

Mariana Trench  
by  
Joe Manning

Based on James Cameron's Alien & John  
Carpenter's The Thing

Revisions by  
N/A

Current Revisions by  
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FADE IN:

MUSIC FADE IN:

[HTTPS://YOUTU.BE/TKZY\\_VWNIEK](https://youtu.be/TKZY_VWNIEK)

'Ocean Man' plays, staring credits, and crew credits roll.

We see looking over the pacific ocean, a palm tree island idles.

EXT. ABOVE PACIFIC OCEAN - DAY - SUNNY

We submerge, sinking below the pacific ocean.

MUSIC FADES OUT:

Music is drowned further from the water's surface.

EXT. PACIFIC OCEAN - 1000'S METRES DEEP - SAME TIME

MUSIC FADES IN:

<https://open.spotify.com/track/09oLMBYe1SijYG6xzjFUHl?si=342339bd37a44137> (Mood)

light starts to darken, caustic sunshine streaks trickle through, we are now 1,000 metres deep. Prologue.

TEXT FADES IN:

Seal emergency rescue and deep sea diver expert is sent down to the edge of 'The Trench'.

TEXT FADES IN:

Colonel Denzel is on a mission to save and recover missing divers in a submarine they lost touch with inside 'The Deep'.

TEXT FADES IN:

Dale Kansas, Marine Biologist  
Expert and Marine Zoologist  
performer & Marine and Mechanical  
Engineer Lucas Pryor

TEXT FADES IN:

(MORE)

(CONT'D)

The three make their decent into  
'The Abyss' via a special  
engineered submarine to withstand  
14500 PSI (bottom of Mariana Trench  
is more than 16000 PSI)

TEXT FADES OUT:

TITLE SEQUENCE

Mariana Trench

<https://open.spotify.com/track/6ImXws9JSZhhSVlRxfkfsZ?si=7642ba2f58a143d7> (by 1:47ish OR 3:05ish)

BUBBLES:

EXT. - OCEANIC 1 - SOMEWHERE IN THE PACIFIC OCEAN - SAME TIME

Sonar pulses like a heart beat, bubbles rise up by obscuring,  
a submarine sinks further past into darkness.

DALE

(reads sonar)

Sonar reading clear.

LUCAS

(flicks a switch)

Yep. Pressure's holding- eh,  
steady.

COLONEL

(lifts his head)

Rapture, can you still hear me?

JENKINS (V.O)

Affirmative.

CUT TO:

INT. RAPTURE MARINE RESEARCH STATION - COMMAND - THAT SECOND

Jenkins (30's, African Jamaican, white collar worker, tie),  
at a radio comms station in a white, licked-clean command  
center of files, 70's equipment, and archives. A colleague in  
a cheap suit operates behind with his back turned.

JENKINS

(High spirits)

Loud and clear Colonel.

A colleague in the cheap suit turns to Jenkins, shooting up a  
thumbs up. Jenkins approves too.

JENKINS (CONT'D)  
 (curious)  
 What's it like down there?..

CUT BACK TO:

INT. RESCUE SUB - SOMEWHERE IN THE PACIFIC OCEAN - NOW  
 Colonel is still seated, gleaming out into darkness.

COLONEL  
 (to himself)  
 Really fricken dark

COLONEL (CONT'D)  
 (gesture)  
 Can we get some light out there  
 Dale?

<https://open.spotify.com/track/63RPjkDl5hQmED5QYU60pn?si=e32a3037178e480f> (new mood)

DALE  
 (flicks switch above)  
 Overheads are on.

LUCAS  
 (squints out)  
 Geez, we can't see sh\*t..

DALE  
 (Steers)  
 There's no light bouncing off anything, and I'd prefer if we keep the light to a minimum, we don't want to disturb ecosystems that have adapted to these pressures and light.

LUCAS  
 Yeah well I don't speak for the fish people, but we are our own ecosystem, they can adapt to us, stupid Jelly Fish-

COLONEL  
 Shut up Lucas. Are we getting close?

DALE  
 Sonar still says clear.

Colonel retains patience.

CUT TO:

EXT. OCEANIC 1 - PACIFIC OCEAN - 34K FEET DEEP - LATER

LUCAS

(sings)

Under the sea, Darling it's better,  
Down where it's wetter, Take it  
from me. Up on the shore they work  
all day, Out in the sun they slave  
away, While we devotin', Full time  
to floatin' Under the-

Dale rolls eyes, adjusting overhead light.

COLONEL

(stern, warns)

One more lyric, and I'll beat the  
living shit from your sorry Little  
Mermaid ass.

LUCAS

(cheek, switches)

Never met a tone deaf Colonel  
before.

COLONEL

(dwells)

Likely, no, but you'll have a real  
pissed off one if you don't zip it.

Silence. Moments pass.

Lucas hums Under the Sea-

COLONEL (CONT'D)

Lucas. Go check the escape trunk  
for me, I think there's a hull leak  
you need to fix outside.

Submarine creaks from pressure, pause

LUCAS

(deterred)

... Thanks. I'll pass.

Sonar blips.

DALE

Sir.

COLONEL  
(tolerant)  
What?

DALE  
(Checking)  
There was a blip.

COLONEL  
Did we pass it?

Sonar blips louder.

DALE  
No, it's getting closer though.

COLONEL  
(updates)  
Rapture we're getting closer to  
Odesis, preparing for a dock.

JENKINS (V.O.)  
Ne... Colne... approc... essel...

COLONEL  
(not impressed)  
I thought you said this piece of  
sh\*t could hold comms?

LUCAS  
It's meant to, I don't know why  
it's dropping.

DALE  
We're just passing 34 thousand  
feet.

COLONEL  
(leans forward)  
What's that?

LUCAS  
(squinting)  
Looks like a fish.

COLONEL  
(points out)  
Dale, can you increase the lights  
please.

DALE  
Sir-

COLONEL  
 (affirms)  
 I don't want to hear about fish rights, I want to see where the hell we are.

DALE  
 (reluctant)  
 ...Yes sir..

LUCAS  
 (pleased)  
 Odesis. We found her!

COLONEL  
 (taps)  
 Open nearby comms-

Lucas preps radio.

DALE  
 (stands)  
 Uh sir, those frequencies will disturb life down here this deep.

COLONEL  
 (restless)  
 I'm starting to change my mind for who will check that leak.

DALE  
 (persists)  
 All life is precious sir, we don't want to kill it before it thrives.

COLONEL  
 (stands)  
 I see Dale, do you want us to all die, while we attempt saving our own on this mission of search and rescue, it what you were hired for. And now, the only person trained to steer, is going to kill all of us.. Because she likes fish? - A little survival of the fittest scenario for you. You have kids?

Dale NODS.

COLONEL (CONT'D)  
 It will be an honourable story, to know the ocean killed us.

Colonel sits. Dale arms crossed, unnerved.

LUCAS  
 (empathises)  
 Colonel-

COLONEL  
 (Anger, to Lucas)  
 Sing it out your ass princess!

COLONEL (CONT'D)  
 (concludes)  
 We're here for them, nothing more.  
 Now contact the vessel.

Dale looks out helm standing arms crossed. Pause. Lucas picks up the radio and immediately signals.

LUCAS  
 ..Odesis this is Oceanic 1. Do you  
 copy?

COLONEL  
 (focuses out)  
 They're responding.

LUCAS  
 (on radio)  
 I haven't received a response, sir.

Colonel points to the vessel. On Odesis, a red light flashes from inside the darkness.

COLONEL  
 That red light flashing, that means  
 they're comms are down, they must  
 be conserving power for oxygen  
 flow.

Dale sits down, ready.

COLONEL (CONT'D)  
 Dock it.

DALE  
 (sarcasm)  
 Aye.

CUT TO:

EXT. 14,500 FEET BELOW PACIFIC OCEAN - SECONDS LATER  
 Oceanic 1 docks the vessel Odesis.



LUCAS  
(twisting a switch)  
Depressurising.

DALE  
Sir I don't want to go on the  
vessel, can I stay here with Lucas?

COLONEL  
(walking off)  
Sure. Slap him if he speaks.

DALE  
(smug)  
Aye sir.

Lucas victimises himself.

COLONEL  
Lucas can you hear me?

LUCAS  
Yep, and your idle threats.

COLONEL  
Don't tempt me.

DALE  
Do you see anyone?

COLONEL  
No.

COLONEL (CONT'D)  
Hold on.

COLONEL (CONT'D)  
I found the navigator. The f\*ck?

LUCAS  
What's wrong sir?

COLONEL  
He's frozen solid.

LUCAS  
Sir?

COLONEL  
He's human popsicle, like he was  
dipped in liquid nitrogen or  
something.

DALE  
Are there others.

COLONEL  
None I can see.

COLONEL (CONT'D)  
Going to take a closer look at  
their engineering interiors.

LUCAS  
Aye, keep safe.

COLONEL  
(Mocks)  
I'll try not to sing when I'm  
nervous.

LUCAS  
Ha ha, you seem like the type of  
person to be class clown.

COLONEL  
Doubtful. People hate clowns.

DALE  
What's that?

LUCAS  
The- com-s- are- bre-ak-in-

COLONEL  
Oceanic?...

COLONEL (CONT'D)  
Wonderful..

COLONEL (CONT'D)  
Oceanic I'm not sure if you can  
hear me, but I've entered  
engineering. You're not going to  
believe it. Temperature's dropped  
well below freezing, won't be able  
to stay for long. But, they're all  
encircled around the engine.  
They're all frozen. Looks like they  
were also freezing. Oceanic do you  
copy?!

A wham, and a destabilised creak of Odesis, icicles enrich  
the walls closing in around Colonel.

COLONEL (CONT'D)  
Sh\*t..

Colonel is almost trapped by a permafrost cold snap climbing from the ladder and hurrying back to Oceanic 1.

COLONEL (CONT'D)  
Sh\*t!!

COLONEL (CONT'D)  
Lucas! Dale! Do you read me?!

Colonel gets back to the repressuring chamber, he hammers on the door for Oceanic 1.

COLONEL (CONT'D)  
Let me in Oceanic! I'm not kidding!

COLONEL (CONT'D)  
Lucas! Hey!!

The icicles reach above and around the ladder area and crawling over to Colonel. Colonel tries shoulder barging the door. Dale's face appears in the glass. A hissing pressure is heard, as the door groans open.

DALE  
Colonel are you-

COLONEL  
Inside!!!

Colonel rams the door shut.

COLONEL (CONT'D)  
Lucas detach now!

LUCAS  
But I haven't-

COLONEL  
Now!!!

Lucas detaches oceanic from Odesis a small, pocketed compression explosion pushes both vessels apart.

DALE  
Sir we lost comms, what happened?

COLONEL  
I don't know, but I that same thing killed the crew.

LUCAS  
Every horror story has a ghost story.

COLONEL

(firm)

Quit joking around Lucas, I'm getting sick of it.

DALE

There was a strange reading we got when we lost comms.

COLONEL

Strange doesn't give me an insight of what the hell happened-

DALE

When comms dropped, the temperature for us dropped significantly.

COLONEL

Did you feel the tremor?

LUCAS

Only thing we got was a noise.

COLONEL

Something rammed Odesis and caused the frost.

LUCAS

Might have been the ghost crew.

COLONEL

Hey Lucas-

LUCAS

Wh-

Colonel breaks his nose.

DALE

Sir.

LUCAS

(cups nose)

Ow..

DALE

This is what we heard.

A muffled whispered voice plays, almost unrecognisable.

COLONEL

That was me. I was trying to contact you.

DALE

The strange part was this, it was on the opposite frequency. It wasn't coming from the Odesis.

COLONEL

(sarcasm)

I didn't go outside for a swim, what do you mean?

LUCAS

(victimized, nose bleeds)

And I can't do jokes. Now, that's funny.

COLONEL

(tense)

I'm sorry okay? I was relying on the wrong person to open the door, Lucas.

LUCAS

(Firm)

Comms weren't working, I was here ready to open and close the door at your command, sir.

COLONEL

(huffs)

We need to contact rapture that we found Odesis.

DALE

We tried that. Our frequency doesn't seem to like any other channel the one we used to enter, the one it switched to when we lost comms with you.

LUCAS

Did you find the rest of the crew?

COLONEL

(reflecting)

Yeah.

LUCAS

They weren't very jovial then.

DALE

Shut up Lucas.

LUCAS  
 (Explains)  
 I'm trying to make light of our  
 stressful situation.

COLONEL  
 Making jokes is not solving  
 anything.

COLONEL (CONT'D)  
 Set a course for Rapture.

LUCAS  
 We're leaving?

DALE  
 Sir what about Odesis?

COLONEL  
 I say we either stick around to  
 find out how they become ice aged,  
 or we stop future divers from  
 meeting the same fate- and for God  
 sake can someone fix the heater?

DALE  
 Why is it getting so cold?

Sonar blips.

DALE (CONT'D)  
 We already found Odesis?

COLONEL  
 Black box's is on board yeah.

Sonar blips louder.

COLONEL (CONT'D)  
 (under his breath, stiff)  
 Lucas..

LUCAS  
 Yeah?

Colonel gestures to shush.

COLONEL  
 (cautious, hushed)  
 I want you to drift Oceanic.

LUCAS  
 (soft)  
 Cutting engines.

Oceanic goes dark as they drift through the Marina Trench, it is dark with red emergency lights. The sonar is working. They see a large spotted blip next to the centre of their sonar monitor. Colonel gestures to silence as they don't move. The blip goes from directly in the centre, to gone.

LUCAS (CONT'D)

(soft)

..sir..

COLONEL

(hushed, annoyed)

...what..

LUCAS

(soft)

..what the f\*ck was that..

COLONEL

(under breath)

..I don't know..

DALES

(soft)

..orders?...

COLONEL

(hushed)

...Lucas..How quickly can you start the engine and climb the trench?...

LUCAS

(soft)

..I can probably try 30 seconds..

COLONEL

(hushed)

..Right.. On my mark.. Dale.. you will man the helm.. Lucas.. you will restart the engine.. and we get the f\*ck - outta here... on 3... 1  
- 2 - 3!

Lucas turns Oceanic back on, Dale sits in the helm seat and wonders why she can't move it.

COLONEL (CONT'D)

Dale??

DALE

It won't move, it's jammed!

COLONEL

What?.

LUCAS

Aw sh\*t..

Lucas looks at the rudders for Oceanic are seized up due to excessive cold, freezing them over, solid.

LUCAS (CONT'D)

Colonel, I'm not joking, our rudders are f\*cked, we're dead in the water..

COLONEL

Kill the engine!...

LUCAS

Sir?

Colonel eyeballs Lucas, he switches Oceanic off. They drift in the trench near Odesis. Colonel is frustrated. Dale scared. Lucas uncertain.

COLONEL

Lucas..

LUCAS

Sir.

COLONEL

How long do those auxiliary batteries last?

LUCAS

If we're lucky, 20 hours.

COLONEL

Not even a day... Radio comms run off either power?

LUCAS

They do, but it drains faster.

Colonel stroking his brow of thought.

COLONEL

No one bought a lighter did they?

Lucas and Dale look at Colonel.

LUCAS

I mean. Don't discharge me, but..

Lucas takes a lighter from his fitted jumpsuit top pocket.



COLONEL  
 (serious)  
 That's a safety violation Lucas...  
 Thank you. And I'm glad to have you  
 on board.

Colonel grabs the lighter and walks to the back of Oceanic.

DALE  
 What do you suppose we do with a  
 small lighter?

COLONEL  
 I was thinking of practicing hand  
 puppets until we die.

DALE  
 (serious)  
 Colonel..

COLONEL  
 I was thinking if we can heat one  
 of mains of hydraulic rudder. We  
 can get out of here.

Sonar blips.

LUCAS  
 (stage whisper)  
 ..Sir..

COLONEL  
 (hushed)  
 ..What now..

LUCAS  
 (soft)  
 ..The blip is back..

Colonel, Dale, and Lucas make their way back to the front.  
 Colonel sees the blip waiting direct stern side, he tries  
 lighting the lighter. The blip appears closer. Colonel halts  
 everyone.

DALE  
 (soft cheek)  
 ..we could turn on the lights to  
 see-.

COLONEL  
 (hushed)  
 -..don't you dare..

The blip eventually disappears.

COLONEL (CONT'D)  
..Ok.. New plan..

CUT TO:

INT. OCEANIC 1 - EDGE OF TRENCH - MINUTES LATER

Trio sit comfortably around on the back of the ship for balance of the vessel, conversing.

COLONEL  
Remember how I was talking about  
paddle boats?

LUCAS  
I remember you punching me, but  
that's the extent of everything-

Colonel sits up and turns back to where he was leaning on.

COLONEL  
I was talking about paddle boats as  
a manual use instead of hydraulics.  
If we can get past this panelling,  
we can crawl through the ducts to  
get to the end, and find the  
emergency release for the rudders-

LUCAS  
Uh, yeah, but sir we would lose the  
rudders.

COLONEL  
The angle we are, they should stay  
in place, any more horizontal and  
yes, they would fall like anchors.

LUCAS  
So, crank on, crank off.

DALE  
Something tells me men don't need  
an instruction manual for that.

Dale hands out screwdriver.

LUCAS  
(insulted)  
...I'll give it a shot.

To be continued.