

# WING COMMANDER

by  
KEVIN DRONEY

Rewrite by Chris Roberts & Larry Wilson

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1	FADE IN:	1	
2	OMIT.	2	*
3	EXT. INTERSTELLAR SPACE	3	*
	We see a beautiful swirling quasar. Red spills over the blackness of space. This is the Charybdis Quasar -- the offspring of several collapsed stars and the gateway to Earth.		*
			*
	A HUGE ASTEROID slowly cruises into frame. As we drift closer we can see that this "rock" is covered with a lattice work of towers, gun emplacements, antennae and docks -- huge battle ships sit idle in their berths. Two monstrously large ion engines are imbedded in the "rear" of this mobile naval base.		*
			*
	SUPERIMPOSE: VEGA SECTOR FLEET HEADQUARTERS - TERRAN CONFEDERATION: ASTEROID WORLD "PEGASUS." MARCH 15TH. EARTH YEAR 2654. 0900 HOURS, ZULU TIME. LOCATION: ULYSSES CORRIDOR. 700 LIGHT YEARS FROM EARTH.		*
			*
3A	INT. PEGASUS COMMAND AND CONTROL/NAVCOM CONTROL ROOM	3A	*
	Hewn out of solid rock, this is the nerve center of the Pegasus station. a FEW BORED TECHS sit at their stations. This is the end of the graveyard shift. A RADAR tech is drinking coffee.		*
			*
	CLOSE ON his screen: NOTHING.		*
	Puts down his coffee, leans back.		*
			*
	RADAR TECH		*
	Hey Tom, you cover for me? I've got to take a leak.		*
			*
	Another tech nods. The Radar Tech leaves.		*
	CLOSE ON his screen: a mass of RED BLIPS suddenly appears.		*
			*
	CLOSE ON the coffee mug: The coffee starts to VIBRATE.		*
3B	EXT. ASTEROID WORLDLET	3B	*
	From above, we see what must be the shadows of a hundred bombers pass over the surface of this rock. Then we hear the scream of engines. STRANGE, ALIEN FIGHTER CRAFT -- their shapes almost suggesting a TALON or a CLAW -- dive INTO THE FRAME. Begin their attack run.		*
			*
3C	INT. PEGASUS COMMAND AND CONTROL/NAVCOM CONTROL ROOM	3C	*
	The Coffee cup is shaken by explosions. Alarms ring out.		*
4	OMIT.	4	*
5	OMIT.	5	*
6	OMIT.	6	*



# Blue Amendments - Revised 13/2/98

2.

7 OMIT.

7 \*

8 OMIT.

8 \*

9 EXT. ASTEROID WORLDLET

9

Explosions pepper the surface of the asteroid world.

\*

Confederation battle ships are caught helplessly in their berths as missiles and laser fire rain down on them.

\*

\*

Cold space erupts with streams of tachyon fire as the desperate CONFED ships and asteroid based gun batteries return fire.

It's a futile effort. For every attacking ship that is destroyed, another takes it's place. What few Confed fighters the worldlet can launch are instantly destroyed. The destruction is awesome, all-encompassing. This is what Pearl Harbor must have been like seven hundred years ago.

An alien bomber pulls up from it's attack run, banks hard, tears past us under full power.

\*

9A INT. PEGASUS COMMAND AND CONTROL/NAVCOM CONTROL ROOM

9A

Alive now, people run to their stations.

\*

9A CONTINUED:

9A

Radar, communications, weapons, and security officers bark out orders to subordinates, relay orders and issue on the spot situation reports.

Over the communications links, we hear fighters engaging the enemy, disappearing in screams and static; capital ship commanders desperately ordering their mooring cut, calling for full power and more aerial support. Mayday calls, prayers, expletives fill the airways.

RADAR TECH

I count one nine zero bogies inbound.  
Vector three seven four, attack formation.

SECURITY OFFICER

Shields are not responding.

Station shudders as a CONFED capital ship explodes, tears apart. Great pieces of fiery metal spin through space, smash into the station, hurtle into space.

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

The Iowa's gone. And the Kobi.

ADMIRAL BILL WILSON, grey haired, mid fifties, thick around the middle, enters the room, a CONFED Marine trailing.

WILSON

Status?

RADAR TECH

Forty Kilrathi capital ships coming to bear, Admiral. They are powering weapons.

WILSON

How did they get past our patrols?

Alarms sound. SECURITY OFFICER reacts.

SECURITY OFFICER

We have a station breach. Levels seven, eleven, and thirteen. Kilrathi Marines.

WILSON looks at a bank of black and white security monitors.

9B SECURITY MONITORS -

9B

We catch glimpses of massive, armored forms moving through shadow enshrouded corridors. Their faces obscured by rebreathers and great flowing plumes, they cut through CONFED security teams, move efficiently and inexorably forward.

A figure steps into view.

*Green Amendments - Revised 3/4/9.*

4.

9B CONTINUED:

9B

SECURITY OFFICER

They're headed for Command and Control.

WILSON reacts, turns towards a massive computer system sitting behind a glass partition. At its center is a small black box with NAVCOM stenciled on it.

WILSON

Destroy the NAVCOM A.I. Now!

COMPUTER OFFICER bangs on a keyboard, smashes a glass case to reveal a red handle, pushes it forward. Nothing happens. HE pushes handle a second time. Again, nothing. Off of Wilson's look, COMPUTER OFFICER just shakes his head.

COMPUTER OFFICER

Command codes have been overwritten.

WILSON grabs the Marine's weapon, drops the slide back, lines the weapon, fires on the NAVCOM. Uranium depleted rounds, bounce off the glass. Clip empty, he tries to break the glass with the butt. Stock shatters.

Concussion outside. Heads swing to the massive reinforced doors leading to the center. They're distorting, bending in.

WILSON

Prepare a drone. Get me a coded channel.

COMMUNICATIONS TECH bangs at a keyboard, nods to Wilson who turns towards a video monitor:

WILSON (CONT'D)

This is Admiral Bill Wilson, Pegasus station commanding officer. Forty Kilrathi capital ships are closing. Station has been breached. They want the NAVCOM. Repeat, they want--

Concussion tears into the room as the exterior doors are blown off their hinges in a wall of toxic smoke. Wilson's head snaps to the doors. He can just see the outline of an armored figure stepping through.

(CONTINUED)

9B CONTINUED: (2)

9B

CLOSE ON his eyes. He's a dead man, but there's no fear, just resignation.

He depresses a button by the video monitor.

9C EXT. PEGASUS STATION

9C

A single drone launches from the burning station, fires retro rockets, speeds away towards a distant swirling mass of dying suns called the Charybdis Quasar some forty hours away.

As the drone speeds back, it passes in front of the Kilrathi battle group. CAMERA stays on the ominous alien armada.

9D INT. CONCORDIA - BRIDGE

9D

CLOSE ON a video monitor. On it, we see a playback of Wilson on the Pegasus station. Image shakes as he speaks:

WILSON

This is Admiral Bill Wilson, Pegasus station commanding officer. Forty Kilrathi capital ships are closing. Station has been breached. They want the NAVCOM. Repeat, they want--

Concussion and Wilson spins, puts his back to the monitor....transmission ends in fuzz.

CAMERA PULLS BACK to reveal Admiral TOLWYN standing on the pristine bridge of the massive battle ship, COMMODORE RICHARD BELLEGARDE behind him.

SUPERIMPOSE: CONCORDIA BATTLE GROUP, MARCH 15TH, 2100 ZULU TIME. 42 HOURS FROM EARTH

BELLEGARDE

The Pegasus NAVCOM? My God, if they have it--

TOLWYN turns towards an open area.

TOLWYN

Tactical. Give me the Vega and Sol sectors.

A holographic projection of Vega and Sol sectors materializes in front of him. Pegasus, a small blue dot is near the center. Around it are dozens of star systems peppered with red and blue dots, indicating the position of the CONFED and Kilrathi fleets.

Behind Pegasus, we see the Ulysses Corridor funneling towards the massive Charybdis Quasar.

A hundred yellow lines--avenues through space-time--emanate from it, lead into Sol sector. One, thicker than the rest, leads directly to a solar system with nine planets.

TOLWYN walks inside the hologram. As he nears the solar system, a single blue planet, Earth, enlarges, floats there, spinning slowly.

TOLWYN

What is the fleet's position?

BELLE GARDE

We're spread all over the sector. The earliest our advance elements could reach Sol is forty-two hours. And that is piecemeal and taking risks with the jumps, sir.

TOLWYN

And with the NAVCOM they can reach Earth in under forty through the Charybdis Quasar...

(ironic smile)

A mere two hours could decided the outcome of this war.

(pauses, decides)

Signal all ships to mark our course and make full speed for Earth....I need to know what the Kilrathi are up to, Richard. I need eyes and ears, and I need intelligence. Do we have any ships left in Vega?

BELLE GARDE checks the situational display on his monitor:

BELLE GARDE

Just one, sir. The Tiger Claw. But she is out of communications range, and a drone will take two days to reach her.

TOLWYN checks the display, motions to a small red dot in Sol Sector.

TOLWYN

Who's this?

BELLE GARDE bangs on the keyboard, reads:

BELLE GARDE

A requisitioned merchantman, sir. The Diligent.

TOLWYN

The Diligent?

BELLE GARDE

It's captained by James Taggart.

(CONTINUED)

Green Amendments - Revised 3/4/98  
6A.

9D CONTINUED: (2)

9D

TOLWYN

(thinks)

Taggart.

\*

\*

BELLEGARDE

Enroute to the Tiger Claw with two  
replacement pilots. Lieutenants Todd  
Marshall and Christopher Blair.

TOLWYN

Open a secure channel to the Diligent  
immediately. I need to speak to her  
Captain --

BELLEGARDE

Right away, sir.

TOLWYN

(peering at readout)

and this 1st Lieutenant Blair.

9E EXT. EARTH'S SOLAR SYSTEM

9E

The Diligent, a merchantman, speeds by Venus. Behind it, spinning slowly, we can clearly see Earth.

9F INT. DILIGENT - TINY CABIN (PREVIOUSLY SC. 26)

9F

BLAIR, mid twenties, straight out of the academy, is sprawled out on the tiny bunk, no shirt. He's fingering a silver cross that hangs around his neck. On closer examination, we see that it is inscribed with astrological symbols and ends in a dagger point. It's a PILGRIM CROSS.

A VERY SMALL MAN, about sixteen inches tall, appears to sit on a shelf just above his head, watching. This is, in fact, a HOLOGRAM projected by Blair's portable personal computer (PPC), MERLIN.

MERLIN

I know there's a war going on -- but a requisitioned merchantman? What are we on, a garbage run? Delivering groceries?

BLAIR ignores him and keeps reading. This irks Merlin.

MERLIN (Cont'd)

"The Diligent?" Please -- "The Dilapidated" is more like it. "The Deluded." "The Dilatory."

BLAIR

(finally looking up)  
"Dilatory?"

MERLIN

"Inclined to delay, tardy, slow. From the Latin, Dilator"

(heavy sarcasm)  
I'm not keeping you up, am I?

BLAIR

Where did you pick up that sarcasm?  
I didn't put that in your program.

MERLIN

I don't just sit around waiting for you to power me up. The sarcasm I downloaded from the main-frame at the Academy while you were in --  
(suddenly all business)  
Lt. Marshall's approaching the hatch.

Blair hides the cross in his book, just as the hatch opens, revealing TODD 'MANIAC' MARSHALL. He hasn't earned his "Maniac" moniker just yet -- For now people just call him Lt. Marshall. But for script simplicity we'll refer to him as Maniac through out. Maniac is Blair's age and a fellow pilot, but the resemblance ends there.

(CONTINUED)

9F CONTINUED:

9F

Where Blair seems closed-off and brooding, Maniac's an open book -- big-boned and with a slightly crazed gleam in his eye.

MANIAC

Up and at 'em. Captain wants you on the bridge. Top priority.

He glances up at Merlin, who now sits immobile, but with eyes that seem to follow you around the room, like a creepy optical illusion.

MANIAC

(to Merlin)

What are you looking at?

(to Blair)

What a waste of artificial intelligence.

MERLIN reactivates.

MERLIN

Funny Lieutenant, I was thinking the same about you.

BLAIR

Merlin, off.

Merlin shoots an indignant glance at Blair just as he vanishes.

MANIAC

There weren't enough know it alls in the universe, you had to program another one.

(a beat)

Come on, we better get upstairs.

BLAIR

I'll meet you.

Maniac starts to say something, then shrugs and leaves.

Blair lifts his Pilgrim cross from the book and slips it over his head. He grabs his shirt and pulls it on hastily.



9G INT. DILIGENT - BRIDGE

9G

A grim, ruggedly handsome man of indeterminate age, looking more like a pirate than a merchant, comes out of the GALLEY with a hot cup of coffee. This is James Taggart, better know as PALADIN. Maniac sits idly in the copilot's seat.

BLAIR arrives, ducking through a small hatch-way.

BLAIR

Sir?

PALADIN looks strangely at Blair. Blair realizing his cross is still partially visible, tucks it away. Paladin doesn't say anything.

PALADIN

I don't' know who you know Lieutenant,  
but you just received a CONFED Code One  
secure communication.

BLAIR sits at the center console, slides over to the comm screen, keys a code.

BLAIR

Blair, Christopher, Lieutenant.

9G CONTINUED:

9G

...Screen powers up and ADMIRAL TOLWYN appears on the screen. Reflexively, Blair straightens up.

TOLWYN

At ease, Lieutenant?

BLAIR

Yes sir, Admiral.

TOLWYN

Good. You are currently outbound for Vega sector and the Tiger Claw. I need you to hand deliver an encrypted communications chip to her captain. Captain Sansky. Message is incoming.

BLAIR

Why not send it by drone to the Pegasus, sir? It would be quicker--

TOLWYN

The Pegasus is gone. It was destroyed by a Kilrathi battle group twelve and a half hours ago. See that Captain Sansky gets that chip.

BLAIR

All do respect sir, why me?

TOLWYN

(Small smile)

Right now, you're all I've got.

(a beat)

I fought along side your father, in the Pilgrim Wars. He was a good man -- you look a lot like him.

BLAIR

People say I have my mother's looks, sir.

Tolwyn reacts, as if remembering something.

TOLWYN

Yes, it must of been hard. They were both good people. Godspeed. Tolwyn Out

Recorder spits a small circular chip out. BLAIR takes it and the monitor turns to fuzz.

9H INT. CONCORDIA - BRIDGE

9H

TOLWYN steps back from the monitor. BELLEGARDE stands behind him.

TOLWYN

You don't approve, Richard?

BELLEGARDE

Of using Blair's kid? No, sir, I do not.

9I INT. DILIGENT - BRIDGE

9I

PALADIN bangs coordinates into a navigational computer as MANIAC sits idle in the copilot's seat. BLAIR looks up from the comm screen. Paladin doesn't wait for Blair to speak.

PALADIN

This milk-run just got a little more interesting. Set a course for beacon 147, one quarter impulse.

MANIAC

Course for 147. One quarter impulse.  
(reads screen)  
147's off limit's sir. There's 100,000 kilometer no-fly zone around it.

PALADIN

I said beacon 147. It's a shortcut.  
Lose the sir.

MANIAC shrugs, leans over to the controls, bangs the course in, hits the engage button with his foot.

As PALADIN moves away, we see a black tattoo on his fore arm. It's in a strange, jagged script: Kilrathi.

9J EXT. DILIGENT - SOLAR SYSTEM

9J

Craft streaks by Mercury. We follow the Diligent as it heads towards the Sun. Ahead of it, far in the distance, we can just make out a flashing buoy. Behind the buoy, space seems to distort, shimmer ever so slightly.

10 EXT. KILRATHI BATTLE GROUP

10

A ship, a Snakeir, enters the frame. Thing's huge, ominous, deadly.

SUPERIMPOSE: KILRATHI BATTLE GROUP. ULYSSES CORRIDOR, VEGA SECTOR. 40 HOURS FROM THE CHARYBDIS QUASAR.

11 INT. SNAKEIR BRIDGE - ADMIRAL'S FLAGSHIP

11

The interior of the huge space vessel is nearly obscured by a thick, almost viscous green fog: the nutrient atmosphere for the Kilrathi officers and crew. They are a biped, two armed race of beings nearly eight feet tall. But their features are obscured by the thick mist. Only their eyes, gleaming yellow, seem to penetrate the dense atmosphere. There is something vaguely cat-like about their silhouettes as they move lithely about the bridge. It's almost as though they can see clearly...which they can. Their vision is in the infrared spectrum.

GREEN Amendments - Revised 3/4/98

11.

11 CONTINUED:

11

A Kilrathi, the ship's CAPTAIN, approaches the battle group commander, a Kilrathi ADMIRAL.

12 CAPTAIN'S POV, INFRARED BAND:

12

Through his eyes, the fog disappears as he comes up behind the shadowy figure peering out into space through a thick window.

The CAPTAIN, head bowed, speaks in a low hiss--the Kilrathi language--which we read in subtitles.

KILRATHI CAPTAIN

(Kilrathi; subtitled)

The Ulysses Corridor is clear. As you predicted, the door to Earth is open.

ADMIRAL turns. It's face is scarred, distorted, one eye missing. His plumes, indicative of rank, clan, and battles fought and won, flow over massive shoulders. Small smile creeps over his visage, exposes yellowed canines.

Human voice cuts through his reverie:

TRAITOR (O.S.)

And you have your prize.

ADMIRAL turns, looks. Dressed in a full atmospheric suit a human shape stands in shadow at the edge of the bridge. Around his neck hangs a PILGRIM CROSS. His voice is tiny and filtered through his comm device.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

TRAITOR (CONT'D)

The NAVCOM A.I. has been reconfigured to your jump drives.

ADMIRAL's one good eye dilates, seems to flash. His voice is tinny and slightly delayed as its filtered through the a translation device.

ADMIRAL

You have betrayed your race on a scale unimaginable, Pilgrim.

TRAITOR

(ignores insult)

I have lived up to my part of our agreement. Live up to yours. Destroy Earth.

\*  
\*

ADMIRAL looks long and hard at the Traitor.

SC. 13-33 OMIT

34 INT. DILIGENT - PALADIN'S QUARTERS

34

Paladin's door is open. Blair appears. Paladin is studying An ancient star chart.

(CONTINUED)

34 CONTINUED:

34

PALADIN

Come in.

Blair steps into the quarters, Spartan at best. A cold meal is scattered over the old star charts.

BLAIR

We're holding steady on the beacon.  
Maniac has the helm.

He sees the old star charts.

BLAIR

These must be antiques.

PALADIN

Yeah. They were made by the first  
explorers in the sector. Pilgrims.

Paladin starts folding the star charts.

BLAIR

I couldn't help noticing the tattoo on  
your neck.

A small smile crosses Paladin's face; the type you use to  
conceal painful memories.

PALADIN

How about the Pilgrim cross you hide  
under your vest.

BLAIR reacts.

PALADIN (CONT'D)

Don't worry we all have pasts and  
secrets.

BLAIR

(remembering)

It was my mothers.

PALADIN studies Blair, seems to like what he sees.

PALADIN  
May I see it?

BLAIR pulls his cross off, hands it to Paladin. There's something in Paladin's eyes as he takes it, something almost reverential. He runs his fingers over it, depresses a plate and a seven inch blade telescopes from the cross. As Paladin runs his finger over the blade:

PALADIN (CONT'D)  
(That easy smile again.)  
There was a time, long ago, when people looked up to the Pilgrims. They were at the forefront of space exploration.

PALADIN retracts the blade, hands the cross back to Blair, looks at him as the younger man slips the cross around his neck.

PALADIN (CONT'D)  
You know, since the Pilgrim's were defeated -- not a single new Quasar has been charted.

Just then, the ship lurches with a sudden surge of acceleration.

PALADIN  
The idiot!

And Paladin flies out of the cabin.

SC. 35 OMIT

36 INT. DILIGENT - BRIDGE

36

Paladin storms onto the bridge, followed by Blair.

PALADIN  
Get up!

Maniac vacates the captain's chair. Paladin studies the instruments.

PALADIN  
Did you change course?

MANIAC  
No, just boosted the power. Why dog it when we can be at that beacon in an hour?

PALADIN  
That beacon is marking a gravity well!

BLAIR and MANIAC react as PALADIN punches the navigation computer. Heads up display materializes. A flat grid appears. It begins to fold inward, creating a strange, swirling elliptical spike in the concave surface.

This galvanizes both Blair and Maniac. Merlin self-activates and begins pacing.

MERLIN

I told you this ship wasn't up the job.  
My sensors indicate that there are a  
number of structural flaws that--

PALADIN

What the hell is that?

BLAIR

Merlin. My personal portable computer.

PALADIN

Tell that runt to shut up or I'll  
jettison it.

Merlin freezes, mute.

Paladin uses a telescopic lens to bring up a dim object on the screen, a blurred image of spinning space, generating a powerful magnetic field! Asteroids and space junk caught in its pull are sucked down, as though into a whirlpool, and disappear.

Paladin begins firing reverse thrusters, throwing the two younger men forward as he slowly alters course.

PALADIN

One cubic inch of that well exerts more  
gravitational force than the sun!

PALADIN bangs on the navigational computer, inputs coordinates.

PALADIN (cont'd)

Come on! If I don't re-align our entry  
vector, we're not going to make the  
jump.

MANIAC

What happens if we miss?

PALADIN

We die.

The Diligent's skin begins to GROAN and CREAK. A sensor screams out.

BLAIR

Have we reached the entry vector's PNR  
yet?

Paladin feverishly throws switches, makes adjustments, totally concentrated on the task. The spinning gravity well appears closer.

PALADIN

No quite yet. She's reaching out for us. Hear that?

The GROANS increase, as the thrusters fight to change course. On the screen Scylla appears larger and more ominous.

PALADIN

Well Ladies, meet Scylla, bane to sailors, and monster of myth.

MANIAC

What's a Scylla?

BLAIR

Ulysses sailed between the whirlpool Charybdis and the island monster, Scylla. She snatched six of his men and ate them.

MANIAC

I didn't need to know that.

PALADIN

This beauty will eat more than that. Hold on.

Paladin flips a switch, and a bank of thrusters throws the ship sideways. The Diligent yaws for a few moments, as every seam groans. Maniac and Blair are thrown to the deck. Merlin's holographic image VIBRATES until it's a blur. The ships' afterburners scream.

PALADIN bangs on the navigational computers, keeps putting in coordinates.

Diligent seems to steady, line up. On the heads up display, we see a digital glide path.

PALADIN

(to the screen)

Broken your grip, old girl. Better luck, next time.

PALADIN sits at the pilot's chair, steers the Diligent along the glide path. Outside, we see space shimmer, distort, bend.

MANIAC

What the hell is this thing?

PALADIN

This "thing" is a distortion in space-time. Pilgrims were the first to chart it.



MANIAC

So why is it off-limits?

PALADIN

Because it's unstable.

MANIAC

(Mouthing to Blair:)

And we're going to jump it?

36 CONTINUED: (4)

36

Suddenly, a sensor screams out, and the heads up display disappears. \*

BLAIR  
Navigational computers just went off line.

PALADIN  
It's the magnetic fields. Blair, take the helm!

BLAIR  
I've never made a jump before.

PALADIN  
Now would be a good time to learn.

And Paladin's gone.

MANIAC  
Do you like this guy? \*

BLAIR'S POV: The swirling vortex of the gravity well approaches fast. \*

36A INT. DILIGENT BRIDGE - NAV COMPUTER

36A \*

PALADIN works desperately on the navigation computer, pulls a panel off, considers the intricate wiring, starts pulling chips, rewiring the thing.

36B INT. DILIGENT - BRIDGE

36B

Gravity well's right there. Digital countdown reads 9, 8, 7...

MANIAC  
(calling out)  
Ah, Mr. Taggart. \*

PALADIN'S still digging away at the computer.

PALADIN  
What?

BLAIR  
Five seconds to jump.

PALADIN  
So?

MANIAC  
So if you don't get the computer back on line, this "unstable" gravity well is going pull us in, one molecule at a time. \*

PALADIN  
You want to live forever? \*

36B CONTINUED:

36B

MANIAC

Great answer. Really instills  
confidence in the crew.

PALADIN shoves the last chip into place.

MERLIN appears again.

MERLIN

As I was saying, this antiquated vessel  
is riddled with structural flaws. In  
my opinion it cannot survive the jump--

Navigation system comes to life.

Suddenly, on a computer screen, the heads up display and  
trajectory appear. BLAIR looks at it, doesn't move.

PALADIN

Plot your course, Mr. Blair!

BLAIR snaps out of it, pulls the cross from his vest,  
squeezed it for luck. He bangs in the coordinates, steers  
the Diligent on the plotted course. MANIAC starts to  
scream a crazy, joyous scream.

MERLIN

--in fact, I would calculate our  
chances of survival as twenty-seven  
point two percent. I implore you...

36C EXT. DILIGENT

36C

Tiny ship enters the gravity well, following the plotted  
course. It starts to shudder as it pushes against the  
barrier of time-space.

36D INT. DILIGENT

36D

The nature and content of the environment changes.  
Stars, planets--everything--disappears. And then  
everything seems to freeze: PALADIN moving towards the  
bridge, MANIAC holding on, screaming at the top of his  
lungs, BLAIR at the flight controls, MERLIN pointing at  
the approaching singularity.

36E EXT. SPACE - THE DILIGENT

36E

A flash of light and the Diligent appears. There's no  
sign of the our solar system or the gravity well, only  
new and unfamiliar stars and distant planets.

36F INT. DILIGENT

36F

BLAIR, PALADIN, a still screaming MANIAC are jolted by  
the entry. MERLIN picks up where he left off.

MERLIN

...stop this madness. That man is  
quite probably insane.

(MORE)

36F CONTINUED:

36F

MERLIN (Cont'd)  
He will kill us all.  
(Realizing where he is.)  
...Oh.

BLAIR looks around. They're alive. PALADIN looks hard and long at Blair -- he sees something.

BLAIR  
What happened?

PALADIN  
You just plotted a jump through a gravity well. *In under five seconds.* A NAVCOM can't do that.

MANIAC, face flush with the rush of the jump, turns to Blair, impressed.

MANIAC  
Not bad for the *second best* pilot at the Academy.

PALADIN turns to Maniac.

PALADIN  
Shut up Next time you fail to follow my orders, I'll dump you with the rest of the garbage. Plot a course for the Tiger Claw, Mr. Blair.

BLAIR  
Yes, sir.

PALADIN exits the bridge, a pissed off MANIAC staring after him.

MANIAC  
That guy has some serious issues.

37 EXT. SPACE - VEGA SECTOR, ENYO SYSTEM

37

Two Confederation Rapier fighters streak across the blackness toward a distant fleck, reflecting light from a distant sun.

The fleck resolves itself into the Diligent.

SC. 38 OMIT

39 INT. DILIGENT - BRIDGE

39

Blair is at the con. Paladin has been summoned to the bridge. Maniac joins them.

BLAIR  
Fighters from the Tiger Claw. They've queried us.

PALADIN  
Send the countersign.

39 CONTINUED:

39

Blair punches a button. A coded burst crackles over the intercom. Followed by another burst.

BLAIR

Identification acknowledged. They'll  
escort us in.

40 EXT. DILIGENT AND RAPIERS

40

The two star fighters bracket the larger merchantman. The three craft now head for another distant fleck half illuminated in the distance. The Tiger Claw.

41 EXT. TIGER CLAW

41

SUPERIMPOSE: UNITED CONFEDERATION SHIP TIGER CLAW - ON PATROL IN VEGA SECTOR, ENYO SYSTEM.

The three craft slowly approach the carrier class capital ship. The huge flight deck doors open, catching the Diligent and the fighters in a broad beam of yellow light. The Diligent fires its boosters and eases into the flight deck. The huge doors close. The Rapiers bank sharply in unison and veer away to continue their patrol.

42 INT. TIGER CLAW - FLIGHT DECK

42

Marine guards scan the identity badges and examine the orders of the two new lieutenants, MOS, then step back and salute. Paladin's ID is also electronically scanned.

The three walk towards the elevators, passing the flight deck.

The flight deck is busy, as repair crews struggle to patch combat damage from the last engagement -- we get the sense that the Tiger Claw has seen a lot of action.

PALADIN

Well, gentlemen, don't think I haven't enjoyed your company.

MANIAC

We won't...Sir.

BLAIR

So what about the tattoo?

PALADIN

You know what it is?

BLAIR

It's a Kilrathi marker. You were a prisoner of war.

PALADIN

That's right. I was on the Iason when they took her.

BLAIR

The Iason. That was the first ship to have contact with the Kilrathi. There weren't any survivors.

PALADIN

I guess not.

Elevator doors open. PALADIN steps in.

\*  
\*

42 CONTINUED:

42

BLAIR

Why don't you have it removed?

PALADIN

Let's just say, it helps me not forget.

BLAIR

Not forget what?

PALADIN

Why I fight.

Doors start to close.

MANIAC

So what exactly do the Kilrathi look like?

PALADIN

...They're ugly.  
(directly to Blair)  
Good luck.

43 INT. TIGER CLAW - FLIGHT DECK

43

Doors close. BLAIR and MANIAC look at one another start to walk the huge deck, check out the Rapiers arranged in a neat row along the side of the flight deck. Like the Tiger Claw, the Rapiers have obviously seen a lot of combat.

The same for a group of larger Broadsword medium bombers that occupy another part of the deck. Maniac and Blair tote their kit bags among the star craft.

MANIAC

I don't see the X.O.

He spots a beautiful blond, in grease covered overalls, working on a Broadsword.

MANIAC

Maybe she can help.

He moves off and engages the blond in conversation, MOS. Blair shakes his head, ducks under the Broadsword's belly and continues on. He stops and admires a BATTLE WORN Rapier, its cockpit open, allowing himself to daydream.

He finds A CLIPBOARD that shows the Rapier's mission status. He scans it for a moment, then, a kid-like gleam in his eye, climbs into the cockpit.

He gets the feel of the controls...

Then, he's distracted by a feminine voice behind him.

DEVERAUX (O.S.)

Two Dralthis on your tail -- one above,  
one below.

\*  
\*

He looks down at his inquisitor. JEANETTE (ANGEL) DEVERAUX is brunette, looks about thirty-two, her hair up, wearing an oil-stained disposable plasticine coveralls -- a socket wrench in one hand, and a small x-ray scanner in the other.

DEVERAUX (Cont'd)

You've got five, maybe ten seconds -- the clock is ticking. What do you do?

BLAIR

Simple. I go vertical and inverted -- do a 180 at full throttle -- apply the breaks -- and drop behind them...

DEVERAUX

Bang. You're dead. Not fast enough. Dralthis are too quick -- particularly in a climb. You've just taken a missile up your tail-pipe.

Blair meets her gaze -- she has a streak of carbon lubricant across an otherwise unblemished and beautiful face.

DEVERAUX

Reverse the situation. You're locked on a Dralthis. It goes evasive -- enters an asteroid belt. Clock is ticking.

She starts removing the disposable coveralls.

BLAIR

If I'm locked on, there's no such thing as evasive--

DEVERAUX

(getting irritated)

Bang. Dead again -- it's an ambush: five or six fighters hide behind rocks the size of your swollen head and pounce -- a Kilrathi gang-bang.

(a beat)

What's the matter, did I bruise your ego?

Blair's getting pissed.

BLAIR

No, I'm just not used to getting combat tips from a Grease Monkey --

Deveraux steps out of the coveralls, folding them to the size of a washcloth. She's in uniform, wearing her LIEUTENANT COMMANDER'S INSIGNIA.

DEVERAUX

Lt. Commander Deveraux. Your Wing Commander. You have a name, nugget?

Blair snaps to attention and salutes her.

(CONTINUED)



BLAIR

Lt. Blair, Ma'am....

MANIAC has wandered over. He enjoys the show.

DEVERAUX

If you want to play at being a fighter pilot, I suggest you find a virtual fun zone. Meanwhile, step down from the Rapier.

Flustered, Blair climbs down from the Rapier. On his way down he notices a callsign on the side of the rapier - LT. CMDR CHEN - "BOSSMAN" painted next to TWENTY SIX KILL MARKS. The name and kill marks are partially obscured by a large SCORCH MARK that runs the length of the rapier - a clue that this fighter has taken some damage and been patched back together.

BLAIR

Ma'am, the mission sheet said it was unassigned. I apologize -- I didn't realize it was Bossman's.

DEVERAUX

Who?

Blair looks at the name again -- Did he read it right?

BLAIR

Lt. Cmdr Chen -- Bossman.  
(off Deveraux's look)  
Who got all these Kills?

Deveraux takes the clipboard from him.

DEVERAUX

What are you doing on the flight deck, anyway?

MANIAC

(blurts out)  
Looking for the X.O., Ma'am.

Deveraux nods towards a A TALL OFFICER, COMMANDER PAUL GERALD, at the far end of the flight deck.

DEVERAUX

You found him.

Deveraux turns on her heels and strides off. Blair watches her go.

44 INT. TIGER CLAW - BRIDGE

44

CAPTAIN SANSKY, the Tiger Claw's commanding officer, stands at the tactical radar board, plots fighter security flights with the Radar officer. Fifty and balding, there's an avuncular quality to the man offset by battle weary eyes.

BLAIR, GERALD trailing, walks up to Sansky, snaps to attention, salutes.

BLAIR  
Lieutenant j.g. Christopher Blair,  
reporting for duty, sir.

SANSKY turns.

SANSKY  
At ease, Lieutenant. Commander Gerald  
tells me you have something for me.

BLAIR  
Yes sir.

BLAIR holds out the mini-disc.

BLAIR (CONT'D)  
An encrypted communique -- from Admiral  
Tolwyn.

SANSKY  
(Squinting at disk)  
Why didn't the Admiral send a drone via  
Pegasus?

BLAIR  
Sir, Pegasus was destroyed by a  
Kilrathi battle group seventeen hours  
ago.

SANSKY reacts. He takes the disc.

SANSKY  
Communications, I want this disc  
decrypted ASAP.

44 CONTINUED:

44

BLAIR salutes, start to turn.

GERALD  
(to Blair)  
You wouldn't be related to Arnold  
Blair, would you?

BLAIR steels himself. He lives in fear of this question.

BLAIR  
He was my father, sir.

GERALD  
He married a Pilgrim woman, didn't he?

BLAIR  
(cautious.)  
Yes sir.

Sansky is interested, observes Blair closely.

GERALD  
Mixed marriages seldom work out.  
Pilgrims don't think like us.

Blair takes offense.

BLAIR  
You won't have to worry, sir. They're  
both dead.

SANSKY  
(stepping in.)  
I'm sure the lieutenant's heredity will  
have no bearing on his performance,  
Mister Gerald.

GERALD  
No sir. I'm sure it won't.

SANSKY  
That's all, Lieutenant. I suggest you  
stow your gear and familiarize yourself  
with the ship.

Blair can barely contain his anger as he turns and leaves  
the bridge. GERALD watches after him.

SANSKY (CONT'D)  
You don't trust him?

GERALD  
Computer: what are the odds that a  
Kilrathi battle group could infiltrate  
Confederation space undetected and  
destroy Pegasus station?

44 CONTINUED: (2)

44

TIGER CLAW'S artificial intelligence computer responds:

COMPUTER

One chance in one point two one million. To the tenth power.

GERALD

No, sir, I do not.

SC. 45 OMIT

45A INT. TIGER CLAW - CORRIDOR

45A

BLAIR, still fuming from Gerald's dig, walks the corridor with MANIAC.

BLAIR

It never changes.

MANIAC

So Gerald's another tight-ass X.O.. So what? Let it go, we are about to meet our fellow pilots. The men and women we are going to fight with, perhaps even die with and perhaps...

BLAIR

Don't worry, I won't let the fact that I'm pissed keep you from getting laid.

Maniac throws an arm around Blair's shoulder.

MANIAC

Me? I'm worried about it keeping you from getting laid. I'll show you how to make friends.

They open the hatch to the Pilot's Mess.

45B INT. TIGER CLAW - PILOTS MESS. CONTINUOUS

45B

Maniac pushes Blair into the room.

MESS is an apt adjective for these cramped quarters. Defaced propaganda posters, and pin-ups, male and female, line the walls.

PILOTS are spread out all over the mess -- all is banter and bullshit.

TWO PILOTS play chess on a beat up old board -- the anachronism of the game surprising. One of them is POLANSKI, a male pilot with a long scar running down his face. The other is FORBES -- female: brains, beauty, and a warrior's soul.

All of the pilots look up, when Blair and Maniac enter, then go back to whatever they were doing without saying a word -- typical hazing shit. Maniac will have none of it.

45B CONTINUED:

45B

MANIAC

How's everybody doing? Lieutenant Todd Marshall.

Still silence.

MANIAC (Cont'd)

I'd like you all to meet, my close personal friend, Lt. Christopher Blair -- who just happens to be the second best pilot on this hunk of junk.

Now several of the pilots look up. These are very close to fighting words with HUNTER, a male pilot.

HUNTER

Who you calling the best, nugget?

Forbes looks over her shoulder at Maniac.

BLAIR

So this is the secret to your overwhelming popularity?

Maniac takes a step towards Hunter who gets to his feet quickly.

MANIAC

There's two ways to figure that out...

(reading Hunters name tag)

Hunter. One way involves you trying to kick the shit out of me --

Hunter squints at Maniac, he has no idea what to make of guy.

HUNTER

What's the other way?

MANIAC

The other way? That involves my other close personal friend. Mr. Johnny Walker Black.

Maniac produces a bottle of SCOTCH from beneath his jacket -- good scotch. It seems to be a real rarity and gets everyone's attention.

HUNTER, looks towards Forbes -- as if she's the unofficial leader of this bunch.

HUNTER

Forbes?

FORBES

We're on stand down. One won't hurt.

45B CONTINUED: (2)

45B

MANIAC

(pouring a drink for Forbes)  
It may even help.

The pilots flock around.

FORBES

You got balls.

MANIAC

You should see them.

FORBES

Mine are bigger.

MANIAC

I've been told that size doesn't matter.

FORBES

She lied.

(to the pilots)

Personally, Hunter, I'd have taken the third option -- kick his ass first, then drink his Scotch.

Maniac smiles at her. The pilots laugh. Blair and Maniac are accepted.

46 INT. TIGER CLAW - CHART ROOM

46

On a monitor, we see Admiral Tolwyn standing in the bridge of the Concordia.

TOLWYN

Jay, I'm going to have to be brief. The Kilrathi took Pegasus. They may have her NAVCOM A.I.. By the time this communication reaches you, they will be twenty-three hours from the Charybdis jump point and Earth. CONFED capital ships are headed home now. The Concordia battle group will be able to make it in twenty-five hours. I'm ordering the Tiger Claw to the Charybdis Quasar. You are to use any means necessary to gather information as to the Kilrathi whereabouts, capacity, and plan of attack. I need intelligence, old friend. Use Taggart. He knows this space better than any man alive -- he can get you to Charybdis quickly.

\*

CAMERA pulls back to reveal SANSKY and GERALD, watching.

GERALD

I don't like it.

SANSKY

No one asked your opinion, Paul.

GERALD

Sir, the disk came to us on the  
Diligent, entrusted to a Pilgrim half-  
breed.

Sansky ponders this, nods.

SANSKY

Send for Taggart.

46A INT. TIGER CLAW - PILOTS MESS. A SHORT WHILE LATER 46A

The scotch has loosened things up considerably, and Blair  
and Maniac seemed to have been welcomed into the fold.

MANIAC looks at the chess game Forbes and Polanski are  
playing.

MANIAC

(to Forbes)

Take his pony with your castle.

POLANSKI

We call them a 'knight' and a 'rook.'

MANIAC

You're kidding me, that's what you call  
them?

FORBES looks at the board -- damn if he isn't right. She  
looks up at MANIAC who winks. SHE moves the 'pony' and  
captures the rook.

FORBES

Check.

POLANSKI

Where?

MANIAC

Mate.

POLANSKI

Damn. That's cheatin'.

FORBES looks Maniac straight in the eye.

FORBES

So there's a brain behind that  
mouth?

MANIAC flashes a trade-mark smile -- big and charming  
smile.

SHE gets up, heads towards Blair and the bottle.

BLAIR looks up at her -- he's leaning back on a chair with his hands in his pockets. HUNTER, sits silent, sips his Scotch. \*

MANIAC grabs the bottle and pours FORBES a drink. \*

FORBES (Cont'd)  
Your friend always this talkative? \*

MANIAC  
He just made the fatal error of mistaking Cmdr. Deveraux for your average grease monkey. \*

She bends down to Blair's level. Blair smiles. \*

FORBES shoots out her hand and GRABS BLAIR BY THE BALLS. His hands are trapped in his pockets. \*

FORBES  
Feels like they are still there. \*

Pilots laugh. She squeezes a little tighter. Blair squirms. \*

FORBES  
If Lt. Commander Deveraux was really pissed....Well -- you'd be testicularly challenged, Lieutenant. \*

BLAIR  
(taken aback)  
All I did was sat in Lt. Commander Chen's fighter. \*

Nature and quality of the environment changes. Smiles, save Blair's and Maniac's disappear. Some pilots look away. HUNTER looks up from his scotch. \*

HUNTER  
Who? \*

BLAIR  
Lt. Commander Chen. Bossman. \*

HUNTER  
Bossman? Anybody here know a Bossman? \*

Lots of "No"s and "Never heard of him."

BLAIR  
What's with you people? \*

HUNTER downs his Scotch, puts the glass down. \*

KNIGHT, big, black, friendly face, tries to intervene.

KNIGHT  
Leave it alone, Blair.

(CONTINUED)



BLAIR  
Leave what alone?

KNIGHT shakes his head.

HUNTER  
You're asking after a man who never  
existed, nugget.

BLAIR  
(digging in)  
I'm pretty sure he did.

HUNTER'S up in the instant, pushes Blair hard in the  
chest, gets right in Blair's face.

HUNTER  
He never existed. Now, I suggest you  
change the subject, or I'll change it  
for you.

MANIAC steps up behind Hunter.

MANIAC  
You have a problem with my friend...  
Hunter.

HUNTER  
Yeah, I do.

MANIAC  
Then you have a problem with me.

HUNTER turns to face Maniac.

HUNTER  
Oh yeah, well you're going to love  
this--

Hunter spins and grabs Blair by the shirt and pulls  
him up -- -- Maniac grabs Hunter from behind --  
Polanski rushes forward. Blair's shirt rips open --  
suddenly Blair's Pilgrim's cross flops out so that  
everyone can see it.

HUNTER (Cont'd)  
He's a Pilgrim!

Hunter lets go of Blair like he's a live wire.

Everyone in the mess, including Maniac notices the  
cross. The jovial air is gone. Several of the Pilots  
stand up.

FORBES  
Excuse me?

DEVERAUX (O.S.)  
You ladies don't stand down, you're  
going to have a problem with me.

(CONTINUED)

Blue Amendments - Revised 13/2/98

29A.

46A CONTINUED: (3)

46A

All heads turn to ANGEL DEVERAUX. Blair slides the cross under his torn shirt.

DEVERAUX (CONT'D)

I want an explanation. Hunter?

HUNTER looks at Angel. Before HUNTER can answer, BLAIR cuts in.

BLAIR

Hunter and the others were just making Lieutenant Marshall and me feel at home, Ma'am.

DEVERAUX turns to Blair. The look on her face says volumes. SHE looks at HUNTER.

DEVERAUX

Lieutenant?

HUNTER

That's right Lieutenant, ma'am.

BLAIR

(to Deveraux)

There you see, ma'am -- I guess this conversation "never existed."

BLAIR exits.

46B INT. TIGER CLAW - CORRIDOR

46B

BLAIR walks down the corridor, pissed.

DEVERAUX

(sternly)

Lieutenant.

BLAIR stops, his back to Angel.

DEVERAUX (CONT'D)

I need to know that you have your priorities straight. Who the hell do you think you are?

\*  
\*  
\*

46B CONTINUED:

46B

BLAIR

I'm a fighter pilot on a capital ship  
in a war zone, ma'am.

DEVERAUX

Right. Which means you're nothing.  
You're a pawn in somebody else's game.  
We get ten, twelve replacements a month  
-- as fast as the Academy can spit out  
spare parts.

BLAIR

(pissy)

Well that really installs confidence  
Commander.

Deveraux gets right in Blair's face.

DEVERAUX

(too harsh)

Let me give you a Reality check -- in  
all likelihood, you're going to die out  
here -- we all are -- What none of us  
needs to be is reminded of that fact --  
so, you die, you never existed.  
Understood?

BLAIR

Yes ma'am.

DEVERAUX

Good. Cause that's the only sensitivity  
training speech I can remember. Now  
move on.

SHE walks away. MERLIN appears by Blair's shoulder:

MERLIN

She's kind of attractive when she's  
mad.

BLAIR looks at the hologram.

MERLIN (Cont'd)

Hey, I'm a hologram, I'm not blind.

46C INT. CHART ROOM - TIGER CLAW

46C

SANSKY looks at a holographic projection of the Charybdis  
Quasar sector. On it, we see forty red dots heading for  
the Quasar. Behind the quasar, a single yellow line  
leads to a floating Earth. GERALD stands behind him,  
looks at Paladin.

SANSKY

I know of you Taggart, but I'm afraid I  
don't know you. Yet you come to me  
with classified orders from Admiral  
Tolwyn.

PALADIN

And you don't trust me, Blair, or the disc.

SANSKY turns to face Paladin.

SANSKY

Would you?

PALADIN

...No.

SANSKY nods to the hologram.

SANSKY

This tactical schematic outlines a nightmare, Mr. Taggart. It tells me that the Kilrathi may have a NAVCOM, and with it, the capacity to jump into Earth space. Based on that nightmare, it orders me to take radical action that, if it and you are a lie, could compromise this ship and its crew. Both of which are unacceptable. Before I put my command in harms way, I must be certain that you and the orders you bear are legitimate. So I ask you, Mr. Taggart, what proof do you have that this is authentic?

PALADIN reaches into his vest, slowly pulls a ring from his pocket, tosses it to Sansky. SANSKY catches it, reacts.

CLOSE ON: Tolwyn's ring held in Sansky's cupped hand. Inscription on it reads: "Annapolis Naval Academy, 1941." Slowly, Sansky's hand closes around the ring.

SANSKY

How did you get this?

PALADIN

Tolwyn gave it to me eight months ago. He thought it might be useful if I ever had to convince a Captain to follow his orders.

SANSKY

(ponders, a difficult decision)

...Con, plot a course for the Charybdis Quasar, full speed.

\*

OBUTU

Sir, nearest jump point to Charybdis is four days hard travel from our current location.

\*

PALADIN

There's a class two pulsar eleven hours from here. We can jump there.

(CONTINUED)

Green Amendments - Revised 3/4/98.

32.

46C CONTINUED: (2)

46C

OBUTU

Not on the charts, sir. NAVCOM does  
not have those coordinates.

PALADIN looks at Sansky.

PALADIN

I have them.

GERALD

No one's jumped a pulsar for forty  
years. And even then, they were  
Pilgrims.

SANSKY

...I don't believe we have a great deal  
of choice, Mr. Gerald. If the battle  
is to be decided in Charybdis, then we  
have to be there.

(To Paladin:)

Plot your course.

PALADIN nods, heads for the navigation station.

GERALD

Sir, that ring means nothing--

SANSKY

That ring has been in Tolwyn's family  
for sixteen generations. Any man who  
carries it has the Admiral's full  
confidence. And we have our orders.  
Prepare for the jump.

46D INT. TIGER CLAW - BLAIR/MANIAC'S QUARTERS

46D \*

Dark. The lights snap on. BLAIR, asleep, sits up. He's  
shirtless, and we can see the Pilgrim's cross hanging  
from his neck. \*

HE squints at MANIAC, in flight gear, standing in the  
room.

BLAIR

We going out?

MANIAC

No. Just me. I pulled security with  
Lt. Forbes.

BLAIR

So why did you wake me up?

(CONTINUED)

Green Amendments - Revised 3/4/98

33.

46D CONTINUED:

46D

MANIAC

Back at the academy you promised me you wouldn't wear that cross anymore.

BLAIR

It brings me luck, Todd.

MANIAC

It's going to get you killed -- Chris.

BLAIR

I was wearing it when I made the jump.

MANIAC

That had nothing to do with luck. It was about training and desire. take off the cross.

BLAIR

(not convinced)

It's who I am.

MANIAC

You don't even know what it means. They lost the war. Winners write the history books and make the rules.

(a beat)

This is the big show. It is either kill or be killed. You need someone watching your back and I can't always be there.

MANIAC shakes his head.

MANIAC

...I'm trying to have sensitive moment -  
- I don't even know why I bother.

Maniac turns to go.

MANIAC (Cont'd)

Wish me luck.

BLAIR

Luck? What about "desire."

MANIAC

You've seen Lt. Forbes -- you know I got the desire.

MANIAC heads out.

BLAIR

Hey, Marshall -- luck.

Maniac smiles and closes the door behind him.

CLOSE ON BLAIR, thinking. He gets up and heads out the door.

\*  
\*

(CONTINUED)

46D CONTINUED: (2)

46D

MERLIN's hologram appears on the counter across the room.

MERLIN

My god, what time is it?

BLAIR

The Pilgrims. What can you tell me about them?

MERLIN

Very little, I'm afraid. Confederation executive order 37495 decreed that "all history and references to the Pilgrim movement be eradicated--

BLAIR

--from all databanks, computer systems, and hard copy texts. I know the order. Do you have anything?

MERLIN

I'm afraid that that's all I have. Your father wiped my flash memory after the war -- it was law.

MERLIN looks genuinely sad by his lack of information. He tries to help.

MERLIN (Cont'd)

I do know that since the Pilgrim's were defeated not a single new Quasar has been charted.

BLAIR pops out of bed, pulls on pants and a shirt, heads for the door.

MERLIN

Where are you going?

BLAIR

To talk to someone who may know a little about the Pilgrims.

MERLIN

Lieutenant, I must caution you against bringing up the subject. It is officially forbidden....

But Blair is gone.

46E INT. TIGER CLAW - PALADIN'S QUARTERS

46E

PALADIN stands at big windows, looks out at the vastness of space. Buzzer rings.

PALADIN

Come.

Door opens and BLAIR enters.

PALADIN (Cont'd)

Except for a few specs of light, it's all emptiness. If it were up to me, I'd let the Kilrathi have it all -- just leave Earth alone.

BLAIR

We need to talk.

PALADIN

I have been in a thousand different solar systems and I've never seen anything in the Void as beautiful as our own sun breaking through the clouds after a rain storm.

Paladin turns to Blair

PALADIN (Cont'd)

The Kilrathi see us as decadent and weak -- they won't stop until we're all dead. If they let us exist, it would be admitting that another race deserves the stars.

BLAIR

Talk to me.

PALADIN

About?

BLAIR

All my life I've taken shit about being part Pilgrim. And I don't know why.

\*



46E CONTINUED:

46E

PALADIN

You are who you choose to be.

(a beat)

You are one of the last descendants of a dying race. Pilgrims were the first human space explorers and settlers. For five centuries they defied the odds: They embraced space and were rewarded with a gift of a flawless sense of direction. No computers, Blair, no compasses, no charts. They just knew. Then, in a small number, about one in a million, a change started to occur.

BLAIR

What kind of change?

Paladin looks at Blair -- there's a hidden importance to his words.

PALADIN

They learned to feel the magnetic fields created by black holes and quasars -- to negotiate singularities. They learned to navigate not just the stars, but space-time itself.

BLAIR

Like a NAVCOM A.I..

PALADIN

You've got it backwards. The billions of calculations each second necessary to lead us through a black hole or quasar is the NAVCOM's recreation of the mind of a single Pilgrim.

BLAIR

How did the war start?

PALADIN turns back to the window. It's as though he's recalling painful memories.

46E CONTINUED: (2)

46E

PALADIN

You spend so much time out here, alone,  
you end up loosing your humanity. The  
Pilgrims began to lose touch with their  
heritage -- they saw themselves as  
superior to man. And in their  
arrogance, they chose to abandon all  
things human to follow what they called  
their destiny. Some say they believed  
they were gods, others, that they were  
angels.

BLAIR

...You believe they were gods?

PALADIN turns back to Blair.

PALADIN

No. But I do believe they were touched  
by God. And like it or not, you've got  
some of that inside you.

Paladin lets this sink in.

PALADIN (Cont'd)

I have to get to the bridge. We'll be  
jumping soon. I'd like you to be there.

BLAIR watches Paladin exit. Blair looks --

46F OUT THE WINDOW --

46F

Into the void -- suddenly two patrolling Rapiers streak  
by in the distance. They're framed by a brilliant,  
swirling Quasar.

SC 47-65 OMIT

66 INT. RAPIER COCKPIT - FORBES

66

FORBES

(over radio)

Don't take it personally, nugget --  
it's a question of estrogen: Women can  
outfly and outshoot men -- we do better  
at multitasking, we can keep track of  
four enemy fighters.

67 INT. RAPIER COCKPIT - MANIAC

67

MANIAC

Hey, it takes balls, not ovaries to  
handle four enemy fighters: nothing  
personal.

(a beat)

Watch this.

(to Flight Boss)

This is Delta Two. Permission to land?

FLIGHT BOSS (O.S.)

(over radio)

Delta Two, you are cleared to land.

68 EXT. TIGER CLAW

68

Maniac fires the afterburners on his Rapier, banks hard,  
pulls into line with the opening flight deck doors.

FORBES

Ooo! That must of been at least three  
g's...

Then Maniac rolls his craft UPSIDE DOWN and guns the  
throttle...

MANIAC

Try this...

69 INT. TIGER CLAW - FLIGHT DECK

69

FLIGHT BOSS

Delta Two, you're coming in too hot.  
Abort. I repeat, abort!...Delta Two?  
Do you copy? Shit!

70 INT. TIGER CLAW - FLIGHT DECK

70

An alarm barks out. Yellow clad deck personnel scramble  
to get out of the way of the oncoming Rapier. Which is  
still upside down.

FLIGHT BOSS

Delta Two. YOU ARE INVERTED!

As Maniac's ship rockets through the hanger bay doors

71 INT. RAPIER COCKPIT - MANIAC

71

MANIAC jerks his flight stick hard right.

72 INT. TIGER CLAW - FLIGHT DECK

72

And the Rapier flips over and touches down!

MANIAC

Not any more.

The Rapier fires it's reverse thrusters and brakes. The Rapier pulls to a halt just feet in front of a fuel truck and DECKMASTER PETERSON who was desperately trying to get the truck's driver to get his vehicle out of the Rapier's path.

FLIGHT BOSS  
I'm going to have your wings,  
Lieutenant! Just wait until your wing  
leader...DELTA ONE!

And Forbes' Rapier is coming in UPSIDE DOWN TOO!

FORBES  
(to Maniac)  
Now what were you saying?

Forbes' Rapier does A 540 DEGREE ROLL, righting itself at the last possible moment and touching down.

FORBES (CONT'D)  
Now, that's how you do it!

Maniac is already out of his cockpit. He walks up to Forbes' ship. The Deck crew keeps their distance -- still traumatized by Maniac's and Forbes' antics.

Forbes' cockpit pops open -- she's got a huge grin on her face.

MANIAC  
You did that to impress me.

FORBES  
Just trying to re-direct some of that  
testosterone.

They look at each other, sharing the adrenaline buzz.

FORBES (Cont'd)  
You're a total Maniac!

MANIAC  
"Maniac" Marshall at your service,  
ma'am

And Maniac has a new callsign. They start giggling like a couple of high school kids who just played a game of chicken. Then...

FORBES  
Oh shit.

She's looking past Maniac at DEVERAUX who stands on the flight deck, rigid and fuming.

INT. TIGER CLAW - DEVERAUX'S QUARTERS

Deveraux, still upset, paces. The door buzzer sounds. She opens it, and there's Forbes.

DEVERAUX

(scowling)

You don't want to be here right now.

Forbes, smiling, waves Maniac's bottle of Scotch.

FORBES

Single Malt...Just for you, sir.

DEVERAUX

Trying to bribe me?

FORBES

No. Thank you. The Flight Boss would have brought us up on charges if you hadn't said something.

DEVERAUX

Yeah. What the hell were you thinking?

FORBES

Well, I wasn't thinking with my head.

DEVERAUX

Goddamn it Rosie -- you're going to get yourself killed doing that.

FORBES

I know what you are thinking.

DEVERAUX

You're one of my best pilots, I can't afford to lose you.

Forbes can't believe she's heard the word.

FORBES

Sorry... Sorry. I was just showing off a bit in front of Maniac.

DEVERAUX

Maniac?

FORBES

Lt. Marshall. He's got a new callsign.

DEVERAUX

I hope it felt really good.

FORBES

Great -- better than sex...

She pours Deveraux's drink, puts it in her hand. Deveraux takes a healthy swig.

(CONTINUED)

*Green Amendments - Revised 3/4/98*

40A.

CONTINUED:

DEVERAUX

Bullshit.

FORBES

(smiles)

Well, better than sex with myself.

Deveraux smiles. Forbes laughs.

DEVERAUX

See that it never happens again.

FORBES

Never.

DEVERAUX drinks. Forbes, forgiven, relaxes.

FORBES

I've noticed you've been giving special attention to Maniac's friend...

DEVERAUX

Oh really, I think that might just be your imagination working overtime.

FORBES

He's pretty damned cute, Angel.

DEVERAUX

Just shut up and Pour.

Forbes pours her a meager drink, and with a lift of the eyebrows Deveraux gestures for her to fill the glass.

74A INT. SANSKY'S QUARTERS - TIGER CLAW

74A

SANSKY sits at his desk -- reviewing charts of the Ulysses corridor. On his desk is a HOLO-PIC. In it is Sansky at his graduating class at the Naval Academy. Next to him is a younger ADMIRAL WILSON.

\*  
\*  
\*

JUNIOR OFFICER'S VOICE

(over intercom)

You're needed in the chart room.

Sansky puts his pen down. He fondly takes the HOLO-PIC and looks at it.

SANSKY

(over intercom)

I'll be right there.

He takes out a HIP FLASK and takes a swig. A SMALL SHAKE in his hand is noticeable when he holds the flask. He stands to go. Forgets something. Turns back and picks up TOLWYN'S RING.

75 INT. TIGER CLAW - CHART ROOM

75

CLOSE ON: Thousands of numbers scrolling across the screen.

CAMERA pulls back and we see a huge holographic chart. A single blip, the Tiger Claw, flashes red on the curved grid. In front of the Tiger Claw is a mathematical representation of the pulsar, a pulsating, constantly moving series of circles. Unlike a black hole (a discrete singularity) or Quasar (potentially thousands of discrete singularities), the pulsar is a discrete singularity with an infinite number of constantly changing permutations, each one capable of transporting a vessel to another part of the galaxy. Problem is, most are dead ends. With an emphasis on dead.

Slowly, the grid begins to deform as an icicle shaped spike pulls and distorts the grid. The icicle transforms into a stalagmite, with a thick, wide hole at its neck. The flashing red point is poised in front of this huge gap in the grid.

CAMERA pulls back to reveal GERALD and DEVERAUX watching the hologram as PALADIN inputs final calculations into the NAVCOM. Sansky comes through the hatch. Looks at the chart with interest.

PALADIN points to the tip of the stalagmite. His hands trace the trajectory across the wide gap in the quadrant.

PALADIN

The Ulysses Corridor...four days of hard travel using three known jump points. By using this pulsar, we will be there in...

(Glances at a big digital clock.)

...less than three minutes.

HE glances at the console, pushes a final button.

GERALD (O.S.)

If your calculations are correct.

CAMERA pans to GERALD who's just entered the chart room

PALADIN

They're right.

GERALD

NAVCOM and the finest minds in the Confederation couldn't plot this jump. What makes you so sure your right?

75 CONTINUED:

75

PALADIN

Because they're Pilgrim coordinates,  
Mr. Gerald.

DEVERAUX reacts. CAMERA pans to BLAIR who's just  
entered the chart room.

DEVERAUX

Why aren't you at your station,  
Lieutenant Blair?

GERALD, already angry, turns to him.

BLAIR

Ma'am, I--

PALADIN cuts Blair off.

PALADIN

I asked Lieutenant Blair to be here.

GERALD

Why?

PALADIN ignores the question.

SANSKY

I authorized it.

PALADIN

We'll have a lovely view from the  
bridge.

PALADIN leaves the chart room. Blair stares at the  
gigantic spike in the holographic grid. After the others  
have filed out, MERLIN appears, worried.

MERLIN

If the entry trajectory is wrong, we'll  
be trapped in a moment outside of time  
and space...that is until the ship  
plummets into the pulsar and we become  
an infinitely small part of a special  
singularity. My guess is there's a  
fifty seven point one percent chance  
that we're doomed.

CLOSE ON BLAIR as he looks at the grid, at the  
coordinates, at the fast scrolling read outs.

BLAIR

The coordinates are right.

BLAIR exits. MERLIN, interested, watches him go,  
disappears.



76 INT. TIGER CLAW - PILOTS MESS

76

All of the pilots except Blair and Deveraux are gathered by the large portholes, staring out at the gigantic pulsar ahead of them, murmuring in awe.

POLANSKI

This thing is eating suns for breakfast.

KNIGHT

What the hell are we doing, here?

HUNTER

You know what we're not doing?

FORBES

Turning around.

MANIAC

The ultimate rush!

Most of the pilots stare at Maniac like he's nuts. Forbes just grins.

77 INT. TIGER CLAW - BRIDGE

77

Sansky, Gerald, Deveraux, Blair and Paladin are on the bridge along with the various officers and noncoms.

THEIR POV through bridge windows: The pulsar fills the windows, its huge black maw sucking suns and planets into its infinitely dense invisible core.

Suddenly, an alarm sounds. The NAVCOM A.I. voice speaks calmly.

AI VOICE

Attention! Attention. Course error. Adjust course immediately!

PALADIN

Ignore that! Helm, hold steady as she goes.

AI VOICE

Captain, the ship is headed into the PNR zone of an uncharted class two pulsar. One minute before gravitational pull is one hundred per cent.

SANSKY

What about it, Paladin?

PALADIN

The readings are wrong. You're A.I.'s sensors are not calibrated to the pulsar. They've already been warped by the gravitational field.

AI VOICE

I must insist we change course immediately....Initiating A.I. override.

There is a slight jerk as some course change appears to have been made. PALADIN leaps for the helm.

PALADIN

NO!

(Throwing a switch.)

Manual override! Now... Disregard your artificial intelligence or we're all dead!

GERALD

Captain, I believe you should reconsider.

SANSKY

...Steady as she goes, helm.

HELMSMAN

Aye, aye, sir.

The alarm continues to sound throughout the ship!

SC. 78 OMIT

79 INT. TIGER CLAW - MONTAGE:

79

The alarm has men and women sweating and tense. Sansky's voice comes over the intercom throughout.

SANSKY (V.O.)

(over intercom)

This is the Captain. Brace for jump point interphase. Fifteen seconds to jump point.

80 INT. TIGER CLAW - FLIGHT DECK/HANGER BAY

80

Two members of the arming crew, Specialists JONES and OLIVIA lock down a rack of missiles.

In two Rapiers, KNIGHT and SPIRIT, strap into their seats, power engines.

81 INT. TIGER CLAW - TORPEDO ROOM

81

Spaceman RODRIGUEZ, 2nd class, a young Latino crosses himself.

32 INT. TIGER CLAW - FLIGHT CONTROL 32

The Flight Boss drains his coffee and straps himself in.

33 INT. TIGER CLAW - PILOTS MESS 33

Most of the pilots are holding onto their tables or fastening the seat-belts on their chairs. Except for Forbes and Maniac.

34 INT. TIGER CLAW - ENGINE ROOM 34

Engineer DAVIES grabs onto a hand-hold and looks at his crew mates as various parts of the ship all begin to VIBRATE, slowly at first, then more and more violently, throwing any loose objects around.

35 INT. TIGER CLAW - BRIDGE 35

The vibrations grow worse, as people grab onto anything, eyes glued on the windows.

PALADIN

Steady.

BLAIR AND DEVERAUX are thrown together. This startles both of them, then they deliberately grab for a bulkhead.

BLAIR

The ship's trying to tear itself free of the space time fabric.

The vibration grows in pitch, until the sound is almost deafening. Almost on impulse, Deveraux's hand reaches out toward Blair's elbow, as if to have one last physical contact with another human. But it never reaches it!

FREEZE FRAME: The Tiger Claw enters the gap in the space time continuum. All motion and sound on the bridge stop. Nothing moves, either human or inanimate. Time has ceased, as well as any sense of motion or vibration. All is silent.

SC. 86 - 87 OMIT

38 INT. TIGER CLAW - VARIOUS STATIONS - MONTAGE 38

Throughout the ship, men and women are caught, Pompeii-like, with expressions of fear or bewilderment...

A LONG TRAVELING SHOT past all these crew members. Then...

39 INT. TIGER CLAW - BRIDGE 39

With a terrible shudder, life on the bridge resumes, alarms wail. Officers and crew are tossed about.

DEVERAUX AND BLAIR: Angel's hand continues forward, touching Blair's elbow. He turns to look at her, just as they are both SLAMMED AGAINST THE BULKHEAD.

They fall to their knees. The shuddering is intense. It feels like the ship is coming apart. But Blair reaches for Deveraux's face and tilts her chin up. Her forehead is bleeding from a scalp laceration.

BLAIR

You all right?

She is dizzy, but nods. Then Blair turns to glance out the windows.

DEVERAUX

Where are we?

THROUGH THE BRIDGE WINDOWS: There is no sign of the awesome pulsar, now. The blackness of space, peppered with stars.... A Jovian planet looms in the distance.

BLAIR

We're through the jump point. \*

RESUME BRIDGE: Even as the others stare out, the vibrations decrease, then disappear. The alarm ceases.

PALADIN

Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the Ulysses Corridor.

OBUTU

Launching Rapiers...Now.

Through the big windows, we see KNIGHT and SPIRIT launch, bank hard, accelerate away on afterburners.

SANSKY

Shields up. Mr. Obutu, stealth mode, please.

OBUTU hits a switch and the bridge controls power down. Red tactical lights kick on.

OBUTU

Going to stealth. Seven percent electronic emissions, zero communications.

SANSKY

Radar, status?

RADAR TECH

Scanners picking up strong electromagnetic signature at 111 mark 43. An asteroid field. I'd say she's a Kilrathi, sir.

BLAIR has fetched a first aid kit, and is using a small laser pen to seal Deveraux's scalp wound.

DEVERAUX

Ouch.

(CONTINUED)

BLAIR

Sorry.

BLAIR tries to check her scalp. As if annoyed by this enforced intimacy with Blair, DEVERAUX pulls away.

DEVERAUX

It's all right.

BLAIR

It's still bleeding. If I--

DEVERAUX

(pulls away)

It's all right.

BLAIR

(irked)

Yes, Ma'am.

SANSKY

(To Angel:)

Lt. Commander, prepare a recon. I want to know what's out there.

DEVERAUX

Yes, sir.

SHE heads out, Blair trailing.

SANSKY

And Deveraux, I don't want them to know we're here. Not yet.

SC. 90 - 93 OMIT

94 INT. TIGER CLAW - VARIOUS STATIONS - MONTAGE

94

As officers, pilots and crew listen to the intercom.

SANSKY (V.O.)

(over intercom)

This is the Captain. As most of you have guessed, we just made one hell of a jump.

Rodriguez kisses his St. Christopher...

SANSKY (CONT'D)

Actually we've just taken a little short cut into the Ulysses Corridor... If you don't already know, that's where the Pegasus Naval Base was attacked and destroyed. The main Kilrathi battle fleet is in the Quadrant and headed for the Charybdis Quasar. In eleven hours, it will be in position to jump into Earth space.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

\*

94 CONTINUED:

94

SANSKY (Cont'd)

Our mission is to find the Kilrathi,  
asses their capacities and plan of  
action, and if necessary, stop them.

Maniac and Forbes look at each other. Action!

SANSKY (CONT'D)

We're the only Confed ship in the  
sector, people. We can count on no  
help and no rescue. We can only count  
on each other. That is all.

94A EXT. CONCORDIA BATTLE GROUP - DEEP SPACE

94A

The Concordia, bracketed by other CONFED ships, races  
through space.

SUPERIMPOSE: CONCORDIA BATTLE GROUP, MARCH 17TH, 0400  
ZULU TIME. 12 HOURS FROM EARTH.

94B INT. CONCORDIA - BRIDGE

94B

TOLWYN looks out the window at fast moving space.  
BELLEGARDE approaches from behind.

BELLEGARDE

Message from Earth Command, sir. Their  
defenses are on line but--

TOLWYN

They don't believe they can withstand a  
Kilrathi battle group without the  
support of the fleet.

BELLEGARDE

No sir. But they will fight. Earth  
will never surrender.

TOLWYN

Surrender? That's not an option with  
the Kilrathi. They believe themselves  
to be the supreme race above all  
others. The rest of us are just here to  
do one thing.

BELLEGARDE

What's that?

TOLWYN

To die.

(Turns to face Bellegarde.)

Our status?

BELLEGARDE

We're running at 110 percent. We've  
already lost three ships. Two at jump  
points, one's reactor core melted down.

TOLWYN

Run at 120.

94C INT. TIGER CLAW - FLIGHT DECK

94C

BLAIR and DEVERAUX, in full flight suits, helmets in hand, walk together down the flight line. In front of them are TWO FULLY ARMED Rapiers.

BLAIR

Any standard operating procedure I should know about?

DEVERAUX

No SOP out here. There's only one rule.

BLAIR

Don't get killed?

DEVERAUX

Don't get me killed.

As SHE walks towards her Rapier, we see the markings on the side of the fighter: twenty-six kills. The same as Bossman.

BLAIR

Twenty-six. Jesus.

DEVERAUX

That puts me ahead of the law of averages. Well ahead. The curve'll catch up to me sooner or later.

SHE motions to the Rapier next to hers. From it's BURN MARKS and NUMBERING we recognize it as Lt. Cmdr Chen's old fighter. The ground crew has painted LT. BLAIR on the side.

DEVERAUX (CONT'D)

Your bird, Blair. Treat her well.

BLAIR

She's all mine.

DEVERAUX

And she'll probably be someone else's. Mount up. The clock is ticking.

94D EXT. DEEP SPACE - CHARYBDIS SECTOR

94D

Two pin points of light pass by a deserted planet, the light from a nearby brown dwarf star throws it into half light, half shadow -- they resolve into the two Rapiers. The Rapiers head for an asteroid field circling the brown dwarf.

As the Rapiers approach the asteroid field, we see, scattered amidst the rocks and ice, pieces of metal.

94E INT. RAPIER COCKPIT - BLAIR

94E

Blair scans his "heads up" display. On it, we see a digitized tactical schematic of the environment.

(CONTINUED)

94E CONTINUED:

94E

Hanging around his neck, OUTSIDE of his flight suit, is his Pilgrim cross. HE reacts to an odd shaped object spinning towards him.

BLAIR'S POV: A big, twisted and burned piece of metal spins by him. Painted on the side is "CONFEDERATION STATION PEGASUS."

94F INT. RAPIER COCKPIT - BLAIR

94F

Stunned, he watches the piece of metal spin by.

BLAIR

Angel. Did you catch that? That's from Pegasus.

94G INT. RAPIER COCKPIT - DEVERAUX

94G

Shaking her head.

DEVERAUX

Concussion must have blown pieces of the station all over the sector.

Her tactical display chirps. On her radar, we see a blip, another, then they disappear.

DEVERAUX

Pipe down. I'm getting something....

Suddenly, six blips appear on her radar. They're headed for the Rapiers.

DEVERAUX (CONT'D)

Radio silence. And get into the asteroids, now. Low power.

SC. 95-102 OMIT

103 EXT. ASTEROID BELT &amp; BROWN DWARF - WIDE SHOT

103

At the edge of the asteroid field and far below, a brown dwarf star glows dimly. A large Kilrathi Communications Ship is cruising up from the surface of the brown dwarf toward the asteroid belt. The two Rapiers, engines off, are shielded behind two large asteroids, a few hundred yards apart.

104 INT. RAPIER COCKPIT - BLAIR

104

Blair is sweating, now, scanning his instruments.

BLAIR

My scanners are blind, Merlin. Talk to me.

MERLIN'S voice only:



MERLIN

Crosstalk between a large Kilrathi vessel and the brown dwarf down there. Can't decipher the code.

BLAIR

They know we're here?

MERLIN

Possibly. From the sophistication of the equipment on board, I'd say the vessel is a Command and Communications module.

BLAIR

So what is it commanding?

MERLIN

At least six other ships down near the brown dwarf are communicating with it....Interesting. I'm picking up an ULF -- Ultra Low Frequency signal. The Rapier's scanners aren't equipped to receive or detect it.

BLAIR

But you are?

MERLIN

Don't tell me you've down-loaded my "sarcasm" program?

BLUE Amendments- Revised 13/2/98

51.

104 CONTINUED: (2)

104

BLAIR  
(ignoring him)  
What's it mean? This frequency?

\*  
\*

MERLIN  
It's a primitive pulse technology,  
ultra low frequency. Very slow, but it  
carries over extreme distances. Sort of  
like tom toms. Pilgrims used it in the  
war.

\*

BLAIR  
How do you know? You told me you  
didn't know anything about the  
Pilgrims?

Merlin is taken by surprise.

MERLIN  
I -- I don't know how I know it -- I  
just do. Perhaps it's buried in my sub-  
operating memory. Left over from the  
war. Maybe it's intuition.

\*

BLAIR  
Intuition?  
(scary thought)  
Well do you have a direction?

MERLIN  
It appears to be coming from quadrant  
thirty.

BLAIR  
That's near the Tiger Claw? What's it  
saying?

MERLIN  
The code isn't in my vocabulary.  
(detecting something)  
They're scanning the rocks.

\*

BLAIR  
Merlin off.

We can almost feel the pulse of energy passing over Blair  
as the Kilrathi ship scans the rocks.

105 EXT. KILRATHI COMMUNICATIONS SHIP

105

The ship draws closer to the asteroid ring, its exterior  
antennae revolving, seeking... The ship fires its retros,  
and hovers near a group of large asteroids...

WE PULL BACK To REVEAL Angel's Rapier only a few ship  
length's away, hidden behind the asteroid.

105A INT. RAPIER COCKPIT - DEVERAUX

105A

Angel can almost smell them out there. She reaches up and switches off everything in the cockpit she can--an attempt to reduce any electronic "noise" that could be detected by sensitive scanners.

DEVERAUX

(To herself, a whisper.)

Go on. Nothing in this mouse hole. Beat it.

SC. 106 OMIT

107 INT. RAPIER COCKPIT - BLAIR

107

Blair, too, has shut down much of his equipment, and sits in the dark behind a big rock. Tension is palpable.

BLAIR

What do they see, Merlin?

MERLIN

Nothing. Switch on your thermal scanner.

On Blair's heads up display: Not much...except a bright red corona coming from behind an asteroid.

BLAIR

They've spotted Angel's heat corona behind the asteroid.

MERLIN

Two more Kilrathi closing fast. Got to be fighters.

Blair switches on his radio and his other electronic gear.

BLAIR

Angel! They've spotted us! Two more bogies, coming in hot, six o'clock!

107A INT. RAPIER COCKPIT - DEVERAUX

107A

DEVERAUX switches everything back on, fear lessening. Excited now.

DEVERAUX

Can't spot them, Blair. Call it.

Blair touches his cross for good luck...

BLAIR

Jack in the Box. On three. One... two... three!

SC.108-109 OMIT

110 EXT. ASTEROID RING

110

Two Kilrathi Dralathi fighters are closing in fast, bracketing the ComCon ship...

The two Confed Rapiers suddenly spring into view above the asteroids and instantly unleash two missiles...

The missiles streak dead ahead and catch the two Kilrathi fighters before they can blink. ONE EXPLODES. The wreckage of the other one SPIRALS INTO THE ASTEROID ANGEL WAS BEHIND.

Blair and Angel fire two more missiles at the ConCom ship, but invisible deflector shields explode both of them safely away from the ship.

BLAIR

The big one's shielded. I've got two more bogies coming up from the brown dwarf. Engaging.

DEVERAUX

Negative! I count fourteen unfriendlies inbound. Looks like two destroyers. We are out of here!

The two Rapiers turn, kick in their afterburners and disappear in a streak of light.

110A EXT. SNAKEIR - SOMEWHERE IN THE ULYSSES CORRIDOR

110A

The great battle ship, surrounded by several smaller escorts are enroute to Charybdis Quasar -- The stars in the background look unfamiliar. \*

SUPERIMPOSE: KILRATHI BATTLE FLEET: SOMEWHERE IN THE ULYSSES CORRIDOR. 10 HOURS FROM THE CHARYBDIS QUASAR. \*

110B INT. SNAKEIR - BRIDGE

110B

The Kilrathi Admiral is on bended knee in front of a multiarmed fearsome beast-like Effigy -- The Kilrathi War God Sivar. Around the idol are the banners of the Admiral's clan - A testimony to their fallen and future glory.

The Kilrathi Captain approaches and waits respectfully. The Admiral raises his head.

KILRATHI CAPTAIN

(subtitled)

Sir, our lead ships have engaged a Confederation reconnaissance flight in sector 7.

ADMIRAL

Do we have a fix on the Tiger Claw signal?

Green Amendments- Revised 3/4/98

54.

110B CONTINUED:

110B

KILRATHI CAPTAIN

Yes, sir.

The Admiral stands and looks into the shadows beyond his command chair.

KILRATHI ADMIRAL

(English: delayed  
translation)

Your friend is dedicated.

The TRAITOR steps forward. Still in this light we can't quite make out his features.

\*  
\*

TRAITOR

He's a Pilgrim. This is what he trained for. Prepare the ambush.

\*  
\*

ADMIRAL

...In time.

TRAITOR

That ship is the only thing that stands between us and the success of this mission. It is yours for the taking.

\*  
\*  
\*

ADMIRAL

That ship is insignificant. The hate of your kind blinds you. All things pass. Let it go.

\*

TRAITOR

You are wrong, old man. Most things pass: love, passion, anger, life. One is eternal: hate.

\*  
\*

111 INT. TIGER CLAW - BRIDGE

111

BLAIR and DEVERAUX stand "at ease" before Gerald and Sansky. Paladin stands in the background.

GERALD

You knew what the orders were. No contact with the enemy. Now you've compromised the mission, and the very existence of this ship.

BLAIR

I had no choice, sir. They had spotted Lt. Commander Deveraux's heat signature.

GERALD

Really? Angel, how sure are you that the Kilrathi had you targeted? Given the Lieutenant's background, are you really that certain?

(CONTINUED)

111 CONTINUED:

111

BLAIR

Excuse me?

GERALD

It's well documented that Pilgrim  
saboteurs have been responsible for  
much of the Confed's problems in this  
war...

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

DEVERAUX turns to Blair. The look on her face says  
volumes.

DEVERAUX

(overly stern)

Did they have me targeted? Or did you  
just get trigger happy?

Before Blair can answer, Sansky cuts in.

SANSKY

This is sterile conjecture. The  
Kilrathi are aware that Rapiers don't  
fly around in deep space without a  
carrier close by.

(To Blair:)

Tell me about this "communication" you  
claim to have heard.

\*

BLAIR

(Eyes on Gerald:)

It was a ULF signal emanating from the  
vicinity of the Tiger Claw, sir.

SANSKY

(To the Tiger Claw A.I.)

What about it, NAVCOM? Were any  
communications sent from this ship?

AI VOICE

Negative, Captain. There were no  
transmissions sent by the Tiger Claw.

SANSKY turns to Blair.

SANSKY

Thank you Lieutenant. That is all.

BLAIR

Sir, I--

SANSKY

Dismissed, Lieutenant.

BLAIR nods, exits.

SANSKY (CONT'D)

Your assessment, Mr. Gerald?

\*

111 CONTINUED: (2)

111

GERALD

That ComCon's running point for the battle group. Their fleet won't be far behind. They know we're here, so I say we send them a message. I can have my fighters up in thirty minutes.

PALADIN

That would be a mistake. Without her fighters, the Tiger Claw's vulnerable.

Sansky doesn't answer. A difficult decision.

GERALD

You're a civilian scout, Mr. Taggart, not a naval officer. Tactical operations are our concern.

PALADIN

There's a great deal more at stake here than you seem to understand, Commander.

SANSKY holds up a hand.

SANSKY

The X.O. is right. I'm sorry Mr. Taggart. Destroying that ConCom and its escorts will slow the Kilrathi. Deveraux will lead a strike force. You will accompany her.

(To Obutu:)

Con, plot a course for the rings of planet four fifteen.

112 INT. TIGER CLAW - DEVERAUX'S QUARTERS

112

ANGEL, in her flight suit, is alone, spending a quiet moment before the upcoming battle. She's looking at an OLD HOLO-VID - dated by the worn frame and static on the video. A SMALL GIRL is playing with her PARENTS.

The door buzzer sounds. She hits the pause button. The hologram freezes in place. Deveraux groans and gets off the bunk, assuming it's Forbes.

Then her door slides open. Blair stands there in his flight suit, looking grim. For once, she is caught completely off guard.

BLAIR

I need to talk to you.

He pushes past her, not waiting to be invited in.

DEVERAUX

You just don't barge into my--

BLAIR

Here.

112 CONTINUED:

112

He tosses his Pilgrim's cross at her. She catches it.

BLAIR (CONT'D)

I wear it for luck. It was my mother's.

DEVERAUX

Is your luck at odds with our mission?

BLAIR

You think he's right? Gerald -- in his mind I started selling out the Tiger Claw the moment I stepped on board.

DEVERAUX

I don't see how can you be a Pilgrim and fight on our side.

BLAIR

I'm not a Pilgrim -- I don't even know what a Pilgrim is.

Deveraux looks at him.

BLAIR (Cont'd)

My mother was. She was an off-worlder who grew up hating Earth, humanity. My father fought for the Confederation. Somehow, despite all the hate they found each other. They died before I was five. He was killed trying to save her in the Peron massacre. The cross is all I have. I don't know where I belong, Commander -- except here fighting and flying.

Deveraux is maybe starting to understand him. She turns the cross over in her hands.

DEVERAUX

Sit down, Lieutenant.

Blair sits.

DEVERAUX

Why do you think they call me Angel?

BLAIR gives a shake of his head.

DEVERAUX (CONT'D)

It's a real weeper -- headlines: My parents died in the same war. I grew up in an orphanage.

BLAIR meets her gaze. A connection.

DEVERAUX (Cont'd)

At night, I'd cry for them. The sisters told me they were angels. I kept crying for them to come and take me to heaven.

(MORE)



112 CONTINUED: (2)

112

DEVERAUX (Cont'd)  
They weren't angels they were dead --  
gone. It was like they never existed.

BLAIR  
Like Bossman?

Deveraux's look is Blair's answer.

DEVERAUX  
Emotion gets in the way of our mission.

BLAIR  
Commander -- emotion is what separates  
us from the Pilgrims and the Kilrathi.

Deveraux has spent a lifetime denying the pain. Blair  
has struck a nerve.

DEVERAUX  
(Angry/denying tears)  
Lt. Cmdr Chen was -- Bossman and I got  
close. Too close. And then he got  
himself killed.

Neither says anything for a minute. Blair starts to  
reach out to touch her, but Deveraux recovers and puts  
on a game face.

DEVERAUX (Cont'd)  
We are square. You saved my ass today.  
I'd better suit up.

DEVERAUX hands Blair back the cross. BLAIR nods, gets up,  
starts to exit.

DEVERAUX (Cont'd)  
And Blair. Gerald's a clown.

112A INT. TIGER CLAW - MANIAC QUARTERS

112A

Maniac and Forbes have just had sex. Maniac is exhausted  
while Forbes is still excited. Forbes obviously needs some  
more attention.

FORBES  
Come on, fire it up one more time.

MANIAC  
I think the big Maniac needs time to  
refuel.

FORBES  
Come on, baby. Don't I take care of  
you?

MANIAC  
That is a big yes, sir!

FORBES  
Well don't you care about my needs?

112A CONTINUED:

112A

MANIAC

I'm all about your needs.

FORBES

Really?

MANIAC

Yeah. And right now you need to shut up and go to sleep.

(gets serious)

You make it all worthwhile.

FORBES

Make what worthwhile?

MANIAC

Coming out here to fight. Saying goodbye to everyone back home.

FORBES

Yeah, I remember the briefing -- by the time you return, everyone you know will be dead and buried.

MANIAC

I don't care about any of that.

Maniac reaches over and starts to kiss Forbes deeply.

Suddenly, an alarm rings out. FORBES rolls over.

FORBES

Shit. This war's really starting to piss me off.

112B EXT. TIGER CLAW - FLIGHT DECK

112B

DEVERAUX steps on to the flight line, looks out over the line of pilots scurrying around fighters with flight crews. Maniac and Forbes are the last to arrive still putting on their uniforms. The rest of the pilots notice with amusement.

DEVERAUX

Alright, ladies, listen up. We have a ConCom with escorts. That means two, possibly three destroyers, fighters, and support ships. Primary target is the ConCom. Everything else is gravy. Let's make them bleed. Mount up!

Hunter's Rapier is next to Blair's. DEVERAUX approaches.

MANIAC

I'm feeling good today!

BLAIR

Try to keep your mind on the Kilrathi, there "Maniac".

112B CONTINUED:

112B

DEVERAUX

Blair, take Hunter's wing.

HUNTER

Ma'am, I'd just as soon you assign me another wing man.

DEVERAUX turns to Hunter, hard.

DEVERAUX

You have some problem I should be aware of, Hunter?

HUNTER

(Looking at Blair:)

Yes, ma'am, I do. I don't fly with Pilgrims.

DEVERAUX looks at the big Aussie, disgust evident.

DEVERAUX

...Blair, you'll fly my wing.

BLAIR

Are you sure about that?

DEVERAUX

Did I just give you an suggestion or an order?

BLAIR

I got your wing, ma'am.

112B CONTINUED: (2)

112B

SHE walks away, leaves Blair and Hunter staring at one another

HUNTER

You put me or my shipmates in danger,  
half-breed, I'll kill you.

BLAIR

You'll try.

113 EXT. ASTEROID RING - BROWN DWARF

113

Like Indians sneaking up on the settlers, the wing of Rapiers, accompanied by two Broadsword bombers, quietly picks its way through the debris of the asteroid rings around the brown dwarf. We can hear the pilot's radio chatter.

DEVERAUX (O.S.)

Picking up any Com traffic, Baker seven?

PALADIN (O.S.)

Nothing.

DEVERAUX (O.S.)

They're observing radio silence, except for short range frequencies.

PALADIN (O.S.)

Or they aren't here any more.

DEVERAUX (O.S.)

Baker Two, three and four... Anything?

FORBES (O.S.)

Nothing happening, boss.

BLAIR (O.S.)

Negative, chief.

114 INT. RAPIER COCKPIT - MANIAC

114

Maniac is watching a cluster of blips on his HUD.

MANIAC

All right losers, listen up. I've got three confirmed targets at five o'clock, bugging the brown dwarf.

FORBES (O.S.)

Confirm that. Middle one's got a massive electromagnetic signature.

DEVERAUX (O.S.)

It's the ConCom. Alright ladies, Deploy for attack -- the clock is ticking!

INTERCUT WITH:

115 INT. BROADSWORD BOMBER COCKPIT - PALADIN

115

Scanning his equipment. Something's wrong.

PALADIN

(To himself:)

That's no ConCom.

(Into his mic:)

Abort!

116 INT. VARIOUS COCKPITS

116

Deveraux is incensed.

DEVERAUX

Baker seven, you have no authority over this mission of its personnel. You will obey my orders.

PALADIN

Forget it. These are supply ships. They were left behind and out of harms way. The Tiger Claw is at risk. We have to get back.

\*

DEVERAUX

You are a civilian scout--

PALADIN

Commander, I am not a civilian.

(pause; decides)

I hold the rank of Commodore in Confederation Naval Intelligence, reporting directly to Admiral Tolwyn. My callsign is Paladin.

Aboard the other Rapiers, there is astonishment.

FORBES

Yeah, right. And I'm Admiral Nelson.

## PALADIN

My security verification code is  
Charlie Six Alpha Zebra Niner....Try  
it, Commander. Now.

There is a tense moment aboard every fighter in the wing.

Finally, Deveraux gives, punches the numbers into her computer. Her screen blinks for a moment - Then a message flashes on it; "Commodore James Taggart, callsign: Paladin. Fourth Fleet - Security access granted".

## DEVERAUX

Lucky guess.

## PALADIN

Listen to me, Angel. If I'm wrong,  
you'll have missed out on taking out a  
couple of freighters. If I'm right, the  
Tiger Claw could already be under  
attack.

## FORBES

The Claw is already in that radiation  
belt, boss. They couldn't radio for us  
if they wanted to.

All the weight is on Deveraux...

117 EXT. TIGER CLAW - NEAR JOVIAN PLANET

117

The Tiger Claw makes its way amidst giant asteroids...  
Three moons orbit the huge gaseous planet in the  
background.

118 INT. TIGER CLAW - BRIDGE

118

SANSKY stands alone. In his hand he plays with Tolwyn's  
ring. His thoughts are impossible to discern.

CLOSE ON SANSKY: a BEAD OF SWEAT trickles down his  
forehead.

The Tiger Claw cruises between a small moon orbiting the  
huge Jovian planet in the background. A thick series of  
rings glow dimly ahead of the ship. Rapier glint as  
they maneuver while escorting the carrier through the  
"pass" between the two barren moons. Panicked voice cuts  
over the intercom:

## PILOT'S VOICE

(over intercom)

Bogies inbound. I say again--

(static)

I'm hit! I'm hit! Mayday!

Sansky doesn't move. Gerald bursts onto the bridge.

## GERALD

Who's breaking radio silence?

(CONTINUED)

RADAR MAN  
(turning from screen)  
I read multiple targets inbound!

OBUTU, the Officer of the Watch turns to look out the huge windows. GERALD follows his gaze.

THEIR POV: Dozens of small glinting dots, and three larger ones, appear from behind the moon. \*

Gerald looks at Sansky who seems to have lost his nerve. \*

GERALD  
Battle stations! Launch all fighters!

OBUTU  
(relays commands)  
Battle stations! Battle stations! \*

The bridge light switches to an EERIE RED GLOW, as the alarm sounds.

SC. 119 OMIT

120 INT. TIGER CLAW - FLIGHT DECK 120

Pilots and crew sprint across the deck toward their planes as the huge flight doors open and the force field curtain activates.

AI VOICE  
Battle stations! Launch all fighters!

121 EXT. BETWEEN JOVIAN PLANET MOONS 121

The Confederation Rapiers fiercely engage the oncoming Kilrathi fighters. The sky is soon full of individual dogfights. The RADIO CHATTER of the various pilots as they engage choke the airwaves. A Rapier is hit, and spirals past, on fire. A Krant fighter disintegrates.

122 EXT. TIGER CLAW 122

Rapiers leap from the decks into space and streak toward the distant battle. A Broadsword bomber blasts through the air lock curtain into space.

123 INT. TIGER CLAW - BRIDGE 123

OBUTU  
All fighters launched, sir.

GERALD  
(to Sansky)  
Sir?

Sansky snaps out of his trance -- suddenly all business --

SANSKY  
Shields up!

(CONTINUED)

123 CONTINUED:

123

OBUTU  
All shields are engaged.

\*  
\*

SANSKY  
Torpedo room! Prepare all tubes!

124 INT. TIGER CLAW - TORPEDO ROOM

124

Rodriguez loads and locks a torpedo...



125 INT. TIGER CLAW - BRIDGE

125

AI VOICE  
All tubes ready to fire.

RADAR MAN  
I count three dozen Kilrathi  
starfighters, two destroyers, and one  
battle ship, sir!

SANSKY  
(to Gerald)  
That damned Taggart was right.

GERALD  
Maybe he knew something we didn't.

RADAR MAN  
Torpedoes incoming!

GERALD  
Brace for impact!

126 EXT. TIGER CLAW

126

TWO LARGE, STRANGELY CONFIGURED TORPEDOES streak through  
the blackness and EXPLODE against the invisible force  
shield with an awesome burst of energy.

127 INT. TIGER CLAW - HANGER BAY

127

The shock wave from the explosions rock the ship, sending  
men and heavy equipment flying and rolling across the  
deck.

SC. 128 OMIT

129 INT. TIGER CLAW - BRIDGE

129

Impacts on the force shield directly in front of them  
continue to send shock waves through the Tiger Claw.

GERALD  
Give me a target, Mr. Falk!

RADAR MAN  
Target acquisition imminent....We have  
a lock!

GERALD  
Fire tubes one and two!

Officers and crew watch as two white traces from the  
rocket propelled torpedoes streak toward the distant  
dots.

130 EXT. KILRATHI DESTROYER

130

The torpedoes SLAM INTO the weak shields of the destroyer  
and EXPLODE. The shock wave breaks the destroyer in half,  
spewing a huge gas bubble and debris into apace.

130 CONTINUED:

130

WIDER: The Battle ship moves up, parallel with the second Kilrathi destroyer, launches torpedoes.

SC. 131 OMIT

132 EXT. TIGER CLAW

132

The huge torpedoes slam into the force shield, explode!

133 INT. TIGER CLAW - BRIDGE

133

The shaking and shock waves causes widespread damage on the bridge.

OBUTU

The force shield is suffering a forty per cent failure. Battery room reports a fire. Torpedo room reporting damage. Unable to launch.

\*

Sansky picks himself up off the deck. What now?

134 EXT. TIGER CLAW

134

Kilrathi fighters -- Dralathi and Krants -- are now just outside the shield, battling Rapiers.

135 INT. TIGER CLAW - BRIDGE

135

The Radar man peers at his screen.

THE RADAR SCREEN: A dozen more points of light now appear on the far edge of the screen, dead ahead.

RADAR MAN

I'm getting a dozen more targets, behind the battle ship.

GERALD

They're bringing in reinforcements.

SANSKY

We should be flattered.  
(over intercom)  
Torpedo room report.

SC. 136 OMIT

137 INT. TIGER CLAW - TORPEDO ROOM

137

Amid smoke and general chaos, Rodriguez grabs the com.

RODRIGUEZ

(over intercom)  
Tubes three and four damaged.  
autoloaders not operational.

138 INT. TIGER CLAW - BRIDGE

138

SANSKY looks out the big windows, silent, yet not afraid. There's a certain preternatural calmness to him that one might even equate with relief.

RADAR MAN

Captain! I'm getting a coded friend or foe acknowledge from the new starfighters! They're ours, sir!

SANSKY

It's Deveraux's wing!

139 EXT. BETWEEN MOONS

139

In attack formation, the Confederation wing of Rapiers and two Broadwords comes in behind the dreadnought and destroyer.

140 INT. RAPIER COCKPIT - DEVERAUX

140

A half dozen targets present themselves on her heads up display.

DEVERAUX

All right ladies, all Rapiers except Maniac and Blair, engage those Dralthi.

FORBES (O.S.)

See you later, nugget.

MANIAC (O.S.)

Watch your ass, Rosie.

141 EXT. BETWEEN MOONS

141

The Rapiers peel off two by two and engage the oncoming Dralthi fighters. The sky is alive with spiraling missiles and laser fire as the starfighters begin their deadly dance.

DEVERAUX (O.S.)

Broadwords, follow me in. Maniac, Blair. Cover us!

The two BROADSWORD bombers head for the larger Kilrathi ships.

142 INT. BROADSWORD COCKPIT

142

Paladin grimly adjusts his course, and throws open several switches.

PALADIN

Roger that. Beginning bomb run.

143 EXT. DREADNOUGHT AND DESTROYER 143

The Kilrathi ships launch a barrage of torpedoes, which streak toward the damaged Tiger Claw.

144 INT. TIGER CLAW - VARIOUS STATIONS 144

The torpedoes slam into the shield and send shockwaves throughout the ship, causing major destruction. Then, below decks, a TORPEDO PENETRATES, and EXPLODES.

ENGINE ROOM: Men and equipment are ENGULFED IN A FIRE BALL. Engineer Davies is sucked out into the void!

SC. 145 OMIT

146 EXT. TIGER CLAW 146

There is a gaping hole in the side of the ship. Gas, fire and debris spew out, surrounding the ship in a miasmic cloud. The ship begins to yaw and roll.

147 INT. TIGER CLAW - BRIDGE 147

Several crewmen are injured on the bridge. Sansky is badly wounded and his head is covered with blood. Gerald stoops to help him.

OBUTU

(relaying reports)

The hull has been breached at level three. Steering loss, eighty percent.

GERALD

Sir! Sir. Medic to the bridge!

SANSKY

(weakly)

What's Deveraux doing?

148 EXT. BROADSWORDS & THREE RAPIERS 148

The Broadswords are on a bombing run. Deveraux's Rapier leads them in...

Four Kilrathi fighters -- Salthi -- move to intercept. Deveraux shoots one out of the sky with a missile! Blair gets another with his lasers...

MANIAC

Hey! Save some for me...

Maniac shoots a Salthi's wing off. It spirals into the last Kilrathi fighter, both go up in a fireball!

MANIAC (CONT'D)

Buy one, get one free!

Cannon fire starts reaching up towards the fighters.

DEVERAUX

It's getting hot. It's up to the  
bombers -- let's get back out there.

The Rapiers veer off. The Broadwords continue on their  
bomb run.

PALADIN (O.S.)

(over radio)

Thanks for the escort

(to Knight)

Steady on course. Wait for them to  
launch a torpedo. They'll lower their  
shield just before.

The sky fills with laser blasts and tachyon cannon fire.  
The Broadwords countermeasures computer automatically  
activates a variety of weapons, fireballs, tiny  
electronically filled missiles, etc. STILL, THE  
BROADWORDS ARE TAKING HITS.

149 INT. BROADWORD COCKPIT - KNIGHT

149

As the target looms closer, the wall of anti-starcraft  
fire terrifies him.

KNIGHT

They're throwing up too much flak!

The Broadword is rocked.

KNIGHT (CONT'D)

I'm hit!

PALADIN (O.S.)

(over radio)

Almost there. Steady.

But there is another blast and Knight DISAPPEARS IN A  
FIREBALL!

150 EXT. NEAR DESTROYER AND DREADNOUGHT.

150

As Knight's Broadword disintegrates, Paladin veers away  
from the fireball.

151 INT. RAPIER COCKPIT - DEVERAUX

151

Deveraux is engaged with two Krant, weaves hard right,  
left, pulling six g loops. She fires two missiles. Behind  
her, one of the Krant explodes.

152 EXT. RAPIERS AND KRANT

152

The second Krant is firing more accurately at Deveraux.  
Then Blair appears from underneath, and rips the Krant to  
shreds with tachyon cannon fire. He blasts through the  
debris.

DEVERAUX (O.S.)

What took you so long?

(CONTINUED)

BLAIR (O.S.)  
I took the scenic route.

153 INT. RAPIER COCKPIT - BLAIR

153

Blair is scanning the sky.

BLAIR  
Where's Paladin?

MANIAC (O.S.)  
No visual contact. Son-of-a-bitch  
booked!

DEVERAUX (O.S.)  
The battle ship's preparing to launch.  
Torpedo tubes opening.

154 EXT. DREADNOUGHT

154

The huge vessels forward tubes do indeed dilate open.

BLAIR (O.S.)  
(angry)  
They'll have to lower their shield.

The dreadnought passes close to the broken hull of the  
first destroyer...

Only then does Paladin's Broadsword appear, practically  
clinging to the wreckage.

155 INT. BROADSWORD COCKPIT - PALADIN

155

Paladin, looking very grim, hastily reactivates his  
electronics, and moves in behind the battle ship.

PALADIN  
Baker leader, get your fighter clear of  
the pulse wave!

DEVERAUX (O.S.)  
Roger that. Maniac, Blair. Break  
contact! Return to ship!

156 EXT. BETWEEN TWO MOONS

156

The Three Rapiers veer off sharply, kick in afterburners,  
and streak toward the Tiger Claw...

The Broadsword, practically on top of the battle ship  
ignites its own after burners, and LAUNCHES A TORPEDO...

Then it rockets toward the nearest moon, laser and cannon  
fire following it.

Torpedo impacts the battle ship. Everything disappears  
in an INTENSE WHITE LIGHT. Seconds pass, the light dims,  
and a huge explosion breaks the battle ship in two.  
Instantly, a shockwave starts to spread out, hits the  
destroyer.

(CONTINUED)

156 CONTINUED:

156

The destroyer is knocked on its side and collides with the bow half of the much larger Battle ship. A fire starts amidships, then the destroyer's ammunition begins to cook off. IT EXPLODES AND BURNS.

157 EXT. BROADSWORD - PALADIN

157

Shockwave gains on the bomber, catches it!

158 INT. BROADSWORD COCKPIT - PALADIN

158

The pulse wave hits, and all electronics fry and go dead. Paladin begins to spin as if he were in a dryer. His hand reaches the manual eject controls, and jerks the handle.

159 EXT. BROADSWORD - PALADIN

159

The ejection pod tumbles free of the Broadsword. It slowly rotates away from the stricken bomber, which grows smaller and smaller. Then it impacts on the surface of the airless moon in a cloud of ancient dust.

160 INT. PALADIN'S POD

160

The cockpit section of the Broadsword, encased in the pod, rotates down toward the surface of the meteor-pocked moon. Paladin's head has a gash, and blood streams into his eyes.

PALADIN

Well, it was fun while it lasted.

He tries to reactivate his electronics and fire the boosters, but nothing works. The white surface of the moon draws nearer. Then he accepts it, grins, remembers a few lines from his school days....

PALADIN (CONT'D)

(murmurs; half smile)

"...My mind misgives some consequence,  
yet hanging in the stars, shall  
bitterly begin his fearful date with  
this night's revels...."

A SUDDEN, BRUTAL JERK steadies the pod and stops its rotation. Paladin is astonished. He looks down at the moon, then blinks up at the underbelly of Blair's Rapier, and the faint illumination of a tractor beam. BLAIR PEERS down at him, salutes.

161 EXT. NEAR TIGER CLAW

161

The remaining Kilrathi fighters break off their engagements and high tail it back toward the far side of the twin moons.

162 EXT. RAPIERS - MANIAC AND FORBES

162

MANIAC

Forbes, you want some more?

162 CONTINUED:

162

FORBES

Like you have to ask.

Maniac and Forbes gun their two Rapiers after the fleeing ships. Then...

DEVERAUX (O.S.)

Baker One to all Baker pilots. Return to the ship. Repeat, return to the ship!

FORBES

Maniac?

MANIAC

Hey! What about my needs?

163 EXT. FLEEING KILRATHI FIGHTERS

163

Suddenly two Dralathi veer around and head back, on a collision course.

164 INT. RAPIER COCKPIT - FORBES

164

Forbes sees the oncoming Dralathi...

FORBES

They're trying to ram! I guess they don't want to play nice.

...and opens fire with everything she's got. The Dralathi disintegrates right in front of her.

MANIAC'S POV: The second Dralathi coming straight at him...

MANIAC

Watch this Rosie.

And Maniac guns his Rapier right at the Dralathi...

FORBES

Shoot him...MANIAC, OPEN FIRE!

But Maniac continues on a collision course. Forbes brings her Rapier in behind Maniac, trying to get a shot on the Dralathi...

FORBES (CONT'D)

Shoot him, or I will!

MANIAC

It's all in the timing...

The Dralathi and Maniac's fighter are within seconds of colliding...



When Maniac ROLLS his fighter sideways, pulls his nose up and lets loose a volley of cannon fire into the Dralhti's cockpit! The Dralhti critically hit, JUST MISSES Maniac's ship and spirals out of control right into...

SC. 165 OMIT

166 EXT. RAPIER - FORBES

166

Maniac realizes, but it's too late!

MANIAC (O.S.)

(shouting)

Rosie, shit! PULL UP!

But Forbes can't react quick enough -- The Dralhti strikes the side of her ship, amid a shower of sparks.

167 EXT. RAPIERS - MANIAC AND FORBES

167

Maniac comes alongside Forbes heavily damaged fighter. One entire side has been nearly shorn away. One engine remains. Still Forbes, injured, is holding her steady. Maniac eases his Rapier in until he can look into her cockpit.

MANIAC

Rosie. Can you hold her?

FORBES

I could fly this thing and cook you breakfast.

But the Rapier wobbles and veers dangerously.

168 INT. RAPIER COCKPIT - MANIAC AND FORBES

168

Forbes steadies her craft.

MANIAC

Hey, quit showing off.

FORBES

Impressive, huh?

MANIAC

Eject. I'll tractor you in.

FORBES

You'd love that, wouldn't you? The ejection system is fried.

MANIAC

Just stay with me, Rosie. We'll do it together.

The two Rapiers are, in fact, coming in on the open doors to the Tiger Claw's flight deck.

169 FORBES POV - THE TIGER CLAW

169

Forbes fighter continues to shutter and yaw. She fights it and lines up on the flight deck, a yellow beam of light leading the way.

FORBES

Jeez, the ship looks worse than I do after a three day shore pass.

INTERCUT WITH:

170 INT. RAPIER COCKPIT - MANIAC

170

He glances over at Forbes cockpit, only yards away.

MANIAC

(over radio)

Baker three and four to Con. We're coming in. Clear away everything that isn't bolted down.

FLIGHT BOSS

(responds; radio)

Roger that, Baker three and four. Clear to land.

MANIAC

(worried, now)

We're coming in too hot.

FORBES

Sorry, but my brakes are in the shop.

MANIAC

Line it up. That's it.

FORBES

Piece of cake. Just like before.

MANIAC

Except that you're right side up.

FORBES

(almost chuckles)

I knew something was wrong!

MANIAC

Almost there.

Through the canopy, Maniac can see the doors widening like a giant mouth. They're moving too fast. He glances over. Forbes Rapier is shuttering and yawing.

MANIAC

Okay... Easy. Just ease it in.

Forbes is fighting the controls with all her might.

FORBES  
(tension in her voice)  
I love it when you talk dirty.

MANIAC  
Pull up! Pull up!

SC. 171 OMIT

172 INT. TIGER CLAW - FLIGHT DECK

172

The two Rapiers appear in the door. Maniac's Rapier manages to land, but Forbes catches a wing and FLIPS ONTO ITS BACK, slides to a stop outside the air lock force field.

Maniac's craft nearly crashes before he can stop. He pops the canopy and leaps out, running toward the crash.

BLAIR runs after him. In the background we can see Blair's Rapier and Paladin, being tended by a Medic.

BLAIR  
She's outside the air lock! You go through the force field and you're jello!

MANIAC  
(Out of control)  
Get me a suit! Get me a suit!

He runs toward the force field, staring through it at the wreckage of Forbes Rapier.

MANIAC (CONT'D)  
(Screams)  
Rosie! Rosie!

173 EXT. TIGER CLAW

173

A dozen Rapiers are still hovering outside the flight deck doors in formation.

174 INT. RAPIER COCKPIT - DEVERAUX

174

Deveraux looks out through her canopy, sees the wreckage of Forbes' Rapier.

DEVERAUX  
Forbes? Rosie? Can you hear me? Rosie?  
Answer. Just key your mike, if you can.  
Come on girl. Just one little click.

174A INT. RAPIER COCKPIT - FORBES

174A

She mortally wounded and knows it. She won't break radio silence and risk the rest of her comrades in a vain attempt to save her. She ignores Deveraux's pleas.

174B INT. RAPIER COCKPIT - DEVERAUX

174B

None of the other pilots breaks the long silence.  
Until...

HUNTER

I've got approximately ninety seconds  
of fuel left, Commander.

PILOT'S VOICE

Ditto, for me.

Deveraux studies the wreckage. Could anyone have  
survived? Finally....

DEVERAUX

Rosie...?

(silence)

Baker Leader to Con. Push that wreckage  
off the deck!

Deveraux can't take her eyes off the wreckage.

175 INT. TIGER CLAW - FLIGHT DECK

175

An AUTOMATED BULLDOZER-LIKE VEHICLE with a big blade in  
front, built expressly for this purpose, trundles toward  
the air lock curtain and the Rapier wreckage. The noise  
makes Maniac turn.

MANIAC

Hey...? What are you doing? Hey!

Maniac runs past the heavy vehicle and looks up at the  
Con Tower windows, in the wall above him. He can see the  
grim faced Flight Boss there. He begins waving his arms.

MANIAC (CONT'D)

Hey! You can't do this! You can't do  
this. Stop! Stop! Please!

The bulldozer goes through the force field. Maniac runs  
after it. Last second, BLAIR tackles him!

BLAIR

There's nothing you can do!

MANIAC

Get off me you Pilgrim son-of-a-bitch!

He hits Blair hard in the mouth. Blood spurts, and  
Blair's grip on Maniac breaks. Maniac runs towards the  
bulldozer. But Blair manages to wrestle him to the  
ground.

BLAIR

(angry)

Are you going to kill yourself too?

Held by Blair, Maniac watches in silent horror as the  
bulldozer PUSHES THE RAPIER WRECKAGE OFF THE DECK.

175 CONTINUED:

175

SC. 176 OMIT

177 INT. RAPIER COCKPIT - DEVERAUX

177

HER POV: The wreckage of Forbes' Rapier tumbling away. The cockpit has been cracked. It's surface reflects light into Deveraux's eyes once, then it floats clear of her line of sight. A moment passes. Then....

DEVERAUX

Baker Leader to Con. Request permission to land.

178 INT. TIGER CLAW - FLIGHT DECK

178

The waiting Rapiers land. Deveraux's Rapier is the last one in...

Deveraux climbs out of her plane. Blair, Maniac, Hunter, Polanski and others stand on the deck -- Forbes was their unofficial leader.

Deveraux fights to keep it together -- she cannot show any emotion to her subordinates. She sees Blair -- she averts her eyes and lands on Maniac. She marches up to him.

DEVERAUX

Lt. Marshall you disobeyed a direct order.

MANIAC

I was --

DEVERAUX

Which during wartime is considered treason and punishable by death. Hunter -- give me your gun.

Hunter and the other's exchange worried glances. Blair steps forward.

BLAIR

You can't bring her back.

DEVERAUX

There is no one to bring back -- give me your gun, Hunter.

Maniac meets Deveraux's eyes -- he's worried, but hiding it.

Hunter takes out his gun.

BLAIR

Hunter, put the gun away.

HUNTER

She's the CO, nugget.

(CONTINUED)

Blair moves toward Hunter, Polanski grabs him. Hunter gives Deveraux the gun. She raises it up to Maniac's chest -- he's not moving.

BLAIR

What's with you? It was a stupid accident. He has to live with it.

Deveraux takes a breath -- her hand trembles slightly.

DEVERAUX

If you endanger another pilot, I will kill you.

Deveraux lowers the gun. She turns and walks past Hunter and hands it to him. As she walks across the flight deck, all the pilots look at Maniac.

179 INT. TIGER CLAW - BRIDGE

179

Sansky is nowhere to be seen. The remaining officers look haggard and exhausted. Gerald is looking at a panel of scanners.

180 INT. TIGER CLAW - BRIDGE - ON SCANNER SCREEN

180

A deep crater, half in shadow.

GERALD

There. Put her down there!

181 EXT. TIGER CLAW - MOON SURFACE

181

The big, crippled ship eases into black shadow of the crater, until only its lights are visible. Then, it kills its lights, becomes nearly invisible.

A moment later, A LARGE DRONE, first seen from its fiery exhaust, hoves into view, gets its bearings and streaks into space. It has several strange antennae and domes on its hull.

182 INT. TIGER CLAW - BRIDGE

182

The bridge is in near darkness, except for the moonglow and the monitors. Deveraux and Paladin arrive on the bridge. They look at each other -- where is Sansky?

OBUTU

Decoy away, Commander. She has a bigger electronic signature than the Concordia. I think she'll fool them, sir.

GERALD

I hope you're right. Secure all active scanners. Passive systems only.

Gerald turns his attention to the bank of visual scanners. Everyone else also stops what they are doing...

(CONTINUED)

High above them, they can see a series of bright dots in formation.

OBUTU

There. The Kilrathi battle group.

No one speaks, transfixed by the image on the little screen. The seconds feel more like years. Then...

RADAR MAN

They've missed us. They're following the decoy.

There is a moment of wild cheering. But Paladin hears something.

PALADIN

Quiet!

This startles everyone into silence. Then they hear it... the steady beep-beeping of a radar detector.

PALADIN (CONT'D)

A destroyer... hunting for us.

The passive radar detector increases in frequency.

RADAR MAN

They've spotted us!

PALADIN

No. We're in a dense radiation belt. Gamma rays are clouding their screens. If they don't see us... they won't find us.

This is cold comfort as the steady beeping of the radar detector grows more insistent.

183 EXT. ABOVE MOON - KILRATHI DESTROYER

183

The Destroyer LAUNCHES A MISSILE into a crater. A mushroom cloud rises from the surface of the moon.

184 INT. TIGER CLAW - BRIDGE

184

The ship vibrates as a seismic tremor passes under it.

GERALD

They're nuking every crater. Methodical bastards.

The pinging sounds come closer and closer together.

185 EXT. ABOVE THE CRATER

185

The Kilrathi destroyer launches another missile. It streaks into the far side of the crater, the half in sunlight. The Destroyer moves on, a mushroom cloud rising behind it.

186 INT. TIGER CLAW - VARIOUS STATIONS - MONTAGE:

186

The ship is rocked by a POWERFUL SHOCK WAVE.

HANGER BAY: Men and equipment are thrown about. Olivia and Jones are CRUSHED as a damaged Rapier tears free of it's moorings! Fire erupts.

SC. 187 MERGED WITH SC. 186

188 INT. TIGER CLAW - TORPEDO ROOM

188

TORPEDO ROOM: The shock CRACKS OPEN A TUBE, sucking the atmosphere out of the room. Men are LIFTED INTO THE AIR and pulled screaming into the fractured tube. Others try to reach the far hatchway. Spaceman RODRIGUEZ punches the emergency button. The hatch door slides shut, trapping Rodriguez and the remaining men inside. RODRIGUEZ'S face appears in the porthole.

REVERSE ANGLE: On the faces of the crewmen safe on the other side of the door, as they watch Rodriguez die horribly inside.

SC. 189 MERGED WITH SC. 188

190 INT. TIGER CLAW - FLIGHT DECK

190

Blair picks himself off the deck, reacts to a sudden whistling sound....Then others hear it, look around, fear evident.

BLAIR

What's that sound?

PETERSON

The doors are failing!

The outer bay doors begin to groan and warp slightly. Light objects nearby fly up and stick to a crack in the seal between the doors.

PETERSON (CONT'D)

(shouting to his crew)

Grab anything that will seal it! Now!

MANIAC squats at the edge of the flight deck, watches with a blank expression as plots and crewmen race into action.

BLAIR is running for the crack when he sees a composite wing of a Rapier next to a damaged fighter that was being repaired.

BLAIR

Someone help me!

The wing is too heavy for Blair alone. Peterson hurries over to help. It can barely be lifted by both of them. The whistling grows more ominous.



Debris is flying around the flight deck, being sucked toward the crack in the doors

BLAIR (CONT'D)

Come on. We can do it.

They haul the wing close to the doors. The suction from the crack is so strong that the only thing keeping Blair and Peterson anchored to the floor is the weight of the wing.

MANIAC sees BLAIR trip over a piece of debris on the deck. He stumbles, losing his grip on the wing.

HE'S sucked towards the crack--a dead man--until he manages to grab on to a hook bolted to the deck.

The other pilots and crew members hang back, not willing to risk their lives to save Blair.

MANIAC stands. BLAIR clings to the hook but his grip is slipping. The crew members watch, frozen in inaction, HUNTER prominent. He's not going to risk his neck for a Pilgrim.

MANIAC

You sons of bitches just going to watch him die?

Maniac grabs a cable that was ripped loose from it's moorings, wraps it around his waist.

MANIAC (CONT'D)

Secure this.

He tosses the loop of cable over to the other pilots and starts towards Blair.

THE CRACK splits open even wider and the increased suction pulls Maniac off his feet. He flies towards the crack, then the cable PULLS TIGHT. It stops him from being sucked through, but cinches so tightly around his waist that it seems to almost cut him in two.

He swallows a scream, clutches the cable with one hand, and like a rock climber skipping across a cliff face, makes his way to Blair.

MANIAC (CONT'D)

(choked)

Grab on!

BLAIR releases his grip on the hook and clings to Maniac.

MANIAC (CONT'D)

(screaming at the crew)

Come on!

Crew members pull Maniac and Blair away from the crack.

Meanwhile Peterson and several other crew members have HOISTED THE RAPIER WING UPRIGHT.

Anchoring themselves to the deck, they release it -- the tremendous force of the vacuum outside SUCKS the heavy metal wing up against the crack LIKE IT WERE A LEGO TOY. The shrieking howl becomes a slight tea kettle.

A REPAIR CREW arrives in a cart carrying two large metal bottles. They blast around the wing with a thick, viscous containment foam that hardens instantly into a solid mass, seals the leak.

BLAIR AND MANIAC huddle together for a moment, and BLAIR helps Maniac un-cinch the cable from around his waist. As the cable falls away, we see A RING OF BLOOD around Maniac's waist, where the cable has cut into him.

MANIAC (CONT'D)

What are you going to do when I'm not around to watch your ass?

BLAIR

Save your energy.  
(screams)  
Medic! Medic!

Maniac falls to his knees, nearly passing out. Blair supports him.

MANIAC

It's my fault -- she would've come back in, Blair --

BLAIR

She knew what she was doing. \*

MANIAC \*

I should have protected her. \*

BLAIR \*

Forbes was a fighter pilot in a war zone. She didn't need any protection from anybody. She's dead and that's that. \*

MANIAC \*

How can you be so-- \*

He struggles to lift Maniac who passes out.

BLAIR (Cont'd)

(screams)  
Medic! \*

Blair and Maniac seem tiny on the vast flight deck.

SC. 191 - 196 OMIT

The stricken ship bleeds air and debris into the void.

PALADIN

And in your eyes, that makes him guilty of treason?

GERALD

...Yes, sir, it does.

PALADIN

(Shakes his head, disgusted.)  
Lt. Blair risked his life to save mine today. He's as good they get. And I've fought with the best. He can fly on my wing any mission, any time. Now I urge you to get over that damned war, Commander. We have another to fight.

GERALD

(Spits the word out.)  
Commodore. Sir. With all due respect to your apparent rank. You are a Naval Intelligence officer. You don't know a damned thing about space combat, strategy, or war.

PALADIN

I knew enough not to send Deveraux's wing on a wild goose chase while the Tiger Claw was attacked.

GERALD

And if we had been destroyed, you would have been safely out of harms way.

SANSKY

(Breaking in.)  
None of this matters now. What does, is our survival and our mission....  
Welcome aboard, Commodore. Do you have any orders for me?

PALADIN

Sir, this is your ship. I offer you every assistance in the current crisis.

SANSKY looks at Paladin, nods.

SANSKY

As matters stand we need all the help we can get. The ship has suffered massive damage, and we have almost no operational fighters left.

PALADIN

The Kilrathi will be at the jump point in three hours and we still don't know their capabilities or plan of attack.

(Touching the bulkhead)

I think this old lady's got a little fight left in her yet.

*Green Amendments - Revised 3/4/98*

81.

198 CONTINUED: (2)

198

GERALD

...Engineering took a direct hit. Our fuel cells are ninety percent gone. We don't have enough power to keep up with the air pumps, let alone get under way. Barring a miracle, we've failed.

PALADIN

Failure is not an option, Commander. And if it's a miracle we need, I suggest we find a way to make one. Understood?

GERALD

...Yes, sir!

198A EXT. KILRATHI BATTLE GROUP

198A

The massive ships head through space, the Charybdis Quasar a distant swirl of color.

SUPERIMPOSE: KILRATHI BATTLE GROUP. 2 HOURS FROM THE CHARYBDIS JUMP POINT.

198B INT. SNAKEIR - BRIDGE

198B

Admiral looks out the windows at the distant Charybdis Quasar. TRAITOR stands in shadow behind him. \*

TRAITOR

You should have sent more ships. The Tiger Claw is alive, and still a threat.

ADMIRAL looks at the traitor, contempt and hate evident.

ADMIRAL

Go to the ConCom. Prepare the jump coordinates and transmit them to the fleet.

199 INT. TIGER CLAW - FLIGHT DECK

199

The deck looks better. Each surviving pilot heads up his own maintenance team, trying to refurbish the remaining Rapiers. Other crewmen try to repair the sprung door seals in the background as Blair comes out on the deck, sees Deveraux hunched under her own fighter. He approaches her.

BLAIR

Angel?

DEVERAUX emerges from under her plane. She still looks shaken from Forbes' death, but she can't let go of her stiffness towards Blair.

DEVERAUX

What is it, Lieutenant?

(CONTINUED)

199 CONTINUED:

199

BLAIR

Can we stop the bullshit, please.

DEVERAUX'S shocked to hear Blair talk so bluntly.

BLAIR (CONT'D)

I'm sorry about Forbes.

DEVERAUX

...Who?

BLAIR

(Shakes his head.)

Don't. It's a shitty game, Angel. I just tried to play it with Maniac and you know what? It hurt. It's supposed to. You don't just forget the people you loved. They deserve more than that.

DEVERAUX

What do you want to do about it, Blair?

BLAIR

Help.

DEVERAUX

I'm all out.

Turns back to the Rapier.

BLAIR

He was crazy about her.

DEVERAUX stiffens.

DEVERAUX

He was crazy about her? She was my best friend.

(a beat)

I loved her.

BLAIR

He blames himself for what happened.

DEVERAUX

And so he should.

BLAIR

His confidence is shot. He's questioning every move he made. He can't go back up in that condition. And right now, I think we need all the pilots we can get, Angel. How about you?

DEVERAUX

I'll think about it.

199 CONTINUED: (2)

199

BLAIR

He's a good guy. There's no reason to  
hate him.

Deveraux thinks about that.

BLAIR turns to go.

DEVERAUX

Blair--

Blair turns around.

BLAIR

Yeah.

DEVERAUX

Thanks.

SC. 200 OMIT

*GREEN AMENDMENTS- REVISSED 3/4/98*

83.

201 EXT. TIGER CLAW - LATER

201

Work crews in space suits continue to repair the hull.  
Then, a sound is superimposed, the STEADY BEEP-BEEPING of  
a locator beacon.

202 OMIT.

202 \*

SC. 203 OMIT

\*

204 INT. TIGER CLAW - BRIDGE

204

PALADIN is already there. GERALD AND DEVERAUX arrive.  
They hear the telltale sound of an incoming ship.

DEVERAUX

What is she? Another destroyer?

GERALD

It doesn't matter. We can't take  
another round of bombardment.

DEVERAUX

I have four Rapiers ready to go, sir.  
We'll go down fighting.

PALADIN

We'll do better than that, Angel.  
That ship up there is going to save our  
ass.

205 INT. TIGER CLAW - MANIAC'S QUARTERS

205

Klaxon bells announce the upcoming mission but Maniac,  
bandage wrapped around his bare chest, seems oblivious.  
HE just lies there. Door open with a hiss.

(CONTINUED)

205 CONTINUED:

205

DEVERAUX (O.S.)  
Lieutenant? It's time suit up.

MANIAC  
(expressionless)  
Ma'am?

DEVERAUX  
I need my best pilots out there.

MANIAC  
I don't know if I'm one of your best  
pilots.

DEVERAUX  
Does everyone here think that I go  
around making suggestions?

MANIAC  
No ma'am.

DEVERAUX  
Then I guess I gave an order. Be on the  
flight deck in five minutes.  
(a beat)  
And do it for Rosie.

SHE strides away, but her act of forgiveness has worked.  
MANIAC grabs his flight suit, his expression half way  
between that crazed smile of his and tears.

206 INT. TIGER CLAW - FLIGHT DECK

206

The Diligent, and two Rapiers are being readied for a  
launch. A squad of Marines marches into the Diligent in  
space suits. GERALD, in a space-suit, is among them.

207 INT. DILIGENT - HATCH

207

PALADIN and BLAIR are supervising the boarding from  
inside the Diligent's hatch. They are not happy to see  
Gerald marching up the gangplank.

PALADIN  
I think you're on the wrong ship,  
Commander.

GERALD  
I still have a responsibility to this  
crew, Commodore. And, excuse my  
bluntness, but if you think I'm going  
to let my men be flown into combat by a  
rogue and a half-breed you are sadly  
mistaken.

With that GERALD pushes past them. PALADIN looks at  
Blair. With a wink:

PALADIN  
He's really a great guy once you get to  
know him.

(CONTINUED)



Blue Amendments- Revised 13/2/98

84A.

207 CONTINUED:

207

SC. 208 OMIT

209 EXT. ABOVE MOON ASTEROID BELT

209

The Diligent lurks behind an asteroid, its form folded into its ragged ridge line. A shadow passes over her, and a large Kilrathi ship--the ConCom ship seen earlier--passes directly over her. Two Dralhti escorting.

210 INT. DILIGENT - BRIDGE

210

GERALD, PALADIN, DEVERAUX and BLAIR, all in full space suits, listen to the searching radar signal.

210 CONTINUED:

210

Behind them, we see THE MARINES checking equipment dropping clips into weapons.

THEIR POV, through the Diligent windows: The ConCom ship.

DEVERAUX

That's no destroyer.

BLAIR

It's the Communication ship we came up against.

GERALD

They'll spot our heat corona, soon.

PALADIN

They won't have the chance. Blair, man the ion gun.

(pushes radio button)

Hit it.

211 EXT. ASTEROID FIELD

211

The two Rapiers streak from behind meteorites and engage the Dralthi. The Kilrathi ComCon ship begins to veer away, but as it passes the asteroid, the Diligent leaves its cover and heads for it. Maniac's Rapier DESTROYS THE FIRST DRALTHI.

MANIAC (O.S.)

(over radio)

Yeah!

The second Rapier is engaged in a winding, twisting dogfight. Maniac veers his fighter to engage the second Kilrathi.

TWO MORE DRALTHI suddenly appear from around the moon, on full afterburner.

SC. 212 - 214 OMIT

215 INT. DILIGENT - BLAIR'S GUN POSITION

215

From his dome, he can see the Dralthi coming right at them!

BLAIR

Two more Bogies at six o'clock!

Blair opens fire at one of the attackers, who return fire, then veers off.

216 INT. DILIGENT - BRIDGE

216

Paladin is piloting the Diligent up toward the larger Kilrathi ship.

PALADIN

(over intercom)

Marines, to your stations!

217 INT. DILIGENT - BAY

217

The Marines, in pressure suits, lock and load their weapons, gather around the bay door.

PALADIN (O.S.)

(over intercom)

As soon as you get in, go straight for the bridge. We've got to get control of that ship before they scuttle her.

218 INT. DILIGENT - BLAIR'S GUN POSITION

218

A second Dralhti makes its attack run, cannons blazing. Blair tracks him and blasts him to fragments.

BLAIR

Yes!

219 EXT. KILRATHI COMMUNICATIONS SHIP

219

The Diligent is alongside, inching closer to the upper deck. The Diligent's docking umbilical extends...

220 INT. DILIGENT - BRIDGE

220

DEVERAUX

They can't use missiles, now. We're too close.

THEIR POV, through the window: A Dralhti fighter appears, heads straight for them.

GERALD

He's going to ram us!

SC. 221 MERGED WITH SC. 220

222 INT. DRALTHI - COCKPIT

222

The Kilrathi, in an opaque space helmet, streaks in, the image of the Diligent reflected on his face plate.

222A INT. RAPIER COCKPIT - MANIAC

222A

Maniac depresses his joystick.

MANIAC

Heads up, asshole!

222B INT. DRALTHI - COCKPIT

222B

The Kilrathi turns his head, sees Maniac's Rapier bearing down on him. HE can clearly see Maniac giving him the finger.

222C EXT. NEAR KILRATHI COMCON SHIP

222C

Maniac's Rapier collides with the Dralhti cockpit, SHEERING IT OFF NEATLY. The Dralhti spins wildly out of control and crashes into the Communications ship!

222D INT. RAPIER COCKPIT - MANIAC

222D

Maniac's damaged Rapier shakes, rattle and rolls.

MANIAC

That's for you, Rosie.

SC. 223 - 226 OMIT

227 EXT. KILRATHI COMCON SHIP

227

The Diligent's umbilical latches onto the Kilrathi ship.

228 INT. KILRATHI SHIP - CORRIDOR

228

A section of wall glows white hot, exploding inwards! Revealing the Diligent's airlock -- which depressurizes and opens. Spacesuited Confed Marines come towards us in a surreal zero-g grace, and leading the charge...Deveraux!

229 INT. DILIGENT - BLAIR'S GUN POSITION

229

BLAIR can hear radio crosstalk and sounds of battle as he scans his radar screen. MERLIN'S voice comes out of nowhere.

MERLIN

I'm picking up some strange electromagnetic emissions from the Kilrathi ship.

BLAIR

So?

MERLIN

They're Pilgrim. The same ULF frequency I picked up earlier.

This gets Blair's attention.

BLAIR

Where?

MERLIN

Deck two, aft section. The bridge.

BLAIR looks at the radar, considers, pulls out his Pilgrim cross, kisses it, places it on the outside of his suit. He attaches his helmet and grabs a weapon. As he exits the Diligent, he can see PALADIN and GERALD in the cockpit, their backs to him.

230 INT. KILRATHI SHIP - CORRIDOR

230

Blair comes through the hole, weapon ready, swings into the corridor, and right into a Kilrathi! It's dead, floating gruesomely in the airless corridor.

230 CONTINUED:

230

MERLIN

Nice. I believe there's another way.  
To the right.

BLAIR, looks left, can just make out the signs of battle, weighs his options, goes right.

Inside of the Kilrathi ship is alien, hard, grotesque. Sharp angles and exposed tubes give it almost a predatory feel, like the lair of some jungle animal. He comes to an airlock. Hitting the pressure plate he steps inside.

The green fog-like atmosphere that the Kilrathi breathe makes it difficult to see, makes the alien architecture creepy, gruesome. Blair switches his suit to thermal imaging.

BLAIR'S POV (THROUGH THERMAL IMAGER): Similar to normal vision except that forms are more defined, details less so. Anything "hot" is enhanced.

230A INT. KILRATHI SHIP - CORRIDOR

230A

MARINES push forward hard towards a heavily defended hatch way. Air is alive with laser fire, the stink of cordite, and the oppressive feeling of death. Bodies, both Kilrathi and human, litter the deck. A Marine's hit, and DEVERAUX pulls him out of the line of fire.

230B INT. BRIDGE - KILRATHI SHIP. (PREVIOUSLY SC. 234)

230B

Two Kilrathi warriors stand at the door, weapons ready. Behind them, a KILRATHI OFFICER prowls nervously, watches a bank of monitors which show the battle raging in the ship's corridors. He keys a code into the main console and glances at the big, RED BUTTON set in the center of the console.

SC. 231 - 232 OMIT

233 INT. DILIGENT - BRIDGE

233

PALADIN

(over intercom)

Blair! Blair? Answer your station...

No answer. Gerald turns, looks down the long corridor to the gunnery station. Empty. To Paladin:

GERALD

You should have never brought that half-breed on this mission. His orders were to stay on this ship. Stay here. I'll find him.

GERALD locks his helmet in position, cocks his gun and heads for the air-lock Paladin looks worried.

Green Amendments - Revised 3/4/98

89.

233A INT. KILRATHI SHIP - UNFAMILIAR CORRIDOR

233A

BLAIR's head appears from a lower deck. Cautious, he pans the area, climbs up to the deck. In front of him is a hatchway. HE looks through the small window.

HIS POV: The Bridge. THE KILRATHI OFFICER'S fixated on the monitor. Slowly, he turns to an effigy of the god, Sivar, kneels before it. Then HE stands, walks towards the red button, hand raised.

BLAIR drops an explosive round into the grenade launcher section of his weapon, lines it on the door.

233B INT. KILRATHI SHIP - BRIDGE

233B

The KILRATHI OFFICER utters a ritual phrase in Kilrathi. Subtitle's read: "I am honored to die for the glory of Kilrah, the Emperor, and the Empire."

Three Kilrathi react as the door's blown off its hinges! Thing spins into the room in an explosion of smoke steel.

KILRATHI OFFICER recovers, brings a clawed hand down on the self-destruct button. He's blown back by a laser blast as BLAIR, weapon lined and firing, rolls in.

KILRATHI WARRIORS return fire! BLAIR has to dive away as the wall behind him is torn up. HE ends up on the other side of console.

WARRIORS close on him, weapons firing, slugs tearing into the console, ripping it to pieces.

BLAIR'S POV: Massive, armored feet closing on his position from both sides, flanking him.

Last second, he rolls under the console, pops up, fires point blank into the back of a Warrior's head. Blast spatters tissue and crimson fluid on the wall.

BLAIR snaps around, tries to line his weapon on the second Kilrathi. Too late. Thing's right there. An armored fist knocks Blair's weapon away. Backhand sends him spinning back. HE lands hard on the floor.

WARRIOR looms over him, picks him up by his vest, lifts him off the floor, holds him up.

Four inch serrated claws appear in the thing's right hand. It cocks its arm, ready to strike...stops, lets Blair go, stumbles back.

Lodged in its chest is Blair's Pilgrim cross. BLAIR watches the thing fall to the floor.

MERLIN

Nicely done.

BLAIR pulls the cross from dead Kilrathi, wipes the blade.

(CONTINUED)

Green Amendments- Revised 3/4/98

90.

233B CONTINUED:

233B

BLAIR

Thanks for the help.

MERLIN

I'm a hologram. Don't touch the red button.

BLAIR looks around the room. On the counter he dove behind, he sees a black box with a score of cables emanating from it, some leading to a monitor that is scrolling numbers. A piece of the door lies on top of the box, partially obscures it. He can see the letters "NAV."

BLAIR

What the hell?

BLAIR pulls the piece of door away, sees the words PEGASUS NAVCOM A.I. stenciled on them.

BLAIR (CONT'D)

They have the Charybdis jump coordinates, Merlin.

MERLIN

They have more than that. I'm picking up strong electromagnetic emissions from the panel to the right. It's a ULF signal. They're the Tiger Claw's coordinates.

BLAIR moves to the big communications panel, ponders the strange script and numerical readouts.

BLAIR

What's the source?

MERLIN

...The Tiger Claw.

BLAIR

A traitor on the Claw?

MERLIN

It gets worse. It's encrypted with an executive level code.

BLAIR

Who has access to those codes?

MERLIN

Only Sansky and Gerald.

Panel flashes, and suddenly, the code numbers and letters start to scroll by at increasing speed.

MERLIN (CONT'D)

It just went from ULF to Ultra High Frequency. The Tiger Claw just became a beacon.

\*

(CONTINUED)

Green Amendments - Revised 3/4/98  
91.

233B CONTINUED: (2)

233B

BLAIR

Every Kilrathi ship in the sector will  
be able to find her.

\*  
\*  
\*

BLAIR reacts to a sound, spins around, sees GERALD  
standing behind him, weapon lined.

GERALD

You'd like that wouldn't you, you  
treacherous piece of garbage. I'd  
should feed you to these things.

BLAIR

Looks like you'll get your chance.  
(pointing at Navcom)

They owe you a few favors, don't they  
Mr. Gerald?

\*  
\*  
\*

GERALD crosses the deck in several long deliberate  
strides.

GERALD

Mr. Blair...

He smashes Blair across the side of the head with the  
butt of his weapons, sends Blair sprawling to the deck.

GERALD (CONT'D)

I believe you just called me traitor.

GERALD lines the weapon on Blair's head, pulls the slide  
back, motions to the panel with a nod.

GERALD (CONT'D)

Turn it off.

BLAIR looks at Gerald. If it's not him, then its....

A hallow, very human laugh cuts through the tension.

\*

TRAITOR (O.S.)

To think we came from you.

\*  
\*

Both men snap around, react at the sight of the Traitor,  
weapon lined. He steps out of shadow...

\*  
\*

It's Admiral Wilson!

\*

GERALD

Wilson? But the Pegasus? It was your  
command.

\*  
\*  
\*

WILSON

Twenty years of service. Irony isn't  
it? Twenty years, all to destroy the  
world that trains you.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

His finger tenses on the trigger.

BLAIR

Wait!

(CONTINUED)



Green Amendments - Revised 3/4/92

92.

233E CONTINUED: (3)

233B

BLAIR lifts his cross, holds it high.

WILSON

Where did you get that cross?

BLAIR stands, cross held in front of him.

BLAIR

It was my mother's. She was killed at Peron.

Wilson studies Blair

BLAIR (Cont'd)

I was five.

WILSON

My wife burned in those flames. When you remember Peron, what do you feel?

BLAIR looks at Gerald with a dead and deadly expression.

BLAIR

...Hate.

WILSON

(considers)

...If you're a Pilgrim, prove it. Kill him.

BLAIR nods, reaches for his weapon.

WILSON (Cont'd)

With the blade.

Slowly, Blair's hand moves away from the weapon. HE pulls the cross from his neck. A whooshing sound as the blade periscopes out. GERALD pulls an ugly looking fighting knife from his vest, assumes a fighting stance.

GERALD

I was right all along. Come on, Pilgrim, pass your test.

BLAIR and GERALD circle one another, blades moving in slow, almost hypnotic patters. BLAIR feints left and Gerald tries to cut him. Blades spark. GERALD kicks Blair. Blow knocks Blair off balance, gives Gerald the advantage. HE swings, cuts Blair in the arm. Two men circle. Then GERALD makes a mistake: with a head fake, he stabs at Blair. BLAIR catches Gerald's arm, steps in, and in a classic jujitsu move, sweeps his legs out. GERALD lands hard on his back, BLAIR standing over him, blade held high.

WILSON

Finish him!

BLAIR brings the cross down. But instead of digging it into Gerald, he throws it.

(CONTINUED)

*Green Amendments - Revised 3/4/98*

93.

233B CONTINUED: (4)

233B

Cross flies through the air, catches Wilson in the chest. \*  
He staggers back, slumps against a column. We can hear \*  
the hiss of his suit losing air. Inevitable death. \*

GERALD looks at BLAIR, approaches the dying traitor. \*

GERALD  
Why warn Tolwyn? \*

WILSON  
(weak smile) \*  
The stars were the Pilgrim's destiny. \*  
Not Earth's, not Kilrahs. \*

With his last ounce of energy Wilson props himself up. In \*  
his other hand he holds something. \*

A grenade... With no safety! Wilson relaxes his hand. The \*  
firing pin spins off... \*

BLAIR  
Shit! \*

Blair and Gerald dive through the doorway, just as a huge \*  
explosion envelopes Wilson and most of the room. \*

The two men get to their feet. \*

BLAIR (Cont'd) \*  
(Turning to Gerald.) \*  
Now do you want to know who your \*  
traitor is? \*

Suddenly DEVERAUX and Marines enter. \*

DEVERAUX  
You alright in here? \*

They look back at the scorched bridge. \*

GERALD  
Secure the fuel cells. Blair and I  
have some business to take care of.

SC. 234 - 244 OMIT

245 INT. TIGER CLAW - SANSKY'S QUARTERS

245

Blair and Gerald rush in, weapons drawn. Sansky is  
propped up in his bed, In his hand he holds SOMETHING.

GERALD  
You were the best CO I had. Why?

SANSKY  
Because, Paul, sometimes the role you  
play isn't the one you were born for.

GERALD  
You've failed in both.

(CONTINUED)

*Green Amendments - Revised 3/4/9.*

93A.

245 CONTINUED:

245

SANSKY

(Smiling ironically.)

Have I? A bad spy and a bad captain.

(close to death)

Give this back to Tolwyn, please.

Sansky gives TOLWYN'S RING to Blair -- then his hands fall lifelessly to his side.

Gerald picks up Sansky's HOLO-PIC, remembering better times.

CLOSE ON THE HOLO-PIC: A different angle on the Graduating Class Sansky is in -- At the podium is ADMIRAL WILSON.

GERALD, staring at the holo-pic, reacts to the intercom. Obutu's voice comes over:

OBUTU (V.O.)

Engineering reports that the Kilrathi fuel cells have been adapted. We have 60 percent power.

GERALD

Very well. Take us out of the crater.

245A INT. BLAIR'S QUARTERS -- TIGER CLAW

245A

Blair is changing into his flight suit -- Ready for the Tiger Claw's last hurrah. His hand instinctively goes to his chest -- but the cross is no longer there.

He pauses for a moment, noticing Tolwyn's ring. He pockets it and heads out the door.

245 CONTINUED:

245

OBUTU (V.O.)

Engineering reports that the Kilrathi fuel cells have been adapted. We have 60 percent power.

GERALD

Very well. Take us out of the crater.

SC. 246 - 249 OMIT

SC. 250 NOW SC. 251A

251 EXT. TIGER CLAW NEAR MOON

251

The Tiger Claw, firing on one ion engine, moves away from the moon crater.

251A INT. TIGER CLAW - BRIDGE. (PREVIOUSLY SC. 250)

251A

GERALD and PALADIN stand, watch as the massive ship lifts up. OBUTU works on a shattered console. Blair and Deveraux wait.

GERALD

Prepare a drone. Input the Kilrathi jump coordinates. Send it through the Charybdis Quasar to Admiral Tolwyn.

(To Paladin:)

They should be able to target the exact location of the Kilrathi jump entry. It'll be over before they can get their weapons on line.

Obutu bangs at the console.

PALADIN

If Tolwyn's there, Mr. Gerald. If he's there.

OBUTU

Sir, we have a problem. Drones are off line. Executive over-ride.

GERALD

Sansky. Without those coordinates, Tolwyn doesn't have a chance and we're too big to slip past the Kilrathi and warn the fleet.

PALADIN

We'll have to send a fighter through.

GERALD

Impossible. There are over a thousand singularities in that Quasar. To jump it would be suicide without NAVCOM coordinates.

251A CONTINUED:

251A

PALADIN

We don't need a NAVCOM, Mr. Gerald.  
Blair, you will navigate the Quasar.  
Lt. Commander Deveraux will follow your  
lead.

BLAIR looks at Paladin.

BLAIR

It's statistically impossible, sir.

PALADIN

We don't have another option.  
(a beat)  
You have the gift.

BLAIR fingers for his cross. Except it's not there. HE  
shakes his head.

BLAIR

I don't have the faith.

PALADIN

It's not faith. It's genetics. It's  
the capacity to feel magnetic fields.  
But if you believe you need faith...

PALADIN reaches into his tunic, pulls a cross from under  
his vest--a Pilgrim Cross. GERALD reacts.

PALADIN (CONT'D)

Take mine.

HE tosses the cross to Blair. BLAIR looks at it.

BLAIR

Why didn't you tell me?

PALADIN

You didn't ask.

Two men's eyes hold for a long time.

OBUTU

Long range scanners are picking up  
Kilrathi ships, sir. Looks like a  
destroyer and a cruiser.

GERALD

We'll create the diversion. Get those  
coordinates to Tolwyn.

252 INT. TIGER CLAW - FLIGHT DECK

252

DEVERAUX'S climbing into her Rapier as BLAIR moves down the flight line. He stops when he hears a familiar voice: Hunter's:

HUNTER

Pilgrim.

BLAIR turns to Hunter, ready for a confrontation.

HUNTER (CONT'D)

I heard what you did on that Kilrathi ship. We all heard. I was wrong.

HUNTER extends a hand. BLAIR nods, takes it. As BLAIR walks down the flight line, each surviving member of the wing nods to him, shakes his hand. BLAIR stops by Maniac. MANIAC smiles. BLAIR'S about to speak when Maniac holds up a hand.

MANIAC

Don't say anything. I want to remember your pretty face just like this. See you on the other side, bro.

He bangs fists with Blair, and BLAIR swings into his cockpit. Canopy lowers. Both fighters are firing their engines up. Sound is deafening. Both salute the deck officer...

253 EXT. TIGER CLAW

253

Blair and Deveraux's fighters launch into the void, swing left towards the asteroid fields, the Tiger Claw turning to the right.

Further out: Empty space... Then a long, large missile with a warhead materializes as if from nowhere. It adjusts course, AIMS AT THE TIGER CLAW in the distance, vanishes.

SC. 254 OMIT

255 INT. TIGER CLAW - BRIDGE

255

A loud klaxon goes off.

GERALD

Report!

OBUTU

I have a bogie, vector 197 mark 3....Now it's gone.

PALADIN

It's a Skipper missile. We only pick it up when it de-cloaks to take a radar fix. Estimated time till impact?

255 CONTINUED:

255

RADAR MAN  
Nine minutes, sir.

256 INT. RAPIER COCKPITS - BLAIR & DEVERAUX

256

The two pilots streak into the blackness of space.

BLAIR  
I've got a strong signal, at ten  
o'clock. Now it's vanished.

DEVERAUX  
It's a Skipper missile. Shit. The only  
thing that can kill it is a star  
fighter in visual contact. \*

And with that Deveraux banks hard right.

BLAIR  
Hey, what are you doing?

DEVERAUX  
Stay on course. Get through that jump  
point! \*

BLAIR  
What about our orders? Angel? Angel?

257 INT. TIGER CLAW - BRIDGE

257

RADAR MAN  
Six minutes...

OBUTU  
Our shields are too weak to take a  
direct hit.

PALADIN  
It's in Blair and Deveraux's hands now.

258 EXT. SPACE - SKIPPER MISSILE

258

The Skipper missile "cloaks" in, re-adjusts it's course  
one more time and then disappears... A moment later,  
Deveraux's Rapier appears, afterburners kicking in, and  
streaking after the now invisible missile.

259 INT. RAPIER COCKPIT - DEVERAUX

259

Her HEADS UP DISPLAY shows nothing.

DEVERAUX  
(mutters)  
Come on...

260 THROUGH COCKPIT PLEXIGLAS --

260

The Skipper missile de-cloaks and reappears, slightly off  
to her right. She veers, FIRING HER LASER CANNONS .

(CONTINUED)

260 CONTINUED:

260

The Skipper once again "CLOAKS" AND VANISHES, but Deveraux continues to lead it, FIRING ALONG ITS TRAJECTORY.

BLAIR (O.S.)

Angel! You're too close! Back off!

Suddenly, there is a FLASH OF FIRE, and the Skipper decloaks and reappears, SPINNING LIKE A CORKSCREW, BREAKING UP. Deveraux banks hard and veers away.

261 EXT. SPACE - SKIPPER MISSILE 261

Moments later, the Skipper missile EXPLODES, throwing an eerie, visible shock wave that CATCHES DEVERAUX'S RAPIER.

262 INT. RAPIER COCKPIT - DEVERAUX 262

The Rapier begins coming apart. Deveraux EJECTS!

263 EXT. SPACE - BLAIR'S RAPIER 263

... slowly approaches the debris of the destroyed Rapier, and FIRES RETRO JETS, as it pulls alongside the tumbling ejection pod. Retros fire on the pod, stabilizing it.

Blair's cockpit is only yards from Deveraux in the pod. They look at each other across the void.

BLAIR

You okay?

DEVERAUX

Nothing broken.

264 INT. RAPIER COCKPIT - BLAIR 264

He looks out over the empty space between them and the tiny point of light that is the Tiger Claw.

BLAIR

You got it.

265 INTERCUT BETWEEN BLAIR AND DEVERAUX'S COCKPITS. 265

She shakes her head.

DEVERAUX

It got me.

BLAIR

Hang on. I'm going to tractor you back to the ship.

DEVERAUX

No! Go on. We can't both disobey orders.

BLAIR

You'll be out of air in an hour. You're going back to the ship.



DEVERAUX

You disobey my direct order and I'll have you court-martialed.

BLAIR

Like I care.

DEVERAUX

Then care about the billions who are going to die if the fleet doesn't get the Kilrathi jump coordinates.

Blair falls silent. She knows she's won. Their faces are only feet apart, separated by the cockpits.

DEVERAUX

You've gotta go. You know that.

BLAIR

(choking with emotion)

You're all right, Angel. I guess you know that...

She smiles ruefully, then pulls her glove off and puts a hand up on the Plexiglas.

DEVERAUX

You, too, Chris.

There is a last moment... then Blair fires his retros and eases slowly away from her as she watches. A last look, and Blair ignites his engines. The Rapier streaks away. The back wash rocks Deveraux's pod. She's already cold, and begins to shiver.

266 INT. TIGER CLAW - BRIDGE

266

The Radar Man looks up from his scope.

RADAR MAN

No sign of the Skipper missile. One of the Rapiers must have shot it down.

PALADIN

Where are they now?

RADAR MAN

One continuing on course... and one beacon signal from an ejection pod....

(sees something)

Kilrathi ships are closing.

GERALD

So what now?

PALADIN

What now, Mister Gerald? Now we make the Kilrathi on those ships sorry they were ever born!

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

266 CONTINUED:

266

PALADIN (Cont'd)  
(roars)  
Battle stations!

The klaxons sound, and people jump to their stations on the bridge.

267 INT. RAPIER COCKPIT - BLAIR

267

Blair eases around a large asteroid.

Through the canopy, he can just see the Kilrathi cruiser and a destroyer moving slowly through the asteroid field. When they pass, he ignites his engines, and blasts away, weaving around asteroids as he goes.

SC. 268 OMIT

269 INT. TIGER CLAW - FLIGHT DECK

269

Maniac sits in his Rapier, salutes the deck control officer, and blasts into space.

270 INT. TIGER CLAW - BRIDGE

270

GERALD  
All fighters away.

RADAR MAN  
Kilrathi cruiser and destroyer are in missile range. They're launching.

PALADIN  
Open fire, Mister Gerald.

GERALD  
Aye, aye, sir.  
(into intercom)  
All batteries, fire as she bears!

They watch as missiles flair out into space.

271 INT. EJECTION POD - DEVERAUX

271

The reflection of the great battle flashes on the Plexiglas as Deveraux watches.

REVERSE ANGLE: The great ships are like tiny toys, the fighters specks of light as they corkscrew and plunge. The blackness is illuminated with lasers and torpedoes exploding against the shields. The Kilrathi destroyer TAKES A TORPEDO IN ITS STERN, catches fire, begins to drift.

DEVERAUX shivers in the cold, her breath condensing on the Plexiglas. She wipes the mist away, breathing with difficulty, and continues to watch.

SC. 272 - 273 OMIT

274 INT. RAPIER COCKPIT - BLAIR

274

Blair is watching his heads up display intently. Behind it, is the swirling, angry mass of the Charybdis Quasar.

BLAIR

Merlin, check my coordinates.

MERLIN

(voice only)

Coordinates A-okay, boss. Three minutes to jump.

BLAIR

Firing jump drive.

He flicks a switch. There is an enormous six g jolt.

275 EXT. BLAIR'S RAPIER

275

The fighter transforms into a streak of light.

276 EXT. TIGER CLAW & KILRATHI CRUISER

276

The two ships are in close proximity, now, firing weapons, trying to batter down each others shields.

277 INT. TIGER CLAW - BRIDGE

277

The Kilrathi cruiser is clearly visible coming head on.

GERALD

What tac, sir?

PALADIN

Steady on, Mister Gerald. Make them be the first to blink.

Through the bridge windows, The Kilrathi cruiser appears larger and larger.

SC. 278 OMIT

279 INT. RAPIER COCKPIT - BLAIR

279

The Rapier begins to shimmy and shake.

MERLIN

(voice only)

Ninety seconds to Jump point. But you're drifting off course.

BLAIR

The quasar's gravity is affecting you. Shut up, or I'll shut you off.

The Rapier begins to shake like it's going to come apart.

230 EXT. BEHIND JOVIAN PLANET MOON

230

The Kilrathi admiral's flagship, the Snakeir, fires its massive ion engines and drifts from behind the shadow of the moon.

231 INT. SNAKEIR - BRIDGE

231

The murky green atmosphere allows only silhouettes as Kilrathi move about. The Kilrathi Captain approaches the Admiral's chair.

KILRATHI CAPTAIN

(subtitled)

A manned Confederation fighter is approaching the quasar jump point, Admiral. We're not in position to intercept.

KILRATHI ADMIRAL

He's going to warn the Confed fleet of our jump coordinates. Follow him. Instruct all ships to mark our course and follow us through. Sixty second intervals.

SC. 282 OMIT

233 EXT. SNAKEIR

233

The giant ship turns, and accelerates, following a distant speck of light... Blair's Rapier.

234 INT. TIGER CLAW - BRIDGE

234

To the relief of everyone on the bridge, the Kilrathi cruiser veers right.

RADAR MAN

She's changing course!

PALADIN

(roaring)

Mister Gerald, prepare to lower our shield. Starboard missile battery, prepare to fire!

GERALD

Sir, the missile guidance systems won't activate at this range.

PALADIN

They won't need to. Arm warheads!

235 INT. TIGER CLAW - MISSILE ROOM

235

Men and women lock and load missiles, preparing to fire.

236 INT. TIGER CLAW - FLIGHT DECK

236

Peterson and his crew brace themselves.

237 INT. RAPIER COCKPIT - BLAIR

237

The shaking is infernal.

MERLIN

(voice only)

Light speed mach point eight two.

Twenty seconds to jump. Can you do it?

BLAIR

(Distorted by the shaking.)

Only one way to find out.

(Closes his eyes.)

Coordinates: 1 7 2 9 4 mark 3 3 4 3

vector 4 4 2 7 1 angle of attack 6 3 9

5 6 1 by 3 2 4 9....

HE closes his eyes.

238 EXT. TIGER CLAW & KILRATHI CRUISER

238

The Kilrathi pour cannon fire onto the Tiger Claw's shield as the two great ships come abreast of each other.

239 INT. TIGER CLAW - BRIDGE

239

The ship is rocking with shock waves.

PALADIN

Lower shields. Give 'em a broadside,  
Mister Gerald!

290 INT. TIGER CLAW - TORPEDO ROOM

290

The missile room crew, fire their salvo, even as they are rocked by explosions from the cannon fire.

291 EXT. MANIAC'S RAPIER

291

Maniac blows a last Krant escort out of the air and turns upside down to avoid the fireball. Then he stares at the sight below him.

MANIAC

And they say I'm crazy.

292 EXT. TIGER CLAW AND KILRATHI CRUISER

292

A DOZEN GUIDED MISSILES streak from the Tiger Claw's battery as they bear on the cruiser, each striking the cruiser, piercing the shield, and EXPLODING AGAINST THE HULL!

A missile finds the Kilrathi bridge and destroys it. The cruiser rolls over and "capsizes" as its stern clears the devastating field of fire...

The Tiger Claw pulls clear as the Kilrathi ship is SHATTERED BY A SERIES OF EXPLOSIONS, finally disintegrating in the void.

293 INT. RAPIER COCKPIT - BLAIR

293

The vibration is accompanied by a strange noise. BLAIR continues to spout numbers: 4,7,5,5,3,9,9...as MERLIN counts down the seconds to jump.

MERLIN

Five seconds to jump. Four, three, two.

Suddenly, time and motion stop. All is silence.

294 INT. TIGER CLAW - BRIDGE & VARIOUS STATIONS

294

As one, officers and crew of the Tiger Claw scream, cheer, hug one another.

294A EXT. EARTH'S SOLAR SYSTEM

294A

Placid, calm. We can clearly see our system's nine planets, with Earth, blue, lush, alive...vulnerable, spinning in the distance.

Suddenly, a blinding flash of light, and Blair's Rapier appears, blasts past us, jump drive engines glowing.

SC. 295 OMIT

296 INT. RAPIER COCKPIT - BLAIR

296

Blair is ecstatic.

BLAIR

We did it! We did it! I love this baby!  
She held together.

MERLIN

(voice only)

I'm not sure I did.

Blair flicks his radio switch.

BLAIR

Lieutenant Christopher Blair of the Tiger Claw calling any Confed Ship. A Kilrathi battle group has the Charybdis jump coordinates. They will breach at 167 mark 889, Sol system. Repeat, 167 mark 889, Sol system. Do you read?

(to Merlin)

Check your frequencies for any sign of the Confed fleet.

MERLIN

Nothing. Wait a minute. Check behind us.

BLAIR

Behind us?

296 CONTINUED:

103  
295

space, where Blair had been a moment before! A second, bigger, flash of light and the gigantic Snakeir appears through the warp in the time space continuum.

MERLIN (O.S.)  
Kilrathi capital ship... Snakeir class.  
They came through the jump point.

SC. 297 OMIT

298 INT. RAPIER COCKPIT - BLAIR.

293

Blair pounds the instrument panel in frustration.

BLAIR  
Shut! We're too late!

299 EXT. CONCORDIA - BEHIND PLUTO

299

The giant carrier gleams in the dusk reflection from the planet. In the distance, other fleet ships hover silently.

300 INT. CONCORDIA - BRIDGE

300

Bellegarde approaches Tolwyn.

BELLEGARDE  
Com. room reports faint message in clear from a lieutenant Blair. He's broadcasting the Kilrathi jump coordinates.

TOLWYN  
Blair? Like father, like son.

BELLEGARDE  
Should we respond, sir?

RADAR MAN  
(calling out)  
Identifying confirmed Rapier, heading toward Earth at USM point nine. He's being followed by something massive, Admiral. Looks like a Snakeir.

BELLEGARDE  
Permission to intercept it, Admiral?

TOLWYN  
No. We wait.

BELLEGARDE  
The Snakeir will overtake Blair's fighter.  
(concerned)  
Sir, if we don't intercept, the Snakeir will reach earth orbit before us. The casualties could be significant.

300 CONTINUED:

300

TOLWYN

(angry)

I'm bloody well aware of that, Richard.  
All ships are to hold their positions,  
and target those jump coordinates.

BELLEGARDE

(gets it)

If we jump him, we'd be out of position  
when the Kilrathi fleet comes  
through...

TOLWYN

We're after bigger game than the  
Snakeir. We need a resounding victory,  
or this war is over...

(reflects)

For that, I have to risk the lives of  
innocent civilians and one very brave  
young lieutenant...

301 EXT. BLAIR'S RAPIER

301

The Rapier streaks past. Well behind it, a large object is  
following, the Kilrathi Snakeir.

SC. 302 OMIT

303 INT. RAPIER COCKPIT - BLAIR

303

Blair keeps trying to raise someone on the radio.

BLAIR

Blair to Confed Fleet. Do you read me?  
Kilrathi capital ship has penetrated  
the quasar jump point and is in Earth  
space. Copy!

Finally, he gives up.

BLAIR

They aren't in radio range. Earth will  
never see the Kilrathi coming.

MERLIN

(voice only)

I knew this was all going to end  
horribly... Did I mention we'll be in  
range of the Snakeir guns in ten  
minutes.

BLAIR

At least they can't launch torpedoes at  
this speed.

There is a LOUD RHYTHMIC BEEPING. Blair sits up, scans his  
heads up display.

BLAIR

There! Dead ahead. It's the fleet  
signaling. They've heard us!

(MORE)



BLAIR (Cont'd)

(into radio)

Blair to Confed fleet. Kilrathi capital ship on my course, aft of my position! Confed fleet, do you read me?

But the beeping continues, louder. Blair stares at the screen.

BLAIR

Only one ship. But it's huge.

MERLIN

It isn't a ship. Check your scanners.

Blair turns on his telescopic scanner. Space shimmers, then he sees the warning beacon marking Scylla, the gravity well the Diligent negotiated on its way to the Tiger Claw. Behind it, space seems to shimmer.

MERLIN

All we need, Scylla. "Bane to sailors and monster of myth."

304 EXT. TIGER CLAW - ULYSSES CORRIDOR

304

Amidst the debris of the battle, the Tiger Claw with its meager fighter escort changes course.

305 INT. TIGER CLAW - BRIDGE

305

Obutu reports to Paladin.

OBUTU

We're hove to for repair inspection, sir.

PALADIN

What about that locator beacon from the Rapier pod?

RADAR MAN

Nothing sir. Lost contact during the battle.

PALADIN

We've lost too many good pilots today. Have the Diligent prepared for launch. I'm going to look for that pod.

OBUTU

Aye, aye, sir.

Paladin grimly walks from the bridge.

306 EXT. BLAIR'S RAPIER

306

The Rapier, seen from behind, is still on course toward Scylla. Not very far behind it, the immense Snakeir.

307 INT. RAPIER COCKPIT - BLAIR

307

Blair sweats over the controls. There is an urgent alarm jangling his nerves further.

MERLIN

In case the alarms didn't cue you -- you'll be past the Point of No Return of Scylla in ninety seconds. It's gravitational field will tear us to pieces.

BLAIR

Solutions, Merlin! Not more problems.

Blair blinks hard at the scanner scope and the large, swirling whirlpool of distorted space-time ahead. Then it dawns on him.

BLAIR

How much does a Snakeir weigh?

MERLIN

Two hundred thousand tons, give or take a few thousand.

Blair does a quick calculation, then flips on the afterburners. Another flashing WARNING LIGHT immediately illuminates on his heads up screen, as he is thrown back in his seat.

MERLIN

(alarmed)

What are you doing? The after burners will use up our last fuel. And we're still headed for that thing...

308 INT. SNAKEIR - BRIDGE

308

The Kilrathi Captain reports to the Admiral.

KILRATHI CAPTAIN

Planetary torpedoes online. We will be in range in forty minutes. There is no response to the Rapier's transmissions. Sivar smiles on us. The surprise is total.

An alarm goes off. Through the dense green atmosphere, A KILRATHI RADAR TECH growls his report.

KILRATHI TECH

The Rapier is homing in on a beacon signal. It could be a Confederation guidance buoy.

KILRATHI ADMIRAL

Or a capital ship. Identify and report. Full battle stations.

308 CONTINUED:

308

Other alarms go off in the Kilrathi ship. On the Admiral's INFRARED MONITOR, he watches the Rapier--a tiny speck--head for the beacon.

308A INT. EJECTION POD - DEVERAUX

308A

Deveraux is quickly freezing to death. In the far distance a light appears. Deveraux doesn't notice it as the Ejection Pod's window are almost completely iced over. Deveraux slowly locates the Pod's self destruction switch. She gently places her hand over it.

309 INT. RAPIER COCKPIT - BLAIR

309

It seems like half the alarm systems in the cockpit are buzzing or flashing. Blair's concentration is total, his face dripping with sweat.

MERLIN

Kilrathi radar locked on. Ten seconds to the Point of No Return... and you're almost out of fuel. You won't be able to turn.

BLAIR

Give me a count.

MERLIN

Four... three....

BLAIR

Holy shit!

MERLIN

Two...

Blair jerks the joystick hard right.

310 EXT. BLAIR'S RAPIER

310

Banks hard, afterburners glowing and roaring, and veers away from Scylla.

311 INT. RAPIER COCKPIT - BLAIR

311

BLAIR

We're not going to break free of the gravity well! We don't have enough fuel!

MERLIN

Actually, I lied.

BLAIR

What?

MERLIN

You've got ten more seconds of thrust.

311 CONTINUED:

311

The Rapier shimmies like a tuning fork, engines roaring.  
Then, with a last jerk, she hurtles free of the gravity  
well's gravitational pull.

\*  
\*  
\*

BLAIR

We're free!

\*  
\*

312 EXT. BLAIR'S RAPIER 312 \*

The fighter rockets away at a ninety degree angle from Scylla.

313 INT. SNAKEIR - BRIDGE 313

The Admiral continues to peer at his scanners.

KILRATHI CAPTAIN  
The Rapier has veered away.  
Confederation ship, dead ahead.

KILRATHI ADMIRAL  
That isn't a ship! Hard to port!  
Reverse all thrusters!

314 EXT. SNAKEIR 314

The long ship tries to turn, but she has far too much inertia TO VEER AWAY FROM SCYLLA, as the tiny Rapier has done.

315 INT. RAPIER COCKPIT - BLAIR 315

Blair's engines sputter and die.

MERLIN  
We're out of fuel.

He looks back at the Snakeir.

BLAIR  
The Kilrathi's too heavy. Scylla's got her.

316 INT. SNAKEIR - BRIDGE 316

The bridge, still shrouded in its murky atmosphere, is listing. Scylla, her great shimmering maw glistening in space, appears on the starboard side.

KILRATHI ADMIRAL  
All engines full!

The engine noise raises to a deafening roar, but the great ship continues to drift toward Scylla. The Admiral realizes all is lost.

KILRATHI ADMIRAL  
But Sivar chose us...

Every object in the Kilrathi bridge begins to warp and distort. The Kilrathi, mere silhouettes in the murk, are themselves stretched, and pulled, screeching in pain and horror.

317 EXT. SNAKEIR AND SCYLLA

317

The Kilrathi ship is pulled completely around, then seems to STRETCH, THEN CRACK, AND PULL APART, forming A LONG DEBRIS TRAIL that extends toward the gravity well.

318 EXT. EARTH'S SOLAR SYSTEM - JUMP POINT

318

From nowhere, a huge Fralthi appears. But several moments later, it receives DIRECT HITS from a dozen cannon blasts.

REVERSE ANGLE: The Confed fleet, in attack formation, launches A HALF- DOZEN TORPEDOES. The powerful cannon fire pummels the Kilrathi ship before it can react.

RESUME JUMP POINT: The Kilrathi carrier breaks apart, and explodes. A second, smaller ship appears. It too is destroyed in the ambush.

SC. 319 - 320 OMIT

321 EXT. CONCORDIA - SOLAR SYSTEM / JUMP POINT

321

The great ship seems surrounded by a fireworks display as it fires torpedoes and missiles, and uses its massive cannon array.

322 INT. CONCORDIA - BRIDGE

322

Bellegarde approaches Tolwyn, who watches grimly.

BELLEGARDE

The Kilrathi fleet is coming through the jump point one ship at a time, Admiral. They have no chance to defend themselves or warn the ships behind.

TOLWYN

And the Snakeir?

BELLEGARDE

She's disappeared from our scanners.

TOLWYN

Launch two Rapier wings and a squadron of Broadwords. We've got to find her.

BELLEGARDE

Aye, aye, sir.

323 EXT. BLAIR'S RAPIER

323

The darkened fighter tumbles slowly through space. Off, way in the distance we can see Earth. Safe, at least for now.

324 INT. RAPIER COCKPIT - BLAIR

324

All the instruments are dark. Blair trembles violently.

*Green Amendments - Revised 3/4/98*

324 CONTINUED:

112.  
324

BLAIR

Hey, you were right all along.

Merlin appears in hologram.

MERLIN

I was?

BLAIR

We're doomed.

Merlin has a change of character -- a sudden burst  
compassion in his circuitry.

MERLIN

Don't say that. You're a fighter. So  
fight! We're going to make it.

BLAIR

Cold got to you Merlin? You sound  
downright optimistic.

MERLIN

Let's just call it intuition...

Suddenly, the Rapier is jolted.

BLAIR

What the hell...?

325 EXT. RAPIER &amp; BROADSWORD

325

A Broadsword bomber has captured the drifting Rapier in  
its tractor beam.

MERLIN (O.S.)

Or a working array of scanners.

A strong spotlight illuminates Blair inside the cockpit.  
As Blair looks up, the bomber pilot salutes him. With  
badly trembling hand, Blair grins and returns the salute.

DISSOLVE TO:

325A EXT. TIGER CLAW - EARTH SPACE

325A

The battered old lady pulls into low earth orbit, joining  
the rest of the Confed fleet -- the blue planet spinning  
gracefully below her. \*

SC. 326 - 329 OMIT

*Green Amendments- Revised 3/4/98*

113.

329A INT. BRIDGE - CONCORDIA

329A

Tolwyn looks out through the windows -- we can see the  
Tiger Claw -- and Earth.

Blair comes on deck, looking very tattered himself.

He salutes Tolwyn. Tolwyn offers his hand and smiles.

TOLWYN

Your father would have been proud.

Blair takes his hand.

BLAIR

I have something for you.

Blair takes Tolwyn's Ring from his pocket and hands it to  
Tolwyn.

BLAIR (Cont'd)

Sansky asked me to return it.

Tolwyn takes the ring. Behind the mask of command we can  
see the memories of past battles - friends and enemies  
lost.

TOLWYN

The wounds of civil war run deep. He  
was a good captain despite everything.

BLAIR

Did they locate Lt. Cmdr Deveraux?

TOLWYN

Paladin went out to search for her. We  
haven't heard from him since the Tiger  
Claw arrived in Earth space.

The comm chirps.

BELLEGARDE

The Diligent reporting. Commodore  
Taggart requesting permission to land  
on the Tiger Claw, sir.

Bellegarde is listening to the transmission.

BLAIR

Is she with him?

BELLEGARDE

Lt. Cmdr Deveraux is on board.

(CONTINUED)



Green Amendments - Revised 3/4/98

114.

329A CONTINUED:

329A

BLAIR

I knew she'd make it!

BELLEGARDE

Taggart is requesting an emergency medical team to meet him on the flight deck immediately.

The celebration ends quickly.

BLAIR

What's wrong?

BELLEGARDE

I'm sorry. The rest of the transmission got cut off as they entered the Tiger Claw's air lock.

Tolwyn looks at Blair.

TOLWYN

I think you're on the wrong ship.

Blair salutes and leaves. Fast.

329AaEXT. TIGER CLAW

329Aa

Blair's Rapier is on it's final approach. It blasts through the airlock.

329B INT. FLIGHT DECK- TIGER CLAW

329B

Paladin emerges from the Diligent carrying a limp Deveraux. The medical team rush over to them. Paladin places Deveraux on an emergency gurney. The medical team furiously starts to work on her. Maniac and Gerald are all ready there.

Blair runs up, watching in horror as they medical team tries their best to revive her.

MANIAC

(happy, relieved)

You made it!

Blair looks over to Paladin who looks very somber.

PALADIN

Pure luck that I found her at all. She must have turned off her beacon so as not to tip off the Kilrathi. Brave girl.

The Medical team continues to work on her. Blair drops to a knee to get right beside her. Maniac puts a comforting hand on Blair's shoulder. Gerald and Paladin exchange a hopeless look.

BLAIR

Come on, Angel. Come back. Don't you die on me.

(CONTINUED)

GREEN Amendments - Revised 5/4/98

329B CONTINUED:

115.  
329B

Blair clutches her hand.

BLAIR (Cont'd)  
Come on, angel.

MEDIC  
I got a pulse!

Deveraux starts to cough a bit. Her eyes begin to open.  
She looks up at Blair. She doesn't look good but she  
manages to smile.

DEVERAUX  
What did you say?

BLAIR  
I said don't you die on me.

DEVERAUX  
It that a suggestion or an order?

Blair manages a small laugh.

BLAIR  
That's a definite order.

Blair goes in for the kiss- The Medic stops him.

MEDIC  
We have to get her down to sick bay.  
Don't worry she'll be fine.

GERALD  
We stopped the Kilrathi.

PALADIN  
They'll be back. The only question is  
when.

BLAIR  
We'll be ready for them this time, sir.  
No more surprises.

MANIAC  
Maybe it's just me, but I didn't think  
they were all that tough.

Blair, Gerald, and Paladin all exchange a look.

MANIAC (Cont'd)  
What? I mean it.

They all break up laughing.

The CAMERA pulls back, our heroes gathered around  
Deveraux's gurney, sharing this moment of victory and  
relief as people go about their business on the flight  
deck.

329B CONTINUED:

329B

DEVERAUX

It that a suggestion or an order?

Blair manages a small laugh.

BLAIR

That's a definite order.

Blair goes in for the kiss- The Medic stops him.

MEDIC

We have to get her down to sick bay.  
Don't worry she'll be fine.

Deveraux is whisked away by the medical team. Blair stands up, Maniac behind him. Gerald and Paladin joins them.

GERALD

We stopped the Kilrathi.

\*

PALADIN

They'll be back. The only question is when.

BLAIR

We'll be ready for them this time, sir.  
No more surprises.

MANIAC

Maybe it's just me, but I didn't think they were all that tough.

Blair, Gerald, and Paladin all exchange a look.

MANIAC (Cont'd)

What? I mean it.

They all break up laughing.

SC. 330 - 333 OMIT

FADE OUT.