

The Jamie Drake
Equation
- Phase 1
Day 2: Blueprinting

“Is everything OK?” I ask, panicking at the thought of anything going wrong up there. From meteor strikes to toxic leaks, Dad has explained to me all the different dangers he could face on the ISS. In an extreme emergency the astronauts have to take shelter in the Soyuz capsule that’s connected to the space station in case they need to make a quick escape.

“No need to worry, son,” he replies. “It’s just a caution alert. Probably some computer system’s gone offline.”

As he speaks, the beeping tone suddenly stops.

“There you go,” he says. “Panic over. I just need to find out what this alert was about and then I can inform Mission Control. I’ll speak to you tomorrow on our family video call.”

The ISS is dipping low on the horizon now, giving me one last glimpse before it disappears.

“Bye, Jamie.”

“Bye, Dad.”

And then he’s gone, travelling around the world in a tin can at over 27,000 kilometres per hour.

I’m nearly out of breath by the time I reach the very top of Beacon Hill, my shadow lengthening as the last rays of the sun leach out of the sky. I can’t stop myself from shivering. I should’ve brought a jacket. Mum is probably expecting me back about now, but I don’t want to go home yet. I want to see the observatory that Dad mentioned first.

If it was here when my dad was a teenager, then it must be well out of date by now. They put telescopes up into space nowadays so that astronomers can look further and further out into the universe. I glance up at the darkening sky, clouds now starting to appear on the horizon as daylight fades away. You wouldn’t be able to see much from here.

Then I see it, half hidden behind a bank of trees, a squat red-brick building topped with a white, dome-shaped roof. The walls of the building are half covered in ivy and shrubs, making it blend in with the woodland that surrounds it, and as I get closer I can see coils of barbed wire sitting below the lip of the dome, its white paint peeling in

places and mottled with a greenish tint. The observatory looks abandoned, the only clue to its former life the rectangular slit in the side of the dome, left open to the sky.

I reach a rusting chain-link fence, the battered red-and-white sign that’s fixed to this warning:

**PRIVATE PROPERTY
TRESPASSERS WILL BE PROSECUTED**

But less than a metre to the left I spot a gap between the fence post and a padlocked gate, the chain hanging so loose that it’s easy enough for me to squeeze through.

Up close, the observatory looks even more derelict, its curved red-brick walls crumbling in places, the chunks of rubble almost lost among the weeds. It doesn’t look like anyone has been here for years. There are no windows and as I skirt round the edge of the building in search of a door, I wonder what might be left inside. Maybe the telescope is still working and I’ll be able to catch a close-up of Dad on his next orbit round in ninety minutes time. If I could just find a way in...

Then I see something that stops me in my tracks. Silhouetted against the setting sun, it looks like a robot riding on top of a giant techno-spider. It’s nearly twice my height, its four metal legs extended and planted in the ground, while the satellite dish head is pointing to the stars. On its sleek white body I can see a bright blue logo:

*** L.O.G.S.**

Unlike the crumbling observatory, this looks like it’s just fallen off the back of a spaceship. I step closer, peering at the strange machine to try and work out exactly what it is.

That’s when I feel the shotgun press between my shoulder blades.

“Don’t move,” a woman’s voice growls. “Or I’ll let you have it.”

Chunking

Take the text and break it up into 4 sections.

How can you describe the sections to somebody who hasn't read the scene (be specific to this scene)?

RECALL BLUEPRINT FOR THE STORY:

PART OF THE TEXT	CONTENT	FEATURES
PART 1		
PART 2		
PART 3		
PART 4		