FADE IN:

EXT. RYE BEACH, NEW HAMPSHIRE - DUSK

The surf of the Atlantic Ocean hits the beach.

LARRY POST (16) stands on the beach and tosses a stick.

PRINCESS, a two-year-old German Shepard, dashes after the stick.

Across the road from the beach a 1955 Ford bucks slowly forward in a large parking lot. The car stalls. The loud sound of grinding gears.

INT. FORD - DUSK

BOB MURPHY (37), wearing a BOSTON RED SOX cap and glasses, sits on the passenger side.

BOB
The clutch. Step on the clutch, Nancy.

NANCY MURPHY (16), attractive, sits behind the steering wheel. Her foot pushes down on the clutch pedal. She turns the ignition key. The car starts.

BOB
Now give it a little gas.

The engine ROARS.

Bob smiles.

BOB
Just push down on the gas pedal a little bit.

The engine idles.

BOB
That’s good. Now I want you to slowly let up on the clutch while you give it more gas.
EXT. PARKING LOT - DUSK

The loud sound of a car leaving rubber.

The car jets across the parking lot. It abruptly stops.

INT. CAR - DUSK

Bob stares ahead.

BOB
That was better, but a little too fast.

NANCY
Dad, can you buy me an automatic? I know where there’s one for only seventy-five dollars. Please.

BOB
Don’t be a quitter. After sea trials I’ll have you driving like a pro. Let’s get your friend.

Larry watches Princess run into the ocean.

The ocean gets darker.

BLACK SCREEN

SUPER IMPOSE: APRIL 10, 1963

STOCK SOUNDS

The recorded frightful sounds, GROANS and CLANKS, of the USS Thresher breaking apart.

EXT. ATLANTIC OCEAN – DAY

A submarine slowly sinks as the sounds become louder. The AFT end of the sub is lower than the fwd end.

The sail breaks away from the hull. It turns towards its side as it sinks below the submarine.
INT. SUBMARINE - CONTROL AND ATTACK CENTER

Beams of light from battle lanterns shine on the passage ways and gage boards.

TWO SAILORS sit in front of their control panels.

TWO MEN wearing civilian clothes and TWO SAILORS stand behind the sailors.

Everyone appears to be frightened.

Bob Murphy, wearing a navy uniform, stands by the periscope holding a handset from a sound powered telephone.

He places the handset into its holder and turns.

BOB
The air pressure lines are frozen.
We can’t blow air into the ballast tanks.

The load GROANS and CLANKS of the high tensile steel about to break.

The hull above the men breaks in and there is a loud sound “like air rushing into an air tank”.

The men burst into flames.

Large pieces of hull and tons of water crush the burning bodies.

INSERT - NEWSPAPER HEADLINES: U.S. NUCLEAR SUB THRESHER, WITH CREW OF 129, LOST IN ATLANTIC.

INT. OVAL OFFICE - DAY

PRESIDENT JOHN KENNEDY sits on his wooden rocking chair by the fireplace.

ADMIRAL HYMAN RICKOVER, 63, white hair, short, thin, sits across from Kennedy on a white leather sofa.
KENNEDY
What the hell happened, Admiral?

RICKOVER
Insufficient solder at a four-inch pipe joint. Seawater sprayed from that joint onto vital electrical components causing a reactor shutdown and loss of propulsion power. I’m pretty damn sure that’s what happened.

KENNEDY
Well, we don’t know that for sure.

RICKOVER
We know their method of testing those silver-brazed joints was inadequate. We directed them to use ultrasonic testing. They didn’t.

KENNEDY
Okay. Right. Well, Admiral, I’m told that the Navy didn’t specify the extent of the testing required.

RICKOVER
Mr. President, the shipyard found that the ultrasonic testing was too costly and time consuming. THOSE BASTARDS SHOULD HAVE BEEN MORE CONCERNED WITH THE QUALITY OF WORKMANSHIP INSTEAD OF MAKING A FEW EXTRA DOLLARS.

KENNEDY
Okay. My father always told me that all business men were sons of bitches.

Kennedy walks over to the fireplace. He ponders.

KENNEDY
I want you to meet with Secretary
McNamara and draft a submarine safety program.

RICKOVER
A sub-safe program. I like that.

KENNEDY
I want provisions that allows the Navy to oversee and strictly enforce those requirements.

RICKOVER
Good. It’ll cost the government more money, but it’ll be worth it.

KENNEDY
Okay. We’ll talk about this later.

RICKOVER
Thank you, Mr. President.

EXT. CEMETERY – DAY
A large group of PEOPLE walk towards their cars.
A MAN opens a car door for his WIFE.

WIFE
What a waste of money. There’s no body, for Christ sake.

The woman gets in the car.

MAN
It’s what Pam wanted.

WIFE
How could his body incinerate?

MAN
Has to do with combustion. Intense heat when the hull imploded.
The man shuts the car door.

Nancy and PAM (37) stand by a headstone.

Rickover, wearing a suit, approaches Pam.

    RICKOVER
    I’m Admiral Hyman Rickover. I’m sorry for your loss.

With tears running down her cheeks, Pam glares at Rickover.

    PAM
    You knew it wasn’t safe, didn’t you?

Rickover looks at Pam for a moment, then turns his head.

    PAM
    Admiral, you can go to Hell.

Pam cries uncontrollably as Nancy tries to comfort her.

Rickover mopes away.

INT. JOHN KENNEDY LIBRARY - DAY

FOURTEEN YEARS LATER

A painting of John Kennedy sitting in his rocking chair hangs on the wall. Written on the wall next to the painting is ‘ASK NOT WHAT YOUR COUNTRY CAN DO FOR YOU—ASK WHAT YOU CAN DO FOR YOUR COUNTRY.’

    VELIOTIS (O.S.)
    (thick Greek accent)
    Warren Harding said, ‘We must have a citizenship less concerned about what the government can do for it and more anxious about what it can do for the nation’.

Two well dressed MEN stand in front of the words. P. T. VELIOTIS, distinguished looking, mid-fifties, well over six feet tall, pencil-thin moustache and SUBCONTRACTOR, a much smaller man, early fifties, look at the words.
VELIOTIS
(thick Greek accent)
President Kennedy’s most notable words ...a republican concept.

The two men stroll away from the exhibit. While Veliotis talks, they past the “Oval Office” exhibit.

VELIOTIS
I’m going to award Frigitemp an additional twelve million dollar contract. Transfer five hundred thousand into my Swiss account.

SUBCONTRACTOR
Done.

VELIOTIS
I’ll be leaving Quincy shortly.
Don’t get too greedy. We don’t want investigators, my friend.

The men stop in front of the 1960 election exhibit. Hanging on the wall is the red and gray election map that shows the state by state final election results.

SUBCONTRACTOR
Where’re you going, Takis?

VELIOTIS
Connecticut. Another shipyard.

Veliotis extends his hand towards the subcontractor. The two men shake hands.

INT. OVAL OFFICE

JIMMY CARTER meets with Admiral Rickover.

RICKOVER
Those bastards want another five hundred forty-four million dollars for cost overruns.

CARTER
The problems were due to faulty
design data.

RICKOVER
BULLSHIT. They expect the navy
to pay for their fuck-ups. Those
claims are fraudulent.

CARTER
What do you know about their new
General Manager, Veliotis.

RICKOVER
He’s from Greece. Not an American
citizen. He took Quincy out of the
red at our tax payers expense. He
likes to fire people.

EXT. - ELECTRIC BOAT - MAIN GATE - DAY

P.T. Veliotis and seven men, all wearing expensive looking
suits, march into the shipyard with four uniformed security
guards. They proceed down a small hill.

Two men wearing white hard hats talk at the bottom of the
hill. Veliotis and a security guard approach the two men.
The other men keep on walking.

VELIOTIS
What are you two supervisors
doing?

SUPERVISOR
(smiling)
We’re just shooting the breeze.

VELIOTIS
You two can shoot the breeze
elsewhere, you’re both fired.

INT. LIVING ROOM

TELEVISION SCREEN

AN ANCHORWOMAN reports the news.
ANCHORWOMAN
More than three thousand salaried employees were dismissed today at a local defense plant. The full story will be at six.

Nancy, now 30, sits back on a recliner.

Larry, now a paraplegic, sits on a wheelchair. He turns his head away from the television and looks at Nancy.

LARRY
E B?

NANCY
Yeah, I heard they went into offices and told everyone to pack their personal things.

LARRY
Are you safe?

NANCY
I have super seniority, but if they get to someone with more time than me, I’ll give up my steward button.

LARRY
That would be foolish.

NANCY
It would be the right thing to do.

TELEVISION SCREEN

Veliotis struts out of the shipyard’s main gate. A reporter places a microphone in front of Veliotis’ face.

REPORTER
Mr. Veliotis, are you going to lay off more employees tomorrow?

VELIOTIS
I don’t care to tell you want
I’m going to do.

BACK TO SCENE

A wedding picture of Larry, wearing an army uniform, and Nancy hangs on the wall above the television.

LARRY
He’s a prick.

NANCY
Yeah, a big one. Someday I think I’ll be feeling the pain.

INT. VELIOTIS’S OFFICE – DAY

The office is spacious with floor length windows overlooking the shipyard and the Thames river.

Veliotis sits at his large mahogany desk by the windows.

Admiral Rickover sits in front of the desk. Several feet behind Rickover is a long conference table surrounded by chairs. The walls are covered with pictures of submarines and one of Spiro Agnew on the cover of Life magazines May 8, 1970, issue.

RICKOVER
Are more layoffs coming, Mr. Veliotis?

VELIOTIS
Call me, Takas, Admiral. Yes, primarily in the overhead and support functions.

RICKOVER
Will they affect any delivery dates?

VELIOTIS
No, I have brought some good people here to help me turn this place around.

Rickover stands and ambles over to Agnew’s picture. He reads
the words on the picture out loud.

RICKOVER
Stern words of silent majority.  
Spiro Agnew knows best.  A friend of yours, Takis?

VELIOTIS
I met him, Admiral.  Did you know the Greeks were the first to establish a democratic voting assembly and a jury system?

RICKOVER
Yes, I knew that.

Rickover points a Agnew’s picture.

RICKOVER
Did you know that Mr. Agnew accepted bribes?

Veliotis gets up from his desk and slinks over to Rickover.

VELIOTIS
Campaign contributions, Admiral.  They forced him to plead no contest to a tax evasion charge for not paying taxes on those contributions.

RICKOVER
Who are they?

VELIOTIS
The ones who didn’t want Spiro to be the next president.  Thank you for stopping by, Admiral.  Here’s a little something for your wife.

Viliotis hands Rickover a tiny box.

RICKOVER
Thank you.  A bribe?
VELIOTIS
No, just a gift. Be sure to pay the gift taxes on it.

RICKOVER
Do you know what, 'quidquid id est, timeo Danaos et dona ferentes' means?

VELIOTIS
Yes. Beware of Greeks bearing gifts. It’s only a pair of diamond earrings, Admiral.
(smilng)
Not a Trojan horse.

RICKOVER
(pointing)
I’ve been noticing your tie clip.

A tie clip shaped like a submarine is fastened to Veliotis’ tie.

VELIOTIS
Say no more, I will mail you a dozen.

RICKOVER
Would you make that a couple of hundred. I’ll pass them out to my staff, congressmen, and to the President.

VELIOTIS
Consider them in the mail, Admiral.

They shake hands.

INT. INSPECTION OFFICE - DAY

There are six cafeteria style tables located in front of four large desk. There are over thirty people in the office. Most of them appear to be busy: reading procedures,
looking at drawings, and writing up reports. Some are just talking to others.

BOB CRANDALL, early forties, tall, good looking, always holding or smoking a cigarette, sits at a table with Nancy and ROGER HAYWARD, 52, crew cut.

CRANDALL
(puffs on a pall mall)
Mcgill mailed the petition yesterday.

HAYWARD
Even if we get our cases go to arbitration, we can’t beat this company.

NANCY
I trust arbitrators. They’re smart and honest. All our cases are cut and dry.

CRANDALL
Still the eternal optimist.

NANCY
Arbitrators can read. It’s a job requirement. Anybody want a coffee?

Nancy stands and glances at her two co-workers.

CRANDALL
You fly, I’ll buy. The money’s in my pant’s pocket. Help yourself.

He pats his thigh.

NANCY
I thought I noticed a roll of dimes in your pocket. I’ll buy, but I don’t deliver.

CRANDALL
Tell me about it.
Crandall, holding a notebook, gets up from the table. A flashlight and mirror hang from his belt.

CRANDALL
I gotta hit the steel. You going to the apprentice alumni banquet, tonight?

NANCY
A chance to meet the Greek. Wouldn’t miss it.

INT. BANQUET HALL - NIGHT

About a hundred men and four women fill the banquet hall. Some sit at tables, but most of them stand around in small groups.

Veliotis stands with Nancy. Eight men stand in line behind her.

VELIOTIS
What do you do in my shipyard?

NANCY
I’m in inspection.

VELIOTIS
Ah, I’ll be making a lot of changes in that department.

NANCY
I heard that the tradesman will be inspecting their own work.

VELIOTIS
Don’t worry, we will find you a job. We need men...sorry, people to build my submarines.

NANCY
If you do away with inspection, there won’t be any quality. You’ll be putting lives at risk.
VELIOTIS
No. Supervisors will review the workmanship.

NANCY
Then he would be doing the job of an inspector, a clear cut contract violation.

VELIOTIS
If you think it’s a violation, follow the grievance procedure.

NEXT MAN IN LINE
Come on sister, give somebody else a chance.

EXT. POST HOUSE - NIGHT
Nancy walks up to the front door.

INT. LIVING ROOM
Nancy enters.

Larry sits in front of the television. Four empty beer cans lie on the floor next to his wheelchair.

Johnny Carson is talking with Jane Fonda on the television screen.

LARRY
Another night out with the boys. I can’t say that I blame you.

Nancy strolls over to Larry.

NANCY
You’re the only man for me.

She kisses him on the lips.

Larry points at the television.

LARRY
Fonda made a movie with Jon
Voight. She plays a married slut who has an affair with a paraplegic. Only in Hollywood.

Nancy gets behind Larry and massages his shoulders.

NANCY
Love is much more than a couple of minutes of sex.

LARRY
You’re telling me you don’t miss it?

NANCY
I miss not having a baby by the man I love. That’s all.

LARRY
Find another man. Fall in love and have his baby. Ten years caring for me is plenty.

Nancy gives Larry a love tap to the back of the head.

NANCY
Stop that. I love you.

Nancy heads for the kitchen.

NANCY
Can I get you another drink?

LARRY
Sure, it’s what I live for.

Nancy walks out of the room.

TELEVISION SCREEN

Fonda talks to Carson.

FONDA
Zsa Zsa was holding a cat on her lap and asked you, ‘Do you want to pet my pussy’?
You replied, ‘Sure, just get that damn cat out of the way’.

The audience laughs.

Carson laughs and looks around.

FONDA
Did you say that?

CARSON
No, I think I would remember that.

INT. SUBMARINE - MANEUVERING ROOM - DAY

A small area with a open doorway on two sides.

Nancy, on her knees, holding a notebook and pen, inspects the bottom of the Ship’s Control Panel.

Several feet behind her, CHARLIE COX, an electrician in his 20'S, wires a sound powered telephone.

CHARLIE
Nancy, can I pet your pussy?

NANCY
Be nice, Charlie. I heard all about the Tonight Show.

CHARLIE
Okay, then, while you’re on you knees, how about doing me a little favor?

GEORGE LACHAPELL, mid 40's, steps into the room.

GEORGE
You pestering my inspector, Cox?

CHARLIE
Just talking to her.
GEORGE
Is he bothering you, Nancy?

NANCY
No.

GEORGE
Cox, go to the shop and pick up two boxes of banding for Pete Silver. He’s working by the Main Seawater Pump.

Charlie leaves the area.

George stares down at Nancy.

GEORGE
How about stopping for a drink after work, Nancy?

NANCY
Sorry, I’m happily married.

GEORGE
So am I. It’s only a drink, for crying out loud. I’ve seen you drinking with Crandall many times.

NANCY
He’s a close friend.

GEORGE
Aren’t we friends?

NANCY
Not really.

GEORGE
Because I’m management?

Nancy closes her notebook and stands.

NANCY
I’m never going to have a drink with you. And stop leaving roses
on my car.

She storms out of the area.

INT. INSPECTION OFFICE - DAY

Nancy writes up an inspection report. Crandall sits at the table across from her.

    CRANDALL
    You’re mad about something. Did Leo slap your ass again?

    NANCY
    No, it’s Weird George. He won’t leave me alone.

    CRANDALL
    Tell his boss.

    NANCY
    A lot a good that will do. He’s the biggest chauvinist around. He once said if a woman didn’t have a...you know, there would be a bounty on them.

    CRANDALL
    That was before he made general foreman. Now he’s seen the light and is a respected member of our shipyard community.

Hayward approaches the table. He’s pale, exhausted and out of breath.

    NANCY
    What’s with you? You look awful.

    HAYWARD
    (Breathing heavy)
    Thanks. A wife and seven kids ages you, quick.
NANCY
You know what I mean.

Hayward sits on the bench next to Crandall.

HAYWARD
I know. Lately, I’ve been short winded. Listen, I just got the word. Tomorrow night we meet with an international representative at the union hall.

NANCY
Kind of a short notice.

HAYWARD
Yeah, and he wants everybody there.

INT. UNION HALL – NIGHT

INTERNATIONAL REP., 62, short, gray hair, PINKSTON,50, light brown skin, KATT, 49, salt and pepper hair, bushy eyebrows, and MESSIER, 47, sit behind a conference table facing a group of twenty six men and Nancy.

International Rep., looking annoyed as he raises a letter above his head.

INTERNATIONAL REP.
I have a letter of protest signed by twenty seven inspectors. I’ve been assigned by Vice President Flynn to investigate this matter.

Roger Hayward, sitting in the front row, stands up.

HAYWARD
First, I would like to establish that we have definite cases. These are legitimate cases.

INTERNATIONAL REP.
I don’t question that, Brother.

HAYWARD
For three years, no settled grievances.

CRANDALL
I called Pinkston about one grievance and he never got back to me.

KATT
We arbitrated inspection and got our jock knocked off. The pipe fitters lost the fit up case.

CRANDALL
Twenty seven people will lose their jobs. It’s time to put the toys away and have our day in court.

KATT
A hundred people are losing their jobs every month. We’re not losing jobs, we’re being eradicated.

NANCY
Our cases are stronger than the pipe fitters’ case.

KATT
No. Our attorneys advised us that was our best case.

NANCY
Joe Messier told me that the MTC President is piping and his case goes first.

KATT
I don’t believe Joe said that.

NANCY
He’s sitting next to you, ask him.

INTERNATIONAL REP.
I’ve been around for forty years. A communication breakdown is an
important problem. I suggest that two of you meet with Pinkston.

CRANDALL
No. That’s no good. We want dates to hear our cases. We pay dues.

KATT
If Pinkston wants dates, I’ll give him them.

Pinkston nods.

INTERNATIONAL REP
I’ll tell the boss tomorrow that you fellas have reached an agreement. You will have the next available date.

SHIYPARD – ELECTRICAL SHOP – DAY

Nancy strides through the electrical shop.

JOE(40’S), stands next to an unattractive WOMAN. Nancy goes up to him.

NANCY
Joe, I want to talk to you, in private.

They move away from the table and stop between two rows of metal lockers.

NANCY
You signed that you inspected some micro switches for the shutter doors. The switches aren’t installed yet. Joe, you signed that they’re properly installed.

CEDIO
My boss told me to sign the paper work. He said everything was
installed and inspected.

NANCY
Joe, if I write this up, your boss will deny that. You’ll be fired.

CEDIO
You’re gonna report me?

NANCY
Not this time. But next time I will, in a heartbeat.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

Nancy walks up to her car and removes a single long stem rose from the roof. She tosses it to the ground and unlocks her car door.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Nancy enters.

Larry holds up a four-page letter.

LARRY
Who’s George?

Nancy looks stunned.

NANCY
I don’t believe it. He sent me a letter?

LARRY
A love letter. Who is he?

NANCY
A crazy supervisor.

Nancy hurries over to Larry and hugs him.

NANCY
Trust me. There’s nothing going
Larry pushes her away.

LARRY
He says he dreams of marrying you.

Nancy takes the letter and scans it.

NANCY
Honey, you can see he’s a nut case. Nowhere in the letter does he imply that I went out with him.

LARRY
I know. It’s just that he must think you’re easy. Why?

Nancy’s hurt. She loses it.

NANCY
First you open up a letter addressed to me. Now you’re calling me a tramp.

She rushes out of the room.

A door slams shut.

LARRY
(Yells)
You’re never home. Get a divorce, then sleep with whoever you want.

INT. RANDY STURM’S OFFICE – DAY

STURM, 50'S, sits behind a desk reading the letter. He lays it on the desk.

STURM
It looks like he wants to take
you out. Why should I care?

Nancy stands in front of the desk.

    NANCY
    I’m married. Keep him away from me.

    STURM
    What someone does outside the shipyard is none of my business. If he does anything inappropriate in the shipyard, let me know.

    NANCY
    You’re not even going to talk to him?

    STURM
    Ms. Post...

    NANCY
    It’s Mrs. Post.

    STURM
    Mrs. Post, we’ve been building war machines here for over sixty years without any problems. Now, women are working on submarines. Nothing but problems. I’m sorry men stare at you. I’m sorry they swear. It’s only human that some may want to ask you out. I’m sorry but there is nothing I can do about that.

    NANCY
    Actually this is what I expected from you.

Nancy grabs the letter and starts for the door.

    STURM
    Mrs. Post, are you signed out on union business?
NANCY
Yes, do you want to see my time card?

STURM
No, but I’ll be calling your supervisor.

INT. INSPECTION OFFICE - DAY

JAY LAVIGNE, late 30's, reaches across his desk and hands Nancy a warning slip.

She reads it.

NANCY
I wasn’t insubordinate to him.

JAY
He says you were and told me to give you a written warning. If you think it’s unjust, grieve it.

NANCY
We have more important issues to grieve. What else did you want to tell me?

JAY
We now have a zero tolerance for lost time. All lost time will be charged to vacation time or earned sick time.

NANCY
If we use up our vacation hours, can we borrow from next years?

JAY
No. You miss any time without anything to charge it to, you’ll be discharged.

NANCY
Where did these changes come
from?

Jay
Veliotis.

INT. VELIOTIS’S OFFICE

Veliotis meets with Rickover.

VELIOTIS
I believe in managing this shipyard. This is my shipyard, a private enterprise, and I will control it.

RICKOVER
We are not talking about managing a shipyard. WE ARE TALKING ABOUT EXTORTING SIX HUNDRED MILLION DOLLARS FROM THE GOVERNMENT. GOD DAMN IT.

VELIOTIS
Admiral, I will lay off eight thousand workers if the Navy doesn’t settle the cost overrun claims. Production on the 688 class submarines will stop this Friday. We will continue production after we are paid.

RICKOVER
Put in some justifiable claims and don’t exaggerate, and the Navy will pay you.

VELIOTIS
I’ll be meeting with Navy Secretary Hidalgo this week. He sounded very optimistic about settling the claims.

RICKOVER
He’ll probably be working for General Dynamics in a few years.

VELIOTIS
I’m a very busy man, Admiral. That’s all the time I have for you today, please leave.

STOCK SHOT - NAVY OFFICIALS AND ELECTRIC BOAT OFFICIALS SIGNING DOCUMENTS

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Navy agrees to a compromise that provides Electric Boat over six hundred million dollars for cost overrun claims.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Nancy, Pinkston, and Messier sit on one side of a long conference table. Three company REPRESENTATIVES sit on the other side.

Nancy passes the representatives copies of test inspection reports.

Messier takes the minutes of the meeting.

NANCY
Two former structural inspectors, now non-union employees, are inspecting lugs on electrical wiring. A clear violation of Article 2.

PETCHARK, (50'S), a huge man wearing glasses, examines a report.

PETCHARK
That’s for an arbitrator to decide.

NANCY
Those people have no electrical experience. Why didn’t you hire any of the electrical inspectors that were laid off?

GREER, late 30's, jots something on a pad.

GREER
I hired them. That shouldn’t concern you.

NANCY
The contract reads that the Company will make an attempt to find suitable work for anyone on layoff status.

PETCHARK
You can arbitrate that too, if you want to.

NANCY
Did they attend classes in proper lug installation?

GREER
Of course.

NANCY
Did you attend those classes?

GREER
As a matter of fact, I did.

NANCY
All of them?

GREER
Yes.

NANCY
What size lug goes on a tsga-300 and how many crimps?

GREER
I don’t know.

NANCY
Can you give one example? Any size wire or lug?

GREER
No.
NANCY
How many cut or nicked wire strands are allowed?

GREER
I don’t know.

NANCY
Can you tell us what was taught in any of those classes?

Greer, his face bright red, sits and thinks.

NANCY
There weren’t any classes. You’re lying, aren’t you?

PETCHARK
Okay. We’ll settle this one. How many hours do you want?

PINKSTON
A days pay for twenty inspectors.

PETCHARK
Agreed.

Nancy leans over and whispers into Pinkston’s ear. Pinkston puts a hand in front of her face.

PINKSTON
I want a cease and desist.

PETCHARK
Agreed, but if we choose to do it again at a later date, you can grieve it at that time. Of course this settlement is without precedent and can’t be used against the Company.

PINKSTON
Just send me the paperwork.

PETCHARK
One more thing. Off the record?
PINKSTON
Off the record.

PETCHARK
The Company has to cut costs to compete with other shipyards. Inspection is costly. Veliotis wants just surveillance inspections. If the union doesn’t want to co-operate on these issues, then the Company may take a different stance on other issues.

INT. SHIPYARD-DAY

Rickover, Veliotis, and FRIZT TOVAR, mid fifties, short, stocky, stroll down the dock.

RICKOVER
Our inspections have turned up incredibly poor workmanship. Your administrators are concerned with deadlines and not with the quality of the equipment they deliver to the navy.

VELIOTIS
I’ve been told that you said that I couldn’t handle the construction of a barge.

RICKOVER
The situation is so bad here, I told a congressional committee I would not award Electric Boat anything for two years, even a barge

VELIOTIS
(Raising his voice)
You had no cause to say that I couldn’t handle the construction of a barge.
RICKOVER
The submarines are not being
built to the specifications
agreed to.

VELIOTIS
We meet all the specifications.
(Shouts)
GET OFF MY BACK.

Nancy and Crandall stand in front of a large pressure tank
watching the three men walk towards them.

CRANDALL
(puffs on a Pall Mall)
I wonder which ones Moe?

RICKOVER
Loafing and disrespectful.

VELIOTIS
Fritz, escort that man out of
my shipyard.

Veliotis and Rickover continue walking and Fritz marches
over to Nancy and Crandall.

FRITZ
(heavy German accent)
What’s this, picnic?

CRANDALL
No, it’s a barbecue.

FRITZ
What’s your name?

CRANDALL
Crandall, Bob Crandall.

FRITZ looks at their badges and writes their names in a
small brown memo book.

FRITZ
Come with me, Mr. Crandall?
CRANDALL
I’m witnessing a hydrostatic pressure test on some cables. You have to contact my boss.

FRITZ
You may call your supervisor from the security office.

NANCY
I’m Mr. Crandall’s union steward. Is there a problem?

FRITZ
Mr. Crandall’s wisecracks will cost him a week’s pay, maybe his job.

Fritz and Crandall walk away from the tank.

INT. INSPECTION OFFICE - DAY

Nancy and Hayward sit at their table. Their boss, Jay, watches them from his desk.

JAY
You guys over inspect. You forget who you work for.

NANCY
We just follow our written procedures.

JAY
Hayward, you have a job, go to the boat.

INT. SUBMARINE-ENGINE ROOM

Hayward shows several deficiencies to JOHN GLOOM, 35, tall, over two hundred pounds. Gloom always wears a white shirt, tie, black motor cycle jacket, black dungarees, and black boots.
HAYWARD
John, I showed you the same unsats yesterday. Nothing has changed.

GLOOM
I’ll get ’em today. Don’t write em up.

HAYWARD
Sorry, John. It’s Friday, I have to turn it in today.

GLOOM
If ya do, I’ll give Dumaine and Suggs warnin’ slips. Ya wanna be responsible for your union brothers gettin’ warnin’ slips?

HAYWARD
See ya later, John. I gotta write em up.

INT. SUB VET’S CLUB - BACKROOM - NIGHT

Hayward and FIVE MEN sit around a table playing poker. John Gloom enters the room and strides over to the table and points at Hayward.

GLOOM
I wanna see you, outside.

HAYWARD
(smiling friendly)
I don’t want to go outside. I just wanna play cards.

GLOOM
I’ll be waiting for ya. No matta how long ya play, I’ll be waitin’.

Gloom leaves the room. Nobody at the table says a word. Only Hayward seems surprised and puzzled. He throws his cards on the table, gets up, and leaves the room.
INT. CLUB BAR AREA

The Bee Gees singing Staying Alive fills the room.

Hayward walks by four men playing pool, then a group of men standing and sitting at a half dozen tables.

Gloom sits at the bar with SUGGS, 28. 6'4", 240 LBS, black, and DUMAINE, 26, short, thin, red hair.

Hayward goes up to Gloom.

HAYWARD
What’s the problem, John?

GLOOM
Come with me.

Gloom ambles over to a door and opens it.

HAYWARD
Why do you want to go outside?

GLOOM
To talk in private. Come on. It’ll only take a minute.

Gloom exits the club. Hayward hesitates, then follows Gloom outside.

Suggs and Dumaine go up to the door, close it, and peer outside through the glass portion of the door.

EXT. SUB VET’S CLUB-NIGHT

Gloom walks up to Hayward and shoves him against the building.

GLOOM
If I get two days off because of you, I’m gonna beat the shit outta ya.

HAYWARD
See ya later.
Hayward walks over to the door, grabs the knob and tries to open the door. The door doesn’t open.

Suggs and Dumaine smile at him through the glass.

Gloom’s grabs Hayward’s shoulder and turns him around.

He punches Hayward above the eye, steps back and brings his fist back as though he’s about to throw another punch.

Hayward kicks Gloom hard in the testicles. Gloom bends slightly. Hayward lunges at Gloom and flips him across his right leg. As Gloom falls, he grabs Hayward’s shirt.

Gloom lands on his back pulling Hayward with him to the ground. Hayward falls to his knees. Then, he lands a solid right to Gloom’s nose, and a left to his right eye. Then he connects with a very hard right to Gloom’s nose. Gloom grabs Hayward’s wrists and shifts his weight.

Now Gloom sits on Hayward. Blood pours from his nose.

Hayward holds onto Gloom’s wrists.

    GLOOM
    Let go of me.

    HAYWARD
    You got to be kiddin’.

The door to the club opens and a dozen men come running out. ARCHIE GRANADIS, 35, tall, leans over Gloom.

    GRANADIS
    Let him go John. You could lose your job.

    GLOOM
    (looks down)
    Let’s leave everything here. You got in few good punches.

Hayward glares at Gloom and doesn’t respond.

Gloom gets off him. They both stand. Blood still flows from Gloom’s nose. As Hayward walks towards the door, Dumaine
approaches him.

DUMAINE
I saw you throw the first punch, Roger. I saw you throw the first punch.

HAYWARD
(Breathing heavy)
You call yourself a union steward. Merry Christmas, Brother.

INT. ETHIC’S OFFICE
Nancy meets with MILLER, a man in his early 60's.

NANCY
His supervision and security told him it happened outside the shipyard, so it doesn’t concern them. That’s ridiculous. It’s job related.

MILLER
Why is it job related?

NANCY
You can’t allow supervisors to beat up inspectors just because they’re doing their job.

MILLER
That sounds like a police matter to me. What else do you have?

NANCY
Malpractice. Supervisors are signing for inspections without inspecting. One supervisor signed for safety battle lanterns that aren’t installed. I have many examples in this folder.

Nancy hands Miller a manilla folder.
MILLER
I’ll look into everything and
get back to you.

INT. SUBMARINE - RADIO ROOM

LOLA 28, attractive, sits on an upside down trash can
working on a connector plug.

Crandall, wearing a light green hard hat and a large belt
with a mirror and flashlight attached, enters the radio
room.

CRANDALL
Good morning, Lola. You look fantastic,
as usual.

Lola looks at Crandall and sniffs the air.

LOLA
Wow! What do have on?

CRANDALL
A raging hard-on, but I didn’t
think you could smell it.

LOLA
Be nice, Bob. Did you take a bath
in cheap cologne this morning?

CRANDALL
You smell my after shave lotion.
It suppose to turn women on. Stop
your grinning and drop your linen.

John Gloom, wearing a white hard hat, black tie, and black
motor cycle jacket, walks into the Radio Room. He goes up
to Crandall, and taps him on the shoulder.

GLOOM
Are you holding up one of my
workers?

CRANDALL
No sir. I was just inspecting
her plug. She does good work.
39.

GLOOM
Who’s this asshole, John, you’ve
been talking to my crew about?

CRANDALL pulls his mirror from his belt and places it in
front of Gloom’s face. Gloom looks at his own face in the
mirror.

CRANDALL
That’s the asshole.

GLOOM
I could write you up for that.

CRANDALL
I thought hitting from behind
would be more your style. Then
again, I’m one tuff bastard.
I’ll do a little more than just
break your nose.

Gloom just smiles at Crandall.

GLOOM
I want you to clear some unsats
for me.

CRANDALL
By what authority?

GLOOM
By this authority.

Gloom points to the gold button on his badge.
The word foreman is embossed on the button.

Crandall, shaking his head side to side, turns and walks
away, laughing uproariously.

CRANDALL
Call my boss.
EXT. SHIPYARD - DAY

Lola walks along a railroad track. To her right are the building ways, and numerous topless dumpsters overflowing with steel and wood. A ten foot long wooden ladder lies on an angle across the top of a wooden crate just before the shipyard hospital building.

A small locomotive slowly moves towards her back.

Two CARPENTERS, standing by the crate, stare at Lola.

Lola walks around the crate and turns by the corner of the hospital building.

The side of the moving train pushes the ladder. One end goes towards Lola.

Lola sees the ladder coming towards her and steps back against the hospital building.

The ladder comes in contact with the center of her chest. As the locomotive slowly moves forward, the ladder goes into her. She lets out a loud SCREAM.

The locomotive continues forward. The ladder snaps into several pieces. Lola, with a piece of wood covered with blood sticking out of her chest, falls to the ground.

The two carpenters run over to her. One looks around and sees a clear poly bag filled with rags. He runs over and grabs a hand full of rags. He runs back to Lola, pulls out the piece of wood and places rags over the large bloody hole.

Lola shows no signs of life.

INT. RECORDS RETENTION CENTER - DAY

WILLIAM MEUNZNER, a grayed haired man, sits at his desk. Nancy stands in front of it.

NANCY
Do you know where I can get a copy of an old test form for the 685 boat?
MEUNZNER
Sure. All the old records are stored in a warehouse in Norwich.

NANCY
Will I have a problem getting one?

MEUNZNER
The only problem you’ll have is climbing the 168 stairs there.
I know. I counted them. What’s the folder number?

NANCY
It’s 676-1.

Meunzner looks through the Rolodex on his desk, stops, then writes row H, box 16 on a small piece of paper. He hands the paper to Nancy.

NANCY
Thanks a lot.

Nancy turns and walks away.

MEUNZNER
Be sure to cover your ass.

Nancy stops and looks back at Meunzner.

MEUNZNER
Don’t forget to tell your boss.

NANCY
Of course. Thanks again.

INT. INSPECTION OFFICE

Nancy stands in front of Jay’s desk.

NANCY
Jay, I want to go to the Norwich warehouse to pick up an old test folder I need for arbitration.
JAY
I’m not paying you for union business outside the shipyard.

NANCY
I know. I talked to Pinkston. The union will take care of my lost time. I want to leave at two.

JAY
Okay. Make sure you punch out.

Nancy turns and walks over to her table and sits across from Crandall.

NANCY
Remember Burt Farrel?

CRANDALL
Yeah. He used to be an inspector. Now he’s a government inspector.

NANCY
Well, he gave me a page from the contract concerning inspections. He said Admiral Rickover drew up the requirements. It clearly states anything manufactured and assembled in the shipyard must be inspected.

CRANDALL
Maybe we should write Rickover and tell him what’s going on here.

NANCY
If we did and the Company found out, we’ll be fired. I need this job.

CRANDALL
What old folder are you going to get?

NANCY
An old gallery equipment test folder. Evidence for tomorrow’s
arbitration case.

INT. NORWICH WAREHOUSE - DAY

A CLERK stands by a copier machine making copies of documents while Nancy watches.

The clerk puts the photo copies into a manila folder and hands it to Nancy.

   NANCY
   Thanks a lot.

A MAN wearing a white hard hat walks by.

   MAN
   Make sure she signs out when she’s done here.

   CLERK
   Sure thing, boss.

INT. GROTON MOTOR INN - CONFERENCE ROOM

The company LAWYER (39), wearing a bow tie, Petchark and Sturm, sit behind a long table. Across the room from them, Nancy, Pinkston, and Al GOLDMAN, 71, sit behind another long table.

The ARBITRATOR, 57, sits behind a small table between the two other tables. An empty chair is in front of the ARBITRATOR’S table.

   GOLDMAN
   I request that the company supply copies of all test folders concerning the gallery equipment.

   LAWYER
   Al, is that every test folder going back to the Holland built back in 1899?

   GOLDMAN
   No, just back to the submarines
built by your client in the late sixties will be enough.

LAWYER
We deny that request. It will take three months to find those test folders, if they still exist. Old records are stored in a warehouse that has no filing system.

PETCHARK
The government requires that we keep old records for seven years. After that they are destroyed. And there would be a security problem.

STURM
I once tried to get a voucher out of that warehouse. It was like passing an act through Congress.

LAWYER
Well, with respect to the sixties and the early seventies, the Company would stipulate that the hourly inspectors performed the installation inspections on the gallery equipment. So why do we need those documents?

GOLDMAN
It is to show what the Company instructions provided and how the Company altered those instructions.

LAWYER
Mr. Arbitrator, we are dealing with simply a signature block on a document and who the name ought to be in that block. The undertaking of such a laborious job of providing those documents will be an unreasonable burden
on the Company. It may be impossible to provide those documents.

GOLDMAN
I understand that it is very easy to get documents out of that warehouse. There is a very good filing system there. It took less than ten minutes to get these.

GOLDMAN slams the manila folder on the table in front of him. The room becomes very quiet. Petchark’s face turns very red. He stares at Nancy.

NANCY
(whispers to Goldman)
Petchark looks mad. He’s staring at me.

GOLDMAN
Don’t worry about it, he’s just trying to scare you.

NANCY
He’s succeeding.

LAWYER
What did you say, Al.

GOLDMAN
Your client is trying to intimidate my witness. I just told her not to worry about it.

Petchark gets up and leaves the room, slamming the door behind him.

ARBITRATOR
I suggest that we break for twenty minutes. Are you going to put someone on the stand after break, Mr. Goldman.

GOLDMAN
Yes. Mrs. Post will testify on how easy it was to obtain a copy
of an old test folder.

ARBITRATOR
I’ll see you all back here in twenty minutes.

EXT. SHIPYARD - DAY

Pinkson and Crandall stand in front of the hospital building.

CRANDALL
How’s Nancy’s case look.

PINKSTON
Do you have a picture of her in your locker?

CRANDALL
Why would I have a picture of her in my locker?

PINKSTON
Because that’ll be the only way you’d see her in this shipyard again.

CRANDALL
Have they offered a deal?

PINKSTON
The company offered to let her quit, but she refuses.

CRANDALL
I don’t blame her.

PINKSTON
She can’t win this one. She’s just being stubborn.

CRANDALL
What about our inspection grievances?
PINKSTON
We can’t afford to go forward
with them now. We have to
arbitrate her discharge. That’s
gonna cost the union a lot of
money.

CRANDALL
She’s worth it. She’s been
fighting hard for us.

INT. SAILOR BAR - NIGHT

The bar is filled with young SAILORS.

FOUR SAILORS sit at a table. Nancy, carrying four bottles of
Budweiser on a tray, approaches them.

She lays a bottle in front of each sailor.

One sailor puts his hand on her butt.

SAILOR 1
What time do you’ll get off,
sweetheart?

Nancy pushes his hand away.

NANCY
My husband picks me up at two,
why?

SAILOR
Oh, you’re married.

Nancy points at her wedding ring.

NANCY
Yup, to Bill Paquin. Used to be
a pro boxer. Maybe you heard of
him?

SAILOR 1
No, never heard of him. Was he
any good?
NANCY
You’ll find out if you ever touch my ass again.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT
Larry sits in his wheel chair watching television. A dozen empty beer cans lay on the floor.
The front door opens and Nancy appears. She enters the room, closing the door behind her.

NANCY
You don’t have to wait up, hon.

LARRY
(Slurring)
I can’t sleep until you get home.

Nancy hurries over to Larry and tries to kiss him.
Larry slaps her hard on the side of her face.
Nancy, stunned, steps back and puts a hand to her face.

LARRY
You just had to work in a men’s bar, didn’t you?

NANCY
It’s the only job I could find. It’s only temporary. Arbitration starts next week.

LARRY
Get a divorce, please. I can’t take this any more.

INT. RESTAURANT - GROTON MOTOR INN - DAY
Nancy and Meunzner sit at a table.
Pinkston walks over to the table and sits down.
PINKSTON
Cochran will be with us in a minute. He went over to talk with the Company's lawyer.

NANCY
(to Meunzner)
I never gave them your name.

MUENZNER
I know. Security knew it must have been me. I was told to report to security. When I got there, a statement was already typed out. It stated that I told you to make sure that you got proper authorization before going to Norwich. Which I did. I was told if I didn't sign it, it would mean two jobs, mine and the warehouseman.

NANCY
You only told me to cover my ass.

MUENZNER
That's right. It means the same thing.

COCHRAN (59), expensive suit, hurries over to the table.

COCHRAN
Arnie, did you authorize her trip to the Norwich warehouse?

PINKSTON
Only her lost wages and travel expenses.

COCHRAN
(to Nancy)
I was told they haven't pursued the name of the government inspector who gave you a copy of a page out of a highly confidential document.
In the event you win this case, you are going to be asked to give them his name. If you don’t, you are going to be fired for insubordination. If you do give his name, and he denies it, you’ll be fired.

NANCY
His name is Burt Farrel. Tell them now and get it over with.

COCHRAN
The man does you a favor and this is the thanks he gets. The Company will fire him. And if he denies it, any Arbitrator is going to think you’re a liar and a rat.

NANCY
I don’t think so. Just buy Farrel lunch and a few drinks and he’ll testify for me. And he works for the government, not the Company.

COCHRAN
You don’t want to give them Farrel’s name, do you, Arnie?

PINKSTON
No, I don’t think we should.

NANCY
I’m the one on the street, and I say give his name. He won’t mind.

COCHRAN
The Company will tell his boss.

NANCY
So what. The page is nothing. Don’t believe them. If it was confidential, it would be stamped confidential in red.
COCHRAN
Why can’t you just say you don’t remember who gave it to you?

NANCY
(to Pinkston)
He wants me to tell a lie that no one is going to believe. That’s his advice. I told you that I didn’t trust this guy. He’s too friendly with Katt. And Katt’s in the Company’s pocket.

PINKSTON
You apologize to him for saying that.

COCHRAN
It doesn’t matter. It’s your decision who will represent her, not her’s. I’m going to postpone this hearing. I want you to contact Farrel and find out what he has to say.

NANCY
I want my hearing today. I don’t need him. I don’t need two lawyers trying to lose my case.

Nancy puts her hand into a hand bag. She pulls out a tape recorder and places it on the table.

COCHRAN
What’s that?

Nancy picks up the recorder and pushes in front of Cochran’s face.

NANCY
It’s a tape recorder. A reporter from the Hartford Courant is doing an article on my firing, and he wants me to record all our conversations.
Cochran looks stunned. He pulls out a cigarette and lights it up.

COCHRAN
Wait her for a few minutes, please. I’ll be right back.

INT. RESTAURANT - FIVE MINUTES LATER

Cochran hurries towards the table. He stops in front of Nancy.

COCHRAN
They’re willing to let you return to work tomorrow and count the time you’ve been out as a suspension.

NANCY
No. I’ll start Monday. I have plans for tomorrow. I don’t want anything on my work record, unless you tell me what I did that was improper.

COCHRAN
That would be up to an Arbitrator to decide. I can get them to agree to your terms, but there won’t be any back pay.

NANCY
Okay.

COCHRAN
If I was a little ruff on you, I’m sorry. I was just getting you ready for the hearing.

INT. INSPECTION OFFICE

Nancy sits across from Crandall and Hayward.
HAYWARD
We’ve had some more lay offs. We’re down to nine total, all three shifts. Quality illusion. That should be the name of our department.

NANCY
I’m sorry, Roger. I tried.

HAYWARD
You didn’t get any back pay?

NANCY
Nah. If I fought it, I’ll probably be out of work for a year.

CRANDALL
Katt’s going to work for Petchark. Can you believe that?

NANCY
He took care of the Greek and the Greek took care of him. You know I filed a complaint with the ethic’s director before I was fired.

HAYWARD
No, I didn’t know that.

NANCY
I called the director about my complaints. He didn’t look into them because I was fired.

HAYWARD
Really?

NANCY
Yep. I think that’s one of the reasons I was fired. I’ll get even. I went through a lot of records when I was in that warehouse. I saw a bunch of boxes marked Veliotis, Quincy. I copied a lot of records. One of his subcontractors
was charging the government three hundred dollars for a screw.

HAYWARD
You’re crazy.

NANCY
Four hundred dollars for a hammer. Three hundred and fifty dollars for a knife. I’m going to mail copies to some congressmen. If nothing happens, I’ll send copies to the newspapers.

CRANDALL
Be careful. You don’t want to get fired again.

NANCY
Roger, how you making out with your breathing problem?

HAYWARD
Well, the x-rays show pleural plaques caused by asbestos. The doctor took some fluid out of a lung and they’re going to do some tests.

INT. DOCTOR’S OFFICE - DAY

Hayward meets with his DOCTOR (40'S).

DOCTOR
I want to start the chemotherapy as soon as possible.

HAYWARD
No, no chemo. How long do I have?

DOCTOR
Without chemotherapy, maybe four or five months. With it, two, maybe three years.
INT. BAR - NIGHT

A BARTENDER hands Crandall two 16 ounce glasses of beer. Crandall carries the beers over to a table and lays one down in front of Hayward. Then he sits down.

CRANDALL
Think about the extra time you’ll get to spend with your bride.

HAYWARD
It didn’t help Burnett, Lamb or Gannon. All of them bald and dead in less than a year. They all looked over a hundred when they died. I didn’t recognize any of them.

CRANDALL
Looks don’t matter when it’s time for the dirt nap. Any time above ground is good time. What’s a little hair?

HAYWARD
I’m kidding about the hair. The chemo makes you weak and you sleep all the time. No premium time.

Crandall sips his beer, eyeing Hayward.

CRANDALL
Don’t do it. Think about your family after your gone.

HAYWARD
It will give me pleasure. I’ll kill as many as I can before the cops get me. All the ones who fucked with me. It’s payback time.

CRANDALL
I hope that’s the beer taking. Cause it doesn’t make any sense.
HAYWARD
I don’t have the guts to kill myself. I’m not going to go the way they did. I won’t put my family through that. Their final week was Hell. They died a hundred times before that last breath with their wives at their side. No. No fuckin’ way I’ll put my wife through that.

CRANDALL
Than go away. Disappear. That’s better than murder.

HAYWARD
I’ll give it some thought. But just thinking about killing those bastards is giving me a woody.

EXT. WINDING ROAD - NIGHT
A car speeds south on the road. It swerves side to side.

INT. CAR - NIGHT
DICK SMITH (30), drunk, sits behind the steering wheel and fights hard to keep his eyes open. The radio blasts. Dick’s eyes close.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT
The car crosses the road and hits a pole. The pole breaks and an electrical cable splits in two. Sparks fly as the cable lands on the roof of the car. Smith gets out of the car and kicks the door shut. He staggers away.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT
A car moves north on the road. It comes upon the car wreck and stops.
Crandall gets out of the car and hurries towards the wreck. He gets to the drivers side of the vehicle and peers in. He places his hands above the window as he bends to get a better look inside.

Sparks fly. A huge fireball engulfs Crandall.

EXT. DESERTED BEACH - DAY

Hayward sits on the beach reading a newspaper.

INSERT NEWSPAPER ARTICLE: Small headline above article reads: No charges filed against Smith.

MAN, early 20's, approaches Hayward.

Hayward stands.

The man scans the deserted beach.

MAN
You got the money?

Hayward hands the man some money.

The man puts it in his pocket after counting it. He hands Hayward a hand gun and a box of ammunition.

HAYWARD
Thanks.

MAN
No problem. Just get it outta Rhode Island. 'member, we neva met.

Hayward stomps across the beach.

INT. LAWYER’S OFFICE - DAY

Nancy meets with WILMA MAX, 40's.
NANCY
No, I don’t want any of his disability money.

WILMA
It’s just a formality. We can ask for his left nut, but it doesn’t mean we really want it. Yet, I did have some clients that did.

NANCY
Poor Larry doesn’t have any testicles to give.

WILMA
Most men don’t.

NANCY
No, he lost his in Vietnam. A landmine.

WILMA
I’m sorry. I wasn’t aware of that.

NANCY
Anyway, don’t even put it in the paperwork. I insist.

WILMA
Mrs. Post, your husband’s attorney is going to seek half of any retirement benefits you’ve earned already in addition to part of your present day income. We have to make demands in order to negotiate a fair settlement.

NANCY
He may overreact.

WILMA
That’s his problem, not yours.
NANCY
I don’t want to hurt him in any way.

WILMA
Okay, but I’ll need you to sign some papers.

INT. DOCTOR’S OFFICE - DAY

The doctor examines an x-ray.

Hayward, buttoning his shirt, sits on a stool.

DOCTOR
It’s spreading fast. Chemotherapy will slow it down.

HAYWARD
Can you drain the fluid out again? Last time I felt good for a few weeks.

DOCTOR
I’ll set up an appointment. You realize they will probably fill up again in half the time.

HAYWARD
I know. I read up on mesothelioma. If there were any chance of a cure, I’d do chemo.

DOCTOR
You’re making a mistake. Without chemotherapy, you’ll be lucky if you last three more months.

HAYWARD
I hear ya, Doc. Just one more draining and you probably won’t see me again.

The Doctor stares at Hayward.
EXT. SHIPYARD - DAY
Nancy enters the shipyard and strolls down the hill.

INT. INSPECTION OFFICE - DAY
People sit around, drinking coffee and reading newspapers.
Nancy walks into the office.
Jay beckons her over to his desk.
She goes over to him.

JAY
Sorry Nancy.

He hands her a discharge notice.
She reads it.

NANCY
I have vacation time on the books.

JAY
No, you don’t. The time you were suspended was charged to vacation time.

NANCY
I told you yesterday I was leaving early to meet with my lawyer. Why didn’t you warn me that I didn’t have any time left?

JAY
That’s not my job. Get your personal things together. Security will be here shortly to escort you out of the yard.

Nancy struts over to her locker.
INT. NEIGHBORHOOD BAR - NIGHT

TWO MEN, early 20's, shoot pool.

A COUPLE, mid 40's, sit at a small table by the bar.

Dick Smith sits alone at the bar. The BARTENDER pours whiskey into the shot glass in front Smith and walks away.

Smith downs the shot, then drinks from a bottle of Budweiser.

Hayward sits at the end of the bar nursing a glass of beer and glaring at Smith.

Smith notices him and looks back.

SMITH
What’s your problem, buddy?

HAYWARD
You, I can smell you from here.

SMITH
Fuck you, asshole.

Smith turns his back to Hayward and sips his beer.

Hayward gets off his barstool and marches towards Smith.

BARTENDER
Hey, I don’t want any trouble here.

Hayward pulls out his gun and points it at the bartender.

HAYWARD
Keep out of this!

The other patrons stop what they’re doing and turn towards Hayward.

Smith puts his beer down and spins towards Hayward with his hands in front of his chest.
SMITH
I’m sorry. Put that thing away.

BARTENDER
Don’t do anything foolish. His brother’s a cop.

HAYWARD
That figures.

SMITH
What’s your problem?

The two men stand by the pool table watching. A loud SHOT. Stunned the two men jump back.

Smith in pain holds his thigh. Blood seeps between his fingers. He looks up. The look of pain changes to fear.

A shaking hand gun is aimed at his face.

Smith starts to cry.

SMITH
Please, please don’t shoot.

Hayward places the gun to Smith’s forehead. His finger squeezes the trigger.

Smith, crying out loud, closes his eyes.

Hayward’s having breathing problems. He steps back and lowers the gun. He looks up, taking rapid breaths in and out

Smith opens his eyes.

Hayward hands him the gun.

Smith doesn’t hesitate. He shoots him twice in the chest. Hayward falls to the floor.

Smith stands with his weight on one leg and shoots him in the head.

SMITH
Phew! He shit himself.
Smith sits down on the barstool.

    SMITH
    Who stinks now, asshole?

EXT. MOTEL - DAY

The motel appears to be rundown. Nancy’s car is parked in front of one of the rooms.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY

Nancy sits on the bed with a telephone handset to her ear.

    NANCY
    I swear to you I told her not to put that in the paperwork.
    (Beat)
    I’m not lying. I moved out for you. Let me live there until we go to court.
    (Beat)
    Hello? Larry? Hello, are you there?

Nancy puts the handset down. She lays down and stares at the ceiling. Her eyes close.

EXT. ROUTE 84 - DAY

An expensive sports car moves down the road. It slows down as it passes the motel parking lot. Just up the road the car makes a u-turn.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY

Nancy sleeps on the bed. Loud knocking. Her eyes open.

There isn’t a peek hole through the door, but the small chain is secured to the door.
EXT. DOOR TO ROOM - DAY

The door opens slightly. Nancy’s face appears in the opening.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY

Nancy stands by the door. The chain support rips out of the door as it bursts open. Nancy is knocked onto the bed.

EXT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

Several police cars and Nancy’s are parked in front of the building.

INT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

Nancy follows a plainclothes DETECTIVE into a conference room.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - NIGHT

The Detective points at a chair by a small conference table.

    DETECTIVE
    Have a seat, Mrs. Post.

Nancy sits down.

    DETECTIVE
    He has an alibi. His supervisor, Mr. Sturm.

    NANCY
    He raped me. It was him.

    DETECTIVE
    We don’t have anything. No DNA. You didn’t scratch him. No bruises on you. Frankly, it doesn’t look good.
NANCY
What about the motel door? You think I staged a break-in?

DETECTIVE
Of course not. I believe you, but proving it is another matter. No one heard or seen a thing at the motel.

NANCY
He has an extremely small penis. Maybe three inches long, if he’s lucky. Isn’t that evidence?

DETECTIVE
Are you suggesting a line-up?

NANCY
No, but isn’t that unusual? Check it out.

The Detective smiles.

DETECTIVE
I know just man. He would enjoy that.

Nancy glares at the Detective.

DETECTIVE
I apologize. I’ll put some pressure on Sturm. Without an alibi, we have a he said, she said case. A good chance for a conviction.

NANCY
Or a plea bargain.

DETECTIVE
We’ll do whatever we can to make a case against him. We’ll keep you informed. Where will you be staying?
NANCY
Maine. I’ll probably move in
with my mother until my divorce
is finalized.

EXT. FRIENDSHIP, MAINE - DAY
A young BOY fishes off a dock.

MARK SCOBEE (33), handsome, maneuvers a lobster boat along
the side of the dock. He yells at the boy.

MARK
Give me a hand with these lobsters,
I’ll give you a couple.

The surf hits the rocky coastline. A steep road leads to the
docking area. At the top of the hill, Nancy’s car pulls up
next to the curb.

INT. APARTMENT - DAY
Three small rooms make up the apartment. The door less
bedroom is between the kitchen and living room. A small bed
and bureau are the only furniture in the room.

A picture of Bob Murphy hangs on the wall.

Pam Murphy, long salt and pepper hair, sits on a beat up
sofa in the tiny living room. She puffs on a filter
cigarette as she watches a soap opera on a 19 inch. black
and white television set.

KNOCKING on the door.

Pam goes over to the door and opens it.

Nancy stands in the doorway.

NANCY
Hello, ma.

PAM
What do you want?
NANCY
May I come in?

Pam steps out of the way and lets Nancy enter the room.

She closes the door.

PAM
You still living with that baby killer?

NANCY
Ma, he was there, but he didn’t kill any children. Those charges were dropped.

Pam and Nancy sit down on the sofa.

PAM
Forty six murderers and no one was punished. Well, God punished him for what he done. And he made sure he wouldn’t have any murdering children too.

NANCY
Ma, we’ve been through this before. I don’t want to talk about it.

PAM
Why are you here?

NANCY
Larry and I are getting a divorce. I need a place to stay.

PAM
Well, talk about your good news and bad news. It’s about time. I thought he would have killed you by now.

NANCY
May I stay here?
PAM
Where? There’s no room.

NANCY
I’ll sleep on the sofa. On the floor. It doesn’t matter.

PAM
I want ten dollars a day, board.

NANCY
I don’t have a job.

PAM
Find one. I saw a job posting yesterday. Twenty dollars for four hours work. If you hurry, he’s undocking now at the dock down the street.

NANCY
A job doing what?

PAM
Pulling in lobster pots.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Mark and the boy stand by a beat up pickup truck that’s parked by the beach. Cages filled with lobsters are piled on the back of the truck.

Mark hands the boy two lobsters.

BOY
Thanks.

MARK
You earned them. Good job.

Nancy strolls up to Mark.

BOY
See ya.

The boy, carrying a lobster in each hand, dashes towards the
He’s a good kid. Can I interest you in some fresh lobsters?

Nancy smiles as she inspects Mark.

Are you asking me out for dinner?

Mark checks out Nancy.

Of course. I always ask pretty women out before I meet them. It saves time. I’m a very busy man.

I would loved to have dinner with you. But after I start working for you, no more dates. I don’t date my employers.

What if he’s charming and very handsome?

That depends if he’s wealthy or not.

Nancy looks over the beat-up truck.

Define wealthy.

Over six figures a year.

All right! That’s over a thousand a year, right?
NANCY
Maybe. When can I start working?

MARK
How does nine tomorrow morning sound?

NANCY
Like a four o’clock whistle.

MARK
Excuse me?

NANCY
Sorry, old shoptalk. Nine’s good for me. Do we meet here?

MARK
Yes.

Nancy offers her hand. They shake.

NANCY
I’m Nancy.

MARK
Pleased to meet you, Nancy. I’m Mark.

NANCY
Well, I’ll see you tomorrow, Mark.

Nancy walks towards the hill.

MARK
What about dinner?

NANCY
Maybe some other time. I’ll have to see some bank statements first.

She smiles, then turns and walks up the hill.

Mark watches her.
EXT. NEW LONDON COURTHOUSE - DAY

A few well-dressed PEOPLE climb the stairs to the courthouse.

INT. COURTHOUSE - DAY

People enter the building. (No security guards or metal detectors. They weren’t used back in 1980.)

INT. COURTROOM - DAY

A small courtroom with five rows of pews on both sides.

Nancy and Wilma Max sit in the first row. Two MEN sit in the row behind them and a WOMAN and a MAN sit in the pew across from them.

Wilma glances at her wristwatch.

WILMA
We’re early. So, tell me about this guy.

NANCY
He’s great. Poor, but a great guy.

WILMA
Poor? Yuck! I find poor very unappealing. He has to be great looking, funny and have a humongous shaft.

Nancy laughs.

NANCY
I’ll never tell. But if you want me to measure it, I’ll need more than a ruler.

Larry wheels into the courtroom. He has a wool comforter over his lap.
WILMA
He’s here. I hear squeaky wheels.

Wilma looks over her shoulder.

Larry moves his wheel chair past first row and turns. He stops several feet away from Wilma and Nancy.

LARRY
You cunts want my disability pension. Fuck you!

Larry pulls a rifle out from under the comforter. He aims it at Wilma and fires.

A bullet hits Wilma in the forehead. She falls to her side and rolls onto the floor.

He aims the rifle at Nancy.

LARRY
Any last words, bitch?

NANCY
Yeah. My mother was right about you. You’re nothing but a coward.

Nancy stands.

NANCY
I never realized that until just now. Boy, was I stupid or what?

LARRY
Where do you want it? Head or chest? I owe you that much.

NANCY
You owe me a lot more than that, you ungrateful bastard. Aim for my heart, you broke it.

Larry lowers the rifle and aims it at her heart.

Nancy turns to her side and lunges at the rifle.
It fires.

Nancy grabs the barrel of the rifle and yanks it out of Larry’s hands. She holds the rifle in the air.

NANCY
I can understand why you shot defenseless children and babies. They couldn’t fight back.

Nancy, carrying the rifle, storms out of the courtroom.

INT. SUBMARINE - MANEUVERING ROOM - DAY

The CAPTAIN, holding a microphone in front of his mouth, sits on a stool at the control station located center of the maneuvering room. Two sailors sit in front of their control panels. A CIVILIAN ENGINEER, wearing an electric boat badge and holding a notebook, stands next to the captain.

CAPTAIN
Bring her down to 360 feet.

The curtain to the captain’s right is pushed aside and Rickover enters the maneuvering room.

RICKOVER
Good morning, Captain.

CAPTAIN
Good morning, Admiral.

RICKOVER
How’s she doing?

CAPTAIN
Good. We’re presently on a high-speed dive.

RICKOVER
How deep?

CAPTAIN
Three hundred sixty feet.
RICKOVER
Let me take over, Captain.

The captain steps aside and hands the microphone to Rickover. Rickover pushes the stool out of the way and stands in front of the control station.

SAILOR 1
She’s submerged at three hundred sixty feet, Sir.

RICKOVER
(into the microphone)
Crash back.

A few seconds go by and all heads turn towards the admiral. The engineer brings his mouth close to the captain’s ear.

ENGINEER
(whispering )
She’s in reverse speed, Captain.
He didn’t give the ‘ahead 1/3’ order.

CAPTAIN
(to Rickover)
Ship dead in water.

Loud popping sounds.

SAILOR 1
Four hundred feet, Sir.

The captain grabs another microphone and yells into it.

CAPTAIN
Ahead 1/3.

EXT. ATLANTIC OCEAN – DAY
A submarine, on a forty degree angle, sinks rapidly.

INT. MANEUVERING ROOM
Loud popping sounds.
Everybody looks worried.

SAILOR 1
Six hundred feet, sir.
(Beat)
590, 580, 560.

INT. VELIOTIS’S OFFICE - DAY

Veliotis sits at his desk and talks on the telephone.

VELIOTIS
We were lucky we didn’t have another Thresher on our hands. He took over the ship, then he lost control. I am very much worried about his ability to command one of my submarines. I’m not going to allow him to go on any more of our sea trials. If a ship has not yet been delivered and accepted by the Navy, I feel a personal responsibility for the safety of the personnel aboard her. You tell President Reagan that. You tell him I think it’s time for new people, new ideas. He should retire Admiral Rickover.

INSERT - NEWSPAPER HEADLINES: EB CITES SAFETY AS MAIN CONCERN IN SUB MISHAP

INT. OVAL OFFICE

PRESIDENT REAGAN, CASPER WEINBERGER, JOHN LEHMAN and Admiral Rickover stand in front of Reagan’s desk. Lehman and Weinberger shake Rickover’s hand and walk out of the office.

RICKOVER
Mr. President, you are being poorly served by those two. They’re afraid to take on defense contractors.

REAGAN
They’re both good men, Admiral.
John may be young, but I have the utmost confidence in him. John assures me that those agreements were made in our best interests.

RICKOVER
Lehman has the backbone of a jellyfish. That piss-ant knows nothing about the Navy. He’s just doing the work of the contractors. I’m the only one in the government trying to keep the contractors from robbing the taxpayers.

REAGAN
Well, Admiral, thanks again for that tie clip.

Reagan puts his arm around Rickover’s shoulders and walks him to the door.

REAGAN
You made marvelous achievements during you sixty three years of service. Enjoy your retirement, Admiral. In honor of your distinguished career a submarine is being named after you. Admiral, thanks again for a job well done.

INT. OLD LYME INN - DAY

Veliotis and a LAWYER sit at a table. A busboy removes the empty plates in front of the men and walks away. Veliotis grabs a bottle of Batard Montrachet and pours the white burgundy into his wine glass.

VELIOTIS
I warned those greedy bastards...now I’m fucked. Is there any way I can get my six million dollars out of my stock fund.

LAWYER
Not while those indictments are
VELIOTIS
Who mailed them those documents?

LAWYER
We don’t know. It had to be some one who had access to the documents from Quincy.

VELIOTIS
Indicting me for receiving over two million dollars in bribes isn’t enough. They’re going to indict me for fraud, conspiracy and racketeering.

(Beat)
By fleeing to Greece, I’ll be safe from extradition?

LAWYER
Yes, but you can beat those charges. It will probably take a few years.

VELIOTIS
And a few million dollars.
(takes a sip of wine)
I’ll be better off negotiating with the Feds from my villa in Athens.

EXT. ATLANTIC OCEAN – DAY
A lobster boat moves towards a small island.

EXT./INT. LOBSTER BOAT – DAY
Mark sits with his arm around Nancy.

MARK
Up ahead is Dolan’s Island. I have a house on that island.

NANCY
Really?
MARK
Yup. Beachfront property on two sides.

NANCY
Then you really are rich?

MARK
Nah. No electricity or indoor plumbing.

NANCY
I’m rich.

MARK
I must be paying you too much.

NANCY
I’m going to be rich.

MARK
How rich?

NANCY
Ten percent of six million dollars. The government gets ninety percent, but I’m not complaining.

EXT. VELIOTIS’S VILLA - ROOF - DAY

ATHENS, GREECE

Veliotis meets with a REPORTER, 32, by a large rooftop swimming pool.

VELIOTIS
Yes, Electric Boat deliberately defrauded the Navy. I have tape recordings to prove it, but the Justice Department officials don’t want to deal with me.

REPORTER
You want immunity on the kickback
VELIOTIS
Yes, on kickbacks from a subcontractor. That’s the way we did business back then. I regret it. And I’m paying for it now. What about the high paying jobs, favors, donations, and gifts government officials accept from the government contractors. Aren’t these things of value given to officials to influence them. In return the contractors receive contracts and favors.

REPORTER
Can you be specific. How about a name?

VELIOTIS
Admiral Rickover. He accepted a pair of diamond ear rings worth over a thousand dollars. And he asked us to make him hundreds of tie clips.

REPORTER
Apparently your gifts didn’t influence him. He was one of your biggest nemesis.

VELIOTIS
My relationship with Admiral Rickover wasn’t a love affair, to say the least. He was a cantankerous little man that had a lot of power. They called him the father of the nuclear navy. He was what I think you call the midwife.

INT. TV STUDIO - DAY

DIANNE SAWYER sits across from Admiral Rickover.
RICKOVER
No, I never thought I was smart. I thought the people I dealt with were as dumb, were dumb, including you.

SAWYER
I’ll tell you, to be called dumb by you is to be in very good company. Edward R. Murrow, for one.

RICKOVER
Oh yeah, he, well, I told him the same.

SAWYER
What is the heart of leadership. Personality? Charisma?

RICKOVER
No. For example I have the Charisma of a chipmunk. So what the hell difference does that make.

SAWYER
Were you surprised when the Reagan Administration told you goodbye?

RICKOVER
No. Secretary Lehman is one of the biggest fools the Navy ever had. There was over a billion dollars worth of claims by shipbuilders which I thought were false and I fought it. Within a month or two after I left, most of that money was given to the shipbuilder.

(Beat)
Of course, that’s a coincidence.

SAWYER
A former executive from General
Dynamics, P.T. Veliotis, revealed that you had been given gifts, some of them expensive.

RICKOVER
Oh, they gave me little things, they gave me all kinds...one time, I think I even got a small diamond. But the question that ought to be asked is, did I favor General Dynamics.

SAWYER
But do you worry that, at the end of this long career, that something like this has been raised and your ethics are questioned by the press?

RICKOVER
Well, I don’t – it doesn’t bother me,

(Raises voice)
IT DOESN’T BOTHER ME.

(Beat)
I think... God knows what I did and I don’t care what the contractors or you think.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT
The room is large with nice furniture.

Rickover’s face is on a large television screen.

Nancy and Mark snuggle-up together on the sofa.

MARK
Did you ever meet him?

NANCY
No, but a saw him in person a couple of times. We almost met once, but my mother chased him away.
TELEVISION SCREEN

Sawyer, wearing different clothing, stands.

   SAWYER
   Since that interview I met with
   President Carter. Here’s what
   the former president had to say.

President Carter’s face fills the television screen.

   CARTER
   I’m not surprised that Secretary
   Lehman forced the Admiral into
   retirement. The defense contractors
   were out to get Rickover for a
   long time. He was an embarrassment
   to them and he was part of a one
   man watchdog.

Mark rubs his fingers through Nancy’s hair.

   NANCY
   The old watchdog is gone. We’ll
   lose another sub. Deadlines and
   profits are all defense contractors
   care about.

   MARK
   I hope you’re wrong. Francis’s
   life might be as risk someday.

   NANCY
   A space shuttle is so small, why
   cut corners to save a few bucks.
   Besides, they’ll never risk the
   lives of astronauts just to meet
   a launching schedule.

   MARK
   You’re probable right. Would you
   like a back rub, Mrs. Scobee?

   NANCY
   I’d love one.
MARK
And a nice steak dinner at
Deano’s, later?

NANCY
Steak, again?

INT. ARNOLD THOMPSON’S OFFICE - AFTERNOON - 1986

THOMPSON, 52, sits at his desk looking over paperwork. The telephone RINGS. He pushes a button on an intercom.

THOMPSON
Thompson.

VOICE
It’s been postponed until tomorrow morning. A cold front is bearing down on Florida. Are you concerned?

THOMPSON
You bet. Yes, I am, very. What’s the latest weather report?

VOICE
Down to 22 degrees at 6 am.

THOMPSON
Damn. This is very serious. Untested situations. I’m going to set up a teleconference with the SRB project manager. Thanks for calling.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - NIGHT

Thompson, TWENTY MEN, and SIX WOMEN sit at a very long table. A large microphone lies on the center of the table.

ENGINEER 1
On a prior mission, hot gasses blew by an O’ring at 53 degrees. Blackened grease was found on the joint. Make no mistake about it. It was black—just like coal. Jet black.
ENGINEER 2
According to the latest reports, we’re predicting that the seals would go below freezing, 29 degrees.

ENGINEERING VP
Until the temperature reaches 53 degrees, I don’t want to fly.

PROJECT MANAGER (O.S.)
Quantify your claim. Prove it.

ENGINEER 3
Rubber O’rings lose their resiliency at low temperatures and might fail to provide an adequate seal against hot gasses from the burning fuel.

PROJECT MANAGER (O.S.)
Cold gas tests indicate the O’rings will work at 30 degrees. Quantify your claim.

ENGINEER 4
We know the expected temperature is away from the goodness in the current data base.

PROJECT MANAGER (O.S.)
Prove it will fail.

THOMPSON
We can’t prove it will fail, but the risk is higher than we should take. The colder the weather, the greater chance of failure.

PROJECT MANAGER (O.S.)
My God, when do you people want me to launch, next April? Would your VP for the space program be willing to launch.

VP
Not over the recommendation of my engineers.
PROJECT MANAGER (O.S.)
I’m appalled at your recommendation, but I’m not going to launch over your objection. I’ve spent some time looking over all the data, and frankly, I find the data inconclusive.

GENERAL MANAGER
Excuse us for a few minutes. I’m the General Manager here, and I would like an off-line caucus to reevaluate the data. Thank you.

The general manager pushes the mute button.

GENERAL MANAGER
We have to make a management decision. Bob, take off that engineering hat and put on your management hat. Am I the only one who wants to fly? Do any of my senior executives here recommend stopping the launch?

He looks at his three executives.

GENERAL MANAGER
Good. The teacher flies tomorrow.

INT. CHALLENGER-CREW’S CABIN – MORNING

FRANCIS ‘DICK’ SCOBEE, 46, and MICHAEL SMITH, 40, sit in front of the controls, gages, indicator lights and three computer screens. Directly behind and between them is JUDITH ‘J.R’ RESNIK, 36. To her right, back to the wall, is ELLISON ONIZUKA, 39.

The THREE OTHER ASTRONAUTS sit in the middeck area, below them. All the astronauts wear life vests and air tight helmets.

DICK
Welcome to space, guys. Two minutes downstairs. Hey NASA, ya gotta watch running down there?
MIKE
(Looking out the cockpit window)
Okay. There goes the lox arm.

ELLISON
Doesn’t is suppose to go the other way?

MIKE
(laughing)
God, I hope not, Ellison.

JUDY
Got your harnesses locked?

MIKE
What for?

JUDY
Ooh kaaaay.

MIKE
Dick’s thinking of something.

DICK
Un huh...One minute downstairs.

MIKE
Alarm looks good.

DICK
Okay.

MIKE
Ullage pressures are up. Right helium tank is just a little bit low.

DICK
It was yesterday, too. Thirty seconds downstairs.

MIKE
Remember the red button when you
make a roll call.

DICK
I won’t do that, thanks a lot.

A loud BLAST.

DICK
There they go guys.

JUDY
All right.

DICK
Three at a hundred.

JUDY
Aaalll riiight.

DICK
Here we go.

Another loud BLAST. Everything inside the cabin shakes.

MIKE
Go you mother.

JUDY
It’s fuckin’ hot.

DICK
Ooohhkaaay.

MIKE
Looks like we’ve got a lotta wind today.

DICK
Yeah. It’s a little hard to see out of my window.

EXT. CHALLENGER - DAY

The Challenger rises. A long cloud of white and black smoke trailing it. A flame appears on the right side.
INT. CHALLENGER

MIKE
Feel that motha go. Woooohooo.

DICK
Reading four eight six.

MIKE
Yep, that’s what I’ve got, too.

DICK
Roger, go at throttle up.

A loud EXPLOSION.

MIKE’S P.O.V.

A brilliant orange flame burns outside the cockpit window.

MIKE
(STUNNED)

UH OH

EXT. CREW’S CABIN - DAY

The crew’s cabin breaks away from the rockets. It starts falling to earth.

INT. CREW’S CABIN

The astronauts are pinned down in their seats.

Dick Scobee appears to be sleeping.

Judy opens her eyes wide and turns her head towards Ellison.

Ellison returns a half smile.

JUDY
I’m scared.

ELLISON
Me too.
MIKE
My heart must be racing for a reason.

JUDY
Give me your hands.

Mike reaches his right hand behind his seat. Judy grabs it with her left hand and reaches out her right to Ellison. He takes it and gives Judy a big smile. She smiles back. Tears flow down her cheeks.

MIKE
I never did lock my harnesses, Judy.

JUDY
I warned ya.

EXT. CREW’S CABIN - DAY

The cabin approaches the ocean at a speed greater than 200 miles per hour. It hits the ocean and disintegrates on impact. A large cloud of ruddy brown smoke hangs over the ocean as objects splash nearby.

INT. RICKOVER’S HOUSE - DAY

Admiral Rickover sits on a rocking chair reading a newspaper. His WIFE, mid forties, wearing glasses, is on the sofa reading Iacocca: An Autobiography.

RICKOVER
DAMN IT. The space shuttle was covered with icicles. The contractor had to know that the extreme cold weather would affect rubber seals.

WIFE
Why would they risk the lives of those astronauts?

RICKOVER
Contractors don’t give a damn about anything but profits and
schedules. Seven deaths. Seven families suffering. And we’ll never know what really happened. I won’t, that’s for sure. I won’t be around long enough to hear their lies.

WIFE
You know doctors have been wrong before. You’re a fighter.

EXT. ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY - DAY

BOBBY (4) walks between Nancy and Mark. They stop in front of the headstone for the seven astronauts that died on the Challenger.

Their faces are embossed on a bronze plate above the words: IN GRATEFUL AND LOVING TRIBUTE TO THE BRAVE CREW OF THE U.S. SPACE SHUTTLE CHALLENGER 28 JANUARY 1986.

Mark points to Scobee’s image.

MARK
Who’s that, Bobby?

BOBBY
Uncle Francis.

MARK
That’s right. He has his own headstone over here.

The walk over to an adjacent headstone.


NANCY
He was your father’s oldest brother.

BOBBY
Where is he now?
NANCY
In heaven.

MARK
Rickover’s buried nearby, do you want to see his headstone?

NANCY
Sure.

They stroll past the rows of headstones. Mark glances at a map of the cemetery.

MARK
Keep your eyes open. It should be around here.

Nancy points.

NANCY
I see it.

They walk up to Rickover’s headstone.

Admiral Rickover’s tombstone. It is black with white lettering. There are four stars over the lettering H.G. RICKOVER, ‘Father of the Nuclear Navy, 60 years of active duty, January 27, 1900 July 8, 1986’.

NANCY
He took them on.

MARK
No more than you.

NANCY
We both lost. Couldn’t change a thing.

MARK
You think he’ll be remembered for taking bribes?

NANCY
Probably. People don’t care about defense contractors.
MARK
How many lives do you think it’ll take?

NANCY
Frankly, I don’t think they give a damn, my dear.

FADE OUT:

Pam Murphy never remarried. In 1990, after being diagnosed with cancer, she rented a small motor boat. The boat was found adrift in the vicinity where the US Thresher went down. A picture of Robert Murphy was left on a seat. Pam’s body was never found.

Nancy (Murphy) Scobee was diagnosed with mesothelioma in 2005. She currently resides in Seattle, Washington with her husband Mark. They have one grandson, Francis Richard Scobee.

P. T. Veliotis died May 2, 1992 in Athens, Greece. He was never prosecuted. While living in Greece he claimed that attempts were made to assassinate him.

A 1988 Supreme Court ruling gives government contractors immunity from liability lawsuits if they do not deviate from government design instructions. If the design is flawed, neither the government or the contractor can be held the blame.

The wife of astronaut Michael Smith unsuccessfully tried to sue the government and the defense contractor for the wrongful death of her husband.

One of the engineers who sat at the final meeting concerning the Challenger’s launch date said he couldn’t watch the launch because he was sure it would explode.

THE END