

**WING
COMMANDER**

ACADEMY

"INVISIBLE ENEMY"

74708

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WING COMMANDER ACADEMY

CAST LIST
"INVISIBLE ENEMY"

***** THE CADETS *****

MANIAC

EASY — Cadet Emil Zoharian. He has 3 lines.

ARCHER

GRUNT

PAYBACK

MAVERICK

***** TIGER'S CLAW CREW *****

COMMODORE TOLWYN

GUTHRIG

MAYA

COM-TECH

SHIP'S ADDRESS — 1 line in VO only.

HELMSMAN — 1 line

SENSOR-TECH — 1 line

WORK PARTIES — in space suits, repairing exterior of damaged transport. No lines.

REPAIR CREWS — repairing interior of damaged transport. 2 "panic wallas."

***** FORMER TRAFALGAR PILOTS *****

DAGGER

CLIPPER

FALCON — 2 lines

TRIPOD — No lines

***** SUFFOLK CREW *****

SUFFOLK OPS OFFICER — 1 line in VO only.

***** THE KILRATHI *****

ZURAKH NAR KUR'U'TAK — blood-thirsty test-pilot of new Kilrathi stealth fighter.

KIRNOK NAR KIRANKA — captain of the Kilrathi carrier.

KILRATHI DECK OFFICER — No lines.

WING COMMANDER ACADEMY
"Invisible Enemy"

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE - WIDE

A glistening starscape, beautiful and serene, until two Scimitar fighters roar INTO SHOT FROM ABOVE and we PAN with them as they bank fly along -- it's a routine patrol.

MANIAC (RADIO VO)

So I looked ol' Tolwyn straight in the eye and said -- "Orders, sir? Gee, I guess the Kilrathi must've knocked out my communications."

ON EASY - THROUGH THE CANOPY OF HIS SCIMITAR FIGHTER

He shakes his head, ruefully, as he laughs:

EASY (RADIO)

(LAUGHS APPRECIATIVELY) Crossin' the Old Man -- you really are a maniac!

ANGLE ON MANIAC - IN THE COCKPIT OF HIS SCIMITAR FIGHTER

He shrugs nonchalantly.

MANIAC

Hey, that's my name; don't wear it out!

PROXIMITY ALARMS sound in his cockpit. A HEAD'S-UP DISPLAY flashes onto his canopy.

MANIAC (CONT)

(checking sensors)

I got a contact. I'm reading one ship.
Kilrathi!

ANGLE ON EASY - INSIDE HIS SCIMITAR'S COCKPIT

He too is checking his sensors.

EASY

And he's changing course. What do you think?

TRACKING THE TWO SCIMITAR FIGHTERS

flying with Maniac's Scimitar in the lead position.

MANIAC (RADIO VO)

I say we scratch this cat -- right behind the ears. Hold position and cover me.

ANGLE ON MANIAC - IN THE COCKPIT OF HIS SCIMITAR FIGHTER

Maniac looks back at Easy, who is visible in the cockpit of his trailing Scimitar.

MANIAC (CONT)

Keep an eye on your sensors, Easy. I don't want any furball surprises.

We see Easy give Maniac a thumbs-up in the other cockpit.

EASY (RADIO VO)

Screens are clear. Go for it, Maniac.

Maniac pulls back on the controls, winging over--CAMERA FOLLOWING-- the stars rushing by through the canopy behind him.

ANGLE - TRACKING MANIAC'S SCIMITAR FIGHTER

Maniac's ship rockets through the darkness, AFTERBURNERS FLARING.

WIDE ANGLE ON SPACE

As a Kilrathi Transport flies INTO THE SHOT, moving away. As it MOVES OFF, Maniac's Fighter SHOOTS INTO F.G., tracking on it.

CLOSE ON KILRATHI TRANSPORT

BATTLE STATIONS ALARMS sound and the turrets begin pivoting. The turrets OPEN FIRE with lasers.

ANGLE - TRACKING MANIAC'S SCIMITAR FIGHTER

LASER FIRE rips THROUGH THE SHOT as Maniac dives to the attack.

CLOSE ON KILRATHI LASER TURRETS

pivoting to track Maniac OS as they FIRE RAPIDLY.

ANGLE - TRACKING MANIAC'S SCIMITAR FIGHTER

Maniac FIRES A TORPEDO, then dives OUT OF SHOT, just as the LASER FIRE sweeps through the position he just left.

PANNING WITH TORPEDO

As the torpedo approaches, the Kilrathi transport takes evasive action, but it's far too slow.

TORPEDO'S POV - ON TRANSPORT

As it streaks toward the Transport, the Kilrathi ship FIRES A MISSILE which streaks PAST THE CAMERA OUT OF SHOT, then the Torpedo hits the ship. The EXPLOSION BLOTS OUT EVERYTHING.

LONG ON MANIAC'S SCIMITAR FIGHTER

As it arcs upward, the transport is EXPLODING in the distance.

MANIAC (RADIO VO)
(VICTORY WHOOP)

PANNING ON KILRATHI MISSILE

It turns sharply and comes back TOWARD THE CAMERA.

ANGLE ON MANIAC - INSIDE HIS SCIMITAR'S COCKPIT

Maniac reacts with alarm as his TARGETING ALARM SOUNDS and a WARNING LIGHT FLASHES.

MANIAC (CONT)
(a nervous complaint)
Aw, man, I hate a missile that don't
know when to quit!

ANGLE - TRACKING MANIAC'S SCIMITAR

He rolls sideways, and FIRES AFTERBURNERS. He shoots OUT OF SHOT just as the Missile SHOOTS THROUGH THE SCENE.

PANNING WITH THE KILRATHI MISSILE

It turns again and streaks back TOWARD THE CAMERA.

REAR ANGLE - TRACKING MANIAC'S SCIMITAR FIGHTER

He FIRES A PAIR OF FLARING DECOYS --

MANIAC (RADIO VO) (CONT)
Target this, dumb shot!

-- and Maniac's Scimitar arcs up OUT OF SHOT.

ANGLE ON KILRATHI MISSILE

As it SLAMS into a FLARING DECOY and EXPLODES in a FIREBALL.

ANGLE ON MANIAC - IN THE COCKPIT OF HIS SCIMITAR FIGHTER

looking through the canopy at the FIREBALL.

MANIAC (CONT)
 (self-satisfied
 musing, to himself)
 Well, that's why they call 'em missiles
 -- cause they always miss.

WIDE ON SPACE

filled with the brilliant pinpoints of stars. Maniac's Scimitar rockets PAST THE CAMERA INTO SHOT and we TILT UP WITH IT as it climbs and flies AWAY FROM THE CAMERA.

MANIAC (RADIO VO) (CONT)
 (LONG, JOYOUS VICTORY WHOOP)

ANGLE - TRACKING MANIAC'S SCIMITAR FIGHTER

flying through space toward the rendezvous with Easy OS.

MANIAC (RADIO VO) (CONT)
 Hey, Easy. Too bad you couldn't watch
 me take care of that furball.

ANGLE ON MANIAC - INSIDE HIS SCIMITAR'S COCKPIT

speaking with teasing bravado over his comlink.

MANIAC (CONT)
 (teasing bravado)
 You might've learned something.

There's a beat of silence and then Maniac reacts with some concern as he adjusts his comlink.

MANIAC (CONT)
 Easy? Hey, Easy? Speak to me, man.
 (increasing concern)
 Maniac to Easy! Come in, Easy! Answer
 me!

He looks up, forward through the canopy and reacts with shock at something he sees ahead.

MANIAC (CONT)
 (SHOCKED GASP)

SLOW TRUCK ACROSS DRIFTING DEBRIS

The debris of Easy's Scimitar, floating in space. In the FG, a piece of the fuselage with the word "EASY" stenciled on it drifts THROUGH THE SHOT. END TRUCK and PULL BACK WIDE as Maniac's Scimitar DESCENDS INTO SHOT and hovers above the wreckage.

MANIAC (RADIO VO) (CONT)
 (quietly devastated)
 Oh, no. Easy.
 (genuine regret)
 I told you to watch your screens.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. FARTHER AWAY IN SPACE - ON KILRATHI SENSOR SCREEN - INSIDE ZURAHK'S STRAKHA FIGHTER

Maniac's ship is a BLIP on the screen amid the "CLOUD" OF DEBRIS.

ZURAHK (OS)
 I see you, Terran, but you do not see me. Your sensors are blind.

PAN AND TILT UP to reveal ZURAHK NAR KUR'U'TAK (Kilrathi call sign "Stalker"), his face ILLUMINATED BY THE SENSOR SCREEN.

ZURAHK (CONT)
 I could destroy you as easily as I destroyed your wing man -- but not yet.

DRAMATIC ANGLE ON ZURAHK'S STRAKHA FIGHTER

A dark, menacing stealth fighter, a prototype of dangerous things to come. It's hovering in space.

ZURAHK (VO CONT)
 Fly home, Terran.

TRACK as Zurahk FIRES HIS ENGINES and starts to move forward.

ZURAHK (VO CONT)
 Lead me to your carrier.

PAN AHEAD AND PUSH IN to reveal Maniac's Scimitar as it FIRES ENGINES and moves away from the debris field.

WIPE TO:

INT. TIGER'S CLAW: HANGAR DECK - WIDE DOWNANGLE ON A FUNERAL

GUTHRIG and Maniac, MAVERICK, PAYBACK, and the OTHER CADETS (less Archer and Grunt) stand at attention in their dress uniforms. Before them, on a launching skid, is a coffin. TOLWYN stands beside the coffin.

TOLWYN
 No matter how many times I perform this duty, it never gets any easier. And it's been done too many times in this war.

ON MANIAC, MAVERICK, AND PAYBACK

MAVERICK and PAYBACK, glance at Maniac, whose expression is stoney as he stares straight ahead.

TOLWYN (OS CONT)

I believe that some part of the universe will always remain unknown to us --

CLOSE ON TOLWYN

His normally stern expression softens -- he's speaking sincerely.

TOLWYN (CONT)

-- a mystery beyond the limits of our understanding. Cadet Emil Zoharian is now a part of that mystery.

ANGLE FAVORING TOLWYN AND THE COFFIN

Tolwyn looks down at the coffin.

TOLWYN (CONT)

We consign his remains to space, the emptiness that contains all things. May he find the peace we all seek.

ON CADETS - THE COFFIN IN F.G.

They salute, as the Coffin starts to move on its skid.

MEDIUM ANGLE ON HANGAR DOOR

As the skid moves, SHIMMERING THROUGH THE FORCE FIELD that holds in air and gravity, the Coffin tumbles end over end, into space.

PAN ACROSS CADETS

They're all watching with the same thought -- that could be me. END PAN with Tolwyn in the FG. He looks up as we hear:

SHIP'S ADDRESS (LOUDSPEAKER VO)

Bridge to Commodore Tolwyn. Transport convoy approaching.

Tolwyn looks back at the cadets.

TOLWYN

That's all. Return to your duties.

EXT. SPACE - WIDE ON THE TIGER'S CLAW

Four transports (SUFFOLK, SHIRE, PERCHERON and CLEVELAND BAY) are drifting down toward the TIGER'S CLAW. Two Scimitar Fighters -- piloted by ARCHER and GRUNT -- fly PAST THE CAMERA INTO SHOT.

ON ARCHER - IN THE COCKPIT OF HER SCIMITAR FIGHTER

Grunt's Scimitar can be seen through the cockpit canopy.

ARCHER
(into comlink)
We've been cleared for landing.

GRUNT (RADIO VO)
Understood, Archer. See you back at the barn.

Grunt banks away and OUT OF SHOT. A SOFT BEEPING from her control panel draws Archer's attention to her sensor screen.

ARCHER'S POV - ON SENSOR SCREEN - INSIDE HER SCIMITAR'S COCKPIT

A tiny BLIP is moving toward her on the sensor screen.

ANGLE ON ARCHER - IN THE COCKPIT OF HER SCIMITAR FIGHTER

She looks up, as Easy's Coffin drifts past her fighter.

ARCHER
(quietly, to herself)
No... not another one.

Archer looks away, turning her stricken face TOWARD THE CAMERA.

ARCHER (CONT)
It's never going to end. Never.

LONG SHOT ON THE TIGER'S CLAW - WITH EASY'S COFFIN AND ARCHER'S SCIMITAR IN THE FG

Archer FIRES HER ENGINES and moves AWAY FROM THE CAMERA toward the hangar door of the Tiger's Claw. PAN WITH EASY'S COFFIN as it drifts PAST THE CAMERA, then TILT UP to a small speck in the distance -- Zurahk's Strakha fighter, watching from a distance.

MEDIUM ON ZURAHK'S STRAKHA

Drifting quietly in the darkness.

ANGLE ON ZURAKH - IN THE COCKPIT OF HIS STRAKHA FIGHTER

He's watching the four transports and the Tiger's Claw on his sensor screen. His eyes narrow and he smiles cruelly.

ZURAHK
 (to himself)
 Four transports and the Tiger's Claw.
 This is a prize worth taking.

MEDIUM ON ZURAHK'S STRAKHA

He FIRES THE ENGINES, preparing for flight --

ZURAHK (VO CONT)
 Enjoy the time you have left. When I
 return, you will be mine.

PAN with the Strakha as it turns and flies AWAY FROM THE CAMERA.

WIPE TO:

EXT. ANOTHER AREA SPACE - WIDE ANGLE ON KILRATHI CARRIER

floating in space. Zurahk's Strakha flies PAST THE CAMERA INTO SHOT and heads toward the Kilrathi carrier's open hangar door.

INT. KILRATHI CARRIER: HANGAR DECK - ON ZURAHK'S STRAKHA

As it FIRES RETROS and prepares to land. Various KILRATHI PILOTS and GROUND STAFF are moving among their fighters in the BG.

LOW ANGLE ON ZURAHK'S STRAKHA

As it touches down with a CLANG, a pair of booted Kilrathi legs step INTO SHOT. PULL BACK AND UP to reveal the carrier captain, KIRNOK NAR KIRANKA, watching as Zurahk climbs out of his fighter.

KIRNOK
 Well? Did the Terran sensors detect
 you?

ANGLE ON ZURAHK

Zurahk pulls a twisted piece of metal (part of Easy's Scimitar) from the grip of a grappling claw attached to his fighter.

ZURAHK
 I approached from behind.
 (turns and holds up
 the piece of metal)
 He never knew I was there.

ANGLE - FAVORING KIRNOK

Scowling, he steps up to Zurahk.

KIRNOK
 From behind. I am not convinced.
 There must be a second test.

ZURAHK

There was a second Terran. I let him live.

ANGLE ON KIRNOK

reacts with shock and anger.

KIRNOK

What?! You let him live?!

WIDEN SLIGHTLY TO INCLUDE a smug Zurahk as he walks past Kirnok and then stops, looking back at Kirnok.

ZURAHK

He led me to four transports and a carrier -- the Tiger's Claw.

Kirnok reacts with grim excitement.

KIRNOK

The Tiger's Claw!!!

ANOTHER ANGLE ON KIRNOK

Kirnok turns toward a KILRATHI DECK OFFICER overseeing some nearby fighters.

KIRNOK (CONT)

(to Deck Officer)

Ready a fighter strike! Now!

The Officer salutes and runs off. Kirnok nods to Zurahk, turns, and strides away as PRE-FLIGHT ALARMS BEGIN TO SOUND and Kilrathi pilots run to their fighters in the BG.

ON ZURAHK

paying no attention to the activity around him as the PRE-FLIGHT ALARMS CONTINUE. He looks at the twisted metal from Easy Scimitar that he holds in his hands.

ZURAHK

(to himself)

This one was a fool. But the one who destroyed the transport... he is a good pilot. A good enemy.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. TIGER'S CLAW: MESS DECK - WIDE ANGLE - FAVORING MANIAC

Maniac carries his tray of food between tables packed with eating CADETS and sits down at a table with Payback and two TRAFALGAR

Pilots (DAGGER and CLIPPER). Grunt, Archer and Maverick are eating at a table some distance away.

ANGLE ON DAGGER AND CLIPPER

They look at each other. Dagger pushes back from the table.

DAGGER
I just lost my appetite.

Dagger and Clipper get up and walk OUT OF SHOT.

ON PAYBACK AND MANIAC

Payback stands --

PAYBACK
I'm not too hungry myself.

-- and walks away. Maniac watches her angrily, fuming.

MANIAC
(bitter)
Looks like I'm about as popular around here as chipped beef on toast.

Then he reacts with irritation as he hears:

MAVERICK (OS)
Better get used to it.

ANGLE ON MANIAC AND MAVERICK

As Maverick sits down across from Maniac.

MAVERICK (CONT)
There's a lot of people who want to know what really happened out there with Easy -- including me.

MANIAC
I made my report to Tolwyn. Read it yourself.

MAVERICK
I did, and I don't buy it.

CLOSE ON MAVERICK

He leans in TOWARD THE CAMERA.

MAVERICK (CONT)

(intense)

I think you lost your wing man because you were too busy trying to rack up a kill for yourself. I think you left Easy to die alone because you were out hunting glory.

ANGLE ON MANIAC AND MAVERICK

as Maniac stands up angrily. Maverick remains seated.

MANIAC

What makes you think I care what you think?

MAVERICK

The pilots from the Trafalgar won't fly with you anymore. Nobody else wants to either.

CLOSER ANGLE

Maniac leans angrily across the table and grabs Maverick by the lapels of his flight suit.

MANIAC

(cold fury)

They won't have to. I've been grounded. Happy?

ADJUST ANGLE as Maverick knocks Maniac's arm loose and stands up angrily, confronting him. It looks like they'll fight.

ANGLE ON ARCHER AND GRUNT

Archer starts to get up from her table, but Grunt lays a restraining hand on her.

GRUNT

Let 'em play it out.

Archer starts to say something, but before she can speak we hear:

TOLWYN (VIA SHIP'S ADDRESS)

Red alert! All pilots to the hangar deck! Scramble!

WIDE ON ROOM - FAVORING MANIAC AND MAVERICK

As all the other cadets hurry for the door in the BG, Maverick gives Maniac a last hard look --

MAVERICK

Guess you'll be sitting this one out.

-- and then Maverick turns and hurries out. Maniac turns TOWARD THE CAMERA, seething, and then SLAMS his fist down on the table.

INT. TIGER'S CLAW: BRIDGE - ANGLE ON TOLWYN

Tolwyn watches Kilrathi fighter BLIPS approach on a sensor display on the bridge's viewscreen. He activates a comlink.

TOLWYN
(into comlink)
Launch fighters. Blair, you have tactical command.

INT. TIGER CLAW'S LAUNCH BAY - ANGLE ON MAVERICK - IN HIS SCIMITAR'S COCKPIT

The BG speeds along as Maverick's fighter is launched.

TOLWYN (RADIO VO) (CONT)
Protect the transports -- at all costs.

MAVERICK
Understood, sir.

EXT. SPACE - WIDE ANGLE ON TIGER'S CLAW

Terran fighters stream out of the launch bays.

MAVERICK (RADIO VO) (CONT)
Maverick to all fighters. You heard the man -- we're playing defense. Keep 'em away from the transports.

DAGGER (RADIO VO)
(sarcastic)
Yes, General.

LONG ON TIGER'S CLAW AND FOUR TRANSPORTS

with the small dots of the Terran fighters forming in squadrons in front of them. The first Kilrathi Sartha and Grikath fighters roar PAST THE CAMERA INTO SHOT, arrowing in on their targets.

PAYBACK (RADIO VO)
Here they come, eight o'clock high.

WIDE ANGLE ON SCIMITAR FIGHTERS

peeling out of formation as they FIRE AFTERBURNERS and attack.

MAVERICK (RADIO)
Don't let any of 'em get through!

TRACKING ALONG A TRANSPORT (SUFFOLK)

Its guns FIRE, tracking on a Kilrathi Sartha flying along its side. A Scimitar is chasing the Sartha through the barrage.

ANGLE ON PAYBACK - IN THE COCKPIT OF HER SCIMITAR FIGHTER

She FIRES her weapons.

PAYBACK'S POV - ON THE KILRATHI SARTHA

Payback's FIRE BLOWS IT APART, pieces spinning TOWARD THE CAMERA.

PAYBACK (RADIO VO)
Scratch one kitty!

Payback's Scimitar ROARS through the debris from the Kilrathi.

INT. TIGER'S CLAW: BRIDGE - ON TOLWYN

He stands tensely, listening to the squawkbox chatter.

ARCHER (RADIO VO)
Watch it, Payback. You got one on your tail.

PAYBACK (RADIO VO)
I see him.

Tolwyn doesn't see Maniac ENTER the Bridge in the BG. Maniac stands, listening anxiously -- he wishes he were out there.

DAGGER (RADIO VO)
What was that? What was that?

MAVERICK (RADIO VO)
What? Say again, Dagger.

DAGGER (RADIO VO)
I'm getting laser fire, but no--

MAVERICK (RADIO VO)
Repeat that, Dagger. Say again.

CLIPPER (RADIO VO)
Dagger's down. He's gone.

EXT. SPACE - NEAR THE TIGER'S CLAW - ON CLIPPER'S SCIMITAR

As it arcs above the battle, Clipper is looking around.

CLIPPER (RADIO)
I don't see what got him. There's nothing on my sensors.

ON A "SPECK" IN SPACE

It suddenly ROCKETS TOWARD THE CAMERA, revealing itself to be Zurahk's Strakha fighter. Zurahk FIRES AT THE CAMERA.

ON CLIPPER - IN THE COCKPIT OF HIS SCIMITAR

As the LASER FIRE hits his shields and EXPLODES, JOLTING HIM.

CLIPPER (CONT)
(CRY OF ALARM) What was that?!

ANGLE ON MAVERICK - IN THE COCKPIT OF HIS SCIMITAR

His HEAD'S-UP DISPLAY shows just one BLIP.

MAVERICK
Say again, Clipper! Sensors read you
and no one else!

ANGLE - TRACKING CLIPPER'S SCIMITAR AND ZURAHK'S STRAKHA

Clipper jinks his fighter as Zurahk pursues him, FIRING.

CLIPPER (RADIO VO)
I'm not making this up!

MAVERICK (RADIO VO)
I got visual contact! I see him!

PULL BACK WIDE as Maverick's Scimitar races INTO SHOT and gets on Zurahk's tail. As Maverick FIRES, Zurahk FIRES AFTERBURNERS and rockets up OUT OF SHOT.

ON MAVERICK - IN THE COCKPIT OF HIS SCIMITAR FIGHTER

He's looking around. Now he only sees Clipper's Scimitar.

MAVERICK (CONT)
Where'd he go?! He's off my screens!

PANNING WITH ZURAHK'S STRAKHA FIGHTER

As it turns and comes roaring back AT THE CAMERA.

ON ZURAHK - THROUGH THE CANOPY OF HIS STRAKHA FIGHTER

LINES on his HEAD'S-UP DISPLAY box one Scimitar and BEEPS.

ZURAHK
And now, Terran, you die.

Zurahk FIRES AT THE CAMERA.

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE NEAR THE TIGER'S CLAW - ON CLIPPER'S SCIMITAR

As it's HIT and BLOWS APART, the ejection pod spins TOWARD THE CAMERA.

CLIPPER (RADIO VO)
(TERRIFIED SCREAM)

ON EJECTION POD - THROUGH ZURAHK'S HEAD'S UP DISPLAY - OVER ZURAHK'S SHOULDER

as the targeting LINES BOX IT and we hear a BEEP.

ZURAHK
There is no escape, Terran.

But suddenly LASER FIRE rips THROUGH THE SHOT, barely missing Zurahk and he reacts in surprise, looking OS.

ZURAHK (CONT)
(SURPRISED GROWL)

PANNING ON MAVERICK'S SCIMITAR

as he turns TOWARD THE CAMERA, FIRING.

WIDE ANGLE ON EJECTION POD AND ZURAHK'S STRAHKA FIGHTER

Zurahk FIRES AFTERBURNERS and rockets OUT OF SHOT as Maniac's Scimitar flies INTO SHOT and heads for the ejection pod.

ANGLE ON EJECTION POD

drifting in space. WIDEN as Maverick's Scimitar ENTERS SHOT and snags the ejection pod with a TRACTOR BEAM.

MAVERICK
I gotcha, Clipper! You're okay.

CLOSER ANGLE ON EJECTION POD AND MAVERICK'S SCIMITAR

as the pod is pulled in by the TRACTOR BEAM and docks with the Scimitar with a METALLIC CLANG.

PANNING WITH GRUNT'S SCIMITAR

as it turns and dives down.

GRUNT
More gatos on the screen -- four o'clock low.

PANNING WITH MAVERICK'S SCIMITAR FIGHTER (WITH DOCKED POD)

He FIRES AFTERBURNERS, accelerating toward the new threat.

MAVERICK (RADIO VO)

The transports are secure on this side.
Take those Kilrathi out before they can
break through.

GRUNT (RADIO VO)

Understood. The fur will fly!

As Maverick's Scimitar becomes a vanishing point of light,
Zurahk's Strakha DRIFTS INTO SHOT. SHIFT TO COVER as it moves
toward the TIGER'S CLAW and the Transports.

WIDE ANGLE ON KILRATHI FIGHTERS

LASER FIRE from above streaks through their ranks. Two of them
are HIT and EXPLODE and then several Scimitars dive INTO SHOT
through the formation.

ANGLE ON ARCHER - SEEN THROUGH HER COCKPIT CANOPY

She FIRES her lasers.

ARCHER

(INARTICULATE CRY)

ARCHER'S POV - TRACKING ON A KILRATHI SARTHA FIGHTER

Archer's LASER FIRE blasts across its bow and the Sartha fighter
veers OUT OF SHOT, turning away.

FOLLOWING ZURAHK'S STRAKHA FIGHT

moving closer to the four transports. We can see LASER FLASHES
from the dogfight below the transports.

FOLLOWING ANGLE ON FOUR-SHIP PURSUIT

Two Scimitars (Maverick and Payback) and two Kilrathi SARTHAs are
chasing each other, weaving in and out, FIRING. Payback's
Scimitar takes a DAMAGING HIT on her stabilator.

PAYBACK (RADIO VO)

I'm hit!

ANGLE ON MAVERICK - IN THE COCKPIT OF HIS SCIMITAR FIGHTER

reacting with alarm.

MAVERICK

Eject, Payback! Get out of there!

PAYBACK (RADIO VO)

No, I can make it back. Get 'em for me, Maverick!

ANGLE ON PAYBACK'S SCIMITAR

As she wings over and streaks TOWARD CAMERA, trailing debris, Maverick's Scimitar (with docked pod) and the two Kilrathi Sarthas streak into a tight turn, trying to out-turn each other.

CLOSE ON MAVERICK - IN THE COCKPIT OF HIS SCIMITAR FIGHTER

As LASER FIRE ZIPS and BLASTS by around him, he THROTTLES BACK and his Scimitar drops.

ANGLE ON FIGHTERS

As Maverick's Scimitar (with docked pod) suddenly drops below the two Kilrathi Sarthas, who overshoot it. Maverick jinks left and BLASTS one of them -- and then BLASTS the other.

ON MAVERICK - IN THE COCKPIT OF HIS SCIMITAR FIGHTER

looking back over his shoulder at the TWIN FIREBALLS.

MAVERICK

Two down! Two down!

GRUNT (RADIO VO)

We got 'em on the run!

ANGLE ON ZURAHK'S STRAKHA - BETWEEN TWO OF THE TRANSPORTS

The Strakha fighter bucks upward as it FIRES a missile. SHIFT TO TRACK the Missile.

CLOSE - TRACKING MISSILE

As its nose cone opens, and three Warheads rocket away.

MEDIUM ON TRANSPORT (CLEVELAND BAY)

Two warheads streak in and BLAST it, it folds in on itself and BLOWS UP in a THUNDEROUS RIPPLING EXPLOSION.

ANGLE ON TRANSPORT (SUFFOLK)

As the third warhead HITS, it destroys an engine and the SUFFOLK sheers out of line. ALARMS overlay SECONDARY EXPLOSIONS.

INT. THE BRIDGE OF THE TIGER'S CLAW - ON TOLWYN

watching the EXPLOSIONS on the SUFFOLK on the big viewscreen.

SUFFOLK OPS OFFICER (RADIO VO)
 (through STATIC)
 Tiger's Claw, this is Suffolk. We are
 under attack and have been hit. Where
 are your fighters?

Tolwyn's face is a mask of cold fury.

EXT. SPACE - ANGLE ON ZURAHK'S STRAKHA FIGHTER

As it cruises through the CLEVELAND BAY's wreckage, it extends a
 grappling claw and pulls in a piece of debris.

ZURAHK (RADIO VO)
 Zurahk to all fighters -- withdraw to
 maximum sensor range. I am returning
 to the carrier to re-arm.

PAN WITH ZURAHK'S STRAKHA as he FIRES AFTERBURNERS and loops
 around, moving AWAY FROM THE CAMERA, becoming a mere speck before
 disappearing into the darkness of space.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SPACE - WIDE ANGLE ON TIGER'S CLAW - LATER

Scimitars return to the TIGER CLAW's landing bays as the Tiger's
 Claw takes the damaged SUFFOLK under tow with TRACTOR BEAMS. A
 docking "tunnel" EXTRUDES from the Tiger's Claw to the Suffolk.

INT. TIGER'S CLAW BRIDGE - ANGLE ON TOLWYN

Watching on the bridge viewscreen as the docking "tunnel" makes
 contact with the Suffolk's hull. A COM-TECH ENTERS SHOT.

COM-TECH
 The Suffolk has been secured, sir.
 Fires are out, and casualties have been
 transferred to our sick bay.

TOLWYN
 Get repair parties aboard. I want the
 Suffolk under her own power in two
 hours.

The Com-Tech throws a salute, turns, and strides OUT OF SHOT.

ON BRIDGE ELEVATOR DOORS

The ELEVATOR DOORS SLIDE OPEN, revealing Maverick, who steps out
 of the elevator as the Com-Tech ENTERS SHOT and enters the
 elevator. The ELEVATOR DOORS SLIDE CLOSED.

ON TOLWYN

with his BACK TO CAMERA, watching the damaged Suffolk on the view screen. Maverick steps PAST THE CAMERA INTO SHOT and salutes.

MAVERICK
Cadet Blair reporting, sir.

Tolwyn turns to him and fixes him with a cold, furious stare.

TOLWYN
(icily)
In my quarters, cadet. Now.

WIPE TO:

INT. TIGER'S CLAW, TOLWYN'S QUARTERS - SLIGHT DOWNSHOT WIDE

Maverick stands across a desk from Tolwyn, who is giving him a thorough chewing-out. Through a large viewing port in the bulkhead, we can see space suited WORK PARTIES at work on the Suffolk's hull, WELDING LASERS FLARING.

TOLWYN
I don't want to hear your excuses! You neglected your mission to go off after the Kilrathi fighters!

ANGLE ON MAVERICK

trying to control his anger at being falsely accused.

MAVERICK
Our screens were clear, sir. They showed no fighters near the fleet when the transports were hit.

WIDEN as Tolwyn leans across the desk, getting in his face.

TOLWYN
Tell that to the families of the people who were on those transports. You're grounded until further notice, mister! Dismissed!

SLIGHT DOWNSHOT WIDE

as Maverick steps back from the desk, throwing a salute at the glaring Tolwyn.

MAVERICK
(barely controlling
his anger)
Yes, sir.

He turns and walks OUT.

INT. TIGER'S CLAW: INSIDE AN ELEVATOR - ON DOORS - OVER THE SHOULDERS OF FALCON AND TRIPOD

FALCON and TRIPOD are two former Trafalgar pilots. The DOORS SLIDE OPEN, and a bitterly dejected Maverick steps in. Maverick turns his BACK TO THE CAMERA as Falcon looks over at Tripod.

FALCON

At least aboard the old Trafalgar we didn't have to fight alongside pilots who're still learning to fly.

ON MAVERICK, FALCON, AND TRIPOD

Maverick stands slightly in front of Falcon and Tripod. Falcon looks at him sneeringly.

FALCON (CONT)

(sarcastic)

I guess standards at the Academy aren't as high as they used to be.

Maverick tenses, doing a slow, furious burn.

INT. TIGER'S CLAW: HANGAR DECK - ELEVATOR BANK

The elevator doors open, Maverick steps off, and walks to a F.G. railing. After a moment, he leans on it.

DOWNANGLE ON MAVERICK

He's watching REPAIR CREWS working on the fighters damaged in the battle. WELDING sparks, CLANGING MACHINERY, busy activity.

MANIAC (OS)

This railing's taken.

Maverick turns toward Maniac OS.

SLIGHT UPANGLE ON MAVERICK AND MANIAC

Maniac is also leaning on the rail. PUSH IN AND FOLLOW Maverick as he goes over to Maniac.

MAVERICK

Are you sure you did a sensor scan before you hit that Kilrathi transport?

MANIAC

I know my job.

ON MANIAC - OVER MAVERICK'S SHOULDER

Maniac isn't looking at Maverick.

MAVERICK

Easy, checked his screens, too? It couldn't have been a malfunction?

A bitter Maniac turns now to look at Maverick.

MANIAC

You want to believe me now, don't you? Now that you're trying to get yourself off the hook for letting the cats whack those transports.

SLIGHT UPANGLE ON MAVERICK AND MANIAC

Maniac perks up, showing some interest as Maverick tells him:

MAVERICK

I think the Kilrathi may have something that can't be picked up by our sensors.

MANIAC

(showing interest)

Did you tell that to Tolwyn?

Maverick leans on the rail, again looking down at the fighters.

MAVERICK

He wouldn't listen. He says the Kilrathi don't have the technology to beat our sensors.

WIPE TO:

EXT. SPACE - ANGLE ON TIGER'S CLAW AND DAMAGED TRANSPORT SUFFOLK - FAVORING THE SUFFOLK

The two ships are connected by the docking "tunnel." PUSH IN on the Suffolk as we hear:

MAYA (VO)

The Old Man's right, you know.

INT. DAMAGED TRANSPORT SUFFOLK - LOWANGLE ON MAYA

MAYA, in coveralls and a welder's mask, finishes slicing through a twisted girder with a LASER CUTTING TORCH. She SHUTS OFF THE TORCH and we WIDEN AND ADJUST ANGLE as she pushes up her mask and turns to Maniac and Maverick, who are stand behind her.

MAYA (CONT)

The Confederation's been trying to develop a stealth ship for years. If the cats could do it, we'd all be toast.

WIDE ANGLE

Maverick steps up to Maya. In the BG, in the twisted rubble, REPAIR CREWS use LASER TORCHES to cut through debris.

MAVERICK

What if this one is a prototype? The first one, being combat tested?

Maya looks away, worried.

MAYA

We'd have no defense. We'd lose the war.

CLOSER ANGLE ON MAYA, MANIAC, AND MAVERICK

Maya makes up her mind and turns back to Maverick and Maniac.

MAYA (CONT)

(makes up her mind)

Somebody better take it out before the furballs find out it works.

Maniac steps up beside Maverick and speaks to Maya.

MANIAC

We got a plan, but we can't tell Tolwyn about it. He's grounded both of us.

ANOTHER ANGLE - FAVORING MAYA AND MAVERICK

Maya glances at the repair crews to make sure no one can overhear them.

MAYA

Why are you telling me this?

MAVERICK

We need your help. We want to use this transport as bait.

MAYA

(making up her mind)

If you're wrong, we'll be in the brig til we're old and gray, but a Kilrathi stealth fighter -- it's a big fish you're after.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. KILRATHI CARRIER: ZURAHK'S QUARTERS - ON METAL FRAGMENT

The twisted metal from Easy's fighter. It's attached to a plaque with the date and type of ship inscribed on it (in Kilrathi of

course). Zurahk moves INTO SHOT and hangs another plaque on the wall beside it, metal from the destroyed transport CLEVELAND BAY.

WIDE ANGLE ON ZURAHK

As he steps back to admire his collection. The wall is covered with similar trophies of his kills.

ZURAHK
(LOW GROWLING SIGH, then:) Beautiful.

Then he picks up his flight helmet from a nearby table, turns and walks AWAY FROM THE CAMERA, exiting his quarters, the door to his quarters SLIDING OPEN for him and then SLIDING CLOSED behind him.

INT. KILRATHI CARRIER - DOWNANGLE ON HANGAR DECK

Kirnok, holding a flight helmet, is waiting beside the Strakha fighter. Zurahk ENTERS SHOT, walking up to Kirnok.

KIRNOK
This is the final test. If you are successful, it is only a matter of time until the Terrans are obliterated from the galaxy.

ZURAHK
I will bring you a trophy of the Terrans' destruction.

OVERSHOULDER OF ZURAHK - ON KIRNOK

Kirnok pulls his helmet on.

KIRNOK
I personally will lead your fighter escort. At such a proud moment, a member of the emperor's own Kiranka clan should be present.

Kirnok starts to turn away and then pauses, looking back meaningfully over his shoulder at Zurahk.

KIRNOK (CONT)
(meaningfully)
If anything should go wrong, the Strakha must not be allowed to fall into the hands of the enemy.

REVERSE ANGLE - ON ZURAHK

Snarling, he draws his dagger part way out of its scabbard. LIGHT GLINTS off the bright blade.

ZURAHK

You dishonor me by reminding me of my duty!

REVERSE ANGLE - ON KIRNOK

As he talks, the GLEAM FROM ZURAHK'S BLADE plays over his face.

KIRNOK

(backing down)

I will say no more.

WIDE ANGLE - FAVORING ZURAHK

He resheaths the dagger with a SNAP, turns, and strides to the Strakha. Kirnok watches as he climbs into the cockpit.

EXT. SPACE NEAR THE KILRATHI CARRIER

Zurahk's Strakha rockets out of a launch bay, followed by Kirnok leading a six fighter escort. As they APPROACH THE CAMERA:

GUTHRIG (VO)

Each of us face an invisible enemy, one that's always capable of destroying us.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. TIGER'S CLAW: TOLWYN'S OFFICE - ANGLE ON GUTHRIG AND TOLWYN

Tolwyn is looking out his viewing port at the Suffolk under repair, his back to Guthrig.

GUTHRIG (CONT)

That enemy is ourselves.

TOLWYN

(doesn't look at him)

The cadets all hate you, you know. I'm beginning to understand why.

TIGHTER ANGLE - FAVORING TOLWYN

as Guthrig steps up to the window beside him, looking at him. Tolwyn still won't look at Guthrig.

GUTHRIG

Our most dangerous enemy is pride. People willingly destroy themselves and others to protect that pride. It's pride more than anything else that makes a person become a soldier.

CLOSE ANGLE ON TOLWYN

Unconsciously, he fingers the insignia on his collar.

GUTHRIG (OS CONT)

Becoming a soldier is, after all, a way of destroying yourself, of losing your identity in something larger.

TOLWYN

Get to the point, Doctor.

ON TOLWYN - OVER GUTHRIG'S SHOULDER

Irritated, Tolwyn finally turns toward Guthrig.

TOLWYN (CONT)

Are you saying I was wrong to ground Maverick and Maniac because it hurt their pride?

ON GUTHRIG - OVER TOLWYN'S SHOULDER

Guthrig seems genuinely surprised by Tolwyn's vehemence.

GUTHRIG

Actually, I was trying to understand why you did it. I suspect that by punishing them, you're punishing yourself -- for your own failure against the Kilrathi.

In the EXTREME FG, Tolwyn turns back to look out the view port.

TOLWYN

Don't psychoanalyze me, Doctor. I'm not on your couch.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. TIGER'S CLAW: HANGAR DECK - ON FERRET FIGHTERS

Two Ferret Fighters are prepped and ready on the hangar deck. In the BG is the open door of a storage bay, where Maverick and Maniac stand watching.

CLOSER ON MAVERICK AND MANIAC

He looks over with a mischevious grin at Maverick.

MANIAC

I can't believe this was your idea. I always thought you were Tolwyn's pet. That's what everybody says.

MAVERICK

Everybody says you're an arrogant jerk.

MANIAC

Well, sometimes they're right.

Maverick looks at him for a moment, then checks his watch.

MAVERICK

It's time.

Glancing around furtively, they walk TOWARD THE CAMERA.

INT. DAMAGED TRANSPORT SUFFOLK - ON MAYA

Maya glances at the Repair Crews in the BG, making sure that no one is looking, then steps to a control console. She punches in a few numbers. An ALARM SOUNDS. RED LIGHTS FLASH.

ANOTHER ANGLE FAVORING MAYA

as she turns and calls out to the repair crews, who are looking up in alarm as the ALARM SOUND CONTINUES.

MAYA

We've got an overload in the main fuel cell! Everybody out of the ship! Now!

The repair crews drop their equipment and scramble for the entrance to the docking "tunnel".

REPAIR CREWS

(PANIC WALLA)

INT. TIGER'S CLAW: DOCKING "TUNNEL" - ON "TUNNEL" DOORWAY

The repair crews rush out of the tunnel and OUT OF SHOT.

REPAIR CREWS (CONT)

(PANIC WALLA)

PUSH IN ON Doorway as Maya comes out of the "tunnel" and pauses, looking around furtively.

ANGLE ON MAYA

as she steps up to a touchpad beside the "tunnel" door and palms it. A HEAVY AIRLOCK DOOR SLIDES CLOSED. A worried Maya looks at the closed door.

INT. TIGER'S CLAW: BRIDGE - ANGLE ON TOLWYN AND COM-TECH

ALARMS ARE SOUNDING as the COM-TECH anxiously checks his console. Tolwyn watches over his shoulder.

COM-TECH

Everyone is off the Suffolk, sir!

TOLWYN

Cut her loose!

EXT. SPACE - ANGLE ON SUFFOLK AND TIGER'S CLAW

We hear ALARMS, GRINDING NOISES, EXPLOSIVE BOLTS and the SUFFOLK begins to separate from the Tiger's Claw and drift free.

INT. TIGER'S CLAW: BRIDGE - WIDE ANGLE - FAVORING TOLWYN

He turns and calls to the ship's HELMSMAN at his console.

TOLWYN

Helmsman, come about! Put some distance between us and the Suffolk!

HELMSMAN

Aye, sir!

ANGLE ON TOLWYN

He turns anxiously to the ship's viewscreen on which we see the the SUFFOLK receding.

INT. TIGER'S CLAW: HANGAR DECK - ANGLE ON TWO FERRET FIGHTERS

parked side-by-side. Maniac and Maverick climb into the Ferret cockpits and don their helmets. Maniac looks at Maverick.

MANIAC

You know if this doesn't work, we'll both get busted out of the Academy.

ANGLE ON MAVERICK

As the COCKPIT CANOPY CLOSES.

MAVERICK

If it doesn't work, we won't be coming back.

ANGLE ON THE TWO FERRET FIGHTERS

PAN with them as their ENGINES FIRE and the Ferret fighters ROAR out through the Tiger's Claw hangar doors, causing the protective FORCE FIELD TO SHIMMER and off into the blackness of space.

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE - FOLLOW THE TWO FERRET FIGHTERS

As they loop up and away from the TIGER'S CLAW and the other two transports and approach the drifting SUFFOLK.

INT. TIGER'S CLAW: BRIDGE - ANGLE ON TOLWYN AND COM-TECH

Tolwyn watches the Suffolk on the viewscreen when the Com-Tech looks up from his console in surprise.

COM-TECH

Sir, two fighters have launched from the Hangar Deck.

TOLWYN

What flight is that?

COM-TECH

I don't know, sir. They aren't responding.

FALCON (OS)

Commodore.

Tolwyn turns to see:

ANGLE - FAVORING FALCON AND CLIPPER - TOLWYN IN F.G.

The two Trafalgar pilots have been listening.

FALCON

You want us to go after them?

ANGLE ON TOLWYN

He turns back to the viewscreen where we see the tiny specks of the two Ferret fighters approaching the now distant Suffolk.

TOLWYN

No. Let's see what they're up to.

EXT. SPACE - LONG SHOT ON THE DAMAGED TRANSPORT SUFFOLK

In the Distance, the TIGER'S CLAW and the two undamaged Transports are moving away as the two Ferrets ENTER THE SHOT and spiral down toward the SUFFOLK.

ANGLE ON MAVERICK - IN THE COCKPIT OF HIS FERRET FIGHTER

As the SUFFOLK slides by below him, Maverick fingers a remote control device.

MAVERICK

This had better work, or it's gonna be a short trip.

He presses a button on the remote control device.

CLOSE ON THE SUFFOLK'S HULL

As a LARGE CARGO DOOR OPENS in the ship's side.

MAVERICK (RADIO VO) (CONT)

Maya, you're a genius!

INT. TRANSPORT SUFFOLK: CARGO BAY - ON SPACE - THROUGH THE OPEN CARGO BAY DOORWAY

As Maniac and Maverick carefully fly into the cramped bay and FIRE RETROS, turning their Ferrets to point back out toward space and then land on the cargo bay deck.

ON MAVERICK - IN THE COCKPIT OF HIS FERRET FIGHTER

He presses the remote. RUMBLING, the cargo door begins to close.

MAVERICK (CONT)

Now all we have to do is wait.

ON MANIAC AND MAVERICK IN THE COCKPITS OF THE FERRETS

As the door closes, plunging them into darkness.

MANIAC (RADIO)

And hope the cat's still on the prowl.

EXT. SPACE - WIDE

Blackness of space dotted with distant stars -- then Zurahk's Strakha roars PAST THE CAMERA INTO SHOT.

ANGLE ON ZURAHK - IN THE COCKPIT OF HIS STRAKHA FIGHTER

He's watching his sensor screen, on which THREE MOVING BLIPS draw away from a lone STATIONARY BLIP. Zurahk activates his comlink.

ZURAHK

(into comlink)

One of the Terran transports has fallen behind. Hold your position while I destroy the straggler.

EXT. SPACE FARTHER AWAY - ANGLE ON KIRNOK'S GRIKATH FIGHTER

In the BG, we can see three Sartha and two more Grikath fighters.

KIRNOK (RADIO VO)
 Destroy the Tiger's Claw first -- then
 the transports will be at our mercy.

ZURAHK (RADIO VO)
 You may be of the Kiranka clan, but the
 Emperor and Prince Thrakhath selected
me for this test.

EXT. SPACE - PANNING ON ZURAHK'S STRAKHA FIGHTER

As it ROCKETS ahead, toward the distant transport SUFFOLK.

ZURAHK (RADIO VO) (CONT)
 I will choose my own targets -- or they
 will want to know why.

INT. DAMAGED TRANSPORT SUFFOLK: CARGO BAY - ON TWO FERRETS

We can just make out the two Ferret Fighters sitting in the dark.

MANIAC (RADIO VO)
 Aw, man, I hate waiting like this. I
 feel like a fly on a bull's-eye.

MAVERICK (RADIO VO)
 At least this time he can't see us.

EXT. SPACE - ON A DISTANT SPECK

which rapidly becomes Zurahk's Strakha roaring TOWARD THE CAMERA.
 It FIRES A MISSILE PAST THE CAMERA OUT OF SHOT.

INT. DAMAGED TRANSPORT SUFFOLK: CARGO BAY - ON TWO FERRETS

Still sitting in the darkness.

MAVERICK (RADIO VO)
 As I recall, you said you'd never fly
 again as my wing man.

ON MANIAC - SITTING IN THE COCKPIT OF HIS FERRET FIGHTER

His face illuminated by the glow of his sensor screen.

MANIAC
 Hey, I'm not. You're my wing man.

MAVERICK (RADIO VO)
 Let's get something straight here--

Suddenly, the SUFFOLK is ROCKED by a THUNDEROUS EXPLOSION OS.

ON THE TWO FERRET FIGHTERS

debris CLANGS down from the ceiling around the fighters.

MANIAC (RADIO VO)
I think the pussycat took the bait!

EXT. SPACE - ON THE DAMAGED TRANSPORT SUFFOLK

ROCKED by EXPLOSIONS. Small pieces spin off into space, one heading TOWARD THE CAMERA. Zurahk's Strakha FIRES RETROS, descending INTO SHOT IN THE FG, grapples the piece of twisted metal, and pulls it aboard as a trophy.

ANGLE ON ZURAHK - IN THE COCKPIT OF HIS STRAKHA FIGHTER
lit by the GLARE OF SECONDARY EXPLOSIONS on the Suffolk.

ZURAHK
(SATISFIED GROWL) A good end for any
ship.

ON THE SUFFOLK

As EXPLOSIONS tear the Suffolk apart, suddenly the cargo bay doors open and the two Ferrets fly out TOWARD THE CAMERA a split second before a HUGE EXPLOSION rips the Suffolk apart.

ON MAVERICK - IN THE COCKPIT OF HIS FERRET FIGHTER
looking up excitedly through the cockpit canopy.

MAVERICK
There he is! Visual contact!

ANGLE - PANNING ON ZURAHK'S STRAKHA FIGHTER

As it wings over and runs for it. It's fast, but Maniac's Ferret roars PAST THE CAMERA INTO SHOT in pursuit.

LEADING ANGLE - TRACKING MANIAC'S FERRET

As he OPENS FIRE with his lasers.

MANIAC (RADIO VO)
(tauntingly)
I see you, furball!

MANIAC'S POV - PANNING AND TILTING UP WITH ZURAHK'S STRAKHA

Maniac's LASER FIRE rips THROUGH THE SHOT barely missing the Strakha as it loops back over Maniac and is gone.

ANGLE ON MANIAC - IN THE COCKPIT OF HIS FERRET FIGHTER

He looks around desperately, trying to spot the Kilrathi.

MANIAC
 (into comlink)
 I lost him! I lost him!

WIDE ANGLE - TRACKING ZURAHK'S STRAKHA FIGHTER

flying AWAY FROM THE CAMERA AS IT GAINS ON TRACK, but Maverick's Ferret ENTERS SHOT, vectoring in on a converging course.

MAVERICK (RADIO VO)
 Got him visual again! He's mine!

Maverick FIRES, raking the Strakha with LASER FIRE.

ANGLE ON ZURAHK - IN THE COCKPIT OF HIS STRAKHA FIGHTER

He jinks from side to side, but many of Maverick's shots EXPLODE OFF HIS SHIELDS. ALARMS ARE SOUNDING in the cockpit as Zurahk's shields begin to fail.

ZURAHK
 (CRIES OF IMPACT) This is Zurahk -- I
 am under attack! Shields failing!

EXT. SPACE FARTHER AWAY - PANNING WITH KILRATHI FIGHTER SQUADRON

The three Sartha and three Grikath fighters FIRE THEIR AFTERBURNERS and rocket toward the distant battle, PINPOINT FLASHES OF LASER FIRE IN THE DISTANCE.

KIRNOK (RADIO VO)
 All fighters -- attack!

INT. TIGER'S CLAW: BRIDGE - ANGLE ON SENSOR TECH

The SENSOR-TECH looks up from his console.

SENSOR-TECH
 Sir, the Suffolk -- it's blown up and
 I'm showing two Ferrets firing at --
 (now totally puzzled)
 -- at nothing.

Tolwyn steps up INTO SHOT behind him.

TOLWYN
 No, there's something out there -- if
 my pride had let me see it.

ANOTHER ANGLE ON TOLWYN

as he turns to a console and hits a button, activating a comlink.

TOLWYN (CONT)
Launch fighters!

EXT. SPACE NEAR TIGER'S CLAW - WIDE ANGLE

Scimitars stream out of the hangar doors and race OUT OF SHOT.

EXT. SPACE - ON ZURAHK'S STRAKHA FIGHTER

Moving AWAY FROM THE CAMERA as LASER FIRE rips PAST THE CAMERA INTO SHOT, barely missing the Strakha.

LEADING ON TWO FERRET FIGHTERS - CAMERA MOVES WITH THEM

As they chase the Strakha, FIRING THEIR LASERS.

MAVERICK (RADIO VO)
Don't let him lose us!

MANIAC (RADIO VO)
I'm on him. This furball's goin' nowhere!

ANGLE ON ZURAHK - IN THE COCKPIT OF HIS STRAKHA
as his Strakha is HIT by more LASER FIRE.

ZURAHK
(CRY OF IMPACT) Kirnok, you clawless worm! Where are you?

CLOSE ANGLE - TRACKING ZURAHK'S STRAKHA FIGHTER

As a LASER SHOT hits the port stabilator, BLOWING IT OFF. The AFTERBURNERS BLOW OUT, and we END TRACK AND BEGIN PAN as the Strakha goes spinning end over end.

ON ZURAHK - INSIDE HIS STRAKHA'S COCKPIT

The FRAME ROTATES as Zurahk struggles to regain control of his tumbling damaged Strakha.

ZURAHK (CONT)
(ROAR OF FRUSTRATED ANGER AND EXERTION)

SLOW FRAME ROTATION AND STOP as Zurahk regains control. He looks for the two Ferrets as his damaged Strakha drifts, powerless.

LONG ANGLE ON STRAKHA FIGHTER

As it drifts, Maverick's and Maniac's fighters fly PAST THE CAMERA INTO SHOT and cross in the FG and begin circling the Kilrathi in different directions.

ANGLE ON MAVERICK - IN THE COCKPIT OF HIS FERRET FIGHTER

activating his comlink. Through the canopy, we can see the damaged Strakha as Maverick circles it.

MAVERICK
You've had it, Kilrathi! Surrender
your ship.

ANGLE ON MANIAC - IN THE COCKPIT OF HIS FERRET FIGHTER
circling the Strakha on the other side.

MANIAC
If we're lucky, he's in no shape to
answer.

UPANGLE ON ZURAHK - IN THE COCKPIT OF THE STRAKHA FIGHTER

He is battered and disheveled. RED EMERGENCY LIGHTS FLASH on his panel and a SMALL ELECTRICAL FIRE IS CRACKLING. Zurahk reaches up, and removes the cover from an ominous-looking red button.

ZURAHK
You will have no trophy from my defeat.

And he pushes the red button.

LONG ON ZURAHK'S STRAKHA

As it goes up in a NUCLEAR FIREBALL, BLOTTING OUT EVERYTHING.

ANGLE ON TWO FERRET FIGHTERS

As they cross past each other in different directions, having completed a circuit of the Strakha, the FIREBALL OVERWHELMS them, sending them tumbling.

MAVERICK/ MANIAC (VO)
(STARTLED CRIES OF IMPACT)

ANGLE ON MANIAC - IN THE COCKPIT OF HIS FERRET FIGHTER

FRAME ROTATES, THEN SLOWS AND STOPS as he regains control of his fighter. His instruments are dark.

MANIAC
Whooie. They have a mean way of not
surrendering.

PANEL LIGHTS BEGIN TO COME ON. STATIC HISSES OUT of his speakers, resolving to a SOFT HUMM.

MANIAC (CONT)
 (activating comlink)
 Hey, Maverick -- you still in one
 piece?

ON MAVERICK - IN THE COCKPIT OF HIS FERRET FIGHTER

UPSIDE-DOWN IN THE FRAME as his PANEL LIGHTS COME ON. He takes
 the controls and we ROTATE UNTIL HE IS RIGHTSIDE-UP.

MAVERICK
 Yeah. Just rearranged a little.

PROXIMITY ALARMS BLARE and Maverick reacts with alarm.

MAVERICK (CONT)
 More Kilrathi! I'm targetted!

ANGLE - TRACKING THREE SARTHA FIGHTERS AND THREE GRIKATH FIGHTERS
 diving to the attack. Kirnok's lead Grikath FIRES two missiles.

LONG ON TWO FERRET FIGHTERS

Maniac's and Maverick's Ferrets launch FLARING DECOYS and FIRE
 AFTERBURNERS, roaring OUT OF SHOT just as the two missiles streak
 PAST THE CAMERA INTO SHOT and strike the decoys, EXPLODING.

ANGLE - PANNING WITH MAVERICK'S FERRET

as it loops back TOWARD THE CAMERA and FIRES.

ANGLE - TRACKING A SARTHA FIGHTER

It's HIT by Maverick's fire and EXPLODES. WIDEN as Kirnok's
 Grikath ENTERS SHOT and FIRES.

ANGLE ON MAVERICK - IN THE COCKPIT OF HIS FERRET FIGHTER

He throws up his hands, shielding his face from the EXPLOSIVE
 GLARE of a hit on his shields.

MAVERICK
 I'm hit!!!

ANGLE - TRACKING MAVERICK'S FERRET

tumbling out of control. A Kilrathi Sartha descends INTO SHOT and
 gets on his tail. The Sartha FIRES LASERS, but Maniac's Ferret
 roars THROUGH THE SHOT and BLASTS the Sartha, which EXPLODES.

ANGLE ON MAVERICK - IN THE COCKPIT OF HIS FERRET FIGHTER

straining to regain control of his fighter as CIRCUITS SHORT-OUT
 in his control console.

MAVERICK
 (straining)
 Get back to the Claw, Maniac!

ANGLE - PANNING WITH MANIAC'S FERRET

as it turns back and comes roaring TOWARD THE CAMERA.

MANIAC (RADIO VO)
 Hey, I'm the leader, remember? And I
 don't leave my wing man!

As Maniac's Ferret flies PAST THE CAMERA OUT OF SHOT, two Sartha fighters descend INTO SHOT and roar TOWARD THE CAMERA, FIRING.

TRACK MANIAC'S FERRET

as he zig-zags, dodging LASER BLASTS which rip THROUGH THE SHOT from behind, barely missing him. WIDEN TO INCLUDE THE TWO SARTHA FIGHTERS on Maniac's tail, FIRING LASERS at him. Maniac's Ferret takes a HIT on its shields.

MANIAC (VO CONT)
 (CRY OF IMPACT)

A missile streaks INTO SHOT from above and HITS a Sartha, which EXPLODES. Almost instantly, a second missile streaks INTO SHOT from above and HITS the other Sartha, which EXPLODES.

UPANGLE - LONG ON SCIMITARS FROM THE TIGER'S CLAW

diving to the attack. They OPEN FIRE with lasers.

ANGLE ON MANIAC - IN THE COCKPIT OF HIS FERRET

looking up through the canopy at the attacking Scimitars from the Tiger's Claw with excitement.

MANIAC (CONT)
 Whoo-hoo! Go get 'em! Tear 'em up!

LONG SHOT ON MAVERICK'S DAMAGED FERRET

as a Kilrathi Grikath flies PAST THE CAMERA INTO SHOT, heading toward Maverick's crippled Ferret.

ANGLE - LOOKING PAST MAVERICK INSIDE HIS FERRET'S COCKPIT - ON THE GRIKATH FIGHTER SEEN THROUGH HIS CANOPY

heading straight for him. Alarmed, Maverick pounds desperately on his control console.

MAVERICK
 Come on! Target -- one more time!

But then he throws up his arms in a futile defensive gesture as the Grikath FIRES LASERS ONCE, barely missing him --

MAVERICK (CONT)
(FRIGHTENED CRY)

-- and then the Grikath is HIT by a missile streaking in from the side and EXPLODES.

WIDE ON MAVERICK'S DAMAGED FERRET

as Grunt's Scimitar flies INTO SHOT, circling it.

GRUNT (RADIO VO)
You owe me one, Maverick! A really big one!

MAVERICK (RADIO VO)
(LAUGHS, then:) I'll remember that.

ON KIRNOK - INSIDE HIS GRIKATH'S COCKPIT

He's shocked and angered by the turn of events.

KIRNOK
Zurahk, his fighter, all of them -- gone.

PAN WITH KIRNOK'S GRIKATH

as he turns and flees AWAY FROM THE CAMERA. Payback's Scimitar rockets PAST THE CAMERA INTO SHOT, chasing the Grikath.

ANGLE ON PAYBACK - IN THE COCKPIT OF HER SCIMITAR FIGHTER

Her HEAD'S-UP DISPLAY shows a target lock and BEEPS.

PAYBACK
No survivors, furball!

She FIRES a Missile.

PANNING WITH PAYBACK'S MISSILE

It streaks AWAY FROM THE CAMERA toward Kirnok's Grikath.

ANGLE ON KIRNOK - IN THE COCKPIT OF HIS FIGHTER

Rattled, he looks from side to side, as COCKPIT ALARMS BLARE.

KIRNOK (MEMORY VO)
"At such a proud moment, a member of the Emperor's own Kiranka clan should be present."

But then he leans back in his cockpit seat and closes his eyes, bitterly resigned to his fate.

KIRNOK (CONT)

A proud moment.

The Missile hits his fighter. The SCENE BECOMES A FIREBALL which:

DISSOLVES TO:

INT. TIGER'S CLAW: TOLWYN'S QUARTERS - WIDE ANGLE

Tolwyn stands near Maverick and Maniac, who are at attention in front of him.

TOLWYN

I was wrong when I refused to believe the Kilrathi had a stealth fighter. But the fact that I was wrong is not a license to disobey orders.

ON MAVERICK

who looks very worried.

MAVERICK

What are you going to...uh?

ANGLE - FAVORING TOLWYN

TOLWYN

Do with you? If you had captured the stealth fighter intact, I suppose I would have to give you a medal. But since you didn't...

ON MAVERICK AND MANIAC

They register relief as they hear:

TOLWYN (CONT) (OS)

Perhaps it's best we forget the whole thing.

WIDE ANGLE

Tolwyn turns away from them.

TOLWYN (CONT)

I'm afraid none of us has done anything here to be proud of.

INT. TIGER'S CLAW: CORRIDOR - ON ARCHER

As the door to Tolwyn's quarters SLIDES OPEN, Maniac and Maverick emerge. Archer steps up to Maniac.

ARCHER

I don't always approve of the way you fly, Maniac, but I should've known you'd never sacrifice your wing man.

ON ARCHER - OVER MANIAC'S AND MAVERICK'S SHOULDERS

Archer speaks to Maniac.

ARCHER (CONT)

You're a good pilot.

She turns and walks AWAY FROM THE CAMERA down the corridor. Maverick glances over at Maniac.

MAVERICK

When did she join your fan club?

MANIAC

She wanted to say I'm the best, but she didn't want to hurt your feelings.

MAVERICK

In your dreams.

PULL BACK as Maverick and Maniac turn and start down the corridor TOWARD THE CAMERA.

MAVERICK (CONT)

You know, we make a pretty good team. We should work together more often.

WIDE ANGLE ON "T"-INTERSECTION IN THE CORRIDOR

Maniac turns and starts down one arm of the "T", moving AWAY FROM THE CAMERA, glancing back over his shoulder at Maverick.

MANIAC

Sure. Just let me know any time you want me to save your tail.

He walks away. Maverick turns TOWARD THE CAMERA --

MAVERICK

Or maybe I'll save yours.

-- and Maverick walks away down the opposite arm of the "T".

FADE OUT:

THE END