

CALYPSO DOWN

A CHRIS BLACK ADVENTURE

JAMES LINDHOLM

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For Uncles Sam, Harvey, Ron, and Carl—

Thank you for everything.

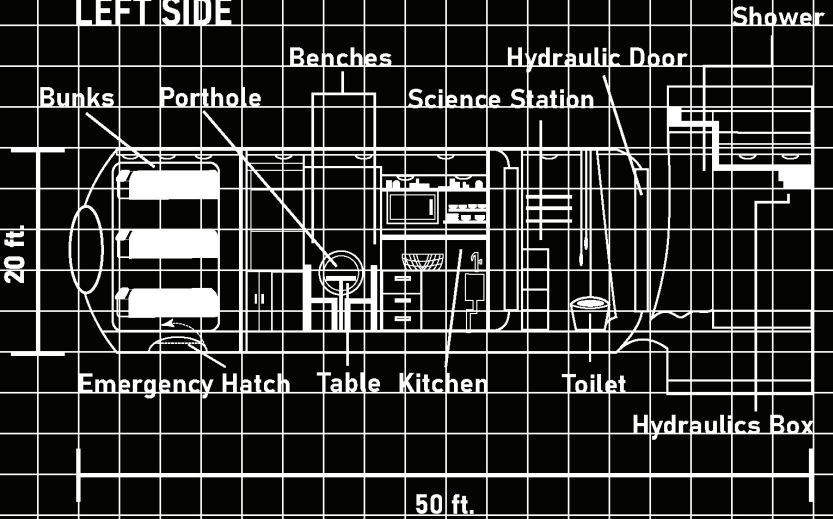
I love all you guys.



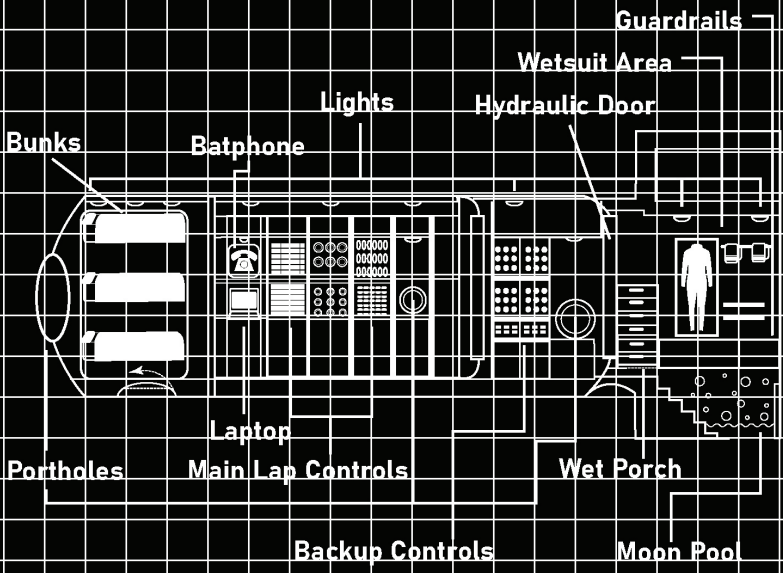


CALYPSO I SEALAB

LEFT SIDE



RIGHT SIDE





1

Deep underwater and alone, Ben Foster knew he was going to die. The cold darkness enveloped him faster than his panic. Firmly wedged into a crevice between two large boulders, he was surrounded by the utter blackness of the Floridian quarry at night. *That was strike two!*

Strike one had come only seconds before when Ben had accidentally dropped his Sola NightSea dive light into the crevice, realizing only then that he'd failed to charge the batteries on his smaller backup light. At that point, Ben's heartrate increased rapidly in the dark, his pulse pounding within the two-millimeter neoprene hood he was wearing. But then he'd spotted the faint illumination from his dive light coming from under an overhang below him, and his heartrate slowed.

Ben knew he shouldn't have been diving solo at all—not to mention at night—in a location as dangerous as a quarry. Several years earlier, a trip to Bermuda with his exotic Aunt Agatha had given Ben the chance to get certified as an entry level SCUBA diver. His instructor had been an American expatriate friend of his aunt who used baseball analogies for everything.

“Listen, man. Diving is the way. And once you’re certified, you’ll be able to dive wherever you want to. But you’ve got to think of each dive you do as an at bat,” the guy had said. “You get three strikes, but remember, with the third strike you’re out. You don’t want to be out while diving, man, so don’t let things progress beyond strike two. Got it?”

“I think I do.”

That simple analogy had stuck with Ben ever since, and so it was only natural that *strike one* was the first thing that went through his mind when he dropped his dive light. *Aunt Agatha’s going to kill me*, was the second.

To celebrate the milestone, Ben had planned to make his one hundredth dive at night, from a boat, in the Dry Tortugas. It was only a four-hour drive to the Florida Keys from his house north of Fort Lauderdale, followed by a short two-hour boat ride out to the westernmost point in the Keys. He’d made the trip with Aunt Agatha the year before. *Perfect*.

But there’d been complications.

“There’s a big mission starting out there next week,” the dive shop owner in Key West had explained. Ben had called down hoping to arrange everything for the trip. “They’ve put a submerged research station down on the edge of the reef at Barracuda Key, right where you were planning to dive. Scientists are going to live there for ten days to conduct experiments. So, the entire area is closed off to any diving or unofficial boat traffic until those folks leave. You should see the social media on this thing. Hashtag something or other, a mythological name, but I can’t remember what it is. It’s blowing up.”

Ben could not hide his disappointment, so the shop owner tried to sell him on another option.

“We’ve got a shop up in Lauderdale that can set you up with a boat dive if you want. It’s two hundred bucks cheaper than the dive here in the Keys.”

“No, thanks,” Ben had replied before closing the call. He’d been wreck diving off Lauderdale before: low visibility and not a lot of fish.

Ben had fallen into a funk for just under twenty-four hours before he’d realized that he had an option much closer to home. The quarry. It wasn’t as sexy as the Dry Tortugas, but it would do.

The old Piedmont Quarry was located only twenty minutes outside of Fort Lauderdale on Highway 98. The abandoned limestone quarry had filled up with freshwater decades before, creating a deep lake. It didn’t have a beach, but it did have natural breaks in the steeply excavated vertical walls surrounding the lake that allowed people to enter the water. Kids from his high school and the nearby community college often came to swim during the day and party during the night.

Ben knew that entering the water at the Piedmont was dangerous. The water had slowly filled in the quarry, leaving the unexcavated bottom full of crevices and dangerous overhangs that had trapped many a swimmer over the years. In fact, so many people had drowned at the quarry that the area had been officially closed off when Ben was in elementary school.

Unofficially, however, the county hadn’t repaired long-standing breaches in the fence surrounding the lake, and the sheriff’s office rarely bothered to roust teenagers who strayed inside.

“There’s so little to do around here,” Aunt Agatha had explained. She worked in the county clerk’s office. “I guess they’d rather the kids hang out somewhere nearby than drive far away to get drunk. You just be very careful if you ever go out there. Promise me.”

Ben had promised. He’d been diving there with two of his friends on many occasions, but never along the south wall. When the visibility was clear, diving over the submerged boulders in the quarry was cool. Someone had stocked the lake with smallmouth bass long ago, so fish could be seen swimming among the rocks in the summer.

On the day of his centennial dive, Ben had parked his aging pick-up truck in the grass near one of the breaks in the cliff and prepared

his gear as the sun set to the west. The north wall of the quarry was two hundred feet higher than the south side. Dark green trees lined the ridge above bleached-white limestone cliffs. He'd waited through twilight, watching from the hood of his truck as the distant lights of Fort Meyers replaced the sunset on the horizon, turning the trees a dark purple and the cliff walls a light pink.

He'd made sure to text his aunt that he was entering the water, though he'd not indicated that he was diving alone.

"You know I'm fine being the enabling aunt," Agatha had texted in reply. "But please don't make me regret that."

Fifteen minutes later, with only the stars and a quarter moon illuminating the scene, Ben had geared up and entered the glassy-calm water. Slipping on his fins, he'd rolled over onto his back and begun kicking along the south wall of the quarry with the intention of submerging after five minutes of surface swimming. Familiar with the area from a previous dive, he didn't turn on either of his two waterproof lights in order to save his night vision for a little longer.

The dive had gone according to plan until he'd dropped his Sola. He'd seen a few bluegill and smallmouth bass swimming among the boulders, and also discovered an old ten-speed bike and a large propane barbecue; both must have been dumped from the cliff above.

Now, hovering above the boulders, looking down at the narrow crevice, Ben considered whether it might just be best to surface in the dark without his lights. The luminescent face of his submersible pressure gauge indicated that he had a third of his air supply remaining. But his aunt had given him that Sola as a birthday gift, and he didn't want to leave it behind. He was pretty sure he wouldn't be able to find the same spot again, even in daylight.

Inverting himself, Ben kicked gently downward as he reached his arm out in front of him. He was initially careful to avoid touching the boulders on either side of the crevice, knowing that were he to come in contact with the bottom, the thin veneer of sediment that covered

everything would be stirred up, ruining visibility. However, the deeper he swam into the crevice, the narrower it became.

The eighty-cubic-foot aluminum air tank on his back slammed hard into the boulder behind him, forcing his chest forward and into direct contact with the boulder in front. Hoping that he was only partially snagged, Ben tried to reach a little deeper for the dive light, but his right hand was still at least two feet from it. It was then that he realized he couldn't move. Not forward. Nor backward.

Ben's respirations increased rapidly as he tried to force himself upward. *He was stuck.* His attempts at dislodging himself had stirred up silt all around him.

When he became aware of the stinging pain on his chest where limestone fragments had penetrated his three-millimeter wetsuit and sliced through his skin, he screamed into his breathing regulator, expunging even more air from his tank.

Seconds passed. He realized that he could not free himself. He screamed again, kicking hard with his fins, but that only served to wedge him more tightly into the crevice.

Minutes passed, and Ben lost hope. No longer able to look downward toward the dim illumination from his light, the silty darkness around him was complete. He wished above all things to be back at his Aunt Agatha's house, watching bad action movies and plotting their next adventure. Agatha was the only parent he'd ever known. His mind rapidly cycled through moments he'd spent with her: the time she brought home his first skateboard, their first visit to Fenway Park in Boston, and the trip to California where they'd skydived together. Over and over, the events replayed in his head, bittersweet reminders of what he was going to miss.

He also cursed himself for coming to the quarry alone. It would have been so easy for him to call his two regular dive buddies, both of whom were probably sitting at home tonight with nothing to do.

I'm such an idiot.

But then Ben's left hand brushed across the dump valve located on the lower portion of his buoyancy compensator vest. As his hand closed around the plastic ball connected to the valve by a nylon cord, he prayed that pulling the cord would release air from his vest, which in turn would potentially free him from his predicament.

So, he pulled.

Immediately, Ben felt and heard air bubbles escape his vest. At first, nothing else happened, but then he detected some movement. Seconds later he could feel himself begin to float upward and away from the boulders.

He was free!

Not waiting to collect himself and forgetting everything he'd learned about the dangers of ascending too quickly toward the surface, Ben swam upward urgently. Breaking the surface in less than twenty seconds, he spit out his regulator and inhaled deeply. The calm at the surface was a welcome relief. He laid back his head and looked at the stars. Relief rushed over him.

Barely a minute after his safe return to the surface, an inflatable boat with a small outboard motor passed within inches of his head as he bobbed in the dark. Though the small boat's wake rocked him as it passed, Ben thought he could make out seven men in the boat. They were all dressed in black, and their boat had no visible running lights.

What the hell? Ben's first thought was that they were probably looking for him. He quickly became concerned that someone from the sheriff's office had seen his truck and that he was going to get into trouble.

Confirming his fears, the small inflatable came about and steered directly at him. Before he thought to react, two men sitting at the bow reached down to grab him, yanking him from the water easily despite all his SCUBA gear.

Lying on his back amid the legs of the seven men, Ben felt the boat turn north and begin motoring away from the cliff into the middle

of the lake. No one spoke as they quietly motored over the rippled surface. Ben tried to sit up but was forcibly pushed back down by someone's foot on his chest.

I'm screwed.

Minutes passed. Lying on his back, wedged into the bow of the small boat, Ben's eyes had yet to adjust, and he could see very little beyond the legs around him. Only the small boat's motor penetrated the eerie silence. His air tank pressed painfully into his spine and the relief he'd experienced only minutes ago had completely dissipated.

"Can I please sit up," Ben sputtered, his lower lip trembling. This time one of the men closest to him drew a knife and held it inches from Ben's face. The blade glinted in what little light was available. *Oh, shit. These aren't cops.* He shivered as warm urine ran down the inside of his wetsuit's legs.

Looking around, he could see that all seven of the men were wearing SCUBA gear. The sheen of water on their neoprene wetsuits glimmered in the moonlight. *They'd been diving too.*

When the engine cut, silence descended over the scene, broken only by the sound of the boat's own wake lapping against the hull as it caught up. Even in the dark, Ben could feel all eyes turning toward him.

"What are you doing here?" barked the man to Ben's right, who held the knife. He was much smaller than the other five. "Who is with you?"

"Where are the others?" demanded another.

Ben struggled to process what was happening. "What others?"

"Do you expect us to believe you are out here on your own?" asked the small man. "Diving at night with no one else around?"

"I didn't, I mean, I don't—" Ben stammered. "There's no one else here."

"He's just a kid," observed the man sitting at the stern. "He doesn't know anything."

A brief animated discussion arose among the other five men.

“Who could have sent him?”

“This could fuck up the entire operation.”

“We’re going to have to report back on this.”

Ben’s eyes had adjusted to the dim light, and he could see that all seven were carrying what looked like automatic rifles. *Fuck!*

“Look,” said the man piloting the boat from the stern. His neoprene hood was pulled back, and Ben could see closely cropped white hair. “Just throw him back in the water. He has nothing to report. By the time he swims his way back to shore, we’ll be long gone. He is not a threat.”

“I won’t say anything,” Ben said, beginning to feel hope.

Seconds later the small man with the knife grabbed Ben’s buoyancy compensation device. He quickly sliced through both shoulder straps before moving down to slice through the cummerbund at his waist. Another man pulled off Ben’s fins, and a third pulled his mask from his forehead.

“Listen, Shaw, you’re just a tourist on this op,” said a man to Ben’s left. He pointed at the white-haired pilot with the index finger on his right hand, which was missing beyond the first knuckle. “We have to report this to Fessler. I’m not letting anyone go until we’ve talked to him about this.”

“Jesus Christ!” the pilot exclaimed in obvious frustration. “No names. This operation is challenging enough without you all in a panic at the first sign of trouble. Get your shit together.”

“I’ll off him right now,” interjected the small man.

“The kid clearly doesn’t know anything. He’s out here alone. He’s got no idea who we are,” the pilot defended him.

“Now that you idiots used our names, we have to deal with him. Poke him in the side with that bowie knife, Bash, and throw him over.

The water's three hundred feet deep out here. No one will ever see him again."

"Wait. Please!" begged Ben, terror rising in his voice. "I didn't hear anything. I won't tell anyone anything. I promise."

"Sorry, kid," replied the white-haired man. "It looks like you were in the wrong place at the wrong time. We've got too much riding on this operation to let you go."

"Add a few more pounds to his weight harness. Without a BCD he'll sink like a rock."

Ben screamed as he was heaved by both arms onto the port side pontoon.

"Enjoy the swim," hissed the small man called Bash as he stabbed Ben in the right side, just below his ribs.

When they released his arms, Ben fell back into the water and immediately began sinking. His ears felt the increasing pressure of greater depth and he instinctively grabbed his nose to equalize his ears. The water around him got progressively colder as he sank.

Too late, Ben realized that he should be reaching down to his waist to undo his weight harness. But his arms weren't responding anymore.

Strike three, he thought, watching the moonlight disappear above him. Then his vision failed, his mouth filled with water, and he knew no more.



2

Chris Black was jarred awake as the bow of the small research vessel steered directly into an oncoming swell. He rubbed his eyes and used the palm of his hand to wipe the drool off the right side of his chin. *Jet lag sucks*, he noted to himself, not for the first time. It was only a three-hour time difference between Florida and his home out in California, but it was enough to compound his ongoing sleep deprivation.

He was sitting on a bench along the starboard gunnel, wearing his blue three-millimeter wetsuit and leaning back against his one-hundred-cubic-foot steel SCUBA tanks, which were strapped in an upright position for the ride out to the dive site. He pulled down on the bill of the blue NaMaRI hat he'd picked up in South Africa, adjusted his polarized sunglasses, and tried to go back to sleep, but the short period swell in the Atlantic resulted in a quick succession of waves slapping the hull. After banging the back of his head for the third time, Chris gave up.

Chris's colleague and childhood friend, Robert "Mac" Johnson, was sitting on the bench next to him, still sleeping. Mac's head was resting awkwardly on Chris's shoulder, mouth wide open. He and Mac

had flown into Fort Lauderdale International Airport from San Francisco the day before.

As a research scientist and the assistant director for the Center for Marine Exploration (CMEx) in Monterey, Chris often found himself conducting research in remote locations. And almost as often, his friend Mac was along for the ride. They'd grown up together in Carmel-by-the-Sea. When Chris left for college and graduate school in New England, Mac had joined the navy, ultimately earning a coveted spot with the SEALs. A wounded knee had ended Mac's military career. After completing a degree in mechanical and electrical engineering, Mac had joined Chris at the CMEx as the director of marine operations.

Around them, the rest of the divers on the vessel were a flurry of activity. The organizers of the forthcoming saturation diving mission off Key West had decided to send the team of divers north to Fort Lauderdale to participate in the day's activities with Chris, a consultant for the mission, before they started saturation training at the end of the week.

"We're still about twenty minutes out from the site. You've got plenty of time to finish getting your gear together," Chris's friend Sarah assured him with a smile when Chris tried to suppress a yawn.

Sarah Henson was a trained ecologist who now worked as a resource manager in the Florida Keys. Her blue and white hat, long-sleeve rash guard, and board shorts were all emblazoned with the logo of the federal agency she worked for. In that role, she had her hands in nearly every major marine science project in the region. She still liked to get in the field as often as possible to keep her finger on the pulse.

"Thanks," replied Chris. "We prepped all our gear last night. Couldn't sleep."

"Really? I remember you sleeping at the drop of a hat back in the day."

"Yeah, well . . . things change."

“Copy that,” said Sarah. “Maybe you can set up your cameras, then.”

“Also done,” noted Chris.

Stretching out the shoulder Mac wasn’t lying on, he added, “I guess I’ll let Mac sleep. He was up even later than I was last night, talking to his new lady friend.”

“My lady *friend*?” interjected Mac, without opening his eyes. “I’ll have you know I was regaling an extremely accomplished woman with exciting tales of our many exploits.”

“You don’t have to spend all your time with Dana talking about me, you know?” offered Chris, winking at Sarah. Dana St. Claire was former military and now worked with Mac and Chris’s colleague Hendrix as a private security consultant.

She’d been with them in the Galapagos Islands off South America when their research vessel had been hijacked by Colombian pirates. Dana had proven invaluable to their efforts in recovering the vessel and all the students on board.

“I mean, I don’t want you feeling insecure,” Chris clarified, patting Mac’s leg. Chris and Dana had shared a tender moment in the heat of battle with pirates, but once back in the States, it was clear that she and Mac had the enduring connection. Chris was very excited to see his friend so happy, but given his and Mac’s long history together, that didn’t mean he was going to make it easy.

Mac straightened his back and stretched his arms, “If it’s Tuesday it must be . . . what? Florida?”

Sarah laughed and tried to speak over the engine noise. “You’ve done quite a bit of traveling over the past few months, I guess. I’ve wanted to go to the Galapagos for a long time.”

“Yeah, the Galapagos,” answered Mac. “We barely made it out of there alive.”

“And South Africa,” continued Sarah.

“And South Africa,” repeated Mac. “Barely made it out of there, too. Plus, I don’t think we’re allowed to go back.”

From behind his sunglasses, Chris watched the other divers as Mac and Sarah were talking. Joking with Mac was as natural as breathing at this point, but he wasn't feeling particularly jovial. The trauma of the incident in the Galapagos had subsided over the past months, but the guilt he felt for allowing young students under his supervision to be victimized by pirates had lingered.

When he'd accepted the request to come help support the *Calypso I* saturation mission, Chris had realized that he wasn't yet ready to take full responsibility for a group of young scientists again. He needed more time to process the events in the Galapagos and his role in those events. He'd only accepted the request because he would be in a supporting role within a much larger program and wouldn't be directly responsible for anyone's safety.

"South Africa *and* the Galapagos?" asked Brian Nakasone. He was from San Francisco and spoke with a frankness Chris often associated with urban dwellers. He was kneeling on the bench with one knee adjusting his SCUBA regulator, his black hair closely cropped on the sides, and several inches long on top. "That's pretty cool. Guys, I'm diving with them."

"Take it easy, dude," replied Nat Gamal without looking from the large waterproof camera housing that was sitting on her lap. The large acrylic dome covering the lens was nearly as big as her head. Dyed green bangs stuck out from under a thin gray hoodie she was wearing. "Didn't you hear the guy just say they barely made it out alive?"

"*Barely* is good enough for me," said Brian, reaching up to high-five Joe Bauer, the diver standing next to him, but getting no response. Joe was looking down at his phone.

"And Joe leaves you hanging!" exclaimed Nat. "I think that says it all, dude. You're diving with us."

Chris smiled and watched them put their gear together, reviewing what he'd learned from the biographies he'd been provided. Nat Gamal and Joe Bauer both worked on fishes. Nat was originally from

Egypt, but now lived in Canada. And at five feet, five inches, she was clearly the feistiest of the group in Chris's estimation.

"Dude," said Brian, glaring at Joe.

Joe Bauer stood at least a head taller than Brian. He swiped his finger across the waterproof case covering his smartphone and pointed it toward Brian and Nat. "Have you seen this?"

"What?" replied Nat and Brian nearly simultaneously.

Joe was considerably more reserved than Nat. He was from Miami and from what Chris observed in their brief time together, he took everything he did very seriously.

"Social media around the mission are just exploding," explained Joe, turning the phone back toward himself. "This is crazy."

"I saw that last night," said Jessica Wilson. She was sitting on the other side of Mac making notes on a waterproof slate. "I didn't see anything too extreme."

Jessica was from Texas, and she was the hardest one for Chris to read. She was very quiet, even when everyone around her was having fun, choosing to focus more on her invertebrate ID books.

"Maybe not last night," replied Joe. "But this morning it's something else altogether."

The conversation stopped as the pilot cut the engines to pull up to a large yellow mooring ball. Bright morning sunlight gleaned from the ball and the calm Florida waters around it.

Sarah leaped up onto the bow of the boat and grabbed a line from the ball using a boat hook, securing it to one of four cleats. This assured that the research vessel did not have to deploy an anchor, which could be damaging to the dive site below. She then returned to the stern and faced the assembled divers to lay out the day's plan.

They were set to dive on the wreck of the *USS Roosevelt*, a former US Navy destroyer that was intentionally sunk off Fort Lauderdale two decades before to provide more opportunities for recreational SCUBA diving.

As Sarah began outlining the details of the day's dive, Chris was distracted by a bright red cigarette boat motoring directly toward them from a thousand yards away. He could see at least three large men standing on the back deck, all holding tight to the canopy covering the wheelhouse as the boat's outsized bow plowed through the swells. *They're not messing around*, he thought, wondering if they were drug runners or drunken college students. *Tourists they are not.*

When the boat was only about five hundred yards from the divers, Chris saw a patrol boat approaching quickly on an intercept course. The red boat, however, was moving much faster and easily outpaced the patrol boat, maintaining their course directly toward the divers.

A loud siren erupted from the patrol boat, followed closely by a stern voice on a bullhorn. "Vessel *Patriot*, you are in a restricted area. Come about immediately!"

Several seconds passed, during which Chris stood up and gripped the rail behind his tank. Quickly calculating the slim odds of getting everyone off the boat safely before a collision, Chris exclaimed, "Everyone down, *now!*"



3

Senator Gwendolyn Pierce slowed imperceptibly as she approached the baggage claim area at Miami International Airport. Though she was scrolling through messages on her smartphone and carrying on two separate conversations with aides walking quickly on either side of her, Pierce still had time to spot the TV news crews hovering outside the arrivals gate.

The long walk through the concourse had been free of all press. But from what she could see in front of her, there were at least six different reporters waiting on the other side of the gate, each with associated camera operators. All the cameras were rolling, and their presence had encouraged dozens of travelers to linger at baggage claim to see what was going on.

“Shit,” she muttered under her breath. “Terry, I thought you said we’d have twenty-four hours before it hit the fan in the press. I’m not ready to make a statement.”

The seventy-five-year-old junior senator from Vermont was four years into her first term in the Senate, where she worked alongside the state’s eighty-year-old senior senator and frequent presidential candidate. However, her long career as an environmentalist and anti-war

activist on the international front had established Pierce as a clear voice in the Senate despite her relative inexperience as a legislator.

Pierce wore her gray hair pulled back in a ponytail and was outfitted in her standard “uniform” of a black fleece jacket, blue jeans, and rafting sandals. “If all these wannabe cowboys are going to be walking around the Senate in bolo ties and steel-toed boots,” she’d told her incredulous aides during the campaign, “then I’m sure as hell going to stick with my own active wear. High-heeled shoes are for younger women with something to prove.”

This was the senator’s first official trip to Florida. She’d been to Orlando once, decades before, when her kids were young to visit all the theme parks, but she’d otherwise stayed away from the state.

“I’m not sure why they’re here, Senator,” replied Terry, as she frantically scrolled through messages on her own phone. “Let me see what I can find out.”

“I can’t stop moving now,” whispered Pierce, looking down as she spoke. “Those cameras are on. I’ll just have to wing it.”

“Senator!”

“Senator!”

“Senator, is it true that your committee is going to recommend no further arm sales to foreign governments?”

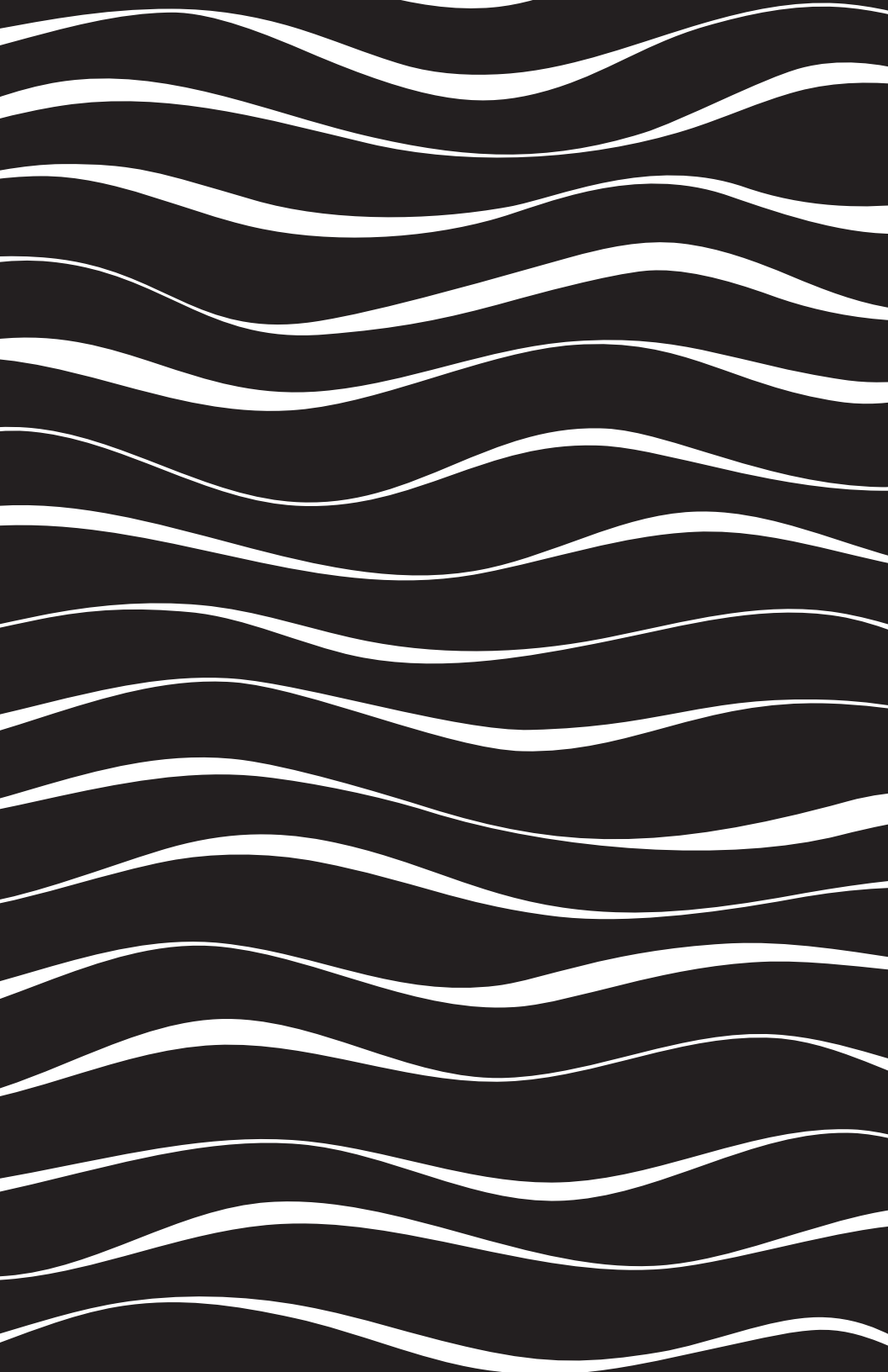
Pierce stepped through the gate and into the middle of the semi-circle created by the crowd of reporters and onlookers. The combined impact of the Miami humidity coming in through the constantly opening terminal doors and the intense glare of the camera lights instantly made her regret not removing her fleece when she stepped off the plane. She hoped that the cameras didn’t pick up on the sweat accumulating at her hairline.

“Ladies and gentlemen,” said Pierce as she held up both palms in an effort to slow the staccato assault of questions. “I’m not ready to comment on the committee’s deliberations. We may have something for you on that later this week.”

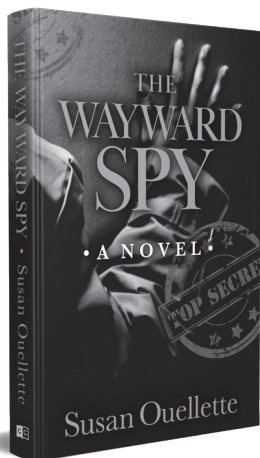
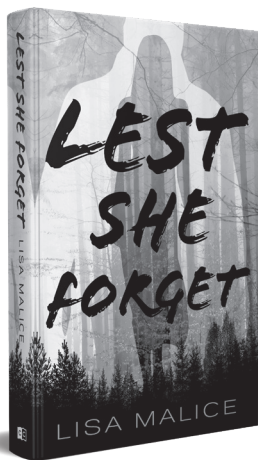
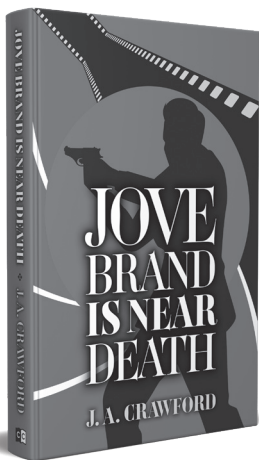
“Can you at least confirm that your recommendation will be to halt all arms sales?” asked a reporter leaning forward out of the crowd. His microphone was only inches from Pierce’s face. “How do you think that’s going to impact a defense industry that isn’t used to such constraints?”

Pierce looked around at the reporters, noticing that the camera phones being held out by the crowd now outnumbered the TV cameras by three to one.

“Later this week, people. Or perhaps this weekend. Today I’m here to support Science Without Borders, an organization, which, I’m proud to say, is a product of Vermont ingenuity and dedication to the idea that national borders will soon be a thing of the past.”

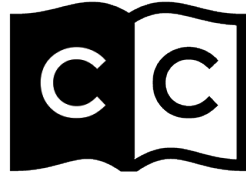


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AN UNDERSEA LABORATORY IN A VIOLENT STORM. ONLY CHRIS BLACK CAN SAVE THE MISSION GONE AWRY.

Indomitable marine biologist Chris Black arrives in Florida intending to assist young aquanauts on an internationally funded mission to *Calypso*, the new undersea laboratory deployed on the edge of a coral reef. But as online trolls jeopardize the integrity of the mission and mysterious attacks suggest that someone would prefer that *Calypso* never come up for air, Chris is called upon to join the underwater team. Already embattled by financial, political, and scientific skepticism, the mission goes awry when a tropical storm builds and threatens the safety of the scientists onboard. Will Chris be able to save the mission and everyone involved amidst a perfect storm?

In the Chris Black Adventures series, marine biologists armed with knowledge and physical prowess fight crime on the open sea and deep under the ocean's surface. Dr. James Lindholm's firsthand experience with the extreme survival conditions of underwater research missions informs all his stories.




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