

# C A L L I S T O

written by

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**TITLE OVER BLACK:**

**THE 22ND CENTURY...**

FADE IN:

**EXT. MARS - UPPER ATMOSPHERE**

Stars give way to the bright glow of the Mars atmosphere, its thin curvature holding back the blackness of space.

Jutting up from the surface of the red planet is a MASSIVE MOUNTAIN: the dormant volcano Olympus Mons.

Far below, a SMALL AIRCRAFT speeds toward it.

**INT. AIRCRAFT COCKPIT - DAY**

Behind the controls is the strong frame of ANDREW BRENNAN (30s and clean-shaven with close-cut red hair). He studies a RADAR display -- all clear. Stares out the window.

Finally, he glances nervously at his co-pilot.

ANDREW  
What do you think?

SAOIRSE (*ser-sha*) BRENNAN (9) pushes a mess of curly red hair from her face and scoots away from Andrew. But her wide eyes betray her awe at the sight of the enormous mountain.

Andrew self-consciously shifts his hands on the controls. Tries again.

ANDREW (CONT'D)  
Want to see the top?

Saoirse leans forward to see the summit. Too high. She shyly glances at Andrew, a smile pulling at her lips.

ANDREW (CONT'D)  
(affectionate)  
Better hang on, little girl.

**EXT. OLYMPUS MONS - DAY**

It's hard to grasp how truly big this mountain is -- the summit alone stretches to the horizon. The aircraft climbs rapidly, quivering as it crests the top, its design pushed to the limit.

**INT. AIRCRAFT COCKPIT - DAY**

Andrew adjusts a few controls, tilts the ship down.

SAOIRSE

Wow...

She scoots closer to her father. He hides a smile as he points at the miles-wide circular depressions atop the mountain.

ANDREW

Those are called calderas. They were magma chambers that collapsed after Olympus Mons erupted. It used to be an active volcano.

SAOIRSE

But not anymore?

ANDREW

No. Now it's at peace.

He reaches up and pulls back the sunroof cover, revealing the onyx and diamond expanse of space, the stars DAZZLING.

Andrew watches Saoirse stare at them. He tries to see the universe through her eyes, to feel her wonder...

SAOIRSE

What's it like, Dad?

ANDREW

In your mind, you know it's the coldest place you've ever been. But when you see Mars, glowing red against the stars, it makes you feel warm. Like you've come home.

SAOIRSE

Maybe you can take me sometime?

ANDREW

I hope so.

He doesn't sound so sure.

**EXT. OLYMPUS MONS - DAY**

The ship passes the calderas, banks, and drops out of sight.

**INT. AIRCRAFT COCKPIT - DAY**

Lower now. Andrew levels the ship, revealing a DARK CLOUD.

SAOIRSE  
Dust storm!

ANDREW  
We'll go around it.

But the brown dust quickly fills the entire cockpit window.

Andrew's eyes narrow. *Something's not right.*

Then --

A retina-searing FLASH erupts within the cloud, and a HULKING BLUE AIRCRAFT, hull covered in bomb bays, pierces the murk.

Andrew pulls hard on the controls just as THREE RED FIGHTERS burst from the cloud and pound the larger craft with projectiles, tearing its armored hide.

CONSORTIUM FIGHTER PILOT (OVER RADIO)  
P1724, what are you doing in a combat  
zone? Evacuate immediately.

**EXT. MARS PLAINS - DAY**

As the blue bomber roars over Andrew's ship, its gunports light up and return fire. The lead red fighter EXPLODES.

**INT. AIRCRAFT COCKPIT - DAY**

Andrew's small craft is hammered by cross-fire --

ANDREW  
Hold on, Saoirse!

She digs her fingernails into her seat as Andrew PULLS UP --

**EXT. MARS PLAINS - DAY**

The ship DARTS UP, projectiles sparking on its hull. It ROLLS, barely dodges the red fighters as they whip by -- but it's sent into a tailspin, accelerating, the ground looming closer --

**INT. AIRCRAFT COCKPIT - DAY**

Andrew idles the engine, rapidly works the controls --

Saoirse squeezes her eyes shut --

**EXT. MARS PLAINS - DAY**

The spinning slows, but impact is imminent --

-- The engine BLAZES TO LIFE. Red rocks are scattered by its power as the craft levels and starts climbing.

**INT. AIRCRAFT COCKPIT - DAY**

Andrew looks over his shoulder just as the bomber EXPLODES and a warm glow floods the cockpit. Then darkness falls as the ship enters the dust cloud.

ANDREW

We're okay. We're okay.

He gently pries Saoirse's left hand from her seat, and she grasps his with both hands. Small fingers covering large ones.

As the dust cloud thins, Saoirse opens her eyes. Still clutching her father's hand, she cautiously leans forward.

Her eyes WIDEN IN HORROR.

**EXT. DESTROYED TOWN - DAY**

Huge shards of a protective glass dome are scattered over what used to be a settlement, now a HEAP OF DEBRIS inside a crater.

Buildings charred and ripped. Cultivated land made barren by bombs and atmosphere. Bodies in the streets. PURE DEVASTATION.

CUT TO:

**INT. BRENNAN HOUSE - KITCHEN - EVENING**

Ten candles glow atop a colorful CAKE.

ANDREW

Make a wish!

Saoirse blows out the candles -- but one stubbornly stays lit. Andrew playfully leans forward to blow it out, but Saoirse beats him to it and giggles.

There's a small cheer, and the lights turn on:

Saoirse, Andrew, and GRACE BRENNAN (30s, with brown hair and a brave face) sit around a rough-hewn STONE TABLE at the center of a rustic kitchen, a mix of frontier and high-tech.

GRACE  
Happy birthday!

She kisses her daughter's head and sets a piece of cake in front of her. Saoirse digs in.

Andrew sets down a METAL BOX wrapped in a green bow. Saoirse swallows her mouthful of cake and looks up at him.

ANDREW  
Open it.

He puts his arm around Grace, but she quietly pulls away as Saoirse excitedly unties the bow and slides open the lid:

Inside is a beautiful ANTIQUE HAMMER with steel head and thick wood handle. A true craftsman's tool.

ANDREW (CONT'D)  
For your creations.

She lifts the hammer, feels its weight, traces the wood grain of the handle with her fingers -- STARTS at the feel of it.

SAOIRSE  
This is real wood?

He smiles at her, nods. Saoirse BEAMS back at him.

**INT. BRENNAN HOUSE - SAOIRSE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Saoirse is asleep, new hammer clutched in her hand. On a shelf above her bed are IRON SCULPTURES: Andrew's aircraft, the mars rover *Opportunity*, a cross.

Andrew sits beside her. Studies her face. Yearning to stay.

He carefully rises and pulls the door softly shut.

**INT. BRENNAN HOUSE - GARDEN - NIGHT**

Sun lamps hang over ROWS OF PLANTS: greens, barley, potatoes. The staples of life, growing in Martian soil.

Grace kneels, pruning a strawberry bush. The airlock door opens and Andrew enters -- wearing a red flight suit.

ANDREW  
She fell right asleep.

Grace doesn't look up.

ANDREW (CONT'D)  
New Syracuse is gone. There were  
bodies everywhere.

GRACE  
Monsters.

She stands and looks at Andrew with hard, uncompromising eyes.

GRACE (CONT'D)  
Don't ever do that again.

ANDREW  
It was going to be a quick--

GRACE  
You took her into a war zone.

ANDREW  
The whole planet is a war zone. I  
wanted to do something special for  
her birthday.

GRACE  
Then why don't you stay?

ANDREW  
I'm out there so that she'll have a  
future.

GRACE  
She needs you now, Andrew. It's  
been six months! Coming home for  
twenty-four hours doesn't make  
everything okay.

She turns back to her plants.

ANDREW  
We're all making sacrifices. When  
we win this war--

Grace spins around, fire in her eyes.

GRACE  
If we do ever win, your daughter  
won't even know you.  
(firm)  
There are other ways to fight.

Andrew softens.

ANDREW  
I want Saoirse to grow up free,  
Grace. I'm a pilot. It's what I'm  
good at. If we all do our part, we  
will beat Earth.

He steps forward and pulls her close. They kiss, then part,  
eyes full of desperate hope and the fear of tomorrow.

**INT. BRENNAN HOUSE - SAOIRSE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

An engine starts outside. Saoirse's eyes POP OPEN. Hammer  
held tight, she jumps up and runs to the window --

-- Just in time to see Andrew's aircraft flying away. Tears  
fill her eyes, her face SCREWED TIGHT WITH EMOTION.

Over the sound of Saoirse's breathing, a SERIES OF SHOTS:

-- Andrew being closed up in a fighter cockpit  
-- Saoirse glancing down at the metal box her hammer came in  
-- Andrew's fighter entering a FRENZIED BATTLE in space  
-- Saoirse raising the hammer above her head  
-- A MISSILE striking Andrew's craft, a FIERY EXPLOSION--  
-- Saoirse BRINGING THE HAMMER DOWN--

CUT TO:

**INT. BLACKSMITH SHOP - MORNING**

BANG! The same hammer strikes RED-HOT IRON, beating it into  
shape.



The blacksmith stops to wipe sweat from her brow, pushing aside a mess of curly red hair:

Saoirse (29), now tall and strong, with a rugged beauty born of good stock and hard work.

Her meticulous shop feels straight from the nineteenth century: traditional tools, a forge of hot coals, an anvil.

Saoirse plunges the iron into water, then picks up a glass and takes a long drink.

**INT. BLACKSMITH SHOP - LATER**

Saoirse finishes assembling a small DISPLAY CASE, glass inlaid into stained wood doors. She screws a decorative IRON HINGE into the frame with manual tools. The hard way.

**INT. BLACKSMITH SHOP - MOMENTS LATER**

The display case is set carefully upon a stone table. Saoirse steps back, proud.

She then gently lays the case in a PLASTIC SHIPPING BOX.

**EXT. BLACKSMITH SHOP - MORNING**

Dawn. The weather-beaten AIRLOCK opens and Saoirse steps out, her environmental suit stained in patches of red and black.

She carries the box to a tarp-covered object, and pulls off the tarp: a DRONE. Presses a button on her WRIST DISPLAY.

The drone comes alive, wraps its spider-like legs around the box. Then it flies straight up.

As Saoirse watches it become lost against the dim sky...

CUT TO:

**EXT. SPACE - CALLISTO STATION**

JUPITER's enormous sandy visage dominates our view. Slowly, an ASTRONAUT in a blue pressure suit crosses in front of it and grasps a handhold on a tall tower. She begins to climb.

From further back, we see the rest of Callisto Station: a bright central core, connected by spires to an external ring, dotted with towers. And WEAPONRY.

Descending a tower is the astronaut. It looks like she's 'climbing' upside-down, but in zero-g, it's all the same.

She's at the end of the tower now. The astronaut raises the reflective visor on her helmet, revealing MARA VEGA (early 30s), a soldier with a perpetual expression of mild annoyance.

She looks at the moon below her: Callisto. It's pockmarked and beat up -- but GLOWING with potential.

MARA (OVER RADIO)  
I'm in position. Beginning  
installation.

She lifts a SATELLITE DISH from a crate attached to the tower and begins bolting it into place.

#### **INT. CALLISTO STATION - CONTROL CENTER**

The control center is bright, but hard-edged and gray. RADIO CHATTER, the HISS of pressurized air, TAPS of fingers at terminals are jarring after the quiet of space.

Half-a-dozen CREW MEMBERS go about their work, three in red uniforms, three in blue -- a mix of Mars and Earth officers.

Mara scowls as she operates a console. Ensign GAIGE VEGA (early 20s), smiling and fresh-faced, approaches.

GAIGE  
You know, those lines in your  
forehead will eventually become  
permanent.

MARA  
(still working)  
Permanent, *sir*.

GAIGE  
...Sir.

She looks up at him, her scowl slowly morphing into a smile.

MARA  
Go away. I'm busy.

GAIGE  
Trouble with your mapping mission?

Mara taps the pistol-shaped WEAPON in the holster on her leg.

MARA

I know how to use this.

GAIGE

Sometimes I wish Dad never taught  
you how to shoot.

MARA

Sometimes I wish I had a target.

Gaige glances at her display, a map dotted with hundreds of  
small objects, a SCANLINE moving slowly across them.

GAIGE

That debris field is massive. Find  
anything interesting?

MARA

I installed the scanner this morning,  
but it took hours to calibrate. And  
now it's giving me false positives.  
But it's nearly done looking for  
active radiation sources.

GAIGE

You think any of those ships could  
still be powered up? It's been twenty  
years.

MARA

No. That's just the first pass.  
Then I'll divide the field into a  
grid and try to identify each  
individual wreck.

(sigh)

It's going to take months.

GAIGE

Years.

MARA

If you don't stop talking to me.

Gaige gives her a mock salute and walks away. Mara shakes her  
head and returns her attention to the display. She growls at  
a message onscreen -- but then leans in, reads it more closely.  
Zooms in on one of the objects.

MARA (CONT'D)

No way.

She presses a few buttons, another scanline passing over the  
object. Its outline GLOWS GREEN.

MARA (CONT'D)  
 (surprised)  
 I have to report this.

**EXT. ASTEROID VESTA**

An unmanned COMMUNICATIONS RELAY on the asteroid's surface.

MARA (OVER RADIO)  
 Consortium Command, this is Callisto  
 Station.

The relay is covered by more than a dozen DISHES.

MARA (OVER RADIO) (CONT'D)  
 We've discovered an active cryo-pod  
 in the debris field on Callisto's  
 surface.

Close on one of the dishes: a beat-up METAL BOX, clearly an  
 add-on, wires snaking up into the dish's circuitry...

MARA (OVER RADIO) (CONT'D)  
 Registry number is vee-dash-one-  
 seven-two-four. Requesting  
 identification.

CUT TO:

**INT. BLACKSMITH SHOP - MORNING**

A loud SIZZLE as Saoirse plunges a red-hot rod into water.

A SOFT BEEP from her wall-mounted computer breaks her focus.  
 Saoirse frowns as she crosses to it, sees a new message. She  
 closes her eyes at the name of the sender: Silas Tanner.

Her hand hovers over the terminal, fingers closing --

-- then opening. She taps the screen and the message appears:

*MEET ME AT ATTACHED COORDINATES.*

*YOUR FATHER IS ALIVE.*

Saoirse's hand reels as if burned. She stumbles back, bumps  
 into the table, water glass SHATTERING on the floor.

Her breaths are quick, trying to stop the shaking, the SHOCK --