

# **AIRTIGHT**

The True Story of the USS Squalus

An Original Screenplay

by

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FROM

ABRAM NALIBOTSKY

**THE GERSH AGENCY**  
LITERARY AND TALENT AGENCY

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The following is based on the actual events that occurred on May of 1939. The loss of life, the personal sacrifices and the risks taken by all involved are historical fact. The voyage of the USS Squalus is a tragedy that brought forth the finest aspects of the human spirit.

This is the true story of American heroes.

FADE IN:

SUPERIMPOSE:

1939 - THE NORTH ATLANTIC

EXT. UNDERWATER - BLACK

Deep beneath the waves, three silhouettes hang in limbo, drifting and swaying at the will of the ocean. Air bubbles drift up from the bodies. On closer inspection, we see that they are uniformed Navy personnel.

Draped around each of their necks hang an apparatus known as a 'Momsen Lung,' an underwater breathing device. It looks like an oversized hot water bottle with a mouthpiece extending from the 'bladder.' The Lungs expand and contract as the three sailors continue their labored breathing.

SIMMS, a wide-eyed kid, fumbles with the apparatus, the breathing tubes popping out of his mouth. He puts it back in but now his throat gurgles, dealing with air and water.

Beside him, CARTER breathes in sharp, chopping gasps, each breath a clawing attempt at retaining the oxygen.

The third, JOHN MARINO, a smooth-skinned, apple-cheeked farm boy from Iowa, has a rhythm to his breathing. There is fear and concern in his eyes but this kid isn't panicking.

Panic is what is taking over Simms. His eyes bulge as he begins to choke and cough. Air and water spew forth from his mouth and nose. The fear has spread like a virus to Carter who spits out his breathing tubes and is now drawing in mouthfuls of salt water. Disoriented from lack of oxygen, they are in a spastic state of fear.

Precious oxygen cascades out of their discarded Momsen Lungs. Marino moves to calm them, but Simms and Carter are now hysterical and are lashing out, trying to determine which way is up. Marino is kicked in the stomach, knocking the wind from him. He backs away to adjust his breathing apparatus, then swims back to save his drowning companions. Their bodies begin the slow descent into the watery abyss.

FROM ABOVE

THREE DIVERS descend on cables. Their lead boots allow for rapid submersion. Full head-to-toe diving gear complete with a bell helmet and air hose attached. Two of the divers grab the now-motionless sailors and drag them up to the surface. The third diver looks to Marino and extends his hands in a gesture of help. Marino smiles and calmly shakes his head. He gives a 'thumbs up' to Marino and they both calmly rise to the surface.

EXT. FALCON - DAY

On the surface sits a NAVAL TUGBOAT with 'THE FALCON' painted on her bow. She has been refitted and overhauled for diving tests and Marine rescues. A calm Marino breaks the surface.

The three divers are being hoisted out of the water on a platform by a crane arm extended from the Falcon. Marino climbs up the ladder on the side of the Falcon onto the deck.

Already aboard, Simms and Carter are coughing the sea water out of their lungs and are happy to be breathing freely once again.

Marino sits on the edge of the railing and pulls the Momsen Lung up and over his head.

LT. COMMANDER CHARLES 'SWEDE' MOMSEN, wanders over to Marino. He is the Chuck Yeager of the oceans. An adventurer dedicated to the sea and the men who risk their lives to keep it safe.

MOMSEN

What happened, sailor?

Marino jumps to his feet and salutes.

MARINO

Sir.

MOMSEN

Drop the stiff back. Just tell me what happened.

Marino stands at ease.

MARINO

Simms and Carter ran into some trouble. Could have happened to anyone, sir.

MOMSEN

But it didn't happen to you.

(calls out)

Mac?

Momsen has called up to the divers now being lowered by the crane arm on to the deck. JAMES 'MAC' MCDONALD, a 'Scotsman' with a quick wit, has his helmet off. He is flanked by two other divers, SKEE and MIHALOWSKI.

MAC

Are you wondering about the lad, Swede?

MOMSEN

Yeah.

MAC

He's still breathing so I think it's safe to toss him back in.

The woman is in love. Calley and Ruth hold hands in the final moments of the ceremony.

MANESS  
(to himself)  
Could we hurry this thing up.

PRIEST  
At this point, without interruption Mr. Maness, the rings will have been exchanged, you've said your vows. Then we turn and march back down the aisle.

CALLEY  
What about the kiss?

PRIEST  
A handshake will do for me, Cal.  
(smiles)  
Well, I suppose we could rehearse the kiss, too.

Ruth and Calley kiss tenderly.

MANESS  
Then we're done, right Father?

PRIEST  
Yes, we're done.

MANESS  
Come on, Cal.

Maness trots down the aisle. Calley looks pleadingly.

RUTH  
Go. Just be careful.

CALLEY  
I will. How about you hold on to these.

He gives her the wedding rings.

CALLEY (CONT'D)  
If you leave them with me they'll probably just get lost.

MANESS  
Cal! They're gonna kill us!

RUTH  
You better get lost. Apparently the crew of USS Squalus can't survive without you.

Calley snaps to a 'goofy' attention.

CALLEY

Torpedoman First Class Matt Calley at your service. Sir.

RUTH

That's ma'am, and you just be here on time Saturday morning.

A gentle kiss. Cal mouths 'Love You' to Ruth.

Maness calls out from the back of the church.

MANESS

For crying out loud!

EXT. BASEBALL DIAMOND - DAY

CRACK! A baseball hits a bat. The ball tears across green grass. JOHN BATICK, covered in tattoos, thick forearms with just as thick a New Orleans accent coming from his mouth, calls out at the top of his lungs.

BATICK

Is that all you got? Move it like you mean it! Move!

A baseball game is in progress. Sailors -- young bucks in their early to mid-twenties and full of life.

Officers and the families eat barbecue and relax in the sun.

On the bases LAWRENCE GAINOR is trying to advance from first to second. He has rounded second and is legging it out to third.

BATICK (CONT'D)

If you want it, you gotta really want it, Gainor!

Gainor is trying to leg out the run to third. The third baseman JIM SAVAGE awaits.

BATICK (CONT'D)

You're sitting too long all day! Time to move those legs!

The ball is in the air. Gainor slides. The tag is made. The umpire is LT. WILLIAM DOYLE, the Executive Officer.

DOYLE

Out!

As Batick's anger rises, his thick Cajun burr spills out.

BATICK

Out? Out? What d'you mean, out? Gainor got the base! You know?

DOYLE  
I say he's out. Good enough for you,  
Batick?

BATICK  
Okay, Lieutenant Doyle. You da boss under  
the water and now you da boss here. Maybe  
I sit too close to the batteries. Sparks  
shooting out to my head.

Batick slaps his head with his hand. Both men smile.

DOYLE  
Maybe. You're up.

Doyle steps over and grabs a soda from his young wife, SARAH.

A HAND ON A RADIO DIAL turns through stations and static. Louis  
Armstrong's 'Lazy River' comes through clearly. POWELL, the ever-  
precise radioman, sees Batick grab a bat and elbows KUNEY, the  
incessant chatter box, who is seated beside him.

KUNEY  
Back it up, hey now, big batter's up.  
Back it up!

BATICK  
Batick going to do some damage.

ISSACS and THOMPSON peer through a fog of charcoal smoke. They  
are overseeing the sizzling food in the barbecue pit.

ISSACS  
What happened to the boys?

THOMPSON  
They were here a minute ago?

LIEUTENANT J.C. NICHOLS, the youngest officer of the crew,  
approaches the cooks. His beautiful redheaded wife, JANE, is on  
his arm.

NICHOLS  
You fellows lose something?

ISSACS  
Lieutenant, Mrs. Nichols. The help done  
took off.

NICHOLS  
The Filipinos?

THOMPSON  
I sent them for more ice, but they seemed  
to have disappeared.

Nichols scans the crowd. Everyone is having fun, lots of smiling  
faces. The outfielders have moved way back.

Batick is at the plate and the pitcher, DON SMITH, an engineer on loan from GM, looks nervous.

BATICK

You all too close. Smith, send them to your mama's house in Detroit, then they be just about right!

NICHOLS

In the outfield. Looks like they found your help.

Standing deep, deep in the outfield are PINOY and ELVINA the two Filipino mess boys. Their brown skin and slight frames stand out in this crowd of husky, white-skinned, Naval personnel. They stand no more than three feet apart, not quite sure what is going on.

Smith sends one across the plate and Batick connects. Batick begins his home run trot.

BATICK

I told you to wait at your Mama's house.

Back, back, the ball is flying deeper into the outfield. The ball plunks down between the two Filipinos. Pinoy stares at Elvina. The crowd yells at them.

CROWD

Pick it up! Pick it up!

They stare at the ball resting at their feet. Maness, the second baseman, runs out yelling at them.

MANESS

Pick it up! He's running! Pick it up!

Pinoy bends down and picks it up. He hands it to Elvina.

PINOY

Run! You are supposed to be running!

Elvina runs like a jack rabbit through the outfield as the players try and catch him.

The crowd laughs.

Naquin stands with his wife, Frances. They balance plates of food and observe the 'Chaplinesque' routine in the outfield.

FRANCES

The men seem to be enjoying themselves.

NAQUIN

And what about the women?

FRANCES

Happy to be here with you.

He looks over at the girls playing with the other children.

NAQUIN  
It's starting to feel like home here,  
isn't it, Frances?

FRANCES  
We're together, that's our home.

Naquin grabs Frances into a tight hug as CAPTAIN HAL GREENLEE and his wife JACQUELINE, sidle up to them.

GREENLEE  
Ahh, young love. I remember it well.

JACQUELINE  
I just wish you'd remember it a little  
more often.

NAQUIN  
Captain.

GREENLEE  
Thanks for the invite. Nice day you've  
got here.

NAQUIN  
Family day. Technically, you are family.

GREENLEE  
By marriage only. Where is that daughter  
of mine?

FRANCES  
Over by the baseball diamond cheering on  
that handsome young husband of hers.

They turn to see their daughter BETTY, just twenty and pretty as they come, cheering on her new husband PAT PATTERSON as he steps to the plate. He has the glow of a star.

GREENLEE  
Son-in-laws. You'll learn to live with  
them when the time comes, Naquin.

Naquin looks over at his two young girls.

NAQUIN  
That won't be for some time and when it  
does...

NAQUIN/GREENLEE  
No sailors!

The two couples laugh.

ON THE BASEBALL DIAMOND, Maness is back playing second base. Calley is playing short stop. His fiancée, Ruth, cheers him on in the stands.

MANESS

Come on, Patty, show us the stick!

CALLEY

Right here! Patterson, give it to me!

The pitch. Patterson connects -- and boy can he run. The ball heads to the hole between short and third. The runner takes off from first, headed for second. Calley dives, stabbing the ball with his glove. On the ground, he turns on his knees, falls backward and fires to Maness at second. Maness snags the ball high, drags his foot across the bag and throws a heater to first. Double play.

MANESS

No one turns the double like Cal and Maness!

CALLEY

What a team!

They slap hands into a shake. Ruth cheers like a schoolgirl. Patterson trots off the field to Betty's arms; she kisses him deeply and won't let go. The players whoop it up.

KUNEY

Medeiros, big swinger Medeiros is next. Hey, ho what do you know, it's Medeiros!

MEDEIROS trots over from the barbecue licking his fingers. He is a muscular kid from the streets of Philadelphia.

MEDEIROS

Ladies, this big smack is just for you!

He blows a sloppy kiss to a group of giggling teenage girls.

Smith delivers. Medeiros tenses, coils and unloads. As he connects with the ball, the bat slips out of his hands. The ball rockets left going directly for Savage, the third baseman's head. It connects and Savage drops.

Naquin leaves Frances, concerned for his man. The players crowd around. Savage is groggy and his head already has a lump on it.

NAQUIN

Somebody get O'Hara. Where's the Doc?

'DOC' O'HARA pushes through the crowd and checks him out.

DOC

Savage? Come on Jim, talk to us.

SAVAGE  
It's not fair, Captain.

NAQUIN  
What isn't?

SAVAGE  
A headache like this and no hangover to blame.

BATICK  
Yes! He's okay.

NAQUIN  
Doc, let's put him in the infirmary for a couple of days all the same. Time to break it up, boys.

The players all nod as Doc and Medeiros help Savage off the field. Naquin and the families begin to disperse.

A BUCKET OF ICED DRINKS. A hand fishes a bottle of coke from the icy depths. GABLE, a handsome rascal named after the movie star, uncaps the bottle using it as a visual to schmooze with a NAVAL WIFE WANNA-BE.

GABLE  
See, we call the sea water 'ballast,' when the sub's full of it, like this Cola -- we dive.

(drinking it down)  
When you want to surface -- fill'er with air, seal'er up.

(recaps the bottle)  
...and she floats again.

He tosses the bottle back in to the bucket, it floats on the surface for a moment -- then the cap bursts off.

NAVAL WIFE WANNA-BE  
And what if you run out of hot air?

The bottle begins to fill with ice water.

GABLE  
Never do. They give the most important man on the boat the job of sealing 'er up tight.

WIFE WANNA-BE  
And who would that be?

GABLE  
You're looking at him, sugar.

She laughs and rolls in to his arms as they walk away. The Coke bottle descends into the murky ice water trailing a stream of tiny bubbles.

EXT. EDGE OF FIELD - LATER

New recruit Marino has arrived on base. He stops an ENSIGN.

MARINO

Excuse me. I'm looking for the Squalus.

ENSIGN

The boat is moored down at Pier 4. But if you're looking for her crew, they're over there.

Marino looks over to the remaining group of sailors.

ENSIGN (CONT'D)

Welcome to the coffin service.

The sailors are back-lit by the setting sun. They are a slice of Americana from the pages of Life magazine.

EXT. PORTSMOUTH - DAY

Sunrise and the base is waking up. An ENSIGN runs the Stars and Stripes up the main flag pole of the base. SAILORS are hosing down the decks of various Naval craft in the fleet.

EXT. NAQUIN'S HOUSE - DAY

A quaint New England cottage situated at the mouth of the Piscataqua River, it looks out over the North Atlantic. Giggling girls' laughter can be heard from inside. Naquin, Frances and the two girls step out onto the porch. Maggie is holding Naquin's attache and Dorothy is wearing his hat. He kisses them on the cheek as they hand the items over.

NAQUIN

Thank you, Ensign Maggie, Ensign Dorothy.

The girls salute.

FRANCES

I've been in the service much longer. I expect a better send-off.

Naquin kisses his wife tenderly on the lips. A loving kiss.

NAQUIN

I'll be back tonight for the rest of that one.

He smiles, turns and walks down the steps. He stops, pats his breast pocket and then looks back at Frances.

NAQUIN (CONT'D)

I almost forgot, didn't I?

FRANCES

Almost.

She reaches into her apron pocket and tosses a shiny silver cigarette case to Naquin.

FRANCES (CONT'D)

Ship to shore.

NAQUIN

And then home once more.

Frances salutes and Naquin blows her a kiss. He turns and walks down the hill to the water.

EXT. WATERFRONT - PORTSMOUTH - DAY

A pre-war sense of urgency surges through the bustling Naval shipyard. Acetylene torches shower sparks. Engineers and workers swarm the massive shell of a half-built submarine, like bees on a honeycomb. It is longer than a football field, towers three stories high and has yet to have the conning tower installed. It is one of many under construction.

Naquin approaches HAROLD PREBLE, a civilian architect.

NAQUIN

Good morning, Preb.

PREBLE

'Morning.

Naquin motions to the submarine under construction.

NAQUIN

Something new?

COLE (O.C.)

Tired of your own boat already?

Naquin turns and salutes REAR ADMIRAL CYRUS COLE, Commandant of Portsmouth. He is a gentle man hardened by the wars fought at sea and the battles in boardrooms.

NAQUIN

No, sir. The Squalus is a fine boat.

Grinders bite the air of the dockside assembly line.

COLE

Busy place. Let's walk. They told me you were too young to take out the Squalus and shake her down. They told me that our newest and finest sub shouldn't be handled by anyone younger than, well, younger than the fossils who make the decisions at the top.

NAQUIN

Yes, sir.

COLE

So why you?

NAQUIN

I suppose you'll tell me, sir.

COLE

We've got problems in Germany. That fellow Hitler is going to be trouble. Japan isn't behaving and that's not good either. Washington knows it, the Navy knows it and most important, I know it. I tell you what else I know. This next war, if there is a war, isn't going to be fought by fossils in Washington or Rear Admirals who like to give speeches. It's going to be fought by men like you and your crew.

NAQUIN

Yes, sir.

COLE

She's a good boat, it's important that we find out what she can do.

NAQUIN

You will, sir.

COLE

FDR himself has an interest in how things go today, so we don't want to disappoint the President.

NAQUIN

No, sir.

COLE

The greatest victories have always been at sea. Control the seas and you control the world.

Naquin salutes.

NAQUIN

Yes, sir.

Cole returns the salute. He turns and walks towards the red brick Naval Headquarters, which overlooks the shipyard.

EXT. PIERS - PORTSMOUTH - DAY

Naquin and Preble walk past row upon row of moored Naval tugs, cutters, and PT boats.

NAQUIN  
Looks like we'd better be perfect.

PREBLE  
Hang on. She rolled off the line...?

NAQUIN  
Eleven days ago.

PREBLE  
She's got over two million man hours in her and in the course of seventeen dives, you've had exactly three minor problems. A wiring short, a hot bearing...

NAQUIN  
And that intake valve that stuck. I know. I know. But our torpedo loads have got to be faster, our dive times have got to get better...

PREBLE  
I've been around these boats a long time. I've been with you every step of the way on this one. You've got a great boat. You've got a great crew.

Naquin allows himself a smile.

NAQUIN  
Okay, let's get to work.

EXT. PIER 4 - USS SQUALUS - PORTSMOUTH - DAY

Naquin and Preble round the corner of the yard to find the USS Squalus. She rides low in the water. Sleek, 310 feet long, grey metal hull, black teak decking and the numbers '192' painted in ivory white across the conning tower.

Assembled on the deck are the officers and crew of the Squalus. Fifty-seven men stand at attention, awaiting their Captain. It's an inspiring sight. Naquin and Preble drink it in. Greenlee comes up behind the men and puts his arms around their shoulders.

GREENLEE  
Ah, she's a beauty. I'd love to go out with you today, but we got some damn politicians showing up for a glory tour of the yard, so you boys will have to have all the fun without me. You watch that rascal Patterson now.

Greenlee nods to Patterson on deck. He then continues along, leaving Naquin and Preble to step aboard the Squalus.

PATTERSON  
Captain on deck!

NAQUIN

Does the Navy pay you well, XO?

DOYLE

An embarrassment of riches, sir.

NAQUIN

Same here. Let's earn our money today.  
Take her out.

DOYLE

All hands to stations, prepare to cast  
off. We are on the move.

A frenzy of excited but controlled activity as the men of the Squalus scatter across the deck and down through open hatches to their assigned positions.

EXT. USS SQUALUS - PISCATAQUA RIVER - MOVING - DAY

The Squalus cuts through the current of the wide-banked river, leaving the Naval Base behind. Ensigns and officers ride on deck securing lines and assessing the movement of the boat.

CONNING TOWER

Naquin, Preble, Nichols and Patterson stand watch.

NICHOLS

Captain, we have a new man on board.

NAQUIN

Let's meet him.

PATTERSON

Marino, front and center.

Marino moves briskly across the deck to meet Naquin.

MARINO

Seaman Second Class John Marino, sir.

NAQUIN

Where you from, son?

MARINO

Iowa, sir.

NAQUIN

Iowa? You won't find any corn fields  
around here.

MARINO

That's the point, sir.

NAQUIN  
Welcome aboard. Patterson will look after you. Maybe Marino here will be the key to improving those torpedo reload times.

PATTERSON  
Aye, sir.

Patterson leads Marino across the deck.

NAQUIN  
Secure the deck for topside running, JC.

NICHOLS  
Aye, sir.

Nichols climbs down from the tower and directs the men.

PREBLE  
He's learning.

NAQUIN  
We all are.

Naquin pulls the silver cigarette case from his pocket. He polishes it on his shirt.

PREBLE  
(smiling)  
Once again, time to say good-bye.

Naquin tilts the case at angles that catch the morning sun.

NAQUIN  
Never good-bye.

Naquin stares off to the distant shore.

EXT. NAQUIN'S COTTAGE - DAY

Frances stands on the porch and scans the horizon. A LIGHT FLASH catches her eye and she smiles.

EXT. USS SQUALUS - CONNING TOWER

The sun glints off the silver cigarette case.

NAQUIN  
(to himself)  
Ship to shore...

EXT. NAQUIN'S HOUSE - DAY

Frances is holding a hand mirror, she too catches the sun.

FRANCES  
And then home once more.

## EXT. PISCATAQUA RIVER - MOVING

The Squalus is back-lit as it steams out of the river mouth and into the North Atlantic.

## CONNING TOWER

Naquin, Preble and Nichols are in the conning tower. Pinoy and Elvina bring coffee up to the men.

PINOY  
Big test dive today.

ELVINA  
Everyone busy.

The men take the coffee.

NAQUIN  
Thank you. It is a big day.

PINOY  
We are ready. Test dive.

Pinoy and Elvina leave the tower. Naquin picks up the phone.

NAQUIN  
Doyle. Let's dry test the induction valves.

## INT. CONTROL ROOM - SQUALUS

Cramped and active. A maze of levers, gauges, dials, indicators and vents all polished with elbow grease.

DOYLE  
Aye, sir. Gable, seal the induction valves.

GABLE  
Aye, sealing induction valves.

Gable grasps a long metal handle and forces it up and over 180 degrees.

## CONNING TOWER

Naquin and Preble observe the two induction valves on the deck. To their right and below them are two circular 'manhole' type openings. One, 18 inches in diameter, the other, 31 inches in diameter. They are air induction valves -- the sub's venting system. One for the engines, the other for the crew. The induction valve's 'manhole covers' slowly slide across and seal tight.

PREBLE  
Diesel air induction closed, main air  
induction closed. Good.

NAQUIN  
How's the board, Doyle?

CONTROL ROOM

Doyle looks to the indicator board. A row of red lights now  
punctuated by two green lights.

DOYLE  
Christmas tree shows two green.

NAQUIN  
Open them up again. The fumes from the  
diesels will be choking the men by now.

GABLE  
Opening induction valves.

Gable grabs the lever and leans back in the other direction --

CONNING TOWER.

The induction valves open.

NAQUIN  
Take her out to the dive coordinates.

INT. AFT (REAR) TORPEDO ROOM - SQUALUS

It is a cramped, narrow space with high polished brass doors  
covering the torpedo tubes mounted in the very back of the  
compartment. A number of MEN work in the compartment. Maness  
drops down from the open hatch above and startles Calley who is  
adjusting the straps on the torpedoes lashed to the wall.

MANESS  
You still got time.

CALLEY  
Don't start.

MANESS  
Tick, tock, tick, tock...

CALLEY  
Cut it out.

MANESS  
Gibbsy, you tell him. You've been through  
the battle.

ROBERT GIBBS, son of a Massachusetts fisherman, looks up from  
beneath the firing tubes.

GIBBS  
Not a battle. Been quiet as a calm sea.

MANESS  
You're killing me here, Gibbsy. Fill Cal in. He won't get a moment's peace and quiet once that ring is slipped on.

GIBBS  
Wrong guy. I married the perfect woman. You'll meet her, she'll be on her way up from Chicago on the night train. Romanian, right from the Old Country. She can't speak English.

CALLEY  
So how do you two communicate?

GIBBS  
(smiling)  
We get by.

MANESS  
You know...humma, humma, humma.

Maness makes repeated thrusts of his pelvis on the end of the torpedo. The compartment is filled with rowdy laughter.

PATTERSON (O.C.)  
Very nice, Mr. Maness.

The laughter drops to smirks. Patterson is standing in the doorway. Marino is with him.

PATTERSON (CONT'D)  
Perhaps you'd like to demonstrate this revolutionary torpedo loading technique to the Captain? I'm sure he'll be impressed.

MANESS  
No, sir.

PATTERSON  
This is Marino. Fill him in, make sure he's up to speed.

MANESS  
Aye, sir.

PATTERSON  
And Mr. Maness, next time use protection. That's all we need is a bunch of baby torps running all over the boat.

Patterson leaves.

GIBBS  
Mr. Marino, I believe Mr. Maness is done.  
How about you get started.

Gibbs points to the torpedoes lashed to the bulkhead.

MANESS  
Try the second one down.

MARINO  
Pardon?

MANESS  
You know, the good looking one!

All the men join in, pelvises thrusting.

ALL  
Humma, humma, humma...

INT. AFT ENGINE ROOM - SQUALUS

Patterson has left the aft torpedo room and stepped into the aft Engine Room.

We're going on a tour of the sub from back (aft) to front (bow). There are seven compartments, this is number two.

Twin rows of now-stationary BATTERY-DRIVEN ENGINES form a tight corridor. Patterson is squeezing past SAILORS checking the gauges and greased housings. Civilian Don Smith refers to a chart of specifications.

PATTERSON  
Mr. Smith, how goes it?

SMITH  
Gear ratios on the battery-driven units in here are fine. The diesels could be doing better.

PATTERSON  
How so?

SMITH  
Nothing specific, just could be better.

PATTERSON  
General Motors didn't send you all the way down from Detroit to be evasive.

SMITH  
Okay, come on.

Smith and Patterson squeeze by the men and step forward through the door at the front of the compartment into the --

## DIESEL ENGINE ROOM

The noise is almost deafening as the large DIESEL ENGINES pound away. The long twin engines fill the compartment to near capacity. Exhaust fumes hang in the air. The MEN working in the room, edge by the powerful machinery as they go about their duties: Smith brings a rag up to his face.

SMITH

I'm going to have to burn these clothes when I'm done here. How do you ever get used to the smell?

PATTERSON

What smell? We're still running on top. Can't you smell the fresh air breezing through?

They smile. Smith moves to the end of one of the engines.

SMITH

We've got to keep a steady flow of oil in these piston casings. We're still breaking in the engines, so they are going to run extra hot for a while. Makes the oil breakdown real quick.

PATTERSON

Bring Maness and Calley forward to help. Drill it into their heads. They're sailors, not lawyers. They like to follow orders.

Patterson steps forward through the door and exits into --

## THE GALLEY

Batick is seated at the tiny table drinking coffee. Thompson is frying a pan filled with potatoes. Isaacs is restocking the pantry. Pinoy and Elvina are washing dishes. All these men are working in a space not much bigger than a walk-in closet.

BATICK

Oh no, Batick been caught.

PATTERSON

You moving forward?

BATICK

Got me coffee here now. Could you tell Gainor he can stay where he is? I'll cover back here.

Batick stands up.

PATTERSON

I'll pass it along.

BATICK

You gonna practice that run to first base?

PATTERSON

Not this morning. Hardly enough room to walk in here.

Batick squeezes by Patterson. He leans down to the floor and pulls up a hatch door from the floor grating.

BATICK

You gotta be joking. This is like Bourbon Street compared to the tiny pig boats we used to sail.

Batick climbs down into the lower compartment housed beneath the floor of the galley. His massive frame twisting as he lowers himself down into the --

AFT BATTERY COMPARTMENT

It is filled with large batteries affixed to the hull. So cramped Batick can barely turn around once he sits.

BATICK

Roomy, like a palace.

THE GALLEY

Patterson pours two cups of coffee and walks forward through a narrow corridor formed by bunks chained to the hull. Doc is checking out a pale young sailor, WASHBURN.

PATTERSON

We gonna have to call the morgue for this guy?

DOC

No, I believe Seaman Washburn will survive this cold and it looks like a minor throat infection.

Patterson ducks through the next door which leads to the --

CONTROL ROOM

Doyle is going over chart details. Gable checks the meter readings and other MEN are scattered about. Patterson hands Doyle a cup of coffee.

PATTERSON

Coffee's hot, XO.

DOYLE

Thanks. How are things aft?

PATTERSON  
Caught Maness humping a torpedo.

Nichols slides down the ladder from the conning tower above.

NICHOLS  
Captain is almost ready to dive.

DOYLE  
Then I guess I'll be seeing you men later.  
Nichols, you'd better tell Powell to be  
sharp about the relay.

PATTERSON  
Batick is staying aft for this run.

NICHOLS  
Got it.

Patterson steps back into the galley. We go with Nichols as he moves forward through the Control Room into the --

#### OFFICER'S COUNTRY

He stops for a moment at a closet-like door on the side of the hull and opens it. Wedged inside is Powell, the radio man.

NICHOLS  
Dive coordinates coming up, Powell.  
Captain wants a sharp relay to Portsmouth.

POWELL  
Aye, sir.

Across the hall, BRYSON, a rotund electrician from the Carolinas, is slipping into the toilet with a thick 'electrical manual.'

NICHOLS  
You're not hoping to get through that in  
one sitting, are you? Dive's coming up.

BRYSON  
I'll be there right when ya need me.

Tiny rooms run the length of the compartment -- Officers' rooms, Captain's quarters, a meeting room and then banks of meters and gauges carefully manned for analysis. Nichols opens a floor hatch and sticks his head into the --

#### FORWARD BATTERY COMPARTMENT

Gainor is monitoring battery levels in his own cramped space.

NICHOLS  
Batick's aft. You're here for the dive.

GAINOR

Aye, sir.

Nichols pops back out.

GAINOR (CONT'D)

(to himself)

Voltage readings here, voltage readings there. Who cares.

FORWARD TORPEDO ROOM

Nichols steps into the forward torpedo room. A number of men are at work. The room is similar to the design of the aft torpedo room. The hatch above them is open. Sunlight and fresh air pours in. Medeiros breathes it in.

NICHOLS

Secure the hatch. Captain's ready to dive.

Medeiros leaps up and pulls the hatch closed.

EXT. SQUALUS - NORTH ATLANTIC

The weather has shifted to gray. The wind is whipping the sea to life. A lobster boat chugs past heading back to port. The massive submarine looks somewhat smaller now that it is out on the open sea. Waves cascade over the bow.

CONNING TOWER

Naquin stares out at the fishermen.

NAQUIN

We had to fish off the side of the dock, my father was afraid of the water. No boats, no rafts, no swimming over your head.

PREBLE

Not a Navy man?

NAQUIN

History teacher. 'Always look back before you move ahead,' his way of life. Admiral Cole is right. There's a storm coming in Europe, they didn't see it before.

PREBLE

World War I?

NAQUIN

We have to be ready. We have to forget that this is a day when people are fishing, sailing with their kids or holding hands with their wife.

(MORE)

NAQUIN (CONT'D)

Today we have to be ready for the dark days yet to come.

PREBLE

Fifty feet in sixty seconds, periscope depth.

NAQUIN

Combat ready. Let's shake her down.

He picks up the phone.

NAQUIN (CONT'D)

Mr. Doyle. Clear the bridge. It's time to dive.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - SQUALUS

Doyle hangs up the phone.

DOYLE

Clear the bridge.

Gable presses the klaxon button and the dive alarm resonates through the ship. Kuney, the headset-wearing intercom operator, relays all the commands to the areas of the ship. Preble slides down the ladder. Naquin slides down the ladder.

NAQUIN

Bridge is clear and hatch is sealed. XO, I will take the dive.

DOYLE

Captain has the dive.

Naquin and Preble hold running stopwatches in their hands.

NAQUIN

All stations prepare to dive. Report in.

Kuney repeats the Captain's commands into his headset.

KUNEY

All stations prepare to dive. Report in.

AFT TORPEDO ROOM

GIBBS

Aft torpedo room, secure.

AFT ENGINE ROOM

PATTERSON

Diesels shut down on standby. Ready for battery.

## FORWARD TORPEDO ROOM

NICHOLS  
Forward torpedo room secure.

## AFT BATTERY ROOM

Batick holds a clipboard in his hands and checks the meters.

BATICK  
Come on, my babies, show me your juice.

## CONTROL ROOM

NAQUIN  
Close main induction valves. Make a seal.  
Gable grabs the lever and forces it over 180 degrees.

GABLE  
Induction valves closed.

Gable looks at the indicator board. All lights are green.

GABLE (CONT'D)  
We have a seal.

Doyle checks the board. All lights are green.

DOYLE  
Christmas tree is green. Confirmed.

NAQUIN  
Helm, bow down ten degrees, stern up five.

HELM  
Aye, sir. Bow down ten, stern up five.

The boat pitches and angles down.

NAQUIN  
Intake main ballast.

KUNEY  
Intake main ballast.

## EXT. SQUALUS - NORTH ATLANTIC

Pushing sixteen knots, waves are bashing over the deck and conning tower which are above surface. The camera takes us below the surface to see the ballast doors on the hull open. Water rushes in through them.

## INT. CONTROL ROOM - SQUALUS

DOYLE  
Ballast full and doors closing.

EXT. SQUALUS - UNDERWATER

The ballast doors of the Squalus shut and its bow slowly dips beneath the waves.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - SQUALUS

The dive continues.

NAQUIN

Radio to Portsmouth. Dive coordinates,  
43:03:25 north, 70:46:55 west.

KUNEY

Dive coordinates, 43:03:25 north, 70:46:55  
west.

RADIO ROOM

POWELL

43:03:25 north, 70:46:55 west.

Powell writes down the coordinates with one hand while tapping out the coordinates with the other. 43:03:25 north, 70:46:55 west.

INT. PORTSMOUTH COMMUNICATIONS ROOM

It's a noisy, bustling office. Ensigns running with messages torn from OPERATORS' note pads. A RADIO MAN receives the Squalus' message and records it.

RADIO MAN

43:03:25 north, 70:46:50 west.

Squalus 8:31 AM, Longitude 43:03:25 W, Latitude 70:46:50 N. Hold on :50 -- recorded incorrectly by five miles.

INT. RADIO ROOM - SQUALUS

Powell underlines his coordinates.

POWELL

Coordinates sent to base.

CONTROL ROOM

NAQUIN

Transfer from diesel to battery.

KUNEY

Transfer from diesel to battery.

ENGINE ROOM

PATTERSON

Aye, sir. Maness! Calley!

Calley and Maness pull on a lever. The deafening roar of the diesels shut down. The silent, battery-driven engines take over. Calley and Maness slap hands.

MANESS

What a team!

AFT BATTERY ROOM

The meters leap to life.

BATICK

Boat be nothin' without Batick's batteries.

EXT. SQUALUS - NORTH ATLANTIC

The deck sinks below the surface. Water rushes up the conning tower exterior.

INT. CONNING TOWER

The water rises above the eye port. ROBERTSON, a lanky Texan who mans the navigational charts, yells down to the Control Room directly below.

ROBERTSON

Squalus is under.

CONTROL ROOM

DOYLE

We are below surface, Captain.

NAQUIN

Check seal.

JACKSON, a technician, releases a compressed air valve which hisses throughout the Control Room. The Pressure Meter beside Jackson rises, he nods to Naquin.

NAQUIN (CONT'D)

All systems go, we are airtight.

EXT. SQUALUS - UNDERWATER

The Squalus passes by, like a mighty black shark, descending into the frigid depths of the Atlantic.

CONTROL ROOM

Naquin monitors the depth gauges. His stopwatch reads forty seconds.

GABLE

Twenty feet.

NAQUIN  
All ahead, one-third.

DOYLE  
All ahead, one-third.

NAQUIN  
Keep an eye on the trim, Doyle.

Doyle monitors the dive plane.

DOYLE  
Descent is smooth and rapid.

Depth gauge reads 40 feet.

GABLE  
Forty feet.

NAQUIN  
Level us off. Bow reduce to five, stern ten.

EXT. SQUALUS - UNDERWATER

The Squalus begins to level out.

GABLE  
We are at fifty feet.

The stopwatches. They both read 60 seconds.

PREBLE  
Looks like the Navy builders are gonna be busy. Nice job.

NAQUIN  
Nicely done. Pass it along, Kuney.

Kuney is speechless.

NAQUIN (CONT'D)  
Kuney?

A 'pressure wave' pulses through the compartment ripping at the men's eardrums. That's not part of a routine dive.

Kuney, on the battle phone, turns to Naquin, death-faced.

KUNEY  
They're flooding aft, sir!

The Control Room freezes. What the hell? All eyes turn to Naquin. He swallows to equalize. His eyes swing to the Christmas tree -- it's green across the board.

GABLE  
All 'green,' all clear, sir.

This can't be happening. A second pressure wave washes through the room -- water rushing through the sub's air vents. Naquin knows what it means -- It's happening.

NAQUIN  
Blow main ballast. We're taking her up!

DOYLE  
Blow bow buoyancy!

Before anyone has a chance to move -- sea water, under hundreds of pounds of pressure, blasts through the many air vents in the room. Men are knocked flying.

NAQUIN  
Bow and stern dive planes, hard rise.  
Sound alarm.

Jackson yanks down the emergency alarm. KLAXONS sound.

50 FEET BELOW THE OCEAN SURFACE

SILENCE. The Squalus lumbers closer and closer. The front ballast doors open. Massive air bubbles belch out and rise. Moving to the conning tower we see the air induction valves are stuck 3/4 open. We are sucked right through the 31-inch-hole into the --

INT. DIESEL ENGINE ROOM - SQUALUS

The Atlantic Ocean is vomiting inward onto the hot diesel engines. Steam spews forth, scalding all in its way. Smith and the men try to close the main induction valve. It's like trying to stop Niagara Falls. They are slammed to the ground and dragged, like rag dolls. A belch of steam and the rush of water tosses Calley to the side of the room and Maness forward into the galley.

Within seconds the engine room is waist-deep. The boat is pitching backwards. Smith is swept back through an open door into the --

AFT ENGINE ROOM

The lights flicker out. It's a nightmare. Bursts of electrical voltage illuminate the water from beneath the surface, like flashbulbs strobing. Men are struck dead.

Smith tumbles against the aft door. Through the thick glass window, he can see into the --

AFT TORPEDO ROOM

Marino stares in awe -- he is in a fountain from Hell. Gibbs, chest-deep in water, scrambles to staunch the flow and screams into the phone.

GIBBS

Take 'er up! Take 'er up.

CONTROL ROOM

Water is streaming in. Men scramble to shut vents. Kuney holds his headset pinned to his ears.

KUNEY

Oh God, they're dying.

Naquin scans the meters for more sea water to jettison.

NAQUIN

We got more ballast, boys! Blow it!

Jackson rams the buoyancy valve open.

EXT. OCEAN DEPTH - SQUALUS

The Squalus sits 60 feet below the surface. Two doors open at her bow. With a mighty blast of air -- seawater is jettisoned out from the ballast tanks. The bow moves up.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - SQUALUS

The bow rises sharply.

NAQUIN

She's going up. Blow reserve stern ballast.

Jackson yanks on the reserve air valve. HSSST! A deafening squeal of compressed air screeches throughout the sub. It's a moment of truth. All eyes to the depth gauge. It rises. The bow tilts further up -- Water streams backwards.

EXT. OCEAN DEPTHS - SQUALUS

The Squalus's bow rises towards the surface as the stern drops.

ON THE SURFACE

The bow of the Squalus breaks the surface. The mighty steel hull rises up like a sea monster reaching to the sky. Ten stories high.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - SQUALUS

Hands grasp for balance as the submarine is pitched at this back, heavy angle. Eyes on the depth gauge. Hearts pray.

EXT. OCEAN SURFACE - SQUALUS

The Squalus hangs in indecision, floating in suspended animation, but there's too much water in the stern.

The Squalus is sliding back slowly at first and then faster with gaining force -- as if the ocean is eating it whole. The bow slides beneath the surface, leaving behind a vortex of bubbles spiraling down in to the sea.

#### FORWARD TORPEDO ROOM

The room tilts crazily, sending men crashing about. A torpedo breaks free. A half-ton rolling pin on the loose. It strikes Medeiros in the head. The wet torpedo slides back through their hands. The fins slam into the door knocking it open. All men grab on for dear life as J.C. runs a line through the torpedo's nose cone.

#### CONTROL ROOM

Water rushes in, driven by the ass-backwards pitch of the sub. Every man in the room knows they are 'going down.'

NAQUIN

We need all doors sealed. Airtight!

Maness is struggling to regain his balance as he stumbles to the door separating the Control Room from --

#### THE GALLEY

The Filipinos, Pinoy and Elvina, leap through the door past Maness into the Control Room.

MANESS

Move, boys! Move.

Washburn falls in through the doorway. Through jets of spray in the Galley, Maness can see Doc, Thompson and Issacs struggling uphill towards him using the bunks for support.

A hatch swings open. Batick's head pops up. A deluge of water drives him back into the --

#### BATTERY COMPARTMENT

Fingers of electricity jump around the room. Batteries are shorting. Sparks ignite paperwork on Batick's desk. A photo of his wife stares back at him as it is consumed by fire.

A 'Main Power Arm' protrudes out from the wall. A zillion volts discharge around it. Batick must drop it to the 'off' position. It's a suicide mission but Batick sees the real dilemma -- he'll be dead before he can drop the power arm.

Batick climbs up on his chair.

BATIK

My baby's gone mad!

He leans over the Power Lever and drops. Voltage rips through his body, but his girth slams the power arm off -- Lights out.

## GALLEY

Issacs scrambles for his life. The boat has pitched back at a 50-degree angle, so it's like climbing a staircase with no steps. He kicks and swims, fighting a thigh-deep current.

AHEAD -- Thompson loses his footing and is swept backwards. Issacs grabs him, but Thompson's shirt rips off in his hands. Thompson is swept away.

Maness can wait no longer. He begins to heave the steel door closed. Doc scrambles through just before it shuts.

## DOC

Wait for Issacs.

Through the dark, Maness sees Issacs. The water has more than half-filled the compartment -- only the steep pitch of the sinking submarine is stopping it from rushing back at Maness. Issacs squeezes past Maness to the safety of the narrow corridor that leads to the Control Room.

With the boat's pitch, the two-hundred-pound door seems like a ton. Maness grits his teeth. His muscles strain. His back is about to pop. His shoulders are ripping apart. He can't close the door.

## MANESS

God help me now!

Mystically, Maness has the power. The door begins to close. Maness peers through the eye port window. His eyes meet two faces --

## PATTERSON AND CALLEY

looking back from the other side of the glass.

## GALLEY

For a moment Maness stops pulling. How can he send his best friend to his death? But, all three men know the door must be closed and sealed to save everyone else.

Calley and Patterson push.

Maness, eyes closed, pulls. Together they are able to close the door. Maness spins the wheel, sealing those in the Control Room in -- Calley and Patterson out. Slowly Maness opens his eyes.

Patterson looks Maness dead in the eyes and nods him a 'well done.' Calley puts his hand to the glass and Maness does the same.

## CALLEY

What a team.

The rush of the water begins to drag Calley away.

CALLEY (CONT'D)  
Tell Ruth I love...

The rushing water swallows Calley before he can finish his sentence. A part of Maness dies as Calley and Patterson are swept from the window into the water-filled Galley.

MANESS  
Okay, Cal. I'll tell her.

Within seconds, water covers the eye port. Maness swallows deep. Issacs gently pulls him away, into the --

#### CONTROL ROOM

Naquin looks up as Issacs and Maness enter. Their eyes are vacant and Naquin knows the aft door has been sealed tight.

From a floor hatch, CRAMER, a balding techie, pops out of the pump room, soaking and exhausted. He is shivering.

CRAMER  
Pump room's down. Sorry, Boss.

NAQUIN  
I need forward status, Kuney.

#### RADIO ROOM

Inside, water pours straight down from a vent above Powell, ripping the headphones from his ears. He dives to cover his radio transmitter -- It arcs and sparks -- sending an electrical current ricocheting around the room. He slams the vent closed. Coughing and spewing water, he tumbles into the --

#### OFFICER'S COUNTRY

Powell scrambles into the Control room to report in. Gainor and Bryson hardly notice him. They are standing in front of a panel that monitors the battery power for the front half of the boat. The VOLT METER is spiking.

GAINOR  
We've got to shut them down!

Gainor pulls open the floor hatch to the aft Battery Room and he and Bryson look in.

#### FORWARD BATTERY COMPARTMENT

They see that the huge batteries are all but submerged. An electrical discharge storm rages around the metal hull. It's so hot, the freezing sea water is steaming. These men have seen a lot, but never this.

GAINOR

Ah, sweet Jesus.

The zapping accelerates. Light bulbs shatter. Filaments fizz. The rubber insulation ignites. Gainor knows his duty. He descends the ladder into the hell hole. Water swirls in with him like a sewer in a monsoon. Bryson can only watch.

Sparks strike around the room, flickering the lights. Gainor instinctively covers as light bulbs explode around him. Then a wave of electricity ricochets around the room. Gainor drops.

CONTROL ROOM

Light bulbs flicker and explode. Panels around the room short out. Errant electrical currents chase across the metal flooring and up the walls. Preble leans in to Naquin.

PREBLE

There's a lot of diesel in these walls.

NAQUIN

I know and just enough air to blow this little boat out of the water. All it needs is a spark.

FORWARD BATTERY ROOM

Bryson peers in. A flash illuminates the room. Batteries. Water. But no Gainor.

BRYSON

Dear God. Gainor?

The room is now a maelstrom of electrical current. Suddenly, Gainor bursts from beneath the water with a deep gasp. He looks up at Bryson.

GAINOR

If I strike out here, Bryson, you're next at bat.

Gainor knows this could be the last moment of his life. Without hesitation, he grabs the 'main power' lever and pulls it down.

FORWARD TORPEDO ROOM

Lights out.

OFFICER'S COUNTRY

Lights out.

CONTROL ROOM

ON NAQUIN'S FACE. Power down to black.

## EXT. OCEAN FLOOR - SQUALUS

The Squalus lands with a jolt and settles in to the silty mud floor of the North Atlantic Ocean, 243 feet below the surface. No power. No communication. No way out.

## INT. CONTROL ROOM - SQUALUS

Darkness. A match is lit and then more. Lanterns soon glow. Gainor and Bryson enter. Both look a little worse for the wear. Naquin looks Gainor in the eye.

NAQUIN

Well done.

Gainor nods back. Hands reach out to slap his back in thanks. Naquin scans the room. No panic, no immediate fear, just disbelief. Preble, Doyle, Maness, Kuney, Gable, Gainor, Doc, Jackson, Issacs, Bryson, Powell, Pinoy, Elvina, Cramer and Robertson are in the water-soaked Control Room. Silence.

NAQUIN (CONT'D)

XO, take a head count in here.

DOYLE

Aye, sir.

NAQUIN

Any word aft?

Kuney has begun to shake from the cold and the fear that has set upon him.

KUNEY

I don't, I don't know...

Kuney presses the headphones tight against his head. He squeezes harder and harder.

NAQUIN

Any word? I need an answer.

KUNEY

I know, sir. They were screaming, and now there doesn't seem to be anything.

Naquin can either tear the man down or hold him together.

NAQUIN

I know. How about I give it a try?

Naquin gently slides the headset off Kuney.

KUNEY

Aye, sir.

NAQUIN  
 Help the XO with the head count.  
 (into headset)  
 Aft torpedo, aft torpedo. This is the  
 Captain.

Maness turns away from the sealed door and the watery tomb  
 encasing his friend.

NAQUIN (CONT'D)  
 Engine Room. I say again, Engine Room,  
 respond. This is the Captain.

Eyes focus on Naquin. Ears strain to hear anything. Nothing.

NAQUIN (CONT'D)  
 Aft battery. Aft battery. Batick, if you  
 can answer.

Gainor turns away from the sealed door.

NAQUIN (CONT'D)  
 Galley, respond.

Issacs lowers his head in silent prayer.

DOYLE  
 I count sixteen.

NAQUIN  
 And you, Kuney?

KUNEY  
 Sixteen, sir.

NAQUIN  
 Sixteen, it is then. Now raise the  
 forward compartments.

Naquin hands the headset back to Kuney.

KUNEY  
 Aye, sir.  
 (into headset)  
 Forward torpedo room, this is the Control  
 Room. Report in.

Silence. Kuney presses on.

KUNEY (CONT'D)  
 I say again, Forward torpedo room, report.

A trickling of sound seeps from Kuney's headset. He smiles.

KUNEY (CONT'D)  
 They're alive. A bunch of them, they're  
 alive.

NAQUIN  
You bet they are. Get me a count.

Kuney continues the chatter into his headset.

NAQUIN (CONT'D)  
Jackson, send up a flare. Let's alert the surface.

Jackson moves to the flare cabinet on the hull of the ship.

JACKSON  
Aye, sir.

He pulls on the door. It won't budge.

JACKSON (CONT'D)  
Door's jammed, sir.

NAQUIN  
Twisted or buckled?

Doyle lends a hand.

JACKSON  
I don't think so, sir.

PREBLE  
It's the pressure. It hasn't equalized.

NAQUIN  
Get it open. I want someone to know we're down here.

KUNEY  
They have a count forward, sir.

NAQUIN  
Lt. Nichols?

KUNEY  
Aye, sir.

NAQUIN  
I'll take it.

Naquin grabs the headset.

NAQUIN (CONT'D)  
JC.

INT. FORWARD TORPEDO ROOM - SQUALUS

The room is wet and cramped just like the Control Room. The soaked men adjust the straps on the torpedoes.

NICHOLS  
Sir.

NAQUIN  
Status.

NICHOLS  
I've got seventeen, shaken up but we're  
alive. Vents closed and we are stable and  
holding. Fish are in the nets.

Naquin moves to the forward door on the Control Room. He peers  
through the window into the next compartment, Officer's Country.  
It is abandoned.

NAQUIN  
Eyeball Officer's Country.

Nichols appears in the tiny window at the opposite end of the  
hall. They can see each other and there is no movement between  
them.

NICHOLS  
I see no movement and no immediate threat.

NAQUIN  
I concur. Prepare the signal buoy and  
report in.

Naquin hands the headset back and turns to the flare cabinet.

NAQUIN (CONT'D)  
I need that open, now.

Doyle has wedged a metal bar onto the seam.

DOYLE  
It's coming.

The cabinet breaks open and water rushes out from the inside.

NAQUIN  
Send a flare topside, Jackson.

JACKSON  
Aye, sir.

He slides a flare into the release tube and jettisons it.

JACKSON (CONT'D)  
We're away.

EXT. SQUALUS - OCEAN FLOOR

A small flare jets away from the Squalus, rising rapidly.

EXT. OCEAN - DAY

The flare breaks the surface and streaks skyward. Colored smoke marks the sky.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - SQUALUS

NAQUIN  
Release the marker buoy.

KUNEY  
Forward torpedo, release buoy.

FORWARD TORPEDO ROOM

Medeiros pulls on a lever affixed to the hull.

MEDEIROS  
Buoy away.

NICHOLS  
(into headset)  
Buoy away.

EXT. SQUALUS - OCEAN FLOOR

A hatch on the deck opens. A buoy rises quickly towards the surface, trailing a communications wire.

CONTROL ROOM

NAQUIN  
Confirm status and assemble the men here.  
Have someone monitor the buoy.

KUNEY  
Confirm buoy status, leave one to monitor  
and assemble in Control Room.

NAQUIN  
XO, get me the manifest.

FORWARD TORPEDO ROOM

Nichols sets the headset back into the cradle. He checks the gauge beside the buoy release arm. It is rising steadily.

NICHOLS  
Medeiros, monitor the buoy phone.  
Everyone else with me.

Nichols steps through the door into --

THE OFFICER'S COUNTRY

Nothing. Stillness. His feet are submerged in water up to his ankles. The men walk through the shadowy corridor.

NICHOLS (CONT'D)  
Last man through, seal that door.

CONTROL ROOM

Naquin, Doyle and Preble huddle in one corner. Doyle holds the crew manifest in his hands.

NAQUIN  
Sixteen in here and seventeen forward  
makes thirty-three.

PREBLE  
Thirty-three of fifty-nine.

DOYLE  
Thirty-three accounted for. Twenty-six  
unknown.

PREBLE  
Right.

NAQUIN  
I'll need an accurate count and a  
recording.

DOYLE  
I'll have Powell maintain a log.

NAQUIN  
Ship's condition? Opinions, Preb?

PREBLE  
I'd have to eyeball it, but aft sections  
are sealed off, Control Room, forward are  
holding. Depth gauge is 243 feet. We're  
not deep enough for hull pressure giving  
in to the ocean, but I don't know how much  
exterior damage the drop caused.

NAQUIN  
Agreed.

Nichols and his men step in and seal the door behind them.

NICHOLS  
Medeiros is forward monitoring the buoy.

NAQUIN  
Good. Before we go any further we need a  
count. The XO will read the crew  
manifest.

Doyle steps forward and speaks. Powell writes it down.

DOYLE  
Adams, James.

A SAILOR speaks up.

ADAMS

Aye.

DOYLE

Batick, John.

The crew scan the faces in the room. He's not there.

DOYLE (CONT'D)

Batick, John.

Silence: The men are acknowledging death.

NAQUIN

Keep it moving, XO.

DOYLE

Blanchard, Roland

BLANCHARD

Aye.

DOYLE

Bryson, Allen.

BRYSON

Aye.

DOYLE

Calley, Matt.

Maness turns away at the mention of his friend's name. Naquin puts his arm on Maness's shoulder for a moment. The roll continues.

Naquin crosses to the sealed door leading to the Galley and the rear of the ship. He peers through the window. Murky water topped with a slick of oil slaps up against the glass. It is the first moment eyes have not been on Naquin. He becomes lost in the death sealed behind the door. The CAMERA passes through the glass of the Control Room into --

#### THE GALLEY

A murky sealed pool. Kitchen instruments and vegetables sprung free from the cabinets bob in the water. Calley floats by and then there is Patterson and Thompson. We move down into the hatch on the floor into --

#### AFT BATTERY COMPARTMENT

There is no electrical spark, just a watery-filled tomb for Batick. The charred burns of the electrical encounter trace the exposed sections of his flesh. His open-mouthed scream frozen for eternity. Up and out --

## DIESEL ENGINE ROOM

Men float at random running up against the silent pistons. Oil seeps out of the motionless engines and bleeds into the water encasing the room. The petroleum slicks give way to --

## AFT ENGINE ROOM

The equally silent battery engine room. Don Smith drifts in the current amongst the OTHER BODIES. His head slapping against the door to --

## AFT TORPEDO ROOM

A cramped space littered with DEAD BODIES. Gibbs is crushed beneath the weight of a loose torpedo. His blood floats in a crimson cloud in front of his face. A SAILOR's upper body is wedged between the firing tubes, the brass covering gleaming in the murky water. Nothing.

The water stirs above. Legs dangle out from the space beneath the hatch. The legs are moving, slowly, but they are moving. Up the moving legs to --

## INSIDE THE CONCAVE AREA

Just beneath the hatch itself, Marino has wedged his head sideways into a space, holding a pocket of air. Water dances beneath his chin. He gulps what remaining oxygen there is, like a goldfish out of water.

MARINO

Oh God, help me. Help me.

## INT. CONTROL ROOM - SQUALUS

Naquin is still at the window, lost in thought. Doyle finishes the roll call.

DOYLE

Captain?

Naquin sucks back his emotions and puts on his game face.

NAQUIN

We're alive. Look at each other, look at the faces in this room, the ones here with you now. We're alive. Turning back time is not an option. Moving forward is. We rest on the bottom, our marker buoy is on the surface. We have flares at our disposal. Portsmouth is aware of where we are and when we are due. I know everyone here has been checked out on the Momsen Lungs. We're 243 feet down and they've only been tested to 100 hundred feet, so that's a risk we won't be taking just yet. Survival, that's our focus.

(MORE)

NAQUIN (CONT'D)

Maness, issue blankets, slickers, whatever we can find to keep warm. Issacs, check the food supplies forward. Gainor, we're gonna need some light. Doc will take a look at those of you that got banged up. No unnecessary moving about. We're alive. Let's remember that. Let's keep it that way.

The men attend to their duties. Naquin, Doyle, JC Nichols and Preble huddle together.

NAQUIN (CONT'D)

JC, take half the men forward. Be ready when that marker buoy starts squawking.

NICHOLS

Aye, sir.

Nichols seems unsure.

NAQUIN

JC, you're the officer in charge. They know that. Make sure you know it.

Nichols nods and heads forward, taking half the men with him.

NAQUIN (CONT'D)

The dive began at 08:30 hours. It's now 09:00.

DOYLE

Nobody's going to miss us for a while.

PREBLE

I've known Admiral Cole for a long time. He's a good man, he'll be on top of this.

NAQUIN

Meanwhile, we have to keep their minds focused on surviving.

DOYLE

They're good sailors.

NAQUIN

They're also men and they know as well as you do that nobody has ever gotten out of a downed submarine.

A fissure of water explodes into the control room. A burst pipe spews oil and a jettison of high-powered water. Issacs is knocked backwards from the blast.

NAQUIN (CONT'D)

Jackson, another flare.

JACKSON

Aye, sir.

Jackson fights through the shooting water and hits the flare release button.

EXT. SQUALUS - OCEAN

The flare rises up through the murky water, higher, higher. Light can be seen from above. The flare breaks the surface and arcs into the sky.

ON THE SURFACE

The marker buoy bobs. The lobster boat Naquin spotted earlier is steaming away from the dive area. No one in sight. On the side of the marker buoy is a brass plaque: 'Submarine Sunk Here. Telephone inside.'

EXT. PORTSMOUTH - DAY

The Naval station goes about its daily business.

INT. PORTSMOUTH COMMUNICATIONS ROOM

Operators track messages. Record data, a beehive of normal chatter. Admiral Cole marches into the room and is greeted by the INFORMATION OFFICER. The Admiral walks right by him.

COLE

Squalus, when was your last contact?

The startled Radio Man looks through his copies of messages.

RADIO MAN

I...got the...there's a message from their...around 08...

Cole holds up a dispatch.

COLE

I got that one. Clocked at 08:31. It's 10:00. Where is she?

RADIO MAN

I don't know.

COLE

Find out.

The Radio Man scrambles to make contact.

COLE (CONT'D)

I need signals sent out to anyone who might have seen her. Navy, Coast Guard, merchants, some kid fishing with his dad.

The room jumps to life. Operators sending out inquiries.

COLE (CONT'D)

I need Captain Greenlee and I want to talk to the Coast Guard on the point.

INT./EXT. COAST GUARD LIGHTHOUSE

Two COAST GUARD men scan the horizon with high-powered binoculars. An OFFICER is on the phone.

COAST GUARD OFFICER

We're continuing to sweep the area. The Squalus is not on the surface.

EXT. WATERFRONT - PORTSMOUTH - DAY

Cole stands beside the fired-up Sculpin, the sister submarine to the Squalus. He is talking to LIEUTENANT COMMANDER WARREN 'WILKIE' WILKINS, the boat Captain.

COLE

Those are her last coordinates. I'm mobilizing all surface craft in the area. I need some eyes out there.

WILKIE

Aye, sir. We'll find her.

Wilkie barks commands and readies to leave. Greenlee hurriedly walks towards Admiral Cole.

GREENLEE

Trouble?

COLE

The Squalus is missing. We're looking. I need you to assemble the families. I don't want them hearing any rumors. They need to hear it from one of their own.

GREENLEE

Aye, sir. Any word at all?

COLE

The families, your family, needs to hear it from someone they can trust. The Squalus is missing and that is all we know. Hal, I know Pat's on board. Your daughter needs to hear it from you.

GREENLEE

Aye, sir.

COLE

We're going to need help.

EXT. NAVAL COMMAND - WASHINGTON D.C.

The nation's capitol gleams under the morning sun. Icons of power jut up from the earth. A large looming building houses the center for Naval Command.

INT. UNITED STATES NAVAL COMMAND - WAR ROOM

Deep mahogany-paneled wood blankets the room. A long conference table is occupied by NAVAL COMMANDERS with lots of medals and decorations on their chests. VICE ADMIRAL LOCKWOOD is in charge. His attention is focused on the phone.

LOCKWOOD

Doesn't sound good. You sure this Naquin didn't breach protocol? Didn't confirm surfacing?

INT. ADMIRAL COLE'S OFFICE

Cole is talking on the phone.

COLE

Not his style. He's a 'by the book,' man. Six years on subs.

An AIDE walks in and hands Cole a message.

COLE (CONT'D)

The Sculpin has reached the dive site.

EXT. SCULPIN - OCEAN

Wilkie and two OFFICERS man the conning tower. The wind has picked up and the waves crash over the tower, assaulting them.

WILKIE

Are you sure of the coordinates?

OFFICER #1

They relayed in before they dived. We've been searching for forty-five minutes, sir, what should we do?

WILKIE

They're not here and there's no buoy in sight. Radio the Admiral we are continuing, but...

A wave crashes over the side of the tower.

OFFICER #1

What should I tell the Admiral?

Wilkie spots a faint drift of smoke in the distance.

WILKIE

Tell the Admiral we have spotted a flare five miles off our starboard bow and we are investigating. All ahead two-thirds hard right rudder. Dammit! Those coordinates were wrong.

EXT. OCEAN - DAY

A flare sputters in the sky. The marker bobs on the surface.

INT. ADMIRAL COLE'S OFFICE

COLE

It is the marker buoy. They should be on it soon.

INTERCUT:

INT. UNITED STATES NAVAL COMMAND - WAR ROOM

LOCKWOOD

We are confirmed. We have a submarine down.

This sends a buzz around the table of the most high-profile men in the Navy.

LOCKWOOD (CONT'D)

We'll need to inform the President.

COLE

As you must.

LOCKWOOD

This has now become the Navy's highest priority. The full weight of the service is yours to utilize through this office. Air, sea and land capabilities.

COLE

We'll use them all. We need someone who can get those men to the surface. Find me the Falcon. We need Swede Momsen.

EXT. FALCON - DAY

The Falcon is docked in New London, Connecticut. Bits and pieces of the boat's engine line the deck along with hosing, dive helmets, metal boots -- a major overhaul is underway. On the dock, a phone rings endlessly. Mac, the Scottish diver, steps from the deck and grabs the phone.

MAC

We're working here, ya cow!  
(changes tone)  
Aye, sir.

He cups the receiver and yells into the bowels of the boat.

MAC (CONT'D)

Swede! There's an Admiral on the phone!

A grease-smearred Swede Momsen pops out from the hole.

MOMSEN

What does he want? This is not the time for an inspection.

MAC

The fellow on the end of the line wasn't in a chatty mood.

Momsen takes the phone.

MOMSEN

Momsen.

Momsen listens. He kaleidoscopes through emotions.

EXT. SCULPIN - OCEAN - DAY

The weather has turned as the Sculpin reaches the marker buoy. It bobs on the surface. Wilkie and the SAILORS on deck, fight the tossing sea in their attempts to snag the buoy.

The sailors wrap the cable onto a cleat on the deck as the waves pitch the Sculpin back and forth. Wilkie removes the top of the marker buoy and reveals a phone inside. He raises the receiver to his ear.

INT. FORWARD TORPEDO ROOM - SQUALUS

The buoy telephone chirps to life.

MEDEIROS

Lieutenant!

NICHOLS

Get the Captain.

Nichols grabs the buoy telephone receiver as Medeiros tears off to the Control Room.

NICHOLS (CONT'D)

This is Lieutenant Nichols of the USS Squalus.

INTERCUT:

The Sculpin pitches and rolls with the waves. Wilkie holds fast to the deck cleats as he speaks into the receiver.

WILKIE

Lieutenant Commander Warren Wilkins of the USS Sculpin. What is your situation?

NICHOLS

Main induction valves locked open. Aft torpedo, engine rooms and galley thought to be fully flooded. Control Room and forward compartments holding. We are 243 feet below. Captain suggests divers pumping water out of aft compartments through induction valves.

WILKIE

How is your crew?

NICHOLS

Thirty-three accounted for. Twenty-six unknown. No response from aft sections.

Naquin enters the forward torpedo room.

NICHOLS (CONT'D)

Hold the line. I will put the Captain on.

The swells on the surface have become more violent and the Sculpin rolls uncontrollably with the ocean.

NAQUIN

Hello, Wilkie.

WILKIE

Hello, Oliver.

A great wave crashes over the deck of the Sculpin. The boat heaves up and strains the buoy cable attached to the cleat. The strain is too much. SNAP! The communication wire breaks.

NAQUIN

Hello? Hello? Sculpin? This is Squalus, come in!

EXT. OCEAN - UNDERWATER

The communication cable from the buoy floats downward through the murky black depths of the Atlantic.

EXT. SCULPIN - OCEAN

WILKIE

Oliver, Squalus, are you there?

Wilkie notices the loose, flowing cable in the water. He turns to his Officer on deck.

WILKIE (CONT'D)

Get below and keep us as close as possible to these coordinates.

The waves rock the boat mercilessly.

OFFICER #1

But sir, the weather is turning. The surface is getting ugly.

WILKIE

We've lost contact with the Squalus. She's somewhere below us and I don't want to drift or we'll never be able to find her again. Now get below and get it done.

EXT. THE WHITE HOUSE - WASHINGTON D.C.

A motorcade of black 1939 Packard Navy staff cars wheel in.

INT. THE WHITE HOUSE - OVAL OFFICE

PRESIDENT FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT sits behind his desk. In front of him are Admiral Lockwood and a number of HIGH-RANKING OFFICERS -- Navy, Army, Air Force.

FDR

Thirty-three of them are still alive?

LOCKWOOD

Yes, sir.

FDR

And the press knows?

LOCKWOOD

Yes, sir.

FDR

Well that means the Japs and the Germans know. Dammit, I pulled this country out of a depression and put it back on its feet. I will not have the world thinking that our armed forces are a joke. Open all the doors here, no inter-agency bullshit. I'll talk to Hoover himself and tell him he's on call. If Momsen is our man, then give him whatever he needs.

EXT. FALCON - DAY

Momsen and Mac assemble the diving gear.

MOMSEN

They're somewhere outside of Portsmouth.

MAC

And they think they've been under since 08:30?

MOMSEN

It's 03:00. They've been down six and a half hours.

He peers down into the engine hold. The boat's captain, LIEUTENANT GEORGE SHARP, surveys the scattered engine parts.

MOMSEN (CONT'D)

Sharp! How we doing?

SHARP

I don't know, Swede. A couple of days, I'd guess.

MOMSEN

Those men don't have a couple of days. You've got hours, and few of them.

SHARP

A head of steam is what I need now.

Two MEN ferociously shovel coal into the burning oven below.

MOMSEN

How long?

SHARP

A couple of hours, at least.

MOMSEN

When can we get the crane arm moving? We can't leave Betty on the dock.

The crane arm has also been taken apart for maintenance.

SHARP

I've got to put everything back together.

MOMSEN

I need it done.

SHARP

Okay, Swede.

MOMSEN

(to Mac)

You, me and Doc Benke are flying out now. He knows more about the bends than anyone, we'll need him. Sharp will bring the Falcon as soon as he can.

MAC

What about the rest of the team? I know Skee and Mihalowski took off on shore leave. They're probably in Washington by now. I don't know where the rest of the guys are.

SIRENS bite the air. A convoy rounds the corner and heads for the Falcon -- cop cars, Shore Patrol, a half-dozen black sedans and a flatbed truck filled with MEN. A NAVY OFFICER leaps from the Shore Patrol car.

NAVY OFFICER  
You Swede Momsen?

MOMSEN  
Yes.

NAVY OFFICER  
We're here to help.

MOMSEN  
Sharp!

Sharp pops up from below deck, spots the nearly two-dozen men stepping down from the flatbed truck.

SHARP  
Work's over here, boys!

Momsen spots the men in suits languishing beside the sedans.

MOMSEN  
They don't look like working men.

NAVY OFFICER  
FBI. Word is your crew is missing.

MOMSEN  
Scattered about is more like it.

NAVY OFFICER  
These are the guys who found Dillinger.

MOMSEN  
Mac, grab the crew photo inside the wheelhouse and fill in J. Edgar Hoover's men.

MAC  
All G-men, follow me!

MOMSEN  
Now, it's just the crane arm I'm worried about. This will all be for nothing if we can't get the Falcon moving, and more importantly, get Betty on board.

They look over to the dock. Mysteriously encased in a fifteen-foot-high crate is 'Betty' -- the name hand-painted on the side. Whatever Betty is, she has significant meaning to Momsen and the mission.

## INT. CONTROL ROOM - SQUALUS

The men sit in silence. With the heat off it's like a meat locker. Morale is dropping as quickly as the temperature. They can see their breath. Their soaking clothes are now beginning to freeze to their skin. Water drips from the ceiling, 'plinking' down in oil-slicked puddles around them.

Maness is gnawing on his fingers. They are beginning to bleed. Issacs has stripped off his clothes and is now just wrapped in a blanket.

Naquin leans against the metal hull deep in thought. There is nothing he can do. He stares at the 'Christmas Tree Panel.' Gable's eyes follows Naquin's. No one makes much eye contact, but to Gable -- every eye is on him. He finally cracks. Gable jumps up and grabs the 'Induction Valve Lever' and starts ramming it back and forth. He screams so hard, tears come to his eyes.

GABLE

I closed it, damnit, I closed it. The Christmas tree showed green across the board, I swear. No red. All green. I know I closed it! I know it...

Gable faces the men. His mouth opens, but nothing comes out but a sob of sorrow. He can barely breathe for the guilt pouring out of his quivering body. He drops to his knees in six inches of ice water.

Naquin grabs Gable and tries to soothe his breaking soul.

NAQUIN

We saw it was green. We all saw it. I know you closed it. You did your job.

Gable is spent. His voice is a tears and mucus-filled squeak.

GABLE

Why did this happen?

NAQUIN

I don't know.

No one wants to make eye contact. They all feel as if they could crack, too. As Naquin holds Gable, he stares up at the ballast gauges. He releases Gable into the arms of Doc, then motions for Doyle and Preble to conference.

NAQUIN (CONT'D)

The after trim. I've still got a reading of 21,000 pounds in her.

PREBLE

It's a chance.

DOYLE

I'd take it.

NAQUIN

Kuney, inform the men in forward we are blowing the remaining ballast in an attempt to lighten our load.

Kuney jumps to his feet and grabs his headset.

KUNEY

Aye, sir. Forward torpedo room we are blowing ballast. Stand by.

INT. GREENLEE HOME

Greenlee, his wife Jacqueline, his daughter Betty. The women are nervously fidgeting as Greenlee stands looking out the window. Naquin's Studebaker pulls up in front of the house.

GREENLEE

She's here.

JACQUELINE

Hal, what is it?

GREENLEE

You all need to hear this together.

THROUGH THE WINDOW

They see Frances Naquin step from her car.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - SQUALUS

The men in the control room have newfound hope. Doyle manipulates the ballast wheels and bleeds the tanks dry.

DOYLE

Blowing after trim.

A pressure rush can be heard squealing in the aft section.

EXT. OCEAN - UNDERWATER

A great blast of seawater and air discharges from beneath the rear of the Squalus. It shifts in the silt.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - SQUALUS

The men hear the water rising and wait for movement.

EXT. OCEAN SURFACE

A great plume of water spouts on the surface as the ballast has completed its rise. It is a few hundred yards from the Sculpin. Wilkie and the crew of the Sculpin take note.

WILKIE  
We're drifting. Get back over those  
bubbles.

Other boats are now gathering nearby.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - SQUALUS

The men look to Naquin. He stares at the depth gauges.

NAQUIN  
No movement. We've got 8,000 pounds left  
in the auxiliary tanks. XO.

DOYLE  
Aye, sir.

Doyle strains to twist another section of ballast wheels.

DOYLE (cont'd)  
It's coming.

A flash runs through Naquin's mind.

NAQUIN  
Belay that order!

The men are startled at the sudden change in orders.

DOYLE  
Aye, sir.

NAQUIN  
It won't be enough to lift us, but it may  
be enough to shift our position.

DOYLE  
Sir?

NAQUIN  
We're resting upright at the moment. A  
shift could toss us on our side or worse.  
Cover the deck hatch in the torpedo room.

DOYLE  
Aye, sir.

NAQUIN  
Got to leave us a way out.

Naquin scans the faces of the men. He has given them hope.

INT. GREENLEE HOME

The women are in shock.

FRANCES

What do you mean, they're on the bottom?  
How far down is that?

GREENLEE

About 240 feet.

FRANCES

Can they get out? Can they swim to the  
surface?

GREENLEE

No one has ever tried it from that depth.

FRANCES

What else did Oliver say?

GREENLEE

We lost contact once he got on the line.

Betty finally speaks, afraid of her own voice.

BETTY

You said thirty-three men...

GREENLEE

Yes, they know that for sure.

BETTY

The aft, that's the back end, isn't it?  
That's the part that's flooded.

GREENLEE

Yes.

Tears run uncontrollably down her cheeks.

BETTY

You've been down there. You know. Could  
a man move forward once it all started?  
Could a man who was supposed to be in the  
back, could he still be alive?

The sharp shrill of the phone explodes the emotional moment.  
Greenlee answers the phone on the table beside him.

GREENLEE

Greenlee...I understand. I'll be right  
there.

He hangs up the phone.

GREENLEE (CONT'D)

They've assembled the families over at the  
base. I have to go. There will be  
questions.

He turns to leave.

BETTY

Daddy?

He looks back at his daughter, a wife with questions.

GREENLEE

Thirty-three men are alive. I know that.  
I also know that any man that goes below  
does all that he can to get home.

Jacqueline Greenlee squeezes her daughter Betty's hand. Frances Naquin closes her eyes.

EXT. NEW HAVEN NAVAL AIR STATION

The Shore Patrol's SIREN winds down as the car comes to a screeching halt on the tarmac. Momsen, Mac and DOC BENKE are ushered from the car to an awaiting twin-engine Navy Amphibian plane. The Navy Officer is recording Momsen's constant stream of orders.

MOMSEN

...its hose designed specifically for deep dives, Captain Hardee of the Brooklyn will know exactly what I'm talking about.

NAVY OFFICER

The Brooklyn?

MOMSEN

A cruiser in New York harbor. Good medical set-up and they'll have the hoses. Also contact the Wandank, it's a destroyer out of Boston. I'll need her floodlights. What about my crew?

NAVY OFFICER

They're turning up. Some are already in the air. But those two divers...

MOMSEN

Skee and Mihalowski.

NAVY OFFICER

They weren't in any of the bars or card rooms you told us about.

MOMSEN

All Navy men aren't hound dogs. Check the Smithsonian.

INT. THE WHITE HOUSE OVAL OFFICE

FDR is on the phone.

FDR  
Your man Momsen is on his way. You need anything else?

INTERCUT:

INT. ADMIRAL COLE'S OFFICE

Cole listens intently.

COLE  
Not at the moment, Mr. President.

FDR  
Well, you make sure to ask, because I won't accept any excuses.

COLE  
No, sir.

FDR  
The world is watching, Admiral. That includes me.

INT. THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTE

A display on early flight. The divers from the Falcon, Skee and Mihalowski, analyze the Wright brothers' work. Skee looks around -- no one. He leans over the rail to touch the paper-thin wing of one of the crafts.

FBI (O.C.)  
You Skee and Mihalowski?

They turn and see every exit covered. A DOZEN FBI MEN and a bunch of UNIFORMED POLICE OFFICERS.

MIHALOWSKI  
He did it.

INT. PORTSMOUTH COMMUNICATIONS ROOM

Admiral Cole is fielding messages from a variety of sources.

INFORMATION OFFICER  
Momsen's team is on its way. The Sculpin has continued sonar attempts but the conditions are less than ideal.

COLE  
The weather office said it was going to get worse before it gets better.

RADIO MAN  
Admiral, apparently a small armada of boats has gathered in the area. The Sculpin is requesting guidance.

RADIO MAN #2

There's a call coming in from the Chicago Tribune. They're dispatching personnel and are looking for an early comment.

AIDE

Admiral, the Penacook is ready.

INFORMATION OFFICER

Sir, what shall I tell the press?

Cole marches out the door.

COLE

Ask Greenlee, he's in charge. I've been here long enough. I've got to get my feet wet.

EXT. PENACOOK

The sun has set. A powerful tugboat, the Penacook, plows through the water. Torrents of water splash across the bow. Admiral Cole stands in the wheelhouse beside CHIEF BOATSWAIN ULLMAN who struggles against the rough seas.

COLE

Don't make an old man relieve you at the wheel. Get me out there now!

ULLMAN

Yes, sir.

Throttles are rammed ahead full.

INT. NAVY SEAPLANE

The small twin-engine pontoon plane fights against the winds. The NAVY PILOT focuses intently on the horizon ahead. Momsen sits beside the Pilot. Mac and Doc Benke are wedged in back.

PILOT

We're being chased by an ugly weather front. I just got word that Boston is fogged in.

MOMSEN

That's where some of my divers are flying in from.

PILOT

Not anymore, not in this weather. I just got orders to set down.

MOMSEN

You know why we're in such a rush?

PILOT

Yeah, I know.

MOMSEN

We need to be there now.

A decision.

PILOT

Alright, hang on. We're dropping below.  
We'll be skimming the rooftops trying to  
outrun this.

The plane tilts and dives. Each man tries to hold down his  
breakfast as the plane is tossed in the sky.

EXT. NIGHT SKIES NEAR BOSTON

The plane dives out of the clouds into a headwind of slashing  
rain. They buzz the city of Boston. Lightning flashes.

INT. CHICAGO TRIBUNE - NIGHT

The newsroom is abuzz with 'Sunken Sub' chatter. JAKE RICHARDS is  
running full out, sweating, a typewriter casing tucked under one  
arm. He stops at a desk piled with Photographers' bags. His  
buddy SNAPS is hurriedly loading gear.

RICHARDS

We got ten minutes to get to the station!

SNAPS

How long is this thing?

RICHARDS

What?

SNAPS

This sub.

RICHARDS

I don't know. Like a block long.

SNAPS

Shit, I'm going to need a 14mm.

The photographer sprints towards the Camera Department.

RICHARDS

You're killing me, man. The story of a  
lifetime and we're going to miss it.

EXT. BOSTON HARBOR

Lightning illuminates THE WANDANK en route. The Naval destroyer's  
foghorn sounds. Its floodlights flash.

## EXT. HIGHWAY TO PORTSMOUTH

Flashing headlights. SIRENS wail. Cherry lights strobe. MASSACHUSETTS STATE PATROLLERS have pulled all cars off the highway, just as a motorcade of police cars SCREAMS past.

## INT. COP CAR

A STATE PATROLLER, pedal to the metal, looks in the mirror. There sit Skee and Mihalowski lost in thought.

STATE PATROLLER

You divers are going to be heroes.

SKEE

Only if we get them out alive.

## EXT. NEW YORK CITY HARBOR - NIGHT

City lights twinkle behind the cruiser USS BROOKLYN. She lumbers out of the port carrying 10,000 feet of life-saving air hose strapped to her deck.

## INT. TRAIN STATION - CHICAGO - NIGHT

A train waits, hissing at the platform. REPORTERS and PHOTOGRAPHERS rush down the stairs with Richards and Snaps.

REPORTER #1

What the hell is happening? My editor dragged me away from my kid's birthday party to catch the ten o'clock train to Portsmouth.

RICHARDS

Bunch of guys trapped in a sub.

The men run by a woman on the platform. ARIANA GIBBS, frail, unsure of herself, clutching a carpet bag in one hand and a train ticket in the other. She approaches the CONDUCTOR. She speaks in halted, broken English and extends the ticket

ARIANA

Ports of mouth?

CONDUCTOR

Yes, Portsmouth. Is that where you're going?

ARIANA

Yes. To submarine.

## EXT. FALCON - OCEAN - NIGHT

Blackness has enveloped the tug as it fights the waves. It is in the middle of the ocean, doing battle against the storm. Sharp is at the wheel. He radios to the Coast Guard.

SHARP  
 (into radio)  
 Coast Guard. This is the Falcon,  
 navigational systems are down. Visibility  
 is near zero. Proceeding on original  
 heading.

EXT. SCULPIN - OCEAN

Admiral Cole, Wilkie and OFFICERS stand on the conning tower of the Sculpin. Coast Guard cutters, merchant boats, fishing trawlers and small craft with locals, encircle the Penacook. There is a tow line descending into the water from the back of the Penacook with a dragging anchor on the end. Back and forth across the area, the Penacook drags the bottom.

WILKIE  
 It's a long job dragging the bottom.

COLE  
 The communication's cable is gone. Sonar is useless. Dragging the bottom for her is our only option.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - SQUALUS

The men shiver in the near darkness of the sub. The whirring blades of the propellers and growling engines of the boats above can be heard by the men on the bottom. Naquin stands in the middle of the room. His eyes follow the sound of the tug. Back and forth. Back and forth.

KUNEY  
 What's taking so long? Why can't they  
 snag us?

Seated beside Kuney is Maness whose mood has turned ugly.

MANESS  
 Give me a cigarette.

KUNEY  
 Captain told us not to smoke.

Maness pulls a cigarette from Kuney's pocket. He then throws it back over Kuney's shoulder into the murky water.

MANESS  
 Now take off your shoelace and drag it  
 behind you. Keep your eyes closed and  
 then tell me when you feel that cigarette  
 on the end. It's a big ocean.

NAQUIN  
 Jackson, that tug is way off.

Jackson looks in the flare cabinet.

JACKSON

Last one.

NAQUIN

Let's give them a hand.

Jackson loads and fires a flare.

EXT. SCULPIN - OCEAN

Cole and Wilkie are focused on the Penacock, its engines churning hard in the surf.

WILKIE

It's been almost two hours.

The small tug is tossed in the waves. The flare breaks the surface -- nowhere near the Penacock.

WILKIE (CONT'D)

We have drifted. We've dragged that area twice.

COLE

With too light a tail. Call back the Penacock. Never liked a woman with a small backside.

Cole motions to the heavy anchor of the Sculpin.

COLE (CONT'D)

A big banger like that won't skip over the Squalus.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - SQUALUS

The men shiver in their makeshift coverings -- blankets, slickers, sheets. They scrape out fruit from tin cans.

GABLE

I'd give a week's pay for a hot cup of your lousy coffee, Issacs.

GAINOR

Two weeks for a bowl of that steaming dishwater you call soup.

ISSACS

Keep it up. I'll be a rich man once my kitchen opens again.

MANESS

That won't be happening soon, will it?

ISSACS

No, I guess it won't.

MANESS

Or maybe you'd like to go back there now. Want to trade places? Someone back there you'd be willing to trade places with?

GAINOR

That's crazy talk, Maness.

MANESS

Is it? You think about Batick? Who was supposed to be aft on the morning dive?

Naquin gets wind of the conversation.

NAQUIN

That's enough, mister! I said no unnecessary talking. You want to discuss the past, bring it over here. Otherwise, pipe down.

Silence inside. The engines drone on above.

EXT. OCEAN FLOOR

The anchor of the Sculpin drags across the bottom of the ocean. Silt whirls in its wake as it rides up and over rocks.

EXT. PENACOOK

The drag line draws tight. The engine labors.

EXT. OCEAN FLOOR

The anchor has snagged the remnants of a downed fishing boat. The rotted wood explodes, trying to resist the tension of the drag line. A dark void looms ahead.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - SQUALUS

Doc enters and approaches Naquin.

DOC

Captain, can I borrow you for a minute?

FORWARD TORPEDO ROOM

The beds are extended down from their latched positions on the hull. Men shiver beneath the blankets. Doc and Naquin use flashlights to navigate through the darkness. The faces of the men stare back, their pallor reflects the icy beam of light.

Doc and Naquin arrive beside Washburn, the man Doc was attending to in the Galley. His eyes are liquid and unresponsive, his body shivers and sweats uncontrollably.

NAQUIN

Can I get you something to eat, Washburn?

WASHBURN

Just so cold, can't stop shaking.

Naquin pulls off his jacket and drapes it over Washburn.

NAQUIN

I know.

They step back from Washburn and huddle in the corner.

DOC

I can't control his fever. He's getting so congested his breathing is becoming irregular. And the air in here or lack of it isn't helping. Some of the men have started vomiting.

NAQUIN

I know. Most of the men in the control room have headaches, too. It's the carbon dioxide. You, Nichols and Doyle will spread cannisters of CO2 absorbent in the most concentrated areas. I'll seep out one tank of standby oxygen.

DOC

That will only leave us with two tanks in reserve.

NAQUIN

We'd better do something. We've been down for almost fourteen hours. We've got less than twenty-four hours of breathable air left.

EXT. OCEAN - NIGHT

The Atlantic rolls and is assaulted by the horizontal rains. Above, the roar of engines cut through the howling wind. A beacon light on the nose of the twin-engine pontoon plane appears from the darkness. It's diving down for a landing.

INT. NAVY SEAPLANE

Momsen, Mac and Benke brace for impact.

MAC

This isn't going to be pretty.

EXT. OCEAN - NIGHT

The Seaplane hits hard. The pontoons cracking on impact. The nose dips into the waves and the entire craft leaps up, tail end heavy.

INT. SEAPLANE

Doc Benke's head bangs against the side window pane. It shatters and his head streams with blood. The Seaplane lurches ahead.

PILOT

Hang on!

EXT. SEAPLANE - OCEAN

Tail first, then slamming hard on to the pontoons. Another crack and the left pontoon is damaged badly. The seaplane rolls and looks like it is going to swamp. Tilting, riding the edge of a wave crest, toppling over and then...a wave slams into the side of the seaplane and edges it upright.

They have stopped. The damaged pontoon is taking on water and the plane is on a cockeyed tilt.

INT. SEAPLANE - OCEAN

PILOT

(into radio)

This is Seahaven. We are touched down and in trouble. Request immediate help.

Momsen spots a powerful search beam in the darkness.

MOMSEN

They were waiting for us.

A NAVY PT BOAT

cuts through the night, steaming towards them.

EXT. SCULPIN - OCEAN - NIGHT

Wilkie is on the phone in the conning tower.

WILKIE

Momsen has landed and is aboard PT 33.

Cole is peering through his binoculars.

COLE

Tell them to pour it on. We've caught something.

The churning water and a taut line behind the Penacock indicates a great resistance on the tug.

COLE (CONT'D)

Let's light it up.

Wilkie grabs the phone.

All around the armada -- floodlights, spotlights, bow lights, fire up and burn brightly.

EXT. PT 33 - NIGHT

Momsen, Mac and Doc Benke are in the wheelhouse. The men stare out the rain-streaked windows.

MAC

Up ahead!

MOMSEN

I see it.

BENKE

How could you miss it.

A powerful reflection of light fills the wheelhouse.

EXT. OCEAN - NIGHT

It is as if the moon has landed on the surface of the ocean. Every spotlight, bow light, searchlight and flashlight in the armada is focused on the water. In the center of the circus is the Penacook.

EXT. SCULPIN - OCEAN

PT 33 idles beside the Sculpin. Momsen jumps down onto the deck, walks towards the conning tower and climbs up.

COLE

You finally made it.

MOMSEN

Barely.

COLE

Lieutenant Commander Swede Momsen,  
Lieutenant Commander Warren Wilkin.

WILKIE

I've heard a lot about you, Lieutenant.

COLE

Mostly bad.

MOMSEN

I'm sure. What do we know?

COLE

The Penacook has caught it or so we hope.  
There was word of drawing a hose line down  
to the open induction valves and pumping  
out the flooded aft compartments.

Momsen nods in a contemplative manner.

MOMSEN

I see. What's your opinion, Admiral?

COLE

You didn't risk your life getting here to be a bystander. It's not why I called you in. I officially name you commander of the dive and entrust you with the duty of the rescue of the USS Squalus.

Momsen salutes, the Admiral returns. Momsen shifts gears.

MOMSEN

Aye, sir. At 243 feet, the pressure and nitrogen narcosis a diver will endure will turn even the simplest task into a slow, complicated ordeal. You can become almost childlike. Pumping out the aft sections is a delicate, time-consuming job that isn't an option here. It'll be dark down there and extremely cold, so bringing the men up on a line with the Lungs isn't an option either. The rescue chamber is our only course.

COLE

After all these years we finally get to see her.

MOMSEN

Betty is our only move.

COLE

Your call Momsen. That's why you're here.

Momsen calls across to PT 33.

MOMSEN

Mac!

Mac pokes his head out from the wheelhouse.

MOMSEN (CONT'D)

Survey the deck of the Sculpin. She's the sister of the boat below, an exact duplicate. We've got to know the deck, especially the forward hatch area.

MAC

It will get done.

MOMSEN

Once Mac knows this boat, he'll take the other divers through it. I can't risk them not knowing the terrain down there.

WILKIE

Where is the rest of your team?

MOMSEN

Close by.

Momsen stares at the illuminated ocean.

MOMSEN (CONT'D)

Very close, I hope.

INT. GREENLEE HOME

Jacqueline, Betty and Frances are gathered with Jane Nichols, Sarah Doyle and a number of the OTHER WIVES. There is little conversation, just a group held together by the common bond of a tragedy.

BETTY

I don't know if I can sit here much longer. Just waiting. Why don't we go out there, Frances?

Frances Naquin stares out the window.

FRANCES

Because there are children who'll be awake soon and they'll want to know where their daddy is. This is our home, where they'll return to. Where they've always returned to.

BETTY

How can you be so sure?

FRANCES

We have to be.

SIRENS in the distance draw closer. The women step to the windows. Cherry lights from speeding cop cars wash over their faces. It's the convoy of divers racing by.

EXT. ROW HOUSES - NIGHT

The cars speed through the base headed for the dock. As each wailing vehicle speeds past a quiet house, the curtains flutter in the windows as the occupants peer out.

EXT. NAVAL BASE - DOCKS

The convoy of escorted cars pull to a stop. Skee and Mihalowski step out along with the rest of the team of TECHNICIANS and DIVERS from the Falcon.

Nearby, the second floor bedroom lights of a modest house, shine brightly. Standing in the window looking down at the cars and divers, is Ruth Desautel. She turns to another figure in the window frame. It is a seamstress's mannequin wearing a dress. The fine stitching and bead work glow in the reflected light. It is Ruth's wedding dress. She continues to sew beads onto it.

EXT. SCULPIN - OCEAN

Momsen stands on the bow staring down into the water. Cole approaches slowly from behind.

COLE  
They aren't there.

Momsen turns and faces him.

MOMSEN  
Sir?

COLE  
Oxygen bubbles rising to the surface. I've been looking. They're airtight below. Your dive team is on a Coast Guard cutter. They'll be here in an hour.

MOMSEN  
They'll need to rest. We can't dive until morning anyway.

COLE  
Nervous?

MOMSEN  
A little, actually I'm ashamed to be excited as well.

COLE  
Want to prove everyone was wrong about your theories on submarine rescue?

MOMSEN  
Maybe. We stood on deck of the Hamilton together and looked down where the S-4 and her crew were trapped. Those men were alive. Ninety feet was all that separated us.

COLE  
Twelve years ago. It was a bad night, I remember.

MOMSEN  
I was part of the salvage team. When we finally surfaced her months later, they found a sailor lodged inside the conning tower. He had ripped the flesh from his fingers trying to claw his way through the hull.

COLE  
I read the report.

MOMSEN

I still have dreams about that night. Knowing men were dying below us. In my dream, I reach down and pull each one up by hand, then I lead them to their wives. Everyone comes home. In my dream, they don't die.

COLE

Dreams are a funny thing. I'm not quite sure whether they're supposed to inspire us or torture us. I guess you figure that out when you wake up.

MOMSEN

I'm awake now. Those men have until about midnight tomorrow before their oxygen runs out. If the Falcon doesn't arrive by daybreak, we won't make it. I don't need any more dreams.

INT: TRAIN - MOVING - NIGHT

The reporters and photographers smoke, play cards and read as the train rattles along in the night. Ariana Gibbs, unaware of the substance of the chatter around her, stares out the window. Richards is seated beside her and Snaps is facing her.

SNAPS

The Valentine's Day Massacre, that was a beaut! Bodies against that wall like a slaughterhouse.

RICHARDS

A gunfight? Give me a break. The McCarthy Warehouse arson. Workers trapped inside, families living in the lofts. For Christ sakes, they were dropping kids from the second story into firemans' arms. Kids from a burning building!

SNAPS

You've been to one of these before?

RICHARDS

Not quite, just the salvage jobs. This guy Momsen, has spent the past twelve years figuring out ways to make this sub rescue stuff work. I don't buy it. Believe me, there'll be plenty of bloated, pasty-faced bodies floating to the surface by the time this is done. Front page.

Richards takes out a cigarette. He searches for matches.

RICHARDS (CONT'D)

Got a light?

SNAPS

I'm out.

Richards taps Ariana on the shoulder.

RICHARDS

Excuse me Miss, you got a light?

Ariana tries to make sense and reacts to the unlit cigarette.

ARIANA

Smoking?

RICHARDS

(mimicking her broken  
English)

Yes, smoking. You got match?

Richards shares a mocking smile with Snaps. Ariana opens her handbag to search for a match. On the top is U.S. Navy letterhead. Richards becomes suspicious.

RICHARDS (CONT'D)

You going to Portsmouth?

Ariana looks up and smiles, oblivious to what is going on.

ARIANA

To submarine. Husband.

She hands Richards the Navy letterhead, he smirks.

RICHARDS

Front page exclusive.

Snaps raises his camera and inserts a flashbulb. A confused Ariana squints at the anticipated bright, white hot...FLASH!

DAYBREAK ON THE NORTH ATLANTIC

The Sculpin sits amongst a flotilla of ships.

EXT. SCULPIN - DECK

Momsen, Cole and Wilkie scan the emerging horizon with their binoculars. Cole lowers his set.

COLE

Any word from the Coast Guard?

Wilkie lowers his.

WILKIE

No, the Falcon may have been blown off course. No one has seen her since she left port.

COLE  
What are our options, Swede?

MOMSEN  
Wake up, Mac.

He drops his binoculars as well.

WILKIE  
What?

MOMSEN  
We've got some diving to do.

He points to the sunrise on the horizon. The lone figure of the Falcon rises over the waves and steams to the dive site.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - SQUALUS

Naquin stands listening. The men are huddled, frozen, their eyes are turned upwards towards the new sound of the Falcon's approaching propellers. Nichols enters.

NICHOLS  
Captain, you're gonna want to hear this.

NAQUIN  
I can hear the tug, JC.

NICHOLS  
Not the way Medeiros does, sir.

INT. FORWARD TORPEDO ROOM - SQUALUS

The door is sealed behind Naquin and Nichols. Medeiros is perched up against the hatch.

MEDEIROS  
We're getting out, sir.

NAQUIN  
Really? You going for a swim?

MEDEIROS  
No, sir. Before I transferred aboard the Squalus, I spent eight months as a machinist's mate doing maintenance on merchant tugs that had been converted for Naval service.

NAQUIN  
And?

MEDEIROS  
And one of the last ones I worked on was outfitted for sub rescue. It was called the Falcon. And that's her.

NAQUIN  
You positive?

MEDEIROS  
Yeah, she was a real bitch and I'll always  
remember the sound of her diesel growl.

The Falcon's engine roars above. The men are smiling.

NAQUIN  
I'll pass it along. Good work, JC.

Naquin opens the door and steps back into Officer's Country,  
Nichols following him. They seal the door behind them.

INT. OFFICER'S COUNTRY - SQUALUS

Naquin stands listening. Nichols doesn't move.

NICHOLS  
Down below?

NAQUIN  
We're taking on water.

EXT. OCEAN - MORNING

The Falcon maneuvers into the center of the dive site. Momsen,  
Cole and Mac are now on board. Anchor lines have been affixed to  
the bow and the stern. The Falcon still shifts and sways with the  
will of the rough water. Sharp calls out.

SHARP  
She won't hold and I don't like the way  
those bastards are inching back in.

A frustrated Momsen looks at the encroaching armada of boats. He  
grabs the radio handset.

MOMSEN  
This is Momsen, Commander of the dive.  
All water craft in the vicinity, move back  
to the established perimeter.  
(replaces handset)  
That's all we need is to be swamped by  
some Curious George.

COLE  
The Penacook has the line. Why don't we  
just transfer it over?

MOMSEN  
I have to be stable and directly above the  
Squalus.

COLE  
The water's not letting up.

MOMSEN

If we come down from too steep an angle,  
we can't make a seal on the hatch. No  
seal, no rescue.

COLE

It's been two hours.

MOMSEN

Admiral, I am aware of the time and if  
your Captain below is the man you say he  
is, he's aware of it, too.

INT. FORWARD BATTERY - SQUALUS

Naquin slashes a flashlight beam across the battery room. The  
light reflects off the black, rippling surface, where water flows  
in.

NAQUIN

It's slow, but it's there.

NICHOLS

Shall I organize a team to seal the leak?

NAQUIN

They'd be dead before they found it. See.

The flashlight catches a whiff of spiralling yellow smoke.

NAQUIN (CONT'D)

The salt water is reacting with the  
batteries.

Naquin shuts the trap door.

OFFICER'S COUNTRY

Naquin and Nichols stand above the closed trap.

NAQUIN

Tell the men forward what's going on.  
Issue Momsen Lungs and be ready. This may  
spread faster than you think.

NICHOLS

What about the water coming in?

NAQUIN

It won't increase beyond that trickle.  
It's our air supply I'm worried about. If  
they don't get here soon, this boat is  
going to be filled with it.

Nichols doesn't understand the gravity of the yellow smoke.

NAQUIN (CONT'D)

Breathing in that smoke will fry your lungs. It's chlorine gas.

EXT. TRAIN STATION - PORTSMOUTH - DAY

Richards, Snaps and the other reporters and photographers leap from the train and snag any available taxi. Ariana steps down onto the platform. She is confused, disoriented and visibly upset. She scans the platform. Where to go?

Within moments, the platform is deserted except for a lone figure. Ariana clutches her handbag and begins to shake. A PORTER walks towards her.

PORTER

Can I help you, ma'am?

Ariana looks up, she is losing control. Tears run down her now-flushed face. She is quivering as she has a stranglehold on the U.S. Navy letterhead. She cries out in broken English.

ARIANA

My husband is on submarine!

Tears stream uncontrollably down her face. The Porter feels her pain. He gently takes her by the arm and leads her away.

EXT. FALCON - DAY

The Falcon now has four anchor lines tying off in various spreads. Heavy waves are still tossing the boat at will.

SHARP

That's the best we can do to get her stable.

MOMSEN

It's not good enough.

MAC

Not like being tied up at dock, is it?

MOMSEN

What?

MAC

The sea, she won't let us sit still. Not like being moored at home.

MOMSEN

To the dock.

MAC

Aye. You okay?

MOMSEN  
 Just fine. Sharp, hand me the radio.  
 (into handset)  
 This is dive command Falcon to Naval  
 cruiser Brooklyn. Falcon to Brooklyn.

SHARP  
 What's up?

MOMSEN  
 I need a dock and here it comes.

They turn to see the imposing USS Brooklyn from New York, steaming towards the dive site. She is massive. Her iron hull cuts through the waves effortlessly.

SHARP  
 She'll have to be real close.

MOMSEN  
 I know. It's a risk with this weather.

SHARP  
 I'll hold the Falcon.

MOMSEN  
 Mac! Get the team, it's time to get wet.

EXT. PORTSMOUTH NAVAL BASE

The media is pouring into town. Locals are swept up in the panic to get the news firsthand. Everyone needs the breaking story -- now! Outside the communications building, the spring flowers are trampled.

EXT. FALCON - DAY

Two iron diving boots stamp on the deck -- but the boots are all Skee has on. He is butt-naked. A cold wind rips at his sinewy body which looks like a road map of muscle.

MAC  
 As naked as the day you came into the world.

SKEE  
 (shivering)  
 At least I wasn't born on an iceberg.

MAC  
 This will seem like the Bahamas compared to the chilly dip you're about to take.

Mac and his team are helping Skee into a bulky diver's suit. This is 1930's diving technology. The suit is formed of layer upon layer of quilted material for thermal protection.

MOMSEN

The thermal layers will help, but remember Skee, your body temperature will be dropping every moment you're down there.

MAC

We'll have you looking like a fat man soon enough.

The bulky layers are all on. It is extremely difficult for even the most agile man to move in.

MOMSEN

No sharp movements or the air hose will buckle. You're going down to 243. We'll have to take our time up and down.

MAC

(smiling)

Wouldn't want you popping like a balloon when you hit the surface.

SKEE

You're a regular George Burns.

MAC

I guess that would make you Gracie.

Skee takes a deep breath as Mac fastens a copper-plated helmet over Skee's head. As Skee exhales, the small glass window in the helmet, fogs. A messy umbilical cord of oxygen lines and communication wires trail behind Skee, adding to his awkwardness. As he takes his first breath in the helmet, a noisy compressor kicks to life and the oxygen begins to flow. The tiny window clears somewhat.

Momsen looks into it to make sure Skee is okay.

MOMSEN

Don't be dancing around down there playing a hero. She'll be deep and she'll be cold.

Cole stands beside Momsen who keys a handset. The transmission goes directly into Skee's helmet.

MOMSEN (CONT'D)

Are we on, Skee?

Skee turns, as much as he can in the two-hundred-pound suit and gives Momsen the "thumbs up." His voice crackles back across the radio speaker. Mac shakes his hand.

SKEE

Let's get it done.

The crane arm of the Falcon jumps to life. It hauls the platform Skee is on, up and over the railing into the water.

The platform submerges. Skee steps from the platform. He takes hold of the thick cable that has hooked what they hope is the Squalus. He descends down this line. Froths of oxygen bubbles rise up from the water as he disappears.

Mac checks the tow, communication and air lines unspooling in one mass along with Skee.

MAC

We're clear.

COLE

Noon, we've got twelve hours.

Mac runs a dive flag up the yardarm.

EXT. UNDERWATER - BLACK

Skee slowly descends. The light from above still visible as he holds the guide line.

SKEE

Guide line is taut and I am following it to the source.

EXT. FALCON

MOMSEN

(into radio)

Watch the rate of descent and keep on that guide line.

MAC

Let's hope the lad is heading for the Squalus and not some old fishing trawler.

OCEAN DEPTHS

Skee passes by. Tilting down we see him becoming smaller and smaller until he just disappears into the black murk below.

INT. PRESS BRIEFING ROOM - PORTSMOUTH

Greenlee stands before a group of REPORTERS and PHOTOGRAPHERS. He is embroiled in a Q&A.

GREENLEE

No, we do not have the names of the crew available for you at this time.

RICHARDS

Richards, Chicago Tribune. Why not? Don't you know who's down there?

Greenlee pauses and fights the urge to yell.

GREENLEE

Believe me, I know exactly who is down there. Husbands, sons, brothers and friends.

An AIDE steps forward with a message.

GREENLEE (CONT'D)

Gentlemen, I am happy to announce the dive has commenced. As soon as things are settled, we'll arrange to have you ferried out to the site. Excuse me.

Greenlee steps from the platform. A buzz of murmurs rattles about the room. Richards leans over to Snaps.

RICHARDS

We won't get anything here.

SNAPS

You want to go out there now?

RICHARDS

Sure, take a look.

SNAPS

Get a couple shots of the happy rescuers and the grateful sailors.

Richards smirks a crooked smile.

RICHARDS

Or better yet. Crying wives and dead bodies.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - SQUALUS

The men are weakened, breathing shallow breaths and quivering uncontrollably from the wet and the cold. Naquin, Preble and Doyle huddle in the corner.

NAQUIN

You'd better spread some more CO2 absorbent and bleed the second oxygen tank, XO. That will leave one. We'll keep it in case we need to fill the Momsen Lungs and take a run for the surface.

DOYLE

Aye, sir.

PREBLE

Been pretty quiet up there for some time.

NAQUIN

I've noticed and I'm sure they have, too.

Naquin looks at the pale faces of his near-broken men.

PREBLE

No one's given up. You've seen to that.

NAQUIN

I'm moving forward. Check in with JC.

Naquin steps forward. Gable grabs Naquin's leg.

GABLE

What's taking them so long, Captain? Where are they?

NAQUIN

They're coming. Believe it, sailor.

Naquin unseals the door to Officer's Country and enters.

#### OFFICER'S COUNTRY

Naquin stares down at the trap door to the forward battery compartment. He can almost hear the ghostly whirling of the chlorine gas. He looks forward to the torpedo room door, then back to the Control Room door. He is finally alone.

The door to his sleeping compartment is opened just a crack. He opens the door and steps inside.

#### THE CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS

The closet-sized room has been tossed about. Charts, books and clothes are strewn about the floor. His bed has been stripped of sheets and blankets. Naquin sits at the small fold-down desk. He reaches into his breast pocket and pulls out the silver case. He opens it and reveals photos of Frances, Maggie and Dorothy.

NAQUIN

And then home once more.

He pauses for a moment and then takes hold of a pen and a piece of paper.

#### EXT. FISHING BOAT

A small fishing boat fights the waves as it heads for the dive site. Richards and Snaps hang tight to the railing. Richards vomits over the side of the lurching boat.

SNAPS

This was your idea.

RICHARDS

Shut up.

He stands to see the circle of boats surrounding the Falcon.

SNAPS

Not much going on.

RICHARDS

See the boat in the middle? It's the Falcon, run by this hard-ass, Swede Momsen. That flag up means they've got a diver below.

Richards calls to the fishing boat Captain.

RICHARDS (CONT'D)

Get us in there!  
 (to himself)  
 No crying wives, but...

His self-serving smirk wipes away his nausea.

UNDERWATER

Dark and cold. Skee slides past, dropping deeper and deeper.

INT. FORWARD TORPEDO ROOM - SQUALUS

Doc stands over Washburn who quakes in a coma state of cold. The rest of the men huddle to keep warm. Naquin steps in.

NAQUIN

XO will be through with CO2 absorbent and a fresh oxygen tank bleed. How are we doing here?

NICHOLS

Hanging on.

Washburn sweats and shivers beneath the blankets.

DOC

Most of us.

NAQUIN

Has he been awake?

DOC

Not for some time and when he does he's in a state of dementia. His fever's out of control. Blanchard and Robertson can't stand up anymore.

Naquin is powerless to help these men.

NAQUIN

The XO will be up soon with the oxygen.

He opens the sealed door and steps into Officer's Country.

## OFFICER'S COUNTRY

Naquin leans against the door. The emotional strain, the physical demands, he is near a breaking point. He closes his eyes and regroups. He stands tall and walks back towards the Control Room.

CLANG! The resounding slap of metal on the outside hull makes Naquin spin about and run back into the --

## FORWARD TORPEDO ROOM

The men are all on their feet. Medeiros is up at the hatch.

MEDEIROS

Captain, someone's on deck!

NAQUIN

They sure are.

## EXT. FALCON - DAY

Momsen, Cole and Mac huddle around the radio.

MOMSEN

(into radio)

Say again, Skee.

## EXT. SQUALUS - UNDERWATER

Skee is standing on the deck of the Squalus.

SKEE

I have touched down on the deck of the Squalus. Drag line has caught ten to fifteen feet from the forward escape hatch.

The anchor of the Sculpin is caught beneath the bow. The drag/guide line points nearly straight up.

## INTERCUT:

## EXT. FALCON

MOMSEN

Get the cable down to him.

MAC

Done.

MOMSEN

(into radio)

What is her condition?

## EXT. SQUALUS - UNDERWATER

Skee moves in a slow motion 'moon walk' across the deck.

SKEE  
 She is upright, her bow slightly elevated.  
 It will not be a factor. I am at the  
 forward escape hatch.

EXT. FALCON

Mac is lowering a heavy-coiled cable into the water. On the end  
 is a self-closing hook.

EXT. SQUALUS - UNDERWATER

The forward escape hatch is at Skee's feet.

MOMSEN (O.C.)  
 Is the hatch clear?

SKEE  
 Negative.

The frayed end of the marker buoy cable is wrapped around the  
 exterior hatch railing.

MOMSEN (O.C.)  
 Clear it, the cable is on its way.

Skee looks to the deck, then up. Back and forth his head bobs.

SKEE  
 The cable isn't here.

EXT. FALCON

MOMSEN  
 (into radio)  
 The cable is on its way. Just relax,  
 Skee.

(to Cole)  
 The pressure and the nitrogen narcosis is  
 affecting him faster than I anticipated.

COLE  
 What can we do?

MOMSEN  
 Get the cable attached before he loses his  
 senses completely.

EXT. SQUALUS - UNDERWATER

Skee is straining to focus as the massive cable descends towards  
 him.

SKEE  
 I can see it. Coming closer.

He reaches out for it. The cable glances off his gloved hands and spins away. It's like playing baseball in space.

SKEE (CONT'D)  
Missed it. Trying to catch it.

Swaying back and forth trying to match the rhythm of the loose cable, Skee struggles to keep his balance on deck.

SKEE (CONT'D)  
Whoa! Almost fell off.

EXT. FALCON

MOMSEN  
(into radio)  
Skee, stop it. Stop moving.

EXT. SQUALUS - UNDERWATER

Skee listens intently to Momsen's voice in his helmet.

MOMSEN (O.C.)  
Stand still. Hold position. The cable will settle. I need you to stand still.

Skee fights the urge to reach out to the taunting cable swaying before him.

MOMSEN (CONT'D)  
Now shuffle back to the guide wire you descended on and wait for the cable to meet you. It will settle back there once you stop grabbing for it.

Skee shakes off the cobwebs in his mind and looks to the guide wire ten feet away. He walks towards it.

SKEE  
The guide wire. Don't grab for the cable.

EXT. FALCON

Mac is now beside Momsen.

MAC  
He misses it this time, we'll have to pull him up.

MOMSEN  
He'll get it.

EXT. SQUALUS - UNDERWATER

Skee is standing beside the taut guide wire. His hand slowly moves out into the dark water.

SKEE

Swede.

MOMSEN (O.C.)

What do you need?

SKEE

Nothing. The cable's in hand.

Skee draws his hand back to his face and the heavy metal clamp can be seen.

SKEE (CONT'D)

Need slack. I am hooking on.

EXT. FALCON

MAC

Give the man some cable.

The winch spits a length of cable through the crane arm.

EXT. SQUALUS - UNDERWATER

Skee is back at the escape hatch. On one of the extended center arms, he firmly clamps the cable.

SKEE

Attach. Confirmed.

MOMSEN (O.C.)

Good job. Hatch status.

Skee is muddled, but focusing. The shredded marker buoy cable is wrapped around the exterior edges of the hatch railing.

SKEE

(slurring)

Marker problem...cable a problem...

EXT. FALCON

MAC

He's been down a while.

MOMSEN

I know, I can hear it. If that hatch isn't clear, we can't make a seal.

MAC

I can prep another diver. It will take time for another dive.

MOMSEN

Time. Do it.

(into radio)

Skee, we're bringing you back up.

EXT. SQUALUS - UNDERWATER

Skee is on his knees unfurling the cable.

SKEE

A little more...cable problem...

His eyes begin to close, blacking out.

MOMSEN (O.C.)

Snap to, sailor! We've got a job here!

Skee fights his eyes open and yanks with all his strength on the frayed cable. He stumbles, swaying like a punch-drunk fighter.

SKEE

Done. Hatch clear. Get me up.

EXT. FALCON

Mac is operating the winch.

MAC

Get him up, boys. Easy now, not too fast. That's a long ride to the surface.

COLE

He cleared the hatch. You can make the seal now.

MOMSEN

He says he cleared the hatch. I've known men who nearly cut their air hose because they thought it was sea snakes attacking them.

COLE

Should we send another diver down?

Momsen checks the clock -- 1:30

MOMSEN

We don't have that luxury and those men don't have the oxygen.

(yelling to Mac)

Hold him off at depth. He'll be in rough shape as it is. His body has to equalize to the pressure change. Have Doc Benke standing by at the decompression chamber.

MAC

Put a bigger pot of coffee on. He'll be frozen right through.

MOMSEN

Mac, time to bring her out.

'Betty's' large crate sits unopened on deck.

MAC

The lady is stepping out, lads!

EXT. FISHING BOAT

Richards peers through binoculars.

RICHARDS

What the hell is that on deck?

He hands the binoculars to the photographer.

SNAPS

Something big.

EXT. FALCON - DAY

Mac is standing atop a ladder beside the crate with a crowbar in hand. He digs in hard and leans into the seam on the top of the crate. The wood cracks and the top begins to separate.

MAC

Come say hello, my darling.

The crane arm has swung over. Mac grabs the heavy clamp on the end of the cable and leans inside the crate.

EXT. FISHING BOAT

Still in awe.

SNAPS

It must be heavy as hell. Look at the size of that cable!

EXT. FALCON

The thick cable comprised of nine wound strands draws taut as the crane arm heaves on the weight inside the crate. Mac continues to knock off the sides of the crate.

Momsen and Cole intently observe the proceedings.

From inside the crate, a fifteen-foot-high metal rescue chamber emerges. A giant inverted metal tea cup. On the side is a hand-painted depiction of the curvaceous Betty Grable. The crane arm lifts it higher, straining against the dead weight.

MAC

Curvy like a highland pass, she's nine tons of beauty. My Betty, my lass.

On the bottom of the chamber is a hatch very similar to the one on the deck of the Squalus. The crane swings the chamber to the side of the Falcon and eases it in the water. It bobs on the surface.

The top of the chamber has another hatch as well as a giant eyelet through which the cable is hooked.

COLE

You banged a lot of heads and spent a boat load of money. This show is yours, Swede.

Momsen watches the rescue chamber like a proud father who hopes his kid can win the race against all odds.

INT. PRESS BRIEFING ROOM - PORTSMOUTH

Greenlee is delivering an update. The room is packed to overflow with REPORTERS and CAMERA CREWS.

GREENLEE

The McCann Rescue Chamber is about to be lowered.

NEW YORK TIMES REPORTER

Harvey, New York Times. The McCann what?

GREENLEE

The McCann Rescue Chamber. It's being lowered to the Squalus.

WASHINGTON POST REPORTER

Reilly, Washington Post. How deep can it go?

GREENLEE

I'm not sure.

LONDON TIMES REPORTER

Finch, London Times. What are the exact specifications?

GREENLEE

I don't have that information.

NEW YORK TIMES REPORTER

Why are you holding out on us?

WASHINGTON POST REPORTER

You got to give us something.

NEW YORK TIMES REPORTER

You just following orders? Tell us what you know.

Greenlee has had it.

GREENLEE

I know people are risking their lives to save those men.

FRANCES ( O.C. )

Our men.

The sound of the female voice cuts through the din. All heads turn to

THE BACK OF THE ROOM

Standing defiantly in the doorway is Frances Naquin, Betty Patterson, Jacqueline Greenlee, Sarah Doyle, Jane Nichols, Ariana Gibbs and the other WIVES.

FRANCES (CONT'D)

We want to know if this is going to work.

Greenlee weighs his answer. It is no longer Q&A.

GREENLEE

I don't know, Frances. No one has ever rescued men from a downed submarine.

The room explodes with questions.

EXT. FALCON - DAY

The rescue chamber bobs in the water beside the Falcon. A wide bundle of air and communications hoses run in through a sealed port in the top. The thick, nine-strand cable is still attached, descending from the crane arm and it holds the chamber on the surface. The top hatch is open and Mihalowski is climbing is. Mac stands above the opening, receiving last-minute instructions from Momsen.

MOMSEN

Your radio com is active. The ballast chambers are full. It's two o'clock. We've got ten hours.

MAC

We'll be back with smiling faces before you know it.

Mac drops into the chamber and seals the hatch.

MOMSEN

Go!

The crane arm whines and the chamber begins to submerge.

COLE

How long?

MOMSEN

There's thirty-three men below. The chamber has been built for seven. That's five trips back and forth and about two and a half hours a run.

Cole checks his watch.

COLE

It's two o'clock now. Twelve and a half hours puts us over by at least one run. Can we increase the loads?

MOMSEN

It's designed for seven. Anymore and we run the risk of overloading the system and then no one goes home.

COLE

What are you going to do?

MOMSEN

I don't know.

Momsen watches the chamber disappear below the surface in a fury of bubbles and froth. The gears in his head are turning.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - SQUALUS

Naquin and the men can hear the whirring of the crane and the taut snap of the cable on the escape hatch.

GABLE

Captain, you hear that?

NAQUIN

Yeah. They're coming to get us.

Naquin assesses the men.

NAQUIN (CONT'D)

There are men forward in bad shape. Can we hold on here?

Doyle, Maness, Kuney, Gable, Gainor, Issacs and Powell, look to Naquin. They nod. No one will ask to leave.

NAQUIN (CONT'D)

Gable?

GABLE

I'll catch the next ride.

NAQUIN (CONT'D)

Okay. XO, I'll coordinate with Doc.

DOYLE

Aye, sir. Send them home.

Naquin walks over to Preble.

NAQUIN

That means you, Preb.

PREBLE

I'm okay.

NAQUIN

You may know the boat, but I know the men.  
You're a civilian Preb, first out.

PREBLE

Thanks.

NAQUIN

Officer's Country is contaminated with  
chlorine gas so we'll assemble at the door  
and move as quickly as we can through to  
the forward torpedo room.

Naquin can hear the chamber getting closer. It may be the first  
time he truly believes that they may make it out alive.

NAQUIN (CONT'D)

Let's be ready.

INT. FALCON WHEELHOUSE

Momsen and Cole monitor the radio. A wall clock reads 2:45.

MOMSEN

(into radio)

It's been forty minutes. How we doing,  
Mac?

INT. RESCUE CHAMBER

It is a cramped, circular interior. Mac and Mihalowski sit on a  
circular iron bench welded on the interior circumference of the  
chamber. A motor whirs above them pumping oxygen into the  
chamber. Mac monitors the winch whirring at his feet.

MAC

(into radio handset)

Ballast holding, air motor running  
smoothly. Lower winch drawing at rate.

EXT. RESCUE CHAMBER - UNDERWATER

The chamber appears to be sliding down a cable. In fact, the  
cable from the Falcon's crane above is lowering the chamber. The  
cable Skee attached earlier to the Squalus, runs up through the  
bottom of the chamber. A winch motor inside is taking in the  
slack and is in effect, pulling the chamber downward towards the  
Squalus's deck below.

INT. RESCUE CHAMBER

He checks a depth gauge. It reads 230 feet.

MAC

Thirteen feet and closing.

EXT. RESCUE CHAMBER - UNDERWATER

The chamber descends slowly through the dark water. It draws closer, closer until...it touches down on the deck.

INT. FORWARD TORPEDO ROOM - SQUALUS

The resounding thud of the chamber echoes in the compartment. The men cheer.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - SQUALUS

Naquin is standing at the door observing wisps of gas in the Officer's Country. He and Preble don Momsen Lungs to make the trek to the torpedo room.

NAQUIN  
Keep your head clear.

Naquin opens the door and they step into --

OFFICER'S COUNTRY

Gas licks at their feet, rising up their bodies. Through the Lungs, breathing is labored.

IN THE WINDOW BEHIND THEM

faces press to see the progress.

INT. FORWARD TORPEDO ROOM - SQUALUS

JC is ready and he spins the wheel on his door and Naquin and Preble tumble through. The door is slammed shut and sealed.

INT. RESCUE CHAMBER

Mihalowski and Mac manipulate the dials.

MAC  
Make a seal.

Air and water rush out from beneath them.

EXT. FALCON

COLE  
What if Skee didn't clear all of that cable?

MOMSEN  
Then Mac can't make a seal. The pressure at that depth will immediately flood the rescue chamber and kill my best friend.

EXT. RESCUE CHAMBER - SQUALUS

The rescue chamber is planted on the deck of the Squalus. A torrent of gas and bubbles spews out from between the bottom of the chamber and the deck of the Squalus. The chamber squeezes tighter and tighter against the deck.

INT. RESCUE CHAMBER

Mihalowski is monitoring the gauges. Mac drops to the bottom of the chamber holding a short-handled sledgehammer.

MIHALOWSKI

(into radio)

Mac is working the chamber hatch now.

He begins to work free the interior wheel of the hatch.

INT. FORWARD TORPEDO ROOM - SQUALUS

The men can hear the pounding from above.

EXT. FALCON

MOMSEN

This is it.

EXT. RESCUE CHAMBER

Mac throws open the hatch. Water sprays up from it.

MIHALOWSKI

(into radio)

We have incoming water...

MOMSEN

Close the hatch immediately!

MAC

We're okay. It was just residual run-off from the deck. The seal is holding.

Below him is the deck of the Squalus and the escape hatch of the forward torpedo room.

MIHALOWSKI

(into radio)

Seal is holding. Squalus escape hatch next.

Mac pounds on the escape hatch with the sledgehammer.

FORWARD TORPEDO ROOM

The interior wheel of the hatch is turning. The men look up in awe as the seal squeaks open and the hatch lifts up. A torrent of water drops through, then Mac pokes his head in.

MAC  
Good afternoon.

Lots of smiles.

INT. FALCON WHEELHOUSE

MOMSEN  
They're in.

Cole looks out to the anxious faces observing from on deck. Cole gives a 'thumbs up.'

MOMSEN (CONT'D)  
Now to get them up.

INT. FORWARD TORPEDO ROOM - SQUALUS

Mac is standing in the torpedo room. The air from the rescue chamber is gulped in by the men below. It is like a cool spring shower washing over their faces. Mihalowski is lowering a yard-long silver cylinder into the torpedo room. It has a large black bag secured to the side of it.

MAC  
Thought you fellows might be needing something hot about now.

Mac opens the container. It is filled with steaming hot soup.

MAC (CONT'D)  
There's CO2 absorbent in the bag. I'm sure you could use a blast of this.

An oxygen tank is lowered.

NAQUIN  
How many will she hold?

MAC  
She's outfitted for seven of you fellows.

Naquin scans the faces.

NAQUIN  
The civilians, Preb, Pinoy and Elvina. Washburn, Robertson, and Blanchard are in bad shape. JC, you're in, too.

NICHOLS  
Captain?

NAQUIN  
I need an officer topside. There'll be questions. You'll need this as well.

He hands Nichols a folder.

NICHOLS  
The manifest?

NAQUIN  
Like I said, there will be questions.

Pinoy and Elvina are climbing the ladder. Pinoy turns back with a smile on his face.

PINOY  
Test dive is over?

ELVINA  
We pass test dive?

Naquin can't believe it. He allows himself a smile.

NAQUIN  
Yeah, you pass the test.

MAC  
Word has come down from Naval Command that they'll need all the sensitive documents removed as well.

NAQUIN  
We've been tossed around pretty good down here and the Officer's Country is filling with chlorine gas. It'll take time to gather that information.

MAC  
Well, we don't have a lot of time. So whoever is coming...

Preble steps to the ladder. He hesitates then turns back. He reaches overhead of one of the bunks. He pulls down a leather attache with the initials 'DS' embossed on the side. Preble sets the attache down on the bunk and pulls out a handful of items. A pipe, a pocket watch, a Bible with the name 'Don Smith' embossed in gold letters on the cover.

PREBLE  
I figure Don's wife would want these. I'll make my way to Detroit.

NAQUIN  
You will.

Preble and Naquin's eyes meet.

NAQUIN (CONT'D)  
I'll see you topside, Preb.

PREBLE  
You will.

Preble climbs the ladder. Washburn is slung over Mac's shoulder and carried up through the hatch. Nichols snaps a firm salute to Naquin and climbs the ladder.

The men look up expectantly at the open hatch.

MAC

See ya soon. That's a promise.

INT. RESCUE CHAMBER

The men are seated as Mac seals the hatch. Mihalowski keys the radio handset and Mac manipulates the dials.

MIHALOWSKI

(into radio)

We have our load and are on the move.

Mac engages the winch and the seal is broken below.

EXT. RESCUE CHAMBER

The Rescue Chamber separates from the deck of the Sculpin.

INT. FORWARD TORPEDO ROOM - SQUALUS

Naquin and the men listen as the chamber lifts off. Naquin looks into Officer's Country. It is now swirling with pale green and white gas.

NAQUIN

The control room will be compromised by gas next. Doc, spread the CO2 absorbent in here. Medeiros, bleed the oxygen tank. We'll evacuate the Control Room and make this our base. Let's be ready when they get back.

EXT. FALCON

The crane arm hauls on the cable.

EXT. RESCUE CHAMBER - UNDERWATER

The loaded chamber rises through the water.

INT. OFFICER'S COUNTRY - SQUALUS

Maness, Kuney, Gainor, Issacs and Powell, wear Momsen Lungs pressed tightly against their faces as they rush through the swirling gas. Naquin helps Gable, the weakest of the men, forward. Doyle is in the Control Room opening and closing the door.

## INT. FALCON WHEELHOUSE

Momsen checks the clock on the wall: 4:15. He keys his handset and flips a switch. His voice is now broadcasting across the ship's PA system.

MOMSEN

(into radio)

Chamber is near the surface. Retrieval team's in place, decompression chamber crew standing by.

## INT. CONTROL ROOM - SQUALUS

Naquin and Doyle stand in the now-evacuated room. Naquin makes calculations on a sheet of paper.

DOYLE

Move forward, Captain?

NAQUIN

We're out of time. They need four more runs to get us all out. We've got air for maybe two, three at the outside.

DOYLE

At seven men a trip, that means...

NAQUIN

At least five men aren't going to make it home.

## INT. PRESS ROOM - WHITE HOUSE

FLASH BULBS POP illuminating FDR in a strobe light effect on the podium. The press room is packed.

FDR

This is a time for heroes. A time to show the world that we can overcome even the most impossible task. Failure is not a consideration. The strength and might of this one nation is on display for the world to marvel at. Heroes are not the stuff of outdated legends. They are the men at work today in the North Atlantic. God bless.

FLASH!

## EXT. FALCON

Momsen, Cole, Doc Benke and the rest of the Falcon crew stand by the edge of the railing. The nine-strand cable strains to pull the loaded chamber to the surface.

AN ARMADA OF SHIPS surround the Falcon. Hundreds of REPORTERS have found their way out to the site.

They hang from every available inch of deck. Even the deck of the Naval cruiser, 'Brooklyn' has become a ringside seat for the Media. It looks like the sidelines of a football game. Shutters click, 16mm film cameras grind out historic footage. Airplanes circle like a pack of vultures trying to get the best view.

The rescue chamber swirls up from the depths and with a mighty blast of air, it breaches the surfaces.

The scene becomes chaotic. No one has ever been rescued from the ocean's floor and every photographer there wants the best shot of the men who were trapped below. Every reporter wants to get the right words on tape. Every sailor and civilian wants a look-see.

Momsen leaps from the railing onto the chamber's hatch. He grabs the wheel and spins. He pulls the hatch open and Mac pops his head out.

MAC

Smiling faces as promised.

Momsen and Mac help out the survivors. Preble is the first to poke his head out. The sunlight assaults his eyes. The air is so fresh, it gives him a head rush and he almost falls back inside. Momsen grabs him and pulls him up. A hush falls over the crowd.

COLE

Good to have you back.

PREBLE

Thank you, Admiral.

Next through is J.C. Cheers rise from the Naval boats. As the rest come out, the racket of shutters and whirring cameras and reporters fills the air. The survivors instinctively face the press for photos.

Momsen knows his work is far from over. The clock is ticking.

MOMSEN

Have Doc Benke check these men out and get them into something dry and warm, nobody is out of the woods yet.

Nichols approaches Cole and salutes. Momsen and Preble join the debriefing.

NICHOLS

Lieutenant JC Nichols, sir.

Cole returns the salute.

COLE

Welcome home, son. What are the conditions below?

NICHOLS

Aft compartments remain flooded, forward compartments remain water-tight, but sea water has interacted with forward batteries disturbing the integrity of the compartments.

MOMSEN

Chlorine gas?

PREBLE

Pretty bad, too. It's eating up what's left of the oxygen. Naquin is moving the whole lot forward to the torpedo room.

Momsen's face drops. Cole picks up on it.

COLE

You made your calculations on having half a boat's worth of oxygen.

Momsen nods his head. The men all know that the time table has just been accelerated. No one has an immediate plan, but Momsen is scheming silently.

Nichols hands Cole an envelope with the manifest.

NICHOLS

Crew manifest USS Squalus, sir. Thirty-three known survivors, twenty-six believed to be missing.

Cole salutes.

COLE

We'll talk more later. Good work men, go see the doctor.

Nichols and Preble leave.

MOMSEN

Mac, let's prep for the next descent. Double time!

COLE

At least twenty-six men lost.

MOMSEN

No, sir. Twenty-six men at the most.

Momsen walks to the rescue chamber. Cole stares down at the envelope in his hands. Within it are the names of the missing. Cole knows they are more than missing -- they are dead. He looks about the floating armada of ships surrounding him. The hundreds of sailors, officers, civilians and reporters on board now seem to be watching him -- waiting for the names -- waiting for him to open it. To reveal the dead. Cole can see that Momsen is in heavy debate with Mac. He finally tears in to the envelope.

## A LIST OF NAMES

But it is in Naquin's hands and we are in --

INT. CONTROL ROOM - SQUALUS

NAQUIN

No ranks here, Walter. Are you ready to play God?

The list is that of the remaining survivors' names.

DOYLE

I don't know. No one ever taught me this part of the job.

Naquin scans the list.

NAQUIN

Adams, Blanchard, Bryson, Doc..

(looking further down the list)

Kuney, Maness, Medeiros...All good men. Do you start with married men or just the men with children? The youngest men or the more senior sailors? Christ, most of them aren't much older than college kids anyway. Is being a single man what keeps you down here? Or being an officer?

Silence.

DOYLE

They told me not to come down here.

NAQUIN

Who?

DOYLE

The guys I went through Annapolis with. Said joining the 'coffin service' was literally a dead end. Only the scum of the service head under the waves in pig boats.

Naquin smirks.

NAQUIN

Yeah, I heard it, too.

DOYLE

I knew the risks before I came below. So did they. I'm an officer in the United States Navy and I'm proud of that. I'm proud to serve with you sir, and with these men.

Naquin looks at Doyle. If he's going to die here, than this is good company.

NAQUIN  
Let's head forward and join our men.

Naquin and Doyle shake hands.

EXT. FALCON

Mac and Momsen stand atop the rescue chamber. The hatch is open. Mihalowski listens in from below.

MAC  
Aye, Swede, it's a plan.

MOMSEN  
Then let's get it done.

Mac slides down into the chamber. Momsen seals the hatch tight and jumps back onto the deck of the Falcon.

MOMSEN (CONT'D)  
Go! Go! Go!

The crane arm whirs to life and the rescue chamber disappears once again beneath the surface in a froth of bubbles.

INT. FORWARD TORPEDO ROOM - SQUALUS

The twenty-six remaining men are crammed into the room. It is as cold as a meat locker. Some lay on the berths, others have found perches in the metal hull to sit on. Momsen Lungs dangle around all their necks. Their breathing is deep and broken. Their faces are white and their eyes blackened from breathing in carbon dioxide. Naquin stands before the men with the list in his hands.

NAQUIN  
I've never lied to you men, so here it is. The Control Room has been compromised, so this is where we'll make our final stand. I've done the math and it looks like some of us won't make it out. There just isn't the time.

Some men exchange glances. Some keep their eyes on Naquin. Some just stare at points in space.

NAQUIN (CONT'D)  
I'm sure they're doing the best they can topside so we have to do the same. It's a matter of who goes first.

Their bodies now seem unnaturally close together. Each feels the proximity of the next. Who will go, who will stay.

NAQUIN (CONT'D)

The XO has volunteered to wait with me until the last run. As for the order of the rest...

A voice from the back arises along with a raised hand.

MANESS

I'll stay, sir.

NAQUIN

No, that's not the way we're going to do this.

Another hand goes up.

MEDEIROS

I'm with you.

GABLE

Me, too. I'll wait with you.

Hands shoot up everywhere.

KUNEY

I'm in, Captain.

NAQUIN

Hold on! There are people above waiting for you to come home. Think about this.

The hands drop slowly. A long beat.

MANESS

I thought about it, sir.

NAQUIN

Alright.

MANESS

Since the day I signed on. I'll stay.

Maness raises his hand and holds it there. The other men look at each other and realize the bond. Slowly all the hands rise once again. Naquin and Doyle swallow deeply and nod approval.

EXT. SCULPIN - CONNING TOWER

Admiral Cole climbs the conning tower where Wilkie and his XO survey the dive. Cole has the manifest in his hand.

COLE

I need to send a message back to Portsmouth.

WILKIE

Aye, sir. I expect Captain Greenlee will be awaiting it.

COLE

I expect he's not the only one.

INT. RADIO ROOM - SCULPIN

Cole reads the names as Wilkie, his XO and a crowd of sailors listen in.

COLE

Batick, Calley...

The RADIO MAN transmits the missing sailors' names via telex.

SCULPIN CONNING TOWER

The sounds of the Morse code seems to tap through the antenna and head across the open waters away from the flotilla, towards shore.

COLE (O.C.)

Coffey, Deal...

INT. PORTSMOUTH COMMUNICATIONS ROOM

The room is crowded, but dead silent. Only the sounds of the Radio Operator's teletype and Greenlee's voice reading the names can be heard.

GREENLEE

Fletcher, Garrison...

By the doorway, the NAVY CHAPLAIN listens. A tear escapes, rolling down his cheek.

INT. PORTSMOUTH - PRESS CONFERENCE

Greenlee continues to read the names in the new venue. This is the hardest thing he has ever had to do. Each name is like a bullet shot into the crowd, taking down many with it.

GREENLEE

Franks, Gibbs...

A catatonic Ariana Gibbs does not react to the sound of her husband's name.

Greenlee's chin begins to quiver.

GREENLEE (CONT'D)

Marino...Patterson ...

The names begin to fade away leaving pain and sorrow.

## A MONTAGE OF IMAGES

- a) The silent cries of wives. Legs buckle and bodies drop at the mention of a loved one's demise. Tears fall from reddened eyes. Hands are buried in faces. Children stare blankly at sobbing mothers. Hardened sailors try to swallow their emotions back.
- b) Reporters, feeling the anguish of these strangers, slide quietly away to file their stories.
- c) Through murky waters, ghostly images of men whose names are listed, float by, trapped in the Squalus. In a small air pocket, John Marino, floats facedown. He, too, ran out of air.
- d) A teletype machine in the Chicago Tribune spews out the names of the dead. At twenty-six names, the machine stops, as if awaiting more.
- e) Women whose husbands are still alive, hug each other and rush towards the port.
- f) Frances Naquin leans against a tree and cries tears of hope.
- g) The Chaplain knocks repeatedly on a door. Ruth Desautel stands in the second story window of her house, refusing to answer. She stares out at the ocean, her wedding dress clutched tightly in her arms.
- h) Greenlee steadies himself on the porch of his house. He looks back to the sea, hopelessly searching for an answer. He turns and in the doorway is his daughter, Betty. The look on Greenlee's face says that the unthinkable is true. Patterson is dead. They step together and embrace. A father trying to comfort his baby girl. A young woman who is now a widow.
- i) FDR slowly spins away from the Officers in his room, turning his back on them.

EXT. SCULPIN

Cole steps onto the deck of the Sculpin. He surveys the scene.

EXT. FALCON

Momsen looks up from his work on the Falcon. His eyes meet Cole's. The news has been delivered. For a moment they reflect on the families and friends and then Momsen goes back to work, so that more bad news won't have to be broken.

EXT. OCEAN - DEEP UNDERWATER

The rescue chamber descends from the darkness above. It passes by and disappears into the dark water below.

INT. FORWARD TORPEDO ROOM - SQUALUS

Once again Mac's head pops in through the hatch.

MAC  
Told you I'd be back.

Mac enters. Naquin and the men are one unit. Standing ready.

NAQUIN  
We've got the next seven ready.

MAC  
Swede says we're going to make it nine.  
We'll be pushing, but it means only two  
more trips after this one.

Everyone understands the implications. One less trip means they may all make it out alive.

NAQUIN  
XO, send up the seven plus two from the  
next round.

Doyle shuttles Issacs, Bryson, Jackson and six other men up the ladder. Naquin and Mac step to one side.

NAQUIN (CONT'D)  
Is she outfitted for nine?

MAC  
I guess we'll find out.

NAQUIN  
How long?

MAC  
We're pushing hard. It'll be close if  
nothing gets in our way.

INT. FALCON WHEELHOUSE

Momsen and Cole check the clock: 5:00.

MOMSEN  
(into radio)  
Maintain rate of ascent. You are holding  
firm and increase load has had little  
effect on the gear.

MAC  
(filtered)  
We'll be topside in forty minutes.  
Chamber out.

MOMSEN  
Time's improving.

COLE  
We'll turn it around and have the next  
dive under by 07:00.

MOMSEN  
Two more trips, we may just get there by  
midnight.

Skee enters and hands Momsen a message.

SKEE  
Just came over from the Sculpin.

MOMSEN  
It's from Portsmouth. There's a weather  
pattern brewing.

Momsen and Cole grab binoculars and head onto the deck. Skee  
follows. They peer out to the horizon.

COLE  
Starboard around four o'clock.

POV - the dark swirling mass of an approaching storm consumes the  
ocean before it, as it moves towards the dive site. This is more  
than a 'weather pattern.' It's a full-blown North Atlantic storm.

COLE (CONT'D)  
I figure forty-five minutes.

MOMSEN  
More like thirty.

COLE  
Either way, she's going to give us a good  
whipping before she's through.

Momsen returns to the wheelhouse and keys the radio handset.

MOMSEN (CONT'D)  
(into radio)  
Mac, we got a storm coming in.

INT. RESCUE CHAMBER

MAC  
(into radio)  
Got it Swede, I'll fill the folks in.

Mac replaces the radio handset. The tiny chamber is unbelievably  
crammed with: the nine survivors, Mac and Mihalowski.

MAC (CONT'D)  
Looks like Mother Nature has got her  
knickers in a bunch and she's bringing a  
show our way.

ISSACS

So what does that mean for us?

MAC

Don't know. Betty's first time out in bad weather.

EXT. FALCON

The skies have darkened and the ocean is getting rough. The crew jumps to stations as Momsen barks commands.

MOMSEN

I need three men to steady the chamber and watch its sway against the side of the Falcon. I need a recovery team standing by to help the men off the top of the chamber. Two on top of the crane arm to monitor the surface level. A pair of divers be ready to hit the water to grab any stragglers.

EXT. RESCUE CHAMBER - UNDERWATER

The rough water becomes visible as the rescue chamber nears the surface.

INT. RESCUE CHAMBER

The occupants can feel the increasing motion of the rescue chamber. They are consumed with nausea. Mac can only shake his head at the predicament.

MAC

Hang on, lads.

EXT. FALCON

The rescue chamber bobs to the surface. The waves roll its exposed top back and forth. Men from the Falcon leap on top and work the hatch open. The occupants scurry, as best they can, from the chamber and are helped on deck.

MOMSEN

There's a medical team on board PT 33. She'll take you ashore.

PT 33 has sidled up beside the Falcon and is transferring the first load of Squalus survivors aboard. They await this second load.

ISSACS

I'd like to wait for the rest of the men.

MOMSEN

I know you would. We don't have the space and more important, there are people on shore who need to see faces.

INT. FORWARD TORPEDO ROOM - SQUALUS

Seventeen men left. They are already in the throes of hypothermia. Their breath seems to crystallize as they exhale, filling the room with a fine mist. Medeiros bleeds a reserve oxygen tank.

MEDEIROS

That's the last one, Captain.

NAQUIN

We'll get a boost when the chamber comes back.

EXT. FALCON

Mac rests on the railing. Momsen stands beside him.

MOMSEN

How are they?

MAC

Surviving. That Captain's a good man. For an officer.

MOMSEN

Two more runs. Seventeen men.

Lighting strikes off in the distance.

MAC

We better keep ahead of that storm.

Mihalowski pops up from the chamber.

MIHALOWSKI

Ready to go here.

Mac jumps from the railing onto the top of the chamber.

MAC

Five hours. We'll do it.

Mac slides inside and seals the hatch.

MOMSEN

Go! Go! Go!

The crane arm whirs to life and the chamber slowly disappears from the surface.

THE CRANE ARM

Its gear mechanisms chatter along, rougher than usual. The gear teeth unspooling the nine-strand cable skips once, then again. Momsen snaps his head in the direction of the unnatural noise.

MOMSEN (CONT'D)

Hang on! Stop it!

Too late. The clutch on the unspooling mechanism springs loose. The wire begins to tear out at an incredible rate.

MOMSEN (CONT'D)

The emergency brake!

Skee dives for the manual hand brake.

OCEAN DEPTHS

The rescue chamber plummets past like a nine-ton rock.

INT. RESCUE CHAMBER

Mac and Mihalowski are pinned to the walls by the pressure of the descent.

MAC

Swede?

The manual brake locks and the rescue chamber comes to a very audible screeching halt. The high-pitched shrill sounds like a garden rake across a blackboard.

EXT. RESCUE CHAMBER - UNDERWATER

The shriek of metal echoes down through the water past the swaying chamber. Down farther to...

INT. FORWARD TORPEDO ROOM - SQUALUS

The hull of the Squalus. The sound from above rattles around the torpedo room. Each man envisioning the worst.

EXT. FALCON

The wind is picking up and the boat is shifting in the waves. Momsen is at the base of the crane arm. Skee is ferociously working on the top of the arm.

MOMSEN

It sounded like the clutch seizing.

SKEE

It did. It's jammed up solid.

MOMSEN

We'll disengage the clutch from down here and then manually run the gear changes.

SKEE

I'm going to have to take this apart first. It will take time.

MOMSEN

You don't have any. Get it done.

EXT. PT. 33

The Navy Patrol boat churns water and heads for shore. Preble, JC and Issacs huddle on deck looking back at the Falcon. They know what the men below are experiencing.

EXT. RESCUE CHAMBER - UNDERWATER

The chamber is feeling the effects of the increasing storm. It swings back and forth with the will of the swells above. The cable flutters in an 'S' and slowly whips its way down to...

EXT. SQUALUS - UNDERWATER

The deck of the Squalus. The cable yanks on the escape hatch arm.

INT. FORWARD TORPEDO ROOM - SQUALUS

The men can hear the cable wrestling against the hatch like a junk yard dog on a leash.

MEDEIROS

Didn't hear that before.

MANESS

Didn't hear the chamber scream before either.

NAQUIN

Must be a storm up top.

MANESS

What does that mean for us?

NAQUIN

Means we'll have to keep waiting.

EXT. FALCON

Skee is finishing reassembling the crane arm mechanism.

SKEE

Done!

Skee slides down the arm. Momsen is on deck adjusting the powerful winch which spools up and through the crane arm. Skee joins him.

MOMSEN

Here we go.

The winch whirs to life. Bits of debris shoot out from the top of the crane arm resulting in a hideous grinding noise.

SKEE

She'll hold. Just let her warm up.

More grinding. A spit of metal filings and the crane arm is operational again.

MOMSEN

Nice work. Run the clutch manually from here.

Skee remains stationed at the winch. Momsen walks to the wheelhouse. Cole is inside monitoring the radio traffic. The clock reads 09:00.

COLE

Nine o'clock. That cost us two hours.

MOMSEN

I know what it cost us. We've got two more trips to make before midnight.

EXT. RESCUE CHAMBER - UNDERWATER

The chamber passes by, moving faster than on previous runs.

EXT. WATERFRONT - PORTSMOUTH

The wind leaps off the ocean and runs across the faces of the women on shore. Wool coats turned up at the collar and the stern resolve of unbreakable spirit meets the cold gusts. All the wives are assembled -- even the ones who have heard that their husbands are missing and presumed dead. They are holding vigil, cradling candles in jars. Frances Naquin, Jacqueline Greenlee, Betty Patterson, Mrs. Doyle and Mrs. Nichols stand their ground.

The growl of a diesel engine rumbles in the distance, somewhat lost in the approaching thunder. From the darkness, the bow light of PT. 33 emerges to provide a focus for the women.

A lone female figure walks the shoreline and approaches the waterfront where the women stand vigil. Up the rock face she is seemingly swept by the gusts of wind. She wears no coat, no sweater, no shoes -- just a dress, a wedding dress -- it is Ruth Desautel. She has clearly lost her grip on reality.

RUTH

I heard they were coming ashore.

Frances Naquin steps forward and wraps her arms around Ruth.

EXT. PT 33

Emerges from the night. The pale faces of Preble, JC, Issacs, Pinoy, Elvina, Bryson and Jackson at the railing, reflect the light from shore. Tired, weakened and cold. As the boat sidles up to the dock, their faces look down to the waiting women. JC's searching eyes meet his wife Jane's, and they are reunited even before the boat comes to rest. Home -- for these men.

INTERCUT:

INT. FORWARD TORPEDO ROOM - SQUALUS

The hatch opens and Mac appears. The conditions have deteriorated. Sullen faces breathe with the help of Momsen Lungs. The 'Lungs' expand and contract on their chests.

EXT. WATERFRONT

Preble steps from PT. 33. Mrs. Preble stands on the edge of the dock. Their youngest child asleep on her shoulder. He steps forward and hugs her, nestles his head on her shoulder and cradles the sleeping child.

EXT. SQUALUS - UNDERWATER

Naquin helps Gable, Adams, Cramer and six other men up the ladder into the chamber. Doyle handles the fresh oxygen canister.

EXT. WATERFRONT

Washburn is carried from the boat on a stretcher with Doc keeping pace. The crowd of women look to the moving stretcher to identify, not to intrude.

EXT. SQUALUS - UNDERWATER

Naquin gulps the last of the rescue chamber's air as the hatch is once again sealed. Eight dying men are now left behind.

EXT. WATERFRONT

Finally, the enlisted men of the Squalus step from PT. 33. No longer able to contain their emotions, women break free from the group and race across the dock to embrace their loved ones.

EXT. SQUALUS - UNDERWATER

Naquin has dispersed a CO2 absorbent and the oxygen tank has been bled dry. There is nothing more he can do, but wait.

EXT. WATERFRONT

The last of the men from PT. 33 are gone from the dock, driven away by Jeep or carried away in ambulances. The boat roars to life and makes its way back out to the dive site.

Women remain on shore. The vigil continues.

RUTH

They'll be along soon.

Frances holds Ruth tighter, a man's Navy pea coat is now draped over her shoulders.

FRANCES  
Yes, they will.

INT. SQUALUS - UNDERWATER

There is very little movement. The shallow breathing and bloodless faces of Naquin and his men are signs of the death that hovers just inside the submarine.

EXT. FALCON

The storm is building a head of steam. The wave swells cause the Falcon to rise and fall. Mac steadies himself on the top of the chamber as he helps the survivors out from inside. The slick metal, wind and falling rain make for a treacherous transfer to the deck of the Falcon. Gable slips and careens off into the water.

Skee leaps from the deck and hits the water. Gable is being thrashed about in the rough sea. Skee's powerful swimming strokes cut through the waves and enable him to reach the man. A line is dropped down to them.

Momsen is on deck as the last survivor has been helped aboard. Mac is still standing on top of the chamber. He steadies himself on the nine-strand cable.

MOMSEN  
Got one more run in you?

Mac smiles and faces the wind.

MAC  
Who'd want to stay up here in this heavenly pissing contest?

MOMSEN  
We have to go now.

MAC  
The chamber's running fine. I'll see ya soon.

Mac drops down into the chamber and seals the hatch.

INT. RESCUE CHAMBER

Mihalowski is surprised to see Mac back inside so quickly.

MIHALOWSKI  
No turnaround maintenance?

MAC  
It's 11:30. Midnight is last call. You saw how it was down there. This is our last run, one way or the other.

## EXT. SQUALUS - UNDERWATER

The great submarine lies motionless in the silt. We travel in through the open induction valves, along the 31-inch venting into the...

## INT. AFT TORPEDO ROOM - SQUALUS

There is no movement here. Marino's lifeless body bobs against the now-flooded hatch. His legs bang against the door leading forward into the...

## AFT ENGINE ROOM

The silent engine room. Motionless. Further through the next door into the...

## DIESEL ENGINE ROOM

The great pistons now stopped for an eternity. Bodies hang in the water suspended in death. Forward to the...

## GALLEY

The once-boisterous eatery is now silent. From the water-filled tombs, forward into the...

## CONTROL ROOM

The chlorine gas has breached this compartment. The greenish spiralling gas fingers the edges of the hull and curls into the center of the room. It leaves no corner untouched.

## THE OFFICER'S COUNTRY

Choked by the life-like vapors. The battery compartment below is a breeding ground for the writhing gas. It has coursed its way throughout the compartment and is licking its way into the...

## FORWARD TORPEDO ROOM

Naquin, Doyle, Maness, Kuney, Medeiros, Gainor, Powell and Doc. Their bodies seeming heaps on the cold metal floor. Momsen Lungs wheeze up and down slowly. A sabre of chlorine gas hangs on edge above the men.

## EXT. RESCUE CHAMBER - UNDERWATER

The chamber is moving at a much faster rate.

## INT. RESCUE CHAMBER

Drawing on the cable and hauling the chamber faster and faster down to the bottom, the winch screams working at maximum capacity.

MIHALOWSKI

It's never been run this hard.

MAC

Been a while since I was run this hard.

They both look at the rapidly descending gauges.

INT. FALCON WHEELHOUSE

Hard rain peppers the windows of the wheelhouse. Men have tied themselves off to sections of the deck as the boat rolls in the storm. Momsen keys the radio handset.

MOMSEN

(into radio)

Mac, prep the Lungs. I don't want you two inhaling that gas.

A great wave rises up and tosses the Falcon viciously. The crane arm reacts and sends a shudder down the cable.

EXT. UNDERWATER

The nine-strand cable reacts to the buffeting above and begins a warble that picks up intensity along the way to the...

EXT. RESCUE CHAMBER - UNDERWATER

The chamber is shaken violently.

INT. RESCUE CHAMBER

Mac and Mihalowski are tossed around the inside of the chamber. They settle along with it.

MAC

(into radio)

Just hold things still up there. We're under control here.

They drape the Momsen Lungs around their necks. They prime them with blasts of oxygen from the standby tank.

EXT. RESCUE CHAMBER - UNDERWATER

The Chamber draws closer and closer to the deck of the Squalus. It touches down.

INT. RESCUE CHAMBER

Mihalowski is turning the dials that ensure a seal. The familiar hiss tells them it is safe.

MAC

Let's crank up the oxygen motor. It'll be ugly inside.

Mihalowski flips the switch on the side of the oxygen motor and it jumps to a higher gear. They make sure their Momsen Lungs are firmly in place.

MIHALOWSKI

(into radio)

We have a seal and Mac is opening the hatch.

Mac spins the wheel and the hatch on the deck of the Squalus opens. Mac looks in from above. He is met by a green waft of gas which is forced back by the blowing oxygen motor inside the chamber. He peers through the clearing cloud of gas.

Nothing.

Naquin, Doyle and the remaining men are sprawled about the compartment. Their ghostly white skin is a chilling sight for Mac to behold. He drops down from the chamber into the..

INT. FORWARD TORPEDO ROOM - SQUALUS

The 'rubber bladder' on Mac's chest rises and falls. He turns slowly examining the bodies before him. The swirling green gas is being buffeted out of the room by the oxygen fan from inside the chamber.

Through the now-clearing haze, Mac focuses on the bodies at his feet. Nothing. He then looks up to Mihalowski who is peering down through the open hatch.

INT. RESCUE CHAMBER

MIHALOWSKI

(into radio)

There is no movement inside the Squalus.

INT. FALCON WHEELHOUSE

Momsen and Cole stand beside the radio.

MOMSEN

(into radio)

Say again, repeat last message.

INT. RESCUE CHAMBER

MIHALOWSKI

(into radio)

There is no movement inside the Squalus. Crew seems to have succumbed to the chlorine gas...

MAC (O.C.)

Hang on!

Mac examines Naquin. The rubber bladder of his Momsen Lung flutters slightly.

MAC (CONT'D; O.C.)  
Get the oxygen cannister down here!

MIHALOWSKI  
(into radio)  
Stand by.

Mihalowski transfers the cannister down into the Squalus.

EXT. SQUALUS - UNDERWATER

Mac bleeds the oxygen from the tank. Naquin coughs as the oxygen fills his lungs, his eyelids lift.

MAC  
We've got movement down here!

The bodies on the floor begin to stir as they react to the clearing of the gas and the introduction of the oxygen.

INT. RESCUE CHAMBER

MIHALOWSKI  
(into radio)  
They're moving, they're alive!

EXT. FALCON

Momsen and Cole share a brief moment of relief.

MOMSEN  
(into radio)  
Let's get them topside.

INT. SQUALUS - UNDERWATER

A sluggish but revived Naquin is shaking his men into consciousness. Mac has Doyle on his feet and they help Gainor and Kuney up the ladder into the rescue chamber.

INT. RESCUE CHAMBER

Mihalowski helps the men settle into their seats beside Doc and Powell. They welcome the blasts of oxygen.

EXT. SQUALUS

Doyle is helping Maness and Kuney up the ladder. Naquin primes his Momsen Lung and turns to Mac.

NAQUIN  
I've got to make one last pass of the boat.

DOYLE  
Captain, there's no one left.

NAQUIN

I can't leave without doing this.

MAC

We'll wait.

NAQUIN

Not too long. You two get in the chamber.  
No one is to follow me in. Understand?  
My boat, my crew.

Naquin spins the wheel on the sealed door to Officer's Country. Mac and Doyle make eye contact as Naquin whips open the door and disappears into the curling gas-filled compartment.

OFFICER'S COUNTRY

Naquin focuses ahead. He carefully picks his way through the deadly fog. The door to the Control Room is ahead. He grasps the wheel and spins it. The gas is making his eyes tear. He enters the Control Room.

CONTROL ROOM

The room is alive with gas. A spider's web of chlorine inhabits the room. Naquin scans the compartment. The voices of the dive and the crash echo in his mind from the now-empty stations.

He steps back into Officer's Country.

OFFICER'S COUNTRY

The gas is thick and flowing. His eyes flow with tears and he can barely see the door to the forward torpedo room.

He stops. Steadies himself on the hull and stumbles in through the open door of his sleeping compartment.

INT. RESCUE CHAMBER

Mihalowski, Mac, Doyle and the rest of the men are assembled inside the chamber. It is an uncomfortable wait.

DOYLE

That's it, I'm going to get him

Doyle moves to the hatch. Mac stops him.

MAC

He said to wait. I believe it was an order from your commanding officer.

Doyle assesses the fact as he sits back on to the metal bench. Mac leaps forward and down through the hatch.

MAC (CONT'D)

But he's just another officer to me.

## FORWARD TORPEDO ROOM

Mac peers through the haze into the fog of gas in Officer's Country.

MAC (CONT'D)  
Naquin! Naquin!

Nothing. Just a wall of green chlorine gas. Mac looks harder and sees...a shifting of the gas. Naquin emerges from the thick haze.

NAQUIN  
It's time to go.

Mac smiles and climbs the ladder. Naquin follows.

## INT. RESCUE CHAMBER

Mac seals the hatch as Naquin settles into his seat. The men are relieved.

MIHALOWSKI  
(into radio)  
We are loaded and on our way.

## EXT. RESCUE CHAMBER

Air and water bubbles shoot out from the deck of the Squalus as the chamber lifts off.

## EXT. FALCON

The crane arm shudders as the winch on deck begins hauling the men in.

## INT. RESCUE CHAMBER

As Mac settles into his seat, Naquin tosses a folder on his lap. It has red 'Top Secret' seals across it.

NAQUIN  
For your friends at Naval Command.

Mac smiles. Doyle shakes Naquin's hand. The winch at their feet whirs as the cable unspools. The chamber is rising.

## EXT. FALCON

The rain is pounding the deck. Momsen makes his way over to Skee who is still operating the winch on deck.

SKEE  
I figure they're about halfway.

MOMSEN  
Keep an eye on the crane arm.

EXT. RESCUE CHAMBER - UNDERWATER

The chamber rises rapidly. The storm above causes it to sway ever so slightly.

INT. RESCUE CHAMBER

The occupants roll with the swaying chamber.

MAC

Storm must be getting worse.

DOYLE

I'll be happy to feel a little rain.

MAC

I'm sure you will.

EXT. FALCON

White caps crash over the deck. A great swell lifts the Falcon up...

CABLE

The cable draws taut underwater.

DECK OF SQUALUS

The cable snaps tight.

INT. RESCUE CHAMBER

The metal chamber is jarred mercilessly. It rocks back and forth violently. The occupants are tossed around like rice in a rattle. Bodies rise up off their seats and smash into the roof. Mihalowski flies across the chamber, caught in the throes of this underwater turbulence and smashes face-first into the metal bench.

A primal screech and a grinding of gears fills the chamber as the interior winch seizes.

EXT. FALCON

The crane arm begins to flex at the resistance. Skee reacts immediately.

SKEE

Shutting down! Shutting down!

MOMSEN

(into radio)

Shut it down, Mac! Mac!?

EXT. RESCUE CHAMBER - UNDERWATER

The chamber dangles motionless in the water. A gentle sway back and forth remains.

INT. RESCUE CHAMBER

Momsen's voice is filtered through the discarded radio handset. Jumbled bodies try and readjust inside the cramped chamber. Mac recovers and grabs the handset.

MAC  
(into radio)  
We're shut down alright.

Mihalowski is not moving. His face is bloodied and he is unconscious. Doyle examines him.

MAC (CONT'D)  
(into radio)  
Mihalowski is hurt and the winch is seized up tight.

MOMSEN  
(into radio)  
We'll drop gear up here and increase the drag. Hopefully, you can manually feed it.

Mac grabs two wrenches and hands one to Naquin.

MAC  
Turns out this ride ain't free.

DECK OF FALCON

Momsen screams across the deck to Skee.

MOMSEN  
Drop it down a gear and increase the torque.

Skee manipulates the giant winch as it heaves on the cable.

INT. RESCUE CHAMBER

Mac and Naquin have wedged the wrenches into the side 'spokes' of the winch at their feet. They pull on them with all their might. It inches forward unspooling the cable. The chamber rises slowly. Until the teeth on the winch give way to the force.

Naquin and Mac struggle with the wrenches. No good. The winch buckles. Stopped dead.

Mac grabs the radio handset.

MAC  
(into radio)  
We're done! Swede, back off!

EXT. FALCON

The crane arm quivers with the strain. The Falcon lists starboard as it pulls itself over. Momsen runs out on deck.

MOMSEN  
Shut it down!

Skee slams the clutch back, eases the tension on the cable and shuts down the crane. Momsen's frustration is beginning to show.

MOMSEN (CONT'D)  
Skee, let's cut this bitch.

INT. RESCUE CHAMBER

Mac has the radio in hand.

MAC  
(into radio)  
We'll be ready. Just be sure Skee keeps away from the cable once he's finished.  
(replaces handset)  
Looks like we'll be moving again soon.

NAQUIN  
But the winch is jammed. We can't surface with the cable the way it is.

MAC  
That's a bit of a problem, isn't it? Lucky we got the best diver in the world coming down to give us a kick in the ass. Make that the second best diver in the world.

Mac smiles.

EXT. FALCON

Skee is dressed in the full-dive suit. He is being lowered over the edge by hand. His guide line in the hands of the men on deck. His head is just above the surface. Momsen hands him a pair of long-handled bolt cutters.

MOMSEN  
Tie them to your belt, keep your head clear. Focus.

Skee nods as he is lowered beneath the surface.

COLE  
Is this going to work?

MOMSEN

I've got a nine-ton chamber filled past capacity hanging off the edge of my boat attached to a submarine at the bottom of the ocean. This storm is kicking our ass to the point that it's going to capsize us any minute. I need to free that chamber from below and hope like hell we can haul them up.

EXT. RESCUE CHAMBER - UNDERWATER

Skee is lowered to the point that he can touch the top of the chamber. His metal boots clatter against its exterior.

INT. RESCUE CHAMBER - UNDERWATER

The men react to the sound on the exterior of the Chamber.

MAC

Sounds like we got company.

EXT. RESCUE CHAMBER - UNDERWATER

Skee guides himself to the bottom of the chamber. He is breathing heavily.

MOMSEN

(in Skee's helmet)

Settle down, Skee. You dropped too fast.

EXT. FALCON

Momsen and Cole are in the wheelhouse.

MOMSEN (CONT'D)

(into radio)

Focus. Breathe and focus.

EXT. RESCUE CHAMBER - UNDERWATER

Skee hooks his arm through the hatch wheel at the bottom of the chamber.

SKEE

I'm at the lower hatch. Cable is directly in front of me.

Skee fumbles with the bolt cutters tied to his waist. He shakes off the cold.

SKEE (CONT'D)

Forgot how cold it was down here. Tell Mac next time I ride inside.

MOMSEN  
 (in Skee's helmet)  
 Deal. Careful with the cutters.

Skee has finally grabbed hold of the bolt cutters.

FALCON

The storm rages on the surface. The Falcon shifts.

EXT. RESCUE CHAMBER - UNDERWATER

The swaying cable causes the Chamber to pendulum in the water. Like a trapeze artist, Skee is dragged back and forth with his one arm hooked through the hatch wheel. His weighted legs dangle like wet pasta.

SKEE  
 Hold it steady up there!

To stop his own motion, Skee wraps his legs around the cable extending from the seized winch to the bottom of the ocean.

MOMSEN  
 (in Skee's helmet)  
 Skee, you still there?

Skee squeezes his eyes tight trying to block out the pressure and the cold. He wraps his legs around the cable running down to the Squalus.

SKEE  
 I've steadied myself on the cable and have the cutters lined up.

EXT. FALCON

Momsen envisions the next moment.

MOMSEN  
 (into radio)  
 Skee, don't cut it! Get off the cable!

EXT. RESCUE CHAMBER - UNDERWATER

Too late. Skee cuts the cable and it snaps back at him. The heavy cable entwined between Skee's legs anchors him to the bottom while his own guide line to the surface sways with the will of the swells above.

The rescue chamber is free to pendulum back and forth at will in the water. The surface movement of the Falcon is the cause of the swaying.

INT. RESCUE CHAMBER - UNDERWATER

The men inside are once again tossed from side to side.

EXT. RESCUE CHAMBER - UNDERWATER

The rescue chamber swings back at Skee and slams into him. Skee bounces off uncontrollably.

Skee is being pulled from above and below. He is in danger of being ripped in half, the sharp cable cutting through his suit. His legs are slashed and bleeding heavily.

SKEE

I'm caught! Help me! I'm caught!

FALCON

Momsen yells out on deck.

MOMSEN

Give him slack! He's being torn apart!

The men on deck feed out additional line.

MOMSEN (CONT'D)

(into radio)

Skee, you've got to stop moving. Focus, breathe and focus.

EXT. RESCUE CHAMBER - UNDERWATER

Skee is dropped far enough down to avoid another collision with the swaying chamber. Skee breathes heavily. A cloud of blood wafts from his torn suit. He is succumbing to the cold and the pain.

SKEE

I'm cut, Swede.

MOMSEN

(into radio)

I know you're hurt. I know it's cold but don't give up on this. Find the end of the cable. It's wrapped you up, so find the end, Skee.

Skee's blurry vision searches his body. He finds the end. He begins the painful process of untangling himself.

He has freed himself.

SKEE

I'm out. Get me up, now.

EXT. FALCON

The men on deck begin hauling him up.

INT. RESCUE CHAMBER

The men have settled back into their seats.

MAC  
 (into radio)  
 Take care of him until you get us topside.

EXT. FALCON

MOMSEN  
 (into radio)  
 He's coming out of the water now. Doc  
 Benke will look after him.

Skee is being pulled up on to the boat. A warrior, he'll survive.

MOMSEN (CONT'D)  
 (into radio)  
 We're going to start the crane arm up  
 again. It won't be the smoothest of  
 rides, so hang on.

The crane arm whirs to life.

INT. RESCUE CHAMBER - UNDERWATER

The chamber is on the move.

NAQUIN  
 Your man is going to make it?

MAC  
 Us divers are a tough bunch. Not like you  
 Nancy boys playing in your boats.

The men smile.

EXT. RESCUE CHAMBER - UNDERWATER

The chamber rises through the water. The cable is at maximum tension as the nine-ton unit is being hauled up in the face of a storm.

The surface looms above as the cable is drawn taut and is feeling the stress of the waves now a mere thirty feet away.

POP! One of the nine-cable strands breaks, then another, then another.

INT. RESCUE CHAMBER - UNDERWATER

Two more strands break free as Mac immediately responds to the sickening sounds of the shredding cable just outside the chamber. He grabs the radio.

MAC  
 (into radio)  
 The cable's going! Swede, the cable!

EXT. FALCON

Momsen can see the wildcat flailing of the nine-strand cable coming loose as the chamber rises. One more strand snaps free, then another.

A command decision. The chamber is ten feet below the surface and being held by one single strand.

MOMSEN  
 Back off the crane. Back it off hard and drop them. Now!

The man running the crane on deck reacts out of training. He slams the winch in reverse and the chamber is dropped. Momsen darts back inside.

MOMSEN (CONT'D)  
 (into radio)  
 Mac, we got a problem.

INT. RESCUE CHAMBER - UNDERWATER

The men brace themselves as the chamber descends rapidly.

MAC  
 (into radio)  
 Damn right! We're going the wrong way!

MOMSEN  
 (into radio)  
 Your cable's down to one strand, she'll never hold the weight. Just hang on.

The men inside hang on, anticipating the impact.

NAQUIN  
 We're going to hit hard.

EXT. RESCUE CHAMBER - UNDERWATER

The chamber rushes to the ocean floor and slams down.

EXT. FALCON

MOMSEN  
 (into radio)  
 Mac! Come in, Mac! Naquin, this is Momsen. Come in, Naquin.

EXT. RESCUE CHAMBER - UNDERWATER

A black cloud envelopes the chamber as the silt displaced by the harsh crash floats in the water. It now lies on the ocean floor just yards from the Squalus.

EXT. FALCON

MOMSEN  
(into radio)  
Come in. This is Momsen, come in.

INT. RESCUE CHAMBER - UNDERWATER

The bodies are strewn about the chamber. Naquin rises up and clears his head. He reaches over and grabs the radio.

NAQUIN  
(into radio)  
This is Naquin.

MOMSEN  
(into radio)  
What is your status?

NAQUIN  
(into radio)  
Alive and on the bottom.

Mac struggles to sit up. His shoulder is jutting out at an unnatural angle. With his good arm he slaps the now-silent oxygen motor. Sparks jump from it and a whiff of black smoke indicates it has given up.

MAC  
Tell him my shoulder and the oxygen motor are out.

Doyle and the rest of the men struggle to right themselves.

NAQUIN  
(into radio)  
Mac has dislocated his shoulder and there are other injuries. The oxygen motor has shorted out. We're alive. What is the plan?

MOMSEN  
(into radio)  
Stand by. We'll pass it along.

Momsen drops the handset. He stands and faces Cole.

COLE  
Send another diver down with a cable splicer?

MOMSEN

No, too deep, too heavy a job. They lost their oxygen source. We have to get them up now.

COLE

You can't haul it up. She's too heavy and what's left of the cable won't handle the weight.

Momsen stares out at the armada of boats lit up and focused on the Falcon. Focused on him.

MOMSEN

I can't let those men die.

Cole looks out to the Sculpin floating on the surface.

COLE

We sent men down below knowing they may never come back up.

Momsen looks at the Sculpin.

MOMSEN

We send them down. We send them down with ballast. Of course we do.

He grabs the radio handset.

MOMSEN (CONT'D)

(into radio)

Mac! You're coming up.

INT. RESCUE CHAMBER - UNDERWATER

Mac is holding the radio.

MAC

(into radio)

I told the fellas down here you'd think of something. After all, you're the one who dropped us.

MOMSEN

(into radio)

The cable can't hold you on its own so you're going to have to help us out. We're going to have you blow the ballast out of the chamber.

MAC

(into radio)

We might shoot right up through the hull of one of them boats up there. We dropped off quite a ways.

MOMSEN

(into radio)

We'll guide you with what's left of the cable and you're going to have to ease the ballast out in a controlled flow.

Mac's shoulder is back in place but he's in obvious pain.

MAC

(into radio)

It's an idea except I'm down to one wing and Mihalowski isn't up to it. We need two men to bleed the tanks at an even rate.

MOMSEN

(into radio)

It's the only shot we've got left.

Mac looks across at Naquin.

MAC

(into radio)

Then I guess I'll be bossing around an officer for a change. We'll be ready.

EXT. FALCON

Momsen has prepped his team.

MOMSEN

The buoyancy of the water will help us until it gets to the surface, then gravity will take over. If the Falcon shifts too much it will break what's left of the cable. We have to clamp it off or she'll snap and we won't get her back. Everyone clear?

The men nod.

MOMSEN (CONT'D)

Then let's get these men home.

INT. RESCUE CHAMBER - UNDERWATER

Mac and Naquin grasp the ballast dials and gently turn them in tandem.

MAC

Easy, just like opening a bottle of twelve-year-old Scotch.

NAQUIN

When we get topside I'll get you a case to practice on.

MAC

Well that's as good a reason as any to get out of here.

The water seeps out from both of the ballast tanks.

EXT. RESCUE CHAMBER - UNDERWATER

The frothing bubbles from the silt indicates release from the ballast tanks. The chamber begins to rise.

EXT. FALCON

The crane arm gingerly gathers in the cable.

MOMSEN

Watch the climb rate. Don't get ahead of them and don't let them drift.

Momsen takes his coat off.

EXT. RESCUE CHAMBER - UNDERWATER

The chamber rises with the gentle and controlled release of the ballast.

INT. RESCUE CHAMBER - UNDERWATER

As one ballast tank empties, Naquin and Mac shift in tandem to the next set.

MAC

We'll make a working man of you yet.

NAQUIN

Thanks.

Mac checks his depth gauge. It reads twenty feet.

MAC

It's up to them now.

EXT. FALCON

As the frayed cable rises up out of the water, the ominous single strand becomes visible once again. The ocean is rocking the Falcon. The single cable strains with each swell.

Momsen is standing on deck with a large cable in one hand and a crimping wrench in the other hand. He has stripped his coat, shirt and shoes off.

Momsen waits for the rescue chamber to appear from below the surface. He leaps off the railing of the Falcon and into the water. The single strand is near breaking.

## MOMSEN

Hold the Falcon still. We're losing her!

The Falcon rises with a wave and SNAP! The chamber is on the loose. With a skilled touch, Momsen threads the cable's link in through the eyelet. The chamber is sinking and dragging Momsen down with it. His hands move like lightning and he locks the new cable. The cable draws taut and...HOLDS!

The chamber is now secure, bobbing just on the surface.

Momsen breaks the surface of the water and gasps for air. The escape hatch of the rescue chamber is clear of the waves. Momsen climbs on top and spins the wheel on the hatch.

Every eye in this corner of the North Atlantic and to a certain degree, the world, is focused on the open hatch. Mac's smiling face emerges and notices the now-soaked Momsen.

## MAC

Finally decided to join us working men.

Cheers explode from the decks of the surface craft as the occupants of the rescue chamber are lifted on board the Falcon. The injured Mihalowski, Doc, Powell, Gainor, Medeiros, Kuney, Maness and Doyle are on deck drinking in the reality of being alive.

The flotilla of press records it all.

EXT. FISHING BOAT

Snaps' shutter is flying. Even Richards can't hold back.

## RICHARDS

What the hell. Heroes sell papers, too.

EXT. FALCON

Finally, from inside, Naquin appears. He steps on deck. Admiral Cole, Momsen, Mac, the Squalus crew and the crew of the Falcon, snap to attention and salute. Naquin is moved.

## COLE

Welcome home. We've been waiting for you.  
All of us.

Naquin turns to see the grand armada of boats encircling him. Bright floodlights illuminate the Naval personnel on the surrounding ships. They are all at attention saluting Naquin. Naquin returns the salute. He shakes Cole's hand.

## NAQUIN

Thank you, sir.

He spots Momsen and shakes his hand.

NAQUIN (CONT'D)

I don't know if it is enough, but thank you.

MOMSEN

It's not. There's one more thing to be done.

Naquin is puzzled by the response.

EXT. WATERFRONT - PORTSMOUTH

Frances Naquin and the wives continue to stand vigil on the docks. Their faces illuminated by golden candlelight.

EXT. PT 33 - NIGHT

The rain has stopped and a thick fog has rolled in. The PT boat pushes hard through the night seas. Naquin stands at the bow consuming every mouthful of sea air available. Doyle, Maness, Kuney, Medeiros, Gainor and Powell stand by the railing. They strain to see 'home.' Through the dense fog, a constellation of earth-bound stars awaits on the shore.

EXT. WATERFRONT - PORTSMOUTH

Thousands of pinpoints of light dance in the darkness, illuminating the way home. The entire Naval base and town of Portsmouth await their arrival. LOCALS, REPORTERS, NEWSREEL CAMERAMEN and NAVAL BRASS, line the banks of the river and crowd the dock area. It is a human sea on shore and each person holds a brightly burning candle.

PT 33 appears from the darkness, moving past the throng that crowds the narrow inlet.

EXT. PT 33 - NIGHT

A mass of faces on shore. Each man on deck scanning, looking for a loved one. Naquin steps to the bow light, reaches in his pocket and pulls out his silver cigarette case. He angles it in front of the powerful light and catches its beam.

EXT. WATERFRONT

Frances warms to the sight of the signal.

FRANCES

From ship to shore...

EXT. PT 33

NAQUIN

And then home once more.

The crowd descends on PT 33 as it pulls up. The Squalus survivors step on to the dock and are engulfed by loved ones.

Naquin moves through the well-wishers congratulating him, looking for Frances. He finally finds her face in the crowd and makes his way to her. He wraps his arms around her. Together, as they should be.

INSIDE THE WHEELHOUSE OF PT 33, Momsen and Cole stare down at the unbridled joy of families reuniting.

COLE

How are those dreams of yours?

MOMSEN

Finally working out.

Naquin is kissing Frances while he holds Maggie and Dorothy.

MAGGIE

You made it just in time, Daddy.

DOROTHY

Did you invite all these people?

NAQUIN

Invite them to what, sweetheart?

DOROTHY

Our birthday party.

MAGGIE

Did you forget?

Naquin looks at his family and thanks God he is alive.

NAQUIN

Never, not even for one second.

He kisses Frances tenderly.

MOMSEN (O.C.)

Now it's done.

Naquin turns to face Momsen who is now on the dock.

MOMSEN (CONT'D)

Thank you.

Naquin smiles.

NAQUIN

You're welcome.

Momsen turns to walk away.

NAQUIN (CONT'D)

We're having a birthday party later today if you're interested.

Momsen looks at Naquin's family and the joyous reunions surrounding him..

MOMSEN

I think I'm going to get some sleep.  
Haven't had any in quite sometime.

Momsen disappears into the crowd. A man at peace.

EXT. PORTSMOUTH - DAY

The sunrise warms the Naval base. The Stars and Stripes is run up the flag pole.

EXT. WANDANK - NORTH ATLANTIC

The cruiser easily moves through the calm seas on this sunlit morning. Naquin and all thirty-three survivors of the Squalus are on deck. Dressed in their formal Naval uniforms, they are accompanied by Greenlee, Jacqueline Greenlee, Betty Patterson, Ariana Gibbs and all the family members of the Squalus crew. The civilians are dressed in black.

The Wandank slows and then comes to rest in the placid water. Naquin steps to a podium set up on the deck.

NAQUIN

My father was a wise man who knew that you cannot move forward without first looking back. These were not the first men to die while serving their country and I know they will not be the last. These men were family. Your family, my family. In the darkest moments below, each man who goes under faces a fear of never returning home. I wrote a letter to my wife in this dark time and I'd now like to read a section of it to you.

(unfolds a piece of paper)

My darling. I have never been closer to you than at this moment. While we are separated in body, you are always here in my heart. The home I long to return to is a place where we are together. Wherever our paths may take us, our home is no farther than the love we carry in our hearts.

(folds the paper back up)

It is in our hearts where these men shall live until that day when we meet again.

Naquin snaps to attention and salutes. Everyone stands and faces the Stars and Stripes fluttering in the breeze. A BUGLER plays taps as the resounding roar of the deck cannons discharge.

Naquin stares out at the dancing sunlight on the water as the melancholy sound of the bugle drifts across the waves to --

**EXT. SHORELINE**

The gentle surf laps at the fine sand beach. Ruth Desautel is walking out into the gentle waves. She stops when she is waist-deep in water. In her hands is a wedding wreath made from wild flowers. She tightens a ribbon on the wreath and tenderly eases it out to sea.

RUTH

I do, Cal. I do.

The wreath is slowly drawn out with the tide. The sunlight shining on the water sparkles brightly on the flowers. A glint of gold is nestled in amongst them, held tight by a ribbon. Tied with love are a pair of gold wedding rings.

Each gentle wave draws the wreath further out to sea. It slowly gives way to the water and slips

**BENEATH THE SURFACE**

The wreath drops deeper and deeper, tilting through sun rays and then into darkness. It finally comes to rest 243 feet down on the deck of the USS Squalus. The submarine lies in the frigid waters, a coffin for twenty-six young men on the bottom of the North Atlantic.

**TITLE CARD**

After an extensive salvage effort led by Swede Momsen the USS Squalus was raised one hundred and thirteen days later.

Swede Momsen went on to become a Rear Admiral in the United States Navy. His research devoted to underwater survival led to the modern-day scuba equipment now used around the world.

In a subsequent inquiry, Oliver Naquin was cleared of any wrong doing. A faulty induction switch was deemed to be the cause of the sinking. Naquin was never given command of another submarine.

The USS Squalus was refitted and later recommissioned as the USS Sailfish. She was dispatched to Pearl Harbor in November of 1941. The USS Sailfish battled throughout the South Pacific and was eventually decommissioned in 1953.

The May 24th, 1939 rescue of the crew of the USS Squalus was the first ever attempted in the history of Naval operations. To this day it is the only successful rescue of men trapped in a downed submarine.

THE END