Author’s Qs – Sentient Australia – Draft Two

These are reference points. You can answer, any or all of the Qs.

1. Does the reader get a clear visual picture of what is going on in the script from the action descriptions? If there are grey areas, let me know. Ref the page and scene number.
2. The inciting incident of the Chinese flashpoint which features in Teaser Act is not right.

The Chinese would never be so blatant.

I am looking to design a flashpoint between China and the US.

My theory is that it will be based on a provocative act taken by the US President that embarrasses the Chinese Premier, forcing his hand and leading to a flashpoint or some act of revenge.

This is more about the Chinese Premier showing his own people; he is not weak, rather than addressing the US President’s challenge.

Can you think of something the US President might do or an act that might provoke the Chinese to act in a reckless or decisive way that leads to war?

It must culminate in the Chinese taking a stand, perhaps moving on a piece of land under the banner of unification and as a pre-emptive they lay mines in US base and Australian Navy base harbours.

The mines bring our lead character into play.

1. I have made the Commodore a woman. I believe that choice completely changed the dynamic of the work and the adversarial relationship between Dowd and Freisler. Did you have that experience of character? Do you have any comment re Commodore Kathryn Freisler?
2. The transition between the Teaser Act and Act One features Dowd descending (into the deep) then a sharp contrast of him rising, after being shock-woken. Does the abrupt reversal/ cut work for you the reader?
3. I coped some criticism ref Scenes 8 and 9 when Dowd calls out for help. It was seen as weak. What do you think of this? Dowd has just shock-woken in a recompression chamber and had that recompression interrupted. He is in a pretty bad way. Do you feel it makes him appear weak to call out for help?
4. Scene 11 – First contact with the alien life form. Does this scene engage you? Can you see it as have a strong visual impact?
5. Scene 14, Dowd states his clear objective. ‘It took our people. I’m getting them back.’ Are you the reader, sold on that as a valid objective for this character and story?
6. Act Two introduces Able Seaman Che Amiri. This character begins an arc in the pilot, on the way to joining Dowd as a Navy Clearance Diver. What do you think of this character? Are you engaged by her? I am particularly keen to hear female readers POV on this character.
7. The work is laden with action scenes. Front to back. I’ll be frank, readers didn’t like my character work, so I sought to sex up the work with more action. Did you find this a more enjoyable read than Draft Two?
8. Scene 25 The infamous bunker scene. Loved and equally hated. I have simplified it, but it still employs the same structure. This is a juggling performance syncopated by the hammering of the shoe on the door. Read it and let me know if you get it or if you still hate it.
9. Scene 32 we reference Dowd’s indigenous heritage. Dowd is Wiradjuri, from the West of NSW. There is an exchange between Dowd and Hunt. They are permanently, playfully aggressive with one another. Hunt makes fun of his mob and references Dowd’s handle in the team, Wudji. Dowd points out that, his mob is Wiradjuri and pays it off to Hunt by calling him an ‘ignorant white bastard.’ There is no hate between these two. It’s just play but I am very concerned that given the level of political correctness that dominates current thinking, that people will not be able to relax and enjoy that exchange. Question; upon reading it, are you uncomfortable with the exchange between the men?
10. Scene 38, the last, we reintroduce characters that featured in Draft Two, Heidi, Sammy and Rebecca Kaye. In Draft Two, introducing those three characters confused a lot of readers. They stated that, it was just too many characters to cope with. My objective is to set them up for the first ep after the Pilot. Question; Did it confuse you or take away from the ending? What was your experience?