

# CLASS

SERIES 1

EPISODE 7

"The Metaphysical Engine, or What Quill  
Did"

By

PATRICK NESS

SHOOTING SCRIPT

8th July 2016

1 \*

This is mostly the same opening sequence as Episode 6, but separate shots would be useful.

An asteroid shower, huge STONES tumbling through space. We turn through them. It's awe-inspiring.

Find a smaller ONE, tumbling faster than the others, follow it around-

The tell-tale SIZZLE as a rip in space/time opens in its path.

CHARLIE (O.S.)  
It was the smallest of infractions.

CUT TO:

2 \*

Quill, coming down the hallway, angry. Charlie behind her, trying to keep up.

\*

CHARLIE  
It was three minutes, at *most*-

QUILL  
Late is *late*, Prince.

CHARLIE  
With everything we've been through,  
I hardly think-

Quill stops suddenly, whips round to him.

QUILL  
Everything we've been through? You  
mean the lies? The slavery?

CHARLIE  
Punish- You know what? I'm not  
going to do this anymore.

QUILL  
At any moment, you could destroy  
the species who wiped out our  
people, yet here we stand.  
(leans in)  
In a *school*.

CHARLIE  
You shouldn't avenge genocide with  
genocide. That's what the Doctor  
said.

QUILL  
And obviously no one else in all of  
time and space can think for  
themselves.

Takes off walking again.

CHARLIE  
It isn't your decision, Quill.

Reach Quill's classroom door. She stops, turns to Charlie.

QUILL  
No, but detention is.

She opens the door, gestures him inside.

CUT TO:

3      **INT. COAL HILL SCHOOL, QUILL'S CLASSROOM - DAY 10, 15:36**      3      \*

Charlie steps in, surprised to see April, Ram, Tanya and  
Matteusz all sitting at desks. They're surprised to see him,  
too.

CHARLIE  
(turning)  
Wait a minute. All of us-?

But Quill has shut the door behind him. He reaches for the  
handle-

She's locked it. He pulls on it.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)  
Hey!

CUT TO:

4      **INT. COAL HILL SCHOOL, CORRIDOR - DAY 10, 15:37**      4      \*

This time, we see the action through the other side of the  
door, Quill watching Charlie.

QUILL  
You've all got an hour's detention,  
and I've got things to do. April's  
in charge. Obviously.

CHARLIE  
(through the door)  
You can't just lock us in here!  
(turns to the others)  
She can't just-  
(stops, off their  
reactions)  
You've already had this argument  
with her.

Charlie turns back to the door. Quill smiles through the glass.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)  
(through the door)  
You're sworn to protect me.

QUILL  
That's why I'm locking you in. So  
you won't come to harm.

CHARLIE  
(through the door)  
Why? What are you going to do?

She just smiles and turns away, walking down the corridor.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)  
(through the door)  
Hey!  
(on door handle)  
Hey!

Quill disappears down the hallway as the SIZZLE of the rip in space/time starts to open as in the last episode.

CUT TO:

5 INT. COAL HILL SCHOOL, CORRIDOR - DAY 10, 15:38

5 \*

Quill reaches the end of the corridor where DOROTHEA waits. Dorothea wears an overdone set of clothes for travelling: safari-shirt, tons of camping gadgets - she could be heading into the jungle. She has a sleek PACK with her.

\*  
\*  
\*

QUILL  
Ready?

DOROTHEA  
(on Quill's normal outfit)  
Is that what you're wearing?

QUILL  
Is that what *you* are?

They walk on, leaving the corridor. Behind them, we (but not they) hear the meteor hit from last week's episode.

CUT TO:

6 INT. COAL HILL SCHOOL, SCHOOL HALL - DAY 10, 15:40

6 \*

Quill and Dorothea enter the school hall.

DOROTHEA  
They'll stay in the classroom? I  
don't want them trying to solve any  
"mysteries" while we're away.

QUILL  
They're all such goody two-shoes,  
they'd probably stay there without  
a key or a teacher. Now, are we  
leaving or aren't we? \*

DOROTHEA  
(surprised)  
Are you really so eager? The  
chances of you surviving this are- \*

QUILL  
I'll either end today dead or with  
this thing out of my skull. \*

Beat, as Dorothea considers this. \*

DOROTHEA  
Are you entirely sure about that?  
(off Quill's look)  
The Arn knows your thoughts, yes? \*

QUILL  
...yes- \*

DOROTHEA  
Then it knows you want it out. And  
surely the only reason it hasn't  
killed you already is that you  
yourself don't believe this will  
work. \*

QUILL  
What are you getting at? \*

DOROTHEA  
At some point today, should  
everything go according to plan,  
there will come a moment when  
you'll start to believe. \*

QUILL  
...and when that happens- \*

DOROTHEA  
When that happens, there will be  
only one survivor. \*

QUILL  
...Me or the Arn. \*

DOROTHEA  
Once we leave, there's no going  
back. You really will either end  
this day dead or with your freedom. \*

This sinks in more. But- \*

QUILL  
Then let's begin. I wish to be  
free. \*

DOROTHEA  
(all-important) \*  
And who, I wonder, *is* Quill when \*  
she's free?

Zoom into Quill, her phrase, but with a definite hint of a \*  
question. \*

QUILL  
I am war itself...? \*

**THEME MUSIC RISES - "Up All Night" by Alex Clare.**

**TITLES.**

CUT TO:

7 **INT. COAL HILL SCHOOL, SCHOOL HALL - DAY 10, 15:45** 7 \*

Dorothea looks at her watch.

QUILL  
What exactly are we waiting for?

Dorothea ignores this.

QUILL (CONT'D)  
So it's going to be that kind of  
day, is it?

DOROTHEA  
Ah, here he is.

There's a shimmer of colour, and BALLON is suddenly with  
them. Handsome, brooding, human-looking save for white \*  
contacts over his irises. He wears a hoodie. His NECK is \*  
partially REPTILIAN, as if he was emerging out of it in the  
shape of a Human. He glares at Dorothea, holds out his hands,  
which are BOUND by an alien device, held by cords of light.

DOROTHEA (CONT'D)  
You're late.

BALLON  
(growly voice, on hands)  
My travel is restricted. By you.

QUILL  
(surprised)  
The Governors keep alien prisoners?  
Does UNIT know about this...?

Dorothea gives her a look that says, Don't ask. Out of her  
pack, she takes a small alien key. Firm eye on Ballon, who  
watches her resentfully, she holds the key over the bonds.

DOROTHEA  
(perhaps slightly nervous)  
Need I remind you of who we are and  
the control we have over you?

BALLON  
(contained fury)  
You do not.

DOROTHEA  
And you will not-

BALLON  
(shouting)  
I need NOTHING MORE of your games,  
human. Cut the binds or do not,  
just *shut up*.

QUILL  
I like him already.

Ballon glances at her. It's not friendly.

Dorothea touches the key to his bonds. They separate. \*  
Dorothea looks impressed at her own tech, as if she's maybe  
not seen it work before.

DOROTHEA  
(quietly, on the key)  
Remarkable.

Ballon massages his wrists, scowling.

QUILL  
Who is this person?

DOROTHEA  
Quill, Ballon. Ballon, Quill.  
That's all either of you need to  
know for now.

BALLON  
(glares at Quill)  
Stay out of my way.

QUILL  
(accepts the challenge)  
Stay out of *mine*.

Dorothea opens her pack and takes out a small RELIQUARY, with \*  
an ancient RELIC inside, a small orb of white within. \*

QUILL (CONT'D)  
What's that?

DOROTHEA  
(cheerful)  
Very old technology, which I  
confess we don't fully understand.  
It's quite unsteady, liable to kill  
us at any moment.

QUILL  
Is that why they sent *you*?  
Expendable?

There's a *sound* from Ballon. Was it a laugh? Quill glances over but he covers it.

Dorothea places the reliquary on the ground between the three of them. Is she just a little unsure of herself? Hides it behind a smile, but there's nervousness when she says:

DOROTHEA  
Three. Two. One.

Without further preface, The reliquary suddenly shoots THREE WHITE BEAMS from it, each passing RIGHT THROUGH our three characters and coming out of their backs.

Quill reacts as if she's been speared, which maybe she has. Ballon toughs it out, even Dorothea looks uncomfortable.

And zero. DOROTHEA (CONT'D)

In a flash, they DEMATERIALISE.

CUT TO:

8 OMITTED. 8

CUT TO:

9 INT. RELIQUARY - DAY 10 9 \*

The interior space is a VERY basic orb - old, no seats, seemingly ready to fall apart - as if they're inside the small white orb in the reliquary, which they are.

Quill is pressed against the floor by acceleration. The sense of speed is overwhelming-

She sees Ballon and Dorothea, both managing to keep upright, though Dorothea is also clearly struggling to keep up her "in charge" persona.

Quill sees Ballon sneering at her infirmity. Then she passes out... It's quick, her eyes just touch closed before-

CUT TO:

10 OMITTED. 10 \*

11 OMITTED. MERGED WITH SCENE 9. 11 \*

CUT TO: \*



12 EXT. FOREST - DAY 10 12 \*

Quill blinks herself awake, frowning. She's... Where is she? \*  
She sits up. It's leafy. It's a forest. She hears a sound.

Dorothea repacks the reliquary. Ballon stands, unnaturally still, his eyes closed.

BALLON  
(without opening his eyes)  
She is awake.

Quill makes to stand, but is clearly very dizzy.

DOROTHEA  
I know. Me, too. There'll be a  
period of adjustment-

QUILL  
What the hell just happened?

Dorothea holds up the reliquary.

DOROTHEA  
A kind of atomic fuzzing. Makes us  
quite nearly not exist in the  
traditional sense.  
(looks around, amazed)  
But it can take you to the *most*  
remarkable places.  
(sighs with delight)  
Gosh.

QUILL  
If you do something like that again  
without warning me, I will pluck  
the eyelids from your screaming  
face.

Ballon laughs again, more clearly, eyes still closed. \*

BALLON  
An interesting company we make.

DOROTHEA  
(smiles, to Quill)  
You're going to regret those shoes.

CUT TO:

13 EXT. FOREST PATH - DAY 10, LATER 13 \*

The three make their way down a forest path, Ballon in the lead, Quill in the rear.

QUILL  
We didn't get "fuzzed" atomically  
to the Peak District, did we?  
Because there are trains for that.

DOROTHEA  
(looking around in wonder)  
Oh, my, no.

QUILL  
(frustrated)  
Fine. I'll ask. Where are we, oh wise headteacher and mistress of nauseating space travel?

DOROTHEA  
(grins)  
Some place *wonderful*.

\*

Quill makes to answer, but Ballon stops suddenly, alert.

\*

BALLON  
They're near.

QUILL  
Who? I can't hear anything.

BALLON  
(scornful)  
When you were asleep, she told me you were a *soldier*.

Before Quill can snap back, Dorothea turns to her, sighing, uncomfortable with not being entirely on top of the facts.

DOROTHEA  
Now, we're flying a little blind here, but our best zoological theory is that you need to talk about your childhood.

\*

QUILL  
(baffled)  
Zoolo- *What?*

\*

DOROTHEA  
What are your first memories? Quickly. It feeds on those. We think it'll come hunting.

There's now a distinct rustling in the bushes.

QUILL  
(angry, confused)  
What the f-

BALLON  
(suddenly loud, commanding)  
What is your first memory, soldier?!

QUILL  
(surprised into it)  
The death of our mother!

Dorothea and Ballon blink at her.

QUILL (CONT'D)  
(pressing on)  
Birth is the last thing a Quill  
does. She has her litter and dies  
and her body...

DOROTHEA  
(genuinely fascinated)  
...You eat it. For nourishment.  
Don't you?

\*  
\*

QUILL  
(angry at it)  
It's a contemptible tradition. And  
medically unnecessary in modern  
times. But there are archaic  
cultural pressures-

\*

BALLON  
It is enough. They are coming.

There's a loud rustling in the BUSHES. Ballon gives a BATTLE  
CRY and dives in. Off-screen, we hear the sounds of a  
physical fight, the calls of some sort of CREATURE-

Who then dies with a sound as of a neck breaking.

Beat. Ballon steps out of the bushes, carrying a small bloody  
creature. Surprisingly small.

QUILL  
That's *it*?

BALLON  
(irritated, befuddled by  
her reaction)  
They're surprisingly strong.

QUILL  
Well, what was all the-  
(imitates his battle cry)  
It's the size of a kitten.

BALLON  
Are kittens dangerous?

QUILL  
Only if you insult their  
worshippers online.

DOROTHEA (O.S.)  
Are we safe?

They turn. She has her gun out, pointing at the bloody mess  
in Ballon's hand.

QUILL  
Are you kidding me?

BALLON  
We are safe. It's dead.

QUILL

All right, ENOUGH! Where are we,  
who is Little Lord Growls-A-Lot and  
why are we all so worried that he  
killed a kitten?

\*

Dorothea gives Quill a look, steps forward, takes out a PEN  
with which to pick up the "kitten". She holds it up. Pull  
focus to Quill's face. Who might recognise it...

\*

\*

QUILL (CONT'D)

That's not. No...

DOROTHEA

Oh, yes.

QUILL

...But that's... *impossible*.

DOROTHEA

Indeed.

She looks up to the surrounding forest, still in some awe.

DOROTHEA (CONT'D)

We're in the Birthing Grounds of  
the Arn. We need the pheromones of  
a fresh specimen to calm the one in  
your head enough for the procedure.

\*

\*

\*

QUILL

(shocked)

What procedure? And that's not...  
The Arn are a *grown* life form!  
Genetically modified. They do *not*  
live in any *forest*-

\*

\*

DOROTHEA

Yes, those are the facts that  
everyone knows to be true. But not,  
apparently, what the Arn believe.

\*

QUILL

What the Arn believe?

\*

Dorothea drops the Arn into a thoroughly inappropriate clear  
plastic sandwich bag.

\*

BALLON

(surly)

And *I* was unharmed, thank you.

\*

Dorothea ignores this, takes out the reliquary, concerned.

\*

DOROTHEA

The trip here took more power than  
we calculated. Getting to our next  
destination could be a close-run  
thing.

\*

(sees Quill glaring)

Oh, all right. *This*, as best we can  
tell, is a metaphysical engine.

QUILL  
Metaphysics? But metaphysics aren't  
real, they're-

DOROTHEA  
Thought, yes. Everything in the  
universe is conserved. Everything.  
Even belief. Get millions of  
creatures believing something  
strongly enough for *long* enough and  
even space responds. You're quite  
right that the Arn weren't exactly  
wild creatures, but parts of them  
were. And they dream, like so many  
of us, of what comes after.

\*

QUILL  
I'm sorry, are you... Are you  
actually suggesting we're in Arn  
heaven?

\*

DOROTHEA  
Don't be ridiculous.

QUILL  
Good, I-

DOROTHEA  
We're in the *idea* of it. The belief  
itself making it so.

\*

\*

Quill opens her mouth to answer but then jumps a little,  
holding her head.

\*

\*

QUILL  
It moved.  
(looking up)  
That's the first time I've ever  
felt it move without pain.

\*

\*

\*

\*

\*

DOROTHEA  
You see? *It* believes.

\*

\*

Dorothea fiddles with the reliquary, having difficulty. She's  
annoyed the others see this.

\*

\*

BALLON  
How many times have you travelled  
on this... device?

\*

Dorothea doesn't answer, doesn't look up. Quill is suddenly  
interested in her non-response.

\*

QUILL  
(sing-song)  
Oh, Headmistress...

Dorothea looks up, hesitant. Beat.

DOROTHEA  
This is my first actual time. We've  
tried several simulations though-

QUILL  
Your *first*?

BALLON  
Your *first*?

DOROTHEA  
(defensive)  
I've been fully briefed. I know  
what I'm do-

\*

The reliquary activates before she can finish. It shoots  
THREE WHITE BEAMS from it again, each passing RIGHT THROUGH  
our three characters.

In a flash, they DEMATERIALISE-

\*

CUT TO:

14 INT. RELIQUARY - DAY 10

14 \*

More juddering on the inside, but Quill, watching Ballon,  
sees that by not fighting it, the ride is easier. She  
steadies herself. They're all quite startled to be there.  
It's loud, they have to talk over it.

\*

QUILL  
So we're in the hands of a learner  
driver?

\*

DOROTHEA  
You're in the hands of the only one  
of us who's read the research on  
how to stay alive while using it.

\*

QUILL  
Where do you get *research*? Where  
did you get *this*?

Gestures at the reliquary space. It's still loud. Dorothea  
WHACKS a panel. Everything quietens down a little.

\*

DOROTHEA  
(all right, fine)  
The Governors study the tears in  
space and time at Coal Hill. We  
study the... *flotsam* that falls  
through. It suggests... interesting  
things.

\*

QUILL  
(suspicious)  
Interesting things like what?

\*

DOROTHEA  
(beat)  
There are those who think that the  
tears aren't accidental. That they  
were *put* there. To provide. For  
those who will listen.  
(almost reverently)  
(MORE)

DOROTHEA (CONT'D)

Coal Hill provides. It always provides.

QUILL

(concerned by this)

It's just a school.

Dorothea gives her a "really?" look. Quill turns to Ballon.

QUILL (CONT'D)

And what do you get out of this?

BALLON

My freedom.

Dorothea repeats her question from earlier.

DOROTHEA

And who is a free *Ballon*, I wonder?

QUILL

Some kind of hunter?

\*

DOROTHEA

Oh, no, my dear, he's your surgeon.

Quill looks at him, surprised, re-appraising, but-

QUILL

You can't get an Arn out through surgery.

DOROTHEA

You can if the surgeon is a shape-shifter.

(beat)

That's the theory anyway.

QUILL

(looking at Ballon)

Shape-shifter? I think I've heard of you on Earth. You're a Zygon.

DOROTHEA

*Zy-gon*.

QUILL

Yeah, because *that* doesn't sound made up.

DOROTHEA

And he's *not* a Zygon-

BALLON

I am a Lorr.

DOROTHEA

Who was *posing* as a Zygon.

QUILL  
One shape-shifter posing as  
another? *That's* meta.

DOROTHEA  
Also a fine way to hide. Zygons are  
protected on Earth. A good place to  
disappear.

QUILL  
(to Ballon)  
What did you do?

BALLON  
(defiant)  
You are on this trip as well,  
Quill. What did *you* do?

QUILL  
I am a victim of circumstance.

BALLON  
As am I.

DOROTHEA  
Yes, I'm sure the families of the  
people you both murdered would be  
more than happy to consider  
themselves a circumstance.

Ballon is angry but she's hit a sore spot.

BALLON  
No one was supposed to die.

DOROTHEA  
I'll bet that's her excuse, too. \*

QUILL  
(eyes on Ballon)  
Not really. I knew what *I* was  
doing.

The reliquary starts to shudder around them. Dorothea turns  
to Ballon. She's hesitant. She knows he won't like it.

DOROTHEA  
(wary)  
Remember what we've promised you. \*  
Ask yourself, what is the reward  
worth?

BALLON  
(resentful but trapped)  
It is everything. But why-

Beat. Then flashes of white light and:

CUT TO:



15      **EXT. LORR HELL - NIGHT 10**

15      \*

They stumble out into what appears to be a landscape of CLOSELY SET STATUES. Every statue is a LORR, frozen in expressions of horror.

BALLON  
(eyes widening)  
No. No! This isn't *real*!

\*

DOROTHEA  
Does no one listen to the posh anymore? No, it is *not* real, but yes, we are *really* here.

QUILL  
Where?

BALLON  
(grieved, terrified)  
It is Lorr ap Thriss.

Quill looks to Dorothea for explanation.

DOROTHEA  
Lorr hell. More or less. Isn't it *amazing*?

\*

QUILL  
...surprisingly quiet for a hell.

BALLON  
Yes. An awful, awful quiet. We are creatures that flow. We *live* in the constant flow.

Quill examines a statue closely, getting it.

QUILL  
And this is the opposite of flowing.

BALLON  
It's a punishment I already suffer!  
(to Dorothea, livid)  
You said the second step would be the retrieval of a key-

\*

\*

\*

A distant THUD, as of a LARGE CREATURE MOVING in the distance, among the maze of statues.

\*

BALLON (CONT'D)  
(more terrified)  
No.

\*

Another thud, closer, louder. Ballon, previously so tough, is reduced to near catatonic terror. Quill, surprisingly, feels a first hint of sympathy.

\*

QUILL  
(to Dorothea)  
This seems cruel. Even for you.

DOROTHEA

(concerned)

His hands need to shift to get into  
your brain. For that, I need a key  
to unlock them, but it's impossible  
to reverse the freezing of a shape-  
shifter-

\*  
\*

QUILL

Except in an impossible place.

\*

Another thud, even closer, dust falls from nearby statues.

QUILL (CONT'D)

What's the key then?

Dorothea looks up, as a SHADOW covers them.

BALLON

The blood of our god.

They turn round to see-

A GIANT SHIMMERING MASS, made of translucent ripples but in a  
posture that looks plenty pissed off.

Ballon lets out a cry and RUNS away. Dorothea, alarmed, runs  
after him.

After a second, Quill runs, too.

CUT TO:

16      **EXT. LORR HELL, DEEPER IN THE MAZE - NIGHT 10**

16      \*

They run, Ballon full out, Quill catching up to Dorothea.

QUILL

We're supposed to get the blood of  
a god?

\*

DOROTHEA

That's the-

QUILL

Say theory again. Go ahead.

Ballon suddenly veers off to the side. The others follow.

CUT TO:

17      **EXT. LORR HELL, A HIDING PLACE - NIGHT 10**

17      \*

Ballon hides behind a few STATUES that have grown together.  
Dorothea and Quill join him.

BALLON

(furious, terrified)

It's too much! I cannot be here!

\*

DOROTHEA  
(to Quill)  
You'll have to do it alone. There  
is a special knife-

\*  
\*  
\*

She opens her pack and pulls out a LORR knife, holding it out to Quill, who's incredulous.

QUILL  
I can't use knives, remember?  
(taps her head)  
Whole point of this trip.

DOROTHEA  
(realising)  
Oh. Oh, dear. That was an oversight-

A ROAR from the god as it approaches.

QUILL  
(to Ballon)  
What can I do?

But he's terrified, doesn't answer. She turns on a military voice, commanding, like he did to her.

\*  
\*

QUILL (CONT'D)  
Soldier! Tell me what I need to do!

\*  
\*

BALLON  
(astonished, impressed)  
You need its blood. It will  
solidify. You can pick it up.

\*

Another THUD behind them, another roar. Quill sees his terror and his accompanying bravery. Surprisingly, she softens-

\*

QUILL  
In Quill, we called this the First  
Fear. The one you can't face.  
Everyone has it. Even Quill.

\*  
\*  
\*

BALLON  
It is cowardice-

QUILL  
A soldier without fear is useless,  
inefficient. They win battles but  
lose wars.

BALLON  
How... How do you overcome it?

DOROTHEA  
(worried)  
Hopefully quickly.

\*

Quill holds out a hand to him. After a beat, he, surprised, takes it.

\*  
\*

QUILL  
(to him, re: knife)  
We'll need that.

\*  
\*

He takes the Knife from Dorothea, and Quill drags him off around the statue.

\*  
\*

CUT TO:

18 EXT. LORR HELL, BATTLE AREA - NIGHT 10

18

\*

She drags Ballon out into an open area, the Lorr Devil hovering above her, still shimmering, formless, translucent against the darkness-

QUILL  
Isn't evil ever *short*?  
(beat)  
Hold the knife.

\*  
\*  
\*

Still terrified, he presents it.

\*

QUILL (CONT'D)  
Hold it *out*.

She pulls his arm so he's holding the knife threateningly.

\*

The Devil is about to bear down on them. Ballon is frozen, his arm still out-

Quill's arm is suddenly under his, supporting it, bracing it-

QUILL (CONT'D)  
I will be your arm, soldier.

POV of the Devil moving down to fight them. Quill imitates Ballon's battle yell as the Devil lunges down-

\*

CUT TO:

19 EXT. LORR HELL, A HIDING PLACE - NIGHT 10

19

\*

We hear more ROARS and THUDS, then a louder ROAR which makes Dorothea wince. But she returns to a DICTAPHONE, into which she's actually dictating. She flinches in fear at every thump, but forces herself to keep recording.

\*  
\*  
\*

DOROTHEA  
(shaken, worried)  
"Degradation seems at least 40%  
faster than originally theorised.  
We'll need to request more  
information from the Chairman-"

\*  
\*  
\*

Stops at another ROAR, another THUMP, more yelling. She clicks off the Dictaphone.

DOROTHEA (CONT'D)  
(worried)  
*This won't look good on the report.*

Then all sound stops suddenly. The thudding starts fading away, step, step, step, getting quieter. \*

Dorothea just waits-

QUILL comes from around the corner, blouse TORN, dirty, but alive and holding a gel-like handful of solidified BLOOD. Ballon, also tousled, follows behind her, astounded. \*

DOROTHEA (CONT'D)  
...how?

QUILL  
It thinks we already are statues.  
(to Ballon)  
Is that how you view the rest of us? As pretty much already dead?

BALLON  
(surprised, truthful)  
Yes. \*

Quill hands the blood to Dorothea, who wraps it and puts it in her pack, taking out the reliquary. Quill goes to Ballon. \*

QUILL  
That was...  
(thoughtful)  
It's been too long since I fought side by side with an actual soldier.

BALLON  
I am filled with shame at my inaction.

QUILL  
(not liking this response)  
Okay, fine, you're welc- \*

Calls out in surprise, grabbing her head again. \*

QUILL (CONT'D)  
(concerned, frightened)  
That... hurt. \*

DOROTHEA  
You're starting to believe this might work. \*

They both look at her; at the urgency in her voice. Dorothea holds up the reliquary. \*

DOROTHEA (CONT'D)  
Which means this really is your last chance to turn back. From here on, there is only death or freedom. \*

Quill thinks, glances at Ballon, decides.

QUILL  
An unfree life isn't a life. Where  
do we go next?

DOROTHEA  
(shaking her head)  
You wouldn't believe me.

She presses the reliquary without warning and the lights hit  
them all again-

CUT TO:

20 INT. RELIQUARY - DAY 10

20

The lights are fading in the reliquary now, flashing in and  
out. A SPARK and one light goes out altogether.

QUILL  
(to Dorothea)  
Would you *stop doing that*?

DOROTHEA  
I'm not sure how long we're going  
to last-

QUILL  
How far is where we're going?

Dorothea looks at her, almost refusing to answer, but then  
reaches into her PACK and takes out a NOTEBOOK-

QUILL (CONT'D)  
(outraged)  
You have to check your *notes*? How  
did you even get picked for this?

DOROTHEA  
(proud, defensive)  
I volunteered. I had to fight to  
convince the Governors that we  
should proceed at all.  
(off Quill's astonishment)  
No one else is all that committed  
to saving you, Quill. Is that so  
much of a surprise?

QUILL  
(quietly)  
Not really.

DOROTHEA  
But the research we could gain  
proved too tempting in the end.  
(on her notebook)  
Now, if you'll just let me check my  
notes-

Ballon finally answers Quill's question, though still smarting from his embarrassment.

BALLON  
The Arn sits on your mid-brain.  
Apparently, your species occludes  
that with a separate inner skull  
that x-rays cannot cut through.

QUILL  
We evolved it. It prevents mind  
control.

BALLON  
Yet, I will still need to see the  
pathway there if I hope to take out  
the Arn without your death.

DOROTHEA  
(looking at her notes)  
And as all Quill brains were  
destroyed on Rhodia and you're  
using yours at the moment..

QUILL  
...Where are you going to find a  
Quill brain?

Dorothea doesn't answer, possibly even she doesn't want to  
enrage Quill that much. \*

QUILL (CONT'D)  
No, don't even say it. Our  
afterlife myth died out a thousand  
years ago- \*

DOROTHEA  
(worried, on her notebook)  
Let's hope not or this will be a  
very short trip.

Flash of light, then-

CUT TO:

21 **EXT. QUILL HEAVEN - DAY 10**

21 \*

They stumble into the middle of a dense, DEAD THICKET. Dead  
branches intertwine into an impassable briar patch over their  
heads. There's also a denser, egg-shaped smaller THICKET in  
the centre. Sun filters through, but it's a dead place.  
They're the only ones there. They look around, baffled. \*

BALLON  
Where *is* this exactly? \*

Dorothea looks to Quill, but Quill refuses to answer.

DOROTHEA  
Our information isn't omnipotent.  
If our theory-

QUILL  
(sharply, to her)  
I swear to this guy's god-

DOROTHEA  
-is correct. This is where the  
Quill goddess is about to be born.

BALLON  
(surprised)  
So this is... your heaven?  
(beat)  
It's a bit dusty.

QUILL  
Well, excuse me, statue boy, but we  
only believed in *this* before we  
realised the only thing out there  
protecting us was *us*. No goddess in  
a Quill nest looking out for our  
best interest.

DOROTHEA  
It's so sad you think that's what  
belief is. \*

BALLON  
(surprisingly agreeing)  
Yes.

QUILL  
(eyes wide)  
Do I really need to do to you what  
I did to those very nice people who  
no longer come to my front door?

There's a RUMBLE. They stop.

BALLON  
What's happening?

Dorothea gives Quill a "well?" look. Quill rolls her eyes.

QUILL  
This is a Quill nest. The *first*  
Quill nest, allegedly. The Quill  
goddess is supposed to...

Stops, suddenly mildly concerned, looks down.

QUILL (CONT'D)  
...exit the underworld.

DOROTHEA  
(excited)  
Where she's been trapped, isn't  
that correct?

Another rumble. The ground starts to shake.

QUILL  
And she rises with-



DOROTHEA

"Fury and venom," according to the text we have. Oh, how exciting!

QUILL

(very concerned now)  
I'm beginning to think you don't know as much about my people as you pretend to-

The central smaller THICKET SUDDENLY ERUPTS, pushing them back. As the dirt falls, the GODDESS OF QUILL is suddenly among them.

She's terrifying. Towering over them, eight feet tall, a primitive version of Quill's own native looks, but vicious FANGS AND TEETH. This isn't a deity you could even talk to.

She looks at them, obviously furious they're there. She ROARS. Both Quill and Ballon look at Dorothea, incredulous. \*

BALLON

*That's* the head we're supposed to take?

DOROTHEA

(nervous)  
Well. Get to it.

They look back up at the goddess-

In time for her to HURL A VICIOUS CLAW at Ballon, sending him flying. He bounces off the wall, groaning, falling to the floor and not getting up. The goddess turns to Dorothea. \*

DOROTHEA (CONT'D)

Oh, dear.  
(glance to Quill)  
If I die, you'll never get home.

QUILL

Really? Nothing in your *notebook* I can use?

The goddess rears up over Dorothea, who backs up. Quill gets an "oh for god's sake" look, moves into her action stance and aims a kick at the back of the goddess' HEAD.

Nothing happens except that she turns to Quill now, furious. \*

QUILL (CONT'D)

I'm a Quill!

She regards Quill. \*

QUILL (CONT'D)

I mean, I know I don't *look* Quill, I had to have some plastic surgery-

The goddess throws a heavy BLOW at her, she ducks and runs underneath. \*

The goddess PUNCHES into the thicket, breaking many branches. \*  
She throws another CLAWED arm at Quill. Quill ducks again, \*  
running around the goddess, past Dorothea-

DOROTHEA

Hey!

Dorothea holds up the notebook to protect herself. The  
Goddess GRABS IT and EATS IT!

QUILL

Oh, that isn't good.

The clawed arm swings again and catches Dorothea in the back \*  
of the head, knocking her down, unconscious-

Quill tries to dive for the pack, but the goddess steps in \*  
the way. Quill looks up at her, nearly defeated. \*

QUILL (CONT'D)

You don't *deserve* my belief.

The goddess regards her again, maybe listening?

QUILL (CONT'D)

Do you know how the Quill have been  
oppressed? For *centuries*?

The goddess leans down, threateningly-

QUILL (CONT'D)

We died. And died *again*. I should  
rip your head off just for daring  
to *exist*!

The goddess reaches out a claw. Quill is surely doomed-

QUILL (CONT'D)

Do it. I was a *soldier*. You weren't  
there to stop them from taking that  
from me! And what am I now?  
(accepting death, defiant)  
I will spit in your eye as my last  
act.

The goddess splays open her claws, ready to kill- \*

But she merely strokes Quill's cheek, as if in recognition. \*

Quill gives a confused look. The goddess' mouth opens, as if  
to speak-

Then suddenly she arches up and CRIES OUT! \*

Ballon has stabbed her in the back with the LORR DAGGER. As \*  
she's calling out in pain, he cuts through the back of the \*  
goddess' neck and decapitates her.

Her head falls to the ground. Ballon stands, breathing  
heavily.

BALLON  
I am *not* a coward.

QUILL  
(frustrated)  
No one said you *were*. I think she was about to speak to me. I could have been the first Quill ever to-

BALLON  
Would you *really* want to hear what your god would say?

QUILL  
As a matter of fact-

BALLON  
If it meant you would then have to believe in her?

This stops Quill.

BALLON (CONT'D)  
If it meant you would have to worship her? That you would have to change how you thought of yourself and the universe?

QUILL  
(beat)  
You believe.

BALLON  
But I always have. It is part of who I am. Your self is already formed.

QUILL  
Yeah, but we didn't behead *your* god. We just... took a blood sample.

Ballon picks up the goddess' head, wraps it in a cloth.

BALLON  
If she is right, this is a metaphysical place. Your goddess will rise again. She will always be born. All gods are.

He sets the wrapped head down.

BALLON (CONT'D)  
I thought perhaps she was your First Fear. I thought perhaps you needed the arm of a fellow soldier.

Quill lets this moment sink in, a surprising connection. She doesn't know what to do with it, looks away.

They look at Dorothea, still unconscious.

\*

QUILL  
Don't suppose you know how to work  
the thingybob?

\*

Beat. He doesn't.

CUT TO:

22 INT. QUILL HEAVEN - DAY 10, LATER

22 \*

Ballon sits, going through Dorothea's pack, pulling out amusingly useless things: a compass, an iPhone charger, a Coal Hill badge...

Dorothea is still out cold. Quill finishes putting TWIGS over the body of her goddess.

QUILL  
Why don't you use the rest of the  
blood to unfreeze yourself?

\*  
\*  
\*

BALLON  
There isn't enough. It is  
extraordinarily painful when only  
part of you can shift.  
(off her burying actions)  
I don't see why you-

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

QUILL  
You start in the nest. You end in  
the nest.  
(adds final twig)  
It's our way.

\*

BALLON  
But this isn't the *real* goddess-

QUILL  
And yours wasn't your *real* devil,  
but you were still terrified of it.

BALLON  
Because it could still freeze me  
forever in one shape. A fate worse  
than your death.

Quill sits near him, both looking at Dorothea.

QUILL  
A fate you're in now.

This hurts. He gestures to the reptilian skin on his neck.

BALLON  
(angry)  
I was caught as I shifted. I am  
neither one thing nor the other.  
Their punishment is doubly unjust.

QUILL  
You killed people.

BALLON  
Are humans "people"?

QUILL  
(shrugs)  
I've grown to tolerate them. They  
smell a bit, but...

Long beat.

BALLON  
My planet was attacked. By an enemy  
we couldn't hope to fight. I lost  
my family. The Lorr I loved. I came  
to Earth seeking sanctuary. But I  
did not find it. Only certain  
aliens are good enough, apparently.

\*  
\*  
\*

QUILL  
Like the Zygotes.

\*

BALLON  
But if you are someone else from  
somewhere else, no matter what  
world you are trying to leave...

QUILL  
They have a poet on Earth. She  
says, "No one leaves home unless  
home is the mouth of a shark."

\*

BALLON  
I did not mean for anyone to die. I  
had just arrived. I was hiding as a  
Zygon, but you have to prove your  
genetic nature to get asylum. I was  
starving.  
(beat)  
It was the home of a family. When  
they caught me, I changed into one  
of those differently shaped small  
humans they always have with them?

QUILL  
(thinks)  
...a dog?

BALLON  
(nods)  
But this terrified them. "Monster!"  
they said. "Freak" they said. They  
beat me. They would have beat me to  
death...

\*

QUILL  
So you killed them.

BALLON

I did not mean to. I did not understand their biology. But... "Ignorance of the law is no excuse".

\*

QUILL

That sounds like her.

BALLON

It was her. I had heard of UNIT, all arriving refugees do. I expected to be arrested but the family's child attended her school. The Governors found me first. And ruined me.

\*

QUILL

But now they're setting you free?

BALLON

(very pessimistic)  
If I can get the thing out of your head without your death.

QUILL

That sounded cheering.

They look at Dorothea passed out, still. Quill is thoughtful.

\*

QUILL (CONT'D)

My planet was destroyed. All my people killed.

\*

(beat, her real loss)

He was my lieutenant, which is - was - unusual for a male of my species. He was strong. And ambitious. And his quills were...

\*

(smiles, moves hand as if she's feeling her quills on her head)

\*

More than adequate.

(then more vulnerable)

There isn't a great deal of tenderness to my people. We're rough to begin with and we've fashioned ourselves into an army. Be he... He could... Make that not feel like weakness.

Her face drops.

BALLON

He was killed in the destruction of your planet?

QUILL

No. He was killed in the war with my enemies. He died in the same battle where they arrested me.

(looks to him)

They took him from me.

(MORE)

QUILL (CONT'D)

Then they took my will. And do you know what they did next? The *worst* thing they did?

(really vulnerable now,  
this is hard)

They made me *used* to it.

He watches her, wary.

QUILL (CONT'D)

I shout my power. I shout my toughness and my danger... But I am shouting it to *children*. It's like they just... amputated the central part of who I was. Who I am.

Ballon shows his hand.

BALLON

You are frozen, too... I am sorry.

QUILL

I do not want your pity-

BALLON

I don't offer pity. I offer shared sorrow.

She looks at him. Another connection.

BALLON (CONT'D)

But I would say this. The question that a *soldier* would ask next is... How will I make them pay?

QUILL

(considers this)

That's part of the problem. They're gone. Without having been made to pay for their crime.

(beat, hard)

All but one.

She winces. Then she puts her hand to her head again.

QUILL (CONT'D)

Oh.

BALLON

Are you well?

QUILL

No. No, I don't think I am.

(looks to him)

I think I just started believing this might work.

Dorothea stirs. Quill and Ballon sit back, the spell temporarily broken.

DOROTHEA  
(groaning)  
Oh. What happened?

QUILL  
(in pain now)  
My goddess planted an egg in your  
stomach. You'll spit up a litter of  
Quill by the end of the week.

DOROTHEA  
Well, that will be bracing.  
(stands)  
Did you get its head?

BALLON  
(concerned for Quill)  
Her head. And yes.

Dorothea takes out the reliquary.

DOROTHEA  
(on Quill)  
What's wrong?

BALLON  
The Arn is fighting her.

DOROTHEA  
(quickly)  
Then we're out of time-

Touches the reliquary immediately, the blasts of light shine-

CUT TO:

23 INT. RELIQUARY - DAY 10

23 \*

Quill screams, holding her head in the reliquary, which is  
clearly in dire straits now. Lights are going off all over  
the place; it groans and judders badly.

QUILL  
Tell me there isn't much left to  
do.

DOROTHEA  
We need an operating theatre.  
(looks around)  
But I don't think we're going to  
make the one we had planned...

Quill calls out again.

DOROTHEA (CONT'D)  
(concerned)  
Can you find a way to convince  
yourself the chances are very slim?



QUILL \*  
(brutal smile) \*  
It's too late. You made me believe. \*

Sinks in for Dorothea. She turns to a CONTROL PANEL. \*

DOROTHEA \*  
Then we have no choice- \*

Lights flash again-

CUT TO:

24 INT. COAL HILL SCHOOL, SCHOOL HALL - DAY 10 24 \*

They stumble out into the boring, old school hall of Coal Hill Academy.

QUILL \*  
(in pain) \*  
Oh, good. My own *personal* hell. \*

BALLON  
(off the room)  
This isn't appropriate. It isn't  
antiseptic, it isn't-

DOROTHEA \*  
But it *is* a place I can control. I  
suggest you get started quickly. \*

Ballon immediately starts preparing, taking things out of Dorothea's pack. Dorothea makes to leave. \*

QUILL \*  
(struggling)  
You're not staying? To watch me  
die?

DOROTHEA \*  
The mission didn't go as planned. I  
will have to explain- \*  
(almost to herself) \*  
And try to buy you more time. \*

QUILL \*  
Ah, yes, the mysterious Governors. \*

Dorothea looks like she won't answer. But then, perhaps even in an attempt to make Quill actually understand: \*

DOROTHEA \*  
There are bigger things in the  
universe than *this* life. Hidden  
things we can't even imagine. And  
if a *place* can be created from  
belief, if a *goddess* can...

QUILL  
(getting it)  
Then what *else* might you be able to  
make. If you believe hard enough?

Dorothea smiles. Quill's nailed it. \*

DOROTHEA  
(sincere)  
Try not to die. You're...  
intriguing. \*

Dorothea leaves them, going out the hall doors.

BALLON  
(watching her go)  
How will she stop either of us from  
killing her when we are free? \*

QUILL  
(in agony now)  
Maybe *neither* of us are supposed to  
survive. \*

He helps her lie on the floor, putting the pack under her  
head. \*

QUILL (CONT'D)  
(quietly)  
Thank you. \*

BALLON  
I don't do it out of kindness. I do  
it for the appropriate angle to  
open your face. \*

QUILL  
Well, when you put it like that- \*

BALLON  
And maybe a little out of kindness. \*

She looks at him. Beat. \*

BALLON (CONT'D)  
People are wary of shape-shifters.  
We are not well-liked in the  
universe. \*

QUILL  
I don't need to like you...  
(beat, almost surprised)  
Though I do. \*

Ballon reacts with muted surprise. \*

QUILL (CONT'D)  
(hurrying on)  
I just need to know that you've  
done this before. \*

BALLON  
Of course I haven't. It's  
impossible, remember? There are  
preparations I *must* make, but... I  
will hurry.  
(beat)  
Fight this. You've fought it all  
this way. Fight more. I will be  
your arm.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

She likes this, very much. Nods. He rushes to Dorothea's  
pack.

\*  
\*

CUT TO:

25 INT. COAL HILL SCHOOL, SCHOOL HALL - DAY 10, SECONDS LATER 25

\*

Quill is on the floor, we pan across all the materials that  
have been gathered. The ARN has been dissected. The blood  
pack has a chunk cut from it. And we come upon Ballon, his  
hands deep in the head of the goddess.

\*

With a squish, he pulls them out, holding what looks to be an  
ARN-

But it is just his hands in the shape of the Arn.

BALLON  
It works.  
(looks up to her, wryly,  
telling a little joke)  
"In theory".

\*  
\*

Quill, still in pain, groans. He SHIFTS his hands back and  
moves to her.

\*  
\*

BALLON (CONT'D)  
I will shift my hands to avoid  
nerves. Make it as painless as  
possible when I go through your eye-

QUILL  
My eye?

BALLON  
There *will* be some pain as the Arn  
comes out, though.

QUILL  
How much?

BALLON  
(genuinely curious)  
Would you really turn back if you  
knew?

QUILL  
(beat)  
No.

\*

Ballon holds up his hands, takes a deep breath, then they  
START TO MORPH into a long SPIKE, very narrow, like an awl.

\*  
\*

BALLON  
This will be horrible.

Before she can reply, he stabs the SPIKE into the corner of her eye. It's an uncomfortable FX. She's trying to hold still, but he is literally burrowing into her brain. She cries out, maybe in pain, but mostly in sheer horror.

Ballon is concentrating, intensely.

BALLON (CONT'D)  
I've reached your secondary  
skull... I have found the Arn. You  
will need to be very still.

She stills.

BALLON (CONT'D)  
It senses the pheromones on my  
hands-

QUILL  
The attack is slowing-

\*

BALLON  
Which is what we want...  
(beat, beat)  
It is releasing. I am surrounding  
it now.  
(he looks in her free eye)  
This is going well.

\*

\*

\*

\*

QUILL  
Oh, God, don't say-

She suddenly SCREAMS. She bucks, Ballon tries to ride the buck with her, the spike of his hands still in her eye.

BALLON  
It's fighting me!

QUILL  
Get it out! Get it out!

\*

She SCREAMS again, much worse, as Ballon suddenly-

PULLS BACK HARD. The ARN ERUPTS from her face, opening a vertical tear down over her eye, from forehead to cheek. The quickest glimpse of utter body horror.

But Ballon is already flinging the Arn away, slamming it to the floor, then stomping it to death, while Quill holds her face in shock-

Then Ballon is on her-

BALLON  
Remain still. The wound is very bad-

Ballon looks around, worried. They've got nothing for this.

QUILL  
(in agony)  
This is what she wanted. It's what  
she knew would happen-

BALLON  
No. No, we must...

He looks around frantically now. Spies the Lorr God Blood Gel. Gets an idea. Beat.

BALLON (CONT'D)  
I am about to try a sacred thing. \*

QUILL  
Wonderful! Just do it fast!

He takes a chunk of Lorr blood and moves back to Quill's face. He holds his hands over it, they SHIFT and SHIFT... \*

BALLON  
Please work. Please. \*

And the wound is closing. He finally pulls away. She's left with a LIVID scar running down her forehead, across her eye, down her cheek. Beat, as she pants. \*

QUILL  
How... How can I still see? How do  
I still have my eye-?

BALLON  
The blood of my "devil", as you  
call him. It let me manipulate your  
flesh. The flow. \*

(beat)

Though you are scarred. \*

Quill toughens at this, reaches up, feels the scar.

QUILL  
What good is a soldier without a  
scar?

She looks to the smashed Arn. She gets up, still looking at it, beat- \*

She pounds it with her feet, working her way to furious tears at what it did to her, stomping and stomping. \*

She finally calms. Ballon watches her, appreciative.

BALLON  
You are now free.

She turns to him, letting it sink in.

BALLON (CONT'D)  
What will you do with your freedom?

QUILL  
There are certain Headteachers who  
have things coming to them-

BALLON  
Not until I am free, too.

QUILL  
...No. No.  
(beat, hard for her)  
Thank you. I will see that you get  
your freedom.

BALLON  
(amused)  
I'm sure you could. I've seen you  
fight. But I shall see to it  
myself.

QUILL  
Yes, I've seen you fight.

There's a definite spark between them now. More than lust.  
This is the kinship of war.

QUILL (CONT'D)  
Quill celebrate victory in battle  
in a particular way-

BALLON  
(smiling)  
All species say that. All are  
lying.

Quill likes this. Then they're on each other, kissing  
passionately. \*

BALLON (CONT'D)  
We are in a school. \*

QUILL  
Do you really think she's going to  
let anyone in here? \*

They kiss again. Then more serious, vulnerable: \*

BALLON  
It has been... too long since I was  
close to someone.

QUILL  
The last person I kissed was a  
robot.

BALLON  
It has made me... coarse.  
Unshifting, like this form I wear.

QUILL  
(this hits home)  
Yes. Yes, we do wear forms, don't  
we?



DOROTHEA  
(makes an apologetic face)  
You were never there, I'm afraid.  
The simplest possible hologram, but  
needs must. We had to come to *here*,  
but the chances of you reacting  
badly to it were... rather high. \*

QUILL  
(shaking her head)  
I don't- \*

DOROTHEA  
This is the closest to Rhodian soil  
we could find. Increased the  
survival chances of the surgery by  
nearly four percent.  
(turns to look)  
A metaphysical place created by the  
Rhodia, who - being practical  
people - put it inside a *physical*  
one. \*

Quill is still looking round-

And then she sees... Over distant hills, lights gathering and  
parting, hovering, interacting. The souls of the Rhodia.

QUILL  
(horrified)  
We're in the Cabinet of Souls.

BALLON  
We're in a cabinet?

QUILL  
(still looking around in  
horrified wonder)  
It's bigger on the inside.

DOROTHEA  
It's beautiful. Wish I hadn't had  
to leave. \*

Beat, as this sinks in.

BALLON  
What? \*

We TURN slightly around Dorothea to see that she is, in fact,  
being PROJECTED out of the box on the desert floor. \*

DOROTHEA  
Another hologram. Very limited, but  
suitable for our momentary needs.  
The reliquary really is dying. I  
had to come home or there was a  
chance I'd never get back. Though I  
did send you back a present. \*

She nods down to the box, almost gleeful.



DOROTHEA (CONT'D)  
Go ahead. Open it.

Quill and Ballon still wary. She sends him a questioning look, "Should we?". He shrugs "Why not?". She approaches.

The box is covered with a black silk cloth. Quill cautiously pinches it with her fingers, pulls it back-

It's a clear box. Inside, is her gun. WHOLE, REPAIRED.

DOROTHEA (CONT'D)  
(quoting Quill)  
"A Quill needs her gun."

\*

QUILL  
How...? *Where?*

DOROTHEA  
As I said, Coal Hill provides.

\*

Quill reaches for it, but-

DOROTHEA (CONT'D)  
(naughty, naughty)  
Ah, ah, ah. You have a mighty dilemma facing you. Both of you.  
(slightly sheepish)  
EverUpwardReach calculated an 85% chance that only one of you would survive this trip. You've already beaten some quite long odds.  
(frowns)  
But unfortunately, that ends now. Despite my arguing, quite strenuously, the Governors have voted. There's only enough energy left in the reliquary for one of you to return. I'm sorry, but there it is. If it's any comfort, the decision, at least, is yours.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

Shocked beat.

\*

QUILL  
You're leaving one of us here to die?

\*  
\*  
\*

BALLON  
You are breaking your word!

\*

He angrily takes out his knife and THROWS it at Dorothea-

Whom it passes through, harmlessly.

DOROTHEA  
You can keep trying. My meeting with the music department isn't until four.  
(grins)  
I'm cutting their budget.

BALLON  
So we're supposed to... what? Agree  
to die so the other lives? \*

DOROTHEA  
It's a shame, I agree. In another  
life, you and I could have been  
great friends, Miss Quill. \*

QUILL  
I would rather swim in my own  
vomit. \*

DOROTHEA  
(hardening a little)  
Regardless, the little we know  
about both your species suggests a  
fight to the death. But again, up  
to you. \*

BALLON  
I just saved her life. I will not  
now take it. \*

QUILL  
Yeah. Ditto. \*

DOROTHEA  
There is something else I need to  
tell you. Quill's reward if she  
returns is the gun.  
(to Ballon)  
Yours- \*

A hologram flashes next to Dorothea. It's a young Lorr- \*

DOROTHEA (CONT'D)  
It turns out there *is* another Lorr  
on Earth. Your niece. \*

BALLON  
My... She is *alive*?  
(beat, hardens)  
This is a lie. I never sensed  
another Lorr- \*

DOROTHEA  
I have been assured she is alive  
and well. And waiting for you. If  
you return. \*

Despite himself, Ballon looks at the picture longingly. \*

DOROTHEA (CONT'D)  
I really am sorry. EverUpwardReach  
feels it's for the best. One of  
you, the Governors will be able to  
handle. Two of you might put the  
school in danger. Reluctantly, I  
have to concur. \*

BALLON

(furious)

What's so precious about this school? That it must be protected at all costs?

DOROTHEA

It's being prepared.

QUILL

For *what*?

DOROTHEA

(patronisingly)

You wouldn't understand. You have no faith.

QUILL

(beat)

You're a true believer... But in what?

\*  
\*

DOROTHEA

Another time perhaps. There are more pressing matters at hand.

\*  
\*

BALLON

We will not fight each other.

DOROTHEA

You'll never be free unless you do.  
You'll never return from this living death. Never see your family again.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

This is having some effect. Quill sees it. What will happen?

DOROTHEA (CONT'D)

(to Quill)

And you. A Quill with the greatest weapon her people ever made. Enough to force a certain Prince to wipe the Shadow Kin off the grinning, smirking face of the universe. You say you are war itself. Now you actually *can* be.

\*  
\*

Long beat, as both Quill and Ballon let this all sink in.

DOROTHEA (CONT'D)

(sorrowful)

I've been told to say that the gun is set for open firing. But don't delay. Time passes differently here. You might wake up tomorrow and find yourself already old.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

With a final smile, her hologram vanishes. Quill and Ballon are left in silence. They regard one another, noting the space between them for the first time.

The realisations happen in silence, with changes of body language. Quill looks at her gun, then back at Ballon-

To find that he's looking at it, too. He glances up at her.

They wait, standing off. Can they trust each other? How far did their encounter go?

She opens her stance more defensively, turning slightly so she has an advantage if he goes for the gun. He sees this and turns, too.

Beat, as they breathe, regarding each other.

Then Ballon, sadly, shakes his head. It's ambiguous. Is he saying no? Is he saying he's sorry?

Quill tenses, worried, her face showing her conflict. Then she settles: fatalistic, furious, disappointed, into how she sees this is going to go.

QUILL

Don't.

BALLON

I have been imprisoned too long.

QUILL

So have I.

BALLON

And my family-

QUILL

If that's even true-

BALLON

Is that not a risk you would take yourself? If there were another Quill?

Quill doesn't answer. It *is* true.

BALLON (CONT'D)

(beat, beat)

I am sorry.

QUILL

That's a sorrow I share.

Beat, Ballon DIVES for the gun.

QUILL (CONT'D)

No!

She dives for it, too. The fight is on-

They land on each other and ROLL across the sand, she's stopping him from getting to the gun and rolling him away.

QUILL (CONT'D)

Stop! This is what she wants!

\*

He pushes her off him and staggers back to the gun. She TACKLES him, knocking him down, trying to reach past him to grab the gun herself.

He pulls her back and they tumble down a small slope. She ends up on TOP of him and BACKHANDS him across the face-

QUILL (CONT'D)

Now you're just pissing me off!

He BUCKS, knocking her off-

They start a HAND TO HAND fight, exchanging blows, blocks, kicks. She knocks him down, he jumps right back up, punching her with a cool move against some rocks.

BALLON

I won't kill you. You can hide-

QUILL

And stay here to starve? Why don't you hide?

\*

BALLON

(anguished)

Because your planet is *gone*. Your people are *gone*. You have *nothing* here.

\*

\*

\*

\*

This hits her hard, but she covers the truth of it with fury, tackling him and knocking him down again. She kneels across him, hitting him across the face, forcing him into submission. Then she hears him saying something, pauses...

\*

\*

BALLON (CONT'D)

(gasping)

Please. Please.

\*

She holds her last punch. They look up at each other, the tragedy of this situation really sinking in. They breathe heavily, wondering what to do now-

BALLON (CONT'D)

I do not wish this. I... submit.

Beat, then Quill, just slightly, relents, pulling back-

He IMMEDIATELY BUCKS her off again and DIVES for the gun-

QUILL

No!

But he's grabbed it and turned, pointing it at her, lying on the ground on his back-

She freezes. Beat. Beat.

QUILL (CONT'D)  
(furious, emotional)  
I won't beg you.

BALLON  
We are slaves. We are none of us free.

QUILL  
And *that* is the thinking that enslaves us. Do you really think she'll set you free?

BALLON  
I have to take the *chance*.

Beat. Then Quill, proud, prepares herself, standing tall, hard, ready. Noble.

BALLON (CONT'D)  
Look away.

QUILL  
I will *not*.

Ballon struggles, wanting to shoot.

QUILL (CONT'D)  
Do it.

He hesitates.

QUILL (CONT'D)  
*Do it!*

BALLON  
(whispers)  
Forgive me.

QUILL  
(breath, beat, surprised)  
I do.

He PULLS THE TRIGGER-

THE GUN FIRES BACKWARDS INTO HIM-

QUILL (CONT'D)  
No!

He has the briefest moment to realise what's happened before, looking in her eyes, he's BLASTED AWAY-

The Gun falling harmlessly to the sand.

Quill falls to her knees over where he died, OVERCOME with emotion, grief, fury-

She WAILS, uncontrolled, anguished, for a long moment...

DOROTHEA (O.S.)  
Did you know?

Quill doesn't even look up as Dorothea reappears. She raises her head, grief-stricken, defiant.

QUILL  
You set the gun. You did.

DOROTHEA  
But surely you must have thought,  
even on a subconscious level.

Quill looks at her with purest hatred.

QUILL  
I... will kill you. Slow.

DOROTHEA  
(smiles)  
You might *try*.

\*

QUILL  
(exasperated)  
Who are you?

DOROTHEA  
Were you not listening?  
(leans in close)  
I'm a true believer.

Quill looks at her, still not knowing what this means.

Quill suddenly reaches for the gun, FLICKS A SETTING, and FIRES IT REPEATEDLY INTO DOROTHEA'S HOLOGRAM, having no effect, but at least getting some frustrations out.

Quill finally lowers the gun.

DOROTHEA (CONT'D)  
Are you quite finished? Because I'm  
afraid I have a confession to make.  
(makes a "my bad" face)  
Sending back the gun and this  
hologram device drained the  
reliquary quite dry. You won't be  
able to leave here by it.

\*

\*

QUILL  
So you want me to die after all-

\*

DOROTHEA  
Oh, my dear, how did someone so  
very stupid ever become a general  
of her people?

Quill looks at her, questioningly.

DOROTHEA (CONT'D)  
We are in the Cabinet of Souls. A  
Cabinet... with doors.

Quill looks confused, looks around her.

DOROTHEA (CONT'D)  
You just need to find them. You'll  
end up right at home.  
(looks at her watch)  
And with how time passes here  
versus how it passes there, I don't  
even think detention will be over.

QUILL  
(more outrage)  
So... So we *both* could have left?  
He didn't have to *die*?

DOROTHEA  
Literally? Yes, you both could have  
left. But no, we wouldn't have  
allowed that. \*

She turns to go, stops.

DOROTHEA (CONT'D)  
I am, however, glad it was you. \*

Quill looks at her with hatred again. \*

QUILL  
I will stand on your corpse. You  
mark my words.

DOROTHEA  
Duly marked.

She vanishes. Quill is alone. We pull back across the great  
expanse of desert to see just how alone she is.

CUT TO:

29 **EXT. ALIEN DESERT LANDSCAPE - DUSK 10, LATER**

29 \*

It's later. Quill holds her gun, looking at the spot where  
Ballon died.

We see her put a last STONE on a pile of them, just like the  
branches in the thicket over her goddess. \*

Then she gains resolve. She looks around, finds the ARN that  
Ballon removed from her head, wraps it in plastic from the  
dissected one. Puts it in her pocket. \*

CUT TO:



30 EXT. ALIEN DESERT LANDSCAPE - DUSK 10, LATER 30 \*

She walks through dunes, under the orange sky. She heads towards the POINTS OF LIGHT that are the souls. She watches them, her face ambiguous.

CUT TO:

31 EXT. ALIEN DESERT LANDSCAPE - DUSK 10, LATER 31 \*

Quill walks in the vast empty landscape, ever closer to the points of light.

CUT TO:

32 EXT. ALIEN DESERT LANDSCAPE - DUSK 10, LATER 32 \*

Quill climbs a dune. There are the DOORS, closed, hanging in  
mid-air. She's under the points of light now. They sail  
through the sky, interacting, moving, beautiful.

She FLICKS her hand up to TOUCH ONE. The STARS suddenly RACE  
ACROSS THE SKY, far too fast, like time has sped up-

Quill lets go, blinking in surprise. Her HAIR is suddenly LONGER. She notices.

QUILL  
 "Time passes differently here."  
 (looks up)  
 How much of my life am I losing?

Ouill is drained and bitter underneath the souls.

QUILL (CONT'D)  
(furious)  
You *keep* taking! Is that all you  
can do? Is that all you ever were?  
(harder)  
Well, I *fought* you! And I will  
*still* fight you. Because do you  
know what? I am free. I am *free*!  
And you are *not* the last. There is  
one of you still living. And the  
question...  
(remembers Ballon)  
The question a *soldier* asks... Is  
"How will I make them pay?"

She cocks her gun ready for firing.

QUILL (CONT'D)  
I suffered on your home world. I  
have suffered in your heaven.  
(resolved)  
I will suffer no more.  
(now, again, but this time  
there is no doubt)  
I am war itself.

She turns to the doors, purposeful, striking them with her hands. They open-

\*  
\*

CUT TO:

33           **OMITTED. MERGED WITH SCENE 32.**

33           \*

34           **INT. CHARLIE'S HOUSE, CHARLIE'S BEDROOM - DAY 10, 16:00**

34           \*

Quill climbs OUT of the Cabinet, tumbling to the floor of Charlie's bedroom. She remains there for a moment, wounded and tired, then hardening into anger. And vengeance.

\*  
\*  
\*

She holds out the gun. And gets to her feet. Looking weary, staggering, but like an utter badass.

CUT TO:

35           **INT. COAL HILL SCHOOL, CORRIDOR - DAY 10, 16:19**

35           \*

Quill walks, with exhausted purpose, her gun out, towards the DOOR of HER CLASSROOM, through which lights flash and screams are heard.

\*

She steps up to the door and kicks it open-

CUT TO:

36           **INT. COAL HILL SCHOOL, QUILL'S CLASSROOM - DAY 10, 16:20**

36           \*

She steps through the door, sees the yellow light pulling Charlie into the prison, the others trying to help him.

                    QUILL  
What the hell is this?

                    APRIL  
We're under threat!

                    QUILL  
                    (rolling eyes)  
When aren't you?

And to their ASTONISHMENT she PULLS OUT HER GUN and FIRES it at the stone, blasting it into a MILLION PIECES.

The light dies. The classroom is back to normal.

Charlie is agog.

                    QUILL (CONT'D)  
My God, you can't even handle  
*detention* right.

                    CHARLIE  
How can you-?

QUILL  
(angry, grieving)  
In no mood to talk.

Ram moves swiftly for the door.

RAM  
I'm gone.

April watches him go. Tanya watches her not go.

TANYA  
Aren't you going after him?

APRIL  
No. I'm not.

TANYA  
But if that thing was making us  
angry-

APRIL  
When you get a boyfriend, you'll  
understand.

TANYA  
(beat, stung)  
And there it is.

Tanya leaves. April watches her go, angry, too.

APRIL  
Why do we even bother with other  
people?

She leaves, too.

Angle on Charlie and Matteusz, staring in horror at Quill.

CHARLIE  
How can you fire a gun?

QUILL  
You do not want to talk to me after  
the day I've had.

CHARLIE  
Day? You've only been gone 45  
minutes.

QUILL  
(bitter)  
Funny. It felt like a lifetime.

MATTEUSZ  
What happened to your eye? And your  
hair?

CHARLIE  
*And how can you fire a gun?*

She stares back at him, at the blood drying on his face.

QUILL  
I saved you, didn't I? Isn't that  
my *punishment*?

CHARLIE  
I... But you-

QUILL  
Consider it my last favour.

MATTEUSZ  
"Last"?

Eyes on Charlie, she reaches into her pocket, pulls out the SQUISHY CLEAR PLASTIC BAG and throws it at him.

He catches it. Through the plastic, he can see-

QUILL  
It's the Arn.

Charlie looks up, astonished, worried.

QUILL (CONT'D)  
(truly grieved)  
I am no longer your slave, Prince.  
I have my free will and I have my  
gun.

She holds it up, cocks it, looks very dangerous.

QUILL (CONT'D)  
And things are going to change  
around here.

Dolly to Quill. Dramatic beat-

\*

Then her EYES ROLL UP IN HER HEAD and she collapses. They watch as she falls unconscious. Then rolls on her back-

MATTEUSZ  
(shocked)  
No. No, that can't be.

CHARLIE  
How? How did she...?

We pull back from them, panning down to Quill.

To Quill's stomach. Quill is very, very pregnant.

\*

\*

**END CREDITS.**