

= Small Victories =

" Small Victories " is the first episode from season four of the science fiction television series Stargate SG @-@ 1 . Penned by Robert C. Cooper and directed by Martin Wood , the episode first aired on the American subscription channel Showtime on June 30 , 2000 . " Small Victories " resumes the story of the season 3 finale , " Nemesis " , in which the SG @-@ 1 team encountered the Replicators for the first time . As the Replicators threaten Earth and the Asgard home galaxy , the team must split to master their job .

" Small Victories " was another visual effects milestone for the series . The Replicators and the Asgard character Thor were computer @-@ animated for parts of the episode . Some scenes were filmed in and outside of a Russian Foxtrot class submarine . " Small Victories " was nominated for Best Special Effects in 2001 for an Emmy , a Gemini Award and a Leo Award .

= = Plot = =

Confident that the destruction of Thor 's starship has ended the Replicator threat to Earth (" Nemesis ") , the SG @-@ 1 team returns home through the second Stargate that has been put up at Stargate Command . Shortly after they learn that a Russian Foxtrot class submarine has been hijacked by creatures whose descriptions match the Replicators , Thor arrives at Stargate Command and asks SG @-@ 1 for help against the Replicators in the Asgard galaxy . As Colonel O 'Neill (Richard Dean Anderson) , Daniel Jackson (Michael Shanks) and Teal 'c (Christopher Judge) go to deal with the hijacked submarine , Major Carter (Amanda Tapping) goes with Thor .

O 'Neill , Daniel , and Teal 'c try to obtain intelligence on the little self @-@ replicating robotic invaders in the submarine , but they are forced to fall back . With Daniel 's new theory that the Replicators are made up of the same materials they consume , the Replicators may be eliminated through sinking the iron submarine as long as the surviving Replicator from Thor 's advanced ship is destroyed beforehand . Meanwhile , Carter witnesses a short battle against the Replicators in the Asgard galaxy during which five Asgard ships are lost . Carter notices the Replicators ' attraction to new technology and proposes to use the O 'Neill , an incomplete Asgard ship originally designed to fight the Replicators , as a lure to draw the Replicators into hyperspace and destroy them in the O 'Neill 's self @-@ destruct . Thor eventually accepts the plan , the Replicators take the bait and are destroyed .

Back on Earth , O 'Neill and Teal 'c penetrate the submarine and find and destroy the original Replicator . When the other Replicators take full control of the submarine , O 'Neill orders the forces outside to destroy the submarine and prepares for the end , but Thor beams the team onto his ship before the explosion occurs . With the imminent Replicator threat over , Thor promises that when the Asgard defeat the Replicators , he will come to assist Earth in the war against the Goa 'uld .

= = Production = =

= = Writing and pre @-@ production = = =

Visual effects supervisor James Tichenor approached producer Robert C. Cooper after the completion of the season 3 finale , " Nemesis " , and stated his confidence in his team 's ability to create effects for a water @-@ based episode . By that time , Cooper had already written the outline of " Small Victories " as the season 4 opener . " Small Victories " resumes the cliffhanger ending of " Nemesis " and alludes to events of that episode several times . The episode begins aboard a Russian submarine where one Russian says in his mother tongue that the noise in the torpedo tube might be caused by " one of the bugs from the other episode " , an in @-@ joke that the producers intentionally left without subtitles . Daniel Jackson 's appendicitis attack from " Nemesis " is picked up , which was originally based on Michael Shanks ' real @-@ life appendicitis attack during the filming of the penultimate season 3 episode . " Small Victories " also continues building the

relationship of O'Neill and Carter in mirroring a similar scene from " Nemesis " . However , Christopher Judge , who in previous seasons sported a bald @-@ shaven head as the alien Teal'c , returned to the set with a small blond chin beard after the hiatus , as the producers had not allowed his character to have scalp hair (until season 8) . Judge shaved off the beard several episodes later after acknowledging its look as silly . The official Showtime website initially caused some confusion by listing Jay Acovone (Kawalsky) as a guest @-@ star in this episode , which later turned out to be untrue .

= = = Filming = = =

" Small Victories " was filmed over the course of seven days like most SG @-@ 1 episodes . After the first three seasons of Stargate SG @-@ 1 had been filmed on 16 mm film (except for shots incorporating visual effects , where experience had shown 35 mm to work better) , " Nemesis " was filmed entirely on 35 mm film as a test run , and season 4 switched to the new gauge for all filming purposes .

Martin Wood directed " Small Victories " and made a short cameo appearance with Sergeant Siler (stunt coordinator Dan Shea) in an SGC corridor . Andy Mikita served as the second unit director and filmed the coverage of the practical Thor puppet after Amanda Tapping 's coverage had been shot . Michael Shanks , who provided the voice of Thor in post @-@ production ADR , read some of Thor 's lines for Tapping on @-@ set . The top lip of the Thor puppet , which was visibly broken during the filming , proved a challenge . One anecdotal bloop moment that Amanda Tapping often tells at conventions and which producer Joseph Mallozzi named one of his favorites in the first five years of Stargate SG @-@ 1 , is that of the puppeteers raising Thor 's hand to touch Tapping 's behind during filming . Tapping instinctively slapped the expensive prop , then she knelt down and apologized to the puppet in all seriousness before realizing the silliness of her reaction .

" Small Victories " is split into two parallel storylines , and several space shots of the B story onboard Thor 's spaceship were cut at the script stage to allot more money to the A story submarine scenes . " Small Victories " was originally written to set on a fishing trawler until the producers got access to a real Russian Foxtrot class submarine , which was brought from Vladivostok to Vancouver , Canada , where Stargate SG @-@ 1 was filmed . Several scenes were filmed in and outside of the submarine for two days . A matching set with removable walls was built later on because only three film crew members could fit into the real 25 @-@ feet @-@ wide submarine . To enhance the submarine 's narrowness , Martin Wood lit the ship with the actors ' helmet lights and chose an agitated shooting style , holding the shots tight and handholding some of the cameras himself . The logistics of the submarine filming proved difficult and time @-@ consuming , since the computer @-@ generated Replicators needed to appear on Daniel 's playback monitors in advance of filming . One scripted scene in which a Replicator piece is removed from Teal'c's shoulder was trimmed on @-@ set because the actors felt it to be redundant .

= = = Effects = = =

" Small Victories " surpassed " Nemesis " as the biggest visual @-@ effects @-@ heavy Stargate SG @-@ 1 episode and remained one of biggest visual effects works of the season . Nevertheless , the limited budget required the major Computer @-@ generated imagery (CGI) moments to be chosen well . The opening sequence of the Asgard ship flying over the ocean until its crash into the water was completely computer @-@ generated , as was the Asgard homeworld at a later point in the episode . The finetuning of the lighting of the Asgard homeworld , which was blended with a matte painting of Asgard space ships in the sky , was the most difficult job . To save costs , the moments before Thor 's entry to the SGC were stockshots of the Stargate , and the illusion of a Stargate event horizon behind Thor in the following scenes was created with an LCD projection . Although a computer @-@ generated version of Thor was built around the puppet for independent movements , the CGI version 's walking down the Stargate ramp was intercut with filmed shots of the puppet put on a trike .

Visual effects producer James Tichenor claimed that visual effects work better when not highlighted , and that a major part of effective visual effects are the actors ' reactions to nonexistent things . Replicator models were used to give the actors an idea at what they were looking and to match their eyelines . One model was mounted on a plexiglass rod and shown on @-@ screen , giving the impression of an organic Replicator hologram . The computer @-@ generated Replicators on board the submarine were tracked with small lights , some of which post @-@ production left in for good looks . The reflections of the green screen on the floor aboard Thor 's ship (" green spill " , usually an undesired side effect) were used to key selective patches for the reflection of the big spaceship screen .

= = Reception = =

" Small Victories " was first broadcast on June 30 , 2000 on Showtime . SG @-@ 1 visual effects producer James Tichenor considered the few episodes with big visual effects budgets the most likely works to contain visual cues that impress Academy of Television Arts & Sciences (Emmy Awards) voters , but he feared that the 2000 submarine feature film U @-@ 571 might spoil expectations . " Small Victories " and the SG @-@ 1 season 4 finale " Exodus " were nominated for a 2001 Emmy in the category " Outstanding Special Visual Effects for a Series " , but they lost to Star Trek : Voyager 's " Endgame " . " Small Victories " was also nominated for a Gemini Award and a Leo Award in the respective " Best Visual Effects " categories , but failed to win either .

In his book *Approaching the Possible* , Jo Storm considered " Small Victories " " one of the most enthralling episodes " that makes the audience forget that it used nearly the same premise that was used in " Nemesis " . He thought the episode was " especially big on the Sam / Jack dynamic " as the characters " toe the line between fraternal teasing and downright chemistry " . He saluted Amanda Tapping 's comedic opportunities and called her character 's reaction to Asgard food " priceless " . He also noted the character development of Daniel Jackson in a military environment , contrasting it with the character 's attitude in the season 1 episode " Thor 's Hammer " where his military mind was less developed .