

# O C E A N

**The 22<sup>nd</sup> Century. OFF THE ANTARCTIC COAST** – An advanced maritime research vessel floats in amongst the ice flows surrounding the Antarctic coastline.

**BELOW THE OCEAN'S SURFACE** – DR. NATHAN KANE explores deeper than any manned expedition has explored in the 21<sup>st</sup> century or earlier. Kane is the preeminent maritime archaeologist of his generation. He is absolutely fixated on the ocean, believing that it is the source of life; that the secrets of human existence are buried in the trenches, artifacts and lost civilizations just waiting to be discovered.

Kane's team is out on this expedition to find a lost continent Kane has been searching for for years. Kane is revered in his scientific community – he is the young hotshot.

On this dive, we see Kane wearing the NAUTILUS SHROUD dive suit, a proprietary technology that his group pioneered. In this Shroud, Kane dives, spins, stops on a dime, rotates, accelerates, decelerates – all with absolute control. This is vastly advanced technology that makes the ocean seem more within reach than it ever has.

The Nautilus Shroud, conceived by Nathan Kane and engineered by his research team, is a form-fitting, pliable “armor” suit that offers absolute motion control to the diver. The Shroud provides the diver zero-G-like movement beneath the ocean's surface, essentially allowing the wearer to “fly” under water. The helmet, a full, open face shield that is lit from the inside, provides 180 degrees of vision and allows the wearer to see far in the dark ocean. Inside the face shield is a heads-up display (HUD) that projects various electronic readouts inside on the transparent polymer.

Kane is following an anomalous signal that the expedition has picked up, something that the Nautilus Shroud is helping him track deep into the frozen waters. There are other DIVERS with him, men and women from his research team. As Kane closes in on the signal, his colleagues warn him of the instability of the ice shelf.

AN OBJECT is sticking out of the ice. Something black, geometric. Something intelligently designed. The proof Kane has been searching for his entire career. He goes after it like a wolf, not hearing his team's requests for information or warning about what he is about to do. Using the LASER KNIFE on his Shroud, Kane starts cutting away the ice around this object, his HUD recording the event through the ice-cold, opaque water. When his team comes in to assist him, Kane has exposed a section of the object – clearly not a rock or some other natural structure.



**EARTH. DEEP IN THE PACIFIC OCEAN** – On the ocean floor, Kane retrieves an alien-looking **PIECE OF MACHINERY**, something from a downed spacecraft. The suit's strength amplifiers allow him to do so with ease.

As he performs this task, his HUD warns him of a large signature it has picked up. It's closing on him. 60 meters in length. A **GIANT SQUID**, the "kraken" of legend, blasts by him, majestically soaring on the ocean currents. Kane is frozen, awed by the sight.

With the piece of equipment in-hand, Kane rises from the depths—fast. As he jets up through the many strata of the ocean, we see just how deep he was – far deeper than anything possible for a manned expedition in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

**AT THE SURFACE**, Kane emerges from the depths carrying the piece of machinery. He carries it to his new **SURFACE VESSEL**, a far less impressive boat than the research vessel we saw previously. Kane's crew, very "blue collar," rushes to the stern of the boat to help pull the equipment on board. It takes six of them to lift the wreckage onboard, but the Nautilus Shroud is powerful enough that Kane brought it up by himself. On board the ship, we see the rest of the retrieved machinery, which is a crashed **US AIR FORCE AIRCRAFT**.

This isn't an archaeological expedition. It's a salvage operation.

**ONBOARD KANE'S SURFACE VESSEL** – Kane's most loyal crewmate, **GABE MURPHY**, lets him know that the payment from the USAF cleared and the rest will come when their men come out to retrieve the wreck. Gabe follows up by telling Kane that a call for another job came through from the **HORIZON GROUP**, the mention of which sets Kane to rolling his eyes. Gabe tells him that "It's big money, Nate."

On **VIDEO CONFERENCE** from the surface vessel, Kane meets **DR. BYRON MORROW** (40s), an Executive Vice President with the Horizon Group, a deep space prospecting effort that bills themselves as "explorers" but in truth are post-modern oil drillers looking to mine undiscovered wealth from the far reaches of space. Dr. Morrow's training is as an "astronomist" (once we started studying the astral bodies up close rather than through telescopes, the "astronomer" profession died) and he is an expert in astronomy and space travel.

Dr. Morrow explains that Horizon has an orbiting station studying Europa. He tells Kane's crew that "Europa is moon of virgin oceans beneath about six miles of solid ice." Their conducting a bit of a "salvage" operation and want Kane's team to help them. Kane refuses the proposal, disinterested in time-consuming space travel or working for the Horizon Group, which he sees as an imperialist venture. Dr. Morrow replies, "John told me you'd say that, which is why I've sent him out to speak with you personally."

**OUTSIDE, AN AERIAL CRAFT** lands on Kane's salvage vessel.

JOHN WELLS (30s) is Horizon's chief technologist. Smart and too smart for his own good. He's sarcastic and fatalistic with a good sense of "gallows humor." He's also a brilliant software engineer. John is well read and erudite, although his appearance as an unwashed slob belies this trait. John sees physical conditioning as "archaic" as medical science has progressed to the point where it is irrelevant. "Besides, it's not like I'm ever going to have to run anywhere." John is the quintessential unlikely hero – tough behind his computer but has never been in a physical scrap in his life.

Kane receives Wells coldly. They used to work together when Kane ran more of an archaeological outfit. Wells left Kane's group to join Horizon when the money stopped coming in because he needed work. John asks him "How are my Shrouds doing?" Wells wrote the software for the suits back in the design phase. Kane replies "I finally upgraded the shitty image capture program you saddled me with."

Kane suffered disgrace in the science community following the accident in Antarctica as he trumpeted his discovery as evidence of an advanced, intelligent civilization that predated the arrival of humans on Earth. Without anything but a brief, inconclusive video feed of the object that Kane found in the ice, his peers ridiculed and marginalized him. Now, with his funding gone, Kane hires out himself and what little remains of his loyal crew on deep-sea assignments such as this salvage mission

As the conversation is going nowhere fast, John asks if he can show Kane some video. What wells shows him is a short video feed that they received from their Science Station orbiting the moon Europa. Due to interference from Jupiter, this channel of communication only opens in short windows. This one is another almost six weeks from opening up again, but they broadcast video before the interference cut off the transmission.

ON THE VIDEO Kane sees shapes floating in the water of an alien ocean. The shapes are intelligently designed; "man"made. And they look exactly like what Kane tried to pull out of the Antarctic 7 years ago. Kane is blown away by what he sees. Kane takes over the video controls, scrolling and zooming until he can stop on a specific angle of the artifact – THE OBJECT'S BASE. The same image that has been forever burned into his mind. Wells tells him, "Looks like you were onto something, Nate."

Kane punches the keys, bringing up the footage he recorded in the Antarctic seven years ago. He fast-forwards through the painful memory to the few moments before the ice shelf collapsed. He FREEZES the image. It's the same as what Wells has brought.

Kane's mind is racing, "You recorded this on another planet?"

John nods. He referred Horizon to Kane for his team, their expertise, and their equipment to aid them in the recovery effort. Wells knows the NAUTILUS SHROUD technology will be a deal-changing asset on their expedition. They're offering an exorbitant amount of money (Kane's team is deeply in debt), which entuses Kane's team – finally they'll have a serious paycheck coming in.

Though Kane doesn't want to admit it to Horizon, the opportunity to actually find, see and study this "holy grail" of his, to redeem himself, to reclaim respect in the archaeological community and prove that he was right after being marginalized and pushed out of his own profession years ago is just too tantalizing to pass up. Kane agrees to go.

**ON THE SPACECRAFT TO EUROPA** - Kane's group meets the rest of the expedition, including the rest of Horizon's SCIENCE TEAM, their MEDICAL TEAM, and the private security force, called THE LEGION (a group of privatized, futuristic Spec Ops soldiers). Kane understandably wants to know why they have a squad of well-paid mercenaries with them on a salvage mission. But Dr. Morrow assures Kane that it is simply an armed escort. Standard operating procedure. "Space can be a scary place," he tells them.

The trip to Europa takes 4 weeks. As they travel, Kane reviews the brief, inconclusive video footage from the fateful Antarctica dive. The footage that he has seen thousands of times. He compares it to what John Wells brought him. He compares it over and over and over again.

Dr. Morrow finds Kane during this process and tells him that "This could be the greatest scientific find in human history. And you're going to be a part of it. Part of the glory. Part of the reward. Just help us retrieve those pods."

As we move through this sequence in quick vignettes, we'll meet our other supporting characters, such as LT. SIOBAHN CONEY (late 20s) a French Canadian, undersexed female member of the private security force, THE LEGIONNAIRES (simply, "The LEGION"). Siobahn is the Lieutenant that will need to take command of the LEGION when their Captain dies early in the mission. Lt. Coney has an easy-going personality and a very effective warrior that will have her command challenged and she will need to rise to the occasion.

## **ACT II**

**COLD HARBOR, THE SCIENCE STATION ORBITING EUROPA** – The expedition locates the orbiting COLD HARBOR station. Dr. Morrow points out that one of the station's descent discs is missing.

**INSIDE COLD HARBOR**, the team finds no signs of life. The station is ghostly quiet. With the protection of the LEGIONNAIRES, the expedition explores the station. They trek from room to room, finding stations abandoned, computer sequences still running, video screens on and projecting empty rooms. All the comm stations are down; they've been disabled. The station's surface lander, a smaller research station (COLD HARBOR II) has been detached from the main station. Is Cold Harbor II down on the

moon's surface? But no one is there to tell the tale. It's as if this place was suddenly and completely abandoned.

Then, they arrive at the SCIENCE LAB. Inside, they find members of Cold Harbor's crew have been slaughtered. There appears to be little left of them – just stains of blood and gore. Body parts. Was this a mutiny or something else? The focal point of the lab is an ALIEN-LOOKING SARCOPHAGUS. It's open. EMPTY. Whatever was is now gone. “Is this what they recovered from the ocean?” The original crew has left a spider's web of electronics hooked up to it. On the side, there are electronic characters pulsing, changing on the face of the strange alloy itself. There's no computer screen. Wildly advanced stuff that is not of human design. But it's as familiar as a good friend to Kane.

The crew, now with the LEGION soldiers on high alert moves out of the science lab and into the KITCHEN. Inside, there are no traces of life, but someone notices blood on the cold storage locker. Inside, they find that something has eaten part of the crew and placed their preserved remains in cold storage. Their bodies have been cut as if by a butcher. Like food. As if in a necessary act of survival.

“There's only one sarcophagus. Just one of these things did all this?”

The team moves on. Entering the MEDICAL LAB, they find one of the CREW MEMBERS lying on a metal slab. The man has been dissected. The procedure was bloodless, surgical and seemingly devoid of any emotion. As Kane points out distantly, “Exactly the way we'd do it.” So far, there have been overwhelming signs of sentience in whatever transpired on Cold Harbor.

In the COMMAND CENTER, John Wells keys into the science station's damaged computer terminal, trying to pull the crew's logs to find out what happened.

Dr. Morrow returns to the science lab to investigate the alien sarcophagus. Looking inside the pod, he sees what appears to be some type of weapon. Dr. Morrow goes to remove it, causing the sarcophagus to suddenly EXPLODE, destroying a large part of the orbiting Cold Harbor station and damaging their arrival spacecraft --

With Dr. Morrow and the LEGIONNAIRES' Captain dead, Kane reverts back to the man we saw in the opening sequence – the confident leader of dangerous diving expeditions – and takes command, barking orders to the crew to get them to safety.

There's a mad rush to the descent disk as Cold Harbor is being TORN APART by the damage and decompression. The surviving members of the expedition have to get the Nautilus Shrouds, military equipment and supplies onboard the descent disk while the science station is destroyed in the vacuum of space.

Half the expedition is now dead. We've suddenly lost characters that we thought were going to have key roles in the mission. Dr. Morrow, the Captain of the LEGION. We've lost both Horizon doctors, leaving us only with a nurse. Kane himself loses one of his

most longtime, loyal divers and protégé, Anna Li, bringing back unhappy echoes of the last expedition where he discovered this technology.

**ON EUROPA** - The surviving members of the expedition pilot the Descent Disk to the moon's surface where the disk docks with COLD HARBOR II, the smaller surface lander detachment, on THE SURFACE OF EUROPA.

**ON COLD HARBOR II (SURFACE LANDER)** – The crew boards Cold Harbor II. Inside, they find more carnage, more signs of alien sentience at work. As the team explores the surface lander, they get the feeling that they are not alone. But they find little more than a pile of dead bodies. Until they find a locked equipment locker.

The LEGION cut through the locking mechanism. As soon as the door opens – BANG! A weapon is fired from inside, hitting a LEGIONNAIRE and wounding him badly. The rest of the unit storms inside, guns drawn and shouting. When Kane shines a light in the room, they see that it's a human inside – FADIA AZIZ (mid 30s), the Cold Harbor Station Commander. She's filthy. There's dried blood (some hers, some not) on her skin and hands. She's dehydrated and more than a little crazed. It takes a while to diffuse the situation as Dr. Morrow is not present to assist with the damage control.

As our nurse-turned-surgeon renders emergency medical aid to the injured LEGIONNAIRE while the team questions Fadia about what has happened. She explains that they followed a strange signature they had picked up beneath Europa's ice crust and followed it. They found that sarcophagus down there where it had broken away from the main cluster and brought it up to the main station to study it.

Kane peppers Fadia with questions, mysteries that have been pent up in his mind for 7 years. "Is the artifact from Earth?" "What was it's material makeup?" "How long has it been down there?"

But Fadia doesn't have any answers for him. All she knows is that the technology was insanely advanced but before they could learn all that much, the thing inside got out and slaughtered the crew. It followed Fadia when she took the descent disk down to Cold Harbor II. After it killed the crew here, it took the Descent Disk leaving Fadia stranded. "What do you mean "it" took the descent disk?!"

"They've been learning our technology. Figuring out how to use it. How we work."

"There were others down there?" Kane asks. "Thousands of them." Fadia tells them that in 5-7 days, the interference from Jupiter should subside and they'll be able to send word back to Earth. Then it will be another 30 days before any help will arrive.

Most of the expedition wants to pull up stakes and get the hell out of there (the LEGION included). This situation is beyond fucked and they are not equipped to face whatever it is that wiped out an entire research expedition. Fadia herself, still post-trauma, wants to wait out the rescue surrounded by the safety of her companions – she wants no part of

going back in that ocean. Whatever it is that happened to her, whatever it is she saw, has her completely terrified.

But Kane can't wait to go diving in the European ocean. He's never been so close to answers before. Every day of the last seven years will be worth it if he can get in that ocean and retrieve this technology. "Come on. It can't hurt to just go take a look."

**IN THE EUROPEAN OCEAN** – Gabe Murphy pilots the Descent Disk with Kane. With Fadia directing Kane and Gabe from the safety of the videolink to Cold Harbor II. The DISK climbs and then DIVES THROUGH 6 MILES OF ICE.

IN THE OCEAN, the expedition becomes immersed in a truly alien world. They dive, seeing the wonders of this alien ocean for themselves –

The water is a translucent milky white, much different than Earth oceans. This trait, in addition to the icy surface, is what gives the moon its pearlescent coloring. The ocean's salt is not sodium chloride, but rather magnesium sulfate. We'll learn that this can be corrosive when exposed to the suits, so they will have to limit exposure. The ocean on Europa is kept liquid by churning tidal currents, deadly underwater jetstreams that can tear apart vehicles (and divers) with little warning.

As they pass through the milky waters, they see that the ocean has patches of ultra-luminescence, created by sections of the ocean floor where the moon's liquid mantle is exposed, lighting the minerals in the water. Other patches are as black as space, creating an eerie patchwork of light and dark throughout the ocean environment.

It's dark, alien, claustrophobic. Absolutely terrifying. And absolutely ALIVE.

The OCEAN LIFE they see is prehistoric. Kane can barely contain his excitement as this brand new ocean world unfolds before him. It exists, as Kane will tell us, much like Earth's ocean did 100s of millions of years ago. The creatures are similar to things we've seen on Earth (or in fossil records) but different enough to be alien. And they're all so terrifying in appearance that we have no idea what's a predator and what's just a docile fish. As they dive, BARACUDAS the size of sharks swim by. Then, a SHARK the size of a city bus swims past. A SPEAR FISH, an enormous marlin-like creature that uses fleshy "sails" to ride the ripping tidal currents to hunt, bounces off the hull of the descent disk – it was trying to hunt them.

This ocean is a highly lethal environment. And Kane is completely fascinated by it.

Diving deeper, Kane finds the CLUSTER OF SARCOPHAGI. Their sensors are having a lot of trouble – is it because of the mineral content of the ocean water? Fadia warns Kane over the videolink "The pod we recovered had come off the main cluster, there were a few out there. I wouldn't go too close. We still don't know all that much..."

Kane asks “How do you switch on the video capture? Are we getting this?” Despite Fadia’s constant warning, Kane pilots the disk in for closer inspection –

There are 10,000 of these “pods”. Maybe more. The coffin-like vessels contain HIBERNATING ALIENS, which we see here for the first time. The ones in the functioning chambers are alabaster white and humanoid. They are completely hairless. These things are clearly alien, but appear more than accidentally similar to humans. The evolutionary implications of this revelation are shocking to Kane.

Closer. Now Gabe is getting alarmed. Kane takes the controls from him. Closer. A PROXIMITY ALERT SOUNDS over Fadia’s demands that Kane not go any further. Closer. DEFENSE MECHANISMS COME ONLINE – There’s a blast of some type of ENERGY WEAPON from the sarcophagi themselves – The devastating attack damages the disk, flipping it over and shutting down its systems. One of the divers is badly injured. The disk’s compromised hull begins to crack and splinter. And it’s sinking to the bottom of the European ocean.

As the disk sinks (upside down), they desperately try to radio back to the crew for help. They sink as strata of indigenous life scrolls past them, huge and terrifying. The disk crashes into the living coral web that digs its spikes into the hull and begins CRUSHING it even further. On the floor of the ocean, Kane and the crew see an ENTIRELY DIFFERENT ALIEN WORLD. Enormous SLINKING SEAWORMS. CRUSTACEANS larger than the descent disk itself. CARNIVOROUS CORAL REEFS that function like a living web, pulling in prey and consuming it.

The crew in the disk must scramble to get into the Nautilus Shrouds before they are crushed to death or frozen in the ocean’s depths. With the sounds of the COLLAPSING SHIP all around them, Kane and Gabe scramble to put on the shrouds. The hull finally cracks open and freezing, deadly ocean water floods into the disk. The only descent disk has been completely destroyed, effectively stranding the expedition on Europa’s surface.

OUTSIDE THE DISK, with just barely enough time, Gabe and Kane escape in the Shrouds and rocket toward the surface. On the way up, they encounter the wildlife; some of which the Shrouds can defend them against. Others are too ferocious for the suits to be of any use. They must dive and dodge the indigenous life. Gabe gets sucked into a TIDAL CURRENT and has to fight his way out of it, including evading a spearfish that tries to impale him while riding the current.

When they reach the bottom of the ice crust, the divers must navigate through the water that’s leaked between the layers of quickly refreezing ice. With the descent disk destroyed, it’s their only way out. If the crust refreezes before they can climb through the frozen, icy mix, they will be trapped in the ice or worse: below the surface in “the galaxy’s scariest aquarium.” The team digs and climbs through the ice flows, having to avoid being crushed by sliding blocks of ice in the solidifying water. Kane helps his wounded colleague as they battle their way back up to the icy surface.

## ACT II MIDPOINT

**ON COLD HARBOR II** – Safely back onboard the surface station, Additionally, Kane notices that the European water is beginning to eat way at the Nautilus Shrouds. They have to rinse themselves off and know that they will only be able to be exposed to the European ocean for a finite amount of time before the Shrouds decompose.

John Wells has been pulling data logs from Cold Harbor II and discusses the small bits of information he's learned about the aliens. These aliens landed on Europa 5,000 years ago. Waiting for something? Lying dormant? He doesn't know. But he does reveal something particularly chilling – Cold Harbor was using language patterns to study the creature's "language." This race is far more advanced than ours. On a relative scale, figure at least 10,000 years. Their language has evolved to become far more complex than ours, with a vocabulary 100 times the size. More disturbing, they have over 160 ways of saying "murder."

Kane wants to immediately go back into the ocean and pull up one of these sarcophagi. "The human race has never had the opportunity to study anything like this – it's a vastly advanced, ocean-based intelligent species." Wells openly argues with Kane, revealing the truth about Kane's disgrace – that he insists he found one of these near Antarctica and it cost him his career and he is now trying to put the entire crew in danger because of his personal quest for validity. Fadia orders the LEGION to keep guard on Kane and his crew – no one is going back into that ocean.

Gabe pulls Kane aside to reason with him. "You can't endanger the lives of these people just to prove that you were right about some hunch you had a decade ago!" Kane responds, "I owe it to every life I lost that day to prove that I was right." Gabe tells him, "You owe them that. No one else." Kane replies flatly, "I'll go in myself then." \_

During the stalemate, Wells approaches the remaining crew, telling him that he's sorry to be "that guy," but the station's power reserves aren't going to last their crew the 5 – 6 weeks they're going to have to wait for a chance to be rescued. They'll freeze to death first when the heat fails.

Now they have to go back into the ocean. They have to face it to survive.

They need to find the missing descent disk to even have a shot at survival, a situation of nearly unmentionably poor odds.

The attitude of the team changes, aligning now for the greater goal of group survival. The good news is that there is a weak transponder signal coming from the Disk that

they can use to track it.

Although the team (other than Kane) is unnerved about going back into the terrifying ocean, they realize that they have to in order to survive. Under Kane's encouragement and support, Fadia manages to face her fears for the good of the expedition. The LEGION will provide some protection, but they are ground troops, not divers.

Using Cold Harbor II's HEAT DRILL PROBE, they carve a narrow tunnel in the ice where the divers (a much larger expedition this time) can descend into the ocean.

**IN THE OCEAN** – Kane's engineer reminds them that they can't be immersed in the European water for too long before the Shrouds are damaged, a fact the timers running on their individual HUDs will remind them of throughout the dive.

The expedition dives to the ocean floor to find the missing descent disk. Using the Nautilus Shroud scanners, they sweep for manmade objects. There is a lot of interference coming from the water's strange mineral content, but Kane is locked onto something huge. "It must be an erroneous reading. The disk isn't nearly that big."

They follow the signal. Harassed by the wildlife, they go to deeper, darker and more dangerous depths. Here they see the strange luminescence of the ocean floor – some parts lit, some parts dark. Other sections flare to life as subterranean eruptions light the surrounding waters.

A section of the ocean floor suddenly LIGHTS UP and Kane sees the unimaginable – A TITANIC ALIEN SPACECRAFT, over 10 miles long, parked on the ocean floor. The ship is black and angular with slivers of orange just barely highlighting it against the dark ocean floor – the same design featured on the sarcophagi. This craft looks more like an advanced battleship than something benevolent.

The HUD timer is running down – they don't have much more time to be exposed to the water. They eventually locate the disk "parked" near the ocean floor. Their Shrouds are starting to show signs of irreversible decay. They have to move fast. Dodging the ocean floor wildlife, they manage to board the disk, expecting a "close encounter." But the disk has been abandoned. Someone (*something*) piloted it down there and then left. But where are they/it? Cold Harbor didn't have the dive suits to survive at this depth...

Kane's team brings the Disk back online. They ascend through the ocean waters back to where the sarcophagi are floating. Kane stops the ship, prompting Fadia to ask him "What the hell are you doing?" Kane wants to bring up one of the sarcophagi.

"You want to know what we're dealing with here as badly as I do. Isn't that why you guys are out here? To rape the galaxy? Recovering just one of these things will fund you guys until the 23<sup>rd</sup> Century." These things even have independent power supplies – something Kane thinks that maybe John Wells can tap into to run Cold Harbor II.

Fadia hesitates, reminding Kane about what just one of these things managed to do to the entire Cold Harbor crew. “They didn’t have big, bad LEGIONNAIRES with them.” But Kane appeals to Fadia’s corporate side and she begrudgingly agrees to bring the pod onboard – from the safety of the Descent Disk. Kane ignores his engineer’s pleas to not over-expose the Shrouds as they don’t know how the equipment will react.

IN THE OCEAN – Kane dives along with Gabe and a couple of the LEGIONNAIRES. As they strategize how not to get attacked by the pods’ defense mechanisms, Kane notices some of the smaller indigenous creatures floating freely through their grid. The defense mechanism must be programmed to attack larger threats.

The team must battle the indigenous life with the Nautilus Shrouds and the LEGION weaponry. One of the LEGION is suddenly and violently torn apart by one of the shark-like creatures, again reminding them as to just how dangerous this ocean is. As they battle the wildlife, they have to be conscious of the ever-present threat of the defense system – something that Kane uses to his benefit to destroy the shark when it turns on him – he swims into the sarcophagus grid and it fries the much larger creature.

Once he swims inside the network of pods, Kane feels confident enough that there is no danger in handling one of the sarcophagi. He surveys the pods – many of the creatures inside appear the same, but others look substantially different. Like they have evolved differently in the ocean. Kane finds a damaged pod that has been long out of commission and sees a much different-looking alien inside. Something bigger, more muscular and even closer to human. Is this what they originally looked like?

Kane finds one of the functioning pods and pulls it out from the group, removing it from the network. Nothing happens. The divers relieved, they and Kane load the sarcophagus onto the Descent Disk.

ONBOARD THE DISK – Back on board, Kane finds that his Nautilus Shroud has been ruined along with two of the others due to the second dive. One of the divers is going into hypothermia and will need immediate medical attention. They now have a good idea of exactly how long they can be exposed to the water. They’re also down three Shrouds with an already limited supply to help them on their mission, something that pisses off Kane’s own divers because of his self-serving behavior.

Once the sarcophagus is safely on board, the disk ascends, breaking back through the icy crust to deliver them to Cold Harbor II.

When they depart, we see a chain reaction occurring due to the sarcophagus being removed from the network – the other pods change. Lights come on. Mechanical parts move. CLOSING ON one of the pods, we see the alien passenger’s EYES OPEN.

**ON COLD HARBOR II** – Night has fallen. On Europa, days and nights last very long due to the massiveness of Jupiter. The expedition argues about what to do. They’ve

seen what these things are capable of. They know there are at the least a few thousand of them down there, possibly more on the ship that Kane saw.

IN THE SCIENCE LAB, John Wells studies the Sarcophagus, pulling data from the interface. Kane is with him, fascinated as to what this creature is and what secrets may be waiting for them to pull out of this alien technology. He tells Wells that he believes these to be some type of adaptation chambers that allow the creatures to evolve in inhospitable, alien environments. This means that these things are not *from* Europa.

Fadia is rejuvenated by the promise of value in this find. These “evolution chambers” could be of immense value if reverse engineered by human scientists – imagine the implications for the medical community, for science itself. Kane wants to know what that huge vessel is sitting on the ocean floor.

Two LEGION soldiers are posted in the lab with them, weapons at the ready, should the pod somehow open and release the creature inside. But as John manages to interface with the alien technology – THE POD IS SUDDENLY OPEN. The door somehow dematerialized, leaving the sarcophagus is no longer sealed. The alien is awake and emerges from the pod, catching the LEGION soldiers off guard. As the alien quickly slaughters the soldiers, Wells and Kane barely escape from the science lab –

And all hell breaks loose on Cold Harbor II.

The alien is humanoid, eerily “human,” almost. This is not a slobbering, mindless killer. It is a thinking, “civilized” being complete with some type of form-fitting clothing chased in foreign symbols. But the way it acts, the way it moves, it’s as though it has been molded into a virtuoso killer. The attacks it makes are a highly advanced martial art, striking precisely at vulnerable points (throat, head, heart, main arteries) – if the creature even gets its hands on you, you are dead.

This is a contained fight on a very small science station. The creature is unbelievably cunning. It learns the human technology at an uncanny rate, turning their own devices against them. It’s able to pick up and use their weapons, to navigate the ship, lock doors and even access their computer system.

While they have it trapped, Kane puts on the Nautilus Shroud to face the creature and fight it using its stronger defenses and strength amplifiers is he able to help the LEGION put the creature down.

And that was only one of them.

In the aftermath, the debate rages about what to do about the aliens. Many want to just wait out the rescue by getting the fuck off Europa, Fadia included.

Kane, having seen what they are capable of up close and personal, now understands what might possibly be at stake if that spacecraft were able to leave Europa. “I found

one of these things in the Antarctic seven years ago. They've already been to Earth once – what if they're going back?" Kane realizes now that the entire human race could be in danger.

And their expedition, Kane's ambition, is what woke the creatures up here on Europa.

Kane is tormented. The guilt from bringing the alien on board Cold Harbor II weighs on him. Losing Anna Li, his friends, his crew, having seen the destruction around him, the threat to the very survival of the human species – Kane's search for the evidence he has sought for so long is superseded by the reality he is now faced with: "Survival of the fittest" is not a gentle scientific concept – survival is won through violence. This alien species knows that – it's how they've survived away from their planet of origin. He understands now what they, as humans, must do.

Kane is forced to make a monumentally difficult decision. His career-long pursuit of this "lost civilization," looking back at everything it has cost him on Earth – it has now culminated in the decision to wipe out what is possibly the entire remaining population of an intelligent alien species.

The proposal here is to commit genocide against an unknown alien species.

"But who amongst us has the right to make that decision? To play God? We're just a bunch of fucking divers!"

But that's what they have to do. Kane pleads with Fadia – this is something she is unwilling and unprepared to do. But she eventually realizes that she has to face this thing – it's beyond her own fear, it's about the survival of their expedition and possibly, mankind.

They have to go back in and destroy the spacecraft before it can leave the ocean and head to Earth. But how are they going to do this? The ship is built with alien technology that they can barely hope to comprehend. "Nothing we have is going to do anything against that monstrosity."

Gabe shrugs "What about the heat drill?" Kane thinks this is an ingenious idea. If they could rupture the ship's outer hull, it could flood the craft and render it useless...

The team preps, now down to only a few remaining Nautilus Shrouds. Kane's engineer repairs the damaged Shrouds and works with the LEGION to modify all the remaining Shrouds with better defense mechanisms and fortify them against the European waters. They bring them as close to military spec as they can with their limited resources. They also work on the heat drill, trying to modify it to best suit cutting through the unknown alien material.

Kane tells John Wells that he needs him to come with them. Wells is the only one that will be able to help them interface with the alien technology. Wells is not at all happy

about this and practically has to be dragged on the suicide mission after being shoehorned into the Nautilus Shroud.

With every diver they can assemble (employing all the remaining Nautilus Shrouds), the team sets off to destroy the alien ship.

### **ACT III**

**IN THE OCEAN** – The Descent Disk dives through the ice and emerges in the ocean.

As soon as the divers exit the descent disk, they are attacked by THE REAWAKENING ALIENS. The human interference set off their “alarm clock” and now the aliens are waking up and becoming fully functional.

IT'S A FULL SCALE ASSUALT-- LEGION battle aliens – guns and hand-to-hand combat in a massive underwater battle. The human divers in the Nautilus Shrouds fight the reawakened alien swimmers who have spent 5,000 years adapting to exist in this environment. John Wells struggles mightily to function in the Nautilus Shroud, so Kane has to constantly protect him as they are attacked. Kane swims into the network of sarcophagi for protection, flipping one over and using it as a shield to protect himself from the onslaught.

The battle's intensity increases when LARGE AMOUNTS OF BLOOD are released into the water, bringing the OCEAN PREDATORS screaming out of the depths to feed on aliens and humans alike. The divers have to defend themselves against deadly indigenous creatures as well as the aliens.

And worse, during the battle, the HEAT DRILL the divers are transporting is targeted and destroyed by the aliens. Like they knew that it was the primary threat.

The mission breaking down around them, Kane leads the divers inside the sarcophagus network where they are protected by the alien defenses against the really big predators. Inside there, they realize that there are only more of these aliens to come – more of them are awakening now that the network has been brought back online. They have to get out of here – they can't possibly face these beings in larger numbers than they already have.

Amidst the chaos, Kane radios to the divers to break off and follow him. They leave the sarcophagi and jet toward the ocean floor, escaping the main fray. The Nautilus Shrouds make them much faster swimmers than their alien opponents, who follow but cannot keep up.

**ON THE OCEAN FLOOR** – When Kane and the divers reach the ocean floor, they must traverse new hazards in order to reach the ship. It's a unique environment, even for

Europa; they have to fight through the indigenous life to get to the ship. There, they encounter GIANT WORMS and CRUSTACEANS. And they have to stay constantly alert and on the move because they have a couple of hundred alien swimmers who are surely coming to find them.

They must navigate open caverns that expose the moon's liquid mantle and create the "bright spots" on the ocean floor. They must also avoid black smokers, geysers that spew super-heated gasses and liquid iron and rock into the ocean.

And then the ALIEN SWIMMERS catch up. Without time to think, Kane's team races into a snarled cluster of the deadly, living European coral. The coral acts like a venus flytrap – snatching passing swimmers and dragging them down into the reef to be slowly digested by the carnivorous tendrils. Pursued by the aliens, they don't have time to carefully navigate around the coral. They have no choice but to race right through it. The divers tear through the coral, often getting snagged and having to slice their way free with the Shrouds' laser knives before they are dragged inside. The aliens try to rip and tear the coral when they are caught, but they have less luck breaking away.

After fighting off the stragglers, the divers finally locate THE HULKING ALIEN SPACECRAFT where it lies on the ocean floor. The ship itself has been overcome by the dangerous coral reef, showing how long it has been dormant on the ocean floor. The ship is even more active now than when Kane first saw it. It's online, thrumming with power.

Without the heat drill, they're going to have to go inside the ship to look for a way to destroy or disable the craft.

Still spooked by the aliens and the ever-present threat of the indigenous wildlife, John Wells leads the dwindling expedition into the equivalent of the "tailpipe" on the massive craft. Fadia guesses that it is something like 10 miles long and a few wide. The "tailpipe" is some type of venting system for the superheated gasses created by their propulsion system. They make their way inside, using Wells' technical knowledge to guide them through this vastly advanced alien environment.

**ONBOARD THE ALIEN SPACECRAFT** – Inside the spacecraft, the floating city is just starting to come back to life. They are awed by the structure's massiveness and distinctly alien origins. This is not a place anything like what can be seen on Earth, now or at any time. There are no typical "interfaces" on this alien craft. No computer screens, no keyboards. This is a technological environment entirely beyond human comprehension.

The main purpose of the craft is clearly as a MILITARY TROOP TRANSPORT. For as far as their eyes can see, there are STACKS UPON STACKS OF THE SARCOPHAGI. A hundred deep, hundreds wide and countless numbers long. "Well over a million of them. At least."

But these aliens look much different than those that have adapted in the European ocean. They have a ruddier complexion, just like the one Kane saw in the damaged pod. These aliens have not adapted like all the others we've seen. Still humanoid, but much bigger and more muscular – adapted to live on land versus the more lithe swimming aliens who have evolved to be almost pearl white to blend in with their surroundings in the ocean.

As they talk to each other, asking questions over the external radios, the SHIP'S COMPUTER starts talking back, but in some strange alien language that sounds nothing like anything on Earth. The team quickly deduces that the ship is learning their language at a geometric rate. Soon, the ship is speaking to them in English. John Wells manages to establish a neural network with the central computer, which is artificially intelligent. This is how this race's technology has evolved – to link with users telepathically. That is why there are no physical interfaces – they are unnecessary.

They learn that the alien race, victims of a dying homeworld, scattered transport craft to every corner of the universe searching for other oceanic planets – other places that can sustain life. These massive transport ships containing more than one million hibernating passengers each were sent to the charted oceanic planets. Their prime initiative was simple: deposit a number of the adaptive sarcophagi on all ocean planets to continue their species. This ship's final destination was Earth, But they are 5,000 years overdue.

This is the shocking truth: *it is no more than a fortuitous cosmic accident that our ancestors were not conquered by this race five millennia ago.*

But something starts to happen. The sarcophagi are suddenly starting to stir. More of the ship's systems are coming back online. The ship is coming alive.

The ALIENS from the ocean outside have begun to make their way onto their ship. They attack the human expedition. Kane's team has little time – if the aliens hibernating onboard in the sarcophagi complete their wake cycle and get out, Kane's team will be overcome by far greater numbers. But how will they destroy a million ship-bound aliens?

The swimmer aliens viciously attack the humans. Brutal. Feral. For the survival of their species.

The humans run and hide, trying to take their hunters by surprise. This makes the combat more “guerilla” in nature as they traverse the alien ship while trying to buy Wells time to complete his investigation.

The odds don't look good. John Wells sacrifices himself to integrate with the central computer. As Kane and the remaining divers fight the pursuing aliens, Wells overrides the computer's navigation initiative and convinces the ship to open the ship's airlocks, allowing the EUROPEAN OCEAN TO FLOOD INSIDE.

Hundreds and thousands of pods begin to open, but THE RUSHING OCEAN FLOOD quickly destroys all of the non-adapted aliens who are emerging from their sarcophagi.

In a measure of self-defense, the ship breaks its network with Wells by killing him. The central computer counter-punches against the cascade of self-destruction by trying to lift off from the European surface. The increased strain on the propulsion drive due to the massive amount of weight from the ocean water causes the engine to over-tax itself, setting in motion a CATASTROPHIC LOSS OF CONTAINMENT.

The ship is now destroying itself from within. Kane and his divers have to get off the craft. Now once again submerged in water, they fight through the chaos using the capabilities of the Nautilus Shrouds to come out the way they got in – through the ship's tailpipe, which is now venting superheated gas and massive amounts of ocean water to try to stop the disastrous loss of it's precious living cargo.

**IN THE OCEAN (OUTSIDE THE ALIEN SHIP)** – Kane, Fadia and just one other survivor make it off the ship. The DESCENT DISK swoops down to rescue them. The divers in the Nautilus Shrouds have to speed up, racing after the disk and boarding it “hot” (while it is moving) so that they are not overcome by the massive amount of freed aliens that pursues them. The divers board the Disk and it rockets out of the ocean, CRASHING THROUGH THE ICE on its way to the surface –

**ON THE EUROPEAN SURFACE** – The coming destruction of the alien ship is wide-reaching in ancillary destruction – EUROPA'S ICE CRUST has become completely unstable – Everything is crumbling -- They need to get off the surface –

**ON COLD HARBOR II** – The Disk docks with Cold Harbor II to rescue those left behind. Fadia demands to take the Sarcophagus with them, but Kane locks the science lab door, sealing it inside. He drags Fadia bodily with him back onto the descent disk. The survivors crowd into the Disk for takeoff -- They LAUNCH –

**FROM THE DESCENT DISK** – Kane and Fadia watch the ice crust crumble as the alien spacecraft tears itself apart in the liquid ocean beneath. The ship never emerges.

**ONBOARD THE HUMAN SPACECRAFT** – Two weeks later, as the REPAIRED SPACECRAFT leaves orbit, EUROPA fades behind them in the distance, clustering with the much larger Jupiter until it fades to a small point –

It becomes the **O** in the TITLE CARD:

**O C E A N**

FADE TO BLACK.

## **APPENDIX – Protagonist Description**

DR. NATHAN KANE (late 30s) is the preeminent maritime archaeologist of his generation. Kane is absolutely fixated on the ocean, believing that it is the source of life; that the secrets of human existence are buried in the trenches, artifacts and lost civilizations just waiting to be discovered.

Having been born in Hawaii and spending much of his youth near the water, Kane finds himself most at home in the ocean. There, his persona changes from a land-locked intellectual into a maverick adventurer.

Kane is our marine encyclopedia – he knows everything there is to know about the ocean world, the origins of life, and forgotten continents thought either to have been lost to the ocean or to be entirely mythical.

In Kane's obsession with the ocean, he also pioneered deep-sea exploration. His research team, the best and brightest talents he could find in their fields, invented the **NAUTILUS SHROUD**, a huge breakthrough in manned diving technology.

Early in his maritime archaeology career, Kane discovered artifacts and archaeological evidence that lent credence to the existence of a lost continent that may have pre-dated the human evolution timeline we currently understand it. An excited archaeology community funded his continuing search, making him somewhat of a celebrity.

During one of his many expeditions to find this lost continent *Mu*, he dove near Antarctica where, while in the frozen depths, he discovered what appeared to be an ancient but vastly advanced artifact. In his excited attempt to quickly extract the buried artifact, an ice shelf collapsed, destroying much of his equipment, killing a number of his divers and eradicating the archaeological evidence before he could excavate it.

All that remains of this "close call" dive is brief, inconclusive video footage that Kane then used obsessively to try prove the existence of an ancient, advanced sentient civilization. Kane's subsequent behavior and "fall from grace" caused him to become marginalized in a scientific community that once regarded him as a bold pioneer.

Now, with his grant sources all but dried up, Kane has been relegated to providing his own funding to pay off the massive amounts of debt he's gone into. To this end, Kane hires out himself and what little remains of his loyal crew on varying deep-sea assignments that require the ingenuity of the Nautilus Shrouds: salvage operations, rescue efforts, toxic cleanups,

But he tries to find jobs that are near his areas of interest -- especially those in the Antarctic, the place where he is sure he found (and lost) the key to understanding the origins of intelligent life.

Kane is a scientist seeking legitimacy. When he is called to Europa, he will be brought face-to-face with the same advanced technology that led to his humiliation. He will learn that this technology is not tied to some grand, benevolent origin of intelligent life, but rather that it is a terrifying threat to the survival of the human race.

This will face Kane with the hardest decision he will ever have to make – that to destroy the “holy grail” that he has spent his career searching for.