

FADE IN:

EXT. SOMEWHERE IN THE PACIFIC OCEAN. UNDERWATER - MIDDAY

A MAN ADRIFT, naked, spread eagle, in silhouette, 15-feet below the surface. Lies motionless, between earth and heaven.

A jungle of sea life. SHARKS - White Tips, Tigers, and Makos. Their eyes - steely, vitreous, dead. Like dolls' eyes.

The man is propelled into motion by the undercurrent, slowly spinning end over end, finally stopping vertically. The creatures circle.

The man is sucked down. Falling, twirling feet-first, getting smaller and smaller, disappearing into oblivion.

INT. WINVIAN FARM. BEDROOM - NIGHT

SUPER: "NOVEMBER, 1968"

A 70-year-old MAN, drenched in sweat. Jerked to consciousness. Breathing heavily. Fearing sleep.

Flips on the light.

Sleeps on the left. Right side of the bed is made. Alone.

On the night table a dusty Bible and a .38 caliber COLT REVOLVER.

On the desk and into the floor a cascade of letters, opened and unopened, and crumpled pages, and pictures of World War 2 era sailors.

EXT. WINVIAN FARM - AFTERNOON

From the yard of Winvian Farm the road south leads toward the ocean.

The sky an abysmal grey. Cold. The apple trees are skeletal and the yards of Litchfield are littered with leaves, except for one freshly manicured yard. The manor is a two-story, 19th century home with a widow's walk.

INT. WINVIAN FARM. FAMILY ROOM - AFTERNOON

The room is meticulously decorated. No expense spared.

Passed out on an ornate Louis XIV style sofa is a DRUNK WOMAN (late 50s). The fading good looks of an aged beauty queen. An empty bottle of Kamotsura Shuzo (sake) on the table beside her, just out of reach of her lifeless hand.

Drool runs down the side of her face and into her hair.

On a black and white GE television, President-Elect RICHARD NIXON delivers his acceptance speech.

RICHARD NIXON

A great philosophy is never won without defeat. It is always one without fear. What is important is that a man or a woman engage in the battle, be in the arena, participate...

The 70-year-old man shuffles past the television.

EXT. WINVIAN FARM. FRONT DOOR - AFTERNOON

The 70-year-old man opens the door from the inside and walks out, stopping on the top step. He is dressed in full Naval Officer's uniform, his firmly pressed blues and bleached whites and his campaign hat with its black vinyl decorated with gold braid.

In the man's right hand, the same .38 caliber revolver. On his ring finger, a Naval Academy RING, Class of 1920. He walks down the marble stairs, lies down on the stone sidewalk, resting his head on the bottom step.

He brings the gun to his head. Closes his eyes.

An EXPLOSION.

EXT. USS INDIANAPOLIS. PHILIPPINE SEA - NIGHT

SUPER: "JULY, 1945. 00:05"

Through thick fog and choppy black water, an EXPLOSION. The blast penetrates the forward starboard side of the USS INDIANAPOLIS - a 610-foot, Portland-class battleship cruiser.

70-feet of the bow is blown straight to heaven.

Smokestack Number One shoots a volcano of FIRE hundreds of feet into the night sky.

EXT. USS INDIANAPOLIS. ON DECK - SAME

Explosions of fuel and flame send SAILORS hurling fifteen, twenty feet into the air. Some into the sea. Others land on the deck, their clothes on fire.

EXT. USS INDIANAPOLIS. PHILIPPINE SEA - SAME

The ocean burns. The night is filled with explosions and screams.

INT. CINCIPAC HEADQUARTERS. COURT OF INQUIRY. GUAM - MORNING

SUPER: "GUAM. AUGUST, 1945"

Two ARMED GUARDS stand on either side of the double doors. 47-year-old NAVY CAPTAIN CHARLES MCVAY enters, campaign hat under his arm.

Captain McVay's face is gentle. The grey just starting to show on his temples. His skin deeply tanned like leather. His face scarred by blisters from the salt water and the sun. McVay faces a pair of well-decorated pencil-pushers. SUPERIOR OFFICERS, including Admiral ERNEST J. KING. They neither stand nor salute.

KING

Have a seat.

McVay does.

KING (CONT'D)

State your name and rank.

MCVAY
Charles Butler McVay, the Third.
Captain. USS Indianapolis.

A reel-to-reel audio recorder spins on the table.

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