

20,000 Leagues

By

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Year: The Semi-distant feature

Time: 12:00 a.m.

Location: The ocean

Depth: 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea

EXT. OCEAN - NIGHT

The shots delves into the ocean. Going further and further into the depths.

A few fish swim past the camera as we dive further to the point where the screen goes completely black.

Save for one light down below. CLOSE IN on this solitary beacon of light.

It stops at what turns out to be a window.

INT. UNDERWATER BASE - NIGHT

Staring out the window into the blackness is 28 year old African American JENNIFER HICKS.

She's tall, blue eyes, and has one or two scars on her hands.

She is in a small bedroom with most of the essentials you'd expect from someone like her.

A sub-machine gun rests on the table, along with a shotgun, 9 millimeter, and some hand grenades tucked under her bed.

She has a rather tight grip on the dog tags around her neck and small beads of sweat form on her forehead.

HEATHER

You know there's nothing to see out there?

Jennifer jumps out of her bed startled.

Pointing the 9 millimeter in her shaking hands at the entrance to her bed room at one of the scientists on board.

HEATHER

(calmly)

Remind me... why do you have weapons with you?

(CONTINUED)

Jennifer sets the gun aside and wipes her forehead.

JENNIFER

Precaution. Never know what'll
happen down her Dr. H-...um Dr...

HEATHER

(chuckling)

Stop trying to pronounce my actual
name. We both know you can't.

DOCTOR HEATHER ZHANG is a few years older than Jennifer,
short cut hair, Japanese, and caring eyes.

JENNIFER

Sorry Doc. I know there isn't
anything to see. It helps calm me
down to be honest.

HEATHER

Is there something wrong? I'm not
that kind of Doctor, but I could
try to help.

JENNIFER

It's no big deal...and kind of
embarrassing.

Heather crosses her arms and gestures for Jennifer to
explain.

Jennifer sighs and opens her mouth when the base suddenly
shakes. Jennifer puts her sheets into a death grip.

Heather hangs onto the door frame until the shakes stop.

JENNIFER

What...what was that?

Heather lets go of the door frame and collects herself.

HEATHER

It's why I came here. Thought you
might like to see it.

Jennifer smiles.

JENNIFER

Alright. Just give me a minute and
I'll be right out.

Jennifer stares back at the window and Heather looks out
with her.

(CONTINUED)

From their sight everything out of the window looks green like in a night vision-ish way.

Jennifer can faintly make out something. It looks like...an octopus.

It gets closer to the window, but then something shocks it and the octopus swims off leaving a trail of ink behind it.

JENNIFER

I hate fish.

HEATHER

Octopi aren't fish.

Jennifer lightly hits Heather's shoulder and goes to the bathroom.

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jennifer shuts the bathroom door behind her and turns on the faucet.

She tightly grips the sink before splashing cold water onto her face.

She takes a long breath then turns the faucet off.

She dries her face, puts her hair into a ponytail, and exits the bathroom.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

The door to Jennifer's room opens and she exits to see Heather waiting for her. They start to walk.

JENNIFER

So what is it you want me to see?

HEATHER

You'll see.

JENNIFER

As long as it isn't my commanding officer.

HEATHER

Exactly what did you do to him to get assigned here?

(CONTINUED)

JENNIFER

I don't want to talk about it. It was bad enough to give me a choice between being discharged or sent down here where nothing ever happens.

ALEX

You just haven't been down here long enough, Hicks.

ALEX HEDGE steps in the ladies' path. He wears the same military attire as Jennifer.

He isn't quite built, but he isn't scrawny either.

He has his black hair in a buzz cut.

Alex is also rather carelessly twirling his dog tags around one of his fingers as he circles Jennifer.

A bag is slung over his shoulders.

ALEX

(whispers)

I'll give you an hour...two tops before this place gets to you. They might even send you out into the dark depths beyond the protective field. Do you know what's out there?

JENNIFER

(dead pan)

Fish.

Alex smiles and loses his serious attitude.

ALEX

Pretty much. Yeah, I'm about ready to go nuts myself from all the boredom and I've only been here a few days longer than you. Had you going for a second didn't I?

JENNIFER

Maybe a micro-second, Hedge. Now if you'll excuse us.

Heather and Jennifer continue their walk and Alex hangs back. His radio starts to buzz and he answers it.

(CONTINUED)

ALEX

These things really do work all the way down here. I'm impressed.

SERGEANT ADAM

(on the radio)

Never mind that. What is Jennifer Hick's status?

ALEX

Oh, sir! It's you.

Adam clears his throat.

ALEX (CONT'D)

She hasn't done much. She has kept patrol of the areas you've assigned her without question. Never been down to the generator room either.

SERGEANT ADAM

Good. See to it that she is fully occupied. Understood?

ALEX

Yes sir!

The radio goes to static. Alex walks off while whistling "**In the Navy**". He heads for a ladder and starts to descend.

INT. MAIN AREA- CONTINUOUS

Heather and Jennifer enter a bright, wide, tall, and spacious room.

Monitors showing parts of the ocean floor are spread throughout.

Computer consoles are also dispersed within the room.

The women head down a few short steps and move to a vacant console.

HEATHER

Hello everyone.

One of the scientists snaps awake from his console. He rubs his face and gives Heather a small wave.

HEATHER (CONT'D)

Dan, only you could somehow sleep with the amount of seismic tremors taking place.

(CONTINUED)

DAN is Caucasian, in his 30s, hair going gray, but is strangely in better physical shape than Alex.

He gives Jennifer a wave too.

DAN
(sleepily)
Well. Look who's finally on the
bridge...

Dan is interrupted by another break of seismic activity and everyone grabs onto the closest thing to them.

Jennifer stares at one of the monitors as it violently shakes.

JENNIFER
Should we be worried about that?

HEATHER
No. When the big one hits we'll
have transferred most power to the
shields to keep us safe...you can
let go of me now.

JENNIFER
Sorry.

INT. GENERATOR ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The door to the generator room slides open and Alex casually steps inside still whistling.

He checks to make sure the coast is clear. Not a soul in sight.

He opens his bag and pulls out a small metal dish. He attaches it to one of the generators non-nonchalantly.

The dish glows and disappears into the generator. Alex smirks and rushes out the room.

INT. MAIN AREA- CONTINUOUS

Heather takes a seat at a computer and types in a few random keys.

HEATHER
This is the source of these seismic
disturbances.

(CONTINUED)

At the end of the room two metal doors suddenly open revealing a large window.

Like the view from Jennifer's window, the view is also night vision colored.

JENNIFER

Is that...?

HEATHER

Yep. Underwater volcano and a massive one at that.

JENNIFER

I didn't think they could form this deep.

HEATHER

Neither did we.

Another seismic tremor occurs.

HEATHER (CONT'D)

You might want to strap yourself down to something. It's gonna blow any second now.

Jennifer slides into a chair and buckles up as does the rest of the personal in the main area.

HEATHER (CONT'D)

Let's get full power to the shield everyone!

The other scientists type swiftly into their keyboards while Jennifer keeps watch outside the window.

The volcano appears to be building up even more pressure.

INT. GENERATOR ROOM- CONTINUOUS

Alex's device begins to loudly hum from within one of the generators.

The hum suddenly dies out and then a huge shock wave blasts out from the device.

INT. MAIN AREA- CONTINUOUS

The computers all automatically switch off. The light turns off and the room is now pitch black.

EXT. UNDERWATER BASE- CONTINUOUS

The protective shield vanishes into nothingness around the base.

INT. MAIN AREA- CONTINUOUS

The entire area is in mass panic.

Blue emergency lights provide some illumination, but not enough to calm everyone down.

HEATHER

What the Hell just happened!?

DAN

What do you think!? We just lost the shield!

HEATHER

I can see that...how did we lose it!?

Jennifer looks at the window uneasily and then at Heather. She starts to hyperventilate.

HEATHER

Don't panic, Jennifer. T-the power will be back in no time.

JENNIFER

Y-y-you don't sound very reassuring right now.

Heather gulps and diverts her attention to the window as well.

The base is hit with a massive seismic tremor. The people not strapped into their seats are thrown out to the floor.

Some try to stand, but instantly fall flat to the floor and grab onto something. Small cracks form in the glass.

A small message saying "**Emergency lock down initiated**" appears on the monitors for a brief second before vanishing.

(CONTINUED)

HEATHER

Unstrap and get out of here!

Jennifer goes for her buckle, but fumbles with it.

Her panic increases as the tremors increase and the cracks grow increasingly larger in the window.

Heather unbuckles Jennifer and they get barely a few steps before the tremors knock them off their feet and into the steps.

INT. HALLWAYS- CONTINUOUS

Alex sprints down the corridors only barely managing to keep his balance. He darts past a sign reading "**Submarines in this direction**".

EXT. UNDERWATER BASE- CONTINUOUS

The pressure violently builds from within the volcano and then...It ERUPTS!

INT. MAIN AREA- CONTINUOUS

The protective glass SHATTERS in an instant.

Bits of the ceiling break off and descend to the floor crushing scientists as water RUSHES inside the base.

Heather and Jennifer both take deep breathes as they are hit full on.

INT. HALLWAYS- CONTINUOUS

Alex is knocked off his feet from the eruption and crashes to the floor.

He gets on his knees when he hears something behind him at the other end of the hall.

He turns his head and sees an immense amount of water rushing down the corridor.

ALEX

Oh shiiiiitttt!

Alex springs to his feet and is off. Stumbling as he runs for his life.

(CONTINUED)

He rounds a corner, but the water follows him almost faster than he can run.

He pushes himself even harder as he moves closer to a ladder in the middle of the hallway, but the water catches him and knocks him down.

He misses the ladder and is carried off down the hallway.

INT. MAIN AREA UNDERWATER- CONTINUOUS

Jennifer thrashes about from under the water.

Even with the emergency lights it isn't enough for her to see much underwater.

Her head darts in every direction trying to see something; anything. It's near pitch black.

Jennifer suddenly screams while underwater and grabs her side while also letting her mouth fill with water.

She continues to have a panic attack when she finally faintly sees something come into view.

Her eyes widen in shock and fear when a hand grasps hers and starts to drag Jennifer to the surface.

INT. MAIN AREA ABOVE WATER- CONTINUOUS

Dan and Jennifer burst their heads above the water.

Dan pushes Jennifer onto a small floating piece of debris as the metal doors shut sealing the room and stopping the water flow.

Jennifer spits out water and violently coughs. She takes in her surroundings.

With the little illumination given by the emergency lights she can see the room is half flooded.

Bodies are floating in the water too.

Most of the scientists are treading in the water.

HEATHER

Jennifer! Are you OK!?

Jennifer gives a silent breath of relief at the sound of Heather's voice.

(CONTINUED)

Straining her eyes Jennifer can see Heather on the other side of the room near a ladder.

JENNIFER
(out of breath)
I'm...I'm OK.

She groans and hangs onto her side. Her body is shivering from the cold water covering her body.

DAN
Jennifer? Wh-what's wrong with you side?

She moves her hands showing a nasty cut in her waist. She rapidly hyperventilates.

JENNIFER
Oh God...Dan. You have to get out! There's something in the water!

Dan's hands slip off the debris and he is instantly dragged under the water.

He manages to surface and Jennifer grabs his hands as people scream all throughout the room. They are all being attacked!

JENNIFER
Hang on Dan! I've got you!

She holds onto him with both hands. Straining herself to forget the shooting pain in her side.

A tentacle EMERGES from the water and wraps itself around Dan's neck.

Jennifer gasps and then winces; taking away one of her hands to hold her waist.

Suddenly another tentacle shoots out from the water and latches onto Jennifer's wrist.

She screams and accidentally lets go of Dan. He is dragged underwater and Jennifer is set to be next.

The tentacle pulls hard making her slip off the debris and into the water.

She splashes uncontrollably; keeping a hand on the debris for dear life.

HEATHER

Don't let go!

Through her sheer panic, Jennifer sees Heather holding onto another scientist.

It isn't long before the man is pulled from Heather and down into the dark depths.

He surfaces and thrashes throughout the water, but is quickly pulled back under. Blood visible where he was just at.

Back on her end, Jennifer continues to hold on. Only three fingers keeping her held to the debris.

Heather sees her, but also spots a shark's fin swimming around her debris.

She looks at the water, then at Jennifer, and then at the water again.

JENNIFER

Heather, don't! I can handle this!

Heather watches the shark go around for another pass then pulls off her lab coat.

Without a moment of hesitation she dives into the water.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

Heather!

That's the last thing Jennifer utters as her hand slips.

INT. MAIN AREA UNDERWATER- CONTINUOUS

Jennifer's legs kick out wildly; fighting against her tentacled assailant.

A second tentacle suddenly snares her other hand.

Jennifer kicks back harder and harder; panic increasing on her face and anxiety rising.

Within seconds the Octopus has ensnared all of her limbs and refuses to let go.

It pulls even harder this time and Jennifer can't get free. Her vision goes in and out of focus.

CLOSE UP of all of Jennifer's about to be dismembered limbs.

(CONTINUED)

She shuts her eyes ready for the end when something slices through one of the tentacles.

Through her distorted vision, Jennifer can see Heather beside her; a knife in right hand.

Heather goes for another tentacle, but the Octopus lets go entirely and sprays black ink at both women as it swims off.

They dodge the ink and Heather aids Jennifer back to the surface.

INT. MAIN AREA ABOVE WATER- CONTINUOUS

They rapidly reach another floating piece of debris and Jennifer climbs on it as fast as possible.

She reaches out to Heather and pulls to get her on board as well.

Heather is almost out of the water when a shark clamps its teeth on her left leg.

HEATHER

AHHHHH!

The fish drags her away from Jennifer, who manages to seize one of Heather's hands.

Heather blindly throws her knife, which seems to hit its mark as the shark releases her and swims away.

Heather and Jennifer just stare at one another for a minute and then Jennifer takes notice of Heather's leg.

She opens her mouth to speak, but Heather cuts her off.

HEATHER

Don't worry. It's nothing.

JENNIFER

Nothing. It nearly tore your leg off.

Jennifer points at Heather's blood soaked leg, but Heather brushes it off.

HEATHER

"Nearly" being the word. You should be more worried about yourself.

(CONTINUED)

JENNIFER

My limbs are still attached to my body so I think I'm good. Thanks for saving me.

Even saying this Jennifer stares at the black water. Spotting shark fins cutting through the liquid.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

How are we going to get out of here?

HEATHER

There's a ladder that leads to the second floor on the other end of the room.

A loud noise of straining metal echoes in the room. Heather directs her gaze to the metal doors keeping back the water.

HEATHER (CONT'D)

Those doors won't hold forever. If we don't splash around then we might not attract the attention of the sharks.

JENNIFER

Heather...there's something you should know about me before we try this...I can't swim.

Heather gives Jennifer a look of disbelief, but can see in Jennifer's panic stricken eyes that she isn't lying.

HEATHER

It'll take some doing, but I can help you get across.

Sparks shoot off from the emergency lights and then they shut down entirely.

The bridge is now coated in entire darkness.

A shark bumps into their floating debris roughly.

The women hang onto each other out of fear of being thrown into the dark abyss.

JENNIFER

I can tread water, but that's about it.

(CONTINUED)

HEATHER
(still watching the water)
Why didn't you tell me?

JENNIFER
Too embarrassed. I'm a soldier
that doesn't know how to swim.

HEATHER
Well...at least you aren't a marine
that can't swim.

JENNIFER
Shut up. How are we going to get
out of here?

HEATHER
I have the layout of the area
memorized so no light won't be a
problem. The problem is...

JENNIFER
The sharks and the octopus.

The straining noises from the metal doors are even louder
this time.

HEATHER
(sighs)
And that. I'll go in first. Just
stay close to me and you'll be
safe...I hope.

Heather carefully slips into the water. She treads to keep
afloat she holds out her hands to Jennifer.

Jennifer's hands shake uncontrollably. She puts one foot in
the water and retracts it; fighting not to hyperventilate
again and attract attention.

HEATHER
I promise I won't let anything
happen to you, Jennifer. Now
please get in the water before the
sharks come back.

JENNIFER
It's funny. I should be the one
trying to control the
situation. Not the other way
around.

She takes Heather's hands and then slowly enters the water.

(CONTINUED)

She holds onto Heather's shoulders, who starts to move through the water.

Jennifer swallows hard; shifting her head in any direction to see something. But it's all black.

She can only make out a few vague shapes.

JENNIFER
(frantic)
Something just moved by my leg.

HEATHER
Relax. Just hang onto me.

They continue to cautiously tread through the water. It feels like an agonizingly long eternity.

The coldness of the water not helping as it effects Jennifer's attempt to hold Heather.

HEATHER
Jennifer. We made it.

JENNIFER
Thank you God.

HEATHER
You go first. I'll be right behind you.

Jennifer gets off of Heather and feels around for the ladder.

Once she has it she starts to ascend. Heather following.

HEATHER (CONT'D)
Can you see the door?

Jennifer strains her eyes as hard as she can.

JENNIFER
Barely.

HEATHER
Good. We're almost there.

They continue their ascent when the door opens above them. Alex steps out.

Arm drenched in blood and clothes torn apart. He's also carrying a shot gun.

ALEX

Jennifer? Heather? Is that you?

JENNIFER

Yes we're still here.

HEATHER

Along with beaten and freezing among other things. Are you alright?

ALEX

No. You know this place is now full of...

JENNIFER

Sharks? They're right below us. Is there anyone else left?

ALEX

I don't know. I saw most of the staff attempting to evacuate when the volcano erupted. I can barely find my way around here with no power.

JENNIFER

We'll stand back. We're coming up.

Alex nods and steps back when a LOUD noise distracts him.

ALEX

Uh...you guys might want to hurry.

Heather takes one step when a large tentacle wraps around her injured leg.

HEATHER

Jennifer!

Jennifer reacts with cat like swiftness and catches Heather's hand.

JENNIFER

What is this squid's problem!?

HEATHER

It's an octopus and pull harder!

Jennifer pulls when the metal doors are finally KNOCKED LOOSE from the wall.

The room shakes and Alex loses his footing; plummeting from the second floor right into the water below.

(CONTINUED)

He lands right behind Heather and aims his gun at the tentacle.

A second tentacle latches onto his neck right as the water collides with the group.

INT. MAIN AREA UNDERWATER- CONTINUOUS

Despite being hit by the incoming flood, Jennifer manages to keep a hold of the ladder.

She can't see Heather, Alex, or even the Octopus.

What she is able to just see is a shark SWIMMING straight towards her.

She climbs as quick as possible, but the water severely cuts down on her speed.

The shark opens wide when Heather swims into view and latches onto the shark diverting it from Jennifer.

The shark enters into a frenzy wildly trying to shake and/or take a bite out of Heather.

Heather looks up to the door, but Jennifer won't leave.

She gets ready to let go of the ladder, but Heather feverishly shakes her head no.

Jennifer begrudgingly nods her head.

INT. MAIN AREA ABOVE WATER- CONTINUOUS

Jennifer pops back up above water. Hands on the door handle.

She turns it with all her strength as the water level rises.

The door won't yield and the water starts to rise over Jennifer's head.

She takes a deep breath before being submerged again, but only by a little.

INT. MAIN AREA BELOW WATER- CONTINUOUS

Jennifer wrestles with opening the door, but it's stuck tight. She punches the handle and goes back up.

INT. MAIN AREA ABOVE WATER- CONTINUOUS

Jennifer resurfaces and takes another breath of air.

ALEX

Jennifer! HELP!

Alex is getting attacked on all sides. Sharks snapping their jaws at every visible inch of his flesh.

He swings his fists like a man possessed only for one of his arms to get bitten.

The second that happens the other sharks converge on him.

JENNIFER

ALEX!

Alex is bitten in both sides of his waist, his other arm and then one shark goes for his face.

Alex goes underwater with nothing, but blood bubbling to the surface.

Jennifer looks away in anguish. She gets it together and goes back to the door. She gives it one more forceful tug.

JENNIFER

COME ON!

She finally wrenches the door open, which smacks into a shark about to attack her.

The water spills out of the main area into the hallway almost taking Jennifer with it.

INT. HALLWAY- CONTINUOUS

Jennifer climbs into the hallway and prepares to slam the door shut.

Suddenly a pair of hands shoot from the water and Heather climbs in also.

The water carries her off when she grips one of Jennifer's legs.

(CONTINUED)

HEATHER

Close it!

Jennifer gives one giant pull and slams the door shut.

She seals it cutting off any more water and then collapses to the floor.

Weak, cold, and exhausted, Jennifer and Heather are still able to give one another a small smile.

JENNIFER

You know if this career as a scientist doesn't work out, we could always use more recruits.

HEATHER

(weak laugh)

If it means I get to stay above water then I'm all for it.