HMS Bagworth

By

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INT. HMS BAGWORTH, SUBMARINE, CONTROL ROOM - DAY (OR NIGHT)

The action starts with chaos in the control room of the British Submarine "HMS Bagworth". There are three members of the crew in the control room and they are being knocked about the room by the force of impact from an enemy DEPTH CHARGE.

The Crew Members in the control room are:

CAPTAIN QUINTON, 42, Commanding officer. FIRST OFFICER FALCONER, 33, Second in command. OFFICER HUGHES, 22, Welsh.

The crew members steady themselves and slowly return to their positions. Captain Quinton grabs the intercom.

CAPTAIN QUINTON
Chief Engineer, damage report? Come in. Are you there?

Crackle from the intercom and a response.

CHIEF ENGINEER (V/O)
Of course, sir. Everything alright?

CAPTAIN QUINTON
Er well. Not really. I thought you were a gonner?

CHIEF ENGINEER (V/O)
Oh no, sir. Definitely not. Spurs fan. It’s bad, sir. The whole of the stern’s been hit.

CAPTAIN QUINTON
Close the watertight doors.

CHIEF ENGINEER (V/O)
I Cleansed them this morning, sir.

CAPTAIN QUINTON
You what? I said CLOSE the watertight doors.

CHIEF ENGINEER (V/O)
I did hose them.

CAPTAIN QUINTON
What’s the matter with you Dawkins. I said CLOSE!
CHIEF ENGINEER (V/O)
Oh? They’re already closed, sir.

FIRST OFFICER FALCONER
Dawkins is suffering from a touch of deafness at the moment, sir.

CAPTAIN QUINTON
Really? How?

OFFICER HUGHES
He was on the lavvy when we dived this morning. He tipped off the bowl and hit his head. Then the contents of the bowl...

CAPTAIN QUINTON
That’s quite enough, Hughes. I didn’t give the order to close the doors. Who did?

FIRST OFFICER FALCONER
I ordered them closed, Captain. When the first one hit.

CAPTAIN QUINTON
You did? How many doors have been closed?

FIRST OFFICER FALCONER
Not sure, sir. All of them, I think?

CAPTAIN QUINTON
You think? Well find out Falconer. Find out!

Falconer is waiting for Captain Quinton to relieve himself of the intercom.

FIRST OFFICER FALCONER
May I, sir?

CAPTAIN QUINTON
Be my guest.

First Office Falconer takes the intercom.

FIRST OFFICER FALCONER
Chief Engineer. How many doors are closed?

Crackle from the intercom again.

CHIEF ENGINEER (V/O)
All the doors to compartments one to seven.
Captain Quinton interjects.

CAPTAIN QUINTON
Ask the Chief engineer which compartment the engine room is in.

CHIEF ENGINEER (V/O)
I heard that. We are in compartment five. Why’s that?

The Captain takes the intercom.

CAPTAIN QUINTON
How do you propose to get to the bridge or even the dining quarters if you have closed the watertight doors to both compartments either side of you?

Violent crackle from the intercom. In between the hiss and crackle we hear the word "Bugger" spoken in haste. The intercom then goes dead.

CAPTAIN QUINTON (CONT’D)
Spiffing! I’ve been on this damn underwater sausage for three months and there’s not one crew member with an ounce of intellect on board.

OFFICER HUGHES
That’s a bit harsh, sir. Half the crew would be underwater by now.

CAPTAIN QUINTON
Half the crew?

OFFICER HUGHES
Yes. I’m afraid Navigating officer Mills was in section three. Petty officer Harrison was paying out the card school debts. So most of the crew were down there.

CAPTAIN QUINTON
(to Falconer)
Did you know about this, Falconer?

FIRST OFFICER FALCONER
Er. Yes, sir. I’d asked Periscope operator Fairfax to collect my winnings.
CAPTAIN QUINTON
What about the second officer?

OFFICER HUGHES
He’ll be submerged too, sir.

CAPTAIN QUINTON
Coxswain? Torpedo gunner? Helmsman Gibbs?

FIRST OFFICER FALCONER
Nope. All gone, sir.

CAPTAIN QUINTON
What about ship’s cook?

FIRST OFFICER FALCONER
Private Kidd?

OFFICER HUGHES
No. He was collecting food supplies from the supply room. He should be alright.

CAPTAIN QUINTON
Don’t just stand there, man. Summon him up here. Get him to bring all rations.

Hughes gets on the intercom. Quinton continues...

CAPTAIN QUINTON (CONT’D)
First Officer. How much air do we have left?

FIRST OFFICER FALCONER
By my calculations, considering we only have four usable compartments, and we are still taking on seawater, about three and a half hours, worth.

CAPTAIN QUINTON
(sarcastic)
Oh Good. I do like a challenge.

FIRST OFFICER FALCONER
(Enthusiastically)
We did get so close though, sir.

CAPTAIN QUINTON
First Officer. Let me tell you this... We’ve been trawling three months in the Baltic Sea in a hundred and fifty feet vessel that resembles a hot dog sausage. Our mission, using HMS Bagworth,
CAPTAIN QUINTON (CONT’D)
the oldest and least equipped
submarine in the fleet, was to
trace and destroy Germany’s
largest, fastest and most deadly
battleship "The Battenberg". We
barely got within five miles of
the enemy, when my Navigating
Officer decides to call in his
debts, leaving us all to face
certain death. The German’s lob a
few depth charges our way and now
half the ship is blown to bits.
We will have to try and survive
on my strength and cunning alone.

The Control room door opens and PRIVATE KIDD enters,
carrying a bag. Private Kidd salutes the Captain. The
salute is returned.

PRIVATE KIDD
You wanted to see me, sir?

Captain Quinton looks the Private up and down.

CAPTAIN QUINTON
You’re a little short for an able
seaman?

PRIVATE KIDD
Er Yeah. It runs in my family.

CAPTAIN QUINTON
Take your cap off, Cook.

Private Kidd removes the cap and a length of FEMALE long
hair tumbles down.

CAPTAIN QUINTON (CONT’D)
Well, well. What do you know. A
stowaway. How were you allowed on
board?

PRIVATE KIDD
I was asked, sir. The boys didn’t
seem to like the last cook’s
cooking.

FIRST OFFICER FALCONER
That’s right, sir. Half the men
ended up chucking their tucker
overboard, sir. When we broke the
surface of course.

OFFICER HUGHES
So that’s why we always had the
seagulls following us.
CAPTAIN QUINTON
What?

OFFICER HUGHES
Well that bird mess was a bugger to get off the hull, sir.

Captain Quinton shakes his head.

CAPTAIN QUINTON
You do realise, Kidd, that women have been banned from the submarine core since 1901?

PRIVATE KIDD
Well I knew I shouldn’t be here officially. I didn’t realise we were banned?

FIRST OFFICER FALCONER
I didn’t know that either, sir??

CAPTAIN QUINTON
Falconer, not one female has graced the King’s vessels for over forty years and you let one on because the lads were... Peckish? (pause) Kidd, you were getting supplies. What did you retrieve?

PRIVATE KIDD
Well, only these, sir.

Kidd passes the bag to the Captain.

CAPTAIN QUINTON
Four cans of baked beans. Is that all?

PRIVATE KIDD
I just grabbed the first thing I could.

FIRST OFFICER FALCONER
At least we’ve got some food, sir.

CAPTAIN QUINTON
Have you ever eaten baked beans before, officer?

FIRST OFFICER FALCONER
Why, yes. Of course, sir.
CAPTAIN QUINTON
You will realise the problem, then.

OFFICER HUGHES
I don’t understand, sir?

CAPTAIN QUINTON
Let me give you a frank appraisal of the situation. We appear to be currently the four surviving members of the HMS Bagworth...

OFFICER HUGHES
Remember the engine room, Captain.

CAPTAIN QUINTON
Numskulls. Their own fault. Here we are, trapped in a room, seventy feet under water... The only food we have is four tins of baked beans. You know what happens when you eat beans...

OFFICER HUGHES
Oh Yes. (Laughs) Gas, sir.

CAPTAIN QUINTON
And how many hours, worth of air do we have, Falconer?

FIRST OFFICER FALCONER
Um. Three hours, Twenty minutes, sir.

CAPTAIN QUINTON
Spiffing. Running out of air and the only meal is baked beans.

OFFICER HUGHES
It is a bit of a poser, sir.

FIRST OFFICER FALCONER
Well I’m not going to starve to death. Kidd, hand me the tin opener.

PRIVATE KIDD
Tin opener, sir?

FIRST OFFICER FALCONER
Yes. The tin opener.

PRIVATE KIDD
I haven’t got a tin opener.

Captain Quinton throws the bag down.
CAPTAIN QUINTON
Well that’s solves the question
of whether baked beans will be
the final supper. Any
suggestions, anyone?

There is a slight pause.

OFFICER HUGHES
I spy?

CAPTAIN QUINTON
Certainly not!

PRIVATE KIDD
Poker?

CAPTAIN QUINTON
Hughes, if you suggest strip
poker..

The radio hisses into life. Crackles galore. Germanic
language. "Schnell... Schnell..."

Falconer checks some instruments and gauges.

FIRST OFFICER FALCONER
I would suggest the enemy is
directly above us.

OFFICER HUGHES
We’re done for. I thought I’d get
out of this in one piece. We’re
all DOOMED!

CAPTAIN QUINTON
Piffle! Absolute piffle! Pull
yourself together, man. Stiff
upper lips, all round. We’re
British. We fly in the face of
danger... We...

PRIVATE KIDD
..wee back into the wind of
misfortune.

CAPTAIN QUINTON
Not quite but that’s the spirit,
Kidd.

FIRST OFFICER FALCONER
Looks like they’re about to drop
another one, sir.

PRIVATE KIDD
I just have. I had a tin of those
beans earlier and all this
doesn’t help.
CAPTAIN QUINTON
Terrific! Facing certain death with a pathetic excuse of a first officer, a transvestite Chef and a Welshman. Oh well... Down with the ship as all great captains do... Right, now. Everyone brace yourselves...

There is a long silent pause until the intercom cracks into life once more...

CHIEF ENGINEER (V/O)
Are you still there, sir?

Everyone looks bemused. Captain Quinton responds.

CAPTAIN QUINTON
Dawkins? Is that you?

CHIEF ENGINEER (V/O)
Of course, sir. Are you alright?

CAPTAIN QUINTON
We’re not gonner’s yet, Dawkins.

CHIEF ENGINEER (V/O)
Told you earlier, sir. Spurs fan.

CAPTAIN QUINTON
No. No. I thought you’d bought it.

CHIEF ENGINEER (V/O)
Sorry, sir. Bad line. Well, last time we were in port I got some coasters for the wife.

CAPTAIN QUINTON
Have you gone mad, Dawkins?

CHIEF ENGINEER (V/O)
Sad, sir? Well I haven’t seen her for three months.

CAPTAIN QUINTON
I thought the stern was hit. Ablaze.

CHIEF ENGINEER (V/O)
I thought so too, sir. Turns out it was Private Stearn being a tit. Miscommunication I’m afraid.

CAPTAIN QUINTON
So there’s nothing wrong with the hull?
The radio hisses once more.

A Beat.

BRITISH COMMANDER (V/O)
Hello chaps. We’re right above you. What have you stopped for? Jerry’s going in the other direction. What?

The Captain does not reply.

FIRST OFFICER FALCONER
Shall I give the order, sir?

CAPTAIN QUINTON
I am surrounded by fools and idiots!

OFFICER HUGHES
Take that as a yes.

Falconer takes the intercom.

FIRST OFFICER FALCONER
Full ahead.

The rest of the control room go about their duties normally. Captain Quinton collapses into his seat with his head in his hands.

FADE OUT