

EXODUS

"Pilot"

Written by

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TEASER

INT. PARISIAN LIVING ROOM - DAY

An eight-foot tall window. The Sacré-Coeur in the distance. Posh place. And silence. Then --

A SIREN. Muffled through the double-glazed glass. The kind you'd hear in wartimes. Long. Single-note. Ominous.

A WOMAN storms through the door: SALEM HARRINGTON (30s) Curly red hair. Fire eyes. Oversized tee shirt and a man's boxer shorts. Just waking up.

She opens the window -- the siren SCREAMS now like it's calling from next door.

She leans across. Looks around. Searching. What could it be?

SALEM

Looks like the world's about to end, pal.

A French man in briefs, REMI (20s) joins her. Great face, broken English.

REMI

Salem, please... I am in love with you.

SALEM

Oh sweet mother of baby Jesus.

REMI

Salem. *J't'aime tellement, putain.*

SALEM

Here's what's gonna happen, Frenchie. One of your servants-- maid, lackey, whatever-- one of them is going to make us breakfast. We're going to eat it without clothes on. Then I'll go back to London. You may see me again next time I'm in town. You may not. My plane's at two pm.

REMI

But I love you.

SALEM

You met me two days ago.

REMI

I know. I'm a fast man. I work fast. I fuck fast. I love fast.

SALEM

Well I'm more of a slow-cooked
kinda girl. You need to prep me
from scratch. None of your
microwaveable shit.

REMI

You stay with me. I pay for
everything. I have money.

SALEM

I have money too, Warren Buffet.

REMI

Me and you. We stay together. We
love each other.

Remi stares at her. Losing hope. Salem wants to say something
back -- but she's distracted. It's the siren.

SALEM

What's your name again?

REMI

Rémi.

SALEM

Rémi. Darling sweetness. What the
fuck is this noise?

REMI

You don't like my voice?

SALEM

No. This, you egomaniac bell-end.

She turns back to the window ledge.

REMI

It's same thing every month. First
Wednesday. They test if the siren
works. In case there is big problem
one day. Like invasion, you know?
Or, like... when you fall in love.

SALEM

And Paris does that every first
Wednesday of every month?

REMI

They started in the-- the thing,
you know? *Seconde guerre mondiale*--
World war two. Not just Paris.
Everywhere in France.

They both stare out. The siren keeps going.

SUPER: "438 DAYS TO EXODUS"

She takes a peek at her watch --

SALEM
It's Monday.

He doesn't react. Until he does. And throws her a look.

CUT TO BLACK.

TITLE OVER BLACK: **EXODUS**

END TEASER

ACT ONE

INT. ABANDONED SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY

Empty and quiet aside from a rumble of voices in the distance. Broken windows and dusty desks. No one seems to have been here for years. A place that looks like it's been blown up by an atomic bomb --

As we move through the hallway -- we enter the CHAOS of the MAIN HALL --

Hundreds of citizens gathered -- children, families, panicking -- a language we can't understand -- are we in Russia? Ukraine? --

MILITARY leading people through the main door, pushing them into buses --

Escaping the area as fast as they can --

A TEENAGE BOY finds his way out of the crowd -- approaches a window, peeks through --

Further in the distance, outside -- A THICK CLOUD OF BLACK SMOKE escapes from a building -- a NUCLEAR PLANT --

HELEN BRADDOCK (V.O.)

All these people think the big problem is that we once again got ourselves into a fucking-- Chernobyl live show-- and that this time, we can't deal with the repercussions. This time we're done for. The whole planet. Fucking *fini*. And they think that's the problem. But it's not really the problem is it?--

The boy turns his attention to a TV screen above his head -- a COMMERCIAL -- A WOMAN in a field. Flight attendant outfit and forced smile --

HELEN BRADDOCK (V.O.)

--aside from the handful who didn't get a travel pass, we're very kindly sending everyone to different places all across the universe. So who gives a crap about a nuclear disaster?--

On TV: a terrible CGI ORANGE PORTAL opening from the ground up -- graphics fill the screen -- "YOUR EXODUS WILL BEGIN IN 162 DAYS" --

HELEN BRADDOCK (V.O.)
 --no, you see, this-- this, right
 here, my friend, that's the real
 problem. Not everything else. Not
 the power plant fuck up. Not the
 magic portals taking a bunch of
 galactic asylum seekers to other
 planets--

The boy catches a glimpse of a stretcher at the end of the
 hallway -- paramedics rolling it towards us -- an animal
 shriek echo from it, a MAN -- or what's left of it --

HELEN BRADDOCK (V.O.)
 --no, the real problem, it's this--
 this abhorrent lie we're about to
 sell these people for a sliver of
 hope thick as a sheet of graphene--
 all these people who have been
 denied a pass-- who all think
 they're gonna watch their planet
 die and die with it-- all these
 people? They're going to spend the
 next few months trying to find a
 way out of this planet--

The man on the stretcher -- his body burnt -- steaming --
 bloody -- oozing through bandages --

HELEN BRADDOCK (V.O.)
 --and one day, we're going to turn
 around, and we'll give them that
 way out. And when we do, they'll
 shut up and they'll say thank you
 because we've answered their
 prayers-- and they expect me to
shut up about it? They think I'm
 just going to stay still-- say
 nothing about any of this to the
 public?--

A man scorched by radiation -- a man who won't make it
 through the night, as we cut to --

INT. LIMO - DAY

HELEN BRADDOCK (50s) almost lying down on the backseat.

HELEN BRADDOCK
 Well absolutely fucking not.

Formal clothes. Angry haircut. Government official type. A
 glass of Whisky in her hand. God knows how many she's had.

SUPER: "162 DAYS TO EXODUS"

In front of Helen: JUDITH BROWN (30s) sits, eyes to her phone. Keeping an eye on the latest scandal. Not for fun; it's her job. Serious plain clothes and not the first person we see with curly hair but you can tell hers is a perm.

She puts her phone away as she looks Braddock down.

HELEN BRADDOCK

And in the name of everything holy,
don't look at me like you're the
main meal, sweetie. You're a side
salad.

JUDITH

I understand your concerns.

HELEN BRADDOCK

Do you, now?

JUDITH

I guess I don't. But I'm still
asking you to reconsider.

HELEN BRADDOCK

Considered and reconsidered. Thank
you, Miss Brown. Can I call you
Judith? Maybe Jude?

JUDITH

People won't--

HELEN BRADDOCK

I prefer Jude. Jude it is.

JUDITH

People won't be thrilled about
this. Not just the people involved.
We'd be looking at treason. The
whole thing would go international.
Ministry of Justice. DOJ. So my
advice--

HELEN BRADDOCK

You can take your advice by the
hand and you can both go fondle
yourselves, Jude.

Judith summons the strength not to punch her.

JUDITH

My advice is what you hired me for,
Mrs. Braddock.

Braddock simmers down a touch. Good point.

JUDITH

Keep it under wrap a few days. Sit
on it.

(MORE)

JUDITH (CONT'D)

The initiative won't be for months.
You'll still have time to say your
piece. Just take a few days out.
You still want me to call a press
conference in a few days? Fine.
I'll call a press conference in a
few days.

Braddock takes it in. Not happy about it, clearly.

HELEN BRADDOCK

So that's how it works?

JUDITH

How what works?

HELEN BRADDOCK

You suggest something to me and
then watch me decide to do it--
like it was my idea the whole time?

Judith smirks.

JUDITH

There are people in my field who
enjoy this approach. Planting seeds
and watching them grow.

HELEN BRADDOCK

And you don't?

JUDITH

I'm not a gardener, Mrs. Braddock.

Braddock says nothing back. Downs her glass.

INT. ALI'S WORKSHOP - DAY

A small low-budget arty studio. Total mess.

Canvases of all sizes all around the room. Some blank. Some
drafts. Some as big as an entire wall. All the same style,
like someone put Basquiat and Van Gogh in a blender.

Standing in the middle of it all, in front of a suit-and-
trench-coat AMERICAN BUSINESSMAN (50s), we find:

ALI (30s). Olive skin. Paint-covered overalls. Rough looking.
If it wasn't for the context, you'd think he's a builder.

SUPER: "161 DAYS TO EXODUS"

Ali holds ONE OF HIS PAINTINGS in his arms. Presenting it to
the businessman. A portrait of a boy, same style as the
others. The businessman stares it down. Stares Ali down.