

ATF

by

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FADE IN:

EXT. OUTER BANKS - DAY

Blue skies. Barrier islands. Intercoastal waterways.

Super: The Outer Banks, NC. - Near Future

BOATS AND SKIFFS

Anchored together, like a Spring Break party. Except these decks are littered with FANS and RACING OFFICIALS -- all standing in front of multiple monitors, high-tech gear.

We also see BOOKIES taking bets -- money changing hands -- and a slew of HOT, BIKINI-CLAD WOMEN sunning themselves. Suddenly, the crowd CHEERS as --

ROCKET RACERS slingshot across the sky at break-neck speed!

Rocket Racers are customized, car-sized JUNKER AIRCRAFT. Powerful, souped-up engines. Wild graphics, aerodynamics.

Racers dodge, dive and roll in super tight formations at low altitude. Wing tips mere feet away from each other.

CUT TO:

ON A SKIFF

JIMMY TWIG aka TWIG THE WONDER KID, (22). Rail-thin. Not sure if he should be working for NASCAR or NASA. He wears a *"Ziggy Stardust"* T-shirt.

With his TWO AUSTRALIAN CATTLE DOGS (BOB and ROO) at his side -- HEADSET on, eyes glued to a monitor -- Twig talks to his teammate -- to his PILOT -- guiding him --

TWIG

-- Lookin' good, Chase. You've got this. Just stay on track --

INT. CHASE'S COCKPIT - DAY

Our pilot is CHASE ELLIOT, (22). Youthful good-looks, rebellious eyes. A skilled daredevil. And he's our hero.

He flies his sleek, kick-ass Racer -- *"Satellite of Love."* A tight cockpit. A hodgepodge of gauges and avionics. Chase sits strapped inside a specialized ROLL CAGE.

Chase wears a HELMET. The VISOR is a pair of space-aged Oakley sunglasses. His pupils bathed in flickering neon.

CHASE'S POV - THROUGH THE VISOR

We see a virtual 3D digital "imaginary track" projected in the visor's HUD (heads-up display). The pilot must fly the racer through a VIRTUAL 3D RING-LIKE TUNNEL TRACK.

NOTE: If pilots fly outside the track, they're disqualified.

CUT TO:

As Chase flies through the track, he can also see the other Racers flying right around him. The landscape is a blur.

This is one crazy, heart-pounding roller coaster ride.

But the Racer to beat is already way out in front -- a killer, tricked-out Racer named "*The Grim Reaper*."

EXT. SKIES ABOVE THE WATER - DAY

The Racers shoot high, twisting into a barrel roll --

Suddenly, ONE RACER -- the engine seizes up -- POW! Flame out. The Racer spins out of control -- the pilot EJECTS, tucked inside his roll cage. A PARACHUTE deploys --

The Racer slams into the forest below. And EXPLODES.

That's one down.

TWIG

You're smack in the pack, four back. S-Curve coming up.

Chase punches it -- cutting in front of ANOTHER RACER. The Racer -- "*Black Widow*" -- panics, veers wide, and --

CUT TO:

ON THE BOATS

Officials see it, flagging him. He's done.

OFFICIAL

Black Widow, you are out.

Black Widow's RADIO MAN hurls his headset in disgust.

CUT TO:

SKIES ABOVE THE WATER

The Racers banking hard to the left, then to the right. It's absolutely gut-wrenching. The Racers dip low, buzzing the water, kicking up A WALL OF SPRAY in their wake, and --

TWO RACERS can't pull up in time -- BAM! Both slamming into the water, hard. Breaking apart. Debris scattering --

CUT TO:

A SKIFF motors out, EMERGENCY CREW on deck, ready to fish out fallen pilots. This game is serious.

INT. CHASE'S COCKPIT - DAY

Chase works the stick and throttle, gaining on Grim Reaper --

TWIG (OVER HEADSET)
You've got a vertical, followed by
a Low Yo-yo at Salvo Split.

EXT. BOAT - DAY

A TECH listens to a Police scanner, hears chatter --

TECH
Police are mobilizing. Cut the
track two miles. Pack it up --

INT. CHASE'S COCKPIT - DAY

Chase flying -- hammer down -- foot to the floor --

TWIG (OVER HEADSET)
Track's being cut short. Make your
move, cowboy. It's now or never.

CHASE
I'm on it.

EXT. SKIES ABOVE THE WATER - DAY

Grim Reaper goes vertical. Chase follows, not far behind --

The Racers bank hard -- dropping down -- earth coming up real fast. The track looping them through a TIGHT HAIRPIN TURN. Grim Reaper taking the outer lane, Chase the inner --

INT. CHASE'S COCKPIT - DAY

Chase grunting, pulling G's, keeping himself conscious --

EXT. SKIES ABOVE THE WATER - DAY

As they come out of the turn, they're now neck-and-neck --

TWIG (OVER HEADSET)
Keep it going! Eye on the prize!

The track drops them down towards a barrier island. A
NARROW GAP through the trees. This is Salvo Split.

Chase punches through Salvo Split, both wing tips nearly
grazing the trees. Grim accelerates -- pulling ahead --

INT. CHASE'S COCKPIT - DAY

Chase is determined to beat him. About to make his move --

CHASE
-- I'm going high --

TWIG (OVER HEADSET)
-- No! Stay inside, stick to --

CHASE
-- Watch this! --

Chase hits the gas -- rocketing skyward -- sliding up and
around -- but Grim Reaper sees him coming -- slipping in
front of Chase -- lighting his BURNERS and --

WHOOOSH! An orange blade of flame SHOOTS TOWARDS CHASE'S
RACER! He's about to get barbecued.

CHASE
Oh, shit!

He cuts it hard -- narrowly avoiding the flame -- veering
off the track. Alarms RING, signaling that he's out of the
race. But he has bigger problems, as --

BAM! He CLIPS a tree -- SEVERING OFF one of the Racer's
front canards (small wing) -- now spinning out of control --

TWIG (OVER HEADSET)
-- Punch out! --

CHASE
-- I can hold her --

TWIG (OVER HEADSET)
-- Eject! Eject! --

We see the water rushing up... Chase has to bail.

CHASE
Dropping fuel tanks.

He hits a release lever, then punches the EJECT BUTTON --

EXT. SKIES ABOVE THE WATER - DAY

BOOM! The roll cage ejects. Chase safely tucked inside.
The cage falls... and SPLASHES DOWN in the water.

We see TWO EXTERNAL FUEL TANKS fall away from the doomed
Racer... right before it SLAMS into the trees.

IN THE WATER

The roll cage tumbles to a stop, sinks to the muddy bottom.

UNDERWATER

Chase holding his breath, trying to free himself from his
safety harness. He struggles, fingers clasping in the
dark, brackish water. He's running out of air. Finally...

CLICK! Unbuckles himself, popping the cage open, and --

ON THE SURFACE

-- exploding to the surface, gulping air, coughing. Chase
pounds the water. He's frustrated, angry with himself.

Yet he's lucky to be alive.

EXT. ROAD - LATER

A TRUCK cruises along, towing an EMPTY TRAILER. We know
the trailer was used to haul Chase's Racer. Not anymore.

INT. TRUCK - DAY

Twig drives, frustrated. Chase rides shotgun, looking like
shit. Bob and Roo sandwiched between them. Awkward silence.

EXT. I-70 / STREETS OF HAVELOCK - DAY

Twig drives through the military town of Havelock, NC. Dollar General. Dairy Queen. Tattoo parlors, strip joints.

Not exactly a boulevard of big dreams.

They drive past **Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point**. Home to the 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing. Proud history. Having fought from the Battle of Midway to Operation Desert Storm.

EXT. CHASE'S HOUSE - DAY

A small, modest prefab. Slightly bigger than a double-wide. A vintage, kick-ass '69 Camaro RS/SS parked in the drive.

Twig's truck pulls up. Without saying a word, Chase slowly climbs out, sore, bruised. Both his body and ego.

TWIG

Hey. We win as a team, we lose
as a team, alright?

Chase nods. These two are more than friends, they're brothers.

INT. CHASE'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Chase enters his bachelor pad. TWO BEDROOMS. One lived in, the other military clean. Untouched. As if frozen in time.

We see framed photos of Chase, his brother RORY and their father JOE, all standing next to their father's F-14 Tomcat. Another photo of Rory in the cockpit of his F-15 Eagle.

This family is a legacy of fighter pilots... and one that used to be close. Happy. But that was a long time ago.

EXT. AIRPORT - LATER THAT DAY

A regional airport. Commuter flights, puddle jumpers.

CUT TO:

Chase's '69 Camaro rumbles into the parking lot. Chase exits, bags in hand, sunglasses on. He walks with other sharp-dressed PILOTS, exchanging friendly chit chat.

F-18 HORNETS rocket overhead. Chase watches... mesmerized.

INT. AIRPORT - DAY

Security checkpoint. A TSA Security Screener sits behind an X-RAY SCANNER, bored out of his skull.

And it's Chase.

Our hero is not a rock star pilot... he's security!

Chase works with BUSTER, (70) who's asleep on his stool. Chase WHISTLES. Buster wakes, startled, just as --

A MOM and SON, (8) set their bags on the conveyor belt. Mom is a real sexy Southern belle. One of the few perks.

As Chase scans their carry-on luggage, he suspiciously eyes the boy's HANDHELD VIDEO GAME. Stops the belt.

CHASE

Excuse me, sir. But is this some kind of alien device?

The boy freezes. Not sure what to think. A beat. Chase smiles, then restarts the belt, allowing the game through.

CHASE

You're free to go, sir.

The boy laughs, relieved. Mom eyes Chase, flirtatiously.

CHASE

(eyes her over, lying)
You look harmless. Enjoy your flight.

She smiles back. Anything but.

As Chase settles back into his boredom, a gruff, grizzled mechanic approaches... RON CYBRYNSKI (50s). He knows all about Chase's illegal racing activities.

And by the sheepish look on Chase's face, Ron knows he lost.

CHASE

It was close.

RON

Close don't cut it, son. Was it mechanical? Pilot error?

Chase knows he's fishing, but he isn't biting.

RON
Forget about it. Yesterday's
ballgame. Don't mean nothin'.
(looking around, low)
But I'm gonna need that fiberscope
kit back or else my ass is gonna
get chewed like a dog on a bone.

Chase nods. No problem. But we know that's not true.

EXT. AFTERBURN - NIGHT

A local watering hole. The most happening place in town.
Parking lot filled with motorcycles, souped-up cars, trucks.

INT. AFTERBURN - NIGHT

Loud. Crowded. Neon. Classic rock. Fighter pilots
rubbing elbows with fishermen, bikers and local hotties.

BEHIND THE BAR

Twig bartending. Chase fights his way to the bar.

CHASE
We need to salvage the Racer.

TWIG
Good thing you dropped your tanks,
otherwise there'd be nothing left.
All the money we've sunk into --
What? You mean tonight?

CHASE
I can't let 'ol Ronny down.

Twig sighs, knows Chase is right. Still not happy.

TWIG
Mosquitoes are gonna eat us alive.
(sees someone--)
Heads up, cowboy. The assholes
have landed.

FOUR FIGHTER PILOTS, dressed in uniform, on approach.

Leading the pack is TOM "FLEX" PHOENIX, (25). A talented
jerkoff who's always flexing his muscles. Behind him is...

STELLA "SAINT" RYDER, (24). Smart, beautiful... and the
one who's captured Chase's heart. But for unknown reasons
their romance has never taken flight.

FLEX

Hey! There he is, saving mankind
one patdown at a time.

Flex and his friends laugh. Saint glares, annoyed.

CHASE

Play your cards right and you'll
get a full cavity search.

And it's on. Flex ready to throw down. Chase right there,
outnumbered, could care less. It's about to get ugly until
Twig lays TWO PITCHERS OF BEER on the bar.

TWIG

On the house! For the graduates.
Make our country proud.

Tempers calm. Flex eyes Chase, time for one more jab.

FLEX

Hang in there, hotshot. Maybe
you can still fly for Fed-Ex, but
you'll probably screw that up too.

With that, he and his buddies move on, free pitchers in
hand. Saint stays behind. An awkward moment.

TWIG

I swear that asshole's the only
one I know who'd walk into a bar
and hit on himself.

(they laugh, then)

Lookin' good, Stella -- err...
Saint. Sorry, I keep forgettin'.
What's your call sign mean again?

Saint sighs, almost embarrassed. But spills it...

SAINT

Salons Are Important, Not Training.

TWIG

(looks at Chase)

Thought you said it was because she
was so damn innocent?

SAINT

I'm not *that* innocent.

Chase nods. It's true. Saint smiles. With that, Twig
gets the hint, moves on giving them some alone time.

CHASE
Congrats. I'm proud of you.
Top of your class, right?

SAINT
(nods, then)
Would've been you.
(Chase shrugs if off)
How've you been?

CHASE
Good. Working.

SAINT
I heard.

Another jab. Awkward for both, no way around the truth.

CHASE
Pays the bills.

SAINT
(re: his cut face)
See you're still flying.

CHASE
Always. It's in my blood.
(moving on)
When do you ship out?

SAINT
Tomorrow. Early.

CHASE
Where to?

SAINT
Don't know. It's classified.

Flex and the others call out for Saint, waving her over.
Flex flips off Chase. Chase plays the martyr.

CHASE
Well, wherever you go, I sure
hope you don't get stuck with
that dumbass as your wingman.
(she smiles)
Enjoy your last night of freedom.

A moment between them. That look. So many things Chase
wants to say. Saint so eager to listen. But Chase can't
find the words. Instead, they hug. Saint crestfallen.

SAINT
(whispers in his ear)
No one has the power to defeat you.
Only you do. Remember that.
(a beat)
I'll see you around, Chase.

And she leaves. Chase now quiet, filled with regret. A missed opportunity. Maybe his last. For a man with such confidence, bravado... he looks rattled, vulnerable.

Chase watches them celebrate, making something out of their lives. And it hurts.

EXT. SWAMPS - LATER THAT NIGHT

Dark, creepy, alive. A vast starlit sky.

A SKIFF motors through the darkness. We can see Chase and Twig, their faces illuminated by the instrument lights.

TWIG
I marked it on the GPS. Should
be somewhere right over there.

Suddenly, the engine dies, lights off. Now adrift.

TWIG
What the hell...?

Mumbling to himself, Twig fiddles with the outboard motor. Chase checks his cell phone. No power. That's odd.

Then, LOUD BOOMS ECHO -- thundering across the water -- sound waves rattling our heroes' teeth and bones.

CHASE
Little late for military exercises.

With eyes glued to the heavens, they scan the night skies, but it's difficult picking out objects amongst the stars.

Then, FLASHES OF LIGHT CRISSCROSS the sky -- something now falling -- hard and fast -- glowing like a comet --

And it's heading right for them! Chase and Twig hit the deck as the mystery object crashes, throwing up water --

CHASE
Look out!

They hold on as the skiff rides out the rough water.

As the water settles... The skiff's power resumes. As does their phones. What the hell is going on?

ON A NEARBY BARRIER ISLAND - THE CRASH SITE

Steam and smoke rise up from within the tall grass.

CHASE

Twig! Over there!

Twig drives towards the crash site, kills the motor. The skiff drifts up against the grass, crunching under the bow.

IN THE TALL GRASS

TWO BEAMS OF LIGHT break through the misty darkness as Chase and Twig slog along. Buzzing, biting mosquitos.

Chase pushes on, his feet crunching under grass until -- THUNK! His foot lands on something solid. Something metallic. As he pushes through, his eyes light up...

Chase is now standing on the WING OF A FIGHTER JET.

But this aircraft is unlike anything we've ever seen. Absolutely bad-ass. Lethal. And even though the ship lies half-submerged in swamp water, it's completely intact.

Twig emerges from the grass, amazed, speechless.

CHASE

Ever seen anything like this?

TWIG

Gotta be some advanced prototype, something out of the Skunk Works Division...

Chase walks across the wing, reaches the COCKPIT, placing an eye against the darkened canopy glass, and --

CHASE

Someone's in there!

Twig jumps to it. Chase looks for an emergency release, finds it. Air hisses. The CANOPY SLOWLY OPENS. Inside...

A MASKED PILOT.

Humanoid form, dressed in futuristic flight gear. On the flight suit, a solitary, RED CRYSTAL DEVICE GLOWS.

Chase reaches in, shakes the pilot. Nothing. Shakes him again, harder. Still nothing. He then carefully pulls off the Pilot's high-tech helmet, revealing...

AN ALIEN!

Twig and Chase jumping back, freaking out -- taking off --

IN THE GRASS

Our guys running -- crashing through the grass as fast as they can. Twig in the lead, Chase right behind. Suddenly, Chase slows... having second thoughts, torn, intrigued...

TWIG

-- I knew this was a bad idea!
That ship could be radioactive --
alien disease -- We've got to
deny *everything*! We were never
here, got it? Chase...?

BACK AT THE SHIP

Chase standing on the wing, staring at the alien pilot.
Twig emerges from the grass, before he can utter a word --

CHASE

Do you realize what we've found?
What this means?

TWIG

Damn right, I do. Government's
known about 'em for years. All
their secret cover-ups.
(looks skyward)
They've got a dozen satellites
watching us right now...

CHASE

(mulling it over)
You're probably right... That's
why we're taking it.

TWIG

Have you lost your damn mind?!

CHASE

If we leave, we'll never see this
ship again. And we'll both regret
it for the rest of our lives.
(smiles)
Time to knuckle up 'n buckle up.

MOMENTS LATER

Chase and Twig (with T-shirts wrapped around their hands, like gloves) lift the alien pilot out of the cockpit. As they do, the red crystal light BLINKS OUT.

They lay him down on the ship's wing. Chase shines a light over the alien's body... Humanoid form, menacing face. You wouldn't want to tussle with one of these guys alive.

CHASE
Hostile or friendly?

TWIG
(shrugs, then)
I wonder where it's from?
(Chase points skyward)
I meant what planet?

Chase notices something, aims his flashlight on the ship's fuselage, near the waterline... A NASTY BURN MARK.

CHASE
Looks like our boys got off a
lucky shot.
(gazing up at the stars)
But why here? Why now?

TWIG
Who knows. Maybe it was on some
sorta alien recon mission, spyin'
on our bases.

Chase climbs up into the cockpit. A perfect fit.

CHASE
Check it out, man. We've got
stick, throttle, basic six...

Twig joins him. Our pilot and mechanic begin fiddling around -- thinking aloud -- speaking their own language --

TWIG
No, not that... No... Maybe this.

He points to RED CRYSTAL IGNITION BUTTON.

CHASE
Only one way to find out.

He presses it... nothing happens. Again. Still nothing.

TWIG

Hell, maybe it ran out of gas.
Forget it. We tried. Let's go.
(moving on, then--)
Hey, did you check that alien's
pockets for the keys?

He laughs. But it strikes a chord with Chase. He leaps out of the cockpit, and removes the RED CRYSTAL DEVICE from the alien pilot's flight suit. Twig sees him...

TWIG

It was a joke. C'mon.

Device in hand, Chase then grabs the alien's HELMET, jumps back in the cockpit. The red crystal device LIGHTS UP. As does the red ignition button. They're connected!

Chase inhales deeply. The moment of truth. With that, he presses the button... VRRROOOOOOOOOOM! The starfighter's engines kick on. Futuristic avionics and displays light up.

CHASE

Too late now.

Suddenly, the ship begins to automatically REPAIR ITSELF. High-tech tools mend the fuselage's cauterized wound.

TWIG

Unbelievable...

As he watches... THE ALIEN PILOT RISES UP BEHIND HIM!

It's alive! It grabs Twig, flinging him. Twig sails through the air... and splashes down hard.

CHASE

Twig!

Alien Pilot then pulls a futuristic GUN on Chase, begins TALKING in some incomprehensible alien language.

Chase sees Twig. He's muddled, bloodied, but alive.

Alien Pilot looms closer... his unknowable words angry in tone. Chase HITS the throttle. The starfighter TILTS SHARPLY as it rises up. Alien Pilot stumbles backwards -- BLAM! -- firing off a LASER SHOT as it falls into the water.

CHASE

(waving him away)
Twig, go! Get outta here!

Alien Pilot surfaces -- back on its feet -- GUN still in hand -- now standing behind the starfighter's ENGINES.

Chase sees him and punches it -- *FFFFWWWOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOM!*
The engines BELCH OUT TWO, SILVER BLADES OF FLAME!

The blast INCINERATES our Alien Pilot.

Twig watches in awe as the canopy closes shut. Chase waves goodbye as the starfighter takes off like a shot --

INT./EXT. CHASE'S STARFIGHTER - NIGHT

Chase flies, talking to himself, calming himself down. A mixture of adrenaline, excitement and anxiety. We see city lights below him, coming and going. This is unreal.

EXT. SWAMPS - NIGHT

Twig runs towards his truck, freaking. Bob and Roo inside the cab. Suddenly... RUMBLING. From above. Jet engines. Twig scans the night skies. Those are military fighters.

TWIG

Oh, no...

INT. CHASE'S COCKPIT - NIGHT

Chase flying. Suddenly, WARNING LIGHTS chime. What's going on? We then hear VOICES over the internal comm system.

VOICE (O.S.)

Identify yourself. You are
entering restricted airspace...

Chase sees a SQUADRON OF F-18s heading right for him. They're hailing him. He doesn't know how to respond.

CHASE

Hey, can you hear me? Don't
shoot! I'm an American!

But there's no reply. We just hear the voice giving the same instructions over and over. Chase is frustrated.

CHASE

Aww, screw it.

He punches it. And he's gone. The ship is that fast.

INT. TRUCK - NIGHT

Twig driving. Dogs riding shotgun.

TWIG

(rambling to himself)

He never, ever listens to me --

Never! -- I don't get it --

(to the dogs)

You guys do. When I say stay in
the truck, you stay in the truck.

Simple. Easy. Why can't he --?

AN ONCOMING MOTORCADE OF BLACK GOVERNMENT SUVs fly past.
Strobe lights flashing. Twig looks really nervous.

EXT. APACHE POINT OBSERVATORY - NIGHT

Located in the Sacramento Mountains. To establish, then:

Super: Apache Point Observatory. Sunspot, NM.

INT. APACHE POINT OBSERVATORY - NIGHT

An ASTRONOMER peers through a massive telescope. As he
looks up at the heavens, his eye suddenly lights up --

ASTRONOMER'S POV - THROUGH THE TELESCOPE

Chase's starfighter is now over New Mexico, in only a matter
minutes. A SQUADRON OF F-22 RAPTORS on an intercept course.

Chase punches it, leaving the Raptors in his dust.

EXT. TWIG'S HOUSE - LATER THAT NIGHT

A HOUSE up on stilts. Surrounded by forest, on the water.
Isolated. No neighbors. Up on the second floor we see...

INT. TWIG'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Twig watching TV. Every channel, same report. Chase's UFO
flyby. Bob and Roo suddenly run to the window, BARKING.

The house shakes -- lights flicker -- Twig looks out the
window, sees the alien starfighter landing in his backyard!

EXT. TWIG'S HOUSE / BACKYARD - NIGHT

Twig and the dogs running down the steps. Chase kills the engines. The starfighter powering down. Grass settling.

The canopy opens. We see Chase. A big shit-eating grin on his face. He's just had the thrill ride of his life.

TWIG

Whoa! Whoa! Are you crazy?!
You can't park that thing here!

CHASE

Where else can I put it?!

TWIG

Your flyby across America is all over the damn news! How many crimes do you plan on committing in one night? The military's gonna come lookin' for this --

CHASE

-- Don't worry. We'll hide it out back, throw some tarps on it. No one will know.

TWIG

Yeah. Unless it's been fitted with some kinda tracking device. Ever think about that?

(off Chase, a beat)

What exactly do plan on doing with this thing? Pick up girls? Fight crime? Start an intergalactic war?

Chase doesn't answer. He doesn't know.

EXT. SWAMPS - LATER THAT NIGHT

The crash site is now a full-fledge military operation. Boats and helicopters, spotlights blazing. ARMED AGENTS everywhere. It's not the FBI or the CIA...

It's the ATF.

And spearheading this operation is GENERAL GAVIN JAX, (40). Suave, smart. A genuine bad-ass hero. And a maverick.

ATF AGENTS survey the area using HIGH-TECH LIGHT DEVICES which reveal heat signatures. Tomorrow's technology.

A FEMALE ATF AGENT hands Jax a sealed plastic bag. Inside we see the melted, twisted remains of Alien Pilot's GUN.

ATF AGENT
An OR-7-Class Holdout Pulser.
(a beat)
No trace of any foreign DNA, but
we've identified two sets of
fingerprints, sir. Human.

ATF AGENT #2
Sir! We've found another aircraft.
Wreckage is still hot.

JAX
What kind of aircraft?

EXT. AIRPORT / PARKING LOT - DAY

Chase walking, in a daze. Excited and nervous. He then sees ATF AGENTS talking to Ron. Chase makes an about face -- WHAM! ATF AGENTS -- out of nowhere -- pouncing on him --

INT. ROOM - LATER

Chase sits alone. Brave face on. Jax enters, lays a PHOTO of Chase's Racer on the table. Burned, but recognizable.

JAX
I hear you like to fly.

CHASE
Yeah? So? It's not illegal --
Alright, it's not *that* illegal.

JAX
That's not why I'm here.

CHASE
Then why are you here? Why am I
here? I've done nothing --

JAX
-- Where is it?

CHASE
Where is *what*?

JAX
The ship.

CHASE

Ship?

(holds up photo)

This ship?

(Jax eyes him hard)

What ship? I don't know what you're talking about. And when you mean "ship" are you referring to a boat or an aircraft...?

Jax pulls out a tablet, tapping away, showing Chase --

ON SCREEN: SATELLITE SURVEILLANCE FOOTAGE.

A bird's-eye view of Chase and Twig stealing the ship, Chase killing the alien pilot. Everything.

Chase cringes, knows he's fucked.

JAX

Yes. That ship. The one we shot down. The one that's not from this planet... You're in over your head, kid. You and your friend are lucky to be alive.

(lets that hang)

Now. Where is it?

EXT. TWIG'S HOUSE / BACKYARD - LATER

Government vehicles surround the alien starfighter, hidden under camouflaged netting. Chase and Twig sit, cuffed.

TWIG

They are so gonna kill us.

(off Chase)

We know too much. We're expendable, man. Ordinary taxpayers. They'll just make us disappear, erase us from existence.

Jax stands nearby, watching his agents work.

CHASE

What does the ATF want with my ship?

JAX

Your ship?

CHASE

I found it.

JAX

Your ship is now property of
the United States Government.

CHASE

Since when did the Federal
Government's jurisdiction include
outer space? And shouldn't y'all
be chasin' after arms dealers or
bootleggers?

No response. Chase watches helplessly as an OVERSIZED TRUCK
begins hooking up his alien starfighter. It's painful.

CHASE

Man, this is such bullshit!

TWIG

Hey, how about a reward? Maybe
a nice tax break? We did dig it
out of the swamps for y'all.

Jax motions. An ATF AGENT uncuffs them both.

CHASE

Good thing this never happened,
and you were never here, right?

JAX

Breathe one word of this and we
will erase you from existence.
And I'll see to it personally.

Chase and Twig both know he's serious. The caravan drives
off with the starship (now covered under a military tarp).
Chase then unveils something hanging around his neck...

A makeshift necklace... the RED CRYSTAL KEY.

INT. CHASE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Chase zoning out on the couch, watching TV. Some program
about The Battle of Midway on *The History Channel*.

EXT. CHASE'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Chase outside, staring up at the silent stars, wondering.
Slow moving lights appear... Chase is excited for a split
second, then realizes it's just a commercial airliner.

Chase lets out a deep sigh. His cell RINGS, shattering
the silence. It reads: Twig. He answers --

CHASE
Hey, what's up? -- Huh? -- No
one's following you -- Believe
me, we're not that important --
I know -- alright -- later.

Hangs up. A solemn beat. As Chase walks back inside the house... A CAR starts up. Headlights snapping on.

INT. AFTERBURN - DAY

Chase at the bar, drinking. Twig cleans glasses.

TWIG
So far, so good. It's been four
days and we're not dead yet.
(off Chase)
Let's head out to Cape Lookout, do
some fishin'. I get off in an
hour, you have the day off --

CHASE
-- I was fired.

TWIG
Suspended.

CHASE
Without pay.

TWIG
Y'know, maybe it was all for the
best. It's now their problem.
Let them deal with it.

Suddenly, the front door opens, in walks GENERAL GAVIN JAX.
Twig stabs Chase a look. Jax pulls up a seat next to Chase.

JAX
Whiskey. And whatever he wants.

Chase points to his beer, then holds up three fingers,
smiles. Twig's on it. Chase still not looking at Jax.

CHASE
How do you like your new toy?

A beat.

JAX
How'd you get it to fly?

CHASE
(nearly spits his beer)
You're kiddin' me, right?

Jax stares daggers. He's serious. Twig hands Jax his whiskey, Chase his three beers. Chase looks at Twig, grins.

CHASE
And you said I couldn't fly it.

TWIG
I stand corrected.
(to Jax)
The kid's got mad skills, sir.
Me on the other hand? No way.
Bad eyes, weak stomach...

Jax eyes Twig hard. Twig leaves. Jax shoots his whiskey. Chase grabs a glass, helping himself to Jax's whiskey...

JAX
Your friend's right. You do
have a lot of talent... Air Force
Academy... On the fast track to
stardom until you got kicked out
a year later... bad attitude...
family issues --

CHASE
-- Don't! Just...

Jax just hit a nerve. Was it an accident? On purpose?

CHASE
My brother served his country
proud, with honor... He was a hero.
And for what? All our government
did was shit on his memory, lie to
his family. I couldn't even give
him a proper burial. So yeah, I'd
say I had a bad attitude.
(raises his shot glass)
Here's to Uncle Sam.

And lays it down, pushes it away. Conversation's over.
Chase gets up, fuming, old wounds now reopened.

JAX
Your brother was part of something
big, something special... Want to
carry on his legacy?

Chase stops. A beat. Fiddles with his necklace.

CHASE

What are you talking about? Who are you? And why would the ATF need fighter pilots? You guys chase down --

JAX

-- I don't have time to waste. Can you fly it? Yes or no? I need an answer right here, right now.

The moment of truth. This is a second chance for Chase. And he's determined not to screw this up.

CHASE

You get me my wings and I'll get your ship to fly. Deal?

(Jax nods, done)

Good. And whatever he wants...

He points at Twig, who's been listening the whole time.

TWIG

A Hydra-Sports Custom 3600 VX fishing boat -- a Ducati 1198 SP superbike, a new Ford-150 truck -- fully loaded -- and a *lifetime* government-issued gas card. Oh and pet insurance for my dogs...

JAX

(mulling it over)

Gas card might be tough.

No one laughs. Jax caves. Twig bumps fists with Chase.

EXT. COASTAL CAROLINA AIRPORT - DAY

Chase is escorted by Jax and ATF Agents on the tarmac, towards a PRIVATE JET. Chase's co-workers watch in horror. Chase waves, smiling. Now they look *really* confused.

INT. PRIVATE JET - LATER

Chase and Jax sit. Awkward silence, then

CHASE

You never answered my question. What does the ATF want with my ship?

JAX

(smiles)

The ATF's annual budget is \$14 billion dollars -- Well, \$14 billion that the taxpayers *know* about. Still, that's a lot of money to combat booze, guns, and cigarettes, don't you think? And the last time I checked, they're *all* legal.

CHASE

Oh, I get it. Now it makes sense. You're not with that ATF, you're with the other... We're going to Area 51, aren't we?

Jax smiles coyly. Chase gazes out the window, grins.

CHASE

The sky's the limit.

JAX

No, it's not. It's just the beginning...

EXT. SKY - DAY

As the jet descends through the clouds, we see beautiful azure waters. Tropical islands. Paradise.

Super: Andros Island. THE BAHAMAS.

EXT. MILITARY BASE - LATER

Nondescript hangars, bungalows and towers. A sign reads: **Atlantic Undersea Test and Evaluation Center (AUTC)** Department of the Navy. (*NOTE: This place actually exists*)

CUT TO:

Chase, Jax and others exit the jet, into an awaiting SUV. They drive through the complex, pulling up onto a HELIPAD.

Suddenly, the helipad LOWERS, taking them down into --

A SECRET UNDERGROUND TUNNEL

Security checkpoint. Armed Guards, attack dogs, scanners. The SUV passes a thorough inspection, drives off...

INT. ATF CONTROL ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

A more advanced version of NORAD. Buzzing with activity, packed with personnel. Jax and Chase enter...

JAX

Welcome to the ATF. The Alien Tactical Force.

(off Chase)

The ATF was created to protect earth from any and all hostile alien races... There's a war going on out there, beyond our solar system. It just hasn't reached earth... yet.

(off Chase, nods)

Mankind is now part of a united coalition of forces. A kind of intergalactic UN.

Chase stares at the wall-sized screens displaying star constellations -- planets -- military intelligence.

CHASE

Humans fighting along side aliens?

JAX

And your brother was a part of it. He died for the cause.

(off Chase)

All of this doesn't exist. It was "born classified." Meaning no one knows about it... FBI, CIA, NSA, NASA... Not even the President.

Chase's mind is still reeling, it's overwhelming. ATF Agents approach Jax, asking for signatures and approvals.

CHASE

How long have we known... been in contact with aliens? Roswell?

JAX

The first reported UFO sighting was back in 1897, in Aurora, Texas. Ship crash-landed, took out a windmill. Alien pilot's still buried in the local cemetery. And that was six years before the Wright Brothers...

CUT TO:

AS THEY MOVE DOWN A HALLWAY - THROUGH THE WINDOWS

ATF SCIENTISTS and TECHNICIANS working on all kinds of cool, high-tech alien hardware. SPECIAL OP ATF SOLDIERS testing bad-ass alien COMBAT WEAPONS. Mind-blowing stuff.

JAX

The Agency itself was created during the early stages of World War II. Allied Forces had to pull together... Nazis got the jump on us. They were the first to harness and utilize alien technology... Jet fighters, advanced rocketry, lasers... We're lucky we won.

CHASE

Thank god for American know-how.

JAX

The world came along so far, so fast. All because of alien technology. And now we've been asked to help... We had no choice.

(eyes Chase)

Lucky for you the people behind this entire facility want you to fly that ship.

INT. HANGAR - MOMENTS LATER

A massive underground HANGAR. Filled with --

FIGHTER JETS AND ATTACK BOMBERS

Planes ranging from the 1940's to the 21st Century. The planes just look somewhat different. They've all been retrofitted with super cool alien aftermarket parts.

JAX

All of these fighters have been retrofitted with alien technology... weapons, avionics, anything and everything under the hood.

CHASE

Hybrids.

We then see (and hear) TWO MEN yelling at each other --

One is a big, burly, bald pilot from Louisiana. Meet CAPTAIN REX JENKS, (28). Call sign: T-RETZ. (Tourette's)

The other a FLIGHT DECK OFFICER. Both standing next to --
An A-10 THUNDERBOLT.

An attack fighter-bomber. The A-10 usually houses a single GAU-8 Avenger GATLING CANNON. This one has three cannons.

We see that Rex has just painted SHARK TEETH around the aircraft's nose with the slogan: "*Talk Dirty to Me.*"

FLIGHT DECK OFFICER
That plane is government property!

T-RETZ
Aw, that's a buncha horseshit!
This is my plane. I fly it.

JAX (O.S.)
But I own the pink slip...

Both men turn around, immediately standing at attention.

JAX
...You just own a set of keys.

FLIGHT DECK OFFICER
(points out the artwork)
Sir, Captain Jenks has vandalized --

T-RETZ
-- *Customized.* Sir.

The two men glare at one another. Jax steps in, enough --

JAX
It's alright. I told him he
could... pretty it up.
(to Chase, low)
Don't ever drink or play cards
with that man. Trust me.

T-RETZ
Family visitation day, sir?

T-Retz just fired the first shot. Chase glares.

JAX
Chase, I want you to meet Captain
Rex Jenks. Call sign: T-Retz.

Chase stifles a laugh. T-Retz turns red with anger.

JAX
 Besides being an artist and
 comedian, Captain Jenks has quite
 a way with words. Very colorful.

He shows off the rest of the GHOST SQUADRON FIGHTERS.

An F-22 Raptor. F-14 Tomcat. F-35 Lightning II. F-18
 Super Hornet. F-15 Strike Eagle. And our A-10 Thunderbolt.

Each modified with alien technology and armament.

JAX
 These Generation 7 fighters take
 "air superiority" to a whole new
 level. Our motto is "*Negari non
 caelum*" -- No sky denied.

Chase is awestruck. These are the most advanced fighter
 planes on the planet. Except for...

CHASE'S ALIEN STARFIGHTER.

On the showroom floor, under the bright lights. It looks
 like it could kick our ass just sitting there.

FIVE OTHER FIGHTER PILOTS approach: Bug, Mozart, Slush,
 Dingo (*we'll get to know them later*) and...

CHASE
 Stella...? -- err... Saint!

SAINT
 Chase Elliott...?

Chase looks at Jax, ready to explain --

JAX
 The Academy. I know.
 (motions to them)
 This good-lookin' bunch are the
 best of the best. And you're now
 the newest member of the team.
 Welcome to Ghost Squadron...

The pilots eye Chase. Unsure, leery, cold.

JAX
 ...If you can get my ship to fly...
 and if you're any good.

Those are fighting words. Chase grins, settles into the
 starfighter's cockpit... the red ignition button and
 crystal key necklace around his neck ILLUMINATE. Yes!

Chase stares at Jax. Both men not taking their eyes off each other. Chase smiles, and -- VRRRRROOOOOOM! Engines rocket to life. Jax sighs relief. It was his ass.

CHASE
This mule can kick. Shall I take
her out for a spin?

INT. ATF / ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Chase sits in front of a WALL OF TOUCH-SCREEN MONITORS. Each screen has an ALIEN FACE. Like a police mug book.

Chase taps through various alien species... finally lands on a familiar face. The Pilot. He looks at Jax, nods.

JAX
*That is the face of our enemy.
An enemy that will one day try
to wipe out earth. Remember it.*

This hits home. Chase now realizes the gravity of it all.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - LATER

Ghost Squadron dressing. Futuristic flight suits. Chase enters. A lamb in the lion's den. He sees pilots in various states of dress (or undress). Chase walks past...

PETER UTLEY, (26). F-22 Raptor pilot. Model looks, cocky, talented. But a man who can back it up. Call sign: BUG.

Next up... T-RETZ. Shirtless. Muscular, lots of ink.

T-RETZ
Don't be shy, boy. We ain't gonna
bite you. Dingo might, but --

Dingo pounces on T-Retz, lightning fast moves. Meet DINGO, (28). Crazy smart. Crazy eyes. A wild and wily F-35 Lightning pilot. His real name is MATT HALSEY.

As the two pilots tussle, Chase finds his locker, opens it -- WHAM! A HAND slams it shut, nearly crushing his fingers. Meet CHRIS LOCKHART, (27). A skilled F-14 Tomcat pilot. But a legend in his own mind. Call sign: SLUSH. And --

EMMA "MOZART" FALCO, (28). A sexy, fearless F-18 pilot.

MOZART
Take it easy, Slush.

CHASE
(laughs)
Slush? Seriously?

BUG
Yeah, you see when Slush here was the "new guy"... He wanted to be called Ice. But unlike me, the rest of the squad decided he wasn't cool enough to be called Ice... so they named him "Slush."

CHASE
That's genius.

SLUSH
(eye-fucking Chase)
Shit. Look at you... You're no seasoned pilot. You're a nobody. How the hell did you wind up here in the big leagues, rookie?

SAINT
I'm a rookie.

SLUSH
Yeah, but you're hot.

SAINT
And you're not, so what's your excuse?

Slush takes a step towards Saint, but Chase steps in front of him, blocking his path. A tense showdown.

MOZART
Alright, that's enough, put your gigglesticks back in your pants. Let's saddle up. Planes don't fly themselves... at least not yet.

SLUSH
Yeah, somethin' ain't right about all this. I say we call him "Snake" or "Sneaky Bastard"... or "Worm." Yeah, that fits. Worm.

With that, he walks off. Saint smiles, thanks. As Chase holds up his FLIGHT UNIFORM, we see the official ATF PATCH with the Ghost Squadron insignia. Chase smiles.

Jax enters, everyone quiets down...

JAX

We're due to ship out any day
now. I want you all ready to
rock when I say roll...
(hands Chase a
high-tech HELMET)
Go grab some sky. Impress me.

EXT. SKIES ABOVE THE OCEAN - DAY

We're in motion -- Ghost Squadron flying -- a training
exercise -- aerobatic combat maneuvers -- everyone working
as a tight unit. Except Chase is nowhere to be seen.

T-RETZ (O.S.)

Where you at, Worm?

WHOOOOSH! Here comes Chase -- hotdogging it -- coming up
from behind at unbelievable speed, now on Dingo's tail --

DINGO (O.S.)

I don't think so, mate.

Dingo's F-35 rolling up -- a pitchback maneuver -- Chase
angling for the kill -- but overshoots his target --

INT. CHASE'S COCKPIT - DAY

Chase now losing sight. Shit! Where'd he go? Then, TWO
TARGETS pop up on Chase's HMD (Helmet Mounted Display) --
Dingo's F-35 and Bug's F-22. Dead ahead. Perfect.

EXT. SKIES ABOVE THE OCEAN - DAY

Chase punches it -- Suddenly, the F-22 and F-35 splinter
off -- Bug a hard left -- Dingo a hard right -- wing tips
tilted at 90 degrees, then --

Both ATF fighters circling back, turning towards each other
-- crossing paths -- canopy to canopy -- dangerously close.
They repeat the maneuver, like flying a FIGURE 8.

Chase on their tail. Has to pick one. Which one?

He bites on Dingo's F-35 -- has him dead in his sights --
but Chase doesn't get a chance to fire because Bug's F-22
-- Dingo's wingman -- his teammate -- roars towards Chase
from the side -- now with a perfect angle of attack (AOA).

INT. CHASE'S COCKPIT - DAY

Alarms blare. Bug has a lock-on. If this was a real combat situation, Chase would be dead. Fuck.

BUG (OVER HEADSET)
You've been bug squashed, rookie.

DINGO (OVER HEADSET)
Now that's how you execute a Thach Weave.

MOZART (OVER HEADSET)
Just remember, Worm. Good judgment comes from experience... and experience comes from bad judgment.

Ghost Squadron laughs. Chase angry at himself.

JAX (OVER HEADSET)
Technology won't save us, Chase. Teamwork will. Basic Air Combat Maneuvers. Lone Ranger jobs will get you killed every time. You might have greater thrust, a faster rate of climb, but in this atmosphere -- you're heavy, not as nimble. Our fighters are far more maneuverable. We believe it has something to do with the ship's metal alloy.

CUT TO:

A SERIES OF SHOTS: CHASE TRAINING

Chase hitting the books, learning Air Combat Maneuvers --

Chase with ATF SCIENTISTS, DOCTORS, ENGINEERS -- studying his starfighter -- running tests and diagnostics -- hooking Chase up with electrodes, monitoring his mind and body -- getting his eyes tested -- giving blood --

Chase back in PT -- lifting weights -- heavy squats -- running -- building endurance -- clearing his mind --

EXT. SKIES ABOVE THE OCEAN - DAY

All fighters hit the deck -- rocketing right across the water twisting in a corkscrew rotation (*flat scissors roll*).

JAX (O.S.)

Deck is set at thirty -- I want a defensive split -- Mako One break left -- Mako Two, right -- AOA 23 degrees -- Chase -- run 'n gun it up the middle, speed of heat --

Bug, Saint and Slush (MAKO ONE) break left -- Dingo, Mozart and T-Retz (MAKO TWO) break right -- Chase zeroes in on --

A CARGO SHIP. The designated target.

All seven fights converge -- firing their deadly ordnance in unison -- Bull's-eye! The cargo ship EXPLODES!

INT. ATF / CONTROL ROOM - DAY

Jax sits in front of massive view screens -- watching his pilots -- monitoring their progress, looking pleased.

JAX

Let's do it again. There's always room for excellence.

INT. ATF / HANGAR - LATER THAT NIGHT

T-Retz and Slush painting -- "customizing" -- Chase's starfighter. But they're not having any luck. The paint runs right off the metal surface, onto the floor. Weird.

SLUSH

This paint sucks.

Annoyed, T-Retz bats him in the head with his paint brush.

INT. ATF / JAX'S OFFICE - LATER

Jax studies a futuristic, interactive STAR MAP. War plans. An ATF ASTROPHYSICIST enters, at a loss for words.

ATF ASTROPHYSICIST

We've run every test possible.
Might be some sort of DNA link
or... We just don't know...

A beat. Jax rubbing his eyes, tired.

JAX

So what you're telling me is that
I'm stuck with this kid?

ATF ASTROPHYSICIST

(nods)

But he's good. Real good. One
of the best I've ever seen.

With that, he leaves. Off Jax --

INT. ATF / HANGAR - NEXT MORNING

Chase suited up, walking towards his starfighter...

T-Retz and Slush on their knees, scrubbing the floor clean.
Soapy water splashing. Both look embarrassed. Like a
scolding parent, Jax stands over them, points to Chase --

JAX

You fly.
(to T-Retz/Slush)
You scrub.

EXT. SKY - DAY

Chase flying along side his wingman... Saint. Together,
they execute intricate, aerobatic maneuvers. Then --

SAINT

Race you to the top... Worm.

She laughs, lighting her afterburners, now going vertical --

CHASE

That's right. You better run.

Chase punches it! Off like a shot -- blowing past Saint's
F-15. Blue skies give way to darkness... We see the
curvature of the earth, stars... We're now in... SPACE.

INT. CHASE'S COCKPIT - SAME

Chase cruising just outside of earth's orbit. A moment.
Serene, beautiful. Quiet. He stares at the earth below.

JAX (OVER HEADSET)

Time to run some laps, hotshot.
Just like we talked about. And if
you hit any of those satellites,
it's coming out of your pocket.

CHASE

Bill me.

EXT. SPACE

Chase's starfighter kicks into another gear -- maneuvering around orbiting satellites at hypersonic speed -- like an obstacle course -- past the International Space Station --

INT. ATF / CONTROL ROOM - DAY

Jax watches, truly impressed with the kid. An ATF AGENT hands Jax a file labeled: **Operation: Stagefright.**

INT. ATF / BARRACKS - DAY

Mozart and Saint doing handstand pushups. Serious strength and skill. The guys cheering them on, waving money --

Suddenly, both women stop. Their faces beet red, sweating, staring... The guys now turning around... It's Jax.

JAX

Orders came through. Tomorrow.
18:00 hours. Enjoy what might be
your last night on earth.

EXT. MILITARY BASE - DAY

A MILITARY JEEP motors along through the maze of bungalows.

Suddenly, SEVEN RADIO-CONTROLLED JETS buzz right overhead, startling the Driver. He swerves, knocking over a trash can.

CUT TO:

ON THE BEACH

Ghost Squadron -- our culprits -- standing in the sand, operating their radio controllers -- flying the RC jets.

It's a race. Chase and Saint in the lead -- neck-and-neck, until -- BAM! Slush takes out Chase -- kamikaze-style -- both RC jets crashing in the surf. Saint wins.

Slush laughs, taunting Chase, as if Slush won. Lame.

LATER - NIGHT

Barbecue. Booze. Bonding. Good times. Everyone a few drinks down, showing off their "call sign" tattoos --

Mozart has a MUSICAL NOTE -- T-Retz has a T-REX across his back (with crazy, buggy eyes) -- Bug has a BUG -- Slush has MELTED ICE CUBES -- Dingo has a DINGO.

Bug strums an acoustic guitar while a hammered Dingo tells the story about the Japanese kanji symbol on his biceps --

DINGO
This means muscle...

CHASE
Muscle? As in strength, right?

DINGO
Nooooo... as in muscle.
(kisses biceps)
My love guns.
(Mozart scoffs)
I was in Osaka... Japan... Right?
Pissed drunk... *obviously*. So I
asked the tattoo artiste to do --
(pantomiming drawing)
-- meaning "strength" -- power...
"*tsuyosa*" -- but my Japanese was
for shit -- I kept saying "*suji*"
meaning "muscle"...

T-RETZ
C'mon, Bug! Play me some Eagles.
Maybe a little "Tequila Sunrise."

SLUSH
Hell no! I don't want to hear any
of that douchebag "yacht rock."

T-RETZ
Blasphemy!

Chase sees Saint walking towards the beach...

ON THE BEACH - MOMENTS LATER

Saint sits, running her toes through the sand, staring at the stars. A beautiful night. Chase joins her, cold beers in hand, hands her one. Raises his beer, a toast --

CHASE
To our last night on earth...
(off her look--)
Uhh, not last as in forever.
I mean -- We'll be coming back,
after we save the world...

Having flubbed that toast, he's now bright red. Saint smiles, thinks it's cute. CLINK! Taps his bottle, drinks.

SAINT
At least you said we.
(off Chase)
Not so bad, being a team player.

Chase smiles. Saint then notices something --

SAINT
What is that?

She reaches over... grabbing Chase's necklace. Uh-oh. Chase keeps his cool. Does he tell her the truth?

CHASE
It's a... it was a gift... from
my father. He got it somewhere
overseas... Thailand, I think.

Nope. But it's a convincing lie. Saint admires it.

SAINT
It's pretty. Oh, and don't worry,
your secret's safe with me.
(off Chase, low)
Y'know... Your old job. Working
as a security... I won't tell.

The color returns to Chase's face, relieved...

CHASE
Oh, yeah, right. Thanks. My old
man would've been real proud.

He laughs, but we can tell it's a sensitive subject.

SAINT
Must've been hard growing up,
living in your father's shadow...

CHASE
The bar was set pretty high for
both me and my brother... But it
is what it was. Guess it really
doesn't matter now...
(waving it off, changing
the subject--)
So. Where's your tattoo? Got a
little halo hidden somewhere?

SAINT
Maybe.

Chase casually leans back, eyeing the small of her back. Saint frowns. Typical. She kicks sand at him.

SAINT
Not even close.

She resumes looking at the stars, reflecting...

SAINT
Always figured there was intelligent life out there. Over a 100 billion planets in the Milky Way galaxy alone. It'd be pretty arrogant to think we were the only game in town.
(Chase nods, a beat)
Still... I don't look at 'em the same way. Not anymore.

CHASE
Well, now we get to see who's been looking back at us...

And now they're both looking at each other. A moment.

SAINT
I'm glad you found that ship.

CHASE
Me too.

Suddenly, T-Retz grabs Chase from behind -- picking him up like a rag doll -- tosses him into the ocean. Everyone laughing. Saint a bit bummed, the moment is gone. Again.

INT. ATF / HANGAR - MORNING

Chase alone, suited up, standing next to Saint's F-15 Eagle. He lays a hand on the fuselage, feeling it. Memories.

JAX
Your brother flew an Eagle just like that one. He was one of the best I'd ever seen.

Chase sees Jax (also suited up). Chase nods. He was.

CHASE
They said his F-15 was shot down somewhere over Afghanistan, flying cover for some Special Forces Op... I never believed 'em. Rory was too good a pilot...

JAX

His sacrifice is the reason why we're going, why we still have a fighting chance. Your brother kept hope alive...

(Chase smiles)

Rory knew the risks, but it didn't matter. He knew it had to be done. That's the kind of man he was.

(a beat)

Your brother died a hero. He saved lives. Now it's your turn.

CHASE

To die a hero?

JAX

To honor him. To carry on the fight. Not let him die in vain.

Chase nods. I'm ready.

Then, A PIT CREW rolls out FIRE HOSES, begins to spray the Ghost Squadron fighters with a CLEAR AEROSOL SUBSTANCE.

JAX

Alien Rust-Oleum -- protects, seals and strengthens metal alloy. Makes it a thousand times stronger than carbon fiber, acts as an impervious heat shield too.

GHOST SQUADRON walks up, all suited up.

T-Retz tosses Chase his HELMET... Chase looks... there's now a LARGE ANIMATED WORM painted on it. T-retz nods. Chase just grins, no sense in fighting it.

Everyone falls in line, standing at attention.

JAX

There are some who believe that we shouldn't get involved, that it's not our problem. A war that's not even on our own soil, let alone our own planet... But I say we if we don't fight now, we only delay the inevitable. Because I can assure you that we are not safe in our corner of the galaxy...

He lets that sink in. Everyone remains focused.

JAX

You are all part of earth's Third Expeditionary Force, and it is our mission is to protect our little slice of heaven amongst the stars. We are to link up with Orbit One and proceed to our rendezvous point. And where that is...

(eyeing them all)

You'll find out soon enough.

Everyone exchanges quick glances. This is it.

JAX

Now I know this isn't what you initially signed up for... but earth needs you. Every single living, breathing thing on this planet is depending on us... They just don't know it. And god-willing they never will.

(a serious beat)

There's a good chance some of you -- *all of you* -- will never return home, never see your friends and family again...

(they nod, understood)

You're going to be challenged in ways you can't even begin to comprehend -- your eyes, your mind, your soul... Everything. Are you up for the challenge?

Ghost Squadron salutes. We're in. Jax nods, satisfied.

JAX

No sky denied.

MOMENTS LATER

Ghost Squadron manning their fighters. Jax hops in the back seat of Slush's high-tech, two-seater F-14 Tomcat.

INT. CHASE'S COCKPIT - SAME

Chase powering up, glad to back in his seat.

SLUSH (OVER HEADSET)

Just remember, Worm -- keep the pointy end going forward.

He laughs. Chase just rolls his eyes.

EXT. AUTEC / RUNWAY - DAY

Ghost Squadron hits the sky... rocketing up into space.
The MOON is full, looking big and bright.

INT. CHASE'S COCKPIT

Chase can't believe that actual human jet fighters (with alien assistance) can now fly in the vacuum of space.

JAX (OVER HEADSET)
Switch primary engines over to
diamagnetic lift drives. And set
your timers.

CHASE
Timers?

JAX (OVER HEADSET)
ATF fighters aren't yet suited for
deep space sorties, forty minutes
of life support maximum. Inertia
cancellers aren't up to spec yet.

EXT. SPACE

The Ghost Squadron fighters' GLOWING engines switch from hot orange to cool blue. Alien jet propulsion. They circle the earth, past satellites, towards...

A SPACE STATION. Call it ORBIT ONE.

And docked in the center of the station is THE AURORA. It's a spacecraft about the size of a modern aircraft carrier.

INT. ORBIT ONE / HANGAR - MOMENTS LATER

The fighters dock. There's actually gravity.

Chase, Saint and rest of Ghost Squadron watch as their fighters are lowered into the Aurora, along with an RAF EUROFIGHTER TYPHOON F2, a SAAB JAS 39 GRIPEN, and the ultra bad-ass SUKHOI T-50. All are modified, lethal.

VOICE (O.S.)
Oi! Like any of those rusty
rockets will do us any bit of good.

Everyone turns. Standing there is a dashing Royal Marine. British wit, charm and cool. MAX "HOOD" ARCHER, (29).

HOOD

And those fighters look like my grandmother's bloody antiques.

(laughs, eyes Chase)

So you're the one who found it, eh? Lucky bastard. Too bad you got stuck with this sorry lot. Name's Max Archer. Call me "Hood."

CHASE

What do you fly?

HOOD

Piss off! I'm no pilot.

(flashes ATF patch)

Star Recon Group. Jupiter Jumpers.

We then see a squadron of vintage 1940's fighter planes roll out, all customized with alien parts and weapons --

A P-51 Mustang. A Supermarine Spitfire. A F6F Hellcat. And a P-38 Lightning. This is ATOMIC SQUADRON.

(NOTE: All the propeller blades are folded in, lying flush against the planes' nose and/or engines)

DINGO

Those are serious old school.

MOZART

More like prehistoric.

SLUSH

Maybe we're using them for target practice.

They all laugh.

JAX (O.S.)

There's no school like old school.

Everyone sees Jax with FOUR PILOTS, (all in their 60's).

JAX

Those fighters helped us win one world war, you might want to show some respect. I want you all to meet Atomic Squadron.

Crazy cowboy WES "BISCUIT" LANDRY. Quiet giant German -- HAGEN "COMET" KELLER. Fun Chicago drunk RAY "DEADSTICK" FLYNN. And suave, Englishman DOUGLAS "CAN'T GET" SLADE.

CAN'T GET
Trust me, lads. Those 'ol boys
are full of surprises...

BISCUIT
We're tiny but mighty. Requested
by the good General himself.

DEADSTICK
It's all very hush, hush.
(eyes Slush)
Y'know what I mean, son?

SLUSH
Whatever you say, pops.
(Deadstick steps up)
Take it easy. Don't want to get
your ticker all worked up...

Comet gets in Slush's face. No one wants to tangle with
this German giant. Slush smiles, backing down.

CUT TO:

As they walk towards the Aurora, they stop... getting one
last look at the earth. A moment. Everyone accepting
the fact that this might be the last time they see home.

INT. AURORA - MOMENTS LATER

Submarine-like interior. Futuristic instruments. Ghost
Squadron and others enter, working their way towards --

INT. AURORA / CABIN - SAME

Rows of ejector-like seats. Everyone finds a seat.

CHASE
No sleeping chamber?

HOOD
We'll be there before you know
it. As you Yanks would say,
"This ain't my first rodeo."

We see ATF PILOTS AND SOLDIERS representing countries from
around the world. Everyone looks apprehensive.

Saint notices Dingo looking really nervous, fidgety.

SAINT
You alright, Dingo?

DINGO
I hate flying.

SAINT
You hate flying? You're a pilot.

DINGO
I don't mind flying when I fly,
it's when others fly -- *that's*
when I get nervous.

INT. AURORA / COCKPIT - SAME

TWO PILOTS setting coordinates. Jax sitting behind them.

AURORA CO-PILOT
Astral-link marked, locked in.
All systems green, sir.

AURORA PILOT
Initiate pulse port sequence.

EXT. SPACE

The Aurora pulls away from Orbit One...

A SHOCK WAVE-LIKE RING OF DUST forms around the Aurora.
The ring SPARKS, crackling with energy. The Dust Ring
SPINS -- gaining speed -- spinning faster and faster --

Then... POW! The Aurora disappears, off into the unknown.

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. SPACE

A vast star field. Pinkish dust clouds. Reds and rust.
Tranquil. Quiet. Suddenly, a DUST RING appears, and --
WHOOOOOOSH! The Aurora disembarks from hyperspace.

Suddenly, an ALIEN BATTLESHIP appears...

The Aurora is dwarfed by this massive, awesome battleship.
The battleship is flanked by SIX SMALLER WARSHIPS.

INT. ALIEN BATTLESHIP / HANGAR - MOMENTS LATER

The Aurora now docked. Ramps lower. Jax leads the way.
And waiting for them at the bottom of the ramp is a tall,
slender, frightening-looking alien. Meet NAL ATEEN.

NAL ATEEN
We've been waiting for you.

Aside from the frightening image, Nal Alteen speaks in a very calm and soothing tone. And next to him stands...

ATF ADMIRAL NATHAN EDMONDSON, (50s). Silver-haired, strong features. Ruthless, brilliant. The ATF's top dog.

And behind them are veteran, battle-weary ATF SOLDIERS and PILOTS. And a menagerie of alien species. Aliens of different colors, shapes, and sizes. Five eyes, six arms...

JAX
(salutes)
General Gavin Jax, sir. ATF.
Third Expeditionary Force.

NAL ATEEN
We are honored.

And bows. Chase leans into Saint, barely a whisper.

CHASE
They speak English.

NAL ATEEN
Of course, we do. We speak
thousands of languages.

Chase cringes. Shit. How did he hear me?

NAL ATEEN
I am Nal Ateen. From the planet
Ando Orn. Welcome aboard the
flagship "Starlight Liberator."

The hangar is full of various ALIEN FIGHTERS and HARDWARE. Aliens eye the newcomers. A few audible groans. Nal Ateen hands them each a SQUISHY, NEON GREEN PILL.

NAL ATEEN
Translation receivers. So you
may communicate with others. It
is safe.

Hood nods. He's right. Everyone swallows their pill.

NAL ATEEN
Your journey was long. Your
bodies require nourishment. If
you'll please follow me...

SLUSH

Long? The trip lasted only a few seconds. I feel fine.

NAL ATEEN

Only in your mind.

HOOD

Trust him. Interstellar jet lag isn't fun.

SAINT

Where are we exactly?

NAL ATEEN

The Galis System. Fifty-one thousand light years away from your Milky Way Galaxy.

They're left speechless. A beat. Chase shrugs.

CHASE

We made good time.

They laugh. Slush walks up, handing Chase a dollar...

SLUSH

Hey, Worm, be a good rookie and grab our bags, will ya?

He laughs. Chase frowns. Someone then catches his eye...

AZURII -- A female, humanoid-like alien. Lavender skin, silver hair and tattoos, yellow eyes. And a body to die for. Chase double-takes. Attracted to an alien? Shakes it off.

Jax meets with Edmondson, salutes.

JAX

How goes the war effort, Admiral?

ADMIRAL EDMONDSON

Pray for a miracle.

JAX

I just might have one for you.

A LARGE, CRANE-LIKE ARM grabs Chase's starfighter from the Aurora's cargo bay, lifting it into the air.

ADMIRAL EDMONDSON

Beware of Greeks bearing gifts.

INT. WARDROOM - LATER

Ghost Squadron sit, eating alien food. Some eat, some stare.

T-Retz dabs Tabasco on his food. AN ALIEN sits next to him, looking perplexed. T-Retz dabs some on the alien's plate.

T-RETZ

Hang a fang on that.

The Alien flashes his teeth. Full of razor fangs!

We get a better look at the mess hall. It's like high school, but with aliens. Different races grouped together, some outcasts, some racially mixed. Playground politics.

Our humans feel the heavy stare from their alien "teammates."

BUG

Why do I get the sense we're not wanted here...

HOOD

Most view us as students, subjects, not equals... Inferior.

CHASE

And we're all supposed to fight together? One big happy family?

Suddenly, a fight breaks out amongst rival ALIENS.

BUG

That about sums up my family.

The fight is broken up just as fast as it started.

MOZART

Seems like we came all this way for nothing. Humans can barely get along with each other let alone alien species.

HOOD

You're quite right. But it's amazing how quickly things change when facing a common enemy. One that's determined to either colonize, plunder or wipe out an entire planet... It just depends if it has anything of value.

MOZART

And who might that be?

VOICE (O.S.)
 (female Russian accent)
 The Durr.

AT THE NEXT TABLE

Two ATF pilots. One is a stunning blonde woman. Ice blue eyes. This is NIKA ORLOVA, (25). Call sign: ICE. Bug locks eyes with Ice, likes what he sees, offers a seat.

BUG
 (in Russian, subtitled)
Would you care to join us?

ICE
 No.

Bug smiles. He likes a challenge. And she knows it.

The other is a debonair Frenchman -- VINCENT ITIER, (30).
Call sign: TICKLER.

TICKLER
 Bonjour everyone. I am Capitaine
 Vincent Itier. Call sign: Tickler.

SAINT
 The French Tickler?

Laughter. Tickler immediately zeroes in on her, smitten.

TICKLER
 Oui, mademoiselle.
 (points to Nika)
 And this is Major General, Nika
 Orlova. Russian Air Force. Her
 name is... Ice.

Slush can't believe it, hangs his head low. Everyone laughs.
 The joke is lost on Tickler and Ice. No matter. Tickler
 refocuses his sights on Saint, until Chase steps in --

CHASE
 Chase Elliott. Nice to meet ya,
 Tickler. I don't have a call sign --

SLUSH
 -- Worm.

CHASE
 It's not official.

SLUSH

Yes, it is.

CHASE

(ignoring him)

So how long have you been here?

TICKLER

Six months now. How is earth?

CHASE

Still there.

-- WHAM! He's slammed from behind by an ALIEN (who was thrown by another alien) It's a fight. Everyone now jumping in -- throwing fists, food, paws, tentacles --

INT. WAR ROOM - LATER

Coalition pilots and soldiers gathering around. Chase enters... looking a bit disheveled. He sits next to a cool-looking ALIEN. Call him TYRIS VEST. Awkward beat.

NAL ATEEN

Our mission is to liberate the occupied planet of Nebvian...

A 3-D HOLOGRAPHIC IMAGE OF NEBVIAN materializes.

NAL ATEEN

...A key strategic stronghold located in the Noga Tathol System.

TYRIS VEST

I say we let the Nebvians fall! They were in league with Durr, responsible for the deaths of millions. Why should we help?

Cheers and protesting. Nal Ateen frustrated.

NAL ATEEN

Nebvian is a primary gateway to nearby star systems. The Durr Armies are a threat to us all --

TYRIS VEST

-- And yet you recruit more humans! A primitive race, ruled by emotions. One that threatens to destroy its own kind, even its own planet. Why?

Chase eyes Tyris, uneasy, wants to move away from this guy.

CHASE

Yeah... why us?

(all eyes now on him,
awkward silence--)

Forgive my ignorance... It's obvious why we need you. Y'all are light years ahead of us in every way... How are we the key?

NAL ATEEN

You and your technology are the keys to this mission's success.

All the humans look at each other. Really? How? And all the aliens look at the humans, confused as well, groaning.

NAL ATEEN

Nebvian's biosphere is very much like earth's... Atmospheric conditions are best suited for you and *your* fighters. Humans will not only have an advantage in the air, but on the planet's surface as well. Its gravity is considerably lighter than your earth's standard gravity. Humans are comprised mostly of water...

Curious, Tyris grabs Chase's hand, feels his skin. Chase yelps. This alien is strong. Chase squirms free.

NAL ATEEN

...And with Nebvian's weak magnetic field, this will allow humans to run faster, jump higher, greater agility...

Chase nods, throws him a thumb's up. Got it.

TYRIS VEST

And what of our remaining allies?

NAL ATEEN

On route to the rendezvous point through the Eratai cloud belt. With our forces united, we will destroy the enemy blockade and take back Nebvian. We must do so before the Durr High Command initiates Ring Lock. If Nebvian falls... we lose the war.

JAX
Ring Lock?

NAL ATEEN
Planetary handcuffs.

He hits a button and A HOLOGRAPHIC MECHANICAL RING appears, wrapping around the planet until the ring is completed.

NAL ATEEN
Impenetrable shields deflect all sunlight back into space. The planet dies a slow death, its habitants along with it...

JAX
How long do we have?

NAL ATEEN
Two earth days.

INT. HANGAR - LATER

Chase sits in his starfighter, surrounded by curious aliens.

RAX NAT approaches Chase. Half of his face is covered with a metal mask. He also has one CYBERNETIC ARM. All smeared with grease. Obvious that he's a mechanic.

RAX NAT
A Durr Interceptor!

CHASE
Durr..? This is an enemy ship?

RAX NAT
Indeed. Very advanced technology. We've never been able to capture one... intact.
(off Chase)
They always self-destruct. You are very lucky.

Chase frowns. Lucky indeed. He then sees AZURII admiring the Ghost Squadron fighters.

INT. ADMIRAL EDMONDSON'S QUARTERS - SAME

The Admiral sits alone, deep in thought. Jax enters...

ADMIRAL EDMONDSON

As soon as we arrive at the rendezvous point, I'm sending you and that alien ship of yours back to earth.

JAX

Sir...?

ADMIRAL EDMONDSON

The rest of your squadron will stay on, but that ship is too valuable. It may hold the key to victory. I can't run the risk of it being blown into scrap metal with some kid behind the wheel. And I don't care how much talent you say he's got. I'm sorry you traveled all this way, but that's how it goes. Plans change.

Jax now rocked. He never saw this coming.

ADMIRAL EDMONDSON

Look, for all of their "*advanced intellect*," this coalition isn't as united as one would think. And what good's their technology if they don't know how to use it? Our friends aren't soldiers. They're not wired for warfare... Hell, some of 'em haven't fought a war in over a thousand years, some even longer.

JAX

That's why we're here. Because they need our help.

ADMIRAL EDMONDSON

Oh, they need us alright. They're betting the farm on us, yet most of 'em don't even want us here.

(rises up)

Feels weird, not being the dominant species? Not being in charge?

He pours himself a drink, then one for Jax.

JAX

So... We're the unwilling led by the unqualified.

ADMIRAL EDMONDSON

Think it's just a coincidence you found that ship? Never thought it might be used as bait? To study us, learn our strengths, our weaknesses?

(Jax considers)

Earth will be in their bomb sights soon enough. Only a matter of time. That ship of yours is proof.

(lets that linger)

Unless you know how we can relocate seven billion people, I don't see any other choice but to cut our losses... I've seen what our enemy can do, what they're capable of. We need to defend our own backyard. We owe it to the people of earth.

INT. HANGAR - MOMENTS LATER

We find Azurii looking at the A-10, T-Retz's artwork.

CHASE (O.S.)

Pretty cool, huh?

She whirls around, GUN in hand. Chase throws his hands up.

CHASE

Whoa! Hey! I'm a friend! We're all on the same side... right?

A beat. Azurii lowers her weapon. Chase sighs relief.

CHASE

My name is Chase.

AZURII

Azurii.

Upon closer look, Azurii sees something familiar. She stares at him. Chase looks away, a little awkward, then...

CHASE

So what planet are you from?

AZURII

Alss. Near the Sintuum Nebula.

CHASE

Can't say I've heard of it.

AZURII
My home world no longer exists.
It was wiped out by the Durr.

CHASE
(feeling stupid)
I didn't know. I'm sorry.

AZURII
Yours will suffer the same fate.

CHASE
Not if I can help it.
(slaps one of the
A-10's cannons--)
Don't underestimate us humans.
We're a scrappy bunch. We don't
go down without a fight.

Suddenly, the ship shudders. Lights FLICKER.

AZURII
We must be near Anthir Pass.

EXT. SPACE

They head towards a planet that's been CRACKED IN HALF.

Welcome to TALDIS V.

A FIELD OF GLOWING ROCKS drift between the two planetary
halves. Mantel and core visible, like a cut-out diagram.

The floating rocks look like GEODES, glowing like lanterns.
Glowing amethyst crystals. On the other side of Anthir Pass
we can see the distant yellow planet of ALSS.

INT. STARLIGHT LIBERATOR / OBSERVATION DECK - SAME

Chase and Azurii looking out at the path ahead.

AZURII
Taldis V, or what's left of it.
Anthir Pass lies between. That is
the safest route to Alss.

CHASE
Alss?

AZURII
Our rendezvous point.

CHASE

Why not just go around? Or jump
into hyperspace?

AZURII

The Durr patrol the surrounding
systems. If we pulse port, they
will be able to detect our fold
signature. Once we enter the Pass,
they won't be able to track us.

INT. STARLIGHT LIBERATOR / BRIDGE - SAME

An awesome sight indeed. Technology beyond our imagination.

NAL ATEEN watches as they enter Anthir Pass. Scopes,
scanners and vid-screens now turning to static snow.

NAL ATEEN

Close up formation... Forward
shields at maximum power and
charge all batteries.

INT. STARLIGHT LIBERATOR / HANGAR - MOMENTS LATER

The Aurora sits docked, crew prepping for take-off.

Jax walks past, conflicted, angry. He watches the crew
load up the Aurora. Knows that he's going to not only crash
this kid's dream... but back stab the coalition as well.

EXT. SPACE

The coalition fleet maneuvers through the CRYSTALLINE
ASTEROID FIELD, keeping tight formation. Suddenly, three
lethal-looking VESSELS appear...

DURR GUNSHIPS.

It's an ambush. The Gunships fan out, begin firing upon
on the coalition fleet, guns blazing on full-auto --

INT. STARLIGHT LIBERATOR / BRIDGE - SAME

ALARMS SOUND. Everyone jumping into action, and --

NAL ATEEN

-- Three enemy Gunships -- Battle
stations! Launch fighters! --

INT. HANGAR / AURORA - SAME

Hysteria. ALIEN PILOTS scrambling. Jax stands in front of all the human pilots -- Ghost Squadron, Tickler, Ice...

JAX

-- All of you stand down! --

CHASE

-- But I can help! --

JAX

-- That's an order! --

EXT. SPACE

Alien ATF starfighters rocket towards the Gunships. Suddenly, DURR INTERCEPTORS -- like Chase's starfighter -- launch from the Gunships, engaging the ATF forces.

One DURR INTERCEPTOR stands out from the rest. A more advanced, kick-ass version. It attacks ATF fighters with a vengeance, taking them out at will, with ease.

Fighters swoop, dive, and dodge around crystalline rocks. Lasers, rockets and exploding flak. Nail-biting intensity. It's a crazy dogfight in the middle of an asteroid field.

A DURR GUNSHIP targets two coalition WARSHIPS -- opens fire -- destroys them both. A third coalition warship is hit, losing power... WHAM! Slams right into an asteroid.

INT. STARLIGHT LIBERATOR / HANGAR

Chase and the others watch in horror -- going against the warrior's code of honor. They want to get out there and help. Admiral Edmondson approaches Chase --

ADMIRAL EDMONDSON

-- Don't you even think about it!
The only place you and that ship
are going is back to earth!

Chase looks at Jax. His eyes give him away. Chase feels like he's been stabbed in the gut. You knew? Then --

CHASE

Look out!

He grabs Jax -- pulling him aside as a damaged Durr Interceptor rockets into the hangar -- spiraling out of control, and SLAMS into the Aurora. It EXPLODES!

Debris strikes ADMIRAL EDMONDSON, killing him on impact!

The thunderous blast slams everyone to floor. Two ATF fighters -- MOZART'S F-18 and DINGO'S F-35 -- are both CRUSHED by falling heavy debris.

Jax lies unconscious. He's bleeding, hurt bad. As Ghost Squadron tends to Jax, Chase eyes his starfighter. Intact, fueled, prepped, ready to go. Saint takes notice...

SAINT
Chase, don't.

INT. CHASE'S COCKPIT - MOMENTS LATER

Chase powering up, helmet on. Time to rock 'n roll.

OPERATOR (OVER HEADSET)
Main hangar inoperable. Standby
for immediate surface launch.

A high-tech GANTRY CRANE (a Javelin) grabs hold of Chase's fighter. A HATCH above open. The Javelin lifts him up...

EXT. STARLIGHT LIBERATOR / SPACE

...onto the deck of the battleship. His starfighter hangs from the Javelin. We see the action all around him.

Another coalition warship EXPLODES! Hurtling, fiery debris everywhere... Bodies tumbling in space...

OPERATOR (OVER HEADSET)
T-Minus in three... two... one...

Lights FLASH. The crane releases the starfighter. Chase punches it, rockets off into the battlefield --

CUT TO:

The Starlight Liberator blasts away. High-tech ordnance and laserfire hit home -- BLOWING UP BOTH GUNSHIPS!

Third Gunship makes a run for it. The Starlight Liberator gives chase, but it's not easy in this asteroid field.

CUT TO:

We see the ADVANCED DURR INTERCEPTOR weaving through the asteroid field at incredible speed -- on the attack --

INT. ADVANCED DURR INTERCEPTOR COCKPIT - SAME

The masked pilot -- call him INDOMITABLE -- (an ace pilot who looks absolutely bad-ass) -- targets the Starlight Liberator's bridge -- ready to take her out --

INT. STARLIGHT LIBERATOR / BRIDGE - SAME

The Gunship appears from around an asteroid --

NAL ATEEN
All forward batteries fire!

EXT. SPACE - SAME

The Starlight's heavy cannons FIRE -- obliterating the glowing asteroids. Clouds of exploding crystalline shrapnel shower the Starlight's outer hull, DAMAGING it.

Exploding shrapnel hits the advanced Durr Interceptor --

INT. ADVANCED DURR INTERCEPTOR COCKPIT - SAME

INDOMITABLE maintains control, but the damage is severe.

EXT. SPACE - SAME

Indomitable bugs out, slipping away unnoticed...

All eyes and guns focused on the Gunship making a run towards the other end of Anthir Pass. Chase give chase -- zigzagging through the perilous mine field of asteroids.

Chase catches up to the enemy Gunship, but the Durr don't fire on him because they think he's one of them!

INT. CHASE'S COCKPIT - SAME

As Chase pulls along side, he gets a good a look --

INSIDE THE GUNSHIP HANGAR

It's full of Durr Interceptors.

NAL ATEEN (OVER HEADSET)
Take out that Gunship!

CHASE
I'm on it!

Chase's fighter drops back, behind the Gunship, opens fire -- guns BLAZING! -- knocking out the primary engines. The wounded Gunship drifts into an asteroid... and EXPLODES!

Mission accomplished. Only the Starlight Liberator and two other warships remain. They limp towards Alss...

INT. STARLIGHT LIBERATOR / HANGAR - LATER

As Chase exits his starfighter, PILOTS and CREW thank him for his heroics. Aliens stare at him, impressed. A tiny glimmer of hope? But the damage and loss is heavy.

The Aurora is toast. A smoldering pile of junk. The same goes for Dingo's F-35 and Mozart's F-18. Scrap metal.

INT. SICK BAY - LATER

The most advanced infirmary anyone has ever seen.

Jax lies unconscious, hooked up to monitors. He's hurt, but breathing normally. Vital stats in the green.

A ROBOTIC DOCTOR motors up, checking on him. Chase, Saint and others in Ghost Squadron looking on, concerned.

DOCTOR

He is in stable condition. Human skin and organs damage easily, yet easy to repair. The same cannot be said for many others...

Dozens of LIFELESS BODIES lie hidden under sheets.

We see Atomic Squadron standing around one of their own... It's DEADSTICK. Comet pulls the sheet over his face.

Saint glares at Chase, upset. That could've easily been him. Off Chase...

EXT. SPACE

Our familiar, advanced Durr Interceptor rockets through space... towards a massive ORANGE PLANET...

The planet is surrounded by rings of black fire, crackling with flashes of electricity. As if the rings are alive.

Welcome to THUL. Home world of the Durr.

EXT. THUL - DAY

Spiraling pillars of hardened gas, thousands of feet high.
Orange skies littered with thousands of flying vessels.

The capital city of YALU TAK. A sprawling metropolis built
within the pillars. Architecture is cold, high-tech, dark.

INT. YALU TAK / COMMAND CENTER - DAY

Incredible size and scale, it's like an actual city.
Technology beyond belief. And standing there is...

DURU KREET.

Leader of the Durr. Cunning, intimidating. Mask and
armor like that of a futuristic Native American Kachina.

He stands surrounded by his loyal CRUSADER COMMANDOS.
These killing machines are adorned in bad-ass armor,
death masks, and armed to the teeth with nasty weaponry.

The doors hiss open, revealing... INDOMITABLE.

INDOMITABLE

(nods, respect)

Nal Ateen's forces have taken
significant losses. Secondary
attack waves are currently under
way in the Eratai cloud belt...

DURU KREET

Excellent. How goes the occupation?
When can we Ring Lock Nebvian?

INDOMITABLE

A few pockets of insurgents still
remain. The Ring Lock Synchronizer
is operational. However, the
factories on Imbariis will not be
on-line for another two planetary
cycles...

He punches up a detailed map of Nebvian and the Durr forces.

INDOMITABLE

One-hundred Itoa-Class Battleships
surround the planet as well as
Six Orbital Defenders. Nothing
can get through our defenses.

DURU KREET

Once the Ring Lock Shipyards are operational, Nebvian will fall before Nal Ateen's very eyes, as well as his pathetic coalition. Victory is inevitable... We leave for Nebvian immediately.

INT. STARLIGHT LIBERATOR / BARRACKS - LATER

The mood is somber. We see a lot of EMPTY BEDS. Humans and aliens dealing with the loss in their own way.

Bug serenades Ice with a little acoustic magic.

T-Retz (shirtless), Slush, and Can't Get play cards with ATF pilots and aliens. T-Retz eyeballs the aliens...

T-RETZ

Now which one of y'all built the pyramids?

The aliens look at each other, confused.

AN ALIEN (whose skin naturally has various patterns of spots and dots) touches the giant Tyrannosaurus Rex tattoo on T-Retz, curious. Mesmerized by all the ink.

T-RETZ

That's right. Looks familiar, don't it? Uh-huh. You see, my theory is that a bunch of y'all first came to earth when these 'ol bad boys ruled the planet.
(pointing to his T-Rex)
Y'all got a good look at that and said, "Screw it. We outta here."

Humans laugh. Aliens not so much. Slush not amused.

SLUSH

Will you just shut up?!

T-RETZ

Hey! Just relax. Everyone grieves in their own way, alright?

Slush folds, scattering them, frustrated.

CAN'T GET

Keep calm and carry on, mate.

SLUSH

Keep calm? Keep calm? We just
got our asses kicked, mate!

(rising up)

-- The Admiral's dead! -- We're
a billion miles from home -- We
can't even get back home --

Mozart pulls Slush away before it gets out of control--

MOZART

You're a soldier! Act like one.

Slush shrugs her off, annoyed, walks past...

Chase -- sitting on his bunk -- his mind full of mixed
emotions. This was his real first combat. His first kill.

Azurii enters, approaches Chase

AZURII

You showed great skill, courage.
You must be someone of great
importance where you come from.

CHASE

Me? No, I'm just good at not
following orders. I'm so
important that the Admiral was
going to send me back to earth.

AZURII

But we need you. All of you.
Now more than ever...

(off Chase)

We've lost contact with the other
members of our fleet.

SAINT

You mean lost as in "can't
communicate" or lost as in "dead?"

AZURII

We don't know. But if we do not
have enough fighters to carry on
with the attack... We will lose
this war. And all free worlds,
including your earth, will either
be conquered... or annihilated.

SLUSH

See?! We're screwed!

EVERYONE
Shut up, Slush!

A tense beat. Chase thinks. Then, an idea.

CHASE
If it's fighters he needs, I've
got an idea.

INT. WAR ROOM - LATER

Chase has just relayed his idea to Nal Ateen, Tyris Vest,
Hood, Azurii, Rax Nat and all of Ghost Squadron.

TYRIS VEST
Steal enemy fighters? That's your
plan? Your grand idea?

CHASE
All we need are four, five pilots
maximum. We keep it small --

TYRIS VEST
(to Nal Ateen)
-- You really want the fate of the
universe resting in *their* hands?

CHASE
Hey, you asked us for help.
(off Tyris)
Look. We're running out of time.
This battle could be the turning
point in the war. The Battle for
Nebvian is our Midway?

TYRIS VEST
Midway?

SLUSH
Y'know... World War Two? June
1942. Pacific theater.

Tyris still doesn't understand.

SAINT
The Battle of Midway. One of the
most decisive battles in earth's
military history. It turned the
tide in our Second World War.

Ghost Squadron nods. She's right. Tyris nods. Whatever.

CHASE

If we win, the fight goes on.
(to Nal Ateen)
If we lose, we lose the war...

NAL ATEEN

And the Durr's conquest will be
complete... including your earth.
(mulling it over)
We could use them to our advantage.
The Durr would never see it coming.
The risks are worth the rewards.

He nods. It's a go for launch.

T-RETZ

The worm has turned. I'm in!

The rest of Ghost Squadron steps forward, but --

CHASE

You can't go. None of you can.
(before they protest--)
They need you, all of you. They
need our fighters, your skills --

SAINT

-- Then forget it. We find --

BUG

-- He's right. We can't go.
Dingo and Mozart can. Their
fighters are totaled. But as for
the rest of us, we need to keep
our eye on the prize, the real
reason why we're here...
(to Nal Ateen)
You said it yourself. We're the
key to this mission's success.

NAL ATEEN

How you do you suggest we get our
pilots onto that Gunship?

HOOD

Jupiter Jumpers will handle that,
sir. We'll get your flyboys to
those fighters, no problem.

RAX NAT

Once inside, just find the
ignition keys and the fighters
will be operational.

DINGO
Ignition keys?

RAX
Each pilot is assigned a coded
ignition key, syncing up the
ship to the pilot. You can't
fly without it.

All eyes now on Chase. What he's talking about? An awkward
beat. Fuck it. It's time for Chase to man up, come clean.
Chase pulls out his KEY NECKLACE.

SLUSH
I knew it! You sneaky bastard.

Chase looks at Saint, his eyes asking for forgiveness.

CHASE
Jax took my ship.

SLUSH
And now he's gonna kick your ass.

CHASE
What else was I supposed to do?

SLUSH
Tell the truth!

CHASE
(scoffs)
Yeah. And where would that've
gotten me? I'd still be back on
earth working a dead-end job.

T-RETZ
Fake it til you make it, baby.

SAINT
It's not like any of us wouldn't
have done the same thing. He
saved Jax... He saved all us.

MOZART
Good enough for me.

Bug and Dingo nod. Okay with us. Slush flips him off.

T-RETZ
(hugging Chase)
If you lied in order to join this
suicide mission, then shit! --
You're crazier than any of us.

INT. STARLIGHT LIBERATOR / HANGAR - LATER

HOOD and RAX walking, both dressed for combat...

RAX NAT
...I never said *I* wanted to go.
I'm just a mechanic --

HOOD
-- We need you, mate. Don't
worry, it'll be fun.

They walk towards Nal Ateen who's been briefing Chase and Azurii. He holds a portable HOLOGRAPHIC STAR MAP.

NAL ATEEN
A Durr Fueling Station orbits
the neutral planet of Malogaan.
Once you enter Malogaan space,
you will have to disrupt their
outbound communications, before
they report your position.

Azurii nods. Chase and Hood excited --

CHASE
Time to knuckle up 'n buckle up.

HOOD
Let's go nick us some fighters.

MOMENTS LATER

Our Strike Team (including Tyriss and A SQUAD OF JUPITER JUMPERS) boards a SCIMITAR. A cooler, futuristic version of a V-22 Osprey mixed with a B2 Stealth Bomber.

Everyone watches as Chase powers up his Starfighter.

T-RETZ
Bring it home, baby! Let's bring
the dawn!

Chase smiles, throws him a thumbs up. Saint approaches.
A moment between them. Unspoken words, then --

SAINT
Be careful.

CHASE
Always.

EXT. SPACE / MALOGAAN ORBIT

The ice blue planet of Malogaan.

The upper regions of the atmosphere is an aquarium of exotic flying vessels -- Orbital Astroports -- and mile-wide HOLOGRAPHIC vid-signs flashing colorful alien advertising.

CUT TO:

A DURR FUELING STATION orbits peacefully. A massive teardrop-shaped structure. And patrolling along side the station is... a lone, familiar DURR GUNSHIP.

Chase's starfighter and Scimitar emerge from hyperspace.

INT. SCIMITAR / COCKPIT

Azurii at the controls, approaching the Gunship...

AZURII

Strike Team, thirty seconds out.

INT. SCIMITAR / PASSENGER HOLD - SAME

Hood and everyone else dressed in SPACE SUITS, MASKS and ROCKET PACKS, standing around the edges the BOMB BAY DOORS.

HOOD

Alright, everyone. As soon as we're clear, hit your rockets and activate your mags. Easy peasy, lemon squeezy.

Dingo looks nervous. Mozart leans in close.

MOZART

I'm nervous too.

Doors power open, revealing... the planet Malogaan and... THE DURR GUNSHIP. Five hundreds yards out.

INT. CHASE'S COCKPIT - SAME

Chase flying cover -- instruments start lighting up --

CHASE

Sleeper One, this is Sleeper Two. I'm getting a lot of enemy chatter. Better make this quick.

EXT. SPACE / MALOGAAN ORBIT

Azurii fires TWO missile-like projectiles (SCRAMBLERS).

As they rocket towards their designated targets -- the Scramblers SNAP OPEN -- long, spider-like legs unfolding --

-- ATTACHING themselves to the outer hulls of both the Gunship and Fueling Station. The Scramblers activate.

INT. SCIMITAR / PASSENGER HOLD - SAME

Our Strike Team waiting --

AZURII (OVER HEADSET)
Targets are blind.

HOOD
Go! Go! Go!

And they jump. One by one. Out into space.

EXT. SPACE / MALOGAAN ORBIT

We see our Strike Team spilling out the Scimitar's belly, floating, tumbling through space. Zero G.

They ignite their ROCKET PACKS -- flying towards the Gunship -- all while dodging chaotic space traffic --

HOOD'S POV - THROUGH HIS MASK

Superimposed high-tech stats, trajectory path...

HOOD
Cables!

Everyone fires their CABLE GUNS. Steel cables adhere to the Gunship's topside hull, and begin reeling them in...

Touchdown! As the Strike Team lands, their MAGNETIC BOOTS stick to the hull. Now like fleas on a dog, they start slowly "walking" along the hull, towards a HATCH.

HOOD
The eagles have landed.
(to his team)
Everyone watch your footing...

Suddenly, a periscope-like GUN TURRET springs up -- *BLAM!*
BLAM! *BLAM!* THREE JUPITER JUMPERS ARE ATOMIZED.

HOOD
Take cover!

Everyone scrambles for cover, firing back, but it's hard to move fast in the vacuum of space. Rax works on the HATCH.

MOZART
Somebody take out these guns!

Azurii flies overhead, dodging cannon fire --

AZURII (O.S.)
I can't get a clean shot!

Suddenly, FOUR DURR INTERCEPTORS appear, blasting away --

CHASE (O.S.)
Patrol units! Look out!

Azurii's ship is hit! Engines flaming out.

INT. SCIMITAR / COCKPIT - SAME

AZURII
-- Chase, I'm in trouble! I'm
punching out --

CHASE (OVER HEADSET)
-- Roger that. I'll cover you --

She hits some switches, holding on tight as --

EXT. SPACE / MALOGAAN ORBIT

The Scimitar's triangular front nose section (Space Capsule) BREAKS AWAY just as the rest of the Scimitar EXPLODES!

Wings unfold from the Space Capsule. Rocket boosters ignite! Azurri now flies a smaller, yet much faster ship.

This is an escape pod on steroids.

CUT TO:

Chase slips in behind the pursuing Interceptors... fires! BOOM! Takes out one enemy fighter. The others scatter -- no longer in pursuit of Azurii.

But Chase has given himself away. Now he's the target.

CHASE (O.S.)
Hood, we've got company. What's
your position?

ON THE GUNSHIP

As we were -- our Strike Team pinned down --

HOOD
Almost there...

ANOTHER GUN TURRET rises up, turns on Mozart. She's a
goner. A JUPITER JUMPER dives in, pushing her clear as --
BLAM! It fires, killing him.

The blast knocks Mozart back. She's about to float off into
space... but Tyris grabs her, bringing her down. Her mag
boots activate, locking her onto the hull. She sighs relief.

Rax working, bypassing the security codes, and --

RAX NAT
Got it!

The hatch slides open. They climb in...

INT. GUNSHIP - MOMENTS LATER

Everyone in -- now on alert, masks off, weapons ready --

HOOD
We're in!

EXT. SPACE / MALOGAAN ORBIT

Chase trying to shake the enemy fighters loose. No good.
He punches it -- rocketing straight towards the Fueling
Station. The enemy fighters bite, staying on his tail --

CHASE (O.S.)
C'mon, c'mon... That's it.

As Chase gets closer... he hits his reverse thrusters --
pulling his nose up -- slowing down -- drifting in space --

The pursuing enemy fighters can't pull up -- can't slow
down in time, and SLAM into the Durr Fueling Station.

Chase flies BACKWARDS -- in reverse -- just as the Fueling
Station breaks apart, BURNING, tumbling out of orbit...

INT. GUNSHIP / HANGAR

Hood, Mozart, Dingo, Tyris and company are in the middle of an intense firefight. Deafening noise. Suddenly --

A LARGE ROBOTIC DRONE appears.

Six weaponized arms. Our guys are toast. But Tyris hits his rocket boots and charges the Drone. Tyris destroys the Drone, but not before he's wounded by laserfire.

HOOD
-- Chase, we're pinned down! --

EXT/INT. SPACE / GUNSHIP

Chase rockets towards Gunship...

CHASE
On my way. Azurii, cover me.

...and swoops into the hangar, reverse thrusters kicking on, slowing him down. His starfighter hovering...

The hangar is packed full of DURR TROOPERS, PILOTS and MECHANIZED WAR DRONES. All looking at Chase, confused.

It's a standoff. What to do?

CHASE
Oh, boy...

War Drones raise their weapons. Chase has no choice, he pulls the trigger, and FIRES AWAY! A crazy shoot-out. Ka-BOOM! The Gunship SHUTTERS violently. That's not good.

EXT. SPACE / MALOGAAN ORBIT

The Gunship drifting aimlessly... slowly plunging backwards as Malogaan's gravity takes hold... now in a reverse dive...

INT. GUNSHIP - SAME

As the ship free falls... All gravity is lost. Zero G.

IN THE HANGAR

Everyone and everything (not locked down) starts FLOATING. All the Durr Interceptors LIFT UP, but then automatically MAGNETIZE -- pulled back down, locking into place.

IN THE HALLWAY

Hood and the others are now WALKING on the walls -- on the ceiling -- upside down -- firing at floating Durr Soldiers (who are not wearing magnetic boots). Easy targets.

DINGO

We've got to get to those fighters!

INT. CHASE'S COCKPIT - SAME

Chase hears the commotion over his headset.

CHASE

Hood!? Dingo?! Anyone...?!

Nothing but noise, static. His friends are in trouble.

Chase pulls his GUN... pops open his canopy... floating out... starts swimming through the air...

IN THE HALLWAY

Hood and the others flying -- blasting away -- dodging laserfire -- rounding the corner --

ANOTHER ROBOTIC DRONE. The drone opens fire, killing TWO JUPITER JUMPERS. Then, it EXPLODES! Fiery debris floating away, revealing... Chase. Everyone happy to see him.

CUT TO:

IN THE HANGAR - MOMENTS LATER

Mozart, Dingo, and Pacer fly/swim/float towards the Durr Interceptors. They can't open up the canopies.

DINGO

They're locked!

MOZART

Ignition keys? Where?!

Rax Nat looks around. The hangar is in shambles. Shit's flying everywhere. And the clock's ticking...

RAX NAT

Uhhh, I don't know...

TYRIS VEST

What?!

CHASE
Don't say that!

RAX NAT
I've got an idea. Just go!

MOZART
Go?! Go where?!

RAX NAT
(pointing outside)
Out there!

MOZART
Seriously?

DINGO
You're crazy!

RAX NAT
Don't worry, we'll open 'em by
remote. Trust me.

MOMENTS LATER

Mozart, Dingo and Tyris each now wearing MASKS, MAGNETIC GLOVES and BOOTS -- each pilot grabbing hold of a Durr starfighter, each sticking to them like Spider-man.

EXT. SPACE / MALOGAAN ORBIT

The Gunship continues falling... now spinning a 180 -- now plunging head first into a nose dive.

Azurii flies cover, sees Chase flying out of the hangar --

AZURII (O.S.)
Where are the others?

CHASE (O.S.)
On their way.

INT. GUNSHIP / HANGAR

Our pilots ready, "stuck" to their fighters. Through the opened hangar doors, we see stars giving way to sunlight.

RAX NAT
Everyone hang on!

DINGO
 (thinking, dawning on him)
 Hey, wait! What happens to us if --

Rax hits a button -- *WHOOSH!* The locks release and each Durr Interceptor is sucked out into the atmosphere --

HOOD
 How will they be able to unlock
 their fighters if we... crash?
 (off Rax, realizing)
 How could you?

RAX NAT
 Had I told them, do you think they
 would've gone along with it?

HOOD
 No, but that's not the point.

RAX NAT
 If I fail, we all die.

EXT. SKY - DAY

THREE INTERCEPTORS spinning, falling towards the planet below. Each pilot hanging on, trying not to vomit. This is the craziest free-fall of all time.

Start the clock...

IN THE GUNSHIP

Hood and Rax fly through the hallways -- entering --

THE BRIDGE

DURR FLIGHT CREW dangling, hanging onto seats, terminals. Hood bursts through the doors -- guns blazing -- taking them out as Rax looks for the override controls.

SKY

Three Interceptors falling... Terrain coming into view...

Malogaan is an ICE BERG planet. A majestic landscape of blinding white ice and turquoise waters...

THE BRIDGE

Rax places a SMALL, GLASS BALL (a futuristic jump drive) on the control panel. Starts downloading info as he works on deactivating the locks. Hood rockets up next to him --

HOOD
Can't you level us out?!

RAX NAT
System's not responding...

SKY

We see THREE, TINY OBJECTS FALLING helplessly, followed by the smoking Durr Gunship... Time is running out... *fast*.

THE BRIDGE

Rax working, Hood standing over him --

HOOD
C'mon, mate. You can do it.

Rax muttering to himself... almost there, and... Bingo!
There it is. Rax deactivates the locks --

SKY

As they fall... all the canopies OPEN! Rax has done it.

Each pilot climbs inside their cockpit. Canopies closing.
Now in control, they fire up the engines, and --

All three fighters go vertical -- clawing for altitude --
just as the icy world rushes up beneath them.

THE BRIDGE

Hood and Rax sigh relief. Rax unplugs the glass ball
jump drive -- stashing it inside a compartment within his
cybernetic arm. Hood alerts Chase and Azurii.

HOOD
Heading for the escape pods!

SKY

Large fragments of the Gunship blow off, tumbling away...

THE BRIDGE

The powerful blast throws Hood and Rax backwards -- into
the air -- both crashing into the front windshield.

CHASE (OVER HEADSET)
You guys alright?!

Rax comes to, looks down... straight down at...

THE PLANET'S SURFACE!

Ice and ocean rushing up. We can see beautiful GLASS CITIES built within the ice pillars and bridges.

Rax is frozen with fear. Vertigo. As Hood tries to get up... the glass beneath him spiderwebs. He stops.

HOOD

Uhhh, we're in a spot of trouble.

SKY

Chase and Azurii slingshot ahead of the crumbling Gunship, all while maneuvering around fiery debris and bodies...

AS THEY FLY AHEAD OF THE GUNSHIP

Chase and Azurii look up and behind them... Hood and Rax sprawled against the windshield, looking down at them.

CHASE

Holy shit!

HOOD

Tell me about it.

AZURII

Shoot the glass! I'll catch you with my tractor beam.

RAX NAT

What?! No way!

AZURII

Don't argue!

THE BRIDGE

Jax and Rax Nat exchange a look. She's right.

HOOD

Hold on tight.

Rax does. *BLAM!* Hood shoot the glass -- it SHATTERS! Both Hood and Rax drop, instantly sucked outside --

SKY

Together they free fall... narrowly avoiding debris.

Azurii pulls up along side them. A SMALL CARGO HATCH opens up. Using her tractor beam, she pulls them inside --

IN THE CARGO HOLD

Hood and Rax lie huddled together, the only light coming from their helmets. Both breathing heavy. But safe.

HOOD
Told you we'd have fun.

EXT. SPACE / NEBVIAN ORBIT

The planet NEBVIAN. An earth-like marble. Nebvian and TWO MOONS orbit the massive red planet NOGA. And --

A BLOCKADE OF ONE-HUNDRED ITOA-CLASS DURR BATTLESHIPS.

A SHUTTLE -- under fighter escort -- rockets past the blockade... past the Durr's second line of defense --

AN ORBITAL DEFENDER. An armored starfish-like structure.

The convoy descends towards the planet below....

EXT. NEBVIAN - MOMENTS LATER

A REEF PLANET. An alien tropical paradise.

THOUSANDS OF TINY ISLANDS dot the azure blue waters. Like the Micronesian islands of Palau, but only more extreme.

CUT TO:

DOZENS OF OCEANIC SINKHOLES (HYDRO POOLS)

Five miles in circumference, a thousand feet deep. Pools are connected by a network of bridges spanning out for miles.

CUT TO:

The Durr convoy flies towards one hydro pool... one with a massive SPIDER-LIKE STRUCTURE erected above it.

THIS IS A RING LOCK SYNCHRONIZING STATION.

And surrounding it...

FLOATING GUN PLATFORMS.

They look like giant JET ENGINES -- twelve stories tall -- armed with dozens of massive HOWITZER-LIKE GUNS.

EXT. RING LOCK STATION / LANDING PLATFORM - LATER

Duru now on the move, flanked by Indomitable and CRUSADER COMMANDOS. We see native NEBVIANS (Salamander-like aliens) being escorted towards a PRISON SHIP by armed DURR TROOPS.

CRUSADER COMMANDO
(taps his helmet)
Incoming message, sir.

DURU KREET
What is it?

CRUSADER COMMANDO
Malogaan Fueling Outpost has been destroyed. An investigation team is on the way...

A moment. Something isn't right. He eyes Indomitable.

DURU KREET
Indomitable, I want this planet secured, do you understand? Population is to be taken prisoner, kill all who resist...
(to Crusader Commando)
Alert Imbariis, I want those Ring Lock shipyards operational. Now.

EXT. SPACE

We see OUR STOLEN DURR INTERCEPTORS and Azurii's ship cruising through space, approaching the yellow planet of...

ALSS. A forgotten, lifeless rock.

AZURII (O.S.)
My home. What's left of it...

As they fly closer, something comes into view, something ominous encircling the entire planet...

A RING LOCK

The Rig Lock is three miles in height. Cold in design. MASSIVE, OUTER MIRRORS redirect all incoming sunlight. Our pilots are blown away by the size and scale.

TYRIS VEST (O.S.)
We use these abandoned worlds as sanctuaries, to repair vessels. The Durr no longer patrol here.

We see the Starlight Liberator -- now bathed in the Ring Lock's shadow -- like a tiny fish hiding in a coral reef.

INT. CHASE'S COCKPIT - SAME

As Chase flies, he stares at the other COALITION SHIPS -- battleships, strike cruisers, destroyers. But something's wrong. The numbers look... thin.

CHASE

This is our entire fleet?

As they fly closer, we see BATTLE SCARS. Fresh ones.

AZURII (OVER HEADSET)

Something must've happened.

INT. STARLIGHT LIBERATOR / HANGAR - MOMENTS LATER

Our team lands. Everyone rushes up to them, relieved that they made it home safe, marveling at the stolen fighters.

T-RETZ

Ya done us proud, Worm!

But the celebration is quickly cut short because Jax approaches. He's all healed up, but doesn't look happy.

CHASE

Glad you're back, sir.

JAX

I told you to stand down. You disobeyed a direct order. From me.

And the air is sucked out of the room.

Chase braces himself. Here it comes. Bug steps forward, not about to let Chase take the fall by himself...

BUG

Sir! We all made the decision.
He didn't act alone --

JAX

-- It doesn't matter.
(Bug backing down,
then to Chase)
I put my reputation and my
career on the line for you...

Everyone cringing. This is gonna be bad.

JAX
...and I made the right call.
Good job.

He smiles. Everyone now relieved. Chase is off the hook.

JAX
I owe you one. Thanks.
(leans in, low)
And for the record, I didn't
agree with the Admiral. But
there was nothing I could do.

Chase nods. Good. Nothing else needs to be said. Jax
eyes the ignition key necklace, then locks eyes with Chase.

CHASE
(skating around it--)
I said I could fly it, and I did.

JAX
Don't ever lie to me again.

CHASE
Yessir.

A beat. It's been settled. Time to move on.

JAX
This coalition is on the verge
of total collapse. I'm doing my
best to keep it together, so what I
want, what I *need* is you and uhh...
(motioning to Rax--)
...Bob over there to run full
diagnostics on those fighters.
See if you can find something
useful... a weakness... *anything*.
We're running out of time.

INT. STARLIGHT LIBERATOR / HANGAR - LATER

Rax works on one of the stolen Durr fighters. Using the
GLASS BALL jump drive, he scans the fighter's avionics.
Chase sits in his starfighter which is parked next to him.

RAX NAT
...If we survive all this --
I'll retrofit Ghost Squadron
with anti-gravity drives that
will prevent inertia and drag...

CHASE
 I wish my buddy Twig was here.
 You too would get along so well...

He then climbs up into his cockpit, tinkering around.
 Notices round-shaped device on the instrument panel --

A TINY CAMERA LENS.

Chase stares... A RAZOR-THIN GREEN LASER shoots from the
 lens, hitting Chase in the eye. But it doesn't hurt.

As Chase turns his head... the ship suddenly MOVES.

CHASE
 Whoa! What's happening?

He swings his head the other way... and the ship moves...
 landing gear GRINDING against the hangar floor.

RAX NAT
 Stop! Don't move.

Chase freezes and the ship stops instantly.

CHASE
 I'm not moving. I'm just... I'm
 looking straight ahead.

Rax climbs up on the starfighter's fuselage, looking in,
 starts tinkering around.

RAX NAT
 You activated the ship's Fly by
 Sight. Ever heard of it?

Chase accidentally looks towards Rax, the ship moves.

RAX NAT
 Fly by Sight will allow you to
 fly hands-free, make you far more
 maneuverable, give you better
 aim... Quicker reaction time...
 (pointing to the lens)
 The laser lens reads the
 photoreceptor cells in your retina,
 acts as an optical amplifier.
 (summing it up)
 Wherever you look, there you go.

CHASE
 (frozen, staring forward)
 I'm stuck! How do you shut it off?

RAX NAT
Simple. Just close your eyes for
roughly three, four seconds and
you'll disengage from the system.

Chase does... and it works.

CHASE
That's really weird.

A SHIP launches from the deck. It's Azurii. Chase watches
her ship shrinks away as it rockets towards the planet...

INT. STARLIGHT LIBERATOR / WAR ROOM - LATER

Coalition leaders going over HOLOGRAPHIC WAR PLANS. And
it's a heated debate. Tension is high.

JAX
-- They'll never expect it. We'll
catch them completely off guard --

NAL ATEEN
-- Impossible! We're completely
outnumbered! We need to regroup
and rebuild --

JAX
-- We don't have time. We have to
act now. The future is now --

NAL ATEEN
-- But we're no match for those
battleships! Their fighters
outnumber us ten to one --

JAX
-- Asymmetric warfare. That's
how you defeat a superior enemy.
We'll use their size and strength
against them. Technology alone
won't save us. We need to rely
on our training, our tactics --
teamwork -- dogfighting -- real
close encounters...

(a beat)
And we've got something to fight
for -- our freedom, our future...

His words strike home. He speaks the truth.

NAL ATEEN

Even if our forces get past the blockade, we have no way to defend ourselves against those Orbital Defenders. Our ships will be left completely powerless --

JAX

-- Your ships. Not ours. Well...
some of ours.
(off their look)
I have a plan.

EXT. ALSS - DAY

Grey skies. Yellow earth. Remnants of old cities. Rusted and broken shells of crashed battleships. A graveyard.

We can see the RING arcing above like a mechanical rainbow, stretching across the horizon...

CUT TO:

Azurii stands, her fighter parked behind her, listens...
No sound of anything alive. It's eerie. Sad.

Chase's starfighter descends. The cockpit opens, Chase walks towards her, wearing an oxygen mask, taking in the view.

CHASE

I'm sure it was a wonderful place.

AZURII

It was. I have spent most of my life hiding, moving from place to place. There has always been war.

A beat. Something then catches Chase's eye. He unearths...
A FLOWER. Small, beautiful. Azurii touches it, moved.

AZURII

Perhaps there is hope.

CHASE

Hope is always the last to die.

Azurii looks at Chase, smiles.

AZURII

You have the same eyes as your brother. I noticed them when I first saw you.

CHASE
You knew him?

AZURII
He told me how he wished you were
here... that perhaps one day you
would be flying together...

Chase has to do everything from tearing up.

CHASE
I only wish he were still alive
to see me now.

AZURII
Dead? Your brother isn't dead.
(off Chase)
He's a prisoner of war. On the
planet Imbariis. Your bother
helped destroy the Durr's Ring
Lock Shipyards. He was one of the
few survivors... and is the reason
why we fight to live another day.

Chase's world has been rocked. He's been given new life.
Suddenly, both of their WATCH-LIKE COMMUNICATORS CHIME.

AZURII
We need to get back.

INT. STARLIGHT LIBERATOR / WAR ROOM - LATER

Everyone stands around a HOLOGRAPHIC WAR PLAN. All eyes
(multiple eyes too) and ears focused on Jax..

*(NOTE: As Jax unveils the battle plan we see a holographic
interpretation of what he's laying out.)*

JAX
Operation: Four Little Diamonds.

He points to Chase, Dingo, Mozart and Tyris.

MOZART
(low, to Dingo)
I like the sound of that.

JAX
The four of you will enter Nebvian
space ahead of the fleet. Your
mission is to disable enemy
battleships.

The four pilots exchange looks. He said what?

CHASE

What? How?

Jax motions to Rax. He steps up, plugs in his GLASS BALL jump drive device. Holographic schematics light up.

RAX NAT

I was able to isolate the Durr's power cell signatures. Your fighters have been armed with recalibrated Scrambler missiles which will shut down all shields, weapons and communications...

CHASE

Leaving them deaf, dumb and blind.

JAX

Our fleet will then engage those battleships at point-blank range, creating a safe passage for our ships to slip past the blockade and proceed to the planet below.

TYRIS VEST

What about the Orbital Defenders?

JAX

Atomic Squadron will handle that.

All eyes shift to Atomic Squadron. They stand there, beaming. Everyone else looks thoroughly confused. Why?

JAX

The Orbital Defender's weapons will be ineffective against them due to their old school technology.

(off everyone)

No electronic circuitry, only hydraulics. It's like fighting analogue in a digital world.

(moving forward--)

Once it's down, transports will begin landing ground forces at pre-designated sites and take back the capital while all fighters knock out the Ring Lock Synchronizer. Understood?

Everyone nods, muttering in agreement.

INT. STARLIGHT LIBERATOR / HANGAR - MOMENTS LATER

Jax stands with Can't Get and the Atomic Squadron, all ready for battle. Chase, Saint and Tickler approach...

SAINT
You wanted to see me, sir.

JAX
You're flying with Atomic Squadron.

He points to Deadstick's tricked-out P-51 MUSTANG.

SAINT
What? Seriously?

CAN'T GET
In order to fly this bird, I need the best. And you were the best in your class, am I right?
(she nods)
Good. Because this is going to be a good 'ol fashioned knife fight in a phone booth. Drink?

He offers Saint his flask. She politely declines.

SAINT
But who's going to fly my plane?

TICKLER
I promise to take good care of her.

Saint feigns a fake smile. Ice walks up behind Tickler.

ICE
I keep eye on him for you.

TICKLER
This I like.

Both women roll their eyes. Jax turns to Chase.

JAX
As soon as the fleet arrives, I want you fly cover for Atomic Squadron, act as a decoy, get 'em in as close as you can.
(Chase nods, understood)
And Chase... We'll find Rory.
You have my word.

Chase nods, thanks.

IN THE HANGAR - IN FULL MOBILIZING MODE - LATER

Futuristic, armored CATs (COMBAT ATTACK TRANSPORTS) Some decorated with customized WWII nose art and nicknames -- *"The Boneshaker", "Whispering Death", "Booby Trap"...*

Bus-sized submarines (Underwater Attack Vehicles -- UAVs) are loaded into the CATs' mechanical underbellies.

T-Rex putting the finishing touches on his latest work of art -- A BUXOM PIN-UP GIRL holding a stick of dynamite. Call this CAT the *"Dinah-Mite!"*

Jax approaches, now suited in combat gear. Total bad-ass.

T-RETZ

In memory of my Granddaddy. He flew B-17s over Berlin.

(slaps the CAT)

She'll do you proud, sir.

JAX

I have no doubt.

Jax looks around, taking it in. ATF soldiers and pilots take notice. An audience gathers...

JAX

Now is the time to make history.
All of us coming together, to
fight as one. And we're not just
fighting for my home world --
(pointing to the crowd)
-- Or yours -- or yours -- or
yours -- but for everyone's.
We're all fighting for respect,
for freedom, for greatness...

FLASH TO: VARIOUS SHOTS - AROUND THE FLEET

- ATF PILOTS AND SOLDIERS mobilizing, checking weapons, fueling and arming starfighters, prepping for battle.

JAX (V.O.)

*...But the odds are against us...
We face an enemy that is superior
in every way -- speed, technology
and firepower... but not in our
hearts...*

RESUME

JAX

...This enemy shows no fear, nor do they fear us... And that will be their downfall. Because our enemies have never felt our united strength. Now is the time for the conquerors to be conquered!

Everyone CHEERS! Aliens chanting their own war cry.

As everyone disperses, we see Mozart and Dingo with the other members of Ghost Squadron, bummed. A family broken up.

MOZART

Just remember, we'll be wearing enemy colors so no itchy trigger fingers --

(points to T-Retz)

Especially you!

They laugh. Then it gets serious. Hugs and pats goodbye.

CUT TO:

Chase approaches Saint. She's walking around her tricked out P-51 Mustang, pre-flight inspection.

CHASE

(re: Deadstick)

You'll do him proud.

Suddenly, A CRANE grabs hold of Saint's P-51, loading it into a sleek spacecraft called a CENTIPEDE.

Actually, there are TWO CENTIPEDES.

The four Atomic Squadron fighters are loaded into one Centipede while Ghost Squadron and all the other "human" fighters are loaded into the second Centipede.

CHASE

Who would've thought the fate of mankind would be left in our hands?

She smiles, but can sense there's something else on his mind.

SAINT

What is it? Tell me.

CHASE

My brother... He's still alive.

(off Saint's reaction)

-- I know. Can you believe it?

SAINT

What are you going to do?

CHASE

First we've got to win this battle.
And then, then I'm going after him.
I'm gonna find him and bring him
back. Whatever it takes.

(a beat)

And... I wanted to apologize, I
should've come clean, told you
about the key... I just -- I didn't
want you to think any less of me --

Saint has had enough. She steps forwards and kisses him,
shutting him up. They slowly break away. Chase grins.

CHASE

Be careful.

SAINT

(smiles)

Always.

INT. CHASE'S COCKPIT - MOMENTS LATER

Chase sits, psyching himself up for war, sees...

Jax, Azurii, Hood and an ELITE COMMANDO UNIT known as
"*Satan's Kittens*" boarding the CAT "Dinah-Mite!" Jax
stops, eyes Chase. A moment between mentor and student.

JAX

Azurii knows her way around the
island capital. Don't worry, she
can handle herself.

(Chase nods)

Forward Air Command will be waiting
for your signal. Remember -- first
look, first shot, first kill.

CHASE

(salutes)

No sky denied. Sir.

Jax smiles, returns the salute.

EXT. SPACE / ALSS ORBIT

As the fleet pulls away from the abandoned Ring Lock...

Our FOUR DURR STARFIGHTERS depart from the Starlight Liberator's hangar bay, then --

WHOOSH! They disappear as they jump into hyperspace.

EXT. SPACE / NEBVIAN ORBIT

The blockade of enemy battleships circle the planet.

Suddenly, FOUR DURR STARFIGHTERS emerge from hyperspace -- in tight formation -- flying towards the blockade...

INT. CHASE'S COCKPIT - SAME

Chase flying -- in the zone -- in mission mode --

CHASE

Alright, everyone. Keep it cool.
Radio silence. On my mark, let's
split up and kick down the doors.
(they all comply)
Lock on target and fire in
three... two... one... Hit it!

EXT. SPACE / NEBVIAN ORBIT - SAME

Here we go! The four starfighters split off -- snap firing their modified SCRAMBLER MISSILES --

All four missiles OPEN UP -- magnetically attaching themselves to each Battleship. Suddenly, all lights FLICKER, then die. Power is lost.

CHASE

It's working! Keep it going!

All four fighters keep going -- firing off their modified Scramblers at other Battleships, rendering them powerless.

CHASE

Give the signal! Alert FAC.

INT. DURR BATTLESHIP / BRIDGE - SAME

BRIDGE CREW in a state of panic -- trying to figure out what the hell's going on. How is this happening?

DURR TECH

We've lost all power.

THROUGH THE FRONT VIEWSCREEN

We see our COALITION FLEET emerging from hyperspace -- at point-blank range -- they're right on top of them!

DURR COMMANDER
Shields! Shields!

DURR TECH
Not responding!

EXT. SPACE / NEBVIAN ORBIT

THE COALITION FLEET OPENS FIRE!

Durr Battleships take a serious beating -- nothing they can do -- it's a one-sided fight. Battleships EXPLODE!

Round One going to our heroes.

INT. STARLIGHT LIBERATOR / BRIDGE

Nal Ateen watches, pleased. So far, so good.

NAL ATEEN
All ships, this is Rocket One.
Hold position. Atomic Squadron,
you are go for launch.

EXT. SPACE / NEBVIAN ORBIT

Centipede One rockets towards the planet below. CHASE'S STARFIGHTER circling back, now flying cover --

We see the other "unaffected" Durr Battleships angling towards the Coalition Fleet, launching their FIGHTERS... The doorway is slowly closing...

INT. RING LOCK CONTROL CENTER - DAY

Duru Kreet and others watch the battle unfold on HOLOGRAPHIC VID-SCREENS. Everyone looks taken by surprise.

DURU KREET
So... There is fight left in him
after all.

DURR TECH
Sir, one enemy target has broken
through the blockade, now on
approach towards Sector Six.

DURU KREET
Alert Orbital Defenders.

EXT. NEBVIAN ORBIT - SAME

Chase and the Centipede hauling ass -- stars winking out of
view as night skies turn lighter --

INT. CHASE'S COCKPIT - SAME

Chase leading the assault, checking his scopes --

CHASE
Target is fifty miles out, coming
into visual range. Remember,
keep it nice 'n tight -- use the
atmosphere to your advantage.

EXT. SKIES ABOVE NEBVIAN - DAY

Centipede's doors open, GULL-WING CRANES swinging out and
upward -- and attached to the end of each crane --

AN "ATOMIC SQUADRON" FIGHTER.

The cranes' finger-like clamps spring open, releasing our
fighters into the air. Atomic Squadron's customized,
alien jet engines GLOW. The old planes haul serious ass --

INT. SAINT'S P-51 COCKPIT - DAY

Saint flying, looking anxious, yet excited. Her cockpit
is a hodgepodge of analogue dials and high-tech avionics.

SAINT
If this works, we'll have to
solely rely on hand signals so
keep your eyes open.

EXT. SKIES ABOVE NEBVIAN - DAY

The four old school WWII fighters slip through clouds...

INT. STARLIGHT LIBERATOR / BRIDGE

Nal Ateen sees the Battleships looming closer. Enemy fighters begin firing away. EXPLOSIONS rock the ship.

EXT. SKIES ABOVE NEBVIAN - DAY

Atomic Squadron emerges from the clouds, we see...

AN ORBITAL DEFENDER

It fires an ELECTRICAL HALO BLAST at our WWII fighters. Like a giant shock wave ring. And it's coming in fast!

INT. SAINT'S COCKPIT - SAME

SAINT
Incoming! Kill all power!
(flipping switches)
Chase, get out of here!

CHASE (OVER HEADSET)
Roger that!

EXT. SKY - DAY

Atomic Squadron powers down, now "gliding" through the air as... WHAM! The ELECTRICAL HALO BLAST engulfs them.

CUT TO:

Chase and the Centipede rocketing skyward -- Chase clears it... but the Centipede's hit by the blast -- now powerless -- falling helplessly towards the planet below...

INT. SAINT'S COCKPIT - DAY

Saint hanging on, her cockpit rattles violently. Saint remains focused. As the blast surges past, things calm.

SAINT
Switching to auxiliary...

EXT. SKY - DAY

As the four fighters fall -- PROPELLER BLADES SPRING UP -- unfolding, and begin SPINNING TO LIFE! Coughing up clouds of exhaust. The WWII fighters line up in attack formation --

INT. SAINT'S COCKPIT - DAY

Saint in control -- target dead in her gunsights, and --

EXT. SKY - DAY

BLAM!-BLAM!-BLAM-BLAM! Atomic Squadron fires a barrage of missiles and lethal gunfire. The Orbital Defender EXPLODES!

INT. RING LOCK COMMAND CENTER - DAY

DURR TECH
Orbital Defender Six is down.

DURU KREET
Impossible! How...?

DURR TECH #2
Sir! All shipyards are fully functional. Awaiting your order.

DURU KREET
Begin pulse port synchronization.

He turns to Indomitable, throws him a look. Indomitable nods, knows exactly what to do, and takes off --

INT. CHASE'S COCKPIT - DAY

Chase looking in his rearview monitors, smiling --

CHASE
Rocket One, I have visual confirmation. We are clear.

INT. STARLIGHT LIBERATOR / BRIDGE

NAL ATEEN
Affirmative, Diamond One. All ships are go for launch! Black CAT Group proceed to the primary target site below.

EXT. SPACE / NEBVIAN ORBIT

Centipede Two takes off from the Starlight Liberator, followed by ATF CATs, hauling ass towards Nebvian.

Jax's CAT "Dinah-Mite!" (BLACK CAT ONE) leads the way.

Durr Interceptors break off their attack and give chase.

EXT. SKY - DAY

As Centipede Two and the CATs head towards the planet,
Chase rockets towards them, blowing right past them --

CHASE

Black CAT One -- six bandits in
trail -- Diamond Group -- Elevator
Angels four-three-zero, maximum
thrust. Let's give those
transports some breathing room --

He starts firing at the Durr Interceptors.

The real enemy fighters are completely thrown.

Dingo, Mozart and Tyris arrive on scene, helping Chase.

EXT. SKY - DAY

CENTIPEDE TWO's doors open, cranes swinging out, each
holding an -- ATF FIGHTER! Ghost Squadron and other ATF
fighters take off -- now joining the battle!

CUT TO:

SKIES ABOVE THE OCEAN - ONE MILE OFFSHORE

CATs hovering over the water -- tail gates opening --
dropping their cargo... Underwater Attack Vehicles (UAVs)

SPLASH! They dive beneath the water.

As the CATs drop off the last remaining submersibles...
BOOM! A CAT is hit -- now spinning uncontrollably. The
heavy transport EXPLODES as it slams into the water.

CUT TO:

THREE DURR INTERCEPTORS diving from above, ready to finish
them off. The CATs are now sitting ducks, until --

ATOMIC SQUADRON swoops in!

Comet's P-38 LIGHTNING fires its SIX NOSE CANNONS and
obliterates two enemy fighters. Biscuit's HELLCAT mows
down the last one. All's clear. CATs moving off --

SAINT
(talking aloud, gesturing)
Let's escort those UAVs, boys.

CUT TO:

UNDERWATER

UAVs motor along through the alien coral reef.

INT. UAV - DAY

Jax, Hood and Azurii in the lead UAV.

JAX
String formation. Nice 'n tight.

EXT. ISLAND BEACHHEAD - DAY

A rocky, tide pool-like beach. Beautiful, tropical.

DOZENS OF UAVs surface, plowing through the surf. Forward ramps power down... COALITION TROOPS spilling out. As the amphibious strike force storms the beach, we see --

HUNDREDS OF DURR TROOPS, TANKS AND HEAVY ARTILLERY!

Armies clash. Explosions. Gunfire. Death.

IT'S D-DAY ON AN ALIEN PLANET!

CUT TO:

Jax and Hood moving fast, guns blasting. They jump -- "*Crouching Tiger*" shit -- landing a good twenty yards away. Both feeling like kids. Amazing acrobatic skills.

The planet's lighter gravity does help!

Jax leaps, lands on top of an enemy TANK. He pops open the hatch, drops a grenade, leaps off -- Ka-BOOM!

JAX
I want Blazers up here now!

Azurii blasting away, taking down enemy combatants.

AZURII
This way! C'mon!

EXT. SKIES ABOVE NEBVIAN - DAY

Our battlefield is 20,000 feet above the planet.

Full-throttle aerial combat. Arcs of cannon fire, tracers, lasers, contrails. Fast, intense, deadly. Downed fighters spiraling like glittering comets. This is the main event.

INT. CHASE'S COCKPIT - DAY

Chase zigzagging -- dogfighting --

CHASE
Ghost Squadron, where are you?

BUG (OVER HEADSET)
Course tracking three-one-zero.
Angels Ten. Fifty-two degrees.

TWO TARGETS APPEAR within Chase's helmet visor (HMD). The images MAGNIFY -- we can now see that it's Bug and T-Retz.

CHASE
Copy that. I see you.

He then ZEROES IN on FOUR BANDITS roaring up from behind. The enemy fighters split up, trying to box them in --

CHASE
-- Bug, T-Retz -- watch your six.
You've got four on your tail.
Two burnin' and two turnin' --

EXT. SKIES ABOVE THE OCEAN - DAY

T-Retz's A-10 and Bug's F-22 being chased by TWO ENEMY FIGHTERS. Bug fires REVERSE MISSILES -- Nails them both!

TWO MORE ENEMY FIGHTERS APPEAR TO THEIR RIGHT

T-Retz snaps off tricked-out missiles... both miss!

BUG
That's why they're called
missiles and not hittiles.

T-RETZ
Aw, shut up and watch this!

BRRRRRRRRRRRAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP! T-Retz mows them down with his A-10's three, powerful Gatling guns. Splash two.

But an enemy fighter slips in behind T-Retz -- Slush's F-14 Tomcat appears -- barrel rolls for a killshot --

INT. SLUSH'S F-14 COCKPIT - DAY

Slush now inverted, sliding in behind the enemy fighter -- fires his GUNS. BOOM! Nails it. Now a swirling fireball.

SLUSH
Whoa! Did you see that shit?!

T-RETZ (OVER HEADSET)
-- I was right there! How the hell did I not see that?! --

SLUSH
-- You're welcome, asshole.
(alarms light up--)
Bandits twelve o'clock!

FOUR MORE ENEMY FIGHTERS APPEAR DEAD AHEAD!

Slush fires -- unleashing a torrent volley of firepower, taking out three enemy ships. But one gets through -- BOOM! It's now a fireball as Ice's MiG-35 swoops in.

SLUSH
Nice shot, Ice!

ICE (OVER HEADSET)
Yes it was. Now be quiet.

EXT. SKIES ABOVE NEBVIAN - DAY

Tickler's F-15 ripple fires, destroying an enemy fighter. Then, *BLAM!* He's hit. T-Retz's A-10 pulls along side...

T-RETZ
You're in trouble now, daddy-o.

TICKLER
Eh, just a scratch.

The F-15 Eagle's starboard engine FLAMES OUT.

SLUSH
That's more than a scratch.

T-RETZ
Time for you to bug out, Tick --

Suddenly, T-Retz's A-10 is hit by enemy fire. T-Retz breaks hard left. Durr Interceptors on him tight --

T-RETZ
-- Shit! They're all over me! --

CUT TO:

ON THE ISLAND BEACHHEAD

Jax and Satan's Kittens fighting. BLAZE COMMANDOS UNITS rush up from behind, firing their bad-ass FLAMETHROWERS!

The flamethrowers actually fire in THREE DIRECTIONS. Each blast leveling troops and vehicles. As Jax and his Blaze Commandos push forward, he looks up --

IN THE SKIES ABOVE

Biscuit's Hellcat rockets overhead -- drops an EMP BOMB.

It detonates. An ELECTRICAL SHOCK WAVE zaps enemy tanks and artillery, rendering them completely powerless, then -- BOOM! Biscuit's Hellcat EXPLODES! And he's gone.

CUT TO:

THREE DURR INTERCEPTORS! On the attack.

Atomic Squadron now heading back out over the ocean. Saint wiggles the P-51's wings, catching her wingmen's attention.

SAINT
(using hand signals,
talking aloud)
Head to the deck.

They nod. Got it. They drop down to --

WAVE-TOP LEVEL

Atomic Squadron buzzing right above the water, weaving -- turning -- enemy fighters in hot pursuit -- firing away -- but they keep overshooting their targets --

The WWII fighters are too maneuverable in this light atmosphere. They slip and slide with incredible ease.

Comet fires -- BOOM! Splash one. Can't Get gets a bead on his bandit, lets it fly -- direct hit! Splash two.

It's now up to Saint. Two down, one to go.

INT. SAINT'S COCKPIT - DAY

Saint stomps the rudder, slowing down -- her bandit rockets right past her. Saint fires. Nails it. And it EXPLODES. But flying debris SLICES OFF ONE OF THE P-51's WINGS!

SAINT
I'm hit! I'm going down!

Saint punches out --

WHOOOSH! And out she goes. Except this EJECTION SEAT is equipped with THRUSTERS. Like a rocket pack, Saint flies her ejection seat over the water, towards...

A NARROW STRIP OF EXPOSED REEF

In the middle of open ocean. Saint lands, safe.

CUT TO:

THE AERIAL BATTLEFIELD ABOVE

The dogfighting is intense. Heavy losses on both sides.

We find Chase locked in a fierce aerial dogfight -- both starfighters circling each other like hungry sharks. Chase gets a lock-on and fires -- BOOM! He wins.

CHASE
-- Diamond Group, form up and
follow me -- Speed of heat --

He lights his thrusters and heads for the deck. Fast. Dingo, Mozart and Tyris form up behind him --

CUT TO:

T-Retz in a High-G vertical climb. He fires off chaff and flares, trying to shake the enemy fighters loose. But he's got bigger problems above him --

A MINE FIELD OF FALLING, BURNING DEBRIS

Raining down on him. T-Retz has to skillfully maneuver around the falling wreckage. One false move and he's dead. BOOM! One pursuing enemy fighter is hit by falling debris.

INT. T-RETZ'S COCKPIT - DAY

He sees A LARGE FIERY ENGINE spiraling towards him...

T-Retz fires! His three cannons BLOW IT APART, turning it into smoldering scrap metal. Tiny debris peppers his ship.

That was close.

Suddenly, SMOKE fills his cockpit. Not good.

T-RETZ
Aww hell, my toast is burnin'.

As he clears the debris field... more bad news.

A SQUADRON OF FOUR DURR INTERCEPTORS

Streaking through the clouds, heading right for him!

CHASE (OVER HEADSET)
Whaddaya say there, Sexy REXY?

It's Chase, Dingo, Mozart and Tyris!

T-RETZ
Where the hell have y'all been?!

The incoming fighters SHOOT PAST HIM --

CHASE (OVER HEADSET)
Saving your ass, rookie!

-- turning on the other Durr fighters. The "real" Durr pilots are confused. They don't know who to shoot. The ATF fighters take advantage the tide begins to turn.

But then a familiar Durr Interceptor appears... INDOMITABLE.

INT. INDOMITABLE'S COCKPIT - DAY

The ace pilot in control. A rock. Unreadable behind that awesome mask. A seasoned, focused killer. He locks on target, begins taking out ATF Fighters with ease.

EXT. SKIES ABOVE THE OCEAN - DAY

Tyris engages Indomitable. The two fighters locked in a crazy, swirling head-to-head dogfight -- but it's obvious he's overmatched. Indomitable flies circles around him.

INT. CHASE'S COCKPIT - DAY

Chase sees that Tyris is in serious trouble --

CHASE
-- Diamond Three, hit your
blowers! He's coming --

BOOM! Too late. Tyris' fighter EXPLODES INTO A FIREBALL.
He's gone. A moment, then --

EXT. SKIES ABOVE NEBVIAN - DAY

Chase angles for a shot, but Indomitable pulls off a crazy defensive maneuver -- literally disappearing from sight --

INT. CHASE'S COCKPIT - DAY

Chase looking -- moving -- looking -- twisting -- trying to find his target, losing him in this chaos. Not good.

CHASE
-- Dammit! Where is he?! --

BUG (OVER HEADSET)
-- Break left! He's on your six --

CHASE
-- No joy! I can't see 'im --

BOOM! Chase is hit. It's Indomitable.

Not a direct hit -- a glancing blow -- but Chase is down --
knocked unconscious -- his cockpit now SMOKING...

EXT. SKIES ABOVE THE OCEAN - DAY

Chase's damaged starfighter now falling... Bug's F-22 swoops in -- SNAPS OFF A MISSILE -- forcing Indomitable to break off his attack, before he can finish off Chase.

INT. CHASE'S COCKPIT - DAY

His starfighter plummets...

...falling through CLOUDS OF BLACK FLAK -- plunging us into temporary darkness...

Chase unaware, out cold, bleeding. The ship buffeting. His head bobbing. Azure waters rushing up below...

EXT. REEF - DAY

Saint watching the battle rage above... Nothing she can do. Wondering where her friends are. Where Chase is...

SAINT
Where are you?

Her eyes pick out one particular falling object... A lone object way up high... Something about it.

INT. CHASE'S COCKPIT - DAY

Chase still falling...

IN SLO-MO: Burning wreckage falling all around him -- white, corkscrewing contrails crisscrossing blue sky. The muted sounds of explosions -- warbled radio chatter --

SAINT'S VOICE
Where are you...?

Then, Chase slowly comes to... eyes unfocused, dazed... as if dreaming... We can hear his name being called out over the radio. Desperate cries. Then --

CLOSE ON - CHASE'S EYE.

Watering, drifting. His world is a BLUR. Slowly, everything comes into focus. Chase fixating on --

THE LASER LENS.

We see the ocean looming larger. Big and blue. Not much time. Suddenly, his eye ACTIVATES the lens --

As he looks up, the starfighter slowly levels out, starts climbing... He's flying by sight. No hands.

EXT. REEF - DAY

Saint watching the starfighter slowly pull up, gaining altitude... She smiles... She knows it's Chase.

INT. CHASE'S COCKPIT - DAY

Now in control, Chase looks to the chaotic skies above. And that's where he goes. Chase's world snaps back to reality. All of his senses now back to normal.

INT. RING LOCK COMMAND CENTER - DAY

Duru Kreet watching the progress...

DURR TECH
Ring Lock 59% complete...

EXT. SKIES ABOVE THE OCEAN - DAY

Chase rocketing skyward. Dingo pulling along side...

INT. CHASE'S COCKPIT - DAY

DINGO (OVER HEADSET)
You alright, mate?

Indomitable's fighter lights up on Chase's HMD --

CHASE
I'm fine. You ready to school
this asshole?

DINGO (OVER HEADSET)
Thatch Weave?

CHASE
Once I set the hook, let's head
to the deck.

DINGO (OVER HEADSET)
Sounds like a plan.

CHASE
Bug, Slush - cover us.

He targets Indomitable -- not lined up in his crosshairs --
but close enough. He fires, just to get his attention.

And it works.

CHASE
Here we go.

EXT. SKIES ABOVE NEBVIAN - DAY

Chase and Dingo reverse course and punch it -- heading
towards the deck -- moving at incredible speed -- going
supersonic. VAPOR CONES now forming around the fighters.

Indomitable right on their tail, gaining ground --

DINGO
He's on us tight.

CHASE
I go left, you go right.

DINGO
Just say when.

CHASE
Hit it!

Chase and Dingo split up -- Chase goes left -- Dingo goes right -- both fighters performing a Thatch Weave -- both flying an aerial figure 8.

They repeat the aerial maneuver numerous times.

Finally, Indomitable bites on Dingo --

INT. CHASE'S COCKPIT - DAY

Chase hauling ass -- twisting and turning -- Dingo's starfighter slingshots right across his nose --

These turns are really tight, takes a lot of skill.

CHASE
-- Alright, he's coming around --

DINGO (OVER HEADSET)
-- You better not miss! --

CHASE
-- Never! --

Chase slows down, falling in just behind Indomitable.

EXT. SKIES ABOVE NEBVIAN - DAY

Indomitable closes in on Dingo -- has him dead in his sights -- but then realizes he's fallen into a trap. The last thing he'll ever see is...

Chase rocketing right towards him -- total blind side! --

CHASE
Later asshole!

He has the perfect angle of attack -- and fires! BOOM!
Indomitable's Interceptor EXPLODES into a fireball. Gone.

Teamwork at its best.

EXT. SPACE / NEBVIAN ORBIT

The battle rages on. The Durr Battleships have begun to turn the tide against the Coalition Fleet.

INT. STARLIGHT LIBERATOR / BRIDGE

Nal Ateen watching. Tension is high. He sees ONE DURR BATTLESHIP heading towards the planet.

NAL ATEEN
Follow that Battleship!

EXT. ISLAND BEACHHEAD - DAY

On the planet below...

Blaze Commandos pushing forward, gaining ground, until the ground starts RUMBLING. A wave of searing heat washes over them. Trees ahead of them ignite, CATCHING FIRE.

Emerging through the dense smoke and fire...

A FLOATING GUN PLATFORM.

Its GLOWING ENGINES leveling everything beneath it, leaving a trail of utter devastation in its wake...

Jax, Hood, Azurii and others now in full retreat.

INT. CHASE'S COCKPIT - DAY

Chase sees their prize. The Ring Lock Synchronizer.

CHASE
Target in sight -- four o'clock
low. AOA thirty-three degrees --

MOZART
-- Watch out! There's a heavy fire
zone on the far --

CHASE
-- It's now or never. Hit it.

Chase brakes hard right, and dives. All other ATF fighters follow suit, towards the sinkholes...

EXT. HYDRO POOL / OCEAN - DAY

THE GUN PLATFORMS encircling the Ring Lock station launch
ALIEN ANTI-AIRCRAFT MISSILES at our incoming flyboys --

-- All fighters break off into a defensive split -- but a
few are shot down, blown out of the sky...

INT. BUG'S COCKPIT - DAY

Bug flying, recovering, shaken --

BUG
Bad idea. Now what?

We hear desperate CHATTER over his (everyone's) headsets --

JAX (OVER HEADSET)
-- Pinned down! -- Need air support
now! We're losing our --

And he's cut off. Radio static and dread fill the airwaves.

CHASE (OVER HEADSET)
We've gotta help 'em.

SLUSH (OVER HEADSET)
What about the Ring Lock?

BUG
Ice, T-Retz -- cover me, we're
going downtown. Chase, the rest
of you take out that Ring Lock.
Got it?
(they respond
"affirmative")
Good. No sky denied!

GHOST SQUADRON (OVER HEADSET)
No sky denied!

EXT. SKIES ABOVE THE OCEAN - DAY

Bug's F-22 veers off -- suddenly TWO MORE ENGINES --
BOOSTERS -- spring up from the F-22's rear fuselage.

FOUR ENGINES. He punches it. The two extra engines POP!
Kicking the Raptor into another gear. An alien turbo boost.

T-Retz and Ice flying right behind him --

INT. RING LOCK COMMAND CENTER - DAY

DURR TECH
Ring Lock Synchronization 73%...

Duru watching... Victory within his grasp.

EXT. ISLAND BEACHHEAD - DAY

Jax, Hood and others running in full retreat because --

TWO GUN PLATFORMS

Roar up behind them, heavy cannons blasting --

JAX
Fall back! Fall back!

Then, RUMBLING. Loud. All eyes looking to the sky as...
Bug, T-Retz and Ice rocket towards them!

INT. BUG'S COCKPIT - DAY

From Bug's POV -- we see him swooping in low, right over
the troops and treetops. Through plumes of smoke --

A GUN PLATFORM! Now lit up in Bug's high-tech HMD --

BUG
You've been bug squashed.

EXT. ISLAND BEACHHEAD - DAY

The three ATF fighters fire away, BLOWING THEM UP! Jax and
the others cheer, waving thanks.

EXT. RING LOCK SYNCHRONIZER - DAY

The Gun Platforms are in a perfect defensive position. No
way for our guys get to the Ring Lock Synchronizer. Our
fighters fly overhead like circling vultures...

INT. CHASE'S COCKPIT - DAY

Chase flying, looking for an opening...

MOZART (OVER HEADSET)
How do we get through?

CHASE
I'm working on it...

Then, emerging through the clouds above...

A DURR BATTLESHIP!

CHASE
Evasive maneuvers!

EXT. SKIES ABOVE THE OCEAN - DAY

All fighters scatter as the Battleship opens fire. It's right on top of them. Our guys are in serious trouble --

BOOM! Mozart's ship is hit and EXPLODES!

CHASE
Nooooooooo!

She's gone. Everyone is numb, rattled to the core.

Suddenly... THE STARLIGHT LIBERATOR appears, guns BLAZING.

INT. STARLIGHT LIBERATOR / BRIDGE - DAY

NAL ATEEN
Forward shields at maximum. Fire!

EXT. SKIES ABOVE THE WATER - DAY

Both ships FIRING, trading punches -- both ships cruising towards one another -- 500 feet above the ocean's surface, plunging the tropical, azure waters in deep shadow.

But the Liberator is no match for the larger battleship. The Liberator is hit. Begins listing, losing power.

INT. STARLIGHT LIBERATOR / BRIDGE - DAY

Alarms blaring. A total shit show. Liberator's been dealt a knockout blow. The Durr Battleship looming dead ahead...

NAL ATEEN
Everyone to the escape pods!

The bridge clears out, but Nal Ateen stays...

NAL ATEEN

Anyone who's out there listening...
the fate of our future is in your
hands. We still have much to learn
from one another. Carry on the
fight. Liberate others from
tyranny.

He plunges the Liberator into a STEEP, VERTICAL DIVE...

Chase rockets past, watching as...

EXT. SKIES ABOVE THE WATER - DAY

THE LIBERATOR PLUNGES STRAIGHT INTO THE OCEAN!

Throwing up a huge WALL OF WATER! The impact *swings* the
Liberator's tail section up and over -- like a somersault --

COLLAPSING ON TOP OF THE DURR BATTLESHIP!

The heavy impact driving -- *pushing* -- the Durr Battleship
down into the water. Both vessels EXPLODE!

INT. CHASE'S COCKPIT - DAY

Chase still shaken from Mozart's death. He digs deep, takes
the reigns, taking charge, eyes and mind focusing --

CHASE

Ghost Squadron -- let's hit the
deck and hit 'em from below.

Chase hits the gas and dives --

EXT. SKIES ABOVE THE WATER - DAY

Ghost Squadron dives, in tight formation -- GUN PLATFORMS
moving into defensive positions around the sinkhole.

It's like a giant chess board.

The ATF fighters pull up, now rocketing along at --

WAVE TOP LEVEL

CHASE

Dingo -- break off and draw their
fire. Slush, stay with me...

Dingo breaks off -- Chase and Slush keep going -- now spinning in a flat scissors roll -- zigzagging between the maze of gun platforms, dodging gunfire --

UP AHEAD

GUN PLATFORMS ignite their engines. Like a blow torch, they BURN THE WATER, throwing up a WALL OF HOT STEAM.

As Chase and Slush streak towards them, the Gun Platforms literally disappear, but still keep firing --

CHASE (OVER HEADSET)
Shit! I'm flying blind.

INT. SLUSH'S F-14 COCKPIT - DAY

SLUSH
Switching to IR laser scan.

He flips a switch on his helmet. A VISOR slides down.

SLUSH'S POV - Laser-like images of the Gun Platforms.

SLUSH
Worm, fall in behind me and keep up... if you can.

CHASE
I'm right behind you.

EXT. SKIES ABOVE THE WATER - DAY

With Slush now leading the charge, they slip through Gun Platforms, firing away, taking them out as they go --

INT. RING LOCK COMMAND CENTER

The countdown continues...

DURR TECH
Ring Lock Synchronization at 90%.

EXT. SKIES ABOVE THE WATER - DAY

As Chase and Slush twist and turn through the fog and maze of Gun Platforms... BOOM! Slush's F-14 is hit. Bad.

INT. SLUSH'S F-14 COCKPIT - DAY

Alarms blaring. Sparks. Smoke.

SLUSH
-- Dammnit! Losing hydraulics --

CHASE
-- Punch out! --

SLUSH
-- Ejection control's shot to shit --

We can see the Ring Lock Synchronizer dead ahead. But
FOUR GUN TURRETS STAND IN THE WAY. Guns blazing.

Slush knows what he has to do.

SLUSH
-- Fly 'n die. That's what we do --

CHASE
-- Slush, get out of out here! --

SLUSH
-- Don't be an asshole, Chase --

CHASE
-- I won't let you down... Ice.

Slush smiles. Then flips Chase off. One more time.

Slush punches it, giving it all he's got... pulling away
from Chase. Chase watches helplessly as --

SLUSH SLAMS HIS F-14 TOMCAT INTO A GUN PLATFORM.

BOOM! The Gun Platform EXPLODES, tipping over... its
FLAMING ENGINE now blowing *sideways* -- literally MELTING
the Gun Platform next to it, triggering a domino effect.

The path is now clear.

Chase throttles up into a steep, climbing turn -- a high
yo-yo -- gaining altitude -- now inverted, then dives --

INT. CHASE'S COCKPIT

Chase flying, intense concentration, diving straight into
the Ring Lock Synchronizer --

INT. RING LOCK COMMAND CENTER - DAY

Alarms chime. All systems green. Ring Lock is a go.

DURR TECH
Ring Lock Synchronization complete.

INT. CHASE'S COCKPIT - DAY

Chase lines up his target. Takes a deep breath.

IN SLO-MO: Chase focuses -- steady breathing -- heart beating slowly -- his world now in razor sharp focus.

The moment of truth. This is for his brother. For Saint. For all of mankind. For everyone's future.

He fires. Firing everything he's got!

EXT. SINKHOLE / RING LOCK GENERATOR - DAY

His aim is true -- taking out one of the Ring Lock station's spider-like support legs. EXPLOSIONS BLOOMING EVERYWHERE!

The station begins to buckle, fall away...

...Chase punches it skyward, climbing fast --

INT. RING LOCK COMMAND CENTER - DAY

Total chaos. Duru Kreet running out the door --

EXT. SPACE / NEBVIAN ORBIT

The RING LOCKS materialize from hyperspace, and...

EXPLODE! The planet's gravity pulling them *inward* -- pulling them into the Durr Battleships. They explode.

Nebvian is encircled by a GIANT RING OF FIRE.

EXT. RING LOCK / PLATFORM - DAY

The entire structure is now failing, crumbling. On fire. Duru Kreet racing towards a SHUTTLE --

EXT. RING LOCK SYNCHRONIZER - SECONDS LATER

The fiery structure FALLS... and just before it hits bottom... A SHUTTLE rockets away...

INT. SHUTTLE - DAY

Duru Kreet inside. A calm anger washes over him. He knows that this war is from over...

EXT. ISLAND BEACHHEAD - DAY

Jax and others look up towards the sky, cheering. Ring Lock debris burning up, looking like a GLOWING HALO...

Everyone CHEERS! Victory.

EXT. SKIES ABOVE NEBVIAN

Chase's starfighter joins up the others ATF and Coalition fighters. They proceed to do a ceremonial flyover -- right over Jax and the others, in the missing man formation.

Respect for their fallen comrades.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. RUUTA ISLAND / HOSPITAL - DAY

Doctors tending to the wounded. Amongst the injured... Saint, recovering. Minor injuries.

Chase approaches Saint, his arm bandaged up.

CHASE

Thought I told you to be careful?

SAINT

I was. So much for being the best.

(smiles, then

sees his arm)

I thought I told you to be careful.

He sits down next to her.

SAINT

You did it.

CHASE

We did it.

And they kiss. Chase stares deep into her eyes, then...

CHASE

When I was up there... I thought
-- I thought I heard your voice...
(off her look)
I know, it sounds crazy, right?
It sounded so real. Maybe I was
dreaming...

SAINT

Maybe not.

And kisses him again. Ghost Squadron and the others enter, all happy to see her alive. Saint sees Tickler. Tickler makes an about face, off running. Everyone laughs.

Chase sees Azurii standing there. They exchange a look. It's evident both are happy to see each other alive.

AZURII

I'll see you around the stars.

And walks out. Chase smiles.

EXT. RUUTA ISLAND - DUSK

Chase stands, overlooking the ocean. Alone.

We see the remnants of the battle -- GIGANTIC, CRASHED VESSELS sticking out of the water like buildings, burning, creating an eerie yet beautiful glow. Jax approaches...

CHASE

Ever been to Imbariis?

JAX

Not yet, but soon. Rory would be proud of you, Chase.

(off Chase)

It's only a matter of time before he tells you that himself.

(smiles)

Too bad no one back home is ever gonna know about your heroics.

CHASE

True. But aren't real heroes supposed to be nameless, faceless?

JAX

Well, maybe some can know.

What? Chase's eyes grow wide with excitement as he sees...
TWIG! And he's got Bob and Roo with him.

JAX
A good pilot needs a good mechanic.

TWIG
Haha! I can't believe it!

Chase and Twig hug. The dogs barking with excitement.

CHASE
You brought the dogs?

TWIG
Hell, yeah! I ain't gonna leave
'em in a kennel. Besides, you
know how much that'll cost?

They laugh. Jax smiles. A solemn beat.

JAX
We're not out of it yet, boys.
We won this battle, but the war
is far from over... For most of
us it's just the beginning. Only
a matter of time before they show
up on earth's doorstep.

CHASE
Let 'em come. We'll be ready.
(salutes Jax)
No sky denied.

Jax returns the salute. Good answer. As ATF starfighters
rocket overhead, we --

FADE OUT.

THE END