

SPACE: ABOVE AND BEYOND

"A Marine's Prayer"

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WRITER'S DRAFT ONLY
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A MARINE'S PRAYER

WRITER'S DRAFT
1/22/96

CAST LIST

VANESSA DAMPHOUSSE
COOPER HAWKES
MCQUEEN
SHANE VANSSEN
PAUL WANG
NATHAN WEST
COMMODORE ROSS

GENERAL BRADFORD P. WEIRICK
ADMIRAL RACHEL VETTER
LT. MICHAEL FEELEY
COMMODORE KURT PREISING
LT. HUGH "HOOT" MCCOY
CHAPLAIN
LT. REBECCA PRICE
GENERAL COLETTI
FRIESS
HUGHES
LT. BELSON
LT. SMITH
TECHNICIAN
MARINE #1
MARINE #2

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SETS

INTERIORS

SARATOGA	/	MESS HALL BRIEFING ROOM CORRIDOR LOADING DOCK COMMAND CENTER MCQUEEN'S QUARTERS TUN TAVERN ROSS'S QUARTERS BUNKROOM
EISENHOWER	/	COMMAND CENTER HALLWAY
HAMMERHEAD	/	SMITH'S COCKPIT BELSON'S COCKPIT
APC	/	CARGO HOLD
CHIG TENT		

EXTERIORS

PLANET DEMIOS	/	AIRSTRIp TARMAC CHIG TENT FOXHOLE ROCKY OUTCROPPING CLEARING OPEN FIELD TREE SITE
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TEASER

1 EXT. SPACE - THE PLANET DEMIOS (CGI)

1

sits fearfully, surrounded by five pale and trembling moons.
Demios -- Dread -- Son of Mars, God of War. CAMERA ZOOMS TO

EST. SHOT - THE U.S.S. SARATOGA

surrounded by three MacArthur class supply ships, hiding in the shadow of one of the moons.

2 INT. U.S.S. SARATOGA - MESS HALL - CLOSE - STEAK & EGGS

2

Sizzling, delicious, and slid onto Cooper's plate.

COOPER

Whoa! Steak and eggs!

The 58th stand in the chow line. Damphousse can't believe it.

DAMPHOUSSE

Eggs Benedict! That real
Hollandaise?

WANG

Hey! Whole Banana Split Bar!
For breakfast!

3 INT. U.S.S. SARATOGA - MESS HALL - LATER - CLOSE - A KNIFE

3

SLICES into a bloody T-bone. NATHAN savors the forkful. The
58th happily chows down. Shane points to five GENERALS and
ADMIRALS who walk past the open doorway.

SHANE

So much Brass onboard, suprised
our compasses don't spin.

NATHAN looks like someone punched him in the stomach.

WANG

You choking?

NATHAN

Just realized... why they're
feeding us so good.

The 58th, puzzled, look at him, then at their plates.

NATHAN

Invasion food.

4 INT. SARATOGA BRIEFING ROOM - CLOSE - ROWS OF SHINED SHOES 4

underneath a table... ROWS of KNUCKLES, white and tense, leaning on a map table... ROWS of MEDALS and RIBBONS pinned to the chests of twenty GENERALS and ADMIRALS, their uniforms reflecting the vast international scope of the meeting.

GENERAL WEIRICK (V.O.)
March tenth, twenty sixty-four...
The Planet Demios...

A THICK FINGER THUMPS down on a transparent underlit BATTLE MAP of the planet DEMIOS, surrounded by its FIVE MOONS.

GENERAL WEIRICK (V.O.)
A date and place to be
remembered, Gentlemen...

GENERAL BRADFORD P. WEIRICK, 50's, Supreme Allied Commander, is direct and inspirational, not unlike General Schwarzkopf.

GENERAL WEIRICK
Along with Gettysburg,
Guadalcanal and Karakoram... as
the turning point of the War.

Weirick looks directly into each commander, including ROSS.

GENERAL WEIRICK
If we win -- one of the most
significant victories in human
history.

McQUEEN stands along the back wall with three other COLONELS. McQueen's eyes tell us he deeply respects Weirick.

GENERAL WEIRICK
If we lose...
(beat)
Then human history will soon be a
very finite lesson.

A few Generals swallow hard. Weirick points to the map.

GENERAL WEIRICK
Our objective is the airstrip on
Demios. When we seize it today,
we will have accomplished Step
One in the grand design known as
Operation Roundhammer...

A SWITCH is flipped. The BATTLE MAP transparency now shows ten numbered planets, with wide RED ARROWS between them.

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED:

4

GENERAL WEIRICK
A lengthy ten-step series of
planet-hopping maneuvers, on a
scale unknown since the days of
Nimitz and MacArthur.

An ADJUTANT passes MANILLA ENVELOPES to the Colonels.

GENERAL WEIRICK
Your assignments. You Colonels
with squadrons in the Invasion's
first wave -- aren't gonna like
'em much. Intelligence estimates
casualties at 80%.

McQueen gives the envelope a double-take.

GENERAL WEIRICK (V.O.)
Only one question remains --

CAMERA PUSHES in on Weirick, staring into McQueen's very core.

GENERAL WEIRICK
...Will we win?

5 INT. SARATOGA - HALLWAY - MCQUEEN

5

walks next to Ross. Studies the assignment.

MCQUEEN
Only one question -- will they
survive? This assignment's a
death sentence.

ROSS
There's a big picture here, Ty.
A big picture.

6 INT. BUNKROOM - LOCKERS - THE 58TH

6

stunned as the implications sink in. Shane's aghast.

SHANE
Wait, we run out of the APC
doors...

NATHAN
...Through interlocking fields of
fire...

SHANE
Across one hundred yards of open
ground, directly at a machine gun
emplacement?

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED:

6

MCQUEEN

(grim)

And you take it.

Dampousse squats down to keep her balance. Horrified.

DAMPHOUSSE

80% attrition.

WANG

That's four out of five... of us.

MCQUEEN

That's just an estimate, but...
yes. Now you know.

(beat)

I thought you should have all the
information.

(beat)

If you need to -- make your
peace.

7 INT. SARATOGA - LOADING DOCK - A CHAPLAIN

7

blesses a kneeling row of ten Marines, including WANG,
DAMPHOUSSE, and SHANE, as he reads from "A MARINE'S PRAYER".

CHAPLAIN

"Almighty Father, whose command
is over all...

8 INT. LOADING DOCK - MOMENTS LATER - GENERAL WEIRICK

8

inspects a row of Marines -- the 58th and 15 others.

CHAPLAIN (V.O.)

"...Make me aware of Thy presence
and obedient to Thy will...

McQueen watches Weirick shake hands with a worried Cooper.

GENERAL WEIRICK

Make us proud, Marine.

Cooper nods. The General moves to NATHAN. Slaps his shoulder.

GENERAL WEIRICK

We're behind you 1000%.

McQueen watches Nathan, fighting fear, nod his thanks.

9 INT. LOADING DOCK - MOMENTS LATER - TWO ENSIGNS

9

push the Marines into the jammed APC. They slam shut the doors.

CHAPLAIN (V.O.)

"...Help me to live...

SHANE & COOPER press their hands against the APC's window, at McQUEEN, who salutes them back, maybe for the last time.

CHAPLAIN (V.O.)

"...So that I can face my fellow
Marines, my loved ones and Thee
without shame or fear...

STEAM from the APC obscures the 58th in the windows...

10 EXT. SPACE - A FLYING WEDGE OF FIVE APC'S

10

SCREAM past FRAME. Then FIVE more. FIVE again, toward Demios.

CHAPLAIN (V.O.)

...Give me the will to do the
work of a Marine...

11 INT. APC - CARGO HOLD - THE 58TH

11

jammed nuts-to-butts. (O.S.) EXPLOSIONS JOLT the APC violently.
Someone involuntarily screams.

CHAPLAIN (V.O.)

"...Grant me courage...

SHANE watches FLAK BURSTS PUFF outside the window. She turns to
look at the faces of her MARINES, depending on her.

CHAPLAIN (V.O.)

"...Keep me loyal and faithful to
my superiors...

(O.S.) EXPLOSIONS grow more violent... we HEAR the muffled sound
of a soldier fighting tears.

CHAPLAIN (V.O.)

"...Help me to wear my uniform
with dignity...

THE APC DOORS BLAST open with a WHOOSH, WHITING OUT FRAME.
(O.S.) WAR YELLS, WEAPONS' FIRE... CHAOS.

DOZENS OF BOOTS suddenly rush across FRAME. CAMERA FOLLOWS one
pair of BOOTS out the APC, onto pavement...

12 EXT. PLANET DEMIOS - NIGHT - SHANE

12

scared, intense, runs toward CAMERA, leading her Marines.

CHAPLAIN (V.O.)

"...And let it remind me of the traditions which I must uphold. Amen."

SHANE'S POV - A MACHINE GUN EMPLACEMENT

The longest hundred yards imaginable. A HELMET-ATTACHED CAMERA shows what she sees -- a bobbing, weaving, heart-pounding race to kill or be killed...

GUN EMPLACEMENT POV - TWENTY MARINES

framed by the window in the emplacement wall, racing toward the MACHINE GUN BARREL...

SHANE'S POV - HELMET-CAM - NATHAN & COOPER

charging on either side of her... then the EMPLACEMENT, fast growing as CHAOS and SOUNDS of BATTLE FADE TO SILENCE... then her belabored BREATHING, then her heart POUNDING, then the CLANKING of her gear... then Shane's resounding cry...

SHANE

SEMPER FIIIII!

A huge REBEL YELL goes up from the running Marines.

GUN EMPLACEMENT POV - SHANE

so close. When will they fire? Closer... suddenly Shane falls out of FRAME... Has she been hit?... A GRENADE thrown in... EXPLODES, WHITING OUT FRAME.

A DOOR, KICKED OPEN. Shane enters, searches with her M-590.

SHANE'S POV - A CHARRED CHIG MACHINE GUN. NOTHING ELSE.

SHANE

There was no one here... They're all... gone.

Off Shane and the 58th exchanging bewildered looks, we

FADE OUT.

END TEASER

ACT ONE

13 EXT. SPACE - U.S.S. SARATOGA 13

hovers among a massive fleet of other space vessels.

WHITE SUBTITLE: U.S.S. SARATOGA, D-DAY, 13:34 HOURS.

14 INT. SARATOGA - COMMAND CENTER - DAY 14

buzzes with post-battle activity. CAMERA RAPIDLY MOVES ALONG communication panels, each manned by a COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER. Standing behind them are COLONELS #1, #2 and #3, each anxiously awaiting reports on his squadron. Staticky voices report quickly over each console --

CONSOLE #1 (O.S.)

Objective taken, no resistance...

Colonel #1 pumps his fist in the air. MCQUEEN, tense, watches this, almost envious.

CONSOLE #2 (O.S.)

...98th Squadron here, Chig
emplacements abandoned...

Colonel #2 slaps Communications #2 on the back. MCQUEEN sees this. Looks back at his console: Where are they?

CONSOLE #3 (O.S.)

Positions overrun, each man
accounted for...

Colonel #3 high-fives Colonel #2. MCQUEEN simply stares at his console, fist clenched tightly... Waiting... suddenly, SHANE'S static-filled VOICE crackles over the celebration.

SHANE (O.S.)

Queen Six, this is Wild Cards.
Report objective Sector 3-5-1 is
secured. Repeat, objective
Sector 3-5-1 secured... No
casualties.

McQueen's face relaxes in profound relief.

MCQUEEN

Wild Card, this is Queen Six,
hold position and await further
instructions.

(beat)

And 58th... Well done.

15 INT. SARATOGA - CORRIDOR - MCQUEEN 15

strides purposefully, carrying a written report.



16 INT. SARATOGA - BRIEFING ROOM - CLOSE - ROSS

16

reads the report. Looks at McQueen.

ROSS
It's a miracle.

WIDEN to show GENERAL WEIRICK, pulling a large cigar from his shirt pocket. He runs it under his nose.

GENERAL WEIRICK
Never thought I'd smoke this so early in the day.

AN ADJUTANT distributes cigars to the GENERALS and ADMIRALS.

GENERAL WEIRICK
Suprise, Gentlemen. Complete and utter suprise.

General Weirick bites off the tip of his cigar. Points to the table battle map of planet Demios, surrounded by its five moons.

GENERAL WEIRICK
Hiding our battle groups behind the planet's moons... That's what gave it to us.

Weirick pushes a marker with the FLAG of the Earth's Forces onto the airstrip portion of the planet, marked "DEMIOS."

GENERAL WEIRICK
Let's reinforce. I want my troops protected -- before our Chiggie friends have time to regroup.

Music to McQueen's ears. He looks at General Weirick with great admiration. Weirick turns to Ross.

GENERAL WEIRICK
Signal Admiral Vetter aboard the U.S.S. Eisenhower. Instruct her to execute Stage B, post-haste.

Ross nods. Salutes.

CUT TO:

17 EXT. SPACE - U.S.S. EISENHOWER

17

The Saratoga's sister ship awaits its instructions...

WHITE SUBTITLE: U.S.S. EISENHOWER, D-DAY, 13:51 HOURS.

CUT TO:

18 INT. EISENHOWER - COMMAND CENTER

18

The Eisenhower's command center is almost identical to the Saratoga's. A COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER, LT. MICHAEL FEELEY, 20's, turns to ADMIRAL RACHEL VETTER, 50's, self-confident professional.

LT. FEELEY

Flagship Saratoga, Admiral.
General Weirick directs you to
execute Stage B, posthaste.

ADMIRAL VETTER

Helmsman, set direct course for
stationary orbit around planet
Demios. All ahead full.

HELMSMAN

Set course, two-one-niner. All
ahead full.

COMMODORE KURT PREISING, 40's, points to a battle map of Demios, surrounded by its FIVE MOONS.

PREISING

Admiral Vetter. Our LIDAR's
blind to what's beyond the outer
moon, Opus Five. S.O.P. dictates
setting course around that moon,
securing our left flank before we
reinforce.

ADMIRAL VETTER

You think Chig warships could be
hiding in that blind spot?

PREISING

It's possible, Sir. An ambush.

ADMIRAL VETTER

(shaking head)

No. If they were there, they'd
have attacked during the initial
invasion wave when we were most
vulnerable.

(beat)

But it's a point well taken.

(calling)

Lt. Feeley, as a precaution,
launch Hammerhead Squadrons 3-4
and 3-9 around Opus 5 for recon.

19 EXT. SPACE - U.S.S. EISENHOWER - SIX HAMMERHEADS

19

launched from the Eisenhower's lower decks...

(CONTINUED)

19 CONTINUED:

19

ADMIRAL VETTER (V.O.)
 If Supreme Commander Weirick
 wants reinforcements post-haste,
 I'll damn well see he gets them
 post-haste.

And the Hammerheads hurtle toward Opus Five...

CUT TO:

20 EXT. PLANET DEMIOS - NIGHT - THE 58TH

20

spooked, guns drawn, crouch-walk toward CAMERA.

WHITE SUBTITLE: PLANET DEMIOS, D-DAY, 14:21 HOURS.

58TH POV - SURROUNDING AREA - LOW ANGLE

CAMERA SLOWLY PANS across the ghostly airstrip tarmac as other MARINES cautiously sweep-search with M-590's, through the drifting BATTLE SMOKE, toward surreal, glowing DOMED TENTS. The only SOUND is the eerie whistle of the cold WIND.

SHANE points her FLASHLIGHT BEAM toward the edge of the airstrip, revealing...

ALIEN WEAPONS strewn on the tarmac... panicked FOOTPRINTS lead into the blackness beyond. Cooper whispers.

COOPER
 Chigs ran so fast, they left
 their guns behind.

SHANE points toward a glowing TENT. Leads the 58th out of FRAME...

21 EXT. PLANET DEMIOS - NIGHT - CLOSE - CHIG TENT

21

glows surreally, haunted through the drifting smoke... WANG signals that he'll enter first. COOPER and SHANE signal they will cover him.

THEIR POV - WANG

SLICES open the tent with his K-BAR... bursts inside... suddenly, his dark silhouette disappears... (O.S.) WANG SCREAMS.

CAMERA CHASES Cooper and Shane into the tent as WANG struggles violently on the floor, writhing in gut-wrenching seizures. Cooper and Shane fight their own urges to succumb as Nathan and Damphousse enter to help them restrain Wang's convulsing body.

WANG'S BOOTS pulled through the tent airlock...

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED:

21

WANG lies on the tarmac. A CORPSMAN administers oxygen as his body continues twitching uncontrollably.

CLOSE - GENERATOR

with HOSES leading into the tents.

NATHAN

Sulphur dioxide -- it's what the Chigs breath. But it'd kill us in about fifteen seconds.

HUGH "HOOT" MCCOY, 21, Idaho farm boy, glances at Wang's body.

MCCOY

Thank God it ain't ten seconds.

SHANE

Air out the tents -- any Chigs, maybe we can flush 'em out.

GENERATORS explode from weapons fire... TENTS suddenly dim...

22 INT. CHIG TENT - ECU - GAS MASKED FACE

22

approaches CAMERA. Hideous. The standard issue Army design still looks frightening. We HEAR only BREATHING. COOPER, M-590 drawn, cautiously moves through the dim surreal tent. Through his mask, sweat from heat and tension shines in the spill of the flashlight.

CAMERA CREEPS along the Alien quarters... eerie, tense, only the SOUND of Cooper's BREATHING...

COOPER'S POV - INSIDE GAS MASK - FLASHING LIGHT: "OXYGEN LEVELS RESTORED."

He rips off the mask, initially relieved to be free of it, then immediately reels from the residual stench of Chig air. Coughs.

COOPER

It's clear --

SHANE enters... CAMERA CREEPS with her FLASHLIGHT BEAM until it reveals a row of translucent containers... Her GLOVED HAND cautiously grasps a container. Holds it up to the FLASHLIGHT.

CLOSE - GLASS JAR

light reflects through it, illuminating pale, grim meat-like substances, like a FETAL PIG packed in a viscous brown and blue liquid... Some unimaginable experiment.

SHANE is horrified as she studies it.

(CONTINUED)

22 CONTINUED:

22

COOPER (V.O.)

Eccch!

She turns suddenly.

COOPER'S GLOVED FINGER pulls a long quivering rope of a bluish-brown MUCUS SUBSTANCE from a bowl. It glistens ominously, like acid.

SHANE

Put it down, Hawkes -- that could burn through your skin!

THE BOWL is cautiously placed back down. Cooper wipes his finger on his pants. Points to hieroglyphics on the bowl.

COOPER

Shane -- translator?

CLOSE - A "POCKET TRANSLATOR"

It looks like a hand-held Watchman with a retractable flashlight/pointer. SHANE extends the pointer. Flips on the flashlight. The light shines across hieroglyphics on the bowl.

CLOSE - INSERT - TRANSLATOR SCREEN - "Oshi-Nagi: a type of food"

SHANE

Food!?

(horrified)

This must be their mess tent.

23 INT. ANOTHER CHIG TENT - CLOSE - NATHAN

23

intense, cautious. FLASHLIGHTS criss-cross through the dim room... DAMPHOUSSE, eerily underlit by the FLASHLIGHT, her eyes intently search the room... (O.S.) only the SOUND of the WIND whistles through the open tent door... (O.S.) CLICKING...

FLASHLIGHT BEAMS immediately turn together, aimed at an ominous DEVICE... suddenly CLICKING, alive.

NATHAN

Hit the deck!

Both Marines hit the floor.

DAMPHOUSSE

What?

NATHAN

A bomb -- probably why they ran.

Both soldiers get up slowly, approach it cautiously... CAMERA SLOWLY MOVES across the device... to some hieroglyphics.

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED:

23

NATHAN
'Phousse -- what's it say?

She runs her own TRANSLATOR across the decals. Reads...

DAMPHOUSSE
"Gan-gee-kay-ya: communications
device."

Immediately, the CLICKING becomes more rapid... intense.

NATHAN
It's transmitting. But what?

CAMERA PUSHES in on the RADIO.

DAMPHOUSSE (V.O.)
And if no one's receiving...
who's sending?

Off the RADIO'S indecipherable, metallic message from the
cosmos...

CUT TO:

24 EXT. SPACE - NIGHT - A WEDGE FORMATION OF SIX HAMMERHEADS 24

ROAR INTO FRAME, speeding around the ominous irregular shaped
crescent of the moon Opus 5. LT. BELSON radios.

LT. BELSON (V.O.)
Eisenhower Command, this is The
Croaker. Rounding Opus 5. .74
MSK's from visual clearance.

25 INT. EISENHOWER COMMAND CENTER - NIGHT - LT. FEELEY 25

LT. FEELEY
Roger that, Croaker. Maintain
radio contact.

26 INT. BELSON'S COCKPIT - NIGHT 26

LT. BELSON checks gauges as he flies.

LT. BELSON
King Air, this is The Croaker.
You'll be first to have a peek.

27 INT. LT. SMITH'S COCKPIT - NIGHT

27

LT. SMITH
Roger, Croaker. Pullin' back the
covers and checkin' for the
Boogieman.

SMITH'S POV - THE CRESCENT

of the moon races toward him... Suddenly

THREE CHIG FIGHTERS SCREAM from behind the moon.

LT. SMITH
Bogeydope! Have contact!

28 INT. BELSON'S COCKPIT - NIGHT - BELSON

28

checks his LIDAR.

CLOSE - LIDAR MONITOR

Almost entirely WHITE with FLASHING BLIPS.

BELSON, horrified, looks up.

BELSON'S POV - A MASSIVE CHIG ARMADA

the largest ever seen by humans, rounds Opus 5. It launches SIX
MISSILES, heading straight toward CAMERA.

LT. BELSON
Holy...

The incoming ALARM beeps until BELSON'S COCKPIT explodes.

29 EXT. SPACE - NIGHT - TWO MORE HAMMERHEADS

29

are obliterated in a hail of FIRE...

CUT TO:

30 EXT. PLANET DEMIOS - NIGHT - WANG

30

chews a candy bar, recovering. Points to the twilight horizon,
now eerily illuminated with hundreds of descending spacecraft.

WANG
Look. Replacements.

Shane holds up her FIELD BINOCULARS. ALIEN TRANSPORTS.

SHANE
They're meant to replace us,
alright -- but they're not ours.
(drops binoculars)
MAN THE PERIMETER!

- 31 EXT. SPACE - NIGHT - CHIG ARMADA 31
 launches a salvo of torpedo-like missiles. They SCREAM toward CAMERA, then whiz past us toward...
- 32 INT. U.S.S. EISENHOWER - COMMAND CENTER - RED SIREN LIGHTS 32
 spin. ALARMS SOUND. A TECHNICIAN turns from his LIDAR SCREEN toward COMMODORE VETTER.
- TECHNICIAN
 Fox 3 torpedoes! Forty-three degrees starboard, ten degrees low.
- ADMIRAL VETTER
 Sort incoming. Employ countermeasures. Now! What happened to our Hammerheads?!
- LT. FEELEY
 Lost radio contact with the 3-4 and 3-9!
- 33 EXT. SPACE - EISENHOWER - NIGHT - ALIEN MISSILES 33
 SLAM into the CONNING TOWER, hurtling a portion of it into space... Another direct hit into the SUPERSTRUCTURE... a FIREBALL erupts, billowing angry FLAMES into the darkness.
- 34 INT. U.S.S. SARATOGA - COMMAND CENTER - LT. REBECCA PRICE 34
 the Communications Officer, turns to Ross, in shock.
- LT. PRICE
 Eisenhower's issuing a distress call. Chig armada from behind Opus 5.
- ROSS
 They didn't screen Opus Five first? Scope me!
- The PERISCOPE descends. CAMERA PUSHES in on McQueen, worried.
- 35 EXT. PLANET DEMIOS - NIGHT - EXPLOSION 35
 fills the FRAME. Through the battle smoke, ALIEN SOLDIERS advance, guns at hips, blasting.
- SHANE
 Fall back to supplementary position!
- The 58th FIRE in frantic retreat, leaving FRAME...

36 INT. SARATOGA - COMMAND CENTER - NIGHT - LT. PRICE

36

calls to Ross, looking through the periscope.

LT. PRICE
Commodore! Personal
communication from Admiral
Vetter.

ROSS
Put it through.

Price flicks a SWITCH. The static-filled SOUNDS of DESTRUCTION are broadcast through the stunned command center.

ADMIRAL VETTER (O.S)
Ross... for God's sake, help me!

ROSS
I'm sending immediate
assistance --

LT. PRICE
(interrupting)
Commodore, ground forces have
been overwhelmed -- they're
retreating from airstrip --

CAMERA PUSHES in on McQUEEN, anguished, helpless. (O.S.) THREE terrible EXPLOSIONS echo through the broadcast from the Eisenhower.

37 EXT. PLANET DEMIOS - NIGHT - THE TWILIGHT SKY

37

flickers ominously with THREE BRIGHT EXPLOSIONS. The 58TH look up, then exchange worried glances: What just happened up there?

38 EXT. SPACE - THE U.S.S. EISENHOWER

38

lays crippled, mercilessly pummelled from all sides. Another missile SLAMS into the hull of the Eisenhower. A METALLIC GROAN shudders and grates... Suddenly, the massive space carrier BREAKS in two.

39 INT. EISENHOWER - CORRIDOR - A SAILOR

39

SUCKED down the corridor along the wall as paper and other articles WHOOSH past him... Then, another GROANING SOUND and a bulkhead tears away, revealing a STARFIELD.

CLOSE - SAILOR'S HANDS

turn white, desperately clinging to the bulkhead rim... then slowly, painfully let go...

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED:

39

THE SAILOR

sucked into SPACE as his SCREAM fades to silence...

40 INT. SARATOGA - COMMAND CENTER - PERISCOPE

40

flips up, revealing Ross, horrified. CAMERA PUSHES in on him.

ROSS

My God. It's a disaster.

CUT TO BLACK:

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

(O.S.) EXPLOSIONS, WEAPONS FIRE, SOLDIERS SCREAMING...

WHITE SUBTITLE: PLANET DEMIOS, D-DAY, 18:53 HOURS.

41 EXT. PLANET DEMIOS - DAY - CLOSE - SHANE'S FACE 41

illuminated by blue Alien weapon fire. CHAOS. Battle smoke obscures everything around her..

SHANE'S POV - DARK FIGURES

FIRE in frantic retreat. CAMERA ADJUSTS to see NATHAN, COOPER and DAMPHOUSSE running into FRAME, breathing hard. Scared.

SHANE
WANG -- WHERE'S WANG?

Damphousse points ahead of them... WANG, crouched against a ROCK, yells desperately into the RADIO. T-140?

WANG
Queen Six, this is Wild Cards,
come in! Queen Six, this is Wild
Cards -- do you read me!

THE 58TH enter FRAME as Wang looks up.

WANG
No contact!

CUT TO:

42 INT. SARATOGA - HALLWAY - ROSS & MCQUEEN 42

crisply salute two GUARDS. They open the door into

43 INT. SARATOGA - BRIEFING ROOM - CONTINUOUS - GENERAL WEIRICK 43

face underlit by a giant battle map, looks up grimly.

GENERAL WEIRICK
Why didn't we see this?

The rest of the Brass is silent.

ROSS
General Weirick, the situation is
desperate. We've lost the
Eisenhower, three Class-A Battle
cruisers, as well as their
support ships.

General Weirick clenches his fist.

(CONTINUED)

GENERAL WEIRICK
An entire battle group.

Lt. Price rushes in with a message. Ashen-faced.

LT. PRICE
General Weirick... The airstrip
on Demios... Our forces have
been driven off and scattered.

General Weirick winces. Looks down. All eyes turn to him.

GENERAL WEIRICK
I am responsible... I am
ultimately responsible.

LT. PRICE
...The enemy continues to land
reinforcements...

ROSS
Request permission to do the
same.

General Weirick seems lost in thought. Something occurs to him.

GENERAL WEIRICK
A Chig fleet... This size...
Where could it come from?

GENERAL COLETTI speaks up.

GENERAL COLETTI
Our initial intelligence reports
indicate from the planet Ixion.

GENERAL WEIRICK
(to Adjutant)
Ixion? Show me Roundhammer.

The Adjutant flips on the underlit battle map, showing the
10-step "Operation Roundhammer."

GENERAL WEIRICK
(pointing)
Ixion is Step Eight of Operation
Roundhammer...
(dawning)
It's undefended.
(looking around)
Undefended.
(to Adjutant)
Stats.

The Adjutant flips through a telephone book-sized binder.

(CONTINUED)

ADJUTANT
Ixion... two light years away.
Estimated timetable for
completion... eight months from
now... estimated casualties...
350,000.

A long silence, heavy with tension. CAMERA PUSHES in on McQueen realizing what's next...

GENERAL WEIRICK
Commodore Ross -- how quickly can
we pull anchor?

ROSS
After recovering our troops,
approximately...

General Weirick puts his hand up. An agonized beat.

GENERAL WEIRICK
Let me stop you. What would be
the losses to our evacuating
APC's under present conditions?

ROSS
Now, without the Eisenhower to
cover? High. Perhaps 50%.

Another agonized beat.

GENERAL WEIRICK
Those APCs are the landing craft
I need to take Ixion.
(beat)
And if I take Ixion now, I shave
eight months off the war -- and
save 350,000 lives.

McQueen takes one step forward.

MCQUEEN
Sir... at the expense of 25,000
lives already fighting on Demios.

All eyes look to McQueen. Weirick looks at him, admiring his courage. The General shares McQueen's agony... and everyone else's in this war. Then he speaks with Schwarzkopfian directness.

GENERAL WEIRICK
Yes.

As CAMERA PUSHES IN on McQueen, his worst fears coming true.

CUT TO:

44 EXT. PLANET DEMIOS - NIGHT - THE 58TH

44

lie in a shallow foxhole. Wang works the radio.

WHITE SUBTITLE: D + ONE DAY, 16:54 HOURS.

WANG
Homebase, this is Wild Cards.
Over.

Nothing but static.

WANG
Homebase, this is Wildcards...

More static.

SHANE
Something's wrong, Paul. Been no
contact since the battle
yesterday.

DAMPHOUSSE
(shakes head)
Driven off the airstrip...
Forces scattered... Those
explosions in the sky...

(O.S.) GROWWWL. The 58th instinctively duck. Then look to
Cooper, who holds his stomach. Nathan laughs.

NATHAN
Thought it was incoming.

COOPER
They only gave us a day's
rations.

SHANE
The reinforcements will bring
more.

The radio begins broadcasting.

LT. PRICE (V.O.)
All Units, all units, this is
Homebase...

Wang grabs the microphone. Before he can speak...

LT. PRICE (V.O.)
Do not, repeat, do not attempt
to respond. Satellite damage
only allows communications for
one and a half minutes at
approximately seventeen hundred
hours each day.

(CONTINUED)

44 CONTINUED:

44

The 58th look at each other, shocked.

LT. PRICE (V.O.)
APC supply drop will occur at
bearing three point two clicks
west-southwest of bull's-eye at
eighteen-thirty hours.

DAMPHOUSSE
"Supply drop?" What about
reinforcements?

LT. PRICE (V.O.)
...This will end two way
communications until seventeen
hundred hours tomorrow...
Homebase out.

The broadcast turns to static. Off the 58th's dismay --

CUT TO:

45 INT. SARATOGA - COMMAND CENTER - MCQUEEN

45

is in the face of COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER LT. PRICE.

MCQUEEN
What do you mean, a mike and a
half a day?!

LT. PRICE
Chigs hit our communications
satellites. The only one
remaining was thrown into a
declining orbit. We can transmit
again in twenty-two hours.

McQueen shakes his head, trembling with rage and frustration.

MCQUEEN
Not... good enough, Lieutenant.
My squadron deserves to know --

McQueen stops, realizing the futility of the situation. He
turns to leave.

MCQUEEN
Twenty-two hours. I don't know
who'll be gone first -- them or
us.

CUT TO:

46 EXT. PLANET DEMIOS - TWILIGHT - THE 58TH

46

lie in a shallow FOXHOLE intense, hungry. Each searches the sky. A solo APC flies overhead.

CAMERA PANS their eyes, hungry.

The APC continues on as the pallet of supplies parachutes down toward an open field. (CGI)

A MARINE rises from a neighboring foxhole. Begins running across the open field. FOURTEEN MARINES follow him.

DAMPHOUSSE
That's no-man's land.

COOPER
Chigs'll chop 'em down.

NATHAN
And destroy the supplies.

58TH POV - DARK FIGURES

of MARINES run across the open field, toward the supply pallet in the distance...

WANG
We need the supplies.

SHANE
(tough decision)
Better help 'em.

The 58th rise out of FRAME.

SHANE'S POV - HELMET-CAM - THE PALLET

100 horrible yards away... HELMET-ATTACHED CAMERA bobs... weaves, coming closer to the 15 Marines ahead, now only 50 yards from the pallet...

A HILLSIDE POV - THE TWENTY MARINES

run desperately across the field, ripe for cross-fire...

SHANE'S POV - HELMET-CAM - THE PALLET

getting closer... We only HEAR Shane's BREATHING... then her heart POUNDING... then the CLANKING of her gear... Then (O.S.) The high-pitch SHRIEK of a mortar round rips the silence as an EXPLOSION in front of the pallet kills the first two MARINES.

HILLSIDE POV - THE EIGHTEEN MARINES

keep running through the smoke... (O.S.) ANOTHER SHRIEK...

SHANE'S POV - EXPLOSION

(CONTINUED)

46 CONTINUED:

46

closer, as two more MARINES go down... SHANE looks left and right, concerned. The 58th races faster through the smoke. The pallet is just yards away...

CLOSE - "SEAT BELT" BANDS

unbuckled.

CLOSE - SUPPLY BOXES

handed off to MARINES.

CLOSE - MORE BOXES

handed off through the choking smoke to COOPER & DAMPHOUSSE.

SHANE

Go! Take 'em back!

HILLSIDE POV - THREE MARINES AND THE 58TH

boxes under each arm, race away from the pallet as the (O.S.) DEATH WHISTLE of a MORTAR ROUND EXPLODES -- A DIRECT HIT on the pallet and the MARINES still unloading boxes.

SHANE'S POV - HELMET-CAM - THREE MARINES

in front of her, racing back to the foxhole. Over Shane's BREATHING we HEAR the slow Death-Rattle of a Chig MACHINE GUN...

HILLSIDE POV - EIGHT MARINES

race with their boxes, easy targets, as the machine gun continues its horrible chatter...

SHANE'S POV: THE LEAD MARINE

almost to the foxhole. MACHINE GUN ROUNDS tear at the ground beneath the SECOND MARINE'S feet, slamming him forward, dead. His box of supplies flies forward. It BREAKS OPEN HARD on the GROUND, sending FIFTY TIN CANS sprawling, as Shane almost trips, hurtling over the tin cans into

47 EXT. FOXHOLE - THE 58TH

47

and two more MARINES jump into FRAME. A machine gun burst kicks up dust on the ridgeline above their heads. The 58th grab their helmets, exhausted.

WANG

Supply pallet -- gone.

SHANE

And twelve Marines.

(CONTINUED)

47 CONTINUED:

47

Damphousse desperately pulls a tin can from her box.

DAMPHOUSSE

Fruit cocktail. A whole crate of
it.

COOPER

(subdued)

I hate fruit cocktail.

NATHAN opens his box. Holds up a plastic container. Looks at it. Desperately, Nathan pulls out another plastic container. Devastated, he throws it back in the box.

NATHAN

Foot powder.

CUT TO:

48 INT. SARATOGA - ROSS'S QUARTERS - THE PLANET DEMIOS

48

is visible from the porthole. CAMERA ADJUSTS to reveal McQueen's reflection in the window as he gazes out.

MCQUEEN

General Weirick looked straight
in their eyes and said "We're
behind you 1000%." Now we can't
even tell them why we're leaving.

(beat)

I feel like a liar.

ROSS

You were in the briefing room.
You know as well as I why it's
necessary.

MCQUEEN

After this -- how can we ever
look them straight in the eye
again?

Sadly, Ross puts his hand on McQueen's shoulder.

ROSS

Ty. You know the facts. If you
were in Weirick's shoes, with
more than the survival of the
58th at hand -- with the
opportunity to shorten the war --
would you decide any differently?

McQueen gives Ross a hard stare. Not liking his own answer,
McQueen walks out.

CUT TO:

49 EXT. PLANET DEMIOS - FOXHOLE - EMPTY CANS

49

strewn across the Foxhole. The 58th eat fruit cocktail.

COOPER
(mouth full)

I hate pear cubes.

DAMPHOUSSE
Better than footpowder pancakes.
That's what we're eating next if
we don't get more supplies.

(O.S.) MORTAR SHRIEK...

SHANE
Hit the dirt!

(O.S.) MULTIPLE LOUD EXPLOSIONS... But no dirt's thrown. THEN
SILENCE... THE 58TH looks up. Almost shocked to see they're
still alive. Then... RED SLIPS OF PAPER... hundreds of them,
FLUTTER down around them. Damphousse snatches one.

CLOSE - LEAFLET

We read what Shane reads in that primitive Chig handwriting.

SHANE
"You are abandoned. Surrender or
die."

NATHAN
Abandoned? Can't wait until
Air Cav makes the Chigs eat those
things.

CUT TO:

50 INT. SARATOGA - COMMAND CENTER - CLOSE - ROSS

50

rubs his brow. Lt. Price offers him the microphone. Ross takes
a breath for composure.

LT. PRICE
Sir. We're in the one and a half
minute communications window.

Ross nods. Takes the microphone.

ROSS
All units...

51 INT. SARATOGA - CORRIDOR - McQUEEN

51

strides to his quarters, filled with despair...

(CONTINUED)

51 CONTINUED:

51

ROSS (V.O.)
This is Commodore Ross... The
Fortunes of War...

52 EXT. PLANET DEMIOS - THE 58TH

52

huddle around the radio, listening expectantly.

ROSS (V.O.)
... Require the fleet to leave
this sector.

The 58th look at each other in disbelief.

ROSS (V.O.)
... You are encouraged, but not
ordered, to continue to engage
the enemy...

53 INT. SARATOGA - COMMAND CENTER - LT. PRICE

53

points to her watch, indicating the window is almost closed.

ROSS
(difficult)
And when your positions become
untenable...

54 EXT. PLANET DEMIOS - THE 58TH

54

stare at the radio.

ROSS (V.O.)
... You are authorized to
surrender.

The 58th stare at each other in utter shock. Shane looks up at
the night sky. Just stars in a sea of blackness.

55 INT. SARATOGA - MCQUEEN'S QUARTERS - MCQUEEN

55

enters. Looks out his window as the planet recedes into space.
He turns, and ~~THROWS a PUNCH at his FRAMED PICTURE of George~~
Washington. At the moment of impact, the GLASS BREAKS and we

SMASH CUT TO BLACK.

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

56 EXT. PLANET DEMIOS - ROCKY OUTCROPPING - THE 58TH

56

sits leaning inside the ring of rocks. WANG scribbles in a small NOTEBOOK.

WHITE SUBTITLE: D + 27 DAYS, 16:57 HOURS.

WANG (V.O.)

Twenty-seven days since the Invasion. After the desperate counterattacks of the first week, lack of ammo and food forced our units to disperse.

CAMERA rotates, to show the 58th, including McCoy, exhausted.

WANG (V.O.)

We sleep days and scramble at nights, away from Chig hunting parties. The bodies of the dead we find are a reminder of their effectiveness.

A SPOON scrapes the bottom of a can of FRUIT COCKTAIL.

WANG (V.O.)

Our meager supplies turned to half rations, turned to quarter rations, turned to gone.

The SPOON and a single PEAR CUBE enters COOPER'S MOUTH.

WANG (V.O.)

All told, through battle, hunger and in some cases surrender, I estimate our original fighting force of 25,000 may have diminished to as few as 3 or 4,000, wandering in small bands through these hills, like ghosts.

Nathan scoots next to Cooper. Teases him.

NATHAN

Thought you didn't like pear cubes.

COOPER

Been changin' my mind lately.

SHANE (V.O.)

It's time. 5 o'clock.

SHANE kneels in the center of the circle. Tunes the radio. The 58th draw nearer, expectantly.

(CONTINUED)

56 CONTINUED:

56

All, except for Cooper, who eats his fruit cocktail.

SHANE
Homebase, this is Wild Cards.

Static. Just static.

SHANE
Homebase, this is Wild Cards,
come in please. Over.

DAMPHOUSSE
Window's closed.

Damphousse gently taps her watch. Shane turns off the radio.

SHANE
Maybe tomorrow.

COOPER
(gently)
Shane... we been doin' this
everyday for a month.

SHANE
(matter-of-fact)
And we'll keep doing it until we
get rescued.

COOPER
Shane... I think they're dead.

SHANE
(calm, firm)
McQueen wouldn't leave us here.

COOPER
I know... that's why I think
they're dead.

The 58th ponder this sobering, world-altering thought.

SHANE
We'll try again tomorrow.

Shane puts the radio away. Cooper tosses away his tin.

COOPER
Then that's when they better
come. We're outta fruit
cocktail.

CUT TO:

57 INT. SARATOGA - LOADING DOCK - ROSS & MCQUEEN

57

inspect the fresh, eager FACES of the new 73rd Squadron.

ROSS
73rd Squadron, this is your new
Commander, Colonel McQueen. Put
your trust in him. He won't let
you down.

CAMERA PUSHES IN on McQueen, distraught, doubting Ross's words.

DISSOLVE TO:

58 INT. SARATOGA - LOADING DOCK - (MCQUEEN'S VISION)

58

The scene is just like the Invasion preparation scene in the
teaser, only the 58th have been replaced by the 73rd. In
dream-like SLOW MOTION, General Weirick inspects the frightened
troops, shaking their hands. His VOICE is eerie, echo-like.

GENERAL WEIRICK
"We're behind you 1000%"

DISSOLVE TO:

59 INT. SARATOGA - COMMAND CENTER - (MCQUEEN'S VISION)

59

SLOW MOTION continues as Ross painfully broadcasts.

ROSS
"You are authorized to
surrender."

DISSOLVE TO:

60 INT. SARATOGA - LOADING DOCK - (MCQUEEN'S VISION)

60

continues, dream-like as he watches the Chaplain bless the 73rd,
who kneel in a row before the APC doors, trembling.

CHAPLAIN
"...Help me to live so that I can
face my fellow Marines, my loved
ones and Thee without shame or
fear..."

McQueen watches the 73rd packed into the APC doors like cattle.
MCQUEEN, in slow motion, salutes the 73rd, who wave GOOD-BYE as
STEAM rises. McQueen's HAUNTING VISION ENDS as we --

CUT TO:

61 EXT. DEMIOS - NIGHT - (REGULAR TIME) - CLOSE - SHANE

61

silently signals the 58th.

CHAPLAIN (V.O.)

"...If I am inclined to doubt,
steady my faith...

The 58th creep among an abandoned battlefield of dead Marines.

CHAPLAIN (V.O.)

"...If I am tempted, make me
strong to resist...

WANG & DAMPHOUSSE strip one of the bodies of field packs. Shane and Nathan, Cooper and McCoy each drag away a DEAD MARINE.

CHAPLAIN (V.O.)

"If I should miss the mark...

A SMALL PACK SHOVEL plunges into the dirt.

CHAPLAIN (V.O.)

"Give me the courage to try
again."

Cooper tamps dirt on a freshly dug grave. The 58th collapse around it, exhausted from digging.

WHITE SUBTITLE: D + 31 DAYS, 11:35 HOURS.

SHANE

Alright, let's try again. Bring
back another for burial.

Wang picks through one of the field packs.

WANG

Shane, maybe that's enough for
now. Haven't eaten in two days.

COOPER

I don't think we should be
diggin' graves at all. Don't
have the calories to spare.

SHANE

We're Marines. That's what we
do. We bury our dead.

COOPER

(to himself)

Yeah, who's gonna bury us.

DAMPHOUSSE builds a grave marker. Slowly, she stacks smooth, palm-sized river rocks, one on top of the other, forming precarious single-column obelisks.

(CONTINUED)

61 CONTINUED:

61

SHANE

Remember to check their packs for food.

WANG

These guys have been picked pretty clean. Just some photos.

Wang looks at a wallet PHOTO of a pretty, girl-next-door. Respectfully puts it back. Pulls out a condom packet. Laughs. Tosses it to the side.

WANG

This guy was pretty optimistic. Somebody must've given him the wrong travel guide before he came down here.

Nathan picks up a handful of dirt from the grave. Lets it run through his fingers. HOOT MCCOY leans forward.

MCCOY

I know nobody ever wants to think this... But we are authorized to surrender.

A beat. Cooper points to the grave.

COOPER

You see the machete marks on these guys? They were trying to surrender.

DAMPHOUSSE

(shell-shocked)

But how much longer can we go... without food?

(no answer)

Two more days? Three more days? A week?

A beat. Nathan holds out his hand.

NATHAN

There's worms in this dirt.

WORMS... pale, gross, wiggling. Everyone looks at them.

SHANE

(gently)

You don't know if they're poisonous. Some of the soldiers we've buried had some kind of roots in their hands and mouths.

(CONTINUED)

61 CONTINUED: 2

61

NATHAN
I'm gonna try.

Everyone watches. Slowly, Nathan puts the WORM in his mouth.
Makes a face. Swallows. Looks at everyone... embarrassed, yet
triumphant. Picks up a handful of dirt. Holds it out. Slowly,
Damphousse reaches for a WORM... then Wang... then McCoy...

62 EXT. PLANET DEMIOS - CLOSE - ROOTS & WORMS

62

collected in an upturned soldier's HELMET.

WANG (V.O.)
Bugs... and roots. You never
think you'll sink that low. And
yet... you have to admire our
human capacity to survive...

A WHITE T-SHIRT ripped in two. NATHAN ties two ends of it to a
tree branch.

WANG (V.O.)
For example, Nathan took a
T-shirt off one of the dead
Marines and found a way to
collect the moth-like insects
that swarmed around us at night.

Nathan pegs the other ends of the T-shirt into the ground. He
turns on a FLASHLIGHT and sets it behind the T-shirt.

WANG (V.O.)
The bugs would fly toward the
light, hit the T-shirt and fall
into a helmet full of water
below.

We see the insects hit the T-shirt and drop out of FRAME. HANDS
greedily scoop the bugs out of the water-filled helmet.

63 INT. SARATOGA - MESS HALL - CLOSE - A SPOON

63

dips into a bowl of beef barley soup.

WANG (V.O.)
We made a type of stew out of
them. Never criticize food on
the Saratoga again.

MCQUEEN, who sits at one end of the table, away from his new
SQUADRON, eats soup. His thoughts are far away, with the 58th.

64 EXT. PLANET DEMIOS - LATER - THE 58TH

64

pick around the destroyed pallet's burnt-out supply boxes.

WANG (V.O.)

Another day, despite the danger
from Chig patrols, we revisited
the supply boxes.

DAMPHOUSSE turns and shakes an empty box. Sadly sets it down.

WANG (V.O.)

Other Marines must've had the
same idea -- everything was
picked clean. But they'd over-
looked the fact that heat from
the explosion had melted a crate
of sugar into the surrounding
soil.

COOPER puts some of the dirt in his mouth. Rolls it around.
Picks up and offers more to Shane, who accepts it with a sad
smile.

WANG (V.O.)

We sucked on this "sugar dirt"
for nourishment. Told ourselves
it was the celebration cake we'll
have when we get back to the
Saratoga.

65 INT. SARATOGA - MCQUEEN'S QUARTERS - CLOSE - A CAKE

65

with candles and the inscription "Happy Birthday, Colonel
McQueen," joyously presented by McQueen's new squadron.

WANG (V.O.)

In the dark moments, we privately
wonder if there ever was a
Saratoga, or if we'll ever live
to see it again.

McQueen awkwardly nods thanks. Blows out the candles. The
smoke becomes...

EXT. PLANET DEMIOS - NIGHT - CLOSE - STEAM

coming from Wang's mouth as he writes in his tiny journal.

WANG (V.O.)

When those dark moments come,
each of us fights them in our own
ways...

DAMPHOUSSE balances another rock on a grave obelisk...

NATHAN K-Bars the dirt. Gathers additional roots...

(CONTINUED)

65 CONTINUED:

65

SHANE tunes the radio. The 58th KNEEL AROUND HER IN A CIRCLE.

WANG (V.O.)

Like at 5 o'clock, when we tell ourselves this will be the one. This will be the message that gets through.

CAMERA PANS their FACES, each hopeful, some bowed.

WANG (V.O.)

5 o'clock gives us hope. Maybe that hope is only as meager as our diet, but it's always enough to sustain us for one more day.

CAMERA RETURNS to WANG, who looks at COOPER sitting away from the group, arms crossed. Sullen.

WANG (V.O.)

I fear the only one who hasn't found his way to fight the dark moments is Cooper. Sometimes he sits for hours, staring into them...

CAMERA PUSHES INTO COOPER, staring darkly...

66 EXT. PLANET DEMIOS - TREE SITE - LATER - COOPER

66

still sits, sullen, as CAMERA PULLS BACK to see the 58th standing around the base of a tall tree, staring upward.

WANG (V.O.)

There's a tree on the planet with a strange red fruit that tastes like a mango. It's high up, and dangerous to get to -- but if you can reach the fruits, they are delicious. Most of us are too weak from hunger to climb, but Hoot McCoy from Idaho says he used to win at pole-climbing in the lumberjack contests back home.

MCCOY scrambles up the tree. Triumphantly pulls off five FRUITS, when (O.S.) WEAPONS' FIRE! MCCOY, shot, falls out of FRAME.

WANG (V.O.)

But Chig patrols are always one step behind, constantly keeping us on the run...

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED:

66

THE 58TH collect the dropped FRUITS as Shane checks McCoy's neck pulse. ~~Dead. They disappear out of FRAME, leaving McCoy's unburied body behind.~~

WANG (V.O.)

...Aware of what we are
becoming -- and that our time is
slowly running out.

TWO ALIEN LEGS enter FRAME. An Alien MACHETE, raised high,
begins its swing downward.

67 EXT. PLANET DEMIOS - CLEARING - LATER - SHANE

67

enters. The 58th are huddled, devouring the FRUIT. Disgusted,
Shane tosses her Mango on the ground. The 58th eye it, then
Shane. The hardships of the last weeks have created enormous
tension, like five hungry wolves with one bone.

WHITE SUBTITLE: D + 51 DAYS, 16:55 HOURS

SHANE

It's 5 o'clock. Gather round.

Shane sets up the RADIO. They continue eating, ignoring her.

SHANE

Look at yourselves. McCoy just
died and all you can think about
is stuffing your faces.

COOPER

He's dead. And we will be too if
we don't eat.

SHANE

The radio's the most important
thing we do all day. Now gather
round.

COOPER

Hey, give us a break! It's the
first time in two weeks we've had
anything but roots and flies.

SHANE

You'll eat a lot more of 'em if
we don't get saved.

Shane pulls the fruit out of his hands. Cooper jumps to his
feet, exploding. Never mess with a starving man's food.

(CONTINUED)

67 CONTINUED:

67

COOPER

Every night you been on your knees, prayin' to the god of static, hoping some message from above's gonna save you. And every night you don't hear nothin' but more static...

The others look at Cooper, realizing he's expressing their darkest thoughts. Shane slowly rises to face Cooper.

COOPER

If we're gonna survive, I say it's time we stop lookin' out there...

(points to the sky)
... and start lookin' to ourselves --

SHANE

You got better ideas? Let's hear 'em.

Everyone intently watches the confrontation. A beat.

COOPER

At night, I been noticin' fires in the hills. I say we check em out -- maybe there're other platoons we can link up with.

DAMPHOUSSE

(hopeful)

Fires. Maybe they're cooking food.

Shane scoffs. Turns away.

SHANE

It's a Chig trick. No one's stupid enough to keep fires up all night. We're not going.

COOPER

Then I'm goin' alone.

SHANE

(in his face)

You're staying here! With us, together! That's an order!

They breathe each other's air. Cooper talks slowly.

(CONTINUED)

67 CONTINUED: 2

67

COOPER

I got a lot a respect for you,
Shane. But unless we can eat
those silver bars of yours --
they don't mean much any more.

(beat)

I'm goin'.

Nathan pushes between them. Gives respect to each.

NATHAN

Wait... things have been
getting... a little tense. Maybe
we check out the fires... but we
do it cautiously... together.

68 EXT. PLANET DEMIOS - NIGHT - COOPER

68

crawls into FRAME. He has a hungry, dangerous look. (O.S.)
CRACKLING SOUND OF A FIRE. THE 58TH crawls alongside, their
FACES suddenly hopeful...

58TH POV - TWO ARMY SOLDIERS

FRIESS and HUGHES, filthy and haggard, sit by the fire. They
hold sticks with pieces of meat on the end, over the flame.

WANG takes a long, indulgent whiff of air.

FRIESS & HUGHES cook silently. Suddenly, (O.S.) RUSTLING.
FRIESS & HUGHES quickly pick up their M-590s and point at
CAMERA, wild-eyed.

THE 58TH cautiously approach, hands raised, slightly.

COOPER (V.O.)

Hey, it's cool. We're one a you.

The campfire's orange under-lighting gives both Friess' and
Hughes' FACES a demonic intensity. They're long-gone.

FRIESS

Nobody... is one of us.

WANG

(friendly)

Hey, what you cooking?

HUGHES

(pointing gun)

Get away from it.

Wang stops in his tracks. Cooper whispers to him.

(CONTINUED)

68 CONTINUED:

68

COOPER
We can take 'em.

Wang glances at Cooper, suddenly concerned he's contending with three crazed soldiers.

DAMPHOUSSE
It smells good.

NATHAN
Yeah, like barbeque chicken.

HUGHES
Closer, and I'll kill you.

SHANE
We don't want any trouble... just
tell us... what are you eating?

A beat. Friess replies slowly.

FRIESS
Kech-i-tan.

The 58th look at each other, puzzled. COOPER'S FINGERS slowly wrap around his K-BAR...

DAMPHOUSSE
Kech-i-tan... is that like, "Chig
chicken?"

FRIESS & HUGHES exchange a dark glance.

HUGHES
You could say that...

WANG
Just tell us where we can get our
own --

COOPER inches his way closer to Friess and Hughes...

FRIESS
It's all around.

NATHAN
What'd you call it again?
"Kech-i-tan?"

COOPER is moments from attacking them... SHANE looks horrified.

SHANE'S POV - ARMY UNIFORMS

in a shredded, blood-stained pile, next to Hughes and Friess.
CAMERA PUSHES IN on a NAMETAG: KECHITAN.

(CONTINUED)

68 CONTINUED: 2

68

SHANE shifts her eyes, signalling Cooper to look. He does. Horrified, he stops suddenly. Shane begins backing up.

SHANE
Okay... we'll be going now...

OFF THE 58TH's horror --

69 EXT. PLANET DEMIOS - ROCKY OUTCROPPING - LATER

69

The 58th stand in a circle, still numbed by their previous revelation. Even Cooper. Shane desperately tunes the radio.

SHANE
This... is the reason we're not
them... why we'll never be
like them. Because we have hope.

Shane, microphone to mouth, not too convincingly calls out, into the blackness of the starry sky.

SHANE
Home base... This is Wild
Cards... Home base...

CUT TO:

70 INT. SARATOGA - COMMAND CENTER - LT. PRICE

70

headphones on, furrows her brow. Jots on a piece of paper.

71 INT. SARATOGA - HALLWAY - CLOSE - PAPER

71

AN ENSIGN walks swiftly down the hall with it.

72 INT. SARATOGA - BRIEFING ROOM - THE PAPER

72

handed to ROSS. Ross reads it. Looks up.

ROSS
My God... They're still alive.

ROSS looks at MCQUEEN, who leans over the battle plans table, locked in concentration. Ross moves to McQueen, then thinks better of it. CAMERA FOLLOWS the PAPER, as Ross slips it into his pants pocket.

CUT TO BLACK:

END ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

73 EXT. PLANET DEMIOS - CLOSE - RED

73

fills the FRAME. Then it's ripped in two. SHANE rips the red paper into smaller pieces. We SEE it is the Chig "Surrender or die" leaflet.

WHITE SUBTITLE: D + 93 DAYS, 16:51 HOURS.

THE 58TH gaunt, hunched-over, scarf down the leaflets. Wang writes in his ragged journal. _____

WANG (V.O.)

The roots and bugs aren't enough to sustain us. So we try to trick our bodies into thinking we're full. But our bodies know better.

DAMPHOUSSE limps, using a home-made cane.

WANG (V.O.)

Today, Cooper noticed his fingernails had stopped growing. I realized mine had too...

THE 58TH sit down to catch their breaths. Rub their legs.

WANG (V.O.)

We can only walk a dozen yards at a time without resting. But it could be worse.

WANG looks up.

WANG'S POV - THE HILLS

silent under the dark starry night.

WANG (V.O.)

The fires in the hills have died out now... and yet something is keeping us alive.

SHANE

Look. Flowers... they're beautiful.

CLOSE - FLOWERS

grow through a toppled pile of rocks.

DAMPHOUSSE, horrified, falls to her knees, pulling out the flowers, trying to re-stack the rocks.

(CONTINUED)

73 CONTINUED:

73

SHANE

What are you doing?

DAMPHOUSSE

My monuments! I built these...
so that someone would remember
the dead. But nature doesn't
even care...

She trembles, but she's too weak even to cry now.

DAMPHOUSSE

It just knocks 'em over and puts
some damn flowers here... Nobody
cares.

SHANE puts her hand on Damphousse's shoulder. Nathan points up.

NATHAN

Look!

58TH'S POV - A SHOOTING STAR

NATHAN

A shooting star. It's a sign --
a sign of hope.

Their eyes follow the shooting star as it arcs across the sky.
The star burns brighter, then breaks into pieces. It scatters
to the ground with a hollow, METALLIC NOISE.

COOPER

That ain't a shooting star. It's
a piece of the Eisenhower...
falling out of orbit.

THEIR FACES fall in disappointment. Then they help each other
up, struggling to walk another dozen yards...

WANG (V.O.)

A beautiful flower -- or Nature's
indifference. A star of hope --
or a sign of destruction. How
could they both be right?

(beat)

Then I realized... it all depends
on the meaning you decide to give
something...

THE 58TH stop to rest again. CAMERA SLOWLY PANS their haunted,
sunken FACES...

WANG (V.O.)

No doubt about it, our situation
is desperate...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

73 CONTINUED: 2

73

WANG (V.O.) (cont'd)
and it's easy to look around and
see that we are starving Marines,
slowly dying...

THE RADIO is tuned... THE 58TH kneel around it, as Shane speaks
into it...

WANG (V.O.)
But at 5 o'clock every night,
there is something else you can't
doubt... We are five people...
who've chosen to live.

OFF their futile broadcast...

CUT TO:

74 INT. SARATOGA - TUN TAVERN - CHAMPAGNE POPPED!

74

The 73rd parties like V-J Day -- Whooping, slapping each other
on the back, shaking up beer bottles and spraying each other.

MARINE #1
We won! We did it! We took
Ixion!

McQueen walks through the saloon doors. Watches.

MARINE #2
Colonel McQueen!

The 73rd bum-rush McQueen. Lift him on their shoulders. Their
enthusiasm is infectious. Even McQueen has to smile.

MCQUEEN
Okay... put me down.

They do.

MCQUEEN
You people really did a job
today. I'm proud to say --
you're damn fine Marines.

MARINE #1
To Colonel McQueen -- and the
73rd -- victorious, together,
forever!

The 73rd cheers in approval. McQueen looks at them.

MCQUEEN'S POV - 73RD SQUADRON

their celebration FADES to SILENCE as McQueen voices-over --

(CONTINUED)

74 CONTINUED:

74

MCQUEEN (V.O.)
I just can't seem to let
myself... care... about them...
the way they deserve...

75 INT. SARATOGA - ROSS' QUARTERS - NIGHT - MCQUEEN

75

sits, cradling a drink in his hands. Ross sits on his bunk.

ROSS
Maybe that's for the best.

MCQUEEN
I know I should be thankful we
took Ixion by surprise, with as
few casualties as we did.
Thankful, that my new squadron
came back, alive, as heroes...

Ross reaches across the space between them. ~~Tries to pour~~
~~McQueen some more Scotch.~~ McQueen pushes away the bottle.

MCQUEEN
And... I know it's not right...
but when I look at their happy
faces... I think that the only
reason they're alive... is that
the 58th were sacrificed for
them.

ROSS
Ty...

MCQUEEN
I know it's wrong to blame them,
but I feel like... somehow...
they're the ones who are
responsible for the 58th being...
(difficult)
...probably... being dead.

Ross gets up. Goes to his desk. Picks up a piece of paper.

ROSS
It is wrong to blame them. Just
as it's wrong to blame yourself.
(beat)
But I know it weighs on you.

Ross holds out the message slip.

ROSS
Which is why I waited until after
the Invasion of Ixion... to give
you this.

(CONTINUED)

75 CONTINUED:

75

McQueen takes it. Reads. He's almost too stunned to speak.

MCQUEEN

How...?

ROSS

A resupply convoy picked up a 5 o'clock broadcast. The convoy couldn't rescue without revealing its position.

(beat)

But now that the battle's over and the Saratoga's heading back for refitting...

McQueen stands. Still in a state of shock.

MCQUEEN

I'll make preparations.

Ross puts a hand on McQueen's shoulder.

ROSS

It's been three months. It'll be another two weeks getting there.

(beat)

Don't get your hopes up.

CUT TO:

76 EXT. PLANET DEMIOS - ROCKY OUTCROPPING - THE 58TH

76

lie down or sit against the rock walls. Their faces are hollow. Their hair is matted, filthy.

WHITE SUBTITLES: D + 107 DAYS, 16:58 HOURS.

DAMPHOUSSE, knees tucked under her arms, rocks back and forth, shivering.

NATHAN, tries to sleep. Fidgets like a dog having a bad dream.

WANG, eyes darting, keeps scribbling in his notebook.

COOPER, intense, draws in the dirt with a stick.

SHANE enters, carrying the radio. She sets it in the middle of the circle. The strain of command, of months of responsibility for others' lives, has clearly taken its toll.

SHANE

Okay, 5 o'clock.

Nathan looks up briefly from sleeping. Puts his head back down. Shane conducts the radio ritual faster than usual.

(CONTINUED)

SHANE

Homebase, this is Wild Cards,
come in please. Homebase, this
is Wild Cards, come in please.

Shane turns off the dial with a "click." Abruptly begins
putting away the radio.

SHANE

Guess that's it for today, try
again tomorrow.

Wang, eyes darting, leans forward. Points to the radio.

WANG

Wait... there was no static.

Shane tries to shrug it off.

SHANE

Probably... less... ionization in
the atmosphere... today.

WANG

There's no static... because it's
not receiving...

The others' ears pick-up. Shane seems in severe denial.

SHANE

Everything's fine. I wouldn't
worry.

DAMPHOUSSE

Shane... the radio's broken?

Shane shuts her eyes. Shamefacedly looks down. Exhales.

NATHAN

You knew it was broken?

Tears begin rolling down Shane's cheeks.

SHANE

I was too weak... and this
morning... I... dropped it...

Cooper leans forward, intense.

COOPER

You knew it was broken? And you
went through the drill anyway?

The months of stress are too much to bear. Shane cracks.

(CONTINUED)

SHANE

I thought we needed it... to have
hope... I had to be strong to
hold us together...

In Shane's vulnerability -- there is almost a sacredness.
Dampousse, Cooper, Nathan and Wang draw closer to comfort her.
Only Cooper hangs back, looking at her with sadness, the way you
would look upon a wounded yet majestic lioness.

SHANE

I was holding out on you guys.

The 58th ad-lib "It's okay." "It'll be alright." Cooper moves
closer.

COOPER

I didn't understand... the radio
thing... until now...

Cooper comforts Shane.

COOPER

I been holding out on you guys
too.

Cooper strokes Shane's hair.

COOPER

It's okay... I know where we can
get food.

The others look at Cooper, hoping against disbelief.

COOPER

The Chigs got food. We just got
to take it from them.

DAMPOUSSE

Human food.

COOPER

No, Chig food.

There's more than a sense of disappointment -- almost like
Cooper's played a cruel practical joke on them.

DAMPOUSSE

Suicide.

NATHAN

Even if we get it, it's poison.

COOPER

We don't know that.

(CONTINUED)

76 CONTINUED: 3

76

Cooper looks intently at each of them. Their returned glances show they're still stunned he'd even make the suggestion.

COOPER

Shane's right -- We gotta have hope.

(beat)

And I got a plan.

CAMERA pushes in on WANG. His VOICE plays over silence.

WANG (V.O.)

Until you've been there, you can't know how many lies you'll tell yourself to stay alive.

CAMERA shows Cooper, drawing with his stick in the dirt.

WANG (V.O.)

Just lies. Call 'em white lies, or rationalizations. Or "holding back." Or "plans."

Cooper keeps explaining, to the skeptical looks of the 58th.

WANG (V.O.)

But they're still lies... I'd been lying too. A lie too shameful to even write down.

Cooper rests his case. The faces of the 58th register that they appreciate his efforts, but it's no use.

NATHAN

Coop... I know you mean the best.

(beat)

It's not even a bad plan. But it's been four days without anything. We're too weak to collect food, let alone fight Chigs for it.

Damphousse looks at everyone. Smiles sadly.

DAMPHOUSSE

The end should come in a couple of days... We can all go together... peacefully.

No one disputes her. A long beat. Then Wang speaks up.

WANG

I... I been holding out on you guys too. I'm ashamed... I found it... and I wasn't gonna share it.

(CONTINUED)

76 CONTINUED: 4

76

CLOSE - A SMALL PINK SUGAR PACKET

Cup-of-coffee-sized, Wang pulls it from his pocket as the world again FADES TO SILENCE.

WANG (V.O.)
I'd found it in a field pack on
one of our dead.

WANG'S FINGERS carefully tear the top off the packet.

WANG (V.O.)
It's hard to split a pack of
sugar five ways.

Shane licks her index finger. Puts it in the packet.

WANG (V.O.)
We agreed everyone would lick
their finger to the first
knuckle.

Shane puts her finger to her mouth.

WANG (V.O.)
Whatever stuck they could eat.

Nathan licks his finger. Then Damphousse. Then Cooper.

WANG (V.O.)
I can't imagine the sugar really
had that much energy in it.

Wang sticks his finger in the pack. Licks his finger.

WANG (V.O.)
But it seemed... like a feast.

77 EXT. PLANET DEMIOS - AIRSTRIP - NIGHT - K-BAR

77

unsheathed for battle.

CLOSE - EYES

fight exhaustion, summoning strength for the final battle...

THE 58TH crouch-walk through the eerie mist, along the airstrip.

CLOSE - HAND SIGNAL

CLOSE - BOOTS

stop. (O.S.) ALIEN NOISE... like conversation.

58TH POV - TWO ALIENS

(CONTINUED)

77 CONTINUED:

77

obscured in planet mist, converse. One turns and walks toward the surreal, glowing domed tents in the background.

CAMERA PANS SHANE, NATHAN, COOPER & DAMPHOUSSE looking over a ridge line. (O.S.) ALIEN NOISES grow louder... more animated.

58TH POV - THE ALIEN

enters the glowing tent. CAMERA ADJUSTS to see the ALIEN'S backlit silhouette as he suddenly TAKES HIS HELMET OFF, revealing a separate silhouette -- vaguely humanoid and decidedly hideous. OTHER helmet-less Chig SILHOUETTES approach him. (O.S.) CLINKING GLASSES, SOUNDS OF EATING, ALIEN LAUGHING.

THE 58TH exchange shocked looks.

DAMPHOUSSE

They almost look... like us...
partying.

SHANE

They're not us. Let's do it.

THE ALIEN GUARD sits with his gun across his lap... sleeping.

A K-BAR raised high, comes down hard.

ALIEN ARMOR hisses gas. Wang pounces, delivers the insurance stab...

CLOSE - A GAS GENERATOR

feeds the DOMED TENT its peculiar Alien gas.

A K-BAR SLICES the gas tube. It HISSES violently.

THE CHIG SILHOUETTES suddenly struggle to find their armour and weapons...

A K-BAR SLICES ANOTHER GAS LINE...

THE 58TH move from tent to tent, SLICING the tent walls, poisoning the writhing dark silhouettes...

58TH POV - GAS

hisses out of the lines as the trapped silhouettes struggle in the grotesque, agonizing dance of death, then collapse on the tent floor. Their SHRIEKS and MOANS fade to SILENCE, except for the HISSING GAS...

CUT TO:

78 INT. TENTS - NIGHT - CHIG FOOD

78

is still hot. COOPER sticks his K-BAR into one of the "fetal pig" chunks. As he pulls it out of the stew, a long, quivering rope of bluish-brown "mucus" substance strings behind. Slowly, carefully, Cooper bites some of it off the end of his knife. Winces. Swallows...

COOPER

Not as good as fruit cocktail...
but I think it's okay.

The others grab handfuls and stuff their mouths. They look at one another, then smile: "We survived."

SHANE

Other Chigs'll be here soon.
Grab as much as we can, carry and
move.

WANG, NATHAN, DAMPHOUSSE and SHANE sheathe their K-BARS. They pick up crates under each arm. Leave the tent. At the tent door Shane turns. Sees

COOPER slice the inside of his forearm with his K-Bar.

SHANE

What are you doing?

Cooper sprinkles his own blood on the remaining boxes of food.

COOPER

Chigs hate our blood.
(beat)
If we can't have it -- neither
can they.

Cooper picks up two boxes and runs out the tent door. The 58th, boxes under each arm, run triumphantly toward the ridge line...

79 EXT. PLANET DEMIOS - CLEARING - THE 58TH

79

huddle around boxes eating Chig food. An APC arcs into FRAME.

WHITE SUBTITLE: D + 113 DAYS, 09:11 HOURS.

WANG (V.O.)

The rescue came when we least
expected it.
(beat)
Weirdly enough, it came when we
thought we needed it least --
when we thought we might live for
months on Chig food.

COOPER and SHANE raise their arms triumphantly toward the sky...

CUT TO:

80 INT. SARATOGA - LOADING DOCK - HAGGARD MARINES

80

file out. Ross and McQueen salute. The Marines all have the thousand yard stare. One MARINE just walks past Ross and McQueen, doesn't even notice. The SECOND, almost in a trance, automatically, yet slowly, salutes as he continues. The THIRD stops and stares at them. He laughs. Then walks on.

WANG (V.O.).

Ross and McQueen met us. General Weirick was already deep in the Ceres Sector, planning Step 9 of Roundhammer...

The 58th emerge. They're no different than the first group. Each has the thousand yard stare.

McQueen breaks ranks. Wants to hug them, but restrains himself.

CAMERA PANS FACES of the 58th. They look, not at McQueen, but through him. On all of their faces is etched one word: "Why?"

Shamefaced, McQueen bites his lip. Looks down. Ross, still saluting, does the same.

ROSS

We gave you up for dead.

SHANE

We did too.

And she moves on. The rest of the 58th follow her.

81 INT. SARATOGA - MESS HALL - THE 58TH

81

still filthy, slides trays along the food line. They grab pieces of chocolate cake and eat them trough-style, while stacking their plates. Everyone else stares at them.

82 INT. SARATOGA - MESS HALL - LATER - THE 58TH

82

still dirty, are in line again. This time they just stack their plates. Cooper looks around, then sticks a handful of bread slices in his pocket. The COOKS stand clear of him.

83 INT. SARATOGA - MESS HALL - LATER - THE 58TH

83

now cleaned up, sit at a large table. They're still eating.

84 INT. SARATOGA - CORRIDOR - MCQUEEN

84

strides purposefully towards the Mess Hall.

(CONTINUED)

84 CONTINUED:

84

MCQUEEN (V.O.)
I thought for three months what
to say to you if -- when -- I saw
you.

85 INT. SARATOGA - MESS HALL - MCQUEEN

85

enters. Sees the 58th chowing down. Approaches.

MCQUEEN (V.O.)
A cowardly part of me wanted to
say The Brass abandoned you --
and I'm just a cog in their
machine.

McQueen stands in front of their table. They look up to him.
Stop eating. Stare...

MCQUEEN (V.O.)
The truth is, I'm part of the
command structure. And given the
choice...

McQueen sits down. CAMERA PANS the faces of the 58th as they
try to understand his position. What he says is clear enough --
just hard to hear. The voice-over stops and McQueen talks.

MCQUEEN
...I would've done the same.

The 58th look at one another, disbelieving.

MCQUEEN
That's probably no consolation to
you. You were just trying to
survive.

(beat)
You have every right to be
bitter.

The 58th cock their heads. Look deeply at McQueen.

WANG
Maybe. But not when life is so
sweet.

WANG'S HAND takes a PINK SUGAR PACKET out of the table holder.
Wang pushes it across the table toward McQueen. The 58th look
at one another. Then at McQueen. They smile. McQueen shakes
his head slightly, not comprehending.

WANG
You can't understand what we went
through down there.

(CONTINUED)

85 CONTINUED:

85

WANG takes his NOTEBOOK out of his vest pocket. Pushes it toward McQueen.

WANG

But maybe this will help.

A beat. McQueen respectfully takes it. The 58th smile at him, any bitterness they once felt now dissolved like sugar on their tongues.

MCQUEEN

Welcome back.

86 INT. BUNKROOM - NIGHT - THE 58TH

86

exhausted, get into their bunks. SHANE enters. Sets the broken RADIO on the table. Wires hang out the back.

SHANE

Hey, it's 5 o'clock!

The 58th look up from their bunks. They laugh. Damphousse throws a pillow. Hits Shane. Soon they're all laughing, hitting one another in a pillow fight.

NATHAN

(joyous)

Thank God we don't need that thing anymore!

WHACK! Nathan takes a pillow hit on the head.

CAMERA PUSHES in on WANG, fighting with the rest of them. Their laughter FADES to SILENCE, as WANG'S VOICE plays over their pillow fight.

WANG (V.O.)

Yes we do. And we always will.

CAMERA PUSHES in on the RADIO, standing like a rock amidst the battle.

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END