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BABEL

(Digital Version)

By

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PROLOGUE

These "speeches" are given straight to camera - almost VOXPOPS could stand alone or be used and interspersed with the overall digital text

*SINGLE COLOUR BACKGROUND PREFERABLY DARK BLACK IF POSSIBLE
THE CHARACTERS ARE IN SINGLE SHOT TALKING DIRECTLY TO THE
CAMERA*

BREE: "An individual has not started living
until he can rise above the narrow condemns
of his individualistic concerns to the
broader
concerns of all humanity."
Martin Luther King

PARKER:
Impersonating Boris Johnson

"I would go further and say it is absolutely ridiculous that people should choose to go around looking like letter boxes. If a female student turned up at school or at a university lecturer looking like a bank robber, then ditto: those in authority should be allowed to converse openly with those that they are being asked to instruct."

- KRISS: The wise man belongs to all countries for the home of a great soul is the whole world. Democritus
- ROBYN: We all live with the objective of being happy; our lives are all different and yet the same. Anne Frank
- KAI: No culture can live, if it attempts to be exclusive Mohandas K. Gandhi.
- GREER: In a country well governed, poverty is something to be ashamed of. In a country badly governed, wealth is something to be ashamed of. Confucius
- KATE: "Diversity is the one true thing we all have in common. Celebrate it every day". Author, unknown

Prologue

KRISS: No dogs, no Blacks, no Irish,
UKIP's policy in full. By 'Black' they mean,
anyone who's not white.

JAYA: No one ever remembers how it begins -

ROSHAN: It goes something like this:

BREE: Let us look forward to a new Britain.
Without knives, guns or bloodshed.

KAI: A just Britain where all can live without fear.

LESLIE: A Britain of action, freedom, of humanity.

CATHY: A Britain that will bring the best from all its
citizens.

KAI: From its men, women

ROBYN: And children.

JUDE: A fever took Britain, a fever of disgrace.

KRISS: Indignity, hunger.

BREE: We had democracy yes, we did. But it was
being savaged by elements from within.

KRISS: Hanging over all of this was the fear -

CATHY: Fear of today

ROBYN: Fear of tomorrow

GREER: Fear of our neighbours

JUDE: Fear of ourselves

PARKER: Understand Brexit and you understand what it
truly means to be British

PARKER: They told everyone, there are devils amongst
us.

BREE: Liberals

Prologue

KAI: Jews, Homosexuals,

LESLIE: Disabled, scroungers/

ROSHAN: Illegal immigrants!

JUDE: Once we have destroyed these devils

PARKER: Our misery, our shame will disappear.

ROSHAN: It's an old story re-enacted century after century -

BREE: Of sacrificial lambs.

JAYA: Those of us who should have known better, who knew better . . .

KRISS: Those of us, who knew the barbed and weighted words were nothing but lies . . .

KAI: Worse than the lies, the people who sat . . ./

JIM: Silently, doing nothing,

KRISS: Letting it happen.

JAYA: Those that took part - why, why did they do that?

BREE: Those that turned their backs,

CATHY: Closed their ears,

ANIL: Shut their eyes,

ROBYN: Why?

JULES: Because -

JIM: Because we loved our country.

PARKER: We loved our country.

KATE: What Britain is supposed to be.

Prologue

BREE: The politicians, & those in high places, the famous and infamous said, "hold your heads up high. Stand tall, be proud to be British."

KAI: They told everyone, there are devils amongst us.

GREER: Liberals

CATHY: Jews, Homosexuals,

LESLIE: Disabled, scroungers/

ROSHAN: Illegal immigrants!

JUDE: Once we have destroyed these devils

KAI: Our misery, our shame will disappear.

KRISS: It's an old story re-enacted century after century -

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JAYA: Those of us who should have known better, who knew better . . .

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JAYA: Those that took part - why, why did they do that?

BREE: Those that turned their backs,

CATHY: Closed their ears,

KATE: Shut their eyes,

ROBYN: Why?

Prologue

KRISS: Because -

KAI: Because we loved our country.

PARKER: We loved our country.

We loved our country.

JUDE:

ROSHAN: We loved our country.

JAYA: What does it matter if a few extremists lose their rights?

KRISS: What difference does it make if a few racial minorities lose some rights?

BREE: Or a few social minorities lose a few rights here and there?

KAI: It's just a stage we have to go through.

KRISS: It will be rectified soon, balance will be brought back.

ROSHAN: The extremists will be discarded. The rise in right wing rhetoric will end.

ROBYN: Sooner or later. . .

PARKER: Our country is in danger; we have to march through the shadows/

JUDE: Only then can we move forwards into the light.

KAI: The password was forwards/

JUDE: it was such a great password - FORWARDS!

KAI: History will remember how well we succeeded.

LESLIE: Our success, more than many could have dreamed
Of.

Prologue

JAYA: But it didn't stop the danger, it created even more danger.

BREE: The rituals began in the council chambers, in news editorial rooms in Parliament itself,

CATHY: In every home where backs were turned, we told ourselves, this isn't happening,

ROBYN: It'll pass . . .

GREER: We won't ever vote that way -

JAYA: How can we say we were not aware?

KRISS: We were aware. How many of us were there listening to the rhetoric vilifying immigrants and those who were not of the same race?

BREE: How many of us praised and applauded the racist rhetoric in the privacy of our own homes, behind locked doors and drawn curtains?

KAI: We were aware of the physical violence, escalating, rising like bile from the stomach.

ROSHAN: We were aware of the hatred being stoked in bedrooms over the internet, transmitted to our smartphones and iPads.

CATHY: Were we all deaf?

KATE: Were we all dumb?

LESLIE: Were we all blind?

KAI: Terrorism has nothing to do with religion, Islam or otherwise.
Abhijit Naskar

BREE: Authoritarianism, religious fundamentalism and militarism are inherently patriarchal and hierarchical. Mona Eltahawy

Prologue

KRISS: Terrorism is born of fundamentalism not of religion. Abhijit Naskar

JIM: Colour-blind ideology allows society to deny the reality of racism in the face of its persistence, while making it more difficult to challenge than when it was openly espoused."
Robin DiAngelo.

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ACT I - SCENE 1
JAYA'S VLOG

JAYA filming a vlog or recording a Youtube. He's sat in his bedroom.

JAYA:

It was just, building . . .

Like when you drop a bottle of fizzy pop, forget then unscrew the lid and - PHFFFFFFF

-

I know my parents had it a lot worse.

The way they dealt with it was to turn their backs and try to forget where they'd come from - who they really were.

I can see that, I don't blame them, but . . .

I mean if you can get by and blend in, isn't that what we all do?

When you're a teenager you don't think about the past. I was too busy trying to hold onto the tail of next week and even that, sometimes, was too far ahead. School was always touch and go.

Good days, bad days, worse days.

Days when I just wanted to disappear.

But I got through it - somehow -.

-

Most kids have at least one friend.

I had three.

Tight we were, inseparable.

Then the hormones kick in.

Pressures -

Home, family, other people's expectations.

Growing up -

Realising that it wasn't that simple.

Things matter -

Postcode, the food you eat, the clothes you wear, the shoes on your feet, the scarf on your head. Religion and, oh yeah - the colour of your skin. See I've always been able to - get by I mean look at me, what do you see? Come on don't be shy! What does this face say to you?

Yeah, white, white boy, teenager, man whatever

But I knew different, so did my parents

Inside, inside we were different we were -

Not white.

My ancestors came from ancient Turkey and ended up in northern Syria these days the boffins refer to us as White Syrians

Yeah White Muslims, head fuck I know . . .

Act I Scene 1

JAYA (Cont'd)

I grew up here, did all my schooling, here. Made friends, went to university, got my first job here. I paid my tax and NI - My passport says I'm British - But I know that I'm not Just because my skin isn't dark you treat me like I'm one of your own But as soon as anyone realises that my ancestors are from Syria I ran away from it for as long as I could You put a Shemagh [pronounced "shammy" or "schmog"] on me and suddenly I'm an Arab, a terrorist I thought I'd heard it all until Buffon Boris Johnson "Look out for signs of radicalisation" if you work with someone who is a Muslim. As if only Muslims can be radicalised. He may as well have drawn a target and pinned it to every British Muslim's back!

My grandpop fought in the war, decorated hero. He worked hard, built up a business and respect in the community. It's not like it was. There's something rancid in the air. Polluting folks. I see it in their hands as they clutch on, that bit tighter, to their bags when anyone different gets on the bus. They gather their children, that bit closer to themselves. When I walk through the shopping mall if I'm wearing a Shemagh, the sideways glances I get. But if I'm clean shaven booted and suited every sees an "Englishman." When I'm on the tube with a rucksack, walking through a store wearing a thobe*

[*an ankle-length, long-sleeved, gownlike garment worn chiefly by men of the Arabian Peninsula]

I know the store detectives are surreptitiously following me. As I look for ideas for Christmas or birthdays. Yes, I did say, Christmas -

Something inside me snapped. It was like I'd put my back out. Pain trickling down my thighs, spreading out into my feet. Crawling up my spine, clinging on like a venomous vine. Searing every part of my body.

Labour, LibDems, Conservatives, doesn't matter what colour.
All of 'em responsible. All guilty,
they turned their backs.

Act I Scene 1

JAYA (Cont'd)

They all used and abused my brethren. Sitting in the comfort
and safety of my semi-detached house.
Surround by my play-station, iPad, iPhone, watching news on my
iMac, listening through my Beats headphones -
Kids screaming
Hospitals overflowing with injured civilians
Victims of a gas attacks Dead bodies washing up on
Turkish holiday beaches.

Pause

I was never one for religion.
I went to the mosque when my dad nagged me or I bumped into
the Imam. But, I never really believed in all that, "stuff."

Beat

The more I watched the news and You Tube videos - The
link, it was there at the end of the video.
"Did I want to know why this was happening?"
Yeah, I wanted to know,
I clicked the link - On screen,
in front of me, a man.
Roughly the same age, like me, like you, British - English
accent, northern, well north of Watford.
Talking about faith, how people saw him, treated him. He
quoted some bits from the Koran. Some that I was vaguely
familiar with, dim memories of Saturday school. Other
bits I'd never heard of. But it made sense.
"O believers, do not hold Jews and Christians as your
allies. They are allies of one another; and anyone who
makes them his friends is surely one of them."
Never thought of it like that -
Hearing this man talk it started to shift - Moving
pieces of me, slotting them into place.
See, at the end of the day no matter how much my parents tried
to get away from their roots - you can't -
Why should I be ashamed of my heritage?
We'd all been living a lie

You, you see people like me, as the enemy.
Any enemy that the public can see and thinks they understand.
We're a threat that brings power to the white population.

We are the "big issue" which the politicians are now concentrating on. They are using us as a wake-up call. Forcing British people to see what's around them and fear anything that isn't like them.

ACT I SCENE 2
KAI'S "MARRIAGE PROPOSAL"

KAI sits on toilet in his flat. He's holding a ring box in his hand. He stares into a mirror opposite looking at himself - unsure.

KAI

God, why do I feel so nervous?!

Lifts up his arms and checks his arm pits.

Shit, I'm sweating like a pig!

Breathes deeply in, clears his throat

Leslie, we've been together now for five years. It feels so much longer than that/

Pause

That sounds like I'm saying we've been together for too long - I can't say that! Ok Kai get it together. You can do this.

Clears he throat, again

Love - Leslie -

Beat

I can't do it, I can't, I . . .
shit!

Pause

Why am I so bad at this -

Breathe - relax.

-

Leslie, it feels like only yesterday when we first met. In the aisles between the courgettes and shiitake mushrooms.

Which is weird because I've never liked mushrooms.

I think it's a texture thing, you know that squeaky sensation on your teeth/
Concentrate.

Focus.

Leslie, for me it was love at first sight.
Pretty miraculous considering the first disastrous first date at Little Po's; which resulted in you getting food
Act I Scene 2

KAI (Cont'd)

poising; you took the plunge and gave me and your stomach a second chance.

We went on a second date.

This time I played it safe. Italian, well sort of, Jamie's. Other Italian restaurants are of course available. Which was a success. For one you didn't get food poisoning and we saw the dinner through to the desert.

Actually, thinking about it, it was pretty bland -

Beat. KAI stops and slaps his face as if to wake himself up.

You can do this. You can do this. You have to do this.

I mean, it's not as if you can send a text message . . .

Beat

No. this has to be done in person. Old school, face to face. Down on one knee.

Right. This is it, this is the one . . .

Pause

Leslie you are the love of my life. My first and only love, my heart's desire/
That's bloody awful!

For a start she knows I've had more than one

relationship. My first love was Dora Jenkins in 2b a love which was never reciprocated - well I was only six.

Pause

I can pitch to a room full of FT100 CEOs but I can't find the words to say to the woman I love, will you marry me.

Closes his eyes. Breathes in, then breathes out.

Just keep it simple. Don't over think, go with the flow.
Tell her how you feel, why she makes you feel that way.
That you want to spend the rest of your life going to bed with her and waking up in the morning next to her.
That last bit is very important, without it the first bit sounds - shit!

KAI screws up his face in frustration then relaxes

Act I Scene 2

KAI (Cont'd)

That could work, it could work, yes.
Yes, that could definitely work.
Ok, ring, check.

KAI gets up to reveal his top half, torso upwards is dressed, simple but stylish shirt open at the neck, casual jacket but his bottom half is missing he's not wearing any trousers, no socks just slippers or flip flops.

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ACT I SCENE 2.2
LESLIE AND KAI LONG DISTANCE SKYPE

LESLIE is in New York and is Skyping with KAI whose in London

KAI: Friday night let the weekend begin!

LESLIE: I'll drink to that.

KAI: You ok, hard day at the office?

LESLIE: -

KAI Look at me
Leslie what's going on?

LESLIE: God! You're so suspicious, why does anything have to be going on?

KAI: Because you have a tell, well you have several.
Just get it out. No? Well I have something
that I've been meaning to talk to you about/

LESLIE: They've offered me a permeant role

Silence

I know we agreed that I fly back at the end of
this month, I just couldn't not sign. It's too
big an opportunity for me to miss.
It a full time job in New York forchristssake!

KAI: But we decided/

LESLIE: You decided, as per usual!

Beat

Can't you just be happy for me? For us?

Silence

What was it you wanted to talk about?

KAI: It can wait/

LESLIE: Don't do that/

KAI holds up a small box and opens it to reveal a ring.

Act I Scene 2.2

KAI: I was going to ask you tonight . . . But long-distance relationships don't work, especially when there's a sea/

LESLIE: Actually, it's an ocean/

KAI: Especially when there's an ocean between.

LESLIE: You'd be coming with me you, numbskull.

KAI: I would, would I/

LESLIE: Really, you're going to be like this/

KAI: My proposal?/

LESLIE: That goes without saying/

KAI:

LESLIE: Don't pretend you can't bear to leave London. This is the excuse you need to pack up and leave. Then we can get married in NYC. Our friends will be the ones that have to schlep for a change.

Silence

Grow up Kai!
Look at the state of things. Only last week
you told me about the girls being attacked.
Look at the racism George and Karim have been
going through lately?

KAI: And the US is more tolerant?/

LESLIE: Flat prices keep rising, it's ridiculous/

KAI: And real estate in NYC is cheaper?

LESLIE: You know what I mean/

KAI: You expect me to uproot, just like that? Leave
my job, like I'm stepping off a bus and getting
into a taxi...

LESLIE: I thought you'd be pleased. It's a huge hike in
salary. We can afford/

Act I Scene 2.2

KAI: You can afford/

Beat

LESLIE: We can buy/rent in NYC. No more looking over
our shoulders. Penny pinching, worrying about
bills. We'd have disposable income. I'd have a
fully comprehensive healthcare package. Which
includes partner. We would want for nothing

KAI: Apart from friends, family/

LESLIE: What family?

We'll make new friends. The old ones, the real
ones, they'll be flying over at any and every
opportunity.

KAI: You have it all planned, not sure why you need
me/

LESLIE: Kai why are you being such a prick about this?

KAI: Don't know, you tell.

Beat

Six years to the day Leslie, didn't think you'd forget that.

Pause

I'm happy for you. Enjoy your new life, new job and, yes congratulations.

KAI leans in and ends the Skype call. The screen goes black

LESLIE: Kai! Kai! Come on we can work around this, think of all those art galleries, museums and libraries

LESLIE stares at the blank screen
Shit!

ACT I SCENE 3

JUDE - YOUR CALL IS IMPORTANT TO US

JUDE is on the phone, he is agitated, angry. He keeps looking directly into a camera he's set up. He's seated next to a bed. There is the shape of body in the bed, but it's covered by a sheet.

JUDE

Three effing hours on the phone, dad. But this time I've got all off you, bastards!

Muttering looking from the bed to the camera

Press one for this, choose option 2, another bloody menu, stay on the line if it's ...

I'm four-hundred and fifty-two in the poxie queue, dad!

All of our operators are currently busy dealing with other calls, "your call is important to us."

My flaming arse! Press 3 if you need to hear this *Beat*

menu in:

Bengali, Urdu or Hindi.

Press 6 if need to talk to us about anything else.

Looking directly into the camera.

Well we don't, do we dad?! We don't want to talk to
some sodding automated crap!

Put me through to a live human being, who talks
English, for fuck sake/

Shouting into the phone

Shut the fuck up!
Just transfer me to someone who can help me!

I just want to talk to someone about dad.
He's -?
He needs to see someone urgently!

The home help's fucking useless, she's either late or doesn't
turn up.

JUDE (Cont'd)

Dad, you shouldn't be sitting in his own filth for hours.
Jesus!
I'm on minimum wage, working two jobs -

Looking at the body in the bed.

Dad's sick, he needs help -

We need help - I
need help -

He's paid his NHS stamp all his life.
My taxes are supposed to cover all of this -

Christ!

Hello, hello?

*The line goes dead. Jude slams the receiver down onto the
phone's cradle. He looks directly into the camera*

This time you can't worm your way out - it's all on camera.

He buries his head in his hands.

Sorry dad, I tried - no one's picking up.

JUDE breaks down

ACT I SCENE 4
GREER

GREER sits next to a window (window seat, or chair next to a window) GREER is on the phone

Hi June, only me -
I just needed - to vent/
It's. . .
I'm angry all the time!
I don't want to be that way - Roll
back did you say Phee?
As in Marta's girl?/
Well we all knew that she was going down the wrong side of the
tracks. . .

If only it was that easy, June.
I look out of my small cracked window to the world and I see
grey despair. Even when the sun's shining...
I'm tired of scrabbling! Aren't you?

Of cobbling my life together. Having to make the frayed ends meet. Stuck up to me elbows in washing up, or laundry or some else's dunny!

I'm tired of feeling - lost Yes
lost.

Out-numbered in my own country!

All the voices I hear around me, all the faces, veiled hidden and foreign!

I'm the only one out of all of them who speaks English!

That can't be right.

That's not how it's meant to be in a good god fearing, Christian country, is it?!

June it can't be Phee, she's away to university. She went last summer. Must have been Brenda's niece.

Of course you know her.

The floozy that found herself in the family way, though Brenda always denied it.

She "went away" for nine months and then came back with a baby "cousin"

I can't help it June. I'm -

Anger, it's just there sitting on my chest like heart-burn. I don't want to feel like this - it's all take, take, take.

Normal people like me, the mugginses of the world, we give, give and give now there's nothing left.

What have we got, what's been left for us - dregs.

Act I Scene 4

GREER (Cont'd)

No homes, no pensions, no care, no future and no past. As for those useless lumps sitting in parliament, they're as clueless as the rest of us.

They don't give a flying fart about us. If they did we wouldn't be here, neck deep in -

This country used to stand for something - oh I know that's not a popular view to have these days

But it stood for something, our schooling was the envy of the world, we had coal, steel, we made things, we farmed, we fished, we -

Those were the days when you got on a bus and young 'uns would get up offer you a seat no need to ask. People were polite, that was the way. You were brought up like that. Money meant something, work meant something, now - No one talks, no looks at the world through their own eyes. Out there it's dangerous, really dangerous. Cold, harsh, unforgiving.

It's too late. Can't turn the clock back.

ACT I SCENE 5

KATE 7/7

KATE: Sits in front of her laptop

KATE:

I hate travelling on public transport. Parker used to say.
"It'll do you good babe. You need to mix more with "real"
people."

I didn't mind mixing -

But I always ended up sitting in close proximity to someone
whose personal hygiene was less than desirable. All life
was there. Travelling on the underground day and night -

Refugees from conventionality, the old, infirm, the lonely and unloved.

All thinking . . .

That day I was worried. I was thinking bout my pepper spray sitting on the hallway Because in my rush to escape the house I'd forgotten to pick it up.

While I rubbed shoulder with the underpaid and under washed, Parker was sitting in his plush two-thousand k, office chair. Playing virtual golf whilst flirting with the latest office intern.

My problem was I'd always been popular. I suppose that's how I ended up crossing paths with Parker. Right postcode, all the trappings daddy could afford and some he couldn't. Prep school, Public school, Finishing school. I'll say, it nearly finished me!

Snorts

He said it was, "an investment in my future..." I suppose anything would be better than nothing.

In spite of the all the popularity I never really felt wanted not by my school friends, not at school or even at home.

Act I Scene 5

KATE (Cont'd)

That day - well evening, I suppose that's what I was thinking about as we pulled into Bank station. I looked at the people on the platform rushing back and forth - scurrying quavers running over each other's crooked backs.

I don't know why, but lines from a poem I'd studied, many years ago, just popped into the front of my brain.

"I can still start the Rose Adagio, one foot on the fender." I remember being annoyed almost angry willing the tube to close its doors and start moving

That was the seventh of July

God knows how long we sat in the dark.

I get nervous now when I'm stuck on a tube - which is why I try and avoid travelling on them/

After a while your eyes get used to the light, well the lack of it.

I could make out shapes. Some of the seats had been torn away. They were piled up like a massive bonfire waiting to be lit.

Poles twisted and contorted -

Bags, shoes - Limbs.

As I sat there in the dark, I promised myself that I'd make changes.

You never know, do you? You just never know -

I reached out and grabbed the first hand that I touched.

The warm flesh was comforting, another living thing.

It was so dark . . .

I was pinned to my seat.

For a nano-second I thought I was at the fair on one of those stupid rides.

Bizarre the things you think about.

It was the smell of burning, it had the same odour as a fair ground. Burnt toffee and warm candy-floss

Act I Scene 5

KATE Cont'd

It wasn't either of those things.

I'm prattling, I prattle when I get nervous,

I had no obvious wounds - I'm fine now, really I am.

I'm just not very good in dark confined spaces.

Time really does drag when you're in a tight spot.

I lived . . .

But he got it wrong

God, or whatever you want to call, *it*, got it wrong.

I should have died.

I was still holding someone's hand. I realised the warmth had gone from the flesh. I brought my hand towards my eyes.

KATE brings her hand towards her eyes

It was just - a hand.

With my hand holding on to someone else's hand. No arm, no shoulder, just the hand curled around mine. A wedding ring and a small tattoo between the thumb and forefinger

So, I just sat there - in the dark, holding on to a hand -/

I was found crying, pinned to my seat holding onto this hand . . .

They never really found the rest of the body, just a few bits. I think it was a woman, the wedding ring - its size and the butterfly tattoo

In the weeks that followed I questioned everything/
What was my purpose/

I'm a fraud/

I married young and I married money. My brain didn't come into it.

Act I Scene 5

KATE Cont'd

It was looks and a vacant womb. The official ball on a golden chain. What a waste

ACT I SCENE 6
ROSHAN THE REFUGEE

ROSHAN – a SYRIAN refugee, sits at his window reflecting on past events, and life in the UK.

ROSHAN

Nothing was the same. I came here to escape the violence.
And ended up being surrounded by violence –
Unspoken violence, fermenting beneath –
In the eyes of strangers –
This is not home. *Pause*

Everyone thinks that I'm white, that I'm like them - until, I start talking. Then most people realise that I'm not from here. I tell them, I have nothing to hide. I'm not from Europe. I'm Syrian.

It usually takes a few minutes for this to sink in - I can see it in their eyes.

"But he looks white, he's not dark skinned, he's not an Arab." I spend most of time when I'm on a tube or a bus, with eyes looking down. Pretending to be asleep -

Why are there so many mad people in London. I traded violence for insanity. This is not home.

Beat

I'd never really given the phrase, "white passing," much thought. Until one of my colleagues referred to me as a Leucosryian. When I got home I had to look it up in a dictionary. White Syrians, an ancient tribe that lived in Anatolia. Believed to be of Iranian, Syro-Hittite origin and possible of mixed Anatolian blood. Nothing is pure - He was saying I'll be alright because I "look white." I'd Act I Scene 6

ROSHAN Cont'd

never thought like that. I'm Syrian. I'm a muslim. Not always a very observant one . . .

To many I'm a terrorist, I'm from Syria, that's the "middle east" where the Islamic fundamentalists come from.

Ha - Syria is technically in Western Asia. But here in the UK, you have some peculiar ideas. Asia is the sub-continent of India. For a nation that conquered nearly two thirds of the globe your knowledge of geography is very bad!

I miss the breeze, the light, the aroma of home.

I find many western women so cold and hard like marble Beautiful, but cruel -

I had hoped for so much more, unrealistic probably. I remember that day in the city. . .

I'd been to early morning prayers
 I saw him -
 I'd seen him at morning prayer before.
 I noticed him, he was a convert, there is nothing wrong with
 that - it was joyous another soul that found its way on to the
 true path
 We'd, - exchanged pleasantries the day before it all happened
 That morning he asked to speak with me I
 was faltered - the pitfall of pride!
 First he spoke with passion
 I was touched moved by his sincerity when spoke with anger and
 sadness and he felt watching my country being torn apart
 whilst the rest of the world closed its eyes Did I not want
 revenge, would it be so bad to seek justice, to make those
 that were responsible pay?

He then quoted 2:65-66 of Qu'ran

*"Christians and Jews must believe what Allah has revealed to
 Muhammad or Allah will disfigure their faces or turn them into
 apes, as he did the Sabbath-breakers."*
 I gently reminded him, true Islam teaches us forgiveness over
 revenge. One of the moral traits recommended by the Qur'an is
 forgiveness.

"What kind of Muslim are you?" he demanded
 Act I Scene 6

ROSHAN (Cont'd)

The peaceful kind, I said. He called
 me a coward and stormed away. I never
 saw him again.

What could I have done? I should have
 said - something. I went back to the
 mosque and I prayed.

Prayed for forgiveness/

I can't even close my eyes. He's there pinned to the inside of
 my lids./

I'd heard that sound so many times before
 Experienced that that moment when everything hangs
 Thought that when I fled my home in Syria and finally made my
 way to the UK that I would never have to - The dust, the
 noise. The pain, the panic/ Silence -

before life rolls into disaster/
I have my faith -
"Thus, do we display our revelations that they may say (unto thee, Muhammad): "Thou hast studied," and that we may make (it) clear for people who have knowledge." I hope that I will find peace - that we will all find peace.

ACT I SCENE 7
ANIL'S LAST MESSAGE

ANIL - he is in the dark and in distress he takes out his phone and records a message

ANIL:

Hi love - I've only got one and a half bars left If you're watching this - then it's bad.
I don't want you to worry, I know you will, but something always comes along.
I need to be buried within 24 hours -
But I'm guessing that isn't going to be that easy. I'm sure He will understand.
Cathy so much that I want to say and now that I have to my mind is just scrambled and I don't know where to start/ It's been such a joy. Having you and Robyn in my life. Tell Robyn not to brood too much, I know what she's like. Its life in all its brutality.
Even though I can't hug you both I'll always be watching over you.

Cathy I know that you'll be cursing me and blaming whatever caused the fire for taking me from you - but.
 I had a great life, of course it could have been longer, but we can't always get what we want. Because most times it's not what we need or deserve.
 I know that Robyn will grow into the beautiful and talented person she was meant to be.
 She will take care of you - just give her some space and have faith.

I'm down to half a bar now so it's time
 The air is getting really thin
 It's so hot
 Everything is on fire
 I feel like I'm boiling from the inside out
 What a world eh,
 Cathy, I love you
 I love Robyn
 And/

The phone goes dead

ACT I SCENE 8

KRISS' MOTIVATIONAL SPEECH

KRISS he's recording a motivational speech.

KRISS

This is Kriss's motivational Youtube channel.
 I've been where you are.
 Ducking, diving, taking the short cuts
 But it's like any short cut they usually aren't that short and usually they're cutting out the essential bits.
 The important parts of life, you see there are no easy ways in life. Like there are no quick fixes into making money. I mean look at me once the talk of the town flying high and then next thing I knew I was banged up and behind bars.
 I want to take you back to **that** night. It's painful I know - I saw it all.

People, falling like flies, some didn't even know they'd been stabbed, until they saw their own blood.

Ff... that was some messed up sh...

I'm a survivor. I didn't hurt nobody,

I saw an eye to a chance, I took it - anyone would. Don't fool yourself, don't lie that you'd be some goody-two-shoes, coz you wouldn't. I've had challenges, life hasn't been all peaches and cream. I'm not lookin' for sympathy. I'm just putting it there.

Life -

So, it's tragic - course it is. Losin' a life that's mega.

But dogs eat dogs. I see them, lifeless, just spread out over the floor.

There's money, wallets, rings, watches.

I take the stuff they don't need. You can't take it with you. 'm being practical.

No law against that. All the hysteria and panic. As I'm "rearranging" the last one, I look up and see the flames lashing out of The Tower.

That was next level.

I'm mean - I went, I did help the first trickle of people coming out. I even took of my top for one grandma. In all the confusion, someone filmed me on their iPhone helping and that was it. I was a hero. Interviews on BBC, ITV, SKY, CNN ... For real. They wanted to talk to me. I mean it would have been rude not to.

A second video turned up on You Tube. Then things really went crazy. It just looked as if I was trying to Act I Scene 8

KRISS (Cont'd)

help the people who'd been stabbed. It snowballed. It was an avalanche!

I thought, keep things simple. I can get through this. I'll be ok.

People were listening to me! I used the platform given to me.

I talked about poverty, homelessness, food banks and the working poor, I mean a phrase like that shouldn't exist. I'm no saint. But I'm no devil neither. Light and shade. We've all got it. I was important. I mattered, for the first time in my life. I was making a difference, being wanted. That's - that's - a great feeling. We all want to be wanted.

Don't you judge me. You don't know me. Thanks for watching and don't forgot to like and subscribe.

ACT I SCENE 9
LESLIE FINALLY SAYS GOODBYE

LESLIE at home she's talking into her smartphone.

LESLIE

I should know -
It's what I do for a living . . .
It's been ten years since -
Since you went
Things, that I thought were the golf-balls of life.
So important, turned out to be nothing -
Inconsequential grains of sand. The things we sucker ourselves
into worrying about
Conning ourselves that these pieces of grit really matter -

Beat

I'm counselling two very troubled men.
Both have received lengthy custodial sentences for their past
youthful, misguided, violent, vengeful and hateful acts.
I realise now - after the anger, self-pity, loss and
loneliness has dissipated
No matter where we were/are in the world - which continent,
time zone, somewhere someone, some group was/is being
marginalised, disenfranchised and demonised by the culturally,
politically and financially dominant in society.
All our petty squabbles about sexuality, gender and borders
mean nothing in comparison to the power and wrath of nature
and its response to our idiocy as a species.

We push others away because we fear them, because they look
different, or the god they worship is alien to us. Or the
language they speak is unfathomable to our ears. Some grasp
onto religious straws and dam those who do not share the same
religion. We create monsters from our own infallible humanity.
Our own hypocrisy at one and the same time we are masters of
our own fate yet in times of need, in times of distress, fear,
grief our gods will protect us and -

The men that face me now, were young adults when they
committed their crimes.
But they are still consumed by hate, fear and misguided
fervour

I can only try and help these men to unpick the thorns and
ropes that cut and gnaw through them I
don't know why I'm videoing this
I miss you Kai, I miss you more than I ever thought I would
I don't know why I'm videoing this
I miss you Kai, I miss you more than I ever thought I would
Act 1 Scene 9

LESLIE (Cont'd)

Time is not a healer - not for me
I try to remember your face but lately
I can only see you in silhouette
In profile as the sun sets looking away from me out over the
horizon

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ACT I SCENE 10
GREER AND JIM FACETIME

GREER and JIM Facetime. GREER has aged.
GREER sits in a living room in front of an old laptop JIM
paces back and forth in a bed room presumably his. He
keeps glancing at rolled up fabric bundle on his bed

GREER: Hello love. How are your studies going?
Have you made many friends - did you go into
the university's halls of residence, are you
feeding yourself properly/

JIM: Mum!

Pause

Which question do you want me to answer first?

GREER: Sorry love - it's -

*Beat - JIM turns his smart phone round so that GREER can
see his room*

JIM: (OS) Here it is chez Jim! It's small and perfectly
formed. In other words it's small and/

GREER: Untidy, you could have cleaned up a bit before
you called me.

JIM: (OS) Mum - give it a rest

GREER: Looks like you've got a month's worth of
laundry sitting on your bed.

*JIM swivels his phone around so he's facing GREER
He tries to "hide" the bundle that was on his bed*

JIM: Mum, give it rest will ya' (he smiles)
There's something I've been wanting to ask -
for ages - but. . .
Do you remember that night mum? I mean what
really happened/

GREER: What's with all the nostalgia?
Why aren't you out there with your mates making
trouble, living, havin' fun/

JIM: Mum! It's important I have to know

Act I Scene 10

JIM: (Cont'd) what really happened -

GREER:

Sighs

What's done is done. Leave it be, love/

JIM: I'm fucking sick of all this sh ...

He throws a few things around his room in anger.

GREER: Who the bloody hell do you think you are?!

JIM: Sorry mum/

GREER: You may have grown some but that doesn't
mean I won't show you the back
of my hand!
What's done is done. Leave it be, love/

JIM: I'm fucking sick of all this sh ...

He throws a few things around the room in anger.

GREER: Who the bloody hell do you think you are?!

JIM: Sorry mum/

GREER: You may have grown some but that doesn't mean
I won't show you the back of my hand!

JIM: You wouldn't/

GREER: Try me!

JIM: I'll call child services!

GREER: Go on then - 'cept you're no longer a child!

JIM: And you're not my real mother!

GREER: Go ahead knock yourself out.

Beat

JIM: I'm sorry, mum I didn't m/

GREER: Yes, you did.

Act I Scene 10

GREER: Cont'd

Beat

And you're right, I'm not your 'real' mum.
Never pretended I was. I'm just the fool
that brought you up, cooked,
cleaned, wiped your arse, made sure you got
schooled and came home safe each day. I
bleached my hands raw when you said you
had to have the latest trainers, iPhone or
the school skiing trip -

Pause

You would have liked your dad and I know he
would have been proud of you.
He wanted to make sure you were safe/

JIM: Yeah, right, that's why he left me, he
abandoned me/

GREER: He went back up those stairs to rescue your
brothers, sisters, mother, aunts and uncles/

JIM: Look how successful that was/

GREER: Jim Garton! You wash that potty mouth of yours
out!

Silence

You're here, well you're there and alive
because of your dad.

Pause

I know it's been tough, love.

JIM: You don't know the half of it!

GREER: Tell me then!
I'm not mystic meg, Jim. If you don't talk to
me how am I supposed to know!?

JIM: It's -
You shouldn't be working three jobs, just so we
can live.

GREER: Well now you're away at university. If you'd really wanted to help you should have a part time job/

JIM: Mum, you think I didn't try!//

GREER: I know love. I know you've/

JIM: It was either drugs or McDonalds and there was a poxie waiting list for Micky Ds. As for the other/

GREER: Don't even think about it. What is it you need, I can ask for some more shifts/

JIM: Stop!
Stop mum. I don't need anything, least nothing money can buy -
Sighs The way they treated you after, after, after the -

Silence

GREER: The fire -

JIM: They made it, like it was our fault for not getting out of the Tower in time. Then turning on you for taking on a "coloured" kid. I remember all that stuff. I heard, you didn't think I did, I heard what people were saying about you and how you used to be "one of them." And now, how you weren't on account of taking in a black bastard. How you'd turned your back on your own -

Pause

GREER:
SIGHS

Before you came to me . . I was different.
I looked at the world around me - What
I say day on day - it angered me.
I blamed everyone but those who we were responsible.
Local government, people in parliament.

Those folks were the ones that should have
 Act I Scene 10

GREER: (Cont'd) kept an eye out for us.
 Blame comes easy when you lump it onto
 someone else's shoulders, "them."
 That way we don't have to face up to our own
 shortcomings.

Beat

Have you noticed, whenever a black, Asian or
 Chinese man is accused of a violent act,
 they're terrorists? But when a white man or
 woman, is accused of the same thing, they're
 mentally ill. But they're just as much a
 terrorist as the others.
 It's easy to say "they," easy to point the
 finger at "immigrants," people of different
 faiths and say, it's their fault. They're the
 ones to blame.

Beat

The Tower and everything else that happened
 afterwards, it knocked some sense into me.

JIM: What do you mean?

GREER: We just didn't want to admit it. I didn't want
 to admit it, no one likes to be told that
 they're dumb, do they?
 But that's what we were. We slept walked into
 the entire mess.
 You call someone a terrorist; you demonise
 people for long enough, and they'll become
 what you call them. It's like a
 magician's sleight of hand. Wave at things
 over there, so we don't look at the bits that
 really matter. Access to basics, housing,
 food, work. I'm ashamed to say I was one of
 those who wailed about immigrants and people
 who didn't look like me. But we're all the
 same when it comes down to it. This country,
 the whole of Europe was looking for someone to
 blame. What's the point of blaming people you
 can't see. So, we picked on the ones that were
 different, the ones who

followed a different faith -not that this country was
 really religious any more. The

rich ones who were in business got a by.
 Don't let anyone tell you that money can't buy you
 most of what you want. They turned on
 their own, decried the terrorists and

Act I Scene 10

GREER: (Cont'd) the anti-Semites. But never pointed the
 finger at their own "isms".
 When the enquiry started, it all came out
 like a fish being gutted. Councillors taking
 backhanders, gambling with lives for what?
 Because it was just council housing! Homes for
 the working poor! People they didn't want in
 their borough.
 You know only one of those crooks served time.
 He was one our own. Stood on a platform of
 justice for all. No more child poverty. None
 of us knew that he meant, we'll just ship 'em
 all off to another borough outside the capitol
 or better still we'll burn 'em out...

Beat

What I'm saying love is, you have to let things
 go otherwise they'll fester and tie you up in
 ways that you -
 It's done. Life is out there waiting for you

JIM: What, "life" mum, eh?
 One where I get called the N word everyone
 thinks it's a bit of fun? The world where
 education is out of my reach unless you're
 prepared to go neck deep in debt?
 The world where security guards in shops follow
 me around because I'm black and that means I'm
 thieving?
 A world where I'm ten times more likely to be
 stopped and searched, for no other reason than
 I'm black? And your generation created this
 world and stood there and did fuck all!

Don't you swear at me!
 Maybe we did, maybe this world isn't what it
 should be.
 But it's the only one we've, you've got.
 Yes, we're all responsible for the mess we're
 in. We're all to blame. We voted in this
 government. We voted for this world all of us!

And those that wanted change didn't vote enough. It's done, no good looking over your shoulder crying about what's passed. If you're that riled up about things, do something about it. Don't expect others to do it for you. If I'd have had that attitude you'd be in the system and I'd be out on the streets with no roof over my head.

Act I Scene 10

JIM: (Cont'd)

Silence

Sorry, mum.
You know I love you .

Pause

You're right as usual, it's up to people like me to do something.

GREER: That's the spirit.

Beat

Study hard, make your dad proud - make me proud while you're about it

JIM: Jim, don't you be doing anything crazy . . .
What me?

GREER blows him a kiss. JIM waves good buy and the screen On GREER's laptop goes blank

GREER: I did my best Jim. Hope you can see that, where ever you are.

Pause

You understand why I thought the way that I did, don't you?

I've changed, I have. So, has he. He's grown up into a fine young man. A bit lost but aren't we all. I'll swing by later in the week. Change your flowers and say hello to everyone else while I'm at it. Could have lunch if the weather holds - how does that sound?

BLACKOUT

ACT I SCENE 11
BREE RECOUNTS

BREE is sat talking on a phone (could be landline, could be mobile)

BREE The
alarm went - I don't think twice. Not
anymore. It's woven into your skin.
You're just up, getting dressed, Everyone
tugging at boots and jackets.
You're in the truck, sirens going, and off. Reports
of a fire - Jesus!
Never saw a fire like that before We
couldn't get near.
We ended up a good four, five streets away
Had to run from the tender to the fire full lugging all our
gubbins.
We get there we and we're told
"Climb up twenty-four flights of stairs" with thirty kilos of
kit.
On the way up the Comms went down.
It was a fucking mess
Another fire-fighter passed whistle blowing from his breathing
apparatus they're carrying another fire-fighter's helmet
Shit! Shit, shit! - Christ!
We keep on ascending, there are civilians and firefighters
slumped on the stairwell gasping for air. We've been told that
there's a family on the twenty-fourth floor but...
We collapse, heat exhaustion -
We have to make a decision We
split the team in two halves.
One carries on ascending, the other half going to
collect everyone on the lower floors and stairwells.
Taking them back down to safety. We look each other in
the eyes and then we're gone.
Ten flights away from the trapped family and the fire.

It just -

I can't help thinking 9/11 seeing those small black dots falling from the Twin Towers - Everything around us is melting away, peeling, like sun blistered skin. Dripping down like melting wax -

Alarms start to go.

We know we're running out of air.

There is no time.

ACT I SCENE 12
JUDE'S THERAPY SESSION

JUDE sits in front of a PC he's talking to LESLIE.

JUDE: How long am I gonna have to put up with this crap!

LESLIE: How long is your sentence?

JUDE: Touche doc!

LESLIE: Tell me about yourself/

JUDE: Why so you can psycho-babble me? Or whatever the shit it is you do?

LESLIE: No, so that I can try to get to know you, a little

JUDE: Good luck with that, I don't even understand myself sometimes

LESLIE:

JUDE:

SIGHS How so?

I wasn't Einstein, but I wasn't thick neither.
It was difficult to find time to do sodding
homework when you gotta take of your Dad.
Social weren't no help. Doesn't matter how much
you're worth if you have no one to share it
with.

He'd rather slit his own throat, than have some
busy body stranger wiping his arse.
The old man used to shout at me.

"Stop daydreaming! Only stars you'll see laddo

Act I Scene 12

JUDE: (Cont'd) are the ones spinning around your head once I've
whacked some sense into yous."

Rubs the side of his head as he remembers the thwack.

He didn't mean - it was just his way.
You know - old school/

LESLIE: A bully/

JUDE: No!
A hard working, salt of the earth - backbone of
this country. It was the likes of my Dad, not
the toffy pounces in parliament that got made
Britain great. That died in wars, that suffered
but kept going, that won freedom for the world
- only to see -

LESLIE: To see what Jude?

JUDE: To see - to be made to feel like a foreigner in their own country. To have jobs, housing, benefits taken from them.

We opened our doors, our hearts, we took them in and what do they do they stab us in the back. Rob us blind. Towards the end my Dad didn't recognise this country anymore,

No-one was there to help, the government they don't give a shit

And all I got was

"Smile it may never happen."

Well, it already had, fifteen fucking years ago.

I'm not sorry for what I did.

LESLIE: Honestly?

Act I Scene 12

JUDE: Honestly. What I am sorry for is surviving. The world hasn't changed. People at the bottom still being screwed by people at the top. I watched my dad disintegrate. Too poor to afford the basics and not poor enough to warrant help. Yet I see a never-ending line of "other" people getting benefits, you name it, they got it/

LESLIE: Jude, that a bit of an exaggeration? /

JUDE: No, Doc. it's not, "an exaggeration". Not where I came from.

Watering holes shut down or turned into pop up Mosques. Endless poxie pound shops with cheap crap - but that's the only stuff we could afford. Maybe it didn't happen in your neck of the woods, but just because you didn't see it doesn't make it not true.

LESLIE: Point taken

JUDE: What is the point of all this? Everyone hates me. I hate me.
I hate them and what they turned this country into.

LESLIE: I think we all understand that Jude. Why, go to such extremes? Why not protest outside the Houses of Parliament? Get a petition together? Organise a rally?

JUDE: Are you for fucking real prof!
None of that polite middle-class bollocks gets anywhere for people like me. The working poor, the "uneducated." The only thing this country takes notice of is violence. Fear is the one thing that gets people at the top, to stop and think, before they all get back on the treadmill again.

LESLIE: I think what most people want to know is did you deliberately plan the explosion, to coincide with the what was happening above at street level

Act I Scene 12

JUDE: What do you think, Doc?

LESLIE: It doesn't matter what I think/

JUDE: That'll be a first/

LESLIE: What's of paramount importance is what you think

JUDE: What I think

LESLIE: Yes, what you think.

JUDE: I think this is a load of horse shit. Just more shit to put this dung pile of country over-run by illegal immigrants and Islamic fascists, ruled by rich public school Tossers who don't know jack. At least what I did got everyone talking out in the open

Beat

This is fucking pointless because everyone even you Doc are too shit scared and spineless to have it out. Instead you plaster labels onto people, fascist, right-wing, extremists - I'm just sticking up for my own. For people like me, with problems like mine who just to live in their own country and not feel like an outsider.

I'm done Doc - I'm outta here
Jude ends the video call.

ACT I SCENE 13
CATHY LEAVES A MESSAGE

CATHY sits alone in an almost empty space. Dressed in black. Looks as if she has been crying. She sits in front of a smartphone (could be mounted on a small table top tripod or just propped up on a table leaning against a mug or a couple of books). CATHY leans forwards and presses record.

CATHY

Everyone's been very nice. Apart from the politicians, though our local MP has been very helpful. Robyn doesn't like him she says he smells funny, kids eh? I don't think he's that bad. He has some very strong views, he's very big on being patriotic - I mean there's no harm in that is there.

Anyway, that's not what I'm here to talk about.

Beat

It's was never easy. . .

What with me having had Robyn so early. Single white female knocked up by a Thai- exchange student. But I wouldn't have it any other way. Because, I ended up with Robyn.

Smiles

And then you come along. My white knight in shining armour, well sort off.

I remember when we first got together, giving you such a hard time about your name. "What sort of name is Anil?" I used to say.

I didn't realise that people converted. It was a bit of shock when you told me that you'd grown up in Surrey and changed your name to Anil. You told me it meant air

CATHY breaks down

I knew you were the one - the way you took to Robyn like she was your own. You didn't have a second thought. And when you asked me to marry you - you asked both of us. My family were up in arms. Second time I'd disappointed them.

But we were happy and everything was going so well until - Did you know that I was so mad at you. So angry that you'd gone. That you did the usual thing of thinking of others before yourself and your family. If you'd just stayed put with Act I Scene 12

CATHY (Cont'd)

us instead of playing the hero and charging off to help past neighbours - none of whom, if I recall were particularly

friendly towards us when we lived in The Tower. Perhaps that's just me being mealy mouthed - oh I don't know Anil.

It's been hard. Robyn just cries all the time. She misses you - I miss you.

We still haven't got a permeant place to live, but I'm hopeful.

Mr Parker that's out local MP he's been very kind.

Pause

Friend of mine, it was her idea that I should make this video for you.

Stupid really, but she said she'd done one after her husband went. It gave her a chance to get things out, get emotional closure -

It's all a bit "new agey" for me. But it can't hurt can it?

Beat

I do miss you love, it was so much harder not being able to see you or say a proper goodbye.

So I'll say bye for now and thanks for everything you'll always have a place in our hearts and even though Robyn wasn't yours she'll always think of you as her dad.

That's it really

CATHY leans forwards fumbles with the camera. You see her had across the lens then nothing but black.

ACT I SCENE 13

KATE BREAKS UP

Split screen. KATE is on the phone Face Timing Parker. PARKER is somewhere else but not with Kate where he's supposed to be

KATE: There you are Parker! I've ordered. A
Salade Niçoise to start followed by The Sea
Bass. A bottle of Pouilly-Fuisee [French
pronunciation:[pu.ji fui.se]. For you crab to
start followed by the steak. Medium-rare. And
a whiskey to
start with a bottle or red with the main
please, something safe, Château Neuf-du-Pape/

PARKER: Vintage?

KATE: Naturally, as you'll be paying.
We're celebrating . . .

PARKER: We are? Of course we are -

KATE: Actually, I'm celebrating. I doubt if
you will be quite as cheerful when you find
out why.

PARKER: So, what is it that we are celebrating,
darling?
You've finally managed to work out how to
operate the home cinema system?

KATE:

Smiles

Parker I'm leaving you. You'll find
everything in order. I let Greer go - oh you
wouldn't know who she is. She's the poor woman
that has cooked, cleaned, ironed and generally
kept your pied-a-terre in good order.
I've had it, Parker. Enough is enough.
It was fun to start with, glorious, hedonistic
fun...
But when you went into politics -
It was all down-hill from there, for me
anyway. Of, course there were all your, 'secretaries'/
PARKER: Is that what this is all about!
Darling I realise I haven't been around as much
as I should which is why I give you
free reign with a generous allowance
The secretaries - I'm a hot-blooded
man, I have needs I was working and schlepping
home,

Act I Scene 13

PARKER: (Cont'd) disturbing you at two or three in the morning
hardly seemed fair/

KATE: The affairs I could forgive Parker, but your
politics -
I know I'm hardly the one that should be
pointing the finger but this, Parker -
this I was even too low for you!

PARKER: What the deuce are you blathering on about?

KATE: Maybe the world that you live in is completely white - or that's the way you want to see it. Look around you Parker, the world is full of difference, it's teaming with other people Parker, who don't have money, who may not speak English as a first language, who haven't had the privileges that we've both had.

PARKER: So?

KATE: The Tower - how could you!

PARKER: Oh, for Christ sake! Not that, again. It's business you wouldn't understand, you're a woman!

KATE: I understand, I understand very well/

PARKER: It was shoddy workmanship and dodgy contractors just one of the many hazards of/

KATE: Which you hired, paid and contracted! People died Parker. You've gone off on this holier than thou crusade to cleanse this country - of what?

PARKER: Kate my sweet, just shut the fuck up and stay out of business and politics. Things you know nothing about. You're good at home making, organising - darling how you manage to create those dinner parties and keep warring factions away from one another - you have my undying admiration. I admit, I couldn't do it. You are my first lady, we're an unstoppable team!

Act I Scene 13

KATE: You're unstoppable.

PARKER: There you go!

Beat

KATE: This team member is pulling the emergency chord and disembarking from the train.

PARKER: Kate, you can't be serious?

KATE: -

PARKER: Why, because of a few meaningless affairs?

KATE: No.

PARKER: What then?!

KATE: It's you Parker, what you've become. What you stand for/

PARKER: Decency, freedom of speech, being responsible?

KATE: It's all about your privilege, holding onto it, demonizing anyone and anything that you don't understand. Even throwing, Reese, one of your own, under the bus. Deluding yourself, that life is better if everyone in the world is white and rich!

PARKER: That's unfair/

KATE: Unfair! How fair was it when you stood up in the house of parliament and claimed it was the residents of The Tower who were to blame for their own deaths? Because they were too stupid to get out of a burning building! How fair was it of you to excuse the actions of the white man responsible for the tube bombing, saying that he had obvious mental health issues?

KATE's voice gets louder.

Act I Scene 13

How fair was any of that? Freedom of speech?
You tried to gag the residents of The Tower
KATE: (Cont'd) from speaking out.
When you backed the idea of rehoming the
residents anywhere else but in the borough
they'd been born and brought up in? How fair
was that?
How fair was it of you, just now, to ask that
you be served by a white waiter?

KATE's voice is now very loud

How fair was that? There's a word for that
type of behaviour isn't there. Come on
Parker, you're always so keen to pick me up
on my use, or incorrect use of the English
language.

What would you call someone who lies. Who
cheats, who can't bear to be in the same
room as another person who's black or wears
a Hijab. What would you call someone like
that
Parker?

PARKER:

KATE: To my dying shame I stood by you and said
nothing. I watched you ridicule and destroy
good people, for no other reason than the
colour of their skin or the fact they were
poor. If that's the world you want to live in-
but you'll do it alone.

KATE gets up

Oh, FYI - there was no need to give me such a
generous allowance. Not that I'm complaining
far from it. I do have money of my own. But
you're so wrapped up in yourself, it didn't
occur to you to check. I put it to good use.
I invested every month. New tech, oil - yes -
some up and coming green tech. Sustainable

Act I Scene 13

food production. Whilst playing the stock-exchange for a while. Then moving the profits over so I could invest and partner with SME businesses. It's a fascinating world. But what do I know,

I'm just a woman. Now a very rich woman. The money is safe and completely out of your reach. My solicitor made doubly sure of that.

Have a wonderful life, Parker, while it lasts. As they say all good things come to an end. Siri end call.

Screen goes black

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Act I Scene 13

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ACT I SCENE 14

JAYA AND THERAPIST

JAYA recording a message for his therapist

JAYA

I was told, I have to keep a video diary. Part of my "rehabilitation"

Pause. He takes out a beanie cap from his pocket and places it on his head - looking straight into the camera on his smart phone he begins.

God is Great! God is Great! God is Great! God is Great! I bear witness that there is no god except the one God. I bear witness that there is no god except the One God. I bear witness that Muhammad is the messenger of God. I bear witness that Muhammad is the messenger of God. Hurry to the prayer. Hurry to the prayer. Hurry to salvation. Hurry to salvation. Prayer is better than sleep. Prayer is better than sleep. God is Great! God is Great! There is no god except the One God. We must always make time for God.

Do you know why, Allah Akbar, became the terrorists' call of choice, Leslie?

It is a call that strikes fear into the hearts of all non-believers.

I wasn't always a believer; did you know that?

I was once like you.

I was born, raised and educated in this country.

My parents are British.

You asked me, why did I do, what I did that night?

Why does anyone do anything? I ran towards my destiny. I slit someone's throat. First time I'd ever done anything like that -

I kissed you with my blades. Scything through the hypocrisy all around me.

Beat

The colonial chickens came home to roost. And we turned our backs. Abandoned our children, devastated their lands, plundered their resources, brought war and suffering down upon their heads!

Act I Scene 14

JAYA: (Cont'd)

I see how people like you treat those that you think are inferior, who look different and you disgust me.

The only rehabilitation I need is to see this world cleansed. We could be brothers and sisters, if only we could see beyond our own selfishness and self-importance.

The west has become a godless, shallow land full of false prophets and fake gods.

The only way to free this world from itself is to start again To cut out the cancer, to be reborn.

I ask Allah to give you a lawful and good and blissful life, full of imaan (faith) and taqwa (piety - God-fearing) and enriched with righteous posterity. All success is from Allah.

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ACT I SCENE 15
ROBYN FACETIMES MUM

ROBYN is face timing her mum, CATHY. ROBYN can only see an empty room

ROBYN: Mum, mum!

CATHY: (OS) Hello love how you settlin' in?

ROBYN: Yes, I'm good. (*giggles*) Mum, you need to turn the camera round.

CATHY: *Slightly flustered and frustrated*

How do I do that?

ROBYN: Touch the camera sign on the lower righthand side of the screen . . .

We hear a rustle and suddenly CATHY appears
There you go!

CATHY looks rather guilty

What's up mum. Thought we could have a girls' night in. We haven't done that in ages. In fact, we haven't seen each other for nearly three weeks. Is everything alri/

CATHY: You know how it is love. Just been busy with work/

ROBYN: You'd tell me if there was anything wrong wouldn't you mum?

CATHY: Course, love.

ROBYN: If you need money, or help, you know I'm here for you. You've only got to say mum and I'll/

CATHY: I appreciate everything you've done, love, really I do. But you have to stop

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Act I Scene 1

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CATHY: (Cont'd) worrying about me. You need to think about yourself now you're living away and at university/

ROBYN: Mum! Not again!

Pause

We talked about this. I'm literally forty-five mins away on a train/

CATHY: And we know how reliable they can be!

ROBYN: Mum - I don't want to argue. I called You because I said I would. And I miss you. We can have a long old chit-chat It'll be like I'm at home/

CATHY: Only you're not.

Silence

I'm fine. You know me, love. Old enough and ugly enough/

ROBYN: Don't say that! You're beautiful, you always will be.

CATHY: Awe, that's so sweet, love, but not true. I'm old, it'll happen to you too - Look do you mind if I pass on the girls' night in, it's just/

ROBYN: What you up to mum? You dating someone, eh?

CATHY: Don't be so stupid, it's nothing like that!

CATHY move her hand slightly and reveals part of a flyer it's for a Neo-Nazi group

ROBYN:

Horrificed

Mum! We talked about this!

Act I Scene 16

ROBYN: (Cont'd) I don't believe you!
I'm gone for five minutes and you - You
promised me mum. You said you'd put
all crap that behind you.

CATHY: Now love, I never said/

ROBYN: Maybe not in words, but you stood in front
of me nodding/

CATHY: If you'd just give it a chance, he's a
really good speaker

ROBYN: Hitler was a, "really good speaker."

CATHY: It's not the same, that's unfair to
compare that monster with Mr Parker/

ROBYN: It's Stephens. Jesus mum you can't even get the
scumbag's name right/

CATHY: Robyn!

ROBYN: Parker Stephens is a right-wing, neo-Nazi
politician. Who thinks anyone
who isn't white doesn't deserve to live,
especially not in this country.

CATHY: That's not true love, he just wants the
country to go back to its old core values.
Back to a time when/

ROBYN: We had rationing? Poor healthcare. Rackham
type landlords. Little to no job security.
Scant work benefits?

CATHY: It weren't all that bad, I survived/

ROBYN: "Survived"?!
Surviving, isn't living.
If things hadn't changed you and I
would have been out on the streets.
You'd never have married Dad and we would
never have become a family.

Act I Scene 1

Beat

You loved my father didn't you - ?

5

CATHY: With all my heart. We were going to elope. He was going to take me to see his home in Thailand. We'd bought the tickets. I'd never flown on an aero plane

ROBYN: You've never really talked about him. I mean Roshan's my dad/

CATHY: Yes, he was love, always will be.

Beat

ROBYN: So, did you make it to Thailand?

CATHY:

She shakes her head

The night before, he was working his usual shift at restaurant in town. A group of five drunk civil-servants came into the place. They were being obnoxious the usual thing. I don't think they knew where they were probably not just the drink. They took their shows off. He tried to tell them politely that they didn't need to do that.

Sighs

Things just went from bad to worse. They started harassing the other diners so he stepped in and that's when it all went pear-shaped. In the melee he ended up on the floor. Initially the police thought he'd be trampled on by mistake in the rush when people were trying to get out of the restaurant - I mean it wasn't very big and it was always packed After the inquiry

ROBYN: Wait! Shit mum there was an inquiry - it was that serious?

CATHY: Oh yes, it made all the broadsheets as well as the all those hideous tabloids. It came out that these civil servants had been on quite a night. It also came out that he'd been punched and stabbed and kicked several times in the head and

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Act I Scene 15

CATHY: (Cont'd) that's what killed him - they couldn't prove which of the group was responsible - they had money and he was just an exchange student from Thailand they tried to make out he was illegal but he/

ROBYN: You keep calling him, "he" why don't you use his name?

CATHY: Klahan he told me it meant warrior - everyone just used to call him K

CATHY breaks down

ROBYN: Oh look mum, I'm sorry I didn't mean to/

CATHY: It's alright love, it's just - well I haven't really thought about him -

Beat

Look love I really do have to start getting ready for/

ROBYN: Unfuckingbelievable!

CATHY: Robyn mind your effing language!

ROBYN: Mum! You've just told me the most horrific story about my biological dad and how he was probably murdered because he was a foreigner and you're still hell bent on going to a rally for neo Nazi right-wing pro-white racist/

CATHY: If your dad could hear you now,

ROBYN: Well he can't/

CATHY: He'd be so disappointed/

ROBYN: Don't think I'd be the only one who he'd be disappointed/

CATHY: Don't say that/

Act I Scene 15

ROBYN: Say what mum? What musn't I say?/

CATHY: Don't be like this Robyn/

ROBYN: That you've turned into a raging racist.
That you want to see people like me thrown
out of the country?!

CATHY: I'd never want that/

ROBYN: How can you even think about listening to
a man like Parker Stephens?!

CATHY: After your dad was lost, after he'd gone/

ROBYN: Didn't you always tell me that, that's
what your dad and my uncle fought against
during the second world war?
The fascists, the dictators, the ideals
that lead to the concentration camps?

CATHY: With your Roshan, your dad gone. You to
care for, me back to being a single
parent, no job in sight. I did what I
thought best. The men from the British
Democratic Party -/

ROBYN: What did you do mum? What
the ffff... did you do?

CATHY: What had to be done to get a roof over our
heads, money to tide us over, to get the
basics, furniture, clothes, food, money to
pay the bills.

ROBYN: Mum!
What did you do?

CATHY: -

ROBYN: Tell me! What the fuck did you do?!

Act I Scene 15

CATHY: It was his idea, your uncle Paul's least that's what you used to call him. He was nice to you. He always came to say hello. Always had a present for you, sweets, a couple of quid, a toy or a book. Books were your favourite/

ROBYN: Mum!

CATHY: He said your dad, Roshan, was a hero, a true hero. But that now he was gone and the government didn't care about us. Which was true - you have to understand love I had nothing. We had nothing and the British Democrats they helped us. They got our flatback, they paid for the renovations, they furnished it, they gave me a weekly wage for as long as I needed it. They helped with funeral costs. Without them love we would have had nothing/

ROBYN:

Pause

I thought you had a meeting to get to

CATHY: I knew in the end you'd understand. Once you get to know them - you'll see

ROBYN:

Act I Scene 15

Weak forced smile

Sure mum

CATHY: Awe love, I'm so proud of you. K would have been too and Roshan well he thought the world of you. You know the British Democrats were so kind about your dad. I was worried that they'd - you know, because of his religion, you know being a M ... hmm anyways they were so kind, said that he obviously wasn't that kind of Muslim, on account of him being white, you know

ROBYN: Yeah, course

CATHY: Oh I'm so glad we had this chat, love and I'm really sorry I have to dash but let's do this again why not tomorrow and have that girls night in

ROBYN: Sure, mum what time

CATHY: Say six-ish?

ROBYN: Right six it is

Act Scene 15

CATHY leans in picks up the flyer and ends the call
ROBYN is left shell-shocked staring at a blank phone
Fuck, fuck fuuuuuuuck!

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ACT I SCENE 1

6

JULES - I DON'T CARE

JULES

I don't care about his motives. I don't care what his politics were, what his religion was/is. Islamic fundamentalist or anti

Muslim they're as bad as each other. Everyone has problems. The world isn't an equal place. This isn't Shangri-La. But it's the only world we've got. People get shat on. Some more than others, it stinks. Compared to other countries, we're bloody lucky.

We can say what we like, we can have whatever political or religious views we want, we can go where we want to. We have healthcare that's free. We have a benefits system. They're not perfect, but then what system is?

I was terrified. Terrified to speak up. In my mind, I'd created these monsters. The stuff of nightmares. But now that I've seen them on TV, they're nothing of the sort. They're frightened people, like the rest of us. The difference is they wanted everyone else to suffer like they were, so they didn't have to face their own terrors. God knows, I know it isn't easy. It's hard to be poor, to different or worship another god. But violence isn't the answer. It's never been the answer. Countless futile wars and we still haven't learnt the lessons.

We have to unite, come together, not tear each other a part. We're all human beings. If we do mend our ways now, we'll never get things right.

We'll end up voting in governments that don't care. That don't work for us. Where the society is nothing more than a profit and loss balance sheet. But if we just stop and unclench our minds and our fists then perhaps we can start to mend, to make things better.

I have to hold on to that, otherwise what's it all been for?

ACT I SCENE 1

7

ROBYN REFLECTS

ROBYN sits alone staring out of a window she's surrounded by books, notes pieces of paper

ROBYN

It's all in the past, but the past is never
that far away -

It started after that car-crash of an evening. I'd just moved
out and I'd promised to call mum, I don't know why, but I
thought I'd face time her. Mum wasn't too clever with tech at
the best of times.

One thing somehow led to another.

For the first time she talked about my bio-dad, I learnt
things that I never knew -

I also learnt that very little has changed when it comes to
people, like me.

I'd never really been that curious about my "roots." Roshan
was my dad and mum, was mum and I was - well "white." Dad
was white - even though he became a Muslim and mum was. .

.

And there was me.

It was fine when I was small. I was cute. I was "pretty" had
a

"natural sun tan"

But as I got older, the sideways glances grew. The space
between me and strangers increased -

I started reading about more about Asia particularly
Southeast

Asia, the history, the culture, the language

Before I knew it I'd discovered that root, my root

I mean it didn't change who mum was or who dad was - but

It made sense of me, the why of me, the how

And why people looked at me the way they did Once you
open that door you can't ever shut it. Mum, she was

ACT I SCENE 1

from a different time and different way of thinking
and for one bright brief moment she'd had that
freedom -

But in the end she'd reverted, given into fear
You can't un-see, un-think, unlearn -

It doesn't stop the inequality; it doesn't prevent the racism
- but it does give it context a means to understand
A way of embracing all that we are or perhaps more to the
point what we are not for many

I think that was my weakness

I'd been focussed on trying to be like everyone else, trying
change to fit into someone else's skin, rather than growing
into my own

8

JIM'S CREDO

JIM he sits in front of a PC.

*He is slightly unkempt - we see that same "laundry pile" in
the background that we saw in the skype JIM had with GREER.*

JIM

He takes a deep breath in and settles himself

I'm Jim Garton. I'm a one of the few survivors from The
Tower.

I was a baby when it happened, so I don't remember, which is
probably a good thing.

The woman that took me in, Greer - my mum -

Hi mum, I love you. I don't say it and I know I should,
but the mushy stuff we've never really done it have we -
She brought me up well and the views I have are my own
You're gonna want to know why -

So rather than letting the media, which is biased and utterly
useless as far as I'm concerned then I'm leaving this for
everyone to see for themselves

Mum taught be that life was tough - hell I lost my entire
family in one night as result of someone else's greed. Yet
those responsible are still free to roam around and pray on
others

I have to bring attention to the injustices in this society.
Caused by the action of the privileged few. Who have all the
wealth and all the power.

ACT I SCENE 1

So today's the day - I'm sorry mum but it has to be done -
it's all too much - it can't go on the way that it is. I
don't want to see this country turning into the US in the
way they treat ethnic minorities

Marcus Garvey said

"The ends you serve that are selfish will take you no further
than yourself but the ends you serve that are for all, in
common, will take you into eternity."

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EPILOGUE

Each quote or short speech is done straight to camera
Black background mid close up to tight close up

JIM: Sitting at the table doesn't make you a diner.
 Malcolm X

GREER: Knowing is not enough, we must apply. Willing
 is not enough we must do.
 Bruce Lee

ROBYN: You may not control all the events that happen
 to you, but you can decide not to be reduced by
 them. History despite its wrenching pain,
 cannot be unlived, but if faced with courage,
 need not be lived again.
 Maya Angelou

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