

THE SARAH JANE ADVENTURES

**Episode 5
By**

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1 EXT. COMBAT 3000 -- DAY X [1500]

1

FX/PRAC SHOT: Lightning splits the sky above Combat 3000. Rain washes across it.

CUT TO:

2 EXT. COMBAT 3000 -- CONTINUOUS DAY X [1501]

2

Heavy rain hits a large poster featuring futuristic soldiers dressed in black. It's advertising COMBAT 3000 with the tagline: BE THE WARRIOR OF THE FUTURE!

CUT TO:

3 INT. COMBAT 3000. ARENA 2 -- CONTINUOUS DAY X [1501] 3

Dark industrial, yet somehow futuristic lay-out of corridors and walkways. We hear the thunder rumble in the distance. We're tight in on a lone boy of 14, LANCE METCALF, making his way towards a steel door. He's glancing around, on edge. The door opens with a hiss and a cloud of PRAC smoke.

LANCE goes into the darkened corridor.

CUT TO:

4 INT. COMBAT 3000. TRANSMAT AREA -- CONTINUOUS DAY X [1501]

LANCE walks down the corridor. Out of no-where, a door slides shut behind him. He whirls towards it.

FX SHOT: A blinding flash of white light.

And the corridor is empty.

CUT TO:

5 INT. COMBAT 3000. CONTROL ROOM -- CONTINUOUS DAY X [1502]

In a dimly lit room - KUDLAK, a hideous alien (PROSTHETIC). He has watched it all.

KUDLAK

Mistress, I bring you another.

A disembodied voice...

MISTRESS (O.S.)

Bring me more. I need more. So many more children.

KUDLAK

It shall be done.

CUT TO:

TITLES

6 INT. METCALFS' HOUSE. LANCE'S BEDROOM -- DAY 1 [1030] 6

SARAH JANE stands in the bedroom of a 14 year old boy. Posters on the walls. A computer with piles of computer games beside it. She's taking in the room, her reporter's notebook in her hand. The boy's mother, CARRIE, is mid-thirties, tired and wired. She's sorting through some photographs. She presents Sarah Jane with a picture of a boy at the funfair. Lance.

CARRIE

This is Lance. Last summer.

Sarah Jane takes the picture.

SARAH JANE

Thankyou, Mrs Metcalf. I can't begin to imagine what the last three days have been like. How you're coping.

Carrie absently smooths down Lance's empty bed.

CARRIE

I keep thinking my head's going to break. That's what it feels like. I'm on edge every minute, thinking I'll see him come up the path... Or the police will knock on the door and tell me...

She struggles to hold it together. Sarah Jane comforts.

SARAH JANE

Children do turn up safe and sound. There's still every chance. Someone may have seen something important without knowing it. My story might make them realise that and come forward.

CARRIE

I hope so.

SARAH JANE

Has anything like this happened before? I mean, Lance has never run away after an argument or -

CARRIE

We don't argue.

(MORE)

CARRIE (CONT'D)

Me and Lance, we've only got each other now. We know life's too short for rowing.

Sarah Jane follows Carrie's brief glance to a photograph beside the bed - a good looking man in his thirties in military uniform.

SARAH JANE

I see.

I'm sorry... Perhaps you can tell me what happened on Saturday.

CARRIE

Nothing. Nothing happened. Except Lance never came back. He was going out to meet his friend, Brandon. They were going down the arcade. He lives for his video games.

Sarah Jane notes the mass of computer games.

SARAH JANE

Quite an impressive collection.

Carrie smiles sadly.

CARRIE

Plays them all the time. Here, or down the arcade with Brandon.

(grim)

Only Brandon never saw him on Saturday. Lance never showed up. He just vanished into thin air.

She looks at Sarah Jane, tears in her eyes.

CARRIE (CONT'D)

Help me get my boy back, Miss Smith.
Please.

CUT TO:

7

EXT. URBAN STREET/ COMBAT 3000 -- DAY 1 [1035]

7

MARIA and LUKE walk and talk.

LUKE

At breakfast time I am so hungry I could murder a bowl of cornflakes. Does that make me a cereal killer?

Silence. Maria just stares at him.

LUKE (CONT'D)

You're not laughing.

MARIA

It wasn't very funny.

LUKE

But I've been studying jokes, their structure and history, and that's what you do. You swap words around. So that was a joke.

MARIA

I don't think it'll get you on the telly, but, yeah, I guess.

LUKE

So what makes a joke funny? I've read that timing is important. How, exactly?

MARIA

I don't know, it's complicated -

LUKE

Is the context important?

MARIA

Why does every single thing with you lead to about 500 questions? Come on, I want to get a new bag.

LUKE

You've got lots of bags.

MARIA

You can never have too many bags.

LUKE

(sighs)

Another thing I don't understand...

MARIA

Don't worry. You're a guy, you're not meant to.

They walk past MARK GRANTHAM as he opens up the Combat 3000 building.

Luke stops to stare at the poster - the one we saw in Sc 2.

Grantham, a slick looking (if slightly dodgy) business man in his early 30s, sees them and pulls out a fistful of flyers.

GRANTHAM

What do you reckon, soldier? Think
you're man enough to have a go?

LUKE

(doleful)

I have to go shopping.

GRANTHAM

Well, that's kind of answered my
question.

Maria has gone on a couple of steps. She comes back,
pulls Luke's arm.

MARIA

Come on.

GRANTHAM

Here you go. Cut price vouchers. In case
you change your mind.

He stuffs some coupons into Luke and Maria's hands.

Luke intrigued, but Maria is heading off.

LUKE

Thank you. Thank you very much.

He trudges off after Maria. Grantham looks after him, his
pleasant manner switched off like a light switch.

CUT TO:

8

INT. COMBAT 3000. GRANTHAM'S OFFICE -- DAY 1 [1100]

8

GRANTHAM comes in, ticking things off on his personal
organiser.

GRANTHAM

The new posters are up. I've got a
local radio piece to do at three, and
I've given the half price tickets to a
street team to shift. You watch, Mr
Kudlak, the last few weeks' takings will
be nothing compared to what's coming.

We realise that he's talking to someone sitting at his
desk, but swivelled towards the wall so that we can't see
them. Grantham seems disappointed that his up-beat run-
down on things fails to get a response - but he has an
ace to play.

GRANTHAM (CONT'D)

And, guess what, we've got a birthday
party shoot 'em up booked in for
tomorrow. Fifteen twelve-year olds.
(MORE)

GRANTHAM (CONT'D)

All hyped to the max on computer games
and over-adrenalized on blockbuster
movies. Just the way you like them.

The chair spins around abruptly to reveal KUDLAK dressed in elaborate, but regal military dress.

KUDLAK

I grow tired of your talk, Mr Grantham.
Just bring me children!

CUT TO:

9 INT. SARAH JANE'S ATTIC -- DAY 1 [1130]

9

*

SARAH JANE is at her word processor, typing up her story on missing Lance... "Lance's mother, Carrie, whose husband Simon was killed in action last year while serving with..."

*

*

*

As the door to the attic bursts open - LUKE and MARIA tumble in, laughing at CLYDE as he models her new bag.

*

*

*

SARAH JANE

Do you mind?

*

CLYDE

Sorry, Sarah Jane.

*

LUKE

Clyde was just bogging about with
Maria's new bag.

SARAH JANE

I'm sorry?

CLYDE

Mucking. I was mucking about.

(to Luke)

Or messing. Messing about. You've got
to listen to the words, Luke. The words
are important in slang, you can't
improvise.

MARIA

(to Sarah Jane)

We'll get out of your way.

But Sarah Jane relents. A little comforted by their presence.

SARAH JANE

Wait. I've just been to see the mother
of that boy that's gone missing. Your
friend, Lance Metcalf. What do you know
about him?

CLYDE

Friend? Don't get me wrong, Sarah Jane, whatever's happened to the kid, I hope he's okay, you know, but The Corporal, he's only been at the school a couple of months and he never really put himself up for making friends.

SARAH JANE

The Corporal?

MARIA

(who thinks it stupid)

Lance. Lance Corporal.

SARAH JANE

(severe)

And did you know his father was in the army? Was killed in Iraq? Nicknames aren't always funny, Clyde. I hope this boy didn't run away because he was bullied.

CLYDE

Hey, don't get all over me about it. It was Luke gave him the nickname.

Shocked Sarah Jane looks at shame-faced Luke.

LUKE

People laughed when I came up with it. I thought that was good.

Sarah Jane's heart goes out to naive, outsider, Luke.

MARIA

It wasn't Luke's fault. No-one knew about Lance's dad. He didn't tell anyone. He didn't have much to do with any of us. Most break times he was too busy with his Nintendo.

But Luke is agonizing now.

LUKE

But I made a joke out of his name. I hurt him. Maybe Lance wanted friends, just like I did. Instead, I probably made him run away!

SARAH JANE

No, Luke...

Luke is almost crying with regret and frustration...

LUKE

It's all my fault!

SARAH JANE

Luke!

But he dashes out of the door. Slams it after him.

*

SARAH JANE (CONT'D)

Oh, dear. I'd better go and talk to him.

CLYDE

No. Let me. I kind of dropped him in it, didn't I?

*

SARAH JANE

Thank you.

Clyde goes. Sarah Jane's face clouds with concern.

SARAH JANE (CONT'D)

Is he finding it really hard, Maria? To fit in?

MARIA

No harder than the rest of us. Clyde will talk to him. It'll be all right.

*

Sarah Jane wonders.

MARIA (CONT'D)

How was Lance's mum?

SARAH JANE

Going out of her mind with worry.

Maria considers...

MARIA

But you don't think there's anything... weird about Lance disappearing, do you? I mean you're not doing this story because you think there's aliens involved, or anything?

SARAH JANE

I don't see aliens behind every bush, you know, Maria. I'm not a conspiracy theorist.

MARIA

No, I know. I just wondered, that's all.

SARAH JANE

Alien-hunting is all very well, but it doesn't pay the bills. Now, this friend of Lance Metcalf's, Brandon. Do you know him?

CUT TO:

10 OMITTED

10

11 INT. CAFE -- DAY 1 [1145]

11

Tight in on a video game. Photon torpedoes sear across space. Space ships blaze and die.

BRANDON BUTLER (14) wrestles the joystick controls. His player name, SLAYER, is at the top of the screen - his score rocketing.

SARAH JANE and MARIA cross the cafe to the couple of arcade games in the corner - and Brandon.

MARIA

Hi Brandon.

He barely glances up from the game.

BRANDON

What do you want?

MARIA

This is my friend, Sarah Jane.

SARAH JANE

I want to ask you some questions about Lance.

Brandon loses the game. He taps the screen.

BRANDON

That's Lance.

They look. The top ten slots are HALO.

SARAH JANE

Halo?

BRANDON

That's him. He's the nuts.

SARAH JANE

(low, to Maria)

Is that good?

MARIA

Very.

CUT TO:

12

INT. CAFE -- LATER DAY 1 [1150]

12

SARAH JANE and MARIA are sitting at a table with drinks. The arcade machines zing and ping with another player in the background.

BRANDON

I was supposed to meet up with him in the park, then we were going down the arcade.

SARAH JANE

Did you?

BRANDON

He never showed. I thought the storm had put him off.

MARIA

There wasn't any storm on Saturday.

BRANDON

You calling me a liar?

SARAH JANE

Of course she's not. But Saturday was warm and sunny. I remember. I was in the garden until dark.

BRANDON

Yeah. Well it was weird, wasn't it? Only lasted a minute. All these black clouds come up the hill and it tips down on me. Then the clouds just vanish and it's blue sky again. Weird, and...

Brandon's uncomfortable, doesn't want to admit what he's thinking...

SARAH JANE

Frightening?

Brandon fidgets, looks away.

BRANDON

Yeah.

CUT TO:

13

INT. COMBAT 3000. CONTROL ROOM -- DAY 1 [1153]

13

A bank of monitor screens. Each has a different shot of the Combat 3000 arena - the same futuristic industrial landscape that we saw Lance Metcalf negotiating. But the walkways and corridors are empty. KUDLAK stands in half-light watching them.

A woman's voice, apparently from nowhere, interrupts those thoughts.

MISTRESS (O.S.)

Kudlak? Kudlak?

KUDLAK

I am here, Mistress.

MISTRESS (O.S.)

Time grows short. You must bring me children, Kudlak. Fresh, strong, children.

KUDLAK

I will, Mistress. You have my vow.

MISTRESS

This hunger for blood, it never ends.

KUDLAK

You shall have what you need, Mistress. Soon. You shall have all the children you need.

CUT TO:

14

EXT. PARK -- DAY 1 [1155]

14

LUKE is sitting, forlorn, on a swing. CLYDE approaches.

CLYDE

Man, for a while I thought you'd gone AWOL, along with Lance. Been looking all over for you.

LUKE

Why?

CLYDE

Cos that's what friends do when one of them's hurting. They try and help. And friends shouldn't grass each other up. Sorry.

LUKE

How did you "grass me up"?

CLYDE

Look, we'll get back to Slang 101
another day. Ding-ding. New class.
How the Corporal doing a runner has got
nothing to do with Luke.

LUKE

Don't call him that.

CLYDE

He's not here.

LUKE

It doesn't matter. I wasn't trying to
be cruel. I was trying to be funny.

CLYDE

Yeah. Well, not everyone's cut out to
be me.

Luke looks at Clyde - and laughs.

CLYDE (CONT'D)

See what I mean.

CUT TO:

15

INT. SARAH JANE'S ATTIC -- DAY 1 [1210]

15

SARAH JANE and MARIA watch children's faces flash by on
MR SMITH's screen. There are scores of them. Sarah Jane
and Maria are horrified.

MARIA

All these kids have gone missing in a
year?

SARAH JANE

Mr Smith, we need to cross-reference
these disappearances with reports of
localized freak weather conditions.

MR SMITH

I will assimilate with meteorological
databases. Processing initiated.

Mr Smith gets to work.

MARIA

I don't get it. What does this storm
have to do with Lance going missing?

SARAH JANE

That's what we're going to find out.
(MORE)

SARAH JANE (CONT'D)

I don't think Brandon is the sort of boy
to be scared by any normal storm, do
you? Maybe there is something "weird"
about Lance's disappearance, after all.

Maria is intrigued.

MR SMITH

I have a data-match for twenty four
children.

Pictures of the children flash across Mr Smith's screen.
(Among them the kids we will later find on the
scoutship.)

SARAH JANE

Twenty four?

MR SMITH

Their disappearances all coincide with
instances of unexpected but short-lived
torrential rain.

His screen shows a map of the UK covered with pin points.

MARIA

All towns and cities.

SARAH JANE

Why would it rain like that?

MR SMITH

Insufficient data.

Sarah Jane has a glint in her eye.

SARAH JANE

Well, Mr Smith, maybe we can get you
some more.

CUT TO:

16

INT. SARAH JANE'S ATTIC -- LATER DAY 1 [1220]

16

SARAH JANE and MARIA are assembling a strange machine
from exotic-looking bits and pieces, including 2 trumpet-
like instruments.

MARIA

So what exactly are we doing?

SARAH JANE

Pass me that spanner.

Maria passes the spanner, Sarah Jane sets about tightening the nut on some strange element of the machine.

SARAH JANE (CONT'D)
What do you know about energy?

MARIA
It can't be created or destroyed.

SARAH JANE
Very good. Now a storm is created by, and in turn creates, energy. The residue hangs around in the atmosphere for a while. And that could tell us quite a lot. Now put those rubber gloves on and pass me those. One at a time.

Sarah Jane indicates two fuse rods. Maria goes to grab the rods...

SARAH JANE (CONT'D)
No! I said put the gloves on first!
Those are made from Cibrianite Flux.
Touch them both at the same time without protection and you complete an electro-neurological circuit that will put you out cold for an hour.

As she speaks, Sarah Jane is pulling on gauntlets.

MARIA
Oh.

And she puts on the rubber gloves. Picks up one of the rods...

MARIA (CONT'D)
Maybe we should get my dad over. He's good at DIY. We could say it's my science project. He's got lots of tools.

She turns back to Sarah Jane with the rod and almost drops it - she's facing a slab-faced robot! Sarah Jane in a welding mask.

SARAH JANE
Bet he hasn't got one of these. Stand back.

Sarah Jane ignites the welding torch, and sets to work.

CUT TO:

17

INT. COMBAT 3000. ARENA 1 -- DAY 1 [1225]

17

GRANTHAM is adjusting a CCTV camera. As KUDLAK melts out of the darkness behind him.

KUDLAK

Mistress is worried. It has been a month, yet our returns are minimal.

GRANTHAM

Can I help it if the kids are low-grade?

KUDLAK

We must find better. We must work harder.

GRANTHAM

(antagonized)

Well maybe your Mistress should come down, put on a sandwich board and hand out some flyers?

And Kudlak is antagonized by Grantham and glowers down on him. Grantham pales.

KUDLAK

Do not mock my Mistress.

Grantham is on the back-foot...

GRANTHAM

It was a joke. Okay?

KUDLAK

It is my honour to attend on the Mistress.

GRANTHAM

No, sure, I wasn't -

KUDLAK

We serve at her pleasure, Mr Grantham. Neither of us are irreplaceable. Not I, and certainly not you.

And Kudlak sweeps off into the darkness. Shaken Grantham, tries to hold it together.

CUT TO:

18

EXT. PARK -- DAY 1 [1230]

18

LUKE and CLYDE have moved off the swings. They're now walking through the park. Luke has a lot on his mind.

LUKE

Sometimes it feels like I'll never fit into this world. When I made a joke about Lance's name, it felt like - like a break-through. Because people laughed. Instead, it was another social miscalculation.

CLYDE

Gaffe, Luke. It was a gaffe.

LUKE

Last week you said a gaff was where a "dude" lives.

CLYDE

Different... Look, let's just stick with the text, yeah?

LUKE

You see? Things are so complex.

CLYDE

Complex? You want to be grateful your old man didn't run off with your Aunt Melba. Listen to me, I'm an expert in complex.

LUKE

Then you can explain things to me?

Clyde is expansive.

CLYDE

Just ask Encyclopedia Clydannica. Anything you want. Take your best shot.

Luke looks vaguely unsure of what Clyde is saying, but his eyes rove across the park to a group of smaller kids playing a game.

LUKE

What's the purpose of games?

CLYDE

(floored)

Why play games? Wow, you ask the big ones, don't you?

Luke pulls a Combat 3000 flyer from his pocket.

LUKE

This looks like war. But it's a game. Why?

CLYDE

It's just a laugh.

LUKE

But they pretend to kill people.

Clyde grabs the flyer.

CLYDE

Okay. You want to find out? Let's do it.

CUT TO:

19 EXT. PARK, HILLTOP -- DAY 1 [1300]

19

SARAH JANE and MARIA are pushing their machine, now covered by a tarpaulin up a hill.

SARAH JANE

Right, this is where Brandon got caught in the rain.

Maria is exhausted.

MARIA

If you find any energy left over from the storm, let me have it, will you?

But Sarah Jane is full of beans as she whips the tarpaulin off with a flourish.

SARAH JANE

Ta-dah!

The machine is complicated, exotic, weird.

SARAH JANE (CONT'D)

Come on, let's get her going.

Sarah Jane cranks a handle, and the thing begins to hum. She holds it steady, thinking. We get the impression that Sarah Jane isn't 100 per cent sure of what she's doing here as she issues instructions to Maria.

SARAH JANE (CONT'D)

Now, turn the dial on the left. 6.02, for the electromagnetic pulse trace.

As Maria turns the dial, the hum of the machine increases. Sarah Jane puts on her spectacles, studying the machine carefully.

SARAH JANE (CONT'D)

Just got to calibrate the Kohonen net...
Right dial to 15... And then the middle
to 2.6. Great. Now, what...? Crank the
lever. Yes. That's it. Excellent, and
we're off.

FX SHOT: The machine shakes. A web of pure energy
sprouts from the vents, leaps out into the sky, expanding
into a mesh that spans the sky before dissipating like
electrical smoke.

MARIA

Wow!

Sarah Jane is studying a computer display on the machine.

SARAH JANE

Again.

Maria cranks the lever. The vents change alignment.

FX SHOT: Another mesh of energy leaps out, disperses.

Sarah Jane studies the screen harder.

SARAH JANE (CONT'D)

Nothing. Once more?

Again Maria cranks the lever.

FX SHOT: Another mesh of energy. Still no joy with the
screen.

SARAH JANE (CONT'D)

This doesn't make any sense. There
should be some sort of reaction.

And then...

FX SHOT: Something starts to rain from the sky.
Glittering particles.

MARIA

What's happening?

Sarah Jane is almost jumping for joy.

SARAH JANE

It works! My machine works!

PRAC SHOT: Maria holds out her hands. They are filled
with hundreds of tiny, beautiful, glittering particles.

CUT TO:

20 INT. COMBAT 3000. LOBBY - DAY 1 [1315]

20

CLYDE and LUKE are taking in the posters.

LUKE

I was here with Maria, earlier. The man called me "soldier".

CLYDE

That's right. You play soldiers- only future style.

Clyde catches himself getting a little too enthusiastic...

CLYDE (CONT'D)

It's for little kids really, but - hey - this is your first lesson.

LUKE

And to play this game, we pretend to kill people. Is it really for "little kids"?

Clyde is on the verge of despair. Bites it back.

CLYDE

Just stick close to me. You'll get it.

And Clyde leads Luke inside.

CUT TO:

21 INT. SARAH JANE'S ATTIC -- DAY 1 [1320]

21

SARAH JANE places a test tube of the particles into MR SMITH'S analysis drive.

MR SMITH

Particles identified as entanglement shells.

MR SMITH has a diagram of the shells on his screen.

SARAH JANE

Okay. And do you want to tell us what an entanglement shell is, exactly?

MR SMITH

Used by climate engineers to terraform hostile planet environments in order to support life, they stimulate rainfall.

MARIA

Ealing doesn't need terraforming. We get too much rain as it is.

MR SMITH
If I might continue?

SARAH JANE
Please.

MR SMITH
Entanglement shells can also be a by-product of some forms of trans-dimensional energy dispersal.

MARIA
By what?

SARAH JANE
(thoughtful)
Teleportation.
(burst of excitement)
Aliens! I knew it!

MARIA
Lance was kidnapped by aliens?

SARAH JANE
They've been kidnapping people from Earth for decades for one reason or another. The question is, why Lance? And from where? Mr Smith, can you pinpoint the exact centre of the storm on Saturday?

MR SMITH
Weather geo-stationary satellites record every hour and are unlikely to have registered such a brief meteorological anomaly. I will access a military satellite.

CUT TO:

22 INT. COMBAT 3000. ARMOURY -- DAY 1 [1322]

22

CLYDE and LUKE, together with a bunch of other KIDS, are getting kitted up for the game. Every sensor vest has an ID number on it. Clyde is 7, Luke is 8.

CLYDE
You shoot out people's sensors. If you get hit your gun goes down for five seconds and you lose a life. You get a hundred lives. The one with the most lives left at the end wins. Last man standing, kind of thing.

LUKE
But I still don't see the point...

CLYDE

You wait 'til the adrenaline starts pumping. You'll see.

A whooping siren starts to wail. Red lights begin to flash. A gravelly, movie trailer-style VOICE comes over a tannoy...

USA VOICE (O.S.)

Attention, Warriors of the Future! Take your places at the Arena Doors.

Clyde gives perplexed Luke a big, excited grin. With the other kids they move towards a set of big doors dressed to appear armour-plated.

USA VOICE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Prepare to do battle. Give no mercy, take no prisoners. This is a fight for survival. Only one can be the ultimate warrior. Battle commences in ten seconds...

Luke looks around him, seeing Clyde and the other kids physically charging up for the game. The adrenaline already starting to pump...

USA VOICE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Nine... eight...

CUT TO:

23 INT. COMBAT 3000. CONTROL ROOM -- CONTINUOUS DAY 1 [132323]

GRANTHAM is watching monitor screens, drinking coffee from a mug. He can see the kids getting hyped up at the arena doors. Behind him stands KUDLAK. The countdown continues in the background.

VOICE (O.S.)

Seven... six... five...

KUDLAK

Well, Grantham? Have you brought me good stock?

Grantham recognises Luke among the kids.

GRANTHAM

I wouldn't get your hopes up just yet.

CUT TO:

24 INT. COMBAT 3000. ARMOURY -- CONTINUOUS DAY 1 [1323] 24

The KIDS are psyched to the max, almost ready to rush through the door itself.

VOICE (O.S.)

Four... three...

CLYDE turns to LUKE, electrified, puts up his hand.

CLYDE

Take no prisoners!

Slightly bemused, Luke gives him five.

VOICE (O.S.)

Two... one...Do Combat!

And with a thunderous roar of music (like the opening of War of the Worlds) and a taped rumble of monstrous hydraulics, the armoured doors begin to open...

CUT TO:

25 INT. COMBAT 3000. ARENA 1 -- CONTINUOUS DAY 1 [1323] 25

And the KIDS come charging through the doors towards the camera, guns raised, supercharged with adrenaline...

CUT TO:

26 INT. SARAH JANE'S ATTIC -- DAY 1 [1324] 26

MR SMITH's screen fills with a UK map.

MR SMITH

This is animated data from a Nato satellite covering Western Europe. Taken on Saturday at 1604 hours.

The animation closes on Ealing and shows what looks like a white explosion that spreads out, then rapidly contracts.

SARAH JANE

Run it again. And slow it down.

The animation happens again. Slower.

SARAH JANE (CONT'D)

(to Maria)

People never really vanish without a trace. There's always a footprint, or a tyre track, or something. You just have to know where to look.

And as the animated storm begins to contract, Sarah Jane leans towards the screen. The final trace of the storm has almost vanished...

SARAH JANE (CONT'D)

Stop. Show me what's right there, at the heart of it.

MR SMITH

Just a moment.

The map flips, and a 3D image of a street comes into focus. The screen hones in on one - that we recognise.

MARIA

I know that place...

MARIA roots around in her pocket.

MARIA (CONT'D)

We were there, me and Luke, earlier!
It's called something really...

She pulls out a Combat 3000 flyer.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Combat 3000!

CUT TO:

27

INT. COMBAT 3000, ARENA 1 -- DAY 1 [1326]

27

Montage: to some loud rock music.

The action will be dictated by the detail of the location.

Shot: CLYDE and LUKE stalking a PLAYER in front of them - Clyde lifts his gun, fires, and the player's lights go out. Clyde looks at Luke. 'See?' Luke gives him a thumb's up - he gets it. But too late.

As Luke turns another PLAYER gets Luke. Clyde instantly dives for cover as Luke's lights go out. Luke is quietly annoyed.

Shot: Luke in hiding, waiting. Another PLAYER goes past. Luke squeezes his trigger tentatively. The player's lights go out. Luke smiles.

Shot: Clyde peering round the corner, like a real soldier.

Shot: Luke stalking a PLAYER in front of him. He lifts his gun, aims - and three more PLAYERS jump out of a side tunnel, blast away at Luke.

With lightning reactions, Luke squeezes off four quick shots, and the lights on all four players' equipment go out. The players are crestfallen. Luke is amazed.

Shot: Clyde blasting away, rolling into cover behind some barrels, gasping for breath, waiting for a PLAYER to come past, then jumping up and shooting them. Another PLAYER appears behind him, ready to spark Clyde - but Luke, watching Clyde's back, gets him first. Clyde gives Luke a salute. Luke grins, saluting back. Really into it now - whirling and firing at more PLAYERS.

Shot: CCTV cameras high on the ceiling watching them.

CUT TO:

28 INT. COMBAT 3000. CONTROL ROOM/ARENA 1 -- DAY 1 [1350] 28

GRANTHAM is still watching the monitor screens. He homes the camera in on LUKE. Hits a button. On-screen graphics list Luke's kills - 102 and remaining lives - 88.

GRANTHAM

Well, well, what do you know? Not such a mummy's boy after all, are you?

KUDLAK appears behind him.

KUDLAK

Someone shows promise?

GRANTHAM

A couple of kids.

The monitor finds CLYDE, blasting his way through. Graphics list his kills at 88, remaining lives at 74.

GRANTHAM (CONT'D)

One of them, is really something.
Reactions like a whiplash.

Grantham's monitor is back on Luke again.

GRANTHAM (CONT'D)

Really going for it, like he's got something to prove.

Something crosses Kulak's face that might pass for a sneer or a smile.

KUDLAK

I smell warrior blood. Mistress will be pleased.

GRANTHAM

Don't go betting the spaceship just yet.
We got to see if he makes it through
Level Two.

CUT TO:

29

INT. COMBAT 3000. ARMOURY -- DAY 1 [1400]

29

LUKE and CLYDE tumble out of the arena, with the other KIDS highly adrenalised. They go to the scoreboard, study the figures - each player is identified as SOLDIER 1 etc. Luke is way ahead of the field.

CLYDE

Hey -

LUKE

I won! And look! You came third!

CLYE

(a little crest-fallen)
Yeah. Beginners' luck, I guess. Maybe we should go again.

LUKE

I thought you said it was for kids.

CLYDE

(casual)

Well, yeah, but it's part of your education. I'm not enjoying it or anything.

GRANTHAM joins them.

GRANTHAM

That's a pretty impressive score,
Soldier Eight.

Luke is pumped up on his success.

LUKE

Clyde says it was beginners' luck. But I have better reflexes and hand-to-eye co-ordination than most kids.

Granham doesn't really know what to make of that.

GRANTHAM

You do? Wow. Well you make one hell of a Future Warrior, Soldier.

LUKE

You mean I would be good at killing people if the eventuality arose?

GRANTHAM

I'm betting you don't get invited to many parties, do you?

CLYDE

I was showing him what to do. He's Luke. Which makes me Obi-Wan Kenobi.
(introducing himself)
Soldier Seven. How's it going?

GRANTHAM

Weird. But good. Okay, listen up. Mr Kudlak, he's the proprietor, he runs a special competition for the more, uh, 'skilled' competitors. Level Two. What do you think? Are you up for it?

Luke and Clyde look at each other. Yes!

CUT TO:

30 INT. COMBAT 3000. LOBBY -- DAY 1 [1403]

30

SARAH JANE and MARIA enter. They head for the CASHIER (fifties and long suffering woman).

CASHIER

(flat, automatic)

Welcome to the unique gaming experience that IS Combat 3000.

(raises a limp fist)

Blam those Drones!

She could happily die right now.

SARAH JANE

Hi, I'd like to book a party. I've heard a lot about this place. Apparently it's The Nuts.

MARIA

Ok, let's agree never to say that ever again...

CASHIER

I wouldn't if I were you.

SARAH JANE

Sorry?

CASHIER

(re. MARIA)

For her is it?

I'd take her to see a film. You don't want to come here, it's mental.

(MORE)

CASHIER (CONT'D)

Used to be lovely and peaceful. Til Mr Grantham took over.

SARAH JANE

Mr Grantham?

CASHIER

Him and his partner, Mr Kudlak. Not that nobody ever sees him.

SARAH JANE

Would it be possible to speak to him?

CASHIER

(lost in thought)

And it always seems to be raining since they moved in. My sister's offered me part-time in The Tanning Salon. I'm thinking "Well, you only live once."

SARAH JANE

Tell you what, why don't we just go through. I can see you're busy...

Sarah Jane and Maria bustle around past the cashier.

CASHIER

(half hearted)

Hey - !

But they've gone. And now there are more CUSTOMERS. The cashier sighs and turns to deal with them.

CASHIER (CONT'D)

Welcome to the unique gaming experience that IS Combat 3000. Blam those Drones.

CUT TO:

31

INT. COMBAT 3000. ARMOURY -- DAY 1 [1405]

31

LUKE and CLYDE waiting, excited. GRANTHAM shows some more CHILDREN over. Clyde recognises one of them.

CLYDE

See him? He does kick boxing. And her? Athletics for the county. Him: Football A team. This is wicked. It's like a Premier League for laser tag.

Grantham addresses them all.

GRANTHAM

Ok, guys. Well done for getting through to Level Two. New arena, new objective.

Grantham presses a button on the wall. The graphics on the scoreboard change to a map of the arena.

GRANTHAM (CONT'D)

You'll be split into four dispersement groups. You'll access the arena from here, here, here and here. When the first siren sounds you'll break up for cover. When the second siren sounds the mission begins.

LUKE

Mission?

Grantham taps a flashing red X on the map.

GRANTHAM

The first soldier to make it through the door, down the corridor and into this chamber wins their place in the World Championships.

CLYDE

They have a laser tag world championships?

GRANTHAM

That's why I said it.

KID

Cool!

GRANTHAM

But this time you don't get a hundred lives. You get ten.

KID 2

Ten?

They all look at each other - this is going to be tough. Clyde takes the opportunity to psych out the opposition.

CLYDE

Piece of cake.

GRANTHAM

You think? Word of advice. The ultimate Warrior of the Future is always on guard for a surprise attack.

CUT TO:

A door marked MANAGER.

SARAH JANE
Seems like a good place to start.

She takes out the sonic lipstick.

CUT TO:

33 INT. COMBAT 3000. ARENA 2 -- DAY 1 [1410]

33

LUKE and CLYDE poke their heads out of their hiding place, and take on a few PLAYERS. They have them trapped in a pincer between them, and are in cover, so manage to shoot without getting hit themselves.

The PLAYERS they are attacking realise they are getting slaughtered, and run.

Luke and Clyde step out from their hiding place.

LUKE

The others are playing by the old rules.
To be the last man standing. If we play as a team, we have the strategic advantage.

CLYDE

Like I said. Piece of cake.

And he takes out another PLAYER on a walk-way above.

CUT TO:

34 INT. COMBAT 3000. CONTROL ROOM -- CONTINUOUS DAY 1 [1411B4]

KUDLAK is watching CLYDE and LUKE. He grunts, pleased.

MISTRESS (V.O.)

We grow weaker, Kudlak. Send me children.

KUDLAK

There are two, mistress. Two fearsome warriors.

MISTRESS

We must replenish... we must live...

KUDLAK

Soon, Mistress. Soon.

Then Kudlak's attention is taken by a beeping sound and flashing light. He hits a button. Another screen shows SARAH JANE and MARIA searching Grantham's office.

Kudlak reaches for a microphone.

KUDLAK (CONT'D)
Grantham...

CUT TO:

35 INT. COMBAT 3000. GRANTHAM'S OFFICE -- DAY 1 [1413] 35

SARAH JANE has moved onto a filing cabinet.

MARIA
What are we looking for?

SARAH JANE
You'll know when you find it. Just see
what bubbles to the top.

MARIA
Does that mean you don't know?

SARAH JANE
Not as such.

And then GRANTHAM is standing behind them. A facade of
pleasantry.

GRANTHAM
Perhaps I can help?

A moment of electric stillness. Then Sarah Jane is
smiling.

SARAH JANE
Mr Grantham, I presume. Not Mr Kudlak.
I hear he likes to stay in the shadows.
I wonder why that is?

GRANTHAM
Who are you? What are you doing in my
office.

Sarah Jane flashes her Press card.

SARAH JANE
Sarah Jane Smith. Journalist.

GRANTHAM
Who's she?

SARAH JANE
My work experience girl.

MARIA
It was either this or putting up
scaffolding.

SARAH JANE

I'm doing a story on laser games and their effect on aggression levels among young people.

Grantham doesn't believe a word of it.

GRANTHAM

No comment. Now get out.

Sarah Jane pulls the picture of Lance from her bag (that Carrie showed her).

SARAH JANE

Any comment on Lance Metcalf? The boy that disappeared three days ago.

Grantham is more wary...

GRANTHAM

Why should I?

SARAH JANE

Because twenty four children have disappeared recently. Manchester, Brighton, Leeds, Inverness. All cities where there's a Combat 3000. Every time in the middle of a freak storm. Still no comment, Mr Grantham?

Grantham absorbs.

GRANTHAM

Do you know why people come to Combat 3000, Miss Smith? They come for the guns.

And Grantham pulls a very alien-looking one on Sarah Jane and Maria.

CUT TO:

36

INT. COMBAT 3000. ARENA 2 -- DAY 1 [1415]

36

LUKE and CLYDE are hiding. Ahead of them they can see their target - the steel door that we saw Lance go through. It opens.

CLYDE

Okay. That's it. The doorway to the World Championships. How many lives you got left?

LUKE

Six. You?

CLYDE

Four. I think we killed off the opposition. You ready?

LUKE

Remember what the manager said. Be ready for a surprise attack.

Clyde weights his gun with a grin.

CLYDE

I am ready to rock! I am ready to roll!

And together they leap from cover, ready to make the dash for the door. In the same instant SIX BLACK HELMETED FIGURES appear, firing. Luke and Clyde dive for cover.

CUT TO:

37

INT. COMBAT 3000. GRANTHAM'S OFFICE -- DAY 1 [1416]

37

GRANTHAM has the gun on SARAH JANE and MARIA (who she has now stepped in front of).

GRANTHAM

Move back against the wall. MOVE.

SARAH JANE

(backing away)

Please, don't feel offended. But this isn't the first time someone has pointed a gun at me, Mr Grantham. And guns from other planets? I'm afraid I've rather lost count.

GRANTHAM

Will you die happy if I tell you I'm impressed?

SARAH JANE

I'll die happy when I get Lance Metcalf and the 23 other children you've kidnapped, back to their parents safe and well.

GRANTHAM

Oh, don't worry about them, Miss Smith. Children adore war games.

CUT TO:

38

INT. COMBAT 3000, ARENA 2 -- DAY 1 [1417]

38

CLYDE and LUKE break from cover and shoot the BLACK HELMETED FIGURES, race towards the steel doorway.

Some other PLAYERS in the background try to follow their lead.

CUT TO:

39 INT. COMBAT 3000. CONTROL ROOM/ARENA 2 -- CONTINUOUS DAY 3D
[1418]

KUDLAK watches with satisfaction as LUKE and CLYDE go for the door.

KUDLAK

A soldier who fights alone dies alone.
These two will do, Mistress.

MISTRESS (O.S.)

Good, Kudlak. Send them to me. Send them to me.

KUDLAK

In the name of the Emperor, it shall be done, Mistress.

Kudlak uses a control.

CUT TO:

40 INT. COMBAT 3000, ARENA 2 -- CONTINUOUS DAY 1 [1419] 40

The door closes on the other PLAYERS - they can't follow Luke and Clyde into the corridor. The other kids are frustrated.

CUT TO:

41 INT. COMBAT 3000. GRANTHAM'S OFFICE -- DAY 1 [1420] 41

SARAH JANE and MARIA, still under cover of GRANTHAM's gun, look up as they hear thunder rumble, and the sound of heavy rain.

MARIA

It's raining.

SARAH JANE

They're powering up the teleporter.

Grantham gets a message on the earpiece he wears.

KUDLAK (O.S.)

Get rid of them, Grantham!

Sarah Jane can't hear, but she notes his body language that suggests he's receiving a message.

She looks at Grantham coldly.

SARAH JANE

Don't you have any conscience about what you're doing with those children, Mr Grantham?

Grantham leans in close to Sarah Jane, his voice low.

GRANTHAM

A conscience is like a stone in your shoe. You cannot *begin* to imagine the relief once you get rid of it.

He straightens up. Aims the gun.

GRANTHAM (CONT'D)

Goodbye, Miss Smith.

SARAH JANE

Just a moment. Please. Can I just...?

She pulls out her Sonic Lipstick.

SARAH JANE (CONT'D)

Bit of lippy? Last request?

Grantham laughs, shakes his head - whatever.

Sarah Jane moves the lipstick towards her mouth, then suddenly whips it round and blasts Grantham. He yells, throws his hands up to ears in agony and collapses to the floor.

SARAH JANE (CONT'D)

Come on! We don't have much time!

Sarah Jane and Maria sprint out the office.

CUT TO:

42 INT. COMBAT 3000. CORRIDOR -- DAY 1 [1421]

42

SARAH JANE and MARIA run. Another distant rumble of thunder.

SARAH JANE

We have to find that matter transporter and shut it down!

CUT TO:

43 INT. COMBAT 3000. CORRIDOR -- DAY 1 [1422]

43

LUKE and CLYDE run towards a glowing white light.

LUKE

What happens now? Do we get a trophy or something?

CLYDE

(uneasy)

I don't know. But I'm kind of thinking, this is weird.

LUKE

Come on, it's just a game.

They run into a dead end. A door slides down behind them, trapping them.

CLYDE

What the...?!

CUT TO:

44 INT. COMBAT 3000. CONTROL ROOM/TRANSMAT ROOM -- CONTINUOUS DAY 1 [1422]

SARAH JANE and MARIA burst into the control room.

MARIA

What does a matter transporter look like?

And in the same moment they see KUDLAK at the control panel - and LUKE and CLYDE on a monitor.

SARAH JANE

Oh, no! It's Luke and Clyde!

And Kudlak hits a control.

CUT TO:

45 INT. COMBAT 3000. TRANSMAT AREA -- CONTINUOUS DAY 1 [14225]

There's a PRAC flash of blinding light.

FX SHOT: Clyde and Luke de-materialize.

CUT TO:

46 INT. COMBAT 3000. CONTROL ROOM/ TRANSMAT ROOM -- CONTINUOUS DAY 1 [1423]

SARAH JANE sees they have gone.

SARAH JANE

No!

KUDLAK
Be proud of them.

SARAH JANE
Where have you sent them? Where?!

KUDLAK
Into darkness!

On Sarah Jane and Maria - horrified.

END OF EPISODE 5