

IN THE LOOP

by

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SIMON (V.O.)

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

MALCOLM

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

3

INT. DFID OPEN PLAN OFFICE

3

JUDY

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

MARK

Yes.

JUDY

Well co-ordinate it better.

MARK

Yes, can do.

JUDY

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

4

INT. DFID OPEN PLAN OFFICE - MORNING

4

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

SIMON

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

JUDY

No not yet.

SIMON

Perhaps he didn't hear it.

JUDY

Or maybe he's dead.

SIMON

(with a degree of genuine hope)

He might be dead. He might have had

JUDY

Yes?

SIMON

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

INT. MALCOLM'S OFFICE - MORNING

Malcolm and Sam still listening to Simon's interview.

SIMON (V.O.)

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

INTERVIEWER (V.O.)

You mention the word war there...

MALCOLM

Steady Eddie!

SIMON (V.O.)

(oh shit)
...against preventable diseases, yes.

INTERVIEWER (V.O.)

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

MALCOLM

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

SIMON (V.O.)

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

MALCOLM

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

INTERVIEWER (V.O.)

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

SIMON (V.O.)

Well, personally, I think that war is unforeseeable.

MALCOLM

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

INTERVIEWER (V.O.)

Unforeseeable?

SIMON (V.O.)

(shit again)

Yes.

MALCOLM

(getting up, calling on his mobile)

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

(on phone)

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

And he's gone.

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

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

INTERCUT PHONE CALL:

TOBY

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

Suzy is still in the FO office.

SUZY

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

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

MICHAEL

(mouthing)

Croissants!

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

MALCOLM

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

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

TOBY

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

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

SUZY

Why did you put clingfilm on it?

TOBY

To keep it fresh.

Malcolm starts dialling on his phone.

SUZY

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

TOBY

No, but it still might dry out.

MALCOLM

(into phone)
YOU FUCKING RELAX!

Michael hands Suzie a croissant.

MICHAEL

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

SUZY

Clingfilm is carcinogenic, Toby.

TOBY

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

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

They wouldn't sell clingfilm if it

JUDY
Malcolm's coming to see you.

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

Malcolm walks in with Toby sheepishly behind him.

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

8 INT. MICHAELS FO OFFICE - MORNING

8

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

Suzy hands him a folder.

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

She turns the music down.

SUZY (CONT'D)
The latest from the State Department for the American meeting. I gather Fatty won't be attending.

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

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

9

MALCOLM is giving SIMON a controlled-anger dressing down. WoCSqliebudHsn0t outsid es inath openo phanY

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

SIMON

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

MALCOLM

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

10 INT. DFID OPEN PLAN OFFICE - DAY

10

Toby's with Judy.

JUDY

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

TOBY

Toby.

JUDY

Right. Just most of you lot tend to be called Dan, or Danny so it's always

11

INT. DFID SIMON'S OFFICE. DAY.

11

Back inside Simon's office

SIMON

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

MALCOLM

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

JUDY and TOBY come in.

JUDY

Minister, this is Toby.

MALCOLM

We haven't got time love, fuck off.

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

SIMON

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

MALCOLM

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

(to Judy)

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

JUDY

That's correct.

MALCOLM

(to Toby)

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

TOBY

Fuck off?

MALCOLM

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

TOBY
Is this a real fuck off?

MALCOLM
Yes. Fuck off.

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

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

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

SIMON
Why?

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

JUDY
Sorry, why wasn't I told about this?

MALCOLM
Why should I tell you about this?

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

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

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

MALCOLM
(to Simon, 7023279hcat) Tj 0 Tc ET Q q 1 0 0 -1 C

SIMON

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

(Judy walks out)

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

MALCOLM

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

SIMON

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

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

Malcolm heads out. Mark Hadley spots his go.

12

INT. FO MICHAELS OFFICE - DAY

12

CONTINUED:

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

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

SUZY
Karen Clark, US Assistant Secretary of State?

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

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

TOBY
Uh hu.

SUZY
Why?

TOBY
(uncomfy with this private motivational motto)
Because I am a big swinging dick.

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

Judy's hovering nearby.

TOBY
Likewise. Affirmative on that.

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

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

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

Meat? TOBY

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.

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

14

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's open He keeps his card in. . Tj 0 Tc ET Q q 1 0 0

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

MIKE
What?

JUDY
Exactly.
(as they walk on)
He's hopeless.
(checks phone)
And that's the end of the tour. I've got to go.

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

JUDY
There's a lot of really important people you need to know about, but I

SIMON

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

TOBY

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

SIMON

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

TOBY

Yeah.

A beat.

SIMON

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

TOBY

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

SIMON

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

TOBY

Sheer bloody hard work.

Judy walks past. Simon calls out.

SIMON

Hey Judy.

She comes in.

JUDY

Hello?

SIMON

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

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

JUDY

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

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

JUDY
Sure. I'll tell the press.

She leaves.

15

INT. CAR ALONG WHITEHALL - DAY

15

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.

17

INT. FOREIGN OFFICE GRAND MEETING ROOM - DAY

17

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

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

Lots of hubbub.

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

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

SIMON

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

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

SIMON (CONT'D)

(to Judy)
Can I swap with you?

Simon and Judy swap seats.

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

KAREN

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

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

SIMON (CONT'D)

No, this is worse. Swap back.

Simon and Judy swap seats again.

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

KAREN

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

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

KAREN (CONT'D)

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

BOB ADRIANO

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

KAREN

Really - such as what?

BOB ADRIANO

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

KAREN

Which committee?

BOB ADRIANO

(covering)

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

KAREN

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

ADRIANO

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

KAREN

You did.

MICHAEL

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

(MORE)

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

TOBY
Okay.

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

18

INT. FOREIGN OFFICE BALLROOM - DAY

18

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'?

KAREN

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

LIZA

Which committee?

KAREN

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

LIZA

Can he do that?

KAREN

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

LIZA

So, listen, about my paper -

KAREN

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

LIZA

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

KAREN

And get me on that committee.

LIZA

The one we don't know about?

LIZA

Oh ... Hi ... hi?

She knows him but can't immediately place him.

TOBY

Toby? It's Toby.

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

LIZA

Hi. Hi.

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

TOBY

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

JUDY

I can imagine.

TOBY

I'm not sure she remembered me.

JUDY

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

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

SIMON

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

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

PRESS

Minister! /Simon! /Mr Foster!

Simon is taken aback.

SIMON

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

JUDY

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

SIMON

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

The press are calling.

REPORTER 1

Is war unforeseeable Minister?

REPORTER 2

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

SIMON

(to the press)

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

(beat)

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

REPORTER

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

JUDY

(to Toby)

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

SIMON

Look,

(grappling now)

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

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

JUDY

That was like scat. Political scat. Boobidydoopi dydopdo-ountai nofconflict-dah!

The press pack are looking for more.

REPORTER

Sorry, are you saying that...?

SIMON

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

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

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

SIMON

(under his breath)

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

(to Judy)

Why didn't we nail the line?

JUDY

I did try to warn you.

SIMON

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

(stupid voice)

'Look! Train!'.

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

SIMON (CONT'D)

Oh *shit*. It's Malcolm.

JUDY

It's Malcolm for me too.

SIMON

How does he do that?

(he answers, tentatively)

Hello?

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

MALCOLM

(on the phone, over TV)

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

MALCOLM, JUDY, SIMON AND TOBY....

MALCOLM

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

SIMON

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

MALCOLM

(even angrier)

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

SIMON

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

MALCOLM

(different tack needed)

(at Toby and Judy)

Right, you two, The White Stripes, outside.

Toby and Judy leave and wait outside the door.

MALCOLM (CONT'D, TO

SIMON) (CONT'D)

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

SIMON

To...?

MALCOLM

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

SIMON

Oh. Right.

MALCOLM

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

SIMON

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

MALCOLM

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

SIMON

I am standing my ground on the verge.

MALCOLM

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

SIMON

I'll give it a whirl.

MALCOLM

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

SIMON

Oh right. I won't talk to him.

MALCOLM I'll deal with him.

Dan7.

Right, so get off your knees, pick up your cyanide co5

TOBY

Brilliant!

JUDY

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

Well done.

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

KAREN

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

LIZA

Shower later?

KAREN

I give you licence to reek.

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

KAREN (cont'd) (CONT'D)

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

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

LINTON

Ah. Karen.

KAREN

Linton.

LINTON

How was London? Good hotel?

KAREN

Great hotel, thank you.

LINTON

Good meetings?

KAREN

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

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

LINTON

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

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

KAREN

Is Chad coming... ?

25

CONTINUED: (2)

25

KAREN (CONT' D)

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

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

KAREN (CONT' D)

Can you get me General Miller at the
Pentagon?

26

INT. STATE DEPARTMENT. DAY

26

Liza goes to her desk, picks up her landline.

LIZA

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

(listens)

Yeah by Liza Weld.

(listens, shit!)

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

(listens)

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

27

INT. STATE DEPARTMENT. LINTON'S OFFICE - DAY

27

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

LINTON

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

BOB ADRIANO

I did mention I could request the
glass be frosted?

LINTON

(as if Bob Adriano brought
it up)

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

BOB ADRIANO

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

(MORE)

BOB ADRIANO (CONT'D)

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

LINTON

Pip what?

BOB ADRIANO

Pwip Pip.

LINTON

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

BOB ADRIANO

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

LINTON

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

BOB ADRIANO

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

LINTON

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

Which committee?

BOB ADRIANO

(doing the same)

The war committee.

LINTON

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

BOB ADRIANO

We can do that?

LINTON

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

28 INT. KAREN'S OFFICE. DAY. 28

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

KAREN

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

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

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

SIMON

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

Judy closes the blinds on her side of the office.

SIMON (CONT'D) (cont'd)

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

TOBY

(joking)

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

SIMON

Yes. I do.

TOBY

Oh. Okay ...

SIMON

Can we go somewhere else?

They walk to Box Room.

SIMON (CONT'D)

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

TOBY

Gut reaction? I like it.

SIMON

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

TOBY

(going with it)

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

SIMON

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

TOBY

Yeah. My husband works in Tower Hamlets."

SIMON

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

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

LINTON

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

BOB ADRIANO

That's something Karen said.

LINTON

It's not right. Change it.

BOB ADRIANO

Yes sir.

LINTON

And get rid of this chunk on seven on proliferation.

BOB ADRIANO

Done.

LINTON

And I like this.

BOB ADRIANO
Thank you.

LINTON
Let's say everyone agreed with this.

BOB ADRIANO
Excellent.

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

BOB ADRIANO
No sir.

LINTON
Shall we mention that?

BOB ADRIANO
Yes sir.

31 INT. STATE DEPARTMENT - DAY

31

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

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

LIZA

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

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

LIZA (CONT'D)

You not getting your printout?

CHAD

Sure, I'm getting my printout.

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

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

Linton passes on his way out with his squash stuff.

LINTON

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

CHAD

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

LIZA

Really? I never knew that.

LINTON

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

CHAD

Sure thing sir.

Linton and Chad walk out. Liza calls after Chad.

LIZA

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

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

SIMON

There will be a car won't there?

TOBY
Oh God yeah, of course.

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

SIMON
Did you book a car?

He's looking panicked - then.

TOBY
Here we go.

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

SIMON
'Simon Forester?'

TOBY
(to the taxi guy)
Hi we're the Simon Foster party?

The driver takes their bags and they follow him.

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

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

SIMON
(terrified of things
getting out of hand)
What? Oh no. God no. No no no no no. I

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

LINTON

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

CHAD

'Commissary'?

LINTON

Very good, Chad.

KAREN

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

LINTON

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

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

LINTON (CONT'D)

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

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

LIZA

Do you want me to come with you?

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

LINTON

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

CHAD

No.

LINTON

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

CHAD

(what?)

Yes! Ha ha! Exactly.

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

LINTON

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

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

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

A beat.

LIZA

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

BOB ADRIANO

(hopes it might be a come-on?)

Oh really?

LIZA

Yeah. Karen knows about the Future Planning Committee.

Bob Adriano looks shocked, tries to cover it up.

BOB ADRIANO

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

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

INT. WASHINGTON HOTEL - TOBY'S ROOM.

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

SIMON

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

TOBY

(panic in his eyes)

What's the plan? For tonight?

SIMON

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

TOBY

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

SIMON

(approaching breaking point with Toby)

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

(MORE)

SIMON (CONT'D)

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

TOBY

Okay ... What have I got?

SIMON

Don't bullshit me Toby.

TOBY

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

SIMON

No.

TOBY

Judy?

SIMON

Dude it's like the middle of the night.

TOBY

Okay, no sure. Give me 20 minutes.

SIMON

Okay, I'll try a contact or two.

Toby goes into the bathroom.

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

TOBY

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

JUDY

Fuck off Toby.

Cancel s call. Her land line goes.

41

CONTINUED:

41

JUDY (CONT'D)

Hi Hi Minister ...

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

JUDY'S BLOKE

Oh for fuck's sake. Honestly.

42

INT. WASHINGTON HOTEL ROOM

42

Toby re-enters the main hotel room.

SIMON

(holding phone,
explaining)

Judy. She - called me.

TOBY

Right sure.

SIMON

What you get us?

TOBY

(left hanging)

My contact will get back to us.

43

INT. GEORGETOWN HOUSE - NIGHT

43

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

They each take a glass of champagne from a waiter.

GENERAL MILLER

Hey Karen. You look beautiful.

KAREN

I bet you say that to all the girls.

GENERAL MILLER

Yeah I do. Ad50some 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

GENERAL MILLER (CONT'D)

Add those. Plus contingency already
deployed.

KAREN

Er - you've lost me.

EXT. GEORGETOWN STREET - EVENING.

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

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

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

TOBY
It's unbelievably hectic.

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

LIZA
So you made it.

TOBY
Whoah. Yeah. Hello.

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

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

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

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

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

TOBY
Oh, wow, okay. Great.

LIZA
And there's one other thing.

TOBY
Yeah?

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

TOBY
Bogsat?

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

TOBY
Fucking brilliant.

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

TOBY (CONT'D)
(can't believe his luck,
there's a connection)
You and me? Sure.

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

TOBY (CONT'D)
(whispers to Simon)
I've got us in.

SIMON
Where?

TOBY
Meeting with Karen Clark at State,

CONTINUED: (2)

TOBY

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

SIMON

No.

48 INT. BLACK CAT INDIE CLUB - NIGHT

48

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

LIZA

(re : the mosh pit)
You see those guys? The mosh pit?

TOBY

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

LIZA

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

They're chuckling, having a good time.

TOBY

So do you ever - rebel, a little.

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

TOBY (CONT'D)

Cool!

LIZA

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

TOBY

(looking a bit too closely?)
What is it?

LIZA

It's Sanskrit for peace.

TOBY

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

LIZA

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

TOBY

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

LIZA

It's my paper. On the war. Pros and

49 INT. LIZA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT 49

Toby and Liza are on the bed together, kissing.

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

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

50 INT. LIZA'S APARTMENT - DAY 50

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

He heads down stairs & out of the apartment.

51 EXT. LIZA'S APARTMENT BLOCK - DAY 51

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

He's on the street.

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

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

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

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

SIMON

Er - no problem.

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

LIZA

It's been great.

SIMON

Terrific.

KAREN

I really appreciate this.

TOBY

Brilliant.

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

TOBY

Was that...?

SIMON

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

TOBY

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

SIMON

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

TOBY

(feels he's taken enough
now)

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

SIMON

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

An uncomfortable beat.

TOBY

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

SIMON

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

TOBY

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

SIMON

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

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

LIZA

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

TOBY

Hi Liza.

They're uncomfy with each other.

LIZA

Hey Toby.

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?

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

A. J.

How are you today? Beat the traffic?

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

MALCOLM

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

He gives AJ his coat.

A. J.

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

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

MALCOLM

(realising)

Your assistant?

A. J.

(sitting, picking up a
file in the room)

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

MALCOLM

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

A. J.

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

(MORE)

A. J. (CONT'D)

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

MALCOLM

Don't get sarcastic with me son.

(starts dialling)

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

A. J.

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

MALCOLM

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

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

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

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

Malcolm runs out, on the phone.

Toby and Simon are still waiting.

TOBY

(re. meeting)

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

SIMON

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

JUDY

Forty seven minutes. Good luck.

Hangs up.

TOBY

Thank you.

(Simon looks at him
hopefully)

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

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

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

MALCOLM

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

JUDY

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

MALCOLM

Just tell me where the fuck it's happening.

JUDY

Say please.

MALCOLM

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

JUDY

Do you want me to tell you where it is?

MALCOLM

Yes.

(pained)

Please.

JUDY

It's on the seventh floor. Room 712.

(beat)

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

MALCOLM

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

(MORE)

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

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

(beat realises)

You've fucking hung up haven't you?
You fucking hoi ty toi ty...

PASSER-BY

Hey, buddy, enough of the curse words.

MALCOLM

Kiss my sweaty balls you nosey fuck.

Malcolm starts running.

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

SIMON

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

TOBY

(as she passes, re
magazine)

... and if you look ... at the line
they take in Newsweek - that's very
much ... another narrative.

KAREN

See you at the committee.

SIMON

(like he's busy)

Yeah, yeah sure, see you in a mo. Just
finishing off some stuff.

(to Toby loud)

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

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

TOBY

(quiet)

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

SIMON

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

61 INT. COMMITTEE ROOM 712 - DAY 61

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

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

But the room is rapidly filling with bodies and din.

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

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

The committee members file out.

62 EXT. WASHINGTON STREET NR STATE DEPARTMENT - DAY 62

Malcolm is legging it down the street.

63 INT. LARGER COMMITTEE ROOM 720 - DAY 63

The committee members file in.

Miller goes close up to Linton.

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

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

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

Linton not fazed by this.

LINTON

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

GENERAL MILLER

Good.

General Miller takes his seat. Linton turns on Adriano.

LINTON

What the hell happened?

ADRIANO

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

LINTON

Oh do you think? Really?

(with menace)

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

ADRIANO

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

LINTON

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

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

SIMON

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

TOBY

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

meat again. This is a massive

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

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

TOBY
(Looking in)
What's all this?

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

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

CHAD
Well, that obviously has bad connotations.

TOBY
Heavy metal.

CHAD
No - the SS.

Karen is talking.

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

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

KAREN
What makes you say that?

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

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

KAREN

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

SIMON

(politely)

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

He goes back to his text.

LINTON

As I say it seems a consensus is forming.

KAREN

(furious)

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

LINTON

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

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

MALCOLM

Are you fucking me about?

LINTON

What seems to be the problem?

MALCOLM

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

LINTON

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

MALCOLM

His fucking briefing notes were written in 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...

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

MALCOLM

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

LINTON

I'm sure that's not the case.

Linton pulls away, starts walking off.

SIMON

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

TOBY

Right.

SIMON

I'm just back from America,

ROZ

MRS MCDAIRMID

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

SIMON

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

Mrs Kendrick heads out.

MRS KENDRICK

Thank you. Thank you very much.

SIMON

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

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

KAREN

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

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

LIZA

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

KAREN

Shit.

Karen calls over to a staffer, ABBEY.

KAREN (CONT'D)

Abbey, get me the president's statement.

ABBHEY

Mr Barwick has asked me to...

Karen is beginning to lose it.

KAREN

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

Karen crosses quickly to her office. Liza follows.

LIZA

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

KAREN

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

A beat.

LIZA

We're going to the UN.

KAREN

Yes, we're going to the UN.

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

PAUL MICHAELSON

(as he enters)

Hi, thanks for seeing me Mr. Foster.

SIMON

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

PAUL MICHAELSON

I know I have.

SIMON

Lovely.

PAUL MICHAELSON

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

SIMON

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

PAUL MICHAELSON

Patronising.

ROZ

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

PAUL MICHAELSON

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

(as to an idiot)

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

SIMON

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

Toby comes back in, hands Simon a coffee.

PAUL MICHAELSON

Do you know what this is?
(he hums something
irritating)

That's your constituency office hold music. I don't want it in my head, do I?

SIMON

(checks notes)

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.

74 INT. STATE DEPARTMENT/INT. CONSTITUENCY SURGERY - DAY 74

(CHANGE SCENE ORDER)

Simon is talking to Karen.

INTERCUT PHONE CALL:

KAREN
What's going on Simon?

SIMON
Departmental business. About a wall.

KAREN
Gaza?

SIMON
Uh-huh. What can I do for you?

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

SIMON

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

But she's gone.

INT. CONSTITUENCY SURGERY - DAY

(CHANGE SCENE ORDER)

Toby's still talking to Paul the wall guy.

TOBY

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

Simon wants to talk.

SIMON

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

PAUL MICHAELSON

Oh right! Fob number two.

SIMON

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

PAUL MICHAELSON

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

Simon is now hovering in the corner.

TOBY

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

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

PAUL MICHAELSON

Mobile.

TOBY

Mobile.

ROZ

Have you got a mobile Paul?

PAUL MICHAELSON

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

TOBY

Of course he's got a mobile.

PAUL MICHAELSON

Five megapixel s.

Roz leads Paul away.

ROZ

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

PAUL MICHAELSON

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

ROZ

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

PAUL MICHAELSON

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

ROZ

Okay, well, I'll take your details.

SIMON

Fuck.

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

MALCOLM

(reading)

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

SIMON

It doesn't say that.

MALCOLM

(holding up paper)

No but it says 'Wall-ace and Gromitt'

SIMON

Wall-ace though?

MALCOLM

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

TOBY

It is just a wall, Malcolm.

MALCOLM

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

SIMON

Oh great. The crossiest man in Scotland.

MALCOLM

Don't say that to his face.

Jamie enters, holding another local rag.

JAMIE

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

SIMON

What is this, surround bollocking?

JAMIE

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

SIMON

Hi Jamie.

TOBY

Hello.

JAMIE

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

TOBY

How is saying "hello" a...

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

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

Simon, Toby and Jamie look at him.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)
Don't look at me like that's arrogant. That is just a fucking fact. Don't even look at me.
(to Jamie)
Be gentle with them.

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

Malcolm leaves.

An awkward beat.

JAMIE (CONT'D)
Right, Butch and Gaydance, this wall story is playing badly.

(Looking in his paper)
Look, here's a cartoon of you as a walrus.

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

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

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

JAMIE
They're builders. What did you expect?!

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 arsehole.

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

Suzy shows the phone to Judy.

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

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

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

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

MICHAEL
Yeah, I remember his first d...

Suzy cuts in.

SUZY
You've got a text.

TOBY

SUZY

So, this Liza. You shagged her?

TOBY

What? No.

SUZY

(to Judy)

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

TOBY

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

SUZY

I'm okay to talk about it now.

SUZY

Why did you do it?

TOBY

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

A beat. Michael and Judy dissolve into laughter.

MICHAEL

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

SUZY

You had sex because of the war?

TOBY

In the broad sense.

(to Judy and Michael)

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

Jamie and Malcolm.

JAMIE

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

(MORE)

JAMIE (CONT'D)

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

MALCOLM

Is this going anywhere?

JAMIE

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

MALCOLM

There was some blood.

JAMIE

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

MALCOLM

My guess is there will be war.

JAMIE

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

MALCOLM

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

JAMIE

Oh fine, as long as It Will Be Fine.

MALCOLM

It will all be fine.

JAMIE

Good. Happy days.

MALCOLM

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

(MORE)

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

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

JAMIE

So, what? Give them the third degree?

MALCOLM

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

JAMIE

What, the work experience kids?

MALCOLM

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

JAMIE

Nice. I see what you did there.

MALCOLM

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

They head off in opposite directions.

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

JUDY

Tobes, that's for you.

TOBY

(to Judy)
What's this?

JUDY

It's the mad man about the wall.

TOBY

The war?

JUDY

The wall.

Judy heads into Simon's office.

TOBY

What can I do for you Paul?

PAUL MICHAELSON

(OS, on phone)

These 'temporary buttresses' you got put up.

TOBY

Right?

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

INTERCUT PHONE CALL:

PAUL MICHAELSON

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

TOBY

I'm sure they're not twigs.

PAUL MICHAELSON

No they're twigs.
(to Journalist)
Are you getting a picture of those twigs? That wall could fall on my mum and crush her. Do you know how old she is?

(calling off)

How old are you mum?

MUM (O.S.)

Sixty.

During this conversation Malcolm arrives.

MALCOLM

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

PAUL MICHAELSON

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

MUM (O.S.)

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

PAUL MICHAELSON

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

TOBY

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

PAUL MICHAELSON

She needs to get to her plants.

(as he goes past Judy,
Leans in)
Hey! Look! It's Leaky Woman! You want

JUDY

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

SIMON

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

JUDY

Ah. Is that what this is about?

SIMON

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

JUDY

(oh this is what it's
about)
Oh. Right.

A beat.

SIMON

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

JUDY

Not my purview, get Toby to do it.

SIMON

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

(he makes a grabbing claw
with his hand)

...beats wall...

(he holds his hand up to
denote a wall)

...beats purview.

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

JUDY

Put out some winks?

SIMON

And nods.

JUDY
Big nods?

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

Judy nods.

SIMON (CONT'D)
No, not that much.

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

SIMON
Oh. Good.

They head in.

83

INT. FOREIGN OFFICE - DAY

83

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

MALCOLM

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

(to Toby)

Little Bo Cock Jockey

(to judy)

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

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

MI CHAEL

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

MALCOLM

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

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

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

Now then, you still got doubts, Complicated Simon?

SIMON

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

MALCOLM

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

SIMON

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

MALCOLM

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

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

SIMON

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

MALCOLM

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

SIMON

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

Malcolm's heading out.

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

Malcolm leaves. A beat.

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

Michael on his way past back into his office.

MICHAEL
 Don't you start as well.

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

TOBY
 What the fuck is he doing here?

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

TOBY
 Well I live here.

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

Suzy and Toby go into the kitchen.

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

TOBY
 I always thought he was gay.

MICHAEL
(calling through)
I'll take that as a come on.

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

TOBY

Where's my needlecord jacket?

SUZY

Your geography teacher's jacket?

TOBY

My corduroy jacket.

SUZY

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

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

MICHAEL

That's not how you fold.

TOBY

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

MICHAEL

The key to travelling is packing.

TOBY

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

MICHAEL

It'll save time the other end.

TOBY

There is no other end.

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

SUZY

Has she got big tits?

TOBY

Massive. Enormous. You can see them on Google Earth12 18Pv6lSeot bhe i ofw

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

TOBY (CONT'D)
See you then.

SUZY
Okay.

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

Toby goes to leave then stops.

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

SUZY
Quickie?

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

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

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

He holds out a memory stick.

86

EXT. PAUL MICHAELSON' GARDEN - DAY

86

(CHANGE SCENE ORDER)

89 INT. NEW YORK AIRPORT. DAY.

89

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

TOBY

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

SIMON

Suckling pig. Cask of ale.
Respirator...

(conspiratorially to Toby)

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

TOBY

You want hookers? You like hooky fucky?

SIMON

I want to talk about the resigning thing.

TOBY

Still?

SIMON

But with you and not her.

90 INT. LIMBO - DAY

90

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

MALCOLM

(Looking at phone)

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

SIMON

What? That wasn't supposed to get outside.

MALCOLM

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

Simon looks to Toby for help.

TOBY

Simon's relaxed about people thinking he might resign.

SIMON

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

TOBY

Because you're not going to resign?

SIMON

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

TOBY

Leverage. (UK pronunciation)

MALCOLM

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

SIMON

You're being sarcastic?

MALCOLM

Well spotted. You're a smart guy.

INT. UN BUILDING - DAY

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

SIR JONATHAN

This is it gentlemen. The United Nations.

SIMON

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

TOBY

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

JUDY

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

MALCOLM

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

They pass a big office.

SIR JONATHAN

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

Sir Jonathan shows them to their office.

SIR JONATHAN (CONT'D)

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

Malcolm and Toby look at one another.

SIR JONATHAN (CONT'D)

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

Sir Jonathan leaves.

MALCOLM

Nibbles? Who still says nibbles?

TOBY

Fuck the nibbles, what was with the homoerotic tension?

Malcolm gets a call.

MALCOLM

Jamie. Hello?

He looks at his phone.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

No fucking signal down here. Jesus.

He leaves the room.

Jamie is on the phone, running down a corridor.

JAMIE

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

93

EXT. UN BUILDING - DAY

93

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

MALCOLM

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

94

INT. UNITED NATIONS RECEPTION ROOM. DAY

94

LINTON
Then how the expletive have the BBC
got this Chad?

CHAD
I really don't know sir.

LINTON
(mimicking)
"I really don't know." That's not good
enough Chad. I'm very very annoyed.
And what disappoints me is that a) you
don't know what's happened here and b)
you don't even have the presence of
mind to fabricate a plausible answer
for your superior.
(beat, mimics again)
"I really don't know." It's your job
to know, Chad. What's your job?

CHAD
To know sir.

LINTON
What is it?

CHAD
To know.

LINTON
Your job is to what?

CHAD
Know.

LINTON
Do you have a job with me any more?

A beat.

CHAD
Yes?

LINTON
Try again, Chad.

95 INT. UNITED NATIONS COFFEE SHOP. DAY.

95

Malcolm is on the phone to Jamie.

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

Miller wanders by.

MILLER

You get everything you need?

MALCOLM

(in a hurry)

Oh yeah I think so. Thanks.

(a beat, thinks)

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

MILLER

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

MALCOLM

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

MILLER

Uh-hu. I think you're doing Linton's
dirty work. I think you're his English
bitch and if I walked into your hotel
room tonight I'd find you on all fours

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.

96

INT. UN CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

96

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

SIR JONATHAN
Hello everyone. It's all going very
smoothly isn't it? Tremendously well.
I was wondering if I might suggest a
cheeky early vote? Bit of an

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

LINTON (CONT'D)

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

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

SIMON

Yeah -- about me resigning? Yeah.
'BS'.

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

LINTON

I heard it was your senior Civil

KAREN

During. Then he can't do anything about it.

GENERAL MILLER

Great. That's decided then.

SIMON

No. No it's bloody not. I'm - me. You're not me. I decide about all the main things about me, okay? Not you. Me.

GENERAL MILLER

No. No Simon. I'm afraid not. Not on this one. This is too big for you.

KAREN

Be realistic. You're being used. We all are. The one thing we can do now to influence things is to resign. Sacrifice ourselves. That's our only weapon.

SIMON

Like a suicide bomber?

GENERAL MILLER

No, not like a suicide bomber. A suicide bomber gets to make a decision.

They usher Simon out of the room.

KAREN

I'm going George. I'm definitely going, this is intolerable. Are you with me?

GENERAL MILLER

It is intolerable. I'm with you.

Toby and Liza are sitting near each other on the floor working on laptops. They're at right-angles to each other. Toby has a view of Liza. She's facing away from him.

TOBY

Listen, I'm really sorry about Suzy and the texting and ...

LIZA

Good. Thanks. Do you have figures there for CFE minimum requirements?

TOBY

Er?

LIZA

Conventional Forces in Europe.

TOBY

Sure. I'll just dig that out.

(beat, taps on his laptop,
then very quietly)

Look it was a very special evening for
me and ...

LIZA

(pissed off)

Sorry? What? You're mumbling.

TOBY

I just wondered 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

He pulls out some mints.

SIMON
Would you like a mint?

JUDY
I'm okay thanks. Are you thinking to
overdose on mints? Because...

Simon eats a mint.

He's lost in his own world. Staring, maybe slightly
nodding at the thoughts in his own head.

SIMON
Do you like me Judy?

JUDY
You're my boss.

SIMON
Yeah, but do you actually like me.

A beat.

JUDY
Sure. Look, I'll leave you to your
thoughts.

SIMON
I haven't got any thoughts. I'm just
staring vacantly into space while a
distant voice in the back of my head
goes "oh shit" like a car alarm in the
middle of the night.

Simon eats another mint. Sits there noisily sucking it.
Judy leaves.

Michael and Suzy are sitting talking in an FO office.

Jamie bursts in.

JAMIE
Was it you?

MI CHAEL
Sorry?

JAMIE
Not you.
I know it wasn't you, you're too
fucking horny for your Knighthood.
(MORE)

JAMIE (CONT'D)

You've probably already ordered your
Sir Michael Shitmuncher stationary
haven't you?

(TO SUZY)

Was it you?

SUZY

Was what me?

JAMIE

Was it fucking you!? Answer the
question!

MICHAEL

She can't very well answer the
question if you don't tell her what it
is, can she?

JAMIE

Oh, right, typical Foreign Office
bullshit liberal sophistry. It's
dipshits like you that threw away a
nice fucking repressive Empire.

(to Suzy)

Was it you?

SUZY

Was what me? I have no idea ...

MICHAEL

Look, maybe you should go away and
leave us alone until you at least have
a question that can be answered by a
rational human being?

JAMIE

Fuck off to your room, Count of Cunt
Cristo, this is between me and her.

(to Suzy)

You leaked Liza Weld's paper to the
BBC. Tell me you leaked it.

SUZY

I didn't leak anything. I don't know
what you're talking about.

JAMIE

You're lying. You touched your nose.
That's what's called a 'tell'. You are
lying.

SUZY

No I'm not.

JAMIE

'No I'm not.' That's a tell as well.
Classic.

SUZY

Well look, it's great to get all this amateur psychological insight for free, but I didn't do it, so I'm not going to say I did okay? I'm just not?

JAMIE

(changing tack to terror)
I know the leak came from here, from this fucking fax machine here.

He pushes a fax casually off the table onto the floor.

JAMIE (CONT'D)

This is what I'm doing to the machine.
(he kicks it, hard till bits start to break off, but he's still quite controlled talking, as he kicks more)

You see? This is how angry I am with the piece of office equipment which leaked this document, so can you imagine how angry I am with the person who did it? Yeah? Can you Suzy?

He kicks the fax machine again.

SUZY

Right.

JAMIE

But let's try and keep this professional, yeah? So. For the last time. Was it you?

MICHAEL

It was me.

JAMIE

Oh fuck off. Don't come over all Spartacus now.

MICHAEL

I leaked it.

JAMIE

What?

Advances on Michael, becomes aware of the music. Jamie points to the CD player.

JAMIE (CONT'D)

Okay for a start turn that fucking row off. It's just fucking vowels. Listen to it. Just subsidised fucking foreign vowels.

(MORE)

JAMIE (CONT'D)

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

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

JAMIE (CONT'D)

Who did you leak it to?

MICHAEL

I just sent it. Any name at bbc dot co dot uk. I thought it was important so I sent it through.

JAMIE

(considers then,)

Okay, right, fine, good. You hear that? Great. That's your career over. Boom. Right there. That's it. No job, no pension. Can you play the spoons? Cos that's what you'll be banging for a living? Outside Brixton Tube. Good. This is all great.

Jamie is heading off.

MICHAEL

Well, you know -- better to go out with a bang...

JAMIE

No, no. I will not allow this to be a bang. This will be a whimper, a tiny pathetic whimper like a puppy being fucked by a big metal puppy-fucking machine. And they do exist, 'cos my gran's got one.

Jamie leaves.

Malcolm and Linton enter. We see Simon's mints lying on the big stone in the middle of the room.

LINTON

Okay, so?

MALCOLM

So? You're going to need to be a little more precise. "So, what about those Yankees?" "So long, suckers, I'm going to stab myself in the perineum."

LINTON

So we're down to the wire here, Mr Miracle Worker, what have you got for me? What intel have you rustled us up?

MALCOLM

Honestly? I haven't got it. We need more time.

LINTON

You haven't got it? Can you delay the vote to give you time to get it?

MALCOLM

No. I've had the vote brought forward.

Simon comes in to retrieve his mints.

SIMON

Just getting my mints.

LINTON

I am telling you to delay the vote and get me some new intel. Now.

MALCOLM

Okay, quick reality check, J Edgar Fucking Hoover. I don't work for you. You don't tell me what to fucking do.

LINTON

Well firstly, don't raise your voice. This is a sacred space. You may not believe that, I may not believe that, but by God it's a useful hypocrisy. And secondarily you do work for me. Your prime minister instructed you to work for me.

Malcolm glances at Simon.

MALCOLM

Get your mints and fuck off.

Simon stays where he is. Linton starts laughing. Toby enters, watches in amazement.

LINTON

The great Malcolm Tucker. One of your guys has leaked a paper, you can't do anything. We tell you to get intel, you can't do anything. I need the vote put back - you can't do anything. You01500000 Tc 12 0 0

MALCOLM
(quietly, to Toby)
What do you want?

TOBY
We've just heard -- the wall's
starting to collapse. A brick has
fallen. That's the news I'm getting.
More to follow. Both news and bricks.

Linton laughs again.

LINTON
Why don't you deal with that Tucker? A
wall is falling down, that's more your
level. I can see you with your shirt
off and a wheelbarrow whistling a
happy song.

Linton walks out.

SIMON
You've been working for him?

MALCOLM
It's complicated, okay? I've been
juggling a number of responsibilities.

Simon stares at Malcolm. He takes a mint and pops it in
his mouth.

SIMON
Okay, well, right, after the vote, I
resign.

MALCOLM
No you fucking don't.

SIMON
I've behaved awfully, Malcolm. I've
behaved, in a way, even worse than
you. And you, obviously, are a
terrible, terrible cunt

MALCOLM
No, Simon, no. C'mon. I'm with you.

Malcolm sincerity -- maybe he does actually believe
this?

MALCOLM (CONT'D)
I thought I might be able to stop the
war if I got you to back it. The PM
only listens to people who agree with
him, and I thought if you agreed with
him, then he might listen to you. Do
you see?

SIMON

No, I don't see. That's nonsense
Malcolm.

MALCOLM

Look. It's too late now. Resigning.
It's not worth it. The horse has
bolted. It's out there getting shot
now.

SIMON

I'll see you later, Malcolm.

Simon exits.

MALCOLM

(to Toby)

If you repeat this to anyone I will
pull your leg off, break it in two and
stab you to death with your broken
shin bone. Now go away.

Toby leaves.

Malcolm sits down, head in his hands.

A GUY comes in.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, this room's occupied.

GUY

I've just come to pray.

MALCOLM

Yeah, well I need this place to myself
because I am waiting for very specific
instructions from the omnipotent
beardy upstairs. Oh, hang on, I'm
getting something... He says tell that
fucking bedwetter who's just come in
to fuck right off or I will ram him
all the way up my fat hairy fucking
spacetime wormhole of an arse and then
shit him out all over Canada.

The guy leaves. Malcolm sits down again to think.

TOBY
(into phone)
Suzy, how's it going? Has Jamie been
round? Right...

Liza comes over.

LIZA
This is you, isn't it?

TOBY
(indicating himself)
This is me, yes. And that's you. I
thought we had this worked out.

SUZY (O.S.)
(on phone)
Is that the bunny boiler?

TOBY
(into phone)
Yes, that is Liza's voice. But no, I'm
not shagging her, she's two feet away
from me. It would be nice to think

KAREN
 (at a loss for what to
 say)
 Have a nice war.

LIZA
 Thanks.

Michael and Suzy in Michael's office, classical music in the background. Michael's clearing his desk, putting stuff in boxes. There are lots of CDs and a couple of bottles of expensive bottles of wine.

Jamie bursts in on Michael and Suzy, his phone still on.

JAMIE
 Right, Frank and Nancy Sinatra. I've got good news. You're not fired. That's great news, isn't it?

MI CHAEL
 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.

MI CHAEL
 Oh right, when you say 'refine it' you mean completely change it

JAMIE
 It's too long. No one's going to read it. We need a document that appeals to the MT-fucking V generation of skunk-numbed retards. We need to cut those cons. They're very negative.

MI CHAEL
 That's a complete fabrication.

JAMIE

Changing his name doesn't make a difference. The main source in there he's not really called Ice Man, is he? "Mr and Mrs Man, you've got a son, Ice." So we change it, to another name....

(refers to the music playing)

Who's the fuck with the fiddle? The Fiddlefuck.

MICHAEL

This is Debussy, if that's what you mean.

JAMIE

Okay, we'll call him Debussy.

MICHAEL

No.

JAMIE

And then you'll make a couple of other changes. It'll mean your fingerprints are on it, Mikey, but it's the only way to save your job, you leaky fuck.

Michael is now scared of what he's being asked to do.

MICHAEL

No, look, okay, really, I'm not up for this. I'm just, I didn't leak it.

(to Suzy)

I'm sorry.

SUZY

I know you didn't leak it. Jamie, he didn't leak it.

JAMIE

Sorry love, that's what I've been told. And I'm very trusting. Maybe too trusting. I tend to get hurt a lot you know.

MICHAEL

It wasn't me, Jamie, alright? It wasn't me. Don't make me do this. Someone else must have come in and used the fax machine.

JAMIE

What? Oh, that thing about your fax? Don't worry about that. I made that up. You're doing this Michael, okay?

(MORE)

TOBY

Can we stop running because my hands
are really rather badly burned now.

They stop.

MALCOLM

I know it was you who put Pip-Pip out

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

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.

IN THE LOI 7 T O everything.

JAMIE
(to Michael)
Attach that to an email.

An alert goes on Michael's MSN Messenger.

JAMIE (CONT'D)
Oh look you've got a friend online. Is it a lady friend?

MI CHAEL
It's Malcolm.

JAMIE
What's he saying?

MI CHAEL
I'm not repeating it.

Jamie reads it off the screen and laughs.

JAMIE
That's terrible Malc. I feel sorry for him now.

MALCOLM
Is he crying?

JAMIE
No. Brave soldier. So where's this going?

MALCOLM
Send it to Toby Wright

TOBY
No!

MALCOLM
Yes! Has it gone?

JAMIE
Yeah we put a little red flag on it and everything.

MALCOLM
(to Toby)
Is it here?

TOBY
(Looking at his email)
If the subject heading is 'Smoking Fucking Gun You Cunt' then yes.

109

INT. UN CORRIDOR - DAY

109

Malcolm approaches Toby.

MALCOLM

Get me a blue folder.

TOBY

Where from?

MALCOLM

I don't fucking know. Do I look like I've ever set foot in a stationary cupboard? I do my shagging in five star hotels. Now go and find me a blue fucking folder. Pronto.

Toby runs off.

110

INT. LINTON'S UN OFFICE - DAY

110

Malcolm walks in. He holds up his blue folder.

MALCOLM

The intelligence your guys couldn't find? I think you owe me a massive, grovelling apology.

LINTON

What, you did your job? Eventually?

KAREN (CONT'D)

What the fuck George. Seriously? Have you thought this through.

GENERAL MILLER

Of course I fucking have, I've sent soldiers into warzones and given it less thought than this.

KAREN

Well of course you have. That was just kids, whereas this is your career we're talking about.

CHAD

That is harsh. That's very harsh Miss Clark.

GENERAL MILLER

(without looking at him)

Gee, thanks for your support, Son of Fucking Rambow.

KAREN

You said that the war was intolerable and we'd go together.

GENERAL MILLER

It is - it is intolerable. I still agree with myself about that. But I've got to tolerate it. My loyalty is with the kids. At the end of the day I'm a soldier.

KAREN

You're not a soldier.

GENERAL MILLER

Look at the uniform, Karen. I'm not a pastry chef. I'm not Miss World. I don't stack shelves at Wal-Mart. I have military commendations on my chest, not a little fucking label saying My Name Is George.

KAREN

You're a politician. You live on canapes and white wine and you have three anecdotes you wheel out at every party and you scour the national papers for mentions of your name. You're a fucking politician.

GENERAL MILLER

I'm still a soldier.

KAREN

When was the last time you shot a guy?

GENERAL MILLER

What, if I haven't shot a guy in 15 years then I'm not a soldier? City hall don't insist I bring along a fucking bullet-ridden corpse every five years to renew my soldier licence.

GENERAL MILLER
Get the fuck away from me and don't
ever talk about my balls you elongated
retard.

Miller walks off.

CHAD
Okay. This was not the plan.

113

INT. UN COFFEE SHOP. DAY.

113

Malcolm catches up with Simon.

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

SIMON
I do. I'm going to resign, Malcolm. In
an hour. You can't stop me now.

Toby comes over.

TOBY
Boss?

SIMON
Yes?

MALCOLM
Yes?

TOBY (CONT'D)
It's on the BBC News website --
Partial collapse of the wall. Mrs
Michaelson's greenhouse has a smashed
pane. The BBC had a crew down there.

SIMON

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

Give me the paper.

(off Simon's look)

He's my new boy. I'm just breaking him in.

TOBY

Here.

MALCOLM

The Telegraph has a cartoon of you crushed underneath the Great Wall Of China, suggesting you are the only political fuck-up visible from space. Look at this. No one could survive this. The PM is very clear on this - you're sacked, over the wall.

SIMON

No.

MALCOLM

Yes.

SIMON

You haven't even - spoken to the Prime Minister.

MALCOLM

Yes I have.

SIMON

You fucking haven't I've been right here.

MALCOLM

I have spoken to the Prime Minister. Whether it has happened or not is irrelevant. It is true. As soon as I heard about the wall, I spoke to him and he decided you had to go.

SIMON

I'm not going quietly.

MALCOLM

Yeah well if you try to turn this into some anti-war protest, you can expect your 'mountain of conflict' soundbite to be everywhere from ringtones to a fucking dance mix on YouTube. I will marshal all the forces of media darkness to hound you to an assisted suicide. And you will be remembered as a mincing, spineless, two-faced opportunist cock-swallowing warmonger.

A silence while Simon and Toby realise there is nowhere for him to go.

MALCOLM (CONT' D)

Right, Rumpleforeskin's give me your laptop, so -- shall we draft your 'Dear Prime Minister, just a quick note to say thanks for sacking me' letter?

LINTON

Okay, I don't want to be accused of micro managing but I personally do not see that 'I heart Huckabees' should be on the list of dvds suitable for forces entertainment. That self-indulgent crap is not suitable entertainment for combat troops. And where's 'United 93' on here? That should be playing 24/7.

INT. CONSTITUENCY OFFICE. DAY.

Simon is back with Roz.

ROZ

Right, I've got a selection of quotes for you, they're all local firms and none of them is very well respected. Everyone's using Poles, but if you do it could be a PR disaster.

(gets another piece of paper out)

Now, this sceptic tank is also rearing it's pooy head again too.

Simon looks zonked with boredom.

INT. WHITE HOUSE

A. J.

Well Alan, I have been balled out by Linton for allowing I Heart Huckabees on to the troops DVD roster. You know the phrase, "I'm too old for this shit? Well, I'm too young for this shit. I should be out there having a youth. Getting high, making women pregnant. Not that obviously. But something fun. Actually, not fun, it would need to be stimulating. Like cancer research. Or working for Apple.

INT. DFID - DAY

Malcolm is walking through the open-plan office with Judy.

MALCOLM

Any news about Michael?

JUDY

No, no-one's heard from him for a few days now.

You worried? MALCOLM

(yes) JUDY

JUDY

Malcolm, go take a running fuck.

MALCOLM

You didn't say no!

(a beat)

Ah, here they are. Minister.
Elizabeth. Welcome aboard.

MINISTER

Thanks Malcolm. Looking forward to it.
War seems to be going 'great guns' at
the moment.

MALCOLM

Ah, cheeky! Let me take you out for an
expensive lunch, roast swan and all
the trimmings, and I'll bring you up
to speed on the whole Middle East
situation.

MINISTER

Are you twisting my arm already?

MALCOLM

Aye, but in a friendly, non-breaky
way.

ADVISOR

(to Judy)

Hi I'm Danny. Dan. I'm Elizabeth's
chief advisor.

JUDY

Judy Molloy. Senior Press -

ADVISOR

Have I got a desk?

JUDY

Yes, it's that one there.

She points at Toby's desk. The Minister and his advisor
start making themselves at home.

We stay on Toby now as Malcolm and Judy greet the new
guys. Toby grabs the last of his things, glances over
at them, and then we follow him as he heads down the
front steps.