

C E T U S

By

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FADE IN:

EXT. ASTEROID - DAY

The asteroid is around 400 meters across, marked by meteorite craters of different sizes. It spins slowly, one rotation about every twenty seconds.

There is an airlock structure, and some nearby lit windows, at one axis. This is ANCHORAGE STATION.

INT. ANCHORAGE STATION CORRIDOR - DAY

The corridor is wide and brightly lit by fluorescent tubes recessed into the ceiling and walls. The walls themselves are obviously carved from rock and painted in pastel colors.

Equipment cabinets line the walls. Doors are set into the walls at intervals. The corridor curves upward with distance - in fact it's a circular corridor rotating with the station to provide artificial gravity.

There are a few people around - SCIENTISTS in white lab coats, ENGINEERS wearing jackets with ANCHORAGE stenciled on the back.

A man strides into view, walking quickly. This is JOHN EVERETT (50), the station manager. He turns off the corridor through an open doorway.

INT. ANCHORAGE STATION LABORATORY - SAME

The laboratory has desks and equipment of various types against every wall.

Sitting at one of the desks by the wall is CARL ENGEL (30), wearing a white lab coat and examining what appears to be an X-ray photograph on a computer screen. He looks up when Everett walks in.

ENGEL

Hi John, thanks for coming down --

EVERETT

(cuts Engel off)

I'm sorry, Carl, but I'm real busy. What is it you wanted to show me?

Engel indicates a workbench in the center of the room. On the bench is transparent container about thirty centimeters tall and wide.

ENGEL

This came in with a sample from
asteroid two six oh nine five
eight.

INSERT - THE CONTAINER

In the cylinder is what appears to be a rough, oval rock about twenty centimeters long.

BACK TO LABORATORY

EVERETT

That's it? I'm working my ass off
on a month's worth of reports and
you drag me here to have a look at
a rock? You're saying we sent a
probe out for rock samples and it
brought back a rock?

(laughs)

I think you're losing it, kid.

Everett bends down, his face close to the glass of the cylinder.

ENGEL

It's not a rock, John. When I --

INSERT - THE ROCK

The thing in the container splits along a hairline crack running all around its sides, and six pointed limbs flick out.

BACK TO LABORATORY

Everett steps back, startled.

EVERETT

Jesus! Did you see that?

Everett looks at Engel who nods his head. Everett moves around the bench, watching the creature. It doesn't move.

EVERETT

Is it dangerous?

ENGEL

I don't know yet. I've only had it
a couple of hours.

Everett puts his hand to the cylinder and taps the glass
with a fingernail.

EVERETT

Carl, I want you to -- ow!

Everett pulls his hand back sharply, as if stung.

ENGEL

What is it? What happened?

Everett examines his stung finger. Engel is also looking.

EVERETT

Static electricity or something.
Quite a belt, too. Damn!

ENGEL

Yeah... I measured a strong
electric field. I think that's how
it knows what's around it.

Everett's attention goes back to the creature and Engel,
seeing this, follows his gaze.

INSERT - THE CREATURE

The creature has turned to "face" Everett (although it
doesn't really have a face) and is pressing against the
cylinder wall, rubbing up and down against the glass with a
rough rubbing sound.

BACK TO LABORATORY

EVERETT

What the hell's it doing?

With a BANG, the container shatters and the creature JUMPS
directly at Everett.

It lands on Everett's hand and drives its pointed legs deep into his arm. Blood appears. Everett slaps at the thing with his free hand but it has too firm a grip.

EVERETT
(screaming)
Goddammit, get this fucker off me.
Ah! Ahhhhhh!

Engel runs for an intercom panel set into the wall by the door.

Everett continues to scream in increasing agony.

Engel hits the intercom switch, first with a shaking finger and then with the side of his fist.

ENGEL (into intercom)
(panicking)
Emergency! Animal attack in room C
twenty-six. We need help right
now! Anybody, fast!

Engel turns back to Everett, who is screaming in incredible agony.

The creature has chewed its way up Everett's arm as far as the elbow, and has swollen to the size of a football. It shows no sign of stopping.

Engel runs from the room screaming for help.

EXT. CARGO VESSEL - DAY

All that is visible of the ship itself is the nose and the cluster of engine nozzles at the tail. Between these are thousands of cargo containers. The ship is around eight hundred meters long.

On the nose is a logo reading TRIPLANETARY SHIPPING and the name of the ship -- CETUS. The ship is coasting at high speed.

INT. CETUS GALLEY - DAY

Countertop runs all around the walls with closets over and under. There's a large STOVETOP with overhead lights. A large WORKTABLE is in the middle of the room. Set into one wall is a DUMBWAITER hatch, open.

JIM SANDERS (36) is cooking a big pan full of bacon. On the counter next to him is a tray loaded with serving dishes filled with sausage, eggs and biscuits.

Sanders tips the bacon into an empty serving dish then adds the dish to the tray.

He takes the tray to the dumbwaiter hatch, puts it in and presses a button. The dumbwaiter door slides closed. Sanders presses another button.

SANDERS
(into intercom)
Hey everybody, breakfast's ready.

INT. CETUS CREW LOUNGE - SAME

The crew lounge has a dining table and chairs at one end and easy chairs and coffee tables at the other. Lighting is muted, comfortable. There is some background music.

There's a large flat-screen TV on the wall near the easy chairs. The TV is showing a news program with the sound down. There's a dumbwaiter hatch in the wall near the dining table. LIAM PHILIPS (22) stands next to it.

The dumbwaiter door slides open revealing the breakfast tray.

PHILIPS
(thumbing intercom switch)
I got it.

Philips carries the tray to the table, on which five places have been set with plates, cutlery, coffee mugs and water glasses. There's a large coffee pot and jug of water in the middle.

As Philips sits down two men enter. One is JOHN COFFIELD (52); the other is DAVE TAYLOR (40). Taylor carries a small water bottle.

COFFIELD

(smiles)

Good morning, Philips.

PHILIPS

Hi, guys.

Coffield and Taylor take places at the table.

The last to enter is MIKE PERRY (46), master of the Cetus. He takes the seat at the head of the table.

PERRY

Morning, troops. Well, what are we waiting for? Let's eat. I'm starved.

The others return the greeting and load plates with food, pour coffee and so on. They talk and eat at the same time.

Perry can't help but notice that Taylor is drinking water from the bottle he brought with him. He hasn't touched the water jug or coffee on the table.

PERRY

So, Taylor. Still drinking bottled water?

TAYLOR

I've said it before... the supply water tastes like piss. I think we've recycled it too many times.

COFFIELD

It's all in your head, Taylor. The water coming out of the plant is as pure as a mountain spring.

Taylor shakes his head but says no more.

PERRY

Okay, let's have status reports. Taylor, how far are we from Anchorage?

TAYLOR

We're a little bit under thirteen million kilometers out. We'll be there in about thirty-two hours.

PERRY

Are we ready? Coffield?

COFFIELD

Everything's running fine. Engine systems are all A-1 for the deceleration burn.

PERRY

Philips, cargo status?

PHILIPS

All the cargo handlers are serviced, fueled and ready to go. I just need to make sure the cargo containers are secure.

PERRY

Good work. Where's Sanders?

Sanders walks in at that moment and walks to the table.

PERRY

Okay, good. We were just making sure we're in shape for the Anchorage delivery tomorrow. What's the status on communications?

SANDERS

We could have a problem there. We received a signal overnight from Callisto. Apparently they lost contact with Anchorage a couple of days ago and they haven't been able to raise them since.

TAYLOR

Any idea what's going on?

SANDERS

Callisto said they have no idea. Anchorage sent their scheduled status check three days ago, and everything was okay then. Since then, nothing. Callisto asked us to try, since we're almost there. I tried it about an hour ago and there was no response.

Perry looks thoughtful for a moment, and then shakes his head.

PERRY

Well, we can't do anything until we get there. Until then, try every hour.

SANDERS

Sure.

PHILIPS

How long do we get on Anchorage?

PERRY

Well, according to the schedule we get a wonderful four days before our launch window, then it's ten weeks to Saturn.

Philips grins and looks at the others. Seeing that nobody else seems enthused, the grin disappears.

PERRY

After breakfast I want Coffield and Sanders outside helping Philips secure the cargo.

EXT. CETUS - DAY

The ship coasts along. Three figures in spacesuits are moving over the cargo containers.

TAYLOR (VO)

We're firing the engines in fifteen minutes, guys. Time to get inside.

The figures head toward the bow of the ship.

INT. CETUS BRIDGE - DAY

The bridge is a large room but filled with equipment. There is a command chair with a console built around it. In front of that and set slightly lower are five or six much larger consoles.

Lighting on the bridge is muted and faintly blue, coming from recesses in the corners of the room. Most of the light comes from the display screens on the consoles.

At the back is a doorway, while in front the entire wall is actually a thick transparent window looking out into space.

Perry is in the command chair, Taylor at the helm controls, Coffield at the engineer's console, Philips at the docking systems console, Sanders at communications.

TAYLOR

Deceleration in ten seconds.

COFFIELD

Thrust reversers engaged. Engines ready.

TAYLOR

Five seconds. Four. Three. Two.
One. Zero.

Coffield makes a hand motion in front of his display screen.

EXT. CETUS - SAME

At the stern of the ship, the engines glow as they fire up. The thrust reversers direct the power forward to slow the ship down.

INT. CETUS BRIDGE - SAME

There's a slight shudder as the engines fire.

COFFIELD

Engines running. Everything looks good. Set for a twenty eight hour burn at one quarter G.

PHILIPS

Cargo is stable.

PERRY

Good work, everyone. Sanders, how about some coffee?

SANDERS

That'd be great, thanks.

PERRY

Very funny. How would you like your head? One lump or two?

Coffield laughs.

INT. CETUS CREW LOUNGE - NIGHT

Sanders and Philips are in easy chairs watching a movie on the TV. Coffield is sitting at the dining table working at a portable computer.

Perry walks in and looks around. He joins Coffield at the table.

PERRY

Business or pleasure?

COFFIELD

(smiling)

Pleasure, definitely pleasure.

PERRY

Working on the third Coffield novel?

COFFIELD

Fourth, actually.

PERRY

How come you don't quit and just be a writer?

COFFIELD

Oh, this pays a few bills but mostly I do it for fun. I'd love to get lucky and hit the bestseller list... but I don't expect that'll ever happen.

PERRY

Well if you do, I guess I'll have to find another engineer.

COFFIELD

Nawww... I wouldn't quit. I love this job.

PERRY

(smiling)

That's good to hear.

(gets up)

I was looking for Taylor. Have you seen him?

COFFIELD

I think he went to his cabin.

INT. TAYLOR'S CABIN - NIGHT

Taylor's cabin has a bunk with a built-in overhead reading light, a desk and chair, and a flat-screen TV monitor mounted on the wall. There's an armchair and coffee table convenient for the TV.

There are some framed photographs on the walls: Taylor as a teenager partying in a group on a beach; an older Taylor in mountain gear standing in snow on the side of a mountain; Taylor skiing in Zermatt; Taylor with his parents in front of a beach house in Fort Lauderdale.

Also on the walls are some reproduction "classic" (i.e. 20th and early 21st century) travel posters -- Paris; Lake Tahoe; Vail; Maui; Athens, Greece and others.

The TV is on with the sound down. The screen is showing outdoor scenes - mountains, forests, oceans and so on.

Taylor is sitting in the armchair staring at the screen. His expression is blank, but as he watches tears run down his cheeks.

EXT. CETUS - NEXT MORNING

The engine glow is still there. Anchorage station is a brighter dot ahead.

INT. CETUS DECK C CORRIDOR - SAME

Perry is standing in the corridor looking slightly annoyed.

In front of him the corridor is almost completely blocked by a large rack filled with brown painted compressed gas cylinders. The rack is near a door marked, "FREIGHT ELEVATOR - FOR USE ONLY WHEN DOCKED".

INT. CETUS BRIDGE - SAME

Sanders is sitting at the communications console, while Philips is at the docking systems controls. Nobody else is on the bridge.

SANDERS (to radio mike in console)
This is Triplanetary Shipping
heavy cargo vehicle Cetus calling
Krueger mining station Anchorage.
Over.

Sanders makes a hand movement at his console and waits for a moment. There is a faint sound of static.

PHILIPS
Are we in range for that?

SANDERS
(nods)
Easily.

Philips looks around; making sure nobody else is on the bridge.

PHILIPS
Is it just me, or am I the only
one who'll be glad to get there?

SANDERS

What it is, is you're the only one who'll be glad to get there.

PHILIPS

What's wrong with the place?

SANDERS

Well, Anchorage isn't like Callisto or the other big stations. There's about forty people on that rock, that's all. Most of them are geologists and engineers looking at asteroids to find stuff to dig up and sell.

PHILIPS

(scoffs)

There can't be much worth selling, way out here.

SANDERS

You'd be surprised. The station is in a Jovian point. It's a kind of gravitational tide pool that collects everything from grains of sand all the way up to asteroids two, three hundred kilometers across. The guys on the station find all kinds of stuff; gold, diamonds, uranium, copper. There's so much stuff they can't mine it out as fast as they find it, so tons of the stuff is out there waiting to be picked up. This station makes Krueger two to three BILLION dollars a week.

PHILIPS

(shakes head)

Oh, man. Hey, maybe I could go out on a handler and get a few free samples.

SANDERS

I wouldn't; they're pretty touchy about that kind of thing. Those guys aren't much fun and I think being so far out, they're all a bit... far out. I tell you right now: there's nothing to do there. You'll be sitting in your cabin for four days watching movies. I'll be glad to get gone from there.

Philips looks a little deflated. Sanders looks at him wryly.

SANDERS

Oh, now I get it. Girls. Forget it, buddy, there are only maybe half a dozen women on the whole station and you won't get to meet them anyway.

The door opens. Taylor and Coffield walk in and take their places, Taylor at the helm controls and Coffield at the engineering station.

Perry follows a moment later and takes the command chair.

PERRY

Can someone, and by that I mean Mister Philips, explain to me why the deck C corridor is blocked?

Philips looks sheepish.

PHILIPS

Ah, that. Those idiots on Callisto put Saturn's chlorine into Anchorage's container. I took it out and I was going to put it back when we've finished here.

Perry is actually slightly amused and trying not to let it show.

PERRY

And please explain why I wasn't told about this?

PHILIPS

Well... that's because I was hoping to get it straightened out before you found out about it.

PERRY

I see. Taylor, where are we?

TAYLOR

(reading his display)

We'll be right at the station in ten minutes.

PERRY

Any luck with the communications?

SANDERS

The navigation beacon's transmitting and the transponder's, um, transponding okay. I can't raise them by voice, though.

PERRY

Bad transmitter?

SANDERS

I think so, yes.

PERRY

How about the docking systems?

PHILIPS

The automated systems are talking but we can't dock without a manual authorization at their end. Still waiting on that.

Perry looks at Taylor. Taylor looks at Perry.

TAYLOR

That's bad.

PERRY

Damn right.

PHILIPS

I don't follow --

SANDERS

(interrupting)

The voice transmitter is one thing, but the dock systems are working or you wouldn't be getting a signal back. If you're not getting an authorization that can only mean there's nobody manning the system.

PHILIPS

Ah...

Realization.

PHILIPS

Oh, shit.

EXT. ANCHORAGE STATION - DAY

The Cetus slows to a halt a couple of hundred meters from the station. The glow of the ship's engines cuts off.

The station and the ship hang in space. There are still lights in the station's windows.

INT. CETUS BRIDGE - SAME

PERRY (to Sanders)

Anything yet?

SANDERS

No, still nothing.

PHILIPS

What do you think happened here?

TAYLOR

Who knows? Some kind of accident, maybe?

SANDERS

Whatever it was, they weren't able to get a call out to Callisto.

PERRY

Coffield, Philips, I want you to get over there and check the outside for damage. Don't go inside.

Coffield and Philips get up and head for the door.

EXT. CETUS AIRLOCK - DAY

The airlock door opens. Philips and Coffield, in spacesuits, float out, weightless. They make their way to six nearby cargo handlers that are attached to the ship.

They clip onto the nearest cargo handler, a kind of space forklift for moving the cargo containers around.

Coffield hangs onto one side of the handler as Philips guides it clear of the ship and accelerates toward the station. They talk by radio.

COFFIELD

Let's check the airlocks first.

PHILIPS

Right.

They're almost at the station airlocks. There is a massive cargo airlock in the center of the docking structure. Around this are three smaller personnel airlocks.

COFFIELD

The airlock doors all look secure.

Philips drives the handler toward the nearest window. The two men make a slow sweep, looking in. As they pass by one window...

COFFIELD

Hold it. I thought I saw something. Go back.

Philips stops and reverses the handler.

COFFIELD

(pointing)
There, see?

Inside the room there's a dark stain on the floor near an open door. It's smeared as if something has been dragged through it, out the door into the corridor beyond.

PHILIPS

Is that blood?

COFFIELD

Maybe, but I can't be sure from here. Cetus, are you there?

PERRY (VO)

I heard you, Anchorage. Any bodies? Anyone at all?

COFFIELD

Not a damn thing, no sign of life.

INT. CETUS BRIDGE - SAME

PERRY

All right. We're going in. Get back here. Taylor, issue side arms.

Perry signals Taylor with a pointed finger. Taylor heads for the door.

PERRY

Sanders, tell Callisto what we know so far.

SANDERS

Should I mention the blood?

PERRY

Not yet, until we're certain. Just stick to what we know for sure.

SANDERS

Okay.

Sanders turns back to his console and gets to work. Perry leaves the bridge.

INT. CETUS AIRLOCK - DAY

Coffield and Philips are in the airlock. There's the HISS of air filling the airlock, then Coffield and Philips remove their helmets.

PHILIPS

What do you think?

COFFIELD

I think everyone on that station is dead.

The airlock door opens.

INT. CETUS DECK D CORRIDOR - SAME

The ship has four decks. Deck A is the bridge. The airlock is on deck D.

Taylor is waiting for Philips and Coffield as they get out of the airlock. He unlocks the gun locker and gives them handguns, which they attach to their belts.

Perry arrives as they get back into the airlock and the door closes.

Taylor takes his spacesuit from the nearby rack. Perry takes his and puts it on over his clothes.

TAYLOR

What are you doing?

PERRY

I'm going over there, what else?

TAYLOR

You're supposed to stay here.
That's what the regulations say.

PERRY

The regulations also say it's my call. I used to work on a rescue boat; I'm trained for this kind of thing. You're not.

TAYLOR

Maybe we should both go. It'd make things go faster.

PERRY

No. That would leave just Sanders,
and one man can't handle the ship
on his own if something goes bad
over there. I need you to stay
here.

Perry has his suit on except for the helmet and gloves. He takes a handgun from the open weapons locker, loads and checks it and fixes it to his belt.

Taylor continues to stand there holding his suit, watching Perry. Perry notices.

PERRY

Is there a problem?

Taylor pauses.

TAYLOR

No.

Taylor clenches his jaw and jams his suit back on the rack, locks the weapons locker and heads back down the corridor.

Perry watches him until he's out of sight.

EXT. ANCHORAGE STATION AIRLOCK - DAY

The outer airlock door is closed and a cargo handler is secured nearby.

Perry rides up on a second handler, stops and secures it and moves to the airlock.

INT. ANCHORAGE STATION AIRLOCK CORRIDOR - SAME

Perry steps out of the airlock, still fully suited.

The corridor is close to the axis of the station. The floor is curved strongly. There's a little gravity but not much. Perry still has his helmet closed up and uses the radio.

PERRY

Coffield?

No response.

PERRY
(emphatic)
Coffield? Philips? Where are you,
dammit!

A shadow moves in an open doorway near Perry. He sees it, spins and fumbles for the handgun.

Philips steps through the doorway into the corridor, helmet and gloves off. Coffield follows.

Perry straightens up and RIPS his helmet off.

PERRY
Jesus, don't do that again! Scared
the piss outta me.

COFFIELD
Sorry, boss, I didn't think. We
went off suit air and I forgot
about the radio.

Coffield reaches into a pocket of his suit and pulls out a radio headset, puts it on. Philips does the same.

Perry takes a deep breath, lets it out.

PERRY
(calmer)
I'm supposed to be the cool,
together guy. You two are supposed
to be the jumpy assholes. Not the
other way round.

Perry looks around, sees Coffield's and Philips' helmets and gloves on a rack by the airlock and adds his own.

He finds his own headset and puts it on.

PERRY
Cetus, this is Anchorage, do you
read?

TAYLOR (VO)
We hear you.

PERRY
Philips, has Coffield told you the
layout of this place?

PHILIPS

Not really --

PERRY

Okay.

Perry looks around and sees a flat display mounted on the wall near the airlock. The display is showing various status readings -- air temperature, humidity, oxygen and carbon dioxide content.

Perry walks over and Philips follows.

INSERT - THE DISPLAY

There is a "hand" symbol in the corner of the screen. Perry's finger touches the symbol and the status displays vanish, replaced by a high-tech three-dimensional menu.

Perry moves his fingers in the air; the display reacts and after a few moments Perry has pulled up a three-dimensional schematic of the station. Perry is able to rotate the model and pull it apart by moving his fingers in front of the panel.

The station has a large central bay; ringing that is corridor D, and further out are corridors A, B and C side by side. Corridors B and C are colored red and marked RESTRICTED.

A red arrow appears on the screen, with the words YOU ARE HERE next to it, pointing to corridor D.

BACK TO CORRIDOR

Perry points down the corridor.

PERRY

We'll start this way, check out each room in turn then move down to corridor A and carry on. Stay in sight of each other. Keep the radio open and if you see anything at all, say something. Clear?

COFFIELD AND PHILIPS

(overlapping)

Clear.

Perry moves and the others follow.

PHILIPS
How come they don't have
artificial gravity?

COFFIELD
This place was built before they
figured out how to control
gravity.

INT. CETUS BRIDGE - DAY

Taylor and Sanders are monitoring the others on the radio.

PERRY (VO)
Room D six. Nothing so far.

A pause.

COFFIELD (VO)
I think I found our bloodstain.
I'm outside D four.

PERRY (VO)
Hold on.

PHILIPS (VO)
Is it blood?

INT. ANCHORAGE CORRIDOR D - SAME

Coffield is kneeling next to the blood streak on the corridor floor. Perry and Philips are standing behind him. It's the same stain they saw from outside and is plainly blood.

COFFIELD
Looks like it to me.

The three men follow the streak into the room.

INT. ANCHORAGE ROOM D-4 - SAME

The room is a small conference room. Some of the chairs are overturned. There are small spatters of blood on the walls and floor.

PERRY

Some kind of a struggle here from
the look of it. Let's keep moving.
Stay sharp.

INT. ANCHORAGE CORRIDOR D - DAY

The men have completed the circle and are back at the
airlock.

PERRY

Cetus, we're back at the airlock.
No signs of life so far. We're
going down to the next level.

Near the airlock, on the other side of the corridor, is a
ladder leading down to the next level through a hole bored
through three meters of rock. Perry starts down.

INT. ANCHORAGE CORRIDOR A - SAME

The corridor is further out from the center of the station,
not so curved and the gravity is stronger, roughly Earth
normal.

Perry drops into the corridor from the ladder and steps
clear.

Coffield and then Philips appear.

Perry indicates a direction.

PERRY

This way. Cetus, we're in corridor
A. Still nothing.

The three men enter the first room.

INT. ANCHORAGE ROOM A-20 - SAME

The room appears to be some kind of library. There are
shelves in the walls holding computer storage disk boxes,
and a number of desks each of which has a computer screen
and keyboard built in.

There are smears of dried blood on the walls, floor and
furniture.

PERRY

Are they working?

TAYLOR (VO)

Anchorage, what's going on?

PERRY

Sorry, Cetus. We've found some computers. Stand by.

Coffield sits down at one of the desks and waves his hand in front of the display. The screen lights up. He makes some hand signals.

COFFIELD

The station network's still up and running.

PERRY

See if you can get to the station logs.

Coffield works for a few seconds while Perry and Philips watch.

COFFIELD

There's a file here called "Emergency Report". It's marked as very important. That's about it. The rest is secure; I can't get to anything else without the code keys.

PERRY

Philips, see if you can find a blank chip so we can make a copy.

COFFIELD

Don't bother. I've uploaded it to the Cetus. Cetus, can you confirm?

SANDERS (VO)

Yeah, got it.

PHILIPS

I didn't know you could do that. How did you do that?

TAYLOR (VO)
Very interesting.

PERRY
Coffield's a computer whiz...
that's why we call him "Hard
Drive". Right, Coffield?

COFFIELD
Yeah, right --

PERRY
(grinning)
Remember the time he pressed the
wrong key and jettisoned a
container full of classic Playboy
magazines? The miners on Titan had
been waiting for those for months.
I had to lock him up for his own
protection. Geez, they still
haven't forgiven him for that one.

Coffield, smiling, gives Perry the middle-finger salute.

PERRY
Hey, hey! Is that any way to treat
the C.M.F.I.C?

COFFIELD
I think we're done here.

PERRY
(chuckling)
Okay, let's carry on.

The men leave the room. Perry gives Coffield a friendly
clap on the shoulder as they go.

As the last man leaves, a crablike creature scuttles from
the shadowed foot well of one of the desks and moves toward
the door.

INT. CETUS BRIDGE - DAY

Sanders is still at his console. Taylor is sitting nearby,
chewing a fingernail.

PERRY (VO)

Cetus, we've completed corridor A.
Moving to B.

COFFIELD (VO)

I think we're stuck.

PERRY (VO)

What's the problem?

COFFIELD (VO)

The doors are locked. We can't
open them without the code keys.

PERRY (VO)

Shit. Cetus?

SANDERS

Here, Anchorage.

PERRY (VO)

Send a priority message to
Callisto. Give them what we have
so far and tell them we need
Krueger to send the access codes
ASAP so we can get to the rest of
the station. Send the same request
direct to Krueger HQ on Earth.
That may save some time.

SANDERS

I'll get on it right now. They
won't send them, though.

PERRY (VO)

I know, but we have to try.

PHILIPS (VO)

Why not, for Christ's sake?

PERRY (VO)

Because with those keys we can get
the locations of every valuable
find they've made. They're not
going to give them out without a
decision from the very top, and
that could take days.

INT. ANCHORAGE CORRIDOR A - SAME

The three men are standing next to a locked door.

PERRY

Guys, it'll take an hour and a half to get a signal to Callisto and back, plus however long it takes the Krueger people to dig out the codes assuming they do. There's nothing more we can do here. Let's get back to the ship.

PHILIPS

Right.

The three head back to the ladder.

TAYLOR (VO)

Anchorage?

PERRY

What is it, Cetus?

TAYLOR (VO)

We just got a message from Callisto. They got our first signal and Krueger wants to know if there's anyone still on the station.

PERRY

Tell them we can't be sure until we can get into the rest of it but it doesn't look good.

They've reached the ladder. Perry goes first, followed by Coffield.

INT. ANCHORAGE CORRIDOR D - SAME

Perry steps off the ladder into the corridor.

Coffield's head becomes visible.

Down the ladder, Philips is climbing up. A metallic CLANG sound comes from below him. On the floor of the corridor below, shadows move.

PHILIPS

Hey, wait! There's somebody down
there!

Philips doesn't climb back down; instead he simply lets go,
floating down in the reduced gravity. At the same instant:

PERRY

No! Wait!

INT. ANCHORAGE CORRIDOR A - SAME

Philips hits the floor, facing away down the corridor, and
turns around.

His eyes bug out with sudden fear and horror.

He grabs the ladder and climbs as fast as he can.

INT. ANCHORAGE CORRIDOR D - SAME

Perry and Coffield are looking down the ladder at Philips.

Philips makes it about a meter up the ladder and then,
barely visible in the shadow of the ladder tunnel, dozens
of the creatures hit him from the corridor below.

PHILIPS

(in terror)

OH GOD GET THEM OFF, GET THEM OFF
ME! AHHHHHHH!

Coffield pulls the handgun from his belt. Perry does the
same, and starts down the ladder.

INT. LADDER TUNNEL - SAME

Philips is holding onto the ladder but is being dragged
down. From the waist down he's covered in bugs.

They shred his suit and tear into flesh. Philips screams. A
bug chews into his foot.

INT. ANCHORAGE CORRIDOR D - SAME

Coffield turns pale.

COFFIELD

Oh god --

Coffield turns and runs, panicked.

Perry is aiming his gun trying to get a clear shot at the bugs but in the enclosed tunnel he can't fire without risking hitting Philips. He clips the gun back to his belt and reaches down for Philips' hand.

INT. LADDER TUNNEL - SAME

The bug that started on Philips' foot has chewed his leg up to the thigh. The thing has swollen to the size of a basketball. The flesh of his other leg is gone. Bone shows.

Perry's hand grips Philips' wrist tightly.

More creatures climb over the ones on Philips' lower body, covering him completely. They tear at his back, arms and face.

INT. ANCHORAGE CORRIDOR D - SAME

Philips is pulled from Perry's grip. Perry watches as Philips, screaming, is dragged down the ladder tunnel and out of sight down the corridor below. The screaming fades out and is gone.

Hundreds more of the creatures boil up the ladder tunnel.

Perry runs back up the ladder and runs for the airlock. Coffield is on his knees by the airlock door, vomiting.

PERRY

Coffield! Get in the airlock!

Coffield jumps up as Perry grabs both their helmets and gloves without slowing down. The men jump through into the airlock.

A wave of creatures is right behind them.

The men both shoulder the door shut and collapse on the floor.

Coffield is breathing heavily. He curls into a ball and holds his head in both hands.

COFFIELD

(whispering)

Jesus, Jesus, Jesus --

TAYLOR (VO)

Anchorage, what the hell's going on?

PERRY

Something got Philips. Like big insects, hundreds of them. They tore him to bits.

TAYLOR (VO)

Where did they come from?

PERRY

I think they came out of the air vents.

Perry stands up.

PERRY

Coffield, come on.

He helps Coffield get to his feet.

There is a scratching, crunching sound coming from the door.

COFFIELD

(eyes wild)

Can they get through that?

PERRY

Let's not wait to find out, eh?

Coffield nods shakily. They put their helmets and gloves on.

INT. CETUS CREW LOUNGE - NIGHT

Perry, Coffield, Taylor and Sanders are sitting in the easy chairs.

Coffield is staring through his coffee cup. He's trembling.

PERRY

Sanders, as Philips' backup you're in charge of the docking systems in addition to comms until we get back to Earth. Taylor, I want the ship moved away from the station. I want at least five kilometers between it and us.

SANDERS

We should just go on to Saturn. There's nothing we can do here, man; they're all dead, you know it as well as I do.

PERRY

I agree, and that's what I'm going to tell Krueger. So, we send the signal and move the ship. Then we head for Saturn as soon as we get clearance, and don't look back.

COFFIELD

Sounds good.

TAYLOR

Coffield, if Krueger does send the codes, can you get the station logs from here?

SANDERS

They're not going to send the codes. That would let us get everything; survey locations, research, the works.

PERRY

Exactly. In fact, I hope they DON'T send them.

TAYLOR

Why?

PERRY

Because if they do we'll probably have to go back over there, and I can't really express how much I do NOT want to do that.

TAYLOR

But that's what I meant; can't we just get the logs from here and not have to go back?

COFFIELD

No. It's a security measure to make sure nobody can break into the system from outside.

PERRY

(getting irritated)
Dammit, just skip it, Taylor. Going back in there won't help anyone. We'd just add ourselves to the body count. Now, let's get this ship moved. The further we are from that shithole station the better I'll sleep.

COFFIELD

You and me both.

INT. PERRY'S CABIN - NIGHT

Perry can't sleep. He's sitting at his desk reading from the computer screen.

ON THE SCREEN

"EMERGENCY REPORT/Carl Engel, Analysis Division"

BACK TO PERRY

Perry begins reading the report.

EXT. CETUS AIRLOCK - SAME

The outer airlock door is open. Taylor floats to the nearest cargo handler.

He climbs aboard, fires it up and heads toward Anchorage.

INT. PERRY'S CABIN - NIGHT

Perry is examining the report.

ON THE SCREEN

The screen shows some text. In large letters is the phrase "INSERT #1 - SECURITY CAMERA C-26 - PLAY?"

Perry makes his hand a thumbs-up. The playback begins, filling the screen.

Engel runs back into the lab followed by two armed SECURITY GUARDS. He's sweating heavily. He looks down at Everett.

Perry holds his hand up and the image freezes. He gives a hand motion and the point of view rotates. Another hand motion and the view zooms in centered on Everett's body.

The body is partly eaten. Nothing remains above the sternum.

Perry makes more hand motions. The view pulls back out and the playback resumes.

The FIRST SECURITY GUARD looks at the mess. He covers his mouth with his hand, turns and runs back out. The sound of vomiting comes from the corridor.

Engel looks around the room.

SECOND SECURITY GUARD

Where is it?

ENGEL

It's gone.

The recording ends and the screen goes back to text.

BACK TO PERRY

Perry continues reading from the screen.

ON THE SCREEN

"INSERT #2 - SECURITY CAMERA C-26 - PLAY?"

Perry gives the thumbs-up.

Engel is in the lab dissecting a dead bug.

A TECHNICIAN runs up to Engel, in a panic.

TECHNICIAN

There's thousands of them! We
can't get to Control to call for
help!

Before Engel can do or say anything the technician runs off.

BACK TO PERRY

Perry reads on.

INT. ANCHORAGE AIRLOCK - SAME

Taylor is standing at the inner door looking through the glass. He stays that way for a while, not moving.

He puts his hand on the door handle.

He holds it there for a few seconds.

He can't get up the nerve to go in. He takes his hand away again.

He watches through the glass, not moving.

INT. PERRY'S CABIN - NIGHT

Perry reads on.

ON THE SCREEN

"INSERT #3 - SECURITY CAMERA D-4 - PLAY?"

Perry gives a thumbs-up.

The door is barricaded with chairs. Five or six people are in the room, all sitting on the floor with their backs against the wall. Engel is one of them. He's typing on a portable terminal.

A man sitting near the door is weeping, looking at a photograph, probably of a wife or sweetheart. A woman sitting next to him takes his hand to give comfort.

The door BANGS open, flinging the chairs away. A dozen bugs run in.

The bugs spread out, attacking everyone in the room. A group of them attack the woman. She screams as they tear at her legs.

She tries to crawl away but the bugs grab and pull, dragging her out of the room and smearing a streak of her blood out into the corridor.

Perry holds up his hand and the image freezes. He makes a hand motion and the playback fast-rewinds to the point where the bugs burst into the room. Perry resumes the playback from that point, in slow motion.

BACK TO PERRY

Perry gets up from the desk and flops down on the bed.

EXT. ANCHORAGE AIRLOCK - SAME

Taylor is back on the cargo handler, heading back to the ship.

Unseen by Taylor a set of pointed, spindly legs retract out of sight between the handler's fuel cylinders.

EXT. CETUS - NEXT MORNING

The ship hangs motionless in space.

INT. CETUS BRIDGE - SAME

Coffield and Sanders are on the bridge, sitting at their consoles. Coffield looks a bit rough.

Coffield gets up.

COFFIELD

That's the system checks all done.
I'm going to get some coffee. You
want some?

SANDERS

Yes, please.

Coffield leaves the bridge.

Sanders continues working at his console. An insistent beep comes from the console. He waves his hand and the beeping stops. He makes another hand motion.

SANDERS (to intercom)
Hey, Perry?

PERRY (VO)
Yo.

SANDERS
One of the cargo containers has depressurized. Looks like a meteor hit.

PERRY (VO)
What's in the container?

SANDERS
Mostly food.

PERRY (VO)
Have Taylor meet you at the airlock and check it out. Did we get clearance yet?

SANDERS
There's a coded message for you from Triplanetary HQ. I guess that's it.

PERRY (VO)
Hold on while I check...
(pause)
Okay, Krueger sent out one of their ships to take care of the station. Tell the others we're clear to carry on to Saturn as soon as we're ready.

EXT. CETUS AIRLOCK - DAY

Two figures in spacesuits leave the airlock and move out of sight between the cargo containers.

EXT. CETUS CARGO PASSAGE - SAME

Six large solid shafts run the length of the ship. The cargo containers are attached to these shafts. A motorized cage, like an elevator, is at the bow end of the gap between the shafts.

Taylor and Sanders get into the cage.

Taylor uses the control panel and the cage moves aft.

INT. CETUS BRIDGE - SAME

Coffield is at his console. Perry is sitting on the corner of the desk.

TAYLOR (VO)
We're in the cage.

COFFIELD
Acknowledged.

PERRY
(to Coffield)
Are you feeling better today?

COFFIELD
A bit. I didn't get much sleep.

TAYLOR (VO)
We're at the container now.
Checking it out.

There's a beep from Coffield's console. Coffield looks at a display.

COFFIELD
The automatic repair system just
kicked in... looks like another
meteor hole.

PERRY
Where?

COFFIELD

Near the antenna complex on the rear of the main hull. It's pretty big from the look of it, but it didn't go through to the inner hull. It's under control.

TAYLOR (VO)

Hey boss?

PERRY

Here.

TAYLOR (VO)

There's a hole in the container but it's on the inboard side, and it doesn't look like any kind of meteor hit I've seen.

PERRY

Is there a lot of damage?

EXT. CARGO CONTAINER - SAME

The cargo containers are large, each able to hold about a hundred tons of goods.

Taylor is holding onto a strut next to the damaged container, which has a jagged, one meter hole in it. The jagged pieces are pushed outwards from the container.

TAYLOR

Sanders is inside checking it out. Sanders?

INT. CARGO CONTAINER - SAME

Food cans of various shapes and sizes have been torn open, emptied and strewn around the container.

Sanders is looking around at the mess.

SANDERS

I'm here. Umm, boss, this doesn't look good.

PERRY (VO)

What does THAT mean, Sanders?

SANDERS

Whatever got in here has broken
open a shitload of food cans.
There's a couple of hundred pounds
of soy powder gone too --

INT. CETUS BRIDGE - SAME

Perry whirls around and almost screams into the mike.

PERRY

Both of you get back inside RIGHT
NOW!

COFFIELD

Oh God... there's one of the damn
things on the ship.

PERRY

It looks that way. Shit!

EXT. CETUS CARGO CONTAINER - DAY

The two men get into the cage and start back to the ship at
full speed.

INT. CETUS AIR DUCT - DAY

The air duct is a meter square. The bug, gorged on the food
from the container, has grown so big that it fills the
space. It crawls along the unlit duct.

In the dim light the body contorts. It gives birth to a
shapeless, glistening mass that writhes and pulses. A thin
membrane holds the mass together.

The writhing grows stronger until finally the membrane
tears. Thousands of small bugs boil out, eating through the
membrane. They run in all directions up and down the duct
and disappear into the darkness.

INT. CETUS DECK D CORRIDOR - DAY

The inner airlock door opens.

Coffield and Perry run into sight as Taylor and Sanders step out of the airlock.

PERRY

Taylor, open the gun locker.

SANDERS

What's the deal, boss?

Taylor opens the locker.

PERRY

Get out of the suits. We have to search the ship and find the bug. Two clips each, Taylor.

Taylor and Sanders get out of the suits.

Taylor hands out the handguns and ammunition.

PERRY

I want every room checked out; corners, ceilings, vents. If you see anything out of the ordinary, shout out. We'll cover this deck first. Stay together.

They move down the corridor quickly.

As they reach the first door Taylor flings the door open while Coffield stands back, pistol ready.

They all enter the room.

INT. CETUS EQUIPMENT STORAGE ROOM - SAME

The room is filled with mesh-sided racks and shelves holding tools, electronic equipment, spare parts, oil, welding equipment and so on.

The men check the racks and corners, look into the lighting recesses and vents.

There's nothing.

PERRY

Next deck.

They head for the stairway to deck C.

INT. CETUS LABORATORY - DAY

The door slams opens. Perry is framed in the doorway, pistol ready.

All four enter and continue the search.

They check the closets in pairs; one man standing ready with a gun while the other opens the door. Still nothing.

INT. CETUS DECK C CORRIDOR - DAY

Taylor stands ready while Sanders kicks another door open. All go in.

INT. CETUS GALLEY - SAME

PERRY

Be careful in here guys... there's food in the closets, so the fucker could be hiding in one. Everybody stay cool.

Perry indicates the far side of the room.

PERRY

Coffield, Sanders, take that side.

Coffield and Sanders move that way.

Taylor grabs the handle on the first closet, at floor level. He looks up at Perry.

TAYLOR

Ready?

Perry holds the gun ready.

PERRY

Go.

Taylor yanks the door open.

The closet contains cleaning products; one large bottle is labeled BLEACH while another is marked AMMONIA CLEANSER. There's nothing out of the ordinary.

On the other side of the room Coffield holds the handle of another closet, this one above the countertop.

Sanders gets ready and signals Coffield with a nod.

Coffield pulls the door.

Something moves.

Sanders fires. The BANG is deafening in the small room.

Coffield falls backward.

Perry and Taylor jump up and spin round, guns coming up.

Sanders has shot a bag of dried pinto beans that was stacked on top of some cans and slipped when the door was opened. The bullet impact has scattered beans everywhere.

Coffield is sitting on the floor with his back against the worktable, covered in beans.

He picks up a handful and holds them up, looking at Sanders.

COFFIELD

I think the pinto beans are dead
now.

(sighs)

Please don't do that again.

Sanders sniggers, then all laugh.

Coffield gets up and brushes the beans off his clothes. The laughter subsides.

PERRY

All right, guys. We still have a
lot of ship to cover.

Perry and Taylor go back to the next closet.

Coffield and Sanders do the same their side of the room.

Coffield covers the door while Sanders opens it.

COFFIELD

Whoa!

The others look to see what's up.

They see food cans torn open, as in the container. The back wall is broken through.

PERRY

It's the other side of that wall,
in the water recycling plant.

INT. CETUS DECK C CORRIDOR - DAY

The four are outside the door to the water treatment room.

Sanders covers the door with his gun while Coffield slaps it open.

Sanders walks in first, slowly.

INT. WATER TREATMENT ROOM - SAME

The room is twenty meters square and packed with metal cabinets with narrow spaces between. The ceiling is at least four meters high.

Six-inch water pipes run in and out of the cabinets, between them and around the walls, feeding into larger pipes high up the walls.

There is the humming of pumps and the rushing sound of water.

Sanders is a little way inside the door. Perry is right behind him.

Sanders looks up into a far corner of the room.

SANDERS

(quietly)
Oh, Christ --

Perry looks up at where Sanders is looking. One of the bugs is up on top of the pipes.

It's monstrous, filling the meter of space between the pipes and ceiling and spread out along at least two meters of the pipes. Its legs are over a meter long. Around its body are a number of orifices.

There are smaller creatures here and there. One of them, bloated from feeding, climbs onto the big creature. An orifice opens; the bloated bug climbs in; the orifice closes with a CRUNCH.

PERRY

(quietly)

The little ones feed... then the big one feeds on them --

SANDERS

(whispering, nervous)

Very nice. Can we kill it now?

Sanders and Perry raise their guns, aiming at the big mother creature.

A bug leaps from behind the pipes and hits Sanders in the chest.

The impact SLAMS Sanders back into Perry. Perry's gun goes off, but the shot is wild.

Perry falls backward with Sanders on top of him, almost out into the corridor.

The bug on Sanders' chest drives its pointed legs into his shoulder.

SANDERS

AAAAAAAAAH!

INT. CETUS DECK C CORRIDOR - SAME

TAYLOR

Get them out!

COFFIELD

Jesus --

Coffield and Taylor grab the other two men by the shoulders and HEAVE them out of the room.

Taylor grabs the door and SLAMS it closed and locks it.

INSERT - THE CREATURE

Perry puts his gun to the side of the bug's body and fires twice.

BACK TO CORRIDOR

The second shot blows the creature off Sanders' chest; the limp body slides along the floor trailing clear yellowish liquid.

There is a rough, rhythmic rubbing sound coming from the door.

TAYLOR

We have to go --

Coffield is pale and shaky. He gets to his feet and helps Sanders up.

Sanders has blood on his shirt around the shoulder and yellowish stains across the chest.

SANDERS

I'm okay... I'm okay --

COFFIELD

Lets get out of here.

PERRY

Calm down, Coffield. Let's do what we came to do. Taylor, get back here. Sanders, get behind us. Everybody give Sanders your spare clips. We open the door and when they come through, blast them. Make every shot count. If you run out, give Sanders your gun. Sanders, you keep reloading.

SANDERS

Right on.

PERRY

When we've got all the little ones we go in and finish that big bastard. Any idea how many there were in there?

SANDERS

I couldn't even guess.

PERRY

Okay. Be ready. Taylor, stand by the door. On my signal, hit it and run.

Taylor has his hand on the door.

Perry and Coffield raise their guns.

The rubbing sound is getting louder and faster.

PERRY

Now!

Taylor slaps the door and runs back, gun up.

Three or four bugs run out into the corridor and toward the men.

The shooting starts. Bug bodies fly backwards as they catch bullets, but more are running out from the room.

Perry's gun runs out; he jabs it toward Sanders, grabs the loaded one and carries on firing.

Coffield's gun is next, then Taylor's. There are at least fifty bodies on the floor and they're still coming.

TAYLOR

(shouts over gunfire)

Where are they all coming from?

SANDERS

I'm down to the last clip.

PERRY

Shit... get ready to run.

Perry's gun clicks dry again.

PERRY

That's it. Start backing up, fast.

All four walk backwards.

Bugs pour into the corridor even faster.

COFFIELD

Oh, Jesus --

Coffield, panicky, turns and runs.

PERRY

Airlock, fast! We'll have to use
the storm shelter!

They run as fast as they can for the stairs.

INT. CETUS DECK D CORRIDOR - SAME

Coffield gets to the airlock first, grabs his spacesuit and starts to put it on. The other men are right behind him.

PERRY

No time for that!

Perry grabs suits, helmets, gloves and boots and throws them into the airlock. Taylor grabs ammunition clips and throws them in.

The bugs are ten meters away.

PERRY

Get in!

Coffield dives into the airlock; the others follow.

INT. CETUS AIRLOCK - SAME

Sanders slams the airlock door shut and dogs it just in time.

Bugs rub and thump against the door.

Taylor looks out through the small window in the door.

TAYLOR

There's hundreds of them.

SANDERS

Can they get through the door?

COFFIELD

(shaky)

They punched a hole through the
outer hull. That's how they got
inside.

PERRY

Which means we don't have much
time. Suit up.

In the cramped space it's like four big men trying to
change in a phone booth. Nevertheless they're able to get
into their suits.

SANDERS

Ohhhhh crap.

PERRY

What's the problem?

SANDERS

Four suits. Three helmets. Mine
must be on the rack.

PERRY

Oh, that's just great.

TAYLOR

What if we --

PERRY

(interrupts)

Let me think.

(pause)

Well, we can't go back, and we
can't stay here. How fast can we
get to the storm shelter and get
it pressurized?

SANDERS

(realizing Perry's intention)

You're not serious --

COFFIELD

We can probably do it in about
sixty seconds.

The noise at the door is getting louder.

PERRY

Sanders, it's your choice. You can
stay here while somebody gets a
spare helmet from the shelter --

SANDERS

And have to be depressurized TWICE? Not to mention, those things could get through the door before then. No, thanks. I'll take the risk.

PERRY

Okay. Let's try to do it in thirty.

SANDERS

Aww, shit --

PERRY

Coffield, attach a line to him. Sanders, take a few deep breaths of oxygen from your suit valve.

Sanders does so. While he does that...

PERRY

We don't have time to pump out the air, so we'll use the emergency procedure. Taylor, we'll get to the shelter as fast as we can; first to get there opens it up. Coffield, you'll be guiding Sanders. Get him inside quick. As soon as he's in, we shut the door and pressurize. Anyone behind Sanders will have to wait outside until we've got him safe. All clear?

Everyone's clear.

PERRY

Sanders, stay loose, don't panic, let Coffield do the work. Keep your eyes closed. If you try to hold your breath... well, just don't try to hold your breath, okay?

SANDERS

(nodding)

Let's do this before I change my mind.

PERRY

Right. Helmets and gloves.

Perry, Taylor and Coffield put their helmets and gloves on.

PERRY

Ready?

TAYLOR AND COFFIELD

(together)

Ready.

Sanders gives the thumbs up.

Perry turns to the panel next to the outer door.

INSERT - DOOR CONTROL PANEL

Perry's gloved hand lifts a small, hinged safety cover. Under it is a red button.

Perry's finger jabs the button.

An electronic voice is heard.

ELECTRONIC VOICE

Warning. Explosive decompression in five seconds...

BACK TO AIRLOCK

ELECTRONIC VOICE

Four... three... two...

Perry braces himself against the doorframe.

Taylor pushes back with his legs against the far corner next to the inner door. In the other corner, Coffield and Sanders do the same.

Coffield holds the line tight.

Sanders closes his eyes and blows all the air out of his lungs.

ELECTRONIC VOICE

One... Ze --

There's a loud BANG as the door latches slam back and the door flies open.

The air rushes out, almost dragging Perry into space.

Perry grabs the doorframe and guides himself out.

Taylor follows, pushing against the back wall and floor with his legs.

EXT. CETUS AIRLOCK - SAME

Perry flies in a straight line past several cargo containers then grabs the corner of one and lets his momentum swing him around ninety degrees between the containers.

Taylor flies past him as he makes the turn.

EXT. CETUS CARGO PASSAGE - SAME

Perry is in the central passage that runs the length of the ship. He pushes off again with his legs, using the support struts to guide himself.

Twenty meters ahead of him one of the cargo containers is bright yellow with red stripes.

PERRY

I'm in the pipe. Twenty meters
from the shelter. Where is
everybody?

TAYLOR (OS)

Ahead of you, boss.

Taylor appears from between two cargo containers, ten meters from the marked shelter.

PERRY

Coffield?

COFFIELD (OS)

Right behind you.

EXT. SHELTER - SAME

Taylor reaches the shelter first, grabs a large, red handle, braces his feet and pulls hard. The door opens.

TAYLOR

Door's open.

Perry reaches the door and Taylor dives in.

Lights come on inside.

Coffield and Sanders are fifteen meters away. Coffield is pushing along with his legs and pulling Sanders behind him on a meter of line.

Sanders' face is red and he has his arms wrapped tightly round his sides. His legs are flailing.

COFFIELD

Ten more seconds, that's all,
we're almost there man, hold on --

Perry gets partway into the door and reaches out as Coffield approaches.

As soon as Coffield is within reach, Perry grabs Coffield and YANKS Coffield and Sanders into the shelter.

INT. SHELTER - SAME

The shelter is a small room. There are a number of small doors around the walls, each marked with its function. In one corner is an AIR UNIT: a white cube about a meter on each side with wide vents.

Perry boosts himself inside, dragging Coffield and Sanders in.

Taylor is ready on the door control. He pushes the handle and the door closes.

The instant it's closed, Taylor presses another switch and air rushes from the air unit.

TAYLOR

Pressure's coming up... five PSI
and rising.

Perry removes his helmet; there's a hiss as it unlocks.

The others do the same.

PERRY

Sanders? Can you hear me?

Sanders' eyes stay closed. There are traces of blood from his ears. The vacuum has broken blood vessels in his skin; his face looks bruised.

Perry pats him on the cheek.

COFFIELD

Is he breathing?

Perry put his ear to Sanders' mouth.

PERRY

Yes. There's a medical kit here somewhere... find it.

One of the cabinets on the wall is marked with a large red cross. Coffield opens it and digs inside.

PERRY

How long were we out there?

TAYLOR

Thirty-eight seconds.

SANDERS

(opening eyes, voice weak)
Thirty-eight? Shit, you said thirty... let's try it again, boys.

Coffield laughs.

PERRY

(to Sanders)
How do you feel?

SANDERS

My eyes hurt, my ears hurt, my chest hurts, I feel like I've been beaten all over with a two by four. Apart from that, I'm fuckin' fine.

PERRY

Rest a bit.

Coffield gives Sanders an injection with something from the medical kit.

Sanders gives him a questioning look.

COFFIELD

It'll help with the vacuum effects, but you'll get sleepy.

Sanders nods.

Coffield opens up Sanders' suit to examine the shoulder wounds. Looking closely, he frowns.

SANDERS

Something wrong?

Coffield doesn't answer. He pulls a MEDICAL SCANNER from the kit and holds it over Sanders' shoulder, watching the display.

SANDERS

Coffield... you're beginning to worry me.

PERRY

What's the problem?

Perry looks over Coffield's shoulder at the scanner display.

INSERT - THE SCANNER DISPLAY

The screen shows an extreme close-up of the edge of one of the wounds. Thousands of tiny specks are moving over the exposed flesh.

PERRY

What IS that?

BACK TO SHELTER

COFFIELD

(still frowning slightly)
I don't know. It's not an
infection... it looks more like
some kind of nanotechnology. It's
doing something to his nervous
system at the genetic level.

SANDERS

Now you're REALLY worrying me.

COFFIELD

Is there any pain?

SANDERS

Are you kidding? The fucker
stabbed me. What do you think?

COFFIELD

Well, according to the scanner
it's not doing any damage. It's
probably nothing. Try not to worry
about it.

SANDERS

Huh. Easy for you to say.

Coffield dresses the wounds.

COFFIELD

What do we do now?

PERRY

Well, we can't stay here long,
that's for sure.

TAYLOR

Why not?

COFFIELD

These shelters are designed to support one or two people for perhaps a day during solar radiation storms, that's all. With four of us in here there's only enough air for four, maybe six hours.

TAYLOR

There are thousands of cargo containers... there must be more air somewhere.

COFFIELD

That still won't help us if the damn things come after us.

Coffield finishes with the dressing and closes Sanders' suit back up.

TAYLOR

We need to call for help.

Coffield looks around the walls and finds one of the small doors.

He opens it; it hinges down to form a keyboard, and behind it is a flat computer screen. Coffield waves his hand at it and the console powers up.

TAYLOR

Can you send a message to Callisto from that?

COFFIELD

Normally yes, but...

(points to the screen)

The feed to the main antenna's broken. It must have happened when that thing broke through the hull.

TAYLOR

What about the Krueger ship?

PERRY

That might not get here for weeks.
Coffield, can you tell what the
bugs are doing?

COFFIELD

Not really... the airlocks are
still secure so I guess they gave
up following us.

Perry sits down on the floor with his back against the
wall.

TAYLOR

We can wait here for the Krueger
ship. We've got a quarter million
tons of cargo, so we should be
able to find enough food, water
and air to last until they get
here.

PERRY

We're not waiting. I want my ship
back.

TAYLOR

How the hell do we do that?

PERRY

I read that emergency report.
Engel dissected one of the bugs
and ran a full analysis. I'm
betting that somewhere in that
data is a clue to how we might
kill them. Coffield, is there any
way we can get the data without
the codes?

COFFIELD

Without the codes? Not a hope. But
there might be a way to get the
codes.

PERRY

And that is...?

COFFIELD

These guys were scientists, and scientists hate secrecy. It gets in the way. So I'm betting that at least one of them had copies of the access codes right there in the public part of the network to save time. If we can find the codes, we can get the research data.

PERRY

But we can't get into the system from here, so we have no choice. We have to go back to the station.

Coffield looks very nervous.

COFFIELD

Oh, no. I can't go back there.

PERRY

I need you in on this, Coffield. You're the only one who even has a chance of finding the codes.

COFFIELD

Look, I just can't, okay? There's no guarantee I can find the codes, and even if I can there's no guarantee the data will tell us what we need. So what's the fucking point going over there? No, count me out.

Perry stands up.

PERRY

All right, let me put it another way. The minute those bastards have eaten all the food on the ship they'll be out here looking for more. When that happens, we die.

COFFIELD

I don't want to hear this --

PERRY

(jabbing a finger at Coffield)
You are DAMN WELL going to hear
this!

Perry pushes Coffield against the wall.

PERRY

We can stay here, do nothing, and
have a zero percent chance. Or we
can go over there and just maybe
improve our chances. And I'm
telling you, I'd rather have a one
percent chance than zero percent.

Perry lets Coffield go. Coffield slides down the wall. He
puts his head in his hands.

PERRY

(softer)

You can do this; I know you can.
You did it on the ship and you can
do it again.

Coffield stands up, takes a deep breath and lets it out
slowly.

COFFIELD

If you can keep the things off me
I'll run a search for the codes.
If I find them I can grab the
secure files and upload them to
the ship. But it could take a
while.

TAYLOR

How long?

COFFIELD

I don't know. I could get lucky
and find them in a minute. Or it
could take a couple of hours.

PERRY

Sanders stays here.

Sanders moves to get up and opens his mouth about to say
something.

Perry puts his hand up to Sanders.

PERRY

You're not going; you're in no shape for this.

(to the others)

We get on the station as quiet as we can, then Taylor and I will watch Coffield's back while he works.

TAYLOR

We don't have to do it this way.

PERRY

I don't think we have a choice.

TAYLOR

That's not what I meant...

Taylor looks at Perry and then Coffield, then back to Perry. He looks nervous. Perry frowns.

TAYLOR

Look, I... I've got the access codes.

PERRY

WHAT? How the hell did YOU get them?

TAYLOR

A guy gave them to me before we left Callisto. Six weeks ago, man, I swear.

COFFIELD

You were going to steal Krueger's data?

TAYLOR

(nods)

He told me to get into the secure area and milk the systems for everything I could find. Then when we get to Saturn somebody's going to be contacting me. I hand over the data and I get paid.

PERRY

How much?

TAYLOR

Enough to quit this shit job and retire in the Bahamas. Anyway I tried to get in last night.

PERRY

What happened?

TAYLOR

Nothing. I was in the airlock for an hour trying to get up enough nerve to go in. After what happened to Philips I couldn't do it.

COFFIELD

Did you see any creatures?

Taylor shakes his head.

PERRY

Where are the codes?

TAYLOR

Coffield, can you get into my private files from here?

COFFIELD

Yes. What's the password?

TAYLOR

"Champagne".

Coffield carries on working at the console.

PERRY

(angry)

I should throw you off the fucking ship. You could have told us about the codes earlier.

TAYLOR

Don't you think I've thought about that? The codes wouldn't have saved Philips.

COFFIELD

He's right, you know. If we'd had the codes earlier we'd probably have run into those bastards when we were all the way in, instead of on our way out. We could have all died, not just Philips.

PERRY

(angry)

Fuck!

Nobody says anything for a long moment as Perry calms down.

PERRY

All right, I guess that much is true. But why the FUCK are you doing this?

TAYLOR

(edgy)

Why? How about I'm sick of walking around inside a plastic can breathing recycled air and drinking recycled water? How about that I've lived that way for eleven months out of every twelve for the last EIGHTEEN FUCKING YEARS?

(getting more and more agitated)

Don't you ever feel that way? Don't you ever stop and think about how many other people have breathed the air you're breathing and pissed out the water you're drinking? Because the air on this tub smells like sweat and the water tastes like piss and the longer I'm here the worse it gets. I need some fresh air, except I can't because fresh air is three or five or ten fucking months away.

Taylor sinks to the floor, sobbing a little.

TAYLOR

No. I've had enough. I want to go home.

He straightens up a bit.

TAYLOR

But I can't. I'm forty years old; this is all I've ever done; it's all I CAN do. Nobody on Earth will take on someone like me.

(pauses)

And then this guy shows up on Callisto and says that I can make enough in ONE FUCKING HOUR to be able to go home and stay there and never have to come back out into space again, ever.

PERRY

So you took the chance.

TAYLOR

Damn right. I grabbed it with both hands. I know you don't agree with me and I'm sorry. But I had to get out before this...

(waves his hand around)

...Before living like this drives me crazy or kills me.

Nobody speaks for a moment.

Coffield clears his throat.

Perry looks at him.

COFFIELD

(holding up a memory chip)
I've got the codes.

PERRY

Okay. How long will it take to get in and out?

COFFIELD

We need to get back to the secure area and find a workstation. With the codes I should be able to get the files in two or three minutes. Just keep the fuckers off me and I'll be okay.

Perry looks at Sanders.

The drugs have taken hold; Sanders is asleep.

PERRY

Find a spare helmet and make sure he's got plenty of air while we're gone.

EXT. ANCHORAGE STATION AIRLOCK - DAY

The Cetus is just visible five kilometers away.

A cargo handler approaches the airlock. Coffield is driving while Taylor and Perry hang onto the sides.

The handler slows to a halt; Coffield secures it and the three men move to the airlock.

One of the men opens the airlock and all three enter.

INT. ANCHORAGE STATION AIRLOCK - SAME

The airlock outer door closes and the three men remove their helmets and gloves, placing them on the floor.

PERRY

Let's try to do this as quick and quiet as we can. We'll go down to corridor B, get in and find a console.

Perry takes the handgun from his belt and cocks it.

Seeing this, the others do the same.

Coffield puts his hand on the inner door control and looks at Perry.

Perry nods.

Coffield opens the door.

INT. ANCHORAGE STATION AIRLOCK CORRIDOR - SAME

They step out of the airlock and check around. They head straight for the ladder down to the next level.

INT. ANCHORAGE CORRIDOR A - SAME

Perry drops from the hole first, gun up and facing away from the ladder. There is blood on the floor.

He looks up and down the corridor. There are no creatures.

Perry looks back up the ladder and gives a "come-on" hand signal.

The other two drop into sight.

TAYLOR
(quietly)
Which way?

Perry points down the corridor.

The three move on.

INT. ANCHORAGE CORRIDOR A - DAY

The three arrive at the locked door that stopped them earlier.

Perry looks through the door glass. There are no creatures.

PERRY
(quietly)
I've never been in the secure
area. Any idea about the layout in
there?

The others shake heads.

PERRY
Open it up, Coffield.

Coffield slips the memory chip into a slot in a panel next to the door and presses a key.

The door slides open with a hiss.

Perry goes through first, then the other two.

INT. ANCHORAGE TRANSFER CORRIDOR - SAME

The corridor is five meters long and one wide, and runs between corridors A and B. There are bloody handprints and flecks of blood on the walls.

As Coffield steps away from the door, it closes behind him automatically.

PERRY

Leave it open.

COFFIELD

It's a security door. You can't do that.

PERRY

Oh, that's peachy. All right, keep moving. Did it occur to you to make THREE copies of the codes?

COFFIELD

Yes.

PERRY

When?

COFFIELD

Just now.

Perry reaches the door into corridor B and presses a key on the panel.

The door hisses open.

INT. ANCHORAGE CORRIDOR B - SAME

The corridor looks almost the same as corridor A.

Perry steps into the corridor, followed by Taylor and then Coffield.

Perry indicates a direction.

PERRY

This way.

There are two doors on opposite sides of the corridor a little way along. One is labeled B-19, the other B-18.

Perry goes to B-18, followed by the others. All three are looking around and behind them nervously every couple of seconds.

Perry and Coffield look through the door glass.

COFFIELD

Bingo.

Through the door glass Coffield can see that the room is some kind of office. The lights are off. There is a computer console on a desk.

Perry opens the door.

PERRY

Wait here a minute.

INT. ANCHORAGE ROOM B-18 - SAME

Perry comes into the room slowly and puts the room lights on.

With his handgun at the ready he checks around the room carefully, looking under desks, on the bookshelves and into the corners of the room.

INT. ANCHORAGE CORRIDOR B - SAME

Perry appears at the doorway.

PERRY

Coffield, get to work. Taylor,
stay here and keep your eyes open.

INT. ANCHORAGE ROOM B-18 - SAME

Coffield walks in and goes straight to the console, memory chip in hand. Perry follows.

Coffield sits, puts his handgun into a pocket, plugs the chip into a slot in the console and presses some keys.

Perry notices an air vent grille about half a meter square, near the floor in one corner of the room.

PERRY
Anything yet?

COFFIELD
I've got access to the system.
It'll take a moment to locate the files.

PERRY
Taylor?

TAYLOR (OS)
Still quiet here.

PERRY
See if Sanders has woken up yet.
Tell him what's going on.

TAYLOR (OS)
Okay.

INT. ANCHORAGE CORRIDOR B - SAME

Taylor notices some blackened garbage piled against a small, vented blue door some way along the corridor.

He takes a headset from a suit pocket and puts it on.

TAYLOR
Sanders? You there?

No reply.

TAYLOR
Sanders?

He hears a scuttling noise.

PERRY (OS)
Shit!

Taylor turns to the door.

TAYLOR
What's going on?

PERRY (OS)

Get in here!

INT. SHELTER - SAME

Sanders is asleep in his suit. His face is pale and sweaty. He twitches and murmurs as if having a bad dream.

INT. ANCHORAGE ROOM B-18 - SAME

Taylor rushes in. He sees Perry on the floor, pushing on the sides of the air vent. Perry's gun is on the floor next to him.

On the other side of the grille is one of the creatures, trying to push it open.

PERRY

Get over here, quick!

TAYLOR

Hang on --

Taylor slips his gun into a pocket, grabs a large metal filing cabinet and with hysterical strength slides it across to where Perry is.

As Taylor pushes the cabinet up against the vent, Perry lets go of the grille and jumps to his feet.

The grille bangs open against the cabinet but Taylor and Perry together are able to SLAM the cabinet back against the wall, sealing the vent.

Perry picks his gun up.

PERRY

There'll be more. Coffield, hurry!

COFFIELD

I've got them... starting the upload --

There's a rhythmic rubbing sound from the cabinet, then with a BANG the cabinet jumps away from the wall.

Perry and Taylor SLAM the cabinet back against the wall and hold it there.

PERRY

Come ON!

The sound of hundreds of creatures is coming from the air ducts.

COFFIELD

Okay, uploading now!

PERRY

Run!

Coffield yanks the memory chip from the console and jumps up from the chair.

INT. ANCHORAGE CORRIDOR B - SAME

Coffield runs from the room, then Taylor and Perry. They run for the door leading to corridor A.

The three men run into the connecting corridor.

INT. SHELTER - SAME

Sanders' twitching is getting worse.

INT. ANCHORAGE TRANSFER CORRIDOR - SAME

Perry hits the door switch as he comes through and the door hisses closed.

Coffield has already reached the door at the other end and opened it with the memory chip. He runs out into corridor A.

INT. ANCHORAGE CORRIDOR A - SAME

Coffield dashes into the corridor, then stops dead.

Taylor runs into Coffield, then Perry runs into both men and all fall to the floor.

They scramble to their feet.

PERRY

What the --

Three bugs are in the corridor ahead of them.

Perry turns as if to run back the other way, and sees dozens more bugs running toward them. He turns again, raising his gun.

Taylor reaches into his pocket for his gun... and it's not there. He must have dropped it.

TAYLOR

Oh, fuck.

Taylor RUNS at the three creatures. They move.

Ten feet from the creatures Taylor LEAPS, passing right over them. The creatures stop as if confused.

Taylor lands running and is almost at the ladder.

Perry and Coffield look at each other.

PERRY

Keep it together, Coffield.

Coffield nods and takes a deep breath.

Running forward, they open fire on the creatures.

INT. ANCHORAGE CORRIDOR D - SAME

In the reduced gravity Taylor almost flies from the ladder.

He runs for the airlock. He hears gunfire and the voices of the other men.

PERRY (OS)

Faster!

COFFIELD (OS)

I'm going as fast as I can!

Coffield jumps from the top of the ladder into the corridor. Perry is right behind him.

Taylor gets into the airlock and holds the door wide for the other men. The scuttling noise is louder, as if thousands of the creatures are in the ladder tunnel.

Creatures boil from the tunnel.

Coffield runs through the airlock door.

Perry is last in. The creatures are two meters behind him.

Perry grabs the door and swings it shut, but one of the creatures is already in the doorframe and the door CRUNCHES against it.

INT. SHELTER - SAME

Sanders wakes with a jolt.

INT. ANCHORAGE STATION AIRLOCK - SAME

The creature is plainly dead but the door is fouled and Perry can't close it. Perry puts his foot against the doorframe and pulls the door as hard as he can.

Creatures are trying to squeeze through the gap, legs trying to jab Perry's hands but they can't quite reach.

PERRY

Helmets on, quick! Somebody put mine on me!

Coffield and Taylor put on helmets and gloves as fast as they can.

Coffield grabs Perry's helmet and puts it on him then helps pull on the door while Taylor puts Perry's gloves on him.

PERRY

Hit the button!

Coffield and Perry are still pulling the door but the creatures are slowly gaining headway.

Taylor flips the safety cover on the panic button and presses the red button.

ELECTRONIC VOICE

Warning. Explosive decompression
in five seconds...

Perry and Coffield are groaning with the effort but the door is slowly being pulled open.

ELECTRONIC VOICE

Four... three... two...

TAYLOR

Get ready.

Taylor is braced in the corner of the door.

ELECTRONIC VOICE

One... Ze --

The outer door BANGS open.

The air pressure pulls Perry and Coffield from the inner door and they fly past Taylor and out of the airlock.

EXT. ANCHORAGE STATION AIRLOCK - SAME

Perry manages to grab the handle of the outer door as he flies past. He swings around and slams into the other side of the door.

PERRY

Ooof!

Coffield's leg hits the doorframe as he flies out. He spins out into space.

INT. ANCHORAGE STATION AIRLOCK - SAME

The air pressure on the other side of the inner door is enough to force it almost closed against the crushed bodies of the creatures stuck in the frame, but air is still hissing through the gap spraying yellowish bug blood.

Taylor pulls himself out of the airlock.

EXT. ANCHORAGE STATION AIRLOCK - SAME

Taylor comes out of the airlock and sees Perry hanging onto the door handle.

TAYLOR

Where's Coffield?

Coffield is forty meters out from the station and moving away quite fast, spinning over and over.

COFFIELD (VO)

Ohhhhh hell, I think I'm going to be sick.

PERRY

Close your eyes. We're coming to
get you.

Taylor and Perry make for the handler secured nearby.

PERRY

Next time, remind me to use a suit
with thrusters.

Taylor and Perry reach the handler.

Taylor is at the controls while Perry holds onto the side.

TAYLOR

Can you see him?

PERRY

(looking around)
No. Lock onto his suit radio.
Coffield, ping your beacon.

An electronic PING is heard on the radio.

TAYLOR

I got him. Locked on.

Taylor fires up the handler's thrusters and aims the
handler out toward Coffield. They accelerate away from the
station.

TAYLOR

I see him. One hundred meters.

Coffield is still spinning, eyes closed and groaning with
nausea.

TAYLOR

Fifty meters. I'm slowing us down.
Get ready to grab him.

The handler drifts up to Coffield, and Perry grabs him and
pulls him in.

INT. SHELTER - DAY

Sanders is awake, sitting up, looking pale and a little
sick. Coffield is working at the console.

PERRY (to Coffield)
You're sure?

COFFIELD
Certain. Engel analyzed the bugs
but in his own words he's a
geologist, not a biologist. They
never found a way to kill them;
they never had time.

PERRY
Shit!

Perry sits down with his back against the wall.

PERRY (to Sanders)
Tell me about this dream.

SANDERS
It was weird, man. I could see you
in front of me and I was trying to
get to you but there was something
stopping me. Then we were all in a
corridor. I saw the three of you
fall down and get up, then one of
you ran toward me and jumped right
over.

PERRY
That's pretty weird --

SANDERS
That's not it, though. I'm not
sure... it just felt all wrong
somehow but I can't say why.

PERRY
When we were trying to get off the
station, we crashed. Then Taylor
did the high jump to get to the
ladder.

Sanders looks very serious and worried at this.

SANDERS
What does that mean?

PERRY

I wish I knew.

Perry turns to Taylor.

PERRY

How much air do we have left?

TAYLOR

About three hours, then we'll have to go looking for more.

COFFIELD

I guess we're screwed now.

PERRY

We're not dead yet. Come on, guys, think! There's got to be something we can do to kill them.

SANDERS

Okay, well what do we know about the damn things for sure?

PERRY

(ticks items off on his fingers)

It only takes one to start a colony. They breed incredibly fast. They can punch through a door. They use electric fields to see and communicate. The little ones have virtually no brain; they're just food collectors and remote sensors for the big one; it does all the thinking.

TAYLOR

So the big one sees what the little ones see?

PERRY

Yep, that seems to be how it works. And here's the big one: they're artificial.

SANDERS

What does THAT mean?

PERRY

Engel figured their genetic structure is too ordered, too clean. Every gene has a single defined purpose. These things didn't evolve. They were designed.

TAYLOR

What for?

PERRY

I have no idea. The obvious thing would be a weapon, but there's no way to know for sure.

SANDERS

Open all the airlocks. Let all the air out.

COFFIELD

That won't work. They can survive in a vacuum.

SANDERS

Chemicals, then... maybe acid or something. We could try to catch one to test stuff on.

PERRY

Sure. You go try and catch one.

SANDERS

Okay, forget that. What about fire?

PERRY

Something that doesn't destroy my ship would be my preference... but it's probably got the best chance.

TAYLOR

What do we have that burns? Do we have any oil or gasoline?

COFFIELD

We can use fuel from the maneuvering thrusters. There's a load of it in the storage room on deck C.

PERRY

That'll do it.

Perry stands up and reaches for his helmet. The others look at him, but don't move. Perry sees this.

PERRY

Well, what are you waiting for?

EXT. CETUS CARGO PASSAGE - DAY

The four men are in the cage. Coffield activates a control and the cage moves toward the front of the ship.

PERRY

This should be simple. We'll get aboard and go straight to the storage room. I'll watch the door while you three put together something we can use as a flamethrower or something. As soon as we're ready we'll head for the water plant and toast that big fucker.

TAYLOR

If you're right about the big one controlling the others, we should be able to clean them out real easy after that.

They continue in silence for a few moments.

Suddenly Sanders grabs his helmet with both hands as if in pain.

SANDERS

(gasping)

Stop! Stop now! Go back!

TAYLOR

What's the --

Sanders looks up at the other men but sees distorted, grotesque shapes. He must defend himself.

Sanders launches himself at Taylor and grabs him by the torso. He tears at Taylor's suit with his gloved hands.

PERRY

Coffield, go back right now!

Coffield hits the control and the cage stops then moves back the other way.

Perry tries to pull Sanders off Taylor but Sanders is gripping and tearing with manic strength.

As suddenly as it started, it's over and Sanders lets go of Taylor. Perry is holding Sanders in a death grip.

SANDERS

It's okay, it's gone.

Perry doesn't let go.

PERRY

Coffield, that's far enough.

(to Sanders)

What's gone?

Coffield stops the cage again.

SANDERS

I could... feel them. It. The mother. And it could feel me. It knows we're here. It was trying to control me, like the little bugs.

TAYLOR

(coughing slightly)

It wasn't TRYING... it WAS controlling you --

SANDERS

You can let go now.

Perry hesitates a moment then lets Sanders loose.

PERRY

Coffield, you said something was happening with Sanders' nervous system.

COFFIELD

Yes... if I had to guess, I'd say it's given him the ability to tune into their frequency. He sees what they see, and the big one can see through him.

PERRY

Does it know what we're trying to do?

SANDERS

I don't know. I don't think so though. Its thoughts are... animal, I guess. I don't know if it could really understand.

TAYLOR

He should stay out of range. If he gets too close he could tell it why we're here without even knowing he's doing it.

COFFIELD

It may already know.

PERRY

We don't know that. We'll have to take the chance. Sanders, give Taylor your gun. Go back to the shelter and wait for us.

Sanders gives Taylor his gun then pushes away from the cage and grabs a nearby strut, then heads back toward the shelter.

Coffield starts the cage moving toward the bow of the ship.

SANDERS

Good luck, guys.

PERRY

See you soon, Sanders.

EXT. CETUS AIRLOCK - DAY

A cargo handler approaches the airlock. Coffield is driving while Perry and Taylor hold on.

Coffield secures the handler near the airlock.

The outer airlock door is still open. Perry slips inside and the others follow.

INT. CETUS AIRLOCK - SAME

Perry looks through the airlock glass. There are no bugs around.

He signals Coffield, who closes the outer airlock door. The airlock fills with air.

Perry opens his helmet. The others follow suit.

PERRY

Leave your helmets open so we can talk, but keep them on in case we have to run for it.

Perry takes one more look through the glass then opens the door.

INT. SHELTER - SAME

Sanders is in the shelter, restless.

He puts his helmet on.

INT. CETUS DECK D CORRIDOR - SAME

Perry steps into the corridor, gun at the ready. The others follow.

Perry holds a hand up to signal them to stop.

PERRY

Hear anything?

All stand still for a few seconds. There are no unusual sounds.

Coffield and Taylor shake heads.

Perry points down the corridor in the direction of the stairway to deck C. They move off that way.

INT. CETUS DECK C CORRIDOR - SAME

Three helmeted heads, each facing a different direction, rise slowly and silently into view over the edge of the stairwell until their eyes can see the floor of the corridor.

The corridor is clear of bugs.

PERRY
(whisper)
Let's go.

The men come up the last few steps, quickly but as quietly as they can.

Taylor first, they head down the corridor toward the freight elevator.

INT. FREIGHT ELEVATOR - SAME

The three men approach the large rack of gas cylinders.

PERRY
Shit. I'd forgotten about this damn thing.

There are narrow gaps either side. Perry looks at the gap on one side while Taylor looks at the other.

PERRY
Taylor, can you see any bugs?

TAYLOR
Nope.

PERRY
I think we may be able to squeeze through this side.

Perry turns sideways and shuffles into the gap. It's tight in the spacesuit but he can just about get through.

At the other end, Taylor does the same. Coffield follows.

A little way further along the corridor is a door marked INFLAMMABLE MATERIALS STORAGE. The three head that way slowly, watching and listening for bugs.

Taylor opens the door.

INT. STORAGE ROOM - SAME

Stacked against one wall of the room are dozens of large, rectangular plastic objects, all labeled "THRUSTER FUEL CARTRIDGE TYPE 4D".

Coffield picks one and slides it into the middle of the room. There are two nozzles and two levers on one side.

Perry keeps the door open a crack and watches the corridor. Every few seconds he looks over his shoulder to see what Coffield is doing.

Coffield picks up things from various shelves - some hoses, a roll of silver tape, a wrench. He hands them to Taylor.

COFFIELD

Hold these.

Taylor takes the items as Coffield works on the cartridge.

Perry is still watching the corridor. There are no signs of bugs. He looks back at Coffield. Coffield explains while he works:

COFFIELD

Each cartridge contains two tanks of liquid under high pressure. As soon as they're mixed, they ignite.

Coffield has attached the hoses to the nozzles on the cartridge. Taylor watches as Coffield tapes the hoses together along their length.

COFFIELD

I've done better work, but hey. Let's test it. Taylor, when I say go press those two levers, just for a second.

Taylor puts his hand on the levers. Coffield aims the hose ends toward an empty corner of the room.

COFFIELD

Go.

Taylor presses the levers firmly.

Two jets of liquid shoot from the ends of the hoses. On contact and with a mighty WHOOSH the liquids burst into hot fire.

TAYLOR

Christ!

The jet of flame shoots where Coffield is aiming it. The fire is intense and both men shield their eyes from the burst of white heat.

Taylor releases the levers and the jet stops. The fire in the corner of the room burns for a couple of seconds and is gone.

Coffield holds the end of the hose up.

COFFIELD

If this doesn't fry those fuckers,
nothing will.

Perry takes a last look into the corridor. Still no bugs.

He closes the door and turns.

PERRY

We have a problem.
(nods toward the cartridge)
We're never going to get that
thing past that rack outside.

TAYLOR

Do you think the three of us
together can move it?

PERRY

Let's try.

Perry opens the door.

INT. FREIGHT ELEVATOR - SAME

Perry looks at one side of the rack then the other.

PERRY

If we all get on this side and
push against --

A metallic CLANG comes from behind them. They turn.

A metal mesh cover is lying on the floor under an air vent. As they watch, two pointed legs creep over the edge of the open vent. A bug jumps out, dropping into the corridor. Another follows.

PERRY

Get the... whatever you call it!

All three men run for the storage room. Perry grabs his gun while the other two men run into the room.

Perry takes aim at the first bug and fires.

The shot kills the bug instantly. A third bug jumps from the air vent. The two bugs on the floor move toward Perry.

Coffield and Taylor reappear, pulling and sliding the cartridge.

Coffield aims the hoses at the bugs. His hands are shaking.

COFFIELD

Now, Taylor, now!

Taylor jams the levers down hard.

A jet of flaming liquid shoots down the corridor, bathing the bugs in bright orange fire.

COFFIELD

Enough, Taylor!

Taylor lets go of the levers and the jet of fire dies. The three men look as the fire along the corridor dies down.

The bugs are still.

A moment later, one of the bugs shakes slightly. Then it runs toward the men. The other bug does the same.

The now-familiar scuttling sound of bugs is heard from the air ducts. More bugs fall from the open vent.

PERRY

It hasn't even touched them...
run!

Coffield lets the hoses drop to the floor as all three run for the rack barrier.

Perry scrunches through on one side of the rack closely followed by Coffield.

Taylor squirms through on the other side. As he does, the belt of his spacesuit gets caught on the racking. He's stuck. He pulls on the belt frantically. Bugs are climbing all over the racking, just inches from him.

INT. CETUS DECK C CORRIDOR - SAME

Perry and Coffield are free and run along the corridor back toward the stairway. They're almost back at the stairway when Perry realizes that Taylor isn't with them.

PERRY

Where's Taylor?

INT. FREIGHT ELEVATOR - SAME

Taylor TEARS the belt and is free. He sprints with adrenaline power down the corridor.

Bugs are climbing all over and around the abandoned cartridge. It tips over under the weight and lands lever-side down on the floor. A jet of flame shoots along the corridor and splashes all over the gas cylinders in the rack.

INT. CETUS DECK C CORRIDOR - SAME

Coffield hears movement close behind him and stops and turns.

There are three or four bugs running down the corridor. He raises his gun and fires.

Hearing this, Perry turns and raises his gun.

Coffield takes out the last bug with one shot.

He and Perry see Taylor running toward them.

INT. FREIGHT ELEVATOR - SAME

Some of the cylinders are glowing dull red in the intense heat of the flame from the cartridge.

INT. CETUS DECK C CORRIDOR - SAME

Perry and Coffield are still stopped, watching for bugs and waiting for Taylor to reach them.

Taylor is about halfway.

COFFIELD

Oh, shit, no.

Perry turns and sees what Coffield is talking about.

Twenty or thirty bugs are coming from the corridor behind them.

INT. FREIGHT ELEVATOR - SAME

Some of the cylinders are glowing bright red, almost white hot. Finally one gives way to the heat and the internal pressure, and ruptures.

INT. CETUS DECK C CORRIDOR - SAME

Shrapnel from the cylinder takes out another cylinder and another.

The chain reaction explosion is enormous and carries fragments of cylinder shrapnel in all directions.

Coffield and Perry see the cloud of greenish gas, flame and bits of debris rushing down the corridor toward them.

They drop to the deck and close their helmets, dropping their guns.

A chunk of shrapnel bounces off an equipment cabinet and hits Taylor in the face so hard it knocks him flat. The cloud of gas overtakes him.

Coffield and Perry see Taylor go down. An alarm sounds and lights flash.

COFFIELD

The system's reacting to the gas!
It's sealing off the section!

Between them and Taylor an emergency barrier slides from a slot in one wall to close off the section.

The bugs that were behind them are suddenly all over them, ripping and tearing at their suits. Both men yell and try to fight off the bugs with their hands.

Some of the gas rushes through the gap under pressure as the barrier closes all the way. Wisps of gas wash over Perry, Coffield and the bugs.

Coffield tears one of the bugs off him and flings it away, then another. Then he realizes:

COFFIELD

Perry?

PERRY

They've stopped.

Sure enough the bugs aren't attacking them - they've stopped as if frozen.

Suddenly the bugs scream - a HIGH-PITCHED, UNEARTHLY HOWLING.

The bugs run frantically in random directions, some of them running in circles.

PERRY

(shouting over the alien screams)
What the hell?

The two men get to their feet and pick up their dropped guns, watching the bugs, astonished.

The bugs' skins blister then they give off smoke. They run away from the men, along the corridor.

Coffield and Perry follow, keeping their distance and their guns ready.

The bugs are bursting into flame, still trailing smoke.

One by one the bugs die, their legs curling as they continue to burn. The alien screaming dies away.

COFFIELD

Holy... fucking... hell!

Perry opens his helmet and sniffs the air. Coffield is watching.

PERRY

Smells like a swimming pool but it's okay.

Coffield opens his helmet too.

PERRY

We found a weapon.

COFFIELD AND PERRY

(together)

Chlorine.

PERRY

We can pump chlorine directly into the ventilation system and fill every room.

COFFIELD

(shakes his head)

There are sensors in the air system to detect contamination. We'll have to switch those off first, or the system will just seal the air vents off.

PERRY

Let's see if we can get that door open. I'm hoping that blast didn't take out all the cylinders.

They head back to the emergency barrier.

INT. EMERGENCY BARRIER - SAME

There's a switch on the wall next to the slot the barrier came from. Perry presses it but nothing happens.

PERRY

How long before we can open this?

COFFIELD

It depends, but that's a lot of chlorine for the system to handle. I'd guess ten or fifteen minutes. There's the emergency override --

PERRY

That's no good; we'd have to get to the bridge for that. I don't think we can make it that far without running into more bugs.

COFFIELD

I don't know about you but my gun's almost out.

PERRY

Mine too. Okay, we can wait here and hope no more bugs show up before we can get the door open.

COFFIELD

Sounds like fun.

Perry is looking down the corridor.

PERRY

There may be another way.

Coffield looks at him curiously.

INT. CETUS GALLEY - DAY

The door opens slowly.

A gun appears, then Perry's helmeted face. He looks around.

PERRY

(quietly)

I don't see any.

He opens the door all the way, slowly. Perry and Coffield move slowly into the room.

Perry goes to the first closet at floor level and takes hold of the handle. He looks up at Coffield.

Coffield points his gun at the closet. He nods.

Perry yanks the closet open.

In the closet are the cleaning materials Perry saw earlier. There are no bugs.

Coffield lowers his gun.

Perry grabs the bottles of ammonia and bleach.

PERRY

See if you can find something to mix these in.

Coffield looks around. There's a ten-liter drum of cooking oil on a shelf.

He grabs it and shows Perry.

COFFIELD

Will this do?

PERRY

Good enough.

Coffield pulls the lid off the drum and dumps the oil into a trashcan.

He sets the drum on the countertop.

Perry empties the ammonia cleaner bottle into the drum.

PERRY

All right, here's what we do. As soon as I dump the bleach in it'll make chloramine --

COFFIELD

Not chlorine? Will that work?

PERRY

It's close enough; it should. We take it into the air plant, switch off the sensors and put it right by one of the intakes.

COFFIELD

Do you think there'll be enough to fill the whole ship?

PERRY

That's the big question. The way the bugs reacted to the chlorine I don't think it takes very much to kill them. If it looks like it's working we can try to get to the bridge, override the emergency door and hope there's some chlorine to finish the job.

COFFIELD

And what if it doesn't work?

PERRY

Then we go back and wait for the door to open. If there's bugs we'll have to run for the airlock, get to the shelter and wait for the Krueger ship. How are you doing?

COFFIELD

(shrugs)

Better now that I know we've got a weapon that works. I'm ready.

They close their helmets.

Perry reaches for the bleach bottle... and freezes. There is a bug on the countertop next to the bottle.

Coffield sees it too.

They turn around slowly and see that they are surrounded by dozens of bugs, and more are coming in quietly through the hole they found earlier in the back of the closet.

COFFIELD

(trying very hard not to panic)

Oh God.

Perry reaches, slowly, for the bleach bottle.

The bug on the counter rears up, raising its pointed front legs.

Perry pulls his hand back. The bug drops back.

Perry turns to look at the other bugs again.

PERRY

They're not attacking.

COFFIELD

(shaky)

What ARE they doing?

The bugs nearest the door suddenly run to the other side of the room, leaving the way to the door clear.

A moment later the bugs close in on the men from the side away from the door.

PERRY

They're herding us.

COFFIELD

Maybe we can run for it when we get outside.

They move toward the door.

The bugs follow closely.

INT. CETUS DECK C CORRIDOR - SAME

They step out into the corridor.

The corridor is filled with bugs, but they're not moving.

Perry looks around and sees Sanders standing a few meters away.

PERRY

Sanders!

The bugs suddenly move forward, and then stop.

Sanders is suited but has no helmet. He's pale and sweating, straining with mental effort.

Coffield raises his gun and aims it at Sanders, shakily.

COFFIELD

Are you... you?

SANDERS

Quiet... stay quiet. Just listen.
I can't talk much... I have to
concentrate. I'm in control. But
it's trying... to get them back.

PERRY

You're controlling the bugs?

SANDERS

Yes.

Coffield lowers his gun.

PERRY

We found a way to kill them.

SANDERS

Chlorine, right? I could smell it.
Don't kill them yet... we need
them.

Sanders grabs his head and almost doubles as if in pain.

The bugs move forward again, and then stop.

Sanders straightens up again.

PERRY

Sanders, listen. We don't know if
there's any chlorine left. We have
to try to find more.

SANDERS

Make it quick. I don't know how
much longer I can hold them.

Perry and Coffield hesitate a moment, then run down the
corridor.

INT. EMERGENCY BARRIER - SAME

The door is open again. Perry and Coffield run through.

Taylor is motionless on the floor, unconscious or dead.
Perry and Coffield stop.

Coffield bends over Taylor. The right side of Taylor's face
is a ruin, smashed by the shrapnel that hit him.

COFFIELD

Jesus... I don't know how, but he's still alive. His lungs must be like a wet sponge after the chlorine.

PERRY

If this works there'll be more. Close his helmet and put him on pure oxygen. Be quick.

Coffield closes Taylor's helmet and presses some buttons on the suit controls.

COFFIELD

Okay, he's set.

PERRY

Come on.

INT. FREIGHT ELEVATOR - SAME

The explosion has devastated the area around the elevator. There are dents, holes and bits of metal embedded in the walls, pieces of metal and other debris scattered around the floor.

Perry sees a chlorine cylinder, apparently intact, embedded into one of the walls at shoulder height.

PERRY

This might be okay. Help me.

Coffield helps Perry pulling at the cylinder.

After straining at it for a few seconds they manage to pull it free.

Perry opens the valve a little way and gas hisses out. He closes it again.

PERRY

Looks okay. See if you can find another one.

COFFIELD

Right.

Perry looks in the elevator and around the floor.

Coffield looks between damaged equipment cabinets.

COFFIELD

Here.

Coffield reaches between two cabinets and pulls out an intact cylinder. He tests it - it's okay.

Coffield lifts his cylinder onto his shoulder.

Perry does the same with his. They are obviously very heavy.

COFFIELD

(grunting with effort)

Mmmph.

They head back up the corridor.

A moment later they hear a commotion ahead of them.

INT. CETUS DECK C CORRIDOR - SAME

Sanders is on his knees with an arm stretched out toward the door to the water processing plant.

Around him the bugs are fighting each other to the death, tearing each other apart. There are bodies everywhere.

Perry and Coffield approach as fast as they can under the weight of the cylinders. Sanders looks at them.

COFFIELD

It looks like a war.

PERRY

I think that's exactly what it is.
The big bug versus Sanders, and
the little ones are the soldiers.

Sanders looks at Perry and nods. He's concentrating so hard on the struggle that he can't talk.

PERRY

Help's coming, Sanders. Just a
little longer.

Stepping carefully between the warring bugs, Coffield and Perry carry on past Sanders to the air processing plant. The bugs are too intent on fighting to care about them.

Coffield kicks the door open.

INT. AIR TREATMENT ROOM - SAME

The room is filled with more fighting bugs - on the floor and all over the equipment and air ducts.

As Coffield and Perry pick their way across the room, a group of bugs breaks away from the fight and attack Coffield's leg.

COFFIELD

AHHHH!

He falls, dropping the cylinder.

Perry turns to see what's happening as the cylinder crushes a couple of the attacking bugs.

Instantly another group of bugs attacks the survivors, freeing Coffield. He gets up quickly and moves to pick up his cylinder.

PERRY

Leave it. Help me with this one.

Coffield goes to Perry and they manhandle the cylinder so that each has an end.

They move toward a large mesh-covered vent intake.

PERRY

Drop it right here.

They lower the cylinder to the floor.

PERRY

Get that cover off while I disable the sensors.

COFFIELD

Okay.

Perry steps over bugs, almost running to get to the control panel.

Coffield grabs at the edges of the mesh trying to pull it off. It won't move.

Perry waves at the panel and a screen lights up. He works the panel for a moment. There's a beep.

PERRY

The sensors are off!

Perry heads back to Coffield.

Coffield still can't pull the mesh away from the intake vent. He stands up and kicks the mesh. It bends inward. Another kick and the mesh tears away from the frame at one side. A last kick pushes the mesh wide open.

COFFIELD

I got the vent open.

PERRY

Okay. Open the cylinder all the way and we'll heave the whole thing in.

Perry closes his helmet.

Coffield does the same and reaches for the valve on the cylinder.

At that moment they realize that the noise of fighting bugs around them has stopped, and look around.

The surviving bugs are still as statues.

They stay that way for a few seconds. Then, moving together, every living bug runs for the door.

Within moments the only bugs left in the room are the dead and maimed.

The men open their helmets.

COFFIELD

Now what?

PERRY

I'm going to find out. Stay here.
If they come back, do it.

COFFIELD

Okay. Be careful.

Perry turns to the door.

INT. CETUS DECK C CORRIDOR - SAME

Perry steps into the corridor. Only dead and dying bugs are here.

Sanders has gone.

PERRY

Sanders?

Three bugs run from the water treatment room.

Perry jumps but before he can react they run down the corridor away from him.

Sanders' voice comes from the water processing room.

SANDERS (OS)

In here!

Perry walks to the door.

INT. WATER TREATMENT ROOM - SAME

Sanders is standing in the middle of the room. Hundreds, possibly thousands of bugs surround him. They aren't moving.

Perry looks at the pipes where the mother creature was before, but it's not there any more.

PERRY

Sanders? What's happened?

SANDERS

The mother's stronger than me but all it knows is how to eat, breed and defend itself. It can't think and reason as fast as a human. I got the jump on it mentally and got control, and now it can't get them back.

Sanders moves forward, stepping between and over bugs.

Perry follows, obviously uncomfortable, watching where he's putting his feet.

Sanders stops and Perry almost walks into him.

Perry looks up and sees what is in front of Sanders...

The big bug is on the floor in a large gap between the pump cabinets. It has grown. It almost touches the four-meter high ceiling, and it's six meters across. It's still birthing new bugs.

PERRY

Oh, my --

SANDERS

You remember you said they're artificial?

PERRY

Yes.

SANDERS

Chlorine is the off switch. Or the panic button, maybe. It's designed into them, in case they get out of control. But it won't hurt this one.

PERRY

How do you know?

SANDERS

It knows, so I know too.

PERRY

Did... did they design a panic button into it too?

SANDERS

Probably, but I don't know what it is. So I've had to improvise one of my own. This is why I had to stop you killing the soldiers.

Sanders looks straight at the creature.

SANDERS (to the creature)

Guess who's coming to DINNER!

The smaller bugs rush forward in a wave, covering the big bug. They bite and tear out chunks of the monster.

An alien HOWL comes from the creature -- a deeper, louder version of the death scream of the bugs. The creature's legs are flailing.

The howl gets louder, becomes deafening. Sanders and Perry have to shout over the noise.

SANDERS

Are you ready with the chlorine?

PERRY

Yes... but you don't have a helmet.

SANDERS

I thought of that.

Sanders points to the door. Perry turns to look.

The three bugs Perry saw running from the room are back, moving together with their bodies supporting Sanders' helmet between them.

Perry's jaw drops as he watches the bugs drop the helmet at Sanders' feet, then run to join the attack on the mother creature.

SANDERS

Don't use the chlorine yet. I'll tell you when.

Perry runs back to the other room.

INT. AIR TREATMENT ROOM - SAME

Perry runs in.

Coffield is still waiting by the intake, watching the door.

PERRY

Leave the chlorine. You should see this.

INT. WATER TREATMENT ROOM - SAME

Coffield and Perry come in. The bugs are still attacking the mother creature. Sanders is standing in the same spot.

Coffield looks at the scene in disbelief.

SANDERS

(watching the mother creature)

Its mind is fading. I can feel it.

It's dying.

He turns to Coffield and Perry.

SANDERS

It's time.

Sanders picks his helmet up and puts it on.

Perry and Coffield head back to the air treatment room.

INT. AIR TREATMENT ROOM - SAME

Perry and Coffield close their helmets.

Coffield opens the valve on the gas cylinder all the way, then the two men lift the cylinder and push it, valve end first, part way into the intake vent.

They go back to the other cylinder and carry it back to the intake.

Perry opens the valve and the cylinder follows the first into the intake duct.

PERRY

That should do it.

They go back to the water treatment room.

INT. WATER TREATMENT ROOM - SAME

The mother bug has stopped howling and what's left of it is twitching feebly.

Sanders is still standing but swaying, holding his hands over his helmet where his ears would be.

Suddenly the bugs cease their attack. There is silence as the bugs turn, all facing Sanders.

Sanders collapses.

Coffield and Perry run to him.

SANDERS

It's dead. Christ, there's so many
of them... I can't shut them up --

Sanders loses consciousness.

A moment later some of the bugs on top of the mother's body scream.

Perry and Coffield look up.

Greenish chlorine is coming from the air vents, and the bugs are reacting as the gas hits them.

More and more bugs are affected as the gas fills the room. The bugs smoke and then burn.

PERRY

We have to get out, right now.

They pick up Sanders between them and drag him to the door.

INT. CETUS DECK C CORRIDOR - SAME

They carry Sanders toward the freight elevator. Behind them, flickering firelight is visible through the door, and some bugs run into the corridor, on fire.

Chlorine spews from the air vents, filling the corridor. The air is filled with the screaming of bugs.

INT. EMERGENCY BARRIER - SAME

They lay Sanders down next to Taylor. Smoke from the burning bugs and from the air vents is permeating the corridor.

The screaming dies away as the last of the bugs burn.

PERRY

How's Taylor doing?

Coffield checks a display on Taylor's suit.

COFFIELD

He's still breathing. He might
actually make it.

They hear a THUMP from the direction of the wrecked
elevator.

They look in that direction.

There's another thump as a burning bug falls down the
elevator shaft and through a hole in the roof of the cage.

The bugs twitch and die.

COFFIELD

The smoke'll trigger the fire
system in a moment.

Perry looks up at Coffield and then his eyes go wide as he
realizes...

PERRY

Oh, shit, no it won't. I turned
the air vent sensors off. ALL of
them. The smoke isn't going to
trigger SHIT.

Perry straightens and runs down the corridor. Coffield
stays with Taylor.

INT. CETUS DECK C CORRIDOR - SAME

Perry stops at the door to the water plant and looks in.

The burning bugs have started a fire that's getting out of
control.

Perry runs on.

INT. AIR TREATMENT ROOM - SAME

The room is full of smoke. Flames and smoke from dead bugs
is pouring from the vents. There are small fires all around
the room.

Perry goes to the intake vent, pulls the chlorine cylinders
back out and closes the valves.

He runs to the control panel.

There are dead, burning bugs on the panel. Perry brushes them aside. The panel is scorched, the display black.

PERRY

Shit.

COFFIELD (VO)

What's up?

PERRY

Tell you later.

He waves his hand at the panel. Nothing happens. He pushes a couple of keys. The display lights up, smeared with greasy, black gunk. It reads, "DISPLAY SENSORS DAMAGED".

Perry wipes the display with the edge of his glove and touches some controls. Nothing happens.

PERRY

Come ONNNN!

He touches another couple of controls. There's a beep.

PERRY

Yay!

COFFIELD (VO)

Did you get it?

PERRY

Yep.

He runs for the door.

PERRY

The fire system should kick in as soon as the sensors reset.

INT. EMERGENCY BARRIER - SAME

Perry runs up to the barrier and is almost there when the fire alarm sounds and the barrier slides across. He makes it through just before the door closes all the way.

White vapor bursts from nozzles in the ceiling.

After a few seconds the fires sputter and die out.

A few moments later the sound of pumps and fans changes tone and the vents suck in the smoke, chlorine and vapor.

PERRY

We'll have to wait, but it shouldn't take too long.

COFFIELD

Think we can move the ship?

PERRY

We need to get these guys to the infirmary and have the system watch them. Then we'll set course for Earth.

COFFIELD

Earth? We're supposed to be going to Saturn.

PERRY

Yeah, right. There's no long-range radio, we're pumping most of our breathing air into space, the water plant's history, I have no clue how much food we have left, and there's fire damage and dead bugs all over the ship. Screw Saturn. We're going home.

Sanders stirs.

COFFIELD

He's waking up.

PERRY

Sanders?

Sanders groans.

PERRY

Sanders?

SANDERS

Are we there yet?

PERRY

How do you feel?

Sanders opens his eyes and sits up slowly.

He cocks his head as if listening for something.

After a moment he smiles slightly.

SANDERS

It's quiet. They're all gone.

The fire alarm goes quiet and the emergency barrier opens. The air has cleared.

Perry and Coffield remove their helmets, and Sanders does the same.

PERRY

Let's get the hell out of here.

Perry and Coffield help Sanders to his feet.

They lift the unconscious Taylor and carry him away down the corridor, Sanders following. As they walk away:

COFFIELD

Do you remember what happened?

SANDERS

You mean the part where I saved all our lives? Oh yes. I'll be sure we ALL remember that, every day until we get home.

PERRY

Very funny. How would you like your head? One lump or two?

Coffield laughs.

EXT. CETUS - NIGHT

The ship is hanging in space. Anchorage Station is visible nearby. Gas and smoke is being vented into space from various points across the bow end of the ship.

Thruster ports at the bow and stern of the ship light up, and she turns toward the Sun.

The main engines light and the ship accelerates gently, leaving a trail of gas and smoke as it picks up speed toward Earth.

EXT. BEACH - LATE AFTERNOON

The beach is lit by tropical sunlight. The sand is golden, the sea deep blue. There's heat haze. Palm trees line the top of the beach. The sky is blue but there are dark clouds rolling in. There is the sound of waves breaking.

SUPER: "EIGHTEEN MONTHS LATER"

The beach is deserted except for a couple walking, holding hands. JOHN and SYLVIA are in their sixties and dressed the way vacationers do. They are smiling, having a great time.

JOHN

Here it comes, Sylv.

SYLVIA

Today's scheduled rain delivery?

She turns slightly to see the rain clouds scudding in, then turns back.

JOHN

Same time every day. You can set your watch by it.

SYLVIA

I love it. I love everything about this place.

JOHN

We'll get soaked. We should go back to the hotel.

Sylvia looks at the clouds again, not really concerned.

SYLVIA

I don't think there's time.

She looks back up the beach and shades her eyes with her free hand.

She points at something further along the beach ahead.

SYLVIA

What about in there?

She has seen what appears to be a hut of some sort set at the top of the beach, partly hidden by trees. It's an open deck with vertical white beams supporting a roof of palm fronds.

From where John and Sylvia are, the shadow of the roof makes it impossible to see what's inside.

There's a sign made of driftwood fixed to one of the beams, but they're too far off to read what it says.

JOHN

Let's take a look.

They walk toward the hut.

EXT. THE HUT - SAME

Closer now, they can see that the hut is not at all ramshackle.

The deck is sanded smooth and varnished, the beams painted pristine white. The palm fronds on the roof are actually decoration and cover a solid roof made from pale wood and supported by wooden beams.

The sign is only pretending to be driftwood -- carved to look that way but sanded, painted and varnished. It reads "DAVE'S ON THE BEACH".

What they thought was a simple hut is in fact a well kept bar.

SYLVIA

It's lovely! I didn't know this was here!

JOHN

Looks like they like to keep it quiet.

He nods in the direction of inside.

Sylvia looks that way and sure enough the bar is all but deserted.

SYLVIA

Let's have something, John.

JOHN

Sure. It's hot... I sure could use a drink.

They go inside.

INT. THE BAR - SAME

There are tables and chairs scattered around. Quiet background music plays, Caribbean style.

The back half of the bar has solid walls made of the same pale wood as the roof. There are framed pictures on the walls and various items hanging from the beams -- fishing nets, oars and so on.

The bar itself is an oval in the center of the room. A YOUNG BARMAN is watching them from behind it, smiling pleasantly. His hair is long and sun-bleached, his skin very tanned. He's wearing beach clothes -- bright colored shirt, shorts and rope sandals.

There is a drumming sound from the roof as the rain starts.

John and Sylvia walk up to the bar.

They see an OLDER BARMAN kneeling behind the bar, his back to them as he cleans shelves. He's wearing a sleeveless T-shirt, cut-off jeans and leather sandals. His long hair is tied back in a ponytail. His skin is tanned, but not as much as the younger man's.

YOUNG BARMAN

(smiling a genuine smile)

Hi! What can I get for you folks?

John looks at Sylvia. Ladies first.

SYLVIA

Something cold. I know... a Bloody Mary, please. A big one, lots of ice.

YOUNG BARMAN

Good choice! You're just in time
for cocktail hour, mixed drinks
are half price.

JOHN

I'll take a big, cold draft beer.

YOUNG BARMAN

Coming right up.

While the barman is working on the drinks, Sylvia drifts to the back of the bar to look at the framed pictures. The rain has become torrential.

INSERT - FIRST PICTURE FRAME

The first picture shows a group of five men posing for the camera, smiling. The crew of the Cetus.

BACK TO THE BAR

Sylvia doesn't recognize the men in the picture.

John joins her as she moves to the next frame.

INSERT - SECOND PICTURE FRAME

The frame holds the cover of a paperback book. There is an artist's rendering of the Cetus and Anchorage station against a background of stars and gas clouds.

The wording reads, "CETUS: The true story of the Anchorage Station Tragedy. By John Coffield and Dave Taylor. The International #1 Best Seller!"

YOUNG BARMAN (OS)

Did you ever read that book?

BACK TO THE BAR

Sylvia and John turn and walk back toward the bar. Their drinks are on the counter.

SYLVIA

Yes, we did. It must have been awful. I've often wondered what happened to them all afterwards.

YOUNG BARMAN

Well, Sanders works for Krueger
now...

JOHN

You know them?

YOUNG BARMAN

I've met them a couple of times.
Anyway Krueger sterilized the
station and Sanders is out there
now helping them search for more
aliens in the asteroids. He can,
like, hear them in his mind.

SYLVIA

What about the others?

YOUNG BARMAN

Perry and Coffield are still out
there, flying the Cetus.

(nods toward the framed book
cover)

Coffield helped Mister Taylor
write that book and --

OLDER BARMAN (OS)

And the proceeds from the book
paid for this place.

The older barman is standing behind John and Sylvia. They
turn to face him.

He's wearing a patch over his right eye, and there are
faint scars on the right side of his face. It's Taylor,
smiling broadly.

TAYLOR

There are some things that didn't
make it into the book... if you're
interested.

SYLVIA

Yes... I'd love to hear about it.

TAYLOR

(still smiling)

There's something I have to do
first, then I'll be right back.
Don't you go away!

JOHN

Okay. C'mon, Sylv, let's sit out
on the deck.

John and Sylvia collect their drinks from the bar and walk
to the front of the building.

They sit looking out at the sea and the rain.

A few moments later John sees something and taps Sylvia
gently on the shoulder.

He points through the downpour.

Fifty meters away at the water's edge, Taylor is standing -
arms wide, eyes closed, face to the sky and smiling as the
torrential rain washes over him.

THE END