

FADE IN

INT. TIN SHACK, NIGHT

Station New Bolton, Antarctic Circle, March 1914

The shack is dark and illuminated only by a few torches. The floor is a combination of wood, tin and ice. A wood and tin lined hallway leads down into the ice. A group of men dressed in parkas scramble to prop up wooden beams against the shack door.

One man stands to the side, rifle pointed at the door. Something slams against the door, sending the men reeling. A man in a brighter parka, DR. STEVEN VICKS runs up from the tunnel, clutching something to his chest. Vicks is a frayed man and he speaks with a profound shakiness.

STEVEN

Neal, that door won't hold. We
have to get out here!

NEAL CUNNINGHAM, 40, full-bearded, the man with the gun, doesn't even flinch when the door shakes from the force of another impact. He speaks clearly above the racket.

NEAL

And where would we go exactly,
doctor, eh? Do you have a team
of dogs hidden somewhere!? or
maybe a ship?

He starts loading his gun.

NEAL

Or a goddamned magic portal that
you've been saving for just this
very moment!

STEVEN

You can't just stand here and let
those things kill you!

NEAL

I don't intend to.

He finishes loading.

NEAL

Now quickly, get down to the
lower levels.

Steven starts to back up, his arms clutching the bundle even more tightly, his voice cracking.

STEVEN

Where? There's nowhere to hide

down there. They've come for me
Neal, they'll kill all of you and
then come for me...

Neal stops loading and hits Steven across the head.

NEAL
For God's sake man! Shut up and
hide! If we can't hold them
here, descend in the machine.

Steven looks up in horror, the shock of the blow having
left him.

STEVEN
I can't do that Neal. I won't go
down again. You don't know what
it was like down there.

The door bends with the force of the next impact. One
man is thrown to the wall by the force of it. The men
begin to back off and draw their own guns.

NEAL
Dr.Vicks, our time is beginning
to run low. Prepare the sphere
and we will make to accompany you
as soon as we can.

STEVEN
But, Neal-

NEAL
This is not an option! Now get
down into the tunnel and prepare
the dredging sphere. Please,
this is not a time for cowardice.

The doctor hesitates for a moment, but backs off and
takes off down the tunnel. The men form a circle around
Neal, aiming towards the door.

NEAL
Godspeed, Steven.

The doors burst open in a flurry of ice and splinters.
Shadowy figures pour in. Neal and his men open fire.

EXT. LONDON STREET - DAY

London, England, December, 1914

People and cars bustle about in a cacophony of feet on
cobblestone and the roar of engines. The sky is gray
overhead and snow falls heavily. Icicles hang from every
building and there is a sense of unease and hurriedness
in the way everyone moves.

SCOTT HUXTON, 26, thin and energetic, weaves amongst the crowd to a large oak door, which he starts to pound.

SCOTT
Chester! Open up, we need to go!

TAVISH, the butler, a tall, elegant looking man opens the door.

SCOTT
Hello Tavish. Is Chester ready?

TAVISH
The master is still preparing, but you are welcome to come in for tea.

SCOTT
Thank you.

INT. VICKS RESIDENCE - DAY

The foyer of the residence is a mess. Papers, paintings, half built aparatuses litter the floor. Small tables are pushed against the holds, all carrying mounds of papers, pictures, etc. Tavish sighs audibly, and disappears down the foyer.

Scott leans over to hang his coat when he spies a newspaper folded on a stand. The headline reads "Bombings continue, cities unsafe."

He walks away from it and starts inspecting the various pictures on the wall. He focuses on one, showing a younger Scott, Dr. Steven Vicks and another man, arms slug over each other, standing triumphant over an open excavation pit.

A clattering can be heard from the side and CHESTER VICKS, 41, of ruddy complexion, the other man from the picture walks into the foyer, cane in hand. When he sees Scott, he throws his arms up and Scott hugs him.

CHESTER
Scott! Oh, it's good to see you again. How long has it been, 3, 4 years? Not since the Tannelorne dig, if I remember.

SCOTT
Too long, by my count. I was afraid you didn't receive my message.

They move to the coat rack. Chester's waves his cane and knocks a table clear of papers.

CHESTER

Blasted thing! And yes, I most definitely received it. I sent a proposal to the Royal Society the moment I read it. Tavish, save the tea for when we return!

The grab their coats and exit just as Tavish returns with a tray of tea and coffee.

EXT. LONDON STREET - DAY

Scott and Chester walk at a brisk pace, the wind having picked up since when Scott arrived. The walls on either side of them are plastered with perfectly spaced recruitment posters.

SCOTT

This is terrible.

CHESTER

Aye, things haven't been good while you were away. War, the harshest winter on record, bombings on cities...and now for this to happen.

SCOTT

Don't worry Chester. You and Steven are like family to me. I'll find a way to get him back.

CHESTER

Up ahead, here's their main building.

INT. HOUSE OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY, WAITING HALL - DAY

Natural light floods the hall leading to the main auditorium. Portraits of past members, all dignified and proud, stare down at Scott and Chester.

Chester goes to speak with a retainer while Scott observes the paintings. He focuses on one particularly forboding looking man, shoulders straight, chest puffed out and head held up high. Scott tries to emulate the pose for a moment before his back gives out and he starts pacing back and forth.

Chester comes up and claps him on the shoulder.

CHESTER

They'll be with us in a moment, they're assembling after the last meeting.

Chester notices the picture Scott was looking at.

CHESTER
Ah, Lord Dormmington,
intimidating fellow isn't he?

SCOTT
What did he do?

CHESTER
I can't recall, but judging by
his looks and his year, I'd say
probably an explorer. Maybe
Borneo.

Scott goes back to pacing, muttering lightly under his
breath.

CHESTER
Now don't worry lad. I'm sure
that once you explain our case
they'll see reason.

SCOTT
One can only hope.

CHESTER
I know my brother wasn't the most
beloved member, but he was still
a member of the Royal Society.
They will see the need.

The door to the main auditorium opens and a small, portly
retainer exits.

RETAINER
They're ready to see you now.

INT. HOUSE OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY, AUDITORIUM

The auditorium is wide and circles around a recessed
pit. Scott breathes heavily before entering the pit.
The heads of the Society tribunal come into view. All
old men, graying beards and scowls. The chairman speaks.

CHAIRMAN
State your name and position for
the record.

SCOTT
Scott Huxton, assistant and
student under Dr. Steven Vicks,
oceanographer, anthropologist.

CHAIRMAN
We will now proceed. The board
has reviewed your proposal for a
recovery expedition of the failed
Cunningham expedition and we have
come to the decision that such an

expedition would
be...inadvisable.

SCOTT
What do you mean,
"inadvisable"?! How is trying to
save the life of one of the
greatest minds of the 20th
century-

Chester steps into the pit.

CHESTER
What my young friend means to say
is, uh, how is it inadvisable,
sirs?

The chairman leans over his chair and eyes Chester.

CHAIRMAN
The current war effort has taken
a toll on our resources. It is a
matter of logistics. All
available ships have been
diverted to assist the navy and
merchant fleets.

SCOTT
There must be something we can
do. Couldn't I hire out a
foreign vessel or-

Another member of the tribunal interjects.

TRIBUNAL MEMBER 1
If you were to find a ship, it
would not be hired with the
society's funds. The
responsibility for payment would
fall on you and any other
investors.

SCOTT
But what about the information?
Nearly a year's worth of research
is at the expedition camp.

CHAIRMAN
Enough. That data can be
reproduced, possibly by you, once
the war is over and we can spare
the funds.

SCOTT
But what about the people, what
about Dr.Vicks and Ser
Cunningham?

The chairman fidgets in his seat.

CHAIRMAN

It has been 3 months since their last scheduled report. We declare the expedition lost. All members of the party must certainly be dead.

SCOTT

Dead?

CHAIRMAN

Yes. An unfortunate fate, but not unheard of. I'm terribly sorry for your loss. This meeting is adjourned.

The society members file out, leaving Scott and Chester alone in the pit.

INT. VICKS RESIDENCE - NIGHT

The living room is filled with paintings, maps and artifacts. It is both claustrophobic and cozy. Chester walks in with a bottle of scotch and two glasses, Scott follows closely after, playing with a bauble.

CHESTER

I'm sorry lad, but I just don't know what to do.

The bauble comes together in Scott's hands, a sort of miniature orrery and he puts it on a table.

SCOTT

There must be something we can do. Something I could do.

CHESTER

I doubt there's anything either of us could do.

He fills a glass and raises it up.

CHESTER

To Steven, colleague, brother, mentor.

Chester downs his entire glass. Scott looks at the picture before shaking his head. Tavish, enters the living room.

TAVISH

Sirs, a visitor is waiting for you in the foyer.

SCOTT

Just a moment, let us tidy up-

VISITOR

No need.

NIGEL ERICKSON, 30, dashing and smiling a very white smile stands in the hallway, heavy overcoat lightly dusted with snow.

NIGEL

Nigel Erickson, at your service.

TAVISH

I'm sorry sirs, but he was most insistent on coming in to meet you.

SCOTT

It's fine, Tavish, fetch some coffee. (to Nigel) Sir, if would care to explain yoursel-

NIGEL

(ignoring Scott)

With some brandy, if you don't mind.

Scott looks offended.

CHESTER

...eh, with some brandy, Tavish.

Tavish leaves, and Nigel hangs his overcoat on a rack.

CHESTER

Erickson? I feel as though I've heard that name before.

NIGEL

Likely from my father, or probably my grandfather, or maybe even me.

CHESTER

Of course, the Erickson family.

Scott picks up the second glass, cleans it for a moment before pouring his scotch.

SCOTT

As in Kitchley Erickson, the bushwhacker?

NIGEL

I just call him grandpap, but yes, that Erickson family. But, who might you be?

SCOTT

Oh, pardon. I'm Scott Huxton,
oceanographer and assistant to
the Dr. Steven Vicks and his
brother Chester.

Scott extends his arm out for a shake. Nigel takes it
and squeezes. Scott winces slightly in pain.

CHESTER

Well, this is a surprise. And
what brings you to my home?

Nigel walks about the room, touching artifacts and
tracing his finger along map lines.

NIGEL

One of my sources tells me that
you were looking for a way to get
to the arctic.

SCOTT

Yes, but the Royal Society said
that the had no ships to spare,
and the cost for a foreign vessel
now would be astronomical.

NIGEL

Well then, it's good luck that I
found a ship willing to make the
journey.

SCOTT

Impossible. How could you afford
it?

Tavish reenters the room with a tray of tea and brandy.
Only Nigel takes a cup.

NIGEL

That's just it, I can't. That's
what brought me here.

SCOTT

You need money.

Nigel looks up from his tea, letting the steam float into
his face.

NIGEL

Just like you, I assume. The
ship is docked and prepared for
immediate departure. They're
simply waiting for payment.

SCOTT

And, could I ask you for your
reason in this? People don't

simply wake up one day deciding
to go to Antarctica. Why go?

Nigel finishes his tea before looking at Scott right in
the eye. They are level, but neither shirks away.

NIGEL

Why go? Why not go? The last
truly untamed expanse and I'm
expected to let people like
Shackleton and Amundsen claim it
all for themselves? You act like
I have a choice in the matter.

Scott folds his arms, Chester looks pensive.

NIGEL

(to Chester)

Allow me to be frank. Honestly,
I don't think you have a choice
in the matter. If you don't give
me the money, none of us are
going to Antarctica.

SCOTT

How dare you take that tone with
him? Do you know who he is, you
impertinent-

CHESTER

Fine, I'll have the money wired
in tomorrow. Give Tavish the
information.

SCOTT

(shocked)

Chester?- How can you-?

NIGEL

Excellent. The ship's in the
Belfast shipyards. It's a new
model, designed for arctic
travel.

Nigel gets up and slips his coat back on, not wasting a
moment.

SCOTT

Belfast? That's a navy
shipyard. It'll take a few days
just to get there.

NIGEL

Then I suggest you start packing
immediately. Very well, it's
getting late, so I will take my
leave of you. It's been a
pleasure. May our journey

be...eventful. Goodnight
gentlemen.

CHESTER
Goodnight.

Nigel exits the room. Scott sighs and collapses into a chair.

CHESTER
You better get used to him,
Scott. You'll be traveling with
him.

SCOTT
What? No, you have to come with
me.

He bangs his cane against the side of his chair.

CHESTER
With this? I don't think so.
Hmmp. Besides, even if he is
the son of a famous family, I'm
not just going to let him walk
away with my and my brother's
money.

SCOTT
I suppose so.

CHESTER
If there was anyone who could
pull through for Steven, it's
you.

SCOTT
But do you think we can trust
this Erickson fellow?

Chester reaches over from his chair to a pile of books and pulls out a worn, leatherbound volume. He flicks through a few pages.

CHESTER
The Ericksons are an...ambitious
family. Wherever there's been
wilderness to be conquered,
there's been an Erickson or two.
Take from that what you will.

Scott looks at him and nods his head but doesn't say anything.

SCOTT
Antarctica...I should pack.

Chester laughs.

CHESTER

That sounds like a good idea.
Get Tavish to help you. Hah hah,
Tavish!

EXT. SHIP DECK - THE AUDACITY, DAY

Holland and Wolf Shipyards, Belfast.

The ship deck is a flurry of activity. Deckhands hurry about making sure everything is ready for departure. Cargo is loaded on board from the dock. Passengers, mostly laborers, but also the captain and his crew, board by walking a thin plank. Scott pesters the captain with questions.

SCOTT

And when will we be able to
depart? It is imperative that we
depart immediately.

CAPTAIN ELSWORTH TUSSIN, A grizzled man in an immaculate blue uniform, clearly annoyed by Huxton, brushes him aside.

CAPTAIN

Mr. Huxton, I fully understand
the urgency of our mission, but I
will not sacrifice safety in the
name of expediency. We will
depart when I say we depart.

SCOTT

Very well, I understand captain,
I'm only trying to convey the
IMMEDIACY of our mission.

CAPTAIN

As you have done countless times
for the past 3 hours. This is a
new vessel, I don't want to push
her too hard out of the docks.

He looks down at the deck. Rows of boxes are covered with gray sheets. The captain reaches for his hat and wipes at his brow.

CAPTAIN

Now where's this Erickson fellow?
at this rate, he'll be the one
holding us up.

SCOTT

You haven't met him, from the way
it sounded, it seemed like he'd
met you before.

CAPTAIN

No, I've never met the kid before
and frankly, I-

Scott and the captain are interrupted by screaming coming from the docks. A throng of men and women slowly amble towards the boarding plank. From the throng emerges Nigel. Everyone seems to be pressing bottles of liquor or tokens of affection on him. He waves the people away before walking up to the captain and extending for a shake.

SCOTT
May I present Mr.Erickson,
Captain.

NIGEL
Nigel Erickson, at your service,
sir.

Captain Elsworth is all business and instead extends his hand out.

CAPTAIN
Papers.

Nigel hands over the papers. The captain is wary, but goes over the them and waves him aboard.

CAPTAIN
Welcome aboard The Audacity, Mr.
Erickson. You'll be bunking with
Dr. Huxton.

SCOTT
I'm not actually a doctor. I
have yet to attain my doctorate-

CAPTAIN
God help you, Mr.Erickson.

Nigel snickers and moves to go into the ships but the captain grabs his arm.

CAPTAIN
But before you go into the holds
I would like you to know that we
received payment from the Society
this morning, just as you said.

Nigel looks at the captain, blank for a moment, then smiling.

NIGEL
Yes, they were a little late on
that, it won't happen the next
time.

CAPTAIN

Yes, I'm sure it won't. Well
then, I'll leave you too to
settle in.

The captain leaves them and Scott and Nigel descend into
the holds.

INT. SHIP BUNKS

The bunks for Scott and Nigel are small but there is all
the space for a desk and for Nigel's trunks. They set up
materials. Silence eventually falls upon the room, which
Scott tries to break.

SCOTT

What did he mean by the Royal
Society's payment?

Nigel snorts.

NIGEL

It was part of what I had to do
to get them to agree to push
off. There are other dangers out
there besides ice floes and
storms.

SCOTT

Did you lie to these people?

NIGEL

Lie is a strong word.
Misinformed is so much more
appropriate.

SCOTT

What did you tell them?

NIGEL

I told them what I had to tell
them. Sanctioned by the Royal
Society, with a bonus once they
get us back to England.

SCOTT

Goddamn it man.

NIGEL

It was the only way. No one else
wants to try breaking off from
the merchant fleet and risk
getting torpedoed by some Uboat.
Elsworth was the only captain
willing to do it.

Scott throws his luggage to the side and makes for the
door.

SCOTT
I need to tell the Captain this,
you're putting their lives
endanger.

Nigel jumps between him and the door.

NIGEL
Fine, go ahead and tell the
captain, and then lose any chance
of rescuing anyone from the
Cunningham expedition.

Scott and Nigel stare each other down. Scott moves to his suitcase and unclasps it. Nigel relaxes and does the same to his own. They unpack in silence until Nigel peeks at Scott's luggage, measuring equipment and maps.

NIGEL.
Scott, have you ever been to the
arctic?

SCOTT
I can't say I have, no.

NIGEL
Well I have, and let me tell you,
it is quite unlike anything you
will ever see. It's a harsh
environment, Mr. Huxton. It's
not a place for the weak, or for
the cowardly.

He unbuttons his shirt his shirt to reveal three long, brutal scars. Scott blanches, but remains seated.

SCOTT
Was that, but how, no creature
from the...what creature from the
arctic did that?

NIGEL
None. This was from trip to
Burma with my father. I was
attacked by a tiger on the river.

He buttons his shirt back up.

NIGEL
So let me ask you right now, if
you're going to rescue your
mentor's expedition, what if he's
dead?

Scott fidgets and doesn't answer.

NIGEL
God forbid, of course.

SCOTT

Even if he was...dead, the amount of data he'd compiled is too valuable to be lost.

NIGEL

Phhh, data. So tell me, what do you and your mentor study that's so valuable?

Scott pulls out a map of Antarctica and a small totem-like artifact.

SCOTT

Anthropology, particularly, ancient South American cultures.

Nigel grabs the artifact.

NIGEL

What in god's name is this?

Scott snatches it back and places it on the desk.

SCOTT

It's what we've been studying for the past few years. The Alatzí people.

Nigel peers over the map. There are x's crossed all over the antarctic continent, and red lines leading into the southernmost regions of south america.

SCOTT

They were the first people to set foot on Antarctica.

NIGEL

Explorers?

SCOTT

No. As far as we found, they worshiped a southern deity, a god of cold who wished to shroud the world in darkness.

He taps the totem on the head. It's a foul thing, amorphous, many-limbed, many-eyed with a jawless head. He goes back to unpacking.

Scott pulls out some sketches of deep sea animals. Angler fish, volcanic vent worms, fish with expandable jaws and all manner of strange creatures. Nigel grabs one and observes it intently.

NIGEL

Amazing. How did you get these?

SCOTT

Not me, Chester. It's a new device, it's called a bathysphere. It lets you go down and see what lurks down below. We've been using it recently, to aid in excavating the ocean floor.

NIGEL

And you've been in this bathysphere?

SCOTT

Me? No, Not me. When we were testing it on the coast I was deathly afraid of it. Of being bcrushed by the pressure.

NIGEL

Maybe, it's a reasonable fear, but, look at what you could have seen. Are you telling me that you would have rather stayed on the ship, I'm assuming, and let someone else have all the glory of making the first citing?

Scott doesn't answer, but sits down on a chair.

SCOTT

I suppose so, yes. It doesn't really matter who did it, just that it was done, don't you think?

NIGEL

No, I don't think.

Scott looks down at his papers again.

SCOTT

You know, a famous adventurer was with them. Neal-

NIGEL

Cunningham, yes I know. The man's a legend. He cut into the jungles of Brazil, the forests of the Philippines, even journeyed to the Himalayas.

Nigel pulls out a knife and starts cleaning the bottom of his fingernail.

NIGEL

You know, I'm going to be honest with you. You can trust me, do

you know why, Mr. Huxton?

SCOTT

Why?

He leans in close to Scott.

NIGEL

Because we both want something,
and I have a good feeling about
you. We watch each other's backs
everything will turn out fine.
Do you get me?

Scott looks at him with a mixture of shock, but relents.

SCOTT

I understand.

NIGEL

Good.

Nigel takes another look at the map and the picture of
the anglerfish and the Alatzi statue.

NIGEL

I like that statue.

He leaves the bunk. Scott continues organizing. Behind
him, a man stealthily enters. He is SHAW, 19, an
apprentice on the ship. He's not a terribly bright
looking young fellow, and he has the tone of the kind
that could be easily swayed, but he does have a cheerful
demeanor and a head full of thick, messy hair.

SHAW

Hello sir.

Scott jumps.

SCOTT

Oh, sorry, you sort of snuck up
on me. Uh, who are you.

SHAW

Oh, I was told by the captain to
assist you in unpacking and
setting up your equipment.

SCOTT

No, that's alright, everything
here is extremely delicate and
I'd rather not risk damaging
anything.

SHAW

As you wish sir.

He turns to walk out when he sees the statue. Whispers fill the air. Scott keeps talking but his voice is drowned out. Shaw then pockets the statue. A klaxon snaps him out of his semi-trance.

SHAW

That's the captain's call.

SCOTT

To the deck then.

EXT. SHIP DECK - THE AUDACITY

The entire crew and passenger regiment is lined up on the deck. They number about 40 in all. The captain stands on a podium. Scott and Nigel join the crowd just before the captain addresses them.

CAPTAIN ELSWORTH

Men, I would like to commend you for volunteering for this assignment. This will be the maiden voyage of The Audacity, one of the world's newest and most capable arctic vessels.

Two crewmen break off from the rest and start pulling in the mooring ropes.

CAPTAIN ELSWORTH

We go for one reason. At the behest of the royal society to rescue a fellow member. Ill luck has befallen them, and it is our mission to rescue them from the cold arctic.

The ship engines roar to life.

CAPTAIN ELSWORTH

We will not fail in this endeavor.

He salutes.

CAPTAIN ELSWORTH

God save the King. You're dismissed.

The workers get back to preparing the deck. Nigel and Scott walk the captain up to the top deck. They watch as they leave dock and enter the open ocean. In the far distance, black smoke rises up into the sky.

CAPTAIN ELSWORTH

Say goodbye to Great Britain boys, that's Attenborough burning. Our sister shipyard.

The sun begins to set, the distant smoke dimming its intensity and making it a glowing orange as it dips below the horizon.

NIGEL

I think we're going to get along splendidly, Scott. Splendidly.

EXT. SHIP DECK - NIGHT

The open sea stretches on to the horizon in every direction. The night is clear and the moon shines brightly. The deck is mostly empty, although a few men yet stand at watch. They hold spyglasses and binoculars all survey the horizons.

Scott exits the lower holds, carrying a notebook and a small lantern. He walks to the second level of the deck and sits down. Captain Elsworth appears behind him, book in one hand, spyglass in the other.

CAPTAIN ELSWORTH

Douse that light Mr. Huxton.

Scott jumps.

SCOTT

Captain, I didn't anyone else was up here.

CAPTAIN ELSWORTH

The light.

Scott hustles to turn off his lantern.

CAPTAIN ELSWORTH

We're still in enemy waters. It would be a shame if we were sunk not a day out of port.

Scott begins packing up when he notices the book the captain's carrying.

SCOTT

A Princess of Mars?

CAPTAIN ELSWORTH

A guilty pleasure of mine. What about you?

Scott, flips open the book. Though he doesn't have a lantern the moonlight is bright enough to show the sketches and drawings within.

SCOTT

Sketchbooks. Steven's, my master's.

He turns the page and lands on a hideous etching. A many limbed, evil looking thing.

CAPTAIN ELSWORTH
What the hell's that?

SCOTT
What I study. Nigel had the same reaction in fact.

CAPTAIN ELSWORTH
It's hideous.

SCOTT
A statue of the god of the Alatzí, an ancient south american people. They would paddle down from the southernmost tip bearing sacrifice for it.

CAPTAIN ELSWORTH
Sacrifice...and they worshiped this thing?

SCOTT
Worship might be a strong word. They feared it more than anything. It was said to be a harbinger of madness, and that to live in its thrall was a fate worse than death.

CAPTAIN ELSWORTH
Worse than death?

Scott flips to another page. More drawings, this time of beasts and terrible, two legged monsters. They are more like vicious looking fish with legs more than men with fish features.

SCOTT
It could also reshape flesh. Apparently this was the form it preferred for those in its grasp.

Captain Elsworth and Scott look at each other for a moment before the captain starts laughing.

CAPTAIN ELSWORTH
I like this. I'd like to see this thing in person.

Scott closes the book.

SCOTT
I wouldn't. The Alatzí thought that to look upon it was to invite madness and catatonia.

Its very presence could break
mens minds.

They both stand silent for a moment to let Scott's words sink in. There's a raucous burst of laughter and the sound of glass smashing. The captain chuckles and pats Scott on the back.

CAPTAIN ELSWORTH
I meant so I could kill it. If
you'll excuse me, I think my
presence is needed to keep the
peace.

The captain leaves, leaving Scott alone in the night,
looking out to the sea.

SCOTT
Harbinger of Madness...

INT. TEMPLE COMPLEX

The temple complex is a mix of oblong shapes and non-euclidean forms. The sky is pitch black but an ethereal green light suffuses the environment. Shadows seem to pulse and move.

Scott walks, dressed in a parka and clutching the statue of the Alatzi god, along a wide stone path. A haze seems to envelop everything.

SCOTT
Nigel!? Captain!?

Scott's calls echo back to him. A scraping sound is heard and movement further down the path. He gives chase. He comes to a sudden precipice leading down into a great chasm. He stares into it before clutching the statue to his chest.

Whispers and shadows seem to come for him. He closes his eyes and the whispers stop, but when he opens them again, a cluster of hands pushes him over the precipice.

INT. SHIP BUNKS

Scott awakens in his bunk and nearly falls out. He looks around for a moment before buttoning his shirt, grabbing a notebook and heading out onto the deck.

EXT. SHIP DECK - DAY

The Middle Atlantic

The bright sunlight shines down on the ship. Men wander around, some lounge in the sun. The Captain stands watch on the upper part of the deck, book in hand.

Nigel and some other crew members are sitting around a table, deck of cards out. Scott walks exits the holds and hails the captain before sitting down to look at the game.

NIGEL

Scott! How good of you to join
us this day, and only half past
noon at that.

The men laugh, but Scott shirks them off. He puts the notebook on the table before pulling out a few bills from his pocket and throwing them on the table. Nigel starts shuffling.

SCOTT

I must have eaten something bad,
I was plagued by nightmares.

Nigel stops shuffling for a moment.

NIGEL

Nightmares?

SCOTT

Yes, I can't even describe them,
there was something otherworldly
about them. It was dark,
inhuman, yet real.

Nigel finishes shuffling the deck, begins passing out cards.

NIGEL

I too was plagued by nightmares
last night.

He pulls out a cigarette.

NIGEL

Y'Zalmet, was in it. It was as
though he was stalking me.

Scott looks at him, then

SCOTT

How did you know it was named
Y'Zalmet?

The men stop playing cards and look at Nigel. He looks around at them, then back to his own hand.

NIGEL

You must have mentioned it once,
in passing. Either way, it's
nothing. Now play.

Scott looks at Nigel worryingly for a moment before

playing his hand.

From the side of the deck, men begin panicking. Black smoke begins to billow out from within the holds. They put their cards down and go to look over the side of the vessel.

The table gets flipped over and the captain rushes down from the upper deck.

CAPTAIN ELSWORTH
Fire! We need to save the cargo!

SCOTT
The notes.

Scott and Nigel rip pieces of cloth and press it to their faces before running into the smoky holds.

INT. SHIP BUNKS

Vision is obscured by the smoke. In wide sweeps, Scott shoves papers and gear into luggage. Nigel does the same and the two begin running back out.

On the way, a man falls onto Nigel, causing him to fall over. The man is babbling incoherently and pounding at Nigel's head. Scott turns around to try to hit the man with his luggage, but a burst of flame knocks him down.

Getting up, Scott turns and runs away, leaving Nigel.

EXT. SHIP DECK

The crewmen are still scrambling. Some are bent over, panting and surrounded by recovered cargo, mostly bundles of food and water. Scott is lying on his back, covered in soot and breathing heavily. The captain is pacing quickly, counting the heads present.

CAPTAIN ELSWORTH
Geller, Huxton, McCloud,
Koenig...Where are Shaw and
Erickson?

SCOTT
Nigel was with me, we went down
to save our gear. Someone jumped
him and then the fire caught up
to us.

CAPTAIN ELSWORTH
So he's still down there? Gods
damn it, Geller, Kitai, get some
extinguishers and go...

He's cut off as Nigel emerges from the smoking holds. He is bloodied, but unburnt. He walks up to Scott, looks at

him for a moment before bending down. He grabs Scott by the scruff of his shirt and pulls him up to his feet. Straightening him up, Nigel punches him once and knocks him down.

NIGEL
You NEVER leave someone alone
like that!

SCOTT
Nigel, I'm sorry, I didn't know.
That man was attacking you, and
the holds were on fire! I
panicked.

Nigel's face is a mix of disgust and anger.

CAPTAIN ELSWORTH
What's this about a man attacking
you?

NIGEL
He's over there by the door. The
crazy fucker bit me. Bit me!

Despite their recent confrontation, Scott and Nigel and the rest of the crew gather around the crazed crewmember. GELLER, a portly man, speaks up.

GELLER
That's Shaw alright, but what the
hell happened to him?

Shaw's skin, underneath the soot, is clearly afflicted by some sort of disease. Scale like deformities appear in patches on his skin and where they haven't his skin has turned deathly pale. His eyes are discolored and glassy. He has no hair.

GELLER
I didn't see that stuff on him
last week.

CAPTAIN ELSWORTH
Did any of us see him last week?

The ship's medical doctor, JIMOTHY, rushes over.

JIMOTHY
Out of my way, let me see him -
Jesus Christ, waht in god's name
happened to him...?

He flips Shaw onto his back.

JIMOTHY
Unclench his hand, I'll try to
stimulate pulse.

Geller and the Captain do it, and from Shaw's hand rolls out the Y'Zalmet statue. It lands upright, facing Nigel. Nigel sees it and the sound drowns out for a moment. Scott quickly notices the statue and grabs it, looking over it before pocketing it.

The crew begins talking among themselves. The captain stands up and raises his hands to speak.

CAPTAIN ELSWORTH
All of you, shut up and listen.
Kitai, go see if there's anything
else that can be salvaged.

KITAI
Captain...

Two crewmen enter the deck, carrying a burnt trunk. They open it to reveal the interior, collections of books, burnt to ash. Elsworth picks one up and it disintegrates in his hand. He clenches his hand and wipes the dust away.

CAPTAIN ELSWORTH
Goddamit.

INT. SHIP BUNKS

Scott and Nigel both sit in their respective bunks. Everything is blackened by soot. Nigel stares at the ceiling. Scott holds the statue of Y'Zalmet, he turns it over in his hand.

SCOTT
Nigel.

Nigel doesn't respond.

SCOTT
Nigel!

Nigel leaps from his bunk to the floor and prepares to leave when Scott gets up and grabs his arm.

SCOTT
I'm sorry. What more do you want
me to do.

Nigel grabs Scott's arm, bends it, pulls out his knife and slams Scott against the wall. He presses the knife against Scott.

NIGEL
First, don't ever touch me
again. Second, you don't just
leave a man to die.

SCOTT

I know that, why do you think.
I'm on this trip?

NIGEL
Hmmpf, the first sign of danger
and you flee? Dr. Vicks need not
fear, he'll surely be saved.

SCOTT
You-

They are interrupted by footsteps. Nigel quickly lets go
and sheathes his knife before the Captain enters.

CAPTAIN ELSWORTH
What's going on here?

Nigel straightens his clothes.

NIGEL
Nothing, bunk mate squabbles.

Scott glares at him, then nods. The captain looks at
them suspiciously, but sighs and pulls out a cigarette.

CAPTAIN ELSWORTH
Today was a hard day. I just
came to check on you.

He rubs his eyes.

CAPTAIN ELSWORTH
Gods I'm tired.

SCOTT
Nightmares?

Captain Elsworth and Nigel look at him.

CAPTAIN ELSWORTH
Yes, actually.

Scott gets closer to the Captain.

SCOTT
In a dark place, with a black
sky.

CAPTAIN ELSWORTH
On a stone walkway.

Nigel steps in.

NIGEL
Where the shadows seem to linger,
and whispers seem to echo on
forever.

They stand silent. Scott pulls out the statue of Y'Zalmet.

SCOTT

Your man Shaw had this in his hand. He took it from my records.

Captain Elsworth takes the statue.

CAPTAIN ELSWORTH

Alright then, what does this all mean. The nightmares, Shaw going mad.

NIGEL

How is he?

CAPTAIN ELSWORTH

Dead. Jimothy doesn't know what happened to him. But you saw his skin. And we have reason to beleive that he caused the fire as well.

NIGEL

Are we really considering this? I'm all for outlandish explanations but this-

CAPTAIN ELSWORTH

I'm not considering anything. I've lost a man and damn near the ship. I don't want to see this thing again.

The captain puts the statue away. He leaves the bunk, leaving Nigel and Scott alone.

EXT. SHIP DECK - DAY

Tierra del Fuego

Under a steel sky, the crew is hard at work on the deck. They are now equipped in their winter gear. Scott and Nigel stand at opposite ends. The crew is on noticeably on edge, each casting furtive glances. A glass falls and the shattering sound causes more than one man to jump, the Captain included, whose hand immediately goes for his holster, but then loosens.

Scott walks up to the captain.

SCOTT

The crew's nervous.

CAPTAIN ELSWORTH

Aye, is it that obvious? Sleep's

been hard to come by, for everyone.

Scott nods his head.

SCOTT
Tierra del Fuego. It's beautiful.

The shore is beautiful. Verdant green hills leading up to distant snow capped mountains. Gulls hover over the ship.

CAPTAIN ELSWORTH
Crew! File in!

The entire crew files in a line. 4 bear the weighted coffin of Shaw.

CAPTAIN ELSWORTH
Men, we've done it. Look over there.

He points to land.

CAPTAIN ELSWORTH
That is the last scrap of the conquered world. Before us-

He points to the open sea.

CAPTAIN ELSWORTH
is Drake's passage and our goal.
But before we depart, let commit one of our fallen to the deep.

The men haul the body over the side of the deck. The crewmen watch it sink as the ship the land slowly disappears into the horizon. The men slowly go back to work. The captain leaves Scott, who is approached by Nigel.

NIGEL
Well Scott, say goodbye to the sun. Say goodbye to the sun.

Confused, and a little nervous, Scott leaves. Alone, Nigel pulls out the small statue of Y'Zalmat and twiddles with it.

INT. SHIP BRIDGE - NIGHT

The night is exceptionally clear, clearer than the night when they were still in the upper Atlantic. Chunks of ice dwarf the *Audacity*. The Captain, Nigel and Scott stand around a map, compasses out. Geller stands at the wheel. It's a spartan cabin, but well lit.

SCOTT

If we move quickly, we should be able to dock here.

Nige snorts.

NIGEL

Maybe, if you wanted to get there a few months from now. You wanted to get there quickly, take this path.

He takes a red pencil and draws a snaking path through the continent, coming near a large red X.

NIGEL

It runs through the entirety of the continent. In one way, out the other.

Elsworth is suspicious

CAPTAIN ELSWORTH

I've never heard of this passage.

NIGEL

That's because it hasn't been officially discovered. I found it but held off on claiming it until I could come with my own expedition.

SCOTT

Won't it be frozen?

NIGEL

No, it shouldn't, we're in the middle of summer, at least, summer for here.

CAPTAIN ELSWORTH

You heard the man, Geller, due south, 13 degrees port.

EXT. SHIP DECK - DAY

The ship moves swiftly, entering a kind of fjord, jagged ice walls on either side. Wind howls down the fjord in a ghastly wail. Scott, Nigel and two crewmen prepare dogs for the journey to Station Bolton. Nigel carries the statue with him, in the palm of his hand. He stares at it, but pockets it as soon as Scott nears.

SCOTT

Nigel, how much longer are we going to be here?

Nigel's voice is much raspier than it has been lately. Huge shadows are under his eyes and a pallor seems to have fallen over him.

NIGEL

Not long.

Soon enough, the ice walls give way to a flat open ice plain. The Antarctic plain seems almost perfect, unmmared by any of man's creations and the glare from the sun is blinding.

NIGEL

Let's move, we only have a few hours worth of sunlight. Or maybe you wanted to stay on the ship and let me handle it?

Scott looks at him, then slings his pack onto one of the sleds.

EXT.ICE PLAIN - DAY

The pair of sleds rush across the frozen plain. Neck and neck, the featureless plain goes on forever. For a moment, they stop. Scott consults his map and compass and points to a distant spot. They take off again.

They come to a ridge and survey their sorroundings. In the distance, a massive ice wall juts out against the stark whiteness. A brown shape clings to the it, rising several stories. The mush towards it.

EXT. STATION BOLTON - DAY

Station Bolton is an imposing structure. It hugs the side of the ice wall precariously for about 3 stories. Station Bolton actually seems to be built out of tin sheets and wood planks. The door leading into the station is nonexistent, simply a hole leading into the dark interior, sorrounded by shattered wood.

Scott and Nigel disembark their sleds.

NIGEL

You two, stay with the dogs.
Scott, shall we?

Scott nods and the two enter Station Bolton.

INT. STATION BOLTON -DAY

The interior of Station Bolton is filthy. The initial room is carved dierectly into the ice. Wood and tin brace the ceiling, but it is, for lack of a better word, cave-like. Further on, past the wood splinters, a tunnel appears and decends into the ice, further into the wall.

NIGEL

Wow...This, I was not expecting.

SCOTT

I know. I had read descriptions
from Steven, but this is still
pretty amazing.

Nigel pulls out a torch from his pack and lights it.
Immediately, black streaks are seen against the stark
blueness of the ice walls.

NIGEL

God!

SCOTT

What?

Scott sees the long stains on the wall. They both back
up. Nigel reaches into his pack and pulls out a
revolver.

NIGEL

Just a precaution...

Scott nods and the two enter the ice tunnel.

INT. STATION BOLTON LOWER LEVELS

The lower levels are mine-like in their construction.
Wood planks hold up the walls and spent oil lamps hang
from the ceiling. They come to a fork.

NIGEL

Alright, your call.

SCOTT

I think the research and storage
rooms were to the left.

NIGEL

Left it is then.

INT. STATION BOLTON STORAGE AND RESEARCH

Huge crates lean against the walls of the chamber. The
ceiling is low, but the chamber seems to extend for quite
some distance.

SCOTT

Look around, Steven's desk should
be around here somewhere.

They split up, Scott lights his own torch. There is the
sound of skittering. Scott sees a large, spartan desk in
the corner. A small pile of books and stone chips rests
on it.

SCOTT
Nigel! I found it!

He sets the torch down and picks up the first book, a beaten notebook. Scott flips it open. The first page is legible, but as he flips through, the writing becomes visibly more illegible, devolving into scribbles and gibberish. The final page he comes to is full of scratch like drawings of eyes and hands.

SCOTT
Nigel...I think we should get out
of here.

There is rapid skittering. Scott turns around and is tackled by a shadowy figure. He cries out and is thrown to the ground, the table of research tipped over. The thing bites Scott's ear and he screams. Struggling to escape, he reaches for his torch and hits the shape, sending it reeling.

Scott gets up and cups his wounded ear as Nigel appears, torch in one hand, gun on the other. They shine their torches on the creature. It is as horrible as the sketched carvings depicted. More fish than man, whiskers droop from its fang-filled maw, large black eyes reflecting the light of the torches.

SCOTT
Nigel! Shoot it for god's sake!

Nigel is standing several feet from Scott, gun pointed at the creature, but he doesn't fire. The creature advances on Scott.

SCOTT
Nigel! Shoot IT! Please!

Still, Nigel just stands there, vacant expression on his face. Scott, takes a stance to intercept the creature with his torch when a shot rings out and the creature staggers. Nigel gets snapped out of his vacancy and also opens fire on the creature. It collapses in a pool of ichor like blood.

From the shadows emerges Neal Cunningham, haggard, wild eyed, but still alive, his beard now massive.

SCOTT
Thank you, ser.

NIGEL
Who the hell are you.

Cunningham doesn't speak, but runs over to the fallen beast to check it. He shoots it again, for good measure before walking up to Scott.

SCOTT

Ser-?

CUNNINGHAM

No, we need to move, quickly,
quietly, if we don't want those
things to find us.

Cunningham glares at Nigel.

CUNNINGHAM

Keep up, pup, you seem a little
slow.

Cunningham dashes into the tunnels leading back to the
upper levels, followed by Scott and Nigel.

INT. STATION BOLTON PANTRY

The pantry is half storage, half fortified vault. Piles
of bullets and gun parts litter the floor. As they
enter, Cunningham double bolts the door behind them.
Empty cans, cans clatter as Scott and Neal try to find a
spot to sit. Cunningham shushes them.

NIGEL

Who is this guy?

SCOTT

I think it's Ser Cunningham,
Steven's friend.

Cunningham overhears them and tiptoes silently over to
where they sit.

CUNNINGHAM

Aye, I was with Dr. Vicks. Neal
Cunningham, at your service sir.

He laughs a raspy laugh and reaches for an unmarked can
and starts prying it open.

CUNNINGHAM

Oh, where are my manners.
Fruit? I think it's apricots, or
maybe peaches, I forget.

SCOTT

No, that's fine, I just want to
what happened here.

CUNNINGHAM

Feh, what happened here...

The can lid pops off and he starts slurping at the fruit
inside. He leans in close to Scott.

CUNNINGHAM

You must be Scott, yes? The doctor mentioned you once or twice.

Skittering sounds can be heardm just outside the vault door. Neals arms stay Scott and Nigel from moving. He holds them until the skittering subsides.

CUNNINGHAM
It sends the bastards out every so often. It knows I'm here but it can't find me.

He taps his head.

CUNNINGHAM
And I'm a little tougher when it comes to cracking this. Heh heh.

NIGEL
Who?

Cunningham looks at Nigel, eventually forcing the younger man to look away.

CUNNINGHAM
By the looks of you, I'd say you know.

SCOTT
Y'Zalmet.

Cunningham's hand covers Scott's mouth.

CUNNINGHAM
Shh. You fool. This one (he nudges at Neal) is its ears. You have a ship, right?

SCOTT
Yeah, a few hours mush away.

CUNNINGHAM
Then we need to move quickly.

He grabs a two rifles, passes one to Scott.

CUNNINGHAM
Follow me, I know a secret path, in an abandoned expansion tunnel.

They head deeper into the pantry, down a small tunnel.

EXT.ICE WALL TOP - DAY

They emerge onto the ice, at the top of the ice wall. Cunningham spies the dogs and begins running.

SCOTT

Wait, there's so much I need to ask you.

CUNNINGHAM

When we reach the ship, now run!

EXT. STATION BOLTON - DAY

The sled dogs are milling about aimlessly. Scott reaches the sleds before the others and starts calling for the drivers.

Cunningham immediately starts loading a sled.

CUNNINGHAM

Don't bother. The fishies probably dragged them down.

NIGEL

Fishies?

CUNNINGHAM

What else am I going to call them? Now, we mush.

The dogs take off, Nigel leading Cunningham and Scott towards the ship.

EXT. SHIP DECK - NIGHT

The Captain and Geller stand at watch, binoculars out.

GELLER

I don't like this, sir. It's quiet, even the wind has stopped.

CAPTAIN ELSWORTH

I don't like it either. I haven't liked anything about this voyage.

GELLER

Captain?

CAPTAIN ELSWORTH

Just stay alert, and keep watch.

In the distance, two streaks appear.

GELLER

Captain, look.

CAPTAIN ELSWORTH

Get down, get the crew ready.

EXT. SHIP DECK - NIGHT

The crew has come out onto the deck to see the return of Scott, Nigel and Neal. Ice has begun to creep up the sides of the ship and icicles hang from the side. A few lanterns illuminate the deck. Climbing on board, the captain claps Scott over the shoulder.

CAPTAIN ELSWORTH
Where are May and Pepper?

Cunningham interjects.

CUNNINGHAM
Gone, taken by the creatures.

Captain Elsworth looks surprised.

CAPTAIN ELSWORTH
Who the hell are you?

CUNNINGHAM
That's not important, we have to go, quickly, why aren't we departing?

CAPTAIN ELSWORTH
Ice, it's crept up on the ship somehow. We're not going anywhere until we dig ourselves out.

CUNNINGHAM
Dammit man! No, listen to me, we have to go, NOW!

GELLER
Captain!

The crew rushes over to Geller, who points out to the horizon. Even in the dark, there seem to be wavering shapes in the distance.

SCOTT
Is it more of them?

Nigel pulls back from the group. He pulls out the statue of Y'Zalmet and clutches it to his chest.

CAPTAIN ELSWORTH
More of what?

As he says this, the creatures bound into visibility. They are in fact more fish monsters, alot of them.

CAPTAIN ELSWORTH
Arms! Everybody, to arms!

In a panic, they grab whatever they can. Some grab axes, a few grab gaffs. The captain and a few others go into

the holds. Cunningham jumps onto a crate and starts yelling.

CUNNINGHAM

Whatever you do, don't let them grab you. If you fall from the ship, pray for death!

The first monsters climb onto the deck just as the captain and the other crewmen emerge carrying guns. Shots fire, men hurl themselves onto the beasts. Many fall, but still they pour onto the ship.

One man is grabbed by two of them and thrown to the side, his screams echoing as creatures carry him into the night. Kitai is cut across the chest by a claw swipe. Scott has grabbed a wooden plank and is deep in the fray. The Captain is assaulted by two at once, though Jimothy and Geller have his back.

CAPTAIN ELSWORTH

Stand together lads!

SCOTT

We need to do something!

Cunningham shoots one of the beasts and turns to see Nigel all alone in a corner. Runs over to him and grabs him by the scruff.

CUNNINGHAM

What are you doing? Pick up a weapon and fight, or we're all dead!

He sees the statue in Nigel's arms and reaches for it. Nigel resists and they wrestle for it. Cunningham eventually grabs it and smashes it against the deck floor. The creatures flail their arms wildly and then disperse, dropping the fallen and fleeing back into the darkness.

The Captain walks to the smashed statue, Cunningham and Nigel. Scott walks up, supporting the wounded Kitai.

CUNNINGHAM

I think we all need to have a talk.

INT. SHIP BUNKS

Jimothy is bandaging Scott's wounded ear. The captain, Cunningham and Geller all stand in the crowded bunk. Steven's notebook lies open on the table.

CUNNINGHAM

They came in the night, just like tonight, in one wave.

CAPTAIN ELSWORTH
What are they?

SCOTT
Remember what I told you Captain,
the drawings?

The captain turns to the notebook.

CAPTAIN ELSWORTH
Alright then. Let's say that
there is some sort of devil
living out here, why'd they
dragged two of our men with them
when they left.

CUNNINGHAM
Gotta make more somehow. I think
i killed a few of my friends
tonight. Little late on the
promises though.

The bluntness of the comment stuns all save Jimothy, who
finishes bandaging Scott.

SCOTT
What about the statue though?

CUNNINGHAM
Steven had one just like it. We
had a few men go crazy and it was
on their persons. I just figured
it was a totem or something. It
attracts weak minds and bends it
to its will. Destroying it
worked though, right?

Scott nods his head and turns to the captain.

SCOTT
What about Nigel?

CAPTAIN ELSWORTH
After speaking to ser Cunningham,
I've decided to brig him. He
might be a danger.

CUNNINGHAM
Why'd you think letting a pup
like him be your guide...hmmph.
He didn't look like he'd spent a
single month outside of his
father's estate.

CAPTAIN ELSWORTH
I gleaned as much, and I trusted
him anyway, goddamit. Scott-

Scott turns to him.

CAPTAIN ELSWORTH
The royal society isn't even
backing him, are they?

Scott shakes his head. The captain's head sags.

CAPTAIN ELSWORTH
Well then damn. Halfway around
the bloody fucking world, fish
monsters and not even a check
waiting for us back home.
Lovely.

He turns to walk out of the bunks.

CAPTAIN ELSWORTH
Get some sleep, tomorrow, we find
a way out of this godforsaken
land.

CUNNINGHAM
Tomorrow might be all we have,
Captain.

INT. SHIP BUNKS - DAY

A small lamp illuminates the room. Scott sits alone, hunched over a desk, compass and sextant at his side. His fur lined parka looks as though it's barely keeping him warm and his stylus slips from his fingers.

He bends over to pick it up, the chair creaking underneath him. The notebook lies on the table. He rubs his eyes stuffs it into his parka.

He picks up the lamp and exits the bunk.

EXT.SHIP DECK - THE AUDACITY - NIGHT

The sky overhead is amazingly clear. Stars can be seen in the still arctic air. The ship is trapped in ice, long spikes of ice reaching up the side of the ship and pinning it in place. A few crewmen chip away at the ice with picks.

More crewmen stand watch with guns across their laps.

Cunningham sits on the top deck with the captain, picking at his fingernails with his knife. Scott walks onto the top deck with his information. Nigel, freed from the brig is arguing with the captain who is hunched over a map and a lamp.

CAPTAIN
Dammnit, I can't let you do that,
there are too many risks

involved.

NIGEL

We've been moving along the channel just like I described. If we don't get out of here, winter will be upon us and before you know it, we're trapped in weather 50 degrees below.

CAPTAIN

Enough, why the hell should I believe anything you say? You lied about our payment and you were practically in league with those monsters!

NIGEL

I- That-!

He lunges at the Captain. Cunningham steps in and trips him.

NEAL

Enough of this foolishness. Calm yourself, you're a shame to your family name.

Nigel glares at him. He's so haggard that he seems to be almost a shadow of the man who approached Scott all those months ago in England. He is gaunt, thin, he's lost at least half of his hair. His eyes are sunken pits.

NEAL

Don't you have any sort of explosives?

CAPTAIN

What we have isn't enough, we wouldn't budge an inch.

SCOTT

We need dynamite.

CAPTAIN

Dynamite?

SCOTT

I remember, when we were at Station Bolton, there was a cache of it to be used for excavation.

Cunningham sheathes his knife.

NEAL

Huxton's right. I remember the Doctor's tallies. We had 2, 3 crates of dynamite just in case

we needed them for more
expansions.

The Captain ponders this. He goes back to the map.

CAPTAIN

I don't want to send men out
while those things are still out
there.

NEAL

Creatures or not, we have to do
something. We have dogs, we could
try to run it.

CAPTAIN

50 kilometers before nightfall?
Impossible.

NIGEL

It would just be me, Scott, and
two others.

NEAL

Bullshit, you're not coming. I
have the most experience with
these creatures and Huxton will
need my help to rescue the
doctor.

NIGEL

No, I need to.

He turns to Scott.

NIGEL

I'm sorry, for everything. Just,
let me help you now...

The Captain looks at them. He turns to Scott, then to
Cunningham.

CAPTAIN

Prepare then, you mush at dawn.

Nigel prepares to walk with them, but the captain stops
him.

CAPTAIN

Don't think I've forgotten what
you've done. You lied to me, and
you lied to my crew. When we get
back to England, you will answer
to the courts.

EXT. THE ICE WALL - DAY

Scott, Nigel, Cunningham and the two sled runners prepare

to set off. The landscape is entirely inhospitable. Long, eerie ice plains stretch on only to suddenly give way to jagged uprisings of rock and ice. Where once it was bright, a steel sky overhead casts a shade over everything. Captain Elsworth walks up to them carrying 5 guns.

CAPTAIN

Boys, you'll need these. Don't know how much good they'll do, but at least you be able to take some of them out before the end.

SCOTT

Thank you, Captain.

NEAL

Thank you.

Cunningham and the captain clap hands.

NEAL

I'll try to keep 'em alive.

CAPTAIN

Godspeed men, you're going to need it.

With that, the dogs take off running across the frozen plain.

EXT. STATION BOLTON - TWILIGHT

The station is a grim site in the twilight. Gripping the side of the ice wall, it looks ready to fall over at any second. The sloped roofs and chimneys are covered in a thick layer of ice, and a mound of ice has built up at the base, as if the wall were absorbing the station.

The two sled runners begin prepping the dogs and setting up the sleds for the dynamite crates. Cunningham, Scott and Nigel load their weapons.

NEAL

We need to move, we have another hour of light at the most, then we'll be racing the creatures back to the ship.

They walk up to the doorway, bare, leading into the darkness. Each begins to light a torch.

NEAL

Quickly.

They run into the dark.

INT. STATION BOLTON - TWILIGHT

The station floor is covered in splintered wood and cracked ice. Wind howls through the open door. The tunnel into the lower level seems to absorb the light from their torches. The three men move quickly.

NEAL

We kept the dynamite in two separate caches.

They go down into the tunnel.

INT. STATION BOLTON LOWER LEVELS

The lower levels are mine-like in their construction. Wood planks hold up the walls and spent oil lamps hang from the ceiling. They come to a fork.

NEAL

I'll take the left, it goes to the main storage. There's also a crate in the excavation chamber, you get that one. If you see anything, shoot it.

Neal pulls Scott aside while Nigel goes down the right tunnel.

NEAL

Scott, about Dr.Vicks, he went down in the bathysphere.

SCOTT

The Bathysphere? What do you mean he went down in the bathysphere?

NEAL

You'll know when you see it. A dark entity.

Neal suddenly stops speaking and looks around. Scott freezes. The wind howls through the tunnel. They stare into darkness, torches burning for a moment before Neal speaks.

NEAL

There was something down there, the doctor called it an air pocket.

SCOTT

That's impossible. Out here, the pressure, the temperature...

NEAL

Believe me, look at it. He's still down there. Just don't go alone, otherwise you'll have no

chance.

SCOTT

But what about Nigel? That thing was trying to possess his mind.

NEAL

So you'd trust him with getting the dynamite all by himself?

Scott shakes his head.

NEAL

Good lad. Just hold fast, and you'll survive.

Neal takes off down the left tunnel. Scott takes a heavy breath before going down the right tunnel.

INT. STATION BOLTON BATHYSphere CHAMBER

The bathysphere chamber is circular with a large pit in the middle. The bathysphere hangs from the ceiling by a series of pulleys. Nigel is rummaging through boxes, carefully holding the torch up so as not to accidentally light the dynamite.

Scott walks up to inspect the bathysphere. Upon closer view, the sphere is covered in a thick ichor, the port holes obscured. Scott tries to wipe them clean, but the ichor only clings to his clothes.

NIGEL

What are you doing? Help me get the dynamite!

The ichor seems to stick to Scott's arm. In a panic, he drops his torch and it hits the side of the bathysphere. The ichor recedes.

SCOTT

Nigel, I'm going to go down.

NIGEL

What?

SCOTT

I'm going down in the bathysphere to get Steven.

NIGEL

Are you mad? He's dead, and we have to get out of here.

SCOTT

No, I didn't travel all this way just to go back with nothing. If there's a chance that he's still

alive, I must take it.

NIGEL

But that's exactly what it wants
you to do! You'd be a fool to-

There is a clattering on the other side of the room. A hissing sound can be heard.

NIGEL

Shit.

They both draw their guns as fish monsters, inhuman beasts, circle them, emerging from the shadows. Scott, walking backwards, knocks into the box of dynamite. Nigel throws his gun aside and picks up a stick, but Scott turns his gun on him.

SCOTT

Don't light that! This room'll
collapse and you'll kill us all.

NIGEL

Then what do we do?

Scott waves his torch to repel the fish monsters.

SCOTT

Get in the bathysphere. We're
going down.

NIGEL

Are you crazy-?

SCOTT

Just open the door!

Nigel pries the door to the bathysphere open, ichor clinging to the hatch. Gun still held, Scott enters behind him and shuts the latch.

INT. BATHYSPHERE

The bathysphere is cramped, but the porthole is cleared of ichor and fish monsters can be seen lurking just outside. A small control panel stands in the middle of the sphere.

Dousing his torch and flicking on the oil lamp, he pulls the lever marked "DESCEND". The pulley system sputters to life and they begin to lose sight of the chamber, replaced by inky blackness.

Nigel flips another marked switch and the external lights come on. Vision is limited, but the massive shapes of underwater ice formations are clearly defined.

Strange shapes seem to form and then dissipate in the

darkness. A long, vicious looking eel swims by, eying them for a moment before swimming down. Nigel peers out intently while Scott stares at the ceiling.

The sphere stops for a moment, as if it hit something, and then descends more slowly. The sense of being in water leaves them. The bathysphere suddenly stops, having definitely hit ground.

NIGEL

Should we get out?

SCOTT

Cunningham said there was an air pocket. I guess we should.

They depressurize and open the hatch.

EXT. THE TEMPLE

The Temple dwarfs their bathysphere. A sharp, angular structure descends further into the darkness. Ethereal light seems to emanate from nowhere. High above their heads is a pure black ceiling. The bathysphere is entirely cleaned of ichor, having come back into contact with the ceiling.

NIGEL

What in God's name is this?

SCOTT

The Alatzi temple.

He pulls out Steven's sketch book from his parka and rips out a drawing. He holds it up to compare. It's a perfect match. He stuffs the drawing back into his parka.

SCOTT

It's real.

He is in awe. The sight of it is at once breathtaking and disconcerting. The inhumanness of its construction, the majesty of whatever titanic force could maintain it in such a harsh environment, nearly knocks Scott down. He flinches and his goes to his head.

NIGEL

What's wrong?

SCOTT

I don't know. It feels like a headache, but it came upon me so suddenly...

NIGEL

Now that you mention, my head doesn't feel well either.

There's something about this place I don't like.

SCOTT

The air is old, we're the first people to breathe it for thousands of years.

NIGEL

There's something else though.

SCOTT

Come on, we need to find Dr. Vicks.

They proceed down the path to the main complex.

EXT. MAIN COMPLEX

Even with it's impressive form, the main complex is deceptively large. Scott and Nigel walk down a winding path, leading up to a set of stairs far too tall for a normal human gait. It is eerily quiet. Their footsteps seem to echo forever.

Eventually they come across a great atrium, a basilica of sorts of a black, reflective material, and another path leading further down. Nigel wanders off to the side.

SCOTT

Nigel, what are you doing, we have to get Steven, so we can go back and help, help Cunningham.

Scott grips his head again. Perspiration falls from his forehead. He throws his parka and gun away, but holds onto the sketchbook. Nigel curses. Scott rushes over to him.

SCOTT

What happened?

NIGEL

I don't know why. I threw away my gun. I don't know why, it felt so heavy. I just wanted to throw it away...

Nigel's face has lost even more color. His skin has turned clammy. A sound emanates from deeper within the temple. Scott lets go of Nigel and runs to find the source.

At the end of the walkway, on the edge of a great precipice, curled in a little ball, is Dr. Steven Vicks. He's mumbling incoherently, and scratching at the air.

Scott nearly collapses, he grips his head in pain, but

still tries to talk to his mentor.

SCOTT

Dr. Vicks, Steven, god, come on,
we have to get out of here.

STEVEN

No, no, no...

SCOTT

C'mon, we have to get out of
here. Cunningham is at the
station. The monsters are up
there, we have to hurry.

STEVEN

No! NO!

Steven tries to fling himself off the precipice, but
Scott holds him back.

SCOTT

Wait, Stop! What's happened to
you.

STEVEN

In your head, through your eyes,
in your head, through your
eyes...

SCOTT

What? In my head?

Scott looks back. He dropped the notebook further up the
slope. He goes back to the page where the scrawlings
became illegible. Drawings of eyes, scratched out with
Xs, and drawings of hands, many, many hands.

STEVEN

Don't look, Don't look, DON'T
LOOK!

Steven passes out. Scott, confused and squinting from
pain, slings his mentor over his shoulder and walks back
up to the atrium. He immediately detects motion. Hands,
darting back into shadows. Nigel's body lies in the
center of the atrium.

Scott kicks him lightly to try and stir him.

SCOTT

Nigel, get up. Nigel, get up.

STEVEN

(mumbling)

Don't look, please don't look.

Scott bends down to flip Nigel over, revealing a

partially transformed Nigel. His hair has all fallen off, his eyes have grown wider and his teeth have become sharpened. Nigel lunges at Scott and Steven.

SCOTT

God!

They struggle. Steven falls and curls up into a ball. Scott and Nigel wrestle toward the center of the atrium. It seems as though Nigel is about to overpower Scott when Scott gains the upper hand by tripping Nigel on a jutting angle. Pushing him to the edge, Nigel falls over the side of the atrium, down into the black abyss.

Scott leans back in relief but

STEVEN

Don't look!

From the shadows around the atrium, hands begin to emerge. Steven starts to panic. The ethereal light intensifies as the deity of the Alatzzi attempts to show itself to Scott. Scott averts his gaze. Steven keeps yelling to not look.

Scott takes enough time to cut a piece of cloth. Before tying it in a blindfold, he relights his torch.

SCOTT

Hold on Steven, we're getting out of here.

The actual form of the deity, is much like the statue, a brambly mass of limbs, flesh deformed, eyes emerging from elbows and palms. It floats through the air and many of its limbs seem to not be attached to it at all, but actually emanate from shadows.

A hand reaches out to grab Steven, who yelps in terror. Scott wheels around, and by hearing alone, bashes it away.

Slowly, Scott walks out of the atrium with Steven hanging onto his back.

EXT. THE TEMPLE

He reaches the steps and one of the arms trips him. He tumbles down the stairs, but holds onto the torch and the blindfold.

Scott fights off limbs as he makes his way to the bathysphere. More and more converge on him as he approaches it. Kicking the latch open, he throws Steven into it before entering himself.

INT. BATHYSPHERE

Scott takes off the blindfold and slams on the "ASCEND" lever. The Bathysphere rises.

SCOTT
Hah, Yes, die you goddamned monster!

The bathysphere reaches the ichor ceiling. The hands reach up and try to pull it down. The full mass of the deity is now floating in midair, trying to pull down on the bathysphere.

SCOTT
Dammit!

Scott presses on some of the other switches, but nothing substantial happens. The cable of the bathysphere creaks.

SCOTT
NO!

Scott falls back in dismay. Steven has curled up in a ball by the control panel.

SCOTT
Sorry, Steven, I tried.

An explosion rocks the bathysphere. A terrible howling fills the air. The Bathysphere shoots through the ichor and starts rising quickly. Small bundles fall by and after each, another explosion.

INT. STATION BOLTON BATHYSPHERE CHAMBER

Cunningham overlooks the bathysphere chamber. The two sled runners are helping him tie bundles of dynamite sticks and throwing them. The bathysphere chamber emerges and quickly depressurizes. Cunningham burns the ichor off with a torch.

He grabs Steven and Scott stumbles out, holding the now beaten remains of Steven's notebook. Dead fish monsters lie everywhere.

CUNNINGHAM
What happened?

SCOTT
Nigel's dead, or worse, I didn't really know

CUNNINGHAM
Dammit, alright, let's get the hell out of here. And put on a parka for god's sake.

EXT. STATION BOLTON - NIGHT

They run out of Station Bolton and load Steven and the dynamite crate onto one of the sleds. They begin to flee as the station goes up in flames. The ice explodes from the force of the dynamite and a great fissure erupts. Thousands of tons of ice fall, burying everything beneath Station Bolton.

EXT.SHIP DECK - THE AUDACITY - NIGHT

Cunningham and Scott, carrying Steven on his back. The two sled runners haul the dynamite on board where it is distributed to members of the crew.

CAPTAIN ELSWORTH
Get these set up, hurry now.

CUNNINGHAM
Any sign of the beasts?

SCOTT
This man needs a doctor.

CAPTAIN ELSWORTH
Jimothy'll look at him, and no,
we haven't seen anything.

As he says this, the ice starts to break away. Huge chunks of earth and ice are thrown into the air. The perfection of the ice plain is suddenly marred by sharp angular boulders emerging.

CAPTAIN ELSWORTH
Earthquake!?

SCOTT
Cover!

The ship begins to sway, back and forth. Geller shouts at the captain from the side.

GELLER
Captain, the tremors have freed
the ship!

CAPTAIN ELSWORTH
Furnace! Stoke the furnace.

SCOTT
We're moving.

The ship begins moving slightly, soon quickly. The frozen river they were traveling along has become a raging river. On the frozen plain, dark shapes rush to the ship.

CUNNINGHAM
Look!

In the far distance, a great black sphere is rising out of the ice. Even in the dark of night, the bubble can be clearly seen. Water and earth either slide off it or are absorbed by the bubble.

The whole crew stares in awe.

SCOTT

I thought you destroyed it!?

CUNNINGHAM

This...is unfortunate.

CAPTAIN ELSWORTH

Where the hell are my engines?

On cue, the engines whir to life and the ship starts billowing smoke. The ship begins to accelerate rapidly, leaving, but the bubble only seems to expand ever more quickly toward them.

The captain runs up to the bridge and Jimothy takes Steven into the holds, leaving Cunningham and Scott on the deck to watch the bubble.

INT. SHIP BRIDGE

Geller is trying his hardest to hold the wheel of the ship steady until Elsworth takes over for him.

CAPTAIN ELSWORTH

Navigate! How much farther until we're free?

Geller clears the map table with one sweep and goes over it.

GELLER

We're being flushed out to sea.
Just 20 more kilometers and we'll
be out in the open.

EXT. SHIP DECK - NIGHT

The ship's course has smoother over and Cunningham, Scott and some of the other crew look at the expanding, in both awe and fear. The surface of the bubble appears to convulse for a moment before bursting. The bubble dissipates quickly, revealing the full breadth of the Alatzi temple.

It's a floating city, its ethereal green light suffusing the landscape. It rises, higher and higher. Some men collapse, others grab their heads. Whispers seem to envelop them. Scott and Cunningham resist the pulling sensation and stand tall. The structure continues to rise.

INT. SHIP BRIDGE

Captain Elsworth is having trouble controlling the wheel of the ship. The various pressure gauges are in the red. A crackly voice feeds in.

CREWMEMBER

(P.A.)

Captain, the furnace is breaking down, if we keep going, we're going to kill the engines.

A block of ice breaks from the side of the fjord and nearly collides with the ship.

CAPTAIN ELSWORTH

Keep it going! Geller, how long?

GELLER

5 more kilometers, sir.

EXT. SHIP DECK - NIGHT

The Alatzi temple has now risen high into the sky. It is a spiky ball of non-euclidean angles. It rises higher and higher until the people on the deck have to crane their heads to see it. Its green light obscures the stars.

In a flash, it disappears. The rumblings stop. The walls stop falling around them before giving way to the open sea. In the sky, an aurora forms where the temple floated before it too dissipates a few seconds later.

The crew falls over, exhausted and relieved. Cunningham gets right back up, unfazed. He claps Scott over the shoulder.

CUNNINGHAM

Ah, Ha! We did it! Oh god, I didn't think I was going to make it there for a second. Come on lad, get up.

The ship has slowed down, but they are still several kilometers away from the opening to the mainland. He salutes Antarctica.

CUNNINGHAM

Goodbye, you cold bitch. I hope you stay frozen forever.

He turns to Scott.

CUNNINGHAM

Now let's go home. I haven't a beer for 4 months.

Scott breathes heavily, almost in a daze.

SCOTT

Aye, Ser Cunningham, I think I
need a beer as well.

He falls on his back, staring at the sky. Cunningham
laughs. A cheer goes up from the crew as the ship
continues to push its way north, to warmer lands.

FADE OUT