

"Heat"

by
Mike Murphy

112 Lovering Street
Medway, MA 02053-2326
508-533-8310
mikeandzachary@gmail.com
WGAE Registered

1 INT. OSIRIS BASE 1 - EVENING

1

A large Earth base on an alien world.

The rugged landscape of the host planet is visible through some windows along the bulkhead walls. The stars are everywhere.

Four Earthmen in uniform walk along the base's dark, empty corridors. They shine their flashlights up and down the halls. Their footsteps and their conversations echo in the emptiness.

ENSIGN NORRIS, 29, looks up from his flashing handheld scanner and wipes beads of sweat from his brow.

NORRIS

Damn hot in here.

DR. OSGOOD, 55, nods.

OSGOOD

The electricity must be out all over the base.

CAPT. THATCHER, 41, shakes his flashlight.

THATCHER

These aren't much help.

Norris looks down at his scanner.

NORRIS

(to Thatcher)

According to the base's blueprints, Captain, the control room isn't far.

He motions at his so-far silent fellow crewman, LT. MENDOZA, 31, who is using his own scanner.

NORRIS

Hopefully, Lt. Mendoza and I can get the lights working from there.

MENDOZA

And the air conditioning.

OSGOOD

(confused)

Where *is* everyone? It didn't take us long to get here in answer to their SOS.

(CONTINUED)

THATCHER

I wish I knew, Doc. Osiris Base
has a crew complement of 47.

He wipes his brow.

THATCHER

Scan for life signs, Mendoza -
widest possible range.

MENDOZA

Yes, sir.

He adjusts the controls of his scanner, which glows and
beeps in his hands.

THATCHER

(to Norris)
The control room, Ensign?

Norris double-checks his scanner and points down a hall.

NORRIS

This way.

The men walk for less than a minute. Mendoza is the first
to stop in his tracks. He looks quizzically at his
scanner.

MENDOZA

Captain, I'm -

There is a *deafening* roar, like that of a wounded animal.

OSGOOD

What the -

A large, multi-tentacled, slimy creature drops from its
perch on the ceiling and lands slightly before the
incredulous Earthmen with a wet *thud*. Its tentacles
angrily lash out at them.

One wraps itself around Mendoza and lifts him high into
the air, his arms pinned to his sides. His scanner, comm
box, and laser pistol fall to the floor.

MENDOZA

(bellowing)
Help!

He screams in agony as the creature punctures his skin
with something jagged and injects an unknown liquid into
him.

(CONTINUED)

THATCHER

Lasers!

The three men unholster their weapons.

NORRIS

But Mendoza -

THATCHER

Fire!

They shoot at the creature, doing their best to miss their comrade. The thing roars in pain as it is injured. It squeezes Mendoza even tighter.

One of the laser blasts cuts through the creature's hide, severing a tentacle. It drops to the floor and twitches for a few seconds. Green blood spurts everywhere from the thing's wound, including on Thatcher and his crewmen.

They continue firing as the creature thrashes Mendoza about.

FADE TO:

The director of the base, gray-haired CARL JENSEN, 59, sits at his desk in his command chair among the blinking and beeping panels lining the walls. Many of his crew are anxiously moving about the room. Muted behind him are the sounds of people screaming and creatures roaring.

Jensen speaks into a microphone attached to his desk.

JENSEN

(urgently)

This is Director Carl Jensen of Osiris Base 1 on the planet Pontra. We're a *science research station*. We're not equipped for combat. Please *help*.

(beat)

They're *killing* us!

FADE TO:

Mendoza's crewmates continue firing.

(CONTINUED)

One of the blasts hits home. The creature wails, the echo carrying far and wide. The whipping tentacle slows and stops.

THATCHER

Hold your fire!

Osgood and Norris do as ordered.

A guttural, bubbling sound emits from the creature. It breathes a loud, pained exhalation - its last.

NORRIS

Yes!

It crumples to the floor, dropping Mendoza a few feet. His crewmates hurry to him. Their uniforms are somewhat stained with the dead creature's green blood.

Osgood passes his medical scanner over the wounded crewman. Thatcher approaches him.

THATCHER

(beat; winded)

Paul?

Osgood looks up, confused.

OSGOOD

He's alive. . . but. . .

NORRIS

(anxiously)

But *what*, Doc?

Osgood looks at his scanner in bewilderment.

OSGOOD

His insides are. . . liquefying.
His bones, his organs. It's like
they're. . . *melting*.

THATCHER

How's that possible?

OSGOOD

It must be something the creature
did.

NORRIS

It punctured him with some kind of
stinger. I could just barely see
it.

(CONTINUED)

THATCHER

And whatever that thing injected
into the Lieutenant is *liquefying*
him?

OSGOOD

That's right.

THATCHER

(urgently)
Can you help him?

OSGOOD

Not with my portable med kit.

NORRIS

Then we'd better get him back to
the *Dauntless*.

OSGOOD

I'd advise against that. Unless I
can stabilize him *here*, he won't
survive the trip. The slightest
change in g forces would crush
him, and I don't know yet how fast
acting the creature's venom is.

THATCHER

Then *what*?

OSGOOD

(beat; to Norris)
Ensign, you said the control room
is nearby.

Norris gestures to his right with a thumb.

NORRIS

Down that corridor.

OSGOOD

How about the Infirmary?

NORRIS

That's even closer - along the
way.

THATCHER

But without power -

OSGOOD

I served on a base similar to this
when I was in training.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

OSGOOD (CONT'D)

The Infirmary was equipped with a dedicated generator in case of a base-wide power outage. Hopefully, that's the case here too.

THATCHER

Can you help Mendoza there?

OSGOOD

If they have the equipment I need, yes.

NORRIS

We could call the *Dauntless*. Commander Piller could send down whatever you need in another shuttle.

THATCHER

I'm not bringing anyone else down here.

OSGOOD

Also, Mendoza doesn't have the time for that. I need to stabilize him *fast*.

NORRIS

(quickly)

What can we do?

Osgood looks about at their surroundings.

OSGOOD

Find something flat that we can use as a stretcher. I'll need you and the Captain to carry Mendoza carefully - but *quickly* - to the Infirmary.

FADE TO:

The Infirmary door slides open. The diagnostic table in a corner of the room shows dim lights and is humming slightly. Osgood looks at it and grins.

OSGOOD

That's a good sign.

All of the Earthmen enter the Infirmary, Thatcher and Norris carrying Mendoza on a makeshift stretcher.

(CONTINUED)

The overhead lighting is minimal. Osgood tries the light switch a few times, with no luck. The door shuts.

OSGOOD

This light will have to do.

He walks to the diagnostic table and taps on it.

OSGOOD

Looks like it's still working.

(beat)

Bring him over here please.

Thatcher and Norris carry Mendoza to the table. They heft the stretcher up and onto it.

OSGOOD

Now, very carefully. . . *slide*.

They slowly remove the makeshift stretcher and put it against the wall. Osgood pushes some buttons on one of the table's built-in panels, and things light up. Thatcher and Norris hover over him.

Osgood smiles.

OSGOOD

Looks like we're in business.

THATCHER

Do they have what you need?

Osgood pokes through the equipment located on shelves above and beside the diagnostic table.

OSGOOD

They seem to.

THATCHER

Great!

(to Norris)

Ensign, go to the control -

Osgood nervously looks up. He points with a shaky hand.

OSGOOD

Captain.

There is a loud, wet *thud* as a slightly smaller creature drops from its ceiling perch to the floor, within feet of the crewmen. It lets out a loud roar similar - but slightly different - to the ones emitted by the dead alien.

(CONTINUED)

THATCHER

Lasers!

Three of the creature's tentacles lash out, knocking the weapons, scanners, and comm boxes out of the crewmen's hands. They drop less than a foot before the alien.

NORRIS

Our guns!

He takes a couple of steps forward.

THATCHER

As you were!

He stops on command.

Some tentacles slither out, lingering over each man, including the unconscious Mendoza. One of them probes Norris's face. Sweating, he closes his eyes in disgust.

NORRIS

C-Captain?

THATCHER

Be still.

Norris barely holds in his desire to scream.

NORRIS

(disgusted and
terrified)

It's. . . on my *face*.

OSGOOD

Don't provoke it.

Slowly, to sighs of relief, the tentacles retract. With one slimy tentacle, the creature pulls the crewmen's equipment closer.

NORRIS

That. . . That was the sickest
thing I've ever felt.

THATCHER

(beat)

Why didn't it kill us?

NORRIS

It took all our stuff.

(longish beat)

I bet I could. . .

(CONTINUED)

He reaches out, and the creature snaps a tentacle at his hand, which he quickly withdraws.

THATCHER

You'll do nothing of the kind! The creature obviously doesn't want us to have them.

NORRIS

But without our guns -

THATCHER

You're not to attempt to get them back. That's an order.

(beat)

We're alive. Let's keep it that way.

OSGOOD

(longish beat)

I'll get to work.

He steps back to the table. The creature holds one of its tentacles in the air, ready to strike if need be.

THATCHER

It looks like we're stuck here for as long as our friend wants.

He points to an interface panel.

THATCHER

Norris, see what you can do about getting us communications.

NORRIS

(confused)

Sir?

THATCHER

We're not going to be able to check in with Commander Piller as long as the creature has our comm boxes. I don't want anyone else from the *Dauntless* coming down here.

(beat)

Four endangered crew members is enough.

A tentacle slithers about, as if in agreement.

FADE TO:

5

INT. INFIRMARY - LATER

5

Osgood is working over Mendoza as Thatcher approaches.

THATCHER

How's it going?

OSGOOD

I've managed to stop the
liquefaction.

THATCHER

That's good news.

OSGOOD

Yes, but it's only step one.

Norris approaches.

NORRIS

Sir, no go on communications, I'm
afraid. The circuits are toast.

Thatcher shakes his head.

THATCHER

At least the Infirmary is still
functional.

NORRIS

How's Lt. Mendoza, Doc?

OSGOOD

I've managed to stop his
condition, but *reversing* it so he
can be moved is going to take some
time.

THATCHER

How long?

OSGOOD

Approximately four hours.

NORRIS

(surprised)

Four. . .

OSGOOD

If we move him before then, he's a
goner. He'll need to remain as
still as possible while the meds
do their work.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

OSGOOD (CONT'D)

I'll have to strap him to the table later to avoid any unnecessary movement.

Thatcher sighs.

THATCHER

Then I guess we're staying here for a while.

NORRIS

(shocked)

Staying here? With that thing only feet away?

THATCHER

Unless you have a better idea.

(beat; to Osgood)

Are the interior Infirmary scanners working, Paul?

OSGOOD

To a degree. Why?

THATCHER

As soon as you've done all you can for Mendoza, I want you to scan our friend. If we're going to be here for the next four hours, I'd like to know as much as I can about our. . . roommate.

FADE TO:

Mendoza is now strapped to the diagnostic table.

THATCHER

How are the scanners?

OSGOOD

They're working, but they're sluggish.

(longish beat)

Results coming in now. Weight: 416 pounds. Its hide is made of something unidentifiable.

He points at the screen attached to the control panel.

(CONTINUED)

OSGOOD

This looks like its heart. . .
Lungs here. *Three* of them.
(beat; surprised)
That's interesting.

THATCHER

What is?

OSGOOD

It's *female*.

NORRIS

(quickly; hopefully)
Maybe the other one was *male*?
We're still alive. Maybe the
females don't attack?

THATCHER

Let's *hope* so.

OSGOOD

(shocked)
Oh, dear God!

THATCHER

What's wrong?

OSGOOD

(longish beat)
According to the scan, the. . .
the creature's. . . in *heat*.

A long tentacle moves about above the Earthmen's heads.

FADE TO:

INT. INFIRMARY - MOMENTS LATER

Norris stares at the creature.

NORRIS

(shocked)
So, before long, we're. . . we're
gonna be overrun by this thing's
wanna-be boyfriends?

OSGOOD

Easy, son.
(beat)
Aside from the two we've
encountered, we don't know if
there are any more creatures.

(CONTINUED)

He looks about nervously.

NORRIS

We *have* to get out of here.

THATCHER

Care to tell me how we get past *her*?

NORRIS

We could run like hell!

THATCHER

And Mendoza?

Norris sighs heavily.

NORRIS

Doc, there must be *something* -

OSGOOD

(adamantly)

There's *nothing*. If we move him before the four hours are up, he'll die. No question about it.

NORRIS

But if we stay, we'll *all* die!

Thatcher grabs Norris by the shoulders.

THATCHER

Get a hold of yourself, Ensign! We're not going anywhere until we can *all* leave - Mendoza included.

NORRIS

But, sir -

THATCHER

You'd write off his life that quickly?

NORRIS

No, but -

THATCHER

Do you want to bring him with us as we run back to the shuttle or leave him here as the three of us go?

(beat)

Either way, he'll die.

(CONTINUED)

NORRIS

Captain, I didn't -

THATCHER

Get back to the interface panel.

NORRIS

But everything's *fried*.

THATCHER

Then *improvise*.

(longish beat)

Can you get the surface cameras working?

NORRIS

Maybe.

THATCHER

Since we can't know if there are more of these things *in* the base, at least we'll know if any are heading our way.

(beat)

Get to work.

Ashamed, Norris slowly walks away. Thatcher and Osgood talk quietly.

OSGOOD

Weren't you kind of rough on him, Will?

THATCHER

I don't think so.

OSGOOD

He's young. . . and *scared*. This is only his third field mission.

THATCHER

That's no excuse for cowardice.

(beat)

Mendoza?

OSGOOD

Norris was right. There's a definite indication of a stinger wound in his abdomen.

(beat)

From my readings, I believe the thing was. . . "tenderizing" him.

(CONTINUED)

THATCHER

(shocked)

What?

OSGOOD

The scans show human remains -
bones and tissue - in the belly of
the female creature.

THATCHER

(amazed)

They eat. . ?

OSGOOD

Apparently.

(beat)

Even on Earth, some insects inject
their prey with a paralyzing agent
before eating them.

(beat)

The other monster probably thought
of us as a threat to him becoming
the alpha male.

THATCHER

That explains where the base's
crew went.

OSGOOD

But all 47 of them? Could just two
creatures have done that?

THATCHER

I hope so. Otherwise, we should
expect some visitors.

A tentacle reaches out and briefly slithers around
Thatcher.

THATCHER

She could have killed us already,
but she *hasn't*. Why not?

THATCHER

(beat)

Maybe the females *don't* kill. This
creature doesn't have a stinger
like the first one did.

THATCHER

But the human remains in her
stomach. . .

(CONTINUED)

OSGOOD

Her food could have been brought
to her by a would-be mate.

(beat)

Maybe, like in ancient times, the
males are hunter-gatherers, and
the females stay home to care for
the young?

THATCHER

It's as good a theory as any.

(longish beat)

Time to test it out.

He takes a couple of steps away. Osgood grabs his arm.

OSGOOD

(anxiously)

What do you mean?

THATCHER

You'll see.

He removes Osgood's hand and slowly walks away. The
creature follows him with a ready-to-strike tentacle.

OSGOOD

(very concerned)

Will?

THATCHER

Tend to your patient, Doctor.

He takes a few more steps, and the tentacle continues to
follow him.

NORRIS

Sir?

Thatcher walks to Norris, who is trying to bring the
outdoor cameras to life.

THATCHER

Yes, Ensign?

NORRIS

I was able to make a bypass
connection, sir. At least one of
the surface cameras should be
operational soon.

THATCHER

Good work.

(CONTINUED)

NORRIS

I may not be able to keep it
running for *long*.

THATCHER

I'll take what we can get. Beggars
can't be choosers.

NORRIS

(embarrassed)
I'd like to. . . to apologize for
my earlier behavior.

Thatcher nods.

THATCHER

Accepted.

NORRIS

It's only that I'm. . .

THATCHER

Scared? We all are. You'd be a
fool if you weren't.

Thatcher takes some careful steps away from Norris. The
tentacle stands ready.

NORRIS

What are you doing?

THATCHER

Conducting an experiment.

Thatcher walks to the door, which opens. He quickly steps
into the corridor, turns, and reenters the Infirmary. The
door closes.

Osgood hurries to him.

OSGOOD

What the *hell* are you doing?

THATCHER

She let me leave.

(beat)

It looks like she doesn't care
enough about us to waste energy
killing us.

OSGOOD

She has our guns; we're no threat.
(beat)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

OSGOOD (CONT'D)

She must know what lasers can do
from the fight the base's crew put
up.

THATCHER

Then all we have to do is wait.
Once Mendoza's well enough to
travel -

There are several urgent-sounding beeps from the
interface panel.

NORRIS

One surface camera is working,
Captain.

Thatcher and Osgood approach as the panel's screen lights
up.

Thatcher's jaw drops.

THATCHER

Mother of. . .

OSGOOD

Her heat travels far.

On the exterior camera, we see many creatures heading
toward the base.

NORRIS

There must be. . . a dozen of 'em.

THATCHER

And they're right at our doorstep.

FADE TO:

INT. INFIRMARY - MOMENTS LATER

On the screen, two creatures are engaged in a fierce
fight - with much roaring and throw downs. Some of the
other aliens wait and watch for the chance to take on the
winner.

THATCHER

Whaddya think, Doc?

Osgood briefly studies the screen.

(CONTINUED)

OSGOOD

Probably all males. It looks like they fight for the attention of the female.

He gestures at the female creature before them.

OSGOOD

And she might be the only one around.

THATCHER

That *could* buy us some time.

NORRIS

How, sir?

A very loud roar comes over the speaker.

THATCHER

Turn the sound off, Norris.

He does so.

THATCHER

We can keep an eye on them, but we *don't* have to listen.

(beat)

Hopefully, they fight for a good, long time so the four of us can get back to the shuttle.

Norris points at the fighting creatures on the screen.

NORRIS

Past *them*?

THATCHER

(beat)

One problem at a time.

FADE TO:

Thatcher approaches Norris, who is watching the screen.

THATCHER

How goes it?

(CONTINUED)

NORRIS

It's down to the last two, sir.
The smaller one looks like he's
running out of gas.

THATCHER

I hope he gets a second wind.
(beat)
As soon as we're down to one
creature, let me know.

Norris nods. Thatcher walks to the diagnostic table. He
leans on the table and sighs.

THATCHER

Paul, I could do with some good
news.

OSGOOD

Mendoza's responding well to the
drugs.

THATCHER

(prompting him)
But?

OSGOOD

I don't *dare* move him for another
30 minutes.

Thatcher bites his lip.

THATCHER

(sotto voce)
I don't know if we *have* 30
minutes.

FADE TO:

NORRIS

Captain, the camera's gone
offline!

Thatcher hurries to Norris.

THATCHER

(quickly)
Can you get it back?

(CONTINUED)

NORRIS

I don't see how. I tried everything I could think of to get it running in the first place.

THATCHER

How was the fight going before we lost visual?

NORRIS

The big guy had the little one on the ropes.

THATCHER

Great! Blind as a bat with the heavyweight champ on his way here.

FADE TO:

NORRIS

The camera's dead, Captain. I've tried everything I can think of.

THATCHER

Damn!

NORRIS

Permission to go to the control room?

THATCHER

(quickly)
Denied.

NORRIS

But the creature will let -

THATCHER

We don't know what's on the other side of that door. The place could be *crawling* with creatures just like the one that attacked Mendoza here.

NORRIS

Or there could be injured base crew members who need our help. *That's* what we came here for.

THATCHER

No, Ensign.

(CONTINUED)

NORRIS

But the Infirmary scanners can only cover this room while running on the dedicated generator. If I can get the scanners working for the entire base -

THATCHER

I know we came here for an SOS call, but right now we have to worry about saving *ourselves*.

(beat)

I'll have Dr. Osgood run a life-signs scan once we're out of the Infirmary. If there's anyone alive we can rescue without risking our own necks, we will.

NORRIS

(humbled)

Thank you, sir.

Osgood calls from the diagnostic table.

OSGOOD

Mendoza's coming around!

Thatcher and Norris rush over. Mendoza is groggily coming to. Thatcher leans over him.

THATCHER

Mendoza?

(longish beat)

Lieutenant?

Mendoza wakes with a start. Fortunately, he is still strapped to the table. He moves his head about.

MENDOZA

What the. . . Where. . . ?

Osgood places a gentle hand on his chest.

OSGOOD

Easy.

Norris leans in so Mendoza can see him.

NORRIS

Welcome back, pal.

MENDOZA

That *thing*!

(CONTINUED)

THATCHER

It's dead. You're safe.

Mendoza is relieved.

MENDOZA

(confused)

What's with the straps, Doc?

OSGOOD

I need you to stay as still as possible. You're pumped full of meds to reverse what the creature did to you. The less you move, the faster they'll take hold.

MENDOZA

Gotcha.

A tentacle whips out from the female creature and touches Mendoza's boot. He gulps hard and attempts to see what's happening while keeping his head still as Osgood told him.

MENDOZA

(frightened)

Is that. . . *another* one?

OSGOOD

Don't worry about it.

MENDOZA

Don't -

THATCHER

You heard what he said. That's an order.

MENDOZA

Understood, Captain.

Osgood presses a few buttons on the table panel, and it powers down.

OSGOOD

We're getting out of here, son. The Captain and Ensign Norris will be carrying you to the shuttlecraft.

MENDOZA

Carrying? I can walk.

(CONTINUED)

OSGOOD
(cautioning him)
Lieutenant.

THATCHER
Take the ride.

Mendoza sighs.

MENDOZA
Whatever you guys say.

OSGOOD
(to Thatcher)
Let's get him on the stretcher
while we still have time.

As Thatcher and Norris lift up the stretcher, the victorious male creature bursts through the bulkhead wall and into the Infirmary, sending building materials flying.

It lets out an ear-piercing, echoing roar. All the crewmen freeze.

THATCHER
What were you saying about time,
Paul?

The male creature emits another glorious roar.

FADE TO:

With both creatures watching them, Thatcher, Osgood, and Norris carefully get Mendoza onto the improvised stretcher.

The male lets out a roar that makes them all shiver. The female copies him. This happens several times, each of the creatures interrupting the other.

OSGOOD
Do you hear what I hear, Will?

Thatcher smiles.

THATCHER
I certainly do: They're *arguing*.

MENDOZA
About?

(CONTINUED)

NORRIS

Probably what to do with us.

The male lets out an enormous roar and angrily flicks his tentacles at the men. One snaps near Norris's face. Another wraps around Thatcher's arm.

OSGOOD

Captain!

THATCHER

Easy now.

(longish beat)

He's not hurting me. He's. . .
pushing me toward the door.

Both creatures howl in unison.

NORRIS

(confused)

It wants us. . . to leave?

MENDOZA

Why would it. . .

THATCHER

I. . . I guess it wants privacy.

The tentacle around his arm releases. The male roars even louder and pushes it repeatedly into the Captain's stomach. Thatcher hurriedly grabs his end of the stretcher.

THATCHER

OK. We're going. You don't have to
tell us twice.

With the Captain and Norris carrying the stretcher, the crewmen guardedly leave the Infirmary.

FADE TO:

Thatcher buckles into his flight chair. Norris is across from him in the co-pilot's seat.

THATCHER

Main motors, Ensign.

NORRIS

Aye, sir.

(CONTINUED)

With a few button presses, the shuttlecraft slowly rises into the air.

NORRIS

Atmosphere in two minutes, sir.

THATCHER

Keep it steady.

Norris sighs a heavy sigh.

NORRIS

I didn't think we'd make it past those aliens on the surface, sir.

THATCHER

Fortunately, they were all tuckered out from the fight.

(longish beat)

By the way, Doc was able to perform a life signs scan on the base before we boarded the shuttle.

NORRIS

Let me guess: None?

Thatcher nods.

THATCHER

Unfortunately.

Norris shakes his head.

NORRIS

All those people. . . *dead*.

THATCHER

We tried our best. That's all we could do.

(longish beat)

ETA to the *Dauntless*?

Norris presses a few buttons.

NORRIS

Nineteen minutes.

THATCHER

Can you fly this thing on your own?

(CONTINUED)

NORRIS

(proudly)
Yes, sir.

THATCHER

I want the smoothest flight
possible, for Mendoza's sake.
We're not looking for any speed
records.

(beat)

Pretend that your grandmother is
back in the passenger compartment.

Norris chuckles softly.

NORRIS

I understand.

Thatcher unbuckles himself.

THATCHER

I'm going to check in with the
Doctor.

He stands.

THATCHER

About your performance down on
Pontra. . .

NORRIS

(quickly)
You have my apologies, Captain. It
won't happen again.

THATCHER

We're only human. We'll chalk it
up as a learning experience. . .
for both of us.

FADE TO:

Thatcher approaches Osgood. He is watching over Mendoza,
who is now on a regulation stretcher.

OSGOOD

He's asleep. That's the best thing
for him.

(CONTINUED)

THATCHER

You'll be able to fix him up back
on the ship?

OSGOOD

Oh sure. Right as rain.

THATCHER

Good.

OSGOOD

I'll need Mendoza to remain in
Sickbay for two or three days
under surveillance - just to make
sure everything takes.

THATCHER

I'll make it an order.

Osgood sighs.

THATCHER

I didn't think we'd make it out of
there alive, Paul.

OSGOOD

You and me both.

THATCHER

(distraught)

We didn't rescue even *one* person.

OSGOOD

I've lost some patients in my
career. You have to learn to let
it go and realize what happened
was out of your control.
Otherwise, it will gnaw at you for
all your days.

THATCHER

I know, but I've always had
trouble with that.

(beat)

I'm going to contact HQ and advise
that Pontra be declared off
limits.

OSGOOD

If I'm not mistaken, before long,
there's going to be the pitter-
patter of little alien feet down
there.

(CONTINUED)

Thatcher chuckles.

THATCHER

That's one baby shower I *won't* be
attending.

FADE TO BLACK.