

THE  
C R O W N

Episode 508  
"GUNPOWDER"



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PRE-TITLE:

1 EXT. LANGHAM PLACE, BROADCASTING HOUSE - DAY 1

A MAN arrives at Broadcasting House.

This is JOHN BIRT (51), Director-General of the BBC. Young. Modern Britain. Armani suit. Progressive. A smile for the SECURITY at the door as he enters..

BIRT  
Morning.

2 EXT. LANGHAM PLACE, BROADCASTING HOUSE - DAY 2

Presently, a car arrives..

Out of it emerges MARMADUKE 'DUKEY' HUSSEY (72), Chairman of the Board of Governors:

Aristocratic, white-haired, former WWII war hero. 6'5" and 17st - with one prosthetic (right) leg, he ambles towards the entrance with his walking stick.

HUSSEY  
Good morning.

Above him, the marble relief of Prospero releasing Ariel into the world.

3 INT. LANGHAM PLACE, BROADCASTING HOUSE, COUNCIL CHAMBER - DAY 3

A Latin inscription on the wall, and a portrait: 'MCMXXXI Rectore Johanni Reith'...

We're in the council chamber of the BBC. The dozen or more BOARD OF GOVERNORS chatting among themselves.

At one end of the table, BIRT. Half John Lennon, half John Major. A hint of Merseyside in his voice.

BIRT  
Right - everyone - shall we make a start?

EVERYONE begins to take their seats. Presently, the sound of a walking stick banging on the floor...calling for silence.

HUSSEY ambles towards his place at the table with his walking stick.

HUSSEY

I think you'll find calling any meeting of the BBC Board of Governors to order is my job. As Chair.

The room falls silent. The tension between the two men has become a familiar event. And the room itself reflects it.

BIRT

If you insist. 'Dukey'.

HUSSEY

I do. 'John'.

Some intakes of breath. Some of the BOARD (younger, more progressive) is made up of 'Birt-ists' but the majority are (older, more traditional) 'Hussey-ists'.

HUSSEY

First item on the agenda, it gives me great pleasure to confirm that the royal charter, as granted by Her Majesty the Queen, has been renewed for a further ten years.

Relief. Applause among the 'HUSSEY-ISTS'.

HUSSEY

The fruit of months, indeed years, of careful negotiation over which I presided...

Half the room (those in the know) turn to give BIRT credit. Lots of nods, "Well done, John", "Bravo".

HUSSEY

..and whose outcome, I should say, I played no small part in influencing.

Polite smiles. One or two of Hussey's (elder, white-haired) ALLIES are nodding to him, "Well done, Dukey". "Bravo".

HUSSEY

But will it be ME who gets the credit? No. That will go to our illustrious Director-General. In his Armani suits and slip-on shoes, speaking a language that doesn't come from England but some management training course in America.

BIRT

There's no need for this.

HUSSEY

A man so blinkered, so obsessed with the threat posed by these new satellite channels, that he fails to see the glaringly obvious: that it's our very difference from these channels on which the survival of the BBC depends. Not our similarity. It is our very refusal to depart from Reithian public broadcasting ideals...

HUSSEY looks up at a Latin inscription on the wall, and a portrait: 'MCMXXXI Rectore Johanni Reith'...

HUSSEY

'To inform, to educate', and only then 'to entertain': that makes us who we are. And who are we? We are the British Broadcasting Corporation. The BBC. We are 'Auntie'. A nickname I have always cherished. Why? Because 'Auntie always knows best'. But does John Birt cherish the nickname? Oh, no. To him, 'Auntie' is an insult because it's not modern. It's not progressive. It's not avant garde.

Awkward looks between all the GOVERNORS. This rivalry is tearing the organisation apart.

HUSSEY

For heaven's sake, John. What's not to love about a favourite aunt?

4

INT. WINDSOR CASTLE, DRAWING ROOM - DAY

4

The face of ELIZABETH, 'Auntie' to the nation: staring, peering into our lens. Visibly not understanding.

She is trying to get an old television set (from the early 1980s) to work. Maybe even giving it a cautious bash.

WILLIAM is on his knees in the background, also looking at the TV.

ELIZABETH

I just thought... you're young, you might understand.

WILLIAM is in his Eton uniform. He adjusts/tunes the failing, ancient, TV set..

WILLIAM

I might understand it if it had been made within my lifetime.

ELIZABETH

Yes, you're right. It's been with us for years.

(thinks)

It might even be a rental.

WILLIAM continues fiddling with the TV.

WILLIAM

Why don't you just buy a big new one?

ELIZABETH

I don't want a big new one.

WILLIAM

But it would come with the right sockets and jacks and you could get satellite TV as well, with hundreds of channels from all over the world.

ELIZABETH

What? And abandon the BBC? I can't do that.

WILLIAM

(smiles, dinosaur)

You wouldn't be 'abandoning' the BBC, Granny.

ELIZABETH

Switching to satellite would be seen as a betrayal of the national broadcaster by the Head of State. It'd be treason. Like me becoming a Catholic! And just imagine this place with a huge horrid dish on the roof. Like a space ship.

WILLIAM

They could hide that. You could just close your ears, bury your head in the sand and pretend you don't know what's going on.

ELIZABETH

Yes, I think I can do that.

WILLIAM

I'll see if we can get you that specialist racing channel.

ELIZABETH

You mean like at the betting shops? With night races? From America? I'd never do any work.

WILLIAM

You're a racehorse owner. It's part of your work.

WILLIAM gives the TV a sharp whack. The picture (the early evening BBC News) fizzles.

ELIZABETH

Oh, yes. You're right. It does seem to have had better days.

(a beat)

Even the televisions are metaphors in this place.

FADE TO BLACK.

FRONT TITLE SEQUENCE

CUT TO:

5 EXT. KENSINGTON PALACE, COURTYARD - DAY 5

DIANA checks no one is watching, then snatches a kiss with HASNAT KHAN. She then waves him goodbye as he gets into a waiting taxi.

6 INT. BBC WHITE CITY, PANORAMA OFFICES - DAY 6

BASHIR enters the offices. Upbeat. Confident. Cheery. Chirpy greetings to his COLLEAGUES.

BASHIR

Morning all, how are we?

COLLEAGUES look at one another. What's he so chipper about? BASHIR meets with HEWLETT.

BASHIR

Got a second?

They walk to Hewlett's office.

7 INT. BBC WHITE CITY, PANORAMA OFFICES, HEWLETT'S OFFICE - DAY 7

BASHIR with HEWLETT.

BASHIR

I spoke to the Princess again. She's agreed to give us free rein on the questions. Free rein on the final cut. Her only stipulation was that she be allowed to speak to the Queen before it airs.

HEWLETT

When does she want to record it?

BASHIR

This Sunday. At Kensington Palace. She thinks the place will be deserted.

HEWLETT

Of course. It's November the 5th. Guy Fawkes Night.

BASHIR

The significance of that date was not lost on me either.

The two men laugh.

HEWLETT

I'm going to have to run this past a few people.

BASHIR

Why? I gave her my word that no one would know but us.

HEWLETT

C'mon, Martin. An interview like this has to go to the Director of News and Current Affairs at least. And probably the DG.

8

INT. KENSINGTON PALACE, KITCHEN - EVENING

8

DIANA makes herself a cup of tea, a white cordless telephone pressed against her ear.

DIANA

How's my big hero?

WILLIAM (V.O.)

I'm alright.

DIANA

How's school?

WILLIAM (V.O.)

Good.

9

INT. KENSINGTON PALACE, KITCHEN/ETON COLLEGE, HOUSEMASTER'S OFFICE - EVENING

9

We INTERCUT.

DIANA

Made any new friends?

WILLIAM

Freddie's been over from MJA.

DIANA

That's nice.

WILLIAM

And there's a couple of guys in my house - who I think could become...new friends.

DIANA

Good! Well... Mummy might have made a new friend too.

WILLIAM

(weird/too much info)

Okay.

DIANA

Right now, just a friend-friend. But I hope he will become a 'special' friend.. And I wanted you to be the first to know.

WILLIAM

Do you have to tell me these things?

DIANA

Well I thought you might be happy for me.

WILLIAM

I just prefer it if you didn't talk to about this stuff. I never know what to say when. It's embarrassing. It's hard enough with you being in the news all the time. You're only making things harder.

William's housemaster, DR ANDREW GAILEY, comes into his office, signals to WILLIAM.

GAILEY

Ready?

WILLIAM

(uncomfortable with all this)

I have to go. Evensong.

WILLIAM hangs up before DIANA has a chance to say goodbye.

DIANA

Right. Bye.



That didn't go very well. WILLIAM, a young man clearly swirling with difficult and painful feelings.

10 INT. WINDSOR CASTLE, DRAWING ROOM - DAY

10

A birthday celebration is in progress. ELIZABETH, SUSAN HUSSEY and the rest of Elizabeth's LADIES-IN-WAITING are in attendance; GINNY AIRLIE, LADY DUGDALE, LADY ELTON, the HON. MARY MORRISON and LADY ABEL SMITH. A cake is brought in.

The WOMEN sing "Happy Birthday" to SUSAN as she blows out her candles. SUSAN looks at ELIZABETH.

Later, SUSAN and the GUESTS talk to ELIZABETH over cake.

ELIZABETH

It doesn't look as though I'm going to be able to make Cheltenham this year. Someone very inconsiderate arranged for the French President to visit.

LADY DUGDALE

If you can't get there in person, ma'am, you can always catch the highlights on ITV.

GINNY

Channel 4.

LADY DUGDALE

Channel 4. That's it.

ELIZABETH

I thought Cheltenham was on the BBC?

SUSAN

It was. For forty years. Then Channel 4 paid more than five times what the BBC was paying. We couldn't afford to hold onto it.

ELIZABETH

But it's Cheltenham! The Gold Cup!

LADY ELTON

(to SUSAN)

Can't you do anything about it?

GINNY

Whisper in hubby's ear?

LADY ELTON

Or perform some magic in the bedroom!

Shrieks, laughter...

SUSAN notices ELIZABETH is not laughing much herself. Appears distracted. A bit low.

11 INT. SOMERSET, CHEWTON MENDIP, THE HUSSEYS' HOUSE - NIGHT 11

That night, SUSAN and her husband, MARMADUKE HUSSEY, are preparing for bed. He removes his fake leg, his caliper.

SUSAN

The Queen was not her normal self today. She was surrounded by some of her dearest friends yet...Seemed a little flat.

HUSSEY

Poor woman. Those children have a lot to answer for. Each day brings fresh horrors in the newspapers.

SUSAN is applying moisturiser cream.

SUSAN

I was thinking...couldn't the BBC do something to cheer her up? Remind everyone how hard she works. How lucky we are to have her. It's her seventieth birthday coming up.

HUSSEY

That's a nice idea.

SUSAN

One of your specials. To show our appreciation.

HUSSEY

I'll talk to the Director-General..  
(under his breath)  
For my sins.

SUSAN

Thank you.

"Click", SUSAN turns off the light.

12 INT. SHEPHERD'S BUSH, HEWLETT'S HOUSE - DAY 12

BASHIR stands by a window and watches as cars arrive and BIRT, TONY HALL and TIM GARDAM get out.

BASHIR

God. All the top brass.

HEWLETT  
(trying to convince  
himself)  
It'll be fine.

HEWLETT goes to answer the door.

13 INT. SHEPHERD'S BUSH, HEWLETT'S HOUSE - DAY

13

BIRT, in an Italian suit, is with BASHIR, HEWLETT, HALL, and GARDAM.

BIRT  
What do we think her agenda is?

BASHIR  
I think she has multiple agendas.  
She feels misunderstood. She feels  
angry. She wants to be vindicated.

BIRT  
You think she will be critical of  
the monarchy.

BASHIR  
Critical of Charles, certainly.

BIRT  
Explain something to me. She could  
go anywhere in the world with this.  
How did you get her to do it with  
you?

BASHIR  
It's not with me, though, is it?  
It's the BBC. She's doing it with  
us because she feels safe.  
Understood and protected.

HEWLETT  
He's being modest. It is Martin,  
too. When he puts his mind to  
something...he can be very  
persuasive.

BIRT scrutinises BASHIR. A moment, then..

BIRT  
All right. Give me a day or two. I  
need to think about it.

HEWLETT  
About what?

BIRT

The ethics of giving a national platform to someone with such a personal agenda. There will be plenty of people that violently object - not least our own Chairman.

HEWLETT

Hussey? What about him?

BIRT

Apart from having outdated notions of the role the BBC plays not just in national life, but in the 'British soul', he happens to be the husband of the Queen's most senior lady-in-waiting. He would rather lose his left leg than have this go out.

BASHIR stares. HEWLETT stares.

BIRT

Oh c'mon. You did know that. He lost his right one in the war. Amputated in a prisoner-of-war camp.

EVERYONE stares.

14 INT. LANGHAM PLACE, BROADCASTING HOUSE, BIRT'S OFFICE - DAY 14

BIRT arrives back at his office...to find KATIE KAY, his PA, waiting for him.

KATIE

Duke Hussey's office called. He wants to see you.

BIRT

(defensive)  
Did they say why?

KATIE

They just said it was urgent and if you could possibly make time this afternoon.

BIRT is understandably paranoid.

15 INT. ST JAMES'S, BROOKS'S CLUB - DAY 15

Hussey's private members' club in St James's. An 18th Century gentleman's club, all high barrel vault ceilings and heavy leather armchairs and royal portraits;

a place that has played host to politicians, prime ministers and even royalty over the years.

Several WHITE-HAIRED ESTABLISHMENT FIGURES, Lascelles-types, blue-bloods, in Savile Row threads, and quiet chat..

BIRT enters, led by a club VALET, who shows BIRT to a far corner where HUSSEY awaits. Gets to his feet..

16 INT. ST JAMES'S, BROOKS'S CLUB - DAY

16

BIRT and HUSSEY eating lunch.

HUSSEY

As you know, I have never sought to interfere in editorial matters, or influence programme makers in any way. As DG, that's your sphere.

BIRT nods tensely. Looks around the room. It's a Britain that he imagined ceased to exist in the 1950s.

HUSSEY

But as I reach the end of my tenure, I wonder if you might allow me one exception. I'd like us to do something for the Queen. Some sort of tribute. About how hard she works. And how bloody lucky we are to have her.

BIRT

And that's why you've asked me here today?

HUSSEY

Yes. Just to ask the question. Is that very cheeky of me?

BIRT conceals his personal relief. Exhales.

HUSSEY

Because whatever one may think about the royal family, SHE has been remarkable. And doesn't, in my view, get the credit or the gratitude she deserves. And isn't that one of the many things the BBC is for?

BIRT

To kiss the ring?

HUSSEY

If you like. I can see it's an unfashionable line to take, but for better or worse I believe it IS part of the British character to have a monarchy - take that away, and what are you left with?

BIRT

An egalitarian, modern republic?

HUSSEY

But not Britain.

BIRT

A new Britain? A different Britain?

HUSSEY

Not Great Britain. It's the same with the BBC. Take away the BBC, and what are you left with? A country. But not Britain. In that way, the two institutions, Crown and BBC, are inherently intertwined. Reflected, incidentally, in the fact we exist thanks to a royal charter.

BIRT

You see the monarchy as part of the architecture of this country, but more and more people have grown to see it simply as part of the furniture. Something they've grown up with but not something that can't be rearranged. Thrown out if need be or replaced. And the same goes for the BBC. Poll after poll shows people are crying out for change. From the post-war era, into a something much more..

HUSSEY

To a crass, commercial, satellite era, controlled by Rupert Murdoch with limitless choice and a thousand different channels all offering rubbish. Look, I know my role is not to interfere - I just thought I've been Chairman now for almost ten years - my full term - and I've never asked a thing.

BIRT

I know. You've been quiet as a mouse, Dukey.

HUSSEY

And I do this not for myself, but for a country it has been my privilege to serve my whole life. Oh, come on, John, a nice one-off programme, in the grand BBC style, that brings us all together to celebrate one of our greatest assets and say, "Thank you, ma'am".

17 EXT. ST JAMES'S, BROOKS'S CLUB, STREETS - DAY 17

BIRT emerges from the club, shaking his head in response to what he has heard. Walks for a minute. Thinks. Then stops, pulls out his mobile phone.

18 INT/EXT. BBC WHITE CITY, PANORAMA OFFICES, HEWLETT'S OFFICE/ST JAME'S, BROOK'S CLUB, STREETS - DAY 18

We INTERCUT as HEWLETT picks up the phone.

HEWLETT

Steve Hewlett.

BIRT

Steve? It's John. That Bonfire Night thing we discussed? Let's go for it.

HEWLETT hangs up. He looks up, stares across the offices at BASHIR. Their eyes meet. Thumbs up.

Bashir's face breaks out into a smile.

19 INT. ALTHORP, SPENCER'S STUDY - DAY 19

CHARLES SPENCER is deep in thought. He flicks through notebooks filled with handwritten notes of the meetings with BASHIR. We pick out individual notes.

SPENCER is clearly troubled. He makes further comparisons. Things just don't add up. SPENCER picks up the phone and dials a number.

20 INT. UNDERGROUND CAR PARK, DIANA'S CAR - NIGHT 20

A parked car. All very cloak and dagger. BASHIR enters the car, sits besides DIANA in the driver's seat.

BASHIR

Hi.

DIANA

My brother called me. He's a little concerned.

BASHIR

What about?

DIANA

You, frankly. He said he made notes in your first meeting which didn't tally with the notes he took in the second; in the first you said that MI5 were watching me but in the second you said MI6.

BASHIR

Actually, I think it could be both.

DIANA

He said there were other inconsistencies. And now regrets introducing us and he wants me to have nothing more to do with you.

BASHIR

Okay. Two things. This is quite normal, and to be honest, I was expecting a last-minute wobble. I think you chose the date for the interview, November the fifth, Bonfire Night, deliberately.

DIANA

Only because I knew everyone would be busy! Not symbolically.

BASHIR

The thirteen members of the Gunpowder Plot in 1605 also almost pulled out at the last minute and it took the ringleader to encourage them to stick with it.

DIANA

Maybe he shouldn't have! Not only were they unsuccessful, they were hung, drawn and quartered!

BASHIR

Difference is, we WILL be successful. I promise.

DIANA

What was the second thing?

BASHIR

What?



DIANA  
You said two things.

BASHIR  
I think they might have got to your brother.

DIANA  
No!

BASHIR  
These are serious people. And that kind of change of heart is just too irrational. Too random. Which is why I think the sooner we get this done, the better.

DIANA stares at him. Wanting to trust/believe him. Nods.

21 INT. ETON COLLEGE, CLASSROOM - DAY

21

GAILEY  
Today is the fifth of November. Which is a significant day in the British calendar. Guy Fawkes night. What do we know about Guy Fawkes himself?

PUPIL 1  
He was a rebel?

GAILEY  
A little more than just a rebel..

PUPIL 2  
A terrorist?

GAILEY  
In a manner of speaking. His cause was certainly political.

WILLIAM  
A traitor?

GAILEY  
A traitor! That's right. Maybe England's most famous traitor.

GAILEY writes the word 'Traitor' on the blackboard, alongside other words, 'Jacobean', '1605', 'Catholicism', 'Church of England', 'Reformation', 'Civil War', etc.

GAILEY  
And what do we mean when we call someone a traitor?  
(MORE)

GAILEY (CONT'D)

A traitor commits the crime of treason - which derives from the French "trahir", to betray. But there are different kinds of treason. 'Petty treason': which could simply be a wife killing her husband...Or a servant killing their master..But Guy Fawkes and his co-conspirators committed 'high treason'. Which means?

PUPIL

Trying to kill the King!

GAILEY

That's right. Trying to kill the King.

WILLIAM listens, uncomfortable. Other PUPILS smile.

GAILEY

Guy Fawkes was working with twelve other men. The ringleader was a man by the name of Robert Catesby. And together, they devised 'The Gunpowder Plot of 1605', as it has come to be known - a plan by disaffected Catholics to blow up the Houses of Parliament on a day they knew the King, the Queen and the Prince of Wales would be present. The State Opening of Parliament on November the fifth. In the days before, under the cover of darkness, they entered a cellar directly beneath the House of Lords. They filled it with thirty-six barrels of gunpowder.

22 INT. BBC WHITE CITY, PANORAMA OFFICES - EVENING 22

BASHIR distributes hi-fi salesman outfits to his TEAM.

GAILEY (V.O.)

Fawkes's job that night was to light the all-important fuse.

23 INT. ETON COLLEGE, CLASSROOM - DAY (FLASHBACK) 23

GAILEY

His goal was to slaughter the entire Protestant establishment in one fell swoop. An act that would change the country forever.

24 EXT. KENSINGTON PALACE, GATES/STREET - EVENING 24

The entrance gates to the Palace. POLICE OFFICERS stationed outside.

Further down the street, we see a car approaching. It slows down as it draws near..

Inside; two MEN. Through the windscreen we can just make out that one of them is BASHIR.

25 EXT. KENSINGTON PALACE, GATES - EVENING 25

The car we saw previously pulls up at the gates. A POLICE OFFICER spots it, approaches. Leans down to the open window..

.. Where we see BASHIR and his cameraman, TONY POOLE, seated inside. They're dressed in salesman uniforms and are both wearing (fake) staff name tags from *Dixons*.

BASHIR  
We're here to deliver the new hi-fi audio equipment.

The POLICE OFFICER looks inside to the back seat. Several boxes of audio equipment have been piled up on a tarpaulin..

BASHIR and POOLE exchange nervous glances as the POLICE OFFICER looks it over. He checks his paperwork.

POLICE OFFICER  
All right, she's expecting you.

Gates open. The POLICE OFFICER waves them inside.

26 INT. KENSINGTON PALACE - EVENING 26

DIANA is pacing. She hears a car pulling up. Runs to the window and looks outside to..

27 EXT. KENSINGTON PALACE, COURTYARD - EVENING 27

.. Where Bashir's car is turning in.

BASHIR remains calm. Collects himself, and pulls into a pre-arranged spot, just out of sight.

BASHIR and POOLE get out.

MIKE ROBINSON (producer) appears from under the tarpaulin on the backseat, and they start unloading boxes from the car.

Moments later.. DIANA appears in a doorway, looks left and right.

Quickly gestures them inside.

28 INT. KENSINGTON PALACE, DRAWING ROOM - EVENING 28

The three-man PANORAMA TEAM set up in the drawing room.

Boxes are unpacked. Lights and compact cameras taken out. *Dixons* name tags are unclipped, and BASHIR puts on a dark jacket and changes tie.

Furniture is rearranged. Lights are positioned. This INTERCUTS with:

29 INT. KENSINGTON PALACE, DIANA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 29

DIANA getting dressed.. White top. Dark jacket. Skirt. Large gold clip-on stud earrings. Eye make-up applied.

After; DIANA paces. Running through the potential areas they'll cover in her head. Rehearsing..

30 INT. KENSINGTON PALACE, DRAWING ROOM - NIGHT 30

POOLE has finished rigging up the lights.. when DIANA comes back in.

DIANA takes her seat. BASHIR goes to his chair.

POOLE crosses to the curtains to close them, and looks outside..

All around the London skyline, the first fireworks of Bonfire Night are starting to appear. Rockets. Myriad distant displays; a fizzing sea of coloured lights scattered across the horizon. The sound of bangs, explosions.

A nervous smile between DIANA and BASHIR.

BASHIR

We can stop anytime, but the tapes run for thirty-two minutes, so we'll be breaking to change them over every half hour anyway.

A FULL-FRAME image of Diana's face; staring down the lens. POOLE zooms in close to find his focus, then pulls back out.

BASHIR

(to DIANA)

Ready?

DIANA nods.

BASHIR

Your Royal Highness..

- 31 EXT. WINDSOR CASTLE, GROUNDS - NIGHT 31  
 A match is struck. It lights a rag soaked in gasoline.  
 We pull back to reveal a large bonfire is lit.  
 The fire catches hold, as ELIZABETH, PHILIP, ANNE, TIM, the HUSSEYS, the QUEEN MOTHER and LOCAL FAMILIES watch with excitement.
- 32 INT. KENSINGTON PALACE, DRAWING ROOM - NIGHT 32  
 Same time: Diana and Bashir's interview continues. They are talking but we do not hear the actual words.
- 33 EXT. HIGHGROVE - NIGHT 33  
 "BANG!" The firework explodes, leaving a cascading ball of twinkling stars.  
 It lights up the faces of CHARLES and CAMILLA as they stare up into the sky.  
 Another rocket is lit. We follow its journey as it goes up --  
 -- BANG! The crowd (of FRIENDS) "oohs" and "aaahs".
- 34 INT. KENSINGTON PALACE, DRAWING ROOM - NIGHT 34  
 DIANA and BASHIR continue their interview..  
 OVER THIS: The sound of fireworks continues, and we hear snippets of what they're saying drifting through the bangs..  
 "BANG", another volley of rockets explodes.
- 35 EXT. WINDSOR CASTLE, GROUNDS - NIGHT 35  
 The fire is roaring now, growing to the top of the pile.  
 ELIZABETH, PHILIP, WILLIAM, ANNE, TIM, the HUSSEYS, the QUEEN MOTHER and LOCAL FAMILIES watch as the flames reach the smiling 'royal' Guy.  
 WILLIAM watches as the life-like, man-sized doll catches fire.
- 36 INT. KENSINGTON PALACE, DRAWING ROOM - NIGHT 36  
 The interview continues..

- 37 EXT. HIGHGROVE - NIGHT 37
- "BANG", a rocket explodes, leaving a cascading waterfall of golden sparks in its wake.
- Whoops of delight and laughter as GUESTS peer at the fireworks above. More drinks are served.
- CHARLES and CAMILLA preside over the celebrations. Stealing a moment, as another rocket explodes overhead, they kiss.
- 38 EXT. WINDSOR CASTLE, GROUNDS - NIGHT 38
- Elizabeth's GUESTS watch the fire from a distance and are served with steaming hot toddies, champagne and canapés by STAFF.
- WILLIAM, by himself, remains fixated on the Guy.
- 39 INT. KENSINGTON PALACE, DRAWING ROOM - NIGHT 39
- Diana and Bashir's interview comes to an end..
- It's late now, close to midnight.
- DIANA exits.. reappears with champagne and glasses.
- They all toast each other 'congratulations', as a final firework goes off.
- 40 EXT/INT. MAIN ROADS/CAR - DAY 40
- BASHIR drives in his car. Checking if he is being followed.
- 41 EXT. EASTBOURNE - DAY 41
- A series of shots of Eastbourne. To establish. Gulls circling in the sea breeze. A seafront. Grey November skies/sea. An English seaside town with a whiff of death in the air.
- White-haired PENSIONERS stroll in wind and rain. YOUNG UNEMPLOYED on motorbikes.
- Among the many sea-front hotels, we pick out one. 'THE QUEENS HOTEL'.
- 42 EXT/INT. THE QUEENS HOTEL/BIRT'S CAR - DAY 42
- Birt's CHAUFFEUR-driven car pulls up outside. BIRT gets out the car.

43 INT. THE QUEENS HOTEL, LOBBY - DAY

43

BIRT enters a grand old lobby. Part *Shining* part *Cuckoo's Nest*. The smell of hospital quality food. A poster of a recent bonfire night on the wall.

BIRT  
Good morning.

RECEPTIONIST  
Checking in?

BIRT  
No. I'm here to meet a friend. I believe he's staying in the Duchess of York Suite.

RECEPTIONIST  
And the name?

BIRT  
'Catesby'.

RECEPTIONIST  
Right. I'll let him know you're here.  
(on the phone)  
Hi, your guest has arrive. Can I send him up?...Thank You.  
(to BIRT)  
So, it's just through to the bar, right at the stairs, down the long corridor and it's the fourth door on the right.

44 INT. THE QUEENS HOTEL, CORRIDOR - DAY

44

BIRT walks down a tatty, old hotel corridor.

Passes other GUESTS in their 70s. He reaches a door. The 'Duchess of York Suite'. Looks left and right. All very cloak and dagger. Knocks.

The door is opened very cautiously. Like spies.

45 INT. THE QUEENS HOTEL, SUITE - DAY

45

In a hotel suite - two large adjoining rooms - an edit suite has been set up.. Windows blacked out with blinds.

Wearing headphones, BIRT is being shown extracts from the video.. We can't hear the contents. We don't need to.

46 EXT. EASTBOURNE, BEACH - DAY

46

BIRT, shell-shocked, his complexion the same deathly colour (slate) as the skies overhead, walks on the beach with BASHIR and HEWLETT.

Roaring wind. Circling gulls. BIRT stares out at the crashing waves, still contemplating what he just saw.

BIRT

Well, I expected it to be dynamite..

HEWLETT

It's sensational, John. The biggest coup of our careers.

BIRT

What I've just seen could end our careers, too. Not to mention what it might do to her.

BASHIR

I guarantee she will talk to someone, if not us. Ask yourself how you would feel if this went out on CBS. Or ABC. Or ITV. Or Channel 4.

BIRT

Still, it's giving a platform to a very hurt, very unstable woman, who clearly wants to inflict significant damage on the monarchy.

HEWLETT

In the end, it's going to be your call John.

BIRT thinks about it.

BIRT

Diana's insisted on telling the Queen personally, is that right?

BASHIR

Tomorrow.

HEWLETT

So if you're going to kill this, you need to let us know before end of play today, so we can stop her.

47 INT. THE QUEENS HOTEL, SUITE - DAY (FLASHBACK)

47

BIRT

Bloody hell.



He takes off the headphones. Speechless.

48 EXT. EASTBOURNE, BEACH - DAY 48

BIRT paces the beach on the phone. Trying to make a decision.

49 EXT. EASTBOURNE, BEACH - DAY 49

BIRT looks at HEWLETT and BASHIR.

BIRT

Look me in the eye and tell me I'm  
not going to regret this.

BASHIR

You won't.

50 EXT. WINDSOR CASTLE - DAY 50

Satellite dishes are being discreetly installed on the  
rooftop of Windsor Castle.

TECHNICIANS being assisted by uniformed FOOTMEN.

51 INT. WINDSOR CASTLE, DRAWING ROOM - DAY 51

ELIZABETH and the QUEEN MOTHER are with WILLIAM who is  
holding a TV remote, showing them how to use satellite TV.

WILLIAM

Apparently, satellite dishes have  
now been installed at all the royal  
households.

QUEEN MOTHER

Ooooooooo.

ELIZABETH

As long as they're out of sight!

WILLIAM

Plus the specialist racing channel  
you wanted. Like in the betting  
shops.

ELIZABETH

Did you hear that, Mummy?

QUEEN MOTHER

How thrilling.

WILLIAM

Look, simple instructions on all  
the remotes.

ELIZABETH  
(studying the remote)  
Printed in a nice, large idiot-  
proof font.

QUEEN MOTHER  
What about the soaps?

ELIZABETH  
(clears throat)  
Not that we ever watch those.

ELIZABETH tries the remote. Skips through the channels. A world of benign options. Antiques. Nature documentaries...

WILLIAM  
Twenty-three is UK Gold for repeats of *Dallas*, *Knots Landing* and *The Bill*. Please tell me you have no idea what I'm talking about..

ELIZABETH  
Not a clue.

... but the more ELIZABETH surfs, the more unsettled she becomes.

ELIZABETH  
Would you put the racing back on? I seem to have got lost.

WILLIAM intervenes, puts the racing channel back on.

QUEEN MOTHER  
(to WILLIAM)  
It's sad to see her struggle to understand a medium with which she is inextricably linked. 1936, the year she became heir to the throne, the first BBC programme was broadcast from Alexandra Palace. Of course, barely anyone had televisions then. That all changed with her coronation. People bought sets in their millions to watch it. Just one channel. The BBC. A few hours of educational broadcasting. With 'God Save the Queen' at the end of every day.

ELIZABETH  
Quite right!

QUEEN MOTHER  
Then commercial television arrived, do you remember?

ELIZABETH

I do.

QUEEN MOTHER

And colour.

ELIZABETH

That was a shock.

QUEEN MOTHER

Then there were three channels. And then a fourth. And now a hundred.

Presently, a knock at the door. FELLOWES enters.

FELLOWES

Ma'am. We've just had a call from the Princess of Wales. She has asked to see you on an urgent matter.

WILLIAM looks up.

ELIZABETH

When?

FELLOWES

She was hoping for this evening.

ELIZABETH looks at WILLIAM who averts his eyes.

WILLIAM

I should be going. Homework. Granny.  
(kisses, proper, adorable)  
Great-granny.

QUEEN MOTHER

No I'm coming too!  
(WILLIAM helps her up)  
Oh thank you dear.

WILLIAM exits. QUEEN MOTHER exits. ELIZABETH is left alone. That was a very telling reaction.

52 EXT. WINDSOR CASTLE - DUSK 52

Diana's car arrives. DIANA gets out.

53 INT. WINDSOR CASTLE, DRAWING ROOM - NIGHT 53

DIANA in the drawing room. ELIZABETH is shown in.

DIANA

Mama. Thank you for seeing me.

They kiss. Stiffly. Awkwardly. Formally.

DIANA

There is something I wanted you to hear first from me. I expect as a consequence you're going to think even less of me than you already do.

ELIZABETH

Why don't I be the judge of that?

DIANA

I've given an interview.

ELIZABETH

What kind of interview?

DIANA

A full, rather frank interview. To the BBC. Which will go out on Monday the 20th.

ELIZABETH

Why?

DIANA

I felt the need to clear a few things up. About my marriage.

ELIZABETH

Honestly, it's like a broken record..

DIANA

About the fact I've so often been shut out. Left to cope on my own. That I've suffered from a lack of sympathy, and feeling, and compassion..

ELIZABETH

Haven't we heard all this before? A thousand times? Haven't we read it in newspaper articles? A thousand times? Does it not occur to you, that if you feel the need to "clear a few things up" a public forum might not be the best place to do it? That such matters would best be discussed in private with the people involved.

DIANA

I've tried that.

ELIZABETH

When?

DIANA

On numerous occasions over the years I asked to see you. So that we might talk face to face. And on every occasion you refused or were unavailable.

ELIZABETH

I accept it's not easy navigating this family, and I can understand why you might think we're all a bit remote. But there is another word for remote. 'Busy'. We are all busy people with busy diaries rarely under the same roof for two nights at a time, and NONE of us, not one senior member of the royal family has a spare ten minutes to think about themselves let alone you or how we might best make your life miserable. On the contrary, it might surprise you to learn we ALL spend a great deal of time doing the opposite.

When people, armies of people, say to me "What has that girl done now?", "Who does she think she is?". What do you imagine I say? "Lord yes, Diana's awful". "A nightmare". "What a mistake that was." Not once. Not a single time. You're wife to my eldest son, mother to my grandsons and a valued, senior member of this family. So I defend you each and every time. Loyally. Emphatically. To the hilt. The enemy you imagine I am, the hostility you imagine we all feel is a figment of your imagination.

DIANA

Is it?

ELIZABETH

Yes. All any of us wants, Diana, is for you to be happy. And, one day, to be our next queen.

DIANA appears thrown.

ELIZABETH

I suppose it's already too late to stop this?

DIANA

Yes.

ELIZABETH  
Have you told William?

DIANA  
Not yet, no.

ELIZABETH  
Poor child. As if he hasn't got  
enough to worry about already.

DIANA  
He's stronger than you think.

ELIZABETH  
I didn't say I thought he was weak.  
I said "He's a child and has enough  
to worry about already".

DIANA  
I'll tell him not to watch it.

ELIZABETH  
I hope you don't mind if Philip and  
I don't watch either. Monday the  
20th happens to be our wedding  
anniversary. Forty-eight years.

DIANA  
Congratulations. I'm happy for you.  
It's all I would have wished for  
myself.

DIANA goes.

54 INT. ST JAMES'S, BROOKS'S CLUB - NIGHT

54

BIRT is shown to a table where HUSSEY is sitting at his club  
with one or two other LANDED-GENTRY MEMBERS..

BIRT  
Dukey?

HUSSEY  
John?

BIRT  
Sorry to disturb..

HUSSEY  
Not at all..

BIRT and HUSSEY move to another table..

BIRT

I'm here to let you know that the BBC has indeed made a special programme about the monarchy which we will announce on Tuesday.

HUSSEY

Tuesday the 14th?

BIRT

Yes.

HUSSEY

The Prince of Wales's birthday! If I may say, uncharacteristically sentimental of you, John.

BIRT

It was the date she insisted the announcement be made.

HUSSEY

The Queen? Touching she would want to do that. I've always said as a mother she adores him really.

BIRT

Not the Queen.

BIRT lets it hang. Averts his eyes.

HUSSEY

Which 'she' are you talking about?

BIRT

It's the Queen's Golden Jubilee in seven years' time. The BBC will make countless programmes justifiably celebrating Her Majesty then. In the meantime we thought an in-depth *Panorama* interview with the Princess of Wales might be more relevant.

HUSSEY

What?! Why would the BBC give her the time of day, let alone an interview? The girl's a loose cannon.

BIRT

We've not always seen eye to eye, Dukey. But as Chairman and Director-General, we've always agreed that we'd go to any lengths to do what we felt was best for the organisation.

HUSSEY  
This will kill it.

BIRT  
It's my view that this may come to  
define the BBC.

HUSSEY  
KILL IT!!! This will destroy us.

BIRT  
(looking at Hussey's  
fellow MEMBERS)  
Look, I simply wanted to let you  
know the news directly.

HUSSEY  
You will find yourself on the wrong  
side of history John.

BIRT  
Thanks for seeing me --

HUSSEY  
(calling after him)  
The wrong side of history!

55 EXT. DOMINION THEATRE - EVENING

55

ELIZABETH and PHILIP arrive at the Dominion Theatre for the  
Royal Variety Performance.

COMMENTATOR (V.O.)  
A very warm welcome to the sixty-  
seventh Royal Variety Performance -  
a charity event to support the  
Entertainment Artistes' Benevolent  
Fund, coming to you from London's  
West End on the occasion of Her  
Majesty the Queen's 48th wedding  
anniversary. Many congratulations  
to the Queen and His Royal Highness  
The Duke of Edinburgh.

56 INT. DOMINION THEATRE - EVENING

56

The CROWD take their seats in the theatre.

COMMENTATOR (V.O.)  
The stars have taken their places  
behind the curtain, for what  
promises to be a memorable night..



57 INT. DOMINION THEATRE, STAIRCASE/ROYAL BOX - EVENING 57  
 STAFF lead ELIZABETH and PHILIP to their seats in the Royal Box.

58 INT. DOMINION THEATRE, STAGE CURTAIN - EVENING 58  
 Behind the stage curtain, the evening's PERFORMERS are getting ready.

59 INT. DOMINION THEATRE, ROYAL BOX - EVENING 59  
 ELIZABETH sits in the Royal Box, wearing a diamond tiara, with PHILIP beside her. She takes the applause of the AUDIENCE at the Royal Variety Performance.  
 An act comes out on stage. A SINGER (Carol Kenyon) is isolated by a spotlight as music begins; the song 'One Night Only', from the musical *Dreamgirls*.

SINGER  
*You want all my love and my  
 devotion  
 You want my love and soul, right on  
 the line  
 I have no doubt that I could love  
 you, forever  
 The only trouble is, you really  
 don't have the time*

More spotlights appear, illuminating the backing DANCERS. They dance slowly, exaggeratedly, casting shadows in the light around her as the music builds.

SINGER  
*You've got one night only, one  
 night only  
 That's all I have to spare  
 One night only  
 Let's not pretend to care  
 One night only, one night only  
 Come on, big baby, come on  
 One night only  
 We only have 'til dawn*

Which is INTERCUT with...

60 INT. SOMERSET, CHEWTON MENDIP, THE HUSSEYS' HOUSE - NIGHT 60  
 The HUSSEYS sitting in front of the television. The opening credits of *Panorama* are spliced with a soundbite from the interview.

BASHIR (ON TV)  
Your Royal Highness, do you genuinely believe that members of the royal household have been out to get you?

DIANA (ON TV)  
When I separated from the Prince of Wales I was seen as problem number one...the first of my kind.

61 INT. DOWNING STREET - NIGHT

61

JOHN MAJOR watching *Panorama*...

BASHIR (ON TV)  
When your first son was born, that must have been a very happy moment?

DIANA (ON TV)  
When William was born I became unwell. With post-natal depression. I just... wanted to stay in bed all day, was in a very dark place.

62 INT. BBC WHITE CITY, PANORAMA OFFICES - NIGHT

62

BASHIR and HEWLETT. Watching *Panorama*.

BASHIR (ON TV)  
Did you reach out for help?

DIANA (ON TV)  
I suppose if you're the first person in a family to feel low it's pretty hard to get the support you need. So you suffer alone.

63 INT. KENSINGTON PALACE, MARGARET'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

63

MARGARET watches from Apartment 1A.

BASHIR (ON TV)  
What impact did the illness have on your marriage?

DIANA (ON TV)  
It gave people a marvellous new label to pin on me - Diana's crazy. Should be sent to a home. But... what better way to break down a personality than by isolating it?

BASHIR (ON TV)  
Your husband is said to have  
rekindled his relationship with Mrs  
Camilla Parker Bowles around 1986.  
Did this contribute to the  
breakdown of your marriage?

DIANA (ON TV)  
There were three of us in this  
marriage, so it was a bit  
crowded... Was I devastated? Yes.  
Did I feel like a failure? Yes.

64 INT. ROYAL BROMPTON HOSPITAL, WARD - NIGHT

64

HASNAT watching *Panorama* on a small TV with PATIENTS and  
NURSES from the hospital.

BASHIR (ON TV)  
Reflecting back, you say that the  
royal family has effectively given  
up on you. Why do you think that  
is?

DIANA (ON TV)  
Because I don't do things the way  
they do. I want to connect with  
people emotionally. Comfort them in  
distress.

BASHIR (ON TV)  
And this isn't something the royal  
family provides.

DIANA (ON TV)  
Well you have to remember I didn't  
just marry into a family. I married  
into a system. But I won't go  
quietly. I will battle to the end.

Hasnat's heard enough. He returns to his PATIENTS.

65 INT. ETON COLLEGE, HOUSEMASTER'S OFFICE - NIGHT

65

WILLIAM sits in Gailey's study, also watching.

GAILEY is also there. Behind WILLIAM. Gently protective.

BASHIR (ON TV)  
What impact do you think the  
breakdown of your marriage had on  
Prince William?

DIANA (ON TV)  
Well, he's a boy that's a serious  
thinker, so it's hard to tell the  
impact just yet. We'll have to wait  
a few years to see.

GAILEY  
(concerned)  
Are you all right?

WILLIAM  
(brave smile)  
Yes. I'm fine.

66 INT/EXT. HIGHGROVE - NIGHT

66

CAMILLA and CHARLES watching *Panorama* - shocked.

BASHIR (ON TV)  
Do you believe Prince Charles will  
be king?

DIANA (ON TV)  
Who knows what fate will bring?  
It's a very demanding, suffocating  
role and Charles was always  
conflicted about it. And because I  
know him so well I would think that  
the 'top job' would put big limits  
on him, and I'm not sure he could  
cope with that.

CHARLES gets up, furious, unable to bear any more.

CHARLES  
What the hell is she doing?!

BASHIR (ON TV)  
Some might view this as you trying  
to take revenge on the Prince of  
Wales. What would you say to those  
people?

DIANA (ON TV)  
I don't speak with bitterness or  
anger but sorrow, because our  
marriage has failed.

CHARLES paces up and down, crying.

67 INT. KENSINGTON PALACE, DRAWING ROOM - NIGHT

67

DIANA on her sofa, remote control in hand, wearing casual  
clothes.

Watching *Panorama*.

BASHIR (ON TV)

Do you think you will ever be queen?

DIANA (ON TV)

I would like to be a queen of people's hearts, in people's hearts. But I don't envisage myself ever being queen of this country. I don't think many people will be calling for that. And when I say people, I mean those at the top, my husband's side, because they have decided that I'm an issue, full stop... a liability. But someone's got to go out onto the streets and give people the love that they need.

BASHIR (ON TV)

Your Royal Highness, thank you.

68 INT. DOMINION THEATRE, ROYAL BOX - EVENING (FLASHBACK) 68

ELIZABETH in the Royal Box, inscrutable, as the first act comes to a close.

SINGER

*One night only, one night only  
You'll be the only one  
One night only  
Then you have to run  
One night only, one night only  
There's nothing more to say  
One night only  
Words get in the way*

The spotlight shines down on the SINGER (Carol Kenyon). Applause. Cheers.

69 FULL-FRAME ARCHIVE TELEVISION FOOTAGE - DAY 69

Archive of the *Panorama* media bombshell. Reactions from the world's news networks:

ANCHOR

Princess Diana hit the airwaves in England tonight talking about her life, her broken marriage and her future.

ANCHOR 2

The astonishing interview has left the Palace shocked and concerned.

ANCHOR 3

...dropping bombshell after bombshell about the British royal family, the Princess also admitted to an extramarital affair, an eating disorder, postnatal depression. And most damaging of all - her doubts over Prince Charles's suitability to be the next king of England.

ANCHOR 4

They were so stunned they didn't issue any statement last night, but I don't think they can hide behind that. I really think they're going to have to say something, the accusations against the royal family and in particular Prince Charles, were astronomical.

70 INT. WINDSOR CASTLE, BREAKFAST ROOM - DAY 70

The next morning. A heavy silence as ELIZABETH and PHILIP read the papers over breakfast.

Every paper leads with the same story: the *Panorama* interview.

'SHE WON'T GO QUIETLY'; 'DI: THREE OF US IN THIS MARRIAGE'; 'DIANA: I WILL NEVER BE QUEEN'; 'PANIC AT THE PALACE'; 'UNFIT TO BE KING?'; 'WILLS' TELLY AGONY'.

Their faces as they come to terms with the news.

71 INT. WINDSOR CASTLE, STAIRCASE/CORRIDOR - DAY 71

HUSSEY and SUSAN walk up a staircase and down a daunting corridor, led by a PAGE.

OVER THIS:

HUSSEY (V.O.)

A great many honest, decent people work at the BBC. On their behalf, and mine, I'm so sorry.

72 INT. WINDSOR CASTLE, DRAWING ROOM - DAY 72

ELIZABETH with the HUSSEYS..

ELIZABETH

Diana had the decency to warn me in advance. But *no one* was prepared for this.

HUSSEY

I blame myself entirely. And will,  
of course, hand in my resignation.

ELIZABETH

There's no need, Dukey.

HUSSEY

There's every need, ma'am. I'm  
already hearing shocking rumours  
about how the interview was  
secured. How can I effectively  
govern when it's not a corporation  
I recognise anymore? Not a world I  
recognise anymore.

73

INT. WINDSOR CASTLE, DRAWING ROOM - DAY

73

Later: ELIZABETH is sitting in silence. Opposite her -  
WILLIAM.

Nothing to say.

An untouched cream tea on the table.

ELIZABETH looks at WILLIAM. WILLIAM looks back.

Two wounded people. In a world of pain.

ELIZABETH goes to her television, picks up the remote, with  
the idiot-proof instructions..

She struggles to get it to work. WILLIAM gets up.

WILLIAM

Let me.

He takes the remote and starts flicking through.

And turns on satellite television. WILLIAM flicks through  
channel after channel. A lurid world of deregulated satellite  
horrors. Disagreeable things. Provocative music videos.  
*Beavis and Butthead*. *Jerry Springer*. Game shows in which  
contestants are gunged. A hostile world of human bear-  
baiting.

ELIZABETH stares in horror. What is this world?

ELIZABETH

Couldn't we just find the BBC?

WILLIAM switches to the BBC. A church service is on, a choir  
singing.

WILLIAM and ELIZABETH settle down to watch.

BLACKOUT.