

An excerpt from ALIEN by Walter Hill & Dan O'Bannon

Everyone can take a step toward this lean, spare writing style. You may not need to go this far, but if you have a problem with wordiness... take heed.

FADE IN:

SOMETIME IN THE FUTURE

INT. ENGINE ROOM 1

Empty, cavernous.

INT. ENGINE CUBICLE 2

Circular, jammed with instruments.

All of them idle.

Console chairs for two.

Empty.

INT. OILY CORRIDOR - "C" LEVEL 2-A

Long, dark.

Empty.

Turbos throbbing.

No other movement.

INT. CORRIDOR - "A" LEVEL 2-B

Long, empty.

INT. INFIRMARY - "A" LEVEL 2-C

Distressed ivory walls.

All instrumentation at rest.

INT. CORRIDOR TO BRIDGE - "A" LEVEL 3

Black, empty.

INT. BRIDGE 4

Vacant.

Two space helmets resting on chairs.

Electrical hum.

Lights on the helmets begin to signal one another.

Moments of silence.

A yellow light goes on.

Data mind bank in b.g.

Electronic hum.

A green light goes on in front of one helmet.

Electronic pulsing sounds.

A red light goes on in front of other helmet.

An electronic conversation ensues.

Reaches a crescendo.

Then silence.

The lights go off, save the yellow.

INT. CORRIDOR TO HYPERSLEEP VAULT: 4-A

Lights come on.

Seven gowns hang from the curved wall.

Vault door opens.

INT. HYPERSLEEP VAULT 5

Explosion of escaping gas.
The lid on a freezer pops open.
Slowly, groggily, KANE sits up.
Pale.
Kane rubs the sleep from his eyes.
Stands.
Looks around.
Stretches.
Looks at the other freezer compartments.
Scratches.
Moves off.

INT. GALLEY

6

Kane plugs in a Silex.
Lights a cigarette.
Coughs.
Grinds some coffee beans.
Runs some water through.

KANE

Rise and shine, Lambert.

INT. HYPERSLEEP VAULT

7

Another lid pops open.
A young woman sits up.

LAMBERT

What time is it.

KANE
(voice over)
What do you care.

INT. GALLEY

8

Pot now half-full.

Kane watches it drip.

Inhales the fragrance.

KANE
Now Dallas and Ash.
(calls out)
Good morning Captain.

DALLAS
(voice over)
Where's the coffee.

KANE
Brewing.

LAMBERT walks into the kitchen.

Pours herself a cup.

INT. HYPERSLEEP VAULT

9

Two more lids pop open.

A pair of men sit up.

Look at each other.

INT. GALLEY

10

Kane enjoys a freshly-brewed cup.

KANE

Ripley...

Another moment.

And then the sound of another lid opening.

KANE

And if we have Parker, can
Brett be far behind.

Lid opening sound.

KANE

Right.

INT. HYPERSLEEP VAULT

11

DALLAS looks at his groggy circus.

DALLAS

One of you jokers get the cat.

RIPLEY picks up a limp cat out of one of the compartments.

INT. MESS

12

The crew of the United States commercial starship Nostromo
seated around a table.

Dallas.....	Captain
Kane.....	Executive Officer
Ripley.....	Warrant Officer
Ash.....	Science Officer
Lambert.....	Navigator
Parker.....	Engineer
Brett.....	Engineering Technician
Jones.....	Cat

Five men and two women: Lambert and Ripley.

LAMBERT

Jesus am I cold.

PARKER

Still with us, Brett.

BRETT

Yo.

RIPLEY

Lucky us.

They yawn, stretch, shiver.

Dallas looks over at a flashing yellow light.

KANE

I feel dead.

Kane is not yet fully awake.

Yawns.

PARKER

You look dead.

ASH

Nice to be back.

PARKER

Before we dock maybe we'd
better go over the bonus
situation.

BRETT

Yeah.

PARKER

Brett and I think we deserve a
full share.

DALLAS

You two will get what you
contracted for. Just like
everybody else.

BRETT

Everybody else gets more than us.

DALLAS

Everybody else deserves more
than you two.

ASH

Mother wants to talk to you.

DALLAS

I saw it. Yellow light for my eyes only...Now, everybody hit their stations.

INT. COMPUTER ROOM ANNEX

13

Floor to ceiling data banks.

Another flashing yellow light.

A legend underneath.

COMMAND PRIORITY ACCESS ONLY.

Dallas enters.

Sits at his console.

Removes insignia master computer key attached to his shirt.

Plug it into the board under the light.

All banks burst into life.

Dallas punches up a computer code on the keyboard.

Legend on the screen...

What's my God damn key.

Print-out from computer answers...

01335 on the binary side.

DALLAS

Thank you Mother.

Dallas punches up the combination on the keyboard.

Immediately start getting a readout.

CUT TO:

INT. BRIDGE

14

Above eye level the room is ringed by viewscreens.

All of them blank.

Kane, Ripley, and Lambert enter.

Dallas' seat remains empty.

All of them now dressed; they find their way to individual consoles.

Ripley puts down the cat, straps herself into the high-backed chair.

KANE

Plug us in.

All three crew members begin throwing switches.

The control room starts to come to life.

Colored lights flicker.

Chase each other across glowing screens.

KANE

Give us something to look at.

Lambert presses a bank of switches.

Viewscreens glimmer into life.

LAMBERT

Take a look at this.

On each screen, blackness speckled with stars.

LAMBERT

Where's Earth.

KANE

You're the navigator.

RIPLEY

That's not our system.

KANE

Scan.

Lambert hits several toggles.

On the screens the images begin to drift.

ONE OF THE SCREENS

15

A moving image of a starfield.

EXT. NOSTROMO

16

The Factory Starship lumbering with the depths
of inter-stellar space.

Function: Petroleum tanker and Refinery.
Capacity: 2000,000,000 tons.
Length: One and one half kilometers.

Battered exterior encrusted with dark sludge.

INT. BRIDGE

17

Lambert pores over charts.

Consults her console.

Puzzled.

KANE

Contact traffic control.

Ripley switches on her transmission unit.

RIPLEY

This is commercial vessel Nostromo.
Registration number 180246. Do
you read me. Over.

Nothing but the hiss of static.

RIPLEY

Nothing.

KANE

Keep trying.

Turns to Lambert.

Ripley attempting transmission in b.g.

KANE

You got a reading yet.

LAMBERT

We're way out in the boondocks here...

KANE

Keep trying...

LAMBERT

Working on it.

Eureka.

LAMBERT

Found it.

KANE

Hard to believe.

LAMBERT

What the hell are we doing out here.

KANE

What are you talking about.

RIPLEY

It's not our system.