

Before the Fall

1 EXT. DAY. STREET

Rain is pouring. The windshield wiper is beating strongly against the back window of a Black Minivan waiting at a traffic light. As the wiper moves left to right, it clears the rain away from the "Kids on Board" sticker. WE CAN SEE IN MACRO SLOW MOTION THE VIOLENT IMPACT OF THE RAIN DROPS ON THE BACK WINDOW. Screams and giggles ARE HEARD from within the car.

2 INT. DAY. MINIVAN

WE CAN SEE small hands pulling some hair, more screams follow. It's a fight between sisters, CELIA, a smart, curly, eleven year old girl, and LIZZIE, a cute, bubbly, 6 year old. The DRIVER intervenes (HER FACE IS NOT VISIBLE).

DRIVER

Shh-Shh girls, we're almost there.

The two little girls look up.

CELIA

(frowning)

LIZZIE started it.

LIZZIE

Not true!

Lizzie folds her arms.

DRIVER

CELIA, don't you have something to tell your sister?

CELIA

Sorry Lizzie. I'll see you at recess. (mumbling) Not...

LIZZIE

Mum!

The car stops at the school's dropping zone and WE CAN HEAR the car beeping as the side door opens.

DRIVER

Go! Go! Go!

The two girls jump out. WE CAN SEE IN MACRO SLOW MOTION THE IMPACT OF THEIR BOOTS ON THE WATER PUDDLE.

3 INT. DAY. MINIVAN

The driver turns the radio on. WE CAN HEAR news headlines about civil unrest rising around the world. The words heard at these are echoed by the CHANTS coming from a nearby protest. As we drive by, WE CAN SEE FROM THE PASSENGER WINDOW what some of the protest boards say : "No more lies", "Citizens of the world unite", "What is BH-17"? WE CAN HEAR A STRONG THUMP on the driver side window, WE PAN TO IT as she gasps. A man is holding a sign which reads "We want the truth".

CUT TO TITLE

4 INT. DAY. PARKING

It's a well lit underground parking. The driver walks steadily. THE CAMERA FOLLOWS HER FROM BEHIND WITHOUT REVEALING HER FACE. Her hair is up in a pony tail, bouncing from side to side. She's holding a thick leather briefcase. She goes through a coded door and a fingerprint verification system. At another door, a GUARD stops her. She shows her identity badge. Her badge reads "Iris Rodgers", "therapist", "May 22 1976".

SECURITY GUARD

Good morning Miss Rodgers. In a hurry today?

IRIS

A bit. Have a nice day!

5 INT. DAY. CORRIDOR

Iris walks fast in a large corridor filled with early 20th century furniture and late 19th century paintings. Todd, a tall man in his early thirties comes out of a corner and approaches her to give her a few documents.

TODD

(Anxiously)

She's already here.

IRIS

Good. Make me three copies.

She gives him a paper from her briefcase and a big smile as she enters a room through white double doors.

6 INT. DAY. PRIVATE OFFICE

The room is ample and has two large sofas facing each other and a desk placed in front of them. Daylight comes from a tall window and hits one of the two sofas, where a LADY is sitting down. The rest of the room is in the dark.

IRIS

Please accept my apologies for the delay.

LADY

I came early, I needed time to think.

The lady turns around, she has a gentle face but tired piercing eyes. She stands up and shakes Iris' hands.

LADY

(formal)

How are you Iris?

IRIS

Good. Just looking to get through the day.

LADY

Don't we all?

IRIS

Yes, I assume (she points to the sofa with her arm) Let's sit down.

SEEN FROM THE CORRIDOR. IRIS CLOSES THE DOUBLE DOORS.

FADE TO BLACK

INT. DAY. PRIVATE OFFICE

LADY

Thank you for your time.

Iris outlines a smile. She gets up and quickly goes behind her desk to check her agenda.

LADY

(seems absent)

How old are you kids?

IRIS

Mmh?

LADY

Never mind.

The lady gets up slowly, adjusting her suit and comes close to her.

IRIS

When can we meet again?

LADY

Let's not schedule it right this moment.

She shakes her hand and then slowly pats her on the shoulder.

LADY (CONT'D)

Go be with your family.

Iris seems confused as she sees her leave. As the lady steps off the room she is welcomed by a handful of people in suits and ties, some with press badges and others holding briefs. They call her "Madam President".

Iris stands alone in her room. Todd is at the entrance and struggles to find a way inside. As he enters and walks towards Iris, we can hear the president speaking in the corridor.

PRESIDENT

Meet me in the situation room and prepare a live press release at 1300 hours. (The sound fades as she walks away with the group behind her). Contact the media, I want as much coverage on this as possible.

(CONTINUED)

TODD

(to Iris)

Do you know what's going on?

IRIS

I need to leave Todd.

TODD

What? Where?

Iris grabs her coat and her things while Todd looks at her motionless. Before stepping out, Iris turns around and looks at Todd.

IRIS

I need to be with my family. And so should you.

7

INT. AFTERNOON. MINIVAN

Iris is driving with the radio on, looking straight at the road. It's a beautiful afternoon, after rain. The winter light hits her face but she looks worried. Celia and Lizzie are in the back. As she drives by other cars, she tries to catch a glimpse of the expressions on other drivers' faces.

LIZZIE

Are we going on a trip mommy?

CELIA

Is Dad coming with us? Mom? Mom?!

IRIS

Stop it Celia. I just needed you both to be with me.

RADIO HOST (V.O.)

(British accent)

... Well it certainly seems like President Warren has some important news to share...

Iris raises the volume and tries to pay attention despite the girls in the back. Celia is playing a loud game on her tablet and Lizzie starts singing.

RADIO CO-HOST (V.O)

Could this be about the Chinese hacking? Or is this another smoke screen?

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED:

RADIO HOST (V.O)
 Michael, you're at the protest
 happening in front of the Senate
 right now, can you tell us what is
 unfolding?

LIZZIE
 (speaking over the
 radio)
 Mommy, can you play the Mr. Moon
 song please?

IRIS
 (impatiently)
 No sweetie. You have to let mommy
 listen. You too Celia, lower the
 sound on your game for me ok?

MICHAEL (V.O)
 I heard you loud and clear Jeremy,
 well no one here seems to know
 what it will be about.

INTERCUT WITH

8 EXT. DAY. OUTSIDE THE SENATE

MICHAEL, a fifty year old British Radio reporter is
 speaking in front of the protest. WE CAN HEAR people
 shouting in the background.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
 But according to an internal
 source, it will most likely not be
 about the...

RADIO HOST (V.O)
 ... Michael sorry to interrupt you
 right now but I have just received
 word that the president has
 started her speech.

INTERCUT WITH

9 INT. AFTERNOON. MINIVAN

Iris looks at the radio carefully as if it was speaking
 her.

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED:

PRESIDENT (V.O)
 ...Therefore I think it is my duty
 to address the world and tell you
 the truth as it stands.

INTERCUT WITH

10 INT. DAY. DINER

A few people inside a small fast food restaurant turn
 their attention to the TV.

PRESIDENT (V.O)
 Just an hour ago my cabinet
 contacted heads of states around
 the world to let them know the
 situation.

INTERCUT WITH

11 INT. DAY. GOVERNMENT - CONFERENCE ROOM

WE CAN SEE the president speaking on the podium. Two
 guards are standing behind her.

PRESIDENT
 There's no easy way to say this
 but we have strong reason to
 believe that the asteroid BH-17
 has changed its trajectory
 (voice breaking)
 and is now heading on a collision
 course with Earth....

INTERCUT WITH

12 INT. AFTERNOON. MINIVAN

Iris holds her breath for a second. WE CAN SEE her
 desperation. Celia stops playing her game and looks at
 the radio.

LIZZIE
 Are you crying mommy?

Iris is looking at her phone. It reads "Update: President
 Warren to make a speech", followed by "Breaking: Asteroid
 BH-17 to hit Earth?".

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED:

PRESIDENT (V.O)

(composed)

Although the exact time and place
of impact still has to be
calculated, I ask you not to yield
to panic...

IRIS

(panting)

It's alright. It's alright.

INTERCUT WITH

13 INT. DAY. CONFERENCE ROOM - WHITE HOUSE

The president's voice is overshadowed by the sound of the
people present in the room. WE CAN HEAR them shout
incomprehensible words, some are crying, others are
laughing.

PRESIDENT (CONT'D)

Once again, I call upon citizens
of this country to remain calm so
we can prepare for this event.

The room becomes more chaotic.

PRESIDENT (CONT'D)

(in a louder tone)

We will face this challenge the
same way we've faced any other
we've encountered during... The
... Wait! No...

The president is taken away from the stand and escorted
out of the room.

14 INT. AFTERNOON. MINIVAN

Iris is looking straight at the road as though she could
not bear to look directly at the radio any longer. Iris'
phone rings, Todd is calling. Iris does not react.

RADIO HOST (V.O)

Michael? Michael? We seem to have
lost the audio with our
correspondent.

The drivers around her start to get nervous, WE CAN HEAR
cars accelerating, honking and police sirens in the back.

(CONTINUED)

RADIO CO-HOST (V.O)

Did we hear correctly? Did she,
did she just say an asteroid was
going to hit our planet?

Iris looks through the rear mirror. Lizzie is sleeping
but Celia is looking at her straight in the eyes.

CELIA

(trembling)
Mom, what's going on? Is this for
real?

IRIS

I don't know Celia. Let me listen.

RADIO HOST (V.O)

It's what I heard but I simply can
not fathom the words. If it's
true, then?

(correcting himself)
Did, did she mention where the
impact would be?!

RADIO CO-HOST

No, I don't think so... Dear God,
is this really happening? Does it
mean this could be our last show?

CIVIL DEFENSE SIRENS GO OFF and it grabs Iris' attention.
She looks to the side. WE CAN HEAR the car in front
breaking suddenly. The minivan crashes into it. Iris hits
her head on her side of the window. THE SOUND FADES.

Iris takes off her seat belt and sees that both of her
girls are still in place. Lizzie cries vigorously.

CELIA

(screaming, blocking
her ears with her
hands)
Mommy! Mommy!

IRIS

(muffled)
Are you ok?

Lizzie and Celia nod. Celia comforts Lizzie.

THE SOUND FADES BACK IN. The car in front is honking
endlessly as the driver is lying unconscious on the
wheel.

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED: (2)

IRIS (CONT'D)

We had an accident, it's gonna be
alright. Just listen to mommy.

Iris tries reaching Celia and Lizzie but her hand is
shaking so she turns back around. A man approaches the
car in front and steals from the unconscious driver.

Iris sees the thief backing away from the car with blood
on his hands. Celia hears a YOUNG GIRL crying for help
outside. She looks through the window and sees two MEN
pulling the young girl's shirt off.

CELIA
(Trembling)
Mum? MOMMY?

Iris locks the doors and tries to start the car. Her hand
can not turn the keys properly.

IRIS
Look away Celia. LOOK AWAY!

The car engine starts.

15 EXT. SUNSET. MOUNTAINOUS COUNTRYSIDE

It's a quiet countryside dirt road. The minivan is
driving fast on the rubble, raising a lot of dust on the
way.

16 INT. SUNSET. MINIVAN

Inside the car, Iris looks exhausted. The radio station
is playing a soft melancholic "Dream Pop" song. Celia and
Lizzie are looking through the back window, playing "I
spy"

CELIA
(Bored)
I spy a pine tree.

Lizzie points out through the rear window the road full
of pine trees mischievously.

CELIA
Ok, so you find something better!

(CONTINUED)

Lizzie turns around on her seat to look through the rear window.

LIZZIE
(looking through the
rear window)
I spy, with my little eye, another
moon.

Celia looks at it with awe and fear.

Noticing her children's silence, Iris looks through the rear mirror and through the rear window SHE CAN SEE amidst the blue sky, the moon and next to it another small pale dot.

THE END