

DOWN TO EARTH

1        **EXT. ENGLAND. SUTTON MANOR WOODLAND - DAY**

1

CAPTION: ENGLAND. ST HELENS. 2040.

Stretching grassland littered with plastic wrappers and empty ale cans. At the centre, a sculpture of a huge white head cuts into the sky - 'The Dream'.

Up in the sky, a strange silvery smoke trail is glistening.

The sounds don't match the scenery - vague beeps and keyboard clacking are audible, as well as -

MISSION CONTROL (V.O.)

Mission Control to the U.S.

Reflect, do you copy? What's happening up there?

A pair of denim-clad legs are running through the grass, crushing rubbish and cigarette butts beneath them.

ROBERT BYERS (V.O.)

This is Robert Byers of the U.S.

Reflect to Mission Control. Seems like we might'a hit something on the way up.

2        **EXT. TENNYSON STREET - DAY**

2

Terraced houses with plywood windows and mismatched fronts line the street. It's still. The ruins of a factory in the distance.

MISSION CONTROL (V.O.)

Mission Control to Robert; Hit what?

ALEX, (16) has dwarfism, is wearing a geeky t shirt, and is currently panting heavily, hair all over the place. She's carrying a couple of physics textbooks. She rounds the derelict pub on the corner and heads down a side street.

The huge metal gate that closes off the houses' snicket has been smashed in. Alex screeches to a halt.

ROBERT BYERS

A satellite maybe? Mission compromised, we're way off course -

The line crackles until inaudible.

Alex looks up, catches sight of the silvery sky trail and pauses for a moment, concerned.

But then she shakes it off and slides through the gap in the doors, pulling her rucksack through after her...

3           **EXT. TENNYSON STREET SNICKET - DAY**

3

... And turning to push through piles of rotting bin bags.

She checks her phone - 16:58.

ALEX

Aw, nononono...

4           **INT. THE LIVING ROOM - DAY**

4

The living room is quiet, outdated. Artex walls, an old gas fireplace is switched on.

Photographs hang along the wall. One of a young woman, her clothes indicating the late 90s, graduating. Another, the same woman, standing in front of the NASA logo with a certificate.

Then another, the same woman, looking worn, and a man holding a baby. Their wedding photo, the baby grows into a woman. The two women stand together with two new small children, an older boy and a younger girl.

The next photo on the wall is of the first woman, old now, with a young Alex. Together, they hold a model rocket and a trophy aloft in triumph. Then one of Alex alone, receiving a school physics prize.

Alex crashes through the door from the kitchen. She kicks off her muddy trainers.

ALEX

I'm back! Sorry! The trains are off again!

JAMES (O.S.)

For fucks' sake, Alex! I've got stuff to do and you should've been here twenty minutes ago!

ALEX walks to the foot of the stairs.

ALEX

Alright then mardy-arse! I'm here now, I'll take over. What are you doing up there?

JAMES (O.S.)

Getting dressed.

Alex looks around the living room again - at the cup of tea steaming on the window-ledge.

ALEX

She's not up there with you?

JAMES, (25), a skinny man with a downturned mouth, wearing a crumpled supermarket uniform shirt over tracksuit bottoms, appears at the top of the stairs.

JAMES

She stopped being my problem twenty minutes ago!

They fall silent, eyes locked.

There's a faint mumbling outside the window, and Alex hears it, turns to it.

She can see figures moving through the net curtains.

The front door is ever so slightly ajar. Alex pushes it open and sees...

5

**EXT. THE FRONT GARDEN - DAY**

5

MR THOMPSON and MR RUDDS, two suited men in their late 30s, crossing the road from their smart black car.

They're walking towards MOTHER, a wiry old woman in her 70s, who's standing in the front garden. The same old woman from the photographs.

She's shaking, wide-eyed, backing towards the house.

Mr Thompson speeds up, getting closer.

MR THOMPSON

Are you alright? Let me...

Alex launches herself from the front door, in her socks, between Mother and Mr Thompson.

ALEX

Back off! She's got dementia!

Way in the distance, there's a faint thundering sound. It's only getting louder.

Mother's freaked out by Alex's shouting, she's scrambling to get out from behind her. Alex takes her hands firmly.

MOTHER

No!

ALEX

You need to come inside!

MOTHER

They've made a terrible mistake!

Alex tries to lead the old lady inside.

Mr Thompson's still crossing the road, but he's slowed right down. He shares a look with Mr Rudds, waiting by their car. Mr Rudds gives the slightest of nods.

MR THOMPSON

You sure you can manage, getting her inside?

Alex glares at the implication.

ALEX

I'm perfectly capable, thanks.

But Mr Thompson continues edging towards them, almost at the pavement.

Alex ignores him - looking straight at Mother.

ALEX (CONT'D)

(Soothing)

I'm sorry for shouting.

Mother responds to the change of tack, calming and relaxing.

MOTHER

You look just like my granddaughter.

ALEX

I'll bet I do!

Alex and Mother are almost at the door. Alex looks back and is surprised to see Mr Thompson still following. Then his eyes flicker to the sky, towards the thundering noise.

CRASH.

And then there's rubble. Dust. Screams.

A huge chunk of satellite has smashed to the earth just feet from them.

Alex. Mother. Mr Rudds. Mr Thompson. All their faces, shocked but still standing, fine.

Until Mr Thompson opens his mouth and blood dribbles out.

He looks down at the shard of panel piercing his abdomen, paws at it weakly.

MR RUDDS

Thompson!

But the crash has created a crater in the centre of the road, separating them.

Mr Thompson goes down on his knees, hard. He stares up at Alex - she could reach him.

MR RUDDS (CONT'D)

Help him!

Alex stares desperately between Mr Thompson and Mother, who's wide-eyed with fright again, but so close to the door.

MR RUDDS (CONT'D)

HELP HIM!

More space debris has started to drop around them, crashing into the ground. Mr Thompson is still out in the open, unprotected.

Alex takes a step towards him.

ALEX

I'm sorry.

She grabs Mother suddenly by the wrist and pulls her into the house, Mr Rudds' wails of rage muffled as she slams the door shut behind them.

6

**INT. THE LIVING ROOM - DAY**

6

Alex pulls Mother - who's struggling to get away from her - away from the door.

ALEX

I need you to calm down.

MOTHER

Those people are still out there!

Alex snaps the curtains shut without looking out of the window. Mother looks dazed.

ALEX

(To James)

Why didn't you come out and help?

James is scrabbling with his headphones, unplugging and plugging them into his phone.

JAMES

My phone's gone off... I've got candy to crush!

ALEX

We could have died!

JAMES

What, walking in from the garden?

ALEX

What are you-- (talking about?)

Frustrated, she grabs the TV remote and switches it on. Static.

Another. Another. Static. Static. Over and over again, she flicks through channels, until one flashes colour.

7

**INT. A TV NEWS STUDIO - DAY**

7

Your typical newsroom, but something's not right. None of the digital screens are on. Frantic journalists can be seen through the large glass walls behind the sombre NEWSREADER.

NEWSREADER

... and officials say the cause of this ongoing crisis is unkno--  
(unknown)

8 INT. THE LIVING ROOM - DAY 8

The TV screen goes black.

9 INT. A DOCTOR'S WAITING ROOM - DAY 9

People can be seen running around, frantic, bloody. Nobody notices the TV screen go black there.

10 INT. GOVERNMENT MEETING ROOM - DAY 10

There's a wall of TV screens here, each trained on a different channel. One by one, they each blip to black, too.

MR HATTON, (50s) with smart grey hair and an expensive suit, watches each screen go out. A GOVERNMENT ASSISTANT (30s) panting, sweaty, runs up to him.

GOVERNMENT ASSISTANT

The Americans have confirmed it was their 'climate change cure-all' rocket, sir, the thing with the spray. Knocked a satellite on the way up, caused a chain reaction.

Mr Hatton sighs and starts walking out into the...

11 INT. GOVERNMENT OFFICES - CONTINUOUS 11

... corridor. The government assistant follows.

MR HATTON

Keep the official line - we don't know the cause. And the effects?

GOVERNMENT ASSISTANT

All planes are grounded. Fibre internet can't withstand the surge in traffic. And - and all currencies appear to be crashing.

MR HATTON

Casualties?

GOVERNMENT ASSISTANT

Too soon to know how many.

MR HATTON

How long until the food supply chain breaks down?



GOVERNMENT ASSISTANT  
Problems already being reported.

They reach a large wooden door. One hand on the handle, Mr Hatton turns to the government assistant.

MR HATTON  
But the launch was successful?  
Climate emergency over?

A bead of sweat rolls down the government assistant's head and splashes onto the carpet.

GOVERNMENT ASSISTANT  
NASA are saying they lost contact  
with the rocket, sir. Mission  
incomplete.

Mr Hatton purses his lips and turns the door handle.

GOVERNMENT ASSISTANT (CONT'D)  
Good luck, Prime Minister.

12

**INT. THE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

12

It's dark outside. The sounds of crashing and screaming and chaos go on in the distance.

Alex has cups of tea in each hand. She gives one to Mother, now sitting in her armchair, and sits on the floor beside it with her own. After a moment, a wizened hand begins to stroke her hair.

MOTHER  
You see that big silvery trail in  
the sky today, petal?

Alex nods.

MOTHER (CONT'D)  
That's how I knew they'd made a  
mistake.  
(BEAT. She looks to the  
pictures of her younger  
self.)  
I had a scholarship with NASA  
before your Mum was born.

Alex smiles.

ALEX

You used to talk about it all the time.

MOTHER

That trail in the sky leaked from a specific type of rocket. It was designed to spray reflective mist into the outer atmosphere, make the solar radiation bounce. It doesn't fix climate change, but it gives us time.

ALEX

What does that have to do with all the satellites crashing?

Alex looks up at Mother. Mother looks down at Alex, completely lucid.

MOTHER

For years, higher-ups barely recognised the climate emergency. Ignored our warnings about the satellites. With so many in orbit, all could take was for one rocket to hit one satellite; the pieces of that satellite take out another, then another.

(Beat)

I took them a solution to both problems, long-term, but it was too much work, I was too junior, excuses, excuses.

She carefully puts her cup of tea on the window-ledge, beside the cold one, from earlier. She smiles down at Alex.

Behind them, James enters and dips a hand under the sofa.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

My plan would still work. And I've kept it all safe upstairs.

She taps a quivering finger to her temple. Then double-takes at Alex.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

You know, you look just like my granddaughter.

Alex's face falls. James snorts.

He pulls a box from under the sofa and tips it out. A few jars of pills roll onto the floor. He lines them up neatly under the TV.

JAMES

She's all set for a few months  
anyway.

The jars of pills look infinite...

CUT TO:

13      **INT. THE LIVING ROOM - 3 MONTHS LATER**

13

... Until they're not.

Just a few pills remain at the bottom of one jar.

The living room looks different. Mother is still in her chair but the windows are boarded up, sunlight peeping through the cracks. The front door has been padlocked. Most of the furniture, including the TV, is gone.

ALEX (O.S.)

Have you got the ladder?

James walks through the living room and up the stairs, tall ladder on his shoulder. He's unkempt, thinner.

14      **INT. THE LANDING - DAY**

14

He meets Alex at the top of the stairs. She's got torches and bags.

JAMES

(Sarcastic, of the ladder)

Holy shit, where did this come  
from?

Alex's stomach gurgles.

ALEX

Ugh, I could murder some chicken  
nuggets.

JAMES

Not sure there'll be many of those  
in the attic...

ALEX

There has to be something up there  
we can trade with.

(Beat)

And we'll need more than just food  
this time.

15

**INT. THE ATTIC - DAY**

15

A shaft of light from the hatch into the attic illuminates  
Alex and James, moving around amongst boxes.

James stops and dips his hand into one. Rummages.

JAMES

There's a load of old wires in  
here. Might get something for them.

Alex keeps walking.

Something juts out into her path. She trips and lands hard.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Alex?

A new shaft of light where she fell. James hurries over.

Alex is pointing her torch at what tripped her up. A  
beautiful old wooden rocking horse.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Not valuable, but it'll do as  
firewood.

(He walks away)

Watch yourself.

Alex scrambles to her feet and grabs the rocking horse. She  
starts dragging it towards the attic hatch.

JAMES (CONT'D)

There's a decent toolbox over here,  
pretty complete.

Alex is distracted, watching her brother as he pulls at  
boxes. He picks up something small, his face lights up, but  
he stays silent.

Alex puts the horse down quietly and approaches him. He has a  
jewellery box.

ALEX

What's that?

JAMES

Oh, not sure, doesn't look like much.

ALEX

Open it.

He does. There are several nice necklaces and bracelets inside. Alex lights up.

ALEX (CONT'D)

I knew we'd find something up here!

She turns around to go back to the rocking horse and misses James' strange expression.

JAMES

Yeah. Perfect timing.

As Alex gets back to the horse, the extra light shining through the hatch illuminates a few sheets of paper trapped underneath it.

She leans down and grabs them.

Handwritten notes on yellowed paper, dated 1998. We make out a few words- 'solar reflectors', 'satellites', 'global warming'.

Alex retraces her steps back to where the rocking horse was and sees some notebooks have fallen into the empty space.

She kneels down and begins going through them.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Found something good?

ALEX

These notebooks... they're Mother's notebooks...

She's pulling more and more out from where they fell.

ALEX (CONT'D)

When she said her plans were upstairs, I didn't think she meant literally.

She picks up one particular book and studies a couple of the pages.

ALEX (CONT'D)

This could work... could change the world! We need to get these to somebody in charge, get them to admit what's really happened...

(Beat)

She might've saved us all!

The notebook is pulled out of her hands. She looks up. James is holding it.

JAMES

No. She hasn't.

**END OF PART ONE.**

**PART TWO**

16

**INT. THE ATTIC - DAY**

16

Alex and James still stand in deadlock, both clasping an end of the notebook. The beam of light from the attic entrance shines up between them, illuminating their faces.

James yanks at it.

JAMES

You can't show this to anybody!

Alex yanks at it.

ALEX

It might save the world!

JAMES

Oh, yeah, 'listen Mr President, our dementia addled grandma wrote a plan to stop the apocalypse back in the 90s. Want a read?'

Alex freezes just long enough for James to pull the book out of her hands.

JAMES (CONT'D)

They'd have to take you seriously for a start. That's if they weren't too busy looking for the rest of the circus--

ALEX

(In)

Say freaks. I fucking dare you.

They stare each other down. Alex breaks first, stares at the notebook.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Those plans make sense - Mother worked at NASA, she--

JAMES

(In)

She was an exchange student! A scholarship! Then she moved home, had a kid and never worked again! Don't you hear how that sounds?

ALEX

I'll make someone listen!

JAMES

And if you do, what then? A bunch  
of politicians come and interrogate  
her, upset her, over some  
scribbles?

He opens the book and starts tearing out page after page,  
letting them flutter to the ground. Alex starts scrabbling at  
them.

Abruptly, the shaft of light from downstairs goes out and  
lands the pair in darkness.

Somewhere downstairs, Mother begins crying, calling out.

A torch flashes on. James is holding it.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Power's out more often than it's on  
nowadays. Come on. We found enough.

He throws the notebook aside and scoops up his finds from the  
attic before heading down, taking the torch with him. The  
light from it just barely still illuminates the attic.

Alex watches after him for just a second before she snatches  
up the notebook and a load of the pages.

Then she, too, clambers through the hole in the floor and  
bobs out of sight.

As the attic door closes, it creates the smallest breeze that  
ruffles just one forgotten page, still on the floor nearby.

17

**EXT. THE STREET - DAY**

17

The whole street is dark, streetlights and windows black. A  
shadow ducks along the line of the houses.

People with candles and torches can be seen emerging further  
down the street. They head for other houses. Breaking glass  
and screaming fills the air.

We follow the shadow, ducking from house to house, as it gets  
closer to the noise. It's Alex.

She watches from the corner of one house as two masked  
figures with backpacks, armed with bats and bars, try to  
smash into a garage door.



From the house beside them, another masked figure, BILL BRIGSTOCK, (48), drags a bloody, screaming man, LEWIS WITHERS (42), by his hair.

LEWIS

Bill, come on! What are you doing?  
Bill--

BILL

(Shouting to the other  
masked men)  
He's got the key on him!

LEWIS

--You were at my kids' birthday, we  
swap Christmas cards!

Bill drags Lewis over to the door and the two other masked men step aside.

BILL

Open it.

LEWIS

But--

Bill kicks him, hard, in the stomach. He yelps, then digs in his pocket for a loop of keys. He fumbles at the garage door, but eventually gets it open.

There's a visible glint of supplies in the garage. Lined shelves. All three men rush in and begin grabbing things, filling the backpacks.

LEWIS (CONT'D)

You can't steal from me!

BILL

Call the police. See if they come!

BILL (CONT'D)

(To the masked men)  
Next house is just one old girl,  
should be easy.

Backpacks full, they move off to the house next door. Bill hangs back for just a moment, the baseball bat in his hand.

He spray paints a red 'Z' on the door. Then he walks purposefully towards Lewis, writhing on the lawn. Bill lifts the baseball bat to swing...

BILL (CONT'D)

This is for 'borrowing' my big ladders.

We hear Lewis' scream cut short with a dull thud as Alex runs back up the street, hood up.

She pauses outside a boarded up front door and begins to spray paint herself. When she moves off, the dim moonlight reveals it to be a red 'Z'.

18

**INT. THE LIVING ROOM - DAY**

18

James is lighting candles around the room, all out of the reach of Mother, who is still in her chair and has tear tracks down her face.

He flops down onto the sofa and lies back. After a few moments, he starts to softly snore.

Alex lets herself into the room, through the door from the back again. She starts removing several layers of coats, which are soaked.

MOTHER

Alex, love, are you okay?

ALEX

I'm safe, don't worry.

MOTHER

But are you okay?

James wakes up with a start. Alex and Mother both jump.

ALEX

The raid's out tonight. They're tagging places with a red Z.

JAMES

Did you do us?

ALEX

(Sarcastically)

No, I thought I'd let them murder us and take our stuff!

JAMES

Bill hasn't got murder in him!

ALEX

No?

(Beat)

Snuff those candles, you can see  
them from outside.

JAMES

Who died and made you king of the  
room?

Alex huffs and starts ambling round the living room,  
extinguishing candles. We can hear Bill and his mates getting  
closer outside.

Alex sees Mother looking up at her. She presses a single  
finger to her lips, and with the other hand, snuffs out the  
last flame.

BLACK.

Knock, knock, knock.

19

**INT. THE BACK DOOR - DAY**

19

The door swings open to reveal RAAHI, (24) a scruffy looking  
man wearing a tattered version of the same supermarket  
uniform shirt that James was wearing. He's jumpy, checking  
around himself.

Alex looks him up and down bemusedly.

ALEX

Nothing else to wear?

RAAHI

Not since my house burned down, no.

ALEX

(Into the house)

James! Raahi's here!

They stand in silence for a minute, either side of the  
threshold.

ANNIE

Want to come in?

RAAHI

No thanks.

James appears in the kitchen behind Alex.

JAMES

Mate!

He shoves past Alex and gives Raahi a hug.

Alex starts to leave the kitchen, but a few words of her brother's conversation are audible.

RAAHI  
You got enough then?

JAMES  
(Glancing at Alex over his  
shoulder)  
Yeah. Enough for both of us.

20

**INT. THE LIVING ROOM - DAY**

20

Mother's in the living room, stretched out on the sofa, shakily reading a book. She looks up as Alex enters.

MOTHER  
That lad's too old to have friends  
calling for him.

ALEX  
Nice to have friends at all, these  
days.

She drops onto the floor beside the sofa and pulls out Mother's ripped old notebook from underneath.

Mother's face lights up.

MOTHER  
My blueprints!

She pulls one towards herself, across the floor.

MOTHER (CONT'D)  
(Re: the blueprint)  
See, the reflective surface here,  
that does the same job as their  
rocket spray... and with an  
organised network of them around  
the world, bouncing the UV rays  
back into the atmosphere... well,  
it's a better solution to both  
problems.

ALEX  
Why did you stop working?

This makes Mother pause for a minute, to look at her granddaughter.

MOTHER

Cockle.

(Beat)

I wish I could say things were different back then, but they're the same as ever. You're just a girl, then you're just a mum, then you're just an old woman. The boys' club dismiss you.

(Beat)

Especially if you don't look or sound like them. Posh nobs.

She pauses to stroke Alex's hair.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

I gave up trying to make them listen. But you won't - you'll shout 'til they hear you anyway.

Alex falls into her arms and cuddles in, breathing in her hair.

ALEX

I missed you.

MOTHER

Where've I been?

A squeak as the door handle from the kitchen turns.

Alex jumps up and hides all the notebook pages in her coat pocket just as James comes into the living room.

JAMES

Yeah, grab your coat. We'll lock her in and go to the market now.

MOTHER

I am here, you know.

James ignores her and grabs his own coat from under Alex's.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

Were you born in a barn? Shut--  
[that door]

JAMES

(In)

Oh, shut up, you stupid old woman!

Mother shrinks back.

ALEX

Don't talk to her like that!

JAMES

We're going now. Get the stuff.

21      **EXT. TENNYSON STREET - DAY**

21

There's a view of the gated snicket entrance through a car window. Somebody's watching.

James pops out of the gate. He stops in the street and pulls the jewellery box he found out of his pocket. He scoops a few glittering pieces out, considers them in the daylight, then tucks them away separately.

Alex pops out of the gate beside him.

JAMES

Let's split this now. And don't get it out at the market unless you have to.

ALEX

I'm 16, not stupid.

JAMES

Could have fooled me.

He opens the jewellery box again and dumps a couple of necklaces into her open hands.

Through the car window, we see her tuck her share into her own pockets.

Alex and James walk off down the street as the person in the car makes a call, the dial tone purring.

22      **INT. THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE - DAY**

22

The phone is ringing.

Mr Hatton sits at his desk with his head in his hands. The windows are boarded up here, too, but the furniture is as luxurious as ever. He's not lost weight - in fact, he might even have put a little on.

There's jeering and chanting coming from outside. It sounds like it's from a huge crowd.

The cheering and the ringing are overwhelming, scary.

Mr Hatton heaves a sigh and picks up the phone.

MR HATTON

What is it?

He pauses as someone on the other end of the line speaks. Whatever they say makes him perk up slightly.

MR HATTON (CONT'D)

Follow them. Find out how much she's told them.

23      **EXT. TOWN CENTRE - DAY**

23

James is striding along a pavement, Alex chasing along behind him, struggling with the toolbox.

Somewhere in the background, we might make out a car, crawling the pavement some distance behind them.

24      **EXT. THE MARKET - DAY**

24

James and Alex make it to the entrance of the market, which is a kind of car boot sale, in an old car park.

James stops and turns to Alex.

JAMES

Said I'd meet up with Raahi. I'll find you at the medicine place.

ALEX

Yeah, sounds good.

He nods to her and strides off amongst the stalls.

Alex wanders in and the noise of buying and selling gets louder.

There are several stalls for candles, for canned food and for clothes. Lots of the stall holders are shady characters, BILL amongst them. Most of what they're selling looks stolen, but nobody in the market looks twice, least of all Alex.

Somebody's watching her again, their view slightly obscured by the throngs of people, as she swaps the tools, and the toolbox, for an armful of tinned food, which she stuffs into her rucksack.

They're still watching, as she meanders towards the back of the car park, throwing more and more sidelong glances as she does.

Whoever it is can see as she approaches a particular market stall.

25

**EXT. THE MARKET STALL - DAY**

25

Alex can't stop glancing around as she sidles up to a mostly empty table. The only thing on it is a slip of paper.

The STALL HOLDER from the table beside her, 40s, hiding beneath a hood, is eyeing her with interest.

STALL HOLDER

You need medical information, hun?  
I can get you a meeting with a  
proper GP here, qualified and all.

Alex shakes her head, avoiding eye contact, and looks down at the paper. It says; 'Price On Request'.

Behind the table, a large man's rear is protruding from the back of a car.

ALEX

Erm, excuse me?

The behind stays where it is, wobbling slightly.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Any time today mate!

The head of the person in the car shoots up and hits the car roof with a clang. They yelp, and turn.

MR GOYLES is in his 50s, gaunt, like he's lost a lot of weight very quickly, but he's still a large man, in height as well as weight.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Mr Goyles! Didn't recognise you!  
(Beat, ashamed)  
Sorry sir.

But Mr Goyles laughs.

MR GOYLES

You don't have to call me sir any  
more Alex. Nobody does.



ALEX

Nobody?

MR GOYLES

Even if there were funds for IT  
teachers, what would be the point?  
The tech industry's dead.

Alex squirms, glances into the back of Mr Goyles' car -  
there's a crumpled duvet on the backseat.

MR GOYLES (CONT'D)

So, young lady, what can I do you  
for?

ALEX

I need some medications for my  
grandmother. Here.

She hands him a list and glances around again at the other  
nearby stalls.

Mr Goyles takes her in before he eyes what's written and his  
face tightens.

MR GOYLES

Serious stuff, eh? Lay out what  
you've got to trade and I'll see  
what I've got.

He ducks under the table and can be heard rifling through  
boxes.

Alex begins laying her jewellery on the table. The other  
stall holder's eyes nearly pop out of his skull.

MR GOYLES (CONT'D)

So what else were you hoping to  
find on this side of the market?

ALEX

Pardon?

MR GOYLES

You're hardly subtle trying to  
check out the other stalls. What do  
you need?

He pops his head up from under the table and looks at her.

ALEX

I need to speak to somebody... from  
the government.

MR GOYLES

Jeez Alex, I've heard they barely see those shysters in the capital. I doubt you're going to find them here.

(Re: the medicine)

It's not down here, let me just check the car.

He turns away into the boot of his car. The other stall holder leans in.

STALL HOLDER

Ey girl. Girl!

Alex looks at him uncomfortably.

STALL HOLDER (CONT'D)

I can put you in touch. There's a government agent in town right now and I'm willing to sell his number and a working mobile. Hooked up to the last private satellite network. Interested?

ALEX

I'm sorry, I don't--

Another SHOPPER, a woman in her 40s, swoops in beside them.

SHOPPER

I need that phone. Whatever she's paying, I'll give you double.

ALEX

Wait--

SHOPPER

(In)

Triple!

The shopper starts fumbling in her bag. Alex looks between her, the stall holder and Mr Goyles.

ALEX

How much do you want?

The stall holder nods to her jewellery.

STALL HOLDER

All of it- that number, these phones? Gold dust.

The shopper's still digging in her bag. Alex doesn't notice her watching.

ALEX

This is for my grandmother's meds.  
If you wait, my brother can pay, I  
swear.

STALL HOLDER

Your brother can pay for the meds.  
I'm only selling this once!

The shopper pulls packs of sealed batteries out of her back and starts laying them out in front of the stall holder, who takes a sharp breath.

STALL HOLDER (CONT'D)

Well, love, looks like you're my  
best offer.

The stall holder gets out a pen and paper.

Alex looks back at Mr Goyles, returning to his desk with a few familiar jars of pills.

Alex dumps all the jewellery onto the stall holder's table. Mr Goyles looks on, concerned.

The stall holder grins at her; cha-ching.

26

**EXT. THE BACK OF THE MARKET - DAY**

26

Many people, mostly young men, swarm at the back of a parked, open-top army truck.

Alex walks by, out of breath. She talks to a nearby stall holder. They nod and point at the truck.

We see James and his friend Raahi clamber onto the back - they each exchange something with a man beside the truck as they do so; Mother's jewellery.

ALEX (O.S.)

James!

James doesn't look up.

Alex runs to the back of the truck but it's already moving off.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Wait! James!

A hand swings out and catches her shoulder, and she tries to roughly shrug it off. She looks up at the FIXER, a straggly looking man in his 50s.

FIXER

Next truck's in 20 minutes.

'Course, you'll need to give me something valuable to get on...

He gives her a slimy look.

Alex locks eyes with James. He's seen her, watching her as he bobs around beside Raahi in the back of the truck. He keeps staring until the truck turns a corner and pulls out of sight.

Alex is alone.

**END OF PART TWO.**

**PART THREE.**

27

**EXT. THE MARKET STALL - DAY**

27

ALEX

Please Mr Goyles, you have to help me!

Mr Goyles is packing up his car. His stall is gone, and so is the stall that was beside it.

He looks flustered as Alex follows along beside him - he's carrying boxes to and from his car.

MR GOYLES

No, Alex, I don't.

He puts the last box in his boot and lifts his hand to close it.

ALEX

You have to believe me, my brother had the money!

MR GOYLES

I do believe you, I do, but that doesn't change anything.

Alex is on the verge of tears, almost hyperventilating. Mr Goyles pauses.

MR GOYLES (CONT'D)

I can't give stuff away for free, but I might have a medical emergency number. Let me check.

He slowly moves off to the front of his car. Alex clocks some jars of the same medication she needs, in the box Mr Goyles just put in his boot.

CUT TO:

28

**EXT. THE MARKET STALL - DAY**

28

Mr Goyles shuffles back towards the boot of his car, talking all the while.

MR GOYLES

This number should see you right,  
there is still something left of  
the healthcare companies after all.  
And maybe once you've got some  
money together you can come ba -  
(back)

(Beat)

Alex?

But Alex is long gone from where she'd been standing by the boot of Mr Goyles' car, and as he turns, he sees one of his boxes open, and the pills she'd been eyeing, gone.

29

**EXT. THE STREET - DAY**

29

Alex's legs, running, again.

The street is silent, except for her panting, which slows as her pace does, until she's walking, sniffing.

Tears are running down her face, and she's clutching the jar of pills. Still walking, she takes off her rucksack and shoves them inside. Then she looks up to the sound of talking up ahead.

Two figures in the distance slowly become the stall holder and the shopper before, chatting animatedly. Alex recognises them and gets ever so slightly closer.

STALL HOLDER

... all I'm saying is that it  
shouldn't just be me applying the  
pressure!

SHOPPER

I apply the pressure by being  
there! It's the rivalry effect!

STALL HOLDER

It wouldn't hurt if you put up a  
bit of a fight, you know. The  
quicker we sell, the more we sell.

On Alex: as she realises she's been played.

They turn down one of the many rows of terraced houses and keep walking as Alex passes them by in mortified silence.

She fumbles in her pocket for a second and pulls out a scrap of paper, a phone number scribbled on it.

She pulls out a bulky, heavy duty looking phone, but is distracted again by screams at the end of the street.

30      **EXT. TENNYSON STREET - DAY**

30

The screams are coming from inside Alex's own house, and they sound like mother.

There's grey smoke pouring out of the house, too.

31      **INT. THE KITCHEN - DAY**

31

Alex is home, gauging the chaos she's walked into.

The first thing she does is throw her keys down and yank the electric kettle off the stove. The bottom has already burnt through, which is what's causing all the smoke.

She throws the kettle into the sink and switches off the hob.

Then Alex drops to the floor, crawls under the dining table, where Mother is hiding, beside herself.

Alex wraps her arms around Mother, and Mother's crying subsides.

MOTHER

(Hoarse)

You locked me in - I couldn't escape, I couldn't get help--

ALEX

(In)

I know, I know. I'm sorry.

Mother takes her in, then looks past her into the otherwise empty kitchen.

MOTHER

This doesn't feel right. What's missing?

Alex looks at her. Struggles to speak.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

Hot chocolate! That's what we need!

She bobs up from under the table and starts opening cupboards and taking out ingredients. Beside her, Alex pulls out a small, well used wooden step.

She's just taking out cups when Alex's hand takes them off her, gently.

ALEX

Best let me do that. You sit down,  
take the weight off.

Mother potters off into the living room, hunched over, looking particularly frail.

Alex goes to the tap to fill a pan with water. As she does, she takes in the destroyed kettle. Sighs.

As she begins preparing powdered milk in a pan on the stove, the gentle thrum of rain begins to beat against the plywood window coverings.

32      **INT. GOVERNMENT OFFICES. PRIME MINISTER'S QUARTERS - DAY**      32

The same thrumming of rain fills the Prime Minister's Office.

Mr Hatton sits across from MR DUNCAN, (50s) whose slicked back hair and whiter than white teeth give him an unnatural quality.

The coffee table between them is revealed to be laid out for high tea - expensive cakes, tea set, the lot.

MR DUNCAN

It's been so long since I've seen  
your son... Edward? How is he?

MR HATTON

Oh, you know, final exams looming,  
stressful time for anyone.

They fall back into silence. A carriage clock above the fireplace ticks away the awkward seconds, loudly.

MR DUNCAN

I--

MR HATTON

(In)

Enough small talk. We really should  
discuss the situation at hand, Mr  
President.

Mr Duncan raises an eyebrow.



MR DUNCAN

I was about to discuss the  
situation with Sweden...

MR HATTON

Prime Minister Thunberg has refused  
talks with us--

MR DUNCAN

(In)

Little surprise.

(Beat)

She shared all details of the NASA  
mishap with her citizens, framed it  
like it's our fault.

They fall back into an awkward silence. Each begins to scoop  
up finger food and eat.

Mr Duncan is taking in the room, avoiding eye contact with Mr  
Hatton. His eyes fall onto a newspaper, sitting on the arm of  
the sofa.

Mr Hatton catches him looking.

MR HATTON

Yeah, business is booming again for  
print media.

Mr Duncan picks up the paper and it flops open. The front  
page is filled with a picture - a truck, late at night, full  
of people, mostly young men, at a check point. The headline  
reads, 'CUT AND RUN; BRITS FLEE TO THE EU'.

MR HATTON (CONT'D)

How quickly they forget their own  
behaviour.

(Beat)

The EU hasn't forgotten.

MR DUNCAN

The world is turned on its head!

Mr Hatton takes the paper. He eyes the picture.

MR HATTON

Yes, well. There are measures in  
place for traitors.

33

**INT. MOTHER'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

33

A photograph in a small gilded frame. It's of James, a little younger, a little cleaner. A school photo. He's smiling.

The photograph is on a worn dressing table, in front of a mismatched mirror. It's surrounded by old lady makeup debris, like an explosion at the Avon factory.

Alex passes the photograph on her way to the bed, where Mother is already in her pyjamas and tucked in. Alex is carrying two hot chocolates.

ALEX

It's baltic! Thought I'd tip in  
with you tonight, keep us both  
snug.

MOTHER

Have you brought it?

Alex smiles.

ALEX

Thought I might be a bit old.

MOTHER

Nonsense.

Alex sets the drinks down beside the jars of meds she stole, on a small bedside table, falling apart and full of books. She begins digging amongst the volumes.

Mother watches her granddaughter fumble around beside the bed with a small smile on her face.

Eventually, the fumbling noises stop and Alex pulls herself under the duvet beside Mother.

She's holding an incredibly old Ladybird Book; 'Little Red Riding Hood'.

She sets it on the duvet between them.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

You're never too old to learn a  
lesson.

Carefully, Alex hands Mother her hot chocolate. Mother's hands shake badly as she accepts it.

Alex picks up her own drink.

ALEX

What lesson am I learning?

MOTHER

That you should always have some  
food on you...

(Beat)

To always trust that your path is  
the right path...

(Beat)

And that one day, you will have to  
choose your path and walk it alone.

Mother smiles at Alex. There's a finality to it and Alex  
looks away, uncomfortable.

Mother's expression suddenly changes. She looks around  
herself, panicked.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

Where's your brother?!

The half drunk cup starts wobbling dubiously in her hand and  
Alex prizes it from her grip.

ALEX

Calm down, calm... He's spending a  
bit of time with Raahi.

MOTHER

On a school night?! Honestly, your  
ma's soft.

ALEX

He's - It's not a school night,  
Mother.

MOTHER

I'm exhausted.

ALEX

I know.

She puts her own empty mug down and grabs the jar of meds.  
Rolls two tablets out onto her palm.

She hands them to Mother, along with the end of the drink.  
Mother dutifully pops the tablets into her mouth and swigs  
them down.

Then, she picks up the tatty old children's book.

MOTHER  
Story before bed?

ALEX  
Go on then!

Alex turns and puts the jar of meds back on the bedside table, beside an empty meds jar. Side by side, we can see that the label of Alex's stolen meds is missing its dosage - like it's been removed.

MOTHER  
Hand me my glasses, squire!

ALEX  
Yes m'lady!

Alex passes Mother the glasses and snuggles into her side.

Mother balances the glasses on the end of her nose like she's about to perform a dramatic reading of Ulysses.

She cracks open 'Little Red Riding Hood', her eyes flickering to Alex, tucked beneath her arm.

MOTHER  
(Reading)  
'Once upon a time, there was a  
young girl who loved to visit her  
grandmother...'

34      **INT. THE KITCHEN - NIGHT**

34

Alex's coat slung over the back of a dining chair. On the kitchen table, pages.

MOTHER (V.O.)  
(Reading)  
'The old woman was always busy  
making something for her favourite  
granddaughter...'

The pages are Mother's satellite blueprints, illuminated by the back window - until a shadow falls over them.

MOTHER (V.O.)  
'One day, she made something very  
special indeed...'

35      **EXT. THE TRUCK - NIGHT**

35

Huddled masses in the darkness. They wobble as the truck squeaks to a halt, and we see Raahi before we see James. They're both crouched on the floor of the truck, held upright by the sheer number of people.

The truck comes to a final stop. Some of the passengers stir, readying coats, bags.

There's shouting outside, and it's getting louder. The noise of other trucks.

A SOLDIER rips open the canvas at the back. The people closest to him cower away.

SOLDIER

Out! Leave your stuff, line up!

The passengers blink up at him, confused.

SOLDIER (CONT'D)

I said everybody out!

And then everybody's scrabbling, clambering over each other. James is jostled, overwhelmed, he moves -

36      **EXT. CHECKPOINT - NIGHT**

36

- Out into the night sky.

People are still jostling, trying to run, and there are lots more soldiers, with guns.

James catches Raahi's eye as Raahi runs, away from James, every man for himself.

Somebody knocks James to the ground from behind. A BUSINESSWOMAN (40s), high quality suit, briefcase... she pushes him over and runs, drawing the attention of the soldier, who raises his gun and...

A shot rings out and everybody stops.

The businesswoman drops to the floor with a scream, shot. She twitches for a minute in the dirt.

All eyes turn to the soldier that shot her.

SOLDIER

Everybody line up. Now.

The truck passengers assemble themselves into a sort of line. James is close to the end.

He leans forward ever so slightly, and he can see Raahi a couple of people ahead of him.

The soldier, and two of his armed colleagues, begin at the front of the line. They're inspecting each passenger, and divvying them up.

Those sorted as '1' are moved aside. Those sorted as '2' are passed to nearby soldiers, who escort them away.

SOLDIER (CONT'D)  
1... 1... 2... 1... 2... 2...

The soldier pauses at Raahi. For the tiniest second, his eyes flick to James. The smallest smile curls the corner of his mouth.

SOLDIER (CONT'D)  
2...

James flinches.

Raahi struggles a bit as he's led away.

Eventually the soldier gets to James. They stand, almost nose to nose.

37

**INT. THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE - NIGHT**

37

Mr Hatton and Mr Duncan are in the same position, almost nose to nose, over a map of the UK and Ireland.

It's covered in pins, with a large red marker over the Black Mountain, Northern Ireland.

MR DUNCAN  
... but how does that solve our  
shared problem?

MR HATTON  
It's being eliminated, chunk by  
chunk. For all we know, we're  
already safe.

Mr Duncan's eyes linger across the map.

MR DUNCAN  
All the same, four months in orbit  
and it's finally down.  
(MORE)

MR DUNCAN (CONT'D)  
I'd like to see it all working with  
my own eyes.

MR HATTON  
That can be arranged!

He pushes the pin further into the Black Mountains.

38      **EXT. THE BLACK MOUNTAINS - NIGHT**

38

It's almost pitch black on the mountainside. The faint glow of Belfast, in the valley below, makes a plume of smoke just visible.

It's coming from the trees.

Nestled amongst them, at their base, is some kind of metal wing. With perfect timing, it ignites, and the flames that engulf it illuminate lettering down the side.

'NASA - U.S. REFLECT'

As the fire begins to blaze, the letters warp and melt away.

39      **INT. MOTHER'S BEDROOM - DAY**

39

The sun cracks through the boarded up windows across Alex and Mother's faces. They're still bundled up together amongst the pillows and blankets.

Alex stretches, comes to. She yawns, and as she does, her hand brushes Mother's, which makes her shiver.

Then her eyes snap open.

She stares up at Mother, who is smiling slightly, eyes closed. No movement. The childrens' book is still open on the last page between her limp fingers.

Alex raises a hand to her cheek. Slowly, hesitantly, touches - and recoils.

Then she grabs her grandmother, buries her face in the old woman's still chest... and starts to sob.

**END OF PART  
THREE.**

**PART FOUR.**

40

**INT. THE DETENTION CENTRE - DAY**

40

James is conked out on a grim plastic waiting room chair. There's a needle sticking out of his neck, and a bruise developing under his cheekbone.

He's alone in the centre of a bare grey room - closed door, suspicious mirror on one wall. Just him, his chair, a table and some magazines.

His eyes flutter. He squints at the fluorescents.

Then he launches himself out of his seat, sending the table and magazines flying.

Hyperventilating, he swipes at his neck. The needle falls out, he sees it and his panic gets worse.

He looks up at the large mirror and then rushes at it, screaming into the surface.

JAMES

Where's Raahi?! You can't keep me  
here! It's against my human rights.  
Let me out! You let me go!

The door swings open and startles him. He turns, wide eyed.

The same soldier that inspected his truck bobs his head in, looking puzzled.

SOLDIER

It wasn't locked...

The soldier smirks, enters and shuts the door behind himself.

SOLDIER (CONT'D)

Why are you shouting into a mirror?

JAMES

I'm not thick! There's people  
behind there!

The soldier approaches the mirror. As he does, James cowers ever so slightly.



The soldier maintains James' eye contact and his smirk as he slides his finger behind the mirror and lifts it, revealing the blank wall behind. He mimes looking back there.

SOLDIER

Well they must be very small.

JAMES

You drugged me!

The soldier eyes the needle on the floor.

SOLDIER

You were panicking.

JAMES

Of course I was fucking panicking,  
you shot a woman and took Raahi.

(Beat)

Where is he?!

SOLDIER

Mr Tiwari was breaking the law,  
like yourself. He is safe and in  
custody.

JAMES

We hadn't broken any laws, we had  
our passports!

SOLDIER

Leaving the country under martial  
law is different, I'm afraid.

(Beat)

James. Let's you and I talk this  
out.

The soldier pushes the desk back into the centre of the room,  
towards the chair, and perches on it.

SOLDIER (CONT'D)

Abandoning the country right now is  
a serious offense. But we're  
willing to make an exchange.

JAMES

What exchange?

SOLDIER

You help us out with a couple of  
things... things only you could  
help us with... and we'll call it  
quits.

James approaches the table.

JAMES

And what's quits, specifically?

SOLDIER

No punishment for the abandonment,  
we set you up somewhere new, safe.  
A job and all.

JAMES

If you need my help, I'll take that  
and the same for Raahi.

SOLDIER

Done.

James finally sits at the table.

JAMES

I want to see him, now.

(Beat)

A - and... my sister. I want to  
know my sister's okay.

41      **INT. THE LIVING ROOM - DAY**

41

Alex is coming down the stairs, in shock, head down. She looks up.

The living room is chaos. Smashed windows, Mother's armchair overturned, all the photographs shattered at the foot of the fireplace.

Alex lets out a tiny gasp. She makes it down the last few stairs and into the living room.

Behind her, the once boarded-up front door hangs on its hinges, burst open. Over Alex's old decoy graffiti, the red 'z', somebody has spray painted a fresh mark, a blue 'x'.

Alex's head whips round to look at the door into the kitchen. It's unopened, but she rushes across to it anyway and bursts through it.

42      **INT. THE KITCHEN - DAY**

42

The kitchen looks oddly untouched. Everything's as it was the night before.

Alex rushes to the kitchen table.

The blueprints are still there and she lets out a sigh of relief. Then she dips a hand into the pocket of her raincoat, hanging on the back of one of the dining chairs.

She pulls out a piece of tatty notepaper and opens it. It's recognizable as the government contact number that the stallholder gave her.

43        **INT. THE LIVING ROOM - DAY**

43

Alex is dialling on the bulky satellite phone, the receiver balanced against her ear.

She stands in amongst the tattered remains of her life. Finishes dialling.

Brrt, brrt... Brrt, brrt... Brrt, brrt...

Then it goes quiet.

ALEX

Hello? Please, I need someone in charge, it's an emergency, my grandmother--

But she's cut off by a long beeeeeeeep, the dial tone. Nobody's listening.

That beep continues as she -

44        **EXT. THE STREET - DAY**

44

Runs down the street, frantic, contact number scrunched in her hand.

45        **EXT. THE BLACK MOUNTAINS - DAY**

45

There's birdsong and the whistle of wing as a hiker, DR JEANNIE MCCLEOD, (40s), practically dressed, serious expression, trudges up the mountainside in her huge hiking boots.

46        **EXT. THE STREET - DAY**

46

Alex's breath is heavy as she swings round a corner and onto the street she saw the stall holder and the shopper go down yesterday.

She starts pounding on one front door after another.

ALEX  
You! Where are you?

47      **EXT. THE BLACK MOUNTAINS - DAY**

47

Dr McCleod is poking around in bushes, foliage, occasionally photographing and pulling out tiny pieces of smouldering wreckage.

Above her, the dwindling remains of a smoke plume in the sky, somewhere quite close by.

She straightens up, arms full of pieces of the spacecraft, and wanders towards it.

48      **EXT. THE STREET - DAY**

48

As Alex progresses down the street, hammering doors, some start to open. It's still early morning, people in their pyjamas peering out, concerned.

ALEX  
The conman from the market. Where  
is he?

A few of the neighbours glance over at one of the doors Alex hasn't tried yet. It's scruffy and scratched and looks foreboding.

Alex makes a beeline for the door, thunders at it.

Nobody opens it, but when Alex backs out into the middle of the street and looks up at the house, she sees a curtain twitch.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
Get out here now!

49      **EXT. THE BLACK MOUNTAINS - DAY**

49

Dr McCleod is pushing through partially scorched bushes, following a growing hiss and chatter ahead of her.

She breaks through into a clearing; catches a glimpse of the main wreckage of the spacecraft, charred human remains inside, still smoking. As one, the gang of lab coats and armed suits surrounding it swivel to stare at her.

There's paperwork piled up on the grass, one folder right beside her with a great big red 'CONFIDENTIAL' stamp across the front. She grabs it.

As Dr McCleod straightens up, she sees one of the armed guards running straight for her. She breaks into a run - SLAM.

50

**EXT. THE STREET - DAY**

50

Alex slams into the door, tears streaming down her face. The door wobbles like it might burst.

She shoves it again, harder.

STALL HOLDER (O.C.)

All right, all right, shit.

There's some scrabbling behind the door, and when it swings open, the stallholder is there. Behind him, in the darkness of the dirty hallway, the shopper is also visible.

STALL HOLDER (CONT'D)

I remember you.

A Mexican stand-off in the street. Almost all the neighbours hanging out of their doors and windows, watching.

ALEX

Bet you remember all your con victims!

STALL HOLDER

What con?

Alex lurches for him, but he slips behind the door, protecting himself. A couple of the neighbours approach her, arms ready to take her down.

ALEX

(To the neighbours)

He tricked me into buying bogus contact details!

(Beat)

My grandmother died. I tried to call the number for help, but, it failed.

Alex finally sags, despondent. There's no fight left in her.

The neighbours relax, throw her pitying looks. They begin to return to their homes.

STALL HOLDER (O.C.)

The number should have worked.

His front door opens again. He stares at her.

STALL HOLDER (CONT'D)

It's not a con, it's a hard sell,  
but all my contacts, all my phones  
are legit.

ALEX

So what happened?

There's silence for a long minute. Alex looks down at the crumpled contact number in her hand. Looks up at the stall holder.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Write it out for me.

STALL HOLDER

What?

ALEX

If the number's real, you'll still  
remember it. Write it out for me  
right now.

STALL HOLDER

You're crazy. What's someone like  
you got to say to the men in  
charge?

ALEX

(Disbelief)

Someone like me?

51

**EXT. THE BLACK MOUNTAINS - DAY**

51

Dr McCleod is on the ground, the armed guard who tackled her holding her down.

ALEX (V.O.)

Someone like me has got what it  
takes to 'save the world'...

Dr McCleod struggles out from underneath the guard, folder still in her arms. She makes a run for it.

ALEX (V.O.)  
... and if the 'men in charge'  
actually listened to what we said,  
instead of where we're from or what  
we look like...

Dr McCleod keeps running and running, the trees whizzing past her, until she's far away.

She stops, panting, and opens the folder.

The documents inside; maps, transcripts and reports, and on the top... a photo of Alex.

ALEX (V.O.)  
... we might just get shit done.

52      **EXT. THE STREET - DAY**

52

The stallholder is scribbling on a piece of paper against his front door. A number.

Once he's finished, he holds it out to Alex, who holds the original contact number up beside it. They match.

Alex swipes the new copy of the number and stuffs it in her pocket.

ALEX  
Can't have you giving it to anyone  
else.

The stallholder looks at her for a while. Wrings his hands.

STALL HOLDER  
Sorry about your grandmother.

But Alex is already walking away.

ALEX  
(Over her shoulder)  
If it doesn't work, you'll be  
seeing me.

53      **EXT. THE BLACK MOUNTAINS - DAY**

53

The site of the rocket crash looks vastly different now. The wreckage is under a sheet and strapped on the back of a 4x4, and some of the armed guards are just finishing relaying grass meticulously, or trimming at the scorched foliage.

One armed guard is on a call, using a phone just like Alex's.

ARMED GUARD

(On the phone)

... we're identifying now which  
files she got. Where's the bloody  
cloud when you need it, eh? Yes,  
the body was present...

He looks over his shoulder and walks a little further away.

ARMED GUARD (CONT'D)

... Clean up is almost complete.

He hangs up and waves to the 4x4 to move off. It does,  
revealing a strange red planet logo on its side.

Once it's out of sight, he signals again, to two of the  
guards, then follows after the vehicle.

Behind him, the two soldiers he signalled turn and shoot  
their colleagues down.

54

**EXT. THE PARK - NIGHT**

54

There's crunch after crunch as the shovel bites the earth.  
Alex is digging and crying. Noisy sobs.

Mother's body is wrapped in a blanket, laid out alongside the  
hole Alex is digging. She can't hold back her crying, which  
gets louder and louder.

The sky above her is black.

BARRY (O.C.)

Oi... oi!

Alex climbs out of the grave. Looks around as somebody shines  
a torch right at her, blinding her momentarily.

Barry (40s) and his family are gathered round a small, fresh  
mound of earth.

Barry sneers at Alex's shock.

BARRY (CONT'D)

What, you think you're the only  
person burying somebody in the park  
right now?

Somebody in the distance shouts something like 'keep it  
down!' and Barry smiles grimly, his point proven.



ALEX

Sorry...

BARRY

We're going now, anyway.

Alex gets back to work as Barry and his family gather up their things. She's trying to pull Mother into the grave gently as they pass.

BARRY (CONT'D)

Here.

As he passes, he shoves Mother's body into the grave roughly and it lands, hard.

ALEX

No!

(Beat)

I didn't want your help!

But Barry is already gone.

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**EXT. THE PARK - NIGHT**

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Alex has laid mother out in the grave, the blanket laid out beneath her. The old woman has a physics textbook and Little Red Riding Hood clutched in her hands.

Alex very carefully paints Mother's lips with lipstick.

She brushes Mother's hair.

Then Alex stands back. Stares into the deep hole.

She's being watched through the trees nearby. She bows her head at the graveside and mutters something unheard.

Then she picks up the shovel again and starts to fill the grave in.

Soil upon soil, tears landing on it.

CUT TO:

Then the tears land on a fresh mound of earth, streaking it with mud.

Alex stands over Mother's grave. She's crying again, quietly, her hands balled up in her pockets.

The shovel, planted in the ground beside her, begins to lean and fall and when she throws out a hand to catch it, a note flutters from her pocket. She picks it up and opens it.

It's the contact number, hastily scrawled by the vendor. Seeing it makes Alex cry harder.

ALEX

I'm sorry... I'm sorry.

She pulls the bulky phone out of her pocket and begins dialling the number.

It's ringing.

She puts it to her ear.

Then, in the undergrowth ahead of her, a phone starts ringing. She freezes, stares into the darkness...

MAN'S VOICE (O.C.)

What a privilege, to bury those you  
care about. To have a place to  
mourn them.

Mr Rudd emerges from the trees, hard faced.

Alex instantly recognises him. Her face betrays shame.

MR RUDD

I hear you want my help.

**END OF EPISODE.**