

SO WARM THE WATER

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**FADE IN:**

**INT. BAYSIDE AQUARIUM - VIEWING GALLERY - NIGHT**

Footlights cast a dim glow on HOYT, late 80s. A threadbare suit hangs loose about his thin frame. His dark eyes long strained of emotion.

He rests on a bench seat, staring into the watery gloom of a vast exhibition tank, his hands folded over a walking stick.

ATTENDANT (O.S.)  
Aquarium closes in fifteen minutes.

Hoyt turns to see a passing ATTENDANT, early 20s, a logo on her uniform shirt reads: BAYSIDE AQUARIUM.

HOYT  
You'll let me sit till then?

ATTENDANT  
Yes, Mister Hoyt. Of course.

He watches her go before reaching out a liver-spotted hand, pressing his fingers to the thick glass.

HOYT  
Won't be long now. They wrote to tell me I'm the last one.

**FLASHBACK**

**EXT. PACIFIC OCEAN - NIGHT**

SUPER: PACIFIC OCEAN, JULY 30TH, 1945

The stern of a battleship tilts skyward - like a dagger plunged into an ocean of flame. A name of the hull: USS INDIANAPOLIS.

An oil coated YOUNG HOYT, 20, dressed in tattered underclothes, swims frantically from the sinking vessel.

HOYT (V.O.)  
I survived the torpedoes.

**EXT. PACIFIC OCEAN - DAY**

Dozens of ragged, oil blackened SAILORS cling together amid the waves. Young Hoyt and those without life vests supported by those few with.

HOYT (V.O.)

Never knew open water could be so warm... Guess I didn't know much of anything.

SAILOR

Did you see that? I saw something, near the Lieutenant's group.

A flash of panic cuts through Young Hoyt's fatigue.

HOYT (V.O.)

At first they came for the wounded.

Young Hoyt's group watches in horror as a wave of panic spreads through a second clump of SURVIVORS. Water churns, men thrashing and fighting one another in a bid to escape.

HOYT (V.O.)

All we could do was watch...

**EXT. PACIFIC OCEAN - NIGHT**

Young Hoyt covers his ears in a bid to block out the horror of SCREAMS around him. A MARINER beside him is snatched beneath the surface.

HOYT (V.O.)

And wait for our turn to come.

**EXT. PACIFIC OCEAN - DAY**

Two dozen sun-blistered and exhausted survivors struggle on. Young Hoyt treads water among them.

Several of the group support an ailing WILY, 18, badly burned, a bandage wrapping his eyes.

SKINNY MARINER

He ain't gonna make it.

Young Hoyt watches BURLY MARINER, 30s, remove his own life vest and slip it over Wily's head.

BURLY MARINER

Take mine, Wily. We'll be your eyes  
kid, we'll see you through.

The water erupts. A massive SHARK forges a path through the dense huddle of men, tail thrashing, Burly Mariner locked in its jaws. The group splinters in panic.

Young Hoyt and Wily find themselves separated. Young Hoyt paddles toward Wily who flails blindly.

WILY

Don't leave me!

YOUNG HOYT

I'm right here, Wily. I'm right  
here.

Young Hoyt frees the buckle of Wily's life vest.

#### **MOMENTS LATER**

Young Hoyt drifts alone, the life vest holding him afloat. He stares into the sky, fear replaced with guilt as sharks mob Wily's sinking corpse below.

HOYT (V.O.)

But the more I watched...

#### **EXT. PACIFIC OCEAN - NIGHT**

The bloodshot eyes of LIEUTENANT ASHMORE, 40s, peer over the rim of a makeshift raft at Young Hoyt.

YOUNG HOYT

Sir, you gotta let me up!

LIEUTENANT ASHMORE

It won't take us both!

YOUNG HOYT

Just take my hand, please!

Lieutenant Ashmore stretches a blistered hand over the side, grasping Young Hoyt's.

HOYT (V.O.)

The more I learned.

From a distance, Young Hoyt grips the tiny raft, bracing himself he pulls Ashmore overboard.

**EXT. PACIFIC OCEAN - DAY**

Young Hoyt lies atop the raft, staring skyward. Clusters of survivors dot the water, clinging to life. Sharks cruise in their dozens, taking men at will.

HOYT (V.O.)

And I came to understand.

Climbing higher still: pockets of survivors scattered like flotsam across a sparkling ocean. Sharks in their hundreds.

A military twin-prop banks into view. The USAAF insignia on the fuselage.

HOYT (V.O.)

Four days and nights.

**END FLASHBACK****INT. BAYSIDE AQUARIUM - VIEWING GALLERY - NIGHT**

Hoyt gazes into the tank, eyes misting in rising fear.

A shadow emerges from the far reaches of the gloom. The silhouette of a shark glides towards the glass.

HOYT

I used to believe in luck.

He leans his head to the window - forcing himself closer.

Inches of glass separate Hoyt from the cold black eye staring back. For a brief moment, Hoyt's reflection melds with the creature's face.

HOYT

But you taught me better.

**FADE OUT**