS.

He, like the ship, is lost.

Behind him, an open window.

The panes are smashed, the view obscured by ash.

Debris is strewn throughout the office.

He pushes aside the wreck of the Sirius to recover a photo. The frame is broken. The glass shattered. He carefully removes the glass fragments and places the photo on his desk.

The photo features he and his teenage son Tobias.

Dante enters carrying replacement wardrobe for Rosen.

Glass crunches under foot.

Rosen lays asleep on the couch, covered by a blanket.

Dante meticulously lays out Rosen's clothes ready for her awakening then checks Rosen's throat pulse before resting his hand on her forehead to check for temperature.

There is gentle measure in his actions, a stark contrast to his brutal look.

DANTE

Where are your people?

FREISLER

They'll return shortly.

DANTE

I didn't ask you when, I asked you where.

FREISLER

I don't give account of my business to valets.

DANTE

Is that what you think I do?

Freisler stares into the eyes of another, stone-cold killer.

DANTE (CONT'D)

Where are your people?

FREISLER  
Securing Dowd.

DANTE  
Michael Dowd? You sent gate-gooks  
to lock up a Navy Seal?

FREISLER  
We don't use the term, Seal in this  
country.

DANTE  
What about term, bodybag?

50 EXT. NORTH SYDNEY. HARBOUR FORESHORE - DAY 50

Heidi makes her way through the rain of human ash.  
The face of Luna Park appears before her.  
She's glad to see a smiling face.  
To her right, a slow squeaking door flaps back and forth.  
She approaches.  
It's an exit door to the North Sydney Olympic pool.  
Heidi goes in through the outdoor.

51 INT. NORTH SYDNEY. OLYMPIC POOL - DAY 51

Heidi's hit with a wall of steam.  
Late afternoon sun. Shafts of light. Rising mist.  
Visibility, nil.

HEIDI  
(Sheepishly)  
Hello. Is anyone here?

A face appears in the mist.

It's Sammy, the teenage daughter of Dr. Kristoff Stamm, the  
girl in the photo from Heidi's hotel lobby. Her hair is  
tangled. Her dress is torn.

HEIDI (CONT'D)  
Hey!

Heidi rushes forward, excited to see someone, anyone.  
Sammy raises her hands to stop her.  
Heidi walks straight over the edge and into, SPLASH!



52 UNDER THE WATER

52

Straight to the bottom.

Heidi looks up.

Bodies!

The pool is full of bodies, floating face down in the water.

An electric blue ripple passes through the dead.

ALL EYES OPEN, fixed on Heidi.

Heidi freaks.

She shoots to the surface. Claws her way through the bodies.

Desperately searches for the edge. She can't find it.

Heidi thrashes back and forth. She's drowning.

A yellow rescue buoy flies through the air and lands next to Heidi. She clambers on and gets reeled in like a fish.

53 POOLSIDE

53

Sammy appears at the end of the rope.

Heidi reaches the side.

Sammy offers her hand but Heidi's so freaked, she scrambles over the edge and straight into a glass wall. WHACK!

Heidi flies backwards onto the concrete. Lights out.

54 EXT. HMAS PENGUIN NAVY BASE. DIVE SCHOOL - DAY

54

Dowd stands at the door, M4 ready.

Amiri looks to the rain of ash, mystified.

They speak in whispers.

DOWD  
(To Teicher)  
If you want to go to your sister...

TEICHER  
I prefer this peril.

AMIRI  
What are we doing sir?

DOWD  
Rounding up every hard-bodied  
killer we can find.

55 INT. HMAS PENGUIN NAVY BASE. DIVE SCHOOL - DAY 55

The door slowly opens.

Dowd stands in the doorway toting an M4.

He surveys then enters in silence.

Amiri and Teicher follow. Amiri is carrying two M4s, one slung over her shoulder, one in hand.

Dowd approaches the first doorway in the corridor.

He pushes it open with the M4, slowly, then looks inside.

Nothing.

He proceeds down the hallway with Amiri and Teicher, opening each door until they arrive at the showers.

They hear running water. Dowd points towards the shower.

56 SHOWERS 56

Dowd enters, slow and silent.

Teicher and Amiri follow.

Amiri has her M4 raised, ready for action.

Dowd pushes the barrel away and down.

DOWD  
(To Amiri)  
Check out back.

Amiri exits and heads to the rear of the building.

Dowd and Teicher follow the sound of the water to a shower cubicle.

Petty Officer Lachlan Hunt, Dowd's wingman from Balmoral Beach, sits shivering on the floor. The top half of his wetsuit is peeled to his waist.

DOWD (CONT'D)  
Lachy?

Waters pours over Hunt. He doesn't respond. Dowd places his hand under the water.

DOWD (CONT'D)  
It's cold water bloke.

Dowd turns off the faucet. Teicher drops to his knees to see.

TEICHER  
He's in shock.

Dowd rests his hand on Hunt's shoulder.

Amiri arrives back to see Hunt, shivering in the shower cubicle. Amiri is shocked by his condition.

Dowd blocks her view.

DOWD  
Where are they?

ABLE SEAMAN CHE AMIRI  
Who?

DOWD  
My team?

ABLE SEAMAN CHE AMIRI  
There's no one here sir.

The news stuns Dowd. He collects himself.

DOWD  
Are you familiar with coms?

ABLE SEAMAN CHE AMIRI  
Yes sir.

DOWD  
Go to ours, make contact with any friendly you can, advise what's happened.

ABLE SEAMAN CHE AMIRI  
What has happened?

DOWD  
Tell them... tell them first strike, biological WMD on Sydney, significant casualties, you'd better write this down.

ABLE SEAMAN CHE AMIRI  
I can remember.

DOWD  
Significant casualties. Invasion ex littorals imminent. Second wave en masse ground force incoming likely using, commercial jet airliners.

ABLE SEAMAN CHE AMIRI  
Do I tell them our location?

DOWD  
Sydney, just Sydney.

57 INT. NORTH SYDNEY. HARBOUR FORESHORE. GIFT SHOP - DAY 57

Reflections from the harbour. Ripples cast shadows on the wall.

Heidi wakes on the floor.

She raises her head only to grab her temple in pain.

A silhouette appears in the doorway.

Heidi braces, pushing herself up from the floor.

The door opens. The figure approaches and kneels beside Heidi. It's Sammy. She produces two green apples, placing one in Heidi's open palm and the other in her own mouth.

Sammy bites down as she ices Heidi's wound.

HEIDI  
Did you see those people? What are they? What...

Heidi recognizes Sammy. She grabs her around the shoulders.

HEIDI (CONT'D)  
Sammy?

Sammy pauses, puzzled by Heidi's deduction.

Rays of the setting sun filter through the falling ash.

FLASHBACK TO:

58 EXT. SYDNEY HARBOUR. OCEAN FLOOR - DAY 58

Navy Diver, Lt. Commander Michael Dowd cruises low and slow over the ocean floor.

He communicates using VOX (Voice underwater communication).

DOWD  
Aiden? Where are you?

There is alarm in Dowd's voice.

Dowd ascends to get a big picture view. A dim light illuminates the sea bed in the distance.

Two Navy vessels hover on the surface above.

59 EXT. SYDNEY HARBOUR. SURFACE - DAY 59

A Zodiac dinghy floats next to a RAN Patrol boat.

A female NAVY NCO, sits in the Zodiac, listening in on the conversation on her VOX. She also, is alarmed.

Petty Officer Lachlan Hunt surfaces and rips off his mask.

HUNT

What's up?

The Navy Vox Operator stays him with a raised hand. She presses the headphone to her ears.

60 EXT. SYDNEY HARBOUR. OCEAN FLOOR - DAY 60

Dowd hangs suspended in the water, waiting upon Frank's response.

LT. AIDEN FRANK (V.O.)

I'm getting back on the horse,  
growing a spine like the son of an  
Admiral ought.

NAVY VOX OPERATOR(V.O.)

Is there a problem Commander?

HUNT (V.O.)

Bloke, do you want me to come down?

DOWD

No, no problem.  
(To Frank)  
Aiden?

LT. AIDEN FRANK (V.O.)

Yeah.

DOWD

Stay there. I'm coming to you.

Dowd descends east then drives hard along the ocean floor.

His heart rate rises.

LT. AIDEN FRANK (V.O.)

I found the ordinance.

DOWD

Where?

61 EXT. SYDNEY HARBOUR. OCEAN FLOOR. ORDINANCE SITE - DAY 61

Frank hovers before a massive World War 2 spiky contact mine.

LT. AIDEN FRANK  
I'm looking at it.

62 EXT. SYDNEY HARBOUR. OCEAN FLOOR - DAY 62

Dowd navigates the sea grass towards a rise in the distance.

DOWD  
Good, wait there.

LT. AIDEN FRANK (V.O.)  
Charges set.

DOWD  
What?!

LT. AIDEN FRANK (V.O.)  
Good to go.

DOWD  
Aiden, wait upon my arrival!

Dowd redoubles his pace, paddling towards Frank.

His heart is pounding.

NAVY VOX OPERATOR(V.O.)  
Commander?

HUNT (V.O.)  
Bloke, I'm coming down.

DOWD  
Wait for me Aiden!

LT. AIDEN FRANK (V.O.)  
Too far.

DOWD  
You're not too far. I'll be there  
in a minute.

63 EXT. SYDNEY HARBOUR. OCEAN FLOOR. ORDINANCE SITE - DAY 63

Frank holds the remote detonator in hand.

LT. AIDEN FRANK  
Too far gone.

64 EXT. SYDNEY HARBOUR. OCEAN FLOOR - DAY 64

Dowd paddles furiously over the rise. He finally sees Frank's ghostly silhouette against the mine.

DOWD  
Aiden, wait!

An explosion erupts from the ocean floor.  
A compression ring heads straight at Dowd.  
The ring envelopes him in light and bubble.  
His body is cast to the abyss.

RETURN TO PRESENT

65 INT. HMAS PENGUIN NAVY BASE. DIVE SCHOOL. LOCKER ROOM - DAY 65  
Dowd, freshly dressed in Navy combat fatigues, rests his hand against Lt. Aiden Frank's locker.  
Hunt, now also dressed, stands right behind him.

HUNT  
Does the Admiral know?

DOWD  
No. And he's never going to. Are we clear?

66 EXT. M5 TOLLROAD - DAY 66  
Sabban and Hass walk the tollroad to the airport. Sabban eyes are dialed-out. Hass trails, his hand on Sabban's shoulder.

HASS  
Just one drop to cool my tongue, please.

Sabban spots an old hatchback and stops. A shrink-wrapped pallet of bottled water lay in the back. He places Hass' hand on an SUV and makes his way to the hatchback.

Sabban checks out the car. The door is open. He looks for the rear release. There isn't one.

Hass raises his head to the sky. Hot ash falls on his face.

HASS (CONT'D)  
Where are we?

Sabban proceeds to the rear of the car then looks to Hass.

He hits the release button. The boot springs up, knocking him backwards.

He recovers only to step back onto an abandoned tyre, lose his footing and tumble over the embankment.

67 EMBANKMENT

67

Sabban rolls to a stop, hitting his head on a rock.

His eyes remain open.

HASS (O.S.)

Hello? Hello? Please don't leave me here.

Sabban's eyes close.

68 INT. HMAS PENGUIN NAVY BASE. DIVE SCHOOL - DAY

68

Dowd and Hunt survey a map on a table.

Upright bullets represents waypoints by sea.

Teicher watches them from afar.

Dowd collects a single bullet from the map and offers it to Hunt. Amiri arrives back to witness it.

Hunt pauses. The offer is confronting.

Hunt pockets it. Dowd takes another bullet and does the same.

ABLE SEAMAN CHE AMIRI

What's that all about?

DOWD

Contact?

ABLE SEAMAN CHE AMIRI

There's no power. What's the plan?

Dowd stabs a finger at the map.

DOWD

We take them at the airport.

ABLE SEAMAN CHE AMIRI

How are we going to get there?

DOWD

We're in the Navy, Able Seaman. We sail.

TEICHER

That's it? Four against an army?

Dowd hands out pistols and ammunition to Hunt and Amiri.

DOWD

You're not going.



TEICHER

I can be another set of eyes.

Dowd ignores him.

TEICHER (CONT'D)

You asked me what kind of biological weapon could do this. I have seen things today, I have never seen before and I do this for a living!

HUNT

Do what for a living?

DOWD

Biological warfare.

HUNT

Fuck me.

DOWD

(To Teicher)

That's it, isn't it? That's what you really do? You and your team.

TEICHER

Yes.

DOWD

Alright.

Dowd offers him a pistol. Teicher reaches out to take it. Dowd retracts it.

DOWD (CONT'D)

Tell me about your wife...Tell me about your wife, Doctor.

TEICHER

I said goodbye to Katherine this morning.

DOWD

Goodbye?

TEICHER

I killed her. Katherine had stage four Hodgkin's Lymphoma.

DOWD

Then came to work?

TEICHER

Yes.

HUNT

Planning an eventful day?

TEICHER  
You have no idea.

**END OF ACT FOUR**

ACT FIVE

69 EXT. HMAS PENGUIN NAVY BASE. BOOM GATES - DAY 69

Dowd leads Hunt, Amiri and Teicher to the boom gates.  
He stops. The base's Australian flag lays on the ground.  
It's torn and wretched. Dowd retrieves it and begins folding.  
Hunt helps. Amiri and Teicher join them.

DOWD  
Got room in your bag Able Seaman?

ABLE SEAMAN CHE AMIRI  
Yes sir.

They hand the folded flag to Amiri and head out.

Dowd stops to look back at the base, the sign, HMAS Penguin  
and the empty flagpole. He knows he may never return.

70 INT. HMAS PENGUIN NAVY BASE. COMMODORE'S OFFICE. DAY 70

Rosen, now clothed immaculately in a business ensemble,  
stands defiant before an upright mirror.

She peels the bandage from her eye. The empty socket is  
revealed. Wincing becomes writhing. Writhing becomes hate.

Rosen maintains her stare then reapplies the bandage.

Dante returns with Babic and Eid.

Dante slaps a chain and padlock on Freisler's desk.

Eid is clutching his jaw. His mouth and nose are bloodied.

Babic looks around, unsure of what's going on.

BABIC  
Where's the Commodore?

ROSEN  
Are you Babic?

Rosen maintains her stare in the mirror.

BABIC  
Who are you?

ROSEN  
What happened?

EID  
Dowd jumped us.

ROSEN  
(To Eid)  
What's wrong with your mouth?

EID  
I lost a tooth in the fight.

ROSEN  
(To Babic)  
Why have you still got your teeth?

BABIC  
What?

DANTE  
Answer Ms Rosen.

BABIC  
He pointed a gun at me.

DANTE  
(Referring to Babic)  
Yeah, this one's going to be a  
problem.

EID  
I'll bring 'em back. Dead or alive.

ROSEN  
What's your name?

EID  
Eid.

ROSEN  
Mr. Eid, you're our new supervisor.

BABIC  
Supervisor of what?! Have you seen  
outside? You people are crazy.

Babic heads for the door.

DANTE  
Don't come back. Don't ever come  
back.

Babic heads exits.

EID  
I'm going to need something in  
writing.

ROSEN  
 (To Dante)  
 The bunker?

DANTE  
 No.

ROSEN  
 Dowd and my brother?

DANTE  
 Gone. We need to be gone too.

71 INT. SYDNEY. HOSPITAL. CHILDREN'S WARD - DAY 71

Freisler walks up a darkened stairwell to a corridor.  
 Tray tables lay abandoned. The place is deserted.  
 He reaches for the door handle of a room then pauses.  
 He looks away, overwhelmed. He fears what he will find.  
 He opens the door the let's it swing wide.

72 TOBIAS' ROOM 72

Freisler appears in the doorway, relieved to see his son.  
 Tobias, his teenage son, is reading a book in bed. Balding  
 and pallid, Tobias shows the legacy of his chemotherapy.

TOBIAS FREISLER  
 You look like shit, dad.

73 EXT. SYDNEY. BALMORAL BEACH - DUSK 73

The setting sun lights the falling ash like a sun shower.  
 Heidi and Sammy make their way along the beach.  
 Waves rush upon the shore.  
 Heidi look up the hill.

HEIDI  
 My friend lives here. He may not be  
 happy to see me but I got nowhere  
 else to go.

Heidi turns to discover Sammy gone.

HEIDI (CONT'D)  
 Sammy? Sammy?

74 EXT. SYDNEY. BALMORAL BEACH - DUSK

74

Dowd, Hunt, Teicher and Amiri look out to a catamaran in the bay.

HUNT  
Who's going out?

ABLE SEAMAN CHE AMIRI  
I'll go.

Amiri hands her M4 to Teicher then removes her shoes.

Two barking Dobermans come out of nowhere. Barely visible through the rain of ash, they race out of sight, to the shoreline.

The dogs' attack, against their unseen victim, is brought to a brutal end. The harrowing sounds of the dogs' deaths set everyone on edge.

Dowd beckons Hunt to follow. He heads towards the threat.

DOWD  
(To Hunt)  
Come on.  
(To Amiri)  
Get the cat.

TEICHER  
Commander.

Teicher points west to a line of passenger jets, silhouette against the setting sun.

TEICHER (CONT'D)  
They're coming in to land.

HUNT  
We're too late.

DOWD  
We stay the course.  
( To Amiri)  
Get the cat!

Dowd runs into the falling ash. Hunt follows.

75 EXT. SYDNEY. M5 TOLLWAY - DUSK

75

An outstretched palm feels the way forward.

Hass staggers down the M5.

Before him, a distant view of Sydney airport.

HASS

Get behind me. Get behind me Satan!  
You have no authority over me!!

Hass impales his leg into the jagged edge of a crashed car.

He moans in pain. Blood flows from the wound.

He drops to his knees and raises his head skyward.

A calm comes over his face then something else.

He squints. A vision of the airport comes into view.

HASS (CONT'D)

I can see.

An ear to ear grin.

Hot ash falls on his face but he doesn't care.

Hass stands. He's surrounded by carnage.

HASS (CONT'D)

What place is this?

A hooded figure, THE ACOLYTE, comes into view.

THE ACOLYTE

The road to Damascus.

The Acolyte reaches out as if to embrace.

THE ACOLYTE (CONT'D)

Now you really see.

A passenger jet screams in low overhead. The engines cut. It disappears from view.

76 EXT. SYDNEY. BALMORAL BEACH - DUSK

76

Heidi runs through the falling ash.

HEIDI

Sammy? Sammy?

**KA-BOOOOOM!** An explosion rocks the city. A plume of smoke mushrooms into the sky from the south. Heidi freezes.

A flare shoots over the harbour.

Flare embers descend to the beach.

Heidi, panicked, searches frantically.

HEIDI (CONT'D)

Sammy!!

Heidi hears a woman's scream. Heidi runs towards it.

77 EXT. SYDNEY. BALMORAL BEACH - DUSK 77

Teicher sees Amiri rush out of the water.  
She's terrified.

ABLE SEAMAN CHE AMIRI  
Give me the four!

Amiri wrenches the M4 out of Teicher's hands, turns back, flicks to auto and empties the entire mag. **TUMP TUMP TUMP TUMP TUMP TUMP TUMP TUMP**.

78 THE WATERLINE 78

Heidi is paused by the gunfire. Then she sees it.

A creature, humanoid, translucent black and filled with stars, crouches on the ground before Sammy.

Steam rises from its body. It's panting like a dog and bleeding from a bite mark to its leg.

Sammy reaches out to touch it. Her face is serene. Her presence, surreal.

The creature looks up. It's back bristles, threatening with a deep growling sound.

HEIDI  
Sammy, baby, please come back.

Heidi cannot move.

An electric blue arc passes between Sammy's fingers and the creature's body.

It has no face. It has no face!

The creature assembles itself, bones cracking into position, rising to tower over Sammy.

In Heidi's peripheral vision, she spots a crying woman kneeling in the sand, Rebecca Kay and a Navy officer standing nearby, Lt. Commander Michael Dowd.

Another, Petty Officer Lachlan Hunt runs towards them breakneck speed.

HUNT  
(To Dowd)  
Leaving! Now!!

Heidi looks to the harbour. The water is alive.



Thousands of the creatures make their way ashore.

Heidi looks back to Sammy and Dowd.

Two glowing eyes light up the creature's darkness then lock-on to Dowd.

Kay screams.

Heidi watches Dowd raise his M4, take aim and.

FADE OUT.