

THERE IS LIFE

Written by

Mike Wilczynski

Jeremy Loethen  
Courageous Artists  
jl@courageousartists.com  
310.210.6299

EXT. TEMPORARY RECEPTION CENTERS - DAY

SUPER: POLAND-UKRAINE BORDER

On the Polish side, a series of white tents have been set up as temporary reception centers to welcome the refugees from Ukraine. A camera crew, wearing ANN (American News Network) windbreakers, is set up in front of the tents. The camera is on --

JILL LAWRENCE (late 40s), a seasoned journalist whose ambition is matched only by her dedication to the truth.

JILL

Good evening, and welcome to Life with Lawrence. I am here at the Poland-Ukraine border, where conflict has seized the region and has taken a toll not just in terms of geopolitical shifts but on the lives uprooted in its wake. But this is not another report on the devastating effects of the war with Russia...

As Jill speaks, the camera begins to PULL BACK, slowly revealing a wooden bridge...

JILL (CONT'D)

...This report is one of an inspiring individual who, in these darkest of times, has been a beacon of light.

The full view of the BRIDGE OF TOYS now becomes visible -- a kaleidoscope of colorful toys line the guard rails. As Ukrainian families journey across, the children among them pause to grab a toy... and their faces light up with joy.

Next to Jill is PIOTR WOLCZYK, Polish, an average looking man in his 40s.

JILL (CONT'D)

With me is the man who transformed this once ordinary bridge into an extraordinary message of hope. Piotr Wolczyk.

(turning to Piotr)

Piotr-- Tell us. How did this touching initiative come to be?

PIOTR

It started out with bringing food for refugees.

(MORE)

PIOTR (CONT'D)

One day, I see children... suitcases bigger than they are. So tired... The next I brought my passport, crossed, and offered to take the luggage across. Some ran. They have seen so much... So I started bringing toys and trading, a toy, for a suitcase. And now...

He gestures to the myriad of toys adorning the bridge.

PIOTR (CONT'D)

It's our way of saying, welcome to Poland. You are safe here. And for the children, the toy represents a new beginning.

JILL

What a difference you are making.

Segueing, she reaches into her bag resting on the ground and pulls out a plushy toy.

JILL (CONT'D)

And now you are allowing me to do the same.

The crew cuts. Jill takes up her toy. Her security guards walk behind her as she sets out across the bridge.

JILL (CONT'D)

(to camera crew)

Get some B roll of me crossing. Then once I have picked out a family just roll and keep rolling until we are all the way across. I want to catch any impromptu, emotional moments the family experiences.

EXT. BRIDGE OF TOYS - CONTINUOUS

On the bank of Ukraine, Jill spots the mother and child she'd like to escort immediately. The MOTHER is worn out, thin, tired, in boots and a tattered coat. Her daughter MARYSKA (6) clutches her suitcase tight to her chest. Maryska's bright blue eyes dart around, taking in her surroundings. She is nervous.

Jill approaches.

JILL

Excuse me. Uh  
(trying to remember the  
Ukrainian words)  
Vybachte. Chy mozhu ya  
dopomohty?... May I help you?

She bends down, offers Maryska the toy in exchange for her suitcase. Maryska looks to her mother who nods. The exchange is made. Maryska hugs the plush toy in close. Breathes in the fresh new scent. Jill takes the suitcase and leads the two toward the bridge. They begin their crossing.

The camera crew is capturing every moment without being intrusive.

The mother looks to the far bank, freedom and safety in sight. Soon to have a reprieve from their days of walking.

Jill looks back to the little girl trailing just behind. She gives the girl a heartfelt smile and the little girl hugs the toy tighter.

Turning back to lead the way, Jill raises her chin, a proud sense of accomplishment and love fills her entire being. All of this is captured by the film crew.

POP POP!

SCREAMS break forth. Chaos overtakes the bridge. Jill, the mother and Maryska duck... as more SHOTS are fired in the air.

A group of Russian Soldiers enter the bridge, on the heels of Jill and her group.

RUSSIAN SOLDIER

Ostnavlivat'sya.

Jill looks to her crew. The mother and Maryska have thrown up their hands in the air. The plush toy falls to the bridge.

Jill moves in front of the family.

RUSSIAN SOLDIER (CONT'D)

Ostnavlivat'sya!

CREW MEMBER

Jill. He's telling you to stop!

Jill is the buffer, standing between the soldiers and the family.

JILL

Tell him. We don't want any trouble. Just let these people cross.

The crew member, sweating bullets, breathing heavily, works hard to translate under pressure.

CREW MEMBER

Pozhaluysta. Davayte peresechemsya.

The soldier points to Jill with his weapon. Another soldier points at the crew with his weapon.

RUSSIAN SOLDIER

Ty mozhesh' idti. Mat' i rebenok idut so mnoy.

The mother begins to cry.

CREW MEMBER

Christ. He's saying we may go... but those two have to go with him.

JILL

No. Tell him no. They are coming with us.

The soldier knows what she is saying. He steps forward, grabs around Jill, and locks onto the mother's arm. Dragging her to him as she screams and pleads. Maryska runs to her mother and is swept up into her free arm.

JILL (CONT'D)

No. Wait. Please.

Another soldier cuts Jill off with a rifle trained on her.

Jill watches helplessly as the Mother and Maryska are dragged off the bridge and disappear from sight. The soldiers have seized others and are dragging them back to Ukraine.

Jill looks to her crew. They are just as distraught, not knowing what to do.

POP POP! Gun shots ring out from the direction the family was taken. Jill starts to run in that direction, but the soldier pushes her back.

JILL (CONT'D)

Unforgiveable. They can't do this.

The crew member shakes his head. Jill backs away slowly. Her foot brushes the plush toy on the bridge. She just stares at it, it has lost all significance.

JILL (CONT'D)  
We tell these stories... the world  
keeps burning.

Jill turns to her crew.

JILL (CONT'D)  
Run it. All of it.

Then, a sudden movement of clouds overhead -- the sunny day turns gray...

Jill looks up... We follow her gaze into the clouds.. ascending higher and higher until we are consumed by thick dark clouds.

We linger in the darkness for a moment, before a shift in the clouds allows light to peek through... forming three words:

## THERE IS LIFE

The TITLE bleeds into the next scene --

EXT. CLOUDY SKY - DAY

And is whisked away by a jet stream. An F-35 fighter jet ZOOMS through the cloudy atmosphere.

SUPER: THREE WEEKS LATER

INT/EXT. F-35 COCKPIT/CLOUDY SKY - CONTINUOUS

Navy pilot GRACE "ACE" LINDSAY (30s) navigates through the harsh conditions, her face etched with concentration.

LT. 'ACE' LINDSAY  
(into the radio)  
Now at 50,000 feet. Visibility  
remains at 10 percent, with no sign  
of clearing.

CONTROL (V.O.)  
Roger that.

The Air Force F-35 jet slices through the clouds, as visibility continues to worsen...

LT. 'ACE' LINDSAY  
 Control. Visibility is nearing zero  
 percent. Switching to infrared  
 sensors.

She activates the F-35's infrared technology, painting an  
 eerie picture of her surroundings.

Suddenly, the F-35's Traffic Collision Avoidance System  
 blares a warning in the cockpit.

CONTROL (V.O.)  
 Lieutenant-- We're picking up some  
 information from your radar...

A WAVE OF ENERGY CRASHES INTO HER --

LT. 'ACE' LINDSAY  
 Control...

-- all electronic functions cease as she is WHIPPED SIDEWAYS  
 and PULLED WITH SHEER FORCE...

INT. NAVAL COMMAND CENTER - CONTINUOUS

The room filled with monitors and military personnel goes  
 dark with alarm. SERGEANT MOONEY (40s) looks to his operators  
 at the central console --

SERGEANT MOONEY  
 What just happened?

COMMUNICATION OFFICER works on the control panel, trying to  
 bring radar back up --

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER  
 ... we lost her.

SERGEANT MOONEY  
 What do you mean lost her?

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER  
 I don't know. There was an  
 object...

SERGEANT MOONEY  
 Did she hit it?

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER  
 I can't get radar back...

Sergeant Mooney moves to the radio --

SERGEANT MOONEY  
Lieutenant? Lieutenant... Ace...

INT. F-35 COCKPIT - CONTINUOUS

Only the sound of Ace's breathing is heard.

Ace's eyes widen --

LT. 'ACE' LINDSAY  
Oh my God.

Following Ace's gaze, we pan to see --

A GIANT LANDMASS emerging from the haze -- suspended by an unseen force and surrounded by white clouds... is an island in the sky, its beauty captivating and surreal.

The jet remains powerless, but some other force allows it to float around the island.

Returning to reality, Ace pulls out her phone and hurriedly snaps a few pictures.

Suddenly, the jet... FALLS. Ace's breathing grows rapid as she frantically tries to power up the engine...

INT/EXT. F-35 COCKPIT/CLOUDY SKY - CONTINUOUS

The nose of her plane peeks through the thick clouds...

EXT. BOAT/ATLANTIC OCEAN - SAME

Standing on the stern of a boat, is a man in a white bucket hat and a long pony tail, enjoying the solitude of a peaceful day of fishing... casting a line out into the sea when --

A LOUD WHISTLE pulls his attention to the sky...

Out of a veil of clouds, he sees a fighter jet PLUMMETING toward the ocean...

INT. NAVAL COMMAND CENTER - SAME

A BLIP on one of the screens...

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER  
-- Wait. I am picking something up  
from our satellite... It's Ace.

But the momentary relief is cut short when --

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER (CONT'D)  
She's descending rapidly, sir.

-- the grainy feed from a satellite reveals: The F-35 in a free-fall, spiraling uncontrollably towards the ocean...

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER (CONT'D)  
No signs of engine activity.

INT/EXT. F-35 COCKPIT/CLOUDY SKY - CONTINUOUS

In a desperate moment, Lt. Lindsay whispers a prayer.

And miraculously... the power returns. She quickly throttles back, managing to pull up from the deathly descent.

EXT. BOAT - SAME

The man on the boat lets out a sigh of relief to see the jet's wings level.

INT. NAVAL COMMAND CENTER - SAME

As does the control room. The screens have flickered back to life. Sergeant Mooney is back at the radio --

SERGEANT MOONEY  
Ace, report your status.

LT. 'ACE' LINDSAY (V.O.)  
... I'm here.

EXT. WASHINGTON D.C. - DAY

Dark, ominous clouds hang low over the nation's capitol. Iconic monuments, government buildings, and the White House... veiled in an eerie shadow. A newscast plays.

ED (V.O.)  
Today marks 22 days of complete  
cloud coverage across the globe...

A sleek Mercedes-Benz AMG S63 navigates through a sea of traffic.

INT/EXT. JILL'S MERCEDES/PENNSYLVANIA AVE - DAY

Maneuvering behind the wheel with purpose is Jill Lawrence. Her hand at the top of the steering wheel has no jewelry on her ring finger. The ANN news coverage streams from her phone, resonating through the car's speakers via CarPlay.

ON THE PHONE'S SCREEN, Anchor ED ADAMS (63), conservatively dressed with unnaturally dark hair, reports from behind his desk.

ED (V.O.)

Passenger operations for all major airlines are suspended for a second consecutive week.

Jill SIGHS, clearly bothered by the inability to travel.

ED (V.O.)

Meteorologists, our government, and physicists everywhere have yet to determine the cause of this worldwide phenomenon. In World News, the escalating conflict in Poland claims more lives today...

JILL

I can't believe he's anchoring our coverage.

Jill instinctively switches to the radio.

REPORTER 1 (V.O.)

...a convoy of peacekeepers hit by an explosion in the capitol of...

She tries another station --

REPORTER 2 (V.O.)

...a beach party mass murder in Key Largo sends shockwaves through the vacation hotspot...

Flipping to yet another station --

REPORTER 3 (V.O.)

...the ongoing street violence in Chicago leaves four...

JILL

God. Is there nothing else to report on?

Jill tries AM, a POLITICAL ANALYST talks --

POLITICAL ANALYST (V.O.)  
 Never have I witnessed an event  
 that cast such a long shadow on  
 this city... and nation. Today...

She knows where this is going. She glances at her late  
 parents' photo on the sun visor.

POLITICAL ANALYST (V.O.)  
 ... marks forty years since the  
 assassination of Senator Thomas  
 Lawrence - the man who nearly  
 brokered a bipartisan deal on gun  
 reform. Many still ask: What would  
 the world be like today if he had  
 not been taken from us. And his  
 assassin, gun advocate -

... CLICK. She's had enough.

Jill pulls over to the side of the road. Takes a breath.  
 Grabs her phone, pulls up "Steve" from her contacts.

Jill shakes her head and puts the phone down.

JILL  
 You're past this.

She resumes her drive to work - in silence.

As she passes by the White House, we linger there.

INT. WHITE HOUSE - OVAL OFFICE - DAY

So many momentous decisions have been made and so many  
 fateful events have unfolded here that it seems almost alive  
 with the weight of history. PRESIDENT GERALD SCOTT (50s)  
 stands behind the resolute desk, gazing out the window.

PRESIDENT SCOTT  
 They're dying.

Sitting on one sofa is VICE PRESIDENT JAY RONGSTAD (70), a  
 grizzled military veteran with a flat top haircut and horn-  
 rimmed glasses. On the other is Speaker of the House STEVE  
 RANDALL (50s), handsome, dressed in a sharp blue suit and red  
 tie. Next to them, maintaining supreme posture on a separate  
 chair, is SENATE LEADER STEPHANIE BOX (60s), a crucifix hangs  
 prominently around her neck.

VICE PRESIDENT RONGSTAD  
 Who is dying, Mr. President?

PRESIDENT SCOTT

The roses...

We see now he is looking out over the Rose Garden of the White House.

PRESIDENT SCOTT (CONT'D)

They can't survive without sunlight. Nothing can. Our scientists have been studying this phenomenon for weeks. No progress. How is that possible?

VICE PRESIDENT RONGSTAD

I have my theories.

SENATE LEADER BOX

The Chinese?

VICE PRESIDENT RONGSTAD

The Pentagon backs me on this. Some aerial technology -

STEVE

It's not the Chinese.

VICE PRESIDENT RONGSTAD

Let me guess. Global warming.

STEVE

The patterns seem too organized to be natural.

PRESIDENT SCOTT

Every choice feels like a mistake waiting to happen.

Suddenly, the door swings open, and SECRETARY OF DEFENSE JEFFREY MATTHEWS (50s) enters with a mix of urgency and disbelief.

SECRETARY MATTHEWS

Mr. President, we have a breakthrough.

MATILDA, the President's personal secretary, at his heels --

MATILDA

I'm sorry, Mr. President... he wouldn't wait.

PRESIDENT SCOTT

It's fine.

Matilda exits, closing the door behind her. Secretary Matthews hands the President a folder. He quickly opens... eyes a grouping of photographs, then moves onto the report.

PRESIDENT SCOTT (CONT'D)  
What am I looking at, Matthews?

SECRETARY MATTHEWS  
A floating landmass, sir.  
(off his confusion)  
It seems unbelievable, but our pilot, Lt. Lindsay, spotted it about a mile into international waters off the coast of Virginia. She narrowly avoided collision.

PRESIDENT SCOTT  
Are you saying there is an island in the sky off the coast of Virginia?

SECRETARY MATTHEWS  
Yes, sir.

PRESIDENT SCOTT  
How is that possible?

SECRETARY MATTHEWS  
We don't know, sir.

PRESIDENT SCOTT  
Is it a threat?

SECRETARY MATTHEWS  
We're still gathering information, but it's unlike anything -

PRESIDENT SCOTT  
I want a full briefing as soon as we have more information. If this is a threat, we need to be ready.

Taking up the pictures.

PRESIDENT SCOTT (CONT'D)  
And I don't know what these are, but I need the pictures your pilot was able to capture.

SECRETARY MATTHEWS  
Sir?

PRESIDENT SCOTT  
 Matthews, you have given me... One,  
 two, three, four, five pictures of  
 clouds.

Matthews rounds the desk.

SECRETARY MATTHEWS  
 What?

PRESIDENT SCOTT  
 Rongstad, Randall, Box...

The three join him at the presidential desk, each are handed  
 photos.

VICE PRESIDENT RONGSTAD  
 Looks like heavy cloud coverage.

Senate Leader Box nods in agreement. President Scott looks to  
 Steve, who is awestruck.

PRESIDENT SCOTT  
 Steve?

STEVE  
 I can't believe it -

But before Steve can finish his answer, Secretary Matthews  
 pulls the photo away --

SECRETARY MATTHEWS  
 I'm sorry, Mr. President.  
 (gathering up the photos)  
 I don't know what happened here,  
 but I'm going to find out.

PRESIDENT SCOTT  
 See that you do.

SECRETARY MATTHEWS  
 (hurrying out)  
 Sorry again, sir.

As soon as the door closes behind him --

VICE PRESIDENT RONGSTAD  
 What the hell was that about?

SENATE LEADER BOX  
 The lack of sun must be getting to  
 him.

PRESIDENT SCOTT  
(to the room)  
Where were we?

As the hypothesis continue, we PUSH IN on Steve, whose mind remains on the photographs.

INT. ANN - MR. BIRCH'S OFFICE - LATER

Framed photographs from ANN's storied past, capturing pivotal moments in journalistic history, cover the walls. The awards in the trophy case are a testament to the network's commitment to genuine journalism.

Behind an aged oak desk sits GENE BIRCH, the current president of the network. Jill stands across from him. A muted television plays the ANN broadcast behind her. Mid conversation:

JILL  
No.

GENE  
What do you mean "no"?

JILL  
I can't do it, Gene. The show is called Life with Lawrence. How does reporting on a UFO sighting make sense for Life with Lawrence?

GENE  
Because you are Lawrence and Life... IT is what you make it.

JILL  
When are you going to let me take over the anchor desk? This feels like punishment.

GENE  
The number one search on the internet right now is "How to prepare for an alien invasion." You're chasing proof again.

She moves towards the window and stares out at the oppressive clouds.

JILL  
Ever since I returned from Poland, the network has treated me differently.

GENE

This is a legitimate source, asking for you directly. I've already assigned your cameraman. Danny Batliner...

(off her look)

His energy will do you some good today.

Wheels turning --

JILL

What if I can get the First Lady?

GENE

The first lady hasn't sat down with the media in...

JILL

... three years. But what if I can get her?

GENE

That would be a great get for the network, but I'd still like you to move forward with the UFO piece.

She looks back out the window and takes in the gloom one last time.

JILL

God, I miss the sun.

Then moves to leave.

GENE

Oh, and Jill... I want you to know that we will not be covering the 40th anniversary...

Jill offers a pained, half-hearted smile --

JILL

Radio already had it. They remember the shooter, not what my dad accomplished for his country.

Then proceeds out the door.

INT. ANN - 8TH FLOOR NEWSROOM - CONTINUOUS

A whirlwind of activity engulfs the vast newsroom, where producers and writers navigate the rapid-fire business of shaping headlines. Jill cuts through the somewhat controlled chaos with purpose, her heels not slowing her down in the slightest - as if an extension of her body. Ed's coverage maintains a steady presence across the myriad of televisions throughout the room.

Arriving at the elevator, the doors open to reveal --

Cameraman DANNY BATLINER. We recognize him as the man on the boat from earlier - the pony tail and bucket hat, which he is still wearing, being a dead give away. He is completely out of breath...

JILL  
Danny Batliner.

INT. ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

Jill continues in and punches the 6th-floor button.

JILL  
You ran here?

DANNY  
Yes. I mean I drove first. Then ran.

JILL  
After the promo, we go straight to the interview.

DANNY  
Great. Great. I'll put in for a van.

The doors close and the elevator descends. Unable to contain his excitement --

DANNY (CONT'D)  
U.F. freakin' Os, man!

INT. ANN NEWS STUDIO - CONTINUOUS

A typical studio setup. All cameras point at the anchor desk, where HAIR & MAKEUP personnel tend to Ed during the commercial break. Danny follows Jill, at her heels --

DANNY  
Someone is giving us a big story.

JILL  
Facts and algorithms produce stories.

DANNY  
We're gonna be a part of history!

JILL  
Danny. I'm supposed to be a trusted voice for the people, and I am seconds away from throwing it all away on a conspiracy...

DANNY  
...no, no, UFOs are not a conspiracy...in fact I was just out on my boat and...

JILL  
...Danny. Danny! Please...

Raising her hand above her head --

JILL (CONT'D)  
...you're at an eleven right now, and I need you down to...

Lowering her hand to her knee --

JILL (CONT'D)  
...a three for the rest of the day.

DANNY  
A three?

JILL  
A three. Can you do that?

DANNY  
A three. I can do a three.

JILL  
Great.

She plucks the bucket hat off his head, hands it to him.

JILL (CONT'D)  
Now secure the van.

DANNY  
Good looking out.

Danny stops near the control room, Jill continues toward the anchor desk.

DANNY (CONT'D)  
Go get 'em, captain.

She takes her seat next to Ed.

ED  
Jill.

JILL  
Ed.

ED  
Gene doesn't want to cover the anniversary.

JILL  
I've heard.

ED  
Unless you do... It's getting covered by other networks either way.

JILL  
You know my stance.

An ASSISTANT DIRECTOR calls out --

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR  
On in 2.

As Hair & Makeup put on their finishing touch ups --

ED  
He was your father. You don't want to comment?

Jill remains silent.

ED (CONT'D)  
Missed opportunity.

Aides hustle out of frame and the cameras roll.

ED (CONT'D)  
Jill Lawrence is here to preview what to look forward to on *Life with Lawrence*.

JILL

Thank you, Ed. On Sunday evening I will be diving deep into this stratocumulus phenomena. Are the clouds the disastrous effects of global warming? A part of a foreign global surveillance technology? Or are UFOs among us? Sunday night at 7:00PM Eastern. You won't want to miss it.

Jill's smile beams brightly but Ed's is less convincing. ANN goes to a commercial message.

ED

(bursting into laughter)  
UFOs! That's what you're covering...

Packing up his stack of papers --

ED (CONT'D)

You were a finalist for the Pulitzer? Wow. Talk about a fall from grace... Beam me up.

Ed walks off.

Danny is there to meet Jill as she exits the stage.

DANNY

That was perfect. You nailed it.

JILL

It was just a tease, Danny.

DANNY

Yes, and you nailed it. You nailed that tease.

EXT. ALLEY BEHIND ANN - CONTINUOUS

Jill and Danny walk past a number of ANN Vans.

DANNY

Do you see van 5?

Danny repeatedly presses the key fob...

JILL

Press lock for it to beep.

The van at the end BEEPS.

DANNY

There we go.

Jill opens the back while Danny walks around to the driver side door...

CRIMINAL (O.S.)

Wallet...Wallet... Now!

Hearing the demand, Jill swings back from the end of the vehicle to see --

A MASKED CRIMINAL with a Glock pointed to Danny's head.

CRIMINAL (CONT'D)

... do you wanna die?!

Danny has lost the ability to speak. His hands shake so badly he drops the keys and is fumbling to get his hand into his back pocket to retrieve his wallet. Thinking fast --

JILL

My purse is in the back...it's full of cash.

The criminal now has to decide who has the better take. He goes with Jill, following her to the back of the van. All the while his Glock is trained on her.

CRIMINAL

Nice and slow.

Jill slowly opens the back door. She picks up her purse, zips it open, and retrieves her wallet.

CRIMINAL (CONT'D)

Face me as you take it out.

She pauses.

CRIMINAL (CONT'D)

Are you deaf? Face me!

She turns to face him, cash in hand...

Then suddenly stops.

JILL

No... I can't do this anymore.

She makes a new decision... shoving the cash back in and throwing her purse deep into the vehicle.

CRIMINAL

What the fuck?

JILL

The intimidation...it has to stop.

Jill points at the criminal's chest.

JILL (CONT'D)

People who feel they have the right  
to take have to be stopped.

Jill points at herself.

JILL (CONT'D)

I have a choice, I have a say in  
the world I want to live in. And  
this... this is not it. I would  
rather die.

Criminal steps back.

CRIMINAL

Have it your way.

The criminal points the gun straight at Jill's head and pulls  
the trigger -- she closes her eyes...

OVER BLACK we hear the gun FIRE... interrupted by an abrupt  
HISS... POP!

She opens her eyes to a blinding blue flash and... PFFFT...  
it's gone. As is the mugger.

Shaking, she grabs her phone. Dials a number by heart --

STEVE (V.O.)

Hey, Sunshine.

The sound of his voice has her hesitating.

INT. WHITE HOUSE - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Steve, flanked by his Secret Service Agent JOSEPH DOOLEY  
(30s), a strong and stoic African-American officer in a black  
suit, holds his phone to his ear as he waits for a response.

STEVE

Jill.

The line goes dead with a CLICK. Steve is disappointed.

AGENT DOOLEY  
Everything okay, sir?

STEVE  
This day just keeps getting  
stranger.

Steve spots Secretary Matthews down the hall. He heads in his  
direction --

STEVE (CONT'D)  
Secretary Matthews...

EXT. ALLEY BEHIND ANN - CONTINUOUS

Jill pockets her phone as Danny rushes around the vehicle --

DANNY  
Jill. Jill... Oh my God...

Still out of sorts, Jill looks up to the cloudy sky.  
Intrigued by the single white cloud above her.

DANNY (CONT'D)  
I thought you were dead.

A SECURITY GUARD rushes on the scene --

SECURITY GUARD (O.S.)  
I heard gunfire? Is everyone okay?  
Ma'am, are you okay? Ma'am...

Jill looks up. The white cloud quickly blows across the gray  
sky.

SECURITY GUARD (CONT'D)  
Ma'am...

JILL  
There was a mugger. He fired...  
but... uh... I'm fine.

SECURITY GUARD  
Where is he now?

JILL  
He's gone.

Security guard turns to Danny.

SECURITY GUARD  
What did you see?

DANNY

I saw the man, the gun...then... I must've blacked out. I always freeze in real danger.

SECURITY GUARD

I'll pull the surveillance video. Both of you are going to need to file a police report.

JILL

Can it wait? We have an interview to get to. It's time sensitive.

SECURITY GUARD

Make it a priority when you get back.

Jill and Danny continue into van.

INT. WHITE HOUSE - SECURE HALLWAY - DAY

Steve and Secretary Matthews converse discretely in a less traveled hallway. Photographs in hand --

STEVE

It's as clear as day. How could the President and the Vice President both not see it?

SECRETARY MATTHEWS

I'm not going to argue with the two most powerful men in the country. And it's not just them. I showed these photos to five others. Only one could see what you and I see.

STEVE

Lt. Lindsay. Did she see anything else?

SECRETARY MATTHEWS

All she could see is what is in the photographs.

STEVE

And the satellite imagery?

SECRETARY MATTHEWS

Looks like storm clouds.

STEVE

Humans have always doubted truth  
without proof.

INT/EXT. NATIONAL MALL - ANN VAN - DAY

Danny pulls the ANN production van into the only open space  
in the parking lot. Jill is in the passenger seat.

She checks her watch --

JILL

We're surprisingly early.

Danny pulls out a set of green paper squares from his  
backpack. He begins setting a few out on the dash.

JILL (CONT'D)

What are you doing?

DANNY

I printed these off the Wellness  
Society site yesterday.

He reads the first card.

DANNY (CONT'D)

What happened does not define you.

(takes it in)

Woo. I needed that. Back there. Not  
one of my proudest moments... All I  
remember is hearing the gunshot...  
I'm sorry.

JILL

You don't have anything to  
apologize for.

(grabbing a card)

Except maybe for these.

(reads one)

When you separate the reality of  
what is happening, from your mood  
or attitude about it... It lights  
you up & it FEELS good.

Danny lights up, looking to her with hope-filled eyes.

JILL (CONT'D)

Yeah... I don't get it.

Her phone chimes. A text message from an unknown caller  
reads: *I do not like the world as it is; so I am trying to  
make it a little more as I want it.*

Jill looks up disconcerted.

DANNY  
Everything okay?

JILL  
Another spam text.

DANNY  
Ah, those are the worst.

She deletes the text and is in the process of blocking the caller when her phone rings -- STEVE.

Jill contemplates answering...

DANNY (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
She's here.

Jill looks to see Lt. Lindsay on the lawn. She sends the call to voicemail and exits the van.

EXT. WASHINGTON D.C. - BENCH NEAR THE MLK STATUE - CONTINUOUS

Near the Martin Luther King Jr. statue, a symbol of peace and justice, is Lt. Lindsay. She stands tall in her military uniform, the name 'Ace' proudly displayed on her jacket.

JILL  
(shaking her hand)  
Lt. Lindsay. Jill Lawrence.

LT. 'ACE' LINDSAY  
Miss Lawrence, it is an honor. Your work in Afghanistan, Israel, Poland... I value your search for truth.

Jill takes in the compliment, a bit surprised at Ace's candor.

JILL  
I cover wars. You're in them.  
(signaling Ace to sit)  
Please.

They sit. She waves Danny forward. He moves in to mic them both.

JILL (CONT'D)  
This is Danny, he will be recording the interview for us today.

(MORE)

JILL (CONT'D)

I understand that you would like  
your face blurred and voice masked.

A simple nod.

JILL (CONT'D)

Ace, before we begin... I want to  
make sure you're one hundred  
percent okay with going through  
with this. We will do our best to  
anonymize, but as you know-- the  
government is fairly good at  
connecting dots...

LT. 'ACE' LINDSAY

This is really about time.

JILL

Time?

LT. 'ACE' LINDSAY

For the truth.

Ace looks around, then discretely pulls out her phone.

LT. 'ACE' LINDSAY (CONT'D)

I presented my findings... But it  
seems we've hit a wall. And I am  
telling you... this...

She shows Jill the first photo.

LT. 'ACE' LINDSAY (CONT'D)

...demands attention.

JILL

The clouds?

LT. 'ACE' LINDSAY

Uh. Yes and what is hiding inside  
them.

Jill looks at the photo again and then back to Ace. Ace  
clocks that she can't see anything.

LT. 'ACE' LINDSAY (CONT'D)

You don't see it?

JILL

See what?

LT. 'ACE' LINDSAY

That... it's right there in the  
fucking clouds.

Jill raises her eyebrows, now beginning to doubt Ace.

Ace, frustrated, scrolls through the photos --

LT. 'ACE' LINDSAY (CONT'D)  
What about this one?

Shakes her head.

LT. 'ACE' LINDSAY (CONT'D)  
This?

JILL  
They're not gray... they're white.  
That's different, I guess. We  
haven't seen much of those around  
lately.

Ace leans back mystified.

LT. 'ACE' LINDSAY  
How are they doing this?

JILL  
They?

LT. 'ACE' LINDSAY  
The aliens, or whatever.  
(off Jill's look)  
You think I'm making this up?! Why  
would I lie... risk my career...  
the Medal of Honor?

JILL  
I'm not sure what you are expecting  
of me.

LT. 'ACE' LINDSAY  
Trust that what I'm telling you is  
the truth.

JILL  
I don't see what you see.

LT. 'ACE' LINDSAY  
Can you just air the photos and see  
if there are others out there that  
see what I see?

Jill hesitates.

LT. 'ACE' LINDSAY

There are other believers at the Pentagon, but my report is being written up as a system malfunction. But that's not what happened. Something, or someone, kept me suspended. Guided me to the landmass. Like it wanted me to see it.

JILL

What did it look like?

Ace fights off emotion.

LT. 'ACE' LINDSAY

Paradise.

JILL

Send me everything and I'll look into it.

Jill starts to rise, Ace grabs her hand.

LT. 'ACE' LINDSAY

The typical human response to the unknown is to destroy... and every bone in my body is telling me that is not the correct course of action.

INT/EXT. ANN VAN/NATIONAL MALL - CONTINUOUS

As Jill and Danny head back toward the van, her cell phone BUZZES with another text message from the unknown caller: *I do not like the world as it is; so I am trying to make it a little more as I want it.*

DANNY

I believe her.

JILL

I'm not throwing away my reputation on non-sense.

DANNY

Why would she make it up? (beat)  
It's not belief that wrecks people - it's being sure.

JILL

I don't know. I'll ask what the government knows... I need to talk to Steve.

She texts STEVE -- *Drinks?*

INT. WHITE HOUSE - PRESIDENTIAL RESIDENCE - NIGHT

President Scott enters the dining room to find FIRST LADY ANNA SCOTT, 50, alone with a glass of wine, her quiet elegance and sharp wit dimmed by solitude and an unspoken heaviness. A poodle hops off her lap and scurries to greet him, ignored. He gives Anna a quick, insincere kiss on the cheek before heading to the opposite end of the long table.

A Naval waiter pulls out his chair. He sits, eyes briefly meeting the perfectly proportioned meal before him, and begins cutting his filet with practiced detachment. Anna, mirroring his motions, follows suit.

PRESIDENT SCOTT

We picked a hell of a time to be President, Anna.

ANNA

What happened?

PRESIDENT SCOTT

It's what didn't happen that's the issue. We are nowhere closer than we were three weeks ago. Steve Randall is ruling out global warming. Rongstad is convinced whatever it is, it's not good and needs to be dealt with.

ANNA

With force?

PRESIDENT SCOTT

It's the Rongstad way.

ANNA

What do you think?

PRESIDENT SCOTT

I can't do anything with theories and hearsay, and mysterious clouds. We need something tangible. I need a face.

President Scott watches Anna take a big drink of her wine.

ANNA

You got a face, babe. You just never show it round these parts.

PRESIDENT SCOTT

Jesus. You didn't even make it until noon, did you?

ANNA

It was the cereal aisle at the grocery store. The cereal aisle... I couldn't stop staring at those damn fruit loops.

PRESIDENT SCOTT

If there's something you want that isn't in the house, just ask the Residence staff.

ANNA

You're not getting it.

PRESIDENT SCOTT

I get it. You miss our daughter. I miss our daughter! I miss her every second of every day.

(beat)

But what am I supposed to do?

ANNA

Let me in. We used to tell each other everything!

PRESIDENT SCOTT

Back when you didn't find answers in a glass.

ANNA

Maybe if my husband was around once in awhile and not consumed with keeping his job, I wouldn't have to.

PRESIDENT SCOTT

You're goddamn right I'm consumed. These are uncertain times. And who do the people look to for answers? They look to me. Their leader.

ANNA

You're the president, Gerald. You're not God.

PRESIDENT SCOTT

I know. I just... I don't want to  
be the last President.

Anna gets up, holding her little dog, and heads toward the door. Without looking back --

ANNA

I'm going to bed.

INT. LOCAL BAR - NIGHT

The sports bar, nestled in a nondescript strip mall, buzzes with the familiar sounds of a neighborhood hangout. Neon beer signs cast a warm glow through the window. Flat-screen televisions line the walls, each tuned to a different game or sports news channel.

Steve sits in a booth, sipping on a beer. Makes eye contact with Agent Dooley, standing near the bar, keeping a close watch on things.

Jill squeezes between two servers and shimmies into the booth, a bit disheveled. Steve takes her in, she's beautiful.

STEVE

Wow. You look great.

JILL

Please. I've been running around  
like a crazy lady.

Jill catches a glimpse of Danny bellied up to the far end of the bar. Steve follows her gaze. Danny ducks behind his menu.

JILL (CONT'D)

My cameraman. He was supposed to  
wait in the van.

STEVE

So, it's a work dinner.

She looks around for the waiter. He's a little far but she orders from a distance.

JILL

Excuse me, hi... can I get a Kettle  
soda?

She turns back to Steve, who is more amused than upset.

JILL (CONT'D)  
Sorry about the pocket dial  
earlier.

STEVE  
Is that what that was?

JILL  
What did you think it was?

STEVE  
You chickened out.

JILL  
Chickened out?

STEVE  
You woke up today. You looked at  
the state of the world and  
thought... Today I am going to do  
it. I am finally going to tell  
Steve how I truly feel about him  
before it's too late. Then I answer  
"Hey Sunshine" and the resonant  
tone of my voice...

JILL  
Resonant tone?

STEVE  
...it sparked a torrent of emotions  
from our many love affairs over the  
years...

JILL  
There haven't been that many.

STEVE  
...and it all became way too much.

Jill tries to suppress a smile, clearly entertained by his  
dramatics.

JILL  
You got all that from a pocket  
dial?

STEVE  
I did.

Steve smiles and takes a drink of his beer. As the waiter  
delivers Jill's drink, her gaze inadvertently shifts upward,  
drawn to the TV above Steve.

The one screen not featuring sports cycles - a montage of Senator Lawrence's life - a timeline of his political journey leading to the tragic end.

STEVE (CONT'D)  
So how are you, Sunshine? How are you handling everything?

JILL  
What do you mean?

ON SCREEN is footage of *Red Onion State Prison* where Senator Lawrence's assassin is serving life.

Jill's face show fury.

STEVE  
Jill.

Her attention returns to Steve.

JILL  
I'm fine.

She leans in, her demeanor changing -- uncomfortable.

JILL (CONT'D)  
Have you heard anything about a landmass in the sky?

STEVE  
Who have you been talking to? What does your network know?

Jill perks up aggressively.

JILL  
Have you seen it?

He nods.

JILL (CONT'D)  
What did you see?

STEVE  
Pictures of a landmass. The size of an island, floating in the sky.

Jill pulls out her phone, shows him a photo that Ace sent her.

JILL  
Was this one of the photos?

Steve nods, confirming. Jill leans back.

STEVE

You can't see it can you?

She lets out a sigh of frustration.

JILL

What is going on?

BUZZ. Text message: *I do not like the world as it is; so I am trying to make it a little more as I want it.*

STEVE

What is it?

JILL

This is the third time I have received this today...

Steve takes her phone and has a look, reading --

STEVE

"I do not like the world as it is; so I am trying to make it a little more as I want it." That's Helen Keller.

She pauses, thinks.

JILL

Yeah, you're right... Why does this number keep sending me this?

Suddenly, all the bar's televisions stutter to static. Patrons call for someone to fix the TV. But before the bartender can react -- a DING sounds from everyone's phones simultaneously.

After a brief moment, they pull out their phones in response...

The screens flicker and shift, capturing the attention of everyone in the bar. An older woman materializes amidst a vivid, multi-colored backdrop. Her image is translucent, yet not transparent, and possesses an ethereal glow.

JILL / STEVE

Helen Keller.

HELEN KELLER speaks clearly, in a calm and sincere voice, while doing American Sign Language.

HELEN (V.O.)  
 Please forgive this sudden  
 interruption across your devices.  
 My name is Helen. I represent  
 Mother and Life. Before we lay out  
 the task at hand, let us impart  
 these ideas to you.

JILL  
 It can't be... can it?

As her message continues, we INTERCUT:

INT. WHITE HOUSE - SITUATION ROOM - NIGHT

President Scott, VP Rongstad, and Secretary Matthews look to  
 their phones and back to the television, flabbergasted.

VICE PRESIDENT RONGSTAD  
 Helen Keller? What kind of AI stunt  
 is this?

PRESIDENT SCOTT  
 Is it only our airways and phones?

SECRETARY MATTHEWS  
 I am being told the entire world's,  
 Mr. President.

HELEN (V.O.)  
 We are optimistic you will hear our  
 message and respond with love.

Helen repeats the American Sign Language for Love Everybody.

EXT. NEW YORK - TIMES SQUARE - NIGHT

A massive crowd stands transfixed, staring at an outdoor  
 screen. A little girl amongst the crowd imitates the sign  
 language for Love Everybody.

HELEN (V.O.)  
 Now is the time to realize the  
 power Mother has given you to see  
 the best in everyone, and make that  
 part of your lives.

EXT. RIO DE JANEIRO - CHRIST THE REDEEMER STATUE - NIGHT

A group of tourists and locals gathered around the iconic  
 Christ the Redeemer statue, staring at their phones...

HELEN (V.O.)  
 (Portuguese)  
*The world is sown with good.*

EXT. JAKARTA, INDONESIA - ISTIQLAL MOSQUE - MORNING

Usually a haven of peace is awash in a restless energy. Worshippers cluster together, eyes on their screens as Helen's message unfolds...

HELEN (V.O.)  
 (Indonesian)  
*But unless we turn our glad  
 thoughts into practical living and  
 till our own fields, we cannot reap  
 a kernel of the good.*

EXT. MUMBAI - GATEWAY OF INDIA - MORNING

A bustling crowd of commuters and street vendors at the Gateway of India are at a standstill as they watch the screens in the area or are on their phones, captivated.

HELEN (V.O.)  
 (Marathi)  
*Thus our optimism is grounded in  
 two worlds, ourselves and what is  
 about us.*

INT. TANK - POLAND - EARLY MORNING

A Russian soldier watches the announcement on his satellite device. Bombs and explosives are heard outside of the tank.

HELEN (V.O.)  
 (Polish)  
*Mother demands that the world be  
 good, and lo, it obeys.*

EXT. JOINT BASE ANACOSTIA-BOLLING - MAIN GATE - NIGHT

The guard at the main gate and Ace Lindsay, in her car mid check in, are locked in on their phones.

INT. WHITE HOUSE - FIRST LADY'S CHAMBERS - NIGHT

Anna is drawn into a profound connection with the message, her heart open and receptive to every word.

HELEN (V.O.)

But what she has been observing is your history -- disagreements over land and religion. Battles over misunderstandings and greed. You are failing at the most important thing - Love Everybody. Mother expects peace.

Helen then moves her hands in a way that has Anna inching closer to the television, and her fingertips gently tracing the same gesture on the screen.

Helen stops signing. Her hands drop to her side. She pauses looking into the camera.

INT. WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM - NIGHT

The President's expression has gone from intrigue to concern...

HELEN (V.O.)

Not in the future. Now. Those who take a life without remorse will not be renewed. Mother commands all killing weapons to be destroyed.

And has amplified. Rongstad chuckles --

VICE PRESIDENT RONGSTAD

That dog won't hunt, lady. They're trying to make us vulnerable.

HELEN (V.O.)

Some may need proof. I am your proof. You have twenty-four hours.

INT. LOCAL BAR - SAME

Danny's eyes go wide in disbelief. In a swift, almost reflexive motion, he snatches the cocktail from the patron next to him and chugs it.

GLITCH -- all screens on all devices return to their previous state. Followed by --

The sound of an innumerable amount of incoming text messages and phone calls from loved ones echoing throughout the bar.

Jill and Steve sit for a beat in stunned silence. Then --

JILL  
Helen Keller? Why me?

STEVE  
You think one person can't change things?

Jill exhales, the question hits deep.

JILL  
Some have tried. Got killed for it.

Steve gently takes Jill's hand. She takes a deep breath.

JILL (CONT'D)  
Ok... what's your take-- technology gone rogue?

STEVE  
That doesn't feel right... There are the clouds, the island in the sky, the call for love and peace... No, this... this feels like...

JILL  
What? Aliens?  
(off his hesitation)  
Say it, Steve. What do you think is going on?

STEVE  
Divine intervention. Like the warning to build Noah's Ark.

Jill laughs, part in disbelief and part as a nervous reaction.

JILL  
You think that stunt was God giving the world 24 hours to course correct or... lights out?

Agent Dooley approaches --

AGENT DOOLEY  
Mr. Speaker, we have to go.

STEVE  
(to Jill)  
Come to the White House with me.

JILL  
Where in your bible is God referred to as Mother?

STEVE

God can manifest however God wants.

CRASH! Chaos can be heard from outside. People have already started looting.

JILL

This is how it starts. Panic in the streets. Over-reaction by authorities.

STEVE

Come to the White House. We can theorize further in the car. Please.

Jill considers for a brief moment. Then grabs her personal items and stands, throwing cash on the table for the tab.

JILL

I have to follow the story.

Jill signals to Danny to set up the camera gear. She gives Steve a quick kiss on the lips, surprising him.

Jill and Danny rush toward the door as crowds on the street surge.

Calling out:

STEVE

Jill...

She turns to him.

STEVE (CONT'D)

Have you tried texting the number back?

Jill raises her eyebrows -- good idea.

INT. ANN NEWS STUDIO - NIGHT

Ed adjusts his seat at the anchor desk.

ED

Good evening everyone, I'm Ed Adams. We have just witnessed an unprecedented event. A woman, or at least a voice, in the likeness of Helen Keller, claims to represent Mother and Life. But what does that mean? Is she claiming there...

(MORE)

ED (CONT'D)  
is... life... beyond our human  
 existence?

INSERT: Photo of Helen from her appearance.

ED (CONT'D)  
 She has called for the destruction  
 of all killing weapons within 24  
 hours.

Ed takes a sip of water.

ED (CONT'D)  
 As you can see behind me, we have  
 started a 24-hour countdown.

The graphic on the screen shows: 23:34:15

ED (CONT'D)  
 We don't know yet what the  
 ramifications will be if Helen's  
 demands are not met, but I and the  
 entire ANN news team will remain on  
 the air for the 23 hours and 33  
 minutes that remain on Helen's  
 doomsday countdown. First, we go  
 live to Jill Lawrence.

EXT. LOCAL BAR - CONTINUOUS

Jill is standing outside of the bar with a microphone in her hand, Danny has a camera trained on her. However, her focus is on her cell phone, eyes on the text messages from the unknown caller. In the background, police officers arrive on the scene to attempt to contain an unruly crowd. The air is thick with tension, and the fear of the unknown is palpable.

She quickly types: *What do you want from me?*

DANNY  
 We're rolling.

Ed speaks to Jill from the studio --

ED (V.O.)  
 Jill... Just a minute everyone. It  
 looks like we may not have sound on  
 Jill yet. Jill?

Jill looks into the camera.

JILL

Ed... As you can see, moments after Helen's broadcast - the atmosphere is charged with anxiety and uncertainty. Escalating lawlessness... a reflection of the collective fear already gripping the nation's capital.

ED (V.O.)

Indeed. A clear indicator that people are struggling with the idea of what may happen if Helen's demands are not met.

(segueing)

Jill, our producers tell us you have some exclusive information to share.

JILL

That is correct. I believe this could be connected to the Helen broadcast.

(takes a breath)

Earlier tonight, I received confirmation from government and military sources that there is a giant landmass hovering in the clouds over the Atlantic Ocean.

ED (V.O.)

A landmass in the sky?

JILL

That is correct. Before you show the image that I sent the studio I must preface, it is going to be very controversial. Unlike any image that has ever been shown... Some people will see the image and others will not.

ED (V.O.)

That is peculiar. And why is it that some people can see it and others cannot?

JILL

That remains unknown.

INT. ANN STUDIOS - CONTINUOUS

An ANN CREW MEMBER gasps looking at the photo.

Ed looks at the image that has taken over the screens. He's puzzled. We can't tell if he can see the island or not. His eyes briefly glance to the right -- producers are in his ear.

ED

Oh my... that is something else.  
Wow. Perhaps some type of foreign  
military base?

EXT. LOCAL BAR - CONTINUOUS

JILL

Ed, I do believe there is a  
connection between this island in  
the sky and Helen's mother figure.

DING. Danny gives her a look - *Are you kidding me?!* He silently mouths to her: *Is your phone on?!*

Jill looks to her phone to see a response to her text message: *To change the world.*

Jill, stunned, pales at the memory of --

EXT. PEACE RALLY - DAY - (FLASHBACK)

Demonstrators chant a unified plea, "Give peace a chance."

At the forefront, SENATOR LAWRENCE raises a peace sign, resolute and hopeful. Jill (8), accompanied by her mother, KAREN, waves with youthful enthusiasm among the crowd.

POP! POP! POP!

SCREAMS pierce the air, and chaos ensues as the demonstrators scatter in every direction, desperate to escape the gunfire.

Police officers quickly locate the shooter. They tackle him, wrestle him to the ground, and subdue him. Jill screams.

YOUNG JILL

Daddy!

Senator Lawrence lies in the street, gravely injured. A Christian scapular rests on his bloodstained white shirt. A young aide attempts to tend to his wounds. Jill and her mother push through the panicked crowd to reach her father's side. Jill grasps his hand, and he looks up at her, his smile bittersweet through the pain.

SENATOR LAWRENCE

Jill -

Senator Lawrence gasps for air.

SENATOR LAWRENCE (CONT'D)  
... change the world.

His eyes close.

Jill turns to the shooter, her eyes now filling with fury. The distinct tattoo on his face, that runs from the bridge of his nose up into the ragged edge of his hairline, of an upside-down cross is a symbol she will never forget.

Their eyes lock for a fleeting moment as he is hauled away.

DANNY (PRELAP)  
Jill. Jill...

EXT. LOCAL BAR - NIGHT (PRESENT)

A running TEENAGER -- SLAMS into Jill. She stumbles dropping her phone and microphone. The teenager's backpack BURSTS open - a small stuffed animal tumbles onto the sidewalk.

Jill freezes on it. (beat)

She scrambles for her phone and microphone.

Recovering --

JILL  
I will keep the public updated as I learn what could be behind this global disruption. Over to you, Ed.

The camera lowers. Danny takes note of her frazzled state, his eyes reflecting a shared concern.

INT. ANN NEWS STUDIO - CONTINUOUS

Ed can tell Jill is not herself, but keeps it moving.

ED  
Thank you, Jill... Be safe.  
(segueing from the awkward  
outro)  
Now, we turn to Dr. Connie Shanks,  
renowned historian and professor.

The camera pans to DR. CONNIE SHANKS (mid-60s), a distinguished woman with her silver hair pulled back into a neat bun.

She exudes an air of scholarly authority, her glasses perched on the bridge of her nose as she sits confidently next to Ed.

ED (CONT'D)

Dr. Shanks, can you share any insights on the implications of this broadcast and its potential historical significance?

Dr. Shanks adjusts her glasses and begins to speak, her tone measured and thoughtful.

DR. SHANKS

Ed, we are facing a moment that could reshape our understanding of the world... challenge our beliefs, and redefine the very fabric of our society. The implications touch our spiritual lives but also our political and social landscapes. We may be standing on the precipice of a new way of perceiving our very existence...

INT. WHITE HOUSE - SITUATION ROOM - NIGHT

President Scott's brow furrows as he faces a countdown clock above the large wall screen, where 16 international government leaders appear alongside Vice President Rongstad, Senate Leader Box and Secretary Matthews. Steve slips into the background unnoticed.

FRENCH PRESIDENT (V.O.)

France requests assurances that no nation will engage with this phenomenon independently.

PRESIDENT SCOTT

It is clearly a hostile force using visual trickery as a means to instill fear in our citizens.

As he speaks, President Scott notices the French president receiving a note and the Russian president's advisor whispering in his ear. He catches sight of the off-camera ANN broadcast, showing clouds and the banner ISLAND IN THE SKY OFF THE COAST OF VIRGINIA.

FRENCH PRESIDENT (V.O.)

We must commit to open communication and a unified response.

The Chinese president receives a note.

CHINA REPRESENTATIVE (V.O.)  
Agreed.

RUSSIAN REPRESENTATIVE (V.O.)  
Agreed.

UN SECRETARY GENERAL (V.O.)  
President Scott?

President Scott fidgets with his pen, nerves evident.

PRESIDENT SCOTT  
I apologize... I'm being called  
away for a briefing. I'll be in  
touch.

President Scott quickly ends the video meeting.

PRESIDENT SCOTT (CONT'D)  
What in the hell?

He storms over to the television. Working to turn the volume  
up.

PRESIDENT SCOTT (CONT'D)  
An island in the sky?

Off the photographs shown on screen --

PRESIDENT SCOTT (CONT'D)  
(to Secretary Matthews)  
Aren't those the cloud pictures you  
showed me?

ON TV: Ed and Dr. Shanks speak with author and televangelist  
REVEREND PERRY PETERS (40s), African-American, connected via  
Zoom. A bible is clenched in his hand.

REV. PETERS (V.O.)  
The island is magnificent. I pray  
that everyone on Earth will receive  
what these pictures reveal.

President Scott's jaw drops. He looks around the room at a  
few guilty faces.

PRESIDENT SCOTT  
Who in this room can see this  
island?

He turns to Rongstad, he clearly can't.

Steve raises his hand, waiting the President to ask him.

VICE PRESIDENT RONGSTAD  
I don't know what all these people  
are smoking, but there is no  
island.

Senate Leader Box shakes her head. Steve lowers his hand.

STEVE  
Mr. President. It's -

PRESIDENT SCOTT  
Matthews?

He reluctantly nods. President Scott turns a shade a red that we haven't seen, as if he is about to combust.

PRESIDENT SCOTT (CONT'D)  
What is happening?!!

He takes a moment to collect himself.

PRESIDENT SCOTT (CONT'D)  
Not one of you had the balls to  
tell me you were seeing something I  
wasn't?

SECRETARY MATTHEWS  
We can't confirm what we're looking  
at.

STEVE  
Believers see. Doubters are in the  
dark.

VICE PRESIDENT RONGSTAD  
Organize a drone launch  
immediately. We need to get eyes on  
this thing. I'll lead the response.

President Scott nods.

SECRETARY MATTHEWS  
Yes, sir.

PRESIDENT SCOTT  
Find out who leaked these  
photographs and turn them over to  
the Department of Justice  
immediately. This is a goddamn  
breach of National Security!

President Scott storms out --

INT. WHITE HOUSE - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Bustling with activity. Anna is there to meet President Scott as soon as he exits the Situation Room.

ANNA  
Gerald, we need to talk.

PRESIDENT SCOTT  
Not now, Anna.

He continues past her, she follows...

ANNA  
I saw something in that broadcast.

PRESIDENT SCOTT  
I'm on it.

ANNA  
Helen... did the sign.

President Scott slows.

ANNA (CONT'D)  
She did Madelyn's sign.

He turns to her.

PRESIDENT SCOTT  
So she made the infinity sign. So what? She was signing everything she spoke.

ANNA  
Exactly... but she didn't speak it. She just did it...

Anna mimics the sign.

PRESIDENT SCOTT  
What are you getting at? That this terrorist knows personal things about our family.

ANNA  
This isn't terrorism. She's campaigning for love and peace.

PRESIDENT SCOTT  
Not campaigning... demanding. That is terrorism.

ANNA

Madelyn is trying to tell us something. Take these demands seriously. I think we need to comply.

President Scott pulls her aside to a more discrete location --

PRESIDENT SCOTT

Madelyn is gone. Okay. She is gone... Maybe there is a heaven. Maybe there isn't... but you have to stop. And you have to move on.

ANNA

I know what I saw, Gerald.

VICE PRESIDENT RONGSTAD (O.S.)

There you are.

Vice President Rongstad walks up.

VICE PRESIDENT RONGSTAD (CONT'D)

Hello, Anna. Do you mind if I steal the big man for a minute?

ANNA

What if you're wrong about Helen?

VICE PRESIDENT RONGSTAD

The President of the United States is never wrong. That is why he was elected. He's the boss.

ANNA

Maybe not.

The President looks at his watch.

PRESIDENT SCOTT

We have the smartest people in the world working on this. You don't need to worry. Now please, go back upstairs.

The President and VP head off, leaving Anna alone in the shadowy hallway.

VICE PRESIDENT RONGSTAD

Perhaps it wouldn't hurt to consider Steve for questioning? You know, he and Jill Lawrence were quite close, once upon a time.

PRESIDENT SCOTT  
I am not cross-examining the  
Speaker of the House.

EXT. ANN VAN - NIGHT

Danny and Jill are trapped in a sea of unyielding traffic, an orchestra of car horns accompanying the glow of red tail lights.

DANNY  
Traffic is fucked.

Danny, unable to resist, adds his own honk to the cacophony.

Jill's attention remains on her cell phone and the text message: *To change the world.*

Jill's hands rise to her head, perplexed.

JILL  
Why would she text me this?

DANNY  
Who?

JILL  
Helen.

DANNY  
Helen? The Helen? Who just appeared  
on every screen across the world,  
Helen... text you?

JILL  
I've been receiving Helen Keller  
quotes from an unknown caller all  
day. Until now. I asked what she  
wanted from me and she responded...

Jill shows Danny the text chain.

DANNY  
Change the world...

JILL  
What's equally as strange... the  
day my dad was shot, he said the  
same thing. It was his dying wish.

DANNY  
(nervous chuckle)  
No pressure.

JILL  
How should I respond?

DANNY  
Well, let's see... If I'm an all-powerful being and I can contact anyone in the world at any given time, why would I choose to establish contact with Jill Lawrence? What does Jill Lawrence do? Jill Lawrence is a journalist. More specifically, what type of journalist is Jill Lawrence?

JILL  
Please, you don't have to keep restating my full name like that.

DANNY  
Yes, I do. I'm getting somewhere. Jill Lawrence is a public interest journalist. Jill Lawrence has a major platform, is the voice of the people... and most importantly a voice they can trust. I believe Helen, or whatever is behind all of this, is asking you to be the conduit.

JILL  
Alright. Let's find out.

Jill types a message back to Helen, takes a deep breath, and hits send. Message: *My interest is piqued. Will Mother agree to meet for an interview?*

Jill and Danny anxiously await a response...

DING.

Jill checks her phone, nothing.

DING.

DANNY  
Ope. That's me.  
(reads his phone)  
The First Lady wants you to interview her.

JILL  
When does she want to do it?

DANNY

Now.

INT. ANN STUDIO - LATER

Ed and Dr. Shanks continue their conversation with Reverend Peters. The countdown is at the bottom of the screen.

REV. PETERS

Helen aligns with what I've spent  
my life preaching. Love one  
another... killing is a sin. (beat)  
Is Helen a divine messenger? I  
don't know. But, if this is one  
final wake-up call... God help us  
if we ignore it.

*A Breaking News banner on the screen reads: Explosion at Red  
Onion State Prison: Two Dozen Inmates Escape.*

EXT. BLAIR HOUSE - NIGHT

A wrought iron fence surrounds the property of the  
President's guest house, ensuring security and privacy. The  
main entrance is accentuated by an elegant portico, supported  
by classic white columns.

Jill and Danny pull up to the designated parking, near the  
entrance. Security personnel is there to meet them as they  
exit the van.

INT. BLAIR HOUSE - DRAWING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The room's soft blues, creams, and golds create an atmosphere  
of tranquil sophistication. Anna waits patiently on the sofa.  
Her index finger subconsciously tracing the infinity sign on  
her pant. The door opens to reveal a member of her security  
detail.

SECURITY DETAIL

Ma'am. Jill Lawrence is here.

ANNA

Please, let her in.

He steps aside and Jill enters followed by Danny lugging the  
camera equipment.

JILL

First Lady Scott. Thank you for  
agreeing to this interview.

Danny sets up the camera.

ANNA

Oh no. I didn't agree to your interview proposal. You agreed to mine.

Jill nods and takes a seat across from Anna. Danny gives the rolling signal and Jill jumps in.

JILL

Good evening and welcome to Life with Lawrence. First Lady Anna Scott... You have been out of the media for quite some time.

ANNA

Three years to be precise.

JILL

I have been putting in requests for an interview with you since your husband first took office. What changed today?

Anna shifts, a bit uncomfortable to dive into the topic, but takes the plunge.

ANNA

Mmm. As you know, when my husband first took office... our daughter, Madelyn... succumbed to Chordoma, a rare form of cancer for a ten-year-old... It has been a lot to bear... too much to bear really. Uh. And I had no interest in interviews, or much of anything. I've had nothing to give.

She pauses. Jill waits patiently.

ANNA (CONT'D)

So why today? Well, today I finally heard from God.

Off Jill's questioning eye.

ANNA (CONT'D)

We all did.

Jill cannot hide her skepticism.

JILL

There are many theories circling  
the recent events.

ANNA

Finally I have something to give.  
And if I can reach even one person,  
that is good with me.

JILL

And what is your message?

ANNA

Helen is real. Mother is real. I  
have prayed... I said, "God, if my  
baby girl is safe, with you, give  
me a clear sign." Tonight my sign  
came.

She draws the infinity sign in the air.

ANNA (CONT'D)

It may not have significance to  
you... but that was the sign my  
Madelyn would use instead of waving  
goodbye...

Anna puts her hand over her heart.

ANNA (CONT'D)

She knew I hated goodbyes. It was  
her way of telling me, that she  
will always be with me.

Anna looks into the camera.

ANNA (CONT'D)

Now it is my duty to testify to my  
fellow Americans, to step into the  
First Lady's shoes and stand up for  
what I know now to be true.

JILL

I am sorry to play Devil's  
advocate... And believe me, I am  
not questioning what you believe  
you saw...

ANNA

You don't believe. I know.

JILL

Okay. But if God is real... and speaking to us as Reverend Peters stated earlier on our network... Why the delay? Why now? Why let the world get to this point? Why was your daughter taken from you at such an early age? Why were my parents taken from me? Why put us through so much pain...

ANNA

When I read scripture, they are not feel-good bedtime stories. The people in the good book suffered and clung to God. He takes each individual to the brink of what they can bear. To see what they will become.

Turns to face the camera.

ANNA (CONT'D)

I'm inviting the people of this nation to join me outside the White House tonight for a candlelight vigil for peace. We must come together and love everyone.

Anna does the sign language symbol for "Love".

JILL

Thank you, First Lady, for sharing your heart and your message with us tonight.

The red light on the camera turns off, Danny lowers the camera.

DANNY

Wow. That was... Wow.

Anna stands.

ANNA

I hope I gave America something to stand for.

Before she turns to go --

ANNA (CONT'D)

Jill, just... be careful. I know my husband. He is not going to be thrilled with this interview.

JILL  
 Would he go live with me, if you  
 made the request?

Anna shakes her head, looks down, walks away.

Jill turns to Danny, whispers.

JILL (CONT'D)  
 Edit out the scripture notes.  
 (beat) It's not helping.

INT. WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM - NIGHT

The President's most trusted advisors are present, including Secretary Matthews, Senate Leader Box, Speaker Randall and GENERAL HERZBERG (60), chairman of the joint chiefs of staff in full military dress.

President Scott and VP Rongstad join them around the central table. High-res screens display various feeds of intelligence data.

Secretary Matthews nods to General Herzberg who pulls up a secure video call to --

The Drone Control Room at HURLBURT FIELD AIR FORCE BASE in Florida, a team of OPERATORS sit at the terminal with a set of specific monitors and controls for piloting the drones.

VICE PRESIDENT RONGSTAD  
 The United States doesn't  
 negotiate. We respond.

The President nods, his face stern.

GENERAL HERZBERG  
 Deploy the drones.

OPERATOR (V.O.)  
 Didn't he see that picture on TV?

GENERAL HERZBERG  
 Follow orders. Deploy.

The operators' fingers fly over the keyboard, and a screen switches to a live feed from a high-altitude as the drones ascend into the sky.

OPERATOR (V.O.)  
 Approaching target altitude.

The drones' cameras show complete cloud coverage... getting thicker the closer it gets to the target... visibility approaching zero...

PRESIDENT SCOTT  
Is this the best you can do?

Suddenly, the feed begins to GLITCH, static crackling on the screens. The room fills with a sense of unease.

OPERATOR (V.O.)  
We're experiencing some kind of interference, sir.

The static intensifies. President Scott is on edge.

The video feed returns... but the point of view is of the ocean and we are approaching FAST!

OPERATOR (V.O.)  
I'm losing connection.

PRESIDENT SCOTT  
Then re-establish it.

All the screens go DARK. The President is looking for an explanation.

OPERATOR (V.O.)  
They've hit the ocean. All units lost, sir.

PRESIDENT SCOTT  
I still have to address the nation... And I have not a goddamn clue what the hell I am dealing with!!

He grabs a binder and FLINGS it across the room.

He pinches the bridge of his nose as he takes a moment to compose himself. Taking this as a cue to leave, people begin filing out.

PRESIDENT SCOTT (CONT'D)  
Matthews...

Secretary Matthews, frightened, hangs back.

PRESIDENT SCOTT (CONT'D)  
Bring me Lt. Ace Lindsay.

INT. ANN - 8TH FLOOR NEWSROOM - LATER

Jill and Danny exit the elevator. She tries to call Steve, gets an unusual, fast busy signal.

Jill and Danny step into an electric atmosphere. The room buzzes with a frenetic energy as producers scramble to coordinate more interviews and cover stories related to the mysterious Helen broadcast.

The pair head down the path to Jill's office. As they pass by desks fellow employees stop what they are doing and stare.

Jill pays no mind and beelines for her office.

INT. JILL'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Jill's office is a shrine to journalistic excellence. Each accolade, article and photograph is a testament to her career.

Jill and Danny enter... CRUNCH!

Jill lifts her heel, revealing the shattered framed photographs of her iconic interviews - one with Muhammad Ali, the other with Pope John Paul II. They look around to see --

The room has been turned inside out, papers strewn everywhere, drawers emptied, the computer missing...

GENE (O.S.)

Jill...

Gene stands in the doorway.

GENE (CONT'D)

We couldn't stop the Feds.

JILL

What happened?

GENE

The FBI wanted to know how you procured the photographs that went public... When I told him we don't reveal our sources... this.

Taking in the full mess that they caused --

JILL

I need you to stand up... keep me in the loop.

Gene is a little surprised to be taking orders from Jill.

GENE

I'll have everything cleaned up and  
put back together.

(sighs)

What a day.

Gene leaves just as the Security Guard walks up.

SECURITY GUARD

Ms. Lawrence-- the police report is  
a no go. The precinct's a  
madhouse... and truthfully, I'm not  
even sure what they would be able  
to do.

He hands her a thumb drive.

SECURITY GUARD (CONT'D)

But one thing is for sure, someone  
above must be watching out for you.

JILL

What do you mean, you're not sure  
what they would be able to do?

SECURITY GUARD

Just look at the footage.

Security Guard heads off.

JILL

They took my laptop. My sources. My  
private files.

NEWSROOM

Danny runs to the nearest desk and grabs a laptop from a  
young man wearing an intern badge.

DANNY

Sorry. We're going to be needing  
this. Have ANN issue you a new one.

The intern gets up, miffed, but complies. He returns to --

JILL'S OFFICE

Clears off a space on her desk for the laptop, picks up a  
chair and sits down next to her. She plugs in the thumb  
drive.

She scans the footage, freezing on the moment the trigger is pulled, holding her chest. Then, rewinding just a few seconds prior. She ZOOMS IN, not on the attacker, but on the sky. A peculiar white cloud appears moments before the trigger is pulled.

Jill pulls up the photograph, comparing it with the image on the screen. Her mouth drops. The clouds are identical.

JILL  
Doesn't this cloud look similar to these?

DANNY  
Our cloud...

As Jill focuses on the photograph, shivers. The celestial landmass and otherworldly landscape materializes before her very eyes...

JILL  
It is real. It was never about the camera. I just wasn't ready to see it before.

DANNY  
I knew you'd see it.

She resumes the video. He pulls the trigger -- A BLAST OF WHITE CONSUMES THE SCREEN! Then suddenly ends.

DANNY (CONT'D)  
Whoa!! It like... totally evaporated him.

JILL  
We have the story of all time.  
We're going to the White House.

INT. ANN - 8TH FLOOR NEWSROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jill and Danny are on the move when one of the many reports covering the societal response to the Helen broadcast pulls her attention --

A *Breaking News* banner on the screen reads: *Red Onion escapees cited near Chesapeake Bay.*

A chill runs down her spine as she watches a reporter in front of a chaotic scene at Red Onion State Prison where emergency efforts are underway.

JILL  
 Red Onion. Erasing killers... feels  
 like justice.

**Note: In the lower third of every television screen is the  
 countdown - 18:53:27**

DANNY (O.S.)  
 Jill... Jill...

Pulled from her reverie -- she looks to see Danny standing  
 inside the elevator holding the doors open, waiting for her.

She stops at the news desk handing Ed the thumb drive.

JILL  
 I promised Gene proof. Play the  
 video.

Ed looks confused.

JILL (CONT'D)  
 The danger isn't the cloud - it's  
 what people might do because of it.  
 Don't let them twist Mother's  
 message. The country needs to see  
 this.

She glances back at the Red Onion story, takes a brief moment  
 to compose herself, then joins Danny in the elevator.

DANNY  
 Are you okay?

She gives a less than convincing nod before the elevator  
 doors close.

INT. WHITE HOUSE - OVAL OFFICE - NIGHT

President Scott stands by the window, looking out onto  
 Pennsylvania Avenue, where people are gathering beyond the  
 security fence for Anna's candlelight vigil. His  
 introspective silence broken with --

SECRETARY MATTHEWS (O.S.)  
 Mr. President.

Flanked to his right is Lt. Ace Lindsay.

President Scott's eyes study her for a moment before he  
 speaks.

PRESIDENT SCOTT  
Please, sit.

Ace respectfully takes a seat on the plush sofa, her back straight, her gaze steady on the President. Secretary Matthews starts to follow suit when President Scott raises his hand --

PRESIDENT SCOTT (CONT'D)  
Not you, Matthews. You can go.  
Effective immediately, you're  
relieved of your duties.

The room grows tense as Matthews stares at the President, in disbelief.

SECRETARY MATTHEWS  
I beg your pardon, sir?

PRESIDENT SCOTT  
You've been dismissed.

Matthews opens his mouth to protest --

PRESIDENT SCOTT (CONT'D)  
-- Unless you'd prefer I have you  
escorted out?

The finality in his words leaves no room for discussion. Secretary Matthews leaves, head down, his exit casting a long shadow on the scene as President Scott turns his attention back to Ace.

PRESIDENT SCOTT (CONT'D)  
Lt. Lindsay... A decorated combat  
pilot. An exemplary officer... A  
war hero...

Ace remains silent, waiting for the other shoe to drop.

PRESIDENT SCOTT (CONT'D)  
And yet, here we are...

He pauses, letting the gravity of the situation settle.

PRESIDENT SCOTT (CONT'D)  
Lieutenant, I know it was you who  
leaked those classified photographs  
to Jill Lawrence.

LT. 'ACE' LINDSAY  
Sir...

PRESIDENT SCOTT

...No, no. Let me finish. You and I, have a lot in common... Because like you, I swore an oath. An oath to support and defend the Constitution against all enemies, foreign and domestic.

(steely)

And when you were faced with the choice between that oath and whatever it is you think you saw, you made your choice. And it wasn't the Constitution.

The weight of his words hang heavy in the air.

LT. 'ACE' LINDSAY

Mr. President, I'm not trying to justify my actions, and I am ready to face any consequences you find appropriate, but what I encountered up there... given the events that have followed, I stand by the fact that my assessment was not off base.

President Scott goes to the window. Looks out at the candle light vigil, a sea of cellphone lights, electric candles and lighters.

PRESIDENT SCOTT

Looking out this window, you know what I see?

Ace walks over and takes a look.

PRESIDENT SCOTT (CONT'D)

I see a bunch of wishful thinkers lighting candles to hope their way out of, what you and I both know, is most likely a hostile scenario.

Ace doesn't have an answer, but you can tell she is weighing his words heavily.

Matilda pokes her head in.

MATILDA

Sir. They're ready for you.

He nods, holds up a finger to signal just a minute.

PRESIDENT SCOTT

You have two options. Continue on the path you are on, which will only land you a date in military court or we chalk this up as a momentary lapse in judgement and offer you a chance at redemption. And I trust when called upon you will exhibit that same degree of heroism that has me considering you for the Medal of Honor.

INT. WHITE HOUSE - SECURE HALLWAY - NIGHT

Steve is on his cell phone, texting with Jill. Agent Dooley walks with him.

He texts: *Do not come here. You will only make it worse.*

He looks up to see Secretary Matthews approaching, visibly upset.

STEVE

Matthews... What's going on?

SECRETARY MATTHEWS

I've been dismissed.

STEVE

What? Why?

SECRETARY MATTHEWS

He didn't say... but I have an idea why.

STEVE

Because of the photographs?

SECRETARY MATTHEWS

It's fine. I don't like the way he thinks. You don't either.

Steve turns to Dooley.

STEVE

Do me a favor.

INT. WHITE HOUSE - NORTHWEST HALLWAY - NIGHT

Jill and Danny are among a swarm of badge wearing journalists, buzzing with anticipation, as they make their way to the press room.

DANNY

We are literally throwing ourselves  
into the lion's den.

Jill's eyes are on her text exchange with Steve. *Do not come here. You will only make it worse.*

JILL

I am being asked to do something I  
have no clue how to do... or if I  
am even capable to come anywhere  
near achieving it... The only thing  
I do know... for the first time in  
my life... I believe there is  
something greater... and it's time  
for me to try to do something about  
it.

They pass through a security check point -- show their  
credentials, pass bags through screening check, and pass  
through the metal detector.

INT. WHITE HOUSE - SOUTHEAST HALLWAY - NIGHT

President Scott, VP Rongstad and their secret service detail  
follow Matilda to the press room.

VICE PRESIDENT RONGSTAD

(in the President's ear)

Jill Lawrence's computer has been  
seized and we are working on  
gaining access to her cell phone.

Steve approaches from the opposite end of the hall.

PRESIDENT SCOTT

Steve... I figured you would've  
gone home to be with family like  
Senate Leader Box and the rest of  
Congress.

STEVE

My constituents are my family, sir.  
And I can serve their voices best  
right here.

PRESIDENT SCOTT

Very well.

The group proceeds into --

INT. WHITE HOUSE PRESS ROOM - CONTINUOUS

As President Scott enters the room, the atmosphere shifts to tense silence. He takes his place at the podium. A look of satisfaction passes over his face as he spots Jill among the sea of Press.

From the sideline Steve locks eyes with Jill.

PRESIDENT SCOTT

Ladies and gentlemen, earlier this evening our airwaves, satellites, and internet were hijacked... This entity, which took the form of our beloved Helen Keller, who passed away more than half a century ago, claimed to be a messenger of peace.

(beat)

While we all hope for a peaceful resolution, I want to assure you that the United States and our allies stand ready to take any necessary action to safeguard our people from this potential threat. As such, I am declaring a state of emergency.

The room erupts with questions. Jill raises her hand. He skips over her to another reporter.

PRESIDENT SCOTT (CONT'D)

Go ahead.

REPORTER #1

What should citizens do during this state of emergency?

PRESIDENT SCOTT

Follow instructions from local authorities, stay informed, stay indoors, and above all else -- stay calm. The National Guard has been deployed and is protecting our streets.

REPORTER #1

What happens at the end of the 24 hours if we don't comply?

PRESIDENT SCOTT

The United States of America does not bow to threats. We are the most powerful country on Earth.

REPORTER #2

And what if it isn't from Earth?

PRESIDENT SCOTT

We're prepared to face whatever this is.

President Scott moves on to the next reporter, skipping over Jill for a third time.

REPORTER #3

Mr. President, are you saying the United States is prepared to go to war with Mother?

PRESIDENT SCOTT

I'm saying the United States of America will do whatever it takes to protect its citizens. Last one.

Unable to bear it any longer --

JILL

Mr. President, what is your opinion of the First Lady's interview, where she expressed her belief in the message and urged for peace?

PRESIDENT SCOTT

My wife is a caring and compassionate woman, who has been through allot. (beat) And while I respect her views, you, the people of the United States, elected me as your President. You have put your trust in me, that I am capable of making the right decisions during challenging times.

JILL

What if I can prove it? What if I can prove that Helen, Mother and Life... is all real and that everything that was said is of genuine nature? And if we just do what she asks... we will experience heaven on earth.

CLICK CLICK SNAP SNAP... the photographers' lenses have shifted from the President to Jill, immortalizing her in a flurry of flash photography.

PRESIDENT SCOTT  
Miss Lawrence, do you have  
information on this terrorist that  
you are withholding?

JILL  
What terrorist organization do you  
know whose message is of love and  
peace?

PRESIDENT SCOTT  
With a stipulation that is a direct  
attack against our 2nd amendment.

JILL  
A manmade amendment that is clearly  
flawed. It's that thinking that put  
us in this situation.

PRESIDENT SCOTT  
You think disarmament means peace?  
Violence has existed since the  
beginning of man.

JILL  
But it doesn't have to. Why not  
give peace a chance?

INT. LOCAL BAR - CONTINUOUS

The packed bar is quiet. Everyone in the crowd is holding  
their collective breath.

INT. WHITE HOUSE PRESS ROOM - CONTINUOUS

PRESIDENT SCOTT  
Answer the question.

JILL  
Answer my question.

Vice President Rongstad hurries to the podium, tugs on the  
President's elbow.

PRESIDENT SCOTT  
That is all.

As the President exits, he subtly nods toward Jill -- the  
head of the Secret Service detail understands the President's  
intention. As does Jill. She turns to Danny.

JILL  
Go. Don't think. I need you to run.

DANNY  
You realize you just cost us our  
jobs?

JILL  
I'm sorry.

DANNY  
It was worth it.

Jill whispers something to Danny who hurries off. The Secret Service agent makes his way through the cluster of reporters toward, Jill...

But Steve gets to her first, taking her by the arm, and leading her out through a back exit.

INT. WHITE HOUSE - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Steve guides Jill with calculated precision, knowing exactly where the surveillance camera's intermittent blind spots are in the hallway.

STEVE  
So, she finally texted back?

Jill blinks, shrugs, then smiles.

JILL  
Steve, I can't tell you how much  
you helping me means to me... but  
you need it distance yourself. I  
don't want you getting into trouble  
because of me.

STEVE  
Jill, there's no amount of trouble  
I wouldn't get into for you.

They reach a corner... and Steve immediately halts. He waits for a group of PASSERSBY to draw near, then deftly leads Jill alongside them, using the crowd as a screen from the surveillance camera on the opposite wall.

JILL  
What if the President is right?

STEVE  
Then, I lose the Speakership.  
You're worth it.

Before she can protest further, Steve pushes on an unmarked door and guides her inside with urgency.

INT. WHITE HOUSE MAINTENANCE CLOSET - CONTINUOUS

Steve leads Jill past cleaning supplies and tools, stopping at a metal rack. He moves it aside. Opens a concealed panel and enters a code on the numeric keypad. A secret door glides open, revealing a hidden passage.

JILL

Is this?

STEVE

It is not "the tunnel." Every administration seems to add a new way of escaping a potential hostile scenario.

INT. WHITE HOUSE - SECRET PASSAGEWAY - CONTINUOUS

Jill follows Steve down the narrow clandestine passageway. It's quiet. A lot for both of them to process.

Jill stops --

JILL

A mugger tried to shoot me today.

STEVE

Oh my God, Jill...

JILL

Point blank. On the security footage... there was this light and this white cloud... It consumed him... he vanished.

STEVE

Vanished?

JILL

The flash wasn't random... It judged him.

STEVE

That's why you called and hung up.

JILL

Steve... I just have to say...

STEVE  
...not now.

Steve takes her by the hand...

STEVE (CONT'D)  
We have to keep moving.

EXT. ELLIPSE PARK - CONTINUOUS

Jill and Steve emerge from the Bulfinch Gatehouse. Steve secures the door behind them, just as a black SUV pulls up along Constitution Ave NE - Dooley at the wheel.

Steve and Jill run to the vehicle and duck inside.

INT. BLACK SUV - CONTINUOUS

Steve and Jill work to catch their breath as Dooley drives.

JILL  
Hey, Dooley.

AGENT DOOLEY  
It's good to see you, Jill. You'd better turn off that phone.

Jill clicks the phone off.

JILL  
I apologize if I get you all arrested.

AGENT DOOLEY  
If the world ends tomorrow, it won't matter all that much.

Jill's phone BUZZES. Surprised, Jill and Steve look to her phone, eyes go wide.

JILL  
It's her. She responded to my interview request.

Looking over at Jill's phone --

STEVE  
(impressed)  
You requested an interview with the Almighty?

He examines the text: 36.8529° N, 75.0256° W.

STEVE (CONT'D)

These coordinates are on the water... If we have any hope at of you making it there we better get to the Wharf stat.

Love fills Jill's eyes as she looks at Steve.

JILL

(in a soft voice)

You kept it?

DING -- all their phones GLITCH...

INT. ANN STUDIO - SAME

FOOTAGE of President Scott and Jill at the press conference --

JILL

Why not give peace a chance?

Ed is reporting from the ANN anchor desk.

ED

Why not give peace a chance? A slogan that has become the mantra for the pro-Mother movement... and the group referring to themselves as Lifers.

DING -- every cell phone within the studio GLITCHES, screens flickering in tandem...

INT. SITUATION ROOM - SAME

President Scott and VP Rongstad are here with the HEAD OF SECURITY, surveillance feed of the White House hallways is on display when...

HEAD OF SECURITY

I've looked everywhere. She's nowhere to be found.

VICE PRESIDENT RONGSTAD

Unacceptable.

DING -- screens on their phones GLITCH...

PRESIDENT SCOTT

For fuck's sake.

Anticipating another Helen announcement, but instead are the numbers are 16:09:09... counting down.

PRESIDENT SCOTT (CONT'D)  
Someone please, tell me-- how this  
is this peaceful.

INT. BLACK SUV - CONTINUOUS

Dooley drives a few feet. Jill and Steve are in back. Steve looks up from the countdown and turns to Jill.

STEVE  
Look...

Steve gestures out the window at the First Lady's rally outside the White House --

Anna's crowd has swelled and is now harmonizing in song. Among the handcrafted signs include a heart with "Everybody" and "Why Not Give Peace a Chance?"

Some display the sign language symbol for "Love".

Jill beams, proud.

Anna speaks into a megaphone:

ANNA  
Wherever you are, join us. Sing in  
the streets. Let the government...  
let the military know... you  
believe.

Traffic has come to a complete halt.

AGENT DOOLEY  
We're not going anywhere.

STEVE  
Find a place to pull over. We'll  
run.

EXT. PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE - LATER

A few blocks away from the White House, the scene is much different -- a mob of looters smash everything in their path...

With his hand on his holstered firearm, Dooley leads Steve, and Jill through the mayhem at a hurried pace.

EXT. WASHINGTON D.C. SIDE STREET - CONTINUOUS

Agent Dooley, Jill and Steve continue to push their way through the dense crowds. They cross a street with a church on the corner. They hear screams. Crowds are now starting to run toward them.

Jill turns to a woman, then to a man... both running away in panic.

JILL

Why is everyone running?

Most are all too terrified to stop, or even look back.

JILL (CONT'D)

Ma'am, what is happening?

AGENT DOOLEY

Jill, keep moving.

Jill is trying to move quickly past the church, but a crowd member pushes her down on the ground.

JILL

(voice strained)

Steve.

Steve turns back for her, but sees Agent Dooley is already rushing to her aid.

As they try to regroup, a man with a bomb strapped to his body appears in front of the church. His eyes gleam with a fanatical light.

MAN

(voice raised)

Did you hear Helen? Killers will not be rewarded.

JILL

Wait. I can tell the world your story.

The man points back towards the church.

MAN

Your church lied to you too. But I know the truth.

BOOM! The explosion rips through the front of the church, hurtling debris in all directions. Those nearest to the blast are violently thrown back. Sporadic fires ignite amidst the crowd.

A RINGING fills Jill's ears. A panorama of chaos: civilians screaming. A MAN screams into the sky. A WOMAN drops to her knees praying. A CHILD cries as her FATHER pulls her away.

Jill swallows hard. She spots Steve, distanced by about twenty feet... encircled by debris... bizarrely SUSPENDED IN THE AIR... around only the three of them, as if they are protected by an invisible force field.

After a moment, reality reasserts itself as the debris falls to the ground.

No one has words for what they just experienced. They continue on, fighting their way through the crowd.

EXT. MARKET DOCKS AT THE WHARF - LATER

Steve, Jill, and Agent Dooley arrive, the aftermath of a mob's frenzy is evident. Few boats remain and two of those are currently under attack from desperate looters. Dooley steps in front, his weapon drawn and ready.

A flicker of light captures Steve and Jill's attention --

JILL

Sunshine.

*Slip #111* is illuminated by the subtle glow of wharf lights, revealing a familiar vessel nestled in its berth.

Steve rushes inside, Jill follows, her hand brushing the wooden railing, fingers trailing over its worn grain. And suddenly, she's somewhere else --

INT. BOAT "SUNSHINE" - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Sunlight pours through the clear blue sky as the boat gently rocks on calm waters. Jill pilots the boat, the breeze blowing through her hair. We see her unlike we've ever seen, at ease, smiling, content, free.

She looks around. Noticing there is no one else on deck she leaves the wheel. She heads down the stairs to the cabin below. She hears low voices. She pauses at the cracked door.

BELOW DECKS

Muted voices. The door cracked just enough.

KAREN, Jill's mom, sits - the oversized sunhat slipping slightly on her fragile frame.

She's thin, the kind of thin that comes from years of fighting something bigger than yourself.

Steve sits across from her. The man who always knows what to say, struggling now to find the words.

STEVE

Karen... there's something I'd like to ask you.

She watches him, waiting.

STEVE (CONT'D)

I would've asked Jill's father, but...

KAREN

I know.

STEVE

I love her. I love her more than I know what to do with.

DECK - LATER

Karen, Steve, and Jill share a picnic. Steve pops open a bottle of champagne. Hands Jill a glass. Drops down on one knee.

JILL

Steve... Stop. No. We live in two different worlds. You're a politician, I'm a reporter. You want a church wedding... I... don't want a wedding.

Steve bows his head in disappointment.

A breeze catches Karen's sunhat and sends it sailing overboard along with the beautiful silk scarf that was hiding her hair loss.

KAREN

Oh...

Jill rushes to her, but Karen just watches the hat go, disappearing into the waves.

INT. BOAT "SUNSHINE" - NIGHT (PRESENT)

Jill is jolted out of her memory with a stick of splinter in her finger.

JILL

Ouch.

HELM

Steve tears through the navigation station, stowing a shotgun, flipping through charts, yanking open drawers...

STEVE

Where the hell is the marine chart?

JILL

We have GPS.

STEVE

Electronics can fail.

Beyond them, a VHF radio crackles from a boat docked nearby. A voice filters through, hazy, distorted:

VHF RADIO (O.S.)

All you Lifers out there... we're counting on you to get the word out... to make your voices heard... and to spread the love.

Jill listens, something shifting behind her eyes. A thought forming.

She pulls out her phone and sends a text.

BELOW DECKS

Steve is crouched low, cushions tossed aside, digging through a storage compartment. Above him, the shotgun sways slightly with the boat's rhythm.

JILL

You have to stay.

She looks up.

STEVE

What?

She steps closer, not hesitating this time.

JILL

The world can't end like this. I've made too many mistakes... I need time to make it right... to make us right.

Her voice catches, but she pushes through.

JILL (CONT'D)  
I never should've said no to you.

Steve searches her face, his usual quick wit failing him.

STEVE  
Jill...

JILL  
Please, Steve. You have to try. You  
have to try to talk sense into him.

He exhales.

STEVE  
Even if that was possible, I would  
never let you go out there alone.

She meets his eyes, steady now.

JILL  
Danny's a sailor. He's already on  
his way.

A beat. His jaw tightens.

STEVE  
What if I never see you again?

JILL  
It's up to us to make sure that  
doesn't happen.

A pause that swallows the air between them. Then...

He kisses her.

It starts as more of a goodbye, but then deepens, grows  
heavier, more desperate than either of them expected...

CREAK.

The sound of Danny descending the stairs pulls them out of  
the moment. Danny takes off his sailor hat and hides his  
face.

DANNY  
I can come back.

Off the large paper he is holding --

STEVE  
Is that a marine chart?

DANNY

I'll get us there... pronto.

STEVE

If anything happens to her...

DANNY

...My dad was a sailor. His dad was a sailor. His dad's dad was a sailor...

(beat, then with a grin)  
Sunshine is in safe hands.

Steve doesn't move.

STEVE

I'm talking about Jill.

Danny's smirk fades just enough.

DANNY

Oh. Jill too.

Steve softens, turns back to Jill.

STEVE

I will see you soon.

Jill nods, holding onto that hope.

As Steve heads up the stairs, he pauses at the top, one last glance back.

Their eyes meet. A silent promise.

Then he steps out into the night, where Dooley is waiting.

INT. BOAT "SUNSHINE" - HELM - LATER

The engine hums, a low vibration pulsing through the deck. Danny settles into the pilot's seat, hands steady on the controls.

Jill sits to his left, silent, lost in thought.

DANNY

You good?

She lets out a small, hollow laugh.

JILL

Not even close.

Danny nods, understanding. No empty reassurances. No forced optimism.

DANNY  
Let's set sail.

He eases the throttle forward. The boat lurches gently, then glides into the dark water, leaving the dock behind.

The glowing lights of the wharf fade, swallowed by the vast, open sea.

INT. OVAL OFFICE - EARLY MORNING

President Scott stands at the window, surveying the enduring spirit of Anna's followers as their song of peace and love persists into the ungodly hours. President Scott has a tear in his eye and smiles.

PRESIDENT SCOTT  
Anna's back.

A BEEP of the intercom breaks his contemplation.

PERSONAL SECRETARY (V.O.)  
The Speaker of the House is here.

President Scott nods. Steve enters with serious intent.

PRESIDENT SCOTT  
Steve... 12 hours left in the  
countdown. What brings you here?

STEVE  
I know it defies logic... but you  
and I both know it is illogical to  
even try to think logically at this  
point... But Sir, for the sake of  
humanity-- please give the  
Executive Order for immediate  
disarmament.

PRESIDENT SCOTT  
Did you help Jill Lawrence escape?

STEVE  
Escape? Escape from what?

PRESIDENT SCOTT  
The most peculiar thing... I had  
asked security to bring her in for  
questioning after her little  
outburst...

(MORE)

PRESIDENT SCOTT (CONT'D)

But they couldn't find her  
anywhere... Not even a flicker on  
our surveillance feeds. It's as if  
she knew our exact security layout  
and how to navigate through it  
without being seen.

STEVE

Jill is not the enemy, Sir. Nor do  
I think there is an enemy in this  
equation period. We are being given  
a second chance here... to do  
things right. To finally have peace  
on Earth.

Before the President can respond the windows START TO  
RATTLE... their glass panes quivering in their frames.

President Scott and Steve hurry to the window to see --

The dark clouds, once high in the sky, rapidly descending  
onto the city...

Outside, the harmonious chants transform into SCREAMS as  
Anna's steadfast followers scatter.

For the first time, a glimmer of fear seeps into President  
Scott's eyes. He glances at the picture of his daughter.

PRESIDENT SCOTT

If this thing can be stopped, then  
no more American families will  
suffer unnecessarily.

STEVE

This is not the work of terrorists.  
These are not hollow threats. This  
is an instruction from a higher  
power... And I urge you to act now.  
Because if you don't... you'll be  
to blame for the end of humanity.

And with that, Steve turns on his heel and leaves.

President Scott remains at the window, staring out into the  
encroaching darkness.

INT./EXT. BOAT "SUNSHINE"/CHESAPEAKE BAY - MORNING

Jill has fallen asleep on the boat deck. Danny guides the  
boat, steady at the wheel.

Jill stirs, then wakes.

JILL  
Sorry, I drifted off.

DANNY  
I'm glad you're awake... Cause  
uh... either I'm seeing things...  
or the sky is shrinking.

Jill looks to see the clouds have descended, and the boat is headed into a thick blanket of fog.

JILL  
What're we going to do? We can't  
even see where we're going.

He pats the wheel.

DANNY  
Fear not. This baby has state of  
the art navigation. Sunshineth in  
darkness.

JILL  
I must say, I'm glad you're here,  
Danny.

DANNY  
You know, I never quite got my head  
'round whatever happened with you  
and Steve. I know there was talk  
about careers not aligning... but  
I'm like... Why do you have to pick  
one or the other. Why not try to  
make both work?

Jill contemplates this.

JILL  
It didn't seem so clear back then.

INT. ANN STUDIO - MORNING

A sleep deprived Ed sits at the anchor desk, looking earnestly into the camera, while overhead monitors display images of the eerily low-hanging clouds.

ED  
While some leaders still doubt  
Mother's power, our own Jill  
Lawrence experienced it first-hand.

Video plays of Jill's mugger disappearing.

ED (CONT'D)

In our very parking lot, this attempted murderer was not renewed.

Ed looks directly into the camera.

ED (CONT'D)

Nine hours left, before this could be our fate. Helen's cell phone takeover, the mugger, along with the drastic descent of the clouds, could be a sign that Mother is not pleased with our response to her demands.

The headline below him reads: *Mother's Discontent: Clouds Descend*. Countdown: 09:09:09 is in the lower third.

ED (CONT'D)

The question is: How will President Scott and other world leaders respond to the recent events?

INT./EXT. BOAT "SUNSHINE"/ATLANTIC OCEAN - DAY

Jill and Danny huddle around the navigation console, the coordinates she received glowing on the screen.

DANNY

Okay. So, we have reached our destination. What happens next?

JILL

I have no idea...

Danny looks out to see the cloud cover thickening and visibility dwindling.

DANNY

Well, hopefully something happens fast... because this fog is only getting worse.

The CRACKLE of the radio interrupts -- a voice, frantic, cuts through the static.

VOICE ON RADIO

Mayday, Mayday, Mayday... This is the vessel Blue Gill's Call, Blue Gill's Call, Blue Gill's Call. We're going down... and going down fast...

The transmission cuts off, leaving only the white noise of the radio.

Danny grabs the radio and speaks:

DANNY  
Blue Gill's Call, this is  
Sunshine... Visibility is  
nonexistent. What are your  
coordinates?

He releases the talk button and waits for a response... but only silence answers back. Danny tries again.

DANNY (CONT'D)  
Blue Gill's Call-- Can you hear me?  
What are your coordinates?

The silence is deafening. Then, a faint CRACKLE...

VOICE ON RADIO  
36.8529° North, 75.0256° West.

Danny and Jill look to each other, taken aback.

JILL  
That's here.

DANNY  
Fate brought us together.

He immediately kills the engine. Jill and Danny don their life jackets and head to the bow.

BOW

Floating on the tide. Jill strains to see through the dense fog. Danny calls out:

DANNY (CONT'D)  
Ahoy! Ahoy! Anyone out there?

His voice seems to be losing the battle against the noisy sea. He tries again, determined --

DANNY (CONT'D)  
Ahoy! Is there anyone out there!  
Hello!

Another pause. Jill shoots Danny a look - she can't hear a thing. Then, a voice shouts back:

VOICE FROM AFAR  
We're over here! Over here!

Danny quickly pulls the cord on their lifeboat -- inflating.

DANNY

Dude... We can't see you. I'm going to throw you a line.

He casts the line out.

VOICE FROM AFAR

I got it! I got the line!

Danny pulls the line tight. He attaches a carabiner to the life raft and then to the end of the line.

DANNY

I've attached the life raft to the line. All you need to do is reel it in.

He attaches another line to the raft - this end is for him to hang on to.

DANNY (CONT'D)

When you're secure in the raft give two tugs and I'll pull you in. Cool?

The scene plays out as Danny instructed. No tug.

Calling out:

DANNY (CONT'D)

Do you have the raft?

Nothing. Jill looks to Danny losing faith in their rescue plan. Then - One tug. Beat. A second tug.

Danny begins strong arming the line, reeling it in. It is tough. Jill jumps in behind to help.

Through the clouds the bright orange raft comes into view. Jill can see two figures in the raft, but can't make out their faces.

The raft drifts alongside Sunshine. Danny locks hands with the FIRST MAN and pulls him aboard. The second man extends his hand to Jill. Just as she's about to reach out, recognition freezes her. The unmistakable upside-down cross tattoo. It's her FATHER'S KILLER.

Off her hesitation, Danny steps in and pulls him aboard.

As he comes on board, she distances herself. He looks at her strangely.

FATHER'S KILLER

Man, we thought we were goners for sure. You two saved our lives.

Danny takes notice of their poorly fitting polo shirts and khaki shorts, a stark contrast to their tattooed bodies and unkempt appearance. The first man, marked by a coiling SERPENT TATTOO around his neck, extends his calloused hand for a handshake.

SERPENT TATTOO

Our boat suddenly lost control. Dumped us here. We are eternally grateful. I'm Johnny and this here is...

FATHER'S KILLER

Anthony.

DANNY

Anthony, Johnny. Where y'all headed?

SERPENT TATTOO

Antarctica.

DANNY

Not a bad place to be when time expires, but we're not going to make it there in this rig.

FATHER'S KILLER

No worries. We'll just tag along with you then. Not like we have many options.

DANNY

Great. Let's all head port side.

Father's Killer and Serpent Tattoo head to the wrong side of the boat, but Danny doesn't correct them. He and Jill share a discrete look.

JILL

You guys are probably freezing. Let me get you some blankets.

FATHER'S KILLER

Much obliged.

JILL

I'll meet you there.

She heads down the stairs.

## BELOW DECKS

In the belly of the boat, she grabs Steve's shotgun. Double checks it is loaded, foregoes the blankets, and heads upstairs.

## DECK

Jill walks starboard, shotgun ready. Danny is showing the guests his wellness cards facing the bow, with their backs toward Jill. Father's Killer, picking up on the tension mirrored in Danny's expression, spins around.

JILL (CONT'D)  
Anthony Giannini...

FATHER'S KILLER  
Do I know you?

Serpent Tattoo also raises his hands as Danny drops his cards and unearths a flare gun hidden in the bow's seat, his hands shaking.

SERPENT TATTOO  
Hey hey hey-- What's ruffled  
y'all's feathers?

Moving closer to Father's Killer --

JILL  
Sentenced to life imprisonment at  
Red Onion State Prison without  
parole for First Degree Murder.

He attempts to place her face, but cannot recall any memories associated with her.

JILL (CONT'D)  
You don't remember me, do you?  
No, I wouldn't imagine you would. I  
was just an eight-year-old girl  
when our lives intersected. (beat)  
How about the name Senator Robert  
Lawrence?

His eyes light up. Now he knows.

FATHER'S KILLER  
The daughter.

Serpent Tattoo looks to Father's Killer, then back to Jill.

## SERPENT TATTOO

I barely know this dude, we fled together. That's it.

Jill stays focused on Father's Killer.

## JILL

Do you know how long I have dreamt of this day? The opportunity to confront the man that killed my father. Do you know what I dreamt I would do to you if I were ever given that opportunity?

## FATHER'S KILLER

I've had decades to forgive myself. I have a pretty good idea of what's played out in that head of yours.

Jill shakes her head.

## FATHER'S KILLER (CONT'D)

Most people believe they're incapable of murder... yet, here we are.

His eyes linger on the trigger.

## DANNY

Jill! Jill... This is going too far.

Danny looks as though he is about to faint again. Jill is consumed by painful memories and unresolved grief.

## JILL

(vengeful)

Why? Why did you kill him?

## FATHER'S KILLER

I didn't know who he was. I was young... angry... a patsy following orders.

## JILL

Who gave the order?

## FATHER'S KILLER

People I never saw. But I pulled the trigger... and have to live with that every day.

JILL

You didn't just take him. You  
destroyed me, my mother... stripped  
me of my faith... of ever being  
truly happy!

FATHER'S KILLER

I thought I didn't have a choice.

JILL

We all have a choice.

Her fingers tighten around the shotgun, pulling it securely  
against her shoulder.

DANNY

Jill... You kill this man...  
justified or not... it makes you a  
murderer. That is not who you are.  
Killers will not be renewed.

Jill wrestles with her torment... Clenching her teeth, she  
looks towards the heavens for an answer. Her grip begins to  
waver as tears begin to blur her vision. Then --

Fueled by revenge, returns to the sightline of the shotgun,  
with her finger on the trigger...

DANNY (CONT'D)

Everything your father stood for -

A single white cloud appears overhead, pulls her attention...  
and years of anguish suddenly spill out of her in a raw,  
PRIMAL CRY.

Jill looks back at the killer, lowers the gun. Exhausted.  
Staggered over to the railing...

JILL

Love Everybody.

And tosses the gun overboard.

JILL (CONT'D)

Your fate lies with Mother.

Father's Killer looks questioningly to her.

JILL (CONT'D)

The burden is no longer mine.

A WHIRLWIND of white clouds begins forming overhead. They spiral down -- wrapping Jill into a thick blanket of fog, and as quickly as they descended, they recede, spiraling upwards into the sky.

Leaving Danny staring at the empty space where Jill once stood.

DANNY

Jill! Jill!

He slowly looks up, the sky is suddenly still.

EXT. ISLAND IN THE SKY - CONTINUOUS

Jill appears in a majestic land. Before her lies a pathway, veining through an untamed landscape... the vegetation vibrant and alive. The sky, crystal clear. A land in its purest form, best described as a land before man made its mark.

Jill shivers. With her first step upon the path it illuminates -- leading to an ancient castle in the distance.

INT. CASTLE - CONTINUOUS

Jill enters into a giant colorful and bright television studio, but without equipment or a control room. Just three empty thrones in the center.

Jill momentarily freezes in total awe of...

Helen Keller.

HELEN

Hello, Jill.

JILL

Helen... Where am I?

HELEN

You are in Life.

JILL

I was just on the boat... the coordinates... they led me to...

She is reliving the scene with her Father's Killer. She searches Helen for answers.

HELEN  
 Mother had to see if you would  
 truly love everybody...

JILL  
 A test...

HELEN  
 She believed you would pass.

Jill processes this. She is overwhelmed with the free flow of emotion that is released through her forgiveness. Tears stream down her face. Helen gives her the time she needs.

HELEN (CONT'D)  
 Your interview request has been  
 approved.

The chair is suddenly filled by: A young MUHAMMAD ALI (22), and Karol Wojtyla - POPE JOHN PAUL II, both with same translucent and ethereal glowing appearance as Helen.

JILL  
 I don't understand. I thought I was  
 interviewing Mother?

HELEN  
 Muhammad Ali... Pope John Paul II.  
 Messengers of the Almighty. And  
 since men have started nearly every  
 one of your wars, Mother believed  
 it fitting that Earth should hear  
 her through these advocates of  
 peace.

Helen's arm points to the studio.

HELEN (CONT'D)  
 The world is watching.

Helen vanishes as a transcendent transformation ensues -- our surroundings shift into towering screens, a global, high resolution look at society through their devices... And as Jill becomes witness to the world, the world becomes witness to Jill...

She's on the mega screens of bustling metropolises to the handheld devices in quiet hamlets - billions are tuned into the spectacle that is Jill.

The countdown appears in the lower third on every image.

Jill turns to the panel, takes a seat opposite them, takes a deep breath and exhales.

JILL

I haven't had nerves like this  
since my first day on the job.

MUHAMMAD ALI

We can't be brave without fear.

(beat)

It's good to see you, Jill. It's  
been a long time.

JILL

I don't even know where to begin.

POPE JOHN PAUL II

How about the beginning? Many  
believe that the BIG BANG disproves  
creation... when it is the exact  
opposite. It says it right there in  
your Bible. God spoke... and BANG.  
So much of scripture has been  
misinterpreted.

JILL

What about heaven and hell?

POPE JOHN PAUL II

We prefer to think of it as those  
who advance into Life and those who  
don't... Though I will tell you a  
secret... Very few don't advance.  
In fact, only the ones who are  
incapable of change when faced with  
truth... are eliminated.

JILL

You are saying people can change?

POPE JOHN PAUL II

Why do you think you're here? You  
are a living testament.

JILL

It's true. Before today... I had  
been living a lie. There was a hate  
in my heart that I couldn't get  
passed...

MUHAMMAD ALI

But you did. And it was beautiful.  
There is nothing more inspiring  
than transformation.

JILL

But why do we have to even go there... Why do bad things even have to exist?

POPE JOHN PAUL II

It's complicated but also simple. Life, or heaven as you call it, can exist on Earth. Our hope is that will happen today before the clock stops... but we need the people to want it. You get to choose the world you want to live in.

MUHAMMAD ALI

Violence and hate do not have to exist.

JILL

What about innocents, like Madelyn Scott, who die so young?

POPE JOHN PAUL II

There are divine moments that may be perceived as bad to the people not being privy to Life's playbook.

EXT. PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE - CONTINUOUS

The First Lady watches on her phone, full of emotion, making the infinity symbol in the air.

INT. CASTLE - CONTINUOUS

Back with Jill, Pope John Paul II and Muhammad Ali.

MUHAMMAD ALI

Like your role as a journalist... there are assignments in Life. And if one's assignment in Life means one has to return home sooner... that is Mother's call.

JILL

It is not a coincidence that Mother chose you as my interviewees is it?

MUHAMMAD ALI

There are no coincidences.

Jill turns to Ali, then the Pope.

JILL

You converted to Islam. You led the Catholic Church. Which was right?

POPE JOHN PAUL II

Jesus... Muhammad... Buddha... all people of peace were right. There is not just one religion that leads to Life. The only practice that ensures Life is love... love everybody.

The Pope does the sign language symbol for "Love".

INT. SITUATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

VP Rongstad, Steve, General Herzberg and his other trusted advisors watch the Jill live stream.

President Scott paces, deep in thought (beat).

PRESIDENT SCOTT

Give Lindsay the go-ahead.

President Scott nervously holds his hands to his mouth.

STEVE

Mr. President, please... you have to reconsider.

VICE PRESIDENT RONGSTAD

We have a threat and a deadline.

PRESIDENT SCOTT

If I'm wrong, millions die. If I hesitate... maybe billions. God forgive me, either way.

Steve rises, confronts the President.

STEVE

I'm telling you, this is not the answer...

President nods to Herzberg. He picks up the phone, speaks:

GENERAL HERZBERG

Deploy Lt. Lindsay.

STEVE

Jill Lawrence, an American citizen, is on that island.

Herzberg receives a confirmation over the phone, sets the receiver down and turns to President Scott.

GENERAL HERZBERG  
Lindsay is set to strike in  
00:09:00 minutes, Sir.

INT. CASTLE - CONTINUOUS

The interview seen around the world continues --

JILL  
What is Life like?

POPE JOHN PAUL II  
An abundance of joy. And time... An  
endless amount of time to enjoy  
with our ancestors.

JILL  
My Mom and Dad... are they?

Muhammad Ali and Pope John Paul II look at each other and smile. A fourth throne appears with Jill's parents sitting in it.

Jill is filled with emotion.

JILL (CONT'D)  
Daddy?

ROBERT  
We were watching over you this  
entire time.

Jill's parents are holding hands.

KAREN  
That horrible mugging --

ROBERT  
The church explosion debris --

KAREN AND ROBERT  
On the boat.

ROBERT  
You chose mercy when vengeance  
seemed easier.

JILL  
The white cloud?

Jill's parents nod.

ROBERT

A doorway. It opened the moment you  
were ready to see it.

Tears roll down Jill's cheeks, her expression radiant with  
joy.

JILL

This is the happiest moment of my  
entire life.

KAREN

There could be more.

JILL

What else happens in Life?

KAREN

We've met millions of people from  
thousands of galaxies. Mother's  
universe is indefinite.

ROBERT

As is her love. The things we've  
learned...

JILL

Why doesn't Mother introduce us to  
them now?

BEEP BEEP BEEP. An alarm sounds. A red light overhead  
flashes, casting an eerie hue on the room. Jill looks around,  
what is the cause? She looks back to the panel, their faces  
are suddenly downcast.

JILL (CONT'D)

(speaking up over the  
alarm)

What is happening?

MUHAMMAD ALI

It's the U-S.

POPE JOHN PAUL II

Man has forfeited his chance.

Their images flicker.

JILL

Wait, no...

ROBERT  
There's nothing more for us to do.

JILL  
Dad, get Mother to stop them.

KAREN  
We love --

They flicker once more and are gone.

JILL  
Please, please don't go.

With a sense of growing dread, Jill looks to her phone... and her heart plummets at --

CLOSE UP of the countdown jumping forward from 07:00:00 to 00:07:00.

INT. SITUATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

WIDEN OUT from the countdown 00:06:59 on another phone's screen to reveal Steve's tense face --

STEVE  
Uh, Sir...

PRESIDENT SCOTT  
What is it now, Randall?

STEVE  
Look at your phone.

President Scott, along with the rest of the room, pull out their phones to see the countdown numbers reading the same as the impending airstrike.

He looks to the TV showing the Jill livestream, where in the lower third in the images on the screen -- Helen's doomsday countdown matches as well.

PRESIDENT SCOTT  
My God.

INT. CASTLE - CONTINUOUS

HELEN (O.S.)  
Jill, I'll send you back now.

Jill's face, reflecting her anxiety and the weight of this moment, appears on all the screens --

JILL

I'm staying. Mother, I know you can  
hear me... I am begging you...  
spare us. Please... I have faith  
you'll see the best of us.

INSERT shots of people from all over the world, watching her.

JILL (CONT'D)

People of Earth, if you are  
listening, lay down your arms.  
Wherever you are... in the  
streets... even in battle, I beg of  
you... Show Mother that we want  
what she wants!

Then, an idea pops into Jill's head that has her walking over  
to a screen...

JILL (CONT'D)

Pull up First Lady Anna Scott.

A live video of First Lady Anna Scott now replaces Jill's  
face. It worked!

PENNSYLVANIA AVE, Anna holds hands with other Lifers staying  
strong amidst the chaos blanketed in a thick fog.

FIRST LADY SCOTT

Hold strong Lifers. Believe.

A man among the Lifers begins to softly sing "We Are the  
World", his way of comforting himself and bonding together  
with the group.

LIFER MAN

There comes a time; When we heed a  
certain call; When the world must  
come together as one...

Members of the group join in.

LIFER GROUP

There are people dying; Oh, and  
it's time to lend a hand to life;  
The greatest gift of all...

The scene continues on the screen as Jill steps to another  
screen with her face on it --

JILL

Pull up Jürgen Grässlin.

On a makeshift stage at Pariser Platz in BERLIN, with the Brandenburg Gate in the background, JÜRGEN GRÄSSLIN looks upon a sea of protestors, their banners waving with slogans "Give Peace a Chance" and "Love Everybody".

JÜRGEN GRÄSSLIN

(German)

*Our fight is not against each other, but against a system that has lost sight of its duty. A system that's forgotten love. Remember, the most powerful weapon we have is love. We must love our country, love our fellow citizens, love our freedom... And we must love everybody!*

The crowd CHEERS, united in their quest for change.

Jill picks up the pace, going screen to screen --

JILL

Show me Malala Yousafzai...

MALALA YOUSAFZAI stands in front of MINAR-E-PAKISTAN - LAHORE, speaking loudly to a massive crowd --

MALALA

(Urdu)

*The power of love outstrips the love for power. Together we can put an end to tyranny...*

On to the next screen.

JILL

Let me see Ai Weiwei.

AI WEIWEI speaks to an expansive crowd at 798 ART DISTRICT - BEIJING --

AI WEIWEI

(Mandarin)

*Paint the world with love. Sculpt a future of respect for one another... Share a mission... Love everybody...*

Screen after screen.

JILL

Pull up the countries laying down their arms.

The screens light up with images of: France disarming, Turkey destroying weapons, DRC military throwing weapons in a pile to be disposed of... and on and on... surprisingly more countries than she expected fill the screens.

JILL (CONT'D)  
Show the world Piotr Wolczyk.

Piotr holds the hands of two children followed by a single mother crossing the BRIDGE OF TOYS.

JILL (CONT'D)  
Mother, you can't tell me that all of these people are not worth saving. Humanity at its core is good. We are capable of change... I can testify to repenting. I made a different choice. Mother...

The clock ticks to reveal 00:02:00 remaining.

JILL (CONT'D)  
Pull up Steve Randall.

A screen shows Steve in the SITUATION ROOM with President Scott. President Scott's eyes are on Lt. Lindsay's video feed approaching the island in the sky... Steve addresses the president.

STEVE  
You see it, don't you?

President Scott clearly does.

STEVE (CONT'D)  
There is still time. You can call it off.

PRESIDENT SCOTT  
Why would I do that?

STEVE  
Because now you know it's all real.

PRESIDENT SCOTT  
My belief is not in question. I believe.

President Scott walks behind his desk. Picks up a framed photo of his daughter.

PRESIDENT SCOTT (CONT'D)  
I just can't forgive.

The red phone RINGS. VP Rongstad picks it up...

VICE PRESIDENT RONGSTAD

It's Anna.

President Scott takes the phone... and with a deliberate, measured motion, lowers it back into its cradle. Deep breath.

VICE PRESIDENT RONGSTAD (CONT'D)

People cling to faith when they are  
out of bullets.

The President speaks into the radio linked to Lt. Lindsay's headset.

PRESIDENT SCOTT

Lt. Lindsay, fire when ready.

INT/EXT. F-35 COCKPIT/CLOUDY SKY - CONTINUOUS

Ace is locked onto the island, her thumb hovering over the weapon release... She is watching the Jill feed on her phone, seeing directly into the situation room.

LT. 'ACE' LINDSAY

This is wrong. All wrong.  
Mr. President... I'm sorry.

Ace begins to change course.

SITUATION ROOM

President Scott doesn't look surprised.

PRESIDENT SCOTT

You disappoint me, Lieutenant.

He nods to General Herzberg, who taps a key on the computer in front of him --

COCKPIT

An OVERRIDE NOTIFICATION flashes on Ace's screen. The F-35's systems have been remotely activated.

LT. 'ACE' LINDSAY

Oh God...

Ace tries unsuccessfully to regain control.

INT. SITUATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The clock ticks down. Seconds remain.

STEVE

Gerald... We used to be of the same mindset. Wanting similar things for this country, for this world. Don't do this...

The President touches the picture of his daughter tracing the infinity sign with his finger.

PRESIDENT SCOTT

I do this... so that other children have a chance.

He closes his eyes and takes a big breath.

PRESIDENT SCOTT (CONT'D)

(to Herzberg)

Release.

CLOUDY SKY

Missiles fire from the F-35... toward the island.

GENERAL HERZBERG (PRELAP)

Twenty seconds until impact.

President Scott does the infinity sign -- ready for the world to end.

JILL (O.S.)

Steve... Steve.

Steve turns to see his image on the TV screen - a split screen image with Jill.

INT. CASTLE - CONTINUOUS

Jill speaks from her soul to the TV screen of Steve.

JILL

I'm so sorry for all the time I wasted. If I could go back and do it differently I would. You are the love of my life. Your love for everybody used to seem unfathomable to me... I just couldn't allow myself to see what you see. But I do now... Now I love everybody.

(MORE)

JILL (CONT'D)

But most of all I love you. I love  
you with every fiber of my being.

The clock ticks to :05. Jill and the rest of the world  
inhale, bracing for what is to come.

INT/EXT. F-35 COCKPIT/CLOUDY SKY - CONTINUOUS

Ace watches on horrified as the missiles draw closer and  
closer to the island in the sky. The end is nigh.

INT. SITUATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

President Scott, VP Rongstad, and General Herzberg anxiously  
watch the display of the missiles closing in...

Steve's focus is only on Jill --

STEVE

I love you, Jill. And I always  
will... I will see you again in  
Life.

W/ JILL

JILL

See you in Life.

:02... :01...

...HISS... POP!! A FLASH OF BLUE...

Steve shields himself from the bright light...

EXT. BORDER OF RUSSIA AND POLAND - NIGHT - SAME

GRAPHIC: Border of Russia and Poland

A small militia of Polish police officers, farmers,  
construction workers and teenagers, armed with hunting  
rifles, are heavily outnumbered near the border. They drop  
their weapons.

A RUSSIAN GENERAL yells "stay-let". The thunderous roar of  
tanks and cannons discharge their deadly payloads...

Soldiers and farmers alike duck for cover just as the  
familiar HISS... POP!! and a FLASH OF BLUE lights up the sky,  
accompanied by a PFFFT sound.

INT/EXT. F-35 COCKPIT/CLOUDY SKY - SAME

The blinding, ethereal blue light engulfs the F-35. Ace shields her eyes, struggling to maintain control. The display panels flash erratically before settling.

When her senses return, she sees... the island in the sky has vanished.

INT. SITUATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

When Steve opens his eyes... He is the only one standing in the room. Everyone else has disappeared.

Agent Dooley rushes inside with his gun drawn --

AGENT DOOLEY  
You okay, sir?

Steve places his hand on the weapon --

STEVE  
We don't need this anymore.

Agent Dooley drops his weapon.

He looks to see the Jill livestream has ended. Replaced by ANN coverage. Ed sits at the anchor desk, rubbing his eyes, confused.

Steve quickly pulls out his phone to dial when *Jill* flashes across the screen.

STEVE (CONT'D)  
This better not be a pocket dial.

JILL (V.O.)  
It's not a pocket dial.

STEVE  
Drop a pin on your location. I'm coming to you.

JILL  
I'm already here.

EXT. WHITE HOUSE - ROSE GARDEN - DAY

Not a cloud in the sky. Steve runs up to see Jill standing in the center of the garden, bathed in sunlight, surrounded by the now vibrant roses.

He slows slightly, caught up in her beauty... his heart skipping a beat with the realization that the moment he so long yearned for is finally here.

The desire to hold her in his arms has him picking up the pace... and when he reaches her, that is exactly what he does -- lifting her up and spinning her around. The two of them have never been so happy, overwhelmed with joy.

The only two words that need to be said at this moment...

JILL

Marry me.

EXT. POLAND BORDER - NIGHT

A Polish military leader arrives at the border. He exits his vehicle to find the farmers dancing for joy. A group of them have their backsides turned toward where the Russian soldiers were, smacking their butts exclaiming --

POLISH FARMERS

Pocałuj mnie w dupę!

EXT. PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE - DAY

Crowds gather, hugging in the streets.

INT. ANN NEWS STUDIO - DAY

Video of Anthony Giannini being placed in handcuffs.

ED

Red Onion escapee Anthony Giannini has turned himself in to port authority police with the assistance of ANN's cameraman Danny Batliner.

News footage shows people gathered at a church memorial.

ED (V.O.)

Flags fly and half-staff across the country. An estimated one-tenth of our world's population has been eliminated. Lives cut short because they were incapable of envisioning a different path.

Ed, front and center at the anchor desk, now addresses the world in the aftermath.

ED

For the rest of us, a rare second chance has been granted to us, thanks to Jill Lawrence's unwavering pursuit to change the world.

Video of weapons being disposed followed by video of people hugging in the streets.

ED (CONT'D)

But now, the question is -- are we capable of rising above our differences and forging a future that transcends boundaries and embraces compassion, empathy, and unity?

(beat)

I hope so. Because all our lives are counting on it.

SUPER: Six Months Later

INT. OVAL OFFICE - DAY

Matilda opens the door for the CHIEF JUSTICE to enter. Steve turns away from the window.

CHIEF JUSTICE

Are you ready, Mr. President?

Steve adjusts his tie, looking confident.

STEVE

Ready, Mr. Chief Justice.

EXT. WHITE HOUSE ROSE GARDEN - DAY

An intimate ceremony is underway. The picturesque Rose Garden is adorned with lush florals. Esteemed guests, include Anna and Ed. Steve, looking dashing in his suit, stands at the altar with his best man Agent Dooley.

Maryska's mother hands her a rose petal basket with a stuffed animal. Maryska smiles and walks down the aisle.

As the melody of Canon in D Major gently wafts through the air as Jill, wearing a traditional white gown that is elegant but understated with the essence of timeless sophistication, and her escort Danny move with a graceful rhythm down the path to the altar.

As Danny delivers Jill to Steve, she shares a knowing glance with him - a moment of true happiness. The Chief Justice officiates the ceremony.

CHIEF JUSTICE

The world could use a love story.  
Jill and Steve have one that will  
go down in history-

Jill lifts her gaze towards the sky, where a luminous white cloud drifts overhead.

JILL

(whispering)  
Hi, Mom. Hi, Dad. I'm glad you're  
here.

As the vows are exchanged and they share a long, passionate kiss, the observing white cloud lingers for a brief moment then ZOOMS AWAY into the limitless sky.

EXT. SUNSHINE/POTOMAC RIVER - LATER

A *JUST MARRIED* banner flutters at the stern, next to the freshly painted *SUNSHINE*, as Jill and Steve jointly steer a *Sunshine*, the setting sun casting a golden path before them. Their silhouettes, united against the twilight, speak of a shared love that will navigate through all waters.

FADE OUT.

**THE END**