

PROTECT AND SURVIVE

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ACT I

INT. MOSCOW - SOVIET MISSILE MONITORING STATION

SUPERIMPOSE:

"SEPTEMBER 1983"

Uniformed personnel busy themselves at monitors in a vast, windowless room. A giant screen depicts missile bases in the USA.

STANISLAV PETROV

watches from his seat on a mezzanine. Aged 44, the lieutenant colonel wears his uniform well. His eyes are set deep. His temples are exposed by receding hair, which is rich, jet black and swept back. Two soldiers laugh below. Stanislav smiles.

MISSILE WARNING

suddenly shatters the calm. CTAPT (START) appears on screen accompanied by a REPETITIVE URGENT ALARM. Soldiers run to their stations. Stanislav appears frozen.

CLOSE ON SCREEN

An Intercontinental Ballistic Missile has been launched from the USA and its icon moves slightly towards the USSR as the ALARM CONTINUES.

WIDER ANGLE

There is frantic activity within the room. We hear RUSSIAN voices speaking loudly into phones. Stanislav reaches for a telephone and an intercom. He barks an order.

STANISLAV

(in Russian;
subtitled)

Stay calm! Remember your training!

Small beads of sweat form on Stanislav's forehead. He shifts uneasily in his seat. He turns to stony-faced deputy MIKHAIL KOZLOV, who is also seated on the mezzanine.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL

Children charge down a corridor, PAN urgency in their faces.

EXT. SCHOOL ROOF

A red air raid siren. CAMERA SLOWLY PANS OUT to reveal a clock tower. The time is 3.30pm.

INT. SCHOOL

Children rush down corridors. CAMERA PANS FACES to reveal urgency and screams. The school front doors fly open and children pour from the building.

EXT. SCHOOL

Some scream, but others are laughing or chatting calmly, walking slowly.

SUPERIMPOSE:

"PERTH ACADEMY, SCOTLAND, SIX MONTHS EARLIER"

It is the end of the school day.

INT. CORRIDOR

A teacher shouts as groups of children bundle down staircases. We watch other students in the corridors. Teachers struggle against an inexorable tide of youth.

EXT. SCHOOL

AERIAL SHOT

A mass of teenage humanity leaves by different exits, like ants leaving a nest.

CUT TO:

SERIES OF SHOTS

A group of children smoke behind a caretaker's shed.

Students wheel bikes from their racks before setting off for home.

Parents chat together beside a row of parked cars, beyond the school gates.

EXT. PLAYING FIELDS

Three 14-year-old boys prepare to vault a large metal fence at the corner of the playing fields. They throw bags over first.

The last boy, BILLY GRAINGER, catches his foot on the fence. He collapses in a pile on the pavement. His friends laugh boisterously.

BILLY GRAINGER'S POV

Looks up from the ground. CALLUM MATHIESON, is thick set with dark hair and the beginnings of a black moustache. JAMIE DIXON is English, blonde with blue eyes, very much a child in physique compared with his larger friend.

BILLY

What are yous laughin' at ya pair of pricks?

BILLY

is tall and gangly with unruly, curly brown hair. He has yet to grow into his body. His trousers are too short and he is more disheveled than the others. He leans forward, plunging a finger in a newly torn hole in his trouser knee, mouthing the word shite to himself.

WIDER ANGLE

CALLUM

(grinning)

Fucking eejit.

BILLY

Piss off and geeza haun ya bastard.

Callum hoists his friend to his feet. Billy aims a playful kick, then picks up his Adidas bag and the three move off together. The boys are full of life. Every now and then, two of the friends trade punches.

CAMERA RISES UP and UP revealing groups of children walking together.

CUT TO:

INT. HOME - LOUNGE

Billy lies on a carpet watching Grange Hill. We hear LONDON ACCENTS on the TV.

We hear CROCKERY BEING MOVED in the kitchen adjacent to the lounge, beyond a connecting hatch. It is Billy's mother SHEILA GRAINGER. A DOOR SLAMS shut. His father, DAVID GRAINGER, is home from work.

INT. HOME - FRONT DOOR

David is stocky, with a thick moustache and mop of curly greying hair. His face is ruddy and friendly.

INT. HOME - LOUNGE

Billy smiles as his dad walks in, but he does not look up. David puts his briefcase on a side table by the door.

DAVID

Hey there wee man? How's school?

BILLY

Awright.

DAVID

What d'you dae?

BILLY

Nuthin.

ANGLE ON DAVID

There is a pause of a few seconds while David watches TV.

DAVID

Who are they cockney wankers?

SHEILA GRAINGER

SHRIEKS. Sheila has dark straight hair. She is slightly overweight and very pretty. She has a mischievous look on her face.

TRACKING SHOT - SHEILA GRAINGER

throws down her apron and runs from the kitchen to the lounge to confront her husband.

SHEILA

For crying out loud! What kind of language is that? You're not on the base now David Grainger.

David grabs his wife while grinning broadly. He pulls her towards him and kisses her firmly on the lips.

His hand anchors around her waist. Sheila wriggles, smiling as she fights her husband's embrace.

DAVID

Nuthin' he hasnae heard in the
playground, eh wee man?

BILLY'S POV

Billy turns and grins at his dad who still holds his mother doggedly in his grasp.

BILLY

No da'. I dinnae understand. What's a
wanker?

Sheila finally pries herself free. She playfully whacks David then turns towards Billy. She smacks him around the head with an oven glove. Billy ducks, still lying on the ground giggling. Sheila walks back to the kitchen.

DAVID

What's fae dinner hen? No' bloody
chicken again I hope?

BACK TO SCENE

David winks at his son.

SHEILA (O.S.)

It's not a restaurant. You'll get what
you are given and be grateful for it!

David raises his eyebrows, nods and turns the corners of his mouth down. He leaves and Billy turns back to the television.

CUT TO:

INT. DINNER TABLE

Billy and his father are watching an evening news bulletin to background CLATTER of PLATES and CUTLERY. We hear the CLANK of KEYS and a FRONT DOOR SLAM. Billy's brother ANTHONY GRAINGER walks into lounge and stares at the TV. He's wearing muddy football gear.

DAVID

Alright son, did ye win?

ANTHONY

Aye, 4-0. A walkover. They were pish.
Shoulda' been mair.

Sheila enters the lounge.

SHEILA

Boots aff Ant! Get your hands and face
washed and up at the table. I'm
serving in five minutes.

Anthony nods, then leaves the room and shuts the door.
CLAMP CLAMP (O.S.) up the stairs.

SHEILA (O.S.)

BOOTS AFF!

ANGLE ON TELEVISION

The news bulletin is running RONALD REAGAN's empire of
evil speech.

REAGAN (V.O.)

"... to ignore the facts of history and
the aggressive impulses of an evil
empire, to simply call the arms race a
giant misunderstanding and thereby
remove yourself from the struggle
between right and wrong and good and
evil... "

ANOTHER ANGLE

Sheila leans through the serving hatch as Reagan is
speaking. David leans backwards, as if it will give him
a better view of the TV. Anthony walks in, sits down
next to Billy and grinds his fist into his brother's
head. Billy wriggles to get away, annoyed.

ANTHONY

Awright Skinny Malinky?

DAVID

Haud yer wheesht Ant, I'm trying tae
listen. Did you hear that hen?

SHEILA

Did I hear what? Reagan? Aye. Ant,
get yer elbows aff the table.

DAVID

Empire of evil indeed.
(MORE)

DAVID (CONT'D)
He's no mincing his words. The boys on
the base will have something to say
about that the morn'.

CUT TO:

INT. CLASSROOM

Billy rests his head in his hands, propped up by elbows.
There is an open book sitting by his left elbow. The
TEACHER is an elderly lady in a badly fitting dress.

TEACHER
For the next lesson you will have read
to chapter three. And just to be clear
there will be a test next week.

There is a collective GROAN. Children start to pack away
their books. The BELL RINGS and they race to their feet.

TEACHER
The bell is a signal for me, not for
you. Re-take your seats please.
(beat)
Right, now, away you go.

Children rush in a disorderly fashion towards the door.

CUT TO:

EXT. PLAYING FIELDS

Billy and friends are playing football after school, with
a teacher as referee. Billy is hacked by an opponent.
He gets up, grabs the boy by the scruff of the neck. The
teacher separates them, then orders Billy off the pitch.
He stomps off, furiously.

INT. HOME - LOUNGE

David, Sheila, Billy and Anthony watch a news bulletin.
President Reagan has just announced the United States
Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI), better known as Star
Wars.

INSERT: TV

The bulletin features a simulation, missiles being shot
from space by satellite, laser weapons.

BACK TO SCENE

DAVID

Jesus H Christ.

SHEILA

David please. The bairns.

David ignores his wife.

DAVID

Do you see this lunatic Sheila? Do you see him? Missiles in space now? What's he trying to dae?

ANTHONY

What's wrang wi' it? It's just for blastin' commie nukes.

DAVID

No. Anthony. It's not that at all. It's a bloody first strike weapon.

BILLY

Eh?

DAVID

It means Davis, the yanks can start world war 3 from outer space Billy. And the stupid bastards think they can win it. Wud ye believe it. The geriatric daftie.

SHEILA

C'mon Dave. You'll scare them.

DAVID

Scare them? Never mind them Sheila, I'm bloody terrified. I mean, do we no' have enough missiles doon here? We might just as well go and join those wummin' on Greenham Common.

ANGLE ON DAVID

ANTHONY

(mocking)

I don't think you'd be welcome there, sweetheart.

DAVID
 (shaking head)
 You mark my words Sheila my girl. This
 Star Wars thing is trouble. Big
 trouble.

FAVOURING BILLY

Billy looks at his brother who is shaking his head.
 David walks to the kitchen. We hear a DRINK BEING
 POURED. Anthony turns to Billy.

ANTHONY
 Daft old bugger.

SHEILA
 Ant! For goodness sake! Show some
 respect for your father.

WIDER ANGLE

Billy grins. David re-enters the room, whisky in hand.
 He stands by the doorway watching the rest of the
 bulletin. In Washington a group of protesters stand
 outside the White House holding a banner that reads: "THE
 STARS ARE FOR AWE, NOT WAR."

DAVID
 Utter bloody madness.

Billy shakes his head to impress his brother. Anthony
 smiles, then runs a finger in circles next to his head
 pointing at his dad, suggesting that his father, not
 Reagan, is the madman.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOME

Billy and Jamie play football in the back garden. David
 arrives home in an orange Ford Escort. He alights
 carrying a white envelope and raises it in greeting the
 boys. The front door closes behind him, but quickly
 opens again. Billy's mother peeps out of the door.

SHEILA
 Billy, Jamie, come inside for a drink.

BILLY
 Aye, two minutes mum.

INT. HOME - KITCHEN

SHEILA

What's this gorgeous, a pressie pour moi?

DAVID

takes a pamphlet out of the envelope.

PROTECT AND SURVIVE

depicts a family of four, framed by a roundel, standing in front of a mushroom cloud.

BACK TO SCENE

DAVID

Just in case. You know.

Sheila, looking annoyed, grabs the pamphlet.

SHEILA

What the!? Did Jim give you this?

DAVID

Aye. We need to know what tae dae...

SHEILA

What tae dae? Och, we've talked about this already David. It doesnae matter if you're here or in outer bloody Mongolia. There's nuthin' to dae.

DAVID

Of course there is. We cannae just dae nuthin Sheila. We have to prepare. The bairns.

ANGLE ON SHEILA

Sheila leafs through the pamphlet. She shakes her head.

SHEILA

Will ye look at this garbage? Take ma doors aff their hinges? Paint the windaes white? Build yersel' a toilet out of a manky bucket? And what then? Look down and kiss your arse goodbye? David, this is madness.

DAVID

(breathes heavily)

Aye... I s'pose. It's just this Star Wars business. I'm worried. Jim says that if --

SHEILA

Jim says, Jim says. Look Jim is your mate. And he knows what he knows. But I don't want to know what he knows. Leave it at the base darling. Please.

David nods slowly and Sheila returns to the pamphlet shaking her head as she flicks the pages.

SHEILA

Hiding under a door for weeks, with yous three and a mingin' toilet for company? I'd rather crash and burn on day one.

ANGLE ON PROTECT AND SURVIVE

Sheila flings the pamphlet into the waste bin just inside the lounge door. It rests part way in, part way out.

We hear NOISY TEENAGERS. Billy and Jamie charge through the front door and make their way to the kitchen. Sheila hands them pre-poured squash.

CUT TO:

INT. HOME - LATER THAT EVENING

Billy lies alone on the sofa while CLANKING CROCKERY and MUFFLED VOICES are heard in the kitchen. Billy idly digs into his nose and flicks DEBRIS into the air above his head. Fearing it will fall into his eyes, he quickly turns his head. It lands with a TICK onto the cover of Protect and Survive, still poking out of the bin.

ANGLE ON BIN

Billy sits up, intrigued. He fishes it out of the bin and mouths the words on the cover to himself: "THIS BOOKLET TELLS YOU HOW TO MAKE YOUR HOME AND YOUR FAMILY AS SAFE AS POSSIBLE UNDER NUCLEAR ATTACK."

BILLY

Slowly leafs through its pages. He sits bolt upright.

CLOSE ON BILLY'S EYES MOVING LEFT TO RIGHT

We watch as Billy begins reading. His eyebrows begin to curl upwards at the bridge of his nose. The CAMERA MOVES WITH INCREASING SPEED between close shots of Billy's face and pamphlet text.

INSERT: PROTECT AND SURVIVE

"You will need special sanitation arrangements because there will be no water to waste in lavatories."

CLOSE ON BILLY'S EYES

INSERT: PROTECT AND SURVIVE

"If anyone's clothing catches fire lay them on the floor and roll them in a blanket, rug or thick coat."

CLOSE ON BILLY'S EYES

INSERT: PROTECT AND SURVIVE

"If a death occurs while you are confined to the fall-out room place the body in another room and cover it as securely as possible. Attach an identification."

CLOSE ON BILLY'S EYES

INSERT: PROTECT AND SURVIVE

"You should temporarily bury the body as soon as it is safe to go out, and mark the spot."

CLOSE ON BILLY'S EYES AND FOREHEAD

Tiny beads of sweat have formed on Billy's forehead.

EXTREME CLOSEUP

"... bury the body... "

DAVID

walks into the lounge. He sees terror on his son's face.

DAVID

Billy... what are you... C'mon, give me that.

BILLY

Dad?

DAVID
Aye, what is it son?

Billy looks down. He doesn't answer.

DAVID
Don't worry about it mate... It willnae
happen. This... This is just garbage.
OK?

Billy nods. David rubs his son's head, then pulls
Protect and Survive from Billy's limp hands. He walks
out leaving Billy staring after him. We hear the sound
of a SWING BIN LID (O.S.) CLOSING.

DAVID (O.S.)
And that's that.

Billy turns and stares at the lounge ceiling. The CAMERA
DISTORTS swirls of Artex, giving the appearance of
mushroom clouds. Billy turns to face the electric fire.

ZOOM IN on display simulating leaping flames.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BILLY'S BEDROOM

Billy lies in bed staring wide-eyed at the ceiling, a St
Johnstone duvet pulled up to his neck.

DREAM SEQUENCE - INT. HOME - LOUNGE

One side of the Grainger house is missing. Outside is
grey, charred and lifeless except for a pristine, red air
raid siren perched on top of the family's burnt-out car.
Inside the half-house, the sofa is blackened and burnt.
The electric fire burns high with real flames. The
television is somehow working. Ronald Reagan is
commanding missile attacks from space.

A BLACK BIN LINER

lies stationary in the corner of the room, a label tied
to one end. It begins to twitch, then starts to twist
and writhe. Something punches at its sides, trying to
escape. Billy walks towards it.

He grabs the top and forces it open. Little by little we
see the face of Anthony. Burnt and badly disfigured, he
cannot speak, but raises his hand shakily.

Blackened, contorted fingers hook Billy's one-by-one. Billy tries to pull away, but the grip is too firm.

WIDER ANGLE

Billy is dragged inside. Firstly, his head disappears. Then he is consumed entirely by the body bag which has taken on the form of an amorphous black monster with open SCREAMING MOUTH, like a Francis Bacon painting.

INT. BEDROOM

Billy is bolt upright. Gradually, his breathing slows and he settles back down. But he does not return to sleep.

CLOSE ON BILLY

Wide-eyed in the darkness. He is still terrified.

CUT TO:

EXT. PERTH - EARLY MORNING

Billy walks to school. His breath is visible in the crisp air. He stops on the corner of a street to wait for Jamie. He looks preoccupied.

BILLY'S WATCH

He presses a button on his digital watch. It's 08:15.

BACK TO SCENE

In the distance, Jamie tears down his driveway and onto the pavement. He is 20 yards from Billy when he raises forefinger and middle finger in a V-insult.

JAMIE

Alright tosser. How's it going?

BILLY

Oh, you know.

JAMIE

What's up?

BILLY

Nuthin. Just didnae sleep so well.

The boys walk on a little.

JAMIE

You coming to Saints on Saturday?

BILLY

Aye. Maybe. Who they playin'?

JAMIE

Dunno, but it's Muirton Park. Dad's taking me. There's room in the car.

BILLY

OK, I'll check with my folks.

They walk on. Jamie senses Billy is troubled. He stops and tenderly touches his friend's arm.

JAMIE

Look, is something the matter mate?

BILLY

(snatches arm
away)

No, I telt ye. There's nuthin' wrang.
I'm just tired. Nae sleep.

Jamie leans back in mock surprise, both palms raised.

JAMIE

Ooh, alright sunshine. Take it easy.

BILLY

Sorry.

CUT TO:

EXT. SCHOOL ENTRANCE GATE

HIGH ANGLE

Callum approaches at speed from behind. He kicks Jamie up the backside then runs as his friend takes chase. Billy stops and glances up to the school roof.

BILLY'S POV

The red air raid siren. Billy stares at it, then runs after his two friends who are still play-fighting.

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL LIBRARY

Billy wanders without direction, perplexed. The LIBRARIAN watches. She smiles and leans backwards on her chair. He steps OUT OF FRAME in the maze of bookshelves. He returns, reversing until his thigh meets the sharp edge of a table.

BILLY

Ooh ya bastard!

WIDER ANGLE

The librarian giggles to herself, then addresses Billy.

LIBRARIAN

Is there something I can help you with young man?

(half beat)

Other than your language perhaps?

Her arms are folded across a colourful jumper. Middle-aged with thin face and thin glasses, her burgundy Doctor Martin boots stand out over grey leggings.

BILLY

Och... no... No sorry... it's ok... I'm just browsing. There's lots of books.

LIBRARIAN

Ah! You are indeed a perceptive young man.

The librarian smiles warmly and Billy giggles. There is a small pause.

LIBRARIAN

Well? I'm here to help, you only have to ask you know.

BILLY

Oh no, you're ok, I was just aff anyway.

Billy reverses defensively towards the door.

LIBRARIAN

Don't be daft. Come on. Sit down. I won't bite.

She takes a book, opens it and snaps it shut on her hand which she shakes as if in great pain. Billy giggles.

LIBRARIAN

Now then, what's your name?

BILLY

Billy, Billy Grainger. But I really need to go.

The librarian motions to Billy to sit down. Billy does so, a little reluctantly. The table between them is a mess, covered in books and other library detritus.

BILLY'S POV

LIBRARIAN

That's better. Well Mr Grainger, this is your lucky day. You have discovered the library.

(sweeps arms
around room)

Those who thirst for knowledge come here to be sated. And you look like a thirsty young man.

BACK TO SCENE

Billy looks around then shifts in his seat, embarrassed. The librarian takes tobacco and papers from her bag. She rolls a cigarette.

BILLY

You could get suspended for that!

LIBRARIAN

(lighting the
cigarette)

What this? Don't be ridiculous. I'm a librarian. They wouldn't dare.

She flexes her muscles and they laugh together. Billy follows a plume of smoke as it dissipates skywards.

WIDER ANGLE

LIBRARIAN

So, I assume you came here for a book? Or did you mistake this for the tuck shop?

BILLY

Nah.

LIBRARIAN

(in pirate voice)

Well then, what be your poison? A thriller perhaps? A spy story? Mills and Boon? Hmm, a wee bit young for wenches I'll wager?... arrrhh.

Billy is embarrassed again. He looks down, then shifts uneasily. He pauses as if summoning up the courage, then looks straight at the librarian.

BILLY

Nuclear war.

The librarian stops smiling. She looks directly at Billy, the cigarette hanging from her mouth.

LIBRARIAN

Nuclear war? You sure I can't tempt you with something a little more, erm, uplifting?

BILLY

No. I want to know about nuclear war. Protect and Survive, that sort of thing.

LIBRARIAN

Protect and Survive?

BILLY

(babbling a bit)

Aye, you know. Orange pamphlet about yay size ...

(his hands

indicate A5 size)

For what to dae when the sirens go aff ... taking doors aff their hinges, making bogs oot of buckets... burying your brother in the gairden?

The librarian shifts uneasily in her chair. She frowns.

WIDER ANGLE

BILLY

(disappointed)

Look. Doesnae matter. I've got to go anyway.

Billy gets up. The librarian stands quickly.

LIBRARIAN

Wait! Forgive me Billy. When a man thirsts for knowledge, it is the barbarian who withholds a drink.

BILLY'S POV

She turns to a cabinet and opens a drawer packed with cards. She flicks through them. Billy gets impatient.

LIBRARIAN

This won't take long. I take it you've heard of the Dewey Decimal System? Mark my words young man; there will never be an easier or quicker way to find answers to a question.

The librarian continues to flick through cards.

BILLY

What about Ceefax?

The librarian pauses. She turns to Billy and peers over her glasses, looks into the middle distance, then nods in acknowledgement.

LIBRARIAN

Hmm. No joy on Protect and Survive I'm afraid, but maybe there's something else. Follow me.

TRACKING - LIBRARIAN

Billy follows the librarian to a shelf. She pulls a brown book half-out, then turns and smiles. It is The Anti-Nuclear Handbook. Billy is disappointed.

LIBRARIAN

A consolation prize, Billy. Propaganda, some might say! But give it a go. I think you will like it. In the meantime, I'll see if I can get something more attuned to the nuclear warrior in you. Bring this back in a couple of weeks. OK?

The librarian stamps the book. She hands it back to Billy. He nods and leaves quickly.

CUT TO:

EXT. PERTH - EARLY AFTERNOON

Billy, Jamie and Callum are walking behind a pack of men wearing St Johnstone scarfs heading towards Muirton Park.

FAVOURING CALLUM

CALLUM

I thought your da was driving us Jamie?

JAMIE

Got called into work, in the end.

CALLUM

Fuck off! Your old man is on the dole
ya prick.

Jamie punches Callum. A LOW FLYING JET suddenly SCREAMS overhead. Billy crouches slightly then looks upright quickly. He tracks the plane as it passes overhead.

CUT TO:

INT. PHANTOM FG1 - COCKPIT

The fighter pilot looks out of his window at Perth below. He has a thin moustache.

BILLY

is still staring at the part of the sky where the jet could last be seen. His friends have moved on.

CALLUM

Billy! The Russians are coming! Run
ya daft bastard!

WIDER ANGLE

BILLY

Fae Leuchars...

CALLUM

You what?

BILLY

My da's base. Near Dundee. That's
where the plane's from.

Callum
 Aye RAF Leuchars. Very good. Now you
 coming? Or are you goin' plane
 spotting wi' yer old man?

Billy smiles and takes a few, fast steps to catch up with his friends.

ANOTHER ANGLE

The boys disappear into a sea of chanting supporters.

CUT TO:

PERTH - MONTAGE

A) INT. SCHOOL LIBRARY

The librarian does not look up as Billy walks in. He drops The Anti-Nuclear Handbook on the table. She looks up, smiles then raises a finger. She reaches into her drawer and produces Protect and Survive and The Children of the Dust. She date-stamps each. 10 OCTOBER 1983

B) INT. DENTIST - WAITING ROOM

Billy sits next to Sheila and Anthony. He is reading Time Magazine. The front cover depicts an exploding jumbo jet and Soviet MiG. The headline reads: "Shooting to kill: the Soviets destroy an airliner."

C) INT. HOME

David Grainger is gesticulating wildly. The news depicts millions marching against the deployment of Pershing missiles in Europe.

D) INT. SCHOOL - PHYSICS CLASS

A teacher carefully puts on gloves and removes a small vial from a locked cabinet with a radiation roundel. The class look bored, all except Billy.

E) INT. SCHOOL - LIBRARY

Billy is in animated conversation with the librarian. She nods sagely as he points to passages in Sagan's The Cold and the Dark: The World after Nuclear War.

F) INT. HOME - SEPTEMBER 1984

Anthony Grainger cradles his tearful girlfriend. CAMERA PANS stunned family faces and LINGERS ON coffee table. A RADIO TIMES depicts a traffic warden carrying a rifle, wearing a bandage, covering blast injuries. The family has just watched Threads. Billy catches his father's eye and nods.

G) EXT. PERTH

Children walk home after school in couples and groups. Billy walks alone.

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL CORRIDOR

Billy reads a notice on a cork board. A representative of the Sellafield nuclear facility will talk to students, part of a tour to promote careers in the nuclear industry, billed as: "The Industry of the Future."

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM

Billy scribbles frantically at a desk, surrounded by paper and marker-pens. A pile of hand-drawn leaflets sit to one side. We see a mushroom cloud, encircled by the words: "The Industry of the Future."

Billy writes the word Windscale in red, in large wavy letters on the next leaflet. He strikes through with a black marker. He writes: "SELLAFIELD" in black letters beneath. He sketches a red radiation roundel in one corner, a skull-and-crossbones in the other.

INT. SCHOOL CORRIDOR - NEXT DAY

Billy stands by a window. He watches a beautiful Jaguar XJ saloon pull into the school. The driver alights. He is a well-dressed, middle-aged man with a colourful tie.

The diminutive physics teacher bounds across the car park, his pencil-tie swinging as he skips. The pair shake hands warmly and walk towards the school entrance chatting.

TRACKING SHOT - BILLY

Billy races down the stairs carrying his bag of leaflets, oblivious to other students whom he pushes aside.

EXT. SCHOOL ENTRANCE

Billy heads for the car and throws his bag down. There is a sense of urgency. He removes the first leaflet and a role of sticky tape. It says: "THE BOMBS ARE REAL." He frantically tears tape with his teeth, then affixes the home-made leaflet to a side window.

WIDER ANGLE

Children point, smiling, and huddling excitedly. Some wander over. Excitement builds. Billy tapes a second leaflet to a window. More children surround the car as Billy plasters it with anti-nuclear messages.

AERIAL SHOT

The car is encircled. There are excited SQUEALS, CHATTER and LAUGHTER. Someone CHANTS Billy's name, but Billy is focused on his task, frantically wrestling with the tape.

BILLY

takes the last leaflet from his bag. It is a picture of the front cover of Protect and Survive. Using his fist, he presses down hard, firmly securing it with tape to the Jaguar's gleaming, pristine bonnet.

WIDE ANGLE

The CHANTING has reached a crescendo. Suddenly THE RECTOR (headmaster) appears, tall and imposing in black cape. He charges towards Billy. Children scatter.

RECTOR

grabs Billy by the ear. He drags him away from the car and up the stairs. The Sellafeld man and physics teacher run back to the car.

BILLY'S POV

The teacher tears Billy's leaflets from windows, apologising profusely. The car's furious owner carefully tries to prise-off tape from his gleaming paintwork.

INT. RECTOR'S STUDY

An austere room. Billy's hands outstretched one on top of the other, palms up. A THREE-PRONGED BELT rises and falls forcefully with a loud SMACK. Between each strike, the rector yells CHANGE and Billy swaps hands. He betrays no emotion, despite the pain.

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL - EXAM HALL

Students sit at desks in a gymnasium. Most write. Some stare into space. Invigilators walk the room in silence. A sudden WAIL pierces the silence. It comes from the AIR RAID SIREN on the school roof.

CLOSE ON BILLY'S EYES

Dilating pupils

HARD CUT TO:

EXT. SIREN

Blades turn. The WAIL rises and falls terribly.

INSERT: STOCK FOOTAGE

Nuclear explosions, buildings destroyed, hurricane-force winds and fire.

BACK TO SCENE

ARIEL VIEW

Students move with speed away from Billy's desk. He sits, head in hands. A pool of urine and excrement gathers by his feet. Brown liquid extends outwards like a river delta. The WAIL of the SIREN morphs into the scream of Billy Grainger. No one goes near the wailing boy.

CUT TO:

EXT. PLAYGROUND - FOLLOWING DAY

ISLA HARDY is an overweight bully. She has small features in the middle of a pudgy face, framed by dirty, long hair. A group of girls surround this fishwife-in-training, as she holds court. As she makes her points, she points at individuals, one by one.

ISLA

See what happened yesterday? Pure.
Fucking. Madness. That Billy
Grainger. He'll no be back. He's in
the looney bin the noo. Mad as fuck.
M. A. D.

Her cohort nods enthusiastically.

FADE OUT

ACT II

FADE IN:

INT. TRAIN CORRIDOR - 23 SEPTEMBER 2019

BILLY GRAINGER, aged 50, looks out at London, his face pressed against a window. His head moves slightly as the train edges out of Waterloo. His eyes catch moments as it progresses. We hear the BEEP of an ELECTRONIC DOOR.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Billy turns quickly. He is in space between two carriages, with two entry/exit doors and a toilet to one side. He is wearing a suit, but he is disheveled. He's been drinking.

A family of four, laden with bags, pass by. The mother is ushering her daughters through. She pauses momentarily when she spots Billy standing. But her HUSBAND beckons her on.

HUSBAND

C'mon, there's loads through here.
Girls, grab that table, the one on the left.

Billy returns to the window. His head rocks to the rhythmic back and forth and CLACKITY CLACK of the TRAIN. A different ELECTRONIC BEEP sounds. Billy turns quickly.

A fellow commuter opens the toilet door. He steps inside, leans down to press a close button and the door slowly closes with another intermittent BEEP.

We hear the DOOR LOCK. Billy starts to breathe in and out slowly. He closes his eyes.

BILLY

(socco)
May I be well, may others be well. May
I be well, may others be well.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HOSPITAL - SCOTLAND - 1985

Billy's parents sit opposite a DOCTOR. He resembles Tom Conti, his greasy salt-and-pepper hair swept to one side.

DAVID
(stroking his
moustache)
Shell shock? What, like a soldier?

DOCTOR
Yes. Sort of. A massive shock to the
system, an overload if you will.

DAVID
I don't understand. He's just a kid.

DAVID'S POV

DOCTOR
Yes, but think of it this way. We all
live with the fear of nuclear war. But
Billy was about to live it. We see his
response as extreme which of course it
was. But in the context of the era in
which we find ourselves and .. well
Billy's propensity to obsess over the
subject matter in question, perhaps
it's not so surprising.

BACK TO SCENE

DAVID
But it was just the malfunction of an
old air raid siren.

DOCTOR
But he didn't know that Mr Grainger.
For him it was a trigger. All the
horrors to come were very real and they
were imminent. It was a devastating
moment, a system overload for his young
mind.

SHEILA
Oh my God. Filling his head with all
that CND stuff. I knew it. All those
books. It's no wonder he went...

ANOTHER ANGLE

DOCTOR
Now now, I don't want you to fret
unduly Mrs Grainger.
(MORE)

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

Billy will need time. But there's no reason why he shouldn't make a full recovery. Perhaps in months, perhaps a year or two.

SHEILA

(crying)

A year or two? But David?

Sheila turns to the doctor.

SHEILA

His job you see, doctor. We have to move to England. We can't stay here. What are we...

SHEILA'S POV

DOCTOR

(taking her wrist
gently)

Mrs Grainger. There are doctors in England too. A change of scene is probably just what he needs. We'll take good care of him for now. Then, when he's ready, a new start. Somewhere he can't be reminded of, well, what happened.

DAVID

Aye, c'mon hen. The doctor's right. We'll be ok. He'll be ok. Make new friends, maybe go to college one day. A new start, for all of us.

BACK TO SCENE

David turns away from his wife and back to the doctor.

DAVID

This thing, this, what did you call it, stress disorder ...

DOCTOR

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.

DAVID

(apprehensively)

Aye that.

(turns to Sheila)

We'll help him through it. We'll get through it together.

He picks up her hand and they smile at each other as best they can.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. LONDON - A GRAND HOUSE - 1999.

SUPERIMPOSE

"LONDON 1999"

BILLY GRAINGER aged 30 emerges from behind a door marked Gentlemen, under a sweeping staircase in a grand central foyer. He is wearing a suit.

He walks towards to a huddle of armchairs, surrounding a glass table, by the main doors. A receptionist, sits behind a grand desk framed by a large "The Association of British Car Manufacturers" logo. She smiles at him as he sits down.

ANGLE ON BILLY

Billy clasps his hands together tightly, until the whites of his knuckles show.

BILLY'S POV

A side door suddenly swings open. CHARLIE GIBBS rushes towards Billy with outstretched hand. Wavy hair tumbles around Charlie's shoulders as he walks. He smiles as he spots Billy, revealing a row of twisted teeth below a twisted nose.

CHARLIE

William Grainger? I'm Charlie.
Charlie Gibbs.

Billy gets to his feet and takes Charlie's hand.

BACK TO SCENE

BILLY

It's Billy. Only the missus calls me William. When she's pissed off with me.

CHARLIE

Fair enough, Billy it is. Welcome to the car industry! C'mon I need to show

you round, but I gotta be quick.
 Things to avoid doing and all that.
 Charlie nods warmly to the receptionist who blushes.
 Billy tries to keep up as Charlie races up the staircase.
 At the top he turns to face Billy.

FAVOURING CHARLIE

CHARLIE
 'ere, That accent Billy? Are you
 Scotch?

BILLY
 No. I'm Scottish.

CHARLIE
 Ain't that the same thing?

BILLY
 No. Scotch is a drink.
 (under his breath)
 Daft cockney wanker.

CHARLIE
 (swinging round,
 grinning broadly)
 Ha ha, you got me pegged mate!

Charlie slaps Billy hard on the back and stops outside a spacious office. The door is open. An overweight, bald man wearing a pin-striped suit sits behind a teak desk, studying a document.

Everything inside chief executive GEORGE FITZGERALD's office is huge, including bay windows overlooking huge plane trees and chandelier, as well as George himself.

CHARLIE
 (whispering)
 CEO, George Fitzgerald. He's alright
 really. Likes a drink. And his food,
 obviously!

WIDER ANGLE

Billy smiles. Charlie races off again, storming through a pair of huge doors and up a side, service staircase. Billy follows one step behind. Suddenly Charlie stops.

CHARLIE
 Jolyon says you write a bit?

BILLY

Aye, I s'pose. A few things published
over the years. The missus sort of
made me do it.

They ascend once more and hear FOOTSTEPS and CHATTER from
two people descending. VARINDER SINGH wears a turban, a
beard and moustache. JEREMY PRINCE is a posh ex-public
schoolboy with floppy hair. They are known as VINNY and
THE PRINCE.

CHARLIE

Well. Lookie here! If it ain't the
gruesome twosome.

FAVOURING VINNY

VINNY

Hello Charlie. Who's your new friend?

CHARLIE

Jeremy The Prince and Vinny the Sikh,
allow me to introduce you to Mr Billy
Grainger. He's scotch.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Charlie smirks as Billy frowns. Vinny warmly takes
Billy's hand. The Prince follows, but is a little more
stand-offish.

CHARLIE

Down the Sow Thursday, boys?

THE PRINCE

Wouldn't miss it Charles.

(nods towards
Billy)

I hope your new chum lasts longer than
the last one!

MOVING SHOT

Charlie is off again. Billy follows.

CHARLIE

(calling down
stairs)

Curse of the saffer, my lovely
princess. Curse of the bleeding
saffer!

Billy turns to Charlie.

BILLY
What's The Sow?

CHARLIE
(grinning inanely)
All in good time. Just keep Thursday
free! That's when we go.

They reach the third floor and enter a door that says, "International Development". Charlie opens it, sticks his head through, but there's no one inside. He closes the door without giving Billy a chance to look through properly. Charlie turns to Billy, looking puzzled.

CHARLIE
'Ere, hope you don't mind me saying,
but ain't you a bit old for this
palaver? Press office assistant?

BILLY
I'm a late developer.

CHARLIE
Fair play! Good answer. Come on,
follow me. There's another service
staircase on the other side. One good
thing about this shitty old house.
Lots of places to hide.

Charlie stops by a door marked "Exhibitions Department". A postcard of Audrey Hepburn smoking adorns the door.

CHARLIE
Married you say? You're gonna wish you
weren't.

Charlie throws open the door to a room full of young women. There are exhibition materials, posters, lots of buzz. MUSIC plays LOUDLY.

CHARLIE
(with open arms)
'ello girls. How are we all today.

MOVING SHOT

They stop chatting and turn to face Charlie, all beaming.

GIRLS
Hi Charlie!

CHARLIE

This is my new mate Billy Grainger.
He's Scotch.

BILLY

Tiresome Charlie! Very tiresome.

One by one Billy shakes hands with the women. He starts to blush a little. Charlie turns and heads for the door grinning warmly. He beckons Billy to follow him and the pair leave to a CHORUS of SEE YA.

EXT. CORRIDOR

Charlie loosens his collar theatrically.

CHARLIE

Phew! Charlie's Angels right? And now, Billy, for something completely different.

(puts on a serious
face)

You a Woody Allen fan?

Billy shakes his head. Charlie looks into the middle distance. Billy follows his stare, confused.

CHARLIE

Well there's this film see, where Woody's on a train. It's cold and miserable, full of unhappy people. Out the window, he sees another train on the next track and it's full of beautiful people having a party? Well, Billy my friend prepare yourself for the Woody Allen express. It's destination data team.

ANGLE ON CHARLIE

Charlie pretends to pull a train whistle. Billy is once more in hot pursuit as they race through a maze of stairs and corridors. They stop at a door with a "Data Department" sign. Charlie throws open the door.

CHARLIE

'ello you crazy cats!

No one answers. The room is full of elderly white men. Some look up, then down again. There is an awkward younger man, who smiles and raises his hand slightly.

CHARLIE
 (aside to Billy)
 See what I mean. Night of the living
 dead.

Billy chuckles.

POV BILLY

Billy spots PAULA JONES, a heavily-made-up PA in her 30s. She is sitting outside the head of department's office, a man silhouetted through frosted glass.

BACK TO SCENE

Charlie sees Billy looking at Paula.

CHARLIE
 Oh no... no no no... Take it from me.
 Don't go near it Billy. More pricks
 than a second-hand dartboard. Keep it
 under your sporran.

Paula looks up from her work, aware that Charlie is talking about her. She scowls at him.

CHARLIE
 (whispering behind
 hand)
 Better get out. Some of these old
 coffin-dodgers ain't seen natural light
 since the eighties.

Billy laughs loudly and a few of the older men look up from computer screens. Charlie and Billy leave and Charlie feigns mock relief. He marches onwards.

MOVING SHOT

BILLY
 Charlie. What is it you do exactly?

CHARLIE
 (slowly and
 deliberately)
 As little as possible mate. As little
 as fucking possible. That and keeping
 out of the saffer's way.

BILLY
 The saffer?

CHARLIE

The boss. Jolyon. White South African, in case you hadn't guessed from the charrrrrrming accent.

BILLY

Oh, don't you like him? He seemed ok at my interview.

CHARLIE

(guffawing)

On his best behaviour mate. Look you make up your own mind. But I can't stand the cunt...

(more seriously)

... and the feeling is entirely mutual.

Billy nods. They stop outside a door with a large red "On Air" sign above the door. Billy looks up at the sign.

ANGLE ON SIGN

CHARLIE

Radio room. It's his place. He loves doing radio. No one goes near it. We're not even allowed a key.

WIDER ANGLE

BILLY

Oh?

CHARLIE

Just a cupboard with a desk, a radio mic and some headphones. He guards the key with his life. Anyway, piece of advice Billy Grainger.

Charlie extends his little finger. He begins wagging it in Billy's face as he speaks.

CHARLIE

(imitating Tony
from The Shining)

Don't go into the radio room. Just don't do it. Oh, and keep your filthy scotch hands off Paula.

Billy laughs heartily. The duo each push a double-door inwards, taking them into the Communications Department.

CUT TO:

EXT. WINCHESTER - LATE EVENING

GABRIELLE (GABI) GRAINGER opens the front door. She has one hand on her belly. She looks relieved.

GABI
(curtseys)
Welcome home daddy.

Billy walks through the door and they embrace.

INT. CORRIDOR

takes them through to a kitchen at the back of the Edwardian house. Billy sits. Gabi turns the kettle on.

BILLY
(looking around)
They home?

GABI
Nope. Gone to a quiz night at the pub.

The KETTLE starts to BOIL. Billy smiles at Gabi. There is a pause, while Billy and Gabi smile at each other.

GABI
Well?

BILLY
Well what, hon?

GABI
Well, how did it go, my little London commuter?

BILLY
Oh, you know. It was fine.

GABI
(hand on hips)
Billy Grainger! You need to throw me a bigger bone than that.

BILLY
Aye, sorry babe. It was great. A great first day.

GABI'S POV

Gabi puts a cup down, rushes over and throws her arms around her husband.

GABI

Oh, I'm so relieved. I've been worried sick.

BACK TO SCENE

She sits beside him and gently cups his face in her hands, looking at him intently.

GABI

So no... issues?

BILLY

(slightly
embarrassed)

No. I was fine. I stood all the way to London, right next to one. You know, just in case.

GABI

Whatever it takes my brave soldier!

Gabi lets go of Billy's face and returns to the kettle.

BILLY

I think it's gonna be ok. This time.

Billy points at her belly.

BILLY

How's the wee man?

GABI

(rubbing herself
gently)

Oh, he's a bastard! Making me puke. Making me fat. Did you practice your techniques?

BILLY

Aye a bit, you know. But didn't need to much. There's this bloke Charlie who I'm gonna be working with. He made me feel, well...

Billy scratches his head, smiling.

GABI

Charlie eh? Sounds like trouble.

BILLY

Oh Aye! He is that. Anyway he works in the same department. Showed me round the building, met lots of people. Everyone loves Charlie.

GABI

You too?

BILLY

Oh aye, ha ha. No, I just mean, you know, he put me at my ease. Made me forget to remember to...

Gabi walks over and rests Billy's head on her belly.

GABI

Well this Charlie, sounds good to me. You know what else sounds good?

BILLY

What?

GABI

(pushing Billy's
head away)

Your folks are out right. Sooooo, wanna show me what a randy Scotsman has under his kilt?

Gabi turns towards the door and looks over her shoulder. Billy gets up and follows her out of the kitchen door, rushing to the stairs.

BILLY

You can play my bagpipes too if you like?

GABI

Dirty little savage. How could a English rose refuse.

Gabi stops at the top of the stairs and cups her face with the back of her palms, like a teenage girl. She runs into the bedroom. Billy follows at speed.

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM

Gabi is snoozing in bed. Billy stares at the ceiling.

BILLY'S POV

The ceiling features the same swirling artex of the family home back in Perth. Gabi turns over.

BACK TO SCENE

GABI

Can't wait to be able to do this
whenever we want.

BILLY

Won't be long. We'll have a deposit
soon enough. Six months max. It's all
thanks to you hon.

Gabi is totally content. She throws an arm over Billy's chest and kisses him tenderly on the cheek.

WIDER ANGLE

BILLY

Erm, Charlie said the fellas go out on
a Thursday. To a place called The Silk
Sow. D'yer mind if I join them?

GABI

The fellas eh? Losing you already am
I?

BILLY

Yeah, ok. I'll tell them no.

Gabi sits up quickly.

GABI

You'll do no such thing Billy Grainger.
You go. I insist. Just...

(beat)

take it easy. You know.

BILLY

Aye, I know hon.

Billy kisses Gabi on the forehead. She sinks down, her arm around his chest once more. She closes her eyes.

BILLY'S POV

He focuses on the artex swirls.

CUT TO:

EXT. BUSY LONDON STREET - EVENING

Charlie is smoking a cigarette. Billy stands next to him. It's a dark, rainy evening. Charlie takes an Erikson mobile phone out of his pocket and dials a number, cursing under his breath as he dials.

CHARLIE

Yeah it's me. Are you two pricks coming or what?

(beat)

Yeah, we're waiting now, usual spot. Fucking hurry up, it's freezing.

Charlie turns to Billy.

CHARLIE

Be late for their own funerals!

Vinny and The Prince turn the corner a few moments later. As soon as they are together Charlie hails a black cab. Brakes SQUEAL and the four pile inside.

INT. BLACK CAB

VINNY

I'm well prepared tonight lads. Check this out.

Vinny takes a pile of £1 coins out of his bag and grins at Charlie, The Prince and Billy. Billy gives Charlie a quizzical look. Charlie grins back in response.

EXT. TAXI

The four men tumble from the cab onto the pavement, like excited puppies. It's raining softly. They are standing outside a pub on the corner of a street. The Silk Sow has opaque, painted windows.

FAVOURING CHARLIE

CHARLIE

(grins at Billy)

Welcome to heaven Billy Grainger.

INT. SILK SOW

The interior of the pub is compact. A long, narrow bar leads to a small raised stage with a vertical, stainless-steel pole. The pub is full of men in suits.

Two young women, clad in nothing but sexy underwear, collect pound coins from the clientele in a pitted, pint-glass.

As Billy and friends make their way to the bar to order drinks a COMPERE takes the microphone.

COMPERE

Next up gentlemen it's CHARLENE from Essex. Give it up for a cutie with the great booty.

MUSIC BLARES. Charlene is one of the girls with a pint-glass. She walks up to the stage which men crowd around. She begins to writhe around the pole. Billy is transfixed. Suddenly the other girl ZOFJA tugs on his coat sleeve.

PINT GLASS

Billy reaches into his pocket and absent-mindedly puts a 20p coin into the jug.

BACK TO SCENE

ZOFJA

What the fuck?

Charlie quickly steps in putting £2 in the pint glass, one for him, one for Billy.

WIDER ANGLE

CHARLIE

Sorry sweetheart. It's his first time. He doesn't know the rules.

ZOFJA

There's signs everywhere.

She nods towards a pillar.

SIGN

"£1 IN THE PINT POT FOR EVERY DANCE. PRIVATE DANCES £10.
NO TOUCHING."

FAVOURING CHARLIE

CHARLIE

Scotch or not Billy, you can't be
putting pennies in the pot mate.
You'll get us all barred.

Charlie grins. The Prince laughs out loud. And Billy finally chuckles too.

VARIOUS SHOTS

A procession of beautiful young girls dance on stage.

The four men order drinks and chasers.

A dancer takes Charlie to a curtained-off area, at the back of the bar.

Billy negotiates a private dance with Zofja.

CUT TO:

INT. HOME - LATE NIGHT

Billy closes the front door carefully. He checks himself in the full-length hall mirror, then ascends the stairs. He stumbles. He enters the bedroom. Gabi is asleep. Billy knocks a clock off the bedside table as he walks past. He curses.

GABI

Good night?

BILLY

Aye, sorry hon, didnae mean to wake you.

GABI

God. You stink.

BILLY

Sorry babe.

Billy walks into the en-suite and closes the door behind him. Billy PEES loudly. Gabi SNORTS, turns over and goes back to sleep.

CUT TO:

INT. COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

Billy and Charlie sit at opposite sides of a four-desk configuration. They are typing, Charlie inexpertly.

CHARLIE
 (motioning to
 Billy's keyboard)
 Where d'yer learn to do that?

BILLY
 What? Touch typing? The missus taught
 me. Plenty of time between jobs. She
 taught me loads.

Charlie nods. JOLYON SHIELDS, the Association's head of communications is in a separate office. White South African, his swept-back dark hair and pinched features give him the appearance of Dracula. TV news plays on a screen on the wall. The calm of the office is shattered by Jolyon's raised voice.

JOLYON
 William Grainger, my office! NOW!

Billy looks up from his screen. Charlie is grinning.

CHARLIE
 Here we go. Hold on to your sporran
 mate.

Billy gives Charlie the V-sign and walks into Jolyon's office.

INT. JOLYON'S OFFICE

Jolyon is seething. He is holding a piece of paper at arm's length, as if it were infectious. It is a draft of something Billy has written.

JOLYON
 (bellowing)
CIRCUMNAVIGATE!!!

He stares intently at Billy before continuing.

JOLYON
Five syllables!!! Why have you used
this ridiculous word? This isn't the
 19th century is it?
 (staring with
 venom)
 We're not announcing the discovery of
 America are we? Have I missed
 something? Have we built a wooden
 sailing ship William? To sail around
 the world. To find more people who
 can't write?

Panic sweeps through Billy's body. He shifts uneasily.

MEMORY FLASH

The examination hall. Billy is screaming.

INT. JOLYON'S OFFICE

Billy momentarily glances at the door, his escape route. He pauses, then starts to breathe deeply. His lips move slightly as if saying something to himself.

JOLYON

Well? Why have you used this ridiculous word?

Jolyon's pinched features are menacing, and become more so as his complexion changes from its usual orange hue to a deeper shade of red.

JOLYON

WELL?

BILLY

Erm, I don't know Jolyon. Sorry. Look I'll change it. It's no bother. This sustainability report, it's a bit of a mouthful. I havenae quite...

JOLYON

Of course you will William. I can't let this go out. Start off by reading the report. And read it properly this time. Then write in English. IN ENGLISH. I know you haven't been here long, but you must hit the ground running. Who, what, why, when, where! The basics...

BILLY'S HANDS

Billy is using the thumb and forefinger of one hand to squeeze in sequence the tip of each finger on the other. He switches hands and repeats.

FAVOURING BILLY'S FACE

The sound of Jolyon's tirade fades. It is replaced by RHYTHMIC BREATHING and a mantra that Billy chants to himself in his head.

BILLY (V.O.)
May I be well, may others be well.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. WINCHESTER - CHURCH HALL - 1993

a Buddhist MONK in an orange cloak sits on a small raised stage. Before him are two rows of people on plastic chairs. He breaths slowly in and out, with eyes closed. His audience also have their eyes closed, except Billy Grainger aged 24. His eyes are wide open.

MONK
May I be well as you breathe in, may
others be well as you breathe out --
may I be well -- may others be well.

Billy shakes his head slightly and looks around the room. To his left, attendees chant gently. He turns his head to the right. A young Gabrielle, sitting a couple of seats away, smiles back at him and giggles. She looks down quickly. It is the moment they meet.

When she looks up, Billy motions as if he were holding a glass, his eyebrows raised in a question. She nods. They sneak out together without disturbing the others.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. JOLYON'S OFFICE

Jolyon attempts to throw the piece of paper at Billy. But it catches the air, performs a volte face and flutters down to the floor by the chair on which he is sitting. He picks it up and thrusts it towards Billy.

JOLYON
(growling)
Re-write it!

INT. COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

Charlie grins as Billy walks back to his seat.

CHARLIE
Fuckin' 'ell, that was a classic!

Charlie leans forward across the space between the two screens, as Billy re-takes his seat.

CHARLIE

Told you, didn't I. The bloke's a grade-A cunt.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Billy supresses a giggle, but Charlie continues grinning like a chimp. He leans further forward and beckons to Billy to come as close as possible. Billy moves to within inches of Charlie's face.

ZOOM IN

CHARLIE

You see, what people don't realise is that it's folk like you and me that are suffering more than anyone did in the old country. The white middle class of London. We're the collateral damage from the downfall of Apartheid. Free ol' Nelson? What the fuck about us?

Billy collapses on to his keypad. Tears roll down his face, his shoulders moved rhythmically as he desperately tries to avoid Charlie's gaze, lest the monster in the end-office hears.

CUT TO:

EXT. LONDON

Charlie and Billy spill out of a London taxi.

INT. PUB

A barman looks up and smiles. By the time Billy and Charlie reach the bar he is already pulling pints.

INT. TRAIN CORRIDOR - LATE

Billy sways as couple walk past GIGGLING. They are as drunk as Billy. He glances up as the toilet door opens.

INT. WATERLOO STATION - LATE

The last five trains are listed on the departure board. Billy sways, while eating a burger.

INT. TOILET CUBICLE

Billy is seated. He holds two plastic disposable cups of water. A TABLET FIZZES in each. He leans forward so the

rim of one cup touches his forehead. He moves it around on his head, as the pills fizz, spit and dissolve.

INT. THE SILK SOW

A girl wearing silver knickers dances for Billy. Her breasts are millimetres from his face as she grinds.

INT. HOME - BEDROOM

Billy turns over in bed, pulling a pillow to his head. Gabi is remonstrating. She leaves, SLAMMING the DOOR.

EXT. LONDON - NIGHTTIME

A pub door opens. The Prince is thrown out by a bouncer. He falls onto the pavement, his hair flapping wildly. Billy, Charlie and Vinny follow laughing. Vinny reaches down and picks up his friend.

INT. HOME - KITCHEN - LATE

There are pictures of Gabi and Scott, now nearly a toddler, on the fridge. There is also a beach picture of the whole family. Gabi is pregnant again. Billy picks up a note on the kitchen table. It reads "Scott misses you Billy. I miss you." Billy drops it then pulls his face through his hands. He looks up at the ceiling.

CUT TO:

INT. CHANNEL 4 NEWS - GREEN ROOM - 2002

Billy, aged 33, sits on a small sofa in a cramped room. He watches a TV on the opposite wall. There are two interview guests. One is George Fitzgerald, the other FIONA LE FÈVRE, young, blonde wearing a tight green t-shirt.

Fiona is London spokesperson for Friends of the Earth. The contrast between the corpulent, older man in pinstripe suit and the vibrant young Fiona is obvious.

An Irish TECHNICIAN wearing headphones around his neck walks into the room. He carries a Styrofoam cup. He looks at the screen as he puts the coffee on the table in front of Billy.

TECHNICIAN

How's yer man sounding?

BILLY
Sounds fine. But he looks terrible.
Next to her.

The technician smirks. Billy frowns slightly, then turns his head to follow the technician as he walks out.

CLOSE ON BILLY

BILLY
(under his breath)
Fucking stitch-up. Bastards!

CLOSE ON TV SCREEN

The camera loves Fiona. We can't hear what she says, we just see her youth, enthusiasm and exuberance.

CUT TO:

INT. STUDIO FLOOR

The interview ends and Fiona removes her earpiece. The Irish technician tries to unclip the microphone from her t-shirt, without touching her neck or chest. She gets up while he is still wrestling with the wires. He finally succeeds and she marches off, past the green room.

She glances at Billy, standing by the door, and MUTTERS something incomprehensible. A few moments later George ambles up to Billy, a big grin on his amicable face.

GEORGE
Well Billy, how did I do?

BILLY
Oh fine, Mr Fitzgerald. Just fine.

GEORGE
Let's dispense with mister, shall we Billy. You've worked with us a long time now. It's just old George.

BILLY
Oh, ok, thanks George. She's a bit feisty, isn't she?

GEORGE
Who? Fiona? Oh yes, she's wonderful. I do wish she'd smile though. I wonder if the earth may be the only friend willing to have her.

BILLY
(forcing a laugh)
Aye, you'll be right there George.

EXT. LONDON

They emerge onto a rainy street. Billy hails a black cab and opens the door for George when it pulls up.

INT. CAB

GEORGE
Association of British Car
Manufacturers please. Balkan Road.

Billy sits opposite George.

GEORGE
It's great to have you here with me
Billy. But why no Jolyon?

BILLY
Said he had some business to attend to.
Sent the B-Team instead. Hope that's
ok?

GEORGE
Oh yes, it's fine by me. Your briefing
was superb. You really know your
stuff.

BILLY
(deadpan)
I specialise in the end of the world.

George laughs.

GEORGE
You and Fiona!

BILLY
Aye. Only difference is Fiona is trying
to save the world. I'm just trying to
survive it.

George laughs heartily, pats Billy's knee and then sits
back to study his colleague carefully.

GEORGE
Good answer! You know your boss doesn't
believe in it?

BILLY

How's that?

GEORGE

Climate change. He says it's all hogwash, or words to that effect.

(mocking a South African accent)

You have to challenge the science
George, query the models, question the data.

WIDER ANGLE

BILLY

Jolyon says a lot of things I don't agree with.

GEORGE

Me too Billy! Me too. Tell me, is that sickly smell in the radio room down to him?

BILLY

Wouldn't know. Guards his key with his life. It's only you with a spare.

George nods. Billy's PHONE BEEPS. He takes it out of his pocket and looks at the screen.

"Braxton Hicks this morning. This bun is baked. Please don't be late tonight. I love you."

Billy sits back and looks out of the window smiling.
George stares out of the opposite window.

CUT TO:

INT. FOYER, ASSOCIATION OF BRITISH CAR MANUFACTURERS

Billy and George walk through vast front doors. George nods at Billy then begins to ascend the stairs.

FAVOURING VINNY AND THE PRINCE

The pair are huddled together, below the staircase.

FAVOURING GEORGE

Upon seeing Billy, Vinny and The Prince flee. George notices this and is intrigued. He slows a little and looks backwards as he proceeds up the stairs.

ANGLE ON BILLY

Billy turns right and opens the large doors to the Communications Department.

INT. COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

In the middle of the department floor Jolyon stands with arms are folded, a thunderous expression on his face. Billy stops dead.

JOLYON

My office. Now please William.

Billy instinctively turns to Charlie. But his friend is not there. Billy starts to breathe slowly, rhythmically.

INT. JOLYON'S OFFICE

Jolyon sits and motions for Billy to do the same.

JOLYON

I have today terminated Charles Gibbs employment with immediate effect. I will not go into details. Suffice it to say, his conduct is now a matter for the police, and I will not prejudice their investigation by divulging any further details.

Billy is shocked. His eyebrows meet in concern. Hands behind back, he uses the thumb and forefinger of one hand to squeeze the tips of his fingers on the other. When he has completed the task, he switches hands and starts again.

OVER THE SHOULDER SHOT

JOLYON

Charles was a close friend of yours William. But mark the tense carefully. Was. Do not be tempted to contact him henceforth. It would be a career limiting move. I repeat career limiting.

(looks at the wall)

His work will be continued by the agency. I need to put my foot on their throats, something he would not do despite my repeated demands. That is that William. I do not wish to discuss this issue further or hear the name Charles Gibbs again. Is that understood?

REVERSE SHOT

Billy nods sheepishly. He continues to perform the thumb and fingers relaxation technique behind his back.

JOLYON

I hope so, you may leave now.

Billy walks back to his desk. He checks his mobile phone. There is no message from Charlie. Billy checks his watch. It's 5.20 pm. He stares vacantly at his computer.

EXT. CENTRAL LONDON - CONSTITUTION ARCH

Billy emerges from the underpass. He walks across the central island with its towering stone arch. He walks with purpose towards Piccadilly. Suddenly he hears the SCREAM of a LOW-FLYING MILITARY JET. It momentarily drowns out the SOUND AND BUSTLE of LONDON TRAFFIC.

BILLY'S FACE

He looks up as he did in Perth 20 years earlier.

CUT TO:

INT. JET COCKPIT

The clean-shaven pilot looks down on London, as the Leuchars pilot had done over Perth, nearly 20 years earlier.

CUT TO:

INT. THE SILK SOW - LATER THAT EVENING

Billy enters the bar and looks around anxiously. He is instantly accosted by a scantily clad dancer, wearing an inane grin and not much else, carrying a pint jar. He fumbles for a coin, throws it in the glass without looking at the girl, before squeezing through groups of suited men to get to the waiting barman, JIM.

JIM

Awright Billy boy?

BILLY

Aye, you seen Charlie, Jim?

JIM

Tonight?

BILLY

Aye, 'course tonight.

JIM

Nah, thought you two came as a package?
McAnt and Dec of the motor industry.

Billy sneers and scans the room once more. He starts watching a dance. The barman delivers a pint to him.

TIME CUT TO:

The bar is now packed. Another pint arrives for Billy. It's clear that he's had a few.

Billy negotiates a private dance with a young, dark haired girl. They move to a booth behind a curtain.

As the girl grinds, the sequence slows in time with languorous song, "Never Ever" by All Saints. The girl throws forward her hair which covers her face. She throws it back again.

DREAM SEQUENCE

The stripper's face has become the face of Fiona Le Fèvre. She dances seductively, topless. She puts both hands on his thighs and leans in. She kisses him. They embrace and there is a lingering kiss as she begins to unbutton his shirt. CAMERA PANS BACK as the dance ends.

END DREAM
SEQUENCE

The girl nods at Billy, wraps a coat around her naked body before running off.

CUT TO:

INT. COAT POCKET

We see a bright screen, but nothing else. We hear a mobile PHONE RINGING against loud BACKGROUND NOISE. The screen enters focus and says "Gabi". CAMERA PANS BACK to reveal the dark exterior of Billy's coat. The RINGING PHONE is quickly drowned-out by MUSIC, pub CHATTER and LAUGHTER.

CUT TO:

INT. THE SILK SOW

Billy laughs with other Punters at the bar. A girl smiles at him resentfully as he puts a pound in a pint jar. Billy sways.

CUT TO:

CLOSE ON PHONE

The phone screen brightens once more. Gabi is calling. Billy misses the call.

EXT. LONDON - VERY LATE

Billy stumbles along a darkened street. He falls against a wall and takes a moment to steady himself. He feels his coat pocket. Takes out the phone.

MOBILE PHONE

There are four missed calls. Billy checks his text messages. One is from Gabi's father.

"Billy, where are you? We are at the hospital with Gabrielle. Come quickly."

CUT TO:

INT. TRAIN CARRIAGE - VERY LATE

Billy stands by the toilet in the space between carriages. He reads his phone messages. His head is agony. He holds it as he reads the last message:

"Where the hell are you?"

CUT TO:

EXT. WINCHESTER - DEAD OF NIGHT

A dark and deserted street. Billy walks quickly. We see the imposing entrance to a Victorian hospital silhouetted in darkness.

INT. HOSPITAL

Billy reaches an empty reception and glances at the clock. It's 2.00 a.m. He rubs his aching head as he looks for signs for the maternity ward.

MOVING SHOT

He stops briefly to steady himself. Finding the maternity wing, a nurse points him towards the delivery room. She watches him as he staggers.

INT. DELIVERY ROOM

Billy bursts through the door. Gabi is awake in bed with her parents seated next to her. A MIDWIFE stops talking and glares at Billy. Baby JAMIE is asleep in a cot to Billy's left. Billy looks to his right. There is a silver, kidney-shaped dish. It contains the umbilical cord and placenta.

FAVOURING BILLY

Billy puts his hand to his mouth. But he cannot stop himself. He vomits through his fingers, over his clothes and onto the delivery ward floor.

MIDWIFE

OUT!

CUT TO:

INT. OFFICE CANTEEN

Billy is eating lunch with Vinny and The Prince. The Prince theatrically draws up some stew with a spoon and allows the slops to stream back into the bowl.

THE PRINCE

Christ. Will you look at this filth?

VINNY

Worth every penny.

THE PRINCE

Yes, well, maybe where you come from.

VINNY

Racist prick.

The Prince grins then turns to Billy.

THE PRINCE

Still nothing from Charlie, Billy?

BILLY

Not a dicky bird. It's like he never existed.

THE PRINCE

What about his flatmates?

BILLY

Went there last week. Said he'd left without any message. His room was bare. Like he'd never been there.

VINNY

Been back to The Sow?

BILLY

Pah! No chance. I'm grounded. Gabi hasnae forgiven me. Neither has her bastard father. I'm home seven on the dot every night.

ANOTHER ANGLE

THE PRINCE

Probably for the best. What about Jolyon? Behaving himself?

BILLY

Worse than ever. Only has me to bully now.

(beat)

Och, I know he stitched Charlie up. Fucking polis investigation. As if.

ANGLE ON VINNY

VINNY

There may be something in it. Jolyon was in very early that morning.

THE PRINCE

Jolyon is in early every Tuesday Varinder. Regular as clockwork. I arrive for the Hong Kong call crack of a sparrow's. Bingo, there's his car. Paula's too.

VINNY

(laughing)

You can always tell when Paula's around. Her perfume reeks!

CLOSE ON BILLY'S FACE

FLASHBACK - INT. TAXI

GEORGE

Tell me, is that sickly smell in the radio room him?

END FLASHBACK.

INT. "ON AIR" SIGN

Flashes red.

BACK TO SCENE

Billy stares into the middle distance, smiling to himself.

BILLY

Gotcha, You bastard.

Vinny and The Prince swap a look. The Prince shrugs.

CUT TO:

INT. GEORGE FITZGERALD'S LOUNGE - LATE EVENING

In a beautifully appointed lounge, George sits in a leather armchair. He watches TV, drinking whisky. His PHONE CHIMES on the bookshelf and he gets up wearily. It is an effort to move.

He picks up the phone and reads the message. He sighs and dials.

GEORGE

Billy, yes it's George. Look I've just received your message. Must I do this one? Is Jolyon not free?

There is a pause while Billy responds.

GEORGE

Yes, yes, I know. But I have a busy schedule tomorrow. Can't they call me at home?

There is another pause.

GEORGE

Gotta be an ISDN, yes I remember. Damn BBC. But Billy, if they cancel on me again, I will not be a happy man. Not with them, nor with you!

There is another pause.

GEORGE

(laughing)

I will hold you to that. But single malt, single barrel Bill. None of that blended muck. Erm, you will not be there, I presume?

There is another very brief pause.

GEORGE

No, that's ok, I have my spare key.
OK, all understood. 5 Live Breakfast...
yes 7.20, I got that already. Bye.

George sighs and shakes his head. He sits back down.

CUT TO:

INT. BOARD ROOM - EARLY

Billy stands by a row of floor-to-ceiling bay windows. From this vantage point on the first floor, he can see everything entering the grounds of the Association. He checks his watch. It's 07:00.

The Prince is the only other employee in the building, safely tucked away on his weekly Hong Kong call.

BILLY'S POV

A blue Land Rover pulls into the driveway. Jolyon parks, then alights slicking back his hair. He glances around furtively. Momentarily, his eyes dart up to where Billy is standing. Billy steps back quickly. Jolyon continues towards the entrance, looking around as he ambles onwards.

FAVOURING BILLY

7.08, and Billy starts to fidget. He mutters under his breath.

BILLY

C'mon, c'mon.

Minutes pass. He looks at his watch again. It's 7.10. Another car pulls in. Billy breathes out hard. A VW Polo.

Paula alights after applying lipstick. She is wearing a long black coat and high heels.

BILLY

C'mon lassie, get yourself movin'. The prince of darkness is waiting.

Paula starts for the entrance, but then returns to her car. Leaning into the open door, we see shapely legs under her coat. Billy fidgets. She closes the door and makes her way towards the entrance, before disappearing from view.

ANGLE ON BILLY

Billy's breathing quickens. He consciously slows it, by doing the calming trick with his thumb and forefinger.

CUT TO:

INT. GEORGE'S CAR

George parks his Jaguar at the entrance to The Association and alights.

INT. FOYER

He makes his way to his first-floor office. He holds the brass handrail and is wheezing by the time he reaches the top of the stairs. He briefly stops, turns left, then first right into his office. He looks at his watch. It's 7.12. He sees the coffee machine and turns it on.

CLOSE ON COFFEE MACHINE

He adds a pod and the drips of coffee start to fall. We watch it closely. DRIP, DRIP, DRIP.

WIDER ANGLE

George takes the coffee and heads for the door.

INT. RADIO ROOM - OUTSIDE DOOR

George sets his coffee down on a water cooler. MUFFLED SOUNDS come from inside the room. He pauses for a moment and checks the "On Air" sign. It is not illuminated. He takes the key from his pocket and unlocks the door.

GEORGE'S POV

Paula screams as the door opens. She attempts to cover herself. Jolyon grabs his trousers, which are gathered around his ankles. He trips and knocks a microphone onto the floor as he tries to steady himself.

BACK TO SCENE

George says nothing. He calmly closes the radio room door and walks down the corridor. As he approaches the grand staircase his PHONE CHIMES. It is a message:

"George, so sorry, looks like I'll be
buying you that whisky. 5-Live has
just cancelled."

The expression on George's face softens a little as he taps out a response.

CLOSE ON BILLY'S PHONE

"My office. 09:00 sharp."

FOCUS ON BILLY

BILLY

Christ!

CUT TO:

INT. GEORGE'S OFFICE - OUTSIDE DOOR

Billy checks his watch, takes a packet of Imodium out of his pocket and swallows two. He mouths may I be well, may others be well, as he slows his breathing. He knocks and enters.

INT. GEORGE'S OFFICE

Billy is talking before he reaches the large teak desk.

BILLY

I'm so sorry for this morning George.
It was exactly like you said. They
called me...

George puts up his hand to interrupt Billy and points to the seat. We hear the sound of Billy's HEART POUNDING as he sits.

GEORGE

I should kick your arse out of the door
for that little charade this morning
Grainger, but I can't afford to lose
three members of the comms team within
the space of a few months.

BILLY

I'm not sure I follow you Ge -

GEORGE

May I finish? I liked Charlie too. I
didn't approve of what happened to him.
But I don't approve of this nonsense
either. Not one bit.

(beat)

Having said all that, you have
initiative. I will give you that. I
think it's safest to keep you as close
as possible. Take my key.

(throws key to
Billy)

Air the room. Windows wide. Your
first task as my new head of comms.

ANOTHER ANGLE

BILLY

(astonished)

But, but what, what about Jolyon?

GEORGE

Gross misconduct. I've just had the pleasure of escorting him from the premises. He's finished. For Paula, a final warning. That is what you'd hoped for, isn't it?

BILLY

Erm...

George grins.

GEORGE

Look I need people I can work with. People I can trust. Remember that William. And no more games. Please.

BILLY

Aye, ok George. Fair enough. I won't let you down.

GEORGE

See to it that you don't. We'll sort out terms later. Now get out of my sight and air that bloody room.

BILLY

Aye. I mean yes. And thank you George.

Billy approaches the door.

GEORGE

One more thing. I want that single malt Billy. I'm going to need something to help me forget.

Billy has a large grin on his face.

BILLY

Aye. 'course. Single malt George. Single barrel an' all.

CUT TO:

INT. BILLY'S OFFICE

Billy strides into Jolyon's old office and takes a seat in the reclining, leather chair. He leans back smugly, taking in the surroundings.

BILLY'S POV

He removes photos of Jolyon's kids from the wall and bins them. He takes a half bottle of whisky out of his bag.

BILLY

Aye George, helps with the forgetting
alright.

He puts the whisky in a drawer under the desk and starts to close the drawer. But then pauses and re-opens it.

INSERT: FOLDER

It is marked: "CONFIDENTIAL."

BACK TO SCENE

The folder is thick with bulging envelopes. He re-opens the drawer and pulls out two. Intrigued, he reaches inside the first and pulls out a pair of knickers. Horrified he curses and drops them. He uses a pencil and pen to pick them up and throw them violently in the bin.

ANOTHER ANGLE

He carefully opens the top of the second envelope. He sniffs at it tentatively, then chucks it in the bin, disgust etched on his face.

BILLY

(rubbing nose
vigorously)
The dirty bastard.

He returns to the folder. He retrieves a copy of the Sustainability Report and chuckles to himself.

BILLY

Circumnavigation! Have a great trip.

He throws it in the bin. As it falls, a memo falls from its pages. Billy retrieves the document.

INSERT: MEMO

It is headed: "CONFIDENTIAL: International Federation of Car Makers, Geneva. 15 January 2001. Policy and Lobbying."

BACK TO SCENE

Billy begins to read. He sits upright in his seat. Key phrases have been underlined by Jolyon Shields.

INSERT: MEMO

"Petrol and diesel models will dominate the product mix until at least 2030, in particular highly profitable 4x4 and SUV-type vehicles."

"It will not be possible, nor desirable, to meet carbon reduction measures, even in their lightest form."

"CO₂ reduction targets must be challenged, to limit exposure and threat to business model viability."

"Seek out scientists who question climate change and embed them in communications plans."

BACK TO SCENE

Billy leans back in his chair. He runs his fingers through his hair then takes the whisky back out of the drawer. He raises the bottle in a toast.

BILLY

Here's to you Jolyon. And to all our
dirty little secrets.

CUT TO:

INT. TRAIN CORRIDOR - 23 SEPTEMBER 2019

VAGUE SHAPES appear to the LEFT of FRAME and BRIGHT LIGHTS to the RIGHT. The shapes ROCK BACK AND FORTH SLIGHTLY. There is sudden, violent SMACK, then WHOOSH of AIR as two TRAINS pass in opposite directions on parallel tracks. CAMERA JOLTS into focus.

PATRICIA BLUM, a diminutive lady in her early 60s, smartly dressed and heavily made-up, is smiling kindly. She sits on a suitcase, on the opposite side of the corridor to where Billy is standing. Billy catches her eye, then looks down quickly.

CUT TO:

INT. BBC STUDIOS - GREEN ROOM - 2008

SUPERIMPOSE

"BBC RADIO STUDIOS - 2008"

Billy sits on one of two threadbare sofas surrounding a glass table. He takes two Imodium. At one end of the room there is a refreshment area, with water, pastries and coffee.

FIONA LE FEVRE

aged 28, arrives dressed in jeans and t-shirt, carrying a black jacket. She scowls at Billy before sitting as far away from him as possible.

FIONA

Where's the fat man?

BILLY

The fat man? Do you mean George Fitzgerald?

FIONA

Yes, Fitzgerald. The fat cat, car man.

BILLY

Couldnae make it. Sent me instead. I'm Billy Grai --

FIONA

(snapping back)

I know who you are. Fat man's bag carrier.

Billy smiles. But Fiona looks away. She starts to fiddle with her phone. Billy has a plan. His strategy is to lull her into a false sense of security. Before pouncing, when they are on air together.

BILLY

sighs heavily. He gets to his feet, shuffles and sits back down. He taps his foot to get Fiona's attention. She looks up momentarily, annoyed.

ANOTHER ANGLE

He gets up again. Fiona glances up from her phone. She watches him as he walks over to the refreshments and pours water. She looks down as he returns. Billy deliberately positions his glass on the edge of the table. He knocks it. It falls. GLASS BREAKS.

BILLY

Shit!

Billy rushes to a sideboard. He grabs paper towels and mops up water and broken glass. Fiona watches and shakes her head. Billy pours himself more water, returns to the sofa and sits down. He sighs theatrically.

FIONA'S POV

Billy sits with his head in his hands.

FIONA

Take it easy. No one's gonna die.

BILLY

Aye, sorry. I'm ok with pre-recs; I not so good wi' lives. Nerves.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Fiona returns to her phone. She leans back on the sofa. Billy GULPS WATER noisily. He THUMPS the GLASS on the table. Fiona sighs and Billy smirks. He taps his foot on the ground again. Fiona shakes her head.

CUT TO:

INT. STUDIO

Billy and Fiona wear headphones, in a radio studio with a large round table. Two presenters sit opposite their guests. Everyone has a desk microphone. Beyond a glass partition we see studio TECHNICIANS.

INT. TECHNICIANS ROOM

TECHNICIANS' POV - THROUGH GLASS

Billy is animated, lots of hand gestures. We cannot hear him, but he is clearly in control. Fiona shakes her head frequently. Billy speaks more often than Fiona, pointing at her to underline his points. He smiles at her when he's not speaking.

FAVOURING TECHNICIANS

One of the technicians turns to another and raises an eyebrow. The interview ends and Fiona storms out of the room. Billy thanks his hosts and waves at the technicians. He rushes out of the studio after Fiona.

CUT TO:

EXT. LONDON - REGENT STREET - LATE AFTERNOON

TRACKING SHOT FIONA

She moves quickly and with purpose through a bustling Regent Street. She wears a furious expression. Billy is in hot pursuit.

TRACKING SHOT BILLY

BILLY

Fiona! Fiona wait. Wait a minute.

On hearing Billy, Fiona readjusts her shoulder bag and increases her pace. Billy is held up momentarily by a couple walking hand-in-hand. They TUT as he squeezes between them, forcing them to break off.

BILLY

Sorry... Fiona! Please. Wait a second.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Billy finally overtakes and turns to block her path. She tries to move left, then right, but as she does so, Billy blocks her. Fiona stops and looks straight at Billy.

FIONA

Will you please get out of my bloody way.

BILLY

Look, I'm really sorry Fiona. Really.
Let me buy you a drink. Please. I'd
like to talk to you.

FIONA

After that performance? Go fuck
yourself.

She tries to pass, but Billy blocks her way once more.

BILLY

I'm sorry. Please. Let me buy you a
drink. Just one. It's the least I can
do. I'd really like to make it up to
you.

FIONA

If you really want to make it up to me,
try retracting all that bullshit
about how green your bloody cars are?
How about that for an apology Billy?

Fiona folds her arms and glares at Billy who stands with
palms open. She pushes past him and marches off. Billy
pursues her. He catches up, 20 yards further on.

FIONA

(pointing at
Billy's ring)
Shouldn't you be getting home to your
wife anyway?

They are walking side-by-side.

BILLY

Look, just one drink Fiona. I just
want to talk. Please.

Fiona stops. The crowds navigate their way around the
couple. For a moment there is silence. Fiona has folded
her arms again.

BILLY

Is that a maybe?

FIONA

One drink. I'm having a double. And
you are paying. And I'm only doing
this because I need a fucking drink
after that. Understood?

BILLY

Aye, of course. Whatever you say. Do you know a pub we could go --

FIONA

(interrupting and
marching off)

Of course I know a fucking pub! This is London for fuck sake.

Billy walks a pace behind her with half a smile on his face.

CUT TO:

INT. PUB INTERIOR

Fiona strides from the pub entrance to a long bar where men in suits drink pints. She squeezes into a space. There are many tables, with animated office workers or couples drinking. A long-haired barman takes Fiona's order.

BILLY

And a Fosters top please. I'm getting hers.

Fiona marches to a free table, sits and takes a big slug of her double gin and tonic. At a nearby jukebox a man punches in a number, then walks away.

TWO SHOT - BILLY AND FIONA

The JUKEBOX PLAYS "WHEN I DREAM" BY THE TEARDROP EXPLODES. Bar noise starts to fade into the song. Mouths of other pub goers move, but the only SOUND is the SONG. Billy tries to make conversation. He works hard to engage his recalcitrant partner.

Fiona takes frequent sips, gives clipped answers and glances around the pub, which is now very busy with after-work drinkers. When she looks at Billy it is for no more than a moment.

Fiona places her empty glass on the table. Billy knows he must act quickly. He downs the remainder of his pint in one, raises his empty glass and tilts his head.

Fiona hesitates. She looks at her watch, then hands Billy her empty glass. He smiles and heads to the bar. The light is a little dimmer, more intimate.

TRACKING SHOT - BILLY

Billy grabs their drinks at the bar, then squeezes through groups of pub-goers. He places his pint on the table, then hands Fiona her drink. He balances the empty tonic bottle on the edge of the table. He knocks it to the floor, catching it just before it hits the floor.

BILLY'S POV

He puts the bottle back on the table and Fiona looks straight at Billy. She grins. The ice is broken.

TWO SHOT - BILLY AND FIONA

The interaction becomes two-way. Fiona sits forward, looking at Billy. This time it is Fiona who raises her empty glass and eyebrows. Billy nods and she heads to the bar. The lights dim further and the MUSIC is LOUD.

Fiona leans on her elbows gazing at Billy. Then she watches as he returns to the bar for a third time.

BILLY

Types a text message.

"Sorry hon, gotta stay late in the office tonight. Give the boys a goodnight kiss from me."

BILLY AND FIONA

resume their intimate conversation. Theirs are the only faces IN FOCUS in the bar.

CAMERA PASSES ABOVE the couple and the CIRCLES their heads. The light is exclusively on Billy and Fiona. The bar is in darkness. They are frozen, a moment in time.

The table disappears and they stand slowly. There is a beautiful, lingering kiss. They pull away slightly and stand like the giant statue of the couple at St Pancras station. The music ends abruptly.

CUT TO:

INT. LONDON - ST PANCRAS STATION - LATE

HIGH ANGLE

Billy stands alone. CAMERA PANS DOWN. The huge clock above the statue says 11.45. We hear a BEEP. He checks his phone.

Billy has missed calls and a message.

"We need to talk."

CUT TO:

INT. HOME - LOUNGE - 2009

It is Jamie's sixth birthday party with grand-parents, Scott and friends from school. The room goes dark, Gabi enters with a lit birthday cake. Everyone begins to sing. Jamie blows out candles and guests applaud. Gabi leaves the room suddenly.

INT. KITCHEN

Gabi takes a bottle of wine out of the fridge and pours herself a large drink. She looks at her watch, then up at the ceiling. She spots her father by the door and bursts into tears. Her father rushes to comfort her.

GABI

I can't do this anymore dad, I just can't.

FATHER

I know sweetheart. I know.

GABI

I can smell her when he gets in. His, his whore.

Gabi grasps her father close to her. She sobs uncontrollably. He has a furious look on his face.

FATHER

You know what I think darling. Nobody would blame you. You gave it your best shot. You gave him your best years.

GABI

What's wrong with me dad. Am I not good enough for...

FATHER

Hey, hey. Hush with that nonsense.
You're too good for him that's the
trouble. Far too good.

GABI

Softly, softly. All the false starts.
The support. And this is how he repays
me?

(sobbing)

Drinking himself to death. Cheating
with his London whore.

FATHER

You've done your best my love. Lord
knows you've tried. Mum and I, we love
you. We'll stand by you whatever. And
the boys.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BLOCK OF FLATS - NIGHTTIME

Billy walks down a concrete staircase leading away from
the block. He is carrying two suitcases. He stops, then
turns back.

BILLY'S POV

Gabi's father is standing at a window. The curtain is
nearly fully drawn. On seeing Billy, he draws it fully
shut.

BILLY

Bastard.

Billy looks away, then continues walking.

CUT TO:

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAYTIME

Fiona sits at a table with a coffee, reading a book.
Billy approaches the coffee shop, pauses momentarily at
the door, then enters. His expression is strained.

FIONA

(looking up as he
sits)

Hey! Not getting one yourself?

Billy shakes his head as he sits down.

BILLY

There's something I've got to tell you
Fi.

FIONA

Let me guess.

(grabs his hand)
you're going on TV tomorrow to spill
the dirt on the filthy car industry?
(shakes empty cup)
Remember, polluter pays.

BILLY

No. I'm being serious. She's, she's
kicked me out.

FIONA

Who?

BILLY

Who d'you think?

FIONA

Your wife?

BILLY

Aye, my wife. Gabi. Gabi's booted me
out.

FIONA

What for?

BILLY

For being a prick.

FIONA

Shit! Does she know about me?

BILLY

No. Well. Not exactly. She knows
there's someone. Her bastard father
made that clear, right enough. But
it's not about you Fi, it's about me.
It's always been about me.

POV BILLY

Fiona looks around frantically.

FIONA

You can't stay with me Billy.

BILLY

Relax. I know the score. Anyway it happened weeks ago. Been kipping at my parents.

FIONA

Shit. I never wanted to be a home wrecker.

BILLY

Och, you weren't. It's me that wrecks things, not you. I'm a bloody time bomb.

FIONA

I don't understand.

BILLY

The marriage. The job. Everything. I'm a wee catastrophe waiting to happen.

FIONA

Eh?

BILLY

Me and the bomb. We never really made our peace.

Billy fills up his cheeks with air. He blows out suddenly, moving his fists away from his head to imitate an explosion. Fiona tilts her head slightly to one side, perplexed.

BILLY

I tried to explain it to her when we met. Only a matter of time. The wailing of that bloody siren. I've been dragging it around with me for decades.

FIONA

The thing from school? Jesus Billy.

Billy nods shamefully. He pauses before continuing.

BILLY

D'yer know, I hated English when I was a kid?

(MORE)

(BILLY CONT'D)

All those dull novels and dreary poets.
Then I met a librarian. After that I
read like a madman. Maybe it's all her
fault?

FIONA

A librarian made you a madman? How'd
he do that?

BILLY

She! She fed me novels, science, anti-
nuclear propaganda. More I read the
clearer it became. The insanity of
those bloody weapons made me want to
scream. But what could we do? We had
no voice back then. No social media.
Best I could do was vandalise a Jaguar.

(rubs his wrist
subconsciously)

Now I have a platform. And what am I
doing? Spinning a new world's end for
climate change deniers.

FIONA

You have a choice you know.

Billy leans back in his chair. He sighs and runs his
hands down through his hair before responding.

BILLY

Do I? Fucking cars. I coulda been
working for the Guild of Vegetarian
Sausage Makers for all I cared. I had
everything Fi, her, Scott, new friends,
London ... And you.

FIONA

It all went wrong?

BILLY

Nothing went wrong. I'm just wired
wrong. That's what I'm trying to tell
you. An unstable element. I was
always gonna implode.

(beat)

Or maybe explode. After a while, Gabi
was just a link to a past I wanted to
forget.

Billy pauses for a moment and looks around the café. He looks up to the ceiling and then down at the table. Finally, he looks back to address Fiona directly.

BILLY

Now when I look in the mirror, I see
the man from Sellafeld with his sharp
suit and shiny car staring back at me.

There is a long pause.

FIONA

So what now?

BILLY

What now? Struggle on I guess. Me and
my no-strings Fiona.

They pause for a second. Then Fiona looks away.

BILLY

Suits you too, right? I saw the panic
in your eyes a moment ago.

Fiona turns away and stares out of the window.

CUT TO:

INT. BILLY'S OFFICE

It's the start of a day. Billy sits down at his desk and picks up his post. He casts aside two letters then studies a hand-addressed package. He tears it open

INSERT - PACKAGE

Billy pulls out a book, John Profumo & Christine Keeler. He casts it to one side, intrigued. then he pulls out an unsigned, hand-written letter. He checks the postage mark on the envelope. It was sent from someone in Birmingham.

BACK TO SCENE

ANGLE ON BILLY

Billy reads the letter to himself.

BILLY (V.O.)

Be very careful Grainger. Your affair with that eco-warrior tart is an open secret. When your gander is up your guard is down. So watch the pillow talk. It would be a great shame to lose you. A great shame.

Billy screws up the letter and throws it into the bin. The book follows with great force.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BILLY'S FLAT

SUPERIMPOSE:

"SEPTEMBER 2015"

In a small, shabby living room, Billy's MOBILE PHONE BUZZES on a messy table. The table is half off-licence, half chemist. Among the detritus, a bottle of whisky, beer cans and packets of Solpadeine, Imodium and Rennie.

Billy, now aged 46, emerges from the bathroom, naked but for a toothbrush in his mouth. His hair is greyer. It is a mess and his eyes are bloodshot. He answers the call.

BILLY

George! Yes, it's me

(half beat)

What? ok.

Billy picks up the remote control, still clutching the phone to his ear. He watches the NEWS BULLETIN on TV. The Volkswagen dieselgate scandal is breaking. His mouth opens a little.

BILLY

Shit! Yes, I can see. Bloody hell

(beat)

Yes, of course. Soon as I can.

CUT TO:

EXT. TRAIN STATION

Billy picks up a copy of Metro. The headline reads "VW ROCKED BY EMISSIONS SCANDAL."

CUT TO:

INT. TRAIN CORRIDOR

Billy takes up his usual position in the corridor between two carriages. He is studying his mobile phone when it rings. He does not answer, but dashes into the toilet and locks the door.

INT. TOILET

Billy sits, head in hands. He takes pills out of his pocket and drops them in a bottle of water. They FIZZ.

CUT TO:

INT. COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

Billy and press officer ANDREW BAKER stand by a wipe board. Billy is on his phone. BBC News 24 is playing in the background. He ends the call and adds another interview bid to a long list on the board.

CUT TO:

INT. RADIO ROOM

Billy is crouched over the desk next to a CODEC machine. He is wearing a mic and phone headset. Andrew sits next to him, just wearing headphones.

BILLY

No worries. What's that? Yeah, sure.
Bye.

Billy presses a button on the CODEC and ends the call. He rubs his face, leans back in his chair.

BILLY

What's next?

ANDREW

Straight in, I'm afraid boss. 5 Live
Drive.

BILLY

(without
conviction)
Tony Livesey? Terrific. Cannae wait.

INT. RADIO ROOM - OUTSIDE DOOR

The "On Air" sign above the door flashes red.

CUT TO:

INT. FIONA'S FLAT

Fiona opens the door. Billy looks exhausted

BILLY
Sorry I'm so late hen. It's been,
well, you know.

Fiona's lounge is full of cream furniture. There are some cardboard boxes on the floor. Her arms are folded as Billy throws his jacket on the sofa.

BILLY
What?

FIONA
I've eaten.

BILLY
(irritated)
Seen the news? I've been working.
What's with the boxes?

They stare at each for a second, without warmth.

BILLY
Something botherin' you?

FIONA
Yes, there is. We need to talk.

BILLY
I'm all ears.

ANOTHER ANGLE

FIONA
It's you Billy. You and your fucking cars. I've been listening to you and the fat man all day. Cheating emission tests? And you're still defending --

BILLY

(holding up hand)

Fiona. Please. Can we no' do this again tonight? I've told you many times; I don't like it either, but I don't see you complaining when we go a Michelin star dinner.

FIONA

Do you have to be so fucking good? I mean, couldn't you fuck up? I mean, really fuck up. Or are the 30 pieces of silver really --

BILLY

(shaking his head,
interrupting)

Fiona, I'm really tired. Not tonight.

FIONA

Why can't you give us something? Give me something. We're the good guys, remember.

Billy steps closer to her.

BILLY

(aggressive and
sarcastic)

Oh yeah, you're the good guys? What are you daein' Fi? Making fucking daisy chains to save a whale?

FIONA

You really have no idea. Your words power the polluters Billy. YOU! We're on a slow boat to Armageddon and people like you --

ANGLE ON BILLY

BILLY

People like me? People like who?

Billy grabs her arms and continues through gritted teeth.

BILLY

While you were pissing in your nappy, I was waiting on the four-minute warning.

(MORE)

BILLY (CONT'D)

When you were learning to love mother
earth, I was in therapy. Ten bloody
years of it. Armageddon? Fuck you.
I've got a masters' in it.

Fiona finally struggles free, but Billy is in her face.

BILLY

(sneering)

And your armageddon? Climate change?
Vineyards in Kent and sun tans in
Glasgow? Doesn't sound too bad to me.

Billy turns and punches the wall, leaving a dent in the
plaster. Fiona looks terrified.

FIONA

OUT!!! And don't come back.

BILLY

Aye, don't worry love. I'm leaving.

Fiona SLAMS the DOOR.

CUT TO:

EXT. PEDESTRIAN CROSSING - LATE

Billy stands at a zebra crossing. The green-man CROSSING
SIGNAL illuminates, accompanied by a series of BEEPS.
Suddenly an Audi 4x4, which has run the red light, makes
a U-turn on the crossing itself. Billy remonstrates
angrily.

CUT TO:

INT. WATERLOO STATION - PUBLIC TOILETS

Billy stands at a washbasin.

CLOSE ON BILLY'S FACE (SLOW MOTION)

He splashes water on his face. We hear a CHORUS of loud
HAND DRYERS, starting then stopping.

PAN ROUND ROOM (DOUBLE TIME)

ANGLE ON MIRROR

Billy looks at himself, exhausted.

BILLY
(to himself)
What are you doing?

CUT TO:

INT. PUB - FOLLOWING EVENING

Fiona stands at a bar with friends. She is laughing with a tall, handsome man. He is casually dressed in light clothes that hang well on dark skin. He has deep brown eyes. She is running her hands through her hair, laughing at an anecdote. Her PHONE RINGS.

INSERT: PHONE

The phone displays a picture of Billy.

BACK TO SCENE

Fiona swipes to end the call and puts the phone back in her pocket. The dark man raises his eyebrows and smiles. She raises an eyebrow in response.

CUT TO:

INT. FIONA'S FLAT - FOLLOWING DAY

The flat is bare. The lounge is full of boxes. Fiona sits on the sofa in a long coat. The doorbell rings. She walks to the door and opens it. Two removal men, in long tan-coloured coats, stand on the other side.

FIONA
Hi. Kettle's through there, in the
kitchen. See you on the other side.

One of the men nods. She tosses him the keys to her flat, then grabs a small piece of hand luggage, picks up her passport from the sideboard and tickets. She takes the tickets out of their cardboard wallet.

TICKETS

Two Eurostar tickets for Brussels.

BACK TO SCENE

She places them in her bag. Breezes past the removal men and leaves her flat for the last time.

CUT TO:

INT. TRAIN CORRIDOR - 23 SEPTEMBER 2019

Passengers push past Billy. An alarm BEEPS, signalling closing doors and the train sets off from the station. Billy is alone with Patricia once more.

He stares doggedly at the ground, avoiding eye contact. He sways a little and steps forward to steady himself. As he does so, he looks up.

PATRICIA

Need a hand?

BILLY

(through gritted
teeth)

No.

A different TONE signals the LAVATORY DOOR opening. Billy swings towards the sound. Patricia smiles.

PATRICIA

It'll still be here...

(beat)

... if you go and sit down.

BILLY

What?

PATRICIA

(nodding towards
the lavatory)

That. I've been watching you for the last 20 minutes. When you're not staring through me, you're panicking. When someone goes in there. That little trick you do with your fingers.

Patricia mimics Billy's thumb and forefingers exercise. Billy sighs, looks down again, defeated.

WIDER ANGLE

BILLY

(eyes tightly
shut)

Stop. Please. I don't wanna talk.

(rubs head)

Jesus Christ!

PATRICIA

Christ? Nope, not on my books, I can assure you.

Billy laughs, then looks down once more. He takes a deep breath, then addresses Patricia.

BILLY

Accidents and near misses... You know I have enough crazy in here to flatten a city?

Billy shakes his head and breaks off before looking down again. He takes a deep breath before continuing.

BILLY

But my accident. My personal Armageddon. Well, that did happen. And it was devastating. It destroyed my world. When the darkness descends, I can't be far from one.

Billy nods towards the toilet, takes a packet of Imodium from his pocket, shakes it for Patricia.

WIDER ANGLE

BILLY

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, that's what they said. No one had heard of it, before Paul Hardcastle. Today, your dog farts and bingo, you got it.

PATRICIA

If it makes you feel any better, I like to perch in the corridor too. To be close to one. But I am a little old lady after all.

Billy is still looking at his feet but smiles slightly. He looks up to address Patricia.

BILLY

You know there's teenagers with selfie sticks taking guided tours of Chernobyl? What a time to be alive huh? May I be well, may others be well. Ha! How can anyone be well in this ridiculous era.

Billy takes a whisky bottle out of his bag.

PATRICIA
Friends in low places?

BILLY
If I have a soldier's condition, I once
said to my wife, then I'll deal with it
like a soldier, not a bloody housewife.

He holds it up, then takes a long swig from the bottle.

PATRICIA
I know all about PTSD.

BILLY
Ha! Give me a break.

PATRICIA
That stare of yours? I've seen it
before. Thirty odd years since my
Arthur hung himself. Falklands you
see. I'm a widow to PTSD

Billy nods but does not reply directly.

BILLY
They'll want me on telly tomorrow you
know. Wheel me out like an ageing
whore. Suck it up and spit it out,
spreading appeasement like poison.
(blows out cheeks)
My kids won't talk to me. I lost my
wife. And my lover left me for a man
working for a think tank. What the
fuck is a think tank?

Patricia shrugs.

BILLY
Reckon there were many think tanks
facing off at Checkpoint Charlie?

Patricia giggles.

PATRICIA
Now, there's you with your whisky and
pills and the train toilet, and a do-
gooder widow who says it's good to
talk.

Billy laughs.

PATRICIA

We cope as best we can. I'm a good Samaritan and you are a good man...

(beat)

Even though you don't think so.

Billy sways. He closes his eyes.

PATRICIA

Don't give up Billy. Talk to someone.

BILLY

How the hell do you know my name?

POV BILLY

Patricia does not answer, but steps forward and gently grasps Billy's arm. He jerks as if her touch is electric. The TRAIN THUNDERS through a tunnel. Patricia moves to the main carriage. Before she sits, she looks back to Billy and smiles kindly once more.

CUT TO:

INT. BILLY'S FLAT

KEYS RATTLE in the door. Billy walks into his living room, soaking. The bulb is bright and without lampshade. He squints and surveys the scene. The flat is a mess.

VARIOUS ANGLES

A messy dining table hosts a glass, half-full of water alongside a packet of Solpadine. A birthday card reads "Happy Birthday to a Wonderful Son" among beer cans, wine bottles and other detritus.

The flat is dilapidated, with a dirty marked sofa. A picture of Billy's infant sons sits to one side of an old TV. Billy turns it on, then wobbles to the kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN

Billy opens a dirty fridge door. Inside there are lager cans, rotting salad and the leftovers of a takeaway.

POV BILLY

Billy removes one of the cold cans.

WIDER ANGLE

He presses it to his forehead, rolls it around on his head. He opens it and takes a large gulp.

INT. LOUNGE

Billy returns to the dining table and picks up the card. Inside, he has already written the word "Sorry". He gulps lager, then throws the card back down.

He picks up a separate pile of paper, full of messy handwriting, doodles and sketches. It is a long suicide letter to his sons. He closes damp eyelids tightly together. He puts the letter down carefully and takes out his phone.

CUT TO:

INT. GABI'S LIVING ROOM

Scott aged 19, looks at his phone. It says, "Don't Answer". He swipes to end the call.

WIDER SHOT

Jamie sits in an armchair opposite Scott in a large, warm living room, decorated in pastel shades. KIERAN MAHONEY is a stocky, middle-aged Irishman, the boys' stepdad.

KIERAN

Scotty. Talk to him. He's your dad.

Scott smiles, then opens an App on his phone. Gabi enters the room, smiling.

GABI

Gentlemen, your dinner is served!

The boys remain motionless, glued to their screens.

GABI

OK, it's in the bin in five seconds if you don't shift your lazy arses.

They leap out of their seats and dash towards the dining table. They pass a large cabinet full of family photographs, none of which includes the boys' father.

CUT TO:

EXT. GARAGE BLOCK - EVENING

Billy stumbles by a row of garages adjacent to his block of flats. It's raining heavily. He holds a can of lager in one hand and a plastic bag in the other. He stops, fumbles for a key, attempts to open a rusty garage door.

He drops the key, retrieves it and unlocks the door and throws the up-and-over skywards. It just misses his chin. But as he enters, the DOOR falls off its runners and WHACKS him on the head.

INT. GARAGE

Rubbing his head, Billy flicks a light switch, before manhandling the door and runners back into alignment. He stoops down beside his car. He removes three disposable barbecue grills from the bag, firelighters, a carbon monoxide detector, masking tape, a stopwatch and matches.

BILLY

removes Post-It notes from his pocket. They are numbered from 2 to 4. He looks around for number 1. But it's not there. He takes his phone out of his pocket.

MOBILE PHONE

Billy types "three grille suicide method" into Google. It responds "no signal."

BILLY

Fucking information age.

EXT. GARAGE

Billy walks outside and tries again.

MOBILE PHONE

displays the telephone number of THE SAMARITANS as the first search response. Billy shakes his head, scrolls down, reads and re-enters the garage.

INT. GARAGE

He stumbles and knocks the garage DOOR once more. It comes off its runners and WHACKS him on the head.

Billy SWEARS, fixes the door, then carefully closes it, but not fully. He crouches down and strikes a match.

It snaps and the momentum sends Billy flying. He SWEARS, gets back up and tries again. He coughs as the grill begins to smoke.

He places the smoking grille by door. He starts the stopwatch, picks up the tape and carbon monoxide detector. Then opens the car door.

INT. CAR

Billy stumbles inside. He starts to tape air vents. After a few moments, we hear someone yelling Billy's name. It is CHUB, a skinny, 20-something layabout from the local estate. Billy freezes momentarily, then exits the car.

EXT. GARAGE

CHUB
(stooping to the
opening)
Oi, Billy Grainger, you there?
Somefing's burning.

The garage door opens. Billy stares at Chub angrily.

BILLY
Aye, it's me. What do you want?

CHUB
What you up to?

Chub spies the smouldering grill. He shifts left, then right, attempting to see what's behind Billy's legs.

BILLY
Piss off will ye Chub.

CHUB
'Aving a barbeque are we?

BILLY
Eh?

CHUB
(pointing at
barbeque)
A barbeque. In the rain? Got any
spare sausages?

BILLY
I'm not having a barbeque.

CHUB
(nodding at other
grills)
Coulda fooled me. What you up to then?

BILLY
Practice for next summer. Or the
weekend. Anyway it's none of your
bloody business.

Once more the garage door partly comes off its runners.
Billy avoids it, but in doing so falls against the car.
Chub laughs heartily. Billy swears.

CHUB
Scottish fing is it? You're fucking
mad you lot.

FAVOURING BILLY

Billy gathers his things. He kicks the lit barbeque out
into the rain. Chub jumps to avoid the smouldering grill
as it slides by. Rain drops HISS as they hit the COALS.
Billy SLAMS the garage door SHUT. He locks it up. He
sways, then steadies himself against the closed door.

CHUB
You wanna be careful, you might hurt
yourself.

Billy brushes past Chub as he heads back to his flat.

BILLY
Chance would be a fine thing.

Billy marches quickly, but erratically.

CHUB
You what?

WIDER ANGLE

Billy strides to the flats. He stops briefly by the
entrance to pick up the missing Post-It note. Chub is
yelling.

CHUB

Got a Stella for me before you go
Billy? I seen you on the telly the
other night. TALKING BOLLOCKS AS
USUAL!

(sotto)

Prick.

INT. LOUNGE

The television is still on as Billy walks in. He sits on the sofa and throws the plastic bag to one side. His eyes are heavy. He quickly drifts off.

Billy turns slightly. In doing so he falls to the floor, onto an empty beer can. He winces, gets up and sits back down on the sofa rubbing his side.

FAVOURING TV

The news is covering GRETA THUNBURG's speech to the United Nations General Assembly Climate Action Summit. Greta builds to an angry crescendo.

POV BILLY

GRETA (V.O.)

... and if you choose to fail us, we
will never forgive you.

CLOSE ON BILLY'S EYES

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. GABI'S HOUSE - DUSK (RECENT PAST)

Billy stands in front of a small house, with well-kept garden. He stumbles as he RINGS the DOORBELL.

BILLY

Scott! Jamie! It's yer da'. Where
are yous?

He crouches down to look through the letter box.

OVER THE SHOULDER SHOT

BILLY

Scott, Jamie? I know you are in there.
WHERE ARE YE?

(shouting through
letterbox)

Has that bastard knee-capped you...
(mocking Irish
accent)
so he has?

WIDER ANGLE

Billy throws small STONES from the drive. They TICK as they strike different windows. Billy trips and falls against a car. He laughs as he hauls himself upright.

BILLY

Scott. Talk to me. Ya wee, ya wee
bastard. JAMIE.

The front door flies open. Kieran is trying to hold Scott, but he wriggles free and rushes towards his dad, rage etched on his face.

BILLY

Scott son. why won't you talk --

Scott grabs his father by the collar. He pushes Billy towards the gate. Initially startled, his father soon pushes back. They move backwards and forwards heads together, like stags rutting.

SCOTT

Why the fuck are you here? Didn't I
make it clear? We don't want anything
to do with you!

BILLY

Scott. Please. I just wanna talk.
Get aff me will ye?

SCOTT

You stink. What a surprise. Drunken
fucking bum. I thought I told you
already. You are not my dad.

BILLY

Scott. Please. Hear me out. The
bombs were...

Scott pushes Billy back, baring his teeth. They reach the front gate. With an almighty shove, Scott sends his father crashing to the pavement beyond.

SCOTT

I will never forgive you for what you did to mum. Do you hear me William. Now piss off back under whatever stone you crawled from.

FAVOURING BILLY

Scott pauses. Then he turns and calmly walks back to the house. Billy turns his head and follows his son.

BILLY'S POV

Kieran and Scott's brother are waiting by the front door. Kieran glances at Billy, then closes the door.

BACK TO SCENE

Billy sits up. But the effort is too much. He lies back down on the pavement, staring up at the clear sky.

BILLY'S POV

He sees the first stars of the night sky.

BILLY

The stars are for awe, not war.

He giggles, then stops. He closes his eyes.

FADE OUT

ACT III

INT. BILLY'S FLAT - 23 SEPTEMBER 2019

CLOSE ON BILLY'S EYES

CAMERA PANS BACK. Greta has finished her speech. The news plays on in V.O. Billy gets up slowly and moves to the table. He picks up the suicide letter and flicks through it.

LETTER

runs to several pages. The writing is messy. It is structured with headings and illustrated with explosions, atomic structures, the dead lying on desolate streets, burnt trees and a dead sheep.

WIDE ON BILLY

He turns back to page two.

INSERT: PAGE 2

We see the heading: "Able Archer 1983 - cover for a first strike?"

BACK TO SCENE

Billy flicks over to page three.

INSERT: PAGE 3

Another heading: "The Goldsboro Incident - a switch away from nuclear catastrophe."

BACK TO SCENE

Billy flicks through several more pages.

INSERT: PAGE 6

Another heading: "1 in 125 - so-called ACCEPTABLE risk of accidental atom bomb detonation in any year."

BACK TO SCENE

Billy turns to the final page. Upon it is a heading and a doodle of a C60 audio cassette. Below the heading Billy has written a single unfinished sentence.

INSERT: FINAL PAGE

"MAD(ness) - The Wrong Tape.
You won't believe this fellas. Back in 1979 in".

CUT TO:

INT. COLORADO SPRINGS - NORAD WAR ROOM - 1979 (11.00 am)

Computer displays come alive. The Soviet Union appears to have launched a devastating first strike against the United States.

AIRMAN #1

Ground launch warning, Soviet ICBMs.
15 minutes to impact. Confirm
confidence is high.

Frantic activity follows. Displays of soviet submarine missile launches join the ballistic missile launches on screen. GENERAL JAMES E HILL, United States Air Force, 50, is the tall, handsome NORAD, Commander in Chief.

AIRMAN #2

Soviet sub launches. First detonation,
ETA six minutes. Confidence is high
commander.

General Hill picks up a phone. He calls GENERAL DAVID CHARLES JONES, head of the joint chiefs of staff at Strategic Air Command (SAC).

INT. WASHINGTON - STRATEGIC AIR COMMAND

General Jones is squat with a square head and large ears. He has thick dark hair with matching eyebrows. He stares at the huge world map. It is tracking the same ballistic missiles and sub launches. The general holds a phone to his ear.

GENERAL JONES

Yes I see them Jim
(beat)
subs and silo launches. No visual
confirmation?
(beat)
OK, well we better call the conference.
Airbases on alert. Yes I agree.
Highly plausible.

CUT TO:

EXT. AIRBASE - EARLY MORNING

SCRAMBLE SIRENS WAIL. The SCREAM of JET ENGINES accompanies air crews sprinting to Strato Fortress bombers, silhouetted ominously against the sky.

CUT TO:

INT. MINUTE MAN MISSILE SILO

Two personnel sit in a cramped control centre on large backed chairs. The MISSILE COMBAT CREW COMMANDER (MCCC) is on the phone.

MCCC

Copy, sir. Soviet first strike, all targets. Confidence is high. Preparing response.

He hangs up and unlocks a cabinet containing launch codes. The missile commander and his deputy look at each other, concern on their faces.

CUT TO:

INT. COLORADO SPRINGS - NORAD - WAR ROOM

At one of the smaller observation screens, an airman puts down a telephone and turns to the general.

AIRMAN #3

Sir, that's still a negative on radar tracking. Negative Thule. No visual confirmation.

Suddenly we hear shouting (O.S.). A young TECHNICIAN rushes in and is immediately restrained. Wearing glasses, he bears a resemblance to Buddy Holly. He is not in uniform, but wears a white shirt and tie.

TECHNICIAN

General Hill, Sir, call it off. It's a mistake. It's not real.

GENERAL HILL

What the... Get that kid outta here.

TECHNICIAN

LISTEN. SIR! PLEASE! It's a mistake. It's an exercise tape. You have to stand down.

GENERAL HILL

(sharply)

This is no exercise son. Get him out.

TECHNICIAN

No, sir. I mean yes general, it is.
There are no missiles. It's the wrong
tape. It's a war game scenario.
Someone put the wrong tape in the
computer. It's not real.

GENERAL HILL

Jesus H Christ. Son, are you telling
me our goddamn computers are playing
chicken with us now?

TECHNICIAN

Sir. Yes sir. That's why it seems so
real. But it ain't real. It's our
game. We made it to be as real
possible.

The general sighs, and slowly picks up the phone.

CUT TO:

INT. WASHINGTON - STRATEGIC AIR COMMAND

Military personnel sit at an oval table in the Missile
Attack Conference. General Jones is on the phone to
General Hill at NORAD.

GENERAL JONES

Are you shitting me Jim? Ain't it
enough we got the Soviets? Now its IBM
and the Casio Cassette Corporation
starting world war 3?

(beat)

Yes, affirmative. Copy that. Stand
down.

The general puts down the phone. He stares at those
around the table. PAN their faces.

Everyone stares back, waiting for the general to speak.

ANGLE ON GENERAL JONES

The General looks foolish.

CUT TO:

INT. BILLY'S FLAT

Billy screws up the suicide letter and throws it forcefully in a bin. He walks to the bathroom, splashes cold water on his face. Water drips from his chin. He looks terrible. But he smiles at himself in the mirror.

CUT TO:

EXT. TRAIN STATION - NEXT DAY

Billy strides with purpose towards the station entrance, full of travellers bustling about. He picks up a copy of Metro.

INSERT: METRO FRONT PAGE

"CLIMATE CRISIS. CAR MAKERS IN THE DOCK."

BACK TO SCENE

Billy snorts. He bundles the paper into his bag. His PHONE RINGS. It's Andrew, his press officer. Billy ignores the call, then turns his phone off.

EXT. PLATFORM

Billy stands between commuters on the platform. A train departs from the platform opposite.

BILLY'S POV

His gaze is fixed on a single blurred point as carriages whiz by. The last carriage passes and Billy's eyes rest on a Samaritans poster, on the opposite platform. It says: "IT'S OK TO BE NOT OK."

INT. TRAIN

Billy is the last to board. He stops at the toilet, chuckles, then walks into the carriage. All spare seats have been occupied by commuter bags. He stops by one. A silver-haired commuter in pin-stripe suit glances up, then turns back quickly to his newspaper to avoid the younger man's gaze.

BILLY

Move your bag.

The man shifts the bag under his seat. Billy smiles insincerely. He sits, then stares dead ahead.

FLASHBACK - GRETA ON TV

GRETA

We will never forgive you.

END FLASHBACK.

Billy opens Metro. There is a photograph of Greta at the United Nations. Billy takes a pen out of his bag.

METRO ARTICLE

Billy writes "GRETA PROTECTS". Then he pauses a moment. Underneath he adds "BILLY SURVIVES". Between the two he draws a huge ampersand.

CUT TO:

EXT. CENTRAL LONDON

Billy is en-route to the office. He walks past The Silk Sow, but cuts back, to read a sign on a locked door. It is a planning application. A MAN IN A TRACKSUIT joins Billy.

TRACKSUIT MAN

Damn shame. Killed by Me Too.

Billy nods and smiles but says nothing. He walks on.

CUT TO:

EXT. CENTRAL LONDON - ANOTHER LOCATION

Approaching set of traffic lights at a busy crossroads. Crowds build at the lights, impatient to cross. We hear TRAFFIC NOISE and the WAIL of an AMBULANCE SIREN.

ANGLE ON BILLY

As he crosses, Billy spots an altercation on the other side of the road. He slows a little, then stops to observe. A white DRIVER in a large saloon is remonstrating vigorously with a young black, female cyclist, just ahead of the traffic lights.

BILLY'S POV

The temperature is rising. The cyclist gesticulates while the driver points at her from his open window.

Suddenly he alights and approaches her. She cowers, scared. The man's face snarls like an angry dog.

HIGH ANGLE - LOOKING DOWN ON ROAD

Billy crosses the road. He weaves in and out of traffic to get to the other side. As he gets closer, we hear the DRIVER'S RAISED VOICE. The man is late middle-aged with short, dark hair and stubble.

DRIVER

... road tax do you pay each year love?
Not a fucking penny. And you think you
have the right to...

ANOTHER ANGLE

Billy taps him on the shoulder. He stops talking and turns. Billy's fist connects firmly with the man's jaw, sending him sprawling into the road.

BILLY'S POV

The cyclist looks at Billy, mouth open in astonishment. Other motorists have slowed or stopped to avoid the man, now lying prostrate by the side of his vehicle.

BACK TO SCENE

Billy calmly turns on his heels. He smiles at the woman, nods slightly, then skips back across the road grinning broadly.

FOCUS ON BILLY

Billy continues to smile as the incident fades into the background.

BILLY

(sotto)
First strike. Decapitation.

CUT TO:

INT. CANTEEN

Vinny is alone in the Association's canteen. The Prince long since left the company. Billy walks in rubbing his fist. He nods at his friend, orders a coffee, then sits down.

VINNY

Billy! Gordon was looking for you earlier. Screaming blue murder, he was.

BILLY

Was he now? Hey Vin, did you know they've closed The Sow? Luxury flats the application says.

VINNY

Yeah, I heard. You ok Billy? Seems like ages since we've spoken.

BILLY

(smiles and shakes
his head)

Never better Vin, never better. Look, I've got something to tell you; today's the last you'll see of me.

VINNY

(with concern)

What do you mean?

BILLY

I mean I'm done. It's over.

VINNY

(alarmed)

Don't do anything stupid Bill. There are people you can talk to. We all know how down you've been ...

BILLY

(warmly taking
Vinny's arm)

Relax! It's not that my friend. Well, actually, it was that. But it isn't THAT now.

VINNY

Eh?

BILLY

Don't look so worried. Everything is fine. I promise. Look, let me ask you a question Vin. Do you know what irony is?

VINNY

Erm, yeah. Everyone knows what irony is.

BILLY

Go on?

VINNY

Well, it's like rain on your wedding day.

BILLY

Har-di-fucking-har Alanis Singh. No, I'm being deadly serious.

VINNY

Yeah, 'course I know what irony is. Look, what's this all about?

BILLY

Me Vinny. All that lower emissions, green cars crap. I've never believed a word of it! Not a bloody dicky bird.

(beat)

But here's the thing; I'm damn good at pretending I do! But the more I spin, the more it eats me up inside.

VINNY

I'm lost. What has this got to do --

BILLY

I'm getting to the point. So one day, when I'm at rock bottom, I make a plan. I'll sock it to them, I think. Shake off this mortal coil with the ol' pipe on the exhaust trick. Stick a ball in the net for the environment at the same time.

VINNY

Mate, you definitely need help.
Please.

BILLY

(shaking his head,
smiling)

One last trip along the great highway to heaven. Let 'em spin that when I'm gone! What a statement!

WIDER ANGLE

VINNY

What the fuck are you talking --

BILLY

Ha! d'you know something Vin? You can't kill yourself with your car these days. It's nigh on impossible. Not enough carbon monoxide. A couple of paracetamol and the Samaritans on speed dial and you'll be right as rain in a heartbeat. That's irony: cars are just too damn clean to help the suicidal!

(beat)

But that's not the whole truth. The best place to kill yourself is still your car. It's just that have to do it with barbeque grills.

Billy laughs. Vinny laughs too, nervously. Paula Jones walks into the canteen. Billy winks at her and Paula scowls back.

VINNY

(leaning forward,
whispering)

Are you trying to tell me you are planning to barbeque yourself to death?

BILLY

Not planning Vin. I tried it last night. But I was foiled by a moron...

(starts to laugh)

a moron who thought I was toasting hotdogs in the rain. Do you see now?

VINNY

Do I see what?

BILLY

The irony of my situation. I thought a moron who'd caught me in the act had saved me. But that's not right. I was saved by the bloody car industry. I'm alive because cars are so damn green!

Billy gets up and offers his hand to his bemused friend.

BILLY

Mate, it's been a real pleasure.

VINNY'S POV

Billy smiles warmly. He gets up and puts his hand on his friend's shoulder, then he leaves the canteen.

CUT TO:

INT. COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

Billy smiles as he approaches a nervous looking Andrew Baker.

ANDREW

I've been trying to ring you all morning boss. We've --

Billy walks past and throws his coat in his office before returning to the wipe board. Andrew is holding a marker pen.

BILLY

I turned it off Andy. Sorry.

ANDREW

But... Gordon's been going mental. I've been trying to, to, to cover for you.

BILLY

Oh, don't worry Andy, I'll deal with Gordon. Right, what we got?

The wipe board lists interviews for the day ahead. Every interview has Billy's initials marked against it.

BILLY

Gordon not able to do any?

ANDREW

Said he had urgent meetings. Couldn't get out of them.

BILLY

(with disgust)

'Course he couldn't. OK, I'll go and see our so-called leader. Then it's straight down to Millbank. Let me get my stuff.

ANDREW

I wrote a briefing. He'll want to --

Andrew tries to hand Billy a piece of paper. But Billy won't take it.

BILLY

Don't need it Andy. Just give me a moment.

INT. BILLY'S OFFICE

Billy sits in his chair. He looks up at photos of his kids on the wall, then reaches down into the drawer. He finds the folder marked Confidential. He pulls out a selection of documents and puts them in his bag.

INT. COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE

TRACKING SHOT - BILLY

leaves the office, nodding to Andrew on the way out. Andrew is talking to someone on his mobile phone. FRANKIE GOES TO HOLLYWOOD "TWO TRIBES" begins.

CUT TO:

INT. CEO'S OFFICE

GORDON SEXTON is now the chief executive. In his early 40s, he has dark features and a long thin nose. He wears a cheap suit that is too big for him. He has a thick Birmingham accent. Gordon dislikes Billy and Billy despises Gordon. A knock on the door and Billy enters.

GORDON

(not looking up)

Ah, finally, you're here. Come in and sit down. Be with you in a moment.

Billy nods and sits opposite. The younger man is making a point of finishing what he is doing, reading -- or perhaps pretending to read -- a letter.

GORDON

(still, not looking up)

I've been trying to reach you all morning. Briefing document.

Gordon holds out his hand. Billy looks with disgust.

BILLY

Yeah, sorry about that. Problem with my phone.

Gordon finally looks up.

GORDON

Hmm, ok, well you're here now. My briefing document?

BILLY

Don't have one.

FAVOURING GORDON

GORDON

What do you mean? How can we do anything without a clear briefing doc...

BILLY

I'm just going to do what we do. You know the sort of thing Gordon, defend the indefensible. How about you? Any plans for the day?

BILLY'S POV

GORDON

Damn it Grainger! I told you what I expected when I started here. I don't play it by ear. I need a briefing document every time something breaks in the news.

BACK TO SCENE

BILLY

Aye? And I need a CEO who isn't afraid to stand in front of a camera.

GORDON

What the hell is that supposed to mean?

BILLY

Exactly what I just said.

GORDON

(screwing up eyes)

You are skating on very thin ice Grainger. Let me give you a bit of free advice. I don't like you. Never have. Briefings in the pub, all that old school crap.

(MORE)

GORDON (CONT'D)

As for your choice of friends. You were the talk of the boardroom when I was at Rover, knocking about with that eco-warrior tart --

BILLY

Eco-warrior tart eh? Thanks for the book Gordon. I always wondered who'd sent that.

GORDON

(wrong-footed)

What... what book? I, I don't know... I don't know what you're talking about!

BILLY

(aside; immitating
Mandy Rice-Davies)

Well, he would say that wouldn't he?

GORDON

Listen Grainger, I'm the boss here now. Not George. I'm going to lay it on the line for you once and for --

FAVOURING BILLY

Billy calmly gets up while Gordon is talking, cutting his boss off. He puts on his jacket and walks to the door.

GORDON

What the... Where the fuck do you think are you going? Come back. Sit down dammit. I haven't finished.

Billy stops at the door and looks back at Gordon with contempt.

BILLY

The fat man was so much more potent than the little boy. If you know what I mean.

Billy puts his hands together and bows as if they were in Japan.

BILLY

Sayonara Gordon.

Gordon is dumbfounded. Billy smirks, turns and walks out of the door.

INT. SWEEPING STAIRCASE

Billy laughs as Gordon yells after him.

GORDON (O.S.)
 What the fuck? Come back here. You
 little bastard. You are finished here
 at the Association Billy Grainger. You
 hear me? Finished!!!

CUT TO:

INT. TV STUDIOS - GREEN ROOM

Billy sits on a sofa watching news on a small wall-mounted TV. A TECHNICIAN walks into the room.

TECHNICIAN
 OK, Billy, we're going to Brussels
 first. Three minutes with the NGO,
 then news at the top of the hour.
 We'll come to you around five past.
 OK?

BILLY
 Aye. Fine. Nay bother.

BILLY'S POV

Billy continues watching. The presenter turns to her guest. It is Fiona Le Fèvre, smartly dressed, adding a sense of gravitas to her beauty and screen presence. The caption says, "FIONA LE FÈVRE, EU CLEAN-UP TRANSPORT."

FOCUS ON BILLY

Billy smiles, delighted to see his former lover.

BILLY
 (tenderly)
 Well hi there Fi. How's it going
 sweetheart?

The technician walks in once more and starts talking, but Billy holds up a hand to cut him off. Billy watches intently. The interview finishes.

TECHNICIAN
 Sorry about that. OK, time to get you
 mic-ed up.

Billy grabs a file from his bag and follows the technician. "TWO TRIBES" GETS LOUDER.

TELEVISION VIEWER'S POV

We watch Billy. He is highly animated while holding a document. He is pointing to the cover, and turning to pages that have been bent over for easy access, pointing to underlined passages.

CUT TO:

INT. RADIO STUDIO

Billy has headphones on. There is a CODEC machine in front of him.

HIGH ANGLE

Billy is talking into a mic, tracing an underlined section in a document.

CUT TO:

EXT. PADDINGTON - PRESS ASSOCIATION OFFICES

Billy talks to a journalist. He turns pages, pointing to sections in a document. Then he hands it over. The journalist raises it to say thank you and re-enters the building.

CUT TO:

INT. LONDON - 4 MILLBANK

Billy walks from a door saying "Sky News" to a reception desk. He is immediately met by a technician, wearing headphones ready to take him to his next media slot.

INT. GREEN ROOM

Billy watches a news bulletin. He smiles as he sees himself on screen. A ticker runs below saying "Motor industry's 20-year dirty tricks campaign." The technician collects him for his interview.

CUT TO:

INT. WATERLOO STATION - EARLY EVENING

Billy emerges from an escalator on the Jubilee line next to the wireframe elephant's head. He moves through the ticket barriers, then stops to collect a newspaper.

EVENING STANDARD

The headline says: "'TRASH THE SCIENCE' CAR MAKERS RESPOND TO CLIMATE CRISIS." There is a picture of Billy on the page next to the story.

The CAMERA MOVES UP, UP, UP

The final moments coincide exactly with the final five beats of "Two Tribes".

FREEZE FRAME - GABI GRAINGER

FREEZE FRAME - CHARLIE GIBBS

FREEZE FRAME - FIONA LE FEVRE

FREEZE FRAME - SCOTT GRAINGER

FREEZE FRAME - GRETA THUNBURG

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MOSCOW - SOVIET MISSILE MONITORING STATION

Display continues to read: "CTAPT (START)". WARNING TONE BUZZES constantly. There is frantic activity. The men speak in Russian with SUBTITLES:

MIKHAIL

Comrade lieutenant colonel, we have to follow the protocol.

Stanislav watches the screen intently. Suddenly it lights up with new missile launches, 2 and 3. The ALARM BUZZES menacingly above the hubbub of Russian.

VOICE ON INTERCOM #1

Confirm, maximum verification level.

VOICE ON INTERCOM #2

Infrared heat signature confirms three missiles.

STANISLAV
(barking into
intercom)
Visual channel. Confirm.

VOICE ON INTERCOM #3
Negative visual channel. No
confirmation on any missile launch.

STANISLAV
Systems report!

VOICE ON INTERCOM #4
All systems working correctly. No
system errors.

STANISLAV
We must have visual confirmation!

Two further missile launches light up on screen. There is a renewed sense of urgency on the floor. The men continue in Russian with SUBTITLES:

MIKHAIL
Comrade Petrov. We won't have time to
retaliate. You have to make a decision

STANISLAV
We must wait for visual confirmation.

MIKHAIL
There is no time. You must do your
job.

FAVOURING STANISLAV

Stanislav looks around the room. He sits calmly in his chair still clutching the phone in one hand and intercom in the other. He thinks. Stanislav and Mikhail continue in Russian with SUBTITLES:

STANISLAV
Not even Americans would be foolish
enough to start world war three with
five missiles.

MIKHAIL
The protocol is clear comrade...

STANISLAV

(rubbing his face
in his hands)

No comrade. No. We must let our
friends in Moscow sleep. To wake
them...

(points to screen
and pauses)

... with this would be a... What you
see -- these missiles -- they are the
ghosts of a terrible future. We must
not allow ourselves to be lured, as
Rusalka lures men to the lake.

PAN anxious face of Mikhail then Stanislav as they watch
five ICBMs closing on the Soviet Union. The missiles
jerk forward slightly.

STANISLAV

We will not be the rooster in the
village to crow first.

Stanislav smiles and reaches for cigarettes. His hands
shake slightly as he takes one and lights it.

CAMERA MOVES IN AND IN

on cigarette end. It glows bright red and orange.

MICROSCOPIC POV

The orb burns in different shades, and patterns. Yellow
and orange FILL THE SCREEN, like a giant fireball.

FADE TO BLACK

THE END