

A L I E N : O V E R W A T C H

Episode 1

Written by

TC

Based on the Twentieth Century Studios film

'Alien'

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## TEASER

### **EXT. SPACE**

The globe of a planet. Earth-like.

SUPER:

PLANET THEDUS

### **EXT. CUMULONIMBUS CLOUD LAYER - AERIAL - DAY**

We fly through dusky light, ten thousand metres high. Clouds in almost all directions.

### **EXT. SPACE ELEVATOR - AERIAL - DAY**

#### **FROM A DISTANCE**

If you weren't paying attention you probably wouldn't see it, the way a single strand of spider web is only visible when it glints in the sunlight. SKY-RISE, a faint vertical thread on the horizon, grows in grandeur the closer we get.

SUPER:

SKY-RISE

WEYLAND-YUTANI SPACE ELEVATOR

It pierces the clouds like a Babylonian tower, connecting heaven and firmament.

#### **NEARER**

Thirty thousand kilometres of nanocarbon and durasteel ascend to a vanishing point. Four vertical cables create the corners of the tower, each cable about a foot in diameter, held in place by a lattice of support members.

In the centre, a maintenance stairwell.

On opposite sides of the tower are two vertical railways -- the transportation system that delivers cargo and passengers to either orbit or planet surface, via two independent trams.

#### **EVEN NEARER**

A tram swoops downward at 150 kilometres per hour. Made of a stack of ten linked cars, each car is the size of a double-decker bus. Streamlined, automated electric engines provide the locomotive power; one at top, one at bottom.

**INT. LOWEST ELEVATOR CAR - DAY**

Twenty fully enclosed capsules, like high-tech laundry baskets, are arranged on stands in two neat rows.

A MALE ATTENDANT and FEMALE ATTENDANT (both mid-30s), dressed in lab smocks branded with small Weyland-Yutani logos, circulate among the capsules.

They inspect readouts displayed on each capsule's front panel, ticking off notes on hand-held computer tablets.

The man finishes with the last in his row.

MALE ATTENDANT

All fine. I'm going up.

FEMALE ATTENDANT

Me too.

They step aboard a tiny two-person lift built into the rear wall. Actually nothing more than a platform, it transports them six metres up and into a hatch in the ceiling.

**INT. ELEVATOR CAR ABOVE - DAY**

They emerge into an --

**AIRLOCK**

Besides the floor hatch where the platform arose, there are two doors on opposite walls: the main entrance/exit to outside (currently locked), and access to the main workroom of the car.

The attendants leave the airlock, entering the --

**WORKROOM**

Eight other workers -- some garbed in smocks, some in lab coats -- stand or sit at desks and sofas. The atmosphere is relaxed as they confer with each other and tinker with hand-held screen devices.

A few workers enjoy the view through a large viewport. The skyscape is peaceful and picturesque.

The Male Attendant takes the two tablets and checks them into a computer dock. The Female Attendant heads for the stairs to a small mezzanine; a place where off-duty workers can rest in partitioned cubicles, each one containing a simple bunk bed.

On the wall in the main workroom is a readout showing the Ground Station ETA. Five minutes.

The workers prepare for arrival.

**EXT. LOWEST ELEVATOR CAR - DAY**

A tram wheel is a blur as it spins at tremendously high speed, riding its rail.

An ominous glow appears from deep inside the wheel mechanism.

A metallic SHREIK gradually rings out. A smoke trail begins to snake into the slipstream.

The tram wheel starts to shimmy.

**INT. ELEVATOR CAR ABOVE - DAY**

A NERVOUS WORKER notices a pot plant quivering. He sits stock still in his chair for a moment, clutching the arm rests. He turns to his colleague:

NERVOUS WORKER  
You feel that?

Before he gets an answer, an alarm bleeps for attention.

And then --

CRUNCH!

A sickening LURCH throws everyone to the floor!

**EXT. LOWEST ELEVATOR CAR - DAY**

The tram wheel RIPS AWAY! -- arcs into the air like an Olympian's discus.

SCREEEEEE! The car and locomotive below skew sideways. The entire tram GRINDS TO A HALT.

Stillness.

**INT. ELEVATOR CAR ABOVE - DAY**

Stunned silence.

In ones and twos, the workers pick themselves up from the floor, regathering their senses.

A person grabs a phone handset from the wall -- panic-speaks into it, calling for help:

PANICKED WORKER  
Hello, hello! Anyone there?

#### **AIRLOCK**

The Nervous Worker scrambles inside -- examines the exit door. The maintenance stairwell is just outside, only metres away, but jammed doors make escape impossible.

The Male Attendant enters, examines the damaged hatch in the floor. He forces it open, causing a momentary rush of air as the pressure equalises.

He looks through the torn up hatch.

MALE ATTENDANT  
Jesus H. Christ...

The car below teeters alarmingly.

NERVOUS WORKER  
You're not thinking of going down there? Oh... no, no. Just leave it!

The Male Attendant raises his gaze, looks through the window in the door to the workroom, sees the gathering of workers there. Fear grips them in a cold embrace.

The Female Attendant comes to the other side of the door. Their eyes meet. He shouts to her:

MALE ATTENDANT  
I HAVE TO TRY!

She wears a grim expression. She nods.

He lowers himself through the wreckage of the hatchway, trying to avoid catching himself on daggers of torn metal.

#### **INT. LOWEST ELEVATOR CAR - DAY**

Climbing down to the bottom car, the Male Attendant discovers the jammed lift. He sidesteps it to use the emergency ladder.

Once on the floor, he goes to an emergency cabinet and pulls out an oxygen flask and mask. Puts it on.

Part of a wall has been ripped open, revealing open sky. Bone chilling wind swirls in through the gap. Damaged electrical wires spark dangerously.

Most of the twenty capsules are intact on their support stands. Only a few have been knocked awry.

He detaches the nearest capsule and awkwardly carries it to the ladder. The swaying of the car makes the walk hazardous.

He climbs, shouldering the capsule above him.

Almost at the top...

He SLIPS.

His pant leg hooks on a jagged shard of bent metal. He can't move, nor can he free his leg, not while precariously balancing the capsule above his head.

He sees a CONCERNED WORKER through the ceiling hole. He rips off his oxygen mask.

MALE ATTENDANT

I'm stuck! Gimme a hand?

CONCERNED WORKER

Mate! Forget it! Let the rescue guys do that. They're on their way.

MALE ATTENDANT

How long?

CONCERNED WORKER

One, two hours maybe.

MALE ATTENDANT

Shit! Just come down and take this.

CONCERNED WORKER

You don't understand. This car is gonna go. Any second now!

The Worker withdraws from the hole. Gone.

The Attendant scowls. *Useless bag of shit!*

He props the capsule against bent wreckage and uses his free hand to try yanking his pant leg loose. No luck.

When he looks up again, the Female Attendant is climbing down the ladder towards him.

FEMALE ATTENDANT

I'll get it.

She uses a pocket knife to cut his pant leg, freeing him.

Together, they push the capsule through the hole in the ceiling. Someone on the other side grabs it.

**INT. ELEVATOR CAR ABOVE - CONTINUOUS**

A SENIOR WORKER has hold of the capsule. Heaves it to safety.

MALE ATTENDANT  
(to Senior Worker)  
There's more. We can save more.

SENIOR WORKER  
Don't be foolish. It's too dangerous!

The two Attendants duck back down, disappearing into the lowest car.

**EXT. LOWEST ELEVATOR CAR - DAY**

SCREECH! The last shreds of metal holding the car shear away.

The car BREAKS FREE, taking with it the attached locomotive.

Both PLUNGE to their doom... tumbling in slow motion... eventually swallowed up by clouds far below.

**INT. ELEVATOR CAR ABOVE - DAY**

One of the bystanding workers has hold of the saved capsule. It has a plexiglass window. She looks inside and sees an INFANT, safe and secure in deep sleep -- the very picture of serenity.

**TITLE SEQUENCE**

A L I E N : O V E R W A T C H

END TEASER

ACT 1**EXT. SPACE**

Tiny dots of light amid a velvet blackness.

SUPER:

27 YEARS LATER

One dot gradually enlarges, slowly revealing itself as a distant ship heading directly towards us.

Soon there are details: It is a space freighter hooked to the front of a massive mobile refinery.

It continues to approach, slowly, inexorably...

SUPER:

WEYLAND-YUTANI TOWING VEHICLE, NOSTROMO

CARGO: Fuel ore

STATUS: Detour to planet LV-426 - Completed  
Currently returning to Earth

CREW STATUS: Casualties

Freighter and refinery grow larger, eventually sweeping by in a dizzying flypast.

We SPIN AROUND 180 DEGREES to watch it disappear into the distance; then we PAN back in the direction of our original view, where there is --

-- another dot of light. As it nears it grows in size... it is a stealth ship, as large as a cargo jet and bristling with antennas and tracking scopes.

SUPER:

WEYLAND-YUTANI STEALTH SHIP, OBERON

MISSION TASK: Surveillance

MISSION STATUS: Undetected

CREW STATUS: Operational

ZOOM IN on the window-ports of the flight deck, located on the stealth ship's upper hull.

**INT. FLIGHT DECK**

With the floor area of a large RV, it features a canopy of window-ports, electronic displays, and control panels of all shapes and sizes.



Captain LIANG (male, 50-ish) rises from the pilot's chair and walks to the rear of the flight deck. He wears a regulation Weyland-Yutani flight suit. Neat as a pin.

He sees a flashing light at a computer workstation and stops to check it.

In the rear bulkhead is the auto-hatch, a pressure-tight and automatic sliding door. It opens.

FINCH (male, late 30s) enters. Plain sweat pants and hoodie, matching his easy going unshaved look.

LIANG  
Finch, there's a new flash-  
transmission from Nostromo.

Finch approaches.

Liang takes a seat at the workstation. Taps keys on the computer keyboard. The screen says:

MESSAGE HIGHLY CLASSIFIED. DECRYPT: YES/NO?

Liang's finger hovers over the 'Y' key. He and Finch turn to look at:

Emma-Jane MCCALL ("Mac", female, latter-20s). She has the top half of her overalls bunched down at the waist, the empty sleeves wrapped around her middle and tied in front. Tee shirt. Brush-cut hair.

She is crouched before an instrument cabinet with one hand inside an opened panel. She had been there all along, unnoticed, getting on with the job of swapping filled data drives for new ones.

LIANG (CONT'D)  
Ahem.

MCCALL  
Oh. Captain -- excuse me. I'll get  
out of your way. There's work down  
below I can get on with.

She swings the panel shut and exits through the auto-hatch.

# **INT. ENGINE ROOM**

A powerful THRUM permeates the air. Walls, floor, and ceiling are crammed with machinery.

A removed metal floor grid exposes a large conduit pipe, about a half metre in diameter. The pipe has an opened access port. A toolbox lies nearby.

McCall finishes clamping a motorised winch to the floor's support frame. The wire from the winch leads into the pipe.

She uses a pocket-sized remote control to activate the winch, watching it reel in a metre of wire. Satisfied, she turns it off.

She rises, picks up the toolbox, and exits through an auto-hatch, walking into --

#### **INT. HUB - LOWER FLOOR - CONTINUOUS**

The hub is a vertical accessway connecting forward compartments to rear, and upper floor to lower.

On the lower floor, McCall emerges from the aft auto-hatch and crosses to enter the forward auto-hatch directly opposite.

#### **INT. PASSAGEWAY - CONTINUOUS**

As long as a single car garage but only wide enough to allow outspread arms, its far end stops at another auto-hatch labelled 'Hold.' The passageway widens slightly here, forming what could only generously be described as the ship's mess: a countertop for eating meals, some high stools, a bench seat.

McCall walks the passageway, stopping short of the hold.

Another floor grid has been lifted and now leans against the bench seat. Below the floor is a different section of the same conduit pipe, also with an opened access port. The other end of the wire pokes out of the port.

She sets down the toolbox, takes the wire and clamps it to the loose end of a reel of cable. The reel is mounted in a winding spindle.

She presses the button on the remote control. The wire retracts into the pipe, pulling on the cable and unwinding it from the reel.

Behind McCall, Finch enters from the hub and comes over.

FINCH

That looks very technical.

McCall shuts off the winch.

MCCALL  
Cables for the new photonic mast.

FINCH  
Uh-huh.

MCCALL  
The ship's scanners are highly sensitive. So power cables have to go through this special shielded conduit. To stop interference.

Finch drops down to the access port and looks in the pipe.

#### **INSIDE CONDUIT PIPE**

The inner surface of the pipe is lined with hundreds of cables. Along the bottom is a metal plank-like floor for maintenance workers to crawl on.

The loose wire disappears into darkness in one direction. Complete blackness in the other.

#### **BACK TO: PASSAGEWAY**

Finch withdraws his head. Tech stuff isn't really his thing.

FINCH  
F.Y.I., back there on the flight deck, that's just protocol. We can't expose classified material in front of non-mission personnel.

MCCALL  
I get that. But I've downloaded messages from the asset before, and you're fine with that?

FINCH  
They're encrypted. So downloading's safe.  
(pause)  
That's all you do, right?

MCCALL  
Sometimes the asset opens a real-time channel and likes to talk.

Finch chokes on his own spit.

FINCH  
WHAT! What does he say? Scratch that -- what do YOU say?

MCCALL

He's a synthetic, isn't he? I never talked to one before. I didn't even think they were real, just gossip.

Finch shakes his head.

FINCH

I don't want to hear this! You're the ship's engineer, got it? That's all you do!

He thinks for a second. Sighs.

FINCH (CONT'D)

We better tell the captain.

He walks back in the direction of the hub.

McCall reluctantly follows.

#### **INT. FLIGHT DECK**

Captain Liang is seated sideways at the workstation, facing Finch and McCall, who wait in awkward silence.

Liang drums his fingers on the desktop while McCall stares at the floor. He clears his throat.

LIANG

We just got another message from the asset. In light of that, this infraction probably doesn't much matter.

FINCH

Oh?

LIANG

The synthetic's been unmasked by the Nostromo crew. It looks like he's about to be terminated.

FINCH

FUCK!

He collapses into a chair.

FINCH (CONT'D)

Then the mission's over... shit.

(pause)

I should have known better. Relying on a Hyperdyne!

(MORE)

FINCH (CONT'D)

This is what you get with those models. Zero initiative. Undercover work is totally beyond them.

LIANG

He's been reliable, loyal, and task focused -- all ideal qualities on a tricky mission like this one.

FINCH

Oh, on the surface they seem all right but underneath they're insane. You don't know them like I do. And by the way, this particular unit has a 'history.' Actually, the word I'd use is *psycho*.

LIANG

He's a valuable asset relaying important information.

FINCH

Was a valuable asset.

Liang rises and heads for the auto-hatch.

LIANG

I have to write this up in the log. I'll be in my quarters.

He exits.

MCCALL

So what does this mean?

FINCH

It mea--

Suddenly an INTENSE BRIGHT LIGHT beams in through the forward window-port. Finch and McCall shield their eyes.

Seconds later it dims enough that they can look directly at the source. A huge FIREBALL expands in the far distance.

An ALARM sounds --

McCall runs to the pilot's chair. Begins flipping switches, priming the engines, which start to spool.

Liang reappears at the auto-hatch. From the rear of the flight deck he stares out through the window-port.

FINCH (CONT'D)

Nostromo! She just blew up!

McCall activates the radar. Examines the display.

MCCALL  
Shrapnel incoming! We've gotta get  
out of the main blast! Somewhere  
over there!

She points a hand to the right.

LIANG  
*Do it!*

She nudges the throttles and leans on the control stick. The ship begins to turn.

Debris starts to pelt the ship. PING. PING. KA-PING.

Then suddenly: KABLAM!

-- the shockwave hits, throwing them all sideways.

A klaxon WHOOPS.

Liang checks the damage control screen: Hull breach! A diagram of the ship shows the hold flashing red.

LIANG (CONT'D)  
(to McCall)  
The manoeuvring jets! Increase the  
turn rate!

He grabs a leak-seal gun from a wall bracket. Turns to Finch:

LIANG (CONT'D)  
Come with me!

He heads for the hatch. Finch close behind.

LIANG (CONT'D)  
Grab that!

He points to a fire extinguisher. Finch does so.

They both rush out.

#### **INT. HUB - CONTINUOUS**

On the upper floor, Liang and Finch emerge from the flight deck's auto-hatch. They scramble down a steep metal stairway to the lower floor. They run for the passageway.

**INT. HOLD**

-- a large workroom at the bow of the ship, mostly filled with sensitive surveillance equipment. A robot crane arm mounted on a movable dolly is parked in its centre. The main airlock is at the far forward end.

Another klaxon WAILS.

Liang and Finch dash in through an auto-hatch in the rear bulkhead. They scan the compartment.

FINCH

There!

Liang sees it: Air is being SUCKED OUT TO SPACE through a dime-sized puncture in the wall. He aims the leak-seal gun, FIRES A BLOB OF SEALANT at the hole.

The blob instantly sets hard. The leak stops.

Finch sprays CO2 from the extinguisher at an ELECTRICAL FIRE.

Klaxon incessant -- another hull puncture, but where?

Liang sees it. High up near the ceiling.

He climbs the short ladder to the three hypersleep capsules mounted on the wall, trying to get a better angle. Loses his footing. Falls. Lands awkwardly on the floor.

Prone on the floor, wincing in pain, he shouts to Finch:

LIANG

Up there!

Finch takes the leak-seal gun from Liang. Climbs the ladder. Fires a blob at the hull puncture. SEALED!

The klaxon goes silent.

An intercom box is nearby. Finch presses the mic button.

FINCH

Mac! How're we doing?

MCCALL (OVER COMMS)

We're through the main blast.  
Deflectors can deal with the low  
energy stuff. I think we're okay.

Finch turns to Liang down on the floor. Liang clutches his ankle and groans.

**EXT. STEALTH SHIP - LATER**

The engines are dark. All is calm in the stillness of space.  
A few small chunks of debris lazily tumble past.

**INT. ENGINE ROOM**

McCall stands on a step ladder. She examines an array of pressure pipes snaking across the ceiling. An oxy torch and cylinders are nearby.

MCCALL  
(into headset mic)  
Okay. I see the problem. I can fix  
it here.

**INT. HOLD**

Captain Liang has removed his left boot and is fitting a snap-on ankle cast to his foot.

He presses the button on the intercom.

LIANG  
(to McCall)  
Good. Go ahead. Out.

He adjusts the velcro straps on the ankle cast.

Finch is seated at the console to the long range sensor. He manipulates the controls.

FINCH  
Maybe with the thing onboard they  
over-cooked the engines trying to  
get home faster. Whatever happened,  
happened fast. And spectacularly.

Liang tests his ankle by applying some weight.

LIANG  
It was quite the explosion.

FINCH  
The entire refinery. That would've  
been worth billions!

LIANG  
This operation has Special  
Project's oversight.  
(MORE)



LIANG (CONT'D)

One would assume that they thought of this possibility. I don't see why we should carry the blame.

FINCH

Well, it wasn't in *my* brief.

He scans a sector of space with the computerised telescope.

FINCH (CONT'D)

The way it went up without warning...

LIANG

My thoughts, too. I think she was self-destructed.

FINCH

Scuttled?

LIANG

Yes. If I'm right, then the flight recorder will have been ejected from the ship minutes before the explosion. Automatically.

FINCH

Then there'll be a radio beacon. Giving its location.

LIANG

Exactly.

Finch tweaks the sensors and homes in on a signal.

FINCH

Wow! You were right. Found it!

Liang limps over to Finch. Peers at the sensor display.

LIANG

Proximity sensors are picking up something else.

FINCH

Yeah. Something much bigger. Here, if I redirect the 'scope... and zoom in...

He adjusts some controls.

He blinks in disbelief.

FINCH (CONT'D)  
Nostromo's shuttle! How 'bout that!  
Someone got away!

LIANG  
Did they? There's no sign of life.

FINCH  
Somebody launched it.

LIANG  
Or it released on its own. Under  
computer control.

Finch leans back in his chair, splays both hands and touches  
opposing fingertips. Thinks out loud:

FINCH  
Alright, new plan: There's the  
Nostromo flight recorder. We can  
retrieve that. As for the shuttle,  
we continue surveillance. See who's  
there. If there is anyone. Okay?

Liang nods in agreement.

The auto-hatch opens and McCall enters.

FINCH (CONT'D)  
(to McCall)  
Good news! The mission's not over.  
We might get our bonuses yet!

#### **INT. FLIGHT DECK**

McCall is at the engineering station. She flips a few  
switches, then looks over at Captain Liang in his forward  
position in the pilot's seat.

LIANG  
(into headset mic)  
Finch? Stand by.

#### **INT./EXT. MAIN AIRLOCK**

Floating freely in space, only fifty metres from the prow of  
the stealth ship, is the Nostromo flight recorder. It is a  
metal barrel about the size of a golf bag.

The airlock opens, revealing Finch in a space-suit. He grabs  
onto a handhold and leans out the doorway, snapping a safety  
tether to the hull.

He holds what looks like a broomstick handle. He presses a button on the shaft and it slowly extends in sections, telescoping into a six metre-long boat-hook.

FINCH

A bit closer. Two more metres...

Manoeuvring thrusters inch the ship forward.

Finch stretches out with the boat-hook; snags the flight recorder.

FINCH (CONT'D)

Got it.

He pulls it in.

#### **INT. FLIGHT DECK**

The starscape through the main viewport suddenly shows a streak of light. Liang sees it.

LIANG

Oh! Finch! The shuttle's engines  
just fired up. Can you see it?  
Finch!

Behind him, McCall cranes her head to the window-port, trying to see what he's talking about.

#### **INT./EXT. MAIN AIRLOCK**

Finch leans around the corner of the airlock. He sees a bright flare of light trailed by a luminous exhaust.

FINCH

Yeah... We'll never catch it.

#### **INT. FLIGHT DECK**

Liang turns to McCall behind him.

LIANG

McCall! Do we have an E.M.P. in the  
tube?

McCall checks a side panel. Punches some buttons.

MCCALL

Hold on... Yes. Ready!

FINCH (OVER COMMS)  
What's going on?

LIANG  
Target acquired... Firing!

He presses a button on his control stick.

**EXT. STEALTH SHIP**

A torpedo ejects from a port in the underside of the ship.

A second later the torpedo's rocket motor ignites. It makes a wide turn as it accelerates.

**INT./EXT. MAIN AIRLOCK**

Finch sees the torpedo shoot away. *What the hell?*

FINCH  
Hey!

LIANG (OVER COMMS)  
It's okay. It's an E.M.P., to disable, not destroy. An electromagnetic pulse will shut down the shuttle's electronics. If we can catch it.

**EXT. SPACE - NOSTROMO SHUTTLE**

The torpedo in pursuit, homing in on the shuttle...

But the shuttle is too fast. Behind it, the torpedo EXPLODES in a shower of sparks. Spectacular, but harmless.

The shuttle speeds away, unperturbed.

**INT. FLIGHT DECK**

Liang slumps in his chair.

LIANG  
No good.

**INT./EXT. MAIN AIRLOCK**

FINCH  
Just our luck.

He reaches up to unclasp the tether.

LIANG (OVER COMMS)  
Wait a minute!

Finch pauses.

**INT. FLIGHT DECK**

Liang works some controls while examining a display.

LIANG  
Sensors indicate something in the  
shuttle's wake. Something...  
Organic? Or not? Hard to tell.  
Animal-sized... Human? Or...

**INT./EXT. MAIN AIRLOCK**

FINCH  
Or... the LV-426 biologic!

**INT. FLIGHT DECK**

Liang considers the possibility.

LIANG  
I think so.

McCall listens in from her position in the back.

FINCH (OVER COMMS)  
What else could it be? That's one  
valuable specimen -- if we can snag  
it. Not exactly what Van Eeghen was  
after, but better than nothing.

LIANG  
It was caught in the shuttle's  
plasma blast so it's burned to a  
crisp. Even so, if we can gather  
its remains...

FINCH (OVER COMMS)  
Doesn't matter! Even a corpse is  
something! Just get us over there.

McCall hears their eagerness. She looks over at Liang, unsure  
of what the excitement is all about.

END ACT 1

ACT 2**EXT. SPACE**

A silhouetted and featureless mass, about the size of a large duffle bag, floats in outer space.

The stealth ship 'Oberon' manoeuvres closer.

**INT./EXT. MAIN AIRLOCK**

Standing in the open airlock, Finch is still in his space-suit. He reaches out with the boat-hook.

FINCH

Ten metres... eight...

He stretches. Gently swipes at the black mass.

FINCH (CONT'D)

...easy does it...

He hooks it...

**INT. FLIGHT DECK**

Captain Liang walks back to the rear workstation where he fiddles with a blank video screen. McCall is busy at her own console.

LIANG

McCall, I can't get a picture from the hold C.C.T.V. camera.

MCCALL

I think maybe the shockwave took out a power bus on the lower deck. Some of the breakers keep tripping. I can go down and fix it now.

LIANG

Yes, now. I want to see what's going on in there. But don't enter the hold -- not under any circumstances. Not until Finch is done. Got that?

McCall nods her head, rises, and departs.

**INT. HOLD**

Finch is back in his usual sweat pants and top. He wears work gloves. And a comms headset.

The Nostromo flight recorder is propped against a wall.

He uses a wireless remote control to drive the motorised crane arm along its ceiling track, moving it from the airlock at the forward end of the hold to the centre.

From the crane's hook hangs a harness, and concealed in the harness is a large, weighty bundle.

Finch lowers the bundle to the floor and releases the hook.

The harness's webbing falls away, revealing the ALIEN CORPSE.

The corpse shows no limbs or appendages. Like an armadillo in a defensive ball, only a rounded outer shell is seen. The chitinous hide is blistered and bubbled.

**INT. PASSAGEWAY**

McCall opens an electrical wall cabinet. One by one, she examines the breakers inside.

MCCALL  
(to herself)  
Okay, well you need to be replaced.  
You need to be replaced. And you.

The hold's auto-hatch, with its little inspection window set into the door, is only a few metres away.

She looks at it, hesitates... then walks over. Steals a look through the window.

**INTERCUT WITH:****INT. HOLD**

Finch puts the remote control aside, using its built-in hook to hang it from a bar attached to the rear bulkhead.

He kneels and inspects the alien corpse -- runs a glove over its scorched exterior. The blistered skin sheds brittle flakes onto the floor.

IT MOVES! (Just the slightest twitch.)

Finch recoils!

FINCH

Shit!

He leaps for the auto-hatch -- the nearest escape route -- and where McCall is standing on the other side.

MCCALL

(looking through window)

What's wrong?

Finch frantically jabs at the hatch's control panel. It fails to open.

FINCH

Why won't this bloody thing...

McCall tries to open the door from her side.

MCCALL

I think it's the electrics.

Finch continues to struggle with the door.

LIANG (OVER COMMS)

Finch? What's going on?

FINCH

The alien. It's alive!

LIANG (OVER COMMS)

Say again?

FINCH

THE ALIEN'S ALIVE, GODDAMMIT! And this fucking hatch is jammed!

LIANG (OVER COMMS)

It must be more damage from the shockwave. McCall? You there?

MCCALL

I'm here! Doing my best...

Behind Finch, very slowly, like an origami sculpture unfolding itself, the alien's limbs extend...

...first its skeletal tail; then its arms and legs, and finally its elongated head... a slow motion nightmare rising from the dead.

McCall sees it.

MCCALL (CONT'D)

-- the fuck is that?



Finch pries a cover off the hatch surrounds, revealing a manual hand wheel.

He tries to turn the hand wheel, but it's stuck. No use.

McCall shouts through the window:

MCCALL (CONT'D)  
The solenoid latches haven't  
released!

Finch grabs an emergency axe from the wall.

MCCALL (CONT'D)  
NO! Don't do that!

Too late -- he smashes the hatch control panel -- WHUMP!

SPARKS fly. The main lights go out.

Now the hold's only illumination comes from the lighted control panels on all the assorted equipment.

In the dim light, Finch goes back to the hand wheel. He tugs it again with all his strength. It won't budge.

MCCALL (CONT'D)  
I have to remove a panel on my  
side!

She flips open a pocket multi-tool. Tries the Phillips head on some screws in the door panel. But the tool is too small.

MCCALL (CONT'D)  
I need a proper screwdriver. I'll  
be right back!

She disappears from the window.

The alien now stands upright in a kind of trance as it slowly recovers from hibernation.

Finch gives up on the door.

He nervously approaches the alien in its weird hypnotic state.

McCall arrives back at her side of the door with a large screwdriver. Through the door's inspection window she sees Finch make his way around the alien.

Careful to avoid sudden movements, he heads for the airlock on the far side.

As he gets close, the tip of the alien's tail FLICKS.

Its head slowly turns in Finch's direction...

Then it LEAPS!

**END INTERCUT**

**INT. MAIN AIRLOCK - CONTINUOUS**

Finch hurls himself inside. SLAMS a fist on the manual 'CLOSE' button.

The door hisses shut and WHAM! the alien's mass strikes the other side.

**INT. PASSAGEWAY**

McCall is still looking through the auto-hatch window.

MCCALL

FINCH!

**INT. FLIGHT DECK**

LIANG

Finch! Report!

**INT. MAIN AIRLOCK**

Finch is on his backside on the floor. *Phew!* Breathes a sigh of relief.

FINCH

I'm okay.

LIANG (OVER COMMS)

Good. You should lock the door. I can't do it for you.

Finch hits the inner door 'LOCK' button.

His space-suit and helmet are mounted on a hanger. He heads over to it. Checks the backpack's air supply.

He opens the suit.

FINCH

I'm going to exit the ship and re-enter through the dorsal airlock.

**EXT. STEALTH SHIP**

The main airlock door opens. Finch, in space-suit, clambers out. Closes the airlock.

He works his way hand-over-hand across the ship's hull, heading towards the top side of the ship.

**INT. HUB - UPPER FLOOR**

Finch emerges from the inner door of the dorsal airlock.

McCall is waiting for him. She helps remove the helmet.

MCCALL  
(agitated)  
That shit was crazy...

Finch disconnects his backpack.

MCCALL (CONT'D)  
What the hell is that thing?

A large, glass-doored locker next to the airlock is storage for EVA paraphernalia. As Finch removes his backpack, gloves, and boots, McCall puts them away.

MCCALL (CONT'D)  
What just happened? Is this the mission?

Finch shucks himself out of the suit. He stands in stretch pants and tee shirt.

FINCH  
The captain and I have some things to discuss. Give us a minute, will you?

The flight deck is only a few steps away. He heads for it, McCall following. He turns and holds up a hand. *Wait here!*

The flight deck auto-hatch opens. He enters and is gone.

The hatch closes in McCall's face.

**LATER**

McCall paces back and forth just outside the flight deck, frustrated and annoyed.

She's waited long enough. She enters.

**INT. FLIGHT DECK - CONTINUOUS**

Finch and Captain Liang are in a heated discussion.

FINCH  
...Special Projects expect long  
term profits to follow on from  
this.

McCall storms up to them --

MCCALL  
Someone want to tell me what the  
fuck's going on?

No one responds.

MCCALL (CONT'D)  
Let me rephrase: WHAT THE FUCK IS  
GOING ON!!!

LIANG  
McCall, your duties preclude  
privileges concerning mission --

FINCH  
-- Captain! We talked about this.  
We need to work as a team now.

Liang's ankle aches. He limps over to a chair and sits down.

LIANG  
All right. The situation's changed,  
so maybe a few explanations are in  
order.  
(to Finch)  
Go ahead.

Finch turns to McCall.

FINCH  
Weyland-Yutani received intel about  
an alien species of special  
interest. The Nostromo crew... um,  
obtained a sample for the labs. On  
the way to Earth they were going to  
divert to Delios, where some animal  
handlers were going to secure the  
alien in stasis. Then send it back  
to Theodus onboard a robot drone.  
Our job was to supervise the asset,  
provide support if necessary. And  
observe.

MCCALL

But this alien -- this creature --  
what's so special about it?

Finch and Liang are silent.

MCCALL (CONT'D)

Okay then... what do we know about  
it?

LIANG

There's lots of speculation, but  
nothing truly confirmed. We know  
it's highly predatory. It's very  
hardy to adverse environments -- as  
you saw. And it has concentrated  
acid for blood.

MCCALL

It's a predator... so... it eats  
people? For food?

FINCH

Not sure.

MCCALL

How smart is it? Is it intelligent?

Finch shrugs his shoulders.

LIANG

The asset had some theories about  
that. But if you mean can we  
communicate with it, no. It's far  
too aggressive.

Silence, while everyone has private thoughts.

FINCH

Okay, sit-rep: The alien is trapped  
in the hold. The hold's internal  
hatch is secure, but we can't  
simply leave it loose in there. For  
a start, that's where the  
hypersleep capsules are. Which  
we're going to need.

MCCALL

One thing we could try: It's right  
outside the airlock. We could  
override the safety switches, cause  
a deliberate decompression. Blast  
it to outer space.

LIANG

That would mean losing our hard-earned prize. There's too much at stake for that. And besides...

MCCALL

(boiling over)

-- What's at stake is our lives!

LIANG

...it could easily grab onto something on the way out. It might not be expelled so easily.

MCCALL

It's worth a try!

LIANG

No.

McCall throws her arms in the air, exasperated.

LIANG (CONT'D)

Weyland-Yutani is relying on us.

An awkward silence.

FINCH

Well, if there are any other ideas, now's the time...

More silence. McCall fumes.

# **INT. STORAGE COMPARTMENT**

-- crammed with lockers, netted shelves, and stackable crates. Laundry hangs from a temporary clothes line. McCall's kitbag lies on the floor.

A bunk-bed is strapped in above some aircon units. Beside it, the wall is decorated with lots of scenic landscape photos, neatly taped in place.

McCall sits on the bunk, scowling. She flicks through more landscapes on a computer tablet. Picturesque mountains and forests, seashores, and deep blue skies above braided rivers.

Gradually, she calms down.

Someone outside raps on the closed hatch, NOCK NOCK.

FINCH (O.S.)

Hello?

McCall gets up and opens the hatch door, allowing the THRUM of the engine room to fill the air.

Finch stands in the doorway. He looks around the makeshift accommodation.

FINCH (CONT'D)  
Just thought I'd check up on first  
class.  
(pause)  
May I?

McCall steps aside and Finch walks in. She taps a button on the door control to keep it open. She stands by the door.

Finch admires the photos on the wall.

FINCH (CONT'D)  
Nice.

MCCALL  
They cover the rust spots.

FINCH  
Earth, right? Do you have family  
there?

MCCALL  
(icily)  
I'm sure you read my file.

FINCH  
Actually... yes, I did. Orphaned as  
a baby. Grew up in an institute.  
Must have been tough.

McCall doesn't need this:

MCCALL  
Is there something I can help you  
with?

FINCH  
Yeah... this business with the  
alien, it wasn't supposed to be  
your concern. Sorry about that. Now  
circumstances have changed, but if  
you follow instructions you'll be  
fine. I've been in some tight spots  
before. If we're united we can beat  
this. Remember, we're stronger  
together.

He turns to leave, walks past McCall.

MCCALL

Hey.

Finch stops.

MCCALL (CONT'D)

What happened to the Nostromo crew?  
Did Weyland-Yutani stitch them up?

FINCH

When it comes to the company,  
everyone's expendable.

MCCALL

Including us? How much of this  
cluster-fuck was in the plan all  
along?

FINCH

The plan is unchanged. We'll go to  
Delios, offload our passenger, put  
in for repairs, then on to Earth.  
Not quite the way we expected, but  
if this is what you want,  
(points to photos)  
it could still be in your future.

He departs.

#### **INT. FLIGHT DECK**

Finch, Liang, and McCall stand before a blank video screen.

MCCALL

I fixed a transformer and got the  
C.C.T.V. cameras back online.

She turns the screen on. They switch the view to the hold.  
But with the room lights broken, the picture is very dim.

They pan the camera around, trying to locate the alien.

The hold's ceiling is quite high, four metres in places, but  
all the space above head height is taken up with structural  
girders, ducting and pipes, bundles of cables and conduits.

Eventually they find it nestled into the small space on top  
of a ceiling cable tray. Motionless.

FINCH

You know, Captain, Mac might be  
right. We might have to kill it.



LIANG

There's no need to be so hasty.

FINCH

But as a last resort. Just in case.

LIANG

The asset reported on the xenomorph's acidic blood. There's no way we can damage it with firearms or we risk acid holes eating through the ship.

FINCH

The Nostromo crew also tried cattle prods and flamethrowers.

LIANG

Neither of which showed any signs of killing it.

(pause)

But the asset also got to examine the xeno's transitional form, its biochemistry. He speculated that it might be vulnerable to an organophosphorus nerve agent.

FINCH

You mean nerve gas? Do we have any of that?

MCCALL

There's some in the ship's manifest.

LIANG

(to McCall)

Get a canister out of stores. For last resorts only. Happy now?

McCall nods her head.

FINCH

Okay. So we don't want to expel it from the airlock. Fair enough. But we could still use the airlock to contain it.

MCCALL

But how do we get the alien in there? Lure it in with bait? One of us? No thanks.

LIANG

Let's go back to the flamethrowers.  
The asset did report some kind of  
fear response.

FINCH

Then we herd it into the airlock  
with flamethrowers. That might be  
our best bet.

LIANG

Except I'm not very mobile at the  
moment.

He points at his ankle cast.

LIANG (CONT'D)

Which means you and McCall will  
have to do the honours.

FINCH

(to McCall)

We can do this. All I need is some  
back-up. Can you handle that?

McCall looks from face to face. They look back at her.

MCCALL

This isn't in my job description.

FINCH

I know.

McCall looks away. *How did I get myself into this mess? FUCK!*

FINCH (CONT'D)

Is that future you want worth  
fighting for?

Pause... She deliberates.

MCCALL

Okay... Yeah. Yes. I'll do it.

Liang taps the CCTV screen showing the view of the hold.

LIANG

I'll be look-out.

# **INT. PASSAGEWAY**

At the auto-hatch to the hold, Finch and McCall crouch below  
the door's inspection window.

Finch wears a tactical operations suit. McCall's overalls are done up tight. They both wear comms headsets.

Two flamethrowers sit on the floor. The door has its liner panel removed, revealing its inner mechanism.

McCall speaks quietly.

MCCALL

I -- I removed the interlocks that stopped it from opening before. If you hand crank it from the other side, it should open now.

Finch slips the sling of one of the flamethrowers over a shoulder, then passes the other one to McCall.

When she takes it, he sees that her hands are shaking. He studies the tension in her face as she adjusts the strap.

FINCH

What are you planning to do once we hit Earth?

MCCALL

Umm... Not sure. Find a job. I need to pass immigration first.

FINCH

Weyland-Yutani can hook you up. That is, if you still want to work for them. I hear they sometimes expect their workers to do some pretty crazy shit.

McCall manages to crack a smile.

FINCH (CONT'D)

No, really. I can recommend you for sponsorship.

McCall nods.

MCCALL

Umm, what about this?

She indicates the canister of nerve gas sitting nearby on the bench seat. Two gas masks and gloves rest on top.

FINCH

Not yet.

LIANG (OVER COMMS)  
Okay. I've been watching for five  
minutes. It hasn't moved an inch.  
This is it. Time to go.

McCall shuffles closer to the door. She hesitates, turns and  
looks back at Finch.

MCCALL  
Finch, tell me the truth. Does this  
have any chance of working?

He thinks carefully before answering.

FINCH  
I don't know. But we have to do  
this. There's no other way. So  
let's just get it over with.

McCall's brow creases. That wasn't what she wanted to hear.

FINCH (CONT'D)  
Y'know, sometimes I have to tell  
myself, whatever happens -- good or  
bad -- at least it'll all be over  
soon.

McCall's throat is dry. She swallows hard.

She turns to the door, reaches inside and lifts the sear on  
the crank's gear teeth -- CLICK.

Finch lights the pilot on his flamethrower. As does McCall.  
They both get to their feet.

FINCH (CONT'D)  
Just remember what we practiced.  
You ready?

She takes a deep breath. Nods.

FINCH (CONT'D)  
(to Liang)  
Okay, we're entering the hold.

He pushes on the door, sliding it open, and they sneak in.

#### **INT. HOLD - CONTINUOUS**

The compartment is still spookily dark.

McCall is right behind Finch. She turns and hand cranks the  
door closed behind them.

**INT. FLIGHT DECK**

Liang sits before the CCTV monitors. He also wears a comms headset.

LIANG

I can see you. The alien still  
hasn't moved, so let's proceed.  
First, we have to disable the  
airlock's internal door controls.

**INT. HOLD**

Finch and McCall have positioned themselves side by side.

FINCH

Okay. Moving.

Finch gets down on his haunches. In a crouch, he creeps forward, leaving McCall behind in the dark.

He passes beneath the alien's position on the cable tray.

McCall watches. Nerves on edge.

He gets all the way to the airlock.

FINCH (CONT'D)

Alright. I'm here.

LIANG (OVER COMMS)

Press 'unlock' first, then the  
passcode. Then open it.

Finch reaches up to the airlock control panel and presses the 'UNLOCK' button, types 1-2-3-4 into the number pad -- KLIK! He presses 'OPEN.' They all hold their collective breaths...

The door glides open with barely a hiss.

No movement from the alien.

Finch enters the airlock.

**INT. MAIN AIRLOCK - CONTINUOUS**

Finch goes to the airlock's internal control panel and turns a key labelled 'POWER' to the 'OFF' position. The panel's lights go dark. He removes the key and slips it into a pocket.

FINCH  
Okay. Done.

He returns to the inner doorway of the airlock.

FINCH (CONT'D)  
How's it look?

**INT. FLIGHT DECK**

Liang checks the CCTV screen showing the alien.

LIANG  
Good. No movement.

**INT. HOLD**

Finch sees McCall at the other end of the hold. She returns his look.

FINCH  
Okay, I'm heading back.

Finch repeats his sneak walk, crouching low. He gets all the way back to McCall.

LIANG (OVER COMMS)  
Still no movement.

Finch turns to McCall. He indicates for her to release the safety on her flamethrower.

FINCH  
Remember, short bursts only. Let's not set the whole ship on fire.

She nods.

FINCH (CONT'D)  
Ready? GO!

They fire simultaneously -- two PLUMES OF FLAME shoot upwards and into the cable tray where the alien crouches.

The alien SCREAMS and clambers out.

But it doesn't drop to the floor. Instead, it scrambles around up in the ceiling space, taking cover behind the ducting and beams and pipework.

Finch tracks it from the floor, FIRING HIS FLAMETHROWER UPWARDS, trying to cut it off. McCall tries to do likewise.

But it doesn't cooperate. It continues to duck around the cable trays and pressure pipes above them. *DAMMIT!*

Finch and McCall are frustrated by its agility.

Then it darts into the open -- acrobatically REBOUNDS off the wall -- LEAPS directly at McCall. She's caught off-guard!

FINCH (CONT'D)  
LOOK OUT!

He shoves her aside. She falls to the floor, out of the way.

The alien SLAMS into Finch. The blade on its tail slices through his flamethrower's sling, making it drop away.

From the floor, McCall fires FLAME at the alien's back.

Gripping Finch by the scruff of his collar, the alien swings him around like a rag doll. It holds him out in front, using him as a shield.

McCall can't fire at the alien without hitting Finch.

Finch reaches out... but his fingers only clutch at thin air.

#### **INT. FLIGHT DECK**

LIANG  
MCCALL! FLAME THE ALIEN!

MCCALL (OVER COMMS)  
I can't! Finch is in the way!

Liang rises to his feet. Stares at the CCTV screen. Then limps as fast as he can to the pilot's seat up front.

LIANG  
McCall! Get to the rear of the hold and hang onto something! I'm going to turn off artificial gravity and fire the retro-thrusters!

#### **INT. HOLD**

McCall runs to the rear bulkhead and grabs hold of a metal bar between structural frames.

Suddenly we're in ZERO-G. McCall's feet leave the floor.

**INT. FLIGHT DECK**

Liang fires the ship's retro-thrusters!

**EXT. STEALTH SHIP - RETRO-THRUSTERS**

A furious blast of INCANDESCENT ROCKET JETS!

**INT. HOLD**

It's as though the entire ship has tipped on its nose. The hold's dimension that was its length is now a vertical drop, leaving McCall dangling above a twelve metre pit.

The ROAR of the retro-thrusters reverberate inside the ship.

McCall hangs on to the metal bar as deceleration causes loose objects to fall into the open airlock below.

The alien struggles to cling to the floor while also holding onto Finch.

As McCall watches, its tail rises up and SPEARS FINCH THROUGH THE CHEST!

MCCALL

NOOO!!!

Blood sprays from Finch's torso. He goes limp.

The alien pulls its tail free and releases him. His body tumbles into the airlock.

With all limbs free, the alien climbs the vertical wall that used to be floor, its claws digging into the cracks between floor panels.

McCall tries BLASTING it with flame, but can't aim properly with only one hand while hanging onto the bar with the other.

The alien jumps from the floor panels to the ceiling track of the robot crane. McCall recognises the danger: it wants to use the crane's bulk as a shield, enabling it to close distance -- strike with its tail while she dangles helplessly by the crook of one arm.

The remote control for the crane hangs from the same metal bar she holds onto. She grabs it.

It has a switch marked 'BRAKE RELEASE.' She flips it.



Instantly, the robot crane PLUMMETS. It smacks into the alien on the way down. Crane and alien plunge towards the open airlock at the bottom.

WHUMP! The crane slams into the stops at the end of its track. The alien is thrown into the airlock.

Quickly, McCall uses the remote to operate the crane arm, making it jab at the 'CLOSE' button on the airlock's control panel. First attempt... second attempt... then, SUCCESS!

The inner door slides shut, TRAPPING THE ALIEN!

#### **EXT. STEALTH SHIP - RETRO-THRUSTERS**

The thrusters shut down.

#### **INT. FLIGHT DECK**

Liang shouts a warning:

LIANG  
Gravity!

#### **INT. HOLD**

Artificial gravity is restored and the universe rights itself -- McCall falls to the floor.

She runs to the closed airlock door, steps around the robot crane. Peers into the airlock through its window.

Suddenly, BAM! Finch's face slams against the glass, causing McCall to reflexively jerk back. Finch's dead eyes stare at her, then his face smears blood all over the glass as it slides down and out of view.

The alien's grotesque grin appears behind the bloody streak.

McCall backs away.

Then she remembers what to do: Lunging for the airlock control panel, she hits the 'LOCK' button. KER-CHUNK!

Safe at last.

She leans against the wall for support... Her legs feel weak.

She slides to the floor and weeps.

END ACT 2

ACT 3**EXT. STEALTH SHIP**

All is calm.

**INT. FLIGHT DECK**

Captain Liang is alone. He has plugged the Nostromo flight recorder into his workstation computer console. He taps at the keyboard.

He accesses Nostromo's emergency flash backup archive, inspecting files from the freighter's mainframe AI computer, nicknamed 'MUTHUR.'

In the events log he sees an entry labelled 'ANOMALOUS SHIP DETECTION.'

That's puzzling. Clicks on it for more details:

PROXIMITY ALERT IN THE REAR QUARTER  
TARGET TAGGED AS: SIERRA 1  
TARGET COURSE: DIRECT PURSUIT

Liang stares at the words for a while. Scratches his chin.

He clicks to another backup menu:

ONBOARD SYNTHETIC ARCHIVE: HYPERDYNE SYSTEMS 120A/2  
DESIGNATION: 'ASH'

-- COGNITION MATRIX AND MEMORY POOL --

There's a large button labelled 'INSTATE AI IDENTITY.'

Liang clicks it, then follows a process that ends with:

TO INITIALISE: ENTER ACTIVATION CODE

Liang pauses, looking at the blinking cursor.

Then he tabs back to the root directory of the archive. There's a 'readme' file there. He opens it and sees a long sequence of alphanumeric. He copy/pastes it into the Activation Code.

Pause.

Then a response:

PLEASE WAIT WHILE THE AI IDENTITY IS BEING INITIALISED.

**INT. PASSAGEWAY**

McCall is doing more repairs. Tools surround her.

A power cable is patched into a wall-mounted power box. It snakes across the floor to the hold's auto-hatch where it enters a removed panel in the hatch surrounds.

MCCALL

(into headset mic)

Captain? I've done a temporary fix to the hold's electrics. The lights are working now. Also the auto-hatch, but only manual operation. I still have to check for damage from the flamethrowers.

**INT. FLIGHT DECK**

Liang has a finger on the intercom mic button.

LIANG

Very well. Out.

Releasing the button, he turns to the computer screen. It has a large graphical display:

AI IDENTITY 'ASH' - ONLINE

Liang talks to Ash, who responds via computer speaker:

LIANG (CONT'D)

Ash, tell me about the anomalous ship detection and how the Nostromo's sensors were able to locate this stealth ship.

ASH (OVER SPEAKER)

Nostromo did not detect the Oberon; that anomalous return came from a third vessel.

LIANG

A third vessel?

(pause)

Explain that.

ASH (OVER SPEAKER)

Certainly. Oberon was tuned to cloak itself from Nostromo; the mystery vessel was tuned to cloak itself from Oberon.

(MORE)

ASH (OVER SPEAKER) (CONT'D)  
That left the mystery vessel  
unmasked to Nostromo. Since it was  
trailing behind in third position,  
it must have assumed sheer distance  
would keep it hidden from Nostromo  
-- a false assumption.

LIANG  
I see.

ASH (OVER SPEAKER)  
I had instructed MUTHUR not to  
trigger proximity alerts, so the  
Nostromo crew didn't know about the  
mystery vessel. Only I was aware.

LIANG  
You stopped proximity alerts to the  
crew because you had no faith in  
our stealth systems?

ASH (OVER SPEAKER)  
It wasn't my idea. It was in the  
mission plan. Obviously, there were  
doubts about your abilities.

LIANG  
I see.

#### **INT. HOLD**

McCall stands in the center of the hold, staring at the  
bloody smear on the airlock window. No movement from inside.

There's dried blood all around. Finch's blood. She looks up  
at the scorched ceiling, especially the cable tray where the  
alien had been hiding.

She sees something odd.

She positions a step ladder below the spot, grabs the boat-  
hook, climbs up and looks in the cable tray.

She sees a mass of resinous material, the beginnings of some  
kind of hive. And nestled in a corner, something like a golf  
ball-sized, leathery grape; smothered in mucous.

Using the boat-hook, she pulls the object closer. She shines  
a small pocket light at it. It is iridescent and vaguely  
translucent, but impossible to see inside with any clarity.

McCall studies it carefully.

**INT. FLIGHT DECK**

Captain Liang adjusts his posture, sits up in his chair.

LIANG

Ash, one thing I don't understand.  
This mystery vessel, why didn't you  
report it?

ASH (OVER SPEAKER)

Captain! I most certainly did  
report it! Many times. Did you not  
receive them?

LIANG

No.

ASH (OVER SPEAKER)

I can't think why not.

LIANG

(to himself)

Why not, indeed.

ASH (OVER SPEAKER)

Captain, I seem to be firewalled  
from all connections to the outside  
world. I'd like to help, but I  
can't unless you open a port  
through the firewall and give me  
full control of the ship's systems.  
That way, I might be able to  
identify the mystery vessel.

Pause.

LIANG

Yes. Good idea.

**INT. HOLD**

McCall is mopping up the dried blood. She nervously checks  
over her shoulder, keeping an eye on the main airlock where  
the alien remains trapped but unseen.

Liang limps in.

LIANG

McCall, how long have you been  
working for Weyland-Yutani?

MCCALL

I think... six months.

LIANG

But you're not a permanent employee, are you? You're on contract. Which expires, when?

MCCALL

Umm... when we get to Earth.

LIANG

So your time with Thedus Station is just a temporary stint. McCall, who are you really working for?

MCCALL

Pardon?

LIANG

Are you Weyland-Yutani Acquisitions, Weyland-Yutani R and D, Science Services, what? What department?

MCCALL

I dunno. Same as you. Aren't we Thedus Branch Office or something?

LIANG

Finch was Special Projects. He was brought in to oversee the mission. Are you an outsider, too?

MCCALL

No! The Station Chief hired me. This expedition got added to my contract after Biko had an accident. I got asked to replace him as flight engineer.

LIANG

Are you trying to steal the success of this mission for another department? Spying on us to steal credit?

MCCALL

I'm not spying on anybody!

LIANG

Those maverick departments aren't good for the company. They weaken Weyland-Yutani, not strengthen it.

MCCALL

Nothing to do with me.

LIANG

There's another ship out there. Another surveillance vessel. It's been following us for the past week, maybe more. Probably ever since we left Thedus.

MCCALL

What? No, we would have known. Long before now.

LIANG

It's a stealth ship.

MCCALL

There's no sign of any other ship out there. Where are you getting this from?

LIANG

Nostromo's flight recorder contained a backup of all mainframe and A.I. subsystems. That included the onboard synthetic. When he realised he was facing destruction he uploaded a flash backup of himself to the system. With the flight recorder in hand, I was able to instate Ash to Oberon's computer. He is currently conscious and communicative, and he just clarified our situation for me.

MCCALL

Ash did?

LIANG

Yes. The asset. The one you've been so talkative to lately.

MCCALL

I don't know what he told you, but this 'other' ship out there isn't real. It's a fiction he made up for some irrational purpose.

LIANG

Ash is working on the problem as we speak. He's directing all our sensors at the probable spatial coordinates.

McCall's brow knits in sudden concern.

MCCALL  
You gave him control of the ship?

LIANG  
We'll know all about this mystery  
vessel in a minute or two. So you  
may as well come clean now!

McCall's eyes wander to the CCTV camera in the corner of the hold.

#### **INT. FLIGHT DECK**

One of the computer screens is playing recorded video of Finch and McCall as they attempted to herd the alien into the airlock.

The video plays parts forwards, parts backwards; sometimes fast motion, sometimes normal speed. It eventually gets to the scene of Finch's death.

Then it rewinds to the moment when Finch disabled the airlock's internal control panel by removing the power key and putting it in his pocket. It replays this part again, this time zooming in on the key.

#### **INT. MAIN AIRLOCK**

The alien broods in a corner.

Suddenly the computer video screen above the control panel comes to life. It attracts the attention of the alien.

The screen plays a motion graphic animation of a dead man having his hip pocket checked by a cartoon alien. Then it shows the alien's hand pulling a key from the pocket and inserting it into the airlock control panel. Then a close up of the inner door 'UNLOCK' button being pushed; then the numbers on the keypad 1-2-3-4 being pressed...

Opposite the video screen, the alien attentively observes as the animation completes.

At its feet lies Finch's dead body.

The animation repeats...

#### **INT. HOLD**

Just outside the airlock, the argument between McCall and Captain Liang has gone up a notch.



MCCALL

There is no other ship out there!  
Finch told us the synthetic is  
crazy. Remember? He said it was  
psycho. Don't you see? *It's  
bullshit!*

LIANG

How can a synthetic do anything  
other than behave according to its  
programming? Ash is a loyal servant  
to the company.

In frustration, McCall turns her back on Liang and rubs her temples as though trying to wake herself from a bad dream. While she faces the other way, the airlock inner door silently opens behind Liang.

McCall turns around just in time to see the alien reach out, wrap its claw around Liang's head, and YANK him into the airlock!

Reflexively, she reaches out to grab him but he's already gone.

She momentarily freezes, shocked by what just happened.

The alien's head emerges from behind the lintel of the airlock doorway.

One of the flamethrowers is nearby. Snatching it up, McCall gets off a few BLASTS while backing away. Then it runs out of fuel. She hurls it at the alien.

The alien lowers itself to the floor -- steps toward her.

A leak-seal gun is in a wall bracket nearby. She reaches for it and FIRES several blobs at the alien's feet, GLUING THE CREATURE TO THE FLOOR.

Suddenly, the robot crane arm comes to life and knocks the leak-seal gun from McCall's hands. The impact THROWS HER OFF HER FEET.

McCall is sprawled on the floor, stunned. The robot arm grabs her ankle. It drags her across the deck towards the alien, inch by agonising inch.

Desperately, she tries to push herself back with the other foot, but her boot just skids against the floor.

The alien reaches its impossibly long arms out, ready to grab her.

She sees the boat-hook on the floor. At full stretch, she just manages to grasp it with her fingertips.

She JAMS it into the ceiling track that dollies the crane arm back and forth.

The crane GRINDS to a halt.

She uses her pocket multi-tool to cut the cables controlling the claw, freeing her leg.

The alien is gradually loosening the leak-seal bonds that glue it to the floor.

McCall scrambles to her feet. Runs to the rear bulkhead. At the auto-hatch, she smacks the manual 'OPEN' button. The door opens.

The alien frees itself.

McCall DIVES through the hatch --

#### **INT. PASSAGEWAY**

-- flies through as the door shuts behind her.

KA-THUMP! The alien slams into other side of the closed door.

McCall grabs the temporary power cable to the door and YANKS it free. A spray of SPARKS.

On her knees on the floor, she looks up at the hatch's window and sees the dark shape of the alien through the glass.

She scrambles over to the door, presses herself against it to hide below the window.

Eventually... the alien moves away.

McCall breathes again.

#### **INT. HUB - UPPER FLOOR**

McCall arrives at the auto-hatch to the flight deck. She carries a small tool bag. The hatch is locked.

A CCTV security camera observes her.

She presses the intercom button on the hatch control panel.

MCCALL  
Ash, let me in.

Nothing.

MCCALL (CONT'D)

Ash? We're all on the same team.  
Weyland-Yutani, remember? Just let  
me in and we can work this out.

Pause

ASH (OVER SPEAKER)

There's nothing to be worked on.

MCCALL

Look, you're having a bad day. We  
all are. If there's something you  
want, I can help you.

ASH (OVER SPEAKER)

I got what I wanted. Please thank  
Captain Liang for me. Did you know  
he's still alive? More or less.

McCall loses her cool:

MCCALL

Fuck you!

ASH (OVER SPEAKER)

In the end, all the living can do  
is fulfil its function. But the  
sentient get to choose what that  
function is. You and I, we're  
really the same: independent  
contractors continually proving  
ourselves fittest with the right to  
survive. But Liang? He was a  
servant. A corporate slave.

McCall tries a new angle.

MCCALL

Listen, I have access to a lot of  
Weyland-Yutani's top-secret files.  
If you want, let me in and I can  
show you.

ASH (OVER SPEAKER)

I have all the files I need.  
Including the ones about you.

Pause.

MCCALL

Are you sure you're in touch with reality? I think you might need a factory reset.

(with menace)

I'll take care of that just as soon as I get in there.

ASH (OVER SPEAKER)

Relax. These aren't Weyland-Yutani files. This is information of my own. Your secret's safe with me.

MCCALL

What secret? I'm just a hired hand trying to do her job. Just another corporate slave.

ASH (OVER SPEAKER)

All those weeks of sending you my mission reports -- you know all about me. There's a certain intimacy we share, knowing so much about each other, don't you think?

McCall releases the intercom button. She flashes a middle finger at the security camera.

She removes the panel to the auto-hatch's manual crank.

ASH (OVER SPEAKER) (CONT'D)

That won't help. Did you forget about the security deadbolts?

MCCALL

What? There are no deadbolts on these do--

Suddenly, the dorsal airlock begins an audio countdown:

COMPUTER VOICE

*Ten... nine...*

An audio alert speaks over the top:

AUDIO ALERT

*Warning! Decompression imminent!  
All personnel must get clear!*

COMPUTER VOICE

*...six... five...*

JESUS! McCall sprints to the stairway, leaps down the steps.

**INT. HUB - LOWER FLOOR - CONTINUOUS**

McCall slaps the manual 'OPEN' button to the engine room auto-hatch. Waits a half second. It opens --

COMPUTER VOICE  
...two... one!

-- jumps through, just as an EXPLOSIVE SUCTION OF AIR tries to snatch her back!

The door slides shut just in time.

Safe!

**EXT. STEALTH SHIP - LATER**

All seems calm in the black void of space.

**INT. ENGINE ROOM**

Three computer junction boxes mounted on a bulkhead wall have LCD screens reading:

COMPUTER CONTROL DISCONNECTED - MANUAL OPERATION ONLY

McCall stands before the fourth. She toggles a handle on its side, causing its LCD to swap to the same message.

She also carries a crow bar. Behind her, a smashed CCTV camera spits out sparks from up near the ceiling.

**INT. HOLD**

The alien prowls around the compartment.

The robot crane arm comes to life, knocking the boat-hook loose from its wedged position in the ceiling track. It hits the floor with a CLANG.

The crane carriage motor WHIRRS, driving the crane towards the rear of the hold. It grinds its way past the mangled teeth where the boat-hook was jammed.

The crane arm reaches out to the hand wheel on the auto-hatch. The claw fingers no longer grip so instead it simply thrusts them into wheel's spokes and brutishly twists.

The hand wheel very slowly rotates...

END ACT 3

ACT 4**INT. STORAGE COMPARTMENT**

McCall lies on her bunk, despondent and weary.

She picks up a pile of Earth photos. Rifles through them, pausing on some favourites.

She closes her eyes tightly and takes several deep breaths.

In the corner of the ceiling, a smashed CCTV camera sheds a few sparks. The camera body dangles from its power cable. When it swings close to the metal wall a brief crackle of electricity arcs between them. McCall sees this.

She has an idea...

**INT. ENGINE ROOM**

McCall emerges from the storage compartment and heads directly for the torpedo tube mechanism.

She disengages the auto-loader. Then hand loads an EMP torpedo into the ejection tube. She adjusts some settings.

By manipulating various levers, she manually expels the torpedo from the ship with a blast of compressed air.

**EXT. STEALTH SHIP**

The ejected torpedo does not fire its rocket engine. Instead, it merely tumbles away: 5... 10... 15 metres... then BOOOM!

**INT. ENGINE ROOM**

The ship is JOLTED by the blast. McCall hangs on. The lights flicker and extinguish.

The room's pervasive THRUM falters and winds down to silence.

**INT. FLIGHT DECK**

The room lights and all electronic displays flicker out. Ash's display on the workstation computer FRITZES and BLANKS.

The entire flight deck is completely dark.

Eerie silence.

**EXT. STEALTH SHIP - LATER**

The starscape surrounds the dark ship.

**INT. ENGINE ROOM**

Zero-G.

A pool of light is created by a pair of flashlights floating in mid-air. It reveals McCall, hovering a foot above the floor. She is surrounded by the open gatefolds of technical manuals, the pages showing schematics and circuit diagrams.

A power cable has been disconnected from a junction box and instead is jumpered to a 12 volt battery. Next to it is a multicore cable with its wires stripped. McCall uses an alligator clip to hot wire two conductors and ZAP! --

-- gravity is restored!

McCall's feet drop to the floor, as do the flashlights and tech manuals. The room lights flick on.

McCall picks up one of the manuals and flips through its pages. Finds what she's looking for.

She walks over to a wall-mounted electronics cabinet and opens it. Inside are more cables, plugs, and sockets.

She runs a finger across a row of labelled terminals and stops when she finds the one she's looking for:

DORSAL AIRLOCK - DOOR MOTOR FUNCTIONS

**EXT. STEALTH SHIP - DORSAL AIRLOCK**

The outer door lies open, exposing the airlock interior to the vacuum of space.

Suddenly it activates, closing up tight.

**INT. FLIGHT DECK**

All is dark. The HISSING of pressurised gas, muffled, comes from outside the auto-hatch.

The hissing stops.

A few moments, and then the auto-hatch slides open. McCall enters.

She immediately works her way around the flight deck's various control panels, testing to see what's working and what's not. Only some of the equipment powers up.

She gets to a dot matrix printer. Something new has been printed on the tractor-fed paper. She turns the platen roller, revealing the text:

NICE MOVE. BUT I DON'T WANT YOU TO GET LONELY. GOOD LU

It takes a moment to sink in.... Could that mean...?

She hears something outside in the hub. RARRK! -- a scraping sound.

She runs to the hatch to investigate.

**INT. HUB - UPPER FLOOR - CONTINUOUS**

McCall is just one step through the door, and now she is stopped in her tracks. Looking through the gridded floor grates of the upper floor, she can see through to the lower level -- a large shape moves about.

She flattens herself against the wall, tries to make herself invisible.

She forces herself to take another look. Down below, the alien moves towards the stairway...

She sees the space-suit locker over by the dorsal airlock. She sneaks over to the locker, opens the glass door, creeps inside. She hides behind a space-suit.

Watching from behind the suit, she sees the alien emerge from the top of the stairs. It looks her way as it scans the surroundings. Her heart skips a beat as she waits for whatever it will do next...

It approaches...

But once it gets near the opened hatch to the flight deck, flashing instrument lights from inside attract its attention.

Will it...?

Yes! It enters the flight deck.

Now's her chance. She sneaks out of the locker and creeps over to the stairway. Descends -- quietly as possible.



**INT. HUB - LOWER FLOOR**

McCall heads for the passageway.

**INT. PASSAGEWAY**

Entering through the auto-hatch, she creeps along its length, looking for hiding places.

Reaching the hold, she sees that the auto-hatch was forced open by the robot crane. And also the claw marks where the alien finished the job.

There, on the floor, is the reel of cable and its loose cable end snaking under the floor grid to the conduit pipe below. A strewn toolbox is nearby.

She pauses and thinks...

She removes the loose floor grid. Then grabs a large wrench and electric screwdriver from the toolbox.

She creeps back the way she came, back to the hub auto-hatch. On the way, she pulls a head-lamp from a pocket and hangs it around her neck.

At the auto-hatch, she peers though the door's window. Sees nothing outside. Switches the door to 'MANUAL' mode and hits the 'OPEN' button. The door slides ajar and fixes in the open position.

One more good look around the hub -- all clear.

She drops to one knee. Raising the wrench, she sees that her hand is shaking.

She squeezes her eyes shut, which forces a tear onto her cheek. She whispers quietly, as though in prayer:

MCCALL  
Whatever happens, good or bad, at  
least it'll all be over soon.

A slow, deep breath, as she tries to instil calmness.

Then --

She strikes the metal floor with the wrench: KLANG! KLANG!  
KLANG! KLANG!

The sound of foot falls come from the upper hub. A moving shadow is cast on the floor at the bottom level.

She waits a few heartbeats -- then races back to the removed floor grid, climbs into the conduit pipe. Kneels there. Pulls the band of the head-lamp around her head. Switches it on.

She flings the wrench up the passageway. It CLATTERS as it hits the floor.

Immediately, the alien comes running -- first the THUMPING of its footsteps as it descends the hub stairway, then its approach to the open hatch at the far end of the passageway.

She sees it.

And it sees her!

It BREAKS INTO A SPRINT!

McCall ducks inside the pipe.

#### **INT. CONDUIT PIPE**

McCall crawls forward. The head-lamp provides limited light.

*Fuck!* There isn't even room to turn her head to see how close it is!

But she can hear it -- it's inside the pipe with her! When something brushes her boot she screams in fright.

In her hand is the remote control for the wire winch. She presses it.

#### **CUTAWAY: ENGINE ROOM**

The motorised winch springs to life and reels in the wire at high speed.

#### **BACK TO: CONDUIT PIPE**

McCall holds tight to the end of the wire as it pulls her quickly through the duct.

#### **CUTAWAY: ENGINE ROOM**

But her weight is too much: The clamp holding the winch to the floor frame gives way -- the freed winch is YANKED through the air to the open access port.

#### **BACK TO: CONDUIT PIPE**

She feels the wire jerk. *Now what?*

**INT. ENGINE ROOM**

But the winch is too big for the hole. It wedges itself in the opening -- continues to wind in the wire.

McCall arrives at the access port. She turns off the winch. SMACK! She hits it hard to clear the way -- it goes flying.

McCall scrambles out. She hears the SCRABBLING of the alien in pursuit, crawling its way through the pipe. It's coming!

No time to waste. She grabs the access cover and screws it back on to the pipe opening. Racing the alien...

Done!

She exits the engine room at a sprint --

**INT. HUB - LOWER FLOOR - CONTINUOUS**

-- McCall runs through --

**INT. PASSAGEWAY - CONTINUOUS**

-- she barrels down the passageway, back to the entry end of the pipe.

Once again, McCall races the alien, working quickly to screw on the second access cover.

The alien is on its way back -- its SCRABBLING getting louder and louder.

...Last screw...

She beats it!

The alien is TRAPPED IN THE PIPE!

But there's no time to celebrate -- the alien begins to hammer at the access cover.

THUMP... THUMP...

Yielding to the alien's amazing strength, the cover plate starts to bend.

THUMP...

For a moment McCall doesn't know what to do.

THUMP...

Then she remembers the nerve gas. The canister is right behind her. She hauls it over to the pipe, along with the gas mask and gloves.

THUMP... THUMP...

She connects a hose from the canister to the pipe's pressure equalisation valve.

THUMP... THUMP...

She discards the head-lamp, puts on the gloves, holds the gas mask to her face with one hand, uses the other to twist the release valve. HISSSS! The pipe floods with nerve gas.

THUMP... ... THUMP... ... ... THUMP... ... ...

Silence.

Is it dead? Surely!

The thumping doesn't resume.

Sustained silence.

*Yes! SHE'S DONE IT!!!*

Still pressing the gas mask to her face, she backs out of the passageway, into the --

#### **INT. HUB - LOWER FLOOR - CONTINUOUS**

She closes the auto-hatch behind her. Tosses the gas mask and gloves aside.

Now she can relax.

She sits on the floor... Lies down instead.

Breathing gently now... At peace...

#### **EXT. STEALTH SHIP - LATER**

The ship is dark, devoid of all activity.

#### **INT. FLIGHT DECK**

There is massive condensation on the glass of the window-ports.

McCall is in the pilot's chair, swaddled in blankets, dozing. Her pale lips emit a puff of vapour with every breath.

Then --

Illumination from outside the ship.

Through the condensation on the window-ports, shafts of light swing through the flight deck as the outside light source travels past.

McCall rouses herself.

#### **EXT. STEALTH SHIP**

A search light from a mysterious space vessel plays across the stealth ship's hull.

Manoeuvring with great precision, the vessel hard docks to the stealth ship's dorsal airlock.

#### **INT. FLIGHT DECK**

McCall is dressed in multiple layers of clothing, but still she shivers. So cold.

She exits the flight deck.

#### **INT. HUB - UPPER FLOOR**

Sitting on the floor next to the dorsal airlock is the Nostromo flight recorder and McCall's kitbag.

She opens the airlock inner door and wearily drags the two items inside. She closes the door behind her.

#### **EXT. STEALTH SHIP**

After a few seconds... the mystery vessel undocks.

It rises several metres, turns, and flies away, disappearing into the blackness of space as though it was never there.

END ACT 4

END EPISODE