

SPACE: ABOVE AND BEYOND

"SUGAR DIRT"

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SPACE: ABOVE AND BEYOND

SUGAR DIRT

2/3/96 (BLUE)

CAST LIST

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

GENERAL BRADFORD P. WEIRICK
GENERAL BEENU SIRAJ
GENERAL MING
GENERAL ALCOTT
ADMIRAL RACHEL VETTER
ADMIRAL BRODEN
COMMODORE KURT PREISING
LT. REBECCA PRICE
LT. FEELEY
LT. BELSON
LT. SMITH
LIDAR OPERATOR
CHAPLAIN

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SET LIST

INTERIORS

SARATOGA	/	CONFERENCE/WAR ROOM
		COMMAND CENTER
		REC ROOM
		LOADING DOCK
		FLIGHT DECK
		HANGAR BAYS
		CORRIDOR
		ROSS' QUARTERS
		HOSPITAL WARD
		COCKPITS/ VANSSEN

EISENHOWER	/	COMMAND CENTER
		COCKPITS/ BELSON
		SMITH

AIRPORT DINER

EXTERIORS

PLANET DEMIOS	/	X-1 DINER
		AIRSTRIPE
		CLEARING
		DEEP COVER
		ROCKS
		SUPPLY DROP

APC

TEASER

A1 OVER BLACK SCREEN:

A1

"For our Fathers and Grandfathers
at Guadalcanal "

August 7, 1942 - February 7, 1943

FADE IN:

1 EXT. SPACE - THE PLANET DEMIOS

1

surrounded by FIVE MOONS, hovers in the dreadful SILENCE of
space. Then, a slow, insistent RUMBLE, builds until...

A MASSIVE HULL

enters FRAME... slowly revealing the U.S.S. SARATOGA. The
giant ship no sooner passes, than the FRAME fills with yet
another MASSIVE SPACE CARRIER... and another, accompanied
by several MacArthur-class supply ships... The most
impressive fighting force we have seen to date. The Cosmos
should be ours.

WHITE SUBTITLE: "15TH EARTH FLEET, PEGASUS SECTOR, 04:10

CUT TO:

2 INT. SARATOGA - WAR ROOM - OVERHEAD VIEW

2

an underlit Battle Map of the PLANET DEMIOS is littered with
flag-topped markers.

CAMERA PUSHES DOWN onto the center of the map where an
outline is marked "AIRSTRIIP."

GENERAL WEIRICK (V.O.)
...This airstrip on Demios is vital
to securing the entire planet.

GENERAL BRADFORD P. WEIRICK

50, Supreme Commander, Pegasus Sector, has an Eisenhower
presence. He addresses GENERALISSIMO MING, Commander,
Chinese component.

GENERAL WEIRICK
General?

GENERAL MING
The Sun-Yat-Sen can insert the 3rd
Chinese Infantry on Snyder's
Plateau. We will pour down from
there in two major thrusts.

2 CONTINUED:

2

Ming pushes the two ROC flagged markers towards the airstrip.

His motions are matched by GENERAL BEENU SIRAJ, Indian commander.

SIRAJ

The Gurkhas, moving from Hornsby Ridge will crush them from the opposing side.

GENERAL WEIRICK

Fine, Beenu. Konrad's EEC troops and the West African brigades tighten the circle. Ross?

The EEC and West African COMMANDERS nod assent. ROSS gestures toward the map.

ROSS

The Saratoga's Hammerhead and Phalanx II missiles will soften up the target. Followed by the 5th Marine Expeditionary Force landing here, establishing a toehold on the field.

General Weirick nods his approval. Turns more formally toward the Intelligence Officer, GENERAL ALCOTT, who seems to be dreading this moment.

GENERAL WEIRICK

Intelligence.

GENERAL ALCOTT

When the Chigs took the airstrip from us six months ago, it cost them three of their finest divisions. We should expect no less of a sacrifice.

GENERAL WEIRICK

Let's hear it.

GENERAL ALCOTT

For the Marines... 48% projected casualty rate.

Ross looks as if the wind's been knocked out of him. The rest of the Brass watch him in sympathy.

ROSS

Bloody ground.

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED: 2

2

GENERAL WEIRICK

(to Ross)

I know it seems steep, Glen. But whoever controls Demios controls the entire Pegasus sector. Besides, to see an airfield we built and lost, now the launch pad for strike after strike, killing thousands of our men and women...

(shakes his head)

Is unacceptable.

ROSS

Yes, Sir. We'll get it back, Sir.

General Weirick looks around the-table at the seven other GENERALS and ADMIRALS.

GENERAL WEIRICK

Gentlemen, the Invasion of Demios, is the first step of "Operation Roundhammer." An ambitious series of planet-hopping maneuvers, designed to drive the war to the heart of Chig territory. As Supreme Commander of the Earth Forces in the Pegasus Theatre, I am proud to lead you men into this battle.

General Weirick grabs the marker with the Chig insignia covering the airstrip.

GENERAL WEIRICK

Today... is the first Domino.

He knocks it over.

GENERAL WEIRICK

Let's make it fall.

CUT TO:

3 INT. SARATOGA - REC ROOM - CLOSE - A METAL LID

3

is lifted off a chafing dish, revealing SIRLOIN STEAKS.

(X)

WANG

looks upon the food... tenses.

(X)

NATHAN

Real steak.

(X)

THE 58TH

(CONTINUED)

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4.

3 CONTINUED:

3

- stands in the mess line. Other MARINES sit in the b.g.
busily eating.

(X)

(X)

DAMPHOUSSE

(worried)

And fresh eggs.

(X)

The 58th share ominous expressions.

(X)

WANG

Only one reason we're getting this
kind of chow...

SHANE

looks out the window with dread as COOPER follows her
gaze.

(X)

SHANE

We're going in.

(X)

CAMERA PUSHES IN at the planet DEMIOS, framed in the window.
Its bloody ground.

FADE OUT.

END TEASER

ACT ONE

4 INT. SARATOGA - LOADING DOCK - PRE-DAWN - A CHAPLAIN 4
blesses five KNEELING MARINES, who cross themselves.

CHAPLAIN
... May the Lord bless and keep
you, in the Name of the Father, and
of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit,
Amen.

WIDER

WHITE SUBTITLE: U.S.S. SARATOGA, 05:20

The kneeling Marines join fifteen other MARINES, in full
battle gear, boarding the APC. As they pile in, EACH
MARINE, in superstitious ritual, RUBS THE BASEBALL CAP worn
by a SHORT MECHANIC who stands by the open cargo door.

5 INT. SARATOGA - FLIGHT DECK - CLOSE - GLOVES 5
pulled firmly onto a HAND.

WIDER

THE 58TH gear up including McCOY. McQueen addresses them on
the frenetic flight deck as FLIGHT CREW attend to the
cockpits.

MCQUEEN
You'll provide air cover until the
ground forces secure their
position. At that time... you'll
set 'em down and anchor the
airstrip.

CAMERA PANS each of their FACES... intense, confident
warriors...

CUT TO:

6 INT. SARATOGA - COMMAND CENTER - ROSS 6
equally intense, confident, over sees... the chaotic command
center as COMMUNICATIONS OFFICERS monitor the loading
preparations. LT. REBECCA PRICE steps up to Ross.

LT. PRICE
Loading bays one through fourteen
operational, Sir.

Ross nods. Picks up a PHONE...

ROSS
Secure for deployment.

7 INT. SARATOGA - LOADING DOCK - CLOSE - MARINES 7

are packed nuts-to-butts inside the APC as CARGO DOORS
whoosh SHUT with a resounding CLANG...

8 INT. SARATOGA - FLIGHT DECK - CLOSE 8

The 58th climb into their cockpits as CREWMEN race off the
flight deck.

SHANE checks her instruments...

SHANE

Master Arms switch, safe...
inertial navigation system, check.

CAMERA ADJUSTS to see McQUEEN watching his Marines proudly,
yet concerned, from the ORIENTATION ROOM...

9 INT. SARATOGA - WAR ROOM - GENERAL WEIRICK 9

stands over the under-lit battle map showing three giant
ships arrayed together, parallel to the PLANET.

GENERAL ALCOTT joins Weirick at the map.

GENERAL ALCOTT

Eisenhower and Yorktown battle
groups are in position, Sir.

A LONG silent, tense pause, as though Weirick is saying a
silent prayer. Finally, he turns toward Alcott, resolute.

GENERAL WEIRICK

Domino.

ALCOTT picks up a phone, into it...

GENERAL ALCOTT

Domino.

CUT TO:

10 EXT. SPACE - U.S.S. EISENHOWER - DARK OUTLINE 10

of the massive Saratoga-class carrier in black-out mode, as
we hear its Commander's voice-over.

WHITE SUBTITLE: U.S.S. EISENHOWER, 05:30 HOURS.

ADMIRAL VETTER (V.O.)

Domino...

CUT TO:

11 EXT. SPACE - U.S.S. YORKTOWN - DARK OUTLINE

11

of another massive SCVN, also in black-out mode. Its
Commander relays the signal.

WHITE SUBTITLE: U.S.S. YORKTOWN.

ADMIRAL RILEY (V.O.)

Domino...

CUT TO:

12 INT. SARATOGA - COMMAND CENTER - ROSS

12

on the phone, nodding. The command center is dead silent.
Everyone stares as Ross turns to them.

ROSS

Domino.

The OFFICERS turn toward their consoles, all business.

CUT TO:

13 EXT. SARATOGA - NIGHT - THE DARKENED SHIP

13

in black-out mode... suddenly

CLOSE - PHALANX II MISSILE LAUNCHER

FIRES MISSILE after MISSILE...

(X)

CLOSE - LASER PULSE CANNONS

FIRE!

WIDER

The firing side of the blacked-out SARATOGA suddenly comes
ALIVE STROBING every time it FIRES another Phalanx salvo.
Reminiscent of newsreel footage of WWII Battleships in the
Pacific. Each salvo SCREAMS like Stalin's Organ.

(X)

WIDER.

The THREE GIANT SHIPS illuminated, then darkened,
illuminated then darkened, as heart-pounding BURSTS of FIRE
HOWL from their sides, toward

THE PLANET DEMIOS

Brilliant ORANGE STREAKS arc gracefully toward the planet's
placid cloud-cover... Piercing it... The cloud cover
wrinkles from the multiple, echoing explosions erupting
underneath.

14 INT. SARATOGA - WAR ROOM - WEIRICK 14
stands over the glowing battle map. Alcott looks up from his phone.

GENERAL ALCOTT
Ships report no return fire from the planet, Sir. Butter's melting.

Weirick, pauses, puzzled... concerned... however he issues his next command.

GENERAL WEIRICK
Drop the Hammers.

CUT TO:

15 INT. SARATOGA - FLIGHT DECK - COCKPITS 15
containing the 58th, drop into the lower decks...

16 INT. SARATOGA - LOWER FLIGHT DECK 16
A cockpit connects to its Hammerhead fuselage...

17 EXT. SARATOGA - HANGAR BAYS - NIGHT 17
Hundreds of Hammerheads ROAR out of the aircraft.

18 EXT. SPACE - DEMIOS 18
Its once placid cloud cover now swirls angrily from the bombardment. Squadrons of Hammerheads THUNDER INTO FRAME...

19 THRU OMITTED 19
30 THRU 30

A31 EXT. PLANET DEMIOS - DAWN A31
Two Chig jets sit on a runway. Three Chig soldiers walk across the runway in the quiet dawn.
Suddenly... O.S. ...an approaching THUNDER.

B31 INT. SHANE'S COCKPIT - DAWN B31
Shane leads the air attack.

SHANE
Two ducks on the pond, who wants 'em?

31 EXT. DEMIOS AIRSTRIP - DAWN

31

THE HAMMERHEADS appear in the sky, descending upon the airfield.

WANG and SHANE'S HAMMERHEADS race over the airstrip. Two Chig fighters, launching off the runway, EXPLODE! (CGI)

32 INT. SHANE'S COCKPIT

32

Shane gives Wang the thumbs up.

SHANE
Saratoga, this is Wild Cards.
Butter's melted...

CUT TO:

33 EXT. PLANET DEMIOS - DAY - AN APC

33

Thunders into FRAME, landing. Then DOZENS of other APC's ROAR down to the airstrip. (CGI)

CUT TO:

34 EXT. APC - SERIES OF SHOTS OF APC DOORS

34

whooshing open, revealing the ground troop MARINES from the Saratoga, intense, RACING TOWARD CAMERA, weapons FIRING...

The MARINES run across the airstrip tarmac, through smoke screens, toward the cover of old HANGARS and BUILDINGS...

CUT TO:

35 INT. SARATOGA - COMMAND CENTER

35

CAMERA MOVES ALONG the communications consoles as OFFICERS receive reports from the field... Overlapping VOICES report:

CONSOLES (O.S.)
"Sector two-one-two taken, no
resistance..." "Sectors
two-one-niner, secured..."
"Objective four, overrun."

AN ENSIGN

collects their reports. CAMERA FOLLOWS HIM to the next in command, McQUEEN. McQueen studies the reports. Turns to his superior, Ross.

MCQUEEN
All MEU's accounted for, reporting
minimal casualties, Sir. Airstrip
sectors secured.

(CONTINUED)

35 CONTINUED:

35

Ross picks up the phone. Speaks into it.

ROSS

The first Domino is down, Sir.

36 INT. SARATOGA - WAR ROOM - ALCOTT

36

holds the phone, turns to WEIRICK, and the others.

GENERAL ALCOTT

We got it back.

Weirick turns to the BATTLE MAP. Immediately moves various
FLAGS to different locations on the MAP.

GENERAL WEIRICK

Let's not break out the cigars yet.
We still have to secure the lateral
regions of the planet against Chig
counter-attacks... Keep the
Chinese Second and Fifth Companies
moving to mop up any resistance...

GENERAL WEIRICK

And I want the U.S. 5-8 and
Brazilian 7-1 on the airfield,
reinforced with the Third Marine
Expeditionary Force from the
Yorktown...

WEIRICK continues to issue orders as he moves the EARTH
FORCES FLAG MARKER onto the AIRFIELD.

37 EXT. PLANET DEMIOS - DAY - CLOSE - EARTH FLAG

37

planted into the soil by four Marines Iwo Jima-style.

WIDER

HAMMERHEADS vertically land in the back-ground. CAMERA
FOLLOWS WANG, walking away from his parked HAMMERHEAD, as he
takes off his flight gear. He walks past a WATER TOWER.
Approaches

THE 58TH now setting up an L/O RADIO. Shane directs them.

SHANE

Key code is Zulu Bravo Charlie.

NATHAN flips through a Key Code/Frequency Decoder Book.

NATHAN

39.1 gigahertz.

SHANE

Azimuth?

37 CONTINUED:

37

WANG calculates on his STELLAR WAYPOINT FINDER.

WANG

Stellar Waypoint Finder says 38
degrees.

SHANE

Direct parabolic antenna?

DAMPHOUSSE points the parabolic antenna, which looks like an
upside-down umbrella, at the sky.

SHANE

Solar cell.

Cooper unfolds SOLAR CELL PANELS,- assisted by McCoy.

COOPER

Ready.

SHANE puts on the HEADPHONES. Rotates a DIAL on the RADIO.

In the b.g., other MARINES move around the airstrip, almost
swaggering. Shane broadcasts.

SHANE

Saratoga, this is Wild Cards...
come in...

Only Shane hears the Saratoga's response. She smiles:
contact.

SHANE

Transmission four dash three dash
sixty-four... Planet surface,
eighteen degrees centigrade... O2
and CO2 levels constant... Alien
presence nominal.

CUT TO:

38 INT. SARATOGA - WAR ROOM - ROSS

38

puts the phone down. Turns to Weirick and the Brass.

ROSS

The 5-8 report the airstrip's now
secured to Level Three -- they're
ready for insertion of essential
supplies and the service support
element.

A sick silence falls upon the conference center. In
contrast to the relieved and cocky soldiers, the Brass seems
worried. A beat. Then --

(CONTINUED)

38 CONTINUED:

38

GENERAL WEIRICK
Why aren't I celebrating?

GENERAL MING
Maybe you feel the same way. It
seems fruits of victory are falling
too easily into our mouths.

(X)

(X)

Weirick nods his head in agreement. He points to...

THE BATTLE MAP

now dotted with familiar FLAGS.

GENERAL WEIRICK
Eight months ago, the Chigs nearly
bled themselves dry taking the
airstrip... And today, they just
walk away. Why?

No answers. The silence only increases their anxiety.
Weirick shakes his head.

GENERAL WEIRICK
Call the Eisenhower, proceed with
the next stage.

CAMERA PUSHES IN on Ross, picking up the phone...

CUT TO:

39 EXT. SPACE - U.S.S. SARATOGA

39

CAMERA PUSHES past the Saratoga to an elegant black FORM,
silhouetted against the distant stars, silently waiting.

WHITE SUBTITLE: U.S.S. EISENHOWER, 14:07 HOURS.

40 INT. U.S.S. EISENHOWER - COMMAND CENTER - CLOSE - LIDAR
SCREEN

40

The Eisenhower's COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER, LT. FEELEY, relays
the message to ADMIRAL RACHEL VETTER, 50's, cool
professional.

LT. FEELEY
Admiral Vetter... General Weirick
instructs you to reinforce Demios
as per Stage B.

VETTER turns to COMMODORE KURT PREISING, 40'S.

ADMIRAL VETTER
Let's get on it.

(CONTINUED)

40 CONTINUED:

40

PREISING

Aye-Aye.

LIDAR OPERATOR

Sir! Single Bogey bearing
one-seven-niner!

ADMIRAL VETTER

Where the hell did he come from?

(X)

CLOSE - LIDAR SCREEN

a single FLASHING BLIP streaks between the planet Demios and
a moon, OPUS FIVE... Then reverses its course 180 degrees.

(X)

LIDAR OPERATOR

What? It's reversing course. Back
towards the Moon Opus Five.

(X)

Vetter, concerned, looks at Preising, who laughs.

PREISING

If I were a lonely Chig, I'd turn
tail when I saw the Eisenhower.

(X)

ADMIRAL VETTER

Doesn't make sense... a single,
rogue attack jet. A straggler
maybe? One that got off the
airstrip?

(X)

(considers)

Before we deploy to that sector,
launch Hammerhead squadron 3-4 and
have them take that Chig pest out
of my sky.

(X)

Preising nods.

CUT TO:

41 EXT. SPACE - U.S.S. EISENHOWER - FIVE HAMMERHEADS

41 (X)

launched from the Eisenhower's lower decks...

GRAPHIC: SQUADRON 34 U.S.S. EISENHOWER, 10TH BATTLE GROUP

(X)

42 EXT. SPACE - DAY - A WEDGE FORMATION OF FIVE HAMMERHEADS

42 (X)

ROAR INTO FRAME, speeding toward the ominous irregular
shaped crescent of the moon OPUS FIVE. LT. BELSON radios.

LT. BELSON

Eisenhower command, this is The
Croaker. 34th Squadron has visual
contact with bogey. Pulling into
firing range...

(X)

43 INT. EISENHOWER COMMAND CENTER - DAY - LT. FEELEY 43

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

44 INT. BELSON'S COCKPIT - DAY 44

LT BELSON checks gauges as he flies.

LT. BELSON
King Air, this is The Croaker.
You'll be the first to take your
shot.

45 INT. LT. SMITH'S COCKPIT - DAY 45

LT. SMITH
Roger, Croaker. And thank you for
my next medal.
(beat)
Locking on to Bogeymen...

SMITH'S POV - THE LONE CHIG

getting closer... suddenly disappears around the crescent of
the moon...

46 EXT. SPACE - SMITH'S HAMMERHEAD 46

follows the Chig, disappears beyond the crescent...
silence...

LT. BELSON (V.O.)
King Air, this is The Croaker, come
in...

47 INT. BELSON'S COCKPIT - DAY 47

Belson suddenly looks concerned.

LT. BELSON
King Air, this is The Croaker, do
you read me?
(beat)
Eisenhower Command, this is The
Croaker... Rounding Opus Five. I
think King Air may've waxed the
target.

(X)

LT. FEELEY (V.O.)
Roger that, Croaker...

LT. BELSON'S POV - THE CRESCENT

of the MOON races toward him...

48 EXT. SPACE - THE HAMMERHEADS 48
disappear around the MOON...

49 INT. BELSON'S COCKPIT - DAY - BELSON 49
BELSON, horrified, looks up.
BELSON'S POV - a MASSIVE CHIG ARMADA
the largest ever seen by humans, waiting, behind Opus Five.
It launches SIX MISSILES, heading straight toward CAMERA.
Before he can even utter a reaction, let alone a warning...
BELSON'S COCKPIT explodes.

50 EXT. SPACE - DAY - THE HAMMERHEADS 50
are obliterated in a hail of FIRE...

CUT TO:

51 INT. EISENHOWER - COMMAND CENTER - ADMIRAL VETTER 51
stands over Communications Officer Feeley.

ADMIRAL VETTER
Mission status, Lt. Feeley?

LT. FEELEY
We just lost radio and LIDAR
contact. But that's to be expected
when they round a moon.

Admiral Vetter looks concerned. Feeley reads this,
offers...

LT. FEELEY
Admiral, it was five on one, (X)
Sir... and they'd already locked on
to it.

Vetter turns to Preising.

ADMIRAL VETTER
I can't let one Chig warship keep
supplies from our people on planet.
Is sector two-one-niner clear?

Preising looks up from LIDAR. (X)

PREISING
Crystal, Sir.

52 EXT. SPACE - U.S.S. EISENHOWER - DAY

52

ADMIRAL VETTER (V.O.)

Then set course. All ahead full.

The massive craft slowly pulls away from the Saratoga...
Toward the black strip of space between the DEMIOS and OPUS
FIVE, unknowingly heading into the hidden Alien Armada.

CUT TO:

53 INT. X-1 DINER - DAY

53

The old truck stop-like Diner is barren except for torn
booths and kitchen equipment. Its a surreal image as the
58th enters, weapons raised.

Cooper, Nathan and Wang check about for any hiding enemy
soldiers.

(X)

DAMPHOUSSE

Look at this. You'd think we were
off the Jersey Turnpike instead of
millions of miles from home.

Cooper opens a door to a food storage area. He backs off
quickly, repulsed.

COOPER

Ahh... man! Chigs dumped all over
the food before they left.

(X)

NATHAN

Go ahead, Hawkes. It's high in
protein.

(X)

COOPER

I get my daily allowance from you
guys.

(X)

(X)

Wang looks in a drawer. He finds a box of packets of sugar
substitutes. He takes out a packet.

WANG

They didn't get to the coffee
sweeteners.

Shane's eyes light up like a junkie. She moves to the box
and takes a handful. As she secures them in her pack...

SHANE

We'll secure it and make this the
command center.

Cooper takes a look around.

(CONTINUED)

53 CONTINUED:

53

COOPER

I can get into this. Would have
been a nice gig being stationed on
this planet.

As everyone has a comfortable look around...

CUT TO:

54 INT. SARATOGA - WAR ROOM - ROSS

54

turns to Weirick, who just stares at the Battle Map.

GENERAL WEIRICK

Any report from the Eisenhower?

ROSS

No confirmation from the
Eisenhower, Sir.

GENERAL WEIRICK

Give 'em a goose, Commodore.

55 INT. SARATOGA - COMMAND CENTER - ROSS & MCQUEEN

55

stands over Lt. Price as she radios the Eisenhower.

LT. PRICE

Eisenhower... this is Saratoga,
come in...

The RADIO CONSOLE just spits back static.

LT. PRICE

Maybe it's a radio problem, Sir.
The Eisenhower's not transmitting.

ROSS

Switch frequencies.

LT. PRICE

Yes, Sir...

(twists dial)

Eisenhower, this is Saratoga, do
you read me?

The RADIO CONSOLE spits more static...

ROSS and MCQUEEN

exchange concerned glances.

(CONTINUED)

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18.

55 CONTINUED:

55

LT. PRICE
Eisenhower, this is Saratoga.
Respond.

(X)

CUT TO:

56
THRU OMITTED
57

56
THRU
57

58 EXT. SPACE - THE STARFIELD

58

fills the FRAME... Beautiful, infinite... Then, slowly, as
in the opening scene, the massive HULL of the U.S.S.
Eisenhower enters FRAME... silent, inspiring... Until,
suddenly it lists to one side, like a giant carcass...

Revealing what is no longer the EISENHOWER, but rather its
DEBRIS -- gnarled STEEL BEAMS, open cavities, testifying to
a BRUTAL, horrible DEATH...

CUT TO BLACK:

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

59 EXT. AIRSTRIP - DAY - CLOSE - THE RADIO

59

an ominous crackle of soft static emits from the radio.
CAMERA ADJUSTS to find Damphousse adjusting the controls.
Her expression is mildly troubled, annoyed. she looks to
the sky as Shane approaches.

SHANE

What's up?

DAMPHOUSSE

Should be the Eisenhower.
Overhead. But I can't get a fix.

Shane squats down to have a look as Nathan walks past,
shaving with a solar powered razor. He moves to Wang and
Cooper, sitting nearby.

(X)

In the b.g., the invading force is active securing the
airfield, however an air of confidence hangs over the base.

Nathan holds the shaver up to the sunlight, recharging.

NATHAN

This thing's outta juice.
(beat, laughs)

Man, when we were goin' in I never
thought I'd have time for a shave.

Wang tears open a packet of "Equal" and dumps it into his
coffee, looks to Cooper.

WANG

You know what this battle reminds
me of? Remember that Bulls-Lakers
final... 'bout seven years ago?

COOPER

I wasn't born yet.

WANG

Oh... right, then, I guess, you'd
have a tough time remembering.

NATHAN

The one that came down to a ninth
game?

(X)

WANG

(smiles, proud)

In LA, at the Magic Johnson
Pavilion. Everyone expected the
Lakers to blow out Chicago, but it
was the 60th anniversary of Michael
Jordan's 110 point game and the
Bulls got fired up.

(CONTINUED)

59 CONTINUED:

59

Nearby, Damphousse is paying attention to the guys while Shane has an earphone held to her ear and works the radio.

DAMPHOUSSE

Chicago had that game won in the first quarter.

WANG

Just like us.

SHANE

(re: radio)

Nothin' from any ship in the Eisenhower's battle group. What's the Saratoga's key code frequency again?

Damphousse flips through the decoder book.

DAMPHOUSSE

39.1 Waypoint finder says 38 degrees by 120 degrees.

As Shane enters the information into the radio controls, CAMERA PUSHES IN ON HER as SHE HEARS...

LT. PRICE (V.O.)

(under radio static, panic)

... H.M.S. Invincible is down...
U.S.S. Tecumseh is signaling
"MAYDAY"... The Eisenhower is gone...

CANNONS FIRE! ALARM BELLS WAIL! KLAXONS SOUND beneath the frenzy of a "sea" battle.

ROSS (V.O.)

Ready those forward fire decks NOW!

LT. PRICE (V.O.)

Enemy's superior! Squadrons descending on planet!

Shane rips off the headphones. CAMERA, LOW ANGLE, LOOKS UP ON HER COMMANDING POSTURE.

SHANE

SCRAMBLE! SCRAMBLE! GET AIRBORNE!

WIDER

Puzzled, the Marines on the airfield freeze. A momentary shock.

SHANE - LOW ANGLE

taking a step toward CAMERA...

(CONTINUED)

SHANE
ENEMY AIRCRAFT 50 MILES OUT!

WIDER

A flurry of activity as the ground forces race to support their defensive positions.

THE 58TH

grab their helmets and are off toward their planes.

ANOTHER ANGLE

A Marine in the f.g. loads a rocket launcher as a half dozen riflemen take cover, diving into foxholes.

RUNWAY

Pilots run toward a Hammerhead in the f.g. AS CAMERA CRANES DOWN, TWO HUGE EXPLOSIONS ROCK the tarmac. The airmen are hurled to the ground.

THE 58TH

fall to the runway from the concussions. Shocked, they hustle for cover from air to ground weapons fire.

AIRFIELD - (CGI)

Earth forces return fire as a Chig attack squadron strafes the airfield. Three parked Hammerheads are destroyed by BOMB BLASTS.

DAMPHOUSSE AND COOPER

race toward CAMERA. Behind them, a lone Hammerhead attempts to get into the air. Chig fighters buzz the plane causing it to erupt in flames, tumbling down the runway.

THE 58TH

behind cover, are joined by Hawkes and Damphousse. The squadron looks out onto the battlefield. CAMERA PUSHES INTO their shocked and scared expressions as...

AIRFIELD (CGI)

enemy aircraft destroy the remaining Hammerheads parked off the runway. On the massive EXPLOSION...

CUT TO:

60 INT. SARATOGA - CONFERENCE ROOM/WAR ROOM - GENERAL WEIRICK

60

This room is controlled chaos. CAMERA OMINOUSLY, SLOWLY, MOVES THROUGH Earth forces Fleet Commanders, Weirick, Alcott and Ming, as they are delivered reports on the battle and dispatch orders. CAMERA PROCEEDS TOWARD THE DOOR. O.S., the BATTLE RAGES, CANNON FIRE ERUPTS. JETS SCREAM into Space.

Ross, anxious to return to the Command Center, listens to Alcott. CAMERA PASSES McQUEEN as he barks an order...

MCQUEEN

Enemy has achieved air superiority over the airfield. Do not dispatch any further squadrons until so ordered.

CAMERA HOLDS on the door. O.S., the chaos CONTINUES. The door slowly opens. In the threshold is ADMIRAL BRODEN. In his hands is a classified report. On his face is the expression of restrained exuberant dread.

CAMERA FOLLOWS Broden as he proceeds into the chaos. His eyes are fixed on General Weirick. Broden moves to the "war board" and simply stands there, eyes on the General.

WEIRICK

is busy processing a report. He closes it and hands the report to an ensign.

(X)

Weirick spots Broden beneath the war board. The General's expression reflects tense puzzlement.

ADMIRAL BRODEN

With his eyes remaining on Weirick, Broden's finger moves to a distant star system. CAMERA MOVES INTO the object of Broden's attention... a planet indicated as "IXION."

GENERAL WEIRICK

knows this is something important.

GENERAL WEIRICK

Clear the room.

The chaos falls silent.

GENERAL WEIRICK (CONT'D)

Clear... the room.

After a beat, all non-essential, lower echelon personnel exit the conference room. Alcott, Ming and Ross remain. McQueen starts out of the room, however...

GENERAL WEIRICK

As you were, Colonel.

.(CONTINUED)

60 CONTINUED:

60

McQueen pauses. He looks about the room and remains.
McQueen shuts the door. The room is silent. Eerie, as the
weapons of war continue to FIRE, O.S., like a thunder storm.

GENERAL WEIRICK

Admiral.

ADMIRAL BRODEN

Gentlemen, we find ourselves in the
midst of our collective countries'
greatest military disaster.

O.S., A CANNON RUMBLES... resonates...

ADMIRAL BRODEN (CONT'D)

Because of which, opens the door
to, possibly... our greatest
achievement.

McQueen eyes Ross. Both men don't quite follow. Broden
once again points to the map.

ADMIRAL BRODEN (CONT'D)

Ixion.

All eyes turn to the symbol.

ADMIRAL BRODEN (CONT'D)

A territory of monumental strategic
importance, lying merely 50
Astronomical Units from the Chig's
home planet. It was so heavily
protected, believed so
unobtainable... Earth Force battle
plans conceded Ixion to the Chigs.

GENERAL WEIRICK

"Believed?"

Broden's excitement intensifies. CANNONS ROAR O.S.

ADMIRAL BRODEN

This communique is from the Earth
Forces Chiefs of Staff in New York.
The enemy fleet attacking us now is
from Ixion... They've left it
unprotected.

The potential increases everyone's pulse. McQueen
considers.

GENERAL MING

Why would they do that?

GENERAL ALCOTT

They must be spread more thin than
we believed. They're gambling by
engaging us here.

(CONTINUED)

Everyone considers.

GENERAL WEIRICK

Whatever the reasons... their blunder becomes ours if we don't seize this opportunity.

(to Ross)

Dispatch the 4th Fleet to that area, instead of bringing them here for support.

ROSS

Sir, without their support, our fight is made all the tougher.

ADMIRAL BRODEN

General, the 4th Fleet would never make it in time. Presently, they're 1,400 A.U.s away.

(beat)

We... are the closest to Ixion.

All of these men know what this statement means. No one is quite prepared to come out and utter the ramifications.

ROSS

Our job is not finished here!

GENERAL ALCOTT

You said it yourself, Glen. Unless we get support... this Fleet is going under.

Ross is furious at the suggestion. McQueen tenses, wanting to talk, but it is not his place.

ROSS

Those words would NEVER enter my heart let alone leave my lips. I will fight until...

GENERAL ALCOTT

Ixion is infinitely more important than a tiny airstrip on Demios.

ADMIRAL BRODEN

Taking Ixion now would cut two years off of this war. It could save a million lives.

ROSS

At the expense of 25,000 lives, my lives, fighting down on Planet.

GENERAL WEIRICK

They're all our lives, Commodore! And we're trying to save a million more!

(CONTINUED)

60 CONTINUED: 2

60

The officers back off. The tension remains. Weirick turns to McQueen.

GENERAL WEIRICK
Colonel... I know you to be a student of military history... what is your counsel?

McQueen pauses, eyes Ross, then...

MCQUEEN
I would retreat this fleet and then advance to Ixion.

Ross glares at McQueen.

MCQUEEN
The Chig counter-attack will be severe. I would send the 4th Fleet to Ixion as support.

ROSS
The five-eight is down there, McQueen.

MCQUEEN
In the Second World War, the Japanese committed their finest troops to protecting the island of Guadalcanal while neglecting the strategic importance of New Guinea. The Marines were... "on their own" for eight months while the Allies exploited the Japanese mistake.
(beat)
It broke the back of the Nippon Offensive. After the Canal... we took the war to them.

Ross still disagrees. The Commanders exchange glances, weighing the gravity of the situation. Weirick straightens.

GENERAL WEIRICK
We will not abandon our troops on Planet. Ming, pull back two supply ships to a distance of one A.U. to resupply the forces on Demios.

Ross hangs his head. He has lost this argument.

GENERAL WEIRICK
I respect your thoughts, Commodore... but this battle will not be won here. We'll win it at Ixion.

(X)

As Ross looks to McQueen, who can't look back...

CUT TO:

61 EXT. AIRFIELD - DAY - PLANET DEMIOS - AN EXPLOSION

61

rips across FRAME. Just as quickly, cooper is up and FIRING him M-590. He drops back behind cover.

O.S., the BATTLE is ferocious and intense. EXPLOSIONS. WEAPONS FIRE. MARINES YELLING. ENEMY JETS SCREAMING. Damphousse is on the radio.

DAMPHOUSSE
SARATOGA THIS IS DEMIOS IN
IMMEDIATE NEED OF AIR SUPPORT...

Wang and Shane fire their weapons. As Nathan reloads, he checks the area.

NATHAN
THE FRENCH DIVISION IS IN RETREAT.
WE'VE LOST OUR RIGHT FLANK.

DAMPHOUSSE
IN JEOPARDY OF LOSING OUR POSITION.
REQUEST IMMEDIATE AIR SUPPORT.

SHANE
WHERE THE HELL ARE THEY?!

As another EXPLOSION FILLS FRAME...

CUT TO:

62
THRU OMITTED
63

62
THRU
63

64 INT. SARTATOGA - CORRIDOR - DAY

64

Ross storms out of the conference/war room. McQueen exits, a few steps behind the Commodore.

MCQUEEN
Commodore Ross.

Ross stops in his tracks but doesn't turn to McQueen. The Colonel approaches.

MCQUEEN
Sir, the right thing to do... is
rarely the easiest.

ROSS
McQueen, right now our people on
planet don't have the luxury of
time to consider "right" or
"wrong." Hell, they don't have
time to think! They can only react
to "dead" or "alive."

(CONTINUED)

64 CONTINUED:

64

McQueen listens, torn.

ROSS (CONT'D)

You and I have been there. And we know that amongst all the hellfire and fear, between the seconds of firing and being fired upon... there is a whisper in their hearts that feels like a scream at the top of their lungs... saying we'll be there to back them up.

(beat)

And now we won't be.

MCQUEEN

Yes, sir, I have been there. I know that Hell. And because so, I would give my life if it meant even one other human did not have to go through what they're going through down there.

(X)

Ross keeps his back to McQueen, yet understands his passion.

MCQUEEN

And I know my kids feel the same way.

(pause)

Taking Ixion now would keep a million kids from that Hell.

Ross sighs, tired and worn.

ROSS

Ty... I just can't bring myself to leave them behind.

McQueen considers. His military posture eases. He looks at the Commodore as a friend.

MCQUEEN

Me neither.

(beat)

I want to join them.

Ross finally turns to McQueen, shocked.

MCQUEEN

Sir, I request permission to remain with the supply ships with the intent of going on planet.

ROSS

Denied. I'm not going to reduce the Corp's finest pilot to a supply sergeant.

(CONTINUED)

64 CONTINUED: 2

64

MCQUEEN

(a desperate whisper)
Commodore Ross... Glen... I'm
asking as a friend.

ROSS

And I'm responding as one.

(beat)

No.

McQueen can't live with the answer.

ROSS

All of us are going to lose too
many friends in this war.

Ross eyes him. The Commodore turns and continues down the
hallway leaving McQueen alone. Very alone. O.S., a CANNON
RUMBLES like distant THUNDER.

CUT TO:

65 EXT. PLANET DEMIOS - DAY - AIRSTRIP

65

The ground battle continues. Wang FIRES his M-590 and
returns to cover. Damphousse works the radio.

BEHIND COVER

The 58th is panicked and scared. Cooper looks around.

COOPER

Hey, man, everyone else has bolted
over the ridge. We're the only
ones left out here.

NATHAN

(to Vansen)

We should fall back to the
supplementary position.

SHANE

McQueen and Ross would want us to
hold our position until we can get
air cover.

WANG

Ross and McQueen ain't down here.

SHANE

Yes, they are.

(turns to Damphousse)

What's the word?

(CONTINUED)

65 CONTINUED:

65

DAMPHOUSSE
(into the radio)
Saratoga... this is Demios.
Request response to request for air.
cover...

CUT TO:

66 INT. SARATOGA - COMMAND CENTER - DAY

66

The room is grimly silent. Every man and woman at the controls are on the brink of tears. Ross and McQueen stand at the helm. Dampousse's lonely, distant and desperate VOICE echoes in the command center.

DAMPHOUSSE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Situation deteriorating. Many
units in retreat. Airfield in
jeopardy of being taken. Many
casualties. Request response.

The room is sick. O.S., the great guns of the Saratoga BOOM. Lt. Price engages a radio switch.

LT. PRICE
Demios... this is the Saratoga...

ROSS
Lieutenant...

Price turns to Ross who indicates "give it to me." Ross speaks into his radio headpiece. He takes a deep breath, remains strong.

ROSS
Marines... this is Commodore Ross
of the U.S.S. Saratoga... we remain
proud of you.
(beat)
Due to security reasons, I cannot
explain this... painful
directive...

67 OMITTED

67

A68 EXT. PLANET DEMIOS - AIRFIELD - DAY

A68

The 58th gather around the radio, cooper keeping watch for enemy advances. They listen intently... hopefully.

ROSS (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Fortunes of war have arisen which
prevent us from providing air
support or ground reinforcements...

The Marines are stunned, sick.

68 INT. SARATOGA - COMMAND CENTER 68

CAMERA PUSHES IN on ROSS with McQueen behind him.

ROSS (CONT'D)
You are encouraged, but not so
ordered... to continue to engage
the enemy... If... however... your
positions become untenable...

69 OMITTED 69

A70 EXT. PLANET DEMIOS - AIRFIELD - DAY A70

The Marines hang on every word...

ROSS (V.O.) (CONT'D)
You are authorized... to surrender.

The shock is so severe, there is no reaction. No one can
look at the Marine next to them.

ROSS (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Semper Fidelis. And may God be
with you always.

70 INT. SARATOGA - COMMAND CENTER 70

A pin dropping would be as loud as a cannon roar at this
moment. Ross holds back tears. McQueen is beyond the point
of any emotion.

ROSS
Helmsman... raise anchor... set
course for the Helios system.

Ross turns to McQueen.

ROSS
We'll be back for them.

MCQUEEN
Yes, sir... if they are still here.

Ross knows this to be true. The Command Center remains
silent.

71 OMITTED 71

72 EXT. SPACE 72

The large armada, led by the Saratoga, pulls away from the
area. Demios remains in the background.

A73 EXT. PLANET DEMIOS - AIRFIELD - DAY

A73

In the distance, CANNONS FIRE and RIFLES BLAST. CAMERA
BEGINS TO PULL AWAY FROM THE 58TH, accentuating their
isolation and despair.

Finally, the stunned Marines look to each other... they're
all they have.

FADE OUT.

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

B73 OVER BLACK:

B73

White graphics FADE UP:

"Two months later."

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

C73 EXT. PLANET DEMIOS - DEEP COVER - NIGHT

C73

Within the dark cover of foliage, two eyes appear in the light, like a jungle animal. They survey the area, then turn to their right, REVEALING Shane, looking toward...

NATHAN

obscured by the cover of darkness, he returns her look and nods.

CLOSE - M-590

the bolt is quietly cocked.

COOPER

hiding in the darkness, draws his K-Bar, tense... ready.

SHANE

gestures with her hand... "move out."

WIDER

Creeping from the brush appears Vansen, West, Hawkes, Wang and Damphousse. CAMERA LEADS them as they advance, REVEALING several dead bodies of Marines fallen long ago. The area is macabre and quiet.

The 58th quietly check around for enemy activity. There is none. As Shane nods her head, however, West and Hawkes move off as guards of the perimeter.

SHANE

Check the ground for ammo.

The others drop their rifles and produce small shovels from their packs. Each living Marine moves to a dead comrade. This entire procedure should have the feel that they've done this before, countless times, and know the drill.

The squad is tired, hungry and well-worn.

DAMPHOUSSE

(CONTINUED)

C73 CONTINUED:

C73

ties a kerchief around her face, over her nose and kneels alongside a dead Marine. She reaches down and removes a single dog tag from the pair.

She places the other in the Marine's mouth.

SHANE

searches a body and produces a wallet. She looks inside. Vansen passes over some I.D. and Armed Service credit cards. She produces a small photograph.

INSERT - PHOTOGRAPH

A family. A wife and two children.

SHANE

is effected, yet she's seen plenty of this lately. Shane places the Marine's dog tag into the wallet then moves across the killing field.

She passes Wang who is doing what Vansen has just done. He checks through the wallet. Some money. A photograph. He finds a condom... considers... then pockets it.

Vansen pauses, giving him a dirty look.

WANG

What's a man without hope?

Vansen commandingly gestures with her head. "In the bag." Wang returns the rubber to the wallet. Vansen and Wang then place the two wallets into a bag. CAMERA MOVES IN TO REVEAL it is filled with wallets and personal effects.

The unit now picks up their shovels and begins to dig. Rhythmically. Drained.

DISSOLVE TO:

73 EXT. PLANET DEMIOS - CLEARING - NIGHT - GRAVES

73

Mounds of fresh dirt, marked by rifles covered by a helmet line the clearing. The 58th stand over the dead. Damphousse reads from the back of a Marine Corps Survival guide.

DAMPHOUSSE

O God, the Creator and Redeemer of
all the faithful, hear our
supplication...

An unidentified stomach GROWLS, sort of loud. Everyone pauses, but no one searches for the point of origin.

(CONTINUED)

73 CONTINUED:

73

DAMPHOUSSE (CONT'D)

And through Thy infinite love and
mercy graciously grant to the soul
of Thy servant departed....

Another growl. This time definitely LOUD. All eyes turn to
Cooper whose tired and cross expression reflects his hunger.

DAMPHOUSSE (CONT'D)

... the remission of all their
sins, by which they may have
deserved the severity...

Another GROWL. All eyes once again look to Cooper.

COOPER

Don't look at me!

Everyone remains locked on him. Nathan "uh-hems."

NATHAN

That was me that time.

DAMPHOUSSE

Of Thy justice and punishments in
the world to come.

Wang crosses himself. Everyone remains, as if too tired to
move. The 58th look to one another. Cooper looks at the
others in a foul mood.

COOPER

I don't know why we bother with
this. No one's gonna do it for us.

NATHAN

Ain't gonna happen to us.

SHANE

Marines always bury their dead.

COOPER

But they abandon the living.

NATHAN

Let it go, man. We all know they
wouldn't leave us here for no
reason.

DAMPHOUSSE

And when they're done with whatever
it is... they'll be back.

Cooper scoffs, moves away from the others.

Shane checks her watch.

(CONTINUED)

73 CONTINUED: 2

73

SHANE
Nineteen hundred hours.
Satellite's up.

Without any further words spoken, everyone knows their part. They move to the radio each doing a part, working together. This procedure now has a sacred feel to the 58th.

SHANE
Key code?

NATHAN
Oscar Tango Charlie.

As Damphousse sets up the small satellite "umbrella..."

DAMPHOUSSE
Frequency is 42.4 gigahertz.

Wang checks his instruments.

WANG
Stellar Viewpoint finder indicated
49 degrees azimuth.

Shane makes the adjustments to the radio. A pause. All eyes turn to Cooper, who remains sitting off by himself.

SHANE
(to Cooper)
Solar cells.

Cooper doesn't move. His stomach GROWLS.

SHANE
Hawkes, we may be out of this war,
but we still have a duty. Now, on
your feet.

Cooper is intentionally slow to follow orders, finally he stands. Cooper unfolds the solar cell panel. Taking flashlights from Wang and Nathan, he shines them into the panel.

Shane dons her headphones and picks up the microphone.

SHANE
Saratoga, this is Demios...

CUT TO:

74 OMITTED

74

75 EXT. PLANET IXION - SARATOGA - DAY

75

Guns of the great warship Saratoga, damaged and worn, FIRE THUNDEROUSLY upon the distant enemy Mothership, which return the volley.

A LEGEND APPEARS: U.S.S. SARATOGA - PLANET IXION

76 INT. SARATOGA - COMMAND CENTER - NIGHT

76

The ship rocks from a direct hit. Chaos reigns in the command center as McQueen and Ross, also tired and worn, oversee the current battle.

ROSS

People. This is the 53rd day of the counter-attack and we have not lost any ground. I don't want to lose any today!

McQueen, intense, moves to Lt. Price at the communications console.

MCQUEEN

Has EEC Third Wing reported in?

LT. PRICE

Sir, I'm searching all frequencies but I can't cut through an incoming transmission... everyday at 1900 this happens...

Price adjusts some controls. Vansen's voice comes over the radio, distant...

SHANE (V.O.)

Planet Demios reporting enemy troop location at grid point 765789 by 784983. Approximately 3,000 in number...

CAMERA PUSHES in on McQueen, an odd time to be reminded.

77 EXT. PLANET DEMIOS - CLEARING - NIGHT

77

Shane reports on the radio, the others are gathered around.

SHANE (CONT'D)

Chig fleet seen in the southwestern sky, five degrees 16:43 hours, bearing North. Buried fifteen Marine casualties today, bringing approximate number of observed dead at 18,000... uncertain of remaining number of survivors on Planet...

78 INT. SARATOGA - COMMAND CENTER - NIGHT

78

This information is of little to no importance to either McQueen or Price, the latter loses her patience.

LT. PRICE

Demios this is Saratoga, you are jamming our communications... cease with your transmission...

McQueen steps up to the console, stopping Price. McQueen speaks into the radio.

MCQUEEN

Wild Cards this is Queen Six, transmission received. Will relay to Pegasus Theatre command. Good work. These are vital reports.

79 EXT. PLANET DEMIOS - CLEARING - NIGHT

79

The 58th listen closely though it fades into static.

MCQUEEN (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Keep up the good work, 5-8...

The words are comforting and affirming. Just as necessary as food and water.

A80 INT. SARATOGA - COMMAND CENTER - NIGHT

A80

McQueen completes the transmission.

MCQUEEN

This is Queen Six. Out.

As soon as he finishes the transmission, McQueen is in Price's face.

MCQUEEN

Don't you EVER make them think they are not needed.

McQueen turns away from Price and feels Ross staring at him from above the hub of the command center. The two men eye one another. McQueen must turn away with a sense of guilt.

As the CANNONS CONTINUE TO FIRE, O.S....

CUT TO:

80 EXT. PLANET DEMIOS - CLEARING - NIGHT

80

The 58th secure the radio, each silently performing their role. The effects of McQueen's voice wear off rather quickly.

(CONTINUED)

80 CONTINUED:

80

Suddenly, in the darkness... a haunting distant voice...

VOICE (O.S.)
Help... Help me...

DAMPHOUSSE
Let's go find him.

Nathan holds up his hand for silence. He shakes his head,
"no." Something bothers him.

VOICE (O.S.)
Help... I need help...

Nathan seems to zero in on the sound. He moves to the edge
of the clearing and looks out into the darkness with his
night vision goggles. The others follow him.

NATHAN'S POV - BINOCULAR/NIGHT VISION MATTE

CAMERA PANS the surrounding area. No one is in sight.

VOICE (O.S.)
Help... Marines... help...

NATHAN

continues to search with the binoculars.

NATHAN'S POV - BINOCULAR/NIGHT VISION MATTE

CAMERA PANS a surrounding area. Nothing but the
landscape...

VOICE (O.S.)
Help, Marines... help...

THE 58TH

The agony in the voice is affecting Damphousse.

DAMPHOUSSE
We can't let him suffer.

Nathan, still looking in the binoculars...

NATHAN'S POV - BINOCULAR/NIGHT VISION MATTE

CAMERA PANS the area. Then... behind cover... three Chig
soldiers wait for the bait to be taken. Near them is a
small black box from which the voice emits.

RETURN

Nathan turns to the others, whispers...

(CONTINUED)

80 CONTINUED: 2

80

NATHAN

It's b.s. They made it up.
There's three Chigs by that ridge.

COOPER

Take 'em out.

SHANE

No ammo.

COOPER

You gonna just let 'em mess with
our heads like that?

VOICE (O.S.)

Help... help... Marines...

Cooper yells out at the top of his lungs.

COOPER

YOU EAT YELLOW SNOW, CHIGGIE MAN!

The 58th moves to Cooper, silencing him.

THE CHIGS

freeze; look around.

RETURN

Every member of the 58th non-verbally admonishes Cooper.
Wang incredulously mouths...

WANG

"You eat yellow snow?!"

COOPER

(shrugs)

It was off the top of my head.

VOICE (O.S.)

Hey Marines... Abe Lincoln's
dead...

NATHAN

What's that supposed to mean?

SHANE

They're using stuff they think will
get us mad... psyche us out...

WANG

"Abe Lincoln's dead" is supposed to
psych us? That's just stating a
fact. Chigs didn't do their
homework.

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED: 3

80

VOICE (O.S.)
Hey, Marines... Chicago Cubs
suck...

Wang draws his K-Bar, furious.

WANG
Let's get those sons a bitches!

Suddenly... a haunting human WAIL rises from the
surrounding. A VOICE in severe agony. Cooper is really
pissed off.

COOPER
Oh... give it up.

Again, a SCREAM and a WAIL. The SOBBING CONTINUES. Nathan
looks through the binoculars.

NATHAN'S POV - BINOCULAR/NIGHT VISION MATTE - THREE CHIGS
move out of their position. Running off toward the
CONTINUING CRIES.

RETURN

Nathan spins around, urgent.

NATHAN
No, it's for real. Chigs are goin'
after him.

SHANE
Let's move.

The 58th draws their K-Bars and are off and running.

A81 EXT. PLANET DEMIOS - ANOTHER AREA - NIGHT

A81

WE REMAIN TIGHT, HANDHELD, as the Marines frantically try to
zero in on the surreal CRIES, O.S. Shane pauses, listens,
then gestures, "this way."

B81 EXT. PLANET DEMIOS - ROCKS - NIGHT

B81

The MOANING intensifies as the 58th ENTER FRAME, moving
quickly, desperate. Wang points in a direction and they are
OFF... CLEARING FRAME.

C81 EXT. PLANET DEMIOS - NIGHT

C81

The Wild Cards hustle INTO FRAME, determined, pumped. They
pauses to zero in on the CRIES, however they suddenly stop.

(CONTINUED)

C81 CONTINUED:

C81

They look to one another, panicked, puzzled. Then... A HORRIFYING SCREAM, O.S.

CAMERA RACES INTO THE UNIT as...

MARINE'S VOICE (O.S.)

NO! NO! STOP!!

Once again, the VOICE RAISES to a tortured SCREAM, accompanied by the SOUNDS of machete HACKING. The 58th's posture collectively turns to sickened defeat as the CRIES cease abruptly. The current silence is as bad as the earlier SCREAMS.

Cooper looks off, spots something and gestures for the others to follow. They move off.

D81 EXT. PLANET DEMIOS - SUPPLY DROP - NIGHT

D81

A supply pallet sits in the middle of a small clearing. It has been obliterated by an enemy shell. Burned out supply boxes are strewn about. CAMERA MOVES TENSELY AROUND the remains to REVEAL the cautiously approaching 58th squadron.

Their eyes are on something away from the pallet and as CAMERA CRANES DOWN, a bloodied twisted hand of the dead Marine is REVEALED. No matter how much death they have seen... the Marines are still affected.

SHANE

Nathan... Cooper... keep an eye out.

As West and Hawkes assume guard positions, Vansen looks about and finds the Marine's pack. From it, she produces the standard issue shovel. She begins to dig.

DAMPHOUSSE

surveys the area. She spots a plastic container on the ground and hungrily opens it. Vanessa eagerly sniffs the contents. Her excited expression falls.

DAMPHOUSSE

Foot powder. We finally find a supply drop and all we get is foot powder.

She throws it to the ground.

WANG

checks another area. On the ground, the dirt sparkles with brownish-white crystals in the moonlight. Curiously, he drops to his knees. Nearby is a burned package. he checks it out, being able to discern "SUG..." marked on the charred package.

(CONTINUED)

D81 CONTINUED:

D81

Wang looks to the dirt, touches it with his finger then brings it to his lips. His reaction is one of pained bliss. He reaches down, breaks off a chunk of the sugar dirt and begins to eat it.

THE OTHERS

while Shane continues to dig, Damphousse, Hawkes and West look to one another as if Wang has lost it.

NATHAN

Paul... Paul... are you alright?

WANG

The heat of the explosion burned
the sugar into the dirt... it's...
it's...

With desperate tears brimming, he can only bite into the bizarre confection.

West, Damphousse and Hawkes give in to their hunger and desperation. They move to Wang and drop to the dirt, breaking off the hardened burned sugar. Each are hesitant at first, but the taste of any type of food only snowballs their hunger. They desperately eat the dirt.

VANSEN

sweating and tired from digging, pauses to look at the others. Her expression turns to grave concern.

VANSEN'S POV - THE 58TH

her friends, her comrades and what they've been reduced to.

VANSEN

is concerned, yet strangely can understand. She turns to the dead Marine.

VANSEN'S POV - DEAD MARINE

lying in the same dirt.

VANSEN

understands that not very much separates the use of the ground for the living and the dead.

FADE OUT.

81
THRU OMITTED
86

81
THRU
86

END ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

A87 EXT. PLANET IXION - SARATOGA - NIGHT

A87

The guns are silent now. The Earth Forces Armada encircle the worn Saratoga.

A88 INT. ROSS' QUARTERS - SARATOGA - NIGHT - CLOSE - RUM
DECANTER

A88

Rum is poured from a glass decanter into a glass. CAMERA FOLLOWS as the Commodore brings it up beneath his nose. He wishes he could sip it, but merely sniffs. Ross appears tired, battle-weary.

He sets the glass on the table. -

ROSS

I'll leave it here... for the time
this battle is finally over.

Ross considers, looks out...

ROSS

Strange how you get used to the
cannon fire. Now the silence is
unnerving.

He looks across the room.

MCQUEEN studies the framed photographs of Ross' family.

ROSS

I've lost count of how many times
I've wondered if I'll ever see them
again.

McQueen nods, looking at the pictures.

ROSS

So many people pass through the
lives we've chosen. And with the
amount of my time in the service...
most of those lives, honestly, just
blur together, you know?

McQueen nods, lost in the photographs and his thoughts.

ROSS (CONT'D)

I'll think of somebody, for one
reason or another, and then have to
stop and remember... did I know
that guy in High school... or did
he serve with me in the A.I. War?
Then I'll realize he's under my
command here on this ship.

Ross takes the photographs out of McQueen's hand.

(CONTINUED)

A88 CONTINUED:

A88

ROSS (CONT'D)

Time is kind of cruel that way, I guess.

(looks at his family).

But some lives... never leave your heart, no matter where you are. Some lives are more important than your own.

McQueen nods. It's hard for him to communicate...

MCQUEEN

I have to say, sir... that some time ago... I wouldn't understand what you were talking about. People kind of came and went for me. My wife... the 127th...

He shakes his head as if "I had no trouble moving on."

MCQUEEN (CONT'D)

But those kids, we... I... left behind. I can't stop thinking about them. What are they going through? Are they alright? How proud I am when they call in everyday at 19:00.

Ross sighs, sets the picture down. Then gently...

ROSS

You know, Ty... one day that call won't come.

McQueen eyes the Commodore, a reflex to deny his words. Yet, after a beat, McQueen nods... and agrees. O.S. A KNOCK at the hatch.

ROSS

What?!

ENSIGN (O.S.)

Sir, the enemy has regrouped. Their ships are bearing our way.

As the two warriors look to one another...

CUT TO:

87 EXT. PLANET DEMIOS - NIGHT

87

Bright stars dot the sky meeting the distant horizon. Five silhouettes move through FRAME. A lost patrol.

CLOSER

(CONTINUED)

87 CONTINUED:

87

The 58th, dirtied and scarred, MOVE INTO FRAME. Vansen looks around, weary...

SHANE

Any idea where we are?

COOPER

As if it mattered.

DAMPHOUSSE

My compass is shot.

SHANE

Use the stars instead.

They look to the sky.

58TH'S POV - THE SKY

a shooting star, that seems to slowly break into pieces.

RETURN

Everyone watches, sad.

DAMPHOUSSE

A shooting star. Maybe it's a sign of hope.

WANG

It's not a shooting star. It's debris from the Eisenhower falling out of orbit. That'll happen for years.

COOPER

Well, we won't be around to see it.

Shane spins to Cooper.

SHANE

SHUT UP! SHUT THE HELL UP!
Hawkes, from day one you've made cracks like that. What the hell good does it do? Huh?! What's the point?

DAMPHOUSSE

Ease up, Captain. He's worn down. We all are.

Nathan looks around, puzzled.

WANG

But Hawkes only makes it worse. by movin' us around as if we were still in the war!

(CONTINUED)

87 CONTINUED: 2

87

NATHAN

This area is familiar...

West moves off...

SHANE

Where the hell's he goin', now?

COOPER

Off by himself. He's got the right idea.

Nathan turns.

NATHAN

It's the airfield. We're right back where we started. Looks like the Chigs have bailed. Sun'll be up by the time we get there.

Nathan continues toward the airfield. The others follow.

A90 INT. DINER - PLANET DEMIOS -MORNING

A90

The diner shows the wear of battle just like the Marines that er' ar. silently they disperse and check the inside. Vansen sets the radio down on the counter.

Wang moves off by himself behind the counter.

Damphousse freezes.

DAMPHOUSSE

Oh my God... some MRE's. A few weeks worth.

Everyone hustles over, except Wang.

COOPER

Chig's get to 'em?

Damphousse checks the case of Meals Ready to Eat. She starts shaking her head and tears into the case. The others grab some food and begin eating hungrily.

WANG

Checks the drawer in which he previously found the sugar substitute. The box is gone. A single packet remains. Wang checks the others, sees they are not watching him... and pockets the tiny packet.

CUT TO:

A91 EXT. SARATOGA - SPACE - NIGHT

A91

Enemy attack jets strafe the Saratoga, as she returns fire. The larger cannons FIRE on the enemy armada.

"SUGAR DIRT"

3S17

2/3/96

(BLUE)

47.

88
THRU
89

OMITTED

88
THRU
89

90 INT. SARATOGA - COMMAND CENTER - NIGHT

90

The command center is rocked by a direct hit. Panic and fear have never been so apparent. Weirick, Alcott and Broden are on the bridge.

ROSS

DIRECT THE CARTER TO OUR STARBOARD
BOW AND RETURN FIRE!

LT. PRICE

THE CARTER HAS RECEIVED A DIRECT
HIT!

CAMERA MOVES IN ON MCQUEEN... who whispers...

MCQUEEN

That means they can move in for the
kill.

The Saratoga takes another hit.

CUT TO:

91
THRU
95

OMITTED

91
THRU
95

A96 INT. PLANET DEMIOS - DINER - NIGHT

A96

In contrasting silence... Vansen turns on the radio. Behind her, Damphousse sets up the dish/antennae.

B96 INT. SARATOGA - COMMAND CENTER - NIGHT

B96

Intensity building, CAMERA IS MOVING WITH WEIRICK as he proceeds to Commodore Ross.

GENERAL WEIRICK

Commodore... the enemy is clearly
superior.

In the heat of battle, Ross turns, furious...

ROSS

There are 100,000 troops on Planet.
I will NOT DO TO THEM WHAT YOU HAD
ME DO TO THE TROOPS ON DEMIOS!

GENERAL WEIRICK

ROSS IT IS TIME TO GET THE HELL OUT
OF DODGE. THAT'S AN ORDER!

CUT TO:

C96 INT. PLANET DEMIOS - DINER - CLOSE - STELLAR WAYPOINT FINDER C96

- Wang reads the instrument. In the b.g., Cooper uncurls the solar arrays.

D96 INT. SARATOGA - COMMAND CENTER - SARATOGA - NIGHT D96

McQueen has to restrain Ross from aggressively moving on Weirick, who firmly stands his ground.

GENERAL WEIRICK
Stand down, Ross. I am
responsible. I am responsible for
the defeat on Demios. And I will
be responsible for the defeat
here... today.

Ross glares. The room becomes momentarily silent. A quiet
before the storm. Outside, in the distance, weapons FIRE.

Cutting through the silence, however... a lone and distant
voice comes over the radio. McQueen looks to his watch.

INSERT - MCQUEEN'S WATCH

it is 19:00 hours.

SHANE (V.O.)
Saratoga this is Demios...

WIDER

The entire room is drawn to the VOICE.

SHANE (V.O.)
As of 06:20 this morning, we have
retaken the airfield. Awaiting
orders.

Everyone is moved. Ross turns to Weirick, fire in the
Commodore's eyes.

ROSS
Sir... there was no defeat on
Demios... and there will be NO
DEFEAT HERE.

Ross turns to the Command Center.

ROSS
INCREASE POSITION TO 15,000
KILOMETERS. I WANT THE 3-2, THE
2-7 AND THE 53RD IN MY SKY ON THE
DOUBLE AND RAININ FIRE!

As the Command Center is overcome with renewed energy...

CUT TO:

E96 INT. PLANET DEMIOS - DINER - NIGHT

E96

Shane is on the headphones. As she shuts down the radio... her expression turns puzzled. She looks to the radio, seeming to hide her concern. She covertly checks the others position. As she appears to grow worried...

FADE OUT.

A LEGEND APPEARS: "FIVE DAYS LATER"

CUT TO:

F96 EXT. SARATOGA - DAY

F96

Planes buzz the deck, however this time it is a pair of Hammerheads.

G96 INT. SARATOGA - COMMAND CENTER - DAY

G96

The room is busy. Frenetic, however, confidence reigns. Ross marches along the upper platform receiving victorious reports.

LT. PRICE

HMS Vanguard reports two downed enemy ships. U.S.S. Michigan and Nevada reporting enemy retreat... Air Forces on Planet have achieved air superiority...

CAMERA PUSHES IN ON ROSS.

ROSS

It's ours.

Although CHEERS and VICTORY ERUPT from the personnel control room. McQueen is subdued... sad. He checks his watch.

INSERT - WATCH

19:05 hours.

MCQUEEN

Ross approaches and offers a handshake. McQueen looks at his commander.

MCQUEEN

No report from Demios.

As Ross understands and feels McQueen's concern...

FADE OUT:

(CONTINUED)

G96 CONTINUED:

G96

A WHITE GRAPHIC APPEARS: "12 DAYS LATER"

FADE IN:

H96 EXT. PLANET DEMIOS - DINER - RE-ESTABLISHING - NIGHT

H96

The planet and airfield feels like a ghost town.

I96 INT. DINER - NIGHT - CLOSE THE RADIO

I96

Shane's hand ENTERS FRAME and turns on the power. Shane leans INTO FRAME and PLACES ON THE HEADPHONES. SHE LOOKS OFF AT...

DAMPHOUSSE

setting up the dish/antennae. Behind her, Cooper appears and sets up the solar arrays.

WANG AND WEST

complete their part in the service.

WIDER

Shane adjusts the radio. She speaks into the microphone.

SHANE

Saratoga this is Demios at 19:00 hours. We report signs of other surviving troops on Planet, yet none have come forth to the airfield...

CAMERA MOVES PAST SHANE to a booth in which Cooper is finishing an MRE. He's sick of them, however, he relishes the last spoonful. Once empty, he looks at the can, then throws it angrily across the room.

The others, tired and worn, barely expend the energy to look at him as he rises and moves aggressively toward Shane.

COOPER

Tell 'em we need supplies. And not foot powder or shoelaces. We're out of food.

Cooper grabs the ear phones from Shane who battles to hold onto them. Cooper rips them out of her grasp. Shane tenses, as if preparing...

Cooper puts on the headphones and yells into the microphone.

COOPER

LISTEN TO ME! I KNOW YOU LEFT US
HERE TO DIE...

(CONTINUED)

196 CONTINUED:

196

He pauses, puzzled. He checks the dials, reacts. His eyes slowly turn to Shane.

COOPER

This radio is dead.

The others turn to Shane and Cooper. They look to the Captain, shocked and accusatory.

DAMPHOUSSE

What?

SHANE

It fried out about twelve days ago.

NATHAN

Why didn't you tell us?

Shane can't, or doesn't want to explain. The others are angry.

WANG

You put us through that charade for the last two weeks?

Shane nods. Cooper moves to her aggressively. She stands her ground.

COOPER

Oh, does "Captain" Vansen think we couldn't handle it? You think we're children?! Idiots?

SHANE

Back off, Hawkes.

COOPER

What are you gonna throw me in the brig for striking an officer? If that's the kind of "leader" you are, a liar, then I'm outta here. I ain't one of you anymore.

He turns and starts to gather his gear. Damphousse walks up to Shane with a betrayed expression.

DAMPHOUSSE

I can't believe you did that to us. How long would you have let it go on?

Shane averts her eyes. With no response from Vansen, Damphousse shakes her head and sighs.

DAMPHOUSSE

I'm going with Hawkes.

(CONTINUED)

196 CONTINUED: 2

196

Wang and West look to one another, back to Shane. Hawkes and Damphousse start to head out of the diner.

SHANE

I did it because without the radio, without a purpose everyday... I knew this would happen.

The group eyes each other.

SHANE

So, you know what, now that it's done... go. It'll be a relief not to be in command. Not to be responsible for four other lives.

Cooper now looks a bit guilty as if he had never really put himself in her shoes. After a beat, however, he collects his gear and indicates to Damphousse.

COOPER

Let's go.

Suddenly... a dim glow from the distance falls into the room. Cooper pauses and looks out the window, as does everyone.

58TH'S POV - LIGHT IN THE SKY

A bright pinpoint of light shines in the distant sky. Much brighter than a star.

RETURN

They continue to look at it out the window.

NATHAN

Another part of the Eisenhower.

WANG

No, it's not losing altitude.

DAMPHOUSSE

It looks like a Chig attack squadron. A few hundred miles out.

And yet, no one moves. They look to one Shane, the leader.

SHANE

I... I... can't run anymore. I guess we have the time to get to cover... but, without the hope of them coming back for us or all of us sticking together, I just can't... or don't care... to run anymore.

(CONTINUED)

196 CONTINUED: 3

196

The group looks to one another, their faces dirtied. Their spirits tired and defeated.

Nathan moves to a booth and sits. Damphousse, doesn't look anyone in the eyes as she thinks to herself. She drops her gear and moves to a booth.

Cooper appears confused. He moves to Vansen as if to get a closer look at her, searching to see if she is telling the truth. She looks up to him, with an expression of resignation.

COOPER

If you can't run... who am I gonna follow?

There is no reaction from Vansen as Hawkes sits in a booth, leaving Wang standing in the diner. He reaches into his pocket and produces the packet of sugar substitute.

WANG

I took this from that drawer... a while ago. And I'll be honest... I wasn't going to tell anybody.

He tears open the packet.

WANG

Our last meal. Everyone gets to wet their finger to the knuckle. Whatever sticks is yours.

He moves to Damphousse. She puts her index finger in her mouth, then places it in the packet. Her finger is coated with powder. She licks slowly around it, taking her time.

Wang moves to Nathan, who puts his finger in his mouth and then the packet. He opts not to "eat" it right away.

Wang moves to Vansen. She looks at Wang with sad eyes. They close as she shakes her head. Wang's eyes turn watery as he licks his finger, places it in the packet and then offers the remaining packet to Vansen. As she takes it, she breaks down in tears.

Wang turns to the window. The light growing brighter. CAMERA PUSHES IN ON HIM as he licks his finger.

WANG

Here they come.

NATHAN

runs his finger into his mouth at the final moment. He looks back out the window as the light turns too bright to look into. ENGINES ROAR.

WIDER

(CONTINUED)

I96 CONTINUED: 4

I96

No one can look into the light. They must turn away.

DAMPHOUSSE
They're landing.

COOPER
I won't let them take me prisoner.

Suddenly, beneath the door, forms break the rays of light
beneath the door. It slowly creaks open.

Backlit by the strong light, McQueen stands in the doorway.

MCQUEEN
Sorry to just drop in... but you
never call anymore.

Although drained, the 58th release their emotions. As
several medics race in to administer medical attention...

CUT TO:

J96 EXT. SARATOGA - SPACE - RE-ESTABLISHING

J96

The ship, battle-worn, rests above Demios.

96 INT. SARATOGA - HOSPITAL WARD - CLOSE - THE BAG

96

IVs are hooked up to each of the 58th as they recover in
hospital beds, regaining strength, but still pale and weak.

The door opens. Ross and McQueen enter. Ross stands
amongst the 58th. He eyes them, each Marine tired and weak,
but alive.

Ross averts his eyes.

ROSS
As a Commander, I feel no need to
explain my actions... but as a man,
as a human being... I must share my
emotions.

(beat)
I've never been more ashamed of
myself...

He begins to choke up.

ROSS (CONT'D)
Or more proud of you. Welcome
home.

Ross pauses a moment before he must turn and leave. The
58th remain silent. McQueen eyes them.

(CONTINUED)

96 CONTINUED:

96

MCQUEEN

Thought you'd like to know, APCs
have picked up approximately two
thousand survivors over the Planet.

DAMPHOUSSE

Sir.

McQueen moves to Damphousse's bedside.

DAMPHOUSSE

All of us who made it back... don't
ever want to forget those that
didn't.

She gestures beside her bed. McQueen picks up the bag that
holds the collected personal effects. He looks over his
squadron, nods and takes the bag from the room.

NATHAN

Man, I'm so tired... I just want to
sleep, but I can't. It's like I'm
supposed to be doin' somethin' but
I can't remember what.

CAMERA MOVES over the Marines in their beds. Everyone seems
to have the same odd feeling, until CAMERA ARRIVES on Shane,
who is looking off at something with a knowing expression.

CAMERA PANS OFF HER, across the hospital walls and holds on
the clock. CAMERA PUSHES INTO the time... 19:00. As the
second hand sweeps on...

FADE OUT.

END ACT FOUR