

THE MAN WHO KILLED THE WORLD

A feature film screenplay

by

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INT. BEDROOM, KNOX'S FLAT - DAWN

A hand grasps on to clean white bedcloths. The owner writhes in his sleep, muttering - nightmares.

BANG, BANG, BANG!

Instantly awake.

BILL KNOX (55), neat beard - looks around his apartment - Minimalist chic.

Did he imagine...?

BANG, BANG, BANG! Hammering on the door.

He runs to a window. Looks out -

Below, at his front door - POLICE. At least six of them.

Christ!

He dresses fast.

Grabs a backpack, pre-packed.

Throws open a window, looks out.

CRASH - his front door splinters.

ARMED POLICE burst in.

Knox - nowhere to be seen.

The Police run over to the open window. Several pile through.

EXT. FLAT ROOF - CONTINUOUS

Police climb out of the window, run along the roof. Weapons aimed up at chimney's that might hide a fugitive.

Some look over the edge near drain-pipes, only for other Police below to shake their heads. Didn't come down here.

A SENIOR OFFICER curses under his breath. Lost him!

INT. KNOX'S FLAT

Police tear the room apart.

Busy hands label and bag up computer hard drives.

A smartly dressed man - GARAD (40) slight build, black, keen intelligence - wanders in and looks around.

The Senior Officer approaches him, riled.

SENIOR OFFICER
You've wasted our time.

Garad checks his wrist watch.

GARAD
(American accent)
This operation started eight minutes
late. And the bed's still warm.

The Senior Officer feels the bed sheets - rather than admit culpability, he busies himself elsewhere.

Garad spots a purple presentation case lying open under a chair. He crouches to examine it -

In the velvet lining, a circular indentation where a medal or award should sit.

Garad - Interesting.

LATER

Everyone leaves.

The dust settles.

SQUEAK - in the corner, the wall moves. It had looked like an unremarkable irregularity in the shape of the room.

Knox emerges from his priest-hole with his bag, taking a deep breath.

He heads for the door.

EXT. ALLEYWAY - DAY

Knox, keeping the peak of his cap low over his face, hurries down a quiet alley between the backs of buildings.

Ahead, the skyline of London. Sunlight glistens off the waters of the flooded Thames, as wide as the Mississippi.

INT. TRAIN CARRIAGE - DAY

A packed carriage - BUSINESS TRAVELERS and REFUGEES rub shoulders.

Knox sits trying to look inconspicuous. The MAN next to him reads a tabloid news site on a battered tablet.

Headline: POLICE BUST FOSSIL ESCAPE RING

Knox, lost in thought, looks out of the window to see -
An inland sea, punctuated with the occasional tree and
the tops of bushes, where hedges lie drowned.

EXT. TRAINLINE, FLOODED LAND - DAY

The shabby train glides slowly over the water. Only a
gentle wake reveal that it does indeed run on rails,
although these lie an inch below water level.

The train stops. The ripples settle.

SPLASH. Rubber boots hit the water.

The TRAIN DRIVER splashes to the front of his train, and
produces from his pocket a ruler, on which a red line has
been drawn. Bending down, he puts the ruler into the
water by where the track is dimly visible.

The red line disappears under the water.

INT. TRAIN CARRIAGE - DAY

PASSENGERS mutter to each other about the stoppage.

TRAIN DRIVER (INTERCOM)
Ladies and gents, we're going to have to
return to London - the line is not
passable today.

An outburst of weary disappointment.

TRAIN DRIVER (CONT'D)
To be honest, I don't see it being
passable from here on.

Knox winces at this news.

TRAIN DRIVER (CONT'D)
For services north, services are still
running via Leicester - booking is
essential.

EXT. TRAINLINE, FLOODED LAND - DAY

The driver climbs into the cab of backward-facing engine
and starts the train crawling back to London.

The departing train reveals Knox, standing by the track.

He starts to wade onwards, away from London through the
eerily still and empty water.

TITLE SEQUENCE - MONTAGE

The city of Manila under four foot of water.

Violent protests on the streets.

Dubai: derelict. Dead trees. Wind whips tattered notices in Arabic and English: 'Extreme Heat: Danger'.

Desperate people, their houses surrounded by water, wave from their rooftops to rescue helicopters.

Water laps at the Easter Island statues.

New Orleans levies bursting.

In Europe, crowded camps of tired and hungry refugees.

EXT. VERGE, DUAL-CARRIAGEWAY - DAY

Knox's beard has grown, his face sunburnt and dirty. The clothes he threw on - tattered from week, months possibly, on the road.

The air heavy with CRICKETS. Heat haze ripples the asphalt. Flat country with vineyards. Feels like the South of France.

He stands, a briarwood pipe clenched between his teeth, his thumb out for a lift.

His hand-written sign reads - 'GLASGOW'

INT. TRUCK CAB - DAY

Knox basks in the cool of an air-conditioned cab. The DRIVER - (30s), English, friendly.

DRIVER

You heading for the new hill towns?

Knox - subtle shake of the head.

DRIVER (CONT'D)

Just as well - Scottish government haven't built half the houses they've promised. There are ways round that, though...

Has he piqued Knox's interest? No.

DRIVER (CONT'D)

Or is it the new world - Canada, Iceland, Greenland...? I know people who can get you on a ship, for a price...

Knox - smiles a 'no thank you'.

The Driver glances across at his silent passenger - possible recognition?

EXT. SERVICE STATION FORECOURT - DAY

The lorry pulls in to a service station.

INT. LORRY CAB, PARKED - DAY

The lorry lurches to a stop.

Knox looks up - curious, suspicious.

DRIVER

The sewers in Glasgow are flooded. Loos work here. Hang tight.

Knox - nods.

The Driver gets out of the cab, making a surreptitious move to take his mobile phone.

Knox notices - pretends not to.

Watching the Driver go, Knox waits until he's out of sight...

Knox jumps out of the cab.

SERVICE STATION FORECOURT

Knox climbs over a fence into a field and makes off, away from the road.

FIELD

In the distance far behind him, SIRENS approach the service station.

EXT. FOOT PATH, OPEN COUNTRYSIDE - DAY

Knox trudges through the baking heat of the Ayrshire countryside. Looking up, he spots on a hill-top -

A machine of some sort.

Troubled by the sight, he turns away.

Ahead lies a town and beyond it... the sea.

EXT. HIGH STREET, COASTAL TOWN - DAY

Knox arrives at the High Street -

Shops boarded up. Rickety market stalls on the road-side. A queue outside the bank. Everyone a little tatty, clothes mended - refugees in their own town. The First World in decay.

Suspicious glances.

Graffiti: 'FOSSILS WILL PAY!', 'YOU CAN BE SURE OF [S]HELL'

On the side of a bus stop a flickering display switches between adverts:

- Solar panels
- A movie poster 'Faustus'
- 'Start a new life in Greenland'

Knox puts his head down and makes his way along the street as inconspicuously as he can.

He approaches the bus stop, the advertising display switches image again:

A 'Wanted' poster - Knox's own face!

He sports his neat beard in the photo, but anyone could recognize him from this.

Knox stops dead. No, that's drawing attention! Keep moving. He ups his pace, original course. Sweating.

Nobody looks up - too wrapped up in their own troubles.

He's through. Knox breathes again - lucky!

EXT. BEACH, COASTAL TOWN - DAY

Knox reaches a beach where small boats sit on the shingle.

He glances around - no one about.

Hastily, he pushes a small pleasure boat called 'Helen of Troy' into the water.

EXT. DECK, SMALL BOAT - DAY

Not far from the coast, Knox happily steers his newly acquired craft. He listens to a radio he liberated from the storage locker.

WEATHER FORECASTER (O.S.)
 Irish Sea, Dogger - four or five, perhaps
 gales later...

He changes station.

SCOTTISH NEWSREADER
 Further shocks on the markets are making
 a fatal crash more likely as the Dow
 Jones had its worst day since climate
 Tipping Point was declared...

Ahead, islands.

Checks the navigation computer -

He's at the mouth of the Firth of Clyde - Glasgow's not
 far. Knox allows himself an optimistic smile.

The boat's electric motor PUTTERS out. Knox checks the
 instrument panel -

Flat battery. That's not good.

He breaks the lock to the little cabin. Disappears in
 there. CLANKS and BANGS as he upends everything looking
 for solutions.

Nothing. Fuck!

AT SEA

Fierce wind. Knox has a paddle and desperately tries to
 inch the boat towards land. Futile determination.

The coast - now a long way off.

Sea swell batters the small craft.

Knox's hand clings to the edge of the boat. A fierce will
 to live.

CRASH. Must have hit some rocks.

Still Knox clings on.

A wave throws Knox into the water. He sinks from view.

Black.

EXT. CLIFFS - DAY

KEN BAILIE (16), tall and broad but withdrawn as if not
 fully occupying his physical frame - walks along the
 clifftop path. Glancing down to the cove below -

Is that a body?

Looking closer: it is. He runs back the way he came and to a path down to the beach.

BEACH, ARTAIR

Ken reaches the body at a run. Turns him over.

It's Knox. His hands still clinging to the sill of the boat, now just a broken piece of hull.

Unconscious or dead?

Check his breathing. Ken starts the kiss-of-life - he knows what he's doing.

No response.

Ken continues.

KEN

Come on!

He keeps going, beyond the point where most would give up - desperate.

SPLUTTER. Water seeps out of Knox's mouth. He draws a deep HOARSE breath.

The boy sits back - relieved, exhausted.

INT. BEDROOM, COTTAGE - DAY

Black.

Knox's eyes flutter half-open.

Blurry shapes come gradually into focus. A picture on the wall. A window. Brightness.

He struggles to get up. Too weak.

Closes his eyes.

LATER

Knox's eyes half open -

It's night now. Two indistinct shapes of people.

MHAIRI

We don't know who he is.

KEN
 He's got a British passport.
 I saved him, Mum, saved his life. Like
 you showed me.

The mother hugs her son.

Knox closes his eyes.

INT. BEDROOM, COTTAGE - MORNING

CREAK.

The opening door wakes Knox. Ken enters.

KNOX
 (American accent)
 Water.

Ken leans over and pours him a glass from a pitcher.

Knox swallows. It hurts.

KNOX (CONT'D)
 What day is it?

KEN
 Thursday.

This information spurs Knox to pull himself up. It hurts, but he can do it.

KNOX
 Where am I?

KEN
 Artair.

KNOX
 'Isle of Artair' - like the whisky?

KEN
 Aye.

KNOX
 Glasgow - how do I get to Glasgow?

Ken - not quite sure how to respond. He heads to another room.

Knox eases himself out of bed to see if his legs work - sort of. He turns out his pockets.

Passport, British - check.

Money, a thick fold of large denomination notes - check.

Pipe, polished briarwood - check.

Something's missing. Where is it? Getting frantic.

Spots it on a sideboard - thank God!

- a gold medallion (a fit for that presentation case).

Ken returns with MHAIRI (late 30s), beaten by life. She carries a small pile of clothes.

KNOX (CONT'D)

I need to get to Glasgow.

MHAIRI

Should you be up? Kwame could take you to Campbeltown, maybe.

KNOX

How far is Glasgow from there?

MHAIRI

If you can get a lift: three or four hours. By bus: not until tomorrow.

Not welcome news.

Knox catches sight of himself in a mirror.

KNOX

You don't happen to have a shaver?

Ken disappears.

Mhairi gestures to the clothes.

MHAIRI

You'll want to change.

KNOX

Let me give you some money.

She shakes her head.

KNOX (CONT'D)

(cautiously)

Well... thank you.

Ken returns with a razor.

KEN

It was Dad's. You can keep it.

A sharp look from Mhairi to her son.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

Knox shaves off his beard.

EXT. MHAIRI'S COTTAGE - DAY

Knox and Mhairi emerge from the house. Knox's new clothes - a work shirt and jeans - fit him well enough.

MHAIRI

So, how did you come to be on the beach?

KNOX

You know, I was so sure I could skipper a small boat through a force nine gale...

She smiles. Ken appears with bicycles.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD, ARTAIR - DAY

Mhairi and Ken cycle along an ill-kept tarmac road passing through wild country. Knox wobbles behind them.

Knox looks around at the scenery - it's an austerely beautiful place.

Something catches his attention -

On a distant hilltop sits a machine, like the one he saw on the mainland.

Knox peers, trying to make it out.

His bike goes into a bush.

EXT. DOCKSIDE, ARTAIR TOWN - DAY

They dismount, leaving their cycles against a wall.

KNOX

You're not going to lock them?

Ken smiles - city folk!

Mhairi strides to the quay. Knox and Ken hang back.

Nervous in public spaces, Knox finds a spot where he's not too visible. He looks around in wonder -

Barely larger than a village. Sleepy, comfortable even. It looks almost exactly like such a town would look today, except with no cars. A time capsule.

KNOX (CONT'D)

Amazing...!

KEN

For now.

KNOX

How's that?

Ken both does and doesn't want to talk about it.

A group of TEENAGE GIRLS pass.

KEN

Elsa!

ELSA (17), well-dressed, pretends not to have noticed. An electric Land Rover pulls up and she gets in.

Mhairi waves Knox over. Knox hurries to join her.

MHAIRI

Kwame can do Campbeltown.

Knox smiles and nods a hello to KWAME (30s), Ghanaian, sturdy. Kwame nods back politely.

KWAME

Not today though.

Knox - frustrated.

KWAME (CONT'D)

See that sky?

KNOX

Is there no way?

KWAME

The storms are getting worse.

EXT. THE CLAYMORE PUB, ARTAIR TOWN - DAY

Mhairi and Ken lead Knox towards the local pub.

INT. BAR, THE CLAYMORE - DAY

Quiet, old-fashioned, all a bit run down.

Knox, Mhairi and Ken talk to MALCOLM, the portly landlord.

KNOX

Could I get a room?

MALCOLM

Sorry - we're clearing everything out: evacuation is in six weeks.

KNOX

I have papers.

He digs urgently in his pocket.

Malcolm shakes his head with a smile - no need.

KNOX (CONT'D)

(to Mhairi)

Where else is there?

Mhairi - this is it.

MALCOLM

(to Knox)

Screw it - I'll work something out. Cash only, mind.

Knox pulls out his big bill-fold.

INT. BAR, THE CLAYMORE - DUSK

Knox sits in a corner, keen to be inconspicuous despite being the only visitor in town.

A PARTY takes up most of the attention in the room - farewell drinks of some sort.

Across the bar Knox spots an ELEGANT WOMAN sits having a heated discussion with a MIDDLE-AGED MAN.

Knox gives her a second look.

She notices - returns his gaze with disinterested curiosity. The arrival of any stranger is noteworthy.

Knox looks away, keen not to attract attention.

Looking around, a thought strikes him. He turns over a yellowing tourist flier and starts drawing on the back. Looks like a plan of the room.

INT. KNOX'S ROOM, THE CLAYMORE - NIGHT

Knox looks into his room: pokey, the furniture - worn, but comfortable enough. WIND buffets the windows, making the space feel cosier.

He waves his hand in front of the bedside light. Nothing happens. He claps his hands - no response.

Examining the light - it's the old-fashioned sort with a switch. What is this - the Dark Ages?!

BANG, BANG, BANG!

Knox jumps up... freezes.

MALCOLM (O.C.)
Mr Knox, your supper.

Sigh of relief.

EXT. HIGH STREET, ARTAIR TOWN - NIGHT

Knox wanders through deserted streets in the dead of night, looking for something.

Rain falls, focussing Knox on his objective. He spots -
An ancient phone box at the end of town.

INT. PHONE BOX

Knox talks on the phone, mid-conversation.

KNOX
Nine AM?! They said noon.

EXT. OFFICE, DOCKS - INTERCUT

A porta-cabin window, yellow against the blue night, inside a MAN stands talking on the phone. Outside a container ship sits berthed.

DOCKS CONTACT
She sails at noon, you need to be on board by nine, so we can hide you.

KNOX
Can't you delay it?

DOCKS CONTACT
It's a container ship, not a taxi.
If you're not at Port of Glasgow by nine, you'll have to wait til next month.

KNOX
There must be other...

A LOCAL walks past. Knox smiles politely, wishing them away. He waits until they pass.

KNOX (CONT'D)
...Other ships must be heading to Greenland?

DOCKS CONTACT
Your picture is everywhere - any other ship and they'll turn you in. Find somewhere to lay low.

KNOX

For a month?!

Knox puts the receiver down. He looks around at the town.

KNOX (CONT'D)

Shit!

The wind gets up - the promised storm - he heads back to the pub.

The lights go out across the town.

Concerned, Knox ups his pace.

INT. BAR, THE CLAYMORE - NIGHT

Malcolm unbolts the door to let in a windswept Knox in.

KNOX

Is there a curfew?

MALCOLM

No electricity after ten.

Knox nods and heads to the stairs - a thought stops him.

KNOX

I was thinking about staying longer.

MALCOLM

You'd need to get yourself a carbon ration book.

KNOX

I have the UK carbon ration card.

MALCOLM

No internet. Final nail in the coffin of our tourist trade.

Another parting thought.

KNOX

You know that you'd have lot more room in the bar if you turned the tables north-south, rather than east-west.

MALCOLM

Excuse me?

KNOX

Here.

He finds the flier - his hand-drawn rearrangement of the bar furniture. Malcolm looks at it, nonplussed.

MALCOLM
You an interior designer, then?

KNOX
Civil engineer.

INT. KNOX'S ROOM, THE CLAYMORE - NIGHT

Knox sleeps fitfully, troubled by nightmares.

INT. KNOX'S ROOM, THE CLAYMORE - DAY

Knox dresses - nervous, agitated.

Looking out of the window, he spots something -

The hill with the machine on it.

Unable to settle, he crosses the room and finds his pipe.

Opening his tobacco pouch - inside a soggy, salty mess.

He heads for the door, thinks better of it and sits down.
He plays with the empty pipe.

He must find something to do! Spots a yellowing
paperback.

He sits reading 'The Isle of Artair Story' (produced by
the whisky company). Can't commit to it - throws it down.

Getting up, he paces the room. Increasingly manic energy.

Stops himself. Tries to control his breathing. Self
soothing. Suppressing a panic attack.

KNOCK, KNOCK.

Knox calms himself before replying.

KNOX
Yes?

MALCOLM (O.C.)
Visitor for you.

Knox pales. Urgent looks around the room for an escape
route.

KNOX
Who is it?

EXT. BEER GARDEN, THE CLAYMORE - DAY

Knox - composed now - sits opposite Ken.

KEN
I need your help.

KNOX
Anything.

KEN
I need you to build a wall.

KNOX
Okay, but I warn you I'm not that handy.

KEN
A wall around the island.

Knox - flummoxed.

KEN (CONT'D)
You're an engineer. You could design it.

KNOX
Forgive me, isn't the island being
evacuated in six weeks?

KEN
Only because the harbour won't be safe
for much longer. Most of the buildings
will be above sea level for at least a
year.

KNOX
A seawall would take at least a year to
build, but you'd need a working harbor to
get construction materials in.

KEN
Can you design it?

KNOX
Do you have a sense of what this would
cost?

KEN
Can you design it?

KNOX
I could, but without millions, many
millions of investment there's really no
point.

KEN
I saved your life.

Knox winces - how to handle this...?

KNOX
Look kid, my default mode is 'We can do
it!', but major infrastructure projects
(MORE)

KNOX (CONT'D)

don't get designed and approved and funded in six weeks. I'm sorry that you're losing your home, but I'm afraid we're way too late.

KEN

Well, fuck you then.

Ken stands and struts off.

Knox watches him go, ruefully.

MEMORY FLASH - GRETCHEN (50s), mixed race, professional attire and an old tattoo - glares at him reproachfully. Furious. Tears.

Knox suppresses the painful memory and heads indoors.

BAR

Knox makes to scurry back upstairs, when...

MALCOLM

Let me guess - 'Save Artair'?

Malcolm serves a couple of customers at the bar. He beckons Knox over. Reluctantly, Knox heads to join them.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

Ken's a good lad, and he's certainly determined. He ran the campaign to save the island. Hit the news and everything. We came this close, but...

CUSTOMER 1

When they offered us flats in Wallace - that's what really took the fire out of things. We'll have proper place to be.

Malcolm winces at this sort of talk.

MALCOLM

I better change that barrel.

He hurries downstairs.

CUSTOMER 1

When the winds change, so must we.

CUSTOMER 2

Forgive my friend's cold-heartedness. Many a tear has been shed over leaving this island, I can assure you.

Knox nods sympathetically. About to head upstairs, a thought strikes him.

KNOX

Could you tell me where I can find some pipe tobacco?

CUSTOMER 1

I've not seen anyone smoking tobacco for a year or two...

CUSTOMER 2

Try in Campbeltown. I'm taking my boat there later today, you'd be welcome to come along?

KNOX

Thank you, but I might give boats a swerve for a bit.

CUSTOMER 1

Doesn't old Mrs Girvan smoke a pipe?

INT. CAR - DAY

WALDEN - meaty, something about him screams 'Special Forces' - drives along a motorway.

Up ahead a footbridge over the motorway, from which **two badly beaten bodies hang**, signs around their necks -

'FOSSILS'

POLICEMEN work on taking the bodies down.

Walden registers a satisfied smile.

In the back seat:

Garad - we met him at the start - works on a tablet. If he saw the bodies, he pays them no heed.

EXT. HIGH STREET, ARTAIR TOWN - DAY

Map in hand, Knox heads past the Land Rover he saw before. He throws it a curious glance -

On the door: a Highland shield and a sword logo.

COAST PATH

Knox strides along the coast, checking his map.

He passes the three wind turbines, or rather two turbines and a broken tower. The sails of only one of the complete towers turns in the wind.

Reaching a promontory, he looks out to sea -

A distant container ship heading out to the ocean.

He watches it go regretfully. Turning, he heads on.

Knox walks through the hills, taking in the scenery - it's a wild and beautiful place.

He checks the map again.

NEAR CROFTER'S COTTAGE - LATER

Knox approaches an old crofter's cottage in the middle of nowhere.

Knocks on the door.

The owner, MRS GIRVAN - 80's no-nonsense - opens up.

KNOX

Mrs Girvan?

MRS GIRVAN

Aye?

INT. MRS GIRVAN'S COTTAGE - DAY

Neat and tidy inside - very organised.

Mrs Girvan moves boxes aside in her store cupboard.

MRS GIRVAN

Must've started in 1977. Punk-rocker, I was. Never thought to change.

KNOX

You've smoked all those years and been fine?

MRS GIRVAN

Och, I've had my share of the cancer. It will always catch up with you.

She finds a large cardboard box printed with the suppliers branding.

MRS GIRVAN (CONT'D)

Baccie's hard to come by out here - they'd only sell in bulk. Set me back a bit.

KNOX

I have cash.

She produces a couple of bags.

MRS GIRVAN

I was relying on this stash to see me through.

KNOX

Until you get to Wallace?

MRS GIRVAN

I'm no' going any such place.

KNOX

I don't know how long you'd last here once everyone else was gone.

MRS GIRVAN

That Alec McCorquodale - so keen to pack us all off to 'safety'. Staying safe is not the only thing in this world. This island is our home, for good or ill. It's been settled since the iron age. Dinosaurs before that. If I have to be the last person to lay my bones here... Well, there are worse things.

Knox smiles, impressed by her spirit. He digs for his money.

KNOX

How much do you want?

She thinks.

MRS GIRVAN

Ach, I'm not sure what I'd do with your money.

She presses the tobacco into his hand.

Knox smiles, grateful.

EXT. HILL PATHS, ARTAIR - DAY

Returning from Mrs Girvan's croft, Knox glances up -

He nears the hill with the machine on top.

Should he go to see it?

No.

He turns towards town. Stops. Turns back.

HILLTOP

Knox arrives at the top of the hill, out of breath.

On it sits the machine. Looks like a jet engine - an intake with a large fan. Difficult to tell what it does, or rather did. The brand name on the side:

'Vortex'

It's not too old, but is just starting to rust. It's also attracted a lot of graffiti and vandalism.

He looks at it for a time, conflicted.

Turning, he sees a steel strut lying on the grass. Picking it up he feels the weight. Good.

He brings the strut crashing down on the machine.

Blow after blow. Anger rising.

Finally he drops to his knees in front of it. Spent, both physically and emotionally.

INT. CAR - DAY

Walden drives. Garad works on his tablet.

A thought strikes Walden.

WALDEN

(Texan)

What's your thinking on our rules of engagement...

REAR-VIEW MIRROR - Garad looks up sharply.

WALDEN (CONT'D)

Any subtle intimations from the powers-that-be?

A questioning look from Garad.

WALDEN (CONT'D)

Why go to the trouble of smuggling handguns into the UK for us if we're not...

Garad returns to what he was doing.

WALDEN (CONT'D)

I mean: the trial is costing ten million per defendant. A bullet is a heck of a lot cheaper. Like with Professor Valentin...

Garad stops what he's doing, but doesn't look up.

GARAD

That was different. This one's worth every penny. I'd even chip in myself. Now, would you mind if I worked?

INT. KNOX'S ROOM, THE CLAYMORE - DAY

Knox stares at his gold medallion, thinking.

He makes a decision.

FLAP! Knox throws open the Ordnance Survey map out to its full extent. Spreads it on the floor in front of him.

Gazing at the entirety of the island, he nods to himself and smiles. Relieved, he settles to his new project.

INT. TOWER - DAY

Knox climbs an infinitely tall metal ladder in an enclosed space, with only a thin trickle of light coming from above.

He looks up -

A long way still to go.

INT. ENGINE ROOM - DAY

A white room with a lot of machinery and breaker boxes. On a work surface fat ring-bound manuals lie open. Nearby, harnesses hang from a rack.

Knox catches his breath - more of a climb than he'd bargained for.

He looks up - a further ladder leads to a perspex hatch in the roof.

EXT. ROOF, WIND TURBINE - DAY

Knox throws the hatch open and emerges. A gust of wind whips his hair. An anemometer spins merrily, but the giant blades stand still.

From this roof he can see the whole island spread out around him.

He doesn't dare come out too far - only the lowest of railings stands between anyone on that roof and a 300 foot drop.

Grabbing a pair of binoculars and the map from his pack, Knox sets about surveying the scenery.

EXT. CLIFF - DAY

Knox strides along at the land's edge and looks around.

He examines the rocks.

Peers over the cliff edge.

Checks the map - where to next?

HILLSIDE

Knox marches a weary route over the distant hills by the sea.

Using a stone, he digs in the soil. There are layers.

He takes the earth in his hand, rubs it between his fingers. Assessing it.

Notes something down on the map.

DUNES

He wanders around the long grass. Finding a stick, he pokes at the ground.

NEAR CROFTER'S COTTAGE

Weary, Knox returns to Mrs Girvan's to find her sitting outside, knitting.

MRS GIRVAN

You can't have smoked it that quick!

Knox smiles.

KNOX

Maybe you could help me with something else? You've lived up here for years, right?

MRS GIRVAN

Aye.

KNOX

I'd like to know about the valley.

INT. BAR, THE CLAYMORE - EVENING

Knox sits at a table with the map, working at something.

Looking up, he spots an old barometer on the wall. A thought strikes him and he approaches the bar.

KNOX

Quiet tonight.

MALCOLM

A lot of regulars have already packed up and moved away - beat the rush. Besides, not much happens on a Wednesday.

KNOX

Not much happens here at all.

MALCOLM

I dunno - we had a Fossil here a few months back!

KNOX

What happened?

Malcolm smiles. Not a nice smile.

MALCOLM

Ken and some friends dealt with him.

Knox smiles thinly.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

What are you doing here, Mr Knox?

KNOX

Just playing with an idea.

MALCOLM

I mean on the island.

KNOX

My job in Greenland got delayed. I've got a month, I'm overdue a vacation so I thought why pay to go somewhere when you can just be ship-wrecked somewhere beautiful for free?

MALCOLM

Seriously, though. We're all a little curious.

He gestures confidentially to Malcolm, checking to see if anyone might overhear their conversation.

KNOX

It may sound a little melodramatic, but I'm on the run.

MALCOLM

Police?

KNOX

Some years ago my firm reported on the urgent need to strengthen the Thames

(MORE)

KNOX (CONT'D)

flood barrier. A report the government buried. Now they're looking to bury me.

Malcolm whistles.

MALCOLM

Police from down south won't get much co-operation from the local boys.

Knox scoffs.

KNOX

Police aren't my problem. The head of my firm threatened to take the report to the media and he ended up under a train.

Malcolm thinks for a moment.

Turning, he walks over to where there's a phone. Instead of making a call he takes down a bottle of whiskey and pours a dram.

He puts the glass down on the table in front of Knox.

Knox takes a sip. It's amazing.

MALCOLM

You're in our care now.

EXT. DOCKSIDE, ARTAIR TOWN - DAY

Knox walks down to the edge of the dock with the barometer and a tape measure. Pipe puffing merrily.

Holding the antique just above the level of the water, he marks where on the dial the needle points.

Ken, just out of school, spots him.

KEN

What you doing?

KNOX

An experiment.

KEN

Aye?

Knox smiles and nods an 'I'd better get on'.

KEN (CONT'D)

Why the barometer?

KNOX

Measuring elevation above sea-level. Bit of a crazy thing to use, but you adapt to what's available.

KEN

Why?

Knox thinks. Decides.

KNOX

If I don't have elevation data how can I design a seawall?

Ken's jaw drops.

KEN

You're messing with me.

KNOX

It's a challenge: sixteen miles of coastline in need of fortification. Steel girders... Ashcrete... you're looking at little change from a hundred and fifty million.

KEN

Aye...

KNOX

So you don't use steel girders and ashcrete...

KEN

You're still going to need some money.

KNOX

You betcha.

KEN

And did you no' say there's not enough time?

KNOX

You know what makes a project happen?

He heads off, leaving a dumbstruck Ken.

KNOX (CONT'D)

(calling back)

Momentum. You coming?

Ken runs after him.

EXT. COASTAL PATH, ARTAIR - DAY

Knox marches along a cliff-edge path, consulting his map, smoke billowing from his pipe. Ken follows him carrying the barometer.

KNOX

Stage one: survey the topography. Stage two: assess the ground. Stage three: scope out building materials.

STEPS DOWN CLIFF

They pause in their descent to take a reading.

Knox notes it on the map.

BEACH

Ken notes down an elevation on Knox's map. He and Knox head on.

KEN

What was it like?

KNOX

"It"?

KEN

When you were young? Before this all happened.

KNOX

It was already happening when I was a kid, it's just that not many people were taking notice.

KEN

But what was the world like?

Knox thinks.

KNOX

Shiny. Before the first crash people were building these great glass towers wherever you looked. It was a new century and it was like everything had just been taken out of its packaging.

KEN

Where was that?

KNOX

Miami.

KEN

I'd love to go there one day.

KNOX

That was over forty years ago - half of it's underwater now.

KEN

I know. I'm done here - I'm no' gonna rot in some 'new town' either. Did you travel much?

(asking about a dirty secret)

Did you fly?

KNOX

For work.

KEN

Where did you go?

KNOX

I remember Mumbai - it was the biggest city you could imagine... then double it. And the colours! I was living in Britain by then; coming from London it was like having stepped out of twilight into the mid-day sun.

A sad smile for lost things.

KEN

Where else?

EXT. MHAIRI'S COTTAGE - DUSK

Knox and Ken stand at the back door. Mhairi opens up.

MHAIRI

(to Ken)

Where the hell have you been! You were supposed to be helping me taking down the Baxters' panels.

KNOX

I'm sorry, I didn't know.

MHAIRI

It's his responsibility to remember.

(to Ken)

Now, get inside!

KEN

Sorry, Mum.

KNOX

Sorry.

He retreats.

Mhairi watches him go... before turning to continue scolding her son.

EXT. BEACH, COASTAL TOWN - DAY

Garad stands on the spot from which Knox stole the boat, chatting to a LOCAL - retired, affluent, 60s.

GARAD

Could I trouble you for the Hull Identification number?

BOAT OWNER

If you find a boat with 'Helen of Troy' painted on the prow, that would be it. Can American police operate here?

GARAD

(indicating Walden)
Sergeant Frazer is my local liaison.

Walden nods. Does not attempt a Scottish accent.

GARAD (CONT'D)

What was in the boat when it was taken?

BOAT OWNER

Has the theft of my little boat become an international incident?

GARAD

(confidentially)
We believe it was taken by a fugitive.

BOAT OWNER

An American fugitive?

GARAD

There are people that both our countries wish to see brought to justice.

BOAT OWNER

A Fossil? Must be someone big to fetch you all this way.

GARAD

Can I ask for your discretion?

BOAT OWNER

Not a word. I tell you one thing: the bugger would have got a shock! The motor - battery was almost dead, he wouldn't have got far.

GARAD

How far?

EXT. BEACH, ARTAIR - DAY

Knox digs a deep hole near the dunes and Ken looks on. Above them, the sky threatens.

Exhausted, Knox climbs out of the hole and Ken takes over.

TING, TING - Ken's spade taps the bottom of the hole.

KNOX

We're there.

Ken gets out and Knox jumps in. He brushes away sandy soil, using a torch to examine the bedrock.

KNOX (CONT'D)

Quartzite.

KEN

Is that good?

KNOX

Good and bad. Tough to drill, but once we've got piles in there they'll really last.

OLD CAR PARK

A parking lot, weeds growing through the tarmac. Here a dozen or so old cars have been left to rust.

Rain hits a puddle. Ken's feet, then Knox's SPLASH through it, heading towards the cars and shelter.

He jumps into an old pickup truck with flat tires.

INT. PICKUP TRUCK, CAR PARK

Knox jumps in the passenger's side and shakes the water from his hair.

KEN

This was ours.

Rain hammers down on the windscreen.

Knox and Ken sit in a comfortable silence. Ken stares out of the window, Knox cleans his pipe.

KEN (CONT'D)

(indicating the pipe)

Can I try?

KNOX

Why?

KEN
Dunno - curious.

KNOX
You know smoking's bad for you?

KEN
So, why do you do it?

Knox thinks.

KNOX
Why did I start? I guess I got tired of acting responsibly. Besides, a pipe catches people's attention. Talking of which, who's the girl?

KEN
Girl?

KNOX
The one you can't get to notice you.

KEN
Can too!

Knox throws him a skeptical smile.

KEN (CONT'D)
Right now she thinks I'm a creep, but I'll win her over.

KNOX
How long have you been trying?

Ken goes quiet.

KNOX (CONT'D)
Is she why you want to build the wall?

KEN
No!

KNOX
It's okay, I only started working in renewables to impress a girl.

KEN
Who was she?

MEMORY FLASH - Gretchen (20) at a demo.

Knox - momentary wince at the memory.

KNOX
Gretchen.

KEN

Did it work?

Knox smiles.

KNOX

We were together for a time. Worked together even longer. What's more I found my calling... Point is - forget making grand gestures: just believe in yourself. You got this.

Ken thinks this over.

KEN

So, can I try the pipe?

KNOX

Sorry.

KEN

We had a deal!

KNOX

I have no knowledge of any deal... besides, your Mom would kill me.

Ken gives up on the idea and looks up at the clouds outside.

EXT. MHAIRI'S COTTAGE - AFTERNOON

Knox and Ken stand by Mhairi's door. Knox checks his watch before knocking.

KNOX

Not too late, I hope?

MHAIRI

You're alright. Will you have some tea?

KNOX

I better head back.

MHAIRI

What would you need to get back for?

Knox smiles - fair point.

INT. LIVING ROOM, COTTAGE - DUSK

Knox sits on the sofa. Mhairi pours him some tea and moves on to Ken.

MHAIRI

So, what have you lads been up to? Ken told me something about a project...

KEN

And I told you that it's a secret!

MHAIRI

Maybe Mr Knox can...

KNOX

I don't want to talk about it until I'm sure. You'll know all about it soon enough. This tea isn't bad - where's it from?

MHAIRI

Bulgaria, I think.

KNOX

They grow tea in Bulgaria now?

MHAIRI

And what about you, where are you from?

KNOX

I live... lived in London working for an engineering company that went under.

MHAIRI

Went under?

Knox smiles.

KNOX

Went bust; the office is still above the waterline, as far as I know. Nowadays I do what I can to survive, like everybody I guess. I live where I can find work.

KEN

Bill's been telling about all the places he travelled when he was younger.

MHAIRI

You mustn't go filling the lad's head with ideas.

KNOX

No, that was a different world.

KEN

I'm not talking about going to Singapore - traveling around Scotland would be a start.

MHAIRI

We'll be in Wallace soon.

KNOX

Of all the places I've travelled to in the UK, Artair is probably the most 'together'. It may not be exciting, but there's a whole world of 'exciting' out there that you don't want to see.

Ken - stung. Stands.

KEN

Excuse me.

He strops upstairs.

KNOX

I hope I didn't...

MHAIRI

Sorry, he's got a lot of pent up anger. And thank you. You think you're being over-protective, making his world this small, but then you listen to the news...

KNOX

It's all true. And more. I don't know if you realise but this place is... it's like the last twenty years didn't happen. You were right to keep him here.

MHAIRI

Wasnae easy. Do you have kids?

Knox pauses. Nods awkwardly.

LATER

They talk over glasses of wine.

KNOX

What about Ken's Dad?

She looks away.

KNOX (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. You look after him well.

MHAIRI

What about you? Who looks after you?

KNOX

No one, not even me.

MEMORY FLASH - An expensively dressed MAN (40), big smile.

Knox smiles sadly.

KNOX (CONT'D)

I was nearby when the Chancery Lane bomb went off. In a sub-basement meeting room - we didn't hear it. No reception either. So, we're coming upstairs afterwards: the client's cell rings - it's her husband "Is she okay?". Then another - it's his sister, going crazy. Finally, my phone rings...
Who's checking to see that I'm okay? It's my boss!

Mhairi laughs.

KNOX (CONT'D)

Laugh if you like! Everyone else did. But: him - he looks after me. Looked after me.

MHAIRI

What happened to him?

KNOX

Got on the wrong side of the government.

Mhairi nods sympathetically.

MHAIRI

Will you have some tea?

KNOX

Tea? Do you mean 'dinner'?

She smiles.

KNOX (CONT'D)

I should go before the power goes off.

MHAIRI

That's not for an hour or more.

He stands.

She catches his hand, as if to stop him. Regrets the gesture and lets go, embarrassed.

Knox hesitates.

KNOX

Another time, maybe?

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - NIGHT

Knox walks alone in the dark, lighting his way with a torch. Silence, but for his FOOTSTEPS. He's upset, almost tearful.

EXT. PICNIC TABLE, NEAR BEACH - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

[All we hear are Knox's FOOTSTEPS]

Knox and Gretchen - she hippyish, he a cool geek (both 20s) sit at an idyllic spot, working together on an open notebook by the light of a lantern.

They discuss ideas earnestly. He comes across as confident, excitable - a world away from his older self.

He says something to make her laugh.

Knox goes in for a kiss.

Gretchen - surprised, takes a moment to process, cautiously reciprocates.

END OF FLASHBACK

BACK TO COUNTRY ROAD

Knox shakes himself free of the memory and pulls himself together. He approaches the lights of the town.

INT. KNOX'S ROOM, THE CLAYMORE - NIGHT

Knox works with his map and notebook. Below he hears a few DRINKER spilling out on to the street - chucking-out time.

Knox screws up a page of his notebook and bins it. There's a lot in the bin already.

He has a radio on.

ANNOUNCER

The special session of the International Court of Justice started in New York today. The five men charged with...

CLUNK the electricity goes off - the light and radio with it.

Knox lights a candle and works on, determined.

EXT. THE CLAYMORE PUB, ARTAIR TOWN - DAY

Knox stands alone on the street, binoculars in hand. Checks his watch.

Looks up and down the street - where is Ken?

A LOCAL COUPLE look at this eccentric figure with curiosity.

Knox sets off up the road, alone.

EXT. INLAND PATH - DAY

The road to Mhairi's house. Knox sees Ken coming in the other direction.

KNOX
I thought you'd bailed.

KEN
I'm not helping you, I'm helping the island.

KNOX
Okay. For what it's worth, I'm sorry.

KEN
Let's just go.

Knox turns and the two head off together.

COASTAL PATH

Knox and Ken walk in silence for a time. Something on Knox's mind.

KNOX
So, what happened to your Dad?

KEN
He got what he deserved.

Knox - taken aback by Ken's dark vehemence.

HILL PATH

From a vantage point, Knox surveys the landscape through binoculars.

KNOX
Not as much topsoil as I'd hoped for.

KEN
Is that a problem?

Binocular POV - roving across the landscape

KNOX
Well, you work with the resources you have to hand. The rock is durable, but tough to transport. What else is there?

The binoculars wander on. Stop. They return to the tower of the broken wind turbine.

KNOX (CONT'D)

Maybe... maybe...

KEN

What?

KNOX

The turbine tower. Take that down, cut it lengthways and you've got two 100 meter curves, perfect for deflecting waves.

KEN

Do you think it's possible?

KNOX

I've only just come up with the idea. Give me a break!

KEN

But is it possible?

Knox looks around, deep in thought. He nods.

Ken beams.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

An anonymous chain hotel.

Garad and Frazer sit at a laptop. Outside HEAVY RAIN. On the laptop screen:

A weather map of the south-west coast of Scotland.

GARAD

Assuming he's headed for Glasgow, if the battery died after half an hour - where would he have drifted?

WALDEN

If he didn't get to land - square in the middle of that storm.

GARAD

Which would take him where?

WALDEN

Oz? Kansas? Who knows. It's late.

Garad checks his watch, unimpressed.

WALDEN (CONT'D)

Alright!

Walden settles back to work.

INT. KNOX'S ROOM, THE CLAYMORE - NIGHT

Rain LASHES the windows.

Knox, still working on his plans by candlelight, obsessively checks two columns of figures against each other. He stops - something doesn't tally.

Without hesitation he throws on his coat, grabs his equipment and heads for the door.

EXT. PATH TO THE HILLS - DAWN

Knox strikes out into the near-darkness. Soaking rain.

HILLSIDE

Buffeted by the wind, he battles through the rain with single-minded determination.

CLIFF PATH

He arrives at a spot he marked previously, hunched against the elements he takes a quick reading. Checks it. Turns around and heads back.

INT. BAR, THE CLAYMORE - MORNING

Knox comes through the door, drenched from head to toe.

MALCOLM pauses in his work to check-out the sight.

KNOX'S ROOM, THE CLAYMORE - DAY

Knox adds the missing detail to the plan and looks over his work. A slow smile of achievement passes across his face.

Laying down his pen, he yawns.

INT. HEADMASTER'S OFFICE, SCHOOL - DAY

A cramped office, a bit run down.

Knox sits self-consciously on a too-small child's plastic chair.

Across the desk: MCCORQUODALE - 40's, friendly, hassled, chip on his shoulder, the man he saw arguing with the elegant lady in the pub.

KNOX

Are you the right guy to see about...

MCCORQUODALE

Pretty much anything. Geography teacher, Headmaster, Council Leader, Sheriff and general Head of Paperclips.

Knox lays a folder on McCorquodale's desk.

KNOX

What about this?

McCorquodale takes it, curious. He peruses the plans inside.

MCCORQUODALE

I'm afraid we looked into this: a seawall is way too expensive.

KNOX

There's a cost breakdown.

MCCORQUODALE

The only thing on Artair of significant economic value is the distillery - we're already taking that apart to move it to the mainland.

KNOX

Page six.

Humoring him, McCorquodale flicks through. He raises an eyebrow. Shakes his head.

MCCORQUODALE

No. We had numerous bids, no one came in anywhere near this low.

KNOX

I'm not charging you for the design, and just using Dutch dyke-building techniques.

McCorquodale snorts.

KNOX (CONT'D)

Kept the Netherlands dry for five hundred years. Learn from the past.

MCCORQUODALE

And how many contractors around here know those techniques, do you think?

KNOX

It's all in the design, the actual construction is child's-play. Slower than modern materials, but much cheaper.

MCCORQUODALE

It's all very well, but come September 27th the government's sending boats for us and we're gone for good. If you'd been here a year ago...

McCorquodale shows him to the door.

MCCORQUODALE (CONT'D)

(confidentially)

Mr Knox, I hope this stops here.

KNOX

Why would I stop?

McCorquodale thinks.

MCCORQUODALE

Okay, I'll pass your plan on to The Islands Council - how about that? But if you could keep it to yourself while they're deliberating.

Knox smiles, but takes the folder away with him.

EXT. SCHOOL GATE - DAY

Knox and Ken walk away from the school.

KEN

Well...?

KNOX

Who's the richest person on the island?

I/E. PHONE BOX, ARTAIR TOWN - DAY

Knox talks on the phone.

KNOX

...Bill Knox of Marlowe Engineering.

(listens)

I'm sorry, I can't say what it's about.

(listens)

When do you think she might be less busy?

EXT. ARTAIR DISTILLERY - DAY

Knox, folder in hand, walks up to state-of-the-art security gates, the sign -

'Isle of Artair Distillery'.

The logo a Highland shield and sword. The celtic signage at odds with the industrial site that lies beyond.

He hits an intercom buzzer.

KNOX

Bill Knox for The MacDonnell. Sorry, I'm a little late.

MALE VOICE

You're not on the system.

KNOX

I just need five minutes.

MALE VOICE

I'm sorry.

KNOX

I'm not leaving until I've had a meeting.

MALE VOICE

Good luck with that!

LATER

Knox stands waiting in the pouring rain, folder hugged protectively in his coat to keep it dry. Resolute.

In the distant security office FIGURES converse.

With a BEEP the gate opens.

INT. MACDONNELL'S OFFICE, DISTILLERY - DAY

Corporate chic meets Scottish baronial - a chrome and glass desk, stags' heads on the wall.

Above the desk: the real 'targe' shield and claymore sword represented in the company logo.

A dripping Knox sits across the desk from ALEXANDRA MACDONNELL (early 40s), the elegant woman from the pub - commanding, hereditary Chieftain of the isle and owner/manager of the distillery.

Across the room Elsa - the girl Ken called to in town - kneels on the floor packing yellowed paperwork into archive boxes.

MacDonnell reads Knox's document. A raised eyebrow. She closes the cover. Struggles with a decision.

MACDONNELL

Elsa - homework.

Elsa gets up and leaves, with an ill grace. MacDonnell waits until she's gone -

MACDONNELL (CONT'D)

So, who exactly are you?

KNOX

I have twenty years experience as an environmental engineer, both for governmental and corporate clients. You can see my full credentials on the website.

MACDONNELL

We've lost the internet - I think you know that.

His look concedes the point.

KNOX

The question you should be asking yourself is 'how can I be sure that he knows what he's doing?' I suspect you've been told that the reason why building a wall would be expensive is because the machair land on the west coast is so calcerious.

She has been told this before. She reopens the folder for a second look.

MACDONNELL

This would require quite a workforce.

KNOX

The plan assumes able-bodied islanders will help.

MACDONNELL

That's a confident assumption.

KNOX

Given the alternative, surely it's worth a try?

She closes the document.

MACDONNELL

By trying we'd lose our places in Wallace. 'Certain safety' versus 'something of a long-shot'. I'm sorry.

Frustrated, Knox stands to leave. A thought strikes him on his way to the door. Desperate.

KNOX

About that...

MACDONNELL

About what?

KNOX

You know the new towns have nowhere near the promised numbers of houses?

MACDONNELL

Did you read that in the English papers?

KNOX

I have it on good authority.

MacDonnell hides her discomfort. She stands and walks to the window.

MACDONNELL

Thank you, I will consider your proposal.

EXT. ROAD NEAR DISTILLERY - DAY

Knox walks along the road back to town, keeping his shit together. He glances back. Far enough away? Yes.

KNOX

Fuck!!!

INT. BAR, THE CLAYMORE - DAY

Knox sits smoking his pipe, frustrated.

Malcolm passes.

KNOX

Did you think about moving these tables round? I could help you.

MALCOLM

Not sure there's much point in changing, this late in the day.

Knox nods, forced smile.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

You know you can't smoke in here?

KNOX

Sorry.

Ken arrives and joins Knox. Malcolm moves on.

KEN

Well?

KNOX

Plan B.

KEN

She was plan B?

Knox nods and falls silent. Cracks show in his can-do optimism.

KEN (CONT'D)

Why are you doing this - helping us?

KNOX

I like helping people.

(recovering his spark)

Okay, who could we talk to about a public meeting?

KEN

That would be the headmaster?

So much for that idea!

A thought strikes Ken.

KEN (CONT'D)

What about getting my friends to help?

KNOX

Same problem - how do you bypass McCorquodale?

Ken smiles.

EXT. SCHOOL GATE - DAY

SCHOOL KIDS troop out of the gate.

Ken stands behind a wall, surreptitiously handing out leaflets to his classmates.

INT. BAR, THE CLAYMORE - DAY

Knox and Ken sit together, as before.

KEN

A lot of interest, particularly the first and second years.

Mhairi comes in laden with shopping bags.

MHAIRI

Time to come home now.

KNOX

Will you join us for a drink?

MHAIRI

I have shopping for the freezer.

(to Ken)

Come on, get your coat.

KEN
What's the rush?

Knox notices -

Mhairi won't meet his eye.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD, ARTAIR - DUSK

Knox walks the road to Mhairi's cottage.

EXT. MHAIRI'S COTTAGE - NIGHT

Standing in the shadow of a tree, Knox watches the house.

The light in Ken's room goes off.

Knox knocks softly on the door.

Mhairi answers - surprised to see him.

KNOX
Can I come in?

She hesitates, but opens the door.

INT. KITCHEN, MHAIRI'S COTTAGE - NIGHT

Mhairi stays at the other end of the room.

Awkward silence between them.

KNOX
What do you know?

MHAIRI
The mainland: there are posters everywhere. You're not a whistleblower, you're a fossil.

KNOX
It's not true: I worked on the Thames barrier.

MHAIRI
So why the posters? The Scottish government shelters whistleblowers.

Knox won't say.

MHAIRI (CONT'D)
If I wanted to turn you in, I could have done that already.

Knox - still guarded.

Mhairi takes a deep breath.

MHAIRI (CONT'D)

I worked on the rigs myself.

Knox - surprised.

MHAIRI (CONT'D)

Fergus and I got uncomfortable not being able to keep friends outside the oil industry, even before Tipping Point. We came here, set up a business - told nobody about our past lives. He was drinking with a fisherman from the mainland - the fella worked it out. There was a fight and... and Fergus ended up dead. The man was charged with causing a public disturbance - McCorquodale saw to that - I think he got a small fine.

KNOX

I'm so sorry.

(deep breath)

I worked on coastal defenses... for Parker-Barrow Oil.

Mhairi nods, accepting.

MHAIRI

I can get you off the island.

KNOX

Thank you. Once we've started the wall.

MHAIRI

We may be cut off on the island, but we're not that cut off! It just needs one of the fellas from the supply boat to see you...

KNOX

I'll keep my head down.

MHAIRI

Why so fixed on this wall?

KNOX

Because I know it can be done.

Mhairi - curious.

INT. KNOX'S ROOM, THE CLAYMORE - NIGHT

Knox works on plans, the radio playing.

JOURNALIST

Next week, the defendant everyone's waiting to hear from will be making his opening statement.

Knox looks up, his attention caught. An uncomfortable memory trickles into his head.

INT. CONFERENCE HALL, GLASGOW - DAY (FLASHBACK)

[No natural sound, just the GULLS and radio from before]

Knox - (30) hipster - and Gretchen - (30s), less hippyish than before - stand by a small stall, trying to put brochures into the hands of DELEGATES who are otherwise busy. Both wear COP26 lanyards.

JOURNALIST (O.C. CONT'D)

Ironically he's on trial not as an oil tycoon, but for his part in the Vortex scandal. I am, of course, talking about Steven Barrow.

STEVEN BARROW - (40), clean cut, but with Tech Bro energy - sweeps up to the stall with his ENTOURAGE.

He offers a hand to shake - both refuses it.

Barrow shows them a copy of the brochure they've been trying to hand out. On the cover 'Vortex'.

Barrow's impressed.

He talks, charming and positive.

JOURNALIST (O.C.) (CONT'D)

One of the key witnesses will be British scientist, Dr Gretchen Patel.

ON Gretchen listening, arms folded - hostile.

Barrow invites them to come with him.

Knox agrees to come. Gretchen - reluctant, but they talk her round.

END OF FLASHBACK

BACK TO KNOX'S ROOM, THE CLAYMORE

Pushing away the memory, Knox returns to work on the plans, redoubling his efforts.

EXT. OLD CAR PARK, HILLS - DAY

Knox and Ken arrive at the abandoned cars. They sit and wait. Knox checks his watch. Looks to the road that leads to the car park -

Empty.

KNOX

You said 1pm?

Ken nods.

Clouds gather.

Ken throws stones - bored, depressed. Knox paces angrily, checks his watch again. Still no one comes.

KNOX (CONT'D)

Does no one want to save this goddam island?!

KEN

Murdo's Dad says he thinks it's some sort of con. Someone else said they though you were mad.

KNOX

For Christ's sake!

KEN

They want to believe in you.

Knox takes this in.

EXT. MOTORWAY BRIDGE - DAY (FLASHBACK)

[The sound from the cliff continues, no sound from this scene]

Knox and Gretchen (both early 40s) with various SCIENTISTS and ONLOOKERS including Barrow, huddle together. Some wear facemasks to protect from the fumes of the traffic below.

They surround a Vortex machine, like the one on the island except without the housing. An experimental model.

Knox places an air quality meter in front of the intake and takes a reading -

CO2 = 770ppm (parts per million)

He shows it to the onlookers. Walking to the back of the machine, he holds the sensor near the exhaust.

770ppm.

Gretchen switches the machine on.

An anxious wait.

Gretchen looks to Knox, worried.

Knox returns a reassuring glance, attempting to hide his own concern.

767ppm.

750ppm.

610ppm.

526ppm.

312ppm.

It stabilizes at: 274ppm.

Smiling, he shows the reading to his colleagues.

Jubilation!

Backs slapped, hands warmly shaken.

Knox and Gretchen hug.

END OF FLASHBACK

BACK TO THE OLD CAR PARK

Knox nods to himself, grim faced.

KNOX

They need a reason to believe in me? I
can do that!

He storms off.

INT. TOWER, WIND TURBINE - DAY

Knox pounds up the ladder with purpose.

INT. ENGINE ROOM, WIND TURBINE - DAY

A small display offers a helpful error message. Knox hits the touch screen -

A line drawing indicates an obstruction around the hub.

His face falls.

Knox leafs through one of the ring binders.

He turns switches and hits buttons.

Knox straps himself into a climbing harness, not certain how it goes on.

EXT. ROOF, WIND TURBINE - DAY

Emerging from the hatch, Knox straps his harness to the rail around the edge.

Windier than last time - a storm approaches.

Knox crawls out towards the boss - the centre of the blades.

Clinging on for dear life, terror etched in his face, he looks down -

Planet Earth lies a long way below.

Trying to concentrate on the boss, he spots something shiny and colourful peeping out from where it meets the body of the tower.

The wind gets up properly now. Large drops of rain splat on the white metal.

Knox reaches down to the obstruction - nowhere near being able to reach.

Fear in his eyes, Knox starts to reconfigure his harness.

EXT. MEADOW, NEAR WIND TURBINES - DAY

Ken marches along, looking about him.

KEN

Bill?! Bill?!

Movement up the turbine catches his attention. His eyes widen.

KEN (CONT'D)

Bill!!! Are you mad?!!!

EXT. ROOF, WIND TURBINE - CONTINUOUS

Ken - an ant in the meadow below. He couldn't be heard if it weren't blowing a gale.

The anemometer, a spinning blur.

Knox faces backwards now. He ties a rope to his harness.

Breathing fast, he starts to lower himself down the side of the housing towards the blockage.

A gust of wind knocks his feet away. He grabs for the railing and catches it with one hand. Clings on for dear life.

INSERT - Ken looks on, heart in his mouth.

Reaches for the rail with his second hand - can't do it. With a mighty effort he pulls again. Catches the railing.

Hand by hands he edges sideways towards the boss, rain drenching him.

The colourful obstruction in sight...

Knox clips his harness to the railing and reaches out to the colourful foil... whatever it is.

He grabs it and pulls. It moves, but doesn't come free.

He gives it a strong yank...

...and half falls out of his harness. His weight frees the object - the remains of a kid's party balloon - but Knox hangs sideways, ready to slip out of the harness.

INSERT - Ken winces. OTHERS join him.

Grabbing on to the rope, Knox uses the last of his strength to straighten himself up.

He hauls himself back on to the roof, panting.

INT. ENGINE ROOM, WIND TURBINE - DAY

An exhausted Knox hits a big green button. A hundred buttons light up around the room.

He smiles, uncertainly - has it worked?

EXT. MEADOW NEAR WIND TURBINES - DAY

Knox emerges from the door of the turbine to find A SMALL GROUP OF KIDS in wet-weather gear waiting for him.

Ken greets him with a consoling smile.

KEN

You're mad!

Knox looks up -

The sails aren't turning.

KNOX

Oh!

(thinks for a moment)

Okay, that should be fine.

Ken helps him limp away.

INSERT - a screen in the control room shows wind speed in red. 58mph - 57mph - 56mph... 55mph and the figures turn from red to green.

Machinery starts to WHIR.

MEADOW NEAR WIND TURBINES - CONTINUOUS

The wind drops. Knox turns. He smiles.

Seeing this, the other turn.

The sails start to rotate.

Wild WHOOPING!

KNOX

Over fifty-five the sails lock and feather. In reality they should be fine up to sixty-five, and would generate a lot more power. I might look into that...

EXT. THE CLAYMORE PUB - NIGHT

Malcolm puts out a sign:

'Late Night Opening!'

Sounds of JOLLITY from within the pub.

EXT. OLD CAR PARK, HILLS - DAY

Knox and Ken wait in the abandoned pick-up.

KEN

How many people do we need, minimum?

KNOX

We find a use for anyone who shows.

They wait, lost in private thought.

KNOX (CONT'D)

About your Dad... maybe don't be so hard on him.

KEN

How did he live with himself?

KNOX

Everyone knew what was happening. We all pretended that it wasn't happening, or that it would be okay somehow. I don't think your father was any different.

KEN

But he wasnae turning a blind eye - he was one of the guys doing the damage.

KNOX

But he left the oil company. He knew he'd done wrong. Didn't he deserved a second chance?

KEN

He didnae leave us with a second chance.

KNOX

Staying angry with him only hurts you.

Ken - looks away, and sees -

A group of KIDS of various ages arriving.

Ken gets out of the truck to welcome them.

One of them steps forward - he was at the turbine yesterday.

KID

A'right, where do you want us?

Ken turns to Knox for an answer.

Knox shrugs - you decide.

KEN

Could you wait over there until the others arrive.

MONTAGE

Another group arrives.

...And another a larger group.

And another.

Knox addresses the kids.

They listen attentively.

HILLSIDE

The groups fan out across the landscape.

A hammer buries a peg in the ground.

A KID wraps a line of orange rope around the peg and carries the reel to the next peg, where they hand off to the next KID, who takes it on to the peg after that.

Knox checks his plans.

Ken directs a Kid holding the rope further up the hillside - left a bit, right a bit. There!

CLIFF

Knox watches the kids at work, a smile of calm satisfaction on his lips.

McCorquodale approaches.

MCCORQUODALE

I have to thank you for fixing the turbine. It'll make our last weeks here a lot more comfortable.

Knox smiles.

MCCORQUODALE (CONT'D)

But I have to ask... are you aware that your 'team' are trespassing on at least half a dozen landowners' property?

KNOX

We've had no complaints.

MCCORQUODALE

Well, right now it's kids with ropes and metal spikes. Are you planning to ask them before you turn up with workmen and diggers?

KNOX

What difference does it make? The land is going to be under the sea very soon if we don't...

MCCORQUODALE

Mr Knox, there are ways and ways of doing things. This is not the way.

He stalks off. Knox calls after him.

KNOX

Follow procedure and we'll sign off on the plans while up to our necks in water!

McCorquodale turns back.

MCCORQUODALE

I could approve the project right now and it would still never happen, even if you had a backer. Which you don't. A crash is coming. Soon. Complete economic collapse. And when it comes, no amount of money will get things done.

KNOX

Then we better fucking get moving!

McCorquodale approaches.

MCCORQUODALE

My job here is to keep things in order. They told us we have to go. We looked into alternatives but: no, they were right - we had to go. And I had to shepherd everyone into getting behind that decision. Making sure everyone felt fairly treated, felt respected. To create a general feeling of acceptance. Took months. Now all that work: wasted.

KNOX

We can save this community - what's more important than that?

MCCORQUODALE

I don't believe you can. I've seen the damage false hope can do - the whole human race has.

McCorquodale turns and stalks off. Knox - angry, flustered.

OLD CAR PARK - DUSK

The Kids disperse - the day's work done.

Knox and Ken watch them go.

KNOX

Think they'll be back tomorrow?

Ken - smiles.

INT. BATHROOM, COTTAGE - MORNING

Ken looks at himself in the cabinet mirror, deep in thought. Opening the cabinet, he fetches out his Dad's shaver.

Thinks for a time.

Switching it on, he starts shaving.

INT. CAR - DAY

Walden drives, Garad sitting in the front now. Tablet on, listening on earbuds to a digital police scanner.

GARAD
They've found the 'Helen of Troy'.

WALDEN
Where?

GARAD
(listening)
The seafront... Campbeltown.

Their car does a U-turn.

EXT. CAR PARK - MORNING

The Kids arrive in groups from various directions. More than before

Another large group - KIDS and PARENTS too. Among them Elsa - McDonnell's daughter - and her friends. Ken smiles and welcomes her.

DUNES

Knox looks on at the work, pleased.

MacDonnell approaches. She looks around, surprised by the scale of the endeavour.

MACDONNELL
So, we're getting a seawall whether we want it or not?

KNOX
Looks like they want it.

MACDONNELL
How do you plan to pay for it? Out of their pocket money?

KNOX
Given enough time and a little equipment they could build it themselves. The medieval Dutch did okay without reinforced ashcrete and mechanical diggers. Besides, you're going to pay for it.

MACDONNELL
What makes you think that?

KNOX
This is your island, these are your people.

MACDONNELL

You have a romantic notion of me. My title means nothing these days. I'm a business-woman, that's all.

Knox smiles - not buying it.

MACDONNELL (CONT'D)

This is all very well, but it won't be long before the tide of refugees reaches us.

KNOX

Refugees include a lot of high-skilled labor who will work for food and shelter.

MACDONNELL

After them there'd be raiders.

KNOX

That's why we have phase two. Higher walls - fortifications. If a second Dark Ages are coming, a fortified-island is about the safest place you could be. Plus, if it comes to a 'post-money' economy, you've got a great trade good in your whisky.

She thinks about this.

KNOX (CONT'D)

You will be a Chieftain worthy of your ancestors.

The glimmer of a smile. She brushes it away.

Knox returns to the workers. Calls back over his shoulder.

KNOX (CONT'D)

'Seas do thalamh'!

MacDonnell - impressed and amused calls after him.

MACDONNELL

That's not how you say it!

DUNES

Mhairi and others hammer steel posts into the sand.

Nearby, Elsa works. She looks up to see Ken bringing the reel of rope over the brow of the hill.

To the left -

One group unspools rope, which they stop to secure on steel posts on their way.

To the right -

Another group, coming down from the dunes lead by Mhairi does the same.

Knox and Ken stand by a steel post in the middle of the beach. Who will get there first?

KEN

Come on Mum!

A race. Each side start frantically tying their end of the rope to the posts.

Mhairi ties her group's rope around the final post. The winners.

The other side a moment later. They complete the circle.

WHOOOPS and high-fives all round.

Knox claps their efforts, a big smile on his face.

INT. MACDONNELL'S OFFICE, DISTILLERY - DUSK

MacDonnell shuts her laptop down for the day.

The screen goes off and, in its darkness, she sees the reflection of the sword and shield on the wall behind her.

Standing, she turns and contemplates the ancient objects.

EXT. PATH DOWN TO ARTAIR TOWN - DUSK

Knox walks uplifted, surrounded by happy ISLANDERS. He enjoys the evening air.

The sun sets over the hillside. Everyone heads back to town, tired but in high spirits.

Up ahead -

MacDonnell leans against her Land Rover, waiting. Knox approaches her and stops.

She looks him up and down. She offers Knox a hand.

They shake on it.

EXT. BEACH, NEAR CAMPBELTOWN - DUSK

A golden sandy beach in the shadow of a disused power station. Along the coast in the distance, a town.

Garad and Walden walk with a POLICE SERGEANT. He stops.

SERGEANT

There you go.

The Americans look around confused for a moment. Garad steps forward and picks up a broken piece of wood -

On it is painted '...len of Troy'

GARAD

Where's the rest of the boat?

The Policeman shrugs. Garad and Walden look at each other. Garad locates something on his phone. Shows it to the Policeman.

GARAD (CONT'D)

Have you seen this man in the vicinity?

The Sergeant shakes his head.

LATER

The Policeman leaves them.

WALDEN

Reckon that's it - he drowned in that storm.

Garad scopes out surrounding the landscape, in thought -

Across the water, an island with two wind turbines and a broken tower.

GARAD

No body, not even the boat. Could be he survived? No other stolen vehicles reported, so he'd still be hereabouts. Laying low in a cave or a barn, wounded maybe, scavenging food.

EXT. THE CLAYMORE PUB - DUSK

The Kids carry Knox aloft towards the pub in embarrassed triumph.

INT. BAR, THE CLAYMORE - NIGHT

The kids and their parents fill the room. A crush at the bar.

MACDONNELL
Everybody... Hello, everybody...

She can't be heard. She climbs up on a table.

MACDONNELL (CONT'D)
Quiet!!

The room falls silent.

MACDONNELL (CONT'D)
I'm pleased to announce that I've just
greenlit a project to build a seawall
around our island. Those who wish to
stay, can do so. Artair will live on!

Stunned looks from many - a moment for the new reality to
sink in...

A CHEER!

MacDonnell raises her glass.

MACDONNELL (CONT'D)
This is all because of the hard work and
determination of the island's new friend -
Bill Knox.

Glasses are raised around the room

EVERYONE
Bill Knox!

Another CHEER.

High spirits all around. Someone's got a squeeze-box out
and people are singing. Almost an impromptu ceilidh.

SNUG

Knox sits at a table with MacDonnell, Mhairi, Ken, Elsa
and others. Malcolm brings over a large round.

Knox smiles, helps distribute the drinks.

Ken makes nervous eye-contact with Elsa. She smiles, but
glances across to her Mum.

MacDonnell raises her glass.

Knox demurs some praise. He sits quietly, wrapped in
thought.

INT. GRAND RECEPTION ROOM - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

[Sound from the Claymore continues, no natural sound]

A white tie reception. Champagne glasses raised in honour of Knox and Gretchen (both about 40).

Knox carries an award - the gold medallion in its presentation case.

Barrow hugs him.

He introduces Knox to PERSONAGE after PERSONAGE. They crowd him, offering praise, asking enthusiastic questions. Overwhelming... but good.

END OF FLASHBACK

BACK TO THE SNUG

Knox becomes overwhelmed by similar treatment from the Islanders. But this time he's anxious.

KNOX

Excuse me.

He waves his pipe, as an excuse.

MACDONNELL

As Chieftain of the Isle, I hereby grant you permission to smoke in the Claymore.

Knox smiles an apology and extricates himself from behind the table, spilling drinks as he goes. Edge of panic.

EXT. BEER GARDEN - NIGHT

Smoke wafts from Knox's pipe. He starts to calm down.

MACDONNELL (O.S.)

How did you know 'Seas do Thalamh'? The family motto.

He turns, startled.

KNOX

'Stand your ground'? It's in 'The Isle of Artair Story'.

MACDONNELL

Don't tell me you've read that thing?

KNOX

I have trouble sleeping.

She laughs.

MACDONNELL

Why is this project so important to you?

Knox looks at her. He smiles a secret smile. They're interrupted.

KEN

Come back in - there's a party for you.

Knox smiles.

INT. BAR - LATER

Knox approaches the bar and gets served almost immediately by Malcolm who stands there, choked with gratitude.

Knox smiles back awkwardly.

KNOX

Could I order?

Snapping out of it, embarrassed.

MALCOLM

Yes, of course.

Knox turns to McCorquodale - alone at the bar.

KNOX

What are you drinking?

MCCORQUODALE

I'm alright. Scotland's had a parliament for almost fifty years now, but the aristocracy still act as if they own the place. I guess they still do.

KNOX

You're the elected representative: you're responsible for these people.

MCCORQUODALE

And you understand the risks they're running: turning down guaranteed homes in Wallace. I hope you're confident? Well, that doesn't seem to be in question!

KNOX

You and I both want the same thing: the best for the people of this island. The difference is that it's your job to look after them: they chose you. But how would you have looked after them in Wallace? What power would you have had?

MCCORQUODALE

It's not about me.

KNOX

It's in everybody's interest for you to come aboard.

MCCORQUODALE

You've done alright without me so far.

KNOX

Your choice, not mine: I came to you first - not MacDonnell. What can I get you?

McCorquodale - weakening.

SNUG

McCorquodale drinks with the party.

Under the table - with great trepidation, Ken takes Elsa's hand. She accepts the gesture.

Knox holds forth.

KNOX

...So I'm stuck in this lift in Samarkand with a man, who I've been told is in the local mafia, and he says "Tell me, when are you going to be pouring the concrete?"!

This brings the house down.

McCorquodale laughs too. A thought strikes him and his laughter dies.

EXT. DOCKSIDE, ARTAIR TOWN - MORNING

Knox, hungover, walks along the seafront carrying his laptop case. He looks down, something's off -

The pavement's wet. Flotsam near the edge of the dock.

He spots MURDO, a fisherman, working with his nets.

KNOX

Murdo! I know its the equinox, but has the tide come as high as the pavement before?

MURDO

That'd be a first.

Knox nods thanks, concerned.

INT. MACDONNELL'S OFFICE, DISTILLERY - DAY

Knox and MacDonnell sit around her desk working through the details on a laptop.

KNOX

I'd get into procurement as soon as you can: we don't want to order and then the crash hits and suppliers start failing.

She looks through the list.

MACDONNELL

Are these guns?

KNOX

If you're serious about defending the island...

MacDonnell takes this in.

MACDONNELL

What is it with Americans and guns? We'll need to start getting builders over to the island too. You'll be a bit squeezed at The Claymore. I can have a room made up for you at the big house.

Knox smiles at the offer.

MACDONNELL (CONT'D)

Contractors often stay with me. We'll need to keep it professional.

KNOX

Naturally.

MACDONNELL

There can't be a question mark over the reason I've put my faith in you.

KNOX

Of course. While the wall is being built.

MACDONNELL

You'll be gone before it's complete.
(won't he?)

Although you'd be welcome to stay.

Knox smiles.

He stands and walks to the window, needing to think.

I/E. PHONE BOX, ARTAIR TOWN - DAY

Knox waits for the other end of the line to pick up.

DOCKS CONTACT

Hello.

KNOX

It's Forster - could I delay another month?

DOCKS CONTACT

The Police are closing in - next week will be the last sailing. Get here as soon as you can. Here are the details...

Knox hesitates. Grabs a folded document from his pocket and scribbles notes down on the back.

INT. MHAIRI'S COTTAGE - DAY

Mhairi works on a broken solar panel, Knox handing her miniature screwdrivers from time to time.

MHAIRI

You could have said you were going to save the island: have to put these back up now!

Knox smiles.

Ken's FOOTSTEPS head upstairs. They can talk now, but still in hushed tones.

MHAIRI (CONT'D)

They're not putting up that Wanted poster anymore. I'll go with you in the boat and in Ayr I'll take you to Edith. She'll drive you to Glasgow. How soon can you be ready?

KNOX

(distracted)

Sorry?

MHAIRI

When will you be leaving?

KNOX

Not for a few days.

MHAIRI

The builders from the mainland are coming on Friday. Someone could still recognise you.

EXT. DUNES - DAY

Knox sits on a dune looking along the coast. He has a board and some sheets of paper, on which he draws designs.

Ken stares out at a distant stretch of land visible across the firth. Turning away, he approaches Knox.

KEN
What you drawing?

KNOX
More ideas.

He puts down the board.

KNOX (CONT'D)
I'm leaving.

KEN
I'm going with you!

Knox - he wishes he could say yes.

KNOX
I'm sorry.

An idea strikes Knox. Reaching into his pocket he produces his gold medallion. Offers it to Ken. The boy takes it cautiously - is he sure?

KNOX (CONT'D)
I think you deserve it more than me.

Ken looks it over, deep in thought.

KEN
But I need to see the world before its gone.

KNOX
What about saving the island? Elsa?

Ken thinks.

KNOX (CONT'D)
Maybe you should make your home safe first. You're young, there's time.

KEN
The world's not young.

Knox nods.

KEN (CONT'D)
How can my generation rebuild this world if...

KNOX

No. That's not... You don't get to rebuild, you get to survive.

Ken looks at him, deeply stung. He struts away.

Knox turns and sits on the sand - spent. The wind BLOWS. Nasty thoughts return.

INT. KNOX'S OFFICE, PARKER-BARROW - DAY (FLASHBACK)

[The WIND continues over this scene, no natural sound]

Gretchen (50s) hurries in. She plants a red folder on the desk for Knox to see. Knox opens it and reads.

Knox - concerned.

Gretchen - on the verge of panic.

END OF FLASHBACK

BACK TO THE DUNES

Knox tries to rid himself of the upsetting memory.

He stands. Digging in his pocket, he pulls out the details he took down of his ship to Greenland.

He looks from that... to the plan for the sea wall.

INT. HEADMASTER'S OFFICE, SCHOOL - DAY

A map of central Asia. A finger locates the city of Samarkand.

McCorquodale studies the map, concerned.

His landline RINGS.

MCCORQUODALE

Hello.

EXT. DOCKSIDE, ARTAIR TOWN - DAY

Knox walks towards the pub.

A ferry docks. A group of MEN - some in workwear, others in suits, all in hi-vis - troop on to the jetty.

Knox abruptly changes direction, keen not to be seen.

A group of KIDS from the wall-building pass him.

KIDS

Hiya, Mr Knox!

Knox nods in self-conscious acknowledgement.

INT. BAR, THE CLAYMORE - DAY

Knox hurries in to find Malcolm consulting Knox's hand-drawn plan of the bar. He's finally turning round the tables.

MALCOLM

Your lasting legacy!

KNOX

Do you know anything about some builders turning up?

MALCOLM

The advance team? Are they wanting to stay the night?

KNOX

I don't know. I need to pay.

MALCOLM

All taken care of, Mr Knox.

Knox - surprised. He smiles.

KNOX

Thank her for me.

MALCOLM

Not her - me. Least I could do for the saviour of Artair.

EXT. LAY-BY, COASTAL ROAD - DAY

Garad talks on his phone, pacing, hushed tones. Walden waits by the car a little way off, reading a news story on a tablet.

GARAD

Just book a U-Haul, throw as much as you can in the back.

AMERICAN WOMAN (O.S.)

It's an evacuation: one suitcase each. U-Haul booked out weeks ago. So hot I can't think. Can't you just come back?

GARAD

Listen hun, this job is important. I'll speak to the local field office: see what
(MORE)

GARAD (CONT'D)

the Agency can do to help. I'll be back
as soon as I can.

Walden glances up to see Garad end the call.

Garad returns to his colleague.

WALDEN

What's cookin'?

Garad takes a moment for a decision.

GARAD

The Director wants us to speed things up.

Walden's face falls.

WALDEN

I'd say that wreckage was evidence of the
fella's passing.

GARAD

Evidence, not proof. We've pretty much
checked the coast. Islands next. We'll
get the bastard.

Walden nods reluctantly - Garad's the boss.

EXT. DOCKSIDE, ARTAIR TOWN - DAY

Mhairi stands waiting with Kwame, his boat ready.

She checks her watch - anxious, annoyed.

Knox hurries along the dockside towards them.

KNOX

Sorry!

Mhairi throws him a sour look.

They jump aboard the fishing boat and head to sea.

EXT. FISHING BOAT, ARTAIR COAST - DAY

The boat skirts the coast of the island.

Knox looks up to the hills -

The BUILDERS milling around, preparing the groundwork for
the wall.

Knox beams - satisfied. He leans close to Mhairi, to
shout above the noise of the engine.

KNOX
It's going to work!

MHAIRI
What is?

KNOX
The wall.

She looks at him, not understanding. Did she not hear?

KNOX (CONT'D)
The wall. It'll save the island.

MHAIRI
They'll not keep building it.

KNOX
I don't understand.

MHAIRI
When they find out who you were.

KNOX
No. They'll have to! MacDonnell's
committed half her fortune.

MHAIRI
What about everyone else?

Knox thinks about this.

For some time.

Realization.

KNOX
(to the Kwame)
We've got to go back.

MHAIRI
What? Someone could recognise you!

KWAME
We'll not make the tide again today.

KNOX
I need to talk to them!

MHAIRI
You're crazy!

KNOX
Take me back!!!

EXT. BUILDING SITE, HILLS - DAY

Knox strides up the hill towards the BUILDERS.

McCorquodale and a couple of Builders intercept him.

KNOX

I need to talk to everybody.

McCorquodale bars his way.

MCCORQUODALE

And we need to talk to you.

Knox tries again to get past, but the Builders block him.

KNOX

What about?

MCCORQUODALE

Samarkand.

(to the Builders)

Come on.

They escort Knox away, struggling.

KNOX

I need to explain.

He looks back at the wall as he's carried away from it.

INT. STORAGE ROOM, SCHOOL - DAY

The Builders push Knox into a small room packed with old school books.

KNOX

What is this?

MCCORQUODALE

Detention.

The door SLAMS behind him.

INT. ASSEMBLY HALL, SCHOOL - DAY

The walls decked with the school's current project: dinosaurs and the asteroid.

The two Builders escort Knox into the hall. Quiet - no kids.

McCorquodale and MacDonnell stand waiting for him.

MACDONNELL

What's going on.

MCCORQUODALE
Our guest is a fossil.

MacDonnell - surprised.

MCCORQUODALE (CONT'D)
Allow me to introduce you: The MacDonnell
- Dr John Forster.

MACDONNELL
(shocked)
The Vortex?

MCCORQUODALE
That's right.

MacDonnell looks to McCorquodale for an explanation.

MCCORQUODALE (CONT'D)
You remember his story about Samarkand?

He hands her a battered school atlas.

MCCORQUODALE (CONT'D)
What work would a coastal engineer be
doing in a city that's a thousand
kilometers from the nearest sea?

Knox can see the impending checkmate.

MCCORQUODALE (CONT'D)
Those stories about Calgary, Rio,
Singapore, Doha? All centres for one
business: oil. Never cross a geography
teacher. Then I get a call from Sergeant
Fleming telling me that American law
enforcement are looking for a certain
fugitive...

MacDonnell sits in a chair - winded.

Knox [as we'll continue to call him] paces the room.
Thinking.

KNOX
I need to explain.

MCCORQUODALE
You can tell your American friends.

MACDONNELL
The Americans?

MCCORQUODALE
No, maybe it would be better to give him
to the local police.

MACDONNELL
 (without enthusiasm)
 Clearly he must face justice.

MCCORQUODALE
 Aye.

MACDONNELL
 The chieftain's court.

MCCORQUODALE
 Come on - that's ancient!

MACDONNELL
 It's our law.

MCCORQUODALE
 We're hardly equipped for a trial on that
 scale.

MACDONNELL
 Everyone will be told the facts.
 (to McCorquodale)
 You will speak for 'the people' as
 prosecution.
 (to Knox)
 And you can make your defence. The
 islanders will decide.

Reluctantly, McCorquodale nods. He snaps his fingers to
 the Builders and points at Knox.

MCCORQUODALE
 Stationery cupboard.

They take him away. MacDonnell stops them.

MACDONNELL
 (to Knox)
 The plans, the wall... is it...?

KNOX
 It's real. Absolutely.

She breathes a sigh of relief.

MCCORQUODALE
 Whoa, whoa, whoa: you're not considering
 going ahead with his scheme?! Now we know
 who he is?

MACDONNELL
 We're committed at this point.

MCCORQUODALE
 Then un-commit us! Do you really think
 there'll still be faith in the project,
 given his track-record?

MACDONNELL

Let's see what happens at the trial.

INT. STORAGE ROOM - DUSK

Knox leans on a text book, working on the plans. Sweaty. Outside CRICKETS sing. Inside, the RADIO plays.

NEWS READER

...The biggest criminal trial in America's history, possibly the biggest trial in history, continues. Today Steven Barrow, CEO of oil giant Parker-Barrow, is to be cross-examined...

This catches Knox's attention.

EXT. CHURCH - DAY

Another hot day, the air heavy with CRICKETS. Two Builders lead Knox into the village's squat medieval church. Various ISLANDERS look on.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

Inside, the church has been set up as a court.

MacDonnell sits by the altar, she wears a formal plaid and bonnet with eagle feather. Her ceremonial sword sits across her lap.

Knox and McCorquodale sit to the left and right. A lectern stands in the middle.

ISLANDERS pack the pews. Many fan themselves.

Mhairi, Ken and Elsa sit near the front. Mhairi throws Knox a supportive look.

MACDONNELL

State your name for the record.

KNOX

Dr John Forster.

Murmurs of surprise from the pews.

MCCORQUODALE

And could you tell us the name of your last employer?

KNOX

Parker-Barrow Resource Stewardship.

MCCORQUODALE
 (to the room)
 Most of us will remember them as Parker-
 Barrow Oil.

The murmurs from the room become more hostile.

MCCORQUODALE (CONT'D)
 And what work did you do for them?

Deep breath.

KNOX
 I developed a system of direct air carbon
 capture... called Vortex.

The room erupts!

Angry faces hurl ABUSE.

The Builders struggle to keep back furious Islanders.
 McCorquodale has to help.

Knox sits, ready for the mob...

BANG! BANG! BANG!

The pommel of MacDonnell's sword-of-office dents the
 altar.

MACDONNELL
 SILENCE! If the public cannot keep order,
 this will be a closed session.

The crowd settles. McCorquodale resumes.

MACDONNELL (CONT'D)
 To the charge of Ecocide, how plead you?

KNOX
 Not guilty.

LATER

McCorquodale stands at the lectern, in his best suit,
 sweating freely.

MCCORQUODALE
 Could you tell the court, in lay-man's
 terms, what your Vortex was built to do?

KNOX
 Judging by the disturbance just now, I
 think everybody remembers.

MCCORQUODALE
 Humour me.

KNOX

(wearily)

The Vortex was designed to suck carbon pollution - CO2 - from the air in a form that could be safely stored.

MCCORQUODALE

We have one on the island, on Fall Hill. So, the planet was saved...

KNOX

We only claimed to help slow climate breakdown, not to halt it.

MCCORQUODALE

I must confess to being a hoarder. I find I'd kept the sales literature for our Vortex.

He produces a dog-eared brochure.

MCCORQUODALE (CONT'D)

(reading)

'Protecting the Climate, saving our way of life'.

KNOX

I didn't write the advertising.

MCCORQUODALE

It talks of 'sixty to seventy percent carbon capture'. Was that accurate?

KNOX

You know the answer to that question. Everyone on the planet knows the answer to that question.

MCCORQUODALE

How much atmospheric carbon did your machines actually capture? I believe we'd all like to hear you say it.

Agreement from the crowd.

KNOX

(to MacDonnell)

Am I here to be humiliated, or am I on trial?

MACDONNELL

I'm allowing the question.

KNOX

(reluctantly)

Two point four percent.

SILENCE in the room. McCorquodale milks it.

MCCORQUODALE

But you can't convict a man for failure, no matter how massive. The really interesting question is what happened when you discovered the failure of your machine. Did you release that information?

Knox shifts uncomfortably in his chair.

INT. BARROW'S OFFICE - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

[No natural sound]

Barrow sits with an ashen-looking Knox (50), the red folder on the desk between them. He talks to Knox earnestly, persuasively.

KNOX (V.O.)

That wasn't my decision to make.

MCCORQUODALE (V.O.)

So what did you do? Did Steven Barrow force you remain silent?

(long pause)

Did Barrow compel you to silence?

END OF FLASHBACK

BACK TO THE CHURCH

Knox torn as to how he should reply. Eventually -

KNOX

He talked me into it.

MURMURS from the crowd. McCorquodale himself registers surprise.

Ken soaks this in. He turns pale.

MCCORQUODALE

So, he did leave you a choice?

KNOX

Effectively, no.

MCCORQUODALE

What does that mean? With the whole world relying on your machine, why did you not reveal what you knew?

KNOX

Precisely because the whole world was relying on the Vortex.

INT. BARROW'S OFFICE - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Continued from before.

Barrow calmly explains the situation to Knox. Knox questions this, but Barrow remains reasonable.

KNOX (CONT'D, V.O.)

At that moment, working Vortexes were still the climate's best chance. If we'd have come clean, all hell would break loose and nobody would ever trust carbon capture technology again.

Finally Knox nods.

END OF FLASHBACK

INT. CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

KNOX

We sat on the information to give us time to fix our mistakes.

Surprised HUBBUB from the room. The mood might be softening.

McCorquodale - on the backfoot. A thought strikes him.

MCCORQUODALE

Then why did Dr Chowdry go public?

KNOX

She lost faith.

MCCORQUODALE

In you?

KNOX

In Barrow.

MCCORQUODALE

What made you believe that you could fix the machines?

KNOX

Because the Vortex worked - I'd built it myself and seen it work, everyone on the project had! It was just a case of figuring out what had gone wrong in the production model.

MCCORQUODALE

You were gambling on your ability to fix it?

KNOX

Not really.

MCCORQUODALE

You were confident?

KNOX

Yes.

MCCORQUODALE

So, did you manage to fix the machines and prevent the collapse of the Earth's climate?

Knox - caught. Cornered, exasperated.

KNOX

Gretchen blew the whistle before... FOR CHISSAKES I TRIED!

What have you done to save the planet?!

(to the room)

Any of you? You did your recycling when they told you to. You stopped eating beef when they told you to. You stopped driving gas vehicles when they told you to. What else have you done? I dedicated my career, my life, to prevent climate collapse, and I'm the one in the dock! Was I pumping tonnes of carbon into the atmosphere? No, I was extracting it - not enough, sure - but the Vortex didn't actually emit CO2!

Muffled GASPS at this last claim. He's lost the room.

Ken - starts to tear up.

MCCORQUODALE

(pleased)

We'll come to that.

INT. FERRY TERMINAL, CAMPBELTOWN - DAY

Garad and Walden - about to board a ferry. Garad's phone buzzes.

He reads a message - eyes widen.

GARAD

They've located the courier. Glasgow.

They turn round.

INT. STORAGE ROOM - NIGHT

MacDonnell stands at the door talking to a sullen Knox.

MACDONNELL

You lost them with that last tirade.

KNOX

Should you be talking to me right now?

MACDONNELL

I'm trying to help you.

KNOX

Save your breath.

MACDONNELL

This isn't for you: it's for them. If they convict you, they won't carry on with the wall, and even if they do I think we need you to make it happen. The wall is our only hope: we've forfeit our places in Wallace, if we ever had them.

KNOX

The housing shortage in Wallace: it's not true. Only way I could think of to get you to take me seriously.

MacDonnell thinks for a time. She walks away.

EXT. OFFICE, DOCKS - NIGHT

Garad and Walden walk up the steel steps to the portacabin.

INT. OFFICE, DOCKS - NIGHT

Garad scrolls through a list of callers on a phone (not his).

Walden has the Dock Contact tied to an overturned chair, damp cloth over his mouth, pouring water from a plastic jug over his face. Waterboarding.

He stops and removes the cloth. The man splutters and catches his breath.

DOCKS CONTACT

I don't know where he's hiding! I make a point of not knowing!

WALDEN

When is he catching the ship?

DOCKS CONTACT

I don't think he is - he sounded unsure.

Walden prepares to put the cloth back over his mouth.

GARAD

Wait. When did you last speak to him?

DOCKS CONTACT

I dunno, two days ago.

Garad scrolls back in the list of calls. Sees a number not in the address book.

GARAD

Two forty-three PM?

DOCKS CONTACT

Could be.

Garad gets out his own phone. Copies the number into an app.

GARAD

That's a call box. Isle of Artair.

Recognition. He and Walden leave swiftly.

INT. STORAGE ROOM - NIGHT

Knox sits listening to the radio.

REPORTER

...What is taking many by surprise is that some minor defendants, including a few who gave evidence for the prosecution, even they are receiving capital sentences. Take for example British scientist Gretchen Patel - she actually blew the whistle in the Vortex scandal, but even she received a death sentence for her involvement with the project.

Knox turns white.

NEWS ANCHOR

With verdicts about as severe as they could be, you could ask: is about justice or vengeance? I spoke to supreme court judge...

Knox - shaken to his core.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

Knox's trial continues around him. He sits staring blankly off into space - still shell-shocked.

MCCORQUODALE (O.S.)

Madam, my case does not rest on whether Dr Forster's decision to suppress the shortcomings of the Vortex were justifiable. The matter is bigger than that. Dr Forster's real crime is not that he covered up the failure of his machines, it's that he invented them in the first place.

Sad nods of agreement from the crowd.

Ken - keeping his upset under control.

McCorquodale looks again at the brochure.

MCCORQUODALE (CONT'D)

Dr Forster claims that he didn't put any CO2 into the atmosphere, but we all know that's not really true. Maybe it is literally, but his technology was designed to allow - nay, encourage - us not to change: to keep polluting without restraint. And we did just that.

KNOX

That was not my fault.

MCCORQUODALE

Would you go skydiving without a parachute?

KNOX

Clearly not.

MCCORQUODALE

What if I gave you a parachute?

KNOX

Since the effective end of aviation, I'd put it in a museum.

MCCORQUODALE

You can drop the sarcasm.

KNOX

Okay - yes.

MCCORQUODALE

What if the parachute I gave you didn't work? Would your demise be your fault, for jumping out of a plane? Or would it be mine, for giving you defective kit?

Knox - inscrutable.

MCCORQUODALE (CONT'D)

By the time we realised that the
parachute you gave us all didn't work -
we'd hit the ground.

He slams his hand on a pew.

ISLANDER

Skin the bastard!

MCCORQUODALE

He will pay!

Others agree.

MACDONNELL

Order! Mr McCorquodale, cool it!

MCCORQUODALE

I'm done, madam.

He sits.

MACDONNELL

Dr Knox... sorry Forster, if you have
anything further to say in your defence,
now is the time.

Knox - still miles away.

MACDONNELL (CONT'D)

Dr Forster...?

He stands.

KNOX

Let's cut the crap, shall we? What we're
really discussing is - given what you
know - can you trust me to build your
wall? Can you stomach having me around?
Is the plan one hundred percent solid?
You can trust a man who's made a fatal
mistake - he won't do that again any time
soon.

He sits back down. Remembering something he gets back up.

KNOX (CONT'D)

Oh, 'Guilty'.

Ken jumps up and marches out of the room, ashen, overcome
with emotion.

LATER

MacDonnell makes her closing statement.

MACDONNELL

We need to decide what to do with him. On the one hand, is there a crime more serious than ecocide? Is there a punishment that would be too severe? On the other, he has literally saved our island. Harsh punishment would be just... but would it be wise? We're not building a better society, we're preparing for survival in a brutal world. We were misled about Wallace - five times more homes have been promised than can be built there.

Consternation in the room. Knox looks up too - surprised.

MACDONNELL (CONT'D)

Can we think of anyone better able to help ready our island, make it a fortress from the coming storm? The wall that Doctor Forster has designed will defend Artair from the sea, but a second phase of building, of fortification, would defend us from anyone who should want to plunder our island.

Murmurs of surprise.

MACDONNELL (CONT'D)

If we were to spare him, he would live among us under the name of Knox, build our defences and no one would breathe a word of his true identity. The alternative can only be a sentence of death. What say you, people of Artair? Those for death...?

McCorquodale raised his hand, as do:

Many of the builders

Malcolm

A lot of the Islanders

MACDONNELL (CONT'D)

Those for life?

Hesitantly, Mhairi lifts her hand, followed by:

Kwame.

MacDonnell raises her own hand.

Seeing this, more hands go up, some quickly, some reluctantly. Looks like a slim majority for 'life'.

MacDonnell smiles.

Someone counts the hands.

BANG - the doors are hurled open. An Islander bursts in, panicked.

MURDO

The crash! They're saying the big one.

MALCOLM

What?!

MURDO

I called Campbeltown - banks have shut their doors. The cash machine here has gone offline.

Concerned movement towards the door turns into a stampede.

Knox sits in a room empty, save for a sea of upturned chairs.

Looking around, Knox starts to laugh. A laugh of heart-felt relief, mixed with tears.

EXT. HARBOUR, CAR PARK - DAY

Garad approaches a waiting boat. Walden trails behind, reading the news on his phone.

WALDEN

The stockmarkets have tanked!

Garad jumps on board. Walden doesn't move. Garad returns to land to confront him.

GARAD

What?

WALDEN

Even if we do find him alive and can smuggle him back to the States, there will be no trial - they're going to be too busy trying to keep order. No one cares.

GARAD

I care! Law and order only falls apart when we stop caring.

WALDEN

Caring won't stop things falling apart, nor will burying your head in the sand. I'm heading home.

Seething, Garad turns and stalks back to the car.

INT. CAR, CAR PARK - DAY

Garad opens the glove box, grabs his handgun.

HARBOUR

Garad stands on a boat heading out to sea.

EXT. CHURCH - DAY

Knox emerges from the church alone.

He wanders out of town.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD, ARTAIR - DAY

Knox walks the road to the hills, deep in thought.

EXT. SMALL BOAT, COAST OF ARTAIR - DAY

The boat skirts the coast of the island. Garad on deck.

He spots the building work on the shoreline.

GARAD

Isn't this island due for evacuation?

SKIPPER

Aye.

GARAD

So why the construction project?

EXT. SMALL BOAT, HARBOUR, ARTAIR - DAY

The boat pulls into the harbour. Garad looks around -

No one about. Odd.

Getting off the boat, he heads towards the high street.

A boy approaches - Ken.

GARAD

Where is everybody?

KEN

Trying to get the bank on the phone.

GARAD

Have you seen this man?

He produces his phone - on it a photo of Knox.

Ken's unguarded face betrays recognition.

GARAD (CONT'D)

Where is he now?

On the back foot, Ken takes a moment. Eventually, his look hardens.

KEN

(points to the water)

Climate criminals get what they deserve
on this island.

Garad examines Ken's face closely - is he telling the truth?

GARAD

Can you prove that?

Ken thinks. Reaching into his pocket he produces -
Knox's gold medallion.

Garad recognises it. He nods, relief and frustration in equal measure. Gestures to his phone.

GARAD (CONT'D)

I need to take a photo.

Ken hands him the medallion.

KEN

Keep it.

EXT. BUILDING SITE, HILLS - DAY

Knox wanders aimlessly, looking over the work done so far.

At peace.

EXT. HARBOUR, ARTAIR - DAY

Ken watches Garad's boat head back to the mainland. He smiles.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD, ARTAIR - DAY

Knox walks back towards town, lighter in himself.

Mrs Girvan approaches, heading in the other direction. She throws him a smile.

Knox smiles back.

MRS GIRVAN

Oh, Mr Knox, will you be wanting any more tobacco?

KNOX

I couldn't deprive you.

MRS GIRVAN

I've given up.

KNOX

You've given up smoking?!

MRS GIRVAN

Aye.

KNOX

I'm sorry, but at your age?!

MRS GIRVAN

I wanted to see if I could still make a change.

KNOX

Well, congratulations.

MRS GIRVAN

I saw some builders about. They're not going to be ruining the place?

KNOX

They're saving it.

MRS GIRVAN

That doesn't mean that they won't spoil it.

Foxed by her reaction.

KNOX

I guess... we'll be careful.

They nod and head each their own way. She calls back.

MRS GIRVAN

Don't forget the baccy. Save me from myself.

He nods and smiles.

EXT. HIGH STREET, ARTAIR TOWN - DAY

Knox walks through town - no one about.

Tape over the cash machine already.

THE CLAYMORE PUB

Knox nears the pub. Ken, Elsa and a group of the KIDS who helped with the wall chat together nearby.

KNOX

Hey, guys.

Turning, they fall silent. A couple who were sitting on the pavement, stand.

Knox - slow realisation.

Other pick up bats and boat hooks. Another carries a noose - orange rope, the rope they used to mark out the wall.

Ken steps forward - grim-faced. He throws a hand-painted sign that lands at Knox's feet -

'FOSSIL'

Knox runs.

HIGH STREET

Knox running for his life.

Kids behind him.

An ISLANDER watches from behind a lace curtain. She withdraws as he passes.

He heads for the Post Office.

Locked.

He runs on, turns into a side alley.

SIDE ALLEY

Knox sprints.

SOMEONE looks down from a first floor window.

Kids ahead - the group must have split up.

Side turnings? No.

Back the way he came.

HIGH STREET

Still the Kids keep coming - they're gaining on him. Knox has longer legs, but they have youth and numbers.

A cross roads. Left, a road sign -
'Artair Distillery'.

Of course!

He rounds the corner.

Another group, waiting for him. Blocking his way.

Fuck!

Back again.

SIDE STREET

Knox hammers a random door.

No reply.

Another door.

KNOX

Help! Help me!

Inside - a hand bolts the door.

Noticing a watcher, he looks up -

McCorquodale looks down from the upstairs window. He turns away.

The kids - almost on Knox.

He runs on.

CHURCH

Knox makes for the church door, Kids hot on his heels.

Gets there, turns the handle.

It opens!

INT. CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

Knox falls through. Back against the door. The Kids pile against the other side. They almost get it open.

Knox struggles to keep it shut. He looks up -

A bolt.

He reaches up, straining to shut the door so the bolt can find its home.

Almost...

There!

Knox steps away from the door struggling to catch his breath. The kids HAMMER on the door.

He looks around - safe, but trapped. What to do?

The hammering stops.

What are they doing?

He looks out of one of the windows -

He can see a few kids, but can't make out what they're up to.

Beyond them the ISLANDERS have turned up. They remain outside the churchyard, silently watching.

Nervously he approaches the door. In it: a keyhole, made for a big old iron key. He puts his eye against it -

Six kids carry an old stone cross from a tombstone. They charge the door with it, right towards Knox's eye.

Knox jumps backwards, just in time.

SLAM!

The door holds.

Backing away, Knox looks around - where can he hide?

Nowhere presents itself.

He flops down in a pew, to think.

SLAM!

He stares up at the ceiling.

SLAM!

INT. LIVING ROOM, KNOX'S FLAT - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Gretchen (50s) sweeps into the room, excited.

GRETCHEN

(London accent)

I think I've found the problem. I opened up a production model that had been operating about six weeks and...

She hands him a darkened circle of fine mesh.

GRETCHEN (CONT'D)

The machines are working for a few weeks - then the performance falls off: they're getting clogged - the cleaner doesn't work on the filter.

KNOX

Okay, so we look for a stronger cleaning solution.

Is his reply too quick? Gretchen pulls up short. Realization.

GRETCHEN

You knew about this.

Knox - you got me!

KNOX

Okay, I knew it might happen. We're on it. The key thing is that the units are out there - as soon as we've nailed it, we replace the part during servicing and it's like it never happened.

GRETCHEN

How long have you been working on a fix?

KNOX

We're almost there...

GRETCHEN

How long?

He doesn't reply.

GRETCHEN (CONT'D)

Before the machines started shipping?

KNOX

It's a tough problem, but we'll fix it because we gotta fix it. We got this.

GRETCHEN

No, John, you have not got this! You were designing the filters because it's the sort of thing you're brilliant at. If they could be fixed, you'd have fixed them by now.

KNOX

(growing panic)

I can still...

GRETCHEN

...That means it's an intrinsic design flaw. And that means the biggest product recall since...

KNOX

He'll never allow that. We'll get in a new team - different approach. Throw everything at it. It will work!

GRETCHEN

What are you, 'The Little Engine That Could'? GROW UP! Or your can-do attitude will kill us all. You...

Gretchen stops herself - wasting her breath. She storms out, throwing the door shut behind her.

Knox paces the flat. Torment.

END OF FLASHBACK

INT. CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

SLAM!

Knox wipes away tears. Slowly he picks himself up.

He heads towards the door.

SLAM!

He draws down the bolt.

A tidal wave of KIDS burst in, knocking him flat.

Blows rain down. Knox shelters his head.

A hand takes the ceremonial sword from MacDonnell's seat.

Ken stands over the cowering Knox, battered and bruised.

Elsa hands him the sword.

He looks at her.

She nods.

Ken rains sword-blows down on Knox with increasing fury.

He raises his weapon for the killer blow...

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. CLIFF TOP - DAY

A pick lands heavily in turf, gouging a deep wound. The building work continues.

EXT. SMALL BOAT, APPROACHING MAINLAND HARBOUR - DAY

RADIO plays half-heard news of financial calamity.

Garad sits on deck examining the medallion -

The design, a man's profile and the name 'ALFR. NOBEL'.

He pulls a billfold out of his pocket and approaches the Skipper, who's listening to the radio.

GARAD

What do I owe?

The Skipper looks down at the large denomination notes, uncertain.

SKIPPER

The watch, mebbe?

Garad raises an eyebrow. He unfastens his wrist watch.

EXT. CLIFF TOP - DAY

MacDonnell's ceremonial sword in a makeshift scabbard hangs from Ken's belt.

He inspects the progress of the building work.

MacDonnell marches up the hill towards him.

MACDONNELL

What have you done?! How are we going to defend the island without him?

Ken reaches in his pocket and produces the folded paper that Knox left on his bed.

MacDonnell reads the details of Knox's sailing, non-plussed.

Ken unfolds the paper -

Detailed plans for phase 2 of the defences.

EXT. DOCKSIDE, ARTAIR TOWN - DUSK

MacDonnell walks slowly, deep in thought.

She passes The Claymore - lights on. Full of Builders and Locals. MUSIC. High spirits.

She walks on. Activity along the sea front - Artair has never been more alive.

Reaching the harbour wall, she looks sadly out to sea -

On the horizon, a lone fishing boat bobs.

FISHING BOAT - CONTINUOUS

SPLASH! Knox's battered body goes into the water.

Kwame lugs a weight tied to the corpse, after it.

Mhairi sadly watches Knox's body sink out of view.

She looks back to the island a small distance away, lit by the last rays of the sun, and then back down to the dark and empty waters.

THE END