

FORBIDDEN SEA

Written by

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Registration Number: M-001248/2012

BLACK SCREEN

SUPER: "THE SEA HAS NEITHER MEANING NOR PITY." ANTON  
CHEKHOV

FADE IN:

EXT. ABYSSAL DEPTHS/SEA SURFACE - MORNING

POV SHOT of UNSEEN CREATURE as it makes its way along the dark sea floor; bioluminescent fish and small shrimp-like creatures swim away from it.

As the opening credits roll, the CAMERA moves and starts ascending from the ocean bottom.

The unseen creature, keeping a constant high speed, swims up through successive ocean layers. As it swiftly ascends and light filters through the dark waters, the ocean becomes clearer and clearer.

Finally, the creature breaks the surface with a LOUD SPLASH. The bright dawn sun blinds us.

FADE TO:

EXT. PUBLIC MARINA - MORNING

SUPER: SOMEWHERE ON THE EAST COAST.

A public marina hosts several fishing charters, sailboats and yachts. Several families prepare their boats for a fun day of sun and sailing.

EXT. PIER - ZODIAC BOAT - MORNING

A small toy sailboat floats placidly on the water.

WOMAN (O.S.)

Honey, can you give us a hand  
please?

A little girl's HAND comes into frame and picks up the toy sailboat.

The hand belongs to SHUI, 8, a little Chinese girl with serene dark eyes, a bit dumpy, and with a pudding basin haircut.

Seated in a Zodiac boat attached to the stern of a luxury sixty foot motor yacht, Shui stares at the toy as if it holds the answer to some eternal question.

WOMAN (O.S.)

C'mon, Shui! We need some help  
here!

Shui puts down the sailboat toy and, very calmly, stands up and starts climbing up the ladder to the pier.

SUPER: SATURDAY

EXT. PIER - MORNING

Standing on the dock, next to the yacht's bow, a red-haired woman of thin build wearing casual sports clothes places a couple of 3-gallon water bottles on the pier planking. It is CAROL, 45.

KELVIN, 50, a man of healthy appearance, shoulder-length chestnut hair and short growth of stubble, approaches her with another couple of 3-gallon water bottles.

CAROL

Didn't they tell you the water tank would be fixed by today?

KELVIN

I guess they were too busy. I'll call them Tuesday morning.

(joking)

Kelvin Grady's fearful wrath will fall on these incompetent people!

Kelvin smiles and gives her a peck on the lips.

KELVIN

Don't worry, we're gonna have a great time.

Carol smiles back with not much enthusiasm while he puts the bottles next to the first ones. Shui approaches them.

CAROL

Will there be enough?

KELVIN

Sure. Anyway, we can always distill our own urine.

CAROL

You're disgusting.

KELVIN

It's true. I know how to do it. That was one of the things they taught me in the Army.

Carol hands Shui one of the 3-gallon water bottles.

CAROL

Take it into the kitchen, dear.

Shui grabs the bottle by the handle and starts dragging it along the pier towards the yacht's gangway. Carol looks at her watch.

CAROL

(to Kelvin)

Nine o'clock. They should have been here by now.

KELVIN

(looking at his watch)

They won't take long. Discipline and punctuality were Andrew's guiding principles. I don't suppose he's changed much.

CAROL

Discipline and punctuality...

(smiling)

The complete opposite of you.

KELVIN

Yeah, we were pretty different people. But opposites attract, don't they?

Kelvin unties a sports sweater knotted around his waist and puts it on.

CAROL

It's strange to see you trying to recover old friendships. You hate that. You remember Bob Winslow? Last winter he was calling you and-

KELVIN

-Bob Winslow is a very boring guy. Andrew's not. He's funny, funny as hell. Besides, he helped me a lot when I joined the Army, he has a big heart. That's what matters, isn't it?

CAROL

Yeah, I guess so.

Kelvin zips up his sweater. As Shui approaches again, he lovingly chucks Carol under the chin. She smiles.

KELVIN

(smiling)

It's gonna be a great long weekend.

Carol picks up another bottle and walks away towards the yacht. Kelvin and Shui grab the last two bottles.

SHUI  
How is it done?

KELVIN  
(confused)  
What?

SHUI  
Turning pee into water.

KELVIN  
Oh, it's very easy. You just need a couple of empty bottles, electrical tape and-

MAN (O.S.)  
-Captain Kelvin Grady?

Kelvin turns round towards the voice, which belongs to a well-built middle-aged man holding a travel bag. His square-jawed face, blue eyes and serious expression give him an imposing appearance. It's ANDREW, 60.

KELVIN  
(smiling)  
Hey, man!

Kelvin spreads his arms to hug him but Andrew, without changing his face, stops him by putting his hand on his chest.

ANDREW  
You're before a superior. Salute him as regulations require.

Kelvin widens his smile.

KELVIN  
Damn Andrew, as much a joker as-

Kelvin tries again to hug him but Andrew resists.

ANDREW  
-I am not joking at all. Obey your superior.

KELVIN  
(confused)  
C'mon, Andrew, don't-

ANDREW  
-Obey.

KELVIN

Andr-

ANDREW

(angry)

-Obey, Captain Grady!

Kelvin's smile freezes. Then his expression turns to incredulity. They stare at each other and...

Andrew bursts out laughing. He drops his travel bag and spreads his arms.

ANDREW

Come into my arms, you stinking hippie!

Andrew vigorously hugs Kelvin, who smiles relieved.

ANDREW

As naive as ever!

A middle-aged woman with curly blonde hair wearing a pale pink tracksuit approaches them. It's PAM, 45.

ANDREW

You remember Pam?

KELVIN

(smiling)

Of course I do!

Kelvin hugs Pam.

KELVIN

How good to see you again! You look great! How is everything going?

PAM

(shyly)

Fine, thanks.

Andrew looks down at Shui, still standing next to them.

ANDREW

(smiling)

So this is the lovely little Suey.

KELVIN

Shui. Her name's Shui.

ANDREW

(crouching down)

Yeah, Shui... Does she speak our language?