

IN THE LOOP

by

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1

INT. NUMBER TEN CORRIDOR/MALCOLM'S OFFICE - MORNING

1

MALCOLM TUCKER, government director of communications, is arriving early. He's on the phone. Passes a CIVIL SERVANT.

MALCOLM

You're in Mark Hadley's office, yeah?

CIVIL SERVANT 1

Yes.

MALCOLM

I need to see him.

Another CIVIL SERVANT hands Malcolm a CD. Without breaking flow Malcolm raises an eyebrow, what's this?

CIVIL SERVANT 2

Monitoring. Simon Foster on The PM Programme. Wonky Ron on Farming Today.

CIVIL SERVANT 2 walks off.

Malcolm starts to walk through to his office. Malcolm reaches his office. His assistant SAM is there. He hands her the CD and she puts it into a CD player and it starts playing.

MALCOLM

Well, what are you waiting for son, a fucking sex-change?

Civil Servant 1 hurries away.

Malcolm starts listening to the recording of Simon on the radio.

MALCOLM(CONT'D)

So, Sam. What's the dynamic Simon Foster, going to wow us with?

SIMON

(v/o on radio)

...and of course the big one is diarrhoea, which is a major health issue in these countries.

MALCOLM

Diarrhoea? C'mon, Simon. You're International Development. Talk about food parcels. Not arse-spraying mayhem...

SAM laughs.

1

CONTINUED:

1

SIMON (V.O.)

And so if we can tackle the easy things, like diarrhoea.

MALCOLM

He said it again. what is this? The Shitting Forecast?

2

EXT. TOBY & SUZY'S FLAT - MORNING/INT. MICHAEL'S FO OFFICE - MORNING

2

It's busy at the Foreign Office. SUZY is in her boss Michael's office, getting lots of documents, folders etc ready. She's on the phone to TOBY, who's heading out of their flat.

INTERCUT PHONE CALL:

SUZY

You okay? First day at the new department? You've got that thing from the SMF you wanted to show them?

TOBY

Oh yeah. Got my policy papers. Got my packed lunch. And my comfort blanket - which is a rug stitched full of heroin.

SUZY

Have a good day. Call me if you need help, yeah?

TOBY

Cool. Is Michael still in Zurich with Fatty?

SUZY

Back this morning. Michael says Fatty's in a bad mood. He's got water retention.

TOBY

Christ. I wouldn't want to be around when that blows. I can probably organise some spare tents for the flood victims. D'you know, Fatty's the first Foreign secretary to have really understood globalisation by physically achieving it.

Toby heads off. He's feeling chipper. It's a new dawn, is it not?

3

INT. DFID OPEN PLAN OFFICE

3

JUDY

Mark, are you co-ordinating that millenium goals press release?

MARK

Yes.

JUDY

Well co-ordinate it better.

MARK

Yes, can do.

JUDY

Is that the Minister? Bloody nail - has anyone got a nail file?

4

INT. DFID OPEN PLAN OFFICE - MORNING

4

SIMON is arriving with JUDY. Simon carrying his red dispatch box. Simon's worried.

SIMON

Have we heard anything from Malcolm about last night's interview?

JUDY

No not yet.

SIMON

Perhaps he didn't hear it.

JUDY

Or maybe he's dead.

SIMON

(with a degree of genuine hope)

He might be dead. He might have had that massive stroke we've all been waiting for. It's in the post.

JUDY

He'll want you to row back from the 'unforeseeable' thing on Question Time tonight.

SIMON

Fine, I can row. I rowed for my college. Well, I was a cox. On Question Time, you know the funny question they always ask at the end?

JUDY

Yes?

SIMON

Can we prep that now? I want to shine on the funny question, cos I'm a funny guy. With a light touch.

INT. MALCOLM'S OFFICE - MORNING

Malcolm and Sam still listening to Simon's interview.

SIMON (V.O.)

..really kick the diarrhoea ball into touch. Then, hopefully, that will strike another blow in the war against preventable diseases.

INTERVIEWER (V.O.)

You mention the word war there...

MALCOLM

Steady Eddie!

SIMON (V.O.)

(oh shit)

...against preventable diseases, yes.

INTERVIEWER (V.O.)

All the evidence now points to a US military intervention in the Middle East. Is that your view?

MALCOLM

Straight bat, Simon. C'mon. Pump him full of drivel.

SIMON (V.O.)

Well it really isn't for me, Eddie, to announce the Prime Minister's position on any...

MALCOLM

Bat it away! You're English, cricket's your thing! Cricket and incest, come on!

INTERVIEWER (V.O.)

But a personal opinion -- as a man who deals with the fallout from foreign policy on a daily basis?

SIMON (V.O.)

Well, personally, I think that war is unforeseeable.

MALCOLM

No. You don't. You were given the briefing note on this, you useless cock-bun

INTERVIEWER (V.O.)

Unforeseeable?

SIMON (V.O.)

(shit again)

Yes.

MALCOLM

(getting up, calling on his mobile)

Sam, I'm away to International Development to pull Simon Foster's hair.

(on phone)

Yeah. He did not say that. Okay? No, you may have heard him say that, but he didn't actually say that...and that's a fact.

And he's gone.

EXT/INT. DFID - MORNING/INT. MICHAEL'S FO OFFICE - MORNING

Toby is walking towards DFID. As he nears the building he finds himself next to Malcolm, who is heading in too. Toby is on the phone.

INTERCUT PHONE CALL:

TOBY

Are you going to keep ringing me up every two minutes, because you're starting to remind me of my mum. And that could lead to all sorts of erectile dysfunction.

Suzy is still in the FO office.

SUZY

I'm just checking whether you put last night's lasagne in the fridge.

In the FO office, MICHAEL arrives. He has a small suitcase and a paper bag. He holds this up.

MICHAEL

(mouthing)

Croissants!

Back with Malcolm, Toby close by. Malc's on the phone.

MALCOLM

No. You're fine to go ahead and print that. It's lies, you'd be lying, but go ahead. He did not say unforeseeable. No he did not. Oh, just before you go -- when I tell your wife about you and Angela Heaney at the Blackpool conference...would email be better? Or a phone call?

Toby is now next to Malcolm in a lift). Malcolm becomes aware of him.

TOBY

No, it's fine, it's in the fridge. I put some clingfilm over it.

In the FO office, Michael switches on some classical music.

SUZY

Why did you put clingfilm on it?

TOBY

To keep it fresh.

Malcolm starts dialling on his phone.

SUZY

It's in the fridge, that'll keep it fresh.

TOBY

No, but it still might dry out.

MALCOLM

(into phone)  
YOU FUCKING RELAX!

Michael hands Suzie a croissant.

MICHAEL

(knowing Toby is on the other end of the line)  
Still slightly warm. That's how I like my women as well.

SUZY

Clingfilm is carcinogenic, Toby.

TOBY

No it isn't. That's a myth. Clingfilm is perfectly safe.

Malcolm now eyeing Toby with suspicion/contempt -- who is this dick? Toby tries to smile, lowers his voice, embarrassed.

They wouldn't sell clingfilm if it gave you cancer. Clingfilm doesn't give you cancer.

SUZY

I didn't even know we had clingfilm in the flat. Oh, you need more eczema cream. You were a bit flakey again.

TOBY

I've got to go. I'll speak to you later.

He rings off. Smiles again at Malcolm. Gestures to the phone and mimes 'she's mental'. Malcolm gets his guy on the phone.

MALCOLM

James! Right --Simon Foster?

Simon and Judy are looking through newspapers/press cuttings.

JUDY

There's this guy who bought a south sea island. They might ask "If you had to spend the rest of your life on a desert island with someone, who would it be?"

SIMON

Well, I can't say 'my wife' because I haven't got one, and I can't say 'my girlfriend' because I don't have one of those either.

JUDY

Don't say all that though. It'll look desperate.

SIMON

No, I'm just telling you.

JUDY

And don't say Mandela, that's rubbish. And don't say Keira Knightley, you'll look like a pervert..

MALCOLM

What?



JUDY

Malcolm's coming to see you.

SIMON

Shit. He's still alive. When's he due?

Malcolm walks in with Toby sheepishly behind him.

MALCOLM

Now. And don't say you weren't prepared because I rang ahead. Now then, Simon, as the late great Nat King Fucking Cole said, 'Unforeseeable, that's what you are..'

INT. MICHAELS FO OFFICE - MORNING

MICHAEL is having croissants with Suzy. The music is still playing.

Suzy hands him a folder.

SUZY

This is the latest from the...sorry, is it alright if I turn this down a bit?

She turns the music down.

SUZY (CONT'D)

The latest from the State Department for the American meeting. I gather Fatty won't be attending.

MICHAEL

Hey, you. He's the Foreign Secretary. So please address him by his full title. The Right Honourable Sir Jonathan Manboobs-Smith

INT. SIMON'S OFFICE - DAY / DFID OPEN PLAN OFFICE - DAY

MALCOLM is giving SIMON a controlled-anger dressing down. Judy and Toby are outside in the open plan office.

SIMON

He asked me for a personal opinion Malcolm.

MALCOLM

He asked you? Oh, he asked you, that explains it.

(MORE)

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

What if he'd asked you to sing a racist song and give him your PIN number and shit yourself, would you have done that? He's an interviewer, not a fucking hypnotist.

SIMON

Yeah, funny, Malcolm, I know he's not a hypnotist. But, I was just being honest about the prospect of war. If I've got doubts...

MALCOLM

Doubts? Why didn't you say? I'll call up, we can get all our aircraft carriers to idle off Madagascar while you fiddle about with your wee moral compass.

Toby's with Judy.

JUDY

So you're...whatever your name is, Dan, the new advisor?

TOBY

Toby.

JUDY

Right. Just most of you lot tend to be called Dan, or Danny so it's always worth a punt. OK, hello. As you know, I'm Judy Molloy, Civil Service Director of Communications for International Development.

They shake hands.

TOBY

Is this a normal morning, or...?

Judy's not got time for questions.

JUDY

Okay, I've got a meeting in  
(looks at watch)  
two minutes. And the minister was rubbish in last night's interview.

TOBY

Rubbish?

JUDY

It's a technical term.

11 INT. DFID SIMON'S OFFICE. DAY.

11

Back inside Simon's office

SIMON

But war is -- basically unforeseeable  
isn't it?

MALCOLM

That is not our line, alright? Walk  
the fucking line. Look. We've got  
Karen Clark over from Washington,  
okay? We've got the US National  
Security Advisor's main guy coming.  
Yeah? We've got enough Pentagon goons  
here for a fucking coup d'etat.  
This is not the time to send out a  
signal like this in some personal  
fucking sodcast.

JUDY and TOBY come in.

JUDY

Minister, this is Toby.

MALCOLM

We haven't got time love, fuck off.

JUDY smiles at MALCOLM, and doesn't fuck off.

SIMON

Hey Toby. Glad you could join us. Bit  
of an odd morning, but 'Welcome to the  
madhouse!' I apologise for Malcolm.

MALCOLM

Don't apologise for me. You should  
apologise for you.

(to Judy)

Did I just tell you to fuck off and  
yet you're still here?

JUDY

That's correct.

MALCOLM

(to Toby)

If I tell you to fuck off what do you  
do?

TOBY

Fuck off?

MALCOLM

You're learning fast. Okay, weird  
little foetus boy, go away. Fuck off.

TOBY

Is this a real fuck off?

MALCOLM

Yes. Fuck off.

Toby fucks off. We can see him outside, wandering around, not knowing what to do with himself.

SIMON

We were thinking, weren't we Judy, that I could row back on Question Time tonight.

MALCOLM

No, You're not going on Question Time tonight. You've been disinvited.

SIMON

Why?

MALCOLM

Because they ask fucking questions on Question Time. And you're no good at questions. If it was Fumbling, Off-Message Shit Fucking Answer Time, you'd be our main guy. But it's not.

JUDY

Sorry, why wasn't I told about this?

MALCOLM

Why should I tell you about this?

JUDY

Because it's a scheduled media appearance by this department's Secretary Of State and it therefore falls within my purview...

MALCOLM

Your purview? Where do you think you are sweetheart, in some Regency costume drama? Well allow me to pop a jaunty little bonnet on your purview and ram it up the shitter with a lubricated horse cock.

JUDY

Malcolm, your swearing doesn't impress me. My husband teaches in Tower Hamlets and believe me, those kids make you sound like Angel Lansbury.

MALCOLM

(to Simon, lads' chat)  
She's married? The poor bastard.

SIMON

But...okay, putting Judy's lubricated horse cock aside for a moment

(Judy walks out)

Are you saying that I'm now not allowed to make any media appearances?

MALCOLM

No, not until we can trust you to keep to the line.

SIMON

But I was going to keep to the line:  
"I don't actually think war is unforeseeable."

Malcolm's looking out of the office, monitoring Judy's movements. She's flashed up on his radar. He's tracking her.

MALCOLM

What is it then?

A beat.

SIMON

Is it...I don't know? Foreseeable? No.

MALCOLM

No. Not foreseeable. That's declaring war. It's neither foreseeable nor unforeseeable.

SIMON

Right. So not inevitable, but not...evitable.

Malcolm leaves the office. Toby is still hovering.

MALCOLM

(calling back to Simon)

Okay, you need to work out the line.

(to Judy)

That includes you, Jane Fucking Austen with the strap-on. Oh, and put the sniff out there that the next time the BBC ambushes a Minister with a war question we'll drop a bomb on them.

JUDY

I can't do that. That's political, that's not in my...

11 CONTINUED: (3)

11

MALCOLM

Purview? OK, darling. You scuttle off back to fucking Cranford and organise the tea and cake and horse cocks. (TO TOBY) You, Ron Weasley -- you do it.

Malcolm heads out. Mark Hadley spots his go.

12 INT. FO MICHAELS OFFICE - DAY

12

Suzy and Michael in Michael's office. Suzy's getting documents together for the big meeting. Michael's at his computer, on the phone. Classical music still on.

MICHAEL

(on phone)

I want the Angolan charge d'affaires on the phone. Well STOP him playing football.

SUZY

I'm just giving Toby a quick ring, is that OK?

Suzy dials.

13 INT. DFID/INT FOREIGN OFFICE MICHAELS OFFICE

13

Toby is at DFID, finishing another call. His mobile starts ringing.

Toby checks the phone. Sees it's Suzy -- Christ, not her again, I'm a bit busy here. He answers.

INTERCUT PHONE CALL:

TOBY

Hiya. You do know this is the third time you've rung? Are you on a new tariff?

SUZY

So? How's it going? You found the bogs yet?

TOBY

Yeah. Hard. But, no, good. All a bit manic. It was never like this at Agriculture. People tend not to swear so much about wheat.

SUZY

(to Michael, re. the music)

Can you turn that down a bit?

(MORE)

SUZY (CONT'D)

(to Toby)

Look, I've got a leg up for you. We could get Simon over for a three o'clock with Karen Clark?

TOBY

Right - Karen Clark from...did she go round Britain in a coracle for leukemia?

SUZY

Karen Clark, US Assistant Secretary of State?

TOBY

Oh right. Shit. Karen Clark. Wow. Thanks.

SUZY

Exactly. I'm giving your big dick a swing right?

TOBY

Uh hu.

SUZY

Why?

TOBY

(uncomfy with this private motivational motto)

Because I am a big swinging dick.

SUZY

Exactly. Remember that, okay. I'm giving it a big shove. I ought to go. I love you.

Judy's hovering nearby.

TOBY

Likewise. Affirmative on that.

MICHAEL calls over to Suzy from the other side of the room.

MICHAEL

Meat! Tell Dick Swing, International Man Of Mystery that Simon's only going to be meat in the room. Don't get his hopes up.

SUZY

Yeah, so you know -- Simon, between us, he's just going to be meat in the room.

TOBY

Meat?

Judy, nearby, hears this.

SUZY

(waving him away)

Yeah. The Americans don't feel they're getting a real meeting unless there's thirty of you on each side.

INT. DFID - DAY / INT. SIMON'S OFFICE - DAY

Judy is hovering as Toby finishes his call.

JUDY

So, quick tour.

She starts walking away. Toby follows.

TOBY

Um, I do just need to...

JUDY

Over there...that's Mike's patch. Leave Mike to it. He knows what he's doing. Don't you Mike?

MIKE

What?

JUDY

Exactly.

(as they walk on)

He's hopeless.

(checks phone)

And that's the end of the tour. I've got to go.

TOBY

Look, I understand your hostility to new wood coming in..

JUDY

There's a lot of really important people you need to know about, but I haven't got time.

But she's gone. Toby heads over to Simon's office. The door's open. He pops his head in.

TOBY

Hey, boss.



SIMON

Toby, hi. Sorry about earlier --  
Malcolm. He's a bit of an...alpha  
male, isn't he?

TOBY

Yeah, he's a complete and utter alpha  
male.

SIMON

Ha. Yes. He's the biggest alpha male  
I've ever met.

TOBY

Yeah.

A beat.

SIMON

I like the fact that we're not saying  
'cunt'.

TOBY

I like that too. Look, I've managed to  
get you into the big meeting at the  
Foreign Office this afternoon.

SIMON

The Karen Clark meeting? Shit, really?  
Sure. How did you...?

TOBY

Sheer bloody hard work.

Judy walks past. Simon calls out.

SIMON

Hey Judy.

She comes in.

JUDY

Hello?

SIMON

Tobes here has got me into the big  
Karen Clark meeting.

Judy looks at Toby. She heard the 'meat' conversation.

JUDY

Wow. Yeah, the Big Meet. How are you  
spelling that, by the way?

SIMON

So, do you want to do your job and,  
you know...? as PRESS Officer, have  
PRESSING things to do...

JUDY

Sure. I'll tell the press.

She leaves.

INT. CAR ALONG WHITEHALL - DAY

Simon, Toby and Judy drive along Whitehall in their  
car.

An awkward silence.

Judy looks at Toby. She knows Simon's just off to be  
meat.

TOBY

(off Judy's look)

Just, maybe, might be best not to get  
too excited. It might be that their  
guys muscle in and have the lion's  
share of the talk time.

JUDY

Yeah. It might be like that.

INT. FOREIGN OFFICE BUILDING. FOYER - DAY

Simon, Toby and Judy are going through security. Toby  
is nodding sycophantically at everything Simon says.

SIMON

I feel a bit like, you know, when you  
get English actors cast in a Woody  
Allen film?

He walks through a security arch. Toby goes through and  
joins him.

Judy comes through.

SIMON (CONT'D)

I was just saying I feel like an  
English actor in a Woody Allen film.  
But some of them do shine, don't they?  
I can't think of any now.

17

INT. FOREIGN OFFICE GRAND MEETING ROOM - DAY

17

There are three distinct US delegations. KAREN CLARK from the State Department is surrounded by ten or so aides and functionaries, security people and assistants. (Including Chad and LIZA one of Karen's senior aides.) Then there is Bob Adriano'S gang of advisors, smaller but sitting separately.

Next to them is a Pentagon delegation, including uniformed members of all three services.

Lots of hubbub.

SUZY leads SIMON, TOBY and JUDY in, and shows them to their seats.

They're as far away from the US delegation as it's possible to be, and Simon's seat is actually behind a pillar. Suzy goes off to join Michael and the Foreign Office delegation near the front. Suzy looks over to Toby, uses her hands to make mock binoculars, as if to say, 'you're very far away, look how close and therefore important I am'.

SIMON

No-one will hear me if I say anything.  
How's your view? Can we swap?

Simon and Toby swap seats, but Simon can still barely see anything.

SIMON (CONT'D)

(to Judy)  
Can I swap with you?

Simon and Judy swap seats.

The meeting is now underway. We're with Karen Clark.

KAREN

We all agree this is a very tough time, but I don't want a consensus to form around the premise that conflict is necessarily the primary option at this point.

Back with Simon, Judy and Toby. Simon still straining to see.

SIMON (CONT'D)

No, this is worse. Swap back.

Simon and Judy swap seats again.

Back with Karen. She's holding up a paper in a red folder.

KAREN

This paper, authored by one of my aides, Liza Weld. You don't mind me fore-grounding this do you Liza?

Liza reacts. Her paper? In a big meeting. Is this good or bad?

KAREN (CONT'D)

Illuminates the logistical factors we face. She highlights a number of reasons why, in practical terms, we can't envision a theatre deployment for twelve months.

BOB ADRIANO

Although not everyone might agree with the assumptions made in that paper.

KAREN

Really - such as what?

BOB ADRIANO

Let's not stray into the tar pit of detail Karen. The committee feels a much quicker deployment is possible.

KAREN

Which committee?

BOB ADRIANO

(covering)

This has been discussed in a number of committees. I think Chad you're getting a good flow of information on this?

KAREN

Sorry Bob, I didn't catch the name of the committee?

ADRIANO

As I said Karen a number of committees. If I said one committee...

KAREN

You did.

MICHAEL

If I can interject here, I'm aware we're pushed for time so if you'll excuse my hideous disfigurement of the English slash American language I'd like to move us on agenda-wise.

(MORE)

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Our next item is international relief  
co-ordination.

Karen is conferring with Liza, Adriano with his guy.

KAREN

Have you heard of this committee?

ADRIANO

What's this Liza Weld paper?

Simon is watching, feeling the meeting is passing him  
by.

SIMON

(to Judy and Toby)

Should I say something? She invited  
me, I should say something. If you  
don't say something in the first 10  
minutes, you can end up not saying  
anything at all.

JUDY

I don't know whether you should say  
anything.

SIMON

I'm saying something ... I think I'm  
going to try saying something.

Simon goes to put his hand up, Toby maybe puts a  
calming hand on his hand. They look at one another. Has  
Toby crossed a line?

KAREN

Look - I just think it's worth noting  
that Ministers in The UK Government,  
(Liza whispers - Simon's  
over there)  
such as our colleague here ...

SIMON

(pleased)

Is she talking about me?

KAREN

Simon Foster ...

SIMON

She's talking about me!

KAREN

Has made it clear that for them  
currently war is unforeseeable. So  
there can't really be said to be any  
consensus on the war question. Right  
Simon?

She might be looking in the wrong direction, she doesn't know who this 'Simon' guy is, she's just read the quote off a piece of paper. The answer comes from the other side of the room.

SIMON

Well, yes, I mean, that's what I said.  
And I stick to what I said.

At this, one of Karen's press people and one of Bob Adriano's both rush out to start spinning the line on Simon's comments.

SIMON (CONT'D)

But that doesn't mean that what I said  
won't ever change ...

MICHAEL

(cutting in)

I wonder if there aren't some area of  
mutual agreement we can't rattle  
through here and see how much time we  
have at the end for this discussion?

Suzy comes round the back of the meeting all smiles and hands Judy a note with a smile.

JUDY

Thanks.

She opens the note it reads, 'Simon is acting like a massive tit. Stop him.'

SUZY

Is that all fine?

JUDY

That's all fine. Thanks for that.

SUZY

Thanks.

JUDY

(whispered)

Toby can you let the Minister know the  
Foreign Office think he's acting like  
a massive tit and they'd rather he  
stopped?

TOBY

(whispered)

Er? Yeah? Maybe you should. I wouldn't  
want - you know Chinese Whispers - to  
send the wrong message through?

JUDY  
 (whispered)  
 It's a simple message, 'stop being a massive tit'. It's really a political message I think it's best for you to deliver it.

TOBY  
 Okay.

Toby whispers something in Simon's ear. Simon doesn't look pleased. Karen is still talking to the meeting. Simon shuts up. He'll have this out later.

The big meeting is breaking up. Simon is annoyed, leading Judy and Toby out of the room and into any private space he can find - they back into a huge huge ballroom

SIMON  
 Come here - we need to talk  
 (they go into the massive room, look around)  
 What do you mean stop being a 'tit'?  
 In what way was I being a tit? Why am I even over here if I'm not meant to say anything?

JUDY  
 You were just meat in the room, Simon.

SIMON  
 'Meat in the room'? Oh for fuck's sake Judy. I took an hour out to come over here and be room meat?

TOBY  
 But you know you're a prime cut, you're not - offal.

SIMON  
 Great, I'm not liver. What was I, tit meat?

We're with Karen Clark's delegation who have just walked downstairs from the meeting room into a ground floor lobby area. KAREN is talking to LIZA, her right-hand woman.

KAREN

The committee. That committee Bob Adriano dropped on us just then, what is that? Get me on it.

LIZA

Which committee?

KAREN

I don't know. Linton must have set up a war committee.

LIZA

Can he do that?

KAREN

Should he do that? No. Of course not. Would he do that? Yes.

LIZA

So, listen, about my paper -

KAREN

Don't thank me, it's good work, you deserve the credit.

LIZA

I just wondered if - (it could be anonymous? It's not something I authored, I was just tasked with writing it.)

KAREN

And get me on that committee.

LIZA

The one we don't know about?

TOBY, SIMON and JUDY are above them standing round a circular viewing area that looks down on the lobby.

The UK and US delegations are aware of each other, throwing furtive glances each other's way.

KAREN

Whichever committee they don't want me to be a member of, I want to be a member of that. It's a confused Groucho Marx.

LIZA

Okay. Right.

Chad arrives. Karen talks to someone else.



CHAD

Hey Liza. Your paper got a major citation. You must be psyched Karen brought it up.

LIZA

She...that was her call. I didn't know it had been that widely read.

CHAD

Yeah, it's getting read. It's truthy. It's factish. In many regards it is a great paper. Up till page nine. Pages nine through 35? Horror Show. You could not write anything that clashes more violently with the current climate. You are like the woman from The Omen, you've given birth to a demon and it's going to kill you.

LIZA

You probably identify with the kid from The Omen right? Lonely, unloved. Deviant.

CHAD

I am so glad I am not you.

LIZA

You're an only child, right?

CHAD

So what? My parents were older parents. You bring this up whenever you run out of arguments.

Liza walk off, over to Karen.

Karen is back, huddled up with Liza.

KAREN

My teeth hurt. I think the veneers are chipped. Do they look chipped.

Liza stares into Karen's mouth.

LIZA

I'm not sure. Have you got any painkillers?

TOBY

(shouting)

Hey Liza!

LIZA

Oh ... Hi ... hi?

She knows him but can't immediately place him.

TOBY

Toby? It's Toby.

Karen's starting to go. She can't carry on shouting.

LIZA

Hi. Hi.

She makes the phone sign. He gives a thumbs up, she thinks he's misread the phone sign and gestures, or email by doing typing in the air. Toby signs back, yeah, call on the phone or email - does the typing back.

TOBY

She did the Kennedy scholarship at my college. I had a small thing for her.

JUDY

I can imagine.

TOBY

I'm not sure she remembered me.

JUDY

No, that is one of the side effects of Rohypnol.

The conversation is continuing between Simon Judy and Toby as they exit the FO.

SIMON

Yeah. Jesus. I really really hope there's not a war. It's going to be a nightmare. It's bad enough having to cope with the fucking Olympics.

They appear outside. There's a press pack of 10 or so reporters and photographers there.

PRESS

Minister!/Simon!/Mr Foster!

Simon is taken aback.

SIMON

Fuck. Who let the dogs out? We don't need this.

JUDY

Er, you wanted a chance to row back on the war. Do you want to nail the line?

SIMON

What? No. No. I'll freestyle it.

The press are calling.

REPORTER 1

Is war unforeseeable Minister?

REPORTER 2

Karen Clark's people say you are ruling out British involvement. Is that the case is that Government policy?

SIMON

(to the press)

Hello there. Yes, I stand by my view that war is unforeseeable.

(beat)

However, sometimes we don't see things coming. But that doesn't mean they aren't there. Yes?

REPORTER

So is it there, or isn't it there?

JUDY

(to Toby)

It's a bit like listening to a pub bore talking to his dog.

SIMON

Look,

(grappling now)

...loads of things that are actually very likely are also unforeseeable. Y'know, For the plane in the fog the mountain is unforeseeable, but then it, is suddenly very real and inevitable.

Toby and Judy look at one another. This isn't good.

JUDY

That was like scat. Political scat. Boobdiydoopidyopdo-ountainofconflict-dah!

The press pack are looking for more.

REPORTER

Sorry, are you saying that...?

SIMON

What I'm saying is that to - walk the road of peace, sometimes you need to be ready to climb the mountain of conflict. Thank you!

The press are writing furiously, making calls already. Simon tries to look confident. He and the team get into their car.

Toby Simon and Judy on the back seat as they drive back to the Department.

SIMON

(under his breath)

Pee poo belly bum drawers. Fuck shit arse cock bollocks.

(to Judy)

Why didn't we nail the line?

JUDY

I did try to warn you.

SIMON

You did try to warn me but you didn't actually stop me, did you?. That's like shouting 'Train!' as I get hit by a train. Are you warning me there's a train? Or are you just going,

(stupid voice)

'Look! Train!'

JUDY'S and SIMON'S phones start ringing. They each check the number.

SIMON (CONT'D)

Oh *shit*. It's Malcolm.

JUDY

It's Malcolm for me too.

SIMON

How does he do that?

(he answers, tentatively)

Hello?

Malcolm has two phones on the go. He's watching the SKY NEWS coverage of Simon's mini-press coverage. It has a 'Government ready to Climb the Mountain of Conflict' banner running across the top.

MALCOLM

(on the phone, over TV)

Simon. You're breaking news. I don't like unscheduled breaking news. Even fucking acts of Gods need to go through this office, yeah? We need to talk now.

INT. NUMBER TEN - DAY

MALCOLM, JUDY, SIMON AND TOBY....

MALCOLM

Shut the fuck up! All of you! Look at yourselves. You're a fucking disgrace. You're like the Three fucking Stooges. You want some frying pans to hit each other with? You're a fucking farce. I should just replace you with a Benny Hill chase sequence and some jazzy saxophone and be done with it.

SIMON

Look Malcolm I can do without the ritual humiliation,...you know I'm against talking up the war...

MALCOLM

(even angrier)

Well why the fuck did you say 'Climb the Mountain of Conflict.' You sounded like a Nazi Julie Andrews. Look, you are a member of the cabinet. You're Officer Class. Don't make waves. Don't do this.

SIMON

I'm just saying I might be forced to the verge of making a stand.

MALCOLM

(different tack needed)

(at Toby and Judy)

Right, you two, The White Stripes, outside.

Toby and Judy leave and wait outside the door.

MALCOLM (CONT'D, TO

SIMON) (CONT'D)

Look, I admire, I genuinely admire, your principled stand, Simon. So, I take it I can tell the PM you don't want to go to Washington?

SIMON

To...?

MALCOLM

Washington. The boss wants you over there on a fact-finder. Problems we might face if it all goes boombastic in the Middle East.

SIMON

Oh. Right.

MALCOLM

But you were saying, you are on the verge of ... what?

SIMON

Well, look - I don't know what words I used in the heat of the moment, but maybe in a sense I was on the verge. But that's the important thing - I was on the verge. Not in any way decided.

MALCOLM

Christ on a bendy-bus, Simon, stop being such a faffing fuck-arse.

SIMON

I am standing my ground on the verge.

MALCOLM

When you're out there, Talk to Karen Clarke at the State Department,

SIMON

I'll give it a whirl.

MALCOLM

But keep away from Linton Barwick. He's pushing the war for Caulderwood's lot. I'll deal with him. Dangerous fucker. keeps a grenade as a paperweight. True story.

SIMON

Oh right. I won't talk to him.

MALCOLM

Right, so get off your knees, pick up your cyanide capsules and go see Q about your underwater car.

They leave. Outside Malcolm's office, Simon looks at Toby, Toby looks at Simon. This is good, right?

SIMON

Fact finder to Washington!

TOBY

Brilliant!

JUDY

(as if joining in, but  
very half-hearted)

Well done.

Liza, Karen and Chad arrive in the buzzing State Department offices, knackered but in action mode.

KAREN

Okay - so, priorities are: take a shower, play Hunt Linton's War Committee, get me a dental appointment. But not in that order.

LIZA

Shower later?

KAREN

I give you licence to reek.

Karen walks past various desks covered in tons of Post-Its. Stops a STAFFER as he passes.

KAREN (cont'd) (CONT'D)

What's Linton been up to while we've been away? *Has he bombed Hawaii for being UnAmerican?*

But before the staffer can answer they run right into Linton. Karen stands her ground.

LINTON

Ah. Karen.

KAREN

Linton.

LINTON

How was London? Good hotel?

KAREN

Great hotel, thank you.

LINTON

Good meetings?

KAREN

Yes. We had some good discussions. The time at Number Ten could possibly have been better spent but then...

Karen realises that Linton is reading a message on his cell phone and not listening.

LINTON

Good. Welcome back. I'll read the words when they come through. Thank you so much.

Linton heads off to his office. A beat later so does Karen. Chad goes off a little towards Linton's office.

KAREN

Is Chad coming... ?

LIZA

(watching)

He's doing his desperate chorus girl thing, hanging around trying to catch Linton's eye. That's why he's wearing his push-up bra.

Chad manages to say a hello to Linton.

CHAD

(as he passes)

Assistant Secretary of State -- hi.

LINTON

Brad.

CHAD

Chad

LINTON

Uh-huh. Exactly

CHAD

Can I...?

Linton ignores him as he goes to join Bob Adriano waiting for him in his office.

KAREN

So listen, Liza, I need you to find out the names of the ten dullest committees currently operating on the hill.

LIZA

Dullest?

KAREN

They'll have buried the war committee under the most boring name they can think of. 'Diverse Strategy Committee' - not that, I'm on that.

(MORE)



25

CONTINUED: (2)

25

KAREN (CONT'D)

But it'll be a committee that sounds  
so tedious you want to self-harm.

They glance over into Linton's area. He is glancing  
into theirs.

KAREN(CONT'D)

Can you get me General Miller at the  
Pentagon?

26

INT. STATE DEPARTMENT. DAY

26

Liza goes to her desk, picks up her landline.

LIZA

Hi. I'm calling from Karen Clark's  
office about a paper written by a  
staffer here. We need to know if 'Post  
War Planning: Parameters,  
Implication's and Possibilities' has  
reached Assistant Secretary of State  
Linton Barwick yet?

(listens)

Yeah by Liza Weld.

(listens, shit!)

'Pwip Pip'? It's already been given an  
acronym?

(listens)

No I don't want to fast-track it.

27

INT. STATE DEPARTMENT. LINTON'S OFFICE - DAY

27

Looking over at Karen. Now alone, who is still stealing  
glances over.

LINTON

I do not understand why anyone would  
choose to work in a glass office. In  
my opinion glass offices are for  
perverts. He who sees through walls,  
lives through walls.

BOB ADRIANO

I did mention I could request the  
glass be frosted?

LINTON

(as if Bob Adriano brought  
it up)

Can we get off this subject please?  
What happened in London?

BOB ADRIANO

Generally positive. Two glitches.  
Karen flagged a report by one of her  
staffers - Liza.

(MORE)

BOB ADRIANO (CONT'D)

She's obviously trying to use it as some kind of roadblock. It's called Pwip Pip.

LINTON

Pip what?

BOB ADRIANO

Pwip Pip.

LINTON

What is that a report on - birdsong? What does that stand for?

BOB ADRIANO

I don't recall. It's factish. Intel - case for and against intervention.

LINTON

We've got all the facts we need on this. You get too many facts you can get blind to the truth. You said there was another thing?

BOB ADRIANO

In the meeting with the Foreign Office the committee was accidentally briefly alluded to.

LINTON

(putting his hand over his mouth so he can't be lip-read)

Which committee?

BOB ADRIANO

(doing the same)

The war committee.

LINTON

Karen must not find out about that. She is an excitable yapping she-dog. Okay get the minutes of the meeting, we need to correct the record.

BOB ADRIANO

We can do that?

LINTON

Yes we can. They're an aide memoir for us. So they should not be a reductive record of what happened to be said, but a more full record of what was intended to be said. That's the more accurate version, right?

28 INT. KAREN'S OFFICE. DAY.

28

Karen's watching Linton across the floor in his office talking to Bob Adriano. Occasionally Bob Adriano and Linton look over but generally it's obvious they're talking about Karen because of the way they're not looking over. Liza, summoned, enters.

KAREN

They're talking about us aren't they?  
It's obvious from the way they're not  
looking.

29 INT. SIMON'S OFFICE/BOX ROOM - DAY

29

Judy's in her office on the phone, laughing. Simon's eyeing her suspiciously.

SIMON

What's she so fucking happy about? Is  
she laughing at me?

Judy closes the blinds on her side of the office.

SIMON (CONT'D) (cont'd)

Why's she got control of the blinds?  
I'm a government minister. I should  
have blinds.

TOBY

(joking)

You want me to order some blinds? Or I  
could get some heavy curtains with  
swags and a pelmet.

SIMON

Yes. I do.

TOBY

Oh. Okay ...

SIMON

Can we go somewhere else?

They walk to Box Room.

SIMON (CONT'D)

So listen. My team for the US. Team  
Simon. I'm thinking of taking you and  
leaving Judy?

TOBY

Gut reaction? I like it.

SIMON

The way she sprung the press on me outside the FO. That was her screw-up, right?

TOBY

(going with it)

Oh god, yeah. Plus, she can be a bit, "Everything's a bit shit isn't it?"

SIMON

That's true actually, she could be very "So you're the President? And I'm supposed to be impressed by that?"

TOBY

Yeah. My husband works in Tower Hamlets."

SIMON

"That's much harder than being President". Okay. It's settled. Fuck it. She's staying behind. Go and tell her.

The following day. Bob Adriano is going through the minutes with Linton.

LINTON

I don't like this comment here about the LND numbers. Cut that. I don't think this is really what France are saying. Let's change that. And these. And let's reverse this.

BOB ADRIANO

That's something Karen said.

LINTON

It's not right. Change it.

BOB ADRIANO

Yes sir.

LINTON

And get rid of this chunk on seven on proliferation.

BOB ADRIANO

Done.

LINTON

And I like this.

BOB ADRIANO

Thank you.

LINTON

Let's say everyone agreed with this.

BOB ADRIANO

Excellent.

LINTON

And the committee. We need to excise the reference to the committee. Ah. Here's the mention. From you. You did not mention it was your mention.

BOB ADRIANO

No sir.

LINTON

Shall we demention that?

BOB ADRIANO

Yes sir.

Liza is working at her desk, Karen in her office. Chad comes to Liza's desk, but keeps peering into Linton's office.

CHAD

Have you got the transcript of Caulderwood's 'transformational diplomacy' speech?

LIZA

No, Linton hasn't left to play squash yet. He's four minutes late, Rainman! This must play hell with your Aspergers.

CHAD

Okay. Does that mean you don't have the transcript?

LIZA

I do have the transcript.  
(does some computer stuff)  
There, I've sent it down to print on the laser on floor three.

CHAD

Why didn't you print it here?

LIZA

We have a printer here? Silly me.  
Sorry -- my bad, *Chad*.

Chad looks into Linton's office. Linton has a squash racket in his hand and is talking to Bob Adriano. He looks about to leave.

LIZA (CONT'D)

You not getting your printout?

CHAD

Sure, I'm getting my printout.

Chad, keeping an eye on Linton, heads for the door. He's almost there when Linton starts to leave.

Chad sprints like a lunatic back across the office to his own desk, picks up a brand-new squash racket in a brand-new bag, and sprints back to Liza's desk. Starts looking at something nonchalantly on the desk.

Linton passes on his way out with his squash stuff.

LINTON

(re. Chad's racket)  
You play, Chad?

CHAD

Sorry? Oh, yes sir, matter of fact I do play.

LIZA

Really? I never knew that.

LINTON

How about a game? I like a younger opponent, it makes me feel like I'm wearing a hat made of endorphins.

CHAD

Sure thing sir.

Linton and Chad walk out. Liza calls after Chad.

LIZA

You've still got the price tag on your squash bag, Chad.

Chad looks at his brand-new bag. The price tag is still on. He gives Liza the finger. She gives it back.

SIMON

There will be a car won't there?

TOBY

Oh God yeah, of course.

They walk slowly looking at the various cabbies and chauffeurs holding signs.

SIMON

Did you book a car?

He's looking panicked - then.

TOBY

Here we go.

There's a guy with a sign that says 'England Government - Simon Forester'

SIMON

'Simon Forester?'

TOBY

(to the taxi guy)

Hi we're the Simon Foster party?

The driver takes their bags and they follow him.

SIMON

It said Forester. What if there is a Simon Forester?

TOBY

It's fine, it's ours. I mean is there a Simon Forester in the Government? The England Government?

Simon and Toby are heading into Washington. Their car is accompanied by two police motorcycles.

SIMON

(re : the limo)

I almost feel like there should be hookers. Do you know what I mean? Really, here, we should have hookers.

TOBY

(thumbs up, on his mobile)

Hey Gav, I'm in a fucking motorcade!

DRIVER

You want girls?

SIMON

(terrified of things  
getting out of hand)

What? Oh no. God no. No no no no no. I  
was just - I was just joking. I don't  
want hookers. I hate hookers. I mean  
not in an aggressive way. I'm just not  
interested.

(uncomfy beat, then)

But thanks. Thanks very much.

34 EXT. WASHINGTON HOTEL - DAY

34

They get out of the limo, take in the hotel facade. Not  
bad. Pretty fucking good.

TOBY

(pulling out his mobile)

I'm sending a photo of this to Gav and  
those agricultural losers. Remind them  
there's more glamorous things than  
trout farms and rabies.

35 INT. WASHINGTON HOTEL - DAY

35

They walk in. Oh. Right. Not so impressive then. Not  
crappy. Just very bland and ordinary.

TOBY

It's like a hangar for businessmen.

36 INT. WASHINGTON HOTEL ROOM

36

Simon and Toby enter hotel room, pay porter, admire  
disappointing view from window.

37 INT. STATE DEPARTMENT. KAREN'S OFFICE - DAY

37

Karen, Liza and Linton are among those seated round the  
table. Various staffers are standing, including Chad.  
*And Bob Adriano.*

KAREN

Which brings us on to Any Other  
Business.

LINTON

I actually have another appointment.

KAREN

'Appointment?' You're playing squash,  
not having a CAT scan.

(MORE)



KAREN (CONT'D)

But, I'll keep it brief so you can go play with the boy of your choice.

LINTON

Don't cheapen it Karen. It's a noble art.

I believe I've flagged everything I needed to discuss. As I usually do.

KAREN

(putting her hand over her mouth, mocking Linton's gesture from earlier)

Or everything you're prepared to discuss. I understand you've started up a new committee, what's it called?

LINTON

What makes you think that?

KAREN

It was mentioned in our London meeting.

LINTON

You must be mistaken. I've read the minutes and I'm afraid I'm not aware of what you're referring to.

KAREN

I was there, it's in the minutes.

Liza shows Karen the minutes. Karen realises it's not there.

LINTON

You obviously mis-heard.

KAREN

I misheard the word 'committee'?

LINTON

Karen, I can't vouch for your hearing. Maybe it was another word. Say... Khomeini.

KAREN

You're sitting on a Khomeni?

LINTON

There are lots of words. 'Kansas City'? 'Kitty'?

BOB ADRIANO

Itty?

LINTON

'Itty' is not a word, Bob.

CHAD

'Commissary'?

LINTON

Very good, Chad.

KAREN

Okay, why don't you just recap for me all the committees you're on at the moment?

LINTON

Sorry, Karen, you appear to be bleeding from your mouth.

She is. But she doesn't want to leave the meeting.

LINTON (CONT'D)

I don't mean to be rude Karen but that is a tad... repulsive.

Karen gets up to go. It's awkward, she's boxed in and has to clamber over the others to get to the door.

LIZA

Do you want me to come with you?

Liza follows Karen out. Chad takes Liza's seat.

LINTON

I don't like to see a woman bleeding from the mouth.

CHAD

No.

LINTON

It makes me think of Country and Western music. Which I really can't abide.

CHAD

(what?)

Yes! Ha ha! Exactly.

Linton sees his chance to take advantage of Karen being out of the room.

LINTON

Actually while we're on Any Other Business I do have a few points I'd like to resolve.

38

INT. STATE DEPARTMENT - BATHROOM - DAY

38

Liza is pulling handfuls of tissue. Handing them to Karen who is dabbing her teeth.

KAREN

Where are at you at with the committees?

LIZA

I got it down to two. The Aims and Policy Alignment Committee. Here - put some down your front - you don't want it to go down your... And the Future Planning Committee.

KAREN

Well, it's not the first one. I set that one up. Does that really sound dull to you? I thought that was a good name.

LIZA

Right, no, it is a good name.

KAREN

Okay, find out if it is definitely the Future Planning Committee.

LIZA

Okay. Okay. Right, listen, I might go and do that. You're not going to shout at me if I go and do that are you?

KAREN

I'm not a fucking monster Liza, okay? Will you stop implying I'm some kind of monster. I'm just someone whose assistant finds it difficult to multi-task.

39

INT. STATE DEPARTMENT - DAY

39

Liza heads out of the toilets to see Bob Adriano ahead, quite a long way.

LIZA

Bob!

Bob Adriano stops and turns.

BOB ADRIANO

Liza.

Liza sprints and catches up with him. It takes a little while.

A beat.

LIZA

So listen, Bob, there's something I really want to tell you.

BOB ADRIANO

(hopes it might be a come-on?)

Oh really?

LIZA

Yeah. Karen knows about the Future Planning Committee.

Bob Adriano looks shocked, tries to cover it up.

BOB ADRIANO

I officially and actually have no idea what you're talking about.

Liza smiles. Runs back into the toilets and gives a thumbs up to Karen.

INT. WASHINGTON HOTEL - TOBY'S ROOM.

Simon knocks on the door. Toby opens, he's in his boxer shorts and shirt.

SIMON

So! What's the plan? What swanky reception are we going to?

TOBY

(panic in his eyes)  
What's the plan? For tonight?

SIMON

Well that's what I'm asking you Toby, my chief aide, my political advisor.

TOBY

I don't know, I thought tonight we'd be tired?

SIMON

(approaching breaking point with Toby)

Well I am tired but I'm also a career politician Toby, in the political powerhouse of the world for forty-eight hours.

(MORE)

SIMON (CONT'D)

So I thought it might be nice to, you know, go out rather than sit in my room trying to spank one out watching a shark documentary, because I'm scared if I watch a porno it'll end up in the Register of Members Interests. So what have you got?

TOBY

Okay ... What have I got?

SIMON

Don't bullshit me Toby.

TOBY

Okay - so far, we have ... one flyer under the door for happy hour in the bar - which might be interesting? And I have the number of a guy I was with at Uni who I believe now works for CNN out here.

SIMON

No.

TOBY

Judy?

SIMON

Dude it's like the middle of the night.

TOBY

Okay, no sure. Give me 20 minutes.

SIMON

Okay, I'll try a contact or two.

41 INT.WASHINGTON HOTEL BATHROOM/INT JUDY'S FLAT.

41

Toby goes into the bathroom.

He thinks, starts to call squeamishly. Cut to Judy in bed. Rolls over, looks at number on her mobile. Answers.

TOBY

Hi, Judy, we were wondering, Simon and I, well Simon was wondering, did you put anything in the social diary for tonight?

JUDY

Fuck off Toby.

Cancels call. Her land line goes.

41 CONTINUED:

41

JUDY (CONT'D)  
Hi Hi Minister ...

Next to Judy her husband rolls out of bed, frustrated at the number of intrusions.

JUDY'S BLOKE  
Oh for fuck's sake. Honestly.

42 INT. WASHINGTON HOTEL ROOM

42

Toby re-enters the main hotel room.

SIMON  
(hand over phone,  
explaining)  
Judy. She - called me.

TOBY  
Right sure.

SIMON  
What you get us?

TOBY  
(left hanging)  
My contact will get back to us.

43 INT. GEORGETOWN HOUSE - NIGHT

43

A smart private cocktail party in a fancy Georgetown house. Karen and General Miller spot each other.

They each take a glass of champagne from a waiter.

GENERAL MILLER  
Hey Karen. You look beautiful.

KAREN  
I bet you say that to all the girls.

GENERAL MILLER  
Yeah I do. And some of the guys.

KAREN  
That's why you shouldn't run for Senate. Too many skeletons in your enormous closet.

GENERAL MILLER  
Yeah, don't believe the hype. I'm just thinking about doing ... something. I'm more than just a soldier, Karen.

KAREN

That's right, you're passionate about education and housing and what's the other thing?

GENERAL MILLER

Lingerie.

KAREN

That's right. How's the dog?

GENERAL MILLER

Makes my head swell and my eyes disappear. I look like a giant ball sack.

KAREN

And how's the pentagon?

GENERAL MILLER

It's kicked up a level. Talking invasion real soon.

KAREN

Is there somewhere we can talk?

GENERAL MILLER

I don't know, I don't live in this house.

44

INT. CAULDERWOOD'S PARTY. ADJOINING PLAY ROOM - EVENING 44

General Miller and Karen are in Caulderwood's kids' play room. Toys are piled up everywhere.

KAREN

What if someone comes in now?

GENERAL MILLER

I can't think of an excuse that would work can you?

KAREN

No.

GENERAL MILLER

Okay so that's total minimum European Theatre requirement.

He shows her a figure on a piece of paper.

GENERAL MILLER (CONT'D)

(he scribbles)

This is Far East, Korea, Japan etc.

He scribbles.

GENERAL MILLER (CONT'D)

Add those. Plus contingency already deployed.

KAREN

Er - you've lost me.

Miller looks around, grabs a child's laptop. Opens it, it says 'howday' in an electronic voice.

KAREN (CONT'D)

Your military hardware is impressive.

GENERAL MILLER

Not anymore it isn't. Okay so this is total current deployment.

(he types)

This is calling up shitheads, morons, people that just got out of jail, potheads who thought they were joining the coastguard.

(He types)

So the current number of combat troops available for an invasion according to these figures would be ...

(he presses the 'equals' button)

COMPUTER VOICE

Twelve.

KAREN

Thousand?

GENERAL MILLER

No, twelve. Twelve soldiers. Twelve.

KAREN

You're shitting me.

GENERAL MILLER

Of course I'm shitting you, but 12 thousand isn't enough. Twelve thousand's about how many are going to die. And you really need a few guys alive at the end of a war or it looks like you've lost.

KAREN

Uh-hu. Did they teach you that at West Point?

Hm, yeah well tomorrow I've got to meet these Brits. Simon Foster. Sounds cute, doesn't he? Like straight out of a nursery rhyme.



GENERAL MILLER

So, what, you thinking, we big the guy up? Get him on the war committee? Use him as our meat puppet?

KAREN

Exactly. Internationalise the dissent.

GENERAL MILLER

Good, that's what we need. A coalition of the Fucked Off.

Liza walks round to see Karen, on her mobile. She starts waving at her. Karen doesn't spot her in the crowd.

LIZA

I'm waving at you.

KAREN

I can't see you. Be more visible.

She advances.

LIZA

I'm practically on top of you.

KAREN

Now I see you. Okay you can stop talking into your cell now.

They are together.

LIZA

(to her and into phone)

Okay.

KAREN

Look I'm taking the car. My teeth have formed themselves into a guerilla cell and are trying to kill me. Tell Simon Foster and his team to come in for the war committee and I'll do a five-minute Danish and hand job with them at ten. Okay? And if I die in the night, my dentist goes to Cuba in an orange jumpsuit.

EXT. GEORGETOWN STREET - EVENING.

LIZA  
(on phone, deep breath)  
Hey Toby! It's Liza Weld. Do you  
remember? What you guys doing?

INT. WASHINGTON HOTEL. TOBY'S ROOM - EVENING.

Toby and Simon watching a shark documentary eating room  
service on their laps.

TOBY  
It's unbelievably hectic.

SIMON  
You can definitely spot the female  
ones, can't you?

LIZA  
So you made it.

TOBY  
Whoah. Yeah. Hello.

LIZA  
So last time I saw you was what, end  
of semester, five, six years ago?

TOBY  
Yeah sorry about that. I thought it  
would come across as romantic. But  
apparently it seemed more ...  
(does the stabbing from  
Psycho)

LIZA  
To be honest, you were quite drunk. So  
it came across as more  
(drunken shouting)  
'Ma haw wii aaarrllllaaaaaa beeeeeee  
hooooooooooooo'.

TOBY  
But look at us now! Here we are -  
running the world.

LIZA  
Uh-hu. I mean, I guess I'm running the  
world, while your country is more of a  
floating early-warning system.  
So Karen has scheduled face time with  
you and Simon tomorrow at ten.

CONTINUED:

TOBY

Oh, wow, okay. Great.

LIZA

And there's one other thing.

TOBY

Yeah?

LIZA

It's the War Committee. Real top notch Bogsat.

TOBY

Bogsat?

LIZA

Bunch of Guys sat round a table. It's small. Really small, that's how they want it. But very loopy, inner loop. Doubledomes. Beltway hardcore. This is where war's going to get decided. Room 712. Make sure you're briefed, these guys won't fuck around.

TOBY

Fucking brilliant.

Anyway, I need a drink. You wanna catch up, Toby?

TOBY (CONT'D)

(can't believe his luck,  
there's a connection)

You and me? Sure.

Realises he's going to leave Simon on his own.

TOBY (CONT'D)

(whispers to Simon)

I've got us in.

SIMON

Where?

TOBY

Meeting with Karen Clark at State, 10am. Plus. And this is big. War committee. Top secret. Total Bogsat, chock with doubleloops. Domey. Beltway hardnuts. I'll emailed the deets to your blackberry. Cool?

SIMON

Great.

CONTINUED: (2)

TOBY

Look, I'm going out. It's work stuff.  
I'm networking. You'll be okay yeah?

SIMON

No.

48

INT. BLACK CAT INDIE CLUB - NIGHT

48

Toby and Liza sit in a booth. They are by far the most formally dressed people in the club. A band are playing angry rock with a vaguely political message. A small knot of people are rocking out.

LIZA

(re : the mosh pit)

You see those guys? The mosh pit?

TOBY

Yes, I don't think I've ever seen a more civilised 'mosh pit' it's more of a mosh caucus actually.

LIZA

House staffers, Senators' interns, most of them are half-man half-PDF file. Tonight they rage hard. Tomorrow they go back to the hill and argue noise reduction legislation.

They're chuckling, having a good time.

TOBY

So do you ever - rebel, a little.

She looks at him, pulls back the arm of the top she's wearing to reveal a tattoo on her upper arm.

TOBY (CONT'D)

Cool!

LIZA

Yeah - above here,  
(she motions to where her clothes cover)  
you see, is plausible deniability.

TOBY

(looking a bit too closely?)

What is it?

LIZA

It's Sanskrit for peace.

TOBY

Oh. Nice. Best to keep it in code -  
not a very fashionable idea I guess.

LIZA

(she's been mulling on  
something else entirely)  
Did you hear about Pwip Pip to you?

TOBY

I'm sorry? Pip Pip? Is this... a  
person or a cell phone tarrif or..

LIZA

It's my paper. On the war. Pros and  
Cons of the war. But I came up with  
too many cons. The pro-war guys have  
started calling me 'Connie'.

TOBY

You're worried.

LIZA

Yes I'm fucking worried. My career's  
on the line.

TOBY

Yeah- I noticed you're worried, cos I  
saw you looking worried. I'm  
perceptive like that. But...  
(can't think of anything  
else)  
Don't worry.

LIZA

Okay, this place blows. I'm going.  
What are you doing?

TOBY

Well I'm incredibly tired. It feels  
like my brain's eight hours behind but  
my liver's 12 hours ahead.

LIZA

You don't want to come back to my  
place for a quick catch up?

It's an alluring offer.

TOBY

However, due to technological  
developments I no longer need sleep,  
but am physically rejuvenated by  
alcohol!

He guzzles from his beer bottle as they leave.

49 INT. LIZA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT 49

Toby and Liza are on the bed together, kissing.

TOBY

Could I just say, you know, that what happens in Washington stays in Washington?

LIZA

Yeah I live in Washington. So that doesn't really work for me.

50 INT. LIZA'S APARTMENT - DAY 50

Toby wakes up. His mouth is parched. He feels terrible. He rolls over. Liza is gone. He can't remember where he is or what's going on. Then with a flash as he looks at the clock - 9.07 he remembers a lot of things in a rush and springs out like a Ninja and starts pulling his clothes on, while scrabbling for his phone.

He heads down stairs & out of the apartment.

51 EXT. LIZA'S APARTMENT BLOCK - DAY 51

TOBY

Hello I need a number for a taxi in Washington DC. Straight through please.

He's on the street.

TOBY (CONT'D)

Hello. I need a cab, right now. From? From where? From from  
(sees the house number )

TOBY (CONT'D)

It's 40, 46, that's the number, and it's a street. It's a nice street with houses and cars and a - sidewalk and it's got leaves and - hold on I'm walking, I'm walking to a sign ...

52 EXT. STREET NEAR LIZA'S APARTMENT - DAY 52

Toby walks past a kid standing outside a run-down school.







SIMON

Er - no problem.

They start to get up, not quite sure what's going on.

LIZA

It's been great.

SIMON

Terrific.

KAREN

I really appreciate this.

TOBY

Brilliant.

Simon and Toby walk out into a larger office. They find a couple of seats left out for people waiting and sit down. Various staffers come and go, picking up papers and files, saying hi, looking knackered, all drinking either diet cokes or coffees.

TOBY

Was that...?

SIMON

Toby -- I don't want to read you the riot act here but I am going to have to read some extracts from the riot act. Like Section 1 paragraph 1 clause 1. Don't leave your boss twisting in the wind and then burst in late smelling like a pissed seaside donkey.  
(special needs)  
'The British are coming'?

TOBY

Look, chief, I am really sorry okay. But to be fair I did swing the meeting in the first place. And I got us on the committee.

SIMON

Yes well, you might have just got us taken off the committee.

TOBY

(feels he's taken enough  
now)

So I turned up late to the meeting Simon. I'm sorry. But it's not like I threw up in there.

SIMON

No you're right. I should be thanking you for not throwing up. Well done. You're a star. You didn't wet yourself, you're in the right city, you didn't say anything overtly racist, you didn't pull your dick out and start plucking it and shouting 'willy banjo'. No I'm being unfair, you got *so much* right. Without actually being there for the beginning of one of the biggest meetings of my career. You're a legend.

An uncomfortable beat.

TOBY

That was just - the first bit was it? We're going back in do you ...think?

SIMON

We'd barely said hello. I've had muggings that have lasted longer than that. We really only spoke about flammable cheese.

TOBY

Maybe there's some Washington etiquette where they take a short break before they start the meeting proper?

SIMON

Maybe. They show the opening credits of a TV show then they have an ad break.

Liza comes out, passes by. Toby mouths 'shit' to himself.

LIZA

(looking at a list on her desk, then to a staffer)  
Are these all requests to get on the committee? What's going on? Did someone post an invite on Facebook? I'm drowning in Senators. It's Senator soup here.

TOBY

Hi Liza.

They're uncomfy with each other.

LIZA

Hey Toby.

Toby gets up for a private word.

TOBY  
(re last night)  
You feeling okay?

LIZA  
Yes, I'm feeling fine. Why were you late?

TOBY  
Because...you know...you didn't wake me up.

LIZA  
You looked so sweet. I thought you knew what you were doing.

TOBY  
I was asleep, of course I didn't. That's how people walk out of windows.

Chad is passing. As Liza turns away Toby's face does a spasm of regret at his brazen lying.

CHAD  
Everyone is so hot for your paper. I'm running off another ten copies. It's spreading like a virus, Liza. You're in hot water. You're lobsterising.

LIZA  
I don't feel that.

CHAD  
It's by degrees. One by one, then - you're dead. You're dinner.

LIZA  
(to Toby)  
You know the only reason he comes over here is he can see in Linton's office from my desk.

CHAD  
Yeah, well, I'll have your desk soon, now your anti-war paper has declared war on your career. I smell lobster. Can you smell lobster, Toby?

Simon calls Toby back over.

SIMON (O.S.)  
Mate!

TOBY  
I need to...

LIZA

Sure.

Toby goes back to Simon

LIZA (CONT'D)

So, how far would you go with Linton,  
you freaky little stalker? Downtown?  
Or all the way up Brokeback Mountain?

INT. WHITE HOUSE. SMALLISH ROOM - DAY

Malcolm is arriving into a meeting room set up with  
water etc with a young man who looks like an intern,  
A.J.

A.J.

How are you today? Beat the traffic?

Malcolm looking around, as if things aren't right.

MALCOLM

Yeah yeah. Hunky dory. Can I get a  
coffee?

He gives AJ his coat.

A.J.

(doesn't take coat then  
eventually does and just  
puts it on a chair, not  
the coat stand)

Sure, sure, if we get started, I'll  
get my assistant to bring us some  
refreshments.

MALCOLM

(realising)

Your assistant?

A.J.

(sitting, picking up a  
file in the room)

Yeah. So, Item. We need to have a  
conversation about the mood of the  
British Parliament. Any bumps in the  
road ahead.

MALCOLM

I'm sorry son, am I - is this it? No  
offence, but shouldn't you be at  
school with your head down a toilet?

A.J.

Your first point there, the offence.  
I'm afraid I'm gonna have to take it.

(MORE)

A.J. (CONT'D)

Your second point. I'm 22. But - item -  
It's my birthday in nine days, so if  
it would be more comfortable we  
could... wait...?

MALCOLM

Don't get sarcastic with me son.

(starts dialling)

We burnt this tight-arsed city to the  
ground in 1814 and I'm all for doing  
it again. Starting with you, you frat  
fuck. You get sarcastic with me again  
and I will stuff so much cotton wool  
down your fucking throat it'll come  
out of your arse like the wee tail on  
a playboy bunny. Okay? I thought...I  
was led to believe I was attending  
the war committee.

A.J.

Yes, Assistant Secretary of State  
Linton Barwick wanted me to brief you  
on the work of the Future Planning  
Committee.

MALCOLM

I don't want the bullshit son, I want  
the bull. No one sidelines me. I'm  
away.

Malcolm gets up, grabs his coat. An even younger guy  
wheels in a coffee trolley.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

And here we go - the fucking Vice  
President has also graced us with his  
presence!

Malcolm runs out, on the phone.

Toby and Simon are still waiting.

TOBY

(re. meeting)

What if it has finished? And Karen  
comes and sees us still here that's  
going to be embarrassing. We'll look  
like groupies.

SIMON

But what if the meeting hasn't  
finished and she comes out and we've  
done a runner?

TOBY

Why don't we go and find her and ask  
if the meeting has finished?

SIMON

Are you still drunk?

TOBY

Shall I call Judy, see if she can find  
out?

SIMON

No. Let's try for once to do something  
without Judy. We've drawn long enough  
at that teat.

They look around awkwardly about to stand. A staffer  
passes.

STAFFER 3

Can I get you guys anything?

They shake their heads.

SIMON

Now we can't go. Call Judy.

TOBY

(calling)

Hi Judy, do you know how long this  
meeting we were in was scheduled for?

Inter-cut with DFID ladies' toilet.

Judy is in a toilet cubicle, struggling to get changed.  
She has to keep swapping hands and ears to speak to  
Toby.

JUDY

And what is this meeting?

TOBY

With Karen Clark at State. I set it up  
last night.

JUDY

Okay, so you want me to tell you how  
long a meeting you set up in  
Washington is scheduled for?

TOBY

Yes?

JUDY

Forty seven minutes. Good luck.

Hangs up.

TOBY

Thank you.

(Simon looks at him  
hopefully)

Well she said 47 minutes. But I think she was making an unfriendly joke, but I'm not totally certain.

59 EXT. WASHINGTON STREET NR WHITE HOUSE/DFID LADIES' LOO - 59  
DAY

Malcolm's walking fast. He's on the phone. Judy's still in the toilet cubicle, almost changed now.

MALCOLM

Where's the war committee? I thought I was going to the war committee.

JUDY

Simon's going to the committee - I thought you...?

MALCOLM

Just tell me where the fuck it's happening.

JUDY

Say please.

MALCOLM

Are you taking the...Who the fuck do you think you are? Dame Judy Dench?

JUDY

Do you want me to tell you where it is?

MALCOLM

Yes.

(pained)

Please.

JUDY

It's on the seventh floor. Room 712.

(beat)

Do you like how I'm telling you what's going on where you are?

MALCOLM

Well let me tell you what's going on where YOU are, darling.

(MORE)

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

A certain vinegar-faced manipulative  
cowbag is about to discover she's out  
of a fucking job...

(beat realises)

You've fucking hung up haven't you?  
You fucking hoity toity...

PASSER-BY

Hey, buddy, enough of the curse words.

MALCOLM

Kiss my sweaty balls you nosey fuck.

Malcolm starts running.

Simon and Toby are looking through magazines and  
papers. Karen is exiting her office with an entourage.

SIMON

Here she comes - shit - look like  
we're meeting, look like we're having  
a meeting!

TOBY

(as she passes, re  
magazine)  
... and if you look ... at the line  
they take in Newsweek - that's very  
much ... another narrative.

KAREN

See you at the committee.

SIMON

(like he's busy)  
Yeah, yeah sure, see you in a mo. Just  
finishing off some stuff.

(to Toby loud)

Okay, we're all done there. Let's  
roll.

Toby looks at him. As they get up and follow her at  
speed, tripping to keep up.

TOBY

(quiet)

I don't think you can say that anymore  
here. They don't like that.

SIMON

Shut up. Follow them. Don't lose them.  
Lets rock.



61 INT. COMMITTEE ROOM 712 - DAY

61

Linton is with Adriano, quietly horrified by all these people. General Miller passes them.

LINTON  
(For Miller's benefit)  
We seem to be overrun with insurgents here, Bob.

But the room is rapidly filling with bodies and din.

Linton calls the over-stuffed, standing-room-only room to order.

LINTON (CONT'D)  
Okay, due to the fact that seemingly everyone in the world who owns a suit has turned up for this meeting, we'll be relocating to a bigger room. Room 720. So, if you will be so kind...

The committee members file out.

62 EXT. WASHINGTON STREET NR STATE DEPARTMENT - DAY

62

Malcolm is legging it down the street.

63 INT. LARGER COMMITTEE ROOM 720 - DAY

63

The committee members file in.

Miller goes close up to Linton.

GENERAL MILLER  
Just so you know -- Karen and I did not appreciate having to sneak around like fucking Hart To Hart trying to find out about this committee.

LINTON  
Well, you're both here now. So that's great.

GENERAL MILLER  
You and I need to talk, mano-a-mano, cocks on the block, about how things are operating around here at the moment.

Linton not fazed by this.

LINTON

Sure. How about 12:30 tomorrow, my office?

GENERAL MILLER

Good.

General Miller takes his seat. Linton turns on Adriano.

LINTON

What the hell happened?

ADRIANO

I have no idea how they all heard sir. There must have been a leak.

LINTON

Oh do you think? Really?

(with menace)

And do you know anything about this leak? Did you lay an egg in Karen Clark's basket?

ADRIANO

I swear, honestly sir, I have absolutely no idea what is going on.

LINTON

That is not something we like to boast about in my office.

Simon is sitting with Toby, marvelling at the numbers of people cramming into the room.

SIMON

I'm room meat again. This is a massive abattoir of room meat. Stay outside Tobes, I need a guy on the outside. Make friends with Chad, the flannel-fucker. He knows stuff. Pump him.

TOBY

Oh no. I want to stay in here with Miller. Don't make me pump Chad.

SIMON

I'm making you pump Chad. Go on.

Toby gets up to leave.

SIMON (CONT'D)

It'll be easy peasy lemon squeezy.

TOBY

No it won't. It'll be difficult difficult lemon difficult.

63

CONTINUED: (2)

63

Toby reluctantly leaves, trying to grab another peek at Miller.

64

EXT. WASHINGTON STREET NR STATE DEPARTMENT - DAY

64

Malcolm running like a madman.

65

INT. LARGER COMMITTEE ROOM 720 - DAY

65

Everyone is finally assembled. The room has thirty or so people in it.

LINTON

So, welcome to this, somewhat engorged session of the Future Planning Committee. You can all see an agenda?

People are looking at their agendas, low-level chatter, pouring of water, etc. - a general pre-meeting feel.

KAREN

Assistant Secretary -- here on point 6, it feels like there's an assumption that we'll be invading. Should we talk about the practical? I mean this is the war committee after all?

LINTON

It's the Future Planning Committee.

KAREN

Unofficially it's known as the war committee.

LINTON

Well, unofficially we can call anything whatever we like.

(he holds up a water glass)

Unofficially, this is a shoe. But it's not a shoe, Karen, it's a glass of water, and this is the Future Planning Committee.

MILLER

Well, unofficially, this appears to be bullshit.

66

INT. STATE DEPARTMENT - DAY

66

It's lunchtime. Lots of staffers have left their desks. A few are eating sandwiches at their desks, or reading a newspaper during lunch.

Chad is emailing, reading, multi-tasking, from a corner of desk near Linton's office.

Toby mooches around, peers in Linton's office. He spots a couple of A4 sheets of paper that have been printed out with 'Climb the mountain of conflict!' across them on top of the printer.

TOBY  
(looking in)  
What's all this?

CHAD  
Climb the mountain of conflict. We're just choosing a font.

TOBY  
What about the font the SS used? Have you thought about using that one.

CHAD  
Well, that obviously has bad connotations.

TOBY  
Heavy metal.

CHAD  
No - the SS.

Karen is talking.

KAREN  
But what I'm asking is has a decision been reached in principle to advocate invasion?

LINTON  
That's way off agenda Karen. Although it would seem a general consensus may be forming.

KAREN  
What makes you say that?

LINTON  
Well I noted with interest the recent comments of our colleague Simon Foster in that regard.

Simon is texting under the desk and not really paying full attention. He hears his name, looks up, waves to the group. He doesn't clock Karen's intense look that says 'You are going to rebut that, aren't you?'

KAREN

Perhaps Mr. Foster would have something to say about that?

SIMON

(politely)

I'm just...watching with interest. In my country, we have a great saying for situations such as this, which is: "It's difficult, difficult. Lemon. Difficult"

He goes back to his text.

LINTON

As I say it seems a consensus is forming .

KAREN

(furious)

That's just ridiculous. You have no basis for saying that.

LINTON

Karen, please, calm down. We don't want you to have another hemorrhage. Item One.

Malcolm arrives at the committee just as people are spilling out. He's pissed off. Follows Linton into bathroom.

MALCOLM

Are you fucking me about?

LINTON

What seems to be the problem?

MALCOLM

I've just had a briefing from a 9-year-old child .

LINTON

AJ? He is one of my top guys. Stanton College Prep, Harvard...he's smart and he's great at his job.

MALCOLM

His fucking briefing notes were written in Alphabetti Spaghetti. When I left I nearly tripped over his umbilical cord.

LINTON

I'm sorry if it troubles you that our people achieve excellence at a young age.

Simon is emerging. Linton takes Malcolm to one side, out of Simon's earshot.

LINTON (CONT'D)

By the way, your prime minister informs me that he's tasked you with collating some fresh British intel for us.

MALCOLM

Yeah, apparently your fucking master race of gifted toddlers can't quit get the job done in between breast feeds and playing with their power rangers. So yeah, we're getting some actual grown-ups to bail you out.

Simon gets closer. Linton moves in.

LINTON

(to Simon)

Minister, thank you so much for your support and your recent "Climb the mountain of conflict" comment - great. We're going to run with that, it has great repeatability.

SIMON

Thanks very much, but...it's all a bit complex really, in terms of my...

Malcolm interrupts, taking Linton to one side again. Simon hangs around on the periphery, trying to be part of the conversation.

MALCOLM

I don't think you should run with that. It's not playing well in the UK. We need more time.

LINTON

I'm sure that's not the case.

Linton pulls away, starts walking off.

LINTON (CONT'D)

It's early days, my friend. All roads lead to Munich.

He smiles and walks off.

MALCOLM

What the fuck does that mean? 'All roads lead to Munich'?

TOBY and SIMON are with Simon's constituency agent, ROZ, she's ushering them into the small, damp little constituency office. ROZ's arm is in a sling (Jo Scanlon's arm actually is in a sling) and she has difficulty opening the door

ROZ

(to Simon)

Sorry, could you...? You just need to kick the bottom quite hard.

Simon kicks the bottom of the door to unstick it.

ROZ (CONT'D)

Right, here you go, you're pretty booked up - there's a list on the desk.

In the private office next to the waiting room Toby has to turn the lights on. It's small and dingy. Simon has to go under the desk to turn the desk light on.

TOBY

(watching Simon)

How the mighty are fallen. From White House to shitehouse.

SIMON

(coming out from under the desk)

Actually, fuck this, can you get under there mate?

Toby looks - why should he?

TOBY

Er...it's not really a political issue, your lamp so...

SIMON

No, but it allows me to see political issues so - probably it would be best if you stopped pulling your fucking 'I'm in an indie band' face and got under there right now alright?

TOBY

Right.

SIMON

I'm just back from America,

ROZ

How was the President?

She's heading off.

SIMON

Good actually.  
(knowing she won't hear)  
It's Will Smith now.

70

INT. CONSTITUENCY SURGERY - DAY

70

Roz opens the door. There are a few constituents waiting to see Simon, he nods a hello.

SIMON

(Roz has gone ahead, this  
is to Toby)  
Look at them. They all have that  
smell....like a charity shop, you  
know?

71

INT. CONSTITUENCY SURGERY - DAY

71

Simon listens behind a desk. Roz is there taking notes.

Toby is in the corner working on a laptop. He opens a folder called 'Chad Dongle 3'. Sees a document 'Pwip Pip - confidential', opens that. Starts reading.

ROZ

(looking through the  
paperwork)  
Well it's not a council sceptic tank  
so they're not legally obliged to pump  
it...



MRS MCDAIRMID

Look, according to the paperwork there's four metric tons of of shit under there. That's not all me, is it? I'm not a flipping elephant am I?

SIMON

No, of course not. That's the last thing you are. Okay, Mrs McDairmid. Leave it with me. I'm sure there must be a way through this. Alright?

Mrs Kendrick heads out.

MRS KENDRICK

Thank you. Thank you very much.

SIMON

Right, what's next? I've got a letter here from someone who wants me to stop cyclists being smug.

Karen runs out of the lifts. There's even more of a buzz than usual, people running around. She sees Bob Adriano, Linton and Chad in a huddle in Linton's air. Hurries over to Liza.

KAREN

Liza, what's up? Why is everyone running around?

This better be a fucking fire drill otherwise I want to know why I wasn't told about whatever the fuck it is.

LIZA

The President has said he's vetoing tarrifs on Chinese auto imports.

KAREN

Shit.

Karen calls over to a staffer, ABBEY.

KAREN (CONT'D)

Abbey, get me the president's statement.

ABBHEY

Mr Barwick has asked me to...

Karen is beginning to lose it.

KAREN

You work to me, Abbey, you fucking work to me. Get me the statement.

Karen crosses quickly to her office. Liza follows.

LIZA

Sorry, why is that...? He's...what, buttering the Chinese up?

KAREN

He needs them to at least abstain in the security council.

A beat.

LIZA

We're going to the UN.

KAREN

Yes, we're going to the UN.

Toby exits to get coffee as Roz brings in PAUL MICHAELSON.

PAUL MICHAELSON

(as he enters)

Hi, thanks for seeing me Mr. Foster.

SIMON

Hi Paul, call me Simon. You've met Roz.

PAUL MICHAELSON

I know I have.

SIMON

Lovely.

PAUL MICHAELSON

Okay, Simon, I'll try to keep it brief because I can see you're a busy man. There's a bloke out there wants to make it illegal to talk in a foreign language in shops.

SIMON

Yes, well, this place can become a magnet for the mentally dispossessed. And for sensible people like yourself, Paul.

PAUL MICHAELSON

Patronising.

ROZ

Why don't you explain your issue, Mr Michaelson?

PAUL MICHAELSON

I...sorry, is this a joke?  
How many times? For the fourth f...ing time.

(as to an idiot)

The side wall. Of this property. Your wall. Is falling over. On to my mum's garden. She called you up - but she got fobbed off by your people. Because she's not Lord Snooty in his posh car. Because she's not Madonna on a horse.

SIMON

That...I agree, it's unacceptable.

Toby comes back in, hands Simon a coffee.

PAUL MICHAELSON

Do you know what this is?  
(he hums something irritating)  
That's your constituency office hold music. I don't want it in my head, do I?

SIMON

(checks notes)  
We did arrange to get a quote from a builder, but...

Roz has a call on the landline.

ROZ

Patch from London. They say it's urgent. Karen Clark? Is she the coracle woman?

SIMON

Right. Paul, I really need to take this, but I haven't forgotten about you, okay?

PAUL MICHAELSON

No, well I'm not going anywhere, Simon. You won't be able to forget me because I'll be sitting here staring at you.

SIMON

Toby, can I hand Paul over to you?

PAUL MICHAELSON

"Can I fob Paul off with you?"

Simon goes elsewhere in the room to take his call.

TOBY

So, Paul, where are we up to?

(off Paul's scary look)

I was out getting coffee. Sorry.

He grabs a pen and paper.

(CHANGE SCENE ORDER)

Simon is talking to Karen.

INTERCUT PHONE CALL:

KAREN

What's going on Simon?

SIMON

Departmental business. About a wall.

KAREN

Gaza?

SIMON

Uh-huh. What can I do for you?

KAREN

Where were you in the committee? I called for back-up, you sat there like a dumb sack of shit. Maybe worse, cos at a molecular level a bag of shit is probably fizzing with energy.

SIMON

Well - okay. Yes. Um. Well, I have to say Karen, I have a clear strategy here. I'm playing the long game.

Paul Michaelson calls over.

PAUL MICHAELSON

I'm still here, Simon.

KAREN

There is no long game. They've bounced us into a short game. You looked like a...what do you call it in England? A 'wanker

SIMON

We don't call it that, no...

But she's gone.

INT. CONSTITUENCY SURGERY - DAY

(CHANGE SCENE ORDER)

Toby's still talking to Paul the wall guy.

TOBY

Sorry. But I'm on your side. I have to look after my Mum too. You do, or they get shafted don't they? So...

Simon wants to talk.

SIMON

Roz - can you talk to Paul for a moment because...

PAUL MICHAELSON

Oh right! Fob number two.

SIMON

No, I'm sorry. National security, I just need to...

PAUL MICHAELSON

Fobbed to him, fobbed to her. Who's next? A tiny child? A dog? A tiny dog? There are some biscuits over there -- shall I talk to the biscuits?

Simon is now hovering in the corner.

TOBY

(signalling to Simon, don't worry, I'll take care of this. Watch this.)

Look, Paul, why don't I give you the number of my cell.

PAUL MICHAELSON

Mobile.

TOBY

Mobile.

ROZ

Have you got a mobile Paul?

PAUL MICHAELSON

Of course I've got a mobile. What do you think I am? A pykey?

TOBY

Of course he's got a mobile.

PAUL MICHAELSON

Five megapixels.

Roz leads Paul away.

ROZ

Mr Michaelson. Come with me and let's see if we can sort your wall out.

PAUL MICHAELSON

How can you sort a wall out? Look at your arm!

ROZ

It's a sprain, it doesn't stop me from making...

PAUL MICHAELSON

I'm going to pursue this with, what do they call it? Extreme prejudice, to the very end. I can be enormously persistent. Ask my ex-girlfriend.

ROZ

Okay, well, I'll take your details.

SIMON

Fuck.

Malcolm is with Simon and Toby. Malcolm has a local Northamptonshire paper.

MALCOLM

(reading)

"While Foster jets around at the taxpayer's expense, his constituency headquarter's wall's collapsing and he doesn't give a shit.

SIMON

It doesn't say that.

MALCOLM

(holding up paper)

No but it says 'Wall-ace and Gromitt'

SIMON

Wall-ace though?

MALCOLM

You are being portrayed as the biggest twat in Northamptonshire, and that's going some.

TOBY

It is just a wall, Malcolm.

MALCOLM

Listen, my little stem cell, I don't want to be dealing with this either, okay? I've got bigger fucking fish to fry, believe me. I'm rolling blue whales in breadcrumbs at the moment. I'm giving this to Jamie.

SIMON

Oh great. The crossest man in Scotland.

MALCOLM

Don't say that to his face.

Jamie enters, holding another local rag.

JAMIE

Well, if it isn't Humpty-Numpty...

SIMON

What is this, surround bollocking?

JAMIE

With respect, I haven't finished. If it isn't Humpty-Numpty, sitting on top of a collapsing wall like some clueless egg-cunt.

SIMON

Hi Jamie.

TOBY

Hello.

JAMIE

Okay, that's enough of the fucking Oxbridge pleasantries.

TOBY

How is saying "hello" a...

JAMIE

(grabbing a hole-puncher)  
Shut it, Love, Actually, or I'll hole-punch your face.

MALCOLM

Right, it's all kicking off at the UN.  
(to Simon) See you at The Foreign Office. Meantime, my small but perfectly informed colleague here will be managing this little basket of cock and chips. I'm off to deal with the fate of the planet, okay?

Simon, Toby and Jamie look at him.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

Don't look at me like that's arrogant. That is just a fucking fact. Don't even look at me.

(to Jamie)

Be gentle with them.

JAMIE

You know me, Malcy, kid gloves. Made from real kids.

Malcolm leaves.

An awkward beat.

JAMIE (CONT'D)

Right, Butch and Gaydance, this wall story is playing badly.

(looking in his paper)

Look, here's a cartoon of you as a walrus.

SIMON

A walrus? I'm not fat. I don't even have a moustache.

JAMIE

Walrus. Wall-rus? Oh for fuck's sake. All that matters is you're a fucking walrus, alright?

TOBY

Look...we hired some builders. They didn't turn up when they said they would.

JAMIE

They're builders. What did you expect?!

(MORE)



JAMIE (CONT'D)

Have you ever seen a film where the hero is a builder? No. Because they never turn up in the fucking nick of time. *That's why you never see a superhero with a hod.*

SIMON

We also then sent someone else round and they put up temporary buttresses...

JAMIE

That's your headline response? *'We Put Up Temporary Buttresses, Says Flailing Walrus Fuck'*.

Suzy, Michael and Judy are having a drink in a pub. Maybe they're sitting in a four seater booth? Their phones are on the table. As is a bottle of Sancerre. Judy's got her power walking trainers on and her rucksack with her.

JUDY

My theory is Malcolm built him in a lab out of bits of old psychopath.

Toby arrives, dumps his coat, bag, puts his phone on the table.

TOBY

Hello ladies.

SUZY

And gentleman.

TOBY

(doing the joke again)  
Hello ladies.

SUZY

Be nice. Michael's had a visit from the Jock Stress Monster.

MICHAEL

I'm fine. I boarded at Winchester, I'm used to being shouted at.

TOBY

I'm just going to -

SUZY

He's looking for leaks.

MICHAEL

Oh. Lovely. I think we could have another bottle of Sancerre.

TOBY

Great.

SUZY

If you can afford it.

JUDY

If you can get served at the bar.

He goes to the bar. His phone gets a text. Suzy picks it up, reads it.

SUZY

Fucking hell. Here we go again.  
Fucking asshole.

MICHAEL

You're kidding? What's it say?  
(peering at the phone)  
Woah!

Suzy shows the phone to Judy.

JUDY

What a twat.  
(beat)  
What are you doing? Are you replying?

Suzy's texting on Toby's mobile. Toby's coming back. Suzy puts the phone back down.

TOBY

Yeah I wouldn't want to meet Jamie in a dark alley. Or a bright alley. The whole thing of just being in an alley with him would be scary, regardless of the lighting.

SUZY

He is quite frightening. But then you're not much of a man.

MICHAEL

Yeah, I remember his first d...

Suzy cuts in.

SUZY

You've got a text.

TOBY

(reading, covering)  
Oh yeah. It's just Rob about football.

SUZY

So, this Liza. You shagged her?

TOBY

What? No.

SUZY

(to Judy)

Did you realise he was ball-deep in some Washington wonk??

TOBY

Could we not talk about accusations and, health issues, in the pub?

SUZY

I'm okay to talk about it now.

SUZY

Why did you do it?

TOBY

I don't know, it was a weird, intense time over there. It was...maybe, subconsciously, I don't know, it was a kind of last ditch attempt to stop this, awful...war.

A beat. Michael and Judy dissolve into laughter.

MICHAEL

That's classic. That's definitely going in the memoirs.

SUZY

You had sex because of the war?

TOBY

In the broad sense.

(to Judy and Michael)

Sorry, can you stop doing that? Can we go somewhere where they're aren't enormous children eating snacks?

Jamie and Malcolm.

JAMIE

I went to see that film There Will Be Blood right? Fucking great title for a film.

(MORE)

JAMIE (CONT'D)

'Want to see a film?' 'I dunno, will there be blood?' 'There will be blood'. 'Right, I'm fucking in.' Great title for a film, you couldn't have a better title for a film. Apart from, maybe, There Will Be Tits. Basically, you could have a cinema that shows There Will Be Blood and There Will Be Tits and we don't need any other films. That's the end of cinema right there.

MALCOLM

Is this going anywhere?

JAMIE

I went to see There Will Be Blood. There wasn't any fucking blood.

MALCOLM

There was some blood.

JAMIE

There was hardly any fucking blood. So what I want to know is will there be war?

MALCOLM

My guess is there will be war.

JAMIE

Oh right. Interesting. Have you had a look in the soldier box lately? What we gonna send? Two lads from the Territorial Army armed with biros?

MALCOLM

No we're not going to do that. For a start, we're out of biros. But, It Will Be Fine.

JAMIE

Oh fine, as long as It Will Be Fine.

MALCOLM

It will all be fine.

JAMIE

Good. Happy days.

MALCOLM

So, listen, I need intel. I need you to go into the Foreign Office, into International Development, and give them a shake-down.

(MORE)

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

Explain they need to shift their soggy bad-trousered arses and give us the gold they've been sitting on for so long.

JAMIE

So, what? Give them the third degree?

MALCOLM

Don't worry, You'll find stuff. It Will be There. Go through them, one by one, from the most senior civil servant down to the lowliest of the fucking low.

JAMIE

What, the work experience kids?

MALCOLM

No, the ministers. Do you see what I did there?

JAMIE

Nice. I see what you did there.

MALCOLM

It's observational comedy. It's funny cos it's true.

They head off in opposite directions.

Judy punches a button on her phone. Toby's land line starts ringing. Judy comes out. She's just transferred the call.

JUDY

Tobes, that's for you.

TOBY

(to Judy)

What's this?

JUDY

It's the mad man about the wall.

TOBY

The war?

JUDY

The wall.

Judy heads into Simon's office.

TOBY

What can I do for you Paul?

PAUL MICHAELSON

(OS, on phone )

These 'temporary buttresses' you got put up.

TOBY

Right?

Wall man Paul is on the phone, standing with a JOURNALIST by the offending wall, now badly propped up. The journalist is taking notes and photographs.

INTERCUT PHONE CALL:

PAUL MICHAELSON

They're basically a pair of twigs. Thin twigs.

TOBY

I'm sure they're not twigs.

PAUL MICHAELSON

No they're twigs.

(to Journalist)

Are you getting a picture of those twigs? That wall could fall on my mum and crush her. Do you know how old she is?

(calling off)

How old are you mum?

MUM (O.S.)

Sixty.

During this conversation Malcolm arrives.

MALCOLM

I want a word with the minister and Charlotte Fucking Bronte.

PAUL MICHAELSON

You're never fucking sixty. You're older than that. Sixty. How old are you really?

MUM (O.S.)

I'm sixty. If it's going in a newspaper, I'm sixty.

PAUL MICHAELSON

Fuck off are you sixty. Olivia Newton-John's fucking sixty. And she's not on the statins, is she?

TOBY

Could you tell your mum to stay away from the wall just for the time being?

PAUL MICHAELSON

She needs to get to her plants.  
(like Toby's an idiot)  
She has to water them. Plants need water. Or they die. Do you want my mother to be in a garden full of dead plants?

TOBY

No, sure, but could she use a hose, from a distance?

PAUL MICHAELSON

She doesn't have a hose, she's got a watering can. This is like talking to a brick wall about a brick wall.  
(to journalist)  
Get that down, that's gold.

All is relatively peaceful in the open-plan office. People working away.

Jamie storms in, alongside the frightened-looking IT GUY.

JAMIE

(to the entire office)  
Hello, shits! Put your knickers on, it's the IT Sweeney. We are here to strip search your computers. Haven't we...fat man whose name I've forgotten?

IT GUY

Yes.

They march in, Jamie heads past Judy's desk.

JAMIE

(to the room)  
It's only intelligence we're after. We could be here a while.

(MORE)

JAMIE (CONT'D)  
 (as he goes past Judy,  
 leans in)  
 Hey! Look! It's Leaky Woman! You want  
 to do some pelvic floor exercises  
 darling, because I hear you're pissing  
 intel everywhere.

JUDY  
 I didn't leak anything. And I won't be  
 intimidated by some Cro Magnon  
 Scottish dwarf.

JAMIE  
 (even closer?)  
 Whoa. Is this us exploring personal  
 boundaries? You fucking stuck-up  
 toffee pudding bitch.

Jamie smiles. His phone goes.

JAMIE (CONT'D)  
 (friendly)  
 Hi. Yeah. Yeah. Look, I'm just in the  
 middle of something can I call you  
 back? Okay, great.  
 (phone down)  
 So where were we? Oh yeah. You know,  
 I'm actually aroused at the thought of  
 giving you a long hard disciplinary  
 hearing.

JUDY  
 Oh I'd love you to give me a long hard  
 disciplinary hearing? Cos at the end  
 I'd have a big fat compensation  
 payment. So go ahead give me one.

JAMIE  
 I'd like to give you one.

JUDY  
 Well, I'd love you to give me one.

Jamie's come to the end of the line, they head into  
 Simon's office.

Simon and Judy on their way into the foreign office.  
 Malcolm has gone in ahead. Suzy chatting on the stairs  
 with Toby.

Simon draws Judy to one side.

SIMON  
 This is all getting...this is a really  
 stressful job, you know that?



JUDY

Oh come on, you're not a brain  
surgeon, you're not a snooker player  
...

SIMON

But I do have to go Northamptonshire  
to talk to a mentalist. And I got  
treated to a special performance of  
the Scottish play in Number 10 with  
Big Macbeth and Wee Jamie Macbeth.

JUDY

Ah. Is that what this is about?

SIMON

I don't want to back a war, Judy.

JUDY

(oh this is what it's  
about)

Oh. Right.

A beat.

SIMON

Look, drop some hints, put some nods  
and winks out there, that I'm toying  
with resignation. Yeah? See if the PM  
reacts. See how it plays.

JUDY

Not my purview, get Toby to do it.

SIMON

No, I want you to do it. War beats  
purview, Judy. Like stone beats  
scissors. War...

(he makes a grabbing claw  
with his hand)

...beats wall...

(he holds his hand up to  
denote a wall)

...beats purview.

(he thinks for a second  
how to represent  
'purview' then does a  
gentle little Oliver  
Hardy wave)

JUDY

Put out some winks?

SIMON

And nods.

JUDY

Big nods?

SIMON

No, no, just sort of...  
 (he does a small nod)  
 That sort of size nod.

Judy nods.

SIMON (CONT'D)

No, not that much.

JUDY

No, I was just nodding normally to say  
 I understood the need for a small nod.

SIMON

Oh. Good.

They head in.

In a nice room. Malcolm is with Michael, Suzy and a couple of other civil servants.

MALCOLM

So, my lovely friends, bottom line...

MICHAEL

I hate that phrase. We're not in  
 retailing

MALCOLM

Sorry Michael, I promise never to use  
 it again. Bottom line, is that the  
 President is going to the UN, and the  
 PM would like us to join him so we're  
 not stuck on our own like the tiny  
 little island we actually are but no-  
 one wants to admit.

Toby, Simon, and Judy arrive

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

You're eighteen seconds late.

SIMON

Is this the UN? Why couldn't you have  
 told me this in our previous horrible  
 meeting? Why did I have to come to  
 another building?

MALCOLM

Because I am now talking on the record, and you can tell that because there is gravity in my voice and I'm not wearing fucking pyjamas. So, Rob, Innis,

(to Toby)

Little Bo Cock Jockey

(to judy)

And the leaky fucking mingebox, return to your desks and prepare for some extreme briefing.

Two CIVIL SERVANTS get up and exit. Judy walks across the room and starts making calls, as does Toby. They can both still hear Malcolm and Simon's conversation. Michael grabs his phone and stands up.

MICHAEL

Should we call Donald Stebbing at the DST and Paul in Fatty's office, get a steer on their statements?

MALCOLM

Yes, the bottom line is, I would like you to do that.

Michael walks off into the next room, Suzy follows. They start calling.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

Now then, you still got doubts, Complicated Simon?

SIMON

What the fuck, Malcolm. This is all going to spin along from here and we have a vote and we go to war. We fight people, and kill them, and our kids get killed, and that's exactly the sort of thing I didn't want to do when I went into politics. That's the opposite of what I want to be doing.

MALCOLM

That's why you've got to stay in Government. In here you can influence things, delay things. Out there you're just another mad shouty fucker people don't want to make eye-contact with. Remember Mary? She took a stand over Health. Everyone decided she was mental.

SIMON

Only because the Sun showed a photo of her with wide eyes and her head on a cow.

MALCOLM

I found that a very powerful image.  
(a beat)

Look, the Prime Minister of this country is not a Viking. He doesn't drink blood, he doesn't go round biting tramps. He doesn't go to Chequers at the weekend for a bit of light raping and a pub lunch.

SIMON

I know the Prime Minister isn't a Viking, Malcolm.

MALCOLM

Unlike me, the man abhors physical violence. He's never, knowingly, killed a man in a drunken rage outside a Cardiff nightclub. He's a grade A fucking pussy and he knows you have similar concerns and he wants your input on this. Yeah?

SIMON

Good. Because, I have concerns, non-pussy concerns. Where's the intelligence? Where's the hard evidence?

MALCOLM

Listen, we have intelligence so deep and hard it would fucking puncture your kidneys. Jamie's collating it as we speak. There's an informant, 'Ice Man', OK? The stuff he's giving us? It'll make your blood run cold. And clot. Your insides will turn to black pudding.

(lowering his voice)

...but certain box-lickers are sitting on it, and weighing it up in committees and think tanks and wank bins. But you're going to see it, because the PM regards you as a key player now.

Judy's puts her head in.

JUDY  
 (to Simon)  
 Prime Minister wants to speak to you  
 in ten minutes, Simon.

Malcolm's heading out.

MALCOLM  
 See - you're A-list now. In the VIP  
 lounge, with the gold card and the  
 complimentary drinks and the hard-on.  
 You're a fucking Kennedy.

Malcolm leaves. A beat.

SIMON  
 (shouting to Malcolm)  
 Show me the evidence, Malcolm, that's  
 my fucking bottom line.

Michael on his way past back into his office.

MICHAEL  
 Don't you start as well.

Toby lets himself into the flat. Goes through to the  
 kitchen. Suzy is there with Michael.

TOBY  
 What the fuck is he doing here?

SUZY  
 What?! What the fuck are you doing  
 here?

TOBY  
 Well I live here.

SUZY  
 No you don't actually.  
 (to Michael)  
 I'll go make that tea.

Suzy and Toby go into the kitchen.

SUZY (CONT'D)  
 He's having a hard time. Jamie thinks  
 he's got evidence that Michael is  
 having an affair ...

TOBY  
 I always thought he was gay.

MICHAEL

(calling through)

I'll take that as a come on.

TOBY

Oh that's very kind of you. But no thanks.

(to Suzy)

What kind of affair? Who with? You? Is this some affair-themed date?

SUZY

That's none of your business. Don't be ridiculous.

TOBY

So he's allowed to have an affair is he? He gets tea. I get thrown out. My tea by the way.

SUZY

You are so tight. And nothing actually happened. He just sent affectionate emails and you got into her knickers.

TOBY

Yeah but he's from a different generation and if he was from my generation he would have got into her knickers and I never sent affectionate emails.

SUZY

No you sent obscene texts.

TOBY

(beat)

I'm taking my brie. And the port. And my Nando's peri-peri sauce.

They go back out into the living room.

SUZY

Don't forget your hydrocortisone.

TOBY

You putting this in your memoirs as well?

MICHAEL

I should go.

SUZY

No, it's fine. Stay.

85

INT. TOBY'S FLAT - LATER

85

Toby is in the bedroom. A few boxes are lying around. He's putting clothes into bin liners. Suzy is hovering. Michael brings through some teas. The atmosphere is very frosty and awkward.

TOBY

Where's my needlecord jacket?

SUZY

Your geography teacher's jacket?

TOBY

My corduroy jacket.

SUZY

Did you take it to Washington? Maybe Liza's wearing it. Maybe it's fashionable there.

Toby thinks better of responding. Starts folding some shirts. Michael takes over

MICHAEL

That's not how you fold.

TOBY

Michael, this is one of the more humiliating moments of my life. I can pack a bag.

MICHAEL

The key to travelling is packing.

TOBY

I'm not going to fucking Fiji Michael, I'm being chucked out of my house.

MICHAEL

It'll save time the other end.

TOBY

There is no other end.

Toby moves through to the kitchen to get his jeans. Suzy and Michael follow.

SUZY

Has she got big tits?

TOBY

Massive. Enormous. You can see them on Google Earth. They've got their own postcode.

Toby gets his jeans and some other clothes. He's laden down with boxes and bags and can hardly see. Comes out into the hall. Suzy is there without Michael.

TOBY (CONT'D)

See you then.

SUZY

Okay.

Toby struggles to open the front door. Suzy opens it.

Toby goes to leave then stops.

TOBY

Look, Suzy, this is probably going to sound odd under the circumstances.

SUZY

Quickie?

TOBY

No. Thank you. But no. It's about Liza.

SUZY

Oh good tell me more, tell me more about her tits.

TOBY

Listen, Suze, Liza wrote a paper, Pwip-Pip. I think, if it got leaked, it could stop the war.

He holds out a memory stick.

MICHAEL

Good tactic. Get earnest. I tried that with the wife. Didn't work.

SUZY

You are such a fucking coward, you know that? And this is what? A make up leak?

TOBY

Does such a thing exist?

SUZY

Toby, take your rubbish clothes and your back issues of Mojo and your eighth of dope and leave me the fuck alone.

Toby leaves the memory stick in the flat. Then heads out.



86

EXT. PAUL MICHAELSON' GARDEN - DAY

86

(CHANGE SCENE ORDER)

Simon is with Roz in Paul Michaelson' garden. Paul's mum has a camcorder.

PAUL MICHAELSON

You seen those buttresses? Twigs! Thin Twigs!

SIMON

Right. Can I just say again how very sorry I am. That's the reason I've come down here.

PAUL MICHAELSON

(re. Roz)

Why's the one-armed bandit here? Protection?

ROZ

We're both here to help. The minister doesn't need protecting.

SIMON

Unless you try to hit me. You're not going to hit me are you?

Paul gestures -- don't know, might do.

SIMON (CONT'D)

It's... obviously, being a Cabinet Minister I've been extremely busy and...

PAUL MICHAELSON

Don't patronise me. We're all busy. I bet you find time to eat. I bet you eat all the bloody time in fancy bistros..

SIMON

There'll be a builder over here in five minutes, and he and I will take care of the wall.

Simon's phone goes.

SIMON (CONT'D)

I'll just leave you two to...excuse me.

Simon goes away from Roz and Paul to answers his phone. In the background, Roz gets a call.

87

EXT. PAUL MICHAELSON' GARDEN/INT. MALCOLM'S OFFICE -  
DAY

87

SIMON

Malcolm.

INTERCUT WITH:

MALCOLM

Minister. The PM wants you at the UN.  
Thinks you can put the brakes on the  
Americans. He likes your spine and  
your balls. He thinks you're a big  
fuck-off exoskeleton covered in  
testes. You're spunky to them. In a  
good way.

SIMON

I don't know. Where's the evidence  
that Jamie was supposed to find?

MALCOLM

On its way. He's just finishing it.  
It's huge.  
What you gonna do? You coming? To the  
land of the free and the home of the  
obese?

Roz is taking her call, leaving Paul Michaelson on his  
own for a moment.

PAUL MICHAELSON

I thought you said there was a builder  
coming?

SIMON

There is. Roz, what's the latest on  
the builder?

ROZ

He's stuck in traffic. But he says  
he's only ten minutes away.

SIMON

Ten minutes.

PAUL MICHAELSON

He was five minutes before. He's going  
back in time. What's he driving, a  
Delorian?

A beat.

87

CONTINUED:

87

SIMON

(into phone)

86

Ok, I'll come..

86

88

INT. CAR - DAY

88

Simon, Toby and Judy are on the way to Heathrow.

SIMON

Should I resign? I've floated that I might, when I thought I wouldn't, so it'll look convincing if I did. I mean, do you think, is it braver to just resign and say, 'No, no war'?

JUDY

Yes.

SIMON

Or is it actually braver to say, 'I don't agree, but I'm going to grit my teeth and get on with it?' Is the really brave thing actually doing what you don't believe?

JUDY

No.

TOBY

Though -- maybe? What's brave about doing the 'right thing'? Nothing. Doing the wrong thing is braver. In a way. I mean, you know, wars sometimes work. The War of Independence, that worked. For the Americans. Second World War. That was a good idea. I mean not a good idea but ...

SIMON

I know what you mean. And the Crimean War -- we got nurses out of that.

TOBY

Nurses are good.

SIMON

(as if they've achieved something)

Exactly. So...right. Exactly.

JUDY

So you're not resigning?

SIMON

No,

89 INT. NEW YORK AIRPORT. DAY.

89

Simon and Toby are walking past a baggage carousel. Someone from Fatty's entourage is lifting massive bags onto trolleys.

TOBY

Jesus, even Fatty's bags are fucking huge. What's he got in there?

SIMON

Suckling pig. Cask of ale.  
Respirator...

(conspiratorially to Toby)

In the motorcade. Let's get a car without Judy.

TOBY

You want hookers? You like hooky fucky?

SIMON

I want to talk about the resigning thing.

TOBY

Still?

SIMON

But with you and not her.

90 INT. LIMO - DAY

90

Simon and Toby looking very uptight. Malcolm's with them.

MALCOLM

(looking at phone)

So. The wires are all currently reporting that you're going to resign from government over the war.

SIMON

What? That wasn't supposed to get outside.

MALCOLM

Yeah well it is outside. It's lurking outside like a big hairy rapist at a coach station.

Simon looks to Toby for help.

TOBY

Simon's relaxed about people thinking he might resign.

SIMON

Am I? Oh yeah, I am. Because...?

TOBY

Because you're not going to resign?

SIMON

That's right. I just got Judy to float the possibility that I would resign. Leverage. (Says it with US pronunciation)

TOBY

Leverage. (UK pronunciation)

MALCOLM

Leverage. (US pronunciation) Right. Canny. Sorry, Simon I underestimated you.

SIMON

You're being sarcastic?

MALCOLM

Well spotted. You're a smart guy.

INT. UN BUILDING - DAY

Malcolm, Simon, Toby and Judy are being led through a bleak, soulless basement corridor in the UN by Sir Jonathan Tutt, the British ambassador to the UN.

SIR JONATHAN

This is it gentlemen. The United Nations.

SIMON

It's all a bit 'blurrgrh', isn't it?

TOBY

This is even more disappointing than the State Department. And that looked like it had been built out of the off-cuts of other more interesting bureaucracies.

JUDY

It could do with a few more scatter cushions and a bit less asbestos.

MALCOLM

It's a shithole. It looks like a hospice for robots.

They pass a big office.

SIR JONATHAN

Linton Barwick is in there. Karen Clark is there. You're right here. It's literally a corridor of power. You can almost feel it throbbing can't you?

Sir Jonathan shows them to their office.

SIR JONATHAN (CONT'D)

If you need anything, just whistle. You know how to whistle don't you Malcolm? You just put your lips together and blow.

Malcolm and Toby look at one another.

SIR JONATHAN (CONT'D)

Right. I'm off upstairs to the informal delegates' reception. Hope there's nibbles, I'm ravenous.

Sir Jonathan leaves.

MALCOLM

Nibbles? Who still says nibbles?

TOBY

Fuck the nibbles, what was with the homoerotic tension?

Malcolm gets a call.

MALCOLM

Jamie. Hello?

He looks at his phone.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

No fucking signal down here. Jesus.

He leaves the room.

Jamie is on the phone, running down a corridor.

JAMIE

Okay, your phone's off, which means you've been shot dead by a fat American, but there's been a fucktastrophe. Someone's leaked Liza Weld's Pwip Pip paper to the BBC. I reckon it'll be on the Six O'Clock news here, one o'clock your time, so it's going to fist your fucking vote apart. Missing you loads, pwip-pip, toodle-oo!

EXT. UN BUILDING - DAY

Malcolm finishing listening to his voicemail, dialling and running back into the building, pushing past a crowd of smokers at the doorway.

MALCOLM

Okay Jamie, this is your mission, should you choose to accept it. Find out who leaked Pwip Pip. Jump up and down on them until they are dead. Then find out who's got it at the BBC. Go over there and waterboard them with their own fucking frappacino. We need them to dither about until after the vote, yeah? Then it's all fist bumps and shooty fucking bang-bang. I love you.

INT. UNITED NATIONS RECEPTION ROOM. DAY

Malcolm drags the ambassador away from some guests into a corner.

SIR JONATHAN

I was talking there, Mr Tucker. What the bloody hell...? This isn't prison.

MALCOLM

Okay it doesn't matter who leaked it that's happened. We're in a new reality now and You've got to speed things up.

SIR JONATHAN

What things? Speed up what?

MALCOLM

The debate. It needs to start at eleven o'clock, not one thirty.

SIR JONATHAN

Hehe. Can I perhaps briefly explain the way the process works? And why that isn't possible? You see through that door there are a number of secretariats that are currently doing what we call the washing up now...

MALCOLM

Just fucking do it, fishlips. Otherwise you'll find yourself in some medieval warzone in the caucasus with your arse in the air, trying to persuade a group of men in balaclavas that sustained sexual violence is not the way forward.

SIR JONATHAN

No, it can't be. I mean it could be done, it just can't.

MALCOLM

Then I'll do it.  
(motioning to a door)  
They're through there?

SIR JONATHAN

Yes but you can't go in, that would be a serious breach of protocol ...

He's blocking Malcolm. Malcolm grabs his hand.

MALCOLM

Then you do it. Get in there.

On the other side of the room, Linton is with Chad. Linton's furious.

LINTON

Chad, this leak means I am experiencing a period of ... dis-equilibrium. My mental landscape could best be described as - unsettled. I am, to put it plainly - not in good humour. Did it come from you Chad

Chad suspects it might have come from him.

CHAD

No not from me, no Sir. I would never breach national security. Not unless I was directed to by someone such as yourself acting in a higher national interest.



LINTON

Then how the expletive have the BBC  
got this Chad?

CHAD

I really don't know sir.

LINTON

(mimicking)

"I really don't know." That's not good  
enough Chad. I'm very very annoyed.  
And what disappoints me is that a) you  
don't know what's happened here and b)  
you don't even have the presence of  
mind to fabricate a plausible answer  
for your superior.

(beat, mimics again)

"I really don't know." It's your job  
to know, Chad. What's your job?

CHAD

To know sir.

LINTON

What is it?

CHAD

To know.

LINTON

Your job is to what?

CHAD

Know.

LINTON

Do you have a job with me any more?

A beat.

CHAD

Yes?

LINTON

Try again, Chad.

Malcolm is on the phone to Jamie.

MALCOLM

Where's the intel? Are you sure you're  
working as hard as me? Cos I'm  
sweating spinal fluid here. I'm a  
husk.

Miller wanders by.

MILLER

You get everything you need?

MALCOLM

(in a hurry)

Oh yeah I think so. Thanks.

(a beat, thinks)

Oh, Whoa whoa whoa just a wee moment  
General Flintstone. Was it you? Did  
you leak Pwip Pip? I know you can't  
fire a gun, but can you use a fax?

MILLER

No, see, because I'm upfront about  
what I do. I don't creep around like  
some fucking gay mercenary doing other  
people's dirty work.

MALCOLM

I'm doing my own work. I'm doing my  
job.

MILLER

Uh-hu. I think you're doing Linton's  
dirty work. I think you're his English  
bitch and if I walked into your hotel  
room tonight I'd find you on all fours  
in fishnets and him hanging out the  
back of you.

MALCOLM

Oooo. Tough talk from the armchair  
General. What you going to do? Throw a  
cushion at me? Put your feet up on a  
poof and go back to sleep why don't  
you?

GENERAL MILLER

Listen, Tucker, you may be some scary  
poodlefucker back in London, but here?  
You know what you look like? A fucking  
squeezed dick. You got a blue vein  
running all the way up to your temple  
there. That's where I'd put the  
fucking bullet. But I'd stand well  
back. You look like you'd be a  
squirter.

MALCOLM

Have you ever even killed anybody?  
Really?

GENERAL MILLER

Yep.

MALCOLM

Falling asleep on someone doesn't count.

GENERAL MILLER

(closer)

I've done my share. How many you kill, pussy drip?

MALCOLM

Personally, I prefer maiming.

GENERAL MILLER

Go on, tough guy, take a swing at me. I'll smack you so fucking hard you'll be shitting teeth.

MALCOLM

Go ahead. I can see the headlines now. 'Peace-Loving General Starts Fight In UN, Swiss Intervene'. I don't know, I'm no expert on spin but could that hurt your career?

They eyeball each other. Is Miller going to hit him? He doesn't.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

Right. Do excuse me. I've got work to do. Oh, and don't EVER call me fucking English again.

Sir Jonathan walks in. A lot of faces are turned towards him, expectantly.

SIR JONATHAN

Hello everyone. It's all going very smoothly isn't it? Tremendously well. I was wondering if I might suggest a cheeky early vote? Bit of an adventure. Maybe, we could knock off early, go for a drink? Ha. I'm kidding. Or am I? No, I am.

Linton is ushering Fatty and his advisors into his office. Simon looks at them as walks past them into Karen Clark's office. He knows he's a no-mark now for definite.

Miller are looking at a computer screen, presumably reading about Simon's floated resignation.

KAREN  
 (looking at computer)  
 There it is. Simon's going. Everyone's saying he's going.

Simon passes their open door.

GENERAL MILLER  
 (spotting Simon)  
 Simon! There he is! Simon.  
 (re internet)  
 This is great shit. I wasn't sure you had the nerve. You're resigning?

SIMON  
 Ah okay. They're not running with that? I have not said that.

GENERAL MILLER  
 You're not resigning?

SIMON  
 Well not as such. But I'm not afraid to float it. I've got the nerve to float. That takes a bit of nerve.

KAREN  
 You're still playing the hawk?

SIMON  
 It's much subtler than that. It's nuanced. I'm playing a much cleverer game than that. I'm a  
 (whispering)  
 fake hawk.

GENERAL MILLER  
 I'm sorry?

SIMON  
 (whispering)  
 Fake hawk.

GENERAL MILLER  
 You're a fake hawk? You're a fucking idiot. You're not a fake idiot are you.

Linton passes, sees Simon, comes in.

LINTON  
 Excuse me a second.

Karen and Miller go into a confab.

LINTON (CONT'D)

Simon, I'm hearing some odd things coming out of old London Town...

Karen and Miller look over, waiting to hear Simon's answer.

SIMON

Yeah -- about me resigning? Yeah. 'BS'.

Karen and Miller immediately go into a huddle and start planning Simon's future.

LINTON

I heard it was your senior Civil Service Press Secretary. *What's the explanation?*

SIMON

It was her. But, she's mentally ill. A bit.

LINTON

She's mentally ill?

SIMON

A bit. It's sad.

LINTON

Okay well, you're still with us. Terrific.

(re : Karen and Miller)

You're on the right side.

He leaves.

KAREN

(to General Miller, as if Simon's not there)

We could just tell the press he's going anyway. Say he's confirmed to us that he's resigning.

SIMON

Sorry?

GENERAL MILLER

I second that.

SIMON

What? You can't.

GENERAL MILLER

Do we announce it before or after the vote?

KAREN

During. Then he can't do anything about it.

GENERAL MILLER

Great. That's decided then.

SIMON

No. No it's bloody not. I'm - me. You're not me. I decide about all the main things about me, okay? Not you. Me.

GENERAL MILLER

No. No Simon. I'm afraid not. Not on this one. This is too big for you.

KAREN

Be realistic. You're being used. We all are. The one thing we can do now to influence things is to resign. Sacrifice ourselves. That's our only weapon.

SIMON

Like a suicide bomber?

GENERAL MILLER

No, not like a suicide bomber. A suicide bomber gets to make a decision.

They usher Simon out of the room.

KAREN

I'm going George. I'm definitely going, this is intolerable. Are you with me?

GENERAL MILLER

It is intolerable. I'm with you.

Toby and Liza are sitting near each other on the floor working on laptops. They're at right-angles to each other. Toby has a view of Liza. She's facing away from him.

TOBY

Listen, I'm really sorry about Suzy and the texting and ...

LIZA

Good. Thanks. Do you have figures there for CFE minimum requirements?

TOBY

Er?

LIZA

Conventional Forces in Europe.

TOBY

Sure. I'll just dig that out.

(beat, taps on his laptop,  
then very quietly)

Look it was a very special evening for  
me and ...

LIZA

(pissed off)

Sorry? What? You're mumbling.

TOBY

I just wandered if tonight when all  
this shit is over we couldn't - you  
know. You're single. I'm single now.  
You're a woman. I'm not.

LIZA

You want to have sex again?

TOBY

It's not a terrible idea is it? One  
more. For the Gipper?

LIZA

You know what a douchbag is Toby?  
You're a douchbag on fucking wheels.

TOBY

Thanks. That was short and sweet.  
Well, short and sour.

Simon is sitting in the Meditation Room, a stark chapel-  
like room with a big piece of granite in the middle of  
it. He's biting his nails, thinking.

Judy comes in.

JUDY

You okay?

SIMON

I'm thinking of becoming a suicide  
bomber.

JUDY

That's certainly a very powerful way  
of getting your point across.

He pulls out some mints.

SIMON  
Would you like a mint?

JUDY  
I'm okay thanks. Are you thinking to  
overdose on mints? Because...

Simon eats a mint.

He's lost in his own world. Staring, maybe slightly  
nodding at the thoughts in his own head.

SIMON  
Do you like me Judy?

JUDY  
You're my boss.

SIMON  
Yeah, but do you actually like me.

A beat.

JUDY  
Sure. Look, I'll leave you to your  
thoughts.

SIMON  
I haven't got any thoughts. I'm just  
staring vacantly into space while a  
distant voice in the back of my head  
goes "oh shit" like a car alarm in the  
middle of the night.

Simon eats another mint. Sits there noisily sucking it.  
Judy leaves.

Michael and Suzy are sitting talking in an FO office.

Jamie bursts in.

JAMIE  
Was it you?

MICHAEL  
Sorry?

JAMIE  
Not you.  
I know it wasn't you, you're too  
fucking horny for your Knighthood.  
(MORE)



JAMIE (CONT'D)

You've probably already ordered your  
Sir Michael Shitmuncher stationary  
haven't you?

(TO SUZY)

Was it you?

SUZY

Was what me?

JAMIE

Was it fucking you!? Answer the  
question!

MICHAEL

She can't very well answer the  
question if you don't tell her what it  
is, can she?

JAMIE

Oh, right, typical Foreign Office  
bullshit liberal sophistry. It's  
dipshits like you that threw away a  
nice fucking repressive Empire.

(to Suzy)

Was it you?

SUZY

Was what me? I have no idea ...

MICHAEL

Look, maybe you should go away and  
leave us alone until you at least have  
a question that can be answered by a  
rational human being?

JAMIE

Fuck off to your room, Count of Cunt  
Cristo, this is between me and her.

(to Suzy)

You leaked Liza Weld's paper to the  
BBC. Tell me you leaked it.

SUZY

I didn't leak anything. I don't know  
what you're talking about.

JAMIE

You're lying. You touched your nose.  
That's what's called a 'tell'. You are  
lying.

SUZY

No I'm not.

JAMIE

'No I'm not.' That's a tell as well.  
Classic.

SUZY

Well look, it's great to get all this amateur psychological insight for free, but I didn't do it, so I'm not going to say I did okay? I'm just not?

JAMIE

(changing tack to terror)  
I know the leak came from here, from this fucking fax machine here.

He pushes a fax casually off the table onto the floor.

JAMIE (CONT'D)

This is what I'm doing to the machine.  
(he kicks it, hard till bits start to break off, but he's still quite controlled talking, as he kicks more)

You see? This is how angry I am with the piece of office equipment which leaked this document, so can you imagine how angry I am with the person who did it? Yeah? Can you Suzy?

He kicks the fax machine again.

SUZY

Right.

JAMIE

But let's try and keep this professional, yeah? So. For the last time. Was it you?

MICHAEL

It was me.

JAMIE

Oh fuck off. Don't come over all Spartacus now.

MICHAEL

I leaked it.

JAMIE

What?

Advances on Michael, becomes aware of the music. Jamie points to the CD player.

JAMIE (CONT'D)

Okay for a start turn that fucking row off. It's just fucking vowels. Listen to it. Just subsidised fucking foreign vowels.

(MORE)

JAMIE (CONT'D)

You only listen to that shit because it's bad form to actually wear a big hat that says "I went to public school".

Michael doesn't turn it off, so Jamie does.

JAMIE (CONT'D)

Who did you leak it to?

MICHAEL

I just sent it. Any name at bbc dot co dot uk. I thought it was important so I sent it through.

JAMIE

(considers then, )

Okay, right, fine, good. You hear that? Great. That's your career over. Boom. Right there. That's it. No job, no pension. Can you play the spoons? Cos that's what you'll be banging for a living? Outside Brixton Tube. Good. This is all great.

Jamie is heading off.

MICHAEL

Well, you know -- better to go out with a bang...

JAMIE

No, no. I will not allow this to be a bang. This will be a whimper, a tiny pathetic whimper like a puppy being fucked by a big metal puppy-fucking machine. And they do exist, 'cos my gran's got one.

Jamie leaves.

Malcolm and Linton enter. We see Simon's mints lying on the big stone in the middle of the room.

LINTON

Okay, so?

MALCOLM

So? You're going to need to be a little more precise. "So, what about those Yankees?" "So long, suckers, I'm going to stab myself in the perineum."

LINTON

So we're down to the wire here, Mr Miracle Worker, what have you got for me? What intel have you rustled us up?

MALCOLM

Honestly? I haven't got it. We need more time.

LINTON

You haven't got it? Can you delay the vote to give you time to get it?

MALCOLM

No. I've had the vote brought forward.

Simon comes in to retrieve his mints.

SIMON

Just getting my mints.

LINTON

I am telling you to delay the vote and get me some new intel. Now.

MALCOLM

Okay, quick reality check, J Edgar Fucking Hoover. I don't work for you. You don't tell me what to fucking do.

LINTON

Well firstly, don't raise your voice. This is a sacred space. You may not believe that, I may not believe that, but by God it's a useful hypocrisy. And secondarily you do work for me. Your prime minister instructed you to work for me.

Malcolm glances at Simon.

MALCOLM

Get your mints and fuck off.

Simon stays where he is. Linton starts laughing. Toby enters, watches in amazement.

LINTON

The great Malcolm Tucker. One of your guys has leaked a paper, you can't do anything. We tell you to get intel, you can't do anything. I need the vote put back - you can't do anything. You, sir, are a useless piece of 'S' star star 'T'.

A beat.

MALCOLM

(quietly, to Toby)

What do you want?

TOBY

We've just heard -- the wall's starting to collapse. A brick has fallen. That's the news I'm getting. More to follow. Both news and bricks.

Linton laughs again.

LINTON

Why don't you deal with that Tucker? A wall is falling down, that's more your level. I can see you with your shirt off and a wheelbarrow whistling a happy song.

Linton walks out.

SIMON

You've been working for him?

MALCOLM

It's complicated, okay? I've been juggling a number of responsibilities.

Simon stares at Malcolm. He takes a mint and pops it in his mouth.

SIMON

Okay, well, right, after the vote, I resign.

MALCOLM

No you fucking don't.

SIMON

I've behaved awfully, Malcolm. I've behaved, in a way, even worse than you. And you, obviously, are a terrible, terrible cunt

MALCOLM

No, Simon, no. C'mon. I'm with you.

Malc is all sincerity -- maybe he does actually believe this?

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

I thought I might be able to stop the war if I got you to back it. The PM only listens to people who agree with him, and I thought if you agreed with him, then he might listen to you. Do you see?

SIMON

No, I don't see. That's nonsense  
Malcolm.

MALCOLM

Look. It's too late now. Resigning.  
It's not worth it. The horse has  
bolted. It's out there getting shot  
now.

SIMON

I'll see you later, Malcolm.

Simon exits.

MALCOLM

(to Toby)

If you repeat this to anyone I will  
pull your leg off, break it in two and  
stab you to death with your broken  
shin bone. Now go away.

Toby leaves.

Malcolm sits down, head in his hands.

A GUY comes in.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, this room's occupied.

GUY

I've just come to pray.

MALCOLM

Yeah, well I need this place to myself  
because I am waiting for very specific  
instructions from the omnipotent  
beardy upstairs. Oh, hang on, I'm  
getting something...He says tell that  
fucking bedwetter who's just come in  
to fuck right off or I will ram him  
all the way up my fat hairy fucking  
spacetime wormhole of an arse and then  
shit him out all over Canada.

The guy leaves. Malcolm sits down again to think.

The delegates are still mingling. Toby is there now.

Toby's phone goes. He answers.

TOBY  
 (into phone)  
 Suzy, how's it going? Has Jamie been  
 round? Right...

Liza comes over.

LIZA  
 This is you, isn't it?

TOBY  
 (indicating himself)  
This is me, yes. And that's you. I  
 thought we had this worked out.

SUZY (O.S.)  
 (on phone)  
 Is that the bunny boiler?

TOBY  
 (into phone)  
 Yes, that is Liza's voice. But no, I'm  
 not shagging her, she's two feet away  
 from me. It would be nice to think  
 I've got a two-foot penis, but sadly,  
 as we know, it's only half that.

LIZA  
 My paper has made it into UK media.  
 I'm taking calls from a show called  
 'Newsnight'. They want an interview.

TOBY  
 It's a good show Newsnight. You should  
 do it, they're very friendly. It's  
 like Oprah. But with a quieter  
 audience.

(into phone)  
 Sorry Suze I've got an incoming call,  
 I'll ring back for a further  
 bollocking.

LIZA  
 I've got something big lined up and  
 you better not have fucked it up for  
 me.

Liza leaves.

TOBY  
 (into phone)  
 Hello? Oh hi, Paul. How's it going?  
 No, yes, I know the wall is  
 collapsing. I'm as frustrated as you  
 are mate.

The Vice President starts to walk by. Toby sees him, wants to shake his hand.

TOBY (CONT'D)

Look, could I call you back Paul? It's just the Vice President's ... I couldn't? No, okay, let's keep talking...

The Vice President has gone.

Karen's office is very quiet. Karen and ONE OR TWO AIDES in there. Karen is playing solitaire on her laptop.

Liza enters. Karen clicks out of solitaire.

KAREN

Liza can you get me a coffee?

LIZA

Er, no. I just came to say goodbye.

KAREN

Don't tell me you've been drafted? They're not sending you to fight?

LIZA

I'm going to work for Linton and Caulderwood running their Middle East Operations Executive.

KAREN

Excuse me?

LIZA

Yeah. Sorry. But they offered me the job.

KAREN

Just because they offered you the job doesn't mean you have to take it. The homeless guy outside Taco Bell offers to put his wang in my ear every day, I don't feel the need to accept, you know?

LIZA

I'm sorry Karen.

She heads out.



KAREN  
 (at a loss for what to  
 say)  
 Have a nice war.

LIZA  
 Thanks.

Michael and Suzy in Michael's office, classical music in the background. Michael's clearing his desk, putting stuff in boxes. There are lots of CDs and a couple of bottles of expensive bottles of wine.

Jamie bursts in on Michael and Suzy, his phone still on.

JAMIE  
 Right, Frank and Nancy Sinatra. I've got good news. You're not fired. That's great news, isn't it?

MICHAEL  
 That sounds ominous.

JAMIE  
 He's fucking delighted.  
 (cancels phone)  
 We want to put Liza Weld's Pwip Pip out there, properly. In the public domain. We just have to refine it a bit.

SUZY  
 Refine it?

JAMIE  
 Take out the cons, change the name of the main informant.

MICHAEL  
 Oh right, when you say 'refine it' you mean completely change it

JAMIE  
 It's too long. No one's going read it. We need a document that appeals to the MT-fucking V generation of skunk-numbed retards. We need to cut those cons. They're very negative.

MICHAEL  
 That's a complete fabrication.

JAMIE

Changing his name doesn't make a difference. The main source in there he's not really called Ice Man, is he? "Mr and Mrs Man, you've got a son, Ice." So we change it, to another name....

(refers to the music playing)

Who's the fuck with the fiddle? The Fiddlefuck.

MICHAEL

This is Debussy, if that's what you mean.

JAMIE

Okay, we'll call him Debussy.

MICHAEL

No.

JAMIE

And then you'll make a couple of other changes. It'll mean your fingerprints are on it, Mikey, but it's the only way to save your job, you leaky fuck.

Michael is now scared of what he's being asked to do.

MICHAEL

No, look, okay, really, I'm not up for this. I'm just, I didn't leak it.

(to Suzy)

I'm sorry.

SUZY

I know you didn't leak it. Jamie, he didn't leak it.

JAMIE

Sorry love, that's what I've been told. And I'm very trusting. Maybe too trusting. I tend to get hurt a lot you know.

MICHAEL

It wasn't me, Jamie, alright? It wasn't me. Don't make me do this. Someone else must have come in and used the fax machine.

JAMIE

What? Oh, that thing about your fax? Don't worry about that. I made that up. You're doing this Michael, okay?

(MORE)

JAMIE (CONT'D)

Cos if you do you're back on course  
for retirement. A wee cottage in  
Littlehampton. You can shuffle around  
in a tweed dressing gown pretending to  
like Debussy and getting pissed before  
lunchtime and sobbing all afternoon  
over collected works of TS  
cockbollocking Eliot and Phil the  
racist Larkin.

Michael looks at Suzy. She doesn't know what to say or  
do.

JAMIE (CONT'D)

(grabbing Michael)

Come on Deuce Bigalow. You're coming  
with me.

He drags Michael out of the office.

On the closed door of the Meditation Room. Malcolm  
suddenly bursts out, re-energised, ready for action.  
He's in the middle of a call.

MALCOLM

Yeah, BBC newsdesk please. Malcolm  
Tucker. (BEAT) Ben? Hi, how you doing?  
Yeah, well, I'm hearing you're  
preparing a story that we might not  
like.

One of the doors he pushes open has a coffee machine in  
it. Toby is there getting a coffee. Malcolm gestures to  
him to come along. Toby joins Malc in his jog through  
the corridors, spilling his coffee on his hands as he  
goes and scalding himself.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

I just want to say please, this garden  
wall story, please don't run with it.  
I mean, I know it's juicy, it's  
dynamite, it's a lovely exploding  
satsuma but...

(beat, winks at Toby - you  
getting this?)

Simon Foster's constituency-office  
wall? You've got that haven't you? I  
haven't let the cat out of the bag?  
Shit. Look, my reputation will be in  
tatters if you run with...

(to Toby)

And he's gone. Boo hoo. I've got a  
hard on.

TOBY

Can we stop running because my hands  
are really rather badly burned now.

They stop.

MALCOLM

I know it was you who put Pwip-Pip out  
there.

TOBY

Oh? Right.  
(tries it out for size)  
It wasn't?

MALCOLM

Are you telling me it wasn't you? Is  
that your proposition? Is that what  
you want to say if I ask them to fly  
you to Diego Garcia and slip a hood  
over your head and carry out a cavity  
search?

TOBY

(covering)  
I don't actually recall. It was a busy  
time.

MALCOLM

That's more like it. So...you are now  
on probation. Okay? I am giving you a  
probationary period, which will last  
from today...until the end of recorded  
time. Do you understand?

TOBY

Yes.

MALCOLM

You're my guy now. I own you now.  
You're my Kunte Kinte. Go and get your  
laptop.

Toby goes. Sir Jonathan arrives.

SIR JONATHAN

Good, I've been looking for you. I  
needed to tell you that by a huge  
personal effort -- huge -- which has  
cost me my dignity and not a little  
respect among my peers, I have managed  
to bring the vote forward by an hour  
and a half.

MALCOLM

Great. I need it delayed now.

SIR JONATHAN

Very funny. That is funny.

MALCOLM

By an hour, at least. Although I guess two and a half hours now, as you've brought it forward.

SIR JONATHAN

No. Sorry, no.

MALCOLM

I'm sorry? Did you say 'no'? No was not on the acceptable answers sheet for this question. I'm expecting intel.

SIR JONATHAN

No, I'm sorry I'm very sorry but I won't humiliate myself again.

MALCOLM

The UK representative to the UN is refusing to do what the UK Government wants? I don't know what happens now but I've got a feeling it involves a firing squad and sexual smear campaign.

SIR JONATHAN

You are not the UK Government Malcolm

MALCOLM

I'm as fucking good as, alright? So do what I say or you can go and see if Belize are looking for a new ambassador but with a broken nose, one bollock, and a half-chewed cock?

Malcolm gets very close to Sir Jonathan and gives him a terrifying stare.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

Are you doing this or do I have to take you to the Meditation Room?

Sir Jonathan walks in. A lot of faces are turned towards him, expectantly.

SIR JONATHAN

Right. What can I say? Spanner in the works our end.

107 INT. TINY OFFICE

107

Jamie has taken Michael into a tiny windowless office. Michael's hunched at his laptop, looking at the Pwip-Pip document on his computer. Jamie stands right over him, ominously.

JAMIE  
(to Michael re: the office)  
This is nice isn't it? Cosy. Away from prying eyes.

MICHAEL  
So what's this, your torture chamber?

Jamie's phone goes.

108 INT. UN CORRIDOR/TINY OFFICE - DAY

108

Toby is standing in front of Malcolm, holding his laptop up for Malcolm to look at and a physical copy of the red Pwip-Pip folder. He's also got the Pwip-Pip file on screen.

MALCOLM  
Is it up, have you got it up?

JAMIE  
Yeah it's all fine.

MALCOLM  
Okay, go to page nine, highlight that.

JAMIE  
(to Michael)  
Go to page nine.

Michael does.

MALCOLM  
Highlight from that page to the end of the document.

JAMIE  
Do you mean select?

MALCOLM  
I don't know I don't use these things.

JAMIE  
(to Michael)  
Select page nine to the end of the document.

MICHAEL

The caveats?

Michael does it.

MALCOLM

Is it highlighted?

JAMIE

You mean selected, yeah it's selected.

MALCOLM

Okay, right, standby ... delete!

JAMIE

(to Michael)

Delete!

MICHAEL

(subdued)

You can't just delete the arguments  
against the war.

Michael stops what he's doing.

MALCOLM

(to Toby)

Messenger! Get Messenger up!

Toby sticks Pwip-Pip in his mouth so he's got a hand  
free to initiate MSN messenger.

JAMIE

Oh hang on Malc. Michael's stopped  
moving. I think he's crashed.

Malcolm types something on the laptop while Toby holds  
it up for him.

MALCOLM

Have you tried hitting him? Give him a  
thump, that usually works.

JAMIE

Hang on, I think I might be able to  
use manual over-ride.

Jamie picks up Michael's hand and pulls out his index  
finger and places it on the delete key.

JAMIE (CONT'D)

No, it's okay. It's working again.

MALCOLM

Great. Now attach that to email.

JAMIE  
(to Michael)  
Attach that to an email.

An alert goes on Michael's MSN Messenger.

JAMIE (CONT'D)  
Oh look you've got a friend online. Is  
it a lady friend?

MICHAEL  
It's Malcolm.

JAMIE  
What's he saying?

MICHAEL  
I'm not repeating it.

Jamie reads it off the screen and laughs.

JAMIE  
That's terrible Malc. I feel sorry for  
him now.

MALCOLM  
Is he crying?

JAMIE  
No. Brave soldier. So where's this  
going?

MALCOLM  
Send it to Toby Wright

TOBY  
No!

MALCOLM  
Yes! Has it gone?

JAMIE  
Yeah we put a little red flag on it  
and everything.

MALCOLM  
(to Toby)  
Is it here?

TOBY  
(looking at his email)  
If the subject heading is 'Smoking  
Fucking Gun You Cunt' then yes.



109 INT. UN CORRIDOR - DAY

109

Malcolm approaches Toby.

MALCOLM  
Get me a blue folder.

TOBY  
Where from?

MALCOLM  
I don't fucking know. Do I look like I've ever set foot in a stationary cupboard? I do my shagging in five star hotels. Now go and find me a blue fucking folder. Pronto.

Toby runs off.

110 INT. LINTON'S UN OFFICE - DAY

110

Malcolm walks in. He holds up his blue folder.

MALCOLM  
The intelligence your guys couldn't find? I think you owe me a massive, grovelling apology.

LINTON  
What, you did your job? Eventually? Congratulations. Maybe they'll give you a knighthood.

MALCOLM  
It's been a pleasure working with you, Dr Strangelove.

(gives him the folder with a smile)

I say pleasure. I mean poisonous fucking arseache. Shit, I've met some psychos in my time, but none as fucking BORING as you. You know that Conspiracy theory? That the world is controlled by giant lizards disguised as people? Maybe you're a giant lizard disguised as a boring fuck. Oh sorry, that's right. You disapprove of swearing. A boring F star star CUNT!

Malcolm hands over the folder and walks out.!

111 INT. UN - DAY

111

The mood is quietly buzzy. Job well done. Liza is there too.

LINTON

We did it Bob!

BOB ADRIANO

Yes sir! There were moments when it was a little hairy ...

LINTON

No there weren't, no.

They shake hands with various colleagues.

112 INT. UNITED NATIONS. KAREN'S OFFICE. DAY.

112

Karen enters. Chad is there too with General Miller.

KAREN

So, I emailed it ten minutes ago.

(to Chad)

Sorry Chad, you're out of a job again. I've resigned.

CHAD

Oh you ssshhhh ...

(trails off, realising who he's talking to)

KAREN

So mine hits the wires now, yours should come right after the President's announcement, to have the biggest media impact.

GENERAL MILLER

I've been thinking Karen.

KAREN

I mean I guess if you hurry we could go together - but I really think after is better ...

GENERAL MILLER

Karen, I've got to tell you something. This has been the hardest fucking decision of my political life.

KAREN

(she looks at him, sees what's coming)

You're not resigning?

(MORE)

KAREN (CONT'D)

What the fuck George. Seriously? Have you thought this through.

GENERAL MILLER

Of course I fucking have, I've sent soldiers into warzones and given it less thought than this.

KAREN

Well of course you have. That was just kids, whereas this is your career we're talking about.

CHAD

That is harsh. That's very harsh Miss Clark.

GENERAL MILLER

(without looking at him)

Gee, thanks for your support, Son of Fucking Rambow.

KAREN

You said that the war was intolerable and we'd go together.

GENERAL MILLER

It is - it is intolerable. I still agree with myself about that. But I've got to tolerate it. My loyalty is with the kids. At the end of the day I'm a soldier.

KAREN

You're not a soldier.

GENERAL MILLER

Look at the uniform, Karen. I'm not a pastry chef. I'm not Miss World. I don't stack shelves at Wal-Mart. I have military commendations on my chest, not a little fucking label saying My Name Is George.

KAREN

You're a politician. You live on canapes and white wine and you have three anecdotes you wheel out at every party and you scour the national papers for mentions of your name. You're a fucking politician.

GENERAL MILLER

I'm still a soldier.

KAREN

When was the last time you shot a guy?

GENERAL MILLER

What, if I haven't shot a guy in 15 years then I'm not a soldier? City hall don't insist I bring along a fucking bullet-ridden corpse every five years to renew my soldier licence.

KAREN

You know this is an unnecessary war. It's a war you don't believe in. Show me some balls, George.

GENERAL MILLER

I know I've got balls, I don't need to show them to you.

KAREN

Oh sure, It just so happens they're sitting pretty in a pair of Egyptian cotton Ralph Lauren shorts on a Government salary.

GENERAL MILLER

Don't talk about my fucking balls that way. My balls have been around. My balls have got balls.

KAREN

Come on Chad, let's leave the General and his over-stuffed scrotum. We're going to draft our resignation announcements.

Karen turns away from him.

CHAD

Er, I might, stay with the General actually Karen, if that's okay? If he's staying I might stay with him and see what assistance I can furnish.

KAREN

Okay, fuck you. General Shrek and his faithful talking donkey.

She goes.

GENERAL MILLER

This takes balls Karen.

CHAD

You've got balls Sir. Anyone can see you've got big balls.

GENERAL MILLER

Get the fuck away from me and don't  
ever talk about my balls you elongated  
retard.

Miller walks off.

CHAD

Okay. This was not the plan.

Malcolm catches up with Simon.

MALCOLM

Simon, look, mate. Listen to me. You  
still don't need to resign.

SIMON

I do. I'm going to resign, Malcolm. In  
a hour. You can't stop me now.

Toby comes over.

TOBY

Boss?

SIMON

Yes?

MALCOLM

Yes?

TOBY (CONT'D)

It's on the BBC News website --  
Partial collapse of the wall. Mrs  
Michaelson's greenhouse has a smashed  
pane. The BBC had a crew down there.

SIMON

God, and that's NEWS. Ridiculous,  
isn't it?

MALCOLM

It's nor Ridiculous. You're fired.

SIMON

What?

MALCOLM

The wall. It's just not tolerable.

SIMON

It's just a fucking wall.

MALCOLM

Look at this.

(clicks his fingers at  
Toby)

(MORE)

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

Give me the paper.

(off Simon's look)

He's my new boy. I'm just breaking him in.

TOBY

Here.

MALCOLM

The Telegraph has a cartoon of you crushed underneath the Great Wall Of China, suggesting you are the only political fuck-up visible from space. Look at this. No one could survive this. The PM is very clear on this - you're sacked, over the wall.

SIMON

No.

MALCOLM

Yes.

SIMON

You haven't even - spoken to the Prime Minister.

MALCOLM

Yes I have.

SIMON

You fucking haven't I've been right here.

MALCOLM

I have spoken to the Prime Minister. Whether it has happened or not is irrelevant. It is true. As soon as I heard about the wall, I spoke to him and he decided you had to go.

SIMON

I'm not going quietly.

MALCOLM

Yeah well if you try to turn this into some anti-war protest, you can expect your 'mountain of conflict' soundbite to be everywhere from ringtones to a fucking dance mix on YouTube. I will marshall all the forces of media darkness to hound you to an assisted suicide. And you will be remembered as a mincing, spineless, two-faced opportunist cock-swallowing warmonger.

A silence while Simon and Toby realise there is nowhere for him to go.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

Right, Rumbleforeskin's give me your laptop, so -- shall we draft your 'Dear Prime Minister, just a quick note to say thanks for sacking me' letter?

Simon doesn't know what else to do. He follows Malcolm out.

Toby sees Miller is having a cigarette under a no-smoking sign.

TOBY

Hi. General? Look I realise this is a slightly strange time to say this, but I just want to say how much I admire...

GENERAL MILLER

Fuck off, Frodo.

TOBY

You fuck off.

Toby hurries off looking crushed. Miller takes another drag on his cigarette.

OVER CREDITS

Karen walks towards the sidewalk. She's expecting to see her car, it's not there. She dials.

KAREN

Hi I'm just wondering where the car is? Well yes, I did. So, it's that automatic is it? It is. I see. I'll get a taxi then.

Karen tries to hail a cab, then has second thoughts. She crosses the road to the dentist on the other side.

Linton is going through a list with Liza. General Miller is sitting in on this meeting, looking slightly like a man who's being shafted up the ass and having to pretend to enjoy it.

LINTON

Okay, I don't want to be accused of micro managing but I personally do not see that 'I heart Huckabees' should be on the list of dvds suitable for forces entertainment. That self-indulgent crap is not suitable entertainment for combat troops. And where's 'United 93' on here? That should be playing 24/7.

INT. CONSTITUENCY OFFICE. DAY.

Simon is back with Roz.

ROZ

Right, I've got a selection of quotes for you, they're all local firms and none of them is very well respected. Everyone's using Poles, but if you do it could be a PR disaster.

(gets another piece of paper out)

Now, this sceptic tank is also rearing it's pooy head again too.

Simon looks zonked with boredom.

INT. WHITE HOUSE

A.J.

Well Alan, I have been balled out by Linton for allowing I Heart Huckabees on to the troops DVD roster. You know the phrase, "I'm too old for this shit? Well, I'm too young for this shit. I should be out there having a youth. Getting high, making women pregnant. Not that obviously. But something fun. Actually, not fun, it would need to be stimulating. Like cancer research. Or working for Apple.

INT. DFID - DAY

Malcolm is walking through the open-plan office with Judy.

MALCOLM

Any news about Michael?

JUDY

No, no-one's heard from him for a few days now.



MALCOLM

You worried?

JUDY

(yes)

I don't know. Probably just keeping his head down.

MALCOLM

So the rumours are true. Who's the lucky guy?

(then)

When's the new minister and her guy getting here?

JUDY

Should be here now, actually.

MALCOLM

Yeah, should be here. Should be here.

In the background we see Toby getting the last of his things together.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

I like you, you know, Judy.

JUDY

Ha.

MALCOLM

Seriously, I do. I misjudged you. I'm sorry if I might have been a little rude to you.

JUDY

Right. A little rude.

MALCOLM

You get on with it. Business as usual. And you're true to yourself. You and me, we're very similar.

JUDY

Please, please don't ever say that again.

MALCOLM

It's true. Very similar. So, listen, I need someone good with me on this Brussels bun fight ...

The NEW MINISTER and her ADVISOR arrive. They are almost carbon copies of Simon and Toby.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

So, can I rely on you for Brussels?

JUDY

Malcolm, go take a running fuck.

MALCOLM

You didn't say no!

(a beat)

Ah, here they are. Minister.  
Elizabeth. Welcome aboard.

MINISTER

Thanks Malcolm. Looking forward to it.  
War seems to be going 'great guns' at  
the moment.

MALCOLM

Ah, cheeky! Let me take you out for an  
expensive lunch, roast swan and all  
the trimmings, and I'll bring you up  
to speed on the whole Middle East  
situation.

MINISTER

Are you twisting my arm already?

MALCOLM

Aye, but in a friendly, non-breaky  
way.

ADVISOR

(to Judy)

Hi I'm Danny. Dan. I'm Elizabeth's  
chief advisor.

JUDY

Judy Molloy. Senior Press -

ADVISOR

Have I got a desk?

JUDY

Yes, it's that one there.

She points at Toby's desk. The Minister and his advisor  
start making themselves at home.

We stay on Toby now as Malcolm and Judy greet the new  
guys. Toby grabs the last of his things, glances over  
at them, and then we follow him as he heads down the  
front steps.