

James Nicholls

INSIDE COVER

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Strange
days
indeed

■ **MAYBE** we've been watching too many episodes of *The X-Files*, but as far as we can tell the following events actually happened . . .

Tokyo, March 13, 23:00: Japanese officials record satellite illuminations the size of Sydney south of the Kimberley in WA, and near Alpha in Queensland.

Sydney, the next day, 9:00: Sydney woman Margaret P, who says she has a psychic connection with life-forms from other planets, organises a \$50,000 rescue mission through the National UFO Report Sightings Hotline for three stranded aliens she claims have crash-landed on the edge of the Great Sandy Desert.

Ms P plans to fly to Kalgoorlie where she has arranged for a group of experts to take her to the stricken aliens, but fails to make the connection in Perth.



Melbourne, Monday, March 22, 17:00: The hotline is contacted by a Kalgoorlie exploration company which alerts them to a Japanese group wanting to explore the same area as Ms P. The group claims to have satellite pictures of what appear to be city lights in the middle of nowhere.

Meanwhile, in Kalgoorlie: Ms P turns up and persuades a charter company to take her to a remote location to look for stranded aliens. Also contacts police, claiming that the aliens are being terrorised by local communities. Ms P also goes shopping for sheepskins — she's heard the aliens are very cold.

The police contact mental health authorities who assess Ms P as "unstable" and she is escorted to Perth and admitted to hospital.

New York, the same day: Taiwanese cult leader Chen Hon Ming, who has twice predicted the end of the world, claims aliens have landed in WA and expresses interest in exploring the area.

Perth, Tuesday, March 23, 12:00: The hotline becomes concerned for the whereabouts of Ms P and tries to contact her. They track her down to the Perth hospital, which denies any knowledge of the woman . . . Meanwhile, aliens wearing ugh boots . . .