

THE ALTERNATE

PILOT

Written by

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TEASER

FADE IN:

A series of newspapers headlines:

'GIRL AGED 8 MISSING IN WOODS'

'MISSING CHILD LAST SPOTTED ON TRAIN'

'GIRL WAS TRAVELLING WITH MAN SHE DIDN'T KNOW'

'POLICE SEARCH FOR CHILD'

'MISSING CHILD NAMED - ADELAIDE IVY JONES'

Photos of ADELAIDE with her PARENTS plaster various front pages: prestigious newspapers through to redtop tabloids.

'POLICE COMFOUNDED BY ADELAIDE'S DISAPPEARANCE'

'LEADING POLICE TEAM STILL SEARCHING FOR ADELAIDE'

'CHIEF INSPECTOR KENNETH GRAHAM EMBARRASSED BY LACK OF RESULTS IN JONES SEARCH'

'GRAHAM HOUNDED BY REPORTERS OUTSIDE HOME OVER FAILED JONES CASE'

PHOTO: Graham, his back turned away as he enters his home. A flood of cameras and PRESS holding microphones.

'NEW EVIDENCE IN JONES CASE LEADS TO ARREST'

'EVIDENCE ANALYSIS RETURNS WITH INCONCLUSIVE RESULTS'

'SUSPECT RELEASED'

'ADELAIDE LEGALLY DECLARED DEAD'

PHOTOS of a funeral precession.

EXT. SCOTLAND YARD HQ - DAY

A podium has been erected with a single microphone attached.

Numerous cameras: some hand-held, others on tripods. Various news vans in the background, some with recognisable branding: BBC, ITV, CHANNEL 4, SKY NEWS.

JOURNALISTS gathered around, some holding recording equipment, others with phones in hand.

The door opens as two POLICE OFFICERS exit.

Flashes go off.

Behind them is a solemn KENNETH GRAHAM (45) in formal uniform complete with epaulettes and badges, head down as he ambles towards the podium, retrieving a stack of cue cards from his breast pocket.

Cameras flashing as Graham begins to read from the cards.

GRAHAM

(clears throat)

Good afternoon everyone, as you know, over the past few months, the search for young Adelaide Ivy Jones has gripped the nation. For those who are still unaware, she was last seen boarding a train with an unknown male on the evening of November tenth last year, following a day out with some friends, who were under the supervision of one of her friend's older siblings. The sibling was unaware that the girl was gone. Her parents, Matthew and Andrea reported her disappearance one day later, and since then, despite our tireless efforts, no concrete evidence of her whereabouts has come to light.

(tears up)

It was with much sadness and anguish that a few days ago, Adelaide was laid to rest, having been declared dead, and although we hope that she does turn up alive and well, we are officially closing the case.

Cameras again flash. Shouts from REPORTERS in attempts to get out questions.

REPORTER 1

What about the supposed body found in Epping Forest?

REPORTER 2

Or the clothes found in a ditch in Essex that match the ones she was described as wearing on the day she went missing.

GRAHAM

We are aware of those two pieces of information, the body turned out to be a hoax and the culprits have been arrested.

(MORE)

GRAHAM (CONT'D)

The items of clothing were brought in and analysed but came back with inconclusive matches for Adelaide's DNA, we've felt that we've done all we can in searching for her.

(beat)

Should there be a significant piece of evidence we are prepared to reopen the case. But for now, it is with solemn hearts that we are closing the case.

More camera flashes and inane questions from REPORTERS.

Amongst the group of REPORTERS is CASPER BUTCHER (35) has loose, casual clothes and a cap. Makes notes on his pad.

He finishes writing. It reads: '*SIGNIFICANT EVIDENCE - REOPEN CASE*'.

Casper slips his pad into his satchel and slings it over his shoulder.

Casper makes his way out of the crowd, pushing past overeager REPORTERS who seem nonplussed as he pushes them aside.

He passes the various vans where shabby WORKERS stand chatting.

He comes to a fold-out bike that's been chained to a lamppost. Retrieving a key from his pocket, Casper unlocks the chain and drops it into his satchel.

He unfolds the bike, mounts it and cycles away.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

It's homely with knickknacks covering the walls. A couple of BARISTAS serve coffee from behind a bar. A few CUSTOMERS but there's plenty of empty seats.

Casper sits alone at a small table, his satchel next to him, his laptop and pad on the table.

His screen reads:

'THE SEARCH FOR ADELAIDE JONES IS OVER... FOR NOW'

'THE ALTERNATE'

FADE OUT.

END OF TEASER

ACT 1

FADE IN:

INT. CHRONICLE, OFFICE - DAY

Cramped with a few desks crammed together.

F/X: ELECTRONIC FLUTTER

An old fan turns.

Filing cabinets pushed up against a wall. No labels on anything.

A water cooler in need of a top up and algae growing inside. Next to it is a battered coffee machine, lights flickering on buttons.

Papers fly through the air as the fan swings round.

A door reads:

'TAMARA EAGLES'
'EDITOR'

Casper enters. Heads for the door, about to knock, he puts his ear to it.

F/X: SLURPING SNORT

Casper shakes his head, smirking.

He finds his desk, which is the messiest compared to the two others, though they're not much better.

He plunks himself down in the chair and rests his satchel on his lap, removing his laptop and pad. He opens up the laptop and begins typing.

The door opens. FRED MCDERMAT (55) fat and sweaty in an outdated suit, enters.

FRED
Mornin' Casp.

Casper gestures with a wave.

FRED (CONT'D)
How was your trip to Scotland Yard
yesterday?

CASPER
Fun as ever.

Casper and Fred laugh.

FRED
Reckon they'll ever find her?

CASPER
Either they do or they don't, it's
a story either way.

Fred eyes Tamara's door.

FRED
She in yet...

Casper mimics snorting a line.

FRED (CONT'D)
Oh.

Casper reads over his notes.

He flicks over to his computer. Numerous articles are open
about the Adelaide case, some written by him.

CASPER
The clothes they found, where
exactly did they find them?

FRED
Just outside Epping Forest as far
as I know.
(beat)
Why yah asking me, you're the one
reporting on it, I just do the
sports.

CASPER
How's that going?

FRED
Fucking Spurs man, it's
heartbreaking reporting on the team
that you love when they bottle it
every year.

Casper chuckles.

CASPER
At least the tide's turning against
the Windies.

FRED
If only cokezilla would pony up the
money for me to cover that live.
(beat)
Anyway, was on the south side
according to reports.

CASPER
Anything near it?

Fred shrugs.

CASPER (CONT'D)
 Guess I'm gonna have to go and find
 out a bit more.

Casper spins round and heads for the door.

TAMARA (O.S.)
 Butcher, my office, now!

Casper sighs, turns back round.

INT. CHRONICLE, TAMARA'S OFFICE - DAY

Dainty with tacky decor. Someone sits behind a desk, their head down against the desk.

The window's open, a cigarette butt is pressed into an ashtray.

Casper enters.

TAMARA
 (muffled)
 Why do you always do this?

CASPER
 Do what?

TAMARA EAGLES (55) looks up. Her blouse is barely buttoned, her lacy bra peeking up, cleavage on show. Heavy makeup fails to hide her fading looks.

TAMARA
 I saw Commissioner Graham's press conference. He's always been a mess, never should've been appointed, just a face for the cameras. Let it go and just knock out a think piece. Find another story to report on.

CASPER
 It's the biggest thing in Britain right now.

He pulls out his phone, types something on it and holds it up to Tamara.

ON PHONE: An article from the Washington Post. The headline reads:

'EMPTY CASKET BURRIED IN HONOR OF ADELAIDE JONES'

CASPER (CONT'D)
 Even the Americans are fixated.

TAMARA

Put that thing away.

Casper stuffs his phone back in his pocket.

TAMARA (CONT'D)

As far as the police are concerned,
it's case closed...

She stands up, walks over to Casper, they're nose to nose.

TAMARA (CONT'D)

And if it's case closed for them,
it's case closed for us...

She grabs his collar, pulls him towards her.

Tamara and Casper are nose to nose.

TAMARA (CONT'D)

Understand?

CASPER

(stone-faced)

Loud and clear.

Tamara lets go of him.

TAMARA

(smiles)

Good. Now get back to work, a
little birdie told me that Little
Mix are staying at The Savoy, find
out what you can...

Casper's about to say something.

TAMARA (CONT'D)

From your comfort of your desk.

He heads for the door.

CASPER

(on exit)

If you're gonna powder your nose
before work starts, you should
really check to make sure it went
up your nose and not around it.

F/X: DOOR SHUTS

Tamara rubs around her nostrils.

She inspects the substance on her fingers, sucks on them,
joyful smile.

INT. CHRONICLE, OFFICE - DAY

Fred's at his desk.

Casper rushes to his desk and hastily packs his stuff away.

FRED
What did she want?

CASPER
Said she'd give me a raise if I met
her at a hotel tonight. I declined.

Casper bolts for the door, slamming it behind him.

FRED
(aside)
I wonder if that offer's still
open?

Fred jumps up, giddy with excitement.

He heads to her office.

EXT. CHRONICLE BUILDING - DAY

Casper steps out, wheeling his bike into a busy main street,
a mixture of retail shops and offices. He watches the traffic
lights.

They change to red and traffic halts.

Casper hops on his bike and cycles through, passing angry
DRIVERS who honk as he zips by them a little too close.

EXT. LONDON STREET - DAY

He comes to intersection and is forced to stop next to a car.

ANGRY DRIVER
Just coz you're ride's better for
the environment, doesn't mean you
own the road.

CASPER
(flips him off)
Fuck you.

He peddles away. The driver is left red-faced and fuming.

Casper continues his bike ride, coming to Liverpool Street
Station.

He stops, dismounts his bike, folds it up and goes inside.

INT. LIVERPOOL STREET STATION - DAY

Casper makes his way past various COMMUTERS and pushes past unsuspecting TOURISTS unaware of his presence.

F/X: BEEP

Casper taps his Oyster and goes through the barrier, then follows the signage for the CENTRAL LINE.

INT. LIVERPOOL STREET STATION, PLATFORM - DAY

F/X: TRAIN ARRIVING

Casper rushes down the stairs to the platform for the train heading towards Epping Forest. Leaping through the train doors just before they close.

INT. CENTRAL LINE TRAIN, EASTBOUND - DAY

Casper stands on the train packed in with COMMUTERS.

TANNOY (V.O.)

This is a central line service
heading eastbound to Epping Forest,
the next station, Bethnal Green.

The train departs.

EXT. EPPING STATION, PLATFORM - DAY

The train pulls into the station.

F/X: HISS

Beat.

The train comes to a stop.

TANNOY (V.O.)

This train terminates here.
Remember to take all your
belongings with you and thank you
for travelling with us.

The doors open. A handful of PEOPLE step off the train. Amongst them is Casper.

Casper rushes towards the exit, sticking his hand in his pocket and retrieving his oyster card.

EXT/INT. EPPING STATION - DAY

F/X: BEEP

Casper steps out into the street. Although there are a few red buses, this is far from the metropolis of London.

He takes out his phone and sets a destination on his phone, then unfolds his bike, mounts it and starts cycling in the direction of Epping Forest.

An arrowed sign has 'EPPING FOREST' written underneath.

EXT. EPPING STREETS - DAY

Casper cycles past various shops and buildings. It's bustling with PEOPLE out in the street.

A few posters of Adelaide hang in shop windows.

Casper passes a church. The message on the sign outside reads:

'WHEREEVER YOU ARE ADELAIDE
WE HOPE YOU'RE SAFE'

A VICAR (60s) stands outside the church, watching Casper go by.

Their eyes meet and the Vicar stares at him with anger and contempt.

Casper cycles past the police station which is littered with posters of Adelaide.

Notices asking for people to call 01279 641212 if they have any information. Along with social media icons and details.

EXT. NEWSAGENT - DAY

Casper notices a series of newspapers, tabloids and magazines, all focussed on Adelaide, her photo is front and centre of various covers.

On a copy of HELLO magazine is a photo of the disgraced Kenneth Graham. The headline under across his image reads:

'KENNETH GRAHAM ON THE BRINK OF STEPPING DOWN AFTER
CONTROVESIAL TWEETS RESURFACE'

Casper dismounts his bike and grabs the magazine for a closer look.

Underneath the headline it reads:

'Read it all on page 12'

Casper thumbs through the magazine, coming to the article about Kenneth Graham.

Pictures of Graham in and out of uniform on one page, whilst the other has screenshots of tweets, denouncing the BLM movement as a "Radical form of leftist fascism."

A dark shadow looms over Casper. He peers up to see the SHOP OWNER (50s) glaring at him, holding his hand out.

Casper closes the magazine, putting his thumb in to keep the page as he retrieves some coins from his pocket and places them in the Shop Owner's hand who storms back into his shop and puts the money in the till.

Casper returns to the magazine.

CASPER

(reading)

Police Commissioner Kenneth Peter Graham has come under fire following the disastrous attempts at finding kidnapped child, Adelaide Jones, as tweets have resurfaced regarding his views on Antifa and the BLM movement. Though he agrees that more should be done to tackle the racism faced by black people at the hands of police, he described their demonstrations and the tearing down of statues as a "Radical form of leftist fascism." Though this was met with anger when first tweeted, his appointment as Commissioner and the controversial closing of the Adelaide case put Graham into the public eye and the tweet were quickly brought to the forefront.

F/X: PHONE RINGING

Casper retrieves his mobile from his pocket.

PHONE SCREEN: 'TAMARA EAGLES' - LONDON CHRONICLE

Casper answers it.

TAMARA (V.O.)

Where the fuck did you go?

CASPER

I...

TAMARA (V.O.)

You didn't go to dig more into the Adelaide case did you? I told you to let it go. You'd better have that think piece on my desk ready to go out by this afternoon or you are so fired.

CASPER

Don't worry, it will be, I'll be
back before you can say Columbian
sugar.

Tamara's angry voice starts yelling through the speaker but
gets cut off as Casper quickly ends the call.

CASPER (CONT'D)

(sighs)
What a cunt.

A MOTHER shoots Casper an angry look as she hurries her
TODDLER along.

CASPER (CONT'D)

People swear in the real world.

Casper stuffs the magazine in his satchel and hops back on
his bike.

EXT. EPPING FOREST, ENTRANCE - DAY

A sprawling landscape of lush, green treetops. PEOPLE are out
and about enjoying the good weather.

Near the entrance are the remnants of police tape and
markings.

Casper arrives on his bike. He comes to an abrupt stop,
retrieves his phone and takes a photo of the bric-a-brac.

He walks over and inspects it further.

CASPER

So this is where they found those
clothes?

PASSERBY (O.S.)

Yep.

Casper turns around. A MAN (70s) in hiking gear stands behind
him.

PASSERBY (CONT'D)

(pointing)
Those kids planted that fake body
somewhere down there. Even Stevie
Wonder'd be able to see the head
was a shaved coconut.

(beat)
You reporting on this or something?

CASPER

Was.

PASSERBY

You see that piss-poor address
Graham gave?

CASPER

I was there.

PASSERBY

The police haven't done squat.
(re: police tape)
That right there is just for show,
put the public at ease and lets
them know the police are out there
doing their job. Load'a bollocks in
reality. Her parents were smart to
report her disappearance and stay
out of it. You ask me she's been
dead since Christmas.

Casper makes notes.

CASPER

And you know this, how?

PASSERBY

(prods head)
Think about it. If you're looking
to delve into it more, good luck to
yah.

The Man heads off. Casper gets on his bike and enters the forest.

EXT. EPPING FOREST - DAY

Casper cycles along passing a few PEOPLE but as he goes deeper into the forest it becomes a mess of trees.

He cycles deeper, he's now alone.

Beat.

Casper stares at the trees practically engulfing him.

The front wheel hits a root sending him tumbling forward.

He scrambles for his satchel, pulls out his laptop. It's a bit chipped but still functioning.

Casper wanders through like a lost soul.

He spots something in the distance, rushing towards it.

EXT. EPPING FOREST, HUT - DAY

Casper comes to a small, dilapidated hut. He tries the door but it's locked.

Thinking quickly, Casper grabs a rock.

F/X: GLASS SHATTERS

INT. HUT - DAY

Casper steps in through the window. He takes photos of the place immediately.

Someone hasn't lived here for a long time.

There's a pot on an induction hob. Casper puts his hand over it. No heat at all. He continues wandering through, coming to a staircase that leads underground.

INT. HUT, STAIRCASE/BASEMENT - DAY

Casper treads cautiously down the stairs. The walls are littered with pictures of Adelaide: news clippings about the case

PHOTOS of Kenneth Graham and his team of OFFICERS.

In the corner is a tarpaulin, something underneath. Casper moves trepidatiously towards it.

He grabs the sheet.

Nods, counting down...

3...2...1...

He yanks the tarpaulin off...

ADELAIDE (8) wearing knickers and a vest, her pale body crumpled in an awkward foetal position. Welts and bruises all over her face and body.

A wound on her forehead, blood has dried, turned brown, next to her body is a rock with a similar coating of blood.

Casper backs away terrified.

He steps on some rotting wood...

It gives way.

INT. HOLE

Casper falls through an empty blackness, screaming.

It goes quiet.

F/X: THUD

Casper lays still, staring into a void of nothingness.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT 1

ACT 2

FADE IN:

EXT. BUSINESS PARK/CONSTRUCTION SITE - DAY

Casper's POV: Blurry but he can make out a clear blue sky.

F/X: EARS RINGING

F/X: CRACKING

F/X: THUMPING

It's muffled.

The ringing stops.

F/X: PNEUMATIC DRILL

Casper grimaces at the noise, quickly covering his ears.

He looks around.

Casper's POV: Vision starting to clear.

Numerous offices packed in together. To one side is a car park with nary an empty space.

He spots a group of CONSTRUCTION WORKERS working on the metal skeleton of a building.

Casper tries to speak but nothing comes out. Rolls over and crawls forward, dizzied. Buckling limbs give way.

He forces himself up. It's a struggle.

Casper staggers towards the CONSTRUCTION WORKERS.

CASPER
Ec...excuse me...
(no response)
Hello?

Casper's legs go again and he collapses, crashing into a cement mixer, knocking it over.

The CONSTRUCTION WORKERS notice, rush over to him. TWO of them help him up and take him over to a bench.

CONSTRUCTION WORKER
You okay?

Casper rubs his head.

CASPER
Don't think so.

A MANAGER (30s) in a skirt suit and a hard hat peers from her tablet to see her team huddled around something. Stern, she storms over.

MANAGER (O.S.)
Hey, hey what's all this hubbub?
Your lunch break was an hour ago.

They all turn around.

CONSTRUCTION WORKER 2
We found this man in the middle of
the site, he looks hurt.

She stares at Casper, bewildered.

MANAGER
Where the hell did you come from?

CASPER
I don't know, one minute I'm
falling through a hole in Epping
Forest, next minute I wake up here.

The Manager and CONSTRUCTION WORKERS survey the area, confused, then turn back to Casper.

CONSTRUCTION WORKER
This is Epping Forest.

CASPER
Doesn't look like a forest to me.

CONSTRUCTION WORKER
The forest was cleared out back in
the sixties to make way for the
business park.

CASPER
Business park?

CONSTRUCTION WORKER
(gesturing to site)
Everything you see around you.
Wasn't finished until the eighties,
damn strikers, didn't know how good
they had it back then.

CASPER
Oh, what, like the miners at war
with Maggie Thatcher?

The name draws confused looks amongst the CONSTRUCTION WORKERS.

CONSTRUCTION WORKER
Who's Maggie Thatcher?

CASPER
Had two terms as PM, the further
north you go the more they hate
her.

CONSTRUCTION WORKER
But the Liberal Party was in charge
then, it was Thorpe. Went up
against PB, was a shock win, mind
you he weren't in charge for long
and Isambard C. York, put Britain
back on track.

(beat)
We didn't all know that the 'C'
stood for Constantine, and he'd
added York to anglicise his name.
Polly's didn't care that he was
Cypriot because he shared their
vision.

CASPER
Who's Isambard Constantine York?

The CONSTRUCTION WORKERS smile proudly.

CONSTRUCTION WORKER
He made Britain what it is today
and kept the colonies as the beacon
of the Empire.

Casper rubs his head again.

CASPER
(aside)
Must've been one hell of a fall.
(beat)
What's the time, I've gotta get
back to the office? Tam's probably
fuming at how long I've been gone.

MANAGER
(gestures)
Just down there, you can't miss it.
Hospital isn't too far away either.
Might want to go and get yourself
checked out. It's private but they
might give you a free checkup.

CASPER
(focusses on where she's
pointing)
I'll keep that in mind.

Casper heads off in the direction that the Manager pointed.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Casper wanders through. Passing shops similar to the ones he did on the way to the forest, however, this is different, resembling more of a modern cosmopolis, comparable to London.

He's confused as he admires the place, almost stumbling into PEOPLE much to their chagrin.

EXT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Casper sees the hospital, it's a sleek, modern building with digital signage that reads:

'EFIC'
'EPPING FOREST INFIRMARY CARE'

He goes towards the doors, about to go inside but stops himself.

He notices a bus stop and goes over.

EXT. TRAM STOP - DAY

A few PEOPLE standing but it's practically deserted. Casper joins them.

He turns to an OLD LADY.

CASPER
This'll take me to the station,
won't it?

OLD LADY
Yes.
(checks her watch)
Tram should be along any minute.

As if she summoned it, the tram arrives.

The doors open and PEOPLE get on. Casper watches them tap a pad with a card.

F/X: ELECTRICAL LOW-RES BUZZ

EXT/INT. TRAM - DAY

The DRIVER stares at him.

DRIVER
You on or off lad?

Casper steps on.

He retrieves his oyster and taps it.

No noise.

He tries again.

No noise.

Some PASSENGERS are getting fed up with the delay.

DRIVER (CONT'D)

Sometimes that thing plays up. I'll write you a ticket, just make sure it's paid within a week.

The Driver takes out a stack of tickets. He writes on one, tears it off and hands it to an unsure Casper.

CASPER

Thanks, I'll make sure to do that.

The tram departs.

Casper grabs a seat next to the Old Lady.

OLD LADY

So where you headed to?

CASPER

London, gotta get back to the office, already been out for lord knows how long.

The Old Lady smirks.

OLD LADY

Well if your card didn't work here, it certainly won't work on a train.

She reaches into her pocket and pulls out an orange laminated card. Across one side reads:

'TRAVEL REDEEMER'

OLD LADY (CONT'D)

I always carry a spare, though I've never forgotten mine.

She hands it to him.

CASPER

Thank you so much.

OLD LADY

What was that card you were using?

Casper reaches into his pocket and takes out his oyster. The Old Lady gawks at it.

OLD LADY (CONT'D)
I've never seen that before, let me
guess are you from America or
Canada?

CASPER
(laughing)
No.

OLD LADY
New Zealand?
(Casper shakes his head)
Australia?
(he shakes his head again)

OLD LADY (CONT'D)
I'd ask you if you're a planty boy
but you're pale as a ghost.

Her 'planty boy' remark gets a few sneering looks.

CASPER
You should hear how my nan used to
talk, learned more cursing from her
than I did off the telly.

The tram continues on its journey.

EXT/INT. ONGAR STATION - DAY

The tram stops just in front of a sprawling building with a
parade of shops along either side.

Digital signage across the top reads:

'ONGAR'

Casper alights the tram along with a few others.

He follows them inside.

Casper follows the signage that reads:

'WEST/LONDON'

He comes to a pad similar to the one on the tram. He grabs
his oyster card and is about to tap it before remembering and
swapping it for the card the Old Lady gave him. He taps the
card.

F/X: ELECTRICAL LOW-RES BUZZ

Casper smiles then goes on his merry way.

INT. ONGAR STATION, PLATFORM - DAY

Has a futuristic vibe, lots of neon signage. A large digital map showing the route occupies the adjacent wall.

Casper studies it, recognising a few station names but others are completely alien to him.

He surveys the platform.

CASPER
No Metros.

F/X: ROARING HISS

Casper covers his ears.

The train has a retro-technical design. Lots of flashy neon makes it almost blend in with the platform.

The doors open, some PEOPLE alight.

Casper stands aside to let them off, then jumps on.

INT. TRAIN CARRAGE - DAY

Lengthy and narrow, COMMUTERS all sitting. Some give him an odd look.

Casper turns around to see 'EXIT ONLY' written above the door he just entered from.

Casper takes a seat.

The train departs.

INT. TRAIN CARRAGE/STRATFORD PLATFORM - DAY

A load of PEOPLE alight, some get on.

Casper recognises a woman, INGRID (35) in a business suit. She takes the seat opposite him. He stares at her, a friendly smile on his face.

CASPER
Ingrid George, it's me, Casper
Butcher, from school, Southgate
Secondary. We had French together
with Mr Phillips, he was a bit
barmy but very entertaining.

Ingrid looks up at him, confused.

INGRID
Do I know you?

CASPER

(laughing)

Yeah, I tried asking you out in year ten, didn't go so well, you were dating Tony Fields.

INGRID

Tony was the only boy I remember asking me out.

(flashes a ring)

He wooed me into marriage after we left Westminster Polytechnic. Maybe you asked out one of my friends?

CASPER

No, definitely you, when Tony heard about it he was more than a bit rough when we played rugby in PE that day. Almost broke my arm.

Ingrid is shocked.

INGRID

My Tony would've never done that, he was quiet and shy, only asked me out because the popular girls gave him a scathing rejection. I'm sorry, I've never seen you in my life, and it's kind of worrying what you know about me.

Ingrid stands up and moves further down the carriage.

Awkward beat.

Casper looks at her but she turns away.

The train departs.

MARSHALL (O.S.)

Don't worry, I believe you.

Casper looks up.

The seat that Ingrid was in has now been occupied by MARSHALL ROBSON (40) in a cheap suit. There's something off about him.

CASPER

Maybe she's right, I had a nasty fall, and to be honest, I still feel a bit woozy. Soon as I get off I'll head to the hospital.

MARSHALL

Nah, you're telling the truth, or at least your telling your truth...

(beat)

Or should I say our truth.

CASPER
Who was Prime Minister through the
eighties?

MARSHALL
Maggie Thatcher.

Casper's astonished.

MARSHALL (CONT'D)
(chuckles)
You're not the only one.

CASPER
How did you...

MARSHALL
Was working on a tunnel for
Northern Rail and ended up hitting
some bricks that collapsed on me.

CASPER
Where'd you wake up?

MARSHALL
Exact same spot but it was a fish
market, despite being in land.

CASPER
Is there a way back?

MARSHALL
I don't know, but considering how
different my life is here, don't
even think about it.

Their conversation has caused a few concerned COMMUTERS to
move away.

Casper's POV: PEOPLE actively try to avoid his gaze. Turning
their heads or focussing on their phones.

He turns back to Marshall.

CASPER
Is there anything else I should
know?

The train stops.

Marshall stands up.

MARSHALL
Don't worry you'll be fine. Embrace
it, it's a new life, a new start.

He heads for the doors.

The doors open.

F/X: PISTON HISS

Casper stares at the map.

Liverpool Street is the next stop.

He looks over to where Ingrid was sitting.

She's gone.

The train departs.

INT. LIVERPOOL STREET STATION, PLATFORM - DAY

A small shack with a half-platform.

The train arrives with it's deafening hiss. Stops.

Casper gets off from the 'EXIT' marked door. He is the only one who gets off.

EXT. LIVERPOOL STREET STATION - DAY

Casper steps out of the station at ground level, entering a bustling food market in full swing. Stalls of ethnic food from the colonies.

EXT. MARKET/OFFICE LOTS - DAY

Casper wanders through, pinching some bread when a STALL OWNER turns her back.

He continues on his way, biting into the bread only to discover that it's stale but gorges on it anyway.

As he exits the market, Casper comes to a series of office buildings. He recognises the street names but the aesthetic is different.

It's unappealing yet there's a sense of patriotism: Union Jacks with an additional green cross stick out of flagpoles.

Casper stops SOMEONE.

CASPER

This is Liverpool Street, isn't it?

PASSERBY 2

Yeah, why?

CASPER

Just wondering. Looks different to how I remember.

PASSERBY 2
Hasn't changed since the
Millennium.

The PERSON walks on.

Casper continues walking, astounded by everything around him.

He passes an endless array of office buildings that have a postmodern aesthetic, some have those same Union Jacks outside.

Confused by the sudden change in architecture, Casper turns around to see the drab office buildings further down the street.

CASPER
This is crazy, I have to be dead, I
must be.

His walk continues.

EXT. BRITISH ARMED FORCES OFFICES - DAY

A couple of GUARDS in uniform stand at their post outside a building. Their presence is the only thing that makes it stand out.

Casper approaches.

CASPER
This is where the London Chronicle
should be...

Confused, he approaches the GUARDS.

CASPER (CONT'D)
I'm looking for the London
Chronicle, I work there.

GUARD 1
Sorry sir, no tabloids here. I'm
afraid I'm going to have to ask you
to provide identification before we
can allow you to enter this
premises.

CASPER
Casper Butcher.

The Guard checks a tablet implanted onto the forearm of his uniform. He scrolls through.

Sees something.

GUARD 1

Mr Butcher-Clarke. Do you have any
ID on you?

The double-barrelled surname takes Casper by surprise.

Casper searches his pockets, takes out his wallet, searches it, takes out a driver's license which he hands to the Guard who scrutinises it.

GUARD 1 (CONT'D)

You only go by Butcher on your
license.

Casper is astonished.

CASPER

Never liked the added name.

The Guard hands the license back with a smile.

GUARD 1

When you get inside, scan in.
Should be fine.

The Guard presses a few buttons on his tablet.

AT DOOR

F/X: DIGITAL CLICK

A small sensor light goes from red to green.

The GUARDS nod at Casper who nods back and goes inside.

INT. BRITISH ARMED FORCES OFFICES, RECEPTION DESK - DAY

Large and spacious, more like a typical reception than something army-based. That is, save for the Union Jacks and St George's flags on poles in the corners, as well as the many CCTV cameras all pointed at the floor between the entrance and the front desk.

A RECEPTIONIST (28) smiles at Casper as he enters. On the wall behind her is a large oil painting of KING CHARLES III wearing his crown, military formal attire and brandishing a sword.

RECEPTIONIST

May I help you?

CASPER

My name's Casper Butcher... Butcher-
Clarke.

The Receptionist types his name into her computer.

ON COMPUTER SCREEN: Along a search bar 'CASPER BUTCHER-CLARKE' is typed in. The name appears. A curser clicks on it.

Casper's information appears:

NAME: CASPER BUTCHER-CLARKE
 DOB: 12/7/85
 ROLE: LOGGER
 DEPT: DIGITAL ADMINISTRATION

IMAGE: Photo of Casper

Text flashes on the screen.

'PRESENCE REQUESTED (DIGITAL ADMINISTRATION)
 CONFERENCE ROOM A'

The Receptionist peers up from her screen.

RECEPTIONIST

Looks like you're required on the
 conference floor.

CASPER

Where is that?

RECEPTIONIST

Fifth floor, take the lift.
 (she gestures to a
 corridor)
 The rooms are all labelled. Got
 your ID?

Casper searches his pockets. He takes out his wallet, looks through it. Shakes his head.

RECEPTIONIST (CONT'D)

Not to worry, most of the time,
 people leave them at home, I can
 print you out a new one if you
 like.

Casper nods.

The Receptionist starts clicking her computer mouse.

ON COMPUTER SCREEN: Casper's details and photo.

F/X: TYPING

Text appears:

'VOID'

Typing continues.

The Receptionist holds 'CTRL + P' on her keyboard.

AT SPECIAL PRINTER: A laminated ID badge slides out.

The Receptionist grabs a holder with a lanyard from a box and slots the badge in. She hands it to Casper.

CASPER

Thank you.

RECEPTIONIST

(please smile)

You're welcome.

Casper continues on his way.

ON COMPUTER SCREEN: The 'VOID' text on Casper's details disappears.

F/X: LIFT DOORS OPENING

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT 2

ACT 3

FADE IN:

INT. BRITISH ARMED FORCES OFFICES, CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

A large table in the centre of the room.

Minimal military decor.

At the far end of the room is GENERAL ARCHIBALD GOUGH (60) in military formals with epaulettes and medals pinned to his breast pocket.

Behind him is a screen.

The room is full of people: MEN and WOMEN sat around the table.

There is amicable chatter at the table. Gough even chimes in to TWO colleagues near him.

He checks his watch, looks up, clears his throat.

GOUGH

Righty-ho settle down.

Everyone focusses on him immediately.

GOUGH (CONT'D)

We've talked about this already but just to get everyone up to scratch.

(goes to his desk)

Tonight we've a new weapon coming in, it's in France right now but as we're talking, the Armée de Terre are preparing it for transfer.

INTERCUT

INT. ARMÉE DE TERRE, HANGAR - DAY

French flags adorn the massive room. It's been cleared of everything except for something under a tarpaulin which is heavily guarded.

GUARDS are preparing a lorry.

FRENCH GUARD

(in French)

Hurry, hurry, the English are expecting this tonight. The road along the Channel has been cleared for our journey.

INSIDE LORRY: It's being deep-cleaned by a HAZMAT TEAM.

GOUGH

It's a bio weapon that is being brought here for testing. It was used here
 (points to the location on a map)
 in Palestine. But there were some issues.

CASPER

That's Israel.

Everyone in the room turns to him with a confused look.

GOUGH

What's Israel?

CASPER

(aside)
 Guess it doesn't exist here.

They turn back to Gough.

GOUGH

Anyway, because the conditions are, well, hot and dry, and already lack moisture, they want to test it here and make sure it's fully operational before sending it back to the front lines. The Africa Company are currently embroiled in a conflict with some 'Freedom fighters' in the north east.

(points to another location)

Between Egypt and Sudan.

Gough changes the image on the screen to field tactics.

GOUGH (CONT'D)

We've with the Egyptians on this one, helping to clear out Sudan for Egyptian expansion in to the region, though after the mission is successful, the Royal Africa Company will remain there to keep the place in check.

He changes the image to map of Sudan with a few 'X's' marked.

GOUGH (CONT'D)

Plus, we're aware of some oil reserves, which would be a nice parting gift.

(beat)

(MORE)

GOUGH (CONT'D)

Hopefully it's a one-and-done use,
but you never know, and we might
need the weapon in the future.

Gough turns to the DIGITAL ADMINISTRATION TEAM, Casper is
amongst their ranks.

GOUGH (CONT'D)

You guys know what to do, get the
tracking chip and the failsafe
mechanism implanted in the weapon,
log it on the system, and the
Frenchies will be off to Lancashire
soon as.

RACHAEL COLLINS (28) in a trim suit, responds.

COLLINS

Yes, sir.

GOUGH

Very good. They're coming to the
basement garage as usual.
Dismissed.

Everyone stands up and begins shuffling toward the door.

INT. ARMÉE DE TERRE, BASE - DAY

A small incendiary device rolls across the floor.

F/X: HISS

Smoke emits from the device.

MERCENARIES storm the base, taking the SOLDIERS by surprise
and clearing them out sufficiently with machine guns before
they've had a chance to react.

The HAZMAT TEAM step out of the lorry.

F/X: GUNSHOTS

They stop in their tracks.

GABRIËLLE (O.S.)

(in French)

Secure the weapon.

Some MERCENARIES circle round the terrified HAZMAT TEAM
whilst others remove the tarpaulin, revealing a large barrel
beam with a glass bulb attached, filled with green liquid.

They begin moving it to the lorry.

The smoke clears.

GABRIÉLLE AJAK (30s) French Sudanese in light combat gear. A knife strapped to her belt.

GABRIÉLLE (CONT'D)
 (in French)
 We'll make sure to destroy the
 British on their soil.
 (beat)
 Kill them.

The MERCENARIES gun down the HAZMAT TEAM. The weapon is placed in the back of the lorry. Some MERCENARIES get in with it.

A SOLDIER on the floor grabs his gun, he thumbs back the hammer.

F/X: GUNSHOT

It sails past Gabriéllé's head and into the wall. She sighs.

GABRIÉLLE (CONT'D)
 (aside in French)
 If you can't pay someone to do
 something, you've got to do it
 yourself.

Two MERCENARIES pin the Soldier down. One of them steps on his wrist, forcing him to open his hand, and kicks the gun away.

Gabriéllé approaches.

The MERCENARIES move aside.

She spots a bullet wound in his gut and drops on top of him. The Soldier grimaces in pain. Some blood in and around his mouth.

GABRIÉLLE (CONT'D)
 (in French)
 You started this, along with
 Britain, you've taken everything,
 and we've been forced to fend for
 ourselves in fear of being hunted
 down. Families starve to death and
 communities suffer and wither. The
 only thing you've given us is your
 tongue.
 (she grasps his throat and
 puts her knife in his
 mouth)
 Perhaps I should take yours.

Gabriéllé forces the Soldier's head against the floor, inspecting his face. She turns his head to one side, pinning it down with her forearm. She spots part of tattoo on his neck.

GABRIÉLLE (CONT'D)
 (in French)
 The Legionnaires Forever?
 (beat)
 Then you may know some of my
 friends.

Gabriëlle touches the tip of her knife against the Soldier's forehead, running it down his cheek, ending at the tattoo.

Gabriëlle leans in close.

GABRIÉLLE (CONT'D)
 (whispers in Soldier's
 ear)
 The Legionnaires will perish, along
 with the British.

She stabs his neck where the tattoo starts.

The Soldier gargles and sputters clinging onto Gabriëlle for life. There's a grin on her face.

She stands, goes over to the lorry.

The lorry shutter is lowered. Gabriëlle gets in the passenger seat.

INT. PUB - DAY

The DIGITAL ADMINISTRATION TEAM are sat around a table, drinking. It's as amicable as the briefing before.

It's busy with PATRONS at tables and up at the bar.

COLLINS
 So the girlfriend and I just called
 it all off, I gave her the ring
 back and that was it.

LOGGER 1
 You're still friends right?

COLLINS
 She's still living with me, and no
 we're not sharing a bed, just to
 ruin any fantasies you had, Trev.

Collins turns to Casper.

COLLINS (CONT'D)
 So what about you, Casp? You're
 part of our team but I'll be
 honest, I don't remember you
 joining, and I'm the one who
 usually does the interviews with
 Goughy.

Casper is stumped, unsure what to say.

CASPER

No love life to speak of at the moment, saw a girl I asked out at school on the way in but she had no memory of me. It was bloody embracing. I walked up to her, I was like fifteen or something and just mumbled "will you go out with me?"

The GROUP laugh.

CASPER (CONT'D)

Is this really the right thing to do, considering we've got that weapon coming in soon?

COLLINS

Yeah, we're not gonna be the ones driving the thing, the Frenchies are delivering it, one of them stays with us, we install the failsafe and tracking chip, then they're off to whatever base Goughy said. Dull as shit but has to be done. A few pints beforehand ain't a problem, 'long as we're sober when we have to install the thing. Us techies are the team behind the team.

CASPER

Yeah, I suppose.

COLLINS

Plus, what other job is gonna let you go drinking on the Government's time and money?

(beat)

'Least we're not on the front lines. You ever been to the colonies? Lagos is British Nigeria's party capital.

CASPER

Nope, most of my holidays were down in Bournemouth.

LOGGER 2

Ah, a staycation, my grandparents used to do that. I think they've travelled the length and breadth of the British Isles. The old man's particularly fond of Islay.

(mimics drinking)

The GROUP burst out laughing.

LOGGER 2 (CONT'D)
 Anyone else up for another one?
 (turns to Casper)
 I think it's your round, mate.

Casper stands up.

CASPER
 But I don't have any money on me.

COLLINS
 Put it on Goughy's tab, he won't mind. Shame he can't join us. Just tell them it's under Archie Gough and they'll know.

Casper heads to the bar.

AT THE BAR

Casper pushes past PATRONS who aren't fussed by suddenly shifting forwards.

CASPER
 Four Guinesses please, they're for Archie Gough.

BARMAN
 Coming up.

Casper waits whilst the drinks are poured.

MARSHALL (O.S.)
 Didn't think I'd see you again.

Casper turns around to see Marshal sat on a stool.

MARSHALL (CONT'D)
 So how you finding it all?

CASPER
 (shakes head)
 Still trying to get my head around everything.
 (points to group)
 Apparently I work with these guys. It's where my office used to be... is? I don't know how to put it?

MARSHALL
 Do yourself a favour and go visit your parents.

CASPER
 Jesus I hadn't even thought of them.

(MORE)

CASPER (CONT'D)

Something's definitely up with them though. My surname here is Butcher-Clake, whereas at home, it's just Butcher. Wonder which one remarried?

(beat)

And how long has Charles been king?

PUNTER (O.S.)

Since '05.

CASPER

That answers that question. And the colonies, how does... is it like France and Martinique?

MARSHALL

Not quite, they work for us. We're not the only ones though, France have theirs, The Netherlands have theirs, Germany, Italy, Spain, Portugal... Here it's still Congo Belge. Or the Belgian Congo to us.

SIOBHAN'S POV: Watching them from a far off table.

MARSHALL (CONT'D)

Basically, we run our colonies, sans slavery, made illegal at the beginning of the nineteenth century like in our world, but lets just say the colonies aren't independent, they're under our monarchy, our government, our thumb. Better if you ask me, keep the buggers in check, keep the world turning.

BARMAN (O.S.)

Four Guinneses.

CASPER

Top stuff.

(turns to Marshall)

Good seeing you again.

Casper grabs the drinks and heads to his table. They're embroiled in conversation.

SIOBHAN'S POV: She heads towards Casper.

SIOBHAN (O.S.)

You're not safe here. None of us are.

Casper whips round.

CASPER
Who's there?

They're gone.

Casper continues on his way.

SIOBHAN (O.S.)
Meet me outside.

Casper whips around again. He sees someone leaving the pub.
He returns to the table.

CASPER
I'll be right back. Gotta take a
slash.

The DIGITAL ADMINISTRATION TEAM just nod, mid-conversation.

Casper goes to the door the person went through.

EXT. PUB - DUSK

Casper steps out.

CASPER
Shit it's going dark, wonder if
they're expecting us back yet?

He wanders round to an alley next to the pub.

EXT. ALLEYWAY - NIGHT

It's filled with garbage bags and industrial bins.

Casper walks through.

CASPER
Hello?

Someone forces him against the wall. Covers his mouth.

SIOBHAN (O.S.)
Don't get sucked into this world,
you're not a part of it.

Staring back at him is SIOBHAN GREENFIELD (40) casual
clothes.

SIOBHAN (CONT'D)
I saw you at the bar. That man
you're with, he's not who he seems.

Siobhan moves her hand away from Casper's mouth.

CASPER

Why should I trust you, how would you know?

SIOBHAN

Because I'm stuck here too. Have been for a while now. I've almost cracked the code and found a way to get back.

CASPER

What about Marshall?

SIOBHAN

He's been seduced by this world, but it's not ours, we need to get home.

CASPER

How do we do that?

SIOBHAN

If I can pinpoint the next opening, that's our chance, it may mean travelling across the country.

(beat)

Whatever you do, stay away from your friends and family, anyone you even vaguely recognise. As far as they're concerned, you don't exist.

F/X: RAUCOUS NOISE

CASPER

That'll be my group.

SIOBHAN

Good luck.

Siobhan kisses Casper before disappearing into the alley.

Casper stumbles towards his group, rejoins them. They head for the office further down the road.

EXT. CHANNEL BRIDGE - DUSK

The lorry comes to a bridge, it's guarded by BRITISH SOLDIERS. They stop the lorry.

BRITISH SOLDIER

Hold it there. What's inside?

Gabrielle hands over a clipboard. The Soldier reads the document attached, signs it and stamps it. He hands the clipboard back.

BRITISH SOLDIER (CONT'D)
Show them this at the back, they'll
let you through.

GABRIÉLLE
(in French)
Thank you so much.

She smiles.

The lorry drives on.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT 3

ACT 4

FADE IN:

INT. BRITISH ARMED FORCES OFFICES, RECEPTION - NIGHT

The group stumble in.

Collins gestures to the Receptionist.

RECEPTIONIST

He's waiting for you downstairs.
I'll call down and see if they can
get some coffees ready.

COLLINS

(thumbs-up)
Perfic.

The group head for the lift.

The Receptionist picks up her phone and dials.

RECEPTIONIST

Get four coffees ready in the
basement, they're gonna need it.

F/X: LIFT DOORS OPENING

INT. BRITISH ARMED FORCES OFFICES, LIFT - NIGHT

A finger presses a button.

'BASEMENT 2'

The group are tipsy.

CASPER

What's the difference between
basement one and basement two?

LOGGER 2

One's a glorified store cupboard
and the other is glorified garage.

CASPER

So the equipment we need is already
down there?

Collins and the two LOGGERS stare at each other.

COLLINS

Whoops.

Collins quickly presses another floor:

'2'

She turns to Casper.

COLLINS (CONT'D)

D'you mind, they're on one of the desks as you walk in. At least your coffee won't be scolding when you rejoin us.

CASPER

Will do.

F/X: DOORS OPEN

Casper steps out.

F/X: DOORS CLOSE

INT. BRITISH ARMED FORCES OFFICES, TECH AND DIGITAL - NIGHT

A large tech-filled room. It's clean, desks with computers and tables everywhere.

Casper is amazed, this place is something reminiscent of a room he would see in his world.

He waltzes through, plunking himself down at a computer. Completely ignoring the wired computer chip, small device with wires poking out and remote on one of the tables.

Casper scans his ID badge and he's in.

ON COMPUTER SCREEN: A cursor goes to a search icon. Clicks on it, types in:

'INTERNET'

An icon appears with a name underneath:

'XPLORE'

Clicks on it.

A web search screen appears.

Casper types his name in.

Finds a family tree website.

Sees his great grandparent's names, his grandparents names, his parent's names. It splits again, his mother and father are separated.

His mother is married to someone called Wayne Clarke.

CASPER

I don't care what that woman said,
I need to find out what happened.

(realises)

Oh shit, the equipment.

Casper hops up from his chair and snatches the equipment and remote on his way out.

EXT/INT. BRITISH ARMED FORCES, GARAGE - NIGHT

It's guarded like the front entrance. A large shutter is down.

The lorry approaches. Stops just in front.

A GUARD approaches.

GUARD 2

This the weapon?

GABRIÉLLE

Yes.

(hands down the clipboard)

The GUARD inspects it. Smiles.

GUARD 2

Open it up.

He hands the clipboard back.

The shutter is lifted.

Collins, Gough and the two LOGGERS await the lorry inside.
Coffees in hand.

INT. BRITISH ARMED FORCES OFFICES, LIFT - NIGHT

Casper presses the button for Basement 2.

F/X: DOORS CLOSE

The lift descends, the equipment in his hands.

INT. BRITISH ARMED FORCES, GARAGE - NIGHT

The lorry stops.

Gabrielle along with a MERCENARY get out.

GABRIÉLLE

(in French)

Hi.

She approaches Gough.

GOUGH
General Archie Gough.

GABRIÉLLE
Gabriëlle Ajak, Armée de terre.

They shake hands.

She hands him the clipboard.

GOUGH
(gestures)
Let me introduce to you our loggers
and techies.

Collins steps forward.

COLLINS
Rachel Collins.

GABRIÉLLE
(shaking hands)
A pleasure to meet you.

COLLINS
I head up the place,
(gestures to LOGGERS)
Make sure tweedle dum and tweedle
dee get everything logged into the
database, whilst I install the
thing.

GOUGH
Where's Casper?

COLLINS
He's on his way.

The MERCENARY goes over to the button for the shutter.

INT. BRITISH ARMED FORCES OFFICES, BASEMENT HALLWAY - NIGHT
Casper wanders through, he comes to the door to the garage.
He sees the group. Opens the door.

INT. BRITISH ARMED FORCES, GARAGE - NIGHT
The door opens, Casper enters.

GOUGH
Fantastic, what took you so long?

CASPER

Just wanted to make sure it would
all work properly first.

GOUGH

Thorough checks, that's the sort of
prerogative we're lacking. Good
lad.

(turns to Gabri lle)

If you'll retrieve the weapon.

GABRI LLE

(in French)

Certainly.

She goes over to the lorry and opens up the shutter.

GABRI LLE (CONT'D)

(in French)

Now!

The MERCENARY smashes the garage shutter mechanism, forcing
it down.

A group of MERCENARIES jump out of the lorry. Guns pointed at
Gough, Collins and the LOGGERS. They circle round them.

Gabri lle approaches Casper. She unsheathes her knife.

GABRI LLE (CONT'D)

The equipment...

(in French)

Please.

Holds out a hand.

Casper complies, hands it to her.

GABRI LLE (CONT'D)

Now, go over there with the others.

He complies, joins his colleagues.

EXT. BRITISH ARMED FORCES, GARAGE - NIGHT

The SOLDIERS bang on the door, trying the button to lift it
but it's no use.

BRITISH SOLDIER

(into communicator)

Come in General, come in... shit.

He tries another contact.

BRITISH SOLDIER (CONT'D)
 (into communicator)
 This is private Dignell, requesting
 an immediate response. Send the
 CO19 to location 'Whisky-One-Tango-
 Alpha'. Repeat 'Whisky-One-Tango-
 Alpha.'

INT. BRITISH ARMED FORCES, GARAGE - NIGHT

TWO MERCENARIES remove the weapon from the lorry.

GABRIÉLLE
 (to MERCENARY)
 Bring her to me.

A MERCENARY drags Collins over to Gabriëlle.

GABRIÉLLE (CONT'D)
 (holds up chip and
 failsafe device)
 Install these into the weapon.

She hands them over to a MERCENARY.

Before Collins can utter a word, she is dragged once more by
 the MERCENARY, over to the weapon.

COLLINS
 These are just a tracking chip and
 failsafe, you don't actually need
 these.

GABRIÉLLE
 (in French)
 Fantastic...
 (in English)
 Kill them.

The MERCENARIES point their guns at the group.

GOUGH
 Who are you?

Gabriëlle storms up to Gough. Despite the height difference,
 she's more intimidating.

EXT. DESERT VILLAGE - DAY - FLASHBACK

A series of small shacks made of sand bricks. PEOPLE carry
 buckets. One of these is Gabriëlle who is wearing more
 traditional garments.

GABRIÉLLE (V.O.)
 A casualty of imperialism.

F/X: ROARING ENGINES

Shadows loom in the distance.

GABRIÉLLE (V.O.)
We were massacred.

F/X: MACHINE GUN FIRE

F/X: SCREAMING

Gabriëlle begins running.

F/X: BUBBLING

F/X: BEAM FIRING

The ground beneath her feet begins to crumble, a result of any remaining moisture being sucked up.

GABRIÉLLE (V.O.)
The earth we stood on was
destroyed. That weapon took our
home away.

Gabriëlle continues running.

EXT. ARMY HOUSE - DAY - FLASHBACK

A small two-storey bungalow with various country flags outside.

French, Egyptian and British SOLDIERS can be seen lounging around through a window.

Gabriëlle sneaks her way round.

EXT. ARMY HOUSE, GARDEN - DAY - FLASHBACK

Gabriëlle grabs a pair of shorts and a matching vest from a washing line. She finds a hidden spot to change.

INT. ARMY HOUSE, LOUNGE - DAY - FLASHBACK

F/X: KNOCKING

A SOLDIER gets up and opens the door. She lets Gabriëlle in before going back to her seat. Gabriëlle is wearing the combat gear. The SOLDIERS acknowledge her. She snatches a knife by the door and holds it behind her back.

Gabriëlle's movements are quick, she covers the SOLDIER'S mouths as she slits their throats one by one.

F/X: WATER RUNNING

She hears it.

It stops.

Gabri lle heads up the stairs.

INT. ARMY HOUSE, BATHROOM - DAY - FLASHBACK

A SOLDIER relaxes in a bath. Shutting his eyes, peaceful.

F/X: DOOR OPENS

Beat.

F/X: SPLASHING

The SOLDIER opens his eyes to see Gabri lle standing over him. Knife in hand. Before he can do anything, she drops down.

F/X: SPLASHING

Gabri lle's straddling him. She holds his chin with one hand and pokes the tip of the knife against his Adam's apple.

GABRI LLE

(in French)

Hello.

(beat)

English?

The terrified SOLDIER nods. Gabri lle glides the knife down his body.

The SOLDIER creases as the knife goes in. The bath water now turning red.

She removes the knife from his abdomen and drops it on the floor.

Gabri lle holds the SOLDIER'S face, kissing him as she lowers his head under the water, their faces submerged in a deadly kiss. Gabri lle moves away and sits up, keeping the SOLDIER underwater with her forearm across his throat and the other hand pushing his face.

The SOLDIER struggles, splashing about, hands grabbing at Gabri lle as he drowns.

Beat.

The body stops moving. Gabri lle lets go. That grin back on her face as she sits on the now dead SOLDIER.

GABRI LLE (PRE-LAP) (CONT'D)

(in French)

For a free Sudan.

FLASHBACK ENDS.

INT. BRITISH ARMED FORCES, GARAGE - NIGHT

Gabriëlle is eye-to-eye with Gough. She unsheathes her knife, stabs him.

Gough's body collapses to the floor.

The DIGITAL ADMINISTRATION TEAM are shocked.

GABRIËLLE
(gestures)
Kill them.

The MERCENARIES have fingers on triggers.

F/X: EXPLOSION

The shutter flies off.

SOLDIERS and CO19 OFFICERS in riot gear swarm the place.

It's a stand-off between the SOLDIERS & OFFICERS and the MERCENARIES.

The DIGITAL ADMINISTRATION TEAM are trapped in the middle.

BRITISH SOLDIER
Step away from General Gough's
body.

GABRIËLLE
Very well.

Gabriëlle skips over to the weapon, unfazed by the guns pointed on her and turns it on.

F/X: BUBBLING

The liquid inside begins to heat. The beam that it's attached to lights up.

A mix of concern and intrigue on the faces of SOLDIERS, CO19 OFFICERS, the DIGITAL ADMINISTRATION TEAM & the MERCENARIES.

The beam glows with a hue that matches the colour of the liquid. As it reaches the barrel, Gabriëlle excitedly anticipates the result...

Nothing. The weapon fails.

The DIGITAL ADMINISTRATION TEAM can't help but laugh.

GABRIËLLE (CONT'D)
(in French)
Shit.

The SOLDIERS and CO19 OFFICERS pounce on the bemused Gabri lle and equally confused MERCENARIES, disarming them.

GABRI LLE (CONT'D)
Why didn't it work?

COLLINS
Probably because it was the frogs
you were so angry at that built the
thing.

Some of the OFFICERS join in the laughter.

Casper can't help but stare at situation unfolding in front of him in utter confusion.

Gabri lle is apprehended as she and the MERCENARIES are taken away.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT 4

ACT 5

FADE IN:

EXT. SCOTLAND YARD HQ - DAY

A CROWD has gathered, JOURNALISTS stand with microphones, some using phones. CREW point cameras at a podium with a single microphone outside the building.

POLICE OFFICERS step out along with ELEANOR ANDERS (62) in formal police attire complete with epaulettes.

Cameras flash as she takes to the podium.

ANDERS

Last night, there was an incident at a military office. The transfer of a weapon that was being planned for field testing had been hijacked on its way over from France by a group of Sudanese terrorists, lead by a woman who was wanted by French authorities after arriving from Sudan during the ongoing conflict with Egypt.

(beat)

As planned, the weapon was delivered to the office, so that a team of digital administrators could give final checks and log the arrival and departure that was to take place overnight.

Flashes from photos.

INT. BRITISH ARMED FORCES OFFICES, CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

The DIGITAL ADMINISTRATION TEAM sit leery eyed, still wearing their clothes from yesterday.

Beat.

The door opens and they are joined by various MILITARY PERSONNEL in formal attire. ONE of them, a woman, takes to the centre of the room.

ANDERS (V.O.)

The attack only saw one casualty. That of General Archibald Gough who was fatally stabbed by the leader of the Sudanese terrorists.

(MORE)

ANDERS (V.O.) (CONT'D)

A new head has been chosen for the team, who will get them right back on track, and continue the great work they did with Gough. Making sure that weapons are properly checked and logged before being field tested, and used by our brave men and women fighting for the Empire and our allies around the globe.

REPORTER 3 (V.O.)

What about the weapon that was delivered?

EXT. ARMY BASE, FIELD - DAY

The weapon in the middle. Someone turns it on.

ANDERS (V.O.)

That has been deployed to an army base up in Lancashire where it is currently being tested.

The liquid inside begins to bubble.

The barrel charges up.

The ground beneath everyone begins to crumble and dry out. PEOPLE back away.

A WOMAN with a clipboard makes notes.

ANDERS (V.O.)

They will decide whether it is safe for use.

REPORTER 3 (V.O.)

What if it isn't?

ANDERS (V.O.)

Then it'll be dismantled and destroyed.

The weapon breaks down.

The WOMAN presses a button on the remote.

A small spark flickers on the weapon. A TEAM step forward and begin dismantling it.

EXT. SCOTLAND YARD HQ - DAY

Anders addresses the CROWD.

REPORTER 3

And what about the Sudanese
terrorists?

ANDERS

They are being dealt with as we
speak.

Anders leaves the podium.

Cameras flash.

INT. BRITISH ARMED FORCES PRISON - DAY

A small cell. Gabri lle stands at the bars awaiting her fate.

F/X: GUNSHOTS

Beat.

A pair of hands strangle Gabri lle with a garrotte.

She struggles.

Falls unconscious.

The hands and garrotte disappear.

She drops to the floor.

Beat.

F/X: FOOTSTEPS

The cell doors open.

A PRISON GUARD enters, horrified to find Gabri lle's corpse.

INT. BRITISH ARMED FORCES OFFICES, CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

KIMBERLY CHOI (30) presents herself to the group.

CHOI

Good morning team, I'm Sergeant
Choi, but much prefer going by
Kimberly, especially as we're in an
office, and I know how chilled
Goughy was about this work, but he
also knew when to get serious, a
mentality that I'm sure has been
instilled into all of you, and I'm
looking forward to continuing that
working relationship.

She smiles. So does everyone else in the room.

CHOI (CONT'D)
We're glad that the weapon has been
sent out and are looking forward to
the results of the testing taking
place as we speak.

Choi turns around, retrieving some tumblers and a bottle of
whisky from a cabinet.

 CHOI (CONT'D)
Before we proceed, and you all get
some much-needed rest, there's one
last thing to do.

She puts the glasses on the table, fills them and begins
passing them round.

Beat.

 CHOI (CONT'D)
 (raising glass)
To General Archibald Gough.

A chorus of "To Goughy." Fills the room.

They all drink.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT 5

KICKER

FADE IN:

INT. SIOBHAN'S FLAT, BEDROOM - DAY

Maps of Britain, England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland adorn the walls with certain locations marked. It's all very specific.

On the map of England, a line that ends at Epping Forest.

Siobhan focusses on Epping Forest, checking along a line that she has already mapped out. It matches the train line.

SIOBHAN

So it opened here,
(puts a pin on Epping
Forest)
And moved here, where it ultimately
closed.

She puts a pin in Ongar.

SIOBHAN (CONT'D)

Shit, that was the chance to get
home.

F/X: DOOR BREAKING OPEN

Siobhan hears it, goes to a dresser drawer, grabs a gun.

F/X: FOOTSTEPS

They get closer.

Siobhan thumbs back the hammer.

The door begins to creak open.

F/X: GUNSHOT

FADE TO BLACK.

END OF EPISODE