

ONCE UPON A TIME in the inhospitable wastes of Antarctica, amid climate warming that is melting the polar caps. Our hero JOHN STORM, a sporty amateur anthropologist and ocean conservationist, is called upon by the Royal Navy for help. John is an obsessive collector of DNA samples of all life on Earth; since a teenager. Now in his 40s, the rugged explorer has become famous for rescuing an injured Humpback whale and protesting about ocean pollution. Once scaling the Shard in London to unfurl a giant banner. He inherited a solar and hydrogen powered trimaran named Elizabeth Swann, from his deceased uncle; Professor Storm. The ship came complete with onboard AI, named HAL, and the ARK, the world's largest digital database. The vessel is his pride and joy. His crew includes Dan Hawk (20s) an electronics genius, and Charley Temple (30s), a sporty investigative reporter. In a previous adventure, John became physically enhanced, now able to communicate with HAL via a BioCore brain implant, using a CyberCore Genetica super nano computer, the world's most powerful. Making HAL; a virtual crewmate. John and crew, collaborate with Jill Bird (50s) a news anchor for the BBC world service in London; Charley's friend. And so, our story begins.

THE ICE GAVE UP ITS DEAD

EXT. ANTARCTIC OCEAN - DAWN (PRESENT DAY)

A vast, desolate expanse of ANTARCTIC ICE. It stretches to the horizon, ancient and seemingly eternal. But it's changing.

GIANT FRACTURES spiderweb across the surface, some shimmering with newly melted water, others exposing deep, blue chasms. The sound is immense - the GROANING of an ancient world fracturing, the BOOM of distant icebergs calving.

We see the aftermath of human intervention: small, advanced ICEBREAKERS, looking like alien insects, have chewed paths through previously impassable floes. DISTANT INDUSTRIAL SOUNDS -

the hum of generators, the scrape of heavy machinery - hint at massive operations.

The USS ARKTOS - a majestic, ghostly WOODEN FRIGATE - slowly emerges from the melting ice. Half-encased, she lists sharply, her hull bleached almost white, timber groaning under the shift. She's a relic, impossible and eerily intact, from another age.

Above her, the Arctic light is pale, indifferent.

INT. MOBILE COMMAND UNIT - DAY (PRESENT DAY)

MONITORS glow with data: thermal maps of accelerating melt, geological surveys of the seafloor, financial projections. This isn't just about discovery; it's about something far more deliberate. Oil. Coal. Economic growth. Political ambition.

A hand points to a sonar reading on one screen. It's the Arktos, perfectly delineated against the ice.

CLOSE ON SCREEN - Text reads: "USS Arktos. Lost: 1838.
Discovered: Present."

The ice gave up its dead. And the Arktos is freed.

EXT. ARKTOS - DAY

A military HELICOPTER, dark and silent, hovers over the Arktos. It slowly descends, kicking up a plume of snow.

SPECIAL FORCES operatives, in muted, tactical gear, rappel down lines. They move with precise, economic efficiency. No scientists. No historians. Just soldiers. Black operations. Their faces obscured by visors.

They hit the deck, securing their lines. The wooden deck is slick with melting ice, pitted and bleached by centuries.

INT. ARKTOS - DECK LEVEL - CONTINUOUS

The lead OPERATIVE, CALLSIGN "GHOST," signals his team. Four others: SPECTER, ECHO, SHADOW, and BANSHEE.

They fan out, weapons raised, methodically sweeping the ghostly remains of the ship. The air is frigid, damp. The sounds are just their muffled movements, the drip of melting ice, and the distant, low CREAKS of the ancient hull.

GHOST stops. His helmet light cuts through the gloom, illuminating something on the wooden deck.

CLOSE ON - A dark, dried STAIN. Not fresh. Old. Embedded deep in the wood grain. BLOOD.

SPECTER kneels, gloved hand touching it. Not enough for slaughter. Just... struggle.

They continue deeper into the ship.

INT. ARKTOS - PASSAGEWAY - CONTINUOUS

The interior is a labyrinth of dark, narrow passages. Frost-rimmed bulkheads. Rotting canvas. The occasional gleam of tarnished brass.

A low, guttural SCRAPE sounds from ahead. The team freezes. Weapon sights snap up.

GHOST (muffled, through comms)

Hold.

They advance, lights sweeping.

They find a hatch. Heavy, reinforced. SEALED FROM THE INSIDE.

And around the edges of the hatch, on the aged wood, are SCRATCHES. Deep gouges.

CLOSE ON - The scratches are irregular. Some match human fingers. But others ... are wider. Sharper. As if something had been trying to claw its way out. Or in.

SHADOW (muffled)
Unnatural.

ECHO
(Whispers, almost to himself)
1838.

INT. ARKTOS - LOWER DECKS - CONTINUOUS

Deeper. Colder. The air grows heavier. The ship's internal groans seem to swell around them.

The team moves into what appears to be a cargo hold. It's vast, dark, and filled with the shapes of old crates.

BANSHEE, carrying a portable sensor unit, stops. His helmet light illuminates the device.

CLOSE ON SENSOR SCREEN

The display is a chaotic mess of interference at first. Then, a distinct, large BLIP appears. Below them. Beneath the hull.

It's moving. Slowly. Rhythmical.

The blip pulsates, growing slightly larger, then smaller.

BANSHEE (muffled)
Contact. Below deck. Bearing 2-0-0.

GHOST
(Muffled, his voice low, tense)
Nature of contact?

The blip on the screen grows, solidifying. A clear, large shape, shifting beneath the ship.

BANSHEE

(A beat of silence, then a low, strained whisper)
Thermal signature. Alive.

The hum of the ship. The drip of melting ice. The distant groan of the continent. And now, the low, steady, PULSATING HUM from beneath the Arktos.

They found it.
And something found them first.

TUNNEL COMPLEX - THE LABYRINTH BENEATH THE ICE

EXT. ANTARCTIC ICE SHEET - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

The endless white expanse. A landscape defined by the SCREAM of wind, the distant GROAN of shifting glaciers. The sheer, immense WEIGHT of a continent slowly collapsing.

But now, a new sound. A low, resonant HUMMING, barely perceptible beneath the natural cacophony.

AERIAL SHOT

A section of the ice sheet. Not a fracture from the previous scene, but a deliberate, almost geometric rupture. It looks like a colossal, invisible hand has pulled back a veil.
CLOSE ON - The exposed ice beneath. It's not clear. It's CARVED.

INT. TUNNEL COMPLEX - ANCIENT - DAY (FLASHBACK/HYPOTHETICAL)

QUICK CUTS - HYPOTHETICAL/VISUALIZE:

- Shadowed, impossible architecture carved into ice.

- Vast, dark spaces.
- The hint of something moving, or having moved, within.

This is the LABYRINTH. Ancient. Impossibly old. Preserved in secrecy for millions of years. Now, revealed by the relentless thaw. An architectural impossibility hidden from mankind until now.

EXT. RESEARCH OUTPOST - ICE SHEET - DAY (PRESENT DAY)

A small, isolated research outpost. A single tracked vehicle sits abandoned, half-covered in snow. A single tent flap flutters in the wind.

The only sounds are the wind and the FLAPPING of the tent. No human voices. No equipment hum. No distress signal. No trace.

A scientist vanished. Disappeared. Without warning. Without a sound.

Only a single piece of information remained. A leak.

INT. SKY NEWS BROADCAST ROOM - LONDON - NIGHT

MONITORS glow with breaking news alerts. The controlled chaos of a global newsroom. The low murmur of urgent conversations.

A young RESEARCHER, late 20s, hunched over a tablet. Headset on. Her eyes are wide, fixed on a cryptic message, fragments of data scrolling quickly across the screen. A rushed transmission.

SOUND DESIGN: A distorted, broken audio clip plays in her ear, then cuts out. A guttural ROAR, alien, ancient, mixed with crackling static.

On the screen, a crude outline. Something prehistoric. Entombed in ice. Massively huge. Utterly alien to modern classification. Her fingers fly across the keyboard, typing a quick summary.

CLOSE ON SCREEN – Text: "Prehistoric Antarctic Discovery.
Estimated scale: KING KONG."

The discovery is too big to contain.

INT. BBC NEWS WORLD SERVICE – BROADCAST STUDIO – CONTINUOUS

The familiar, cool blue glow of a news desk. A BBC NEWS WORLD SERVICE BUG blazes on a monitor.

JILL BIRD, veteran anchor, straightens her jacket. A technician gives a silent countdown.

JILL BIRD (V.O., crisp, authoritative)
And a late item—researchers in Antarctica say they have discovered a subsurface tunnel complex beneath the compacted snow and ice. Tune in to view this breaking story as it comes in.

The news cuts to a graphic of a stylized ice sheet with a tunnel network diagram.

INT. CHARLEY TEMPLE'S APARTMENT – LONDON – NIGHT

A spartan, functional space. Low light. The only illumination is the glow from a high-end tablet.

CHARLEY TEMPLE (30s, sharp, intense eyes, no-nonsense) leans over the tablet. The BBC News World Service live feed plays in a small window. Her fingers are poised over the screen.

CLOSE ON TABLET – The news graphic. And beneath it, a secure messaging app. An unread message from an anonymous source.

SCREEN TEXT:

"The tunnels. They found them. And the jaw. It's out."

Charley's eyes narrow. The pieces click. The vanished scientist. The leaked findings. The tunnels. This isn't coincidence. She taps out a rapid, encrypted message.

CLOSE ON MESSAGE SCREEN:

TO: STORM

SUBJECT: ANTARCTICA - URGENT

MESSAGE: It's happening. The tunnels. And something else - something huge. We need to move.

Her finger hovers, then with a decisive tap, sends it.

John Storm is halfway across the globe. But Charley knows. She knows with absolute certainty that he'll drop everything the moment he reads this.

EXT. ANTARCTIC ICE SHEET - NIGHT

A low-angle shot. The immense, dark, and silent mass of the continent. The occasional CREAK or CRACK from beneath.

The world had long convinced itself that Antarctica was untouchable. A neutral zone. A wilderness protected by treaties. A fragile lie.

But nothing lasts forever. The treaty was ending. Negotiations stalled. And beneath the surface, a silent war was brewing. Nations staking claims. Corporations laying groundwork. Secret operations unfolding beneath the ice.

The tunnels had surfaced at exactly the wrong time. Or perhaps, the right time for those seeking opportunity.

This was no longer just a scientific discovery. It was a gold rush.

And someone - somewhere - was about to make a move.

John Storm just had to beat them to it.

GOLD RUSH

EXT. ANTARCTIC ICE SHEET - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

The vast, indifferent white. The HOWL of the katabatic winds. The CRACK and GROAN of a continent in flux.

We see the subtle, undeniable signs of retreat. Dark fissures in the ice, growing wider. Meltwater carving temporary rivers.

MONTAGE - THE NEW GOLD RUSH

1. SWEDISH EXPEDITION

EXT. SWEDISH BASE - DAY A compact, rugged base, designed for extreme cold. High-tech, but with a utilitarian, almost Viking-esque aesthetic. BJORN ATLAS (40s, bearded, powerful build, eyes glinting with a fierce determination), dressed in heavy-duty polar gear, barks orders to a team loading supplies onto a tracked vehicle. He moves with an almost reckless energy. SVEN JOHANSSON (40s, thinner, intense gaze, clearly a thinker, not a brawler) is hunched over a complex GPS array, shivering despite his thick parka. He mutters, mostly to himself.

SVEN (Muffled)

You realize this place is going to kill us before we get a damn thing out of it.

Bjorn just grins, teeth gleaming beneath his frost-crusting brows. He pulls on thick gloves.

BJORN

That's what makes it a prize worth taking.

He claps Sven on the shoulder, a brutal, bone-jarring clap. Sven just winces.

2. MULTINATIONAL EXPEDITION

EXT. MULTINATIONAL BASE - DAY A larger, more established base. Flags from Canada and the US ripple in the wind. A sense of disciplined professionalism. CATHY CARTER (40s, sharp, commanding, with the quiet authority of someone who's seen too much) stands with three VETERAN ARCTIC EXPLORERS. Their faces are etched with scars from places where the cold doesn't just cut, but guts. Cathy pulls her thermal hood tight, studying the shifting ice sheets through high-powered binoculars. Her brow furrows.

CATHY

There's movement.

One of her men, grizzled, mid-50s, chuckles, breath pluming.

VETERAN 1

Ice moves, Captain.

Cathy lowers the binoculars, her gaze distant, sensing something fundamentally wrong.

CATHY

(Murmuring, half to herself)

No. Not like that.

3. CHINESE EXPEDITION

EXT. CHINESE BASE - DAY A gleaming, state-of-the-art facility. Sleek, cutting-edge vehicles. A stark contrast to the slightly worn American stations seen in previous scenes. The image of power in transition. LIN PO CHANG (20s, impossibly young, elegant, dressed in tailored arctic gear, a quiet intensity in

his eyes) examines the jagged entrance of a newly exposed tunnel network in the ice. He traces a finger along the ancient, weathered rock face. Two SILENT HENCHMEN, built like brick walls, stand impassively behind him.

Lin exhales. His breath curls into the frigid air, a perfect white plume.

LIN PO CHANG

They were here.

One of the HENCHMEN, his voice a low rumble, asks.

HENCHMAN 1

Who?

Lin's smile is sharp as broken ice. Cold, predatory. He looks into the dark maw of the tunnel.

LIN PO CHANG

Not who. What.

A subtle, deep HUMMING emanates from the exposed tunnel entrance. Just on the edge of hearing.

THE RACE

WIDE SHOT - ANTARCTICA

Three distinct trails of vehicles stretch across the vast, ice-covered landscape. Converging. A silent, desperate race for something buried beneath. The sheer scale of the continent dwarfs them all.

INT. MOBILE COMMAND UNIT - MULTINATIONAL EXPEDITION - DAY

Cathy studies a detailed holographic map of the tunnel complex

discovered in the previous scene. New sensor data overlays it, showing deeper, more intricate sections.

VETERAN 2

Reports are coming in. Geological. Seismic. This isn't natural.

CATHY (Quietly)

No. It's too... deliberate.

EXT. ANTARCTIC ICE - VARIOUS - DAY

The landscape changes again. Not just from melting glaciers. But from human activity. Massive drills pierce the ice. Temporary landing strips appear. The continent is no longer just a neutral zone. It's a battleground.

The visual contrast is stark: the vast, rusting skeletal structure of a long-abandoned American research outpost looms in the background of one shot, while in the foreground, a sleek, new Chinese icebreaker, larger than anything else on the horizon, carves through the ice.

This isn't about treaties anymore. This is a gold rush.

INT. CHINESE BASE - LIN PO CHANG'S PRIVATE QUARTERS - NIGHT

The room is minimalist, functional. A single monitor displays complex biological schematics alongside ancient paleontological diagrams of arthropod evolution. Lin Po Chang sits before it, eyes alight with an almost fanatical intelligence.

He traces a diagram of a prehistoric insectoid jawbone – the same one from the leaked data. He was a paleontologist. He knew. He had theorized. He knew what lay beneath the frost long before the world cared enough to look.

He wasn't just after minerals. He was after something living. Something far older than humanity.

EXT. TUNNEL COMPLEX ENTRANCE - NIGHT

The entrances to the newly revealed tunnel complex are now bustling with activity. Lights cut through the perpetual twilight. Teams in arctic gear move in and out, setting up equipment.

Bjorn Atlas's team is focused on securing the 'archaeological prize' whatever immediately recognizable artifact or mineral deposit is visible.

Cathy Carter's team is methodical, cautious, establishing a secure perimeter. Her eyes constantly scan the distant horizon, looking for threats not on a map.

Lin Po Chang stands at the mouth of the largest tunnel entrance, his two henchmen silent shadows behind him. He looks down into the dark abyss.

The ice was retreating, exposing secrets buried for millennia. Three expeditions raced against time - and each other - to stake their claim before nature swallowed her treasures again.

The shifting of alliances. The shifting of ice. Both inevitable. Both deadly.

The HUMMING from within the tunnel grows almost imperceptibly. A low, resonant thrum.

And this time, Antarctica wasn't just giving up her ghosts. She was releasing something that had never learned how to die.

UN CALLS FOR JOHN STORM

INT. MI6 BRIEFING ROOM - NIGHT

Dim lighting. Frosted glass. A digital map of Antarctica glows on the wall. GENERAL SIR RODNEY DUNBAR (60s, military precision

wrapped in silk) leans forward.

DUNBAR

The PM has authorised me to offer you a commission in His Majesty's Royal Navy.

JOHN STORM (40s, rugged, cerebral, haunted) sits across the table, arms folded. A man who's seen too much ocean—and too many lies.

STORM

I admire Edward Thomas. Gets my vote. But General – or is it Sir Rodney – I fail to see why I'd be interested in a vacation to Antarctica. It's right out of my comfort zone.

DUNBAR (smiling)

Am I right in thinking your ship isn't up to the task?

STORM (coolly)

I won't rise to that bait. I'm saying: pulling my crew from active ocean duties needs compensation. Tangible. Equitable.

Dunbar slides a dossier across the table. Inside: satellite images, expedition manifests, and a list of unclassified species.

DUNBAR

Apart from a generous consultancy... there are rights to species not yet catalogued. You have the most comprehensive DNA archive on Earth. Wouldn't you want to add to it?

Storm's jaw tightens. His Achilles heel. The code of life. His obsession.

STORM

Cover our costs—with interest. A contribution to a cause of my choosing. And full rights to any new DNA we collect.

DUNBAR

Done. You'll be Master & Commander. Ambassadorial status. Your

ship - HMS Elizabeth Swann - will be hired and insured by the Navy. Species rights, yours. Shall I advise the PM?

STORM

In writing. Legal contract. Then I'm your man.

INT. ELIZABETH SWANN - PREPARATION BAY - DAY

Solar panels gleam. Hydrogen tanks hiss. DAN HAWK (20s, tech savant) and CHARLEY TEMPLE (30s, biologist with bite) load arctic gear.

Storm watches from the bridge, stroking his cat. HAL, the ship's AI, hums quietly.

STORM (to Hal)

Plot course: Weddell Sea. Then Deception Island.

HAL (V.O.)

Coordinates locked. Caution: volcanic terrain unstable.

STORM

So's the world.

EXT. SOUTHERN OCEAN - NIGHT

The Elizabeth Swann cuts through black water. Wind lashes. Icebergs loom.

Inside, Storm reviews encrypted files from MI6. Expedition teams from China, Sweden, and the U.S.—all converging. All armed.

CHARLEY

Why us?

STORM

Because we're not them.

INT. UN COMMAND CHANNEL - SPLIT SCREEN

A UN OFFICIAL speaks to Storm via secure link.

UN OFFICIAL

Commander Storm, trust no one. Not the Swedes. Not the Americans.
Especially not the Chinese.

Storm nods, eyes narrowing.

STORM

Understood.

EXT. DECEPTION ISLAND - NIGHT

The volcano sleeps. For now.

Storm stands at the bow, wind tearing at his coat. Behind him,
Dan and Charley prep drones and dive gear.

STORM (V.O.)

They want a consultant. They got a storm.

FADE TO BLACK

MURDER ON THE ICE

EXT. ANTARCTIC ICE SHELF - DAY

A desolate landscape of white and blue. A blizzard rages,
obscuring the horizon. Only the howling wind and the crunch of
snow underfoot can be heard.

INT. ICE TUNNEL - CONTINUOUS

Inside, the silence is oppressive. The air is cold, but bearable.
The space is claustrophobic, a tight, twisting maze of raw ice
walls. The only light comes from the headlamps of the team. We

see the backs of two figures, their breath pluming. They are JOHN STORM's CREW.

Suddenly, a team member slips, dropping his axe. The sound echoes, impossibly loud. The team freezes. The silence returns, heavier than before.

A low, guttural rumble. It could be the ice shifting. It could be something else. No one moves.

The lights hit a small, dark crevice. In it, a cluster of bizarre, ovular forms. They are too large to be a normal clutch of eggs. They are not smooth or hard like a normal dinosaur egg. Their surfaces are textured, tough, and leathery. Alien. They almost seem to pulse.

CHARLEY (Whispering)
What are they?

DAN HAWK (Awe)
Holy... fuel cells.

The teams converge. Carters crew, Storm's crew, the Swedes and the Chinese. The discovery, for a moment, transcends the bitter rivalry. They stare, transfixed. A single, unified breath hangs in the air.

The moment shatters.

CARTER
We found them. The survey was ours. We claim the site.

CHANG (CALM, menacing)
The Chinese team was on this line for a week. The prestige is ours.

The quiet murmurs build into sharp arguments. The discovery has become a prize, not a wonder.

A few hours later, a muffled scream.

EXT. ICE SHELF - DAY

The storm is gone. A low, grey light illuminates the stark white.

We find BJORN ATLAS, his body half-buried in a snowdrift. His neck is at a horrific angle. No tracks. No sign of a struggle. Just an unnerving stillness.

The remaining teams stare at each other. The rivalry turns into something else entirely. The squabbling ceases, replaced by a cold, shared terror.

There is a killer among them.

INT. MAINTENANCE BAY - NIGHT

A cramped room, the air filled with the hum of electronics. CATHY CARTER and SVEN JOHANSEN are huddled together. The remaining team members are gone. Chang has been busy.

CARTER

This reminds me of Ice Station Zebra.

SVEN JOHANSEN lets out a sharp, nervous laugh.

JOHANSEN

Alistair MacLean?

CARTER (Shakes her head, a grim smile)

No. Worse. More like Bear Island.

JOHANSEN (Soberly)

Yes. Much more, Cathy. MacLean, again.

A dark shadow detaches itself from the far wall. It is CHANG. He is fast, silent. He moves with the lethal precision of a hunter.

He wraps a vice-like armlock around Carter's neck. He holds her in place as a glint of steel flashes in his hand.

JOHANSEN doesn't hesitate. He lunges, a desperate, final tackle. He slams into Chang, shoving them both away from a wounded Carter.

Chang's blade flashes, but Johansen's sacrifice has given her a chance. Carter scrambles, pushing herself on her hands and knees out of the bay, a trail of blood behind her. She stumbles toward the comms room, every movement agony. She grabs the comms mic.

CARTER (Wounded, gasping)

...This is Carter... We've lost them... He got Johansen. He killed them all. Chang... he's gone rogue.

She collapses, the mic slipping from her hand.

INT. MAINTENANCE BAY - CONTINUOUS

Chang, his face emotionless, disposes of Johansen with a quick, brutal martial arts move. There are no witnesses. Only the echoes of the struggle.

Chang, alone now, looks around the bay. A cold, predatory stillness. The stage is set. He has a clean sweep. The "find" is his. All of it.

BOUND FOR ENGLAND

EXT. ANTARCTIC ICE SHELF - NIGHT

A blizzard howls. LIN PO CHANG (50s, calculating, composed) stands over a smouldering camp. The last rival expedition lies

buried beneath snow and sabotage. Chang cradles a translucent egg, pulsing faintly.

INT. MAKESHIFT LAB – NIGHT

Chang adjusts temperature dials. Monitors flicker. The egg begins to crack.

INSERT: MONITOR SCREEN A timestamp. A heartbeat. Something ancient stirs.

EXT. KOOLARCTIC – ICE PATROL VESSEL – DAY

The ageing ship creaks through polar waters. A crate marked "ROCK SAMPLES" is lowered into the hold.

INT. CARGO HOLD – NIGHT

Inside the crate, shredded insulation. A glistening tunnel burrows into the hull. Something has hatched.

INT. KOOLARCTIC – ICE BREAKING SURVEY SHIP – GALLEY – NIGHT

Two CREW MEMBERS (early 30s, rugged) inspect spilled food waste.

CREW MEMBER #1

What the hell made this mess?

A low chittering sound. They turn. A shadow darts past.

CREW MEMBER #2

Jesus—did you see that?

They follow. One grabs a wrench. The other, a flare.

INT. STORAGE BAY – MOMENTS LATER

They corner the creature. A grotesque insectoid, six feet long, glistening carapace, mandibles twitching.

CREW MEMBER #1

Alien. Has to be.

He swings. The creature deflects, slashing him across the chest. Blood sprays. He collapses.

CREW MEMBER #2

No! You bastard!

He grabs a fire axe. Charges. The Sectasaur sidesteps—lightning fast. A swipe sends him crashing into iron railings. Skull crushed.

INT. KOOLARCTIC – BRIDGE – NIGHT

CAPTAIN HARRISON (60s, weathered) watches grainy footage. Rewinds. Plays again. The crew gathers, silent.

CAPTAIN HARRISON

We're not alone.

INT. KOOLARCTIC – DARK CORRIDOR – NIGHT

SECOND MATE (40s, trembling) is shoved aside by something unseen. He stumbles, breath ragged.

INT. RADIO ROOM – MOMENTS LATER

He sends a distress call. The US COASTGUARD responds. The footage reaches the BRITISH ADMIRALTY.

INT. ADMIRALTY WAR ROOM – NIGHT

ADMIRAL LAWRENCE FRANCIS PERCIVAL (70s, commanding) watches the footage.

PERCIVAL

This is the First Sealord. KoolArctic, you are ordered to scuttle your ship. Confirm command.

CAPTAIN HARRISON (V.O.)

Command confirmed, Admiral.

EXT. KOOLARCTIC – DECK – DAWN

Crew scramble into inflatable rafts. The ship groans, listing. Explosives detonate below deck.

INT. LIFE RAFT – MOMENTS LATER

The seams tear. Freezing water rushes in. Screams. Chaos. They cling to a ghost fishing net, tangled. One by one, they succumb to hypothermia.

EXT. NORTH ATLANTIC – NIGHT

Debris floats. The Sectasaur clings to a drifting container. Its breath fogs the air. It crawls aboard the HMM ATLANTIC EXPRESS under cover of darkness.

INT. CARGO BAY – HMM ATLANTIC EXPRESS – NIGHT

A faint chitter. A shadow moves between crates. The antifreeze in its blood glows faintly beneath its skin.

FADE TO BLACK

BASECAMP

EXT. ANTARCTIC SHORELINE – DAY

A snowcat rumbles to a halt. CHARLEY, DAN, and JOHN disembark,

faces grim beneath frostbitten gear. They begin unloading equipment.

EXT. EXCAVATION SITE - LATER

The trio trek across windswept ice. A jagged crevasse opens before them. Back on the Elizabeth Swann, HAL spots something using orbiting satellites.

HAL (quietly) Guys... to your left, 30 meters. A faint heat signature.

They descend. A body lies half-buried in snow-frozen mid-scream.

DAN

Jesus. That's one of the Norwegian team.

JOHN

This is The Thing all over again.

They find another corpse nearby. Same expression. Same wounds.

CHARLEY

We need to get Storm on this. Now.

INT. BASECAMP TENT - NIGHT

JOHN (40s, obsessive DNA archivist, intense) pores over data from the Ark DNA database. His fingers fly across the keyboard.

JOHN (to himself) This isn't extinction by impact... it's predation.

He overlays insect mandibles with fossilized chew marks.

JOHN (CONT'D) Vespoidea... Myrmecia Giganticus... Formicidae. Hymenoptera. Insects. But prehistoric. Efficient. Coordinated.

He zooms in. A computer simulation, using the ARK, shows pack hunting behavior—ants swarming a dinosaur carcass.

INT. COMMUNICATIONS TENT - NIGHT

Charley adjusts the satellite radio. Crackle. Then—

SUKI (V.O.)

Hello, Suki Hall here.

CHARLEY

Suki, how are you?

SUKI (V.O.)

All good. What's happening, Charley?

CHARLEY

Funny you should say that. We've got an unusual problem. We're in Antarctica.

SUKI (V.O.)

No. Not you and John. Unusual? What could possibly be unusual in your lives?

CHARLEY

We've discovered a new species. Giant prehistoric insects.

SUKI (V.O.)

Charley, that's not new. Large insects evolved in the Antarctic. Canada too.

CHARLEY

So I hear. Twelve-inch wingspans. But these are enormous. Twelve to fifteen feet in length.

SUKI (V.O.)

You mean fifteen inches, right?

CHARLEY

No. Specimen frozen in ice. Fifteen feet. Four and a half meters.

Silence.

CHARLEY (CONT'D)

Suki? Come in, Suki.

SUKI (V.O.)

Sorry. Just... can't quite take that in.

CHARLEY

Neither can I. But it's true. Or we're all hallucinating. And get this - dinosaur bones with chew marks matching the insect's mandibles.

SUKI (V.O.)

No way. You got me. This is a joke, Charley. A really good one.

Suki laughs. Charley waits.

CHARLEY

John says he'll send a DNA sample. Conditionally.

SUKI (V.O.)

Alright. Alright. I'll help. But I need that sample. If it's real... it changes everything.

INT. ROYAL NAVY INTELLIGENCE OFFICE - NIGHT

Footage of the frozen insect plays on a monitor. Officers exchange glances.

COMMANDER

Get me John Storm. Now.

INT. BASECAMP - NIGHT

John scribbles in his notebook. He writes:

Species: Sectasaur Codename: King Kong

He underlines it twice.

FADE TO BLACK

WHEN DINOSAURS RULED THE EARTH

EXT. ANCIENT EARTH - NIGHT (FLASHBACK IN TIME)

A volcanic winter blankets the planet. Ash clouds swirl.
Tyrannosaurus Rex stumbles through snow-covered terrain,
emaciated. In the shadows, something moves—sleek, fast,
insectoid.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

They lived when dinosaurs ruled the Earth. But they didn't just
survive the extinction... they may have caused it.

A pack of Insectaraptors™ swarms a Velociraptor. Mandibles flash.
Screams echo.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. ELIZABETH SWANN - LAB MODULE - NIGHT - TODAY

SUKI HALL (40s, brilliant, exhausted) pores over DNA sequences.
HAL (AI interface) glows faintly.

SUKI

Hal, run oxygen distribution models. I want to test dorsal aorta
efficiency.

HAL (V.O.)

Confirmed. Processing.

A 3D model of the creature's anatomy appears—lung-like organ, spiracles, exoskeleton.

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

Estimated size: three to five meters. Warm-blooded. High tolerance to freezing. Oxygen saturation: extreme.

Suki's eyes widen.

INT. ELIZABETH SWANN - COMMUNICATIONS BAY - MOMENTS LATER

Suki activates the comms.

SUKI

Suki Hall calling Elizabeth Swann. Come in, Hal.

HAL (V.O.) Greetings and salutations, Miss Hall. Is it warmer where you are?

SUKI

Yes, thanks Hal. Is John, Dan, or Charley listening?

ALL (V.O.)

We're all here, Suki.

SUKI

Great. Just to confirm - John's warm-blooded, super-aspirated hypothesis? Worth pursuing.

JOHN (V.O.)

Uh huh.

SUKI

Charley?

CHARLEY (V.O.)

Hi Suki, how are you?

SUKI Excited and worried.

I've a favour to ask.

CHARLEY (V.O.)

Go ahead. We're all in.

SUKI

This changes everything. Alters the whole prehistory landscape.

DAN (V.O.)

Understatement.

SUKI

If I'm right—or wrong—it could damage our credibility. We'll be called cranks.

Silence.

CHARLEY (V.O.)

Go on, Suki. We're with you.

SUKI

Don't let the cat out of the bag. Especially to Jill and Steve.

CHARLEY (V.O.)

Understood. May be a bit late. But, understood.

SUKI

Perfect. Not until we have enough evidence. That includes you, Commander.

JOHN (V.O.)

And what's so funny about that?

Charley and Dan chuckle. KITTY the ship's cat leaps onto the console.

John picks her up.

JOHN

You don't think it's funny, do you?

Kitty purrs.

SUKI

And no betting.

JOHN

Tell it to Shui. But what a gamble, eh?

SUKI

Only through Ms Bird. When we're ready.

CHARLEY (V.O.)

Couldn't have put it better myself.

Kitty meows.

JOHN

Kitty approves.

INT. ELIZABETH SWANN - LAB MODULE - LATER

John reviews DNA results.

JOHN

Suki, I've run the DNA through Hal and the Ark. It's incredible.

SUKI (V.O.) / CHARLEY (V.O.)

What's incredible?

JOHN

They had lungs. Could warm their own blood. And their antifreeze-potent.

CHARLEY (V.O.)
Meaning?

JOHN
They were fast. Lightning. Survived extreme cold. Stronger than any dinosaur.

SUKI (V.O.)
And their sting could paralyze a dinosaur.

DAN (V.O.)
Holy ... Yikes.

JOHN
A very big yikes.

SUKI (V.O.)
Be careful. It's not just humans who are dangerous.

JOHN
Sure thing, Suki. We love you.

He motions a kiss to the screen.

SUKI (V.O.)
Likewise, Mr Storm. Over and out.

INT. ELIZABETH SWANN - COMMAND MODULE - NIGHT

John stares at the monitor. A map shows missing teams. Red dots blink.

JOHN (V.O.)
Someone's killing everyone in their vicinity. Gold or biology. Either way... humans are expendable.

He watches old footage of the Nostromo android.

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

The objective is clear. Secure the species. We need proof.

FADE TO BLACK

WORST FEARS CONFIRMED - JOHN STORM CALLS LANGLEY

EXT. ANTARCTIC WATERS - DAY

The Elizabeth Swann slices through drifting ice floes, its reinforced hull groaning against the frozen sea. A pale sun glints off the deck.

INT. ELIZABETH SWANN - COMMAND DECK - DAY

JOHN STORM (40s, intense, calculating) leans over the encrypted comms panel. The hum of onboard systems fades as a secure line crackles to life.

JACK MASON (V.O.)

Storm. This better be urgent.

JOHN We've got a situation. Sectasaur eggs—gone. Removed from the site. If they hatch outside controlled conditions... it'll make the Komodo Dragon look like a lapdog.

INT. CIA HEADQUARTERS - LANGLEY - NIGHT

JACK MASON (50s, sharp, weary) rubs his temples. He exhales slowly.

JACK

Jesus. Prehistoric DNA. Hyperoxic evolution. You realize what that means?

INT. ELIZABETH SWANN – COMMAND DECK – CONTINUOUS

DAN HAWK (30s, cynical, ex-military) leans against the bulkhead.

DAN

Means someone's either playing god... or selling nightmares. And I'm guessing Greenpeace isn't the buyer.

John ignores him.

JOHN

Jack, this wasn't luck. It was planned. And considering the murders—someone's cleaning up loose ends.

JACK (V.O.)

You think it's military?

JOHN

If it is, it's black ops. If not—corporate. Bioweapons. Either way, we shut it down. Fast.

JACK (V.O.)

How dangerous is it?

CHARLEY TEMPLE (brilliant, composed) steps forward, tablet in hand.

CHARLEY

Based on gigantism models—three meters minimum. Exoskeletal tensile strength off the charts. No known tranquilizer effective. If it gets loose... we'll need containment and a damn good press strategy.

JACK (V.O.)

And I thought rogue AI was bad. Now we've got prehistoric hellbugs.

HAL (V.O.)

Correction, Jack Mason. Sectasaur size correlates with Carboniferous oxygen levels—35% versus today's 21%. Enhanced oxygen intake enabled massive arthropods. If bioengineered for modern respiration, we could witness a predator beyond natural history.

Dan claps his hands. He loves dinosaurs.

DAN

Holy hydrogen splitters. Fantastic. Just splice in venom and bulletproof plating—we've got humanity's worst nightmare.

JOHN

Focus, Dan.

(to Jack) Mobilize CIA assets. Alert Interpol. Military Intelligence. If viable DNA leaves Antarctica, we've got days.

JACK (V.O.)

Alright, Storm. I'll assemble a response team. But if the wrong hands already have it... this isn't containment. It's an arms race. Watch your back.

The line cuts.

John stares at the panel.

JOHN (V.O.)

An arms race. With monsters.

DAN

Holy fuel cells. Do we get hazard pay?

John doesn't answer. His fist clenches.

THE MISSING EGG

INT. ICE TUNNEL – NIGHT

Crunching boots echo through frozen silence. JOHN and DAN weave through jagged ice formations, breath curling in the air.

DAN

Skipper! Over here—now!

John rushes over. Dan's torch beam reveals a hollow in the ice.

JOHN

What've you got?

DAN

Check this out.

John adjusts his torch. A perfect egg-shaped depression gleams in the frost.

JOHN

Turn your torch behind me.

Dan complies. John snaps photos, records video.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Clear as day. An egg's missing. And it's recent.

DAN

What does that mean?

John studies the imprint.

JOHN

By the stars. It means someone wanted it. Badly enough to kill.

DAN

Murder over a prehistoric bug?

JOHN

Only one reason I can think of.

(taps his ear) Hal, are you reading me?

HAL (V.O.)

Loud and clear, John.

DAN

I need one of those implants.

John's eyes narrow. This was no accident. It was theft—with intent.

BRITISH INTELLIGENCE CALLS

INT. ELIZABETH SWANN – COMMAND DECK – TWO HOURS LATER

The ship glides under a pale sun. A call comes in—British Intelligence via Royal Navy.

NAVY OFFICER (V.O.)

Storm. The KoolArctic has been scuttled.

John freezes.

JOHN

What?

NAVY OFFICER (V.O.)

Gone. All hands lost. No survivors.

John's face hardens.

JOHN

I want to search. There could be survivors.

NAVY OFFICER (V.O.)

Helicopters deployed. Nothing. No bodies. No wreckage. It's like they were erased.

John exhales. *This was orchestrated.*

JOHN

Alright. I'll help.

NAVY OFFICER (V.O.)

You're granted temporary Master & Commander status. Liaise with all parties.

John nods. The Elizabeth Swann is now under official command.

But he's not just following orders.

He's hunting the truth.

And whoever stole that egg...

They have no idea what's coming.

FADE TO BLACK

ATLANTIC EXPRESS - HIGH SPEED PURSUIT

EXT. SOUTH ATLANTIC - DAY

The Elizabeth Swann cuts through icy waters, her hull glinting in the pale sun. Ice floes scatter as she surges forward.

INT. ELIZABETH SWANN – COMMAND DECK – CONTINUOUS

JOHN STORM stands at the helm, eyes locked on the horizon.

JOHN

Hal, high-speed pursuit mode, if you please.

HAL (V.O.)

We are low on power, Skip.

JOHN

Pursuit mode, Hal. Hydrofoils. The works. No time to lose.

DAN HAWK glances up, surprised. He says nothing. One look at John's face says it all.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Dan, keep a lookout for Arktiki debris. Visual sweep. Hal, any ships in the vicinity?

EXT. ELIZABETH SWANN – MOMENTS LATER

Hydrofoils deploy. Thrusters roar. The ship lifts from the waves, gliding like a phantom above the sea.

INT. COMMAND DECK – CONTINUOUS

The ride is smooth. Silent. Almost surreal.

JOHN

Is that full throttle, Hal? We're only making 35 knots.

HAL (V.O.)

My bad, Commander.

Fuel cells open wide. Hydrogen floods the membranes. Steam hisses.

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

Now cruising at 43 knots. Slight headwind.

JOHN

That's better, Hal.

(laughs) Just a shade over. Who's picking up the service tab?

DAN

The Admiralty, Skip. That's for sure.

JOHN Hal, plot a better course. Minimize windage. We need to reach England before it all goes pear-shaped.

INTERCUT: KING KONG'S ESCAPE

EXT. SOUTH ATLANTIC – NIGHT

Flotsam from the KoolArctic drifts beneath moonlight. A shadow moves beneath the surface—massive, insectoid.

The Sectasaur™, nicknamed King Kong, swims with desperate purpose.

EXT. HMM ATLANTIC EXPRESS – NIGHT

A container ship looms. King Kong intercepts, claws scraping the hull. She climbs—slow, deliberate—until she vanishes over the rail.

INT. CARGO BAY – NIGHT

Darkness. Silence. The creature hides among crates. Listening. Learning.

V.O. – CREW TANNOY

Prepare for port call. Rio de Janeiro. Ten containers only.

King Kong twitches. She understands more than she should.

BACK TO: ELIZABETH SWANN – COMMAND DECK

DAN

Skip, flotsam spotted. Starboard bow. Two miles south-southeast.

JOHN

Good eyes, Dan. Hal, you got that?

HAL (V.O.)

Negative. Hold on... hacking satellite.

John and Dan strum fingers on the console. They exchange grins.

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

I read your vibes. Aha. Low orbit satellite confirms debris. And...
a ship passed close by.

JOHN

Close enough?

HAL (V.O.)

I'd say so.

JOHN

Great. I'll start rowing, shall I?

HAL (V.O.)

Recalculating course. Vessel identified: Atlantic Express, out of
Cape Town. Bound for Rio.

JOHN

So we head for Rio?

HAL (V.O.)

Negative. Rio is a short stop. Final destination: Southampton.

JOHN

Not New York?

HAL (V.O.)

Cargo manifest: bully-beef, cocoa, coffee beans. Then Rotterdam.

DAN

Lucky Kong.

HAL (V.O.)

Also bananas and sugar from Cape Town.

JOHN

A feast for a King, Dan.

DAN

You thinking what I'm thinking?

JOHN

Damn right.

INTERCUT: CHANG IN PORTSMOUTH

EXT. PORTSMOUTH DOCKS - DAY

LIN PO CHANG steps off a freighter, coat flapping in the wind. He scans the horizon, unaware the KoolArctic is gone—and that his precious cargo now rides the Atlantic Express.

INT. ELIZABETH SWANN - COMMUNICATIONS BAY - NIGHT

John transmits encrypted data. A message flashes:

Species: Sectasaurus Rex Codename: King Kong Status: Loose. En route to England.

John stares at the screen.

JOHN (V.O.)

Time to spread the word.

FADE TO BLACK

SCENE 11 - HAMPSHIRE

EXT. PORT OF SOUTHAMPTON - NIGHT

The HMM Atlantic Express glides into dock, massive and silent. TUGBOATS nudge her into position. ROPES are thrown, caught, and fastened—old-school, manual.

INT. CARGO BAY - CONTINUOUS

Darkness. A faint rustle. Something shifts among the crates.

The Sectasaur, nicknamed King Kong, unfurls from its hiding place. Its carapace glistens with syrup and pulp. It stretches—slow, deliberate—having feasted on bananas, brazil nuts, sugar, and cocoa beans.

EXT. DOCKSIDE - NIGHT

CRANES swing into motion. CONTAINERS rise and fall. The hum of machinery fills the air.

Under the cover of darkness, King Kong slinks toward the edge of the deck. It grips a mooring rope—underslung—and begins its descent.

EXT. WHARF – CONTINUOUS

Steel and concrete meet claw and mandible. The creature lands silently. It pauses, sensing. Then slips into the River Test-warm compared to the frozen oceans it once knew.

EXT. HAMPSHIRE COUNTRYSIDE – NIGHT

The insectoid silhouette moves through brush and bramble. It crosses fields, bypasses fences, and enters the outskirts of the New Forest.

EXT. NEW FOREST – DAWN

A herd of PONIES grazes peacefully. A shadow passes overhead. One pony whinnies—then silence.

INT. NATURE GROUP OFFICE – DAY

A VOLUNTEER scrolls through reports. Missing equines. Torn fencing. Strange tracks.

VOLUNTEER

This isn't wolves. Or poachers.

She picks up the phone.

INT. HAMPSHIRE POLICE HQ – DAY

An OFFICER listens, scribbles notes. He dials a secure line.

INT. MI6 OPERATIONS ROOM – NIGHT

A red file marked UNCONFIRMED BIOLOGICAL EVENT is opened. A name is circled: Commander John Storm.

INT. ELIZABETH SWANN – COMMAND DECK – NIGHT

JOHN STORM receives the encrypted transmission. He reads. His jaw tightens.

JOHN (V.O.)
It's here.

FADE TO BLACK

BUCKLERS HARD

EXT. THE SOLENT – DUSK

The Elizabeth Swann glides through calm waters, entering the mouth of the Beaulieu River. The sun dips low, casting golden light across the surface.

INT. COMMAND DECK – CONTINUOUS

JOHN STORM stands at the helm, eyes fixed ahead. CHARLEY TEMPLE and DAN HAWK flank him.

JOHN
Bucklers Hard. That's our entry point.

EXT. BEAULIEU RIVER – NIGHT

The ship slows, navigating upriver. Trees close in. Mist curls over the water.

EXT. BUCKLERS HARD – NIGHT

The crew disembarks. A cross-country trek begins—through bracken, mud, and shadow. JOHN moves with uncanny speed.

CHARLEY

Wait for me, John. (panting) No-go ahead. I'll catch up.

She curses under her breath, frustrated. She's fit. Almost athletic. But John is something else.

JOHN

We're getting closer. Tracks are fresh as a daisy.

CHARLEY

And what exactly are we going to do when we find it, oh sporty one?

JOHN

You're right. We play it safe.

INT. ELIZABETH SWANN - COMMUNICATIONS BAY - NIGHT

John activates the comms.

JOHN

Hal, patch me into Dan. Call London-MI6. Request Code Yellow. Worts Gutter and Furzey Lane. Not a kill mission. Capture only. Is that clear?

HAL (V.O.)

You've got it, Commander.

JOHN

Patch me in.

INT. MI6 COMMUNICATIONS BUREAU - NIGHT

A DUTY OFFICER answers.

DUTY OFFICER

Communications Bureau.

DAN (V.O.)

Good evening. Dan Hawk, HMS Elizabeth Swann, for Commander Storm. Requesting emergency Code Yellow. Cordon Worts Gutter, near Beaulieu River. Armed presence. Giant predator—Sectasaur. Do not kill. Valuable specimen. Capture only. Confirm?

DUTY OFFICER

Repeat that, Mr Hawk. Did you say giant Sectasaur?

DAN (V.O.)

Yes. Prehistoric insect. Antarctica origin. Four meters. It's eaten ponies. Not humans.

The officer checks his screen. Storm's covert status flashes green.

DUTY OFFICER

Confirmed. Code Yellow authorized. Actioning request.

DAN (V.O.)

Thank you, Comms. Over and out.

EXT. WOODED AREA – NIGHT

John slows. Charley catches up. The terrain is uneven—felled trees, brambles, soft ground.

JOHN

It doesn't add up.

CHARLEY

What do you mean?

JOHN

King Kong was on the Atlantic Express for days. No crew deaths. But on the KoolArctic—humans were killed. Now, ponies. No humans. Why?

CHARLEY

Maybe it wasn't hungry?

JOHN

Insects are ravenous during pupation. This thing needs food.

CHARLEY

Maybe it found food in the containers?

JOHN

Still. No humans. That's not random.

CHARLEY

You're too examining, John. Could be coincidence.

JOHN

I don't believe in coincidence.

Charley chuckles. She knows that. She doesn't either.

EXT. HAMPSHIRE – NIGHT

MI6 mobilizes. LOCAL POLICE and TERRITORIAL ARMY units converge.
ARMED SOLDIERS fan out, surrounding the area.

At the center: SERGEANT HARRY "RHINO" WINDSOR (50s, grizzled, no-nonsense) leads the charge.

SERGEANT WINDSOR

Twelve men. Full kit. No civilians harmed. Capture only. Let's move.

EXT. WOODED RIDGE – NIGHT

John and Charley watch the soldiers fan out below.

JOHN (V.O.)

It's gone out of its way not to kill humans. Onboard. On land.

That means something.

FADE TO BLACK

CAT & MOUSE

EXT. NEW FOREST – NIGHT

Moonlight filters through the canopy. Twigs snap underfoot. JOHN STORM moves with precision, eyes scanning the undergrowth. CHARLEY TEMPLE follows, breath shallow.

JOHN (whispering)
Charley, this way. I've found a trail.

They follow a line of broken twigs, weaving through bracken and shadow.

CHARLEY
John... are we going in one big circle?

High above, perched in a gnarled oak, the Sectasaur watches. Still. Silent. Predator-like.

JOHN
Well, Charley... I think you're right again.

CHARLEY
Naturally.

JOHN
We've just described a large circle. And you know what that means?

CHARLEY

No, John.

They pause. The forest is too quiet.

JOHN

It's baiting us. Like a Wolverine in Canada.

CHARLEY

I think it can smell us. Doesn't need line of sight.

A low rustle. Then—

WHAM!

The Sectasaur bursts from behind the ridge, knocking Charley sideways. She hits the ground hard, dazed.

JOHN

Charley!

John spins, grabbing a rusted axe from a nearby stump. He swings — CRACK! — striking the creature across its thorax.

The insect recoils, collapsing in partial shock. Its limbs twitch. Steam rises from its carapace.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Oh blast and damn... I've hurt it.

He kneels beside Charley, checking her pulse. She groans, semi-conscious.

John turns to the creature—breathing, but still. He hesitates.

FADE TO BLACK

FIRST AID

EXT. WOODED CLEARING - NIGHT

Moonlight filters through the canopy. The Sectasaur lies motionless on the forest floor, its massive exoskeleton glinting faintly. CHARLEY TEMPLE kneels beside it, rummaging through her knapsack.

JOHN STORM

crouches over the wound - deep, but not fatal. He applies antiseptic with care.

JOHN

Got another bandage, please, Charley.

CHARLEY

Coming up.

She pulls out a roll of webbed gauze, hands it over.

JOHN

Thanks.

He hesitates. For a moment, the creature twitches—barely perceptible. John pauses, then continues.

CHARLEY

Pretty good, Skip.

John smiles. He's no medic - more engineer than nurse - but he's doing his best.

The Sectasaur remains still. Silent. Watching. Listening. Pretending to be incapacitated.

JOHN

Well... what do we do now?

CHARLEY

Good point. He's too big to move ourselves.

JOHN

Don't you mean she's too big?

Charley nods. John knows the biology—female workers, queens, drones. He finishes the final wrap.

The creature's antennae twitch slightly. It hears everything. Registers tone. Emotion. No aggression. No threat.

These humans are different.

CHARLEY

She's letting us help her.

JOHN

She knows we're not enemies.

They sit in silence. The forest breathes around them.

The Sectasaur marks them down—not as prey, but as allies. The only friends she has in this strange, inhospitable world.

FADE TO BLACK

THE SECTASAURO RESCUES JOHN STORM

EXT. FOREST LEDGE – NIGHT

The Sectasaur twitches—feigning recovery. JOHN STORM steps back, instinctively reaching for the axe.

JOHN

Easy... easy...

The creature lashes out—reflexive, defensive. A massive limb strikes John, sending him flying over the edge. CHARLEY TEMPLE tumbles into undergrowth.

EXT. RAVINE EDGE – CONTINUOUS

John clings to a tangle of roots, legs dangling. Dirt crumbles beneath him. The roots begin to tear loose.

JOHN

Okay, you've got me. It's your call. I didn't mean to hurt you - it was reflex. Charley, run. Get help!

Charley stirs, dazed. The Sectasaur looms above the ledge. John braces for the end.

But instead—the creature lowers itself. Carefully. Deliberately.

A massive leg extends toward John.

JOHN (CONT'D)

What the hell...

He grabs hold. The creature lifts him—slowly, steadily—back to safety.

EXT. FOREST FLOOR – MOMENTS LATER

John collapses beside Charley, breathless.

JOHN

Charley... forget help. We seem to have an accord.

CHARLEY

I noticed, John. Forgotten.

They exchange a look - equal parts awe and disbelief.

EXT. WOODED RIDGE – NIGHT

FLASHLIGHTS flicker through the trees. Territorial Army reservists close in—armed, tense. SERGEANT HARRY “RHINO” WINDSOR leads the charge.

SERGEANT WINDSOR

Move! I see movement! Weapons ready!

He squints—short-sighted, misreading the scene. To him, it’s a struggle. A threat.

SERGEANT WINDSOR (CONT'D) Target in sight. Prepare to engage!

EXT. FOREST FLOOR – CONTINUOUS

John sees the soldiers approaching. He steps between them and the creature.

JOHN

Hold fire! She’s not hostile!

The Sectasaur crouches low, sensing danger.

Charley raises her hands.

CHARLEY

She saved him. She’s intelligent. Don’t shoot.

Rhino hesitates. Confused. But the tension crackles.

FADE TO BLACK

PUZZLING SITUATION

EXT. WOODED CLEARING – NIGHT

JOHN STORM brushes dirt from his jacket, breath steadying. Beside him, the Sectasaur squats—massive, alien, yet oddly serene. It preens its feelers with slow, deliberate grace.

John watches, puzzled. Then speaks—softly.

JOHN

You're... magnificent.

The creature pauses. Turns its head. Looks directly at him.

A beat. Then another.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Oh my god.

CHARLEY TEMPLE steps forward, eyes wide.

CHARLEY

Incredible, isn't it?

John nods, transfixed. As a scientist, he can't help himself. He extends his hand—palm up.

CHARLEY

No, don't, John.

But he's already committed.

The Sectasaur leans in. Its feelers brush his hand—delicate, exploratory. A tickling sensation. John's heart pounds. Its jaws could sever his arm in a blink.

Instead, the creature gently nudges him with its mandibles. A

gesture. A choice.

John exhales. Moved.

CHARLEY (CONT'D)

Oh my god...

She's spellbound.

The creature settles back. Watching. Listening.

JOHN

A prehistoric throwback... communicating. After just days with us. Two ships. One hostile. One... not.

CHARLEY

I can't believe it. We're speaking with a species not seen on Earth for thousands of years.

JOHN

More than that, Charley. Try five hundred thousand.

Charley smiles. A warmth spreads through her. John remains still—shocked, bewildered, and deeply touched.

The forest is silent. The moment hangs—fragile, profound.

FADE TO BLACK

ALL FRIENDS

EXT. WOODED CLEARING – NIGHT

CHARLEY TEMPLE pushes through bracken, breath ragged. She freezes.

Ahead, JOHN STORM kneels beside the Sectasaur, now nicknamed King

Kong, and answering to King Kong. The creature gently brushes John's hand with its mandibles.

Charley blinks—disbelieving, then accepting, then questioning.

CHARLEY (V.O.)

Am I seeing this? No threat. No fear. Just... connection.

She steps forward, slowly. Extends her hand.

The Sectasaur turns. Its antennae sweep over her - smelling, tasting, feeling.

CHARLEY

That's ticklish, girl.

She giggles. The creature pauses, then continues its gentle inspection.

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

Iron oxide. Magnetite. A biological compass. Like homing pigeons.

John and Charley exchange wide grins. This isn't a monster. It's a miracle.

JOHN

This changes everything.

CHARLEY

It's not a threat. It's a find.

A beat. Then—

GUNFIRE.

EXT. RIDGE ABOVE – CONTINUOUS

TERRITORIAL ARMY TROOPS open fire. Muzzle flashes light the

trees. SERGEANT RHINO WINDSOR leads the charge.

EXT. CLEARING – CONTINUOUS

Bullets strike the Sectasaur. It recoils, wounded.

JOHN

Stop firing, you idiots!

He leaps in front of the creature. Charley follows—but a bullet catches her arm.

CHARLEY

Agh!

She collapses, clutching her wound.

The Sectasaur roars—not in rage, but in defence. It pushes John and Charley aside, shielding them with its massive body.

Bullets ricochet off its exoskeleton. One strikes its head.

SLOW MOTION:

The creature stumbles. Legs falter. Mandibles twitch.

It collapses.

EXT. CLEARING – SILENCE

John crawls to its side. Charley, bleeding, watches in shock.

JOHN (V.O.)

We just became friends. And now...

FADE TO BLACK

HOSTILE FIRE

EXT. WOODED CLEARING – NIGHT

Gunfire erupts—loud, chaotic, indiscriminate. The Sectasaur moves instinctively, placing its massive body between the bullets and the humans.

Rounds slam into its exoskeleton—sparks, cracks, ricochets. Then one strikes its head.

JOHN STORM

Hold fire! Stop firing!

CHARLEY TEMPLE

Stop morons! You're killing her!

Charley stumbles forward, clutching her bleeding arm. Her face contorts in pain.

The gunfire ceases. Silence falls.

EXT. CLEARING – MOMENTS LATER

John and Charley rush to the creature. It's fading—breath shallow, limbs twitching.

CHARLEY

She's going, John.

John kneels, helpless. He taps his earpiece.

JOHN

Hal, I need help. Now.

HAL (V.O.)

I hear you, Commander. Very sorry, no suggestions. Just as frustrated as you and Charley.

The Sectasaur lifts its feelers—slow, deliberate. Charley takes one in her good hand. John takes the other.

They embrace—human and insect—united in sorrow.

A beat. Then the antennae go limp.

The creature is gone.

CHARLEY

No...

She collapses into tears. John wipes a tear from his eye—his sorrow turning to fury.

JOHN (V.O.)

We were so close. And they couldn't see it.

EXT. CLEARING – CONTINUOUS

John and Charley cradle the fallen creature. Their hands tremble. Their hearts ache.

The soldiers stand frozen—realizing too late what they've done.

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

They didn't understand. And now... it's gone.

FADE TO BLACK

ATTACK SUBSIDES

EXT. WOODED CLEARING – NIGHT

The gunfire has stopped. Smoke drifts through the trees. The Sectasaur lies motionless, its massive body slumped, antennae

limp.

JOHN STORM kneels beside it, trembling. CHARLEY TEMPLE, bloodied and pale, joins him. They each hold one of the creature's feelers—desperate, pleading.

CHARLEY

Come on... come on, don't go.

Her voice cracks. Tears streak her cheeks.

John presses his hands to the creature's thorax, attempting CPR. He pushes hard. Again. Again.

JOHN

Come on. Stay with us.

But the exoskeleton resists. No give. No breath. No response.

He leans in, tries expired air resuscitation—but the anatomy is too alien. The effort is futile.

CHARLEY

She's gone, John.

John lowers his head. Silent. His sorrow channels into motion—gathering supplies, checking vitals, refusing to stop.

Charley sobs openly. Her hand trembles against the creature's shell.

EXT. RIDGE ABOVE – MOMENTS LATER

SERGEANT "RHINO" WINDSOR barrels down the slope—massive, loud, euphoric.

SERGEANT RHINO

Yes! That's how it's done! Mission accomplished!

He whoops, hollers, slaps his chest. His radio crackles.

SERGEANT RHINO (CONT'D)

Target neutralized. No casualties. Repeat-mission success.

John hears every word. His jaw tightens. His fists clench.

JOHN (V.O.)

You endangered us. You killed her. And you call that success?

Rhino stomps closer, oblivious to the grief. Charley recoils.

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

This wasn't containment. This was slaughter.

John stands. Slowly. Deliberately. His eyes locked on Rhino.

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

You're a disgrace to the uniform. And I'm not a civilian.

The forest holds its breath.

FADE TO BLACK

NO REMORSE

EXT. WOODED CLEARING - NIGHT

The air is thick with smoke and sorrow. The Sectasaur lies dead. CHARLEY TEMPLE clutches her wounded arm. JOHN STORM stands over the fallen creature, fists clenched.

A group of TERRITORIAL ARMY SOLDIERS gather nearby. One of them—

SERGEANT "RHINO" WINDSOR—flexes his biceps, showboating.

SERGEANT RHINO

Yes! That's how it's done!

He grins, tearing open a protein bar, chewing smugly.

JOHN

Excuse me, Sergeant.

Rhino turns, still chewing.

SERGEANT RHINO

Yes?

JOHN

Did you give the order to open fire?

SERGEANT RHINO

Good call, yeah?

John stares at him. Then—WHAM!—delivers a brutal punch to the jaw. Rhino drops like a felled tree.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Chew on that.

The other soldiers tense, ready to retaliate. John steps forward.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Game if you are. But be careful—I bite.

Charley steps beside him, wincing from her injury. She raises her voice.

CHARLEY

Stop right there, soldier boys. Do you know what you've done? You

trigger-happy wallabies.

The soldiers freeze. No reply. One by one, they lower their weapons and back away—sheepish, ashamed.

JOHN

Better pick up Sergeant Rhino. Take him with you. You don't leave a fallen comrade - brain-dead or not. No hard feelings. Sometimes things get out of control.

The soldiers salute. John returns it - cold, precise.

EXT. RIDGE OVERLOOKING CLEARING - NIGHT

LIN PO CHANG watches from a distance. His face is pale, devastated. He lowers his binoculars.

He's seen everything.

And in this moment, he finds unexpected kinship with his adversaries—CHARLEY TEMPLE and COMMANDER JOHN STORM.

Respect. Earned.

FADE TO BLACK

EPILOGUE AND DEBRIEFING

INT. MI6 SECURE BRIEFING ROOM - NIGHT

Dimly lit. A single desk lamp casts shadows across a stack of classified documents. COMMANDER JOHN STORM sits alone, typing his final report.

INSERT: SCREEN TEXT TOP SECRET - Eyes Only To: Director, MI6 CC: Secretary General, UNESCO IOC / GOOS - Global Oceanographic

Observation Systems

John pauses. His fingers hover over the keyboard.

JOHN (V.O.)

An evolutionary missing link. Lost. Not to nature... but to fear.

He continues typing.

JOHN (V.O.) (CONT'D) Recommend South Pole excavation. Strictly scientific. No military access. Site designation: Antarctic Area 51.

He scrolls past the section marked Personal Observations. It remains blank.

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

No mention of her intelligence. Her kindness. Her protection. They wouldn't believe us.

INT. CHARLEY TEMPLE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Charley watches the news. A headline scrolls:

Ghost Net Found Off U.S. Coast - Human Remains Confirmed

She lowers the volume. Her wounded arm is bandaged. Her eyes are distant.

BBC NEWS ANCHOR JILL BIRD (V.O.)

UNESCO calls for mandatory tagging of all fishing gear. The net contained remains of the KoolArctic crew.

Charley exhales. Silent.

INT. MI6 BRIEFING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

John closes the report. He seals the file. Stamps it:

INSERT: STAMP TOP SECRET

He leans back. Eyes closed. A tear escapes.

JOHN (V.O.)

She was more than a specimen. She was a soul.

FADE TO BLACK

TEXT ON SCREEN: THE END

ROLL CREDITS