

FOR MY BROTHER'S
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Inspired by true events

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FADE IN:

INT. SYDNEY PUB - DAY

ANZAC day, the pub full of former and current military service personnel. Medals worn on chest. Men and women of all ranks mingle together. Today rank is put aside.

SUPER: "PRESENT DAY"

A game of two-up underway on the dance floor area.

In a corner JACK (late 80's) in a suit, medals on chest. Sits alone at a table, a beer on the table half full. In one hand a faded photo of men on a raft on the ocean.

Nearby a group of current serving Navy personnel. One of the group RYAN (45) smiles and raises his glass to the old man.

Jack grasp his glass, when his hand begins tremble, eyes go wide, an expression of terror on his face. Jack snaps to his feet, knocking his chair over.

JACK

TED, TEDDY, MATE WHERE ARE YA? TED.

Jack looks around his surroundings then down at the table. And arm slams down on the table to brace himself.

Nearby, patrons stop for a moment, then continue on.

RYAN

(to friend)

That poor old bloke, not doing too well. I'll think I should check on him.

FRIEND

Mate leave him be. Just an old digger. Can't handle the drink that's all.

RYAN

Probably, but better go over just in case.

Ryan approaches Jack.

RYAN

Hey buddy, how are you? Do you need a hand with something?

JACK

Piss off, I don't need any help from anyone. Now bugger off.

RYAN

You sure mate?

JACK
You deaf or something? Clear off.

Ryan notices he has a HMAS Armidale association tie on.

RYAN
Okay, sorry to bother you. Say is that an Armidale tie?

JACK
Yeah, so what of it?

RYAN
I am the medic for the current Armidale. Mind if I join you?

JACK
Free country, I can't stop ya.

Ryan picks up Jacks chair and helps him into it. Then takes his seat next to Jack.

Ryan holds his hand out to Jack. The men shake hands.

RYAN
I'm Ryan, been in the Navy for twenty odd years.

JACK
Jack. Sorry for the crazy outburst. Some days are better than other's

Jack has lost the photo he had. He begins to search for it.

RYAN
Are you sure you're okay? What have you lost?

JACK
Me picture, where is it? What have ya done with it?

Ryan checks the floor spots the photo. Picks it up and hands it over to Jack.

JACK
Thanks, I would be lost without it.

RYAN
What is it of?

JACK
This is of a few of me mates from the Armidale. Those poor bastards never saw em' again.

RYAN

Oh yeah. Feel like telling the story?

JACK

I never really told this to anyone before. But I guess I owe you.

RYAN

Not at all Jack. We owe you if anything.

Jack holds the picture up to ryan.

JACK

I remember it like yesterday. This was taken a few days later by one of them buzz boy's flyin' overhead.

Ryan cracks smile, takes sip of his beer. As Jack continues.

RYAN

What happened to them?

JACK

No one knows they set off on the raft after it was decided to split into three groups. And we all made our way back best we could.

RYAN

What about the rest of em'? How did the Armidale sink?

JACK

Bloody Japs, it was day three of our cruise north. The yellow bastards came in like a swarm of bees. All over us they were.

EXT. HMAS ARMIDALE- AFT DECK - DAY (1942)

EDWARD "TEDDY" SHEEAN (18) man the 20mm Oerlikon Cannon, with him is Jack (20) Jack the gunner Teddy the loader.

Jack drags on cigarette. Teddy scans the sky for planes.

JACK

Do ya think they come again today Ted?

TEDDY

Sure why not? Don't want to disappoint us with not showing up. Un-sportsman like.

JACK
I think Ya just got ya wish, here
we go again.

The signal for action stations RINGS out across the ship.

High in the distance, 13 small plane shapes can be made out. Six are Japanese "Zero" fighters. The other seven are twin-engine "Betty" bombers.

All of the planes peel off from their formation, and approach the Armidale from all sides of the ship.

All the guns from Armidale open FIRE with a hail of 20mm rounds.

INT. HMAS ARMIDALE - BRIDGE - DAY

Lieutenant-Commander DAVID RICHARDS (55) watches a torpedo bomber come in.

RICHARDS
Steady as she goes.

At the helm is Ordinary Seaman RUSSEL CARO (19).

RUSSEL CARO
Aye, sir.

RICHARDS
All ahead full, smartly.

Operating the ship's engine telegraph is Sub-Lieutenant BUCKLAND (29). He places the ships engine telegraph into the ahead full position.

BUCKLAND
Aye. All ahead full.

A torpedo bomber lets go a torpedo on the port quarter. It SPLASHES into the sea, speeding toward the Armidale.

RICHARDS
HARD OVER TO STARBOARD.

Russel Caro frantically spins the ship's wheel over to starboard. The Armidale turns sharply.

RUSSEL CARO
Aye. Hard over to starboard.

BUCKLAND
They missed us.

RICHARDS
Rudder amidships.

RUSSEL CARO
Aye. Rudder amidships.

A second torpedo bomber comes in from starboard midships. The bomber lets go its torpedo. Bombs EXPLODE on either side of the Armidale. Sending up huge columns of water.

RICHARDS
Hard over to Starboard.

RUSSEL CARO
Aye. Hard over to starboard.

The Armidale sharply makes the turn, the torpedo passes by parallel to the Armidale.

EXT. HMAS ARMIDALE - PORT BRIDGE WING - DAY

The crew manning the 20mm Oerlikon cannon have a torpedo bomber in their sights. The huge volume of FIRE from the gun causes the pilot of the bomber to drop his torpedo too late.

The torpedo flies only a metre above the bridge and SPLASHES harmlessly down on the starboard side of the ship.

A Japanese Zero comes in low skimming above the waves. Approaches from the port side aft. Drops a torpedo.

RICHARDS
Shit that was close. Keep calling out the targets.

The noise from both the bridge wing guns is deafening. A moment later Buckland sees the torpedo coming in.

BUCKLAND
(points)
TORPEDO PORT SIDE.

RICHARDS
Hard over to port.

RUSSEL CARO
Aye, hard over to port.

RICHARDS
Where the hell did that come from?
Quickly get that damn wheel over.

The torpedo is getting closer and closer. All of the ship's action stations work frantically to fight off the attacking Japanese.

The torpedo HITS the Armidale on the port side just aft of the mess deck. The ships decks split and fracture apart. Some of the sailors on deck are killed.

A second torpedo HITS the Armidale, a bomb EXPLODES on the starboard side aft blowing a huge hole into the hull.

One sailor runs down from the bridge yelling to abandon ship. Men are jumping overboard, grabbing onto what ever floats.

INT. JAPANESE ZERO FIGHTER - DAY

The pilot can see the sailors in the water, he turns the fighter into their direction. The pilot opens FIRE with the machine guns. Killing some of the sailors in the water.

Behind him a second zero fighter finishes off the ones that were missed by the first fighter.

EXT. HMAS ARMIDALE - DECK - DAY

Men scramble to get the ships whaler and life rafts away. One sailor rushes over to the depth charges and sets the depth charge pistols to the safe position.

Another sailor races over to the minesweeping gear and cuts loose the paravane floats into the sea.

INT. JAPANESE ZERO FIGHTER - DAY

Below the pilot looks for more targets to machine gun. Spotting a large gathering of sailors in the sea. The pilot turns the fighter towards them. Tracer FIRE coming up at him.

The pilot looks down his gun sight.

EXT. HMAS ARMIDALE - AFT DECK - DAY

Teddy rushes over to help a sailor free a life boat. The hull and decks are raked with machine gun FIRE. Teddy looks at the dead bodies floating in the water.

Teddy looks at the men being machine gunned in the water. Approaching the ships rail, Teddy climbs over.

More men are killed just meters away from teddy. Teddy looks up at all the aircraft in the air. Looking back at the aft Oerlikon cannon.

Teddy climbs back over the ships rail, scrambles his way back to the Oerlikon cannon.

INT. JAPANESE ZERO FIGHTER - DAY

The pilot can see a lone sailor rush back to the aft Oerlikon cannon and open FIRE. Tracer fire rakes the fighter, killing the pilot.

The pilot slumps forward on the control yoke sending the fighter into a steep dive toward the sea. The fighter cartwheels as it CRASHES into the sea.

EXT. HMAS ARMIDALE - AFT DECK - DAY

Teddy continues to pour on the FIRE from the cannon. The deck around him CRACKS and POPS as rounds from a zero fighter come in at him.

INT. SYDNEY PUB - DAY

At the table Jack and Ryan have been joined by two more sailors from Ryan's group. They stand quietly as the story continues.

RYAN

My God this Teddy bloke has a big pair on him, to do that.

JACK

Well I wouldn't say that. He was brave for sure. There were a lot of brave men on that ship.

RYAN

You seem to know about him, he comes across as a gentle fella.

JACK

He was at first, He would talk a lot about his folks back home in Tassie. Ya know what he did before the War.

Ryan takes out his phone, does a google "Teddy Sheean". Clicks on a Wikipedia entry.

JACK

You don't need no gadget to learn about him. You have it right here.

RYAN

Righto Jack, what else can you tell us?

JACK

Ted loved the simple life, the farm work was good to him and his family.

EXT. TASMANIA - LATROBE - ROAD - DAY (1939)

Teddy (now 15) rides his push bike down the road. A semi-rural area, with lush green fields and dairy farms.

He turns onto a property and rides up the long path to a weather-beaten fibro home.

Resting the push bike against the stairs, Teddy KNOCKS on the front door.

The door is opened by ANGUS HAYS (55), a right-arm amputee from the elbow, with burn scar tissue around the stump.

INT. HAYS HOME - DAY

The home is sparse. With minimal period furniture. Angus shows Teddy into his home.

TEDDY

Hello, Mr. Hays. What can I do for you today?

ANGUS

Come in, Teddy, you can start by chopping some wood. Then a few odd jobs around the house.

TEDDY

Righto, Mr. Hays. Anything else?

ANGUS

No, that should do for today. I need to get down to the store for a few things.

TEDDY

I can do that for ya, Mr. Hays.

ANGUS

No, I can do it. I may only have one arm, but I'm not a complete invalid.

Angus rubs the stump of his right arm as they make their way outside to the backyard.

EXT. HAYS HOME - BACKYARD - DAY

Small logs ready to be cut lie beside a tree stump. An axe's blade is buried in the stump.

Teddy takes the axe and places a log on the stump. Starts chopping the wood.

TEDDY

Does it get itchy much?

ANGUS

Does what get itchy?

TEDDY

You know? The... um.

Teddy gestures to the amputated arm.

ANGUS

Sometimes, but that is none of your business.

TEDDY
 Sorry, Mr. Hays.

Angus removes a small hip flask from his trouser pocket -
 takes a sip.

 ANGUS
 War, never get involved, boy. The
 damn Germans, they never learn.
 Should be wiped from the face of
 the Earth.

 TEDDY
 War? What War? Nothing has happened
 yet.

Teddy chops another log.

 ANGUS
 Then you're a damn fool. War is
 coming mark my words. You have no
 idea what war is.

Angus stops Teddy, and holds his stump up to Teddy. Only an
 inch from Teddy's face.

 ANGUS
 See this, boy? This is what war
 does to ya. And I was one of the
 lucky ones.

Teddy stares at the stump.

 TEDDY
 I'm sorry, Mr. Hays. I meant
 nothin' by it.

 ANGUS
 I can't stop ya, or your brothers
 for that matter. But remember boy,
 only dead heroes don't make it
 back.

 TEDDY
 I won't forget Mr. Hays.

INT. SHEEAN FAMILY HOME - LOUNGE ROOM - NIGHT

Sitting on a lounge chair is Teddy's father JAMES (59).
 Beside him is a radio cabinet. Playing Music softly. Teddy's
 mother MARY (56) sits on a couch, knitting a white wool
 scarf.

SUPER: "1ST SEPTEMBER 1939"

The MUSIC from the radio stops.

MARY

James, that could be something important?. Turn it up a little please.

James increases the volume on the radio.

RADIO ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Here is the Prime Minister of Australia, the Right Honourable R.G. Menzies.

Mary stops knitting.

ROBERT MENZIES (V.O.)

Fellow Australians, it is my melancholy duty to inform you officially that in consequence of a persistence by Germany in her invasion of Poland, Great Britain has declared war upon her and that, as a result, Australia is also at war.

MARY

No more. I don't want to hear it. It's going to be like the great war all over again. No more I say.

JAMES

Hush, I want to hear what the Prime Minister is saying.

Teddy enters the room.

TEDDY

Dad What's going on? What is Mum upset for?

James does not respond, he only stares at the radio, straining to hear. In the background the address by the Prime Minister continues.

EXT. TASMANIA - LATROBE - TOWN CENTRE - NIGHT

Teddy and his girlfriend KATH (17) exit the local cinema. They walk hand in hand down the street.

The street busy with folks out for a Saturday night.

Traffic passing by, a Army flatbed truck with armed soldiers in the back drives by. Their faces camouflaged black.

Both Kath and Teddy watch as the Army truck drives past.

SUPER: "MARCH 1941"

KATH

What do you think will happen to us? I might never see you again.

TEDDY

Try not to become too upset my love. I'm not leaving now. Still 'ave two months of training yet.

KATH

Where will they send you? I couldn't bear it to be away from you.

TEDDY

I don't know, could be on the other side of the world for all I know.

They stop. Teddy lets go of her hand.

KATH

What's wrong? Something you're not telling me.

TEDDY

No, it's nothing.

KATH

Tell me, before I have to leave. My dad is picking me up.

TEDDY

We should get married.

KATH

We're too Young, can it wait until after the war? Besides we haven't well... you know.

TEDDY

Know what?

KATH

(blushing)
Teddy.

TEDDY

Oh... Yes I see what you mean.

KATH

I don't want to rush things. Hope you're okay with that?

TEDDY

Yes. Suppose so. Can you come over to my place tomorrow? Can you do that?

A car pulls up beside them, driven by Kath's father. Kath enters the car, rolls down the window.

KATH
Sure I'll be there.

TEDDY
Bye.

KATH
Bye.

Kath and her father drive away.

EXT. SHEEAN FAMILY HOME - BACKYARD - DAY

Teddy is dressed in his Navy uniform.

Kath is wearing her Jodpurs pants, a white shirt and a cardigan.

TEDDY
Sorry about last night, I was just being silly.

KATH
Not at all, but I'm glad you feel about me that way. You know some day.

TEDDY
Yes some day.

James comes out from the house. In his hand is a box brownie camera.

KATH
Hello Mr. Sheean, how are you?

JAMES
Fine, look how smart Teddy is all done up to the nines in his uniform.

KATH
Yes Teddy does look very nice. Is that a camera Mr. Sheean?

JAMES
Yes it is, marvellous piece of technology.

KATH
Is it your camera?

JAMES
No, I borrowed it from the bloke across the street.

TEDDY
Dad, please.

JAMES
What's wrong boy? The old man an
embarrassment? How about a picture
of you two?

TEDDY
Sure that would be smashing.

James points to where he wants Teddy and Kath to stand.

JAMES
That's the spot, a little closer
now.

Teddy takes a step closer to Kath.

JAMES
Hold it a minute.

James walks up to Teddy and tilts his Navy cap back a little
on his head.

TEDDY
Take it easy Dad, I had it the way
I like it.

JAMES
That's much better, the cap was
covering your eyes. On three. One,
two, three.

The picture is taken of Kath and Teddy standing together.

EXT. HOBART - HMAS DERWENT NAVAL BASE - DAY

Teddy and ten other Navy trainees gather around a 20mm
Oerlikon cannon. On the ground next to the gun are ten 100-
round magazines.

The cannon is fitted with a leather strap, the operator
places around their back to provide stability while firing
the cannon.

Standing in front of them is Leading Seaman LOUIS (45).

LOUIS
Gather around men, today you will
learn about the Oerlikon cannon.
And then you will all take turns at
firing it down range.

TEDDY
Finally something good for a
change.

The comment brings a few sniggers from the other trainees.

LOUIS

One more remark from you Sheean and you'll be scrubbing floors for the rest of the day.

TEDDY

Sorry sir.

LOUIS

Right then, to start off with the barrel on its own weighs in at a whopping one hundred and fifty pounds. The rounds are twenty millimetre.

Louis takes a single round from a magazine and passes it to Teddy. He looks at it and passes it on to the next trainee.

TEDDY

Blighmy hate to get hit by one of those bastards.

LOUIS

As you can see, the rounds are quite large and are designed to inflict maximum damage to the enemy.

TEDDY

When do we get to have a go?

LOUIS

As soon as I'm done. Now pipe down. Each round must be greased before loading into the magazine.

Louis picks up a magazine and demonstrates how to load the magazine onto the Cannon.

LOUIS

I want all of you to take turns in loading and unloading a magazine.

Each of the trainees picks up a magazine and has a turn of loading and unloading a magazine.

Teddy has his turn. He struggles with the procedure.

TEDDY

What is the matter with this thing?

LOUIS

Not good enough, no enemy is going to wait while you figure it out. Do it again.

Teddy finally gets the magazine loaded and unloaded correctly.

 TEDDY
Right, much better.

 LOUIS
See how much better you do without
the smart arse remarks?

Louis shows the correct stance and body position to fire the gun. Placing the leather strap around his back, then leaning against it to take up the slack. COCKS the gun and FIRES a single round down range.

 TEDDY
Strewth, look at the kick on it.

 LOUIS
Quite so, you will need to use your
body weight to control the gun.
Lean into it. And pivot from the
hips.

Louis FIRES a three-round BURST from the gun.

The trainees cover their ears due to the NOISE.

Louis unstraps himself then steps away from the gun.

 LOUIS
Sheean you're next, fire when
ready.

Teddy positions himself, straps himself in and FIRES a short BURST down range.

EXT. LATROBE RAILWAY STATION - PLATFORM - DAY

Teddy, dressed in his Navy uniform and a long coat, is Joined by his parents and his brother THOMAS (26). Dressed in his Navy uniform. James has the box brownie camera with him.

A small suit case and duffle bag are beside Teddy.

 JAMES
Well son, you look all spiffy in
that uniform. Your Mother and I are
proud of you, both of you.

 TEDDY
Thanks, dad. I just want to say..

James cuts Teddy off.

 JAMES
Take it easy son. This is no Bogart
picture.

MARY

Wish your brothers were here to see you off.

JAMES

Yes mother, but duty calls.

Mary takes from her coat pocket a white wool scarf.

MARY

I made this for you. Should keep you warm out on the sea.

TEDDY

Thanks mum, I love it.

Teddy hugs his mother, placing the scarf around his neck and tucking the ends of the scarf under his great coat.

JAMES

How about a picture of Mick and Teddy?

TEDDY

Sure dad.

Thomas and Teddy stand together, Teddy on the right Thomas on the left. Both with their arms behind their backs. James SNAPS a photo.

JAMES

That should be a keeper.

The WHISTLE from a steam Train can be heard. A moment later the train pulls into the station. All of the train cars are full of other soldiers and sailors.

TEDDY

Well this is it.

JAMES

Be safe. We'll miss you.

MARY

Come home to us.

TEDDY

I'll miss you too. So long Tom.

Teddy shakes hands with Tom.

Teddy kisses his mother and hugs her.

JAMES

Here let me help you with them bags.

James picks up the suit case and carries it on board the Train. Then exits the train. Teddy picks up the duffle bag and slings it over his shoulder.

Teddy shakes hands with his father. James pulls Teddy in and hugs him.

The train WHISTLE blows again.

Teddy boards the train as the train blows its WHISTLE once more. The train pulls away from the station. Teddy looks back at his parents and brother on the platform. Waving goodbye to him. Teddy waves back.

INT. SYDNEY PUB - DAY

A group of about ten Navy personnel have gathered around the table. All fixated on the story.

Jack rises to his feet, and steps away from the table.

RYAN

Jack you shooting off now? You haven't finished the story.

JACK

Out of my way can't an old man take a piss? Can't hold it in like I used to.

RYAN

Sorry, go ahead.

As Jack heads off to the men's room ryan turns to his mate.

FRIEND

Jesus what a character. Cracking good yarn.

RYAN

I don't think I could do even half of what Teddy did.

FRIEND

Nope different generation back then.

Jack returns from the men's room. Takes his seat.

RYAN

How about the time before the sinking, what was it like then?

JACK

It was pretty bloody boring, lots of training, more training. The skipper worked us like bloody dogs.

EXT. HMAS ARMIDALE - DECK - DAY

The Armidale sailing in a large race track pattern a few miles out from Sydney heads. The ships company run fire drills.

EXT. HMAS ARMIDALE - BRIDGE - DAY

Standing outside the bridge is Richards and Sub Lieutenant Buckland. Both men have stop watches. They watch as the crew practice fire drills.

Some of the crew are too slow, others fumble with the equipment. Teddy so far is faultless in his duties.

RICHARDS

Not good enough, this will not do.
Two and a half minutes on that last run.

BUCKLAND

The men have been busy with general duties sir.

RICHARDS

Even so, run it again. I want the men able to do this in their sleep. No excuses.

BUCKLAND

Yes sir.

Buckland waves his hand to the men below to re-do the drill. The crew below commence to uncouple the nozzles and roll up the fire hoses.

RICHARDS

That new chap. What's name? Not one mistake so far.

BUCKLAND

Ah.. That would be Edward Sheean sir. However all the men call him Teddy.

RICHARDS

Teddy, after were done here have him sent to my cabin.

BUCKLAND

Yes sir. You should know he is not long out from basic.

RICHARDS

He really is showing up the more experienced men.

BUCKLAND

Teddy is sir, a lot of this is still fresh in his mind.

A sailor waves up to them.

RICHARDS

Okay run it again. I want the men ready and hoses deployed in less than one minute.

The men re-run the drill. A moment later Richards stops his stop watch.

BUCKLAND

Made it with five seconds to spare.

RICHARDS

Much better. But keep the men at it on regular basis. I won't stand for this drop in standards.

Sub Lieutenant waves his arm for another fire drill to start over.

BUCKLAND

Yes sir. Shall we start the anti-aircraft drills?

RICHARDS

Yes start it now.

BUCKLAND

But sir the men are still running the fire drill.

RICHARDS

Run it, do you think the enemy is going to patiently wait while we put fires out?

Sub Lieutenant Buckland enters the bridge and activates the alarm BELL to signal air attack.

The men involved in the fire drill look up at the bridge.

RICHARDS

(to the crew below)

DON'T LOOK AT ME. GET TO YOUR BLOODY ACTION STATIONS.

Some of the crew below break off from the fire drill and man the four inch gun and the Oerlikon cannon's.

BUCKLAND

Much better. Again Sheean is the stand out. But I worry you're pushing the men too hard.

RICHARDS

Where a warship, we must be ready to handle any situation that crops up.

BUCKLAND

Yes sir, sir were due for sub watch tonight.

RICHARDS

Very well, stow the gear and make preparation's to return to the Harbour.

BUCKLAND

Aye sir.

INT. HMAS ARMIDALE- CAPTAINS QUARTERS - NIGHT

A desk, chair and a bed. Some personal effects adorn the walls. Richards sits at his desk, with a personnel file open. With him is Teddy.

RICHARDS

Ordinary seaman Sheean, I see you're not long with us. How do feel you're going so far?

TEDDY

Sir, okay.

RICHARDS

You caught my attention today with the drills.

TEDDY

Sorry sir I will do better.

RICHARDS

On the contrary, no need to be nervous. You out performed many of the men. Even the senior men. Very impressive.

TEDDY

Thank you sir.

RICHARDS

Keep up the good work Sheean and you will go far.

TEDDY

Thank you sir. Will that be all sir?

RICHARDS

Yes, you can go now.

Teddy turns and exits the cabin.

INT. HMAS ARMIDALE - MESS DECK - NIGHT

Teddy is with Russel Caro. They share a table as other members of the ship's company also eat their meals.

Russel has a cup of Tea. Teddy peels an orange.

RUSSEL CARO

Lad that was impressive work today.
Just a word of the wise. Don't get
too cocky.

TEDDY

Thanks, I just try to do my best.
Still learnin' the ropes around
here.

Russel takes a sip of tea.

RUSSEL CARO

I found working hard and don't mess
things up, works best.

TEDDY

What will I have to do? Besides
clean floors and crappers.

RUSSEL CARO

Well as one of the newest men, all
of the shit jobs. But just knuckle
under.

TEDDY

Getting damn sick of being the
dogsboddy around here. They must
hate me.

Teddy eats a slice of the orange.

RUSSEL CARO

Not so loud, look they don't hate
you. You just need to prove ya self
to them first.

TEDDY

S'pose so. I'm not a trouble maker.
I just wanna do my part.

They both get up and head for the Aft deck.

EXT. HMAS ARMIDALE - AFT DECK - NIGHT

A clear night, the city of Sydney in the background. Other ships and pleasure craft dot the Harbour. On the ships' decks other crew make ready for departure.

Teddy and Russel Caro arrive at the aft deck, Russel Caro leans against the ship's rail as he faces Teddy.

RUSSEL CARO

We are on sub watch, so from now on strict light and noise discipline.

TEDDY

Bloody Jap sub almost killed me.

RUSSEL CARO

Yeah, how so?

TEDDY

I was meant to be on the Kattabul when she was hit by a Jap torpedo. Only I was on leave back home.

RUSSEL CARO

Damn lucky turn of events, fate has put you here.

The engines HUM into life.

-- The Armidale moves out heading toward Sydney Heads.

-- The ship stops at Watsons Bay just south of South Head.

-- The ship's engine idles down.

TEDDY

I hope this is not how I am going to spend the war? Baby-sitting a Harbour.

RUSSEL CARO

Be thankful, you do know so far this has been the worst year for the Navy? So many Ships lost to enemy action.

TEDDY

Yeah I know, but I want my folks back home to know I did something. I made a difference.

RUSSEL CARO

We all play our part, it may not seem like it. But even the small parts make the bigger picture whole.

TEDDY

Wish I could get a chance to show the others what I'm capable of.

RUSSEL CARO

Be careful what you wish for.

INT. SYDNEY PUB - DAY

Ryan and the small gathering of Navy personnel, some of which have pulled up chairs around the table.

RYAN

Ok Jack, one thing I don't get is why the trip up north?

JACK

Well lad, it was like this. You ever heard of Lancer Force?

RYAN

Ah..sure I think I read a book about them once.

JACK

Right, they were a crack bunch of commando's sent to Timor to bugger things up for the Japs. You know cause all kinds shit for em'.

RYAN

Yeah right, if I recall they got clobbered pretty good. Even the locals turned on em'.

JACK

They did, but we gave as good as we got. Anyhow it was our job send up some Dutch blokes and bring our boy's home.

RYAN

Something about some reffo's as well?

JACK

You mean refugees, yeah back then we actually treated them good. Anyhow there we were at Darwin Docks.

EXT. DARWIN PORT - NIGHT

The Armidale is at dock side, the ship's company busy with duties. Some clean the weapons, others carry fresh supplies on board.

Richards walks down the gangway. With him is Buckland.

RICHARDS

Reg, continue the resupply. And have Lieutenant Jenkyn report to me when I return.

BUCKLAND
Yes sir, as to why?

RICHARDS
The last supply run. Did you notice
the strong burning smell?

BUCKLAND
Yes I did, I'll have Harry look
into it. What will the Commodore
have for us?

RICHARDS
Hopefully just another briefing.

An ordinary seaman waits by a vehicle. He salutes as both men
approach. They both return the salute.

BUCKLAND
Will that be all sir?

RICHARDS
Yes, I expect to be back in an hour
or so.

Richard's enters the vehicle and they drive off.

INT. DARWIN NAVAL BASE - BASE HQ - NIGHT

The building is blacked out. No light is seen from the
outside. Black curtains hang from all of the windows.

Richards walks down a corridor, enters an office.

INT. DARWIN NAVAL BASE - BASE HQ - OFFICE - NIGHT

Richards sits at a desk. With him is Commodore CUTHBERT POPE
(55)

Pope pours brandy into two glasses. Passes one over to
Richards.

POPE
To our partners.

RICHARDS
To our partners.

Both men CLINK their glasses as the toast is made. Then take
a sip of brandy.

POPE
Right, better get straight to it.
Lancer force operating out of Timor
are in a dreadful situation.

RICHARDS
How so?

POPE

Well they have been doing some bloody good work, given Tojo a bloody nose. But they are beginning to fall apart.

RICHARDS

What is the latest intelligence from Timor?

POPE

Not good I'm afraid, their losses are mounting. No longer an effective force.

Pope passes over a report. Richards takes a moment to read it. Richards takes another sip of brandy as he reads the report.

RICHARDS

Sounds rather grim, what is to be done about it?

POPE

That is where you come in. You and two other ships are to set sail for Timor tomorrow.

RICHARDS

We're not ready, I have an engine problem to see to.

Pope opens a desk draw, removes an envelope.

POPE

You have until the morning to get it fixed. Here are your orders.

He passes the envelope to Richards.

RICHARDS

Who else is going with us?

POPE

You'll be Joined by the Kuru and Castlemaine. The Castlemaine will be the lead ship.

RICHARDS

Can any other ship take our place, if we're not ready?

POPE

If you're not up to the task I'll have another ship take the mission. And you can go back to Sydney.

RICHARDS

That won't be necessary I'll move
Heaven and Earth to be ready to
sail on time.

POPE

Good, you can catch me up on the
other mission another time.

INT. HMAS ARMIDALE - ENGINE ROOM - NIGHT

Richards is with Engineer Lieutenant HARRY JENKYN (33). Harry is covered in grease and dirt. Harry holds an engine part, cleaning it with a rag.

A second engineer works on an engine block.

HARRY JENKYN

(to other engineer)

Be sure the pistons are correctly
seated, call me when you're done.

RICHARDS

Lieutenant a moment please.

Harry steps away from the engine.

HARRY JENKYN

Sir.

RICHARDS

We have orders to set sail to Timor
in eight hours from now. Can we be
ready by then?

HARRY JENKYN

No, several of the engine parts are
burnt out, they need replacing.
That will take at least ten to
twelve hours.

RICHARDS

Not good enough, we must be ready
to leave on time.

HARRY JENKYN

It's not that simple, these
Corvettes are dreadful in rough
seas. Cutting through the big waves
overworks the engines.

Harry steps over to the engine where the part came from.

RICHARDS

Tell me what you need to get it
done?

HARRY JENKYN

Extra men working on each part,
then we might be lucky to leave on
time.

RICHARDS

No might, you must be ready leave.
I will get the extra men you need.
In the mean time work quickly.

HARRY JENKYN

Aye sir.

Richards leaves the engine room.

INT. HMAS ARMIDALE - CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS - NIGHT

Richards takes a seat at the desk. A KNOCK on the door.

RICHARDS

Enter.

Buckland enters.

BUCKLAND

Sir, you wanted to see me.

RICHARDS

Yes, I have our orders from Pope.
We are to sail for Timor.

Richards hands over the orders to Buckland. He takes a moment
to read it.

BUCKLAND

To Betano, with sixty three Dutch
troops plus equipment.

RICHARDS

And relieve what is left of Lancer
force. Then take them and some
refugees back to Darwin.

Buckland takes out a sea chart and looks up the location of
Betano, Timor.

BUCKLAND

That is well inside Jap territory.

RICHARDS

Right into Tojo's backyard.

BUCKLAND

It will get rather cosy on board.
We are rather crammed for space as
it is.

RICHARDS

Indeed so, have the ship's company make all available space for the Dutch troops.

BUCKLAND

Aye sir, anything else?

RICHARDS

How long until the Dutch troops arrive?

BUCKLAND

They will be here within the hour.

RICHARDS

Board the Dutch troops as soon as they arrive. We set sail in the morning.

Buckland leaves, closing the door behind him.

EXT. DARWIN PORT - DAY

The Armidale, Castlemaine and Kuru depart Darwin in a trail formation with Castlemaine taking the lead followed by the Armidale then the Kuru.

EXT. HMAS ARMIDALE - DECK - DAY

On the decks of the Armidale are the DUTCH TROOPS. Some play card games, others read letters. Some play crap's with dice. Two troops with a Lewis machine gun, strip it down and clean the parts.

INT. HMAS ARMIDALE - BRIDGE - DAY

On the bridge is Richards, and the Bridge crew. Richards has a pair of binoculars hanging from his neck.

The signal from Castlemaine's signal lamp is visible. Richards raises the binoculars to read it.

RICHARDS

Leaving friendly waters, as of now strict noise and light discipline. Be on lookout for enemy aircraft.

Richards lowers the binoculars.

BUCKLAND

I'll have the men set observation post.

RICHARDS

Very well. Make your course three zero, zero degrees speed ten knots.

RUSSEL CARO

Aye to course three zero zero
degrees, ten knots.

BUCKLAND

(into voice pipe to lower
bridge)

Hands to observation positions.

Members of the ship's company fan out around the ship on all sides, in teams of three. They commence to observe the water and sky for any signs of the enemy.

EXT. HMAS ARMIDALE - AFT DECK - DAY

Teddy scans the sky, while Jack watches the water. Jack checks his watch. On the deck rest a pair of binoculars.

JACK

Half past twelve, been at it for
six hours. Nothin' yet.

TEDDY

Too bloody right, hope we get a
break soon. Me bloody neck is
killing me.

Teddy rubs the back of his neck. Then resumes scanning the sky.

JACK

Busting for a piss, I need to use
the head.

Jack begins to walk away.

TEDDY

Hang on a minute, I think I see
something, I can see a plane. Not
sure if it is one of ours.

JACK

Gimmy the glasses, I'll have a
look.

TEDDY

Seems to be just flyin' around in
circles.

Teddy passes over the Binoculars.

JACK

It could just be a patrol. Hang on
a sec. Shit, he's a Jap bastard.
Call the skipper.

Teddy picks up a deck phone, and RINGS the bridge.

TEDDY

Skipper we have one, high above,
off the port beam.

A moment later the signal for action stations RINGS out. Teddy moves up to the 20mm Oerlikon cannon, loads a full magazine and COCKS the gun.

JACK

Steady on mate, he's way too high.
Save the ammo.

INT. HMAS ARMIDALE - BRIDGE - DAY

The bridge crew continue to observe the Japanese aircraft.

BUCKLAND

Shall we evade sir?

RICHARDS

No, he would've attacked us by now.
Well if they didn't know we were
here before, they sure as hell do
now.

BUCKLAND

What shall we do now?

RICHARDS

We wait.

INT. HMAS ARMIDALE - CREW QUARTERS - DAY

The Quarters are rectangular in shape, two rows of hammocks on either side.

The hammocks sway in time with the pitching and rolling of the ship.

Teddy is asleep in one of the hammocks. Beside him is Jack. Several other hammocks are occupied by men sleeping.

A moment later the ship's bell RINGS out the alarm for enemy aircraft.

Teddy and the other men all spring out from their hammocks and run to their action stations.

INT. HMAS ARMIDALE - BRIDGE - DAY

Richards is out on the port bridge wing searching for the Aircraft. Wireman NOEL (20) enters the bridge and hands a note to Richards.

The bridge phone RINGS. It is answered by Buckland.

NOEL
Sir, a message from the
Castlemaine.

RICHARDS
(reading the note)
Break formation, position ten
cables abreast. Commence zig-
zagging.

NOEL
Shall I send a reply?

RICHARDS
Yes, moving to position.

Noel leaves the bridge. Buckland returns the bridge phone to
its cradle.

BUCKLAND
Sir, all action stations have
reported in.

RICHARDS
Very well, all ahead full. Commence
zig-zagging when at ten cables
abreast.

BUCKLAND
Aye sir.

EXT. HMAS ARMIDALE - AFT DECK - DAY

Teddy and Jack man the 20mm Oerlikon cannon. The three planes
can be seen clearly above. Two Zero fighters and a Betty
bomber.

JACK
As soon as they're in range, I'll
blow 'em all to fucking hell.

TEDDY
Just don't miss.

Far off in the distance the Castlemaine is seen. Her Guns
have Opened FIRE on the three aircraft. Tracer fire fills the
sky.

JACK
That's it, good enough for them.
Good enough for me.

Jack Opens FIRE, as does the 20mm Oerlikon cannon on the
bridge wing facing the enemy planes. The sky is filled with
tracer FIRE. None of the rounds hit their mark.

TEDDY
Jack a little more in front.

JACK

Damn bastards are just out of range.

TEDDY

Nothin' is even getting close, the bastards are playing with us.

JACK

Shut up, keep the damn ammo coming.

The other Oerlikon's cease FIRE. As does Jack.

TEDDY

Tell me to shut up will ya.

JACK

Sorry lad, don't take it personal.

All three planes suddenly turn toward the Castlemaine, level out. The Castlemaine opens FIRE. The Betty bomber opens FIRE with it's machine guns.

The three Aircraft fly toward the Armidale, machine guns blazing as rounds SPLASH into the water.

TEDDY

Shit take cover, they're comin' right for us.

Both Teddy and Jack dive for cover at the ships waist. As rounds strafe the ship. Missing them both.

The Armidale returns FIRE as the three aircraft climb high and fly away.

INT. HMAS KURU - ARAFURA SEA - DAY

A small wooden motor vessel. In command is Lieutenant JOHN GRANT (39) John stands beside the ship's wireman.

JOHN GRANT

Send the following to Darwin. Ships have been shadowed and attacked.

The wireman TAPS out the message via Morse code.

JOHN GRANT

Consider prospect operation doubtful. Request orders.

The message is sent.

INT. DARWIN NAVAL BASE - BASE HEADQUARTERS - DAY

The room consist of various work stations, telegraphist stations, and a phone exchange.

In the centre of the room is a large table with a map of Northern Australia and immediate countries. On the Table are various markers.

Staff move the markers around on the table.

In the operations room is Pope and Commander LAURANCE TOZER (40) both men are at a telegraphist station.

The Telegraphist passes a note to Pope.

LAURANCE TOZER
What is it sir? Anything wrong?

POPE
Message from the Kuru, the convoy has come under enemy fire.

LAURANCE TOZER
Perhaps we should re-think this mission?

POPE
I can't call off a mission on one minor attack. We must push on.

Laurance turns to the telegraphist.

LAURANCE TOZER
(to telegraphist)
Any additional information from the last message.

The telegraphist shakes their head in response to the question.

POPE
We have to get those men off Timor.

LAURANCE TOZER
Sir, can we try to get the men off from another location. One of the islands south.

POPE
Don't be absurd, how will they get there? What about the refugees? And the wounded soldier?

LAURANCE TOZER
Even if it means loosing three ships to do it. Can you live with that?

Pope snaps a look at Laurance.

POPE

Risk must be accepted in war. My orders stand.

Pope writes a message on a note, passes it to the telegraphist. The message is sent.

INT. HMAS KURU - BRIDGE - DAY

John Grant enters the bridge. A sailor mans the ship's wheel.

The wireman hands a note to John.

JOHN GRANT

(reading out loud.)

Steer a deceptive course to the north-east. Expect Beaufighters at thirteen hundred hours. Risk must be accepted.

INT. JAPANESE BETTY BOMBER - DAY

Flying high above, the PILOT can see the Australian Ships below.

The pilot looks out his window. A large rain squall has formed off in the distance.

The CO-PILOT looks out his window. The BOMBARDIER takes up his position and looks down the bomb sight.

Through the bomb sight he sees tracer FIRE rise from the Armidale and Castlemaine. The Kuru breaks off and heads for the rain squall.

(All dialogue in Japanese.)

PILOT

There they are just ahead.

CO-PILOT

Yes, I see them. Opening bomb-bay doors now. One is getting away, shall we send a bomber after it?

PILOT

No, focus on the main enemy force.

The co-pilot reaches for the lever to open the bomb-bay doors.

PILOT

(into radio)

This is the lead plane. Take up V formation and follow in on my bomb run.

BOMBARDIER
Steady, to the right. Stop, hold it
there.

The bombardier presses a button. The bombs are dropped.

BOMBARDIER
Bombs away.

The Bombs fall toward the Armidale and Castlemaine.

PILOT
Do I need to go around again?

BOMBARDIER
One moment... They missed, come
around for another try.

A BURST of MACHINE GUN FIRE tears through the Fuselage of the bomber. A second later an Australian Beaufighter ROARS past the Betty bomber.

The Beaufighter opens FIRE on the Bomber. Rounds SMASH through the canopy killing the Bombardier.

The Bomber banks hard to evade the FIRE coming from the beaufighter.

Two more Beaufighters chime in on the Attack.

PILOT
(into radio)
All BOMBERS, DROP YOUR BOMBS AND
RETURN TO BASE.

More MACHINE GUN FIRE BURSTS through the mid section of the bomber. Black SMOKE pours out from one engine.

Multiple EXPLOSIONS are heard from below. The Australian Beaufighters continue to attack the Betty bombers as they fly away.

INT. SYDNEY PUB - DAY

Jack sits at the table, observing the world out of a nearby window. The other Navy personnel, heads down all on their phones.

Ryan returns to the table with a large jug of beer and a packet of salted peanuts. Ryan takes his seat. Tosses the peanuts on the table.

The beer and peanuts are passed around the group. Glasses are re-filled.

Phones are placed back into pockets.

JACK

Ah good Ya back, hope I'm keeping
you blokes from anythin'

RYAN

All good mate, keep em' fed and
watered and their right to go.

JACK

Righto, so then after we were
scattered all over the place. But
we pushed on into that night.

RYAN

How did you get on?

JACK

Well we didn't have any of the
fancy equipment like you boys have
now days. With them night vision an
all.

RYAN

Yeah we do have it pretty good.

JACK

The night is as black as the ace of
spades.

EXT. TIMOR - BATANO BAY - NIGHT

The Armidale and Castlemaine arrive at the bay. No signal
fires are lit.

From the search light of the Castlemaine the challenge signal
is flashed. No response is seen.

The two Corvettes slowly move up and down the bay. No sign of
the Kuru. No signal fires.

INT. HMAS CASTLEMAINE - BRIDGE - NIGHT

Lieutenant-Commander PHILIP SULLIVAN (45) leaves the bridge
and enters the Radio room.

INT. HMAS CASTLEMAINE - RADIO ROOM - NIGHT

The room consists of a desk, a receiving radio set and a
transmitting set as well as a sea chart. Sitting at the desk
is Signalman STAN (16).

Philip Sullivan enters the room.

PHILIP SULLIVAN

Send this message to Armidale. This
is the bay. No fires. No reply to
challenge. Consider operation
hopeless. Now returning.

STAN
Right away sir.

The message is tapped out via Morse code. A moment later a reply from the Armidale.

PHILIP SULLIVAN
What is her answer?

STAN
Suggest leave now. Move out as far as possible. Avoid detection by enemy.

Philip consults a sea chart and writes down a set of coordinates. He passes the note to Stan.

PHILIP SULLIVAN
Send this, leaving now. And these co-ordinates.

The message is tapped out again via Morse code.

EXT. HMAS CASTLEMAINE - SEARCH LIGHT DECK - NIGHT

On the Deck is lieutenant-commander Philip Sullivan. With him is a signalman. Over to their Starboard side is the Armidale.

Philip checks his watch.

PHILIP SULLIVAN
Send this. Will signal Darwin. Advise of situation. Let me know of any further communication.

The signalman flashes out the message.

Philip climbs down the ladder and makes his way to the Radio room.

INT. HMAS CASTLEMAINE - RADIO ROOM - NIGHT

In the room is signaller Stan. When Philip Sullivan enters the room.

PHILIP SULLIVAN
I need to send a message to Darwin.

STAN
Ready sir.

PHILIP SULLIVAN
Patrolled beach for one hour. Negative reply to challenge. Negative fires. No sign of kuru. Have departed.

STAN
Sending it now sir.

INT. DARWIN NAVAL BASE - BASE HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT

At the communications room is Pope and Laurance Tozer.
Laurance is speaking with a staffer at the map table.

A telegraphist hands a note to Pope.

POPE
Laurance, you need to see this.

Laurance excuses himself with the staffer and walks over to Pope.

LAURANCE TOZER
What is it sir?

Pope passes over the note, Laurance reads it.

POPE
I want them to return to complete
the mission.

LAURANCE TOZER
My advice would be to wait a day or
two. Then arrange an alternate
location for extraction.

POPE
Too risky, our communications are
intercepted by the Japs. We risk
giving away Lancer forces location.

LAURANCE TOZER
All the more reason to wait, go
quiet for a few days. Then get them
out.

POPE
No, what if the Japs stumble upon
them by accident. No they must go
back tomorrow night.

Pope walks over to a telegraphist station and has the order
issued.

HMAS CASTLEMAINE - RADIO ROOM - NIGHT

Philip Sullivan enters the room.

PHILIP SULLIVAN
Any reply from Darwin?

STAN
Just got it now sir.

PHILIP SULLIVAN

Well no mucking around, let's have it.

STAN

You may be required to repeat operation tonight.

PHILIP SULLIVAN

Send this to the Armidale. Need to rendezvous in four hours. Discuss next move.

The message is sent.

EXT. HMAS ARMIDALE - AFT DECK - DAY

The Armidale moves slowly in a large circle. In the middle of the circle are the Kuru and Castlemaine, who have come alongside each other.

Teddy mans the aft 20mm Oerlikon cannon with Jack.

TEDDY

Around and around we go, where she stops no body knows.

JACK

You are a funny bastard mate. Damn lucky we found the Kuru.

TEDDY

More like they found us. If I were a Jap? Right now I'll think all me Christmases had come at once.

JACK

Don't lose focus now, we don't want to give the damn Japs a gift.

TEDDY

I don't like it out here all exposed. Like a couple of sittin' ducks.

JACK

Look it won't be for too long. They have to get them refugees out of here.

TEDDY

Should have left them, we're not a ferry service.

Teddy swings the 20mm Oerlikon to the port side, scanning the sky.

JACK

Ya just can't leave 'em in a war zone. Sad day If we Aussies ever treat refugees cruelly.

TEDDY

Wish they would get on with it. Making me nervous.

EXT. HMAS KURU - DECK - DAY

The Kuru and Castlemaine are alongside each other. John Grant arrives at the aft deck. On the aft deck of the Castlemaine is Philip Sullivan.

JOHN GRANT

How are you holding up? That last attack almost had us.

PHILIP SULLIVAN

We're doing okay. Some minor damage on our decks but otherwise okay.

JOHN GRANT

I suggest a transfer to you. While I and the Armidale return to Betano.

PHILIP SULLIVAN

As the lead ship I have the responsibility to lead the mission.

JOHN GRANT

Armidale can't do it, they have the Dutch troops.

PHILIP SULLIVAN

Yes, that would make a very big juicy target for the Japs. That is the way it has to be then.

JOHN GRANT

One other thing. I have my orders to do the job tonight.

PHILIP SULLIVAN

What are you talking about?

JOHN GRANT

Pope wants us to go back in.

PHILIP SULLIVAN

Crazy fool sending us back in like that. Same mission same location.

JOHN GRANT

I don't like it either, but what else can I do?

PHILIP SULLIVAN

Righto, then it's agreed I'll complete the operation with the Armidale.

A BURST of FIRE from the Castlemaine's bridge wing 20mm Oerlikon cannon. Both Philip and John turn to see a lone Japanese Plane coming in low and fast.

The other 20mm Oerlikon cannons open FIRE.

JOHN GRANT

Quickly, get the hell outta here.

PHILIP SULLIVAN

No need to tell me twice.

Both ships quickly part company and spread out. The Japanese plane drops a bomb, which misses its target. The plane climbs fast and high. All of the 20mm Oerlikon cannons cease fire.

INT. DARWIN NAVAL BASE - BASE HQ - DAY

Staff move the markers around on the table. Three markers with the names of Armidale, Kuru and Castlemaine are placed just south of Timor.

Pope is in the room. With him is Commander Laurance Tozer.

POPE

Hello Laurance, I hope you slept well?

LAURANCE TOZER

Not too bad, damn mozzies had a bloody picnic.

POPE

I'll have the quartermaster send over a mosquito net. Shall we get into it?

Both men turn to the large map table.

LAURANCE TOZER

Well the latest report on Operation Hamburger is all three ships have met moderate opposition. But are holding their own.

POPE

When was the last communication?

LAURANCE TOZER

Actually just before you arrived a message was coming in. Should be here any second.

Pope points to a location on Timor of the Japanese Air Base.

POPE

That damn Jap Air base in Timor has got to go. How soon can we hit it again?

LAURANCE TOZER

Not for the next two to three days. The crews are at breaking point. They need to rest.

POPE

I don't care if they need rest. We all need rest. I need those planes in the air.

LAURANCE TOZER

Sir, it's not just that, the planes are breaking down more. Spare parts are running dangerously low.

POPE

All I hear from you is excuses. Is it just that? I think you question my decision to send those ships back in.

LAURANCE TOZER

Well since you brought it up. I do. Same location, same mission. You're setting them up for an ambush.

POPE

How dare you even for one second suggest I would do such a thing. What do you have me for? Some kind of callous monster?

LAURANCE TOZER

That is not what I was suggesting at all. I'm not against taking risk in war. What I'm against is sending men on a suicide mission.

A messenger arrives with a note in hand, passes the note to Pope. He reads it. The messenger stands to one side and waits.

Pope hands the note to Laurance, he reads it and hands the note back.

LAURANCE TOZER

Perhaps we should bring them all back and try again in a few days?

POPE

Then we will loose all of lancer force. Relieving those men is the whole purpose of this mission.

LAURANCE TOZER

I'm well aware of the purpose of the mission.

POPE

Do you? Sometimes I don't think you really do.

Pope flips the note over and writes his reply. He hands the note to the messenger who leaves.

EXT. HMAS ARMIDALE - AFT DECK - DAY

Heavy rain falls.

Jack has opened FIRE with the 20mm Oerlikon cannon at five Japanese Betty bombers. Teddy stands by the gun with a fresh magazine in hand.

JACK

You're doing great, Ted. Keep them cans coming.

TEDDY

Ready?

JACK

Yep, do it now.

Teddy replaces the empty magazine with a full one. Tosses the empty magazine onto the deck. Two other empty magazines are already on the deck.

Jack COCKS the Cannon and resumes FIRING.

All of the ship's 20mm Oerlikon cannon Open FIRE. An EXPLOSION from a bomb off the port bow sends a column of water into the air.

TEDDY

Damn that was close, running low on ammo.

JACK

Get to the locker, gather up whatever you can carry.

Teddy leaves for the Ammo locker, gathers up four more ammo cans. Returns to the 20mm Oerlikon cannon.

One of the bombers is hit. It wobbles and loses height rapidly before levelling off. Then flying off.

TEDDY
Four more, you got one?

JACK
You damn well bet I did. Got 'em
alright.

INT. HMAS ARMIDALE - RADIO ROOM - DAY

Noel mans the radio when Richards enters.

RICHARDS
Send this. Emergency. Enemy air
attack. Aircraft bombing. And give
our position.

NOEL
Aye sir.

RICHARDS
I'll be on the bridge. I'll be back
shortly.

NOEL
Aye sir.

EXT. HMAS ARMIDALE - AFT DECK - DAY

Teddy and Jack continue. Two of the Betty bombers leave the
area. Three remain. They continue to bomb the Armidale.

TEDDY
Yeah, two are pissing off, don't
have the stomach for it.

JACK
Never mind them, still three of 'em
left.

Teddy loads a fresh magazine into the 20mm Oerlikon cannon.
The sky is filled with tracer FIRE.

INT. HMAS ARMIDALE - RADIO ROOM - DAY

Noel is TAPPING out a message when Richards enters the room.

RICHARDS
Any response from Darwin?

NOEL
Expect three Beaufighters E.T.A. Oh
three thirty Zulu.

A moment later the three Betty bombers leave the area.

NOEL
They're gone now sir.

RICHARDS

Send this to Darwin. Attack ceased.
Absolutely essential adequate air
protection provided continuously.
Large enemy formations being used.

NOEL

Aye sir.

The message is transmitted.

EXT. HMAS ARMIDALE - AFT DECK - DAY

Jack and Teddy along with all of the ships' guns cease fire. -
Teddy secures the Oerlikon cannon, and clears away the shell
casings on the deck.

TEDDY

Don't they ever run out of those
things?

JACK

Apparently not.

TEDDY

They are never going to stop coming
are they?

JACK

Not on your life. Would you? I just
don't like this mission my gut is
telling me we should call it quits.

TEDDY

That is not our place to speak out
like that. What can you do about
it?

JACK

See the skipper, put my view
across. He's a reasonable bloke.

TEDDY

Don't do it, we have our orders.
The brass know what they are doin'.

JACK

Do they? They don't always get it
right. Might take someone like me
to steer em right.

TEDDY

I don't think the skipper or the
Navy will pull up stumps based on
the gut feeling of one sailor.

JACK
All I can do is try. All they can
do is say no.

TEDDY
Okay, but don't say I didn't warn
Ya.

EXT. HMAS ARMIDALE - MID SHIP DECK - DAY

Jack is with Richards - Richards takes out a pipe and lights
the tobacco. Drawing in a couple of deep puffs.

JACK
Sir, mind if I have a word?

RICHARDS
Not at all, what is on your mind?

JACK
Mind if I speak freely?

RICHARDS
Go on.

JACK
It's about this mission. I and a
few of the men have grave concerns
over our chances of making it out
alive.

RICHARDS
Oh, we do have our orders. I have
my superiors just like you do. What
are your concerns exactly?

JACK
The bloody Japs are all over us
like fly's to shit sir. They are
never going to stop until every
last one of us is dead.

RICHARDS
So you think we should just give up
and go home.

JACK
Well I wouldn't put it that way
sir. How do we know they aren't
already dead.

Richards takes a puff on the pipe

RICHARDS
I see, so we should just assume
they are? So we should just let the
Japs do whatever they bloody well
please.

JACK

Of course not sir. I want to save those men just as much as the next bloke.

RICHARDS

What is it then? If you're not up to the job say so. I can always have you re-assigned to other duties.

JACK

I can do my job. I have a real bad feeling about this one sir.

RICHARDS

We concede defeat here. Where does it stop? In Darwin? On the streets and towns? In the cities? Or do we wait until they raise the Jap flag over Parliament House.

JACK

Why us? Why three small ships? Against everything they have that fly's or floats.

RICHARDS

If you can find a way to get the brass to commit more ships, then let me know.

JACK

I just thought I would raise mine and the men's concerns with you.

RICHARDS

And you have. Look Jack you're afraid. We all are, we have a job to do. Let's do it so others don't have to.

INT. HMAS ARMIDALE - MESS DECK - DAY

Jack is with Teddy and three other sailors at a table. Teddy has a plate of eggs, bacon, sausages. - Teddy opens a bottle of tomato sauce and applies a generous helping.

Jack has a cup of coffee.

JACK

Like a little bit of egg and bacon with your sauce.

TEDDY

Piss off. Told Ya so the skipper would chew you out.

JACK

Not at all mate. I said my piece we came to an agreement.

TEDDY

Well what do Ya reckon now? Going to hell in a hand-basket are we?

JACK

Probably, but I pray we aren't.

Jack takes a sip of his coffee.

TEDDY

The old man has gone troppo. Suicide mission for sure.

Teddy cuts up a sausage and some egg takes a mouth full.

JACK

Keep it down, gonna scare the rest of the crew.

TEDDY

What else can we do? The brass have got it wrong on this one, no doubt about it.

JACK

Nothin' we can do. It's in the lap of the Gods now mate.

INT. DARWIN NAVAL BASE - BASE HEADQUARTERS - OFFICE - DAY

Pope and Laurance Tozer stand at opposite ends of the office.

LAURANCE TOZER

Sir, the Armidale is requesting continuous air cover.

POPE

Then give it to them. What is the problem?

LAURANCE TOZER

We simply don't have the men or planes to do that.

POPE

I already told them they would have it.

LAURANCE TOZER

Why? Would you do that without consulting with me? I can't conjure up men and planes out of thin air.

A KNOCK on the door. Laurance opens the door and is handed a document from a staff member. The staff member closes the door.

POPE

What is that?

LAURANCE TOZER

A report that shows exactly how many planes we have and available crews.

POPE

Okay, what is the point of this?

LAURANCE TOZER

I wanted to show you, since my word is never enough.

Laurance reads the report.

POPE

No need for the dramatics. I said they will have the air cover, and by God they will have it.

LAURANCE TOZER

Not with twelve bombers. Four of which are out of service for repairs. You're promising something we don't have.

POPE

Okay. Then pull other planes off and re-task them.

LAURANCE TOZER

Then we leave Darwin and this base vulnerable to attack.

POPE

So you want me to leave the Armidale without air cover. Cover I already said they would have.

LAURANCE TOZER

What other choice do we have. Sorry sir but you have to reverse the order.

POPE

No the order stands.

INT. HMAS ARMIDALE - BRIDGE - DAY

Richards returns a sextant to it's case. Turning to a sea chart marks the ships position on it.

Richards then returns the sextant case to a draw. Picking up a pair of binocular's from the same draw.

He makes his way over to the port bridge wing. Searching the sky. Checks his watch.

Moving over to the starboard bridge wing, Richards repeats the process. Then moves back into the bridge.

BUCKLAND
Something wrong sir?

RICHARDS
Yes, very wrong, the air cover Pope promised has not shown up. Where the hell can they be?

BUCKLAND
Shall I signal Darwin?

RICHARDS
No, no use now. We are for all intense purposes on our own.

Buckland looks out a window of the ship.

BUCKLAND
Sir I see some planes, lots of them. Getting closer.

RICHARDS
That could be them now. I better check.

Richards checks from a bridge wing. He hurries back to the bridge.

BUCKLAND
Is it them?

RICHARDS
Sound action stations. They're bloody Japs. I counted at least thirteen, maybe more.

The alarm bells RING for action stations.

BUCKLAND
My God, we're in for one hell of a fight.

RICHARDS
I don't like our chances with this one. Get the Dutch troops below to the mess deck.

BUCKLAND
Aye sir.

Buckland turns to a voice pipe.

BUCKLAND
(into voice pipe)
All Dutch troops proceed to mess
deck at once.

RICHARDS
I need to signal Darwin.

INT. HMAS ARMIDALE - RADIO ROOM - DAY

Noel mans the radio, when Richards enters.

RICHARDS
Get this to Darwin urgently. Enemy
aircraft bombing. No fighters
arrived.

NOEL
Aye sir.

RICHARDS
And give our position.

NOEL
Aye sir.

The message is TAPPED out. As this is done the sound of an
EXPLODING bomb in the water can be heard.

INT. HMAS ARMIDALE - BRIDGE - DAY

Richards enters the bridge looks back down toward the aft end
of the ship. Machine gun FIRE from the Japanese strafes the
decks.

Two sailors running for cover are gunned down and killed.

RICHARDS
Get two of the Dutch troops with
their Lewis machine guns on deck.

BUCKLAND
Aye sir.

Buckland turns to the voice pipe beside him.

BUCKLAND
(into voice pipe)
We need two dutch soldiers with
Lewis guns on port and starboard
decks.

RICHARDS
Secure all hatches, and bulkhead
doors.

BUCKLAND

Aye sir.

A moment later two Dutch troops carrying Lewis machine guns and ammo boxes arrive, placing themselves on deck and commence to open FIRE on the Japanese.

Richards returns to the radio room.

INT. HMAS ARMIDALE - RADIO ROOM - DAY

Richards enters the room, Noel is at his station.

RICHARDS

Send this. Nine bombers. Four fighters. Absolutely no fighter support.

NOEL

Aye sir, sir are we going to--

RICHARDS

Just send it.

INT. JAPANESE ZERO FIGHTER - DAY

The pilot of the Zero swoops down. He levels the plane out. Machine gun FIRE from the Armidale pours in around him. Approaching the Armidale from the port side.

The pilot takes aim and drops His torpedo into the water. The torpedo speeds toward the Armidale. The pilot banks hard to one side and climbs high.

INT. HMAS ARMIDALE - MESS DECK - DAY

In the Mess deck are the Dutch Troops, they huddle together. The noise of battle can be heard coming from outside. The ship rocks from side to side with each EXPLOSION.

Then AN EXPLOSION as the torpedo STRIKES the Armidale killing most of the Dutch Troops huddled together.

INT. HMAS ARMIDALE - RADIO ROOM - DAY

Noel is thrown to the floor. A huge piece of Metal SMASHES through the bulkhead, ripping both radio sets to bits before lodging into the opposite bulkhead.

EXT. HMAS ARMIDALE - AFT DECK - DAY

Teddy and Jack both rise to their feet. Sailors around them scramble to take cover. Some men lie dead on the deck.

JACK

Fuck we're hit. We have to get outta here.

TEDDY

We can't give up now, we need to fight on.

The Armidale begins to list to port.

JACK

We're going over, where is the damn order to abandon?

TEDDY

Get it together Jack. Get back on the gun.

Jack returns to the Gun, COCKS it and resumes FIRING.

INT. HMAS ARMIDALE - BRIDGE - DAY

Noel rushes into the bridge.

RICHARDS

Get back to your station. I need to signal Darwin.

NOEL

I can't do that, bloody sets are gone, smashed to bits.

RICHARDS

Then get below, see what help they need.

NOEL

Aye sir.

INT. HMAS ARMIDALE- ENGINE ROOM - DAY

Noel arrives when he is meet by Harry Jenkyn. Harry is rushing to stop water leaks when a high pressure pipe BURST.

A high pressure jet of water erupts from the pipe.

HARRY JENKYN

Damn it, get a clamp on that fucking pipe.

NOEL

A what? What are you talking about?

Harry points to a curved sheet of metal with a flange which has four holes in it.

HARRY JENKYN

Come on now hurry man.

Noel picks up the clamp. Standing in front of the jet of water, Noel holds up the collar in front of the jet.

Noel commences to walk in against the enormous water pressure. Only to stumble to the floor.

NOEL

Can't bloody well do it. You have to give me a hand.

HARRY JENKYN

You're gonna have to do it on Ya own. Someone has to bolt it shut.

Noel try's again, pushing as hard as he can against the jet of water. Reaching the burst section of pipe.

The water level rising above ankle level.

Noel forces the clamp around the pipe.

Harry moves in from the side of Noel with four bolts and nuts and a spanner.

Placing a bolt in each hole and securing with a nut and finally tightens with the spanner.

HARRY JENKYN

Two more mate just hold a little bit longer.

The clamp now secure the jet of water now stopped.

HARRY JENKYN

Well done lad. I'm okay now down here. Head back up.

NOEL

Sure thing mate.

INT. HMAS ARMIDALE - BRIDGE - DAY

The bridge phone RINGS. It's answered by Buckland.

RICHARDS

Reg how far are we listing by?

BUCKLAND

So far twenty degrees. At forty-five we go over.

RICHARDS

Damage reports from all stations.

BUCKLAND

Mess deck is flooding, we need to check for survivors.

Buckland returns the bridge phone to its cradle.

RICHARDS
No time for that, seal it off.

BUCKLAND
But sir men are still in there.

RICHARDS
SEAL IT OFF.

INT. HMAS ARMIDALE - ENGINE ROOM - DAY

The Engine room and Boiler room are separated by a narrow passage between them. In the engine room is Harry Jenkyn. With him is stoker RAY (21)

A second torpedo STRIKES the Armidale between the two rooms sending both men to the floor and Shrapnel flying through the air.

Ray is hit in the legs and Harry in the upper part of his body. Both men, stunned by the blast, rise gingerly to their feet.

HARRY JENKYN
Damn that was bloody close, we have to get off the ship.

RAY
Ya head is bleedin'. We can try the aft end.

Harry raises a hand to his forehead, takes a look at his blood covered fingers.

HARRY JENKYN
Thought I had something, can't see much. You're gonna have to help me out.

They both head toward the aft end of the ship. While doing that a Bomb EXPLODES very close to the ship on the starboard side blowing a large hole in the ship.

Harry and Ray are Knocked over again from the explosion. They help each other up.

The Armidale lists sharply to port. A loud GROANING, TWISTING and TEARING of metal is heard.

RAY
What the hell now?

HARRY JENKYN
She has broken her back. Nothing can save her now.

EXT. HMAS ARMIDALE - DAY

The Armidale is rocked by the EXPLOSION. The ship's rigging STRAINS and SNAPS. Causing the main mast to CRASH onto the bridge of the ship.

The ship's funnel CRASHES down CRUSHING a sailor under it.

INT. HMAS ARMIDALE - BRIDGE - DAY

Russel Caro is knocked to the floor. Richards helps Russel Caro back up to his feet.

RUSSEL CARO

She's breaking apart, we have to abandon.

RICHARDS

That's it, all hands abandon ship.
Say again, all hands abandon ship.

BUCKLAND

I will go below, make sure everyone gets out.

Buckland leaves the bridge. Making his way below deck.

Leading Signaller ARTHUR (24) leaves his station in the asdic cabin and runs to the voice pipes on the bridge.

ARTHUR

(into all voice pipes)
Abandon ship, from the captain
abandon ship.

The Armidale is now listing severely over to port almost to the point of being on her side.

The crew from the Bridge exit for the aft deck. As they do none notice that Russel Caro is tangled up in the ship's rigging.

INT. HMAS ARMIDALE - BELOW DECKS - DAY

Sub Lieutenant Buckland moves along checking every space and room where crew would be. As he does so water is quickly rising.

Sub Lieutenant Buckland opens a door to a room and finds a sailor frozen with fear.

BUCKLAND

(to sailor)
You have to get out. The skipper
has ordered abandon ship.

The sailor white with fear, eyes wide open. Does nothing says nothing only shakes his head.

BUCKLAND

Get off the ship. Did you hear me?

Sub Lieutenant Buckland moves in and forcibly removes the sailor from the room and to the nearest stairway out.

The sailor exits the area. Sub Lieutenant Buckland continues his search below decks.

Overhead a high pressure steam pipe BURST sending a bolt straight into the head of Sub Lieutenant Buckland. He drops to the floor unconscious.

EXT. HMAS ARMIDALE - AFT DECK - DAY

Russel Caro frantically tries to free himself, but can't do it. Russel Caro resigns himself to his fate. Waits for death to come.

Arthur returns and helps Russel Caro free by cutting the rigging with his seaman's knife. Russel Caro makes it to the ships side and jumps into the water.

Arthur moves down toward the aft end of the ship.

ARTHUR

ABANDON SHIP, FROM THE CAPTAIN,
ABANDON SHIP.

Arthur makes it to the ship's rail, climbs over the rail and jumps into the water.

EXT. HMAS ARMIDALE - MID SHIP DECK - DAY

Men are jumping over board as the ship slowly sinks. Some are drawn in by the ship's screws and cut to pieces. Others swim away.

Arthur swims around helping struggling sailors by passing anything that will float to them.

The surviving Dutch troops, some armed with holstered pistols, jump into the sea.

Able Seaman JIM PELLET (23) grabs a tomahawk and cuts through the jammed falls of the motorboat so it can be lowered into the water.

Jim is joined by Teddy.

TEDDY

Here let me give ya a hand with that.

JIM PELLET

Thanks mate, where is Jack?

TEDDY

I don't know, lost him awhile back.

JIM PELLET

Keep at it Teddy, I'll be back in a minute.

Jim leaves for the mess deck.

INT. HMAS ARMIDALE - MESS DECK - DAY

At the mess deck on a bench is a lemonade bottle. Jim fills the bottle with fresh water, then returns to the aft deck.

EXT. HMAS ARMIDALE - AFT DECK - DAY

Teddy still struggles with the falls of the motor boat. Jim returns.

JIM PELLET

Teddy get off the ship.

TEDDY

They just keep mowing them down.
It's bloody murder.

JIM PELLET

GET IN THE DAMN WATER BOY! There's nothin' you can do about it.

Teddy approaches the rail stops, looks at the men in the water being shot at in the water. Turns back and clammers his way back to the aft 20mm Oerlikon cannon.

TEDDY

Someone has to do something!

Jim Pellet cuts through the last of the motor boat falls and sends the boat CRASHING into the sea. Jim jumps into the sea, climbs into the motor boat.

EXT. ARAFURA SEA - DAY

Men in the water huddle together in groups of five to ten. Above them the Japanese fighters continue to machine-gun the men in the water.

Most of the men have their life Vest on. They duck-dive to evade the bullets. Some surface too early and are killed when they surface.

EXT. HMAS ARMIDALE - PORT WAIST - DAY

Ray and Harry Jenkyn take cover crouching below the ship's waist.

RAY

Okay Harry as soon as I give the word we both go over.

HARRY JENKYN

Righto then.

Ray peeks above the Gunwale. Just as he does a bomb EXPLODES nearby. Ray turns back to check on Harry.

RAY

Harry, Harry.

Ray looks to his left then right. Harry is gone. Ray jumps into the water.

EXT. HMAS ARMIDALE - AFT DECK - DAY

Teddy scrambles over dead bodies and the fallen ship's mast and rigging to reach the 20mm Oerlikon cannon.

Teddy straps himself into the gun. At that moment the ship drops below him. He steadies himself. Takes aim and opens FIRE.

A Japanese Zero is HIT, it cartwheels into the water and sinks. A second Zero fighter opens FIRE at Teddy HITTING him in the chest and back.

Teddy, in shock from blood loss. Continues to FIRE the gun. Two more planes are badly damaged.

Teddy has lost the use of his legs. He slumps down to the deck on his belly, blood pouring out from his wounds.

Teddy somehow finds the strength to continue to FIRE the 20mm Oerlikon cannon, water lapping around him.

Teddy continues to FIRE the gun even as the ship sinks below the waves. Tracer FIRE is seen coming up from below the waves.

The Armidale broken in two halves, finally sinks. The Japanese fighters finally stop the attack and fly away from the Area.

INT. SYDNEY PUB - DAY

Jack with a blank stare on his face, tears roll down his face.

Ryan leans in and places a hand on Jack's shoulder. Jack looks up at Ryan.

JACK

Never in my life, will I ever see such a braver act as that.

RYAN

No mate, I can't say I will either.
He did that, he knew death was
comin'

Some of the other Navy personnel in the group choke back tears.

JACK

I can still picture it, they haunt
me in my sleep. The smell, the
blood an guts. The screams. No man
should ever have to see that. Hear
that.

Ryan turns away for a moment, takes a deep breath. Rubs his eyes. Turns back to Jack.

EXT. ARAFURA SEA - DAY

A wide debris field is all that is left behind. An Oil slick has formed. Oil oozes up from under the sea. Dead bodies floating on the surface, as well as body parts. Many of the surviving men are wounded.

Men cling onto empty Oil drums and pieces of drift wood.

Floating on the surface is one carley float, three denton rafts, drift wood.

Men clamber aboard the carley floats or denton rafts. Others into the motorboat.

The ship's whaler, riddled with bullet holes, floats up to the surface upside down.

RICHARDS

Reg where are you? Reg are you
there?

No reply is heard.

ARTHUR

Sir he's gone, he never made it off
the ship.

RICHARDS

Help me gather the men in. Get the
wounded into the motor boat.

In the motor boat are two dead dutch troops. Arthur drags them both out of the motor boat.

ARTHUR

Aye sir, how many do you think made
it?

RICHARDS

No Idea, I will do a roll call as soon as I can.

ARTHUR

Does anyone know we're out here?
What happened to us?

RICHARDS

I JUST DON'T KNOW OKAY... We can worry about that later.

The two paravane floats and drift wood float by.

ARTHUR

Look at it, such a waste.

RICHARDS

Gather that wood up and the floats,
we can make a raft from it.

INT. DARWIN NAVAL BASE - BASE HQ - NIGHT

In the communications room is Pope and Laurance Tozer. They are at a radio telegraph set. A telegraphist waits for a reply from a message.

POPE

How long since my message to the Armidale?

LAURANCE TOZER

Three hours now. No one would go this long without responding.

POPE

Could they have sunk?

LAURANCE TOZER

Given the level of enemy activity in the area a very real possibility.

POPE

Try calling the Castlemaine or Kuru, they might know something.

The Telegraphist TAPS out a message to the Castlemaine.

LAURANCE TOZER

It could take some time for a reply.

POPE

Send up some planes, commence a search starting from the Armidale's last reported position.

EXT. ARAFURA SEA - DAY

The surviving men have made a raft from drift wood, rope and the two paravane floats.

Two shark fins break the surface, slowly moving in and around the raft.

One of the men LIEUTENANT PALMER (30) SLAPS at the water to scare off the sharks, it does not work.

Other men on the motor boat and carley floats also try to scare the sharks, but to no avail.

Richards gestures to the men to gather around him.

RICHARDS

Gather in, get in closer. That's it. Get in close.

Richards waving to the other men to get closer to him.

ARTHUR

What is it skipper? What is all the point of this?

RICHARDS

We're in one hell of a dire situation here. Focus on staying alive.

ARTHUR

What hope have we got? Damn sharks may as well finish us off.

JACK

Look, drop it okay. Let the skipper speak.

RICHARDS

The way I see it, we can wait here for help. But we never got a distress call to Darwin.

NOEL

We should stay here. Wait for rescue.

JACK

Don't you listen? No one knows we're fucking here. So keep Ya stupid mouth shut.

RICHARDS

Jack, enough! We have three options. One. Timor is seventy miles to our north.

NOEL

I don't think so. None of us want to go back.

RICHARDS

Then we have two choices. Two hundred and fifty miles to Bathurst island. Or three hundred miles to Darwin.

A lone shark appears. It raises its nose out of the water. The shark flicks its tail and swims away.

NOEL

Just keep swimmin' buddy. You're not getting a piece of me.

RICHARDS

With the amount of wounded we have, I propose that myself, and the strongest of the men leave for Darwin, we split the supplies we have.

JACK

I'm all for it, we have to make an attempt for land. How about the rest of you fellas?

The other men all nod in agreement.

RICHARDS

Right it's settled then, I will take the Motor boat. With me will be, George, Richard, Les, James, Arthur, Tom, Dave, Jack, Cleland, Ron, Max, Charlie, Morley, Roy, Eric, and Rob.

The men called climb onto the Motor Boat.

JACK

And the wounded man Fred.

RICHARDS

And we better take four of the Dutch blokes as well.

Richards waves over four Dutch soldiers. They all climb onto the Motor Boat. The motor boat is over loaded with men, it only just stays afloat.

JACK

That's it then, twenty two men.

RICHARDS

The rest of you try to stay as one group. Try to stay as close as

possible to here. This is where they will come looking for you.

JACK
Shall we leave now?

ARTHUR
So long boys.

JACK
Food for them sir?

RICHARDS
Jack what is the food situation?

JACK
We have one case of bully beef, two tins of fruit, one tin of condensed milk. Also one tin of carrots.

RICHARDS
Leave the bulk of the food here, we will take one tin of beef, water, fruit and carrots.

ERIC
Who? Will be in charge of the men left here?

RICHARDS
Lieutenant Palmer will lead you.

LT. PALMER
You can count on me skipper.

The men divide the food as instructed.

Some of the men try to start the motor. It fails to start. Others pass over the bulk of the food and water.

JACK
Goodbye and good luck.

RICHARDS
I will send help for you as soon as I can. Till then good luck and God speed.

The men in the Motor Boat take out the oars and row away from the rest of the men.

INT. BEAUFIGHTER - COCKPIT - DAY

In the cockpit is Flying Officer KEARNEY (30) and Sergeant BUCK (22). At the gunners position. They speak via headset intercom.

They fly over a vast empty ocean below them.

KEARNEY

Anything from your position?

BUCK (V.O.)

Nothing yet. So hard to make anything out.

KEARNEY

I can't believe they're gone without a trace. No debris field, no Oil slick, nothing.

BUCK (V.O.)

Makes no sense. Should we get a little lower? Get a closer look.

KEARNEY

I don't think that would make much difference.

BUCK (V.O.)

We have to give it a try, it all looks the same from this high up.

KEARNEY

Too low we narrow our field of view, too high all detail is lost. We're at the right height.

BUCK (V.O.)

We better turn around for one more pass.

KEARNEY

That will have to be our last pass, we're low on fuel.

EXT. ARAFURA SEA - MOTOR BOAT - NIGHT

The men take turns, some in the boat, others in the water, clinging onto the side.

The men in the boat row, others bail out water. Fred lies motionless. Unable to be roused.

A sea snake swims by the boat.

JACK

Skipper, we have a problem.

RICHARDS

What is it?

JACK

Fred has died. Must have gone awhile ago, no one noticed until now.

RICHARDS

Drop him overboard, we need the space.

JACK

Sir how can you say that? He's a great bloke.

RICHARDS

They're all great blokes, we lost a lot of great men.

JACK

Men like Teddy, not even bloody nineteen. Damn bravest man I will ever see.

ARTHUR

Got that right, he saved my life, he save so many lives. Paid for it with his own.

JACK

He should be properly awarded for what he did.

RICHARDS

You don't have to worry about that. I'll see that he gets the proper recognition.

JACK

How about a few words for Fred?

Richards holds his hands in prayer as do the other men.

RICHARDS

Dear Lord as we commend our friend Fred to the sea, we ask that you graciously take him into your hands. We ask that you Provide Fred with eternal rest. Amen.

ALL

Amen.

Fred is gently lowered into the water.

Eric removes the housing from the motorboat engine.

JACK

What are you doing?

ERIC

I think I can get the motor running again.

JACK
Leave it alone, you will make it worse.

ERIC
No, I worked at my uncles mechanic shop before the war.

JACK
Well okay. Don't stuff it up.

EXT. ARAFURA SEA - RAFT - DAY

The men left behind by Richards gather together. Some on the makeshift raft. Others on the carley float or denton raft.

Russel Caro is on the carley float with him is Ray and Lt. Palmer

Ray conducts a count of the men.

RAY
Twenty six, twenty seven. Twenty seven men Lieutenant.

LT. PALMER
Two more taken by sharks. Picking us off one by one.

RAY
We have to get the men out of the water some how.

RUSSEL CARO
In this debris field gives me an idea. The whaler.

LT. PALMER
Not going to work, Japs shot the hell out of it.

RAY
So we just give up? Let nature take it's course.

LT. PALMER
No, we keep thinking.

EXT. ARAFURA SEA - MOTOR BOAT - DAY

The Dutch troops huddle together. Some of the Australians are in the water.

JACK
Skipper, I can't stop thinkin' about Teddy. Is that such a bad thing?

RICHARDS

Not at all, believe me it will help. Now and many years to come.

JACK

Poor bloke, what on earth possessed him to do that?

Eric sits up a little to hear better.

RICHARDS

Only Teddy and God know the answer to that one.

JACK

I remember one time Teddy told me a story about how he and several others while on basic were in a street parade.

ERIC

Do you have to go on? Let the fella rest in peace.

RICHARDS

Go on I would love to here the story.

JACK

The ocean liner Queen Mary was in town. And Teddy had to tow a cannon down the street.

RICHARDS

Not the same one captured during the boxer rebellion?

JACK

The very one. So old man Louis couldn't keep up. Anyhow the lads got away, they thought they had it made.

ERIC

Yeah what happened next?

JACK

They were about to piss off to the local for few beers. When the bloomin' cannon starts rolling down the hill.

ERIC

Serves em right for pullin' a stunt like that.

JACK

So here they all are running down the hill after the bloody cannon. Damn thing only stopped after it hit a bush.

All the men burst out laughing.

ERIC

Too bloody right, that sure sound like somethin' Teddy would do.

RICHARDS

What a cracker story. Okay time to switch places with the Dutch men.

The men in the water try to climb into the motor boat, but are pushed and kicked by the Dutch soldiers.

JACK

What the hell is wrong with you blokes? Get in the damn water.

One of the dutch soldiers gestures no.

RICHARDS

Get them in the Bloody water.

Jack grabs hold of one of the armed Dutch troops to pull him into the sea.

The Dutch troop kicks Jack away. Draws his pistol and aims it at Jack.

JACK

You arrogant bastard, you point that thing at me. After we saved your life.

RICHARDS

Don't antagonise him. Everybody calm down.

The Dutch troop points the pistol at Richards. Richards half raises both his hands.

JACK

Skipper, what do you want us to do?

RICHARDS

Nothing, they can stay where they are.

ERIC

Skipper this is absurd. What bloody right do they have to special treatment?

RICHARDS

They have the guns, I'm not about
to lose anymore men.

Richards gestures for the Dutch troops to stay in the raft.
The Dutch troop lowers his pistol then holsters the gun.

JACK

What are we to do with them
skipper?

ARTHUR

I know what I would like to do with
'em. Leave 'em here to fend for
themselves.

JACK

I'll agree to that.

RICHARDS

No, look leave it for now. I'll see
if I can come up with a solution.

Richards scans the sea around him finding a denton raft
drifting behind them.

JACK

Should have left them with the
others.

RICHARDS

Jack, if you can swim out grab that
denton raft? Tow it back. Give it
to the dutch boys.

JACK

Ah... sure it's not too far.

Jack swims out.

A MOMENT LATER

Jack returns with the denton raft.

RICHARDS

Righto put them in it and tie it to
the motor boat.

INT. DARWIN NAVAL BASE - BASE HQ - DAY

In the communications room is flying officer Kearney, Pope
and Laurance Tozer. All three look over the large map table.

POPE

Glad you could join us, any news?

KEARNEY

Nothing I'm afraid, my last flight,
not a sign.

POPE

We need to widen the search to the
west and east. Can we spare the
aircraft?

KEARNEY

No, we lost one on the way back to
Darwin. The other crews are at the
point of exhaustion.

POPE

Damn it, did the crew make it?

KEARNEY

Yeah a cat landed and picked them
up.

LAURANCE TOZER

We have no other ships available to
search. It has to be the
Beaufighters.

KEARNEY

You keep putting us up like this
and I guarantee you you'll lose
more men, more planes as they drop
out of the sky from exhaustion.

POPE

We're not giving up on those men.
Not yet anyway.

KEARNEY

Anyway?

LAURANCE TOZER

Eventually, if we can't find anyone
or any sign they're alive we'll
have no choice but to call it off.

EXT. ARAFURA SEA - MOTOR BOAT - DAY

The men in the boat struggle to sleep. Men nod off only to
wake seconds later. Richards takes a bearing from a button
compass.

At the boat engine is Eric and Jack.

ERIC

That should do it, crank the engine
and see if we can get it goin'.

Jack CRANKS the engine. It SPLUTTERS. Again he CRANKS it. Again it SPLUTTERS. He CRANKS the engine again. It Only SPLUTTERS.

ERIC

Damn bastard won't start. Perhaps we missed something?

JACK

Give it another go.

Jack CRANKS the engine. Only the crank handle SNAPS off.

ERIC

That's fucking done it now.

JACK

Rope, we need a piece of rope.

One of the men fishes around in the water inside the boat. Finds a length of rope passing it over to Eric.

Eric wraps the rope around the flywheel and pulls as hard as he can.

The engine SPLUTTERS and begins to PUTT, PUTT into life. Finally it starts. A CHEER goes up from all of the men.

The slight increase in speed causes the sea to flow faster over the sides and through the large split in the bow of the boat.

ERIC

That's done it.

RICHARDS

Well done lads, plug up that hole. And put extra men on bailing duty.

Eric tears up his shirt, stuffing it into the hole in the bow. Two other men do the same.

ERIC

That will hold it for now. Which way skipper?

RICHARDS

We need to go toward the south east, that way.

Richards points in the direction of south east.

INT. BEAUFIGHTER - COCKPIT - DAY

At the controls are Kearney and Buck. Buck scans the sea from his gunners position. They speak via headset intercom.

BUCK (V.O.)
How much time do you think they
have?

KEARNEY
A day or two more. Almost four
days, no one can survive that.

BUCK (V.O.)
Sounds like you've given up on them
already. I don't care how long it
takes, we should keep looking.

KEARNEY
I would love nothing more than to
do that.

BUCK (V.O.)
But?

Kearney banks the plane into a slow wide left turn, offering
a vast panorama of endless ocean and sky.

EXT. ARAFURA SEA - MOTOR BOAT - DAY

All the men are in some form of pain. All have sunburnt skin,
puffed-up and cracked skin. Blood oozing from the cracks.
Lips cracked and blistered. Oil in their hair dried and gone
hard.

Sea water only stings them when it flows over the skin. Drift
wood from the Armidale trails around them.

RICHARDS
Hold this course as much as you can
lads. We must be getting close now.

Two of the pieces of drift wood come apart from the raft.

JACK
Damn things breakin' apart skipper.

RICHARDS
Re-tie it with whatever we have. It
will just have to do.

Jack re-ties the raft.

ARTHUR
No use in tryin' skipper, what hope
is there?

RICHARDS
Is that the kind of attitude Teddy
would have?

ARTHUR
No, he's not here to save us now.

RICHARDS

No, but you're here because of him
we all are.

ARTHUR

I just want it to end. Go home to
my misses and kids.

RICHARDS

Just think about getting home to
your family.

ARTHUR

How on Earth do you know it works?

RICHARDS

It works for me. We only have each
other to rely on.

The engine of the motorboat stops working.

ARTHUR

Sorry skipper. Eric you better
check that out.

Eric inspects the engine.

RICHARDS

What is it?

ERIC

No petrol, ran dry.

RICHARDS

Well that's it then back to rowing.

ERIC

Not so fast skipper.

Eric removes the carburettor and empties the contents into
the fuel tank.

RICHARDS

What on earth are you doing man?

ERIC

Run it as a diesel, that will buy
us a few more hours.

EXT. DARWIN NAVAL BASE - AIRSTRIP - NIGHT

Standing on the edge of the airstrip is Pope. He watches as a
Beaufighter comes in for a landing.

When it stops and the door opens Pope walks up to meet with
Kearney and Buck.

POPE
Well anything?

KEARNEY
Not a thing at all, it's like they
just vanished.

BUCK
One more day I'm sure we can find
them.

POPE
No, sorry but I have to call it
off.

BUCK
Sir, one more day, what harm can
one more day do?

KEARNEY
I have to agree, one last flight.

POPE
My mind is made up, I need you for
other operations.

KEARNEY
Perhaps, if we had more planes,
didn't a squadron of Hudson's
arrive? Please sir one last day.

BUCK
We'll go out on our own if we have
to.

POPE
You'll do no such thing.

BUCK
Well give us tomorrow then.

Pope takes a moment to consider the request.

POPE
Okay, you and the Hudson's have one
day to find something, anything.

EXT. ARAFURA SEA - RAFT - DAY

Men on the raft construct a makeshift mast from a boat hook,
using clothing for a sail.

In the water around them is drift wood, and debris from the
Armidale.

Floating just below the surface is the whaler from the
Armidale.

LT. PALMER

That's it men use what rope we have to secure that mast.

NOEL

Not much of a sail but it will do. How much longer do you think lieutenant?

LT. PALMER

At this rate, and assuming we hold our course three maybe four days.

One of the men, BOOL (23), looks around at all of the drift wood and debris.

BOOL

Sir, Take a look at all this floating around us. We could take the whaler and use it too.

NOEL

Are you daft man? Look at it riddled with holes, damn thing has a massive split in the stern.

BOOL

Why don't we make some kind of a raft or something. Get the whaler on top.

NOEL

It'll never work. The sun has driven you mad.

LT. PALMER

Now hang on a minute, I think he's onto something. With what's left of the rope lash the drift wood together into some kind of floating dry dock.

NOEL

Skipper, we are all in a dreadful state, we're barely holding on as it is.

BOOL

It's worth a try, free up some space, we can divide the men up between the carley float, the raft and denton rafts.

LT. PALMER

May as well give it a shot. Gather in all of the drift wood. Gather up the last of the rope.

NOEL

And what is left of the canvas
cover.

Noel and Bool enter the water. They both turn over the whaler
right way up.

Other men tie the driftwood together and form a square-shaped
raft. Three more men enter the water straining to lower one
end of the raft into the water.

LT. PALMER

That's it men keep it lowered now.
You other men on my order push it
up. One, two, three, heave.

Men in the water strain as the whaler is pushed partly onto
the raft.

NOEL

One or two more goes then we have
it.

LT. PALMER

One, two, three, HEAVE. One more
lads HEAVE.

One of the men slips off the raft, the whaler slides off back
into the water.

NOEL

It's no use skipper. Too bloody
hard.

LT. PALMER

No, we don't give up just because
things are hard. Teddy never gave
up. Start over.

The men reset and push as hard as they can.

The whaler sits half way on the raft.

LT. PALMER

One last big push men. HEAVE.

The whaler GRINDS its way fully onto the raft.

NOEL

You little beauty the world's first
floating dry dock constructed while
at sea.

LT. PALMER

Cover that slit in the stern with
the canvas. Use the screws from the
fittings to tack it down.

NOEL
She won't stay afloat for long.

BOOL
Our life vest inflate them. Pop 'em
under the raft.

LT. PALMER
Bloody brilliant, come on then you
heard the man. Start huffin' an
puffin'.

The men begin to inflate their life Vest.

LT. PALMER
Stuff the other holes with
clothing. Start bailing out the
whaler, great job men.

INT. BEAUFIGHTER - COCKPIT - DAY

At the controls are Flying Officer Kearney and sergeant Buck
at his gunner position. They speak via headset intercom.

BUCK (V.O.)
I'm sure I saw something. Just off
to the right.

Both men scan the water below them. The sea is rough with
high swells.

KEARNEY
There! I see them, looks like
they're on a raft of some kind.

BUCK (V.O.)
Yeah, I see them too. I'll mark
their location on a chart.

KEARNEY
I'll put a call into Darwin. Get a
cat out here.

BUCK (V.O.)
I don't think they can land in seas
like this.

KEARNEY
We have to give it a go. It might
settle down by the time they get
here.

INT. DARWIN NAVAL BASE - BASE HQ - NIGHT

A MESSENGER is running down a long corridor with note in
hand. He stops at the office of Pope. An Urgent KNOCK on the
door.

The door opens.

MESSENGER

Sir, you have to come quick to the operations room.

POPE

Why? What is going on? Explain yourself.

The messenger hands over the note. Pope reads it.

MESSENGER

Sir?

POPE

Quickly now, get Tozer to meet me in the ops room urgently.

MESSENGER

Yes sir.

The messenger walks away.

POPE

Run boy, hurry now.

The messenger starts running. Pope breaks into a jog.

INT. DARWIN NAVAL BASE - OFFICER QUARTERS - NIGHT

The messenger outside a door of the quarters.- He KNOCKS on the door. No response. The messenger KNOCKS on the door again harder.

A moment later.

The door is opened by Laurance Tozer who is dressed in his Pyjamas.

LAURANCE TOZER

What is it? What can't wait until the morning?

MESSENGER

Sorry to wake you sir. But the commodore needs to see you in the ops room urgently.

LAURANCE TOZER

Did he say why?

MESSENGER

It is about the Armidale. They found some survivor's.

LAURANCE TOZER

My God. How many?

MESSENGER

I don't know sir. But the commodore just said to get you.

LAURANCE TOZER

Thanks, you can go.

The messengers leaves.

INT. DARWIN NAVAL BASE - BASE HQ - OPERATIONS ROOM - NIGHT

Pope and Laurance Tozer arrive at the room at the same time. Laurance Tozer dressed in pyjamas and a robe and slippers.

They both stop at the large map table.

POPE

Where are they?

A staffer places a marker on the table to indicate the location of the raft.

LAURANCE TOZER

That is about six hours sailing time.

POPE

What planes are in the area now?

LAURANCE TOZER

None, they are all back now.

POPE

Damn it I want a cat in the air, pick them up now.

LAURANCE TOZER

All flights are grounded until first light.

POPE

Get the Kalgoorlie out to the area at once. Have a cat take off at first light.

LAURANCE TOZER

Right, I'll make the arrangements now.

EXT. ARAFURA SEA - MOTOR BOAT - DAY

Every man is on the verge of complete exhaustion. The men are startled when a flying fish leaps out of the sea straight into the motor boat.

ARTHUR

What the hell? Hey fellas take a look at this a damn fish landed in the boat.

RICHARDS

Don't let it get away. Who has a knife?

JACK

I do. Look at it nice and juicy.

Jack passes his knife over to Arthur. The fish is cut into small pieces and distributed amongst the men.

Each man savours the tiny morsel of fish.

RICHARDS

Ask and the lord shall provide.

EXT. ARAFURA SEA - RAFT - DAY

Lieutenant Palmer along with Jim Pellett lower a body of a Dutch soldier into the sea.

JIM PELLETT

No sign of a shark bite. What do Ya reckon got 'im.

LT. PALMER

Probably a sea snake. I think we need to split the men up.

BOOL

What for? Our chances of survival are better together.

LT. PALMER

I don't think so. If it's not sharks, or bloody sea snakes. Then it's men dieing with half their guts missing.

RAY

The Lieutenant's right split the men into two. Some on the whaler. The rest on the raft.

LT. PALMER

Increase our chances of a rescue. We know where the patrol zones are.

BOOL

You base that on the assumption the skipper made it. We don't know that. I say no stick together.

LT. PALMER

What do you think then bumble?

BOOL

Split the men up. We have to assume the skipper never made it.

LT. PALMER

Okay then. We put about a dozen or so on a raft. The rest stay with me on the whaler.

EXT. DARWIN NAVAL BASE - AIRSTRIP - DAY

As the sun rises in the East.

A black catalina plane rolls down the runway. Lifting off it climbs into the air, then levels off.

INT. CATALINA - COCKPIT - DAY

At the controls is flying officer YOUNG (24) and sergeant DAVIS (22). At the waist gunners position is AC2. BOBBY (18)

YOUNG

Check the maps, we have to be sure of the location. We can't waste a moment of daylight.

SGT. DAVIS

I have, but I can do it again. I want to find 'em too, but getting snippy about it doesn't help.

YOUNG

Sorry you're right. I'm sure we can find them.

SGT. DAVIS

Forget it. I better check in with Bobby.

SGT. Davis switches on the intercom.

YOUNG

Hope he brought the camera?

SGT. DAVIS

(into intercom)

Bobby have you got the camera?

AC2. BOBBY (V.O.)

Sure have, I made a package with a note attached should we find them.

SGT. DAVIS

Great work. We will make at least two passes to get a proper fix on their location.

AC2. BOBBY (V.O.)

Copy that, I can drop the supplies first take a picture on the second.

SGT. DAVIS

Sounds like a plan to me. Just don't drop it on their heads, I think they have gone through enough.

AC2. BOBBY (V.O.)

No I won't. I'm a pretty good shot.

INT. HMAS KALGOOLIE - BRIDGE - DAY

In command of the Australian Corvette is HAROLD LITCHFIELD (45) he study's a sea chart. Measuring out distance to a location with a divider.

HAROLD LITCHFIELD

Steer to course three four zero degrees. Slow to one third.

A Sailor at the helm turns the wheel to the new course. An officer at the ship's engine telegraph moves the handle to the slow one third position.

INT. CATALINA - COCKPIT - DAY

The catalina is flying low over the ocean as it approaches a raft with 12 Sailors on it.

YOUNG

We're coming up on them now. Get Bobby ready with that package.

SGT. DAVIS

(into intercom)

Bob you ready back there? Got one shot at this.

YOUNG

Okay ten seconds.

INT. CATALINA - RIGHT WAIST GUNNER - DAY

Bobby with the package in hand holds it out the window. The catalina banks slightly to one side.

SGT. DAVIS (V.O.)

Three, two, one. Drop it now.

Bobby lets go of the package. It plummets into the sea only a few metres from the raft.

AC2. BOBBY

Good drop, I can see a man swimming out now.

INT. CATALINA - COCKPIT - DAY

Young banks the plane into a turn for a second pass. Over the raft.

YOUNG

Get the location on this pass.

SGT. DAVIS

Okay got it. I can send it right away to Darwin.

YOUNG

Yep, do it. Get the camera ready.

INT. CATALINA - RIGHT WAIST GUNNER - DAY

Bobby has a box brownie camera ready, as the plane makes a banking turn Bobby SNAPS a photo of the men on the raft.

The men are seen standing and waving as the picture is taken.

The plane levels out and leaves the area.

AC2. BOBBY

(into intercom)

Is that it? Are you sure we can't land?

YOUNG (V.O.)

Positive, the sea state is too rough. Don't worry we have their location. We will be back first thing tomorrow.

INT. DARWIN NAVAL BASE - BASE HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT

Pope and Laurance Tozer are in the operations room at a telegraphist station. The telegraphist transmits a message to the Kalgoorlie.

LAURANCE TOZER

Have the Kalgoorlie send her current location.

POPE

Also check with the cat crews any further news.

LAURANCE TOZER

I think we need to make the men on the raft a priority.

POPE

Why? Do you think that?

LAURANCE TOZER

The other men are in reasonable good shape on a carley float and motor boat.

POPE

What has that got to do with anything?

LAURANCE TOZER

That raft could break apart at any moment, especially in a rough sea state.

POPE

I can't agree to that we have to go for the other men first. We know where they are and have a better chance of rescue.

LAURANCE TOZER

So their lives are less valuable, more expendable.

POPE

Don't lecture me on life and death decisions. I sent those men out. I am the one who ordered them to their deaths.

LAURANCE TOZER

A burden we must all bear.

POPE

No only I.

INT. CATALINA - COCKPIT - DAY

At the controls is Young and SGT. Davis. With waist gunner Bobby.

Young has the plane in a slow wide turn over the area where the picture was taken the day before.

YOUNG

Check the map again. Are you sure this is the right location?

SGT. DAVIS

I'm telling you this is the location. I have checked it three times now.

YOUNG

Did you work out the location correctly? You could have made a mistake.

SGT. DAVIS

No, I did not. I know how to navigate and read maps.

YOUNG

Tell me how a raft full of men just vanishes into thin air. It makes no sense.

SGT. DAVIS

They could have been picked up by a ship. Or the Japs got them. God knows.

Over the intercom Bobby calls Young.

AC2. BOBBY (V.O.)

Skipper, I think SGT. Davis is right. My maps show the same as yours. We can't both be wrong. Maybe a rouge wave swamped them?

SGT. DAVIS

That is possible. Tired exhausted men. It would not take much to give up in that situation.

AC2. BOBBY

What if we continued out a little further to the south. Followed the sea currents.

SGT. DAVIS

Sounds like a plan to me.

YOUNG

Worth a shot. But I don't like our chances.

EXT. HUDSON BOMBER - DAY

The Australian bomber fly's low and slow over the motor boat a package suspended by parachute is dropped.

A sailor from the motor boat swims out to retrieve the package.

The hudson bomber rocks it's wings as it fly's away from the area.

EXT. ARAFURA SEA - MOTOR BOAT - DAY

Richards unwraps the package with food and tinned water. A flare gun and several flares are also in the package. One of the tins of water has a note wrapped around it.

ARTHUR

What's it say skipper? Are they comin' for us?

RICHARDS

Says that the Kalgoorlie is on her way, and that we should fire the flare gun every half hour from twenty-three hundred hours tonight.

One of the men passes over the flare gun and flares to Richards.

ARTHUR

Praise Jesus, I knew someone was watching over us.

RICHARDS

This could be it lads. We could be going home.

JACK

Only if they're around, no guarantee they will show up.

INT. DARWIN NAVAL BASE - BASE HQ - DAY

In the operations room is Pope and Laurance Tozer. Both men are at the telegraphist station.

LAURANCE TOZER

Message from the Kalgoorlie. Arrived at location. No sign of raft or survivors. Resuming search.

POPE

How does a raft full of men simply up and vanish?

A staffer places two markers with Japanese flags south-west of Betano Timor.

LAURANCE TOZER

Japanese cruisers could of picked them up.

POPE

Not likely, damn Jap bastards would murder the lot of them first.

LAURANCE TOZER

We should not speculate as to their fate. Give the Kalgoorlie time to widen the search.

POPE

They have another twelve hours, then I have to call them back.

LAURANCE TOZER

Sir those men could still be alive...

POPE

Enough, don't you think I know that. It Pains me to do it. But we have to face reality. The war stops for no man.

EXT. ARAFURA SEA - MOTOR BOAT - NIGHT

Richards fires the last of the flares into the air. It burns out, with no response.

RICHARDS

That's it last one gone. Someone must have seen that.

ARTHUR

Japs would have. They show up and forget it.

Arthur runs his finger across his throat, gesturing the cutting of it.

JACK

I'll jump in and risk it with the sharks before that happens.

ARTHUR

Light a fire on the boat, that will get their attention.

JACK

Are you mad? Burn the only thing that floats and keeping us alive.

RICHARDS

No, wait give it a try, what else have we got to lose?

JACK

Our lives.

Men gather up what ever is dry, covered in Oil and set it alight with water proof matches. The fire burns bright.

EXT. HMAS KALGOOLIE - ARAFURA SEA - BRIDGE - NIGHT

Harold Litchfield scans the vast blackness, when the glow of the fire is spotted.

HAROLD LITCHFIELD
Helm, steer toward to that fire.
All stop, don't want to run the
poor bastards over.

The sailor at the helm carries out the orders, an officer places the ship's engine telegraph into the all stop position.

HAROLD LITCHFIELD
Stay on the port side of the fire.
Have rescue parties stand by with
blankets. Lower cargo nets over the
side.

EXT. ARAFURA SEA - MOTOR BOAT - NIGHT

Richards watches as the fire burns brightly. The men on the boat watching for any sign of a ship.

In the darkness a voice is heard.

HAROLD LITCHFIELD (O.S.)
PUT THAT BLOODY FIRE OUT, OR I'LL
LEAVE YOU HERE.

The bow of the Kalgoorlie comes into view from the glow of the fire.

EXT. HMAS KALGOORLIE - PORT BOW - NIGHT

A rescue party from the Kalgoorlie's crew help the men from the motor boat on board. Harold Litchfield greets Richards.

RICHARDS
Thank God you showed up. I don't
think we would have made it another
day.

The crew distribute blankets to the rescued men.

HAROLD LITCHFIELD
I don't know how you did it. Damn
lucky, everyone of you.

RICHARDS
Where do you want us?

HAROLD LITCHFIELD
Get the men below to the mess deck.
Get the worst of the injured to the
sick bay.

RICHARDS

That bloody motor boat saved so many men. We could bring it on board.

HAROLD LITCHFIELD

Why on Earth would you want to do that for?

RICHARDS

For history's sake, a permanent reminder of our ordeal.

HAROLD LITCHFIELD

Well it's your boat.

Two men lower ropes with hooks attached, they snag two ends of the motor boat and begin to haul it up. Only to have it break up half way and fall back into the sea.

RICHARDS

So much for that idea.

INT. DARWIN NAVAL BASE - BASE HQ - DAY

Pope and Laurance Tozer are at the large table map. A telegraphist arrives with a note in hand.

LAURANCE TOZER

They found them, the men are alive. David made it. Final count is nineteen men.

POPE

That is wonderful news. Any news on the other men?

LAURANCE TOZER

Kalgoorlie is reporting that Richards has given the last known location. The kalgoorlie is returning to Darwin.

POPE

No, have them turn around at once.

LAURANCE TOZER

Sir, Harold did state he was going to do that. But decided against it.

POPE

On what grounds? He has no right to do that.

LAURANCE TOZER

The risk is too high, Japs are all over the place. I think he made the right call.

POPE

Yes, perhaps. But as soon as the survivors are off loaded. Send the Kalgoorlie back out at once.

LAURANCE TOZER

Shall we send up a plane to confirm the location?

POPE

Yes, get a cat up quickly.

LAURANCE TOZER

How far are they meant to be?

A staffer places a marker on the large table map.

POPE

That is at least twenty-four hours sailing time. Four to six hours flying time.

EXT. DARWIN PORT - DAY

At the dock side are Pope and Laurance Tozer. Survivors from the Armidale are assisted down the gangway by the ship's company from the Kalgoorlie.

Two men are carried off on stretchers, their bodies covered with blankets.

Richards assisted by a sailor stops to meet with Pope and Laurance. Richards salutes them both, and the salute is returned.

POPE

So good to see you alive, what happened to them?

RICHARDS

Made it all the way to the rescue. Died on the Kalgoorlie on the way back.

LAURANCE TOZER

Damn shame, only to die with the finishing post so close.

RICHARDS

It's not a bloody race.

LAURANCE TOZER

Excuse me.

RICHARDS

Sorry, letting my emotions get to me.

POPE

Hate to ask at a time like this,
but the code books.

RICHARDS

Gone, went down with the ship. No
one will ever get to them.

POPE

How many have we lost?

RICHARDS

Hard to say, so far I estimate in
the figure of forty to forty-five
men.

POPE

My God, as high as that.

RICHARDS

It could have been a lot higher if
it weren't for ordinary seaman
Sheean.

POPE

Oh, how so?

RICHARDS

If you don't mind I would like to
get to the sick berth and rest.

POPE

No, of course not, you can tell me
about it later.

The sailor and Richards continue on toward the sick berth.

EXT. HMAS KALGOORLIE - PORT BOW - DAY

Harold Litchfield supervises the rescue party. Men from the
whaler are helped on board by the crew of the Kalgoorlie.

The crew distribute blankets to the rescued men.

Lieutenant Palmer is the first man aboard.

HAROLD LITCHFIELD

Lieutenant how many men have you
got?

LT. PALMER

I have seventeen, however we left
twelve on a raft. Have they been
found?

HAROLD LITCHFIELD

No, a catalina crew did spot them.
Even managed to take a photograph.

LT. PALMER

Poor bastards I should have stayed with them. What about the rest?

HAROLD LITCHFIELD

They made it, I picked them up last night. Your skipper is safe back in Darwin.

LT. PALMER

I can't leave the area until we find the men on the raft.

HAROLD LITCHFIELD

I understand how you would want to do that. But I'm sorry we can't stay here.

LT. PALMER

They have to keep looking for them. They have to.

HAROLD LITCHFIELD

I'm sure they will, it has been one horrific ordeal for you and the men.

LT. PALMER

Trust me it is something that I and the men who went through it will never forget.

A crew member wraps a blanket around lieutenant Palmer. They both walk off toward the mess deck.

INT. SYDNEY PUB - DAY

The beers are gone, most of the patrons have left. In the corner the small group remain.

JACK

After the War, we all thought Teddy should get more than a bloody mention in dispatches.

RYAN

Too bloody right, you know not one of us Navy blokes has ever been awarded a VC ever.

JACK

I know, but I hope some day that will change. We were and we are all brother's on that ship. Always will be.

Jack rises to his feet, picks up his beer. Raises his arm out and holds it for a moment. Drinks the last of his beer. The full beer remains untouched.

The group moves to one side.

Jack places the photo into his jacket pocket. Looks at Ryan and smiles. Ryan shakes hands with Jack.

Jack turns and leaves the pub. Ryan and the group watch from the window as Jack makes his way to bus stop outside the pub.

A bus pulls up, two passengers exit. Jack boards the bus takes a seat by a window. The bus drives off.

FADE TO BLACK.

SCROLLING TEXT: "THE ACTIONS OF ORDINARY SEAMAN EDWARD 'TEDDY' SHEEAN WITHOUT A DOUBT SAVED THE LIVES OF MANY MEN FROM HMAS ARMIDALE.

"A COMBINED TOTAL OF SHIP'S COMPANY, AIF, DUTCH ARMY OFFICERS AND DUTCH NATIVE TROOPS TOTALLED ONE HUNDRED AND FORTY-NINE SOULS ON BOARD. ONLY FORTY-NINE MEN WOULD SURVIVE.

"THE MEN PHOTOGRAPHED ON THE RAFT, THEIR FATE WAS NEVER KNOWN, THEY VANISHED WITHOUT A TRACE.

"EDWARD 'TEDDY' SHEEAN WILLINGLY GAVE HIS LIFE TO SAVE THE LIVES OF HIS FELLOW SHIPMATES. HE WAS ONLY EIGHTEEN YEARS OLD. TEDDY WAS ONLY MENTIONED IN DISPATCHES FOR HIS SELFLESS ACT.

"FOR THE PAST THIRTY YEARS A CAMPAIGN TO HAVE EDWARD 'TEDDY' SHEEAN AWARDED A VICTORIA CROSS CONTINUED UNTIL 2020. WHEN IT WAS FINALLY ANNOUNCED BY THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT TEDDY WOULD GET HIS VC.

TEDDY WILL BE THE FIRST AUSTRALIAN NAVY PERSONNEL TO BE AWARDED THE VC.

FADE OUT.

THE END.