

It's very dark in here. Virtually the only thing we can make out is a double bed with a couple slumbering beneath a duvet. Beside the bed, a Blackberry thrums into life, on vibrate.

From the bed, a man's hand blearily reaches for the Blackberry, but manages instead to knock it onto the carpet, where it continues to thrum away. He grunts slightly. The Blackberry stops humming. For a moment, all is quiet again.

Then another phone rings: an office desk phone, beside the bed. Sighing, he reaches over and switches on a lamp. Now we see him: Michael Callow: early forties. His wife Jane rolls over, pulls the covers up around her.

Glancing at the clock beside the bed (5.13am), Michael lifts the receiver with a faintly resigned, apprehensive air.

MICHAEL

Hello.

He listens.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Just tell me what's happened.

He listens. Whoever's on the phone is saying something, but not giving him the basics: *what is happening?*

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

What is it?

The voice on the other end says something. Something that wakes him up. His face drains of what little colour the night had left it with.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

I'll be right down.

He hangs up and sits, slightly stunned, for a moment. Jane has woken up herself. She touches his arm to comfort him.

JANE

What's happened?

MICHAEL

(staring into space)
Susannah.

JANE

Susannah?

MICHAEL

Princess Susannah.

He rips back the bedclothes and reaches for a dressing gown.

JANE
Is she alright?

Michael heads for the door.

MICHAEL
I don't know.

2

INT. DOWNING STREET BRIEFING ROOM - NIGHT

2

A large oak panelled room. Prime Minister Michael Callow sits at a large conference room table, a coffee in front of him, still in his dressing gown.

We hear muted sobs. Female. Coming from a speaker. But for now, we're watching the people in this room. It's a COBRA meeting. Aside from Michael there are four others present. Sitting to his right: Alex Cairns, Home Secretary, in her early 50s, smartly dressed. Also present: Julian Hereford, DG of MI5 -- also smartly dressed. *

Standing at the back of the room, Director of Communications Tom Bilce, in trendy specs. *

There's also a steely looking man in his mid-30s: Section Chief Walker, also MI5, standing by a plasma screen which is currently demanding everyone's attention. The screen from which the sobs are emanating. It's hooked up to a laptop in front of Julian. *

On screen, an attractive woman in her 20s. Mascara running down her face. Cut-glass accent. We only see her from the shoulders up: straps of a summer dress and fresh bruises. *

It's Princess Susannah. Clearly in great distress. Tied in position, arms behind her back as far as we can tell. She looks off to the side: there's someone standing there, behind the lens. Someone we can't see.

SUSANNAH
Don't kill me.

We see Michael's ashen face, as he watches. Then back to the screen as an electronic voice - one of the standard ones included with modern laptops - speaks, off-mic, to the Princess.

ELECTRONIC VOICE
Read the statement.

SUSANNAH
Please don't kill me.

ELECTRONIC VOICE
Read the statement.

SUSANNAH

Yes... all right. From that screen?

There is a slight pause: we hear brief typing.

ELECTRONIC VOICE

That is correct.

Susannah looks down the lens, and starts to read, like an amateur presenter having to read an autocue at gunpoint. At times hesitant... at times stuttering on her own terror.

SUSANNAH

I am Susannah, Duchess of
Beaumont... popularly known as
Princess Susannah. I am somewhere
you cannot find, held by someone
you will not trace.

She pauses, peers at the next bit.

SUSANNAH (CONT'D)

Prime Minister Michael Callow...

We see Michael blanch at the direct mention of his name.

SUSANNAH (CONT'D)

Prime Minister Michael Callow... My
life... my life depends on you.
If you do not do precisely as
instructed by 4pm this afternoon, I
will be...

(she sobs)

I will be executed. Oh God I c--

Abruptly, Julian taps the spacebar on the laptop -- the video *
pauses. *

MICHAEL

What are you doing? Keep it going.

JULIAN

Prime Minister, at this point it's
important to say we are 100 percent
certain this *is* indeed Princess Susannah.
Her car was intercepted shortly after
midnight. Returning from the wedding of
one of her student friends.

MICHAEL opens his mouth -- Alex Cairns speaks for the first *
time. She's looking down though, at the table. *

ALEX

She'd insisted on going. *

MICHAEL

(to JULIAN)

But you had security on her, I mean-

WALKER

Two PPOs; still unconscious.

MICHAEL

Unconscious?

WALKER

Heavy sedative, close range, each with a single puncture wound, no sign of struggle.

Michael gestures at the screen, dazed.

MICHAEL

What do they want, money?

No-one says anything.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Release a jihadi? Scrap 3rd world debt?

*
*

(exasperated by silence)

Save the fucking libraries?

JULIAN

We believe both the video and the demand it contains to be genuine.

MICHAEL

(shouting)

What demand?

Beat.

*

ALEX

What Susannah says next... it concerns you directly sir.

Michael stares at her. Looks round at all of them. None of his aides are making eye contact. He's worked alongside Alex and Tom for three years. Now they won't look at him.

Julian is also looking at the table.

This already bad situation just took a lurch towards nightmarish. Callow looks at Walker, who is regarding him with a glimmer of sympathy.

WALKER

This is actually happening sir.

MICHAEL

(quieter)

Just play it.

Julian hits his keyboard. The video resumes.

*

SUSANNAH

... can't... please... I don't want to die.

She dissolves into sobs. We hear fast off-camera typing.

ELECTRONIC VOICE

Continue to read the statement.

Susannah looks back at the lens.

SUSANNAH

There is only one demand. And it is a simple one. At 4pm this afternoon Prime Minister Michael Callow must appear on live television, on all British networks -- terrestrial and satellite -- and... no.

ELECTRONIC VOICE

Continue to read the statement --

SUSANNAH

... on all British networks, terrestrial and satellite -- and have full unsimulated sexual intercourse with a pig.
(sob; looks offscreen)
I don't understand.

Julian pauses the recording again, just as a list of instructions appears.

JULIAN

The video ends with a series of technical specifications for the broadcast.

We watch MICHAEL's face register 500 bewilderments at once. He tries to speak. Nothing. He almost laughs. Then thinks again. He looks around: no-one makes eye contact. Finally:

MICHAEL

Why are you doing this?
(beat)
It's a joke, right? Ha ha Mike. Ho ho.

There is more silence.

JULIAN

It's real.

Michael stares at the table. Then back at the screen. Then at Alex, his *confidant*.

MICHAEL

Did she say "pig"? Sex with a pig.

Alex nods.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

They want me to have sex with a pig?

TOM

On live television this afternoon.

MICHAEL

But what -- who the--

WALKER

We're checking with our embedded operatives, compiling suspects as we speak.

ALEX

Meanwhile, the demand has been made and there's not long to formulate our response.

MICHAEL

Well I'm not fucking a pig. Page one, that's not happening.

ALEX

Of course.

He looks around. Alex nods. Tom nods. Julian nods. Walker's face doesn't react at first. Until Michael looks at him.

WALKER

Absolutely sir.

MICHAEL

(to Julian)

Have we established a dialogue with this... person?

JULIAN

We can't. There's no email address, no codeword, no channel for negotiation. Almost certainly a deliberate stance.

Michael stands up again. He's pacing now, trying to think:

MICHAEL

Okay. So. We focus on finding Susannah, get her back, however it's done, I don't care, we stop this now.

ALEX

I assure you everyone is working toward this.

MICHAEL

Yes -- no! Not everyone! Dedicated core team. This can't go wide.

He looks at Tom Bilce.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

And keep it so far from the press it's on the other side of Jupiter.

Tom opens his mouth awkwardly. *

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

It *only* exists in this room.

TOM

It's already outside it.

That's another blow. Michael's rattled by it:

MICHAEL

If there's hacks sniffing round, shut them down.

Tom looks like he wants to say something.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Bright red D-notice. Super-fucking-Godzilla-injunction with ten-inch Whitehall fangs.

Before Tom can answer, Julian interjects.

JULIAN

This video came from YouTube.

Michael spins around, agape.

MICHAEL

What?

WALKER

It was uploaded via an encrypted IP over an hour ago.

MICHAEL

Well get it off there!

JULIAN

We did, after nine minutes. But that was long enough for it to be downloaded, duplicated, and spread.

MICHAEL

Spread? How many people have seen this?

JULIAN

We take one down, six clones pop up elsewhere. It's viral.

MICHAEL

How many people?

WALKER

50,000. That's our current estimate.

Michael is silenced as that unfurls in his head. Then:

TOM

The newsrooms have got it.

MICHAEL

(alarm)

They're running this on air?

ALEX

No. We put a type five D-notice out immediately, and they're complying.

TOM

For now.

Michael's spooked. Alex shoots Tom a look: not helpful.

TOM (CONT'D)

(ominously)

It's trending on Twitter.

Michael looks at the screen, once again struck dumb. He looks around the room; he might cry. Then he thumps the table hard.

MICHAEL

FUCKING INTERNET!

ALEX

(calmly)

Well, yes.

MICHAEL

So now what? What's the playbook?

JULIAN

It's new territory, Prime Minister. There is no playbook.

Michael looks more puce than ever. Rubs his eyes.

MICHAEL

Christ.

END OF PART ONE

LUCINDA TOWNE *
... the Tillisdale fire inquiry hears *
harrowing 999 calls *
made by trapped residents as flames *
engulfed the building. *

LAUREN
Why's it not on the news?

5 SCENE 5 OMITTED 5

6 EXT. UKN NEWS BUILDING - DAY 1. EARLY MORNING 6

It's early morning. We're looking at a glass-and-steel building. A bit Horseferry Road. A sign with a big UKN News logo. Over this, we hear a woman's voice. The newsreader.

LUCINDA TOWNE (V.O.) *
Shut Down: The Tate Modern's *
controversial 'Agitation' *
exhibition closes three weeks ahead *
of schedule, amidst criticism from *
the Culture Secretary. *

7 INT. UKN NEWS STUDIO - DAY 1. EARLY MORNING 7

A modern rolling news studio. From one side of the camera, we see morning shift news anchor Lucinda Towne reading headlines. *

LUCINDA TOWNE *
In the Clear: Footballer Geraint *
Fitch has been cleared of any *
wrongdoing following a *
confrontation with the paparazzi *
outside a Manchester restaurant. *

8 INT. UKN NEWS ROOM FOUR - DAY 1. EARLY MORNING 8

This is a meeting room designed to accommodate about twelve people comfortably. Right now it's holding almost double that, some seated round the table, some standing.

On the table a laptop shows the Princess Susannah video.

A debate is in full flow. Doing most of the talking are: two reporters, Malaika (female, attractive, late 20s) and Damon (late 30s). Outranking them are Shelly, Day Editor (late 30s) and Martin, Executive Editor (early 40s). Martin sits at the head of the table.

DAMON
How would we even describe it? An
"indecent act"?

MALAIKA

Everyone's *seen* the video; they
already know the full--

SHELLY

If we *mentioned* bestiality pre-
watershed Ofcom'd be seriously
pissed off--

MALAIKA

(snorting)
Fuck Ofcom.

MARTIN

We're still honouring the D-notice -

SHELLY

But sure!--

MARTIN

(raised voice)
We are honouring the D-notice

MALAIKA

(sotto)
The *voluntary* D-notice...

MARTIN

(looking at Malaika)
It may be a 'sportsman-like
gesture' but we're making it.
(he looks around)
A woman's life's at stake. We
follow procedure.

Malaika holds up her iPhone to display Tweetdeck.

MALAIKA

(brandishing iPhone)
My timeline consists 100 percent of
viewers asking why we're not
covering it. How do I reply?

MARTIN

You don't.

MALAIKA

That's totally backwards--

MARTIN

No-one's breaking rank. Not the
Beeb, not Sky, not --

*

DAMON

(unhelpfully)
I hear Facebook's coverage is
pretty comprehensive.

MARTIN
That may be, but --

MALAIKA
It's like 9/11's happening and we're
broadcasting sandwich recipes.

MARTIN
We are not a chatroom.

A young researcher, JACK, sticks his head round the door.

JACK
It's on CNN.

The room turns to look at him.

JACK (CONT'D)
And Fox. And MSNBC. Al Jazeera,
NHK, NDTV...

MARTIN
(he's got the point)
Alright.

Malaika looks vindicated. Martin crumples slightly.

MARTIN (CONT'D)
(sighing)
This planet.

Then he claps his hands and stands up -- a commander.

MARTIN (CONT'D)
Okay. Sarah, you cover the snatch
itself. Damon, public reaction;
Mira, Royal angle, upcoming
marriage etc; Simon -- set tone
with standards and practices. We've
got to explain this without viewers
sicking up their Weetabix.

*
*

Martin walks past a series of team members; he's like Patton.
But he's ignoring Malaika, and she's starting to notice.

MARTIN (CONT'D)
Lorcan, the internet aspect. New
paradigm, Twitter, Arab spring, all
that bibble.

Lorcan nods. Martin is already onto the man beside him.

MARTIN (CONT'D)
Dan, all graphics run past me. And
keep it functional. No Peppa pigs.

*

Finally he gets to Malaika. A brief pause.

MARTIN (CONT'D)
Malaika, update the Princess obit VT.

Wow. To Malaika, that's an insult.

MALAIKA
The obit VT. *

Finally Martin looks at Shelly. He puts his hand on her shoulder. *

MARTIN
Shelly -- you're fired. *

Shelly looks aghast. *

MARTIN (CONT'D)
Seriously, get out. *

Shelly goes to open her mouth. *

MARTIN (CONT'D) *
(deadpan) *
Okay that was a lie. I'll be in the *
gallery with you, if you can bear *
that. *
(sighing)
But first... an awkward phonecall.
Least I can do is warn Tom.

As MARTIN exits the room, we see MALAIKA is texting someone. *

9 INT. NUMBER TEN CORRIDOR - DAY 1. EARLY MORNING

9

A twenty-something press assistant called ANDREW is glancing *
at an incoming message on his Blackberry -- we don't see it -- *
but then quickly hurries off screen, as he hears, bombing *
round the corner, Tom Bilce on the phone. Tom looks furious, *
but daren't raise his voice too much. *

TOM
We put a D-notice on it!

MARTIN
(on phone)
It's global, Tom.

TOM
Don't. I'm begging you.

MARTIN
(on phone)
You're *begging* me?

TOM
Don't run it Martin.

MARTIN
(on phone)
I'm sorry: I can't help you Tom.

Two Downing Street staff members brush past Tom; he nods at one, lowers his voice further. Once they're out of earshot, he hisses violently into the mouthpiece.

TOM
(furious, hissing)
Know how much help you're getting from here on in? Multiply nothing by shit all. UKN's dead to us. *
Shove it up your arse you f--

Just then the door he's standing beside opens -- Alex appears in it. Tom abruptly hangs up. Alex eyes Tom with suspicion. *

ALEX
(pointing at phone)
Interesting?

TOM
A man. *

ALEX
A man?

TOM
A man.

Beat.

ALEX
(quietish)
Tom, so you're across it... I'm *
exploring contingency plans. *

Tom gives her a look. *

10 EXT. BANKSIDE STUDIOS - DAY 1 10

A TV Studios. But there's something strange about it: specifically, we see, a police officer near the door, turning a member of staff away.

11 INT. BANKSIDE STUDIOS CORRIDOR - DAY 1 11

On the walls: the occasional framed shot of celebs and gameshows. This place is commonly used for mainstream TV.

A besuited special agent named CALLETT -- Government type, about 35, is on the move toward the studio, flanked by two armed special officers. They pass a corridor -- CALLETT quickly points down it.

CALLETT
Harper, any doors down there,
secure them.

One of the officers obediently peels off to stride down the corridor. CALLETT and the remaining officer keep moving.

A paunchy producer in his mid-40s called JON appears from another corridor, chaperoning NOEL, a youngish FX guy with a flashy Alienware laptop under his arm.

JON
Mr. Callett? Noel from Blue Eye.

With a glance, CALLETT sizes him up. Noel is about 24; a bit alternative, in a T-shirt with retro videogame art on it.

JON (CONT'D)
(quickly)
Noel won an Emmy for his FX work on that HBO moon... western... thing.

NOEL
Sea of Tranquility.

JON
You won't find better.

By now they're at the perimeter of a TV studio, walking backstage... CALLETT still walking with purpose.

CALLETT
(to NOEL)
Can you map a head onto a different body, live?

NOEL
Depends if your camera's moving.

Callett hands him a print-out with a list of rules on it

CALLETT
His rule-sheet specifies a single handheld camera in a constant 'roving' motion.

*
*
*

Noel inspects the list. As he reads it, we start moving into the studio space itself...

12

INT. STUDIO - DAY 1

12

They enter a cavernous television studio more commonly used for gameshows. Today it's stark. A simple black backdrop.

NOEL
Gonzo style.
(reading)
(MORE)

*
*
*

NOEL (CONT'D)

Knows his shit, that's tough.

(back to the list)

"Fruition" to be transmitted in full? What's --

(thinks for a moment;
answers own thought)

Ah. Yeah.

*
*
*
*

CALLETT

Just focus on the visuals.
Different face mapped onto a live...

(not sure of the word)
performer... with those stipulations.

NOEL

Fringes of possibility...

CALLETT

Deadline's at four. Need to know if it's workable by two.

NOEL

Can't happen.

CALLETT

It has to. Any kit you need -- any kit, it's yours.

NOEL

Mate, I'm good, but I'm not Jesus Christ.

As CALLETT walks off; not even looking back at NOEL...

CALLETT

He didn't have computers.

14

INT. HOSPITAL CASUALTY AREA - DAY

14

*

This is a Casualty waiting area with seating, a reception desk, and a plasma TV on the wall near the Reception Desk to keep waiting patients occupied.

*
*
*

The plasma TV is tuned to UKN News, upon which Lucinda Towne is still blahing on about anything other than this. Footage of BIN COLLECTION VAN and headline REFUSE ROW. *

A slim nurse, BRIAN, is near the desk. Also an orderly, PIKE (boorish guy in ironic T-shirt). They're both looking at the telly. LAUREN arrives and takes her place behind the desk. *

LAUREN
Is it still not on telly?

BRIAN
Nothing. Must be a hoax.

PIKE *

Or a blackout.

Just then, the onscreen strap is replaced by a whooshing BREAKING NEWS logo.

PIKE (CONT'D)
Woah, heads up.

LUCINDA TOWNE *

(shift in tone to suggest
this is potentially
monumentally upsetting
news for most viewers) *

Some major breaking news now here
on UKN. *

PIKE *

(shouting back to some
other staff) *

It's real!

Everyone else in the area looks up. Now it's real. *

15 INT. UKN NEWS STUDIO - DAY 1 15

Full screen on the news report. The BIG BREAKING NEWS STRAP resolves to PRINCESS KIDNAPPED Beneath that in smaller text: Susannah Duchess of Beaumont has been kidnapped. *

NB TEXT IN BOLD ITALICS WILL BE WHAT IS HEARD IN THE FOLLOWING SCENES. *

LUCINDA *

In the last few minutes it's been confirmed that Susannah, Duchess of Beaumont has been kidnapped. A video uploaded anonymously to the internet appears to depict the Princess pleading for her life. *

STILLS FROM THE VIDEO; PRINCESS KIDNAPPED strap stays up. *

PIKE
(eating a biscuit)
If it's terrorists they'll take her
head off.

BRIAN
Fuck sake, man.

PIKE
Just saying.

22 SCENE OMITTED 22

23 SCENE OMITTED 23

23A INT. NASH ARMS PUB - CONTINUOUS. DAY 1. 23A

SONIA, a barmaid-landlady in her early thirties, is behind the bar, preparing pumps for the day's trade and being distracted by a portable TV in the corner on which the news is being broadcast. Behind her, her faintly nerdy 13-year-old mixed race son has wandered downstairs and is half-watching the news, half-playing a handheld videogame.

LUCINDA (ON SCREEN)
The video also depicts the Princess reciting a statement containing a bizarre ransom demand of a personal nature involving the Prime Minister.

*
*
*
*
*
*

SONIA
(eyes on TV)
They'll be asking for a million quid or something.

SON
(gawping at game)
They want him to do it with a pig.

SONIA
(annoyed by that)
Go to school.

The boy exits.

*
*

24 INT. DOWNING STREET STAIRWELL - DAY 1 24

TOM BILCE bustles toward his office, Blackberry beeping every few seconds. Beside him, a young assistant called CAMILLA, referring to an iPad, updates him on coverage so far.

CAMILLA

Telegraph has the full video and an interactive timeline, tonally stark, brief mention of ransom being a sex act, nothing too gross...

They near the press office...

25 INT. DOWNING STREET PRESS OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER. DAY 1. 25

This is Tom Bilce's little fiefdom. Computer monitors, and two big tellies at the side. One is tuned to UKN News.

TOM and CAMILLA enter. *

CAMILLA *

The Sun's site runs with 'TAKEN'; big grab of Susannah, mentions the demand euphemistically... *

It's a poky room, with desks, and three young assistants in their twenties. One of whom is the quiet, faintly nerdy assistant called ANDREW we saw in a corridor earlier. He's currently on the phone, speaking slightly in code.

ANDREW *

(on phone)

Of course I still want that drink. *

25AA INT. UKN NEWS ROOM CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS. DAY 1. 25AA *

We see it's MALAIKA on the phone. *

MALAIKA

(on phone)

Then give me something...

25AB INT. DOWNING STREET PRESS OFFICE - CONTINUOUS. DAY 1 25AB *

ANDREW's worried he might be overheard *

ANDREW

It's not - that won't be possible *

We watch Tom's face, staring intently at the TV as CAMILLA continues with her coverage assessment.

MALAIKA

(on phone)

I'm friendly when I drink. Very friendly when I'm grateful.

25A INT. UKN NEWS CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS. DAY 1. 25A *

MALAIKA
Want to see how grateful I can be?

25B INT. DOWNING STREET PRESS OFFICE - CONTINUOUS. DAY 1. 25B

ANDREW turns the phone to his other ear and lowers his voice.

ANDREW
There's no comment at this time.

He hangs up.

26 INT. UKN NEWS CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS. DAY 1. 26 *

MALAIKA looks at her phone and thinks.

27 INT. TOILET STALL - DAY 1 27

Malaika has slid the sides of her top down slightly, to expose her shoulders. She is taking a photo of herself with her phone. She looks at it and hits some more keys.

28 INT. DOWNING STREET PRESS OFFICE - DAY 1 28

Camilla is still burbling away while Tom gawks at UKN News.

CAMILLA
Guardian's businesslike but
sympathetic; they are running a
fucking liveblog --

TOM
Ugh.

CAMILLA
... and a short think piece on
historical symbolism of the pig...

Andrew's Blackberry thrums once more. He looks at it. A picture of Malaika -- cut off just below the shoulders. It looks like she's naked, even though she isn't.

He checks no-one's looking over his shoulder. Looks at the photo again. And he puts the phone back in his pocket. But now he's on a slightly different plane, somehow.

28A INT. DOWNING STREET HALLWAY, PRIVATE APARTMENT - DAY 1 28A *

Jane, with a worried expression on her face, moving down from the flat towards the briefing room. *

28B INT. DOWNING STREET CORRIDOR - DAY 1. 28B *

Outside the briefing room door, a security guard, spots JANE and looks at the floor. *

29 INT. DOWNING STREET BRIEFING ROOM - DAY 1 29

This is now a nerve centre. Staff coming and going -- the PM in shirt pacing up and down. Julian updating him...

JULIAN

We've been squeezing hard but still nothing concrete. Those names were long shots, so maybe no surprise b--

A commotion; someone trying to enter. A security guard trying to stop them. It's Jane. We hear but don't see her.

JANE

(oov)

It's my house. You can't stop me. That's my doorway. You're touching my doorhandle.

Jane pushes past the security guy. Everyone's looking at her. Then at their shoes. Jane fixes Michael with a look.

JANE (CONT'D)

(sharply)

Can I have a word?

Michael opens his mouth. But nothing comes out.

29A INT. DOWNING STREET CORRIDOR - MOMENTS LATER. DAY 1. 29A

A staff member shuts the briefing room doors from outside.

30 INT. DOWNING STREET BRIEFING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER. DAY 1. 30

The briefing room is now empty apart from the PM and JANE.

MICHAEL

It won't come to that.

JANE

And if they don't find her?

MICHAEL

MI5 have a name; they're surrounding a place now.

JANE

Where?

MICHAEL

What?

JANE

Where's the place?

MICHAEL

(impressively fast)

Truro.

JANE

(equally impressive)

Why are you lying?

MICHAEL

What?

JANE

You're lying. Truro, Jesus.

No point arguing. He puts a hand on her shoulder.

MICHAEL

I don't want you worrying--

JANE

(pushing his arm away)

You never patronize me, don't start now.

MICHAEL

Whoever this is is insane--

JANE

-- and has a princess --

MICHAEL

Who'll get through this --

JANE

Not any princess, but *the* princess--

MICHAEL

Even if they don't find him --

JANE

- Princess Facebook bloody eco-conscious 'national sweetheart' ...

MICHAEL

-- I won't have to do anything.

JANE

(tearing up)

Everyone's laughing at us.

MICHAEL

You don't know that.

JANE

I know 'people'. We love humiliation. It's just slapstick to us -- we can't *not* laugh.

*
*

MICHAEL

Nothing's going to happen --

JANE

It's already happening in their heads. In their heads, that's what you're doing, what *my husband's* doing...

He touches her neck; she pushes his hand away. He touches it again. His touch makes her cry.

JANE (CONT'D)

I just... please...

She pushes his hand away, but doesn't really want to. He puts it back, cradling her head.

MICHAEL

Jane...

JANE

I love you.

There's a knock at the door. Then it opens to reveal CAMILLA.

MICHAEL

(irritated)
What?

CAMILLA

Palace on the phone sir.

MICHAEL

I'll be there in a bit. Get Alex to stall them.

CAMILLA

She's been speaking to her for the last ten minutes.

*

MICHAEL

Her?

CAMILLA

It's the Queen herself.

Michael looks at Jane as if to say 'sorry, but...'

JANE

(understandingly)
Go on.

Jane masks her tears from CAMILLA as she leaves.

31 I/E. CITY - MONTAGE - DAY 1 31

We are listening to a radio phone-in over shots of traffic; shots of builders on a site (with a radio); shots of a woman listening in her garden.

The host is BOB HAYNES. The first caller is a man called WAROUQ who speaks with a bit of an 'innit' tone.

BOB

So Warouq: you say no negotiation with terrorists?

WAROUQ

(phone static)

Yeah, cos if he did it, right, what next? Someone says we'll set off a dirty bomb unless Obama does a shit-

BOB

Sorry Warouq, got to cut you off there, apologies for the language ladies and gentlemen; now on line three it's Sam, hi Sam...

32 SCENE OMITTED 32 *

33 SCENE OMITTED 33 *

34 INT. STUDIO - DAY 1 34 *

Callett is surveying the scene in front of him. Jon is standing still in position behind someone else who is on all fours, as though mimicking a pig. NB no 'thrusting' motions. *

On the other side of the studio is a man standing roughly in position against a large sheet of green fabric. *

CALLET stands behind Noel -- upon Noel's laptop we see an image of Jon with the other man's head mapped onto it. *

CALLETT *

Confident? *

NOEL *

Bit of a kick bollock scramble but with finessing it should work. *

CALLETT *

Then finesse quickly. Our 'performer' is on his way. *

35 EXT. BANKSIDE STUDIOS - DAY 1

35

An official-looking car pulls to a halt outside the TV complex. A waiting officer opens the rear door. Out steps a humourless besuited civil servant called BROWNE, closely followed by a rather goonish-looking lanky man in his early forties, with longish hair and a gold necklace.

He's Colin Flynn, better known by his 'screen name' ROD SENSELESS. A porn star ala Ben Dover, in mid-conversation with BROWNE. A one-sided talk: BROWNE is trying to ignore him.

ROD

It's a new one for me, obviously, cos it's illegal. I wouldn't normally, y'know. Have you seen my stuff?

BROWNE

No.

ROD

Well I'm pretty trad. Bish bash bosh. I'd say no fanning about, but I'd be lying.

That usually gets a laugh. Not now.

ROD (CONT'D)

Yeah, well. What do I put on the invoice, that's what I'm wondering?

BROWNE

(trying not to sigh)
There won't be any invoicing.

During this last exchange, a SPARK unloading equipment from his truck spots Rod, and holds up a cameraphone.

*
*

SPARK

Oy oy Rod!

*

Rod does a cheeky thumbs up as the spark take a snap -- BROWNE impatiently hurries him toward the entrance. The pedestrian walks off, fiddling with his phone...

*

36 SCENE OMITTED

36

37 SCENE OMITTED

37

*

38 SCENE OMITTED

38

*

LAUREN
Would they use a female pig?

PIKE
(nodding)
It's on the list.

Lauren looks a bit blank.

BRIAN
The list of rules at the end of the video. Specifies camera angles and everything.

PIKE
Like Dogme 95.

BRIAN
(exasperated)
It's not like Dogme 95.

PIKE
It's exactly like it!

LAUREN
What's Dogme 95?

BRIAN
A cinematic movement.

PIKE
Lars Von Trier.

LAUREN
Oh.

That means nothing to her. Oh Vienna.

BRIAN
A list of rules for directors; nae background music, only use natural light and so on.

LAUREN
To save electricity?

PIKE
(for a laugh)
Yeah.

BRIAN
(exasperatedly cutting him off)
For authenticity.

PIKE
(to Brian)
Same as these rules.
(MORE)

*

PIKE (CONT'D)

It's so they can't cheat it.
Intercut some other guy's arse
pumping away.

BRIAN

It's nae the same.

PIKE

Still about authenticity.

BRIAN

It's nae the same!

PIKE

(shrugging)
Authenticity.

By now, on screen, UKN News are running a poll: Should the PM
honour the demand? **86% say no.**

*

*

44

INT. DOWNING STREET BRIEFING ROOM - DAY 1

44

The Prime Minister paces, mulling over his conversation with the Queen with ALEX. TOM is in the corner, checking his Blackberry.

In the background WALKER and JULIAN are approached by a young computer analyst called JAMIE.

MICHAEL

"I trust you'll do everything in your power to get her back." That's what she said.

ALEX

And we are.

MICHAEL

It wasn't a collective 'you', it was a singular 'you', i.e. me.

ALEX

I'm sure it was universal.

MICHAEL

Easy to be confident when it's not you.

Suddenly WALKER calls over from the other side of the room.

WALKER

Sir we may have something.

MICHAEL and ALEX come over. TOM looks up. JAMIE looks a tad nervous when the PM approaches -- he *is* the Prime Minister after all.

WALKER (CONT'D)

Jamie's been tracing the video's origin.

MICHAEL

I thought it was untraceable.

JAMIE

Technically yeah but so I thought 'work with what we know'... and that video, okay, before YouTube compression it was 57.3 meg.

MICHAEL gives her a blanker-than-blank look.

JAMIE (CONT'D) *
Algorithm. Boring. Anyway we *also* *
know it was uploaded at 3.16am. *

JAMIE (CONT'D) *
So I ran a nationwide traceback on *
uninterrupted one-way uploads of *
precisely 57.3 meg in the minutes *
leading up to 3.16... And... *

She hits a key. On screen -- a Google Earth style aerial view *
showing an area in Buckinghamshire. *

JAMIE (CONT'D) *
Closest I can get is a postcode. *
But it came from somewhere in *
there. *

MICHAEL leans in. Studies it closely. *

WALKER *
(tapping screen) *
Looks like a campus. *

Could we see from the reverse so we don't need to worry about *
what's on the laptop from hereon in? *

Jamie hits a few keys. *

JAMIE *
Yes. Closed 2010 and it's been *
empty since. *

WALKER *
Latest EYESAT image for this area? *

She taps a few more keys *

JAMIE *
3am flyover shot from last night... *
looks like it had lights on. *
(MORE) *

JAMIE (CONT'D)

*

MICHAEL
(looking at screen)
We've got him...
(to ALEX, delighted)
We've got him!

*
*
*
*
*

ALEX smiles. Perhaps not 100% convinced.

*

WALKER
(to JAMIE)
Alert the local team
(to JULIAN)
We'll head out now. Full squad,
I'll man it.

*
*
*
*
*

JULIAN
(to WALKER)
-- with helmet cam relay.
(to MICHAEL)
We can watch the operation
downstairs in press - okay with you
Tom?

*
*
*
*

Tom nods. Of course it is.

*

MICHAEL
Okay.
(to WALKER)
Good luck.

WALKER
Yes sir.

He turns on his heel. Michael allows himself a small victory punch. This is the first chink of light today. He grins at Tom and Alex.

*
*

END OF PART TWO

*

45 INT. DOWNING STREET PRESS OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER. DAY 1. 45

In the background, some techies are hooking up a plasma screen to accommodate a feed from the operatives in the field. Tom Bilce breezes in.

*
*
*

TOM
Need to prep two statements on the
rescue operation. Good outcome /
bad outcome.

CAMILLA
Rescue operation?

Tom sits at his desk and fires up his laptop. He gestures vaguely at the plasma screen the techies are setting up.

*
*

TOM
Goon squad's heading for "a
postcode" in Buckinghamshire.

Andrew's ears prick up. But not as much as Camilla's:

CAMILLA
What postcode? My mum's in
Buckinghamshire.

TOM
(looking at Blackberry)
BA9 6CV... a college or something.

Camilla grunts. That's not it. Meanwhile ANDREW surreptitiously gets his Blackberry ready -- starts tapping. *

46 INT. UKN NEWS CORRIDOR. - DAY 1 46 *

MALAIKA, walking down a corridor. Her phone pings. She smiles. *

47 INT. DOWNING STREET PRESS OFFICE - DAY 1 47

Andrew's blackberry buzzes. He looks: a photo of Malaika -- this time topless, covering her breasts with one arm. Beneath it, a message: 'Thank you'. *

Andrew looks around -- Tom is busy typing a statement - and allows himself a tiny smile. *

48 SCENE OMITTED 48

49 SCENE OMITTED 49

50 EXT. BUCKINGHAMSHIRE FOREST - DAY 1 50

Walker and an impressive group of SOCA members (in camo) are lurking behind some trees. Checking out their target. WALKER is also using a small scope. *

WALKER
Gotcha. *
(passes scope to another *
grunt) *
Board's been prised away. That's *
where he got in. *

WALKER turns round to address one of the SOCA grunts.

WALKER (CONT'D)

Okay target identified. Assault
team red, have spotted possible
entry point. Any orders sir?

*
*
*

But WALKER's not talking to him. He's talking to a camera
attached to the SOCA grunt's helmet. Because this is all
being watched by...

CALLETT

You need to get into this.

ROD

There a dressing room I can use?

CALLETT

No.

Rod, unfazed, kicks off his shoes and starts getting changed.

ROD

Where's my co-star? Rude not to at least give her a kiss beforehand.

CALLETT

(coldly)

Outside. In the truck.

ROD

Her own trailer! Who's doing her hair? Vidal Sassoon?

He doesn't answer. Rod talks to Noel instead.

ROD (CONT'D)

Full of joie de vivre innee?

He turns back to Callett.

ROD (CONT'D)

"Imagination was given to man to compensate him for what he is not; a sense of humor to console him for what he is." Francis Bacon.

Beat.

ROD (CONT'D)

Bacon? No? Fuckin' hell, tough crowd.

Callett holds out the green ping-pong-ball facemask.

CALLETT

You also need to wear this.

Rod examines it.

ROD

You're sick, d'you know that?

He pulls on the facemask, laughing.

55

INT. DOWNING STREET BRIEFING ROOM - DAY 1

55

*

The PM has opened some French windows for a crafty fag, blowing smoke out the window to avoid setting off an alarm.

*

*

Tom Bilce approaches; the PM's face indicates that he knows he shouldn't be smoking but is going to anyway. *

TOM
Have they gone in yet?

MICHAEL
Think I'd be here if they had? *

TOM
I've got statements for either outcome. Listen. The coverage is very sympath--

Michael holds a hand up.

MICHAEL
I can't think about coverage now.

TOM
Of course.

Although of course Michael *is* thinking about it now. *

MICHAEL
But it's on-side?

TOM
Strong undercurrent of sympathy. Every poll indicates public understanding; disgust with the captor, outrage at the whole thing, but not at you.

Tom checks no-one's listening. *

TOM (CONT'D)
(lowered voice, indicating operation room)
Fact is, if Walker's team fuck up -- not that they will but if they do -- the public *anticipate* non-compliance from us. There'd be squawks from the 'usuals' but... It's not 'England Expects'.
(even lower voice)
If he kills her, there's no blood on your hands. Bottom line.

Michael thinks about that. He flicks the remains of his cigarette out the window, pats Tom on the shoulder. *

MICHAEL
(indicating window)
Close that will you? *

Michael returns to his desk. *

56

INT. UKN NEWS GALLERY - DAY 1

56

Onscreen, an attractive ACTRESS is burbling away about how the Princess might be coping while Lucinda nods meaningfully. In the gallery, MARTIN regards her with scorn.

MARTIN

Where do I know twinkletits from?

SHELLY

Actress. Downton Abbey. She knows the Princess.

Martin looks unimpressed. Before he can finish sighing, JACK, the researcher, walks in with a small box. Approaches Martin.

JACK

This came for you. Left at reception.

Martin looks at the box. It's a small parcel about the size of a sunglasses case. It's got his name neatly printed on it, and the word 'URGENT'.

MARTIN

Feels *cold*.
(unwrapping it)
Any idea where it's from?

JACK

(shaking head)
Courier must've dropped it off.

He removes the outer layer. Inside is a box. It is a spectacles case. Taped to it is a small USB key with the words WATCH ME painted on it in neat lettering. He passes this to SHELLY, who immediately plugs it into a laptop.

Meanwhile MARTIN looks at the spectacles case, now very curious indeed. He flips it open. His face recoils with instant disgust.

MARTIN

Ugh!

He almost drops it. Shelly stands up. Instant hubbub. Martin puts the case on the gallery desk. It contains crushed ice, glistening like diamonds and a severed finger. With nail varnish and a very distinctive ring on it.

SHELLY

Oh Jesus, that ring, is that..?

Martin nods, with his hand over his mouth so he won't puke.

MARTIN

(to assistant)
Call the police.

SHELLY
(pointing at finger)
Someone shoot that first.

She clicks on the laptop with the USB key in it. We see the finder window. There is one file on the USB stick. It's called PLAYME.MOV. She double clicks it. Up pops a window.

Black screen. Then some stark white text. A caption reading:

I GAVE YOU RULES. I SAID NO CHEATING.

Which is then replaced by

ROD SENSELESS? PLEASE.

SHELLY (CONT'D)
What does that mean?

Martin goes to open his mouth but thinks better of it. The caption is replaced by

SHE PAYS THE PRICE. COMPLY OR IT WORSENS.

It abruptly cuts to a shot of the Princess tied to the chair. Her hands are tied behind her back. She is gagged and screaming. *

SHELLY (CONT'D)
Oh shit...

A man with a sack on his head, wearing gloves, is behind the princess -- he has done something to make her scream... then he holds a recently severed finger to the lens. Shelly almost pukes. So does Martin. *

57 SCENE OMITTED 57 *

57A INT. ELECTRICAL SHOWROOM - DAY 1 57A *

We're in a huge branch of Dixons or Curry's. A wall of whopping great brand new plasma screens all tuned to UKN News -- just as a huge BREAKING NEWS strap whooshes onto the screen.

INT. HOSPITAL CASUALTY AREA - DAY *

Our NHS gang are watching part of the finger-severing video being shown on UKN News. *

LAUREN

Oh God, I can't watch this.

LUCINDA (V.O.)

The rest of the recording is too graphic for us to broadcast: it depicts the kidnapper brandishing the Princess's severed finger at the camera... UKN News has passed all material to Scotland Yard who are believed to be subjecting the finger to DNA testing immediately.

*
*
*
*
*
*
*
*

Lauren is shielding her eyes.

LAUREN

That's proper grim. It's got to stop, he's got to do what they want.

BRIAN

Who, Callow?
(looking back at the screen)
Yes he fucking has.

*

58

INT. DOWNING STREET BRIEFING ROOM - DAY 1

58

*

In ALEX's office, MICHAEL, TOM and ALEX gaze at the news.

TOM

Jesus.

Michael is silent. He breathes. But he can't keep down this boiling water. He does his best to contain himself.

MICHAEL

(quiet calm rage)
Unless I'm mistaken our mystery man specified no visual trickery in the original demand didn't he?

Alex doesn't want to speak. But must.

ALEX

I considered it necessary to--

MICHAEL

'considered it necessary'...

ALEX

... to devise a contingency p--

Without warning Michael picks the laptop up and violently hurls it against the wall. Alex jumps slightly.

MICHAEL
(shouting in Alex's face)
FUCKING HELL

*

He holds back. Pauses. Then he kicks the desk, hard.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
CHRIST!

He seems to calm down again. Alex is trying to find a moment to speak.

ALEX
Mike, it's n--

But the very sound of Alex's voice makes Michael lunge towards her, snarling through gritted teeth into her face -- he almost wants to hit her.

*

*

MICHAEL
(almost incoherent)
One word and I'll fucking -- I'll --

*

She pushes him away. He slaps her arm out of the way -- tries to lunge back. She pushes him away again -- it's almost a slap-fight -- MICHAEL grabs her hair and pushes nearer, near tears.

*

*

*

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
(trying to push closer)
You don't help me! You don't help me!

*

Tom Bilce intervenes: grabs Michael, wrestles him away - they both smash to the floor so hard they break every bone in their bodies -- except they don't really -- I'm joking. Actually, no-one falls down, and no-one's health is at any time in any danger. Thus this scene effortlessly sails through any Health and Safety check you can think of.

*

*

*

*

*

What does happen is this: Tom Bilce grabs Michael, wrestles him away, and Michael ends up sitting slumped on the carpet, properly tearful now. Alex, shocked, adjusting herself. Her hair messed.

*

*

*

*

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
(almost childlike)
What did you do Alex?

ALEX
I had a back-up plan. A man prepared to do it, and an FX company that'd paint your head onto his shoulders.
(readjusting his collar)
Plan was to broadcast as instructed -- reputation destroyed -- then announce the truth once we got her back. Reputation restored.

*

MICHAEL

And you actually thought it'd work?

ALEX

I believed it worth considering.

MICHAEL
Then you're a stupid bitch. *

ALEX
With your interests at heart. *

MICHAEL
Who knew about this?

ALEX
A select few --

MICHAEL
But enough for a leak --

ALEX
It seems some idiot at the studios - *
- recognized our designated... *
performer...

MICHAEL
"Performer"

ALEX
-- evidently they saw him entering
the studio with our officers,
tweeted a photo and the online *
hivemind did the maths. We couldn't *
have foreseen th--

MICHAEL
(coldly)
So it would seem.

There's a ping. Tom Bilce checks his Blackberry.

TOM
It's not playing well.

MICHAEL
With who?

TOM
With anyone.

59 SCENE OMITTED 59

60 SCENE OMITTED 60

61 SCENE OMITTED 61

61A I/E. CITY - MONTAGE - DAY 1 61A

More radio phone-in over shots of bustle. But people are stopping to listen now.

WOMAN CALLER

If he don't do it, he's a killer.

BOB

The Prime Minister?

WOMAN CALLER

As good as.

BOB

Have to say I'm with you there.

62 I/E. UKN NEWS PACKAGE - DAY 1. 62

We come in halfway through a UKN News report fronted by DAMON, the reporter from earlier.

Archive shot of the door of Number 10 Downing Street. A still of the PM, and a Pie Chart depicting a statistic. OR DAMON OUTSIDE DOWNING STREET. *

DAMON (V.O.)

Just a few hours ago public opinion was behind Prime Minister Callow, with only 8% of the public believing he should fulfill the bizarre and illegal request.

Then shots of the 'finger' video, and a still photo of the finger -- close up on the ring, with graphic bits pixellated out.

DAMON (V.O.)

But in the wake of these images and the delivery of the Princess's severed finger to UKN, the mood is shifting. *

At which point it cuts to more vox pops. Busy London street.

First up, a female shopper in her early 50s. Middle class type.

SHOPPER

It'd be humiliating but it's nothing compared to her suffering.

DAMON (O.S.)

So you think Mr. Callow should comply with the demand?

SHOPPER

Well I don't see what choice he has.

Hard yet sloppy news-style cut: to a Doncaster couple in their early forties, out in London for the day. The woman's a bit more outgoing than the man.

DONCASTER WOMAN

He's got to do it. He's just got to do it.

DONCASTER MAN

He's got to.

DONCASTER WOMAN

It's a woman's life.

Then we cut again: next vox pop is from a late-forties cab driver. A bit Talksport.

CABBIE

I won't watch but if Callow don't do it, he's letting that girl die. To save his own dignity, right? But how much dignity is he gonna have, with the whole country knowing he could've saved her?

At this point we cut to...

63	<u>SCENE OMITTED</u>	63	
64	<u>INT. DOWNING STREET BRIEFING ROOM - CONTINUOUS. DAY 1.</u>	64	*
	... to reveal Tom Bilce, the PM, and Alex are watching the same UKN News report in Alex's office. On the screen, Damon's doing a walky-talky piece to camera in a busy street.		*
	DAMON (on screen) Online polls suggest 86% of voters now believe the demand should be met.		*
	Tom Bilce switches it off. Michael stares at the screen like he's just experienced a haunting. Then he turns on his heel into --		*
64A	<u>INT. DOWNING STREET CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS. DAY 1.</u>	64A	*
	We follow, as do Alex and Tom, as the PM stalks down the corridor toward the press room with the operation screen.		*
	Alex and Tom go with him...		*
	MICHAEL When are Walker's team hitting the college?		*

ALEX

They need more time to assemb--

*

MICHAEL

It's almost half two -- no more
pissing around.

*

*

ALEX

Julian's advising against (anything
hasty)--

*

*

*

MICHAEL

And I'm advising *for*. They go in
now.

*

*

*

By now they've reached the PRESS ROOM -- everyone looks round
at the PM

*

*

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

They go in now.

*

*

65 EXT. BUCKINGHAMSHIRE ROAD - DAY 1

65

The UKN News van is parked at the side of a country road --
fairly remote, with woods either side. There's a cameraman
beside it getting his gear out of the van, checking tapes
etc.

66 EXT. BUCKINGHAMSHIRE WOOD - MOMENTS LATER. DAY 1.

66

MALAIKA is by a wire fence, peering over it. A distance away
is the suspect college building. She looks at it, picks up
her phone and hits a button.

66A INT. UKN NEWS GALLERY - CONTINUOUS. DAY 1.

66A

MARTIN's phone rings -- he answers it.

MARTIN

Where's my obit VT?

66B EXT. BUCKINGHAMSHIRE WOOD - CONTINUOUS. DAY 1.

66B

MALAIKA

What would you say if I told you I
was standing near the building
where Susannah's being held?

67 INT. UKN NEWS GALLERY - CONTINUOUS. DAY 1.

67

MARTIN sits up.

MARTIN
I'd say bullshit.
(beat)
You've got a crew with you?

68 EXT. BUCKINGHAMSHIRE ROAD - CONTINUOUS. DAY 1. 68

Malaika is passing back toward the van.

MALAIKA
I'm not stupid --

But then she stops dead. She's looking ahead at the van, where two armed police are talking to the cameraman. From their gestures it's clear they're arresting him.

MARTIN
(on phone)
Malaika? Hello?

Without speaking she sneaks back toward the wire fence.

69 SCENE OMITTED 69 *

69A EXT. BUCKINGHAMSHIRE FIELD - DAY 1 69A *

The strike team are stalking toward the college building, sneaking round corners, giving each other signals. *

70 EXT. PERIMETER OF COLLEGE - CONTINUOUS. DAY 1. 70

Quick shots: Malaika clammers over the wire fence, makes her way toward the college. She's looking at a window of the building, holding the phone up, filming what she can see. She now has an earpiece in.

MALAIKA
(hushed)
You better be getting this.

71 INT. UKN NEWS GALLERY - CONTINUOUS. DAY 1. 71

MALAIKA's images are visible on a laptop.

MARTIN
Yes; but stay back: don't put yourself in danger.

72 EXT. PERIMETER OF COLLEGE - CONTINUOUS. DAY 1. 72

Malaika thinks she's spotted something at the window -- a movement. A shadow perhaps. She moves a little closer.

- 79 EXT. COLLEGE PERIMETER - CONTINUOUS. DAY 1. 79
- On the other side of the building, Malaika is holding her iPhone up, trying to film through a window using FaceTime.
- 80 INT. UKN NEWS GALLERY - CONTINUOUS. DAY 1. 80
- Martin and Shelly are watching Malaika's footage -- shaky, blurry, blocky, chaotic, on a monitor in the UKN News Gallery.
- 81 INT. COLLEGE - CONTINUOUS. DAY 1. 81
- The smoke clears. Walker and team look around. This room is empty. Except, in its centre, an inflatable sex doll in a tiara. There's a laptop nearby. *
*
Walker looks defeated.
- 82 INT. DOWNING STREET PRESS OFFICE - CONTINUOUS. DAY 1. 82 *
- Walker addresses the special officer's helmet cam.
- WALKER
 It's a decoy. Probably bounced the *
 upload from here with a proxy. They *
 could be anywhere. *
- Michael sits staring at the screen in silence. Julian looks distinctly uncomfortable. But just then, behind Walker... *
*
83 INT. COLLEGE - CONTINUOUS. DAY 1. 83
- ... one of the soldiers spots Malaika's phone being held aloft at the window.
- SOLDIER
 Tango!
- WALKER
 Weapons free.
- Walker spins around. Runs for the rear of the building.
- 84 EXT. COLLEGE PERIMETER - CONTINUOUS. DAY 1. 84
- Walker bursts through the rear door, gun drawn. Malaika starts running.
- WALKER
 Halt!

MICHAEL
There'll be a clue, some
evidence...

He looks to Julian, as if for help. *

JULIAN
We've done all w(e can)-- *

MICHAEL
You sent a strike team in to rescue
a blow-up doll. *

JULIAN
Look, Michael, I'm sorry-- *

MICHAEL
Fuck off Julian. *

ALEX
Michael, it's twenty past three,
we're out of time. *

Michael punches the table.

MICHAEL
We're not out of time!
(looking around, faintly
hysterical)
We're not out of time! *

But everyone else in the room is looking at their shoes, even
Julian. *

Because they are out of time. And everyone knows it.

MICHAEL exits. Alex moves after him. *

87A INT. DOWNING STREET BRIEFING ROOM

87A *

Michael is chewing a nail, standing by a window. Alex enters,
followed by Tom. Tom sheepishly sits at the far end, almost
embarrassed to be there. Alex goes to stand behind Michael.
He senses her there. *

MICHAEL
It's not going to happen.

ALEX
To the public --

MICHAEL
Fuck the public!

ALEX

To the public, this would be one man of -- to be blunt -- questionable popularity, choosing personal embarrassment over the life of a young girl.

MICHAEL

He won't even release her anyway! She's probably already dead!

ALEX

And if she isn't, he'll kill her and upload the video.

Michael blanches. Alex turns the screw.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Everyone will see it. The world will see it. The mood will border on insurrection and you will be destroyed, I guarantee you: utterly destroyed.

*

MICHAEL looks to Tom -- maybe he can throw him a line.

*

TOM

The polling bears that out.

*

ALEX

You won't just be a disgraced politician, but a despised individual. The public, the palace and the party *insist* on compliance.

MICHAEL

Fuck the party, I'm not goi--

ALEX

Refuse and I've been advised we cannot guarantee your physical safety. Or that of your family.

MICHAEL

But --

ALEX

I've made arrangements for the broadcast.

MICHAEL

I can't--

ALEX

I'm sorry Michael. It's out of your hands.

END OF PART THREE

88

I/E. UKN NEWS NEWSROOM - DAY 1

88

We slam into a breaking news report from UKN News: a mix of studio pieces to camera, VT and live footage. Lots of things happening at once.

GFX: BREAKING NEWS fullscreen strap

Straight into aerial shots of Central London, taken from a chopper. A black limo accompanied by police bikes.

Lots of excitable chatter from customers. The odd gag, the occasional sharp word. Tension and excitement.

SONIA is serving drinks. There's a blackboard behind the bar with various odds chalked up. Stuff like 'PM VOMITS - 4/1'

95 I/E. OFFICIAL CAR - DAY 1

95

The PM looks dead already.

ALEX

We've ratified the law. After midnight, it's a criminal offence to store any recording or still image of the event.

Michael nods, not listening.

TOM

They're doing an announcement beforehand warding people off even watching. Some sort of sonic tone that causes nausea.

96 I/E. UKN NEWS NEWSROOM - DAY 1

96

We're watching part of a UKN News package again. News ticker along the bottom, breaking news strap: PM ARRIVES AT BANKSIDE STUDIOS. An aerial shot of the studios. Chatter from the anchor, Lucinda. (see page 15 of GFX script for full text) *

LUCINDA

... as the deadline nears speculation is mounting as to whether we're moving toward some kind of endgame... and just to remind you this is now a story of global significance...

Shots of New Yorkers in Times Square watching a US affiliate station relaying UKN News's footage of the studios on a huge screen.

LUCINDA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

... With an audience of billions watching Britain This is the scene in Times Square... meanwhile...

Blurry cameraphone shots of Iranian protesters -- some appear to be burning papier mache pigs

LUCINDA (CONT'D)

... in Iran people appear to be taking to the streets, although it's not yet clear whether they're protesting or celebrating...

97 I/E. BANKSIDE STUDIOS - DAY 1

97

The car is parked outside the studio complex. In the back, the PM sits with his head in his hands. Tom Bilce is reading from a post-broadcast statement he has prepared.

TOM

"Michael Callow has displayed incredible bravery in what was literally a matter of life or death." That's how we open, then we move on to --

Michael puts a hand up: stop.

TOM (CONT'D)

Okay. Yeah.

Outside the car, Alex is whispering with CALLETT

ALEX

Everything in place?

CALLETT

Yes sir.

ALEX

It's sedated?

CALLETT

Injection. It's docile.

Alex pats him on the arm. Then opens the car door.

ALEX

(softly)

It's time to go in now.

Michael looks up. He is in tears.

98 INT. NASH ARMS PUB - DAY 1

98

Hubbub -- the TV is still showing UKN News's Bankside Studios shot. Then suddenly, an abrupt cut to black.

The pub falls silent.

A caption on the TV reads: OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

ANNOUNCER

This is an official announcement.
In a few minutes the Prime Minister
will perform an indecent act on
your screens.

There's a cheer. Behind the bar, SONIA's son has reappeared from upstairs.

ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)

This is in accordance with the
kidnappers' demands, in the hope
that it will ensure the safe
release of Princess Susannah.

98A INT. ELECTRICAL SHOWROOM - DAY 1

98A

The announcement is playing on every screen. Staff and
shoppers alike have ground to a gormless, hypnotised halt.

ANNOUNCER

The broadcast will contain strong
scenes of a sexual nature which
some may find disturbing.

*
*
*
*

99 INT. WORKSHOP - CONTINUOUS. DAY 1.

99

The man in overalls is also watching. He's put down his
materials. Still has gloves on.

ANNOUNCER

All viewers are advised to turn off
their televisions immediately.

*

100 SCENE OMITTED

100

101 INT. KIERAN & LAUREN'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS. DAY 1.

101

*

Kieran hasn't got out of bed all day.

KIERAN

Pfff!

*

He hits 'record' on the Tivo remote.

102 SCENE OMITTED

102

102A SCENE OMITTED

102A

*

103 SCENE OMITTED

103

*

104 SCENE OMITTED

104

*

ALEX (CONT'D)

The suggestion we're getting from psychologists is that you should take as long as you need -- to rush could be misinterpreted as eagerness or even enjoyment.

By chance they pass ROD SENSELESS, who is being ushered in the opposite direction by BROWNE. ROD immediately peels off, shaking off BROWNE, following the PM

ROD

Sir? Few tips if I may.

ALEX

(to security)

Get him out of here.

ROD

I've not done *this* but it's my line of work so to speak.

ALEX

Get him out.

Michael stops walking and looks at Rod's kind, open face. He's the only person looking him in the eye.

MICHAEL

(to Rod)

Go on.

ROD

(quickly)

Alright -- your body, your corporeal form, it's an extension of you, but it's not you. It's not you. You're in there.

(pointing to Michael's head)

Everything else is out here where it can't touch you. All of this is miles away. And you can travel further, in your head. Fly into yourself. You'll feel shame: just ride it, like a wave. It'll help carry you.

Michael nods.

ROD (CONT'D)

At the end of the day, you're saving a life. And any cunt laughing at you is just a cunt laughing at you. They're nothing. They're no-one.

Michael looks at Rod. And holds his hand out. Rod accepts it.

MICHAEL

Thank you.

And then he moves around the corner, to be faced by the studio door. The red light is on.

ALEX

We'll stay out here. It's just a skeleton crew inside. Closed set.

MICHAEL moves toward the door and pushes it open, like he's stepping into some awful Narnia...

109 INT. STUDIO - CONTINUOUS. DAY 1. 109

Michael passes through the backstage area, turns a corner and there it is. A pig, tethered to a weight on the ground. Michael looks giddy for a moment.

Behind the animal is a huge plasma screen, showing pornography (naked humans, no pigs). Also: a cameraman with a hand held camera. *
*
*

110 INT. GENERIC OFFICE - DAY 1 110

The kind of office you get all over London. Deserted.

111 EXT. MANCHESTER STREET - DAY 1 111

There's no-one on the streets. Not one person.

112 EXT. BRISTOL STREET - DAY 1 112

Or here.

113 EXT. ANOTHER STREET - DAY 1 113

Or here. The entire nation is like a ghost town.

114 INT. NASH ARMS PUB - MOMENTS LATER. DAY 1. 114

Suddenly the black screen is replaced by a shot of the studio. The PM is standing behind the pig.

An almighty cheer goes up. SONIA hits the unmute button.

MICHAEL turns to the lens, but doesn't make eye contact with it.

MICHAEL

I trust this will bring about the safe return of Susannah. I --

122	<u>INT. HOSPITAL CASUALTY AREA - DAY 1</u>	122	*
	Lots of faces watching. Some are laughing, but all can barely believe it. Various reactions: Lauren feels sick, Pike is laughing, Brian is shaking his head.		* * *
123	<u>SCENE OMITTED</u>	123	*

- 124 EXT. OUTSIDE TATE MODERN - CONTINUOUS. DAY 1. 124 *
- We're behind a woman. A young woman, in an expensive dress, walking in a slow-mo daze. *
- The woman walks out into a deserted South Bank and looks around. It's Princess Susannah. She seems drugged or sedated. There is absolutely no-one around. She staggers, falling to her knees. And getting up. *
- 125 INT. WORKSHOP - CONTINUOUS. DAY 1. 125 *
- On a small TV we see the PM's sweating, tear-streaked face... and pan across, behind the canvas, which we still don't see, to find a body close to the lens, apparently twisting as though suspended. It's in paint-spattered overalls. One of the hands has a severed, bandaged stump in place of a finger.
- In the background we can see a laptop. *
- 126 INT. NASH ARMS PUB - DAY 1 126
- The faces have turned more solemn. Some look almost bored, flat or sad. The place has thinned out a bit -- not a lot, but a bit.
- 127 INT. HOSPITAL CASUALTY AREA - DAY 1 127 *
- Even PIKE is looking morose. BRIAN glances at his watch and back at the screen.
- BRIAN
Jesus, poor bastard.
- Lauren lifts a remote -- goes to switch the TV off. PIKE stops her. *
- LAUREN *
- It's been over an hour.
- PIKE
It's history, this.
- 128 EXT. NASH ARMS PUB - EVENING 1 128
- Establisher -- the light has changed -- looks like quite some time has passed.
- 129 INT. NASH ARMS PUB - EVENING 1 129
- The pub has thinned out. The TV's still on but everyone watching it looks sad and drained. Haunted, almost.

There's an expression playing across their faces -- a sort of final pinch of disgust mixed with the end of a disappointing goalless draw. One guy with a pint talking to his friend:

BLOKE
Least it's over with.

130 EXT. MILLENNIUM BRIDGE - EVENING 1 130 *

Slow mo. A group of concerned passers-by is gathered around someone on the floor. It's Princess Susannah. A policeman is pushing his way through.

131 INT. BANKSIDE STUDIOS TOILET - EVENING 1 131

A poky communal gents toilet cubicle in which Michael is being violently sick, crying and wiping his nose.

132 INT. BANKSIDE STUDIOS CORRIDOR - EVENING 1 132

Outside, Alex waits with a couple of officers. The sound of the PM's vomiting leaks through the door.

Suddenly Alex feels her phone vibrate. She answers it.

133 INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - EVENING 1 133 *

WALKER is in a hospital area; nurses etc. passing in b/g.

WALKER
She's back sir, we've got her.
Susannah.

134 INT. BANKSIDE STUDIOS CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS. EVENING 1. 134

ALEX
They *released* her?

She signals to Tom Bilce - gestures a thumbs up. Tom looks as relieved as a man who's just discovered the moon isn't about to crash into the planet after all.

ALEX (CONT'D)
Where?

135 INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS. EVENING 1. 135

WALKER
Slap bang in the city. Stumbling around -- sedated -- she can't remember anything. But she's unharmed.

*

136 INT. BANKSIDE STUDIOS CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS. EVENING 1. 136

ALEX
But the finger-- *

137 INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS. EVENING 1. 137

WALKER
Not hers. DNA shows it's Male. *

138 INT. BANKSIDE STUDIOS CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS. EVENING 1. 138

ALEX
What--

139 INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS. EVENING 1. 139

WALKER
That's not all ma'am. She'd been walking around for some time. *

ALEX
What do you mean, 'some time'?

WALKER
There's a CCTV grab of her from half three. He let her go 30 minutes *before* it happened.

140 INT. BANKSIDE STUDIOS CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS. EVENING 1. 140

ALEX
Why?

WALKER
(on phone)
My guess? He knew everyone would be elsewhere. Watching screens.

Alex digests that. An almost holy expression of recognition spreads across her face.

ALEX *
So it's a statement. *

WALKER *
Ma'am? *

ALEX *
(to no-one in particular) *
That's what this was all about. *
About making a point. *

WALKER

Should we--

*
*

ALEX

(lowering voice)

Lose that page of the report. No-one knows. Especially the PM.

WALKER

Of course.

*

Alex hangs up. Composes herself, clears her throat, and knocks on Michael's dressing room door.

ALEX

Good news Michael.

141 INT. BANKSIDE STUDIOS TOILET - CONTINUOUS. EVENING 1. 141

Michael is on the floor by the toilet. Alex calls to him.

ALEX

(muffled)

You saved her. Susannah's alive and well.

Michael feels nothing. On the floor, his phone rings again. It's Jane. He looks at it. But doesn't answer.

141A INT. DOWNING STREET BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS. EVENING 1. 141A *

JANE, in tears, listening to the phone ring and not answer. *

At this point, the CREDITS start to cut in - as still boards. Damon's voice continues across the credits -- no music. The following epilogue is threaded between them. *

142 I/E. UKN NEWS STUDIO - DAY 2. 142

Then we cut to footage of Michael on the campaign trail, with Jane by his side. Looking round a community project, nodding. *

DAMON (V.O.)

On the one year anniversary of his humiliating ordeal, an apparently unconcerned Michael Callow put in an assured performance at a public appearance today, accompanied by his wife Jane....

143 SCENE OMITTED 143

143A INT. NASH ARMS - CONTINUOUS. DAY 2.

143A

In the pub, a few disinterested drinkers. The smaller portable telly is displaying the news report.

DAMON (V.O.)

... during a visit to a community project in Lincoln.

*
*

144 INT. HOSPITAL CASUALTY AREA - CONTINUOUS. DAY 2.

144

A few staff, including LAUREN, are chatting, ignoring the news report on the screen behind them

*

On the screen we cut to footage of Princess Susannah -- who is now lightly pregnant and at a red carpet event.

DAMON

The other central figure in last year's events was also before the cameras, at last night's Children of Valour awards; Princess Susannah made her first public appearance since announcing her pregnancy.

Slow zoom on still of the artist standing in his workshop. We also see slow-mo footage of the artist from a Culture Show episode, in slow mo, in his studio. This footage loops.

DAMON (CONT'D)

(over this footage)

It was one year ago today that former Turner prize-winning artist Carlton Bloom coerced the Prime Minister into committing an indecent act with the audacious kidnap.

145 INT. KIERAN & LAUREN'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS. DAY 2.

145

Kieran sits with his back to the TV playing a handheld videogame, ignoring the telly, upon which we see Damon doing a walky-talky link in the alleyway Susannah wandered through.

*
*

DAMON

Immediately after releasing her from his South Bank studio, Bloom hanged himself, leaving behind a note declaring what had occurred to be his final artwork.

*

146

I/E. UKN NEWS REPORT - CONTINUOUS. DAY 2.

146

DAMON (V.O.)

As the anniversary arrived, one art critic has caused controversy by describing it as the first great artwork of the 21st Century.

Shot of a shaven-headed art critic with even twattier glasses. A caption reads 'GREGORY DYCE, Art in Review'

*

GREG

There's no rule that says art must be admirable or even enjoyable. The best art often unsettles us, which this certainly did. And of course it was the single biggest artistic collaboration in history, one in which all of us took part.

*

Shot of Michael and his wife -- his arm around her waist -- waving to the cameras outside Number Ten, then going in.

*

DAMON (V.O.)

But while cultural commentators debate its artistic worth, there's no denying the incident failed to destroy a Prime Minister who currently holds an approval rating 3 points higher than this time last year. Damon Brown, UKN.

*

As he says this, Michael & Jane shut the door of Number Ten.

147

INT. NUMBER TEN ENTRANCE - DAY 2.

147

The door has just shut behind Michael and Jane. Her face goes cold the moment the door shuts. She pushes his arm off her and walks up the stairs. And he looks up at her, as she goes.

But she doesn't look back.

TELEVISION PROGRAMME ENDS HERE