

In the Loop

by  
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1 EXT. 10 DOWNING STREET LONDON - MORNING 1

MALCOLM TUCKERS, government director of communications,  
is arriving early.

2 INT. NUMBER TEN CORRIDOR/MALCOLM'S OFFICE - MORNING 2

A CIVIL SERVANT hands Malcolm a CD.

CIVIL SERVANT  
Monitoring. All the usual.

MALCOLM  
How did your team do at the weekend?

CIVIL SERVANT  
Yeah, alright. We won.

MALCOLM  
Great.  
(to himself)  
Wanker.

Malcolm reaches his office. His assistant SAM is there.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)  
Sam. Morning.

He hands her the CD and she puts it into a CD player.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)  
Well, pop pickers....what shall we start  
with today? Wonky Ron....or Simon Foster,  
on the PM programme for the BBC.

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

EDDIE MAIR (ON RADIO)  
Well, I'm joined by Simon Foster, the  
Minister for International development.  
Thank you for joining us.

MALCOLM  
Here we go.

EDDIE MAIR  
You've been in the job now for eighteen  
months, do you think you're making  
headway?

SIMON  
(v/o on radio)  
Ah. Yes I do. You'd expect me to say that  
I suppose.

3 INT. DIFED OPEN PLAN OFFICE. DAY 3

Judy Malloy, the Department's Press Officer, is preparing for her minister's arrival.

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. DAY. 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.

5 INT. MALCOLM'S OFFICE. DAY. 5

SIMON (ON RADIO)  
...preventable sickness in many of the poorest countries round the world....and Of course the big one is diarrhoea, which is a major, major issue....

MALCOLM

Diarrhoea? I mean, this is the minister for International Development. He should be talking about food parcels, not fucking arse-spraying mayhem.

SAM laughs.

SIMON (ON RADIO)

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

MALCOLM

Oh yes, say it again. Very good. What is this, The Shitting Forecast?

SIMON (ON RADIO)

...and then hopefully that will strike another blow in the war against preventable diseases.

EDDIE MAIR

You mentioned the word 'war'

MALCOLM is paying extremely close attention now.

MALCOLM

Steady Eddie...

SIMON (ON RADIO)

Against preventable diseases, yes....

EDDIE MAIR (ON RADIO)

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

SIMON (ON RADIO)

Well....personally, I think that war is unforeseeable.

MALCOLM

Sam! Sam!

EDDIE MAIR (ON RADIO)

Unforeseeable?

SIMON (ON RADIO)

Yes.

MALCOLM

NO YOU DO NOT THINK THAT! Sam! I'm going to have to go over to International Development, and pull Simon Foster's fucking hair.

6 EXT. 10 DOWNING STREET LONDON. DAY. 6

MALCOLM emerges into the street. On the phone.

MALCOLM

He did not say "unforseeable". You may have heard him say it, but he did not say that, and that is a fact.

7 INT. DFI OPEN PLAN OFFICE. DAY. 7

JUDY

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

SIMON

On Question Time, you know the funny question they always ask at the end?

JUDY

Yes?

SIMON

I think we should prep that now. I'd like to shine on the funny question, cos I'm a funny guy. With a light touch.

SIMON deposits his briefcase. Judy finds some clippings, returns.

JUDY

There's this guy, he's a property tycoon. He's bought a South Sea Island. It might be something like that, you know. "If you had to spend the rest of your life on a desert island, who would it be with?"

SIMON

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

JUDY

And don't say Mandela, that's...

SIMON

No. Boring. And a bloke.

JUDY

Or Keira Knightley.

SIMON

Well, that's a good idea.

JUDY  
Pervert. Sex. Minister.

SIMON  
I don't think so.

JUDY  
People don't want to know.

EXT. STREET NEAR WHITEHALL. DAY.

Toby and Suzy walking to work together.

SUZY  
Did you take the washing out of the  
machine?

TOBY  
No.

SUZY  
What do you mean, no?

TOBY  
No. I didn't take the washing out of the  
machine.

SUZY  
It's going to go really stale.

TOBY  
It'll be fine.

SUZY  
It's not fine. By the time...

TOBY  
It is fine. I'll wear stale pants.

SUZY  
I don't want to go out with some who  
wears stale pants.

TOBY  
Well, there we go. I could go commando,  
but I don't think that's acceptable in  
government.

SUZY  
(Disgusted)  
Please. So: got everything you need for  
your first day in International  
Development?

TOBY

Oh Yes. It's all here. My massive intellect. And an apple for Simon Foster.

SUZY

Simon Fluster.

TOBY

Don't say that, I'm rebranding him.

SUZY

Well he was crap on the radio last night. He sounded like a chicken with a wasp up its arse.

TOBY

Well I'm going to sort that out. After a week I'll have him sounding like a chicken without a wasp up its arse.

SUZY

Have a good day, good luck honey.

TOBY

Have a good day at the Foreign Office. Try not to annoy Russia.

SUZY

I'll give you a call later. Keep your phone on. Bye.

TOBY

Yeah, alright.

SUZY

Oh and be careful - cars!

They walk off in separate directions.

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? Or, hey I know, I'll write it on a cake, "Your hack husband betrayed you on the 4th of October, and congratulations on the new baby" in those little silver balls. (BEAT) Yeah, maybe best to spike it? Okay. Fuckity-bye!

Toby is now next to Malcolm in the building (or better still, 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)

Yeah, Malcolm Tucker. Can I speak to James Lewis at the PM Programme please?

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.

MALCOLM

(into phone)

No, I'll hold,. what's he waiting for? A  
sex-change?

TOBY

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

MALCOLM

James! Right --Simon Foster? Yeah, very  
funny, the Diarrhoea of a Nobody. Listen,  
we get an easy ride on Tom tomorrow, OK?  
(getting annoyed) No, YOU relax. Tell  
you what, I'll come over a lock you in a  
flotation tank and pump it full of sewage  
until you drown. GET ME FUCKING BRIAN!

TITLE - IN THE LOOP

INT. SIMON'S OFFICE - DAY.

Simon and Judy are still prepping the funny question. ..

SIMON

Paris Hilton?

JUDY

Are you serious?

SIMON

Lily Allen.

JUDY

No. No women.

SIMON

The Olson twins?

Judy gets a call.

JUDY

Hi. Right. I see.

She rings off.

SIMON

(sensing something's up)

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.

(To JUDY)

Give us a minute, will you love?

Judy gets up as Malcolm turns back to SIMON

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

In the words of the late, great Nat King Fucking Cole, 'Unforeseeable, that's what you are..'

JUDY has spotted TOBY.

JUDY

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

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. It means he went  
on the radio and everyone could hear that  
he was rubbish.

Someone goes into Simon's office. As door opens we hear  
heated conversation between Simon and Malcolm.

MALCOLM [IN OFFICE]

You sounded like a panicky chimp trapped  
in a washing machine.

Back inside Simon's office.

SIMON

Come on, Malcolm, he asked me for a  
personal opinion.

MALCOLM

Oh why didn't you say? I mean, he asked  
you. Fuck. Of course, that explains it.  
Yeah. Say, if he'd asked you to fucking  
black up, or give him your PIN number, or  
shot yourself, would you have done that  
as well.

SIMON

I would have blacked up. It was the radio  
and no-one would have known.

MALCOLM

Yeah. Very good.

SIMON

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

MALCOLM

That is not our line, alright? Walk the  
fucking line. Look.

(MORE)

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

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

Not the 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 yourself.

(to Judy)

Did I not just tell you to fuck off and yet you're still here?

JUDY

That's correct.

MALCOLM

(to Toby)

Hey, foetus boy. Lesson One: If I tell you to fuck off what do you do?

TOBY

Fuck off?

MALCOLM

You'll go far. Now fuck off.

TOBY

Right.

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? We've been prepping Question Time.

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? This is a government department, not a fucking Jane Austen novel. 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 works for Tower Hamlets and believe me, those kids make you sound like Angela Lansbury.

MALCOLM

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

SIMON

But...okay, Judy's lubricated horse cock aside for one 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 fucking declaring war. Do you want to fucking declare war?

SIMON

I'm a cabinet minister. I didn't get here by screwing up every media appearance I ever had.

MALCOLM

Write this down. It's neither foreseeable nor undorseable.

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 on this fucking 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...

MALCOLM

Purview, Marie Antoinette? Weel listen, darling, why don't you fucking scuttle off back to fucking Cranford and play around with your tea and cake and horse cocks. Let them eat cock! (TO TOBY) You, Ron Weasley -- you do it.

Malcolm heads out.

13 INT. FO MICHAELS OFFICE - DAY

13

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)

You needn't worry about the Canadians. They're just happy to be there. (Pause) Yes, well, they always look surprised when they're invited.

SUZY

Listen, shall I just give Toby a quick call about the Simon Foster thing?

Suzy dials.

14 INT. DFID/INT FOREIGN OFFICE MICHAELS OFFICE

14

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

All a bit manic. It was never like this at Agriculture. People tend not to swear so much about wheat. Apart from farmers. They swear about everything.

SUZY

(to Michael, re. the music)

Can you turn that down a bit?

(to Toby)

Look, I've got a leg up for you. I think we could get Simon into the big meeting with Karen Clark?

TOBY

Right - Karen Clark from...is that the woman who went round Britain in a coracle for leukemia?

SUZY

Karen Clark, US Assistant Secretary of State?

TOBY

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

SUZY

Hang on, Michael wants to say something.

MICHAEL

Meat.

SUZY

Meat.

MICHAEL

Meat! 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. So Simon is...you know those polystyrene peanut things they use to pack electrical goods? Sort of one of those. But you might not want to tell him that. I ought to go. I love you.

Judy's hovering nearby.

TOBY

Likewise. Affirmative on that.

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 an idiot. He organised 3,000 tents and sanitation packs for Rwanda.

TOBY

Right...is that not...?

JUDY

They needed them in Luanda. Angola. It's been in the news.

(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

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

I did it through 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?

TOBY

Two 'e's.

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.

SIMON

I think I can work a room, okay? I'm not a room virgin.

Simon, Toby and Judy are going through security. Suzy and Michael come to meet them.

MICHAEL

Simon.

SIMON

Michael.

A very young man approaches Michael. Looks like he is 19.  
He is CHAD.

CHAD

Ah, Michael? I'm Chad.

MICHAEL

Hello?

CHAD

We'd like a dual horse-shoe formation for the meeting set-up - an enclave for Ms Clark, an enclave for the Pentagon delegation. First names acceptable to all parties and politely we request the presence of both carbonated and non-carbonated waters.

SUZY

Right.

CHAD

Thanks so much.

He walks purposefully off.

MICHAEL

My God. Who was that, Young Lankenstein?

JUDY

Oh he'll be running something relatively major. They're all kids in Washington. It's like Bugsy Malone, but with real guns.

Chad's dual horse-shoe is packed with people. The room's pretty much full.

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?

JUDY

I think the meeting's starting.

It is.

SIMON

Well, quickly then, swap.

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

Are people thinking that? That's -- a bit  
hardcore.

He cranes again 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

The committee feels a much quicker  
deployment is possible.

KAREN

Which committee?

BOB ADRIANO

(covering)

This has been discussed in a number of  
committees. If I said one committee...

KAREN

You did.

ADRIANO

Then that was a slip of the tongue

KAREN

Have you accidentally alluded to some  
secret committee? A war committee?

MICHAEL

If I can interject here, I'm aware we're  
pushed for time. I'd like to move us on  
agenda-wise. 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. Isn't that right Simon?

SIMON

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

SIMON sits down. Then stands back up.

SIMON (CONT'D)

But that doesn't mean that what I said won't ever change. It's not immutable. Or mutable. It's an ongoing ...

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?

He's ended the debate.

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.

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.

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

You could not write anything that clashes more violently with the current climate than you the one you wrote if you were trying, and it almost seems like you were trying.

LIZA

I wasn't trying, believe me.

CHAD

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?

CHAD

Ooh.

LIZA

See, you're an only child, aren't you?

CHAD

You bring this up whenever you run out of  
arguments. I don't see how my parents'  
limited reproductive abilities reflects  
badly on me. I'm the sperm that made it.

Liza walks off, over to Karen.

CHAD (CONT'D)

Have fun with your career kryptonite.

21 INT. FOREIGN OFFICE LOBBY - DAY

21

SIMON

(re : Karen talking  
conspiratorially to Liza  
downstairs)

What's that all about? It looks  
important.

22 INT. FOREIGN OFFICE LOBBY - DAY

22

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

Well, I think that one, that one's always  
been there, right? I'm not sure. Have you  
got any painkillers?

KAREN

Oh, don't look at my teeth.

23 INT. FOREIGN OFFICE UPSTAIRS MEZZANINE - DAY

23

JUDY

(trying to earwig)

Sshhh!

24 INT. FOREIGN OFFICE LOBBY - DAY 24

KAREN  
(looking up at the Brits, off  
Simon's smile)  
I don't want to risk a dentist here.

25 INT. FOREIGN OFFICE UPSTAIRS MEZZANINE - DAY 25

The US delegation are heading off

TOBY  
(shouting)  
Hey Liza!

LIZA  
Oh ... Hi ... hi?

She knows him but can't immediately place him.

TOBY  
Toby? It's Toby.

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.

JUDY  
(re the typing gesture)  
What are you doing? You look like you're practicing baby massage.

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.

26 INT. FOREIGN OFFICE. DAY.

26

KAREN

Linton has set up a secret war committee,  
I just know it. I mean, Linton is an  
absolute lunatic, Liza. He is dangerous.  
The voices in his head are now singing  
barbershop together.

27 EXT. FOREIGN OFFICE - DAY

27

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?

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.

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.

(CHANGE SCENE ORDER - GOES AFTER SC. 29G)

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

SIMON

(under his breath)

Fuck Fuck Fuck Fuck Fuck.

(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. You should go

(stupid voice)

'Look! Train! There's a Fucking 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?

29 INT. NUMBER 10. DAY.

29

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. I don't like finding out about people I work with via the news, unless they've died. Get over here now so we can address at least one of those issues.

30 INT. NUMBER TEN - DAY

30

Judy, Simon and Toby are walking towards Malcolm's office.

TOBY

The thing is. On the war. With your profile..

(uncertain, but fuck it, he is a senior policy aide to a cabinet minister)

... Maybe we should - get it out there? That the war is a resigning issue for you.

SIMON

You can't say it's a resigning issue. Because you then have to resign.

JUDY

You are having a really great first day you know that?

They walk in, Malcolm's there.

MALCOLM

(shouting)

You are supposed to be a Cabinet Minister. You are supposed to be officer class. Don't do this. Don't make waves.

SIMON

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

MALCOLM

You're against talking up the war? Is that why you said, "Climb the mountain of conflict"?

(MORE)

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

Do you know what you sounded like? You sounded like a fucking Nazi Julie Andrews.

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.

Simon makes to leave with them.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

There's only two people in the White Stripes.

Toby and Judy leave and wait outside the door.

MALCOLM (CONT'D, TO SIMON)

(CONT'D)

Look, I admire you, I really do. Making a stand. So, I take it I can tell the PM you don't want to go to Washington?

SIMON

To where...?

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 your stand...

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

Well, when you go to America, 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 live hand-grenade as a paperweight. True story.

SIMON

Oh right. I won't talk to him.

MALCOLM

Talk to as few people as possible. That would be best for you.

31 INT. STATE DEPARTMENT - DAY

31

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

KAREN

Okay - so, priorities are: take a shower, get me on Linton's War Committee, get me a dental appointment. Not necessarily in that order.

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....have we declared war on California yet?

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 your 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 today.

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

Because Linton is not going to call it the big horrible scary war committee...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. 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?

(as she leaves)

My teeth hurt like hell.

LIZA

(to herself)

Sick of hearing about the teeth...

Liza goes to her desk, picks up her landline.

LIZA (cont'd) (CONT'D)

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. Would it possible to slow-track it? Well can we create one?

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.

BOB ADRIANO

I could request the glass be frosted?

LINTON

(as if Bob Adriano brought it  
up)

Frosting is for cakes, Bob. Now. What  
happened in London?

BOB ADRIANO

Generally positive. Two glitches. Karen  
flagged a report by one of her staffers -  
Liza. 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 - birdcalls?  
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.  
In the land of truth, my friend, the man  
with one fact is king. 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. I think that's the more accurate version, right?

LATER. Bob Adriano is going through the minutes with Linton.

LINTON (CONT'D)

I don't like this section. 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 I like this.

BOB ADRIANO

Thank you.

LINTON

Let's say everyone agreed with this.

BOB ADRIANO

Excellent.

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

I could work with that, definitely. Plus she can be a bit... you know?  
"Everything's a bit shit isn't it?"

SIMON

"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.

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 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.

LINTON  
What is that, Karen

KAREN  
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 have misheard.

KAREN  
I misheard the word committee?

LINTON  
Maybe it was another word. Like Khomeini.

KAREN  
You're sitting on a new Khomeini?

LINTON  
Possibly. There are a lot of words,  
Karen. Kansas City. Kitty.

BOB ARIANO  
Itty.

LINTON  
Itty is not a word, Bob.

CHAD  
Commissary?

LINTON  
Thank you, James

CHAD  
Chad.

KAREN  
Ok. Why don't you just recap for me all  
the committees that you're currently  
sitting on?

LINTON

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

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

KAREN

Oh don't try to change the subject  
Linton.

LIZA

(Looking at Karen)  
Oh no. Holy Mother of....

Everyone is just looking at her.

LINTON

I don't mean to be rude Karen but that is  
a tad... repulsive. I can't concentrate  
on what you're saying. You have blood  
coming out of your teeth and that's not  
right.

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

KAREN

Okay, Liza come with me.

CHAD

(aside, to Liza)  
Go, Buffy - you belong to the vampire  
queen now.

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

LINTON

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

35

INT. STATE DEPARTMENT - CORRIDOR/BATHROOM - DAY

35

They head into the bathroom.

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

KAREN

Where are 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?

36

INT. STATE DEPARTMENT - DAY

36

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.

LIZA

So listen, Bob, there's something I really want to tell you. We're having a hunk of the month competition, and I just didn't want you to be feel...objectified in any way....and

BOB ADRIANO

(hopes it might be a come-on?)

Oh really?

LIZA

Karen knows about the Future Planning Committee.

Bob Adriano looks shocked, tries to cover it up.

BOB ADRIANO

I have no idea what you're talking about.

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

Simon and Toby walking past the queues at US immigration, they are being ushered through a separate channel by airport workers and diplomatic staff. As they're escorted Simon and Toby catch each other's eye.

TOBY

This is cool.

SIMON

Don't be callow Toby. We're on official business.

A Homeland Security official ushers them through.

SIMON (CONT'D) (cont'd)

This is a little bit fucking cool.

But then they reach the end of security and find themselves dumped into the same arrivals area as everyone else. They walk through.

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?

TOBY

Me? No. I mean, Judy will have got someone to do it.

He calls on his phone.

TOBY (CONT'D)

Hi Judy? Yeah sorry if you're in bed, but we're here and...

(looks through papers)

Just can't see the car? Wondered what the car situation was?

Intercut with Judy in bed at her flat.

JUDY

What car situation?

TOBY

The airport car?

JUDY

That's not my job Toby. That's Robbie's job to book it, your job to check it and confirm it. Alright? Good night.

The call is over.

TOBY

(to Simon)

Yeah. She's really embarrassed. Sounds like a snarl up her end. I'll see what we can do?

He's looking panicked - then.

TOBY (CONT'D)

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.

41 INT. LIMO - DAY

41

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.

42 EXT. WASHINGTON HOTEL - DAY

42

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

43 INT. WASHINGTON HOTEL - DAY

43

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

TOBY  
 It's like a hangar for businessmen.

44 INT. WASHINGTON HOTEL ROOM

44

Simon and Toby enter with the porter. He hangs around for a tip.

SIMON

Toby, have you....?

TOBY

(searching his pockets)

I haven't been to an ATM yet...I've only got English....

SIMON finds two crumbled up one dollar bills and presses them into the porter's hand.

TOBY (CONT'D)

It's supposed to be a dollar a bag.

Porter leaves. TOBY goes to window, opens curtain. The Capitol it just visisble through a building site.

TOBY (CONT'D)

Technically, you've got a Capitol Hill view.

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.

GENERAL MILLER

And bestiality.

KAREN

I'd forgotten about that. Are you still allergic to that dog?

GENERAL MILLER

Yes, yes. I wake up and my eyes are closed and my head is swollen and I look like a giant ball sack.

KAREN

Oh my god, they do have medication for that.....but a beautiful ball sack, though. 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.

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. Just be careful. Don't mess stuff up.

They sit down on the child's bed. Miller grabs a crayon.

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)

Europe, Asia.

(He types)

And the contingency already deployed.

(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-huh. Tomorrow I've got to meet these Brits. Simon Foster. He's the guy that said war was unforeseeable, and I think he could very useful on the committee because he could internationalise the dissent.

GENERAL MILLER

You're going to use him as a little meat puppet.

INT. WASHINGTON HOTEL - TOBY'S ROOM.

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

SIMON

Tobes. Hi. 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. 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.

47

CONTINUED:

47

TOBY

No?

48

INT. GEORGETOWN PARTY. EVE.

48

Karen on the phone.

KAREN

Liza, where are you?

LIZA

Waving at you.

KAREN

Make yourself more visible.

LIZA

I'm practically on top of you.

They meet.

KAREN

You can stop talking on your phone now. Look, I have to leave. Phone Simon Foster's guy. Tell them to come to the war committee. I'll give them some face time around ten o'clock. It'll be coffee and Danish...tea..they're going to want tea. Tea and sympathy. Tea and a handjob, whatever.

LIZA

Ok.

49

EXT. GEORGETOWN STREET - EVENING.

49

LIZA

(on phone, deep breath)

Hey Toby! It's Liza Weld. Do you remember? What you guys doing tonight?

50

INT. WASHINGTON HOTEL - EVENING

50

Toby and Simon are lying on separate beds in their underpants watching a shark documentary. Toby is the on the phone.

TV NARRATOR

There is still a great deal that is unknown about great white shark mating behaviour...

TOBY

Well it is unbelievably hectic.

SIMON

You can definitely spot the female ones  
can't you?!

INT. WASHINGTON HOTEL BATHROOM - EVENING

Toby's ending his call with Liza.

TOBY

Attending the war committee. That's big.  
I mean, I have been on a committee  
before. "Challenges for the cheese  
market" - that was a big one...  
but...yes, sure I'd love a drink. Forty  
minutes? Great.

(he does that mobile thing  
where people sign off by  
repeatedly saying 'bye' with  
increasing speed but  
diminishing volume)

Bye bye bye-bye-bye-bye-bye bye.

He hangs up. Very excited. Starts getting ready to see  
Liza. Checks his hair in the mirror. Not quite right. He  
opens a pot of hair gel, takes a scoop and rubs it in his  
hands, ready to put it in his hair. His phone goes again.

Doesn't know what to do. Doesn't want to pick up the  
phone with gelly hands. No time to wash it off. Grabs a  
towel and picks up the phone holding the towel. He  
struggles to press the answer button. Puts the towel-  
covered phone to his ear.

TOBY (CONT'D)

Hello? Hi? Hello?

He can't hear through the towel. Tries to adjust it.

TOBY (CONT'D)

Matty, hi, How's CNN? yes -- sorry? Do I  
sound muffled?

Can't mate. Yeah, Liza Weld's's got us on  
to Linton's Future Planning Committee in  
the morning. The war committee, to you  
and me. So I'm prepping...what? Yes,  
Future Planning Committee is the war  
committee. You don't know that? I thought  
you worked for CNN? Or is that Cartoon  
Network News?

INT. WASHINGTON HOTEL - CONTINUOUS

Simon has just answered the door to MALCOLM.

SIMON

Come in....I just wasn't expecting you to be here. Physically here. Obviously, you're always in my heart.

MALCOLM

I'm here, I'm there, I'm fucking everywhere. I am the egg-man.

SIMON

Have you come to insult me in a different time zone?

INT. WASHINGTON HOTEL. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Toby still on the phone.

TOBY

No, off out now for a drink with her...yeah, yeah, ha-di-ha, but nothing's going to happen there. Little Toby's staying in his hammock tonight.

Toby checks himself in the mirror.

INT. WASHINGTON HOTEL - CONTINUOUS

Toby comes out of the bathroom.

TOBY

Simon, I've managed to get us on the...

Malcolm is suddenly in his face.

MALCOLM

Hello!!

TOBY

(heart attack)  
Fuck! Malcolm! Jesus.

MALCOLM

You're meant to shit yourself in there. Not out here.

TOBY

Right.

(to Simon)

I've got us on to Linton's Future Planning Committee in the morning.

SIMON

Okay. What's that?

TOBY

It's the war committee.

MALCOLM

What? The actual....war committee?

TOBY

Yeah, Liza says that...

MALCOLM

Who's going to be there?

TOBY

Karen Clark, Liza, me and Simon.

(off Simon's look)

Simon and me.

MALCOLM

Who else is going -- Jimmy Osmond?  
Gwyneth Paltrow? You've been invited to a  
diversion. The real committee, the real  
thing, that's happening at The White  
House.

Toby picks his jacket up.

TOBY

Yeah well, I'll text you the details  
because I'm going to go out. for A quick  
drink with some State Department bods.

MALCOLM

Don't mention this to the press, ok?  
Don't mention it to anyone. Because if  
the press get a whiff there's a war  
committee, even a cardboard one, every  
fucker in this town is going to turn up  
and try and get on it. So no matter what  
gay bar you end up, keep it schtumm.

Malcolm flicks the TV over to a news channel.

SIMON

I was watching that.

Malcolm looks at him.

MALCOLM

I have to have a word with you. You might  
want to slip into your negligee.

Toby heads out.

55

INT. BLACK CAT INDIE CLUB - NIGHT

55

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  
 (beat, looks at her.)  
 You're worried.

LIZA  
 (she's been mulling on something else entirely)  
 It's Pwip Pip.

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'. So, 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.

INT. LIZA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

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.

INT. WASHINGTON HOTEL - EVENING

Malcolm is still in Simon's room. He's texting. Simon sneaks the remote and flips from the news back to the shark doc. Malcolm, without looking up, picks up the remote and flicks back to the news.

MALCOLM

We are under enormous pressure Simon. Karen will want you to say, 'war is unforeseeable'. Linton will want you to talk up 'climbing the mountain of conflict'. You say nothing, okay? You can't swing both ways, you're not David fucking Bowie.

SIMON

Right. Can I go to bed now?

MALCOLM

No, we're going to run that through.

SIMON

Am I being tortured?

58 INT. LIZA'S APARTMENT - DAY 58

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.

59 EXT. LIZA'S APARTMENT BLOCK - DAY 59

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 ...

60 EXT. WASHINGTON STREET 60

Toby running.

61 INT. KAREN CLARK'S OFFICE. DAY. 61

Karen, Liza and Simon are making small talk.

LIZA

Marcel's is good.

SIMON

Uh-huh.

KAREN

You should go to La Taverna, the Greek place. It's fantastic.

LIZA

They set fire to the cheese. It's a lot of fun.

SIMON

It sounds a lot of fun.

KAREN

There's the aerospace museum, the National Gallery.

SIMON

Do they set fire to the paintings?

Polite laughter. Toby comes in.

TOBY

Hi I'm sorry I'm so late.

KAREN

(re Toby)

And this is your guy?

SIMON

Yes. He's, you know, among my guys.

Toby shoots Simon a look.

KAREN

(turning to Toby)

I'm Karen. And I believe you already know Liza.

TOBY

(she can't know?)

Yes. From college, in England.

KAREN

Pulled an all-nighter?

Toby looks to Liza for guidance. She's not giving any.

TOBY

Yes, I, uh, got led astray.

KAREN

Oh who by?

TOBY

Uh, well I ran into - people. There's some people from - the MoD over and ...

KAREN

Not Penny Grayling?

TOBY

Er - no, another - gang?

KAREN

Right. Wow. I didn't know you had so many delegations in town.

TOBY  
(weakly)  
The British are coming!

KAREN  
Well, I need to just check out a couple  
of things ... this seems like a good  
point to break things up.

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  
(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.

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.

STAFFER

((hand over phone, calls over))

Hey Liza, I've got another call about the Committee from Senator Crudden's office, he wants in too.

LIZA

What is going on here? Fuck. Why's this my problem? Toby you sure you didn't do bad? You didn't mention the committee to anyone else?

TOBY

Nada. Nada.. Bad-da. Nada-bada bing-bong ding-dang-dong.

(beat, she looks at him)

I have no idea what I'm saying anymore I think I really am still quite drunk.

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. Wafting. Bisque. 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. 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.

Malcolm runs out of the White House.

JUDY power walking/jogging on the phone to MALCOLM.

MALCOLM

(OVV)

Where is the fucking war committee meeting?

JUDY

Simon's going to the war committee I thought you knew?

MALCOLM

(OVV)

I thought I was going to the war committee? Tell me where the fuck it's happening!

JUDY

It's on the 7th floor in room 712.

(Beat)

Oh Malcolm, do you like how I'm telling you what's going on where you are?

MALCOLM

(OVV)

Well let me tell you what's going on where you are sweet heart, a certain vinegar faced manipulative cowbag is about to find that she's out of a fucking job...

JUDY hangs up.

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.

They follow Karen around a corner and she disappears into a set of doors, they follow her through, but it is the vestibule before a toilet door. Karen looks at them.

KAREN

Hello?

SIMON

Hello.

KAREN

Are you joining me or shall I see you there?

SIMON

See you there. I don't need to ... do any of the things you need to go in there to do, so I'll just see you there.

Karen goes into the toilet. Simon and Toby head off looking sheepish.

As they head out of the vestibule. There is a gaggle of Karen hangers-on. Chad-type staffers looking to get in with Karen.

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.

GENERAL MILLER

Hi, I'm in seat 204, row W. Will I be able to see the big screen from there? Oh, and can I get one of those big pointy foam hands with 'Go, Monster Trucks!' written on it?

LINTON

The general is on rare form, very rare form.

Toby spots his hero.

TOBY

There he is. General George Miller.

SIMON

(And...?)

Right, yep. There he is.

But the room is rapidly filling with bodies and din. More and more people are turning up. Toby's view of Miller is obscured.

TOBY

That's the second time in 24 hours I've had a partially obscured view of him.

INT. SMALL COMMITTEE ROOM. DAY.

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

LINTON

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.

EXT. WASHINGTON STREET NR STATE DEPARTMENT - DAY

Malcolm is legging it down the street.

INT. LARGER COMMITTEE ROOM 720 - DAY

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 Mulder and Scully trying to find out about this committee.

LINTON

Well, you're both here now. John and Yoko.

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.

General Miller is sitting next to Karen. They're watching Linton having angry words with Adriano.

GENERAL MILLER

Look at Adriano. Poor fuck. He looks like he's with his Daddy: "Sorry, Bob, you're adopted. From a couple with hereditary heart defects."

KAREN

"And your mother only ever kept your baby clothes for the purposes of voodoo."

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, that boy from The Shining. 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.

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

70 EXT. WASHINGTON STREET NR STATE DEPARTMENT - DAY 70  
Malcolm running like a madman.

71 INT. LARGER COMMITTEE ROOM 720 - DAY 71  
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.

72 INT. STATE DEPARTMENT. 7TH FLOOR - DAY 72  
Malcolm is running down the corridor. He runs into Room 712. It's empty.

MALCOLM

Bitch!

73 INT. BIG COMMITTEE ROOM. DAY. 73  
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 Britain we have a saying for complicated situations such as this, which is that it's

(he can't believe he's going to say this)

'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.

74

INT. STATE DEPARTMENT - DAY

74

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

So - do you want to go out and get some lunch?

CHAD

Are you kidding? Lunchtime is work time.

TOBY

Yes, what an incredibly depressing motto. You see you're playing into the hands of the French saying that.

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 as an encouraging slogan on the wall.

TOBY (CONT'D)

(looking in)

Jesus.

CHAD

Yeah work hours are too valuable - for networking. You gotta get in at like 6 work till 8.30 Then start making those connections baby.

(he clicks his fingers rapidly, annoyingly)

Emails and admin at lunch. See if you can play some strategic racquetball through the pm. Then in the six till midnight slot chow down on some serious policy work.

TOBY

Right. And what - friends, family, novels, sexual inter-course you're going to save those for your thirties and forties?

75

INT. STATE DEPARTMENT. CORRIDOR/BATHROOM - DAY

75

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

Mr Tucker, isn't it? Hello again.

MALCOLM

You might pull this kind of stunt on some young wank fresh up from Oklahoma, happy to be getting his hookers paid for by tobacco lobbyists, but not me.

LINTON

What seems to be the problem?

MALCOLM

I've just had a briefing from a 9-year-old finalist in Americas got talent. I think he may have been a ventriloquist. Or possibly the fucking dummie.

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 Alphabeti 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...

Linton pulls away, starts walking off.

LINTON

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'?

SIMON

Well it just means...I guess, I don't know what it means.

MALCOLM

'All roads lead to Munich'?

Malcolm is pissed off, looks around. He is not the centre of attention. He's feeling cut out.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

Come on let's go, get back to the hotel, nick as many coat hangers as you can. We're off back to London.

Malcolm, Toby, and Simon are heading towards their car. They see the Washington Monument in the distance.

SIMON

It's beautiful.

TOBY

If you pull it out, America deflates.

MALCOLM

Don't mock that! The closest you'll come to getting one of those is buying a Toblerone.

(Looks at Blackberry)

Mark Hadley's dad's died.

SIMON

Oh no. Should we send Mark a card?

MALCOLM

Nah, I'll send him a ouija board so they can keep in touch.

SIMON

So what are we getting back to? Apart from a nice cup of tea and some knife crime?

TOBY

Constituency surgery in Northampton.

SIMON

Great, meeting my constituents. It's like being Simon Cowell, but without the ability to say, 'Fuck off, you're mental.'

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 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?  
(to constituents)

Afternoon!

A couple of the waiting constituents respond. They go through to another little office.

ROZ

Right, here you go, you're pretty booked up - there's a list on the desk. I'm just going to have a look at the guttering.

SIMON

I'm just back from America, so it was pretty tough to make it up here - but you know. That's me.

ROZ

Of course. Right. How was the President?

She's heading off.

SIMON

Good actually.

TOBY

And what was the White House like?

SIMON

Blown up by spaceships.

INT. STATE DEPARTMENT - DAY

General Miller & Aides up stairs

INT. STATE DEPARTMENT - DAY

General Miller (and an aide or two?) marches into Linton and Karen's section of State. He's got a meeting scheduled. He's a man on a mission.

He marches straight past Bob Adriano ...

MILLER

(by way of explanation)  
Twelve-thirty.

BOB ADRIANO

Um, hold on General ...

And into Linton's office.

But - it's empty.

MILLER

What the fuck?

BOB ADRIANO

Yeah, Secretary Linton Barwick wanted me to let you know his last - meeting looks like it's over-running. He sends apologies.

Miller stands there for a beat. Very very annoyed.

MILLER

He stood me up? They're better be a fucking good reason. Like he's dead. That is just plain fucking rude. I mean, how would he like it if I just did a big hairy shit on his desk?

BOB ADRIANO

You're very w-welcome to wait, we have newspapers and periodicals?

He gestures to a seating area. Miller picks up a magazine. Rolls it up, looks at Bob Adriano. Might Miller, possibly, hit him?

MILLER

Yeah well excuse me if at this time of national crisis I don't sit with a thumb up my ass flipping through Time magazine eating pop tarts?

(he heads off fast - not quite sure where he's going, calls back as he goes)

Tell him to call me. But he might not get through cos I'm a *fucking* busy man.

He finds himself heading into Karen's office.

It's empty. He stands there for a beat. Shuts the door.

Looks around. Picks up a hole punch. Kicks the couch.

Karen enters, surprised to find him there.

KAREN

Hey, what is it?

MILLER

Yeah - can I hang around in here for a while?

KAREN

Er. Sure. Why?

MILLER

Do I need a fucking reason?

(beat, calming down)

Linton's playing me like a fucking turkey drumstick on a big bass drum.

KAREN

Look, I was going to order food, do you want to eat.

MILLER

Yeah. Order us some cute mammals. Alive. A lamb or a piglet so I can snap it's fucking neck.

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

Toby is in the corner working on a laptop.

MRS MCDAIRMID

My point is - if the septic tank - if we didn't know it was there in the first place how can we be responsible for it now?

SIMON

Yes. No. I understand.

MRS MCDAIRMID

It's under the communal drive. Why should we get it pumped?

ROZ

(looking through the  
paperwork)

Well it's not a council septic 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. Nor should you be treated like one. Okay, Mrs McDairmid. Leave it with me. I'm sure there must be a way through this. Alright?

Mrs Kendrick heads out.

ROZ

Er, Colin Lowe.

SIMON

Jesus. Still on about bendy buses?  
(thinks)

No. Tell him no. What else?

Toby closes the laptop.

ROZ

Pauline Michaelson's son about the constituency office wall.

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)

Later. General Miller is with Karen. They're surrounded  
by cartons of Chinese take-out.

GENERAL MILLER

(flicking through Liza's  
paper)

See, this is the problem with civilians  
wanting to go to war. When you've been  
there you don't want to go back unless  
you absolutely have to. It's like France.

KAREN

(re the paper in it's red  
folder)

You finally read Liza's paper?

GENERAL MILLER

Course, I read it. I'm a voracious  
reader. I'm the fucking Gore Vidal of the  
Pentagon.

(pointing at a spring roll)

You don't want that?

KAREN

Yes I want that.

(points to various packages)

I want that, that, that, that and that.

Those I don't care about. And these let's pack up and drop on North Korea.

GENERAL MILLER

(beat, reads)

Someone should leak this.

Outside Liza sees them discussing her paper animatedly. It doesn't look good to her.

KAREN

Someone maybe shaped a little bit like you.

GENERAL MILLER

Me? Are you kidding?

KAREN

You have more gravitas.

GENERAL MILLER

Exactly. I'm too senior. I can't leak. Leaking is for people like your Liza and the Boy called It out there.

(eats)

It's insane. Not only is the case against war incredibly strong, the case *for* is caveated to hell.

(reading)

"Most analysts believe the state is looking to expand aggressively beyond its borders..." Then here in the caveats, the only source is 'Ice Man' - a *possible alcoholic* - who's probably called that cos he gets through ten bags / *icebergs* a day in his fucking vodka tonics. INR say we can't trust him. That's us disputing our own findings. Has Linton read this?

KAREN

I'm not sure he reads. You're a General. Have him killed.

GENERAL MILLER

You see this is why we never got together. That and the hobo teeth.

Simon is talking to Karen.

INTERCUT PHONE CALL:

KAREN

This is a private call right --  
unrecorded, secure line etc etc?

SIMON

Well, yeah. I mean, your lot are probably  
getting it somehow, but our lot shouldn't  
be.

Paul Michaelson calls over.

PAUL MICHAELSON

I'm still here, Simon.

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.

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.

Toby's still talking to Paul the wall guy.

TOBY

Paul, look, mate...

PAUL MICHAELSON

Patronising.

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.

Roz takes over.

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.

Roz leads Paul away

SIMON

That guy's a bit full-beam.

TOBY

Full-beam?

SIMON

Yeah, full-beam. Headlights.

(he opens his eyes wide to show what he means)

I kept thinking, is he going to nut me. He appears not to be nutting me, but he might well nut me.

TOBY

So what did Karen Clark want?

SIMON

Do you think I came over as weak on the committee over there?

TOBY

Well, uh, no, of course not. I suppose -

Simon's phone goes again. He winces picks up.

INTERCUT PHONE CALL:

KAREN

Also - the war committee got leaked, and that leak came from your department.

SIMON

I find that difficult to believe.

KAREN

I want action to be taken. I want a head.  
On a plate. To go.

PHONE CALL ENDS:

She hangs up.

SIMON

(to the phone)

You don't work here. You're not my boss.  
Fuck off. You can't make me sack people.

Simon is getting into his office - he and Toby are back from the constituency office.

SIMON

We need to talk in my office.

JUDY

About what?

SIMON

(patronising)

I think you know.

A land line is ringing in the open plan office. Judy picks up. Simon has gone into his office and has assumed the bollocking position.

JUDY

(taking call)

Sorry, this is the wrong extension. I'll put you through now.

Judy punches a button on her phone. Toby's land line starts ringing. Simon comes out.

SIMON

(walking backwards into his office)

Come, come into my office.

JUDY

Why? Why do you need to see me?

TOBY

(to Judy)

What's this?

JUDY

It's the mad man about the wall.

TOBY

The war?

JUDY

The wall.

SIMON

(following her out,  
exasperated)

Can you come into my office so I can tell  
you off?

Toby answers his phone, resigned.

TOBY

Hello. Can I help you?

Malcolm sweeps in, straight past Toby, slapping him on  
the back of the head as he passes.

TOBY (CONT'D)

You fucker.

(to phone)

No, not you.

Malcolm pushes Judy back into Simon's office as she's  
leaving it, Simon behind Judy walks backwards to his  
desk, the three of them in a line. Malcolm shuts the door  
and unleashes a torrent of abuse we can't hear.

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:

TOBY

What can I do for you Paul?

PAUL MICHAELSON

These 'temporary buttresses' you got put  
up.

TOBY

Right?

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)

Mum, how old are you? I want to tell the  
newspaper guy.

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.

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.

Toby can still see Malcolm going ballistic at Simon and  
Judy in Simon's office.

87

INT. STATE DEPARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

87

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.

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.

ABBEY

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. Or I will call security and have you escorted off the premises via the window.

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.

LIZA

Shit.

Karen kicks a waste-paper basket.

KAREN

I should be told this fucking stuff!  
I'm going into Linton's office and  
pulling the pin on his grenade.

LIZA

Don't do that.

KAREN

I'm fucking joking.

LIZA

Oh.

KAREN

Why didn't you know about this?

LIZA

Well since I created the budget deficit  
the President doesn't tend to run things  
by me anymore.

KAREN

Don't get funny with me. I am not in the  
mood.

LIZA

No. I'm getting that.

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.

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, 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.

TOBY

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

JAMIE

They're builders. What did you expect?!  
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 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

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

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.

(MORE)

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

Bottom line, is that the President is going to the UN, and the PM would like us to join him. This will be the voe to commence military action. 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. 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.

(MORE)

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

He's a grade A fucking pussy and he knows you have similar concerns and he wants your input on this. Yeah?

SIMON

Where's the intelligence? Where's the hard evidence?

MALCOLM

Listen, We've got evidence harder than a diamond dildo. We have intelligence so deep and hard it would fucking puncture your kidneys. 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)

...now, certain box-lickers are sitting on it. But you're going to see it, because the PM regards you as a key player now.

Judy's mobile goes.

JUDY

Judy Molloy? (BEAT) Ten minutes. Thanks.  
(to Simon)

Prime Minister wants to speak to you in ten minutes, Simon. He want you to go the UN.

Malcolm's heading out.

MALCOLM

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

Malcolm leaves. A beat.

SIMON

(shouting to Malcolm)

Show me the evidence, Malcolm, that's my fucking bottom line.

JUDY

So do you still want...nods and winks?

Simon nods a little nod. Then shakes his head slightly. Then nods a slight nod again.

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.

MICHAEL

Cheers everyone. Here's to surviving another day.

They clink glasses.

JUDY

My theory is Malcolm built Jamie 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. I'm just going to -

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 cuts in.

SUZY

You've got a text.

TOBY

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

SUZY

So, Liza. You shagged her?

TOBY

What? No.

SUZY

(to Judy)  
Did you know my flakey boyfriend has been getting his flakey end away?

JUDY

I don't know anything about his flakey end.

TOBY

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

JUDY

I should go.

SUZY

You haven't finished your drink.

JUDY

No. I mainly have.

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?

JUDY

I should go.

SUZY

Actually I'll go.

She goes. Toby goes after her.

MICHAEL

(a beat)

Shall we stay?

JUDY

I should go. I've got a long walk ahead  
of me. But that'll keep me going.

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.

TOBY

(beat)

Well, if I'm leaving, I'm taking my brie.

(MORE)

TOBY (CONT'D)

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.

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 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 the 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, your flute, and your eighth of dope and leave me the fuck alone.

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

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, I..(trying to change the subject)  
where's Malcolm?

INT. AIRPORT ARRIVALS - DAY

Judy, Simon and Toby are walking past a baggage carousel.

SIMON

(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. She has this  
air of moral righteousness that inhibits  
you from... saying anything morally  
wrong.

INT. LIMO - DAY

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.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

Do you know, if I could I'd punch you  
into total paralysis.

97

INT. UN BUILDING - DAY

97

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

Hello, gentlemen, Sir Jonathan Tutt. This is it. The United Nations.

SIMON

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

JUDY

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

SIR JONATHAN

I don't know what you were expecting -- Jacobean panelling perhaps, arabesques of stonework tracery... great fountains...

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.

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.  
I'd be better off in an internet cafe in  
Kircoddy.

He leaves the room.

INT. NUMBER 10 - SAME TIME

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 fust 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, two jobs. One: find the Pwip  
Pip leaker and kill them. That's one job.  
Job one has two parts. Job two: stop Pwip  
Pip coming out. Sow enough seeds of fear  
and doubt that the fat arses at the BBC  
dither till *after* the vote, okay? After  
the vote Enola Gay is cleared for take-  
off and everything is groovy. I love  
you.

INT. UN FUNCTION ROOM/BAR - CONTINUOUS

Lots of delegates drinking and eating and chatting. We  
glimpse Linton, Karen, General Miller. Sir Jonathan is  
there, mingling.

Malcolm approaches Simon, Toby, Judy and Sir Jonathan.

MALCOLM

(to Sir Jonathan)

Do not move from this spot or I'll  
fucking stab you.

SIR JONATHAN

Hm?

MALCOLM

(to Simon)

Was it you?

SIMON

No, what? No.

MALCOLM

But you know what I'm talking about?

SIMON

No, but whatever it was I didn't do it.

MALCOLM

(to Toby)

Was it you, The-Baby-From-Eraserhead?

TOBY

No.

MALCOLM

(to Judy)

So it must have been you Woman from The  
Crying Game?

JUDY

It wasn't me. You've really got it in for  
me haven't you?

MALCOLM

Someone's dropped a bollock in the  
noodles and I reckon it was you.

JUDY

We've done this all before. You accused  
me of leaking last time and it wasn't me.

MALCOLM

Yeah well I know you didn't leak last  
time. But what I reckon is you got so  
pissy about being accused, you leaked  
this time.

TOBY

Yeah. Yeah, that does sound possible.

JUDY

Look Springer Spaniel, keep your little  
wet nose out alright?

TOBY

I'm just saying psychologically speaking that sounds plausible - that you might build up a resentment and then pay it off in some underhand way. That's just something I've observed.

Malcolm's had enough goes over and grabs Sir Jonathan, mid-conversation, and manhandles him away.

MALCOLM

Come on, Baldermort, I need a word.

Meanwhile Judy and Toby are left alone - Toby embarrassed about his comments.

TOBY

(they look at each other)  
Sorry about that - it's just ...  
(mumbles)  
something I've observed.

JUDY

Wanker. It's okay. It's fine. It's probably just the stress of this awful, awful war.

Malcolm drags the ambassador into a corner.

MALCOLM

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.

He is almost man-handling him in.

SIR JONATHAN

I'm not dancing with you Malcolm.

MALCOLM

I'm leading, look follow my lead.

SIR JONATHAN

You're not dancing me into the  
secretariat!

Jonathan breaks off and under his own steam prepares to  
go in.

As Malcolm is leaving Miller blocks his path.

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

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.

101 INT. UN CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

101

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

SIR JONATHAN

Hello everyone. 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.

102 INT. KAREN CLARK'S UN OFFICE - DAY

102

Karen and 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?

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.

Karen and Miller go into a confab.

Karen and Miller immediately go into a huddle and start planning Simon's future.

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.

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.

INT. FOREIGN OFFICE - DAY

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.

(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

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.

(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.

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. You only listen to that shit  
because it's bad form to actually wear a  
big hat that says "I went to private  
school".

Michael doesn't turn it off, so Jamie does.

JAMIE (CONT'D)

Who did you leak it to?

MICHAEL

I just sent it. I thought it was important so I sent it through.

JAMIE

(considers then, )

Ok. See this fax machine?(kick) That's your career. I'm pretty sure it's fucked. Let me just check (kick). Yeah, it is. Plus, breach of Official Secrets, so that's fucking swannee. Maybe you can get a part time job in West End as a gentleman's fluffer. Or whatever the fuck they call it these days.

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

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 Polos 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

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.

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.

(into phone)

(MORE)

TOBY (CONT'D)

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.

Michael and Suzy in Michael's office, classical music in  
the background. Michael's clearing his desk, putting  
stuff in boxes. 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

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. 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

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. The paper was sent by e-mail. It's just, the fax machine was there and it's easier to kick.

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.

(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 leaked Linton's War Committee.

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?

(MORE)

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

I am giving you a probationary period,  
which will last from today...until the  
end of recorded time.

TOBY

Okay.

MALCOLM

You're my guy now. I own you now. You're  
my Kunte Kinte. Go and get your laptop.

Toby goes.

Malcolm pushes open another door. Sir Jonathan Tutt is in  
there.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

Ah, ambassador -- with your big baldy  
head you are spoiling us.

SIR JONATHAN

Good, I've been looking for you. I needed  
to tell you that by a huge personal  
effort -- huge -- 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, I'm sorry I'm very sorry but I won't  
humiliate myself again.

MALCOLM

You 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.

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

SIR JONATHAN

Right. What can I say? .....

111 INT. TINY OFFICE

111

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 political wet-room?

Jamie's phone goes.

112 INT. UN CORRIDOR/TINY OFFICE - DAY

112

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.

MALCOLM  
(to Toby)  
Right, let's find a printer. The  
Japanese, they'll have one. They've got  
everything.

113 INT. UN CORRIDOR - DAY

113

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.

114 INT. LINTON'S UN OFFICE - DAY

114

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.  
You know, I've met some psychos in my  
time, but none as fucking BORING as you.  
Oh sorry, that's right. You disapprove of  
swearing. A boring F star star CUNT!

Malc hands over the folder and walks out.

115 INT. UN - DAY

115

Linton, with Adriano now back beside him AND LIZA, is waiting for hush from the assembled US delegation, including Miller.

LINTON

Welcome aboard Liza. By the way, congratulations on Pwip Pip. Excellent work.

LIZA

Really?

LINTON

I don't know. I haven't read it personally. No time. But it certainly raised your profile.

LIZA

No. That old thing? That was like a thousand years ago. More maybe.

LINTON

Terrific.

(to the delegation)

So, I'll keep this brief and to the point. We go in, we make our case using the new British intelligence from their source 'Debussy', we win the argument, we get the hell out.

The delegation starts filing out.

116 INT. UN CORRIDOR- DAY

116

The Brit delegation are gathered round a screen in a corridor showing the main debating chamber. The mood is sombre.

CHAIR

(on screen)

Resolution 5977 is passed.

Judy looks at Malcolm. Malcolm looks straight ahead at the screen, nods, impassive.

SIMON

Yup. That's that then.

TOBY

"That's that then"? That's your quote for the ages is it?

SIMON

What?

TOBY

'And I remember the moment war was declared. I turned to the Minister and he said "That's that, then. Anyone want a mint?".

SIMON

Piss off, Toby.

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.

A TV shows BBC News 24's report on the vote. Jamie is stroking Michael's hair in a sweet and therefore very very scary way. Michael's staring ahead pretending it isn't happening.

JAMIE

(sweetly)

Well done Michael. You did a good job. You did a really, really good job.

Karen enters. Chad is there too with General Miller.

KAREN

So, I emailed my resignation ten minutes ago.

(to Miller)

Yours should come right after the President's announcement, to have the biggest media impact.

GENERAL MILLER

I've been thinking Karen. This has been the hardest fucking decision of my political life. I'm not resigning.

KAREN

What the fuck George. Seriously? 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 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. 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. They're two-thirds of a snowman.

GENERAL MILLER

Get the fuck away from me.

Miller walks off.

CHAD

Okay. This was not the plan.

Simon's on the phone to the wall man.

SIMON

No, you're right. I am a piss-brain. That's the perfect word, Mr Michaelson. Your mother came up with it? Well congratulate her from me. I am a piss-brain for letting this happen.

Simon sees Malcolm coming along. Starts to head back into the shared office.

He rings off, Malcolm catches up with him in the office

MALCOLM

Simon, look, mate. Listen to me. You still don't need to resign.

SIMON

No. I'm going to resign, Malcolm. In a hour. You can't stop me now.

Toby comes over.

TOBY

Boss?

SIMON

Yes?

Yes?

MALCOLM

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)

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.

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. Toby goes to get his laptop. 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

Go fuck yoursefl, Frodo.

TOBY

Great. Lovely

Toby hurries off looking crushed. Miller takes another drag on his cigarette.

INT. STATE DEPARTMENT. DAY

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.

(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.

(MORE)

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CONTINUED:

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A.J. (CONT'D)

I should be out there having a youth.  
Getting high, making women pregnant.

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INT. DFID - DAY

124

Malcolm is walking through the open-plan office with Judy. In the background we see Toby getting the last of his things together.

The NEW MINISTER and her ADVISOR arrive. They are almost carbon copies of Simon and Toby.

MALCOLM

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.  
Watch your step there. There's still blood on the deck.

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.

END