

**EXT. OCEAN - NIGHT**

*We zoom across the top of the ocean (within this familiar but slightly different alternative reality). We suddenly dive underneath the water and continue to dive deeper and deeper. A radio DJ introduces us to this strange and new world, which we are about to explore. A smooth Jazz score plays underneath.*

**ADMIRAL** (RADIO)

Salutations to everybody listening across the new European empire, as we all approach a glorious end to the 19th century. I'm your host; the Admiral. Your guide to the bluest blues from the bottom of the ocean; straight into the soul of the deep. This next one goes out to all of you undersea adventures, explorers and lovers of the sea; both human and android.

**SHOW ANOUNCER**

Sink With Me. Written by Jonas Tintenseher

**INT. FARRAGUT - NIGHT**

*Underwater, submarine ambience - the GROANS and ECHOES of the ocean, the occasional BEEP or WHIR of machinery. The engine HUMS, faint, underneath it all.*

*Two voices speak: SAVANNAH, late 20s, an experienced captain and adventuress, and EVIE, also late 20s, a prim heiress and would-be adventuress.*

**EVIE**

Tell me again.

**SAVANNAH**

It's only been a few minutes. Nothing's changed.

**EVIE**

Go on, tell me. I love it when you talk sailing.

**SAVANNAH**

It's your submersible.

**EVIE**

Oh, but I don't know all the specifics, I just bought the thing. That's why I hired you.

**SAVANNAH**

Fine, fine.

*A few CLICKS and BEEPS as Savannah checks the readings.*

**SAVANNAH**

Mini-fusion core is online, reactor coolant is finishing another cycle, sonar is active, depth hovering at three hundred meters...

**EVIE**

Yes, good, good. What else?

**SAVANNAH**

Headings look fine. Oxygen at three quarters capacity. Negligible wind speeds. Nor'westerly current. No, nor'easterly. Current date is November fifteenth, eighteen ninety-nine. Meaning we've been under for approximately four days.

**EVIE** (*excited*)

Oh, I love it!

**SAVANNAH**

You're mad, you know that, Evie?

**EVIE**

No, I'm not mad! I just... you come alive when you're sailing, when you're working. It's a sight to see. Your face lights up like twin moons over the ocean.

**SAVANNAH**

Well, you're the poet, I suppose.

**EVIE** (*giggles*)

O Captain, my Captain...

**SAVANNAH**

Yes?

**EVIE**

No, it's a quote.

**SAVANNAH**

Bit of a short quote.

**EVIE**

Well, there's more to it. I (*beat*) can't recall the rest of it at the moment.

**SAVANNAH**

Well, let me know if you do.

*A RUMBLING rocks the sub. The lights FLICKER and BUZZ.*

**EVIE**

What was that?

**SAVANNAH**

Hmmnn, levels are stable. Could be we've encountered something.

**EVIE** (*gasps*)

A sea monster?

**SAVANNAH**

No, not at these depths. Most likely a chunk of ice, perhaps a whale pod, something like that.

**EVIE**

Whales? Brilliant. Can we go swimming with them?

**SAVANNAH**

Let me call it in first. See if the Coast Survey has any data on this quadrant.

**EVIE**

Ooh, more sailing talk. Magnificent!

*Savannah TWISTS some dials, pulls down a radio microphone on a pole, presses the button to talk.*

**SAVANNAH**

This is Captain Savannah Brunswick of the private submersible vessel Farragut. Come in, Lighthouse.

*She lets go of the button. STATIC.*

**SAVANNAH**

This is Captain Brunswick of the private submersible Farragut. Come in, Lighthouse. We may have had a deep-sea encounter in quadrant four-two-one-six-one. We wish to consult the Coast Survey.

*STATIC. Evie PUSHES her chair away, stands.*

**EVIE**

Savvy, is everything alright?

**SAVANNAH**

It's fine. Sit down, Evie, I'll handle it.

*The sub SHAKES again. Evie's pen rolls off the table and CLATTERS to the floor.*

**SAVANNAH**

Farragut to Lighthouse. Come in Lighthouse. We (*pause*) Actually Evie, go get Howard will you?

*FOOTSTEPS on metal as Evie exits.*

**SAVANNAH**

*(to herself)* Come on, Lighthouse, where are you? *(to Radio)* This is Captain Savannah Brunswick of the Farragut. Lighthouse, are you there? *(Pause, Static)* Lighthouse, do you read me?

*FOOTSTEPS. Evie returns with HOWARD, 30s, an android.*

**EVIE**

Savvy?

**SAVANNAH** *(startled)*

What? Oh yes, Howard. What do we have? Whales? Giant squid?

**HOWARD**

There is nothing visible through the portholes and no anomalies on the radar. Whatever it was, it appears to have left.

*The sub SHAKES and GROANS. The lights FLICKER more.*

**EVIE**

It seems the sea would disagree with your assessment, Howard.

**HOWARD**

How curious. I will return to the viewfinder at once, and...

**SAVANNAH** *(over)*

No. I can't hail Lighthouse. You have to help me fix the radio.

**HOWARD**

Of course Captain.

*Howard gets to work underneath the instrument console, TINKERING with the wires and mechanisms.*

**EVIE**

Um, Savvy, is there anything I can do to help...?

**SAVANNAH**

There's not *(beat)* no, actually, there is. My duffel jacket, under my bunk. Can you get it for me?

**EVIE**

Of course.

*Evie exits. FOOTSTEPS.*

**SAVANNAH**

How bad is it Howard?

**HOWARD**

The system does appear to be intact. There might however be other interference preventing ship to surface communication.

**SAVANNAH**

And there's nothing you can do?

**HOWARD**

Not unless you wish to go ashore and have me construct a relay beacon from the Farragut's radio.

**SAVANNAH**

Now is not the time for jokes.

**HOWARD**

I was not joking Captain. If we salvaged the...

**SAVANNAH** (over)

Fine, fine, enough. Just... (sighs) God!

*She HITS the console. The radio CRACKLES to life.*

**ADMIRAL** (RADIO)

...your host, the Admiral, and I'm your guide to the smoothest tunes this side of the maelstrom.

*Evie returns, DRAGGING something heavy.*

**EVIE**

I've got your duffel, Savvy! It's a bit...heavy. oh, have you got the radio working?

**SAVANNAH** (into the mic)

This is Captain Savannah Brunswick of the private submersible Farragut, in need of assistance. I am transmitting our coordinates. (Static) Lighthouse, can you hear me?

**ADMIRAL** (RADIO)

Next up, sit back and sink beneath the waves with some fine jazz from back in the day.

*Unobtrusive SMOOTH JAZZ plays. The sub GROANS and SHAKES. Savannah drops the microphone - a WHINE of feedback - and RIFLES through her duffel bag.*

**EVIE**

Savvy, are you...?

**SAVANNAH**

I'm fine. We're going up. Howard, prepare to surface. Evie, hold onto your lunch.

**HOWARD**

Yes, Captain.

**EVIE**

Oh, dear.

*Savannah CRANKS a lever. The sub GROANS. She pulls it down, then CRANKS again. Another GROAN. She tries a third time. A third GROAN.*

**SAVANNAH**

We can't ascend.

**EVIE**

What do you mean?

**SAVANNAH**

I mean, for the moment it looks like we're stuck down here. Howard, go on walkabout. Make sure we haven't got a hull breach somewhere.

**HOWARD**

Yes, Captain.

*Howard exits. Metal on metal. Savannah sits, sighs.*

**SAVANNAH** *(quiet)*

Bloody jazz, bloody Coast Survey, bloody port authority...

**EVIE**

Savvy?

**SAVANNAH**

What is it Evie?

**EVIE**

Talk to me. What's going on?

**SAVANNAH**

It's nothing.

**EVIE** *(over)*

Don't tell me it's nothing. It's very clearly not nothing, it's something Savvy.

*Evie sits.*

**EVIE**

Be honest.

*Savannah is reluctant. The sub SHAKES again.*

**SAVANNAH**

I can't reach Lighthouse, I can't tell what's rocking us, we can't get to the surface, and the only other signal broadcasting within range is a blasted jazz station. If the hull's intact, we should be okay to put out a distress beacon and wait for rescue, but... I'm worried.

**EVIE**

You? Worried?

**SAVANNAH**

It's not like me. I know.

**EVIE**

Not like you? It's unheard of! Why so frightened?

**SAVANNAH**

I promised you an adventure. Guess I'd hate to disappoint (*beat*) Or lose the Farragut.

**EVIE**

Lose the Farragut? Is it that bad?

**SAVANNAH** (*grim*)

I suppose we'll know when Howard finishes his rounds.

**EVIE**

Look here, Savvy. I hired you for two very, very good reasons. Do you know what they are?

**SAVANNAH**

Well, I can hazard a guess.

**EVIE**

Go on, then.

**SAVANNAH**

Because we've been the best of friends since primary school?

**EVIE**

That's one of them.

**SAVANNAH** (*thinking*)

Okay, I'm at a loss. What's the other?

**EVIE**

It's because you're the best damn mariner across the entire empire!

**SAVANNAH** (*fakes a gasp*)

Miss Covington! Language!

**EVIE**

Oh, you know what they say - when asea, swear like the sailors do.

*Savannah chuckles and she JUMPS up.*

**SAVANNAH**

Quite right, Madam Covington. I don't know what cowardice could have taken hold of me. I'll have us sorted in time for supper.

**EVIE**

There's the Savannah I know.

*Savannah checks the console again. The jazz piece ends.*

**ADMIRAL** (*RADIO*)

Good evening, dear listeners. I'm your host, the Admiral, and I'm your guide to the sweetest songs in the western hemisphere. Next up, an easy piece from way back home. So let's roll on together with this lullaby from the old country.

*Another SONG plays. Howard returns.*

**HOWARD**

Captain.

**SAVANNAH**

Howard, report. Good news or bad?

**HOWARD**

Yes.

**SAVANNAH**

Which?

**HOWARD**

Both.

**SAVANNAH**

What's the status of the hull?

**HOWARD**

The hull appears to be intact.



**EVIE**

That'll be the good news then?

**HOWARD**

Yes.

**SAVANNAH**

Alright, out with the bad. Go on.

**HOWARD**

The mini-fusion core suffered a coolant system failure and shut down. I expect power to fail fully within four minutes.

*The sub SHAKES. The lights FLICKER and BUZZ.*

**EVIE**

Well, turn it back on then.

**HOWARD**

I'm afraid that is inadvisable, Madam Covington.

**SAVANNAH**

Inadvisable?

**HOWARD**

The mini-fusion core is designed with a failsafe system. Tampering with it during shutdown may result in catastrophic meltdown.

**SAVANNAH**

Then what do you advise we *do do* Serviceman Howard?

**HOWARD**

When the core stops completely, the Farragut will be dead in the water. You must use my battery as a reserve power source and repair the core coolant system before manually restarting the reactor.

**EVIE**

Your battery, Howard? Don't you, er...need that?

**HOWARD**

My primary directive is to ensure the well-being of my crew and my vessel; at any cost.

**EVIE**

But if we take your battery, won't you...

**SAVANNAH** *(over)*

He's right. It's the only way.

**EVIE**

Savvy? Are you sure?

**SAVANNAH**

He has the entirety of the Farragut's schematics embedded in his memory. If anyone knows what to do, it's him. And anyway, we can put it back later. He'll be fine.

**HOWARD**

Agreed, Captain. I will power down immediately to preserve battery life. You must act quickly in order to minimize wait time.

**SAVANNAH**

Thank you, Howard.

**EVIE**

Thank you.

**HOWARD**

I am only doing my duty, Captain. I shall see you both shortly. Shutting down now.

*Howard sits. Savannah opens a PANEL on his neck. A few CLICKS as she removes his battery. A gentle WHINE as he powers down.*

**EVIE**

Is that it then? He's gone?

**SAVANNAH**

Only temporarily.

*The sub GROANS and SHAKES again. The lullaby ends.*

**ADMIRAL** (RADIO)

Welcome to the witching hour, dear listeners. I'm your host, the Admiral, and I'm your guide to the most serene serenades on this the fourth rock from our Sun. Next up, a song for long lost flames and atmosphere for both lovers and thieves.

*A gentle LOVE SONG plays and almost immediately cuts out, replaced by STATIC. The lights shut down with huge mechanical CLUNKS, leaving only the blues of the ocean.*

**SAVANNAH**

Okay. That's the core done. I'm going to plug in Howards battery.

*Savannah reaches under the console, PLUGS IN Howard's battery. They wait for a few moments, but nothing happens.*

**EVIE**

Savvy?

**SAVANNAH**

I know.

**EVIE**

Nothing's happened. It hasn't turned on.

**SAVANNAH** (repeating)

I know.

**EVIE**

What do we do?

*Savannah doesn't respond. A pause. Evie shakes it off, acts confident.*

**EVIE**

Very well. Put on the distress beacon Captain. It has an emergency battery of its own I assume?

**SAVANNAH** (responding)

Right. Yes.

*Savannah flicks some SWITCHES on the instrument console. The distress beacon BEEPS steadily, once every few seconds.*

**EVIE**

We're going to be okay, Savvy.

**SAVANNAH**

You think?

**EVIE**

We're going to be just fine. Don't worry.

*Savannah slumps down to the floor.*

**SAVANNAH**

Could just be the reserve needs some time to start.

**EVIE**

Could very well be.

*Savannah and Evie sit quietly, listening to the deep.*

**EVIE**

Do you remember when we were little, about five years old or so; we used to play at being ship captains down by the beach?

**SAVANNAH**

...It was a pool.

**EVIE**

Sorry?

**SAVANNAH**

It was the neighbourhood swimming pool.

**EVIE**

Nonsense. I most definitely remember a beach. I can see it in my mind.

**SAVANNAH**

We were 50 miles inland and it was before the great floods.

**EVIE** (*reminiscing*)

Oh. I suppose it was, wasn't it?

*The sub RUMBLES. The Admiral returns with a burst of STATIC.*

**ADMIRAL** (*RADIO*)

...utations...steners...bluest blues...bottom...ean.  
Next...jazz...oul of the deep...

*The broadcast reverts to STATIC, cuts out briefly, and returns with more SMOOTH JAZZ.*

**SAVANNAH**

At least we have music.

*They listen to the song for a few moments.*

**EVIE**

It's getting cold, Savvy.

**SAVANNAH**

I'm sure the power'll come back on soon.

*Savannah takes off her coat with a RUSTLE.*

**EVIE**

Oh, I can't..

**SAVANNAH**

Come on, Evie. Take my coat.

*Savannah drapes the coat over Evie's shoulders. A pause.*

**SAVANNAH** (*awkward*)

Why'd you never get married Evie?

**EVIE**

Me?

**SAVANNAH**

I... don't mean to be presumptuous, but I know you've had your share of suitors over the years. Did your parents not approve?

**EVIE** (*unsure*)

...None of them compared.

**SAVANNAH**

Compared to what?

**EVIE**

To whom.

**SAVANNAH**

To whom? (*beat*) ...Oh.

*A pause. Evie SHUFFLES a little closer.*

**EVIE** (*quiet*)

What's it like at the bottom of the sea, Savvy?

**SAVANNAH**

...Well, it's cold. Colder than now. And it's dark. So very dark. And there are all kinds of wonderful and strange creatures that no one has ever seen before.

**EVIE**

...Do you think we'd be famous for discovering them?

**SAVANNAH**

Oh yes, exceptionally so.

**EVIE**

Let's name something after Mister O'Sullivan, then.

**SAVANNAH**

Mister who?

**EVIE**

Eleventh year. Marine biology.

**SAVANNAH**

Oh, Sullivan.

**EVIE**

Yes, O'Sullivan.

*Another pause. Evie begins to CRY.*

**SAVANNAH**

Oh, Evie, no, you musn't cry. You musn't worry. Remember? We'll be just fine. You said so yourself.

*Savannah hugs her, rocks her gently. The sub RUMBLES again.*

**SAVANNAH**

Come now, Evie. I'm here with you. Tell me what I can do? What can I do to help you?

*Evie dries her tears and holds Savannah tight, still SOBBING.*

**EVIE**

We'll never be found down here.

**SAVANNAH**

Of course we will.

**EVIE**

Don't lie to me. You're an awful liar, Savvy.

**SAVANNAH** *(struggling)*

...What do you want me to do?

*Evie sobs, catches her breath. The sub SHAKES and GROANS.*

**EVIE**

Just be here with me.

**SAVANNAH**

I am. I swear I'll stay right here.

**EVIE**

Just be here. Just sink with me Savvy. Let's just sink down to the seafloor. Together.

*Savannah fails to muster the strength to respond. The sub SHAKES again.*

*Evie's sobbing fades, leaving only MUSIC and the steady BEEPING of their distress signal. The signal beeps a few more times, then SHUTS OFF.*

*Only the sad, smooth jazz and the vast ocean remain. Another burst of STATIC cuts the music off.*

*Silence. Then...*

**LIGHTHOUSE** (RADIO)

...Farragut, come in, Farragut. This is Lighthouse. A rescue vessel is en route to your location. Don't worry, we're coming for you.

**END**