



BLACK BEAR
—
PICTURES

REASON OF STATE

Written by

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Black Bear Pictures
Silvertown Films
Wildgaze Films

OVER BLACK

“One can save one’s soul, or one can maintain or serve a great and glorious state; but not always both at once.

-Isaiah Berlin, 1980”

APPLAUSE and LAUGHTER, riding the crest of a joke. An anticipatory silence falls. A VOICE, amplified, cuts through the last of the chuckles. Male. A hint of Scottish.

VOICE (V.O.)

Power to the people. A slogan we know all too well. But is it one we’ve embraced yet? You know, it wasn’t 100 years ago that Parliament tried to outlaw lesbianism. Seriously. 1921, we had a Lieutenant-Colonel advocating the death penalty as punishment! Sir Ernest Wild- no relation, obviously- insisted love between same sex partners “saps the fundamental institutions of society”. But seeing business-leaders, entrepreneurs, and innovators from the LGBT gathered here- it might have given Mr. Wild a heart-attack, but I think we’d all proudly call it progress.

Out of the darkness, TWEETS and FACEBOOK POSTS appear: “@Peter_Fisher LOVE U!!”, “@Peter_Fisher whats ure point”, “RT if you agree: prettier than the last one” etc.

VOICE (V.O.)

The bill failed because most MPs were scared they were publicising the practice. But the optimist in me believes some of them possessed the integrity to do the right thing. I hope they understood the merit in protecting our citizens’ right to privacy. Our citizens’ right to a choice, over how they live their lives.

(MORE)

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

I hope they believed, as I do, that individuality makes Britain great. That it's in our private discussions, considerations, the moments that belong to and define us that forge this nation. And it's on this that I have something to say.

NEWS COVERAGE of an unseen Prime Minister, his rise, his success, Whatsapp, Twitter, Facebook the CONVERSATION BUZZING-

VOICE (V.O.)

Look, it's been a good first year. Success-like crises- must come in clusters. But as we look to future issues to address, we cannot hide from the fact that businesses are still free to harvest and monetise the nuances of you. They have no obligation to tell you how or why they use your private information. Profit is put before the individual. And it is this that we need to curb.

The social media compiling INTENSIFIES. And, as it does, something curious happens: a STREAM OF NUMBERS begin to appear alongside each post. Some sort of program, analysing words, letters, spaces, names...

VOICE (V.O..)

Leading the private sector by example, the British government will ensure it is transparent and participatory when it comes to accessing your data. You, the British people, should not be shaped by the knowledge that government or corporations could be watching. We must protect our right to question, our right to challenge, our right to be different. We must safeguard the liberty of the individual. That belief lies at the heart of this government, our country and the future we want to build through discussion and debate, together.

DEAFENING applause erupts. More and more tweets and messages, PILING UP, each undergoing this STRANGE NUMERICAL ANALYSIS...

A new sound joins the cacophony - a TREADMILL. Growing louder, the sound of feet slapping soon drowns out all else-

2

INT. GYM. NIGHT

A SOLE RUNNER pounds the treadmill in a small, modern gym. Above a mirror, a TV plays BBC News.

BBC NEWS REPORTER (V.O.)

Prime Minister Peter Fisher there, speaking at the Stonewall Workplace Conference in London three days ago. During tomorrow's press briefing, Mr. Fisher will outline exactly how his so-called "privacy charter" will be implemented-

The Man ups the speed. Sweat drips through two-day stubble. An inner steel, glimpsed in his eyes, in the way he smiles at the added speed. Ragged breath he keeps going, runs faster, feet pound harder-

3

INT. SHOWER. GYM

Steam swirls as hot water slams the back of a well-kept torso. The Man scrubs himself clean with a bar of soap.

BBC NEWS REPORTER (V.O.)

He's expected to discuss the data harvesting practices of the previous administration, and explain how his government will balance transparency with keeping people safe.

He sniffs his arm-pit. Nope. Lathers it again.

4

INT. CHANGING ROOM. GYM

Shirt (no tie) and tailored suit now donned, the Man checks his appearance in a mirror. A TV in the corner drones on.

BBC NEWS REPORTER (V.O.)

But with conflict within his party, scepticism from the US, and the business community's hostile response, the opposition to Mr.

Fisher's plans appears staggering. I'm joined tonight by ex-MI6 chief Terrance Howard, a vocal challenger of the Prime Minister's plans. Terrance, in your opinion-

CLICK, as the Man turns the TV off. Back to the mirror. He picks at his teeth. Snags a morsel. Flicks it away.

5

INT. CORRIDOR. LATER

Whoever chose the carpet had the taste of a pub landlord.

The Man pads along by himself. Takes two phones from his inside jacket pocket. An iPhone and a Blackberry. Checks both. Repockets the BB.

On his iPhone, a picture of a SMILING WOMAN and a SCRUFFY-HAIRED TEENAGER as his background. Scrolling through contacts, the Man locates "Harvey". Presses call. It rings-

HARVEY (V.O.)

*Dad? I'm just with a friend at the moment.
Can I call you back?*

MAN

Harvey.

HARVEY (V.O.)

Oh, he says congratulations. Everyone here is still talking about it. Nicky would be thrilled.

MAN

Ha. His throats looks like an aubergine just now, but I'm sure it'd raise a smile.

HARVEY (V.O.)

OK, so maybe we can-

MAN

Harv, come on. We haven't heard from you in four days.

HARVEY (V.O.)

Can I, can we talk later? It's rude.

MAN

(checks watch)

Skype, ten o'clock. Okay? If you're not there, I'm sending the heavies.

HARVEY (V.O.)

I love you.

MAN

(beat)

Love you too. Talk later.

The Man disconnects. Thinks for a moment. Pockets his phone.

6

INT. LIVING ROOM/KITCHEN. APARTMENT. LATER

Keys jangle. Door opens, and the Man steps into a modest apartment. Mismatched furniture and that same awful carpet. It looks like it's been a temporary home for ages.

He heads straight to a cabinet. Extracts a peanut-butter jar.

Takes a spoon from the drying rack. Gets himself an enormous scoop. Just as he goes to eat-

-the front door opens. JULIET enters. A confidence in her poise, her appearance, one that speaks of a life of hard-won victories. A plastic bag in one hand, keys in the other, phone between shoulder and ear.

JULIET

-Chris, I don't care what he says,
fluctuating timber prices is just-
(kisses the Man)
-exactly, he's taking the piss. Ring around
to the other Governors, have Mitchell call
me first thing, let's get this sorted.
(hangs up; smiles)
Sorry. Builders, morons.

MAN

Still the school-roof?

JULIET

Ugh. *But I did snaffle leftovers from the Saudi thing. Pad Thai, a satay chicken, you'll like the Green, sets your mouth on fire-*

The Man approaches Juliet from behind. Kisses the back of her neck as she fishes out doggy bags. She smiles.

JULIET (CONT'D)

Oh, hello. Someone had a good day.
(turns; kisses him)
Did you speak to Harvey?

MAN

We're Skyping later. He'll talk.

JULIET

Hm. To you, maybe.

MAN

Doesn't want his mother to stop spoiling him.

JULIET

Do you want any of my Pad Thai, mister?

MAN

Do I want any of your left-over and cold
Pad Thai? Yes please.

She gives him a faux-angry glare. Hands him a box.

JULIET

You don't think he's in trouble?

The Man takes a huge mouthful. Shrugs, then-

MAN

Probably just killed someone. Don't worry,
we've got a guy for that. God this is spicy.

JULIET

(reacts; then)

Oh, that reminds me. Episode later?

MAN

I've got a-

A KNOCK at the door.

JULIET

That girl's timing. How does she *always*
know where you are?

MAN

She's like a terrier. She can find anything.
I'm not 100% but I *think* she might be
James Bond.

CARO (O.S.)

Sir...

MAN

Just a sec, Caro.

JULIET

I'll finish this, then run a bath. If you're not back, I'm 100% starting without you. Oh, and do another button up. You're not Elvis.

He shows her his teeth. She nods- all good.

MAN

Still love me?

JULIET

You're becoming soppy in your middle-age. So, I haven't decided yet. Let me know about Harvey. And do that bloody button up.

Smiling, the Man puts on a little swagger as he leaves.

7

INT. CORRIDOR

Standing outside, flicking through an iPad stands CARO. Bookish, pretty and given how her eyes and fingers dance across that screen, fiercely efficient.

She looks up as the Man exits.

CARO

Evening, Prime Minister.

And there it is- this is the PRIME MINISTER OF THE UNITED KINGDOM, and we are currently INSIDE NO. 10 DOWNING STREET.

PRIME MINISTER

Caro. Alrighty. Gimme your worst.

They set off at a brisk walk.

INT. SPACIOUS CORRIDOR

Civil servants duck in and out of offices. Nods and “Evenings” to, and returned by, the PM. Famous satirical cartoons line the wall: du Maurier, Low, Cummings.

CARO

Tonight, Eve, Tarquin, Oz and Lizzie 20:30-22:00 on recapping strategy for the press-conference tomorrow. Robin Shaw may be late, but will be there to run over any last minute logistics. After, Pedro and Lizzie were going to go over box notes-

PRIME MINISTER

Move Pedro to the morning. He and Lizzy have been at each others’ throats since the fruit situation.

CARO

Fruit situation?

PRIME MINISTER

You’d have thought two fully-grown, rational humans could share... Let’s not get into it. Life’s too short.

CARO

I did say “were”. I’d heard there were problems. Pedro’s in for 06.45.

PRIME MINISTER

Am I allowed to give you a pay rise?

CARO

No. Trust me, I checked. PMQs prep to finish the day. Tomorrow, the press arrive at 8:00am in the State-

PRIME MINISTER

No, out front. Let’s keep it spicy.

CARO

Sure. Sarika still hasn't confirmed.

PRIME MINISTER

Oh, she's still apoplectic. Is that the word?

CARO

It is a word. Is it still the immigration thing?

PRIME MINISTER

That is a thing. But knowing Sarika, I doubt it's *the* thing.

At the end of the corridor, they turn onto-

9

INT. GREAT STAIRWELL

Descending, the PM and Caro pass the framed photos of Prime Ministers past. Almost without realising, the PM taps a space near the top, where his picture will one day go.

PRIME MINISTER

I have a good one. Churchill. The grumpy portrait here. Why?

CARO

Something to do with the French?

PRIME MINISTER

The photographer- I forget his name, but I think he *was* a Frenchman, very good- wanted to capture iconic Churchill. So he gives Churchill one of his favourite cigars. Lights it. And, as he goes to puff... the guy whips it from the Bulldog's lips and SNAP! Hence: grumpy Churchill.

At the bottom, they turn onto-

10

INT. OUTER OFFICE CORRIDOR

PRIME MINISTER

You can tell that story on your date
tonight, if you like.

CARO

(beat; shoots him a look)

Who told you?

PRIME MINISTER

We took the short-cut today, so you're in
a hurry. You rarely wear make-up, but I
think I see mascara? *And*, despite your
usual inquisitive self you weren't
interested in hearing more about *either*
Churchill *or* the dreaded fruit situation.

CARO

(beat)

It might not be a date. It's drinks. And
dinner. With a friend.

They've arrived at their destination - the PM's Office.

PRIME MINISTER

Make sure you turn your phone off for
once. And do you want me to send Karl? In
case this chap gets fresh?

CARO

All respect sir, don't say fresh. And the
chap in question is the perfect gentleman.

PRIME MINISTER

OK. Are you sure about Karl though? *He* is
an *excellent* marksman. And it's a very
simple system.

CARO

Have a good night, sir.

12.

She turns, smiling, and walks away.

PRIME MINISTER

Right hand wave for lethal, left hand for non-lethal. Or, actually, it might be the other way around. Maybe check that with Karl?

She gives him the thumbs up with her left hand. PM smiles.

11

INT. ANTI-CHAMBER. PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE

A spacious office dotted with desks. SANJI, a clerk, packs for the night. Above the PM's office door, a pink LED light, straight from "Miami Vice", flickers. Reads: BUSY WORKIN.

The PM enters and waves to Sanji. Notices the light.

PRIME MINISTER

Light's still broken.

SANJI

Shall we fix that or the NHS first?

PRIME MINISTER

Decisions, decisions.

12

INT. PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE

Staring at a row of AUTOBIOGRAPHIES, positioned on an old bookshelf by an wide desk, stands Press Secretary EVE HENTLEY. Warm and boisterous, nothing makes Eve smile like the Prime Minister. Turns as the door opens-

EVE HENTLEY

The best news you can think of?

PRIME MINISTER

Hibs in the final?

She raises her hand for a high-five- PM takes it with a SLAP!

EVE HENTLEY

Telegraph, Indie *and* the Guardian are running editorials on privacy. What it means, why it's important.

PRIME MINISTER

Mail didn't go for it?

EVE HENTLEY

They're still running that Terrance Glover quote. Fuck him. Fuck them. *Twitter* still likes you.

PRIME MINISTER

I stand by wishing Twitter nothing but death in a searing inferno.

EVE HENTLEY

I've got the babysitter till 10:30, in case you need me to stay later.

PRIME MINISTER

Oh, thanks. I promised Juliet I'd hurry back. Shouldn't be a late one.

A slight tension, just for a heartbeat. The PM ploughs on-

PRIME MINISTER (CONT'D)

Babysitter? Where's James?

EVE HENTLEY

Oh. He spends as little time with Merryn as he can. Too busy with little miss- ugh, sorry. Sorry.

PRIME MINISTER

Hey. You alright?

EVE HENTLEY

Yeah. Yeah, fine.

(points to bookshelf)

How's "Progress"? As a title.

PRIME MINISTER

Ha. Still got four years to cock it all up,
right?

Chuckling, the PM wanders over to his bookcase. Doesn't see the look Eve gives him- one that speaks of a moment passed.

EVE HENTLEY

It'll still be carnage tomorrow. Toynbee, Chapman and Chris Hope are all sending minions. You've done the briefs, the speech?

PRIME MINISTER

Start on con-glops and techs who've already adopted more transparency, profits unaffected, usership increases, move onto tax incentives- I want to mug up on numbers, so make sure Freddy's got the stats GCHQ prepped for us. Oh, and Eve-

Just then, Eve's phone begins buzzing. She takes it out, going to turn it off- when she sees who's calling.

PRIME MINISTER (CONT'D)

Everything alright?

EVE HENTLEY

Paul Shinn, from the Guardian.

(off his look)

My old boss?

PRIME MINISTER

Course. Still on Twitter liking me.

EVE HENTLEY

He just doesn't usually call me unless...
d'you mind?

The PM nods his head for Eve to answer. He checks his watch. 20:23. Turns to the autobiographies. Smiles at the names, the history. Blair, McDonald, Churchill, Disraeli.

13

INT. GUARDIAN OFFICES. NIGHT

Sat at his desk, bald and bespectacled, PAUL SHINN leans back in his chair, staring at a computer screen.

PAUL SHINN

It doesn't read like spam, Eve. And if it's not, if Fisher's been selling magic beans, then you know exactly how this goes. Fuck, I'll chase it to the ends of the Earth.

A short email, open on his desk. The subject reads: CORTEX.

14

INT. PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE. SAME

She hangs up. Hesitates a moment, staring at her phone. The PM goes to ask her a question-

EVE HENTLEY

Have you heard of "CORTEX"?

PRIME MINISTER

Not outside of a brain context.

EVE HENTLEY

Paul's- he thinks you're... Lying.

PRIME MINISTER

What? What d'you mean, lying to who?

EVE HENTLEY
 To everyone. I- I think we need to press
 pause on the briefing.

15 INT. OUTER OFFICE. LATER

The languid form of ROBIN SHAW arrives. As Cabinet Secretary, the highest-ranking civil servant, Robin hides a degree of self-loathing behind privilege, prestige and tradition.

Several MINISTERS, including Treasury Secretary TARQUIN, lean against desks, muttering. As Shaw goes to enter-

TARQUIN
 Robin, hi- not to be a pushy knob, but what
 the hell's taking so long?

Robin ignores him, and heads straight into-

16 INT. PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE

On the phone, the PM nods. Turns at the sound of the door opening, acknowledging Robin. Eve's on a call too.

PRIME MINISTER
 No Nicky, I understand, of course. Rest up,
 I'll keep you in the loop.

He hangs up. Turns to Eve, who's call has just ended too.

PRIME MINISTER (CONT'D)
 They think it *is* glandular. So, we deal with
 this sans-Chief of Staff.

EVE HENTLEY
 Biz, FCO and Ethan at the MoD, nobody's
 heard of it.

PRIME MINISTER

Robin, thanks for coming. The others have agreed to wait.

ROBIN SHAW

Not a bother old thing, not at all. Only missing Das Lied von der Erde by the Rotterdam Philharmonics. Though there is a tenor in their ranks who is just... ah! Very, very cool. Depending on what all the fuss is about, maybe I'll catch the second half.

EVE HENTLEY

Oh please, don't let a possible crisis stop you.

ROBIN SHAW

You know, you could come Eve? Never too late for one to acquire a little culture.

EVE HENTLEY

Oh, fuck off Robin.

PRIME MINISTER

Oi! Not now. Robin: have you heard of something called "CORTEX"? The Guardian seem to think I'm planning world domination with it. They've been promised a scoop, and given the press conference tomorrow, they're cackling with glee. We've called a couple of ours, nobody's heard of it.

ROBIN SHAW

(considers; then)

I'm afraid I know very few specifics. I believe it *is* a cyber-security initiative, but if so it'll be Strap 2 ECI. Which means only Jonathan Bull himself will be able to advise.

PRIME MINISTER

Do you have his direct line?

Shaw nods. Pulls out his phone and searches through it.

EVE HENTLEY
But what about your opera?

But Shaw doesn't rise to it. Flicks through his phone with a hint of agitation. Off Eve and the PM sharing a look.

17 **INT. HAMMERSMITH FLY-OVER. NIGHT**

A black JAGUAR XJ cuts through the night. Two more follow.

18 **INT. JAGUAR XJ/PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE**

One hand outside of the window, feeling the air slipping between his fingers, sits JONATHAN BULL. His suit hangs from him, and his demeanour and look is one of someone who has been deprived of sleep, sunlight or peace for some time now.

Two others perch quietly within the car. One is Bull's ASSISTANT. Bespectacled, with long, dark hair, she looks meek and quiet as she taps away at a laptop.

The other is an ANALYST (SIMON). A short man with a mop of unkempt hair. Extremely awkward. Also on a laptop.

Simon SHIVERS. Bull sees this. Closes the window.

The Assistant notices. Shifts her weight. Says nothing.

Just then, Bull's phone begins to ring. He answers.

JONATHAN BULL
Ah, Prime Minister. Good evening.

PRIME MINISTER
Jonathan. You're driving?

JONATHAN BULL

We're on our way. We'll operate out of COBRA this evening.

PRIME MINISTER

You know about the Paul Shinn email?

JONATHAN BULL

We have our contacts in the press too. Try not to worry. He's a journalist. If he actually had a story, he wouldn't have called.

PRIME MINISTER

If you're heading here- there must be something to this?

JONATHAN BULL

Though it's highly unlikely, if Cheltenham *has* been compromised, it's prudent that we take no risks.

PRIME MINISTER

And your plan?

JONATHAN BULL

We'll trace the email, find out who's messing around. We've had false alarms before remember. It's likely a frustrated party trying to distract from tomorrow.

PRIME MINISTER

OK. I'll meet you down in COBRA.

JONATHAN BULL

No need, at present. We'll make sure someone from ISC arrives, and I will personally contact you the moment anything worrying comes up.

PRIME MINISTER

Thanks, Jonathan. Grateful, as ever.

JONATHAN BULL
Never a problem. Try not to worry.

Bull hangs up. Doesn't look like he's taking his own advice.

19

INT. PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE

ROBIN SHAW
Shall I call the others in now sir?

The PM hangs up his Blackberry. Checks his iPhone. A text from Harvey:
“Can you talk now?”

PRIME MINISTER
Uh, no. Have them here for 6:00am. Key
figures on flip-cards, plus any info I'm
missing. Thank you, Robin.

ROBIN SHAW
Prime Minister.

EVE HENTLEY
Do you want me to stay?

A PING. A second message from Harvey: “Dad?”.

PRIME MINISTER
No, no. You know what I'm like on no sleep.
Besides. I remember how extortionate
babysitters can be.

EVE HENTLEY
It's how much of your food they eat which
rattles me. Keep me posted?

With a nod, the PM dismisses her. She leaves the office. GENERAL GRUMBLING of Ministers outside being dismissed.

Alone, the PM clocks his reflection in a mirror, suspended above a white fireplace. He looks alert. Together.

Moving to his desk, the PM opens his laptop. A few taps and clicks later, Skype is up. He calls Harvey. After a moment-

PRIME MINISTER
Harvey? You there?

Harvey's video flickers on. A scruffy but handsome young man with an athletic build. He looks exhausted.

PRIME MINISTER (CONT'D)
Harv, I don't have a lot of time. What's going on?

HARVEY
I need your help, Dad.

PRIME MINISTER
I'm here, son. Talk to me.

HARVEY
OK. OK, fuck, OK. About a week ago, I was out with Limi and O'Hara. We're in Bridge, a club here, and things got messy. I'm drunk, but not *that* drunk and- and I meet a guy. We go back to mine. It's, you know- it was just fun. Sorry, if this is too much, uh...

PRIME MINISTER
Harv, come on. It's me. It's OK.

HARVEY
But then I never heard from him. It seemed weird, he was so... But it was Limi, who was here earlier. He heard from a mate that the guy- that he went to the Dean recently. That he's, uh- he's- fuck, Dad.

PRIME MINISTER
Listen pal, I'm here, whatever it is, I'm here. It'll be OK.

HARVEY

He's saying I- I forced myself. On him.
That I... yeah.

Silence. For a moment, the PM's totally speechless.

PRIME MINISTER

Jesus. Christ, Jesus, Harvey. Well, who is this guy, why would he... You know what I have to ask.

HARVEY

Fuck Dad, are you serious?

PRIME MINISTER

If you were drunk, could you maybe-

HARVEY

He said yes, he wanted me, there wasn't even a hint of a problem, I know that, but what I don't know-

PRIME MINISTER

You're certain, you're 100% sure?

HARVEY

I didn't do it Dad, I swear. But I don't know if he- I *don't* know if he *has* spoken to the Dean, Dad. That's what Limi heard but we don't *know*. Maybe if I try and find him, talk to him, and you talk to Nigel-

PRIME MINISTER

Harvey, no. Best case scenario, you scare the boy. Worst, he thinks your manipulating or pressuring him.

HARVEY

So I should sit and do nothing?!

PRIME MINISTER

You can't try and control how he behaves,
son. If he really thinks-

HARVEY

My friends, Dad, my whole life- if this gets out- I'm losing my fucking mind. Are you seriously saying you'd sit and do nothing??

The Prime Minister struggles to find what to say.

HARVEY (CONT'D)

Please, Dad. I'm begging you. Just tell me what we should do.

PRIME MINISTER

OK. Look, look. We need to do the right thing here. I can't do anything that will influence his behaviour. That's- it's not how we do things.

(beat)

But- here's what we can do. I will call the Dean, and depending on what he says, we can chose the *appropriate* next steps.

Alright?

HARVEY

Dad, thank you. Thank you.

PRIME MINISTER

It will be OK. Whatever happens. Keep your phone on. And don't speak to anyone until we know what's what.

HARVEY

Bye Dad.

The PM disconnects. Slumps in his chair. Just sits a moment. Suddenly looks very small behind his enormous desk. Takes out his phone. Makes a call.

24.

20

INT. BATHROOM. APARTMENT

A bath runs. Juliet balances on the rim of the tub, using her foot to check the temperature of the water as she reads through a huge stack of paperwork.

ON HER DESK, IN THE OTHER ROOM- her phone, in amongst half-eaten Thai, BUZZES.

21

EXT. NUMBER 10 DRIVEWAY. NIGHT

The three black Jags wait as a spiked road barrier lowers. Police, armed with semi-automatic rifles, patrol nearby.

22

INT. NUMBER 10 ENTRANCE. MOMENTS LATER

A POLICEMAN hauls the door open, spilling moonlight onto the marble black-and-white chequered floor. In scuttles a small group of Analysts, CERTs (Computer Emergency Response Team) and a few System Admins.

POLICEMAN

All phones on the side, all phones.

They shuffle over and obediently switch off and deposit their phones, except for Bull, who enters texting.

POLICEMAN (CONT'D)

Excuse me sir, all phones-

Bull turns. Stares. The Policeman backs down.

Bull silently leads his group along a corridor, towards the Cabinet Office [accessible from within Number 10]. As he goes, he places the hand on the shoulder of a chubby, curly-haired guy we'll know as SUSLO. Whispers in his ear.

In response, Suslo checks a tablet device. Begins typing.

25.

23

EXT. GUARDIAN OFFICES. KINGS CROSS. NIGHT

The iconic waved-glass cloaks the remaining journalists harboured inside the brightly-lit office.

24

INT. GUARDIAN OFFICES. NIGHT

Returning to his desk with a mug of tea, Paul Shinn settles down. Clicks his computer back on. His internet browser has the wikipedia (cerebral) Cortex page up. There's a headline (but no article) entitled: IS PETER FISHER A TRAITOR?

He clicks onto his Outlook Express. A new email, with the heading "CORTEX". Rushing to put his tea down, Shinn spills it- CURSES. As he mops up the mess- the email DISAPPEARS.

Looking up, he notices. Frowns. Clicks the refresh button on his mailbox. No new message. Growing agitated, he ignores the spillage dripping onto him. He checks his trash. Nothing.

25

INT. APARTMENT ENTRANCE. LATER

Walking fast, the PM taps the wall as he goes, thinking.

BZZZZ! BZZZZ! He stops. Pulls out his Blackberry. Answers.

PRIME MINISTER
Eve?

EVE HENTLEY (V.O.)
*Listen, I was about to jump on the
Bakerloo, but Paul called again. Said he
received another email about CORTEX that-
well, he thinks it was deleted. By someone.*

PRIME MINISTER
He doesn't think we did it.

EVE HENTLEY (V.O.)

Well. He, uh. He's a paranoid old sod at the best of times.

PRIME MINISTER

Can you give me a few minutes?

EVE HENTLEY

I can, it's just- I'm worried about tomorrow. Paul will cause trouble if he thinks it's warranted. We might not have much time.

The Prime Minister glances at the apartment door. Then back the way he's just come. Considers.

PRIME MINISTER

How long can you get that babysitter to stay for?

26

INT. SMALL STAIRCASE. MOMENTS LATER

Moving quickly down a rickety, cramped staircase, the PM has his Blackberry pressed to one ear.

PRIME MINISTER

Switch, hi. Have Dr. Nigel Harman at Corpus, Oxford give me a call. Private, so no ears on- but do record it, as per. Thanks.

Hangs up as he exits the stairs.

27

INT. THATCHER'S OFFICE. LATER

Mismatched armchairs, high ceilings and a towering portrait of Margaret Thatcher do little to make the room welcoming. The PM paces, occasionally glancing at the white Horse Guard building nearby. Turns, as a door clicks open.

EVE HENTLEY

Why does it *always* smell of cat food in here? Don't say it doesn't.

PRIME MINISTER

I think we should get Paul Shinn in. I'll sit down with him, set the record straight. And I want you to reach out to trusted ministers in relevant departments. Let's confirm our lot's involvement in all this.

EVE HENTLEY

I'll try. What do we say to Paul?

PRIME MINISTER

We don't comment on specific defence policy, but what info we can give him, without undermining national security, we will. We're clarifying our link with authorising specific GCHQ programs, and how it'll fit within our transparency framework.

EVE HENTLEY

Shouldn't you check with Bull?

PRIME MINISTER

Where do you think I'm going next.

EVE HENTLEY

And you trust him?

PRIME MINISTER

Anyone who'd helped as much as Jonathan has deserves all our trust. He'll be straight with us.

EVE HENTLEY

One last thing. The babysitter said she'll sit tight for an hour or so.
Biology A-level tomorrow, she says.
Cheeky thing asked for double.

PRIME MINISTER

OK. We'll nip this in the bud then call it a night. And don't worry, I'll cover the cost.

EVE HENTLEY

That's not what I-

PRIME MINISTER

You're doing me a favour. Besides, if she knows the PM's paying the bill, maybe she'll give a discount.

EVE HENTLEY

Or she's a Tory and she asks for triple. But thank you.

PRIME MINISTER

(goes to leave; then)

Oh, there's something- but actually, let me speak to Juliet first.

EVE HENTLEY

Of course. Whatever you need.

He nods in thanks. Leaves. She watches him go.

28

INT. OUTSIDE STATE DINING ROOM. MOMENTS LATER

Walking briskly, the PM passes a shabby, 1970s kitchen cabinet, the "Butler corner". Nods to a group of MINISTERS shuffling out of the State Dining Room, but doesn't slow.

29

INT. DOOR CONNECTING NUMBER 10 AND CABINET OFFICE. LATER

Approaching an armoured door, the PM thanks a POLICE OFFICER who opens it. Passes through, then hurries down some stairs.

30

INT. OUTSIDE COBRA. MOMENTS LATER

An ARMED GUARD stands outside, guarding a small airlock door. The Prime Minister approaches.

Steps into it. The door CHURNS, the translucent tube enveloping the PM, closing behind him as he enters-

31

INT. COBRA

The contrast between here and No. 10 is stark. A 72" screen dominates one wall. A broad table in the centre, at which all of Bull's staff are sat. Robin Shaw perches nearby, watching.

Bull stands at the head of the table. A world map displayed on the screen shows a number of YELLOW LINES crisscrossing the globe. Most pass through Britain and the United States. As the PM enters, the room FREEZES. The Analyst from Bull's car, Simon, looks up briefly, but returns to his computer.

PRIME MINISTER

Christ. Didn't realise we'd have such a full-house.

A confused silence. A tension. Why is he here?

PRIME MINISTER (CONT'D)

Jonathan. A little Q&A?

JONATHAN BULL

Don't tell me. Political risk for you and yours re: CORTEX. Right?

PRIME MINISTER

Have I become that see-through?

JONATHAN BULL

They're just the questions I'd ask. In terms of your party's exposure, don't worry. The problem's ours.

PRIME MINISTER

And the press? Surely it's right we get ahead of this. We should be honest, undermine the leak.

JONATHAN BULL

We can't talk to the press about matters of national security.

PRIME MINISTER

So we give a truncated explanation of what it does, why we have it. If we're clear, we can control this.

JONATHAN BULL

All due respect Prime Minister, CORTEX is a rather complex program.

PRIME MINISTER

Try me. If I have more details, I won't be fumbling in the dark.

JONATHAN BULL

(beat)

It's a cyber-security initiative; a deep-learning network comprised mainly of stacked RBMs, DNNs and Convolutional Deep Neural Networks which facilitate what's known as "computer vision" and ASR.

Overweight, curly-haired Suslo SNORTS at this. Several others smirk. Bull looks at the PM- apologetic for their behaviour.

JONATHAN BULL (CONT'D)

Sorry. But, as I said, it's complex.

The PM considers the tension in the room. Glances at the map. All of the countries that are touched by those yellow lines.

PRIME MINISTER

Jonathan. Perhaps let's continue this conversation in private?

32

INT. OUTSIDE COBRA

Stepping out, the PM turns to Bull- who shakes his head. Not here. The PM considers. Makes his mind up. Leads the way.

33

INT. BEDROOM. NUMBER 10 APARTMENT. NIGHT

Juliet, in bed, a TV on with an episode of *Lost* waiting. She glances at a bedside clock. 23.35... She starts the episode.

34

INT. CABINET ROOM. LATER

CREAK as an old door opens. Light spills into the historic chamber. Corinthian columns prop one half of the room's off-white ceilings, from which ornate chandeliers hang.

The famous coffin-shaped table stands primed for tomorrow's meeting, with the Prime Minister's central chair the only one untucked. Lights flicker on as Bull and the PM enter.

Bull eyes the room. The PM frowns at Bull's expression.

JONATHAN BULL

It's the asymmetry of it all. The erratic design, the bits and bobs.

PRIME MINISTER

The history, for me. The greatest empire the world has ever known, built in this very room.

(to business)

Jonathan, look, I won't micromanage. If you say don't contact Shinn, that CORTEX is too sensitive to share, I take your steer. But I need you to be clear with me.

(MORE)

PRIME MINISTER (CONT'D)

What's going on, and is this going to affect tomorrow?

JONATHAN BULL

(ponders; then)

You once said you knew how long I'd be staying in Number 10 on any night, based on how many food-pots I brought with me. Remember?

PRIME MINISTER

The little portions of chicken and broccoli. Three for an all-nighter.

JONATHAN BULL

Irrespective of whether or not it was true, that's what you perceived.

PRIME MINISTER

And you're worried CORTEX will be misunderstood?

JONATHAN BULL

CORTEX is a young system. Flawed. I'm anxious that a public fuelled by our leak's speculation, and the confidential files we suspect were stolen, would see the system as a threat. Rather than an opportunity.

PRIME MINISTER

What does it do? In layman's terms.

JONATHAN BULL

In short, it's a tool for creating virtual profiles on people. We use it to access electronic devices- phones, webcams, laptops, microphones, overriding their API-

PRIME MINISTER

Easy on the API stuff.

JONATHAN BULL

We harvest data. Any online or offline observable data. Texts, chats, what news people read, websites, likes, dislikes. Anytime they're on CCTV. Anytime they spend money. CORTEX watches, constantly. It builds then updates these profiles. With it, we can observe and, hopefully, anticipate dangerous people's behaviour. We've been able to watch for a while- you'll remember Tempora, Windstop? CORTEX is the next step.

PRIME MINISTER

This all sounds... Christ, I'm not sure. It sounds invasive. Actually, it sounds like A.I.

JONATHAN BULL

To be very Phillip. K. Dick about it all. It's just algorithms and big data analysis. At its best, CORTEX will one day constantly keep security services one step ahead of enemies of the state.

PRIME MINISTER

I've got to ask Jonathan. Ethically- is it sound? I'm trusting you here.

JONATHAN BULL

It is clandestine, and it can be invasive. But I can categorically tell you it's a matter of perception. One might perceive CORTEX as just that- a spy tool. Or they'll see the life-saver it is.

PRIME MINISTER

And why is this the first I'm hearing of it?

JONATHAN BULL

Frankly, because it's existence is strictly need to know. Plus, that's all the information I can give you without getting a bit technical.

PRIME MINISTER

And you think the leak is from one of your people?

JONATHAN BULL

The encryption behind the emails sent to Shinn is good. But software like that can be bought on the deep web. It could be civil servants, MPs, analysts, anyone that has been near GCHQ's mainframes. Or perhaps it's a rogue state. Hackers. To anyone looking to undermine you, CORTEX misconceived is gold-dust. Whatever the case, the only place as safe as GCHQ is here. Hence, tonight.

PRIME MINISTER

(beat)

You said emails just then. Plural. I only told you about Paul Shinn receiving one CORTEX email.

The ensuing silence says enough. The PM absorbs this. Paces slowly. Stops. Leans against a bookcase beside the entrance.

PRIME MINISTER (CONT'D)

You know every Prime Minister leaves a couple of their favourite books behind for this bookcase?

JONATHAN BULL

Das Kapital. Lady Thatcher, ever the comedian.

PRIME MINISTER

Roald Dahl's "The Twits" is in there too.

I've always liked that.

(then)

People don't trust politicians. I think it's because we're not people. Not to them. We've surrendered humanity. We're liars and cheats who dodge questions and speak in sound-bites as we carve up the country for our chums. They forget we're not all Lannisters, that we're not all in it for the wrong reasons.

JONATHAN BULL

(beat)

Lannisters?

PRIME MINISTER

You've never seen Game of Thrones?

Bull shrugs- nope.

JONATHAN BULL

CORTEX's effectiveness relies on our enemies' ignorance. Intel leaks put lives at risk.

PRIME MINISTER

So what will you do when you find the guilty party?

JONATHAN BULL

We will take *appropriate* measures, and have relevant conversations.

PRIME MINISTER

I would like to be present, when those conversations happen.

JONATHAN BULL

I need you to trust me to tackle this, Prime Minister.

PRIME MINISTER

And I do. I do, believe me. But I have a responsibility to see this through. That's why people elected me. Besides. My house, my rules.

The PM smiles. Bull assesses him. Offers his hand.

JONATHAN BULL

Any ethically dubious questions, I will run by you. If it comes to it, I'll speak to Mr. Shinn myself. OK?

The Prime Minister shakes his hand. Nods.

JONATHAN BULL (CONT'D)

You know, the last time I was in this room, we decided to let go of Hong Kong. Time flies, doesn't it?

35

EXT. LONDON. NIGHT

Dangling in the ink-black sky, the moon and the stars are given a run for their money by the shimmering London lights.

36

INT. MARBLE CORRIDOR. NIGHT

Heels click against the polished floor as the PM paces through the building. It's getting quieter. Passing portraits loaned from the Royal Gallery the PM pauses by one. Slightly crooked. Nelson Shanks' HRH Princess Diana. He corrects the image. Stares a moment. Continues on his way.

37

INT. THATCHER'S OFFICE. LATER

On the phone, Eve STARTS as the Prime Minister comes in. She signals to the phone and he nods. Sits in one of the floral armchairs. Leans his head back and closes his eyes.

EVE HENTLEY
OK, thanks. I'll let him know.

She hangs up. Goes and sits opposite the Prime Minister.

PRIME MINISTER
After 331 years somebody might've found
a comfy armchair.

EVE HENTLEY
Bit springy, isn't it?

PRIME MINISTER
Jonathan's going to keep me in the loop. He
wants to hold off speaking to the press, but
will do personally if it's looking like
tomorrow's in jeopardy. So, we're safe. For
now.

EVE HENTLEY
You may want to hold that thought. Paul
won't answer my calls. Which is bad,
knowing him. I'm worried he's rallying the
troops.

The thought sits with the Prime Minister.

PRIME MINISTER
Look, I dread to think what the babysitter's
doing to your fridge. Can you keep going
from home?

EVE HENTLEY
Of course. Whatever you need.
(packs her bag; then)
On the phone, a second ago. It was Sarika. I
checked in with the Home and Foreign
Office. She called back.

PRIME MINISTER
And?

EVE HENTLEY

She could just be playing games.

PRIME MINISTER

She knows something? About CORTEX?

EVE HENTLEY

She said she had “concerning information”.

She wants you to call.

Just then, the PM's phone rings.

PRIME MINISTER

Bugger. I need to take this. Before you go,
can you get Sarika here?

EVE HENTLEY

She'll be more annoyed coming over.

PRIME MINISTER

If she wants to play, the last thing I'm going
to let her do is load the dice. Get her over,
we'll speak in person, and I'll see what she's
got.

With that, the PM leaves. Eve dumps her bag on the floor.

38

INT. APARTMENT. NUMBER 10. SAME

The show's come to an end. Juliet checks the time again. Picks up her phone. Makes a call.

JULIET

I'm off to bed. You'll have to catch up, or I
can fill you in. It was a Hurley episode
anyway, so.

(beat)

Hope everything's alright. Night.

She hangs up. More agitated than before.

39

INT. TOILETS. NUMBER 10/NIGEL'S STUDY

Doors open into a faded, but well-stocked bathroom. Ornate soap dispensers, a fake crystal chandelier. The PM closes the door. Checks he's alone. Leans on the sink. Takes the call.

PRIME MINISTER

Nigel? Can you hear me?

NIGEL is sat in a STUDY that looks eerily similar to rooms in Number 10. Cheeks ruddied from years of port, Nigel looks like he's looked clever and important for years. He's surrounded by sandstone walls. Feet are up on an ornate desk.

NIGEL

Peter. I need to be quick. The chocolate Ganache is in-bound.

PRIME MINISTER

Does the lady of the manor approve of a pudding like that?

NIGEL

Oh, Edith has long-since given up her war on my waistline. We men are governed but by our wives or our stomachs. Only one truly triumphs.

PRIME MINISTER

Listen Nigel. Do you know why we're speaking tonight?

NIGEL

What do you want to know?

PRIME MINISTER

Nothing more than what you'd tell any other concerned parent.

NIGEL

You know, we do have a certain modus vivendi here. I can bring the lad in, have him talk to you. We can be very discreet. You're not the first.

PRIME MINISTER

Absolutely not. Obviously, given everything, it's sensitive. But if someone truly thinks Harvey- we just need to let it play out like it would with any other-dispute.

NIGEL

I was just offering to help.

PRIME MINISTER

I know. Sorry, Nigel. Just the facts.

NIGEL

A student. Strange boy, came to me with a grievance regarding your son. Hazy on detail. Mainly upset. He asked several questions. About you.

PRIME MINISTER

OK, I don't need to know any more-

NIGEL

I suggested he consider the complaint, and, if he was sure, come back and speak to me before going to the police. Alright?

PRIME MINISTER

That's not what I asked.

NIGEL

Good men like you don't ask for help. But I reside within the ranks of the good men who help without being asked. You would do the same if the situation was reversed.

PRIME MINISTER

If he comes back to you- you tell him to go to the police. Alright? We will sort this out through the legal system, just like anyone else.

NIGEL

(beat)

Whatever you say, Prime Minister.

PRIME MINISTER

Enjoy the Ganache.

The PM disconnects. Exhales slowly. Makes another call.

PRIME MINISTER (CONT'D)

Juliet, it's me. Can you come down? We need to talk. No, I can't come up, we're in the middle of something serious. Look, just- Usual spot, OK?

The door opens. Robin Shaw. The Prime Minister hangs up.

PRIME MINISTER (CONT'D)

Robin. What're you doing here?

ROBIN SHAW

Following you, sir.

(off the PM's reaction)

Sorry chap. Too easy.

PRIME MINISTER

Ah-ha. Very good.

ROBIN SHAW

No, truth is, I quite like the faux-opulence in here. The silly relief work, the light. Something very grounding about it, I find. Anyway. Difficult phone call?

PRIME MINISTER

Oh. Sort of. Family stuff. Crises coming in groups, all that.

ROBIN SHAW

Well, if I can help in anyway.

PRIME MINISTER

Thanks.

Shaw approaches the urinal. Begins to urinate.

The PM goes to leave. Hesitates.

PRIME MINISTER (CONT'D)

Clement Attlee and Winston Churchill once peed together. Story goes, Churchill arrived at the urinal first, but when Attlee took his place beside the Prime Minister, Churchill moved away. A little hurt, Attlee asked why he switched urinal? To which Churchill replied: "Every time you see something big, you just want to nationalise it."

Shaw laughs. The PM chuckles himself.

ROBIN SHAW

I think I've heard that one before. Good though. Very good.

Finished, Shaw washes his hands too.

PRIME MINISTER

Robin- you're offer to help.

ROBIN SHAW

You're worried about what's going on in COBRA? I'll be there all night sir. Beady eye on look-out.

The PM pats him on the shoulder in thanks. Robin hesitates. Like he's weighing up a difficult decision.

ROBIN SHAW (CONT'D)

Actually, it might be worth- I overheard Jonathan, earlier. On the phone. He was having a chat with Terrance Glover, I think. What about, *je ne sais pas*. But it just- I don't know. Struck me as odd.

PRIME MINISTER

Thank you, Robin. I'll be in touch. And I'm sorry about the Philharmonics.

ROBIN SHAW

Oh God no. Queen, country, all that.

The PM smiles at Robin, who smiles straight back. The PM turns and leaves. The smile slips from Robin's face.

40 INT. OUTSIDE BATHROOM

Outside, the PM lingers. Shakes off a feeling. Heads off.

41 INT. THATCHER'S OFFICE

Outside, headlights from cars shimmer as they pass down Horse Guard Road. Refract through bomb-proof glass. Head pressed to the window, Eve continues a frustrated phone conversation.

EVE HENTLEY

Please Kally, just one more hour-

A gentle knock at the door. Eve turns.

EVE HENTLEY (CONT'D)

-I'm organising cover as we speak. Eat, relax, there's a bottle of Chateau Soleil- no, A-levels, got it, right. OK, thanks Kally, thank you.

Eve opens the door to find Juliet, standing there.

EVE HENTLEY (CONT'D)

Juliet. Hi.

JULIET

Hi Eve. Is he here?

EVE HENTLEY

No, he's- I don't know where he is.

JULIET

Do you mind if I wait?

Eve steps back. Juliet enters. Stares at the looming portrait of Thatcher. A slight tension in the room now.

EVE HENTLEY

How'd you know he'd be here?

JULIET

It's where he comes. When he can't sleep.
You're here so late?

EVE HENTLEY

Yeah. Duty calls.

A silence. Eve checks her phone.

JULIET

I heard about James. I'm sorry.

EVE HENTLEY

Oh. Don't be. Shit-bag, so.

JULIET

Did you keep the place by the, umm-

EVE HENTLEY

Bakerin' Bagels.

JULIET

That's it. Delicious, I remember. The place with the yellow door?

EVE HENTLEY

Yeah. No, I mean no. We sold it.

JULIET

Oh.

EVE HENTLEY

It's OK. New place is closer to here. Which is good.

For a moment, Juliet looks down from Thatcher. But before she says anything else- the TAP of shoes, inbound. A moment later-

PRIME MINISTER

Christ. You got here fast.

JULIET

Shall we...

EVE HENTLEY

If I could just- two seconds?

A brief beat. Juliet nods. Steps outside. PM turns to Eve.

PRIME MINISTER

Everything OK?

EVE HENTLEY

Yeah. Or, well. Sarika's on her way to the Terracotta room. But. I'm nervous. Not about her. I just heard from Justin Lamb, at the Express. We were at the Indie for a stint. He's spoken to Paul.

PRIME MINISTER

So this is what Neil Armstrong felt like. He still thinks I'm covering this all up?

EVE HENTLEY

All I know is Justin also received an email.
About CORTEX. Opened it, then his
computer froze.

PRIME MINISTER

(beat)

It could be a coincidence.

EVE HENTLEY

It could be.

PRIME MINISTER

Let me speak to Jonathan. I'm not having
tomorrow and our next years derailed by a
bunch of paranoid journos looking to cause
trouble.

(then)

I bumped into Robin. He said Terrance
Glover and Jonathan had been speaking.
Can you reach out to Glover? He's been
around longer than Bull and I combined, he
might have an idea on tackling this
delicately.

EVE HENTLEY

He'll want to talk about tomorrow.

PRIME MINISTER

He'll want to steam-roller tomorrow. But
that doesn't mean he won't talk.

EVE HENTLEY

Of course. I'll see what I can do.

PRIME MINISTER

OK. Wonderful. Thank you. Really.

With that, the PM heads out. Off Eve, watching him go. She returns to her phone.

42

INT. HALLWAY NEAR THATCHER'S STUDY. MOMENTS LATER

Juliet has her head in her hands, pacing back and forth.

The Prime Minister waits for her to say something. Checks his watch. After a moment she looks up at him.

JULIET

You've sent someone, presumably.

PRIME MINISTER

I'm already at the edge of what's acceptable. The next step is waiting.

JULIET

Excuse me?

PRIME MINISTER

We don't know who this boy is, what he thinks, or frankly what happened.

JULIET

So you've not done anything?

PRIME MINISTER

Nothing has been officially reported, there's no clarity on what happened.

JULIET

Jesus Christ, Peter. What happened is somebody's accusing our son of something he didn't do!

PRIME MINISTER

It's not that I don't believe Harvey. It's not. But these things are complicated. Who did what, it's- it's messy. The only thing I *know* is that the truth will come out, the guilty party ends up exposed-

JULIET

This is your *son*, stop talking about him like he's in the fucking abstract. Can you hear yourself?

PRIME MINISTER

I am trying to do the right thing!

A sharpness we've not heard him use before. It stops Juliet, temporarily. She glares.

JULIET

All I want to know is that you are doing *something* to help the boy I have spent 19 years raising.

PRIME MINISTER

We have spent 19 years raising, and I am, Juliet, I am. But it has to be right. It has to be *legal*.

JULIET

Have you even spoken to anyone here?

PRIME MINISTER

When the time comes, Eve and I will-

JULIET

I cannot believe you.

PRIME MINISTER

She is my press secretary, Juliet, who else should I talk to?

JULIET

Why do you think I wouldn't want it to be her, Peter? Why?

The PM goes to respond, then stops. A silence stretches.

PRIME MINISTER

He's my son. He's a target. But fraudsters, attention seekers, back down eventually because they *know* the system will find them out. So, we wait. What would you have me do?

JULIET

You do whatever you think is right. But I won't twiddle my thumbs while someone tries to harm my family.

Juliet begins to walk away before he can respond.

JULIET (CONT'D)

One day, we'll be outside these walls. You'll still be his father. I'll still be his mother. That's what matters, Peter.

With that, she continues on her way. The PM watches her go.

43

INT. COBRA. SAME

Back against a wall, laptop resting on his lap, Simon sits with headphones in, typing. On his screen, he appears to be working on a piece of encryption software: "encrypt=aes encryptkey=green". Moves too fast for us to follow.

Nearby, a member of the CERT team (MARC) whispers to another. Checks quickly that Bull isn't looking... THROWS a scrunched up piece of paper at Simon. Clips him on the nose. Nearby Suslo catches sight of this. Sniggers.

Simon looks up, affronted. The CERT guys have turned back to their computers, pretending to be completely oblivious.

He looks around the room. Nobody seems to have noticed.

Unscrunching the paper, Simon sees that it's blank. Folds it neatly, and puts it to one side. Returns to his laptop. We notice a TINY USB STICK in his laptop. Barely visible.

JONATHAN BULL
Updates people, updates.

SUSLO
(American accent)
We've run XKeyScore through China
Telecom and Unicom, but it's meant
burrowing through the Firewall. Whoever's
doin' this, they ain't afraid to pull the
stops. SHA-1, random IV and 262k
iterations with a random 128-bit AES-
Key...

MARC
We'll get there though, sir.

Bull turns to Simon, in the corner.

JONATHAN BULL
Simon?

Simon glances at Suslo, then Marc. Back at Bull.

SIMON
UK. Greater London. I've unpicked the SSL
and Countermail they used.

JONATHAN BULL
Thank you, Simon.

MARC
(quickly)
There's been a spike in the term "CORTEX".
Telecoms, mainly. I chased it up. It seems
they're calls coming in and out from inside
Number 10.

Bull ponders. As he does, his Assistant whispers something in his ear. He considers, then shakes his head slightly.

JONATHAN BULL
Robin. A quick word?

Staring at a blank wall, Shaw snaps out of it.

ROBIN SHAW

Of course.

He heads over to Bull. Simon watches him go.

44

INT. TERRACOTTA ROOM. LATER

Standing by himself in this wide room, the PM gazes around at the portraits of monarchs past that hang on egg-shell white walls. They all appear to be staring down at him.

A mahogany table, to one side. Teacups, overturned on their saucers sit beside fresh pads of paper. Absentmindedly, the PM walks to the table. Prods one of the teacups.

Picks it up. Balances it in the palm of his hand. It's a beautiful piece of china. Fragile. Floral design.

He moves it to his fingertips. Then, slowly, retracts his fingers one by one until the cup balances on just one finger.

Nearby, a door THUDS SHUT- the teacup DROPS from the PM's hand, TUMBLING TOWARDS THE FLOOR-

-the PM twists his foot, hitting it with his shoe. It bounces off. Gently tumbles to the floor. Still in one piece.

Instinctively, the PM lets out a laugh as he picks the cup up. Looks it over- not a scratch on it. Wipes it with his sleeve. Just as he goes to put it down-

SLAM! This time, inside the room. Home Secretary SARIKA WHITTLESTONE, glares at the PM. Anglo-Asian, Sarika's fierce temper often suggests she's just daring you to question her loyalty, her motives or her right to fight.

SARIKA

You have some bloody nerve.

PRIME MINISTER
Sarika, thanks for coming.

SARIKA
You didn't even have the balls to call
yourself.

PRIME MINISTER
Alright, alright.

SARIKA
Why didn't you back me?

PRIME MINISTER
That's not what I want to discuss.

SARIKA
Why didn't you back me?

PRIME MINISTER
Sarika, let's dial this down.

SARIKA
Why did you not back me?

PRIME MINISTER
It was complicated.

SARIKA
I think it was simple, actually. I have been
saying, for *months*, that immigration
numbers would come back to us. And
when I go on record, like we discussed,
saying 270,000 is unacceptable, that we
will bring the numbers down, you say
nothing-

PRIME MINISTER
I know what you said.

SARIKA

Then why didn't you fucking back me?

PRIME MINISTER

We have a duty, as one of the world's economic leaders, to offer asylum to those most vulnerable.

SARIKA

Oh please, I am not the mob. I'm not some squealing politico fan-girl pinging her knickers as you fumble about on stage-

PRIME MINISTER

Enough, I am your Prime Minister, you will *not* speak to me like this.

SARIKA

No, right now you are a man who made a choice on whether to deliver or to stand by and watch someone else get fucked.

PRIME MINISTER

This isn't a bar-room brawl Sarika, you will give me the damn respect-

SARIKA

I am here at *quarter past one* in the bloody morning, I am showing you-

PRIME MINISTER

-I and this office deserve, now are you going to calm down or do I need to put out a call for a new Home Secretary?

Sarika goes to retort- thinks better of it.

The silence lingers. She goes to one of the sofas. Sits.

SARIKA

And I thought you didn't like people shouting at each other. Must be a long night.

PRIME MINISTER

There is something I want to ask.

SARIKA

I want to hear you say it.

PRIME MINISTER

There is a delicate issue at hand. One I want your insights on.

(off Sarika's silence)

We didn't want an announcement on immigration to distract from the privacy policy stuff. Alright?

A flicker from Sarika. She shifts her weight.

SARIKA

You want to talk about "CORTEX".

The PM and Sarika maintain eye contact. Eventually the Prime Minister takes a seat on the couch opposite.

PRIME MINISTER

I know we've had our disagreements, public and private. But I want to know what the political angle is, and if we're connected to the risk.

SARIKA

And should I help, then what?

PRIME MINISTER

I'm asking, not negotiating.

SARIKA

Well I'm negotiating. So either come to the table or I'm off to bed.

PRIME MINISTER

(beat)

I would be prepared to issue a statement
broadly supporting yours.

SARIKA

Do you know how difficult it is, being an
Anglo-Asian politician who is *hard* on
immigration? The Daily Mail- the Daily-
fucking-Mail- had the nerve to call me a
“traitor”. To my party, and “my people”.
I’m not even sure they realise the
emotional head-fuck that unleashed.

PRIME MINISTER

Sarika, you’re in politics, you are the Daily
Mail’s kindling.

SARIKA

The damage is done. Support now would
be too little, too late.

PRIME MINISTER

You want something, though.

SARIKA

Doesn’t everybody.

PRIME MINISTER

Tell me.

SARIKA

Your endorsement. As your replacement,
when you step down.

PRIME MINISTER

I beg your pardon?

SARIKA

You'll have to, eventually. Either someone'll force you, the public will get bored or you'll tire yourself out. Whatever comes first.

PRIME MINISTER

We're *one year* in Sarika.

SARIKA

Oh don't worry, even if you stepped down tomorrow I'm sure there's a cushty book deal you could wangle. When it happens, it will not be Freddie- don't pretend you're not grooming him already- it will not be Freddie, it will not be Tarquin, it will be me.

PRIME MINISTER

This is highly premature.

SARIKA

I have information.

PRIME MINISTER

On CORTEX?

(off her look)

A conversation.

SARIKA

A serious conversation, outlining practical next steps?

PRIME MINISTER

A conversation.

Sarika considers. After a moment... holds out her hand. The Prime Minister shakes it.

PRIME MINISTER (CONT'D)

Was Freddie really that obvious?

SARIKA

Please. About three days into government, I had an unscheduled visit. An obnoxious American chap, from the NSA. He snuck in right after Krieger and Maurois had launched their drug paper on me, and asked me to sign off on some paperwork. All fairly routine, past two Home Secretaries had signed, as had Bull and Terrance. The Met Commissioner was 5 minutes away, straight after SO19 were in. You see where I'm going with this.

PRIME MINISTER

I'm not sure I do.

SARIKA

I had very little time to read an awful lot. Don't pretend it doesn't happen to you. Given the previous approval, and that we sign docs like that every damn hour, it's fair enough I assumed it was all cricket.

PRIME MINISTER

How is this information useful?

SARIKA

One of the documents I scanned- it had a line. I remember, it stuck out: "In the interest of national security, and in accordance with executive sign-off, GCHQ's CORTEX program will continue to be funded and developed to its fullest potential."

PRIME MINISTER

"Fullest potential"?

SARIKA

You asked for information. He took it away before the ink had dried.

PRIME MINISTER
You didn't ask for a copy?

SARIKA
I sign hundreds of documents a day. I
assume there's a copy somewhere.

PRIME MINISTER
That's- and you're saying that's all you've
got for me?

SARIKA
Of course it is. You know the game.

A pause. Slowly, the Prime Minister stands.

PRIME MINISTER
Alright, Sarika. I'll show you out.

45 INT. OFFICE HALLWAY/OFFICE. NUMBER 10. NIGHT

Prowling the corridor, Robin Shaw bobs his head awkwardly as a few
CLEANERS shuffle past.

Casting an eye around, he opens the door to an office-
-pokes his head in. Dark and empty. Shaw turns, and leaves.

46 INT. NUMBER 10 ENTRANCE. LATER

Reaching the door, nodding to the Policeman as he opens it for her,
Sarika turns to the Prime Minister.

SARIKA
I look forward to our chat.

PRIME MINISTER
I want the name and rank of the man who
had you sign off CORTEX.
(MORE)

PRIME MINISTER (CONT'D)

Further, you'll scour your contacts, your office. Find a copy, find a summary, whatever. No detail is too small regarding what you've signed on behalf of this government.

SARIKA

I'll try, but I make no promises.

PRIME MINISTER

Then I have a sneaking suspicion Caro may struggle to find a place in the diary this side of Christmas. A Prime Minister never signs something they haven't read. Consider that lesson one.

On that, the Prime Minister turns and leaves.

47

INT. BEDROOM. APARTMENT. LATER

Juliet is on her phone, pacing. It rings and it rings-

HARVEY (V.O.)

Mum?

JULIET

Finally, Harvey. There you are.

HARVEY (V.O.)

Mum, I- fuck. Fuck, what am I doing?

JULIET

Look, I spoke to your father-

HARVEY (V.O.)

Is he helping?

JULIET

You know Dad. He- he won't let anything happen to you. But it's difficult. He needs to be careful.

She hears a rustling noise, from Harvey's end.

JULIET (CONT'D)

Darling, where are you?

HARVEY (V.O.)

I can see his room. The light's on. He's in there, Mum.

JULIET

Harvey-

HARVEY (V.O.)

Fuck. Fuck, what is wrong with me? I've got mud on my feet. I'm lurking, Mum, literally lurking in a fucking bush, like Gollum or something, hoping he'll come out, so I can- so I can talk to him, I can ask him why, look him in the eye and ask him why he's doing this to me, to us.

JULIET

Harvey. Harvey, you need to calm down. Don't do anything stupid.

HARVEY (V.O.)

Do you believe me, Mum?

JULIET

Of course, darling.

HARVEY (V.O.)

And Dad?

JULIET

Without question.

HARVEY (V.O.)
Then why won't he help?

Off Juliet, weighing up how to respond.

48

INT. ATRIUM OUTSIDE THATCHER'S STUDY. MOMENTS LATER

From a high angle, looking down, the small figure of the Prime Minister, hurrying towards the study.

49

INT. THATCHER'S OFFICE

Inside, the PM finds the room completely silent.

Eve is nowhere to be seen. Taking out his phone, the Prime Minister slumps down in the uncomfortable armchair. He receives a text from Juliet: "Harvey's getting desperate."

He hesitates, considering his reply. Receives another:

"Please do something, Peter. Before things get worse. He wouldn't lie. Not to us."

The PM begins tapping out a reply-

"The moment something is actually reported, we will-"

-the door opens. The PM JUMPS. Eve enters.

EVE HENTLEY
 Are you OK?

PRIME MINISTER
 Oh. It's- it's Harvey. There's something
 looming.

EVE HENTLEY
 What is it?

PRIME MINISTER

Not now. I need to know it's real. And I
know what you'll want to do.

EVE HENTLEY

We could just talk hypotheticals?

PRIME MINISTER

You know how quickly they become
something more.

EVE HENTLEY

OK. I'm always here. If you need.

PRIME MINISTER

I know. I know. Thank you.

A slight tension lingers.

EVE HENTLEY

How was she?

PRIME MINISTER

Sarika? Oh. The NSA of all people have
sneaked a signature from her. I'm unclear
on the implications. I tried the FO to see if
Patrick had the same thing, but he's in
Helsinki on the EU reform and ATT thing.

A moment of quiet. Eve stands by the Prime Minister, taking in how exhausted he now looks. She reaches out to touch his arm. Stops herself. Sits opposite.

EVE HENTLEY

I've got Switch trying to get ahold of
Terrance. It's taking a while.

PRIME MINISTER

No surprises there.

EVE HENTLEY

This is all getting out of hand. Jenna, at the Metro. She called. Sniffing. She got a CORTEX message too. Both Alison Mayer and Lawrence Greyhouse, too.

PRIME MINISTER

You think he's been lying to me?

EVE HENTLEY

I don't know. It's nearly 2am. I don't know much right now.

A silence. Sounded more bitter than it was meant.

EVE HENTLEY (CONT'D)

Sorry.

PRIME MINISTER

You can shout about doing the right thing till you're blue in the face. Doesn't mean anyone ever listens.

EVE HENTLEY

Formula for failure: please everyone

PRIME MINISTER

I'll speak to Jonathan. Call me when you're through to Terrance.

EVE HENTLEY

I'll do my best.

The PM nods in thanks. Leaves. Doesn't close the door.

Robin Shaw, checking an office, turns at the sound of-

PRIME MINISTER (O.S.)

Robin. Is Jonathan still in COBRA?

ROBIN SHAW
Should be. Everything alright?

PRIME MINISTER
Good question.

The Prime Minister continues towards COBRA.

We stay on Robin a moment, watching. He hears the gentle THUD of a door closing not far off. Turns to the sound.

51 **INT. DOOR CONNECTING NUMBER 10 AND CABINET OFFICE. LATER**

Once more, the PM passes through the armoured door. The Officer nods to the PM. Distracted, he doesn't nod back.

52 **INT. OUTSIDE COBRA. MOMENTS LATER**

The Prime Minister passes through the airlock doors-

53 **INT. COBRA**

-to find the room ABUZZ with activity. The sense that the noose is tightening. To one side, Bull is being shown something on Suslo's state-of-the-art laptop.

Approaching, the Prime Minister spots that, on the screen appear to be SEVERAL MINIATURE DESKTOPS. Suslo minimises the moment he sees the PM approaches.

The DESKTOP IMAGE is an amateur picture of a BEAUTIFUL WOMAN, lying on the middle of a pristine beach. She's smiling.

PRIME MINISTER
Jonathan. A word?

Jonathan turns to face the Prime Minister. Straightens.

JONATHAN BULL

Of course. If you wouldn't mind letting me
finish here first...

He indicates to Suslo, who bobs his head.

SUSLO

Mr. Prime Minister.

PRIME MINISTER

That depends quite what you're-

He turns to Suslo. Frowns.

PRIME MINISTER (CONT'D)

You said Mr. Prime Minister. What's your
name?

Suslo glances at Bull.

SUSLO

Suslo, when I'm working.

PRIME MINISTER

That beach. It's Lanikai, isn't it? My wife
and I honeymooned in Hawaii. Are you- are
you with the NSA?

JONATHAN BULL

Prime Minister, you assured me-

PRIME MINISTER

And do you remember what you assured
me? The press think we're hiding
something Jonathan. Do you have any idea
why they think that?

Voice raised, the PM steps towards Bull. The Analysts in the room glance
over, not wanting to appear like they're looking.

JONATHAN BULL

It's likely a consequence of our tracing the origin of the emails. I'll have someone look into it.

PRIME MINISTER

Jonathan.

JONATHAN BULL

Our leak means this government harm. Otherwise they'd have reported their grievance via the *many* feedback systems we have in place. I'm doing my best with the tools we have to work out what is going on and how we can continue to keep people safe.

PRIME MINISTER

(beat)

And? Have you found the leak yet?

JONATHAN BULL

We're getting closer.

PRIME MINISTER

And I'm sure when you're there you will call me here so we can move forward *together*. Isn't that right?

(to Suslo)

You. Let's go. Now.

With that, the Prime Minister leaves COBRA. Suslo and Bull exchange another brief look. Suslo follows the PM out.

JONATHAN BULL

(once they're gone)

Contact the White House.

54

INT. OUTSIDE COBRA

Nearby, the Prime Minister checks empty offices.

Stepping out of COBRA, Suslo smooths a crease in his shirt. Spots the PM indicating to an open office door...

SUSLO
You got a gym here?

Off the PM, frowning.

55

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM. GUARDIAN HEADQUARTERS. NIGHT

Two TECHIES sit at a broad, boardroom table. They're pouring over Shinn's laptop. Meanwhile, Shinn himself stands staring at a projected screen. He holds a portable keyboard.

He's got the beginnings of an article. Corrects a headline to read: "IS FISHER A FRAUDSTER?" Nods to himself.

56

INT. THATCHER'S OFFICE. SAME

Eve has a nannying website up. Her phone, pressed to her ear.

EVE HENTLEY
No I don't know my account number, Eve
Hentley, I last used you guys back- a few
weeks ago, uh-
(a KNOCK at the door)
I'm sorry, look is that alright? If you could
just- OK, excellent, thank you, thank you.
Goodbye.
(hangs up; to door)
Hello?

The handle swings down, and in steps Robin Shaw.

ROBIN SHAW
Aha. Eve.

EVE HENTLEY
Opera over so soon?

ROBIN SHAW
We need you to stop speaking to the
press. Tomorrow's already going to be
testing, without a media storm.

EVE HENTLEY
What are you implying?
(off his silence)
I'll stop when the PM asks me to.

ROBIN SHAW
You're turning this into a story, dear. The
press aren't stupid, and the buggers
certainly are not loyal. Don't stop for me.
Stop for bloody common sense.

Eve stands. She's shorter than Robin, but puffs herself up.

EVE HENTLEY
You ever been to a multiplex, *dear*?

ROBIN SHAW
Excuse me?

EVE HENTLEY
A multiplex. A cinema chain.

ROBIN SHAW
I think I see where this is going.

EVE HENTLEY
I don't begrudge you your estates. Your
servants, your hunting trips. I knew there'd
be more than a few of you here. It's your
expectancy I hate. The belief that because
you now have your great granddaddy's
money, somehow you think you have the
right to talk down to the rest of us, tell us
how to behave, or what to do. So no.
(MORE)

EVE HENTLEY (CONT'D)
 I'll wait for the Prime Minister of my
 country to tell me to stop, thanks.

A silence. Robin turns, as if in retreat... when he stops.

ROBIN SHAW

Avaricious. Ghastly, crass, decadent, bloody self-entitled, pumped-up pompous arseholes. Inbred do-nothings who spend their days drinking Krug Clos, reading Borges and Krzhizhanovsky and wondering why, just why, must everyone be quite so poor. I know the stereotypes. I live and breathe and shit them day in, day out. My life will never cease to be the walking cliché that it is because my inheritance goes on generating more money, and because frankly I am not strong enough nor willing enough to surrender it. And while this might strike you as base to the highest degree, let me assure you: it is dreadfully dull being rich. I have considered drawing it all to a close more times than you could possibly fathom, lost as I was in a world totally devoid of endeavour, purpose or meaning.

Shaw approaches Eve. With every word, conviction builds.

ROBIN SHAW (CONT'D)
 But. But, but. I came here. To the halls of power. And fine, my father's contacts got me started. But I carved a niche for myself, and I clung to it. Through an avalanche of self-doubt and the very cuntiest the press had to offer. I gritted my teeth and held on. And do you know why? Because here I'm a part of something. If we strive for anything as human beings, I believe it's that.

(MORE)

ROBIN SHAW (CONT'D)

To be swept up in something bigger than ourselves. So, you begrudge me whatever you want. But when the chips are down, remember that we pull together. Near-70 million people depend on us pulling together. And we do it. Despite our hatred, despite our prejudice, despite our *anger*, at ourselves, at one another. We do it because it brings us to life, and because it's right that we do. So I am asking you. Stop making noise, stop all this and please: go home.

As silence falls, Eve looks away from Robin, to her bag on the floor. Thinking.

57

INT. OUTSIDE GYM. SAME

Up near the roof, the ceiling slopes, chopping off part of the corridor. Walking briskly the PM leads Suslo in silence.

SUSLO

You don't get a crick in the neck?

PRIME MINISTER

Am I just calling you Suslo?

SUSLO

You can call me Nick if you like.

PRIME MINISTER

Is that your name?

SUSLO

Sure.

They stop outside a door that the PM pushes open. Step into-

Lights flicker on. Mirrors reflect the PM and Suslo. The Prime Minister lingers by the door. Suslo explores the space.

SUSLO

Not bad, not bad at all. You got what, under-floor heating in here? Yeah, I bet it is. Nice. Nice.

PRIME MINISTER

I want to know what you had my Home Secretary sign, and why.

Suslo approaches a treadmill. Turns it on. Slowly, the engine CHURNS to life. That THRUMMING sound.

PRIME MINISTER (CONT'D)

As Prime Minister, I have a mandate, from the people, to ask questions and to receive answers.

SUSLO

Nu-uh. You sit on a sofa and say yes or no. You're a human binary code. All leaders are, really.

The PM goes to respond- stops himself. He's being antagonised. Suslo turns on a television. The pulse of music, mingling with the whirring treadmill.

SUSLO (CONT'D)

You come here a lot, huh?

PRIME MINISTER

When I can. It's important.

SUSLO

Hmm. For you, maybe. Maybe.
(points to his gut)
For me, less so now. Less so.

PRIME MINISTER

On your desktop. Hawaii. There was a picture of a woman. Your wife? No? No, but girlfriend. Long-term I'd guess. Though your accent- you've been here a while, right?

SUSLO

I bet you think you're awful smart.

PRIME MINISTER

Not particularly. But I've got a reasonable eye for detail. Like CORTEX, I suppose. Jonathan told me what it does. Virtual profiles, for suspicious people. Online and offline data to work out what makes them tick. Updates itself, then flags potential risks. Right?

SUSLO

He said all that?

PRIME MINISTER

And I would guess, given you, that it's not just us that uses it.

SUSLO

Who *wouldn't* use it? Have you ever tried considering how much data people create. Day by day.

PRIME MINISTER

Whatever I say will be way off.

SUSLO

2006, it's 161 exabytes. Of data. That's *three million* times the information contained in every book in the world. Three million.

PRIME MINISTER

Get to your point.

SUSLO

Today it's about 1.2 billion times that. And d'you wanna try and guess how hard it is, for a human to know, to filter all that? For us to comprehend the information, the significance contained in every tweet, every Facebook "like", emails, calls, every day? Sifting through, all the while looking for that *one* sign of communication between Mr. Pakistani terrorist and that newly-radicalised teenager in Brixton with a penchant for making bombs packed fulla tiny little ball-bearings that'll decimate a school-yard full of kids next Wednesday? *That's* what CORTEX is for. That's what tech like this can do. It can find needles in haystacks.

PRIME MINISTER

Haystacks that are 1.2 billion times the size of all recorded knowledge.

SUSLO

Now you're getting it. With technology like this, we can stop a criminal before they-

PRIME MINISTER

Before a crime is committed.

SUSLO

Before they harm other people.

PRIME MINISTER

But if they know about the system, they can disappear, evade it somehow. I understand. But access like that; you *must* have help. The private sector. They've signed up?

SUSLO
(beat)
In a manner of speaking, yes.

PRIME MINISTER
(getting it)
The Home Secretary. That's what you had us sign; tapping the private sector. Right?
And so these "dangerous people". How wide are you casting your net to find them?

A pregnant silence. Just the drone of the machinery.

PRIME MINISTER (CONT'D)
You don't like it here, do you? The UK. You look... Overfed. Bored, right? Your computer was slick, nicer than the others. I'm guessing it's yours? So, and maybe this is a stretch but, am I right in saying, if it weren't for the money, you'd be back in Hawaii, trying to make it work with the missus?

(off his silence)
Tell me what's going on- what's *really* going on- and I will make sure we find you a job on a much sunnier island than ours.

Suslo assesses the PM for a moment.

SUSLO
Bit late for all that. But I am impressed Mr. Prime Minister. That sounded awfully like a bribe.

The PM glares at Suslo. Walks over to the treadmill-

PRIME MINISTER
If you won't be honest with me-

-he switches it, and the TV, off. Before Suslo can respond-

PRIME MINISTER (CONT'D)
-then you can get out of my house.

Taken aback, Suslo hesitates. There's an edge, creeping in at the corners of the PM.

59 INT. COBRA

Bull leans over the shoulder of one of his CERT staff, when an ANALYST pipes up. Nearby, Simon watches.

ANALYST
Sir. White House is on the line.

Bull nods towards the main screen. The doors open. Robin Shaw enters. Him and Bull exchange a quick look as-

JONATHAN BULL
Madame Secretary.

The 72' image of US Secretary of State SAMANTHA THORNTON appears on the screen. Tightly cut grey hair, impeccably presented but with a meanness in her eyes, born from years of duking it out in the American political arena.

SAMANTHA THORNTON
Jonathan. Please. I've had 9 days on the Syria hostage situation. We're getting hammered on a leaked Exec Privilege memo, we've got a Congressman who may or may not have been fucking a 15-year-old and I've got a cold the size of New Hampshire. What do you mean he's "involved"?

JONATHAN BULL
He wants to sign off.

SAMANTHA THORNTON
On what?

JONATHAN BULL
On everything.

SAMANTHA THORNTON
Who does he think he is, Hitler?

JONATHAN BULL
I've done my best to explain.

SAMANTHA THORNTON
Get him here, I'll talk to him. And the
latest with the disgruntled?

JONATHAN BULL
Our press have been contacted, but so far
they've been offered no concrete details.
It'll look bad for him, but that's it. We think
our leak might be getting cold feet.

SAMANTHA THORNTON
You'd better hope so.

With that, she disconnects.

In the ensuing silence, Bull turns to Robin Shaw who gives a small shake of the head. Turning, Bull scours the room. Spots his Assistant. They lock eyes.

JONATHAN BULL
Who wants some brownie points?

A brief hesitation, as Simon considers. He raises his hand.

JONATHAN BULL (CONT'D)
Thank you, Simon. Fetch the Prime
Minister, here. 10 minutes.

Nodding his head quickly, Simon climbs to his feet. Carefully puts his laptop on the chair he was sat on. Marc shakes his head at Simon, the way he awkwardly shuffles out.

We linger, just for a moment, on Simon's laptop. The tiny USB stick that was once inside no longer is.

60 EXT. NUMBER 12 EXIT. NIGHT

The Prime Minister watches as the solitary figure of Suslo heads past the two armed POLICE OFFICERS standing guard of the rear entrance to Downing Street.

We focus on Suslo, as he pulls out his phone. Makes a call.

SUSLO

I can keep going from home. You're going to want to calm him down.

He listens, then hangs up. Glances, just for a moment, at the background on his phone. The same picture from his laptop.

Shaking it off, Suslo pockets his phone. Walks into the night.

61 INT. STAIRWELL. NUMBER 10. MOMENTS LATER

Climbing the steps, the PM has his phone to his ear.

PRIME MINISTER

I'm coming up. Is there any news?

JULIET (V.O.)

You haven't spoken to him. Have you?

PRIME MINISTER

Juliet, I'm up to my eyeballs here, we're getting it from all sides.

JULIET (V.O.)

Your son is crumpling, Peter. He's got the cruellest of fingers pointed at him, and he's doubting whether his father's even in his corner.

PRIME MINISTER
I believe him, for Christsake!

JULIET (V.O.)

Stop trying to persuade me. I don't care how busy you are, a father can take five minutes out of anything to call his child. I don't want to see you until you've spoken to Harvey. If we're going to get past this- just call him, now.

With that, Juliet disconnects. The PM stops. Stares at his phone. For the longest moment, he just stays completely still.

He makes another call. It rings.

EVE HENTLEY (V.O.)
There you are.

PRIME MINISTER
Eve. Just quickly, update me on what's going on with Terrance?

He begins walking back downstairs.

62

EXT. NUMBER 10'S GARDENS. NIGHT

It seems so calm out here. A wide stretch of grass is interrupted by an old climbing frame. Lush foliage lines the edges. To one side of the patio the PM has just emerged onto is a free-standing basketball hoop. Completely incongruous.

Crouching down, the Prime Minister picks up a lonely basketball nearby. Bounces it. A little flat.

He POPS the ball into the air, watches it careen downwards-
-TOTALLY MISSES the hoop. It bounces to a standstill nearby.

With a small chuckle, the PM stares at the hoop. The smile on his face dwindles. He takes out his phone. Makes the call.

PRIME MINISTER

Son. It's me.

HARVEY (V.O.)

I know his name. His full name. I've been asking around. And- and so maybe you could have someone just look into him-

PRIME MINISTER

Harv, I have something to say. I want you to just listen. I know you wouldn't lie to me. But I need you to understand. When I was a kid, my father used to come home late. That smell, of Watneys Red Barrel, it still- Anyway. Slurring, cross-eyed, he'd swear he'd been to the cinema. His brother's. Sometimes he'd smell of perfume, or flowers. The florists, of course. Sometimes Mum would cry. Sometimes she fell, he'd insist. But she fell a lot. So much I used to clean my toys up. I was so scared she'd trip. But I got older. I began to get it. To talk back. Then it was me who fell.

HARVEY

Dad.

PRIME MINISTER

Please, listen son. His story never changed. He just enforced his take on the truth, harder and harder. That's why you never knew him, Harv. It's why he died with no-one at his side, in that cold, lonely bed.

(then)

The moment we tamper with the truth, we force a lie. I know it's difficult but try to see.

On the other end of the phone, Harvey begins to cry. Deep, harsh sobs, as only a child can do in front of their parent.

HARVEY (V.O.)

*I never- never wanted you to think I was
like Grandpa.*

PRIME MINISTER

I don't, son. I believe you. I do.

HARVEY (V.O.)

Why is he doing this to me? Why?

(off the PM's silence)

*What if he's done it before? Or he's doing
it to get at you?*

PRIME MINISTER

I'm sure information like that will emerge quickly. Perhaps that's why he hasn't been to the police yet.

HARVEY (V.O.)

*I'm not asking you to get involved. But you
must have someone who can check. If we
know then we have a defence, we have a
plan.*

(then)

You can't believe both of us, Dad.

PRIME MINISTER

I can't do that, Harvey.

HARVEY (V.O.)

Dad, come on, we need to know.

PRIME MINISTER

That's not how we're playing this.

HARVEY (V.O.)

His name is-

PRIME MINISTER
Harvey, no-

HARVEY (V.O.)
-Kevin-

The Prime Minister HANGS UP.

Though we can't see the maelstrom of thoughts pounding around his mind, the PM looks like he's just been sucker-punched.

Eventually, he turns back to the house... FREEZES. Watching him from inside, staying close to the walls, is Simon. Looks like a deer caught in headlights. Glancing around, he signals to the PM follow him deeper into the building.

63 INT. GARDEN ENTRANCE. MOMENTS LATER

Stepping inside, the PM searches for Simon. Spots him.

PRIME MINISTER
I was just on my way back-

Simon scurries away, heading up a flight of stairs.

PRIME MINISTER (CONT'D)
-but that's the wrong way.

He follows Simon, like Alice chasing the rabbit.

64 INT. BACK STAIRWELL

Entering a narrow stairwell, the PM ascends, pursuing Simon- when his phone rings. He checks- considers ignoring- answers.

PRIME MINISTER
Sarika? Now isn't a great time.

SARIKA (V.O.)

I've been digging. I have something you'll want to hear.

PRIME MINISTER

Like last time, I'm sure.

SARIKA (V.O.)

I couldn't find more on CORTEX, what the NSA had me sign. Before you get into another schpiel, listen to what I did find: the NSA has been paying GCHQ. Billions of dollars.

PRIME MINISTER

They are our allies. Money moves between the agencies. It's on public record, in the PAC reports.

SARIKA (V.O.)

That's not what I'm talking about. We're in charge of some of GCHQ's budget, here at the Home Office. But their expenditure and income for the last two years doesn't add up. So I called a friend, at the NAO.

PRIME MINISTER

Can you cut to the chase?

SARIKA (V.O.)

\$1.66 billion came in last year in "refurbishment fees".

PRIME MINISTER

(beat)

I'm assuming you're telling me they haven't got new curtains recently.

SARIKA (V.O.)

When I checked, that income had been redacted from the PAC report.

(MORE)

SARIKA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
It's been hidden from the public, sir. Too politically sensitive.

PRIME MINISTER
Thank you, Sarika.

SARIKA (V.O.)
I'm just looking out for our pre-Christmas chat. But- good luck, Prime Minister. With all of this.

The Prime Minister hangs up. Continues upstairs.

65

INT. CORRIDOR

Emerging from the stairwell, the PM scours both ends of the corridor- dozens of doors, leading off into offices or conference rooms. All of the doors are closed-

-except one.

66

INT. COMPUTER ROOM. MOMENTS LATER

Cautiously pushing the door ajar, the PM steps into an office illuminated only by the light from outside and the corridor.

Inside, Simon is systematically unplugging every computer in the room. All of their screens lie flat and are disconnected.

PRIME MINISTER
Is everything-

Spinning, Simon holds his finger to his lips. His eyes, begging the PM to stay silent.

Satisfied with the state of the room, Simon comes to a stop by one of the desks. Picks up a pen lying there, and tears a piece of paper from a notebook. Scribbles something.

Watching closely, the PM steps towards Simon-

-who holds up a hand, indicating for the PM to stop. A scribble more, and Simon turns to the Prime Minister. Very deliberately, he extracts the tiny USB stick from his pocket. Places it on top of the note.

He edges towards the Prime Minister. He looks terrified.

PRIME MINISTER (CONT'D)

(whispers)

Who...

A jerk of Simon's head, indicating the PM shut up. Reaching into his jacket, Simon pulls out a security badge. Holds it up for the Prime Minister to see:

"SIMON ARGYLE, SysAdm GCHQ, DV332b5"

Nodding to confirm he's read it, the Prime Minister watches as Simon Argyle drops his security badge in the bin. Without another glance at the Prime Minister, he leaves.

67 INT. CORRIDOR

Without turning back, Simon hurries back the way he came.

68 INT. COMPUTER ROOM

Approaching the desk, the PM's stares in horror at the note Simon's left, written in appalling handwriting:

"I HAVE A FAMILY. PLEASE PROTECT THEM."

69 INT. DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY

Emerging from the narrow stairwell, Simon heads in the direction of the exit of Number 10-

-FREEZES when he sees Jonathan Bull walking towards him.

Bull's eyes are fixed on a tablet, but as he draws closer, he glances up-sees nothing but an empty corridor.

70 INT. STORAGE CUPBOARD

Illuminated by just a thin strip of light, Simon trembles as Bull turns to walk up the stairs-

DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY:

-when he stops. Senses something. Turns around, to see the door to the storage cupboard, slightly ajar.

STORAGE CUPBOARD:

Holding his breath, starting to sweat, Simon crouches, in the hope Bull won't see him.

Approaching the door, Bull stands outside for just a moment-

DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY:

-Bull reaches forward... and CLOSES THE DOOR. A satisfying CLICK. Bull glances at the other doors, all closed too. Small nod of approval. On that, Bull leaves.

STORAGE CUPBOARD:

Breath still held, Simon listens hard to the receding sound of Bull's footsteps. Once satisfied, he opens the door-

-all clear. As fast as possible, Simon Argyle steals away.

INT. COMPUTER ROOM

Crouched under a desk, his jacket hanging on a nearby chair, the Prime Minister forces the plug of one of the computers into a socket. The HUM of a desktop coming back to life.

Emerging, the PM catches sight of himself in a window. Sweat patches have formed under his arms. The old glass distorts his features slightly, making him look even worse.

He checks his watch. 2.36am.

Turning away from it, the PM picks up the USB and the note. Examines them both as the computer loads-

JONATHAN BULL (O.S.)

There you are.

Spinning around, the PM hides the USB in his fist.

PRIME MINISTER

Jonathan. What are you doing here?

JONATHAN BULL

I'd ask the same question. But I suppose it is your house. Did one of my Analysts find you? Simon Argyle.

For the briefest second, the Prime Minister's eyes flick to the bin. Bull sees the PM looking, but before he can turn-

PRIME MINISTER

Yes, sorry. He did. I told him to head back.
Strange guy.

JONATHAN BULL

Gifted.

A silence lingers, just for a moment.

JONATHAN BULL (CONT'D)
The Americans would like a word.

Bull steps back. Offers the PM a passage out, but blocks the bin. With a nod, the PM heads out. Bull follows.

72

INT. BEDROOM. NIGHT

Juliet, head in hand, has poured herself a sizeable glass of something strong and translucent. She's on speakerphone to Harvey, though we don't immediately realise.

HARVEY (V.O.)
Mum? Are you still there?

JULIET
Of course, darling.

HARVEY (V.O.)
What do we do?

Juliet takes a deep drink. Thinks.

HARVEY (V.O.)
Do you know anyone who can help?

JULIET
I've got an idea. I've got an idea.

HARVEY (V.O.)
I love you, Mum.

JULIET
I love you too darling. Stay put.

Juliet hangs up. Reaches over to her phone. Scrolls through contacts. Lands on one. Takes a bigger sip. Calls.

JULIET (CONT'D)

Switch, hi. It's Juliet here. I'm sorry to disturb, but would you be able to get Caro for me?

73

INT. OUTSIDE COBRA. MOMENTS LATER

The PM marches at quite a pace. Bull follows, in silence. As they approach COBRA, the PM's phone buzzes. A text from Eve:

"Terrance. White Room, 30 minutes"

A small smile from the PM, as he heads into-

74

INT. COBRA

The video link with Samantha Thornton has been established. She spots the Prime Minister as he enters.

SAMANTHA THORNTON

Evening Prime Minister.

PRIME MINISTER

Right, everybody out. I'd like to speak to Ms. Thornton alone.

Nobody moves. The PM turns to Jonathan.

JONATHAN BULL

(to Analysts)

Everybody, 10. Cafeteria, or a stretch outside.

Obediently, the room begins to empty. As Bull's Assistant also goes to step out, he takes her by the arm.

JONATHAN BULL (CONT'D)

Simon appears to be lost. See if you and Robin can find him.

With a small nod, she follows Robin Shaw as he shuffles towards the exit, rubbing sleep from his eyes.

PRIME MINISTER
(to Bull)
You too.

For a moment, it looks like Bull's going to argue. Then, he just picks up some paperwork and a tablet device. Steps out.

The room, eerily empty. The PM turns to the screen.

PRIME MINISTER (CONT'D)
Samantha. Is there a reason I'm not speaking with the President?

SAMANTHA THORNTON
I'm afraid there are two.

PRIME MINISTER
She's not still giving me the cold-shoulder about the privacy stuff?

SAMANTHA THORNTON
Madame President told you the risks your policy posed to business during the talks two Thursdays ago, plus-

PRIME MINISTER
-hold on a moment, the President knows that she does not and will not dictate British policy-

SAMANTHA THORNTON
-the President is otherwise engaged.

PRIME MINISTER
With?

SAMANTHA THORNTON

The President is otherwise engaged. But she has urged me to take steps necessary to ensure this evening is dealt with efficiently before our press gets wind of this.

PRIME MINISTER

We're speaking to to forge a strategy together, Samantha.

SAMANTHA THORNTON

No we're speaking because it would seem I need to remind you to let the security services contain this.

PRIME MINISTER

Do you know what's going on?

SAMANTHA THORNTON

It's not our job to know.

PRIME MINISTER

I'm sorry, it's not our job?

SAMANTHA THORNTON

To know the specifics of the NSA's tactics? No, it's not. We don't pump billions into state infrastructure to *know* every detail.

PRIME MINISTER

We're elected to oversee, to keep people safe. Samantha, you know this-

SAMANTHA THORNTON

I know, what I know Prime Minister is what true panic looks like. I know what happens if this gets out.

PRIME MINISTER

There'll be debate, there'll be discussion,
just like last time-

SAMANTHA THORNTON

Last time there wasn't this much *invested*.
Besides. You know, as well as I do, how
destructive the wrong information can be
in the wrong hands.

PRIME MINISTER

Sure, I know that. I also know we have
evidence that you lot *funded* CORTEX.
Alright? Like it or not, we're in this
together. So why don't we stop squabbling
and find a path forward together.

SAMANTHA THORNTON

To be candid, Prime Minister, the US
government doesn't slip billions to any
country without raising an eyebrow or two.

PRIME MINISTER

The money for CORTEX has come from the
NSA. Our Home Secretary signed-

SAMANTHA THORNTON

People are difficult. Which makes
economies difficult. Are you telling me a
system that could *smooth* the cycle isn't
worth investing in?

PRIME MINISTER

(beat; gets it)

I'd like to know which companies.

SAMANTHA THORNTON

A select group, with deep pockets, and the
vision for what this could be.

PRIME MINISTER

You know why we don't have high-schools
being shot up every few months? Why
we're in control of our energy industry?
Because business here abides by our laws.
It doesn't make us bend to its own.

SAMANTHA THORNTON

If this leaks, some of our closest allies in
industry and diplomacy risk exposure.
They've made it clear-

PRIME MINISTER

Well, perhaps they should've considered
the risk before financing a system like this.

SAMANTHA THORNTON

We did. We all did. See, we were all
promised a wonderful new bit of anti-
terror tech from Britain. Imagine our
horror when we realised you'd built *this*.
Under your premiership, no less.

(before he can retort)

If I've not heard within the hour that you've
not allowed your security services to
protect *all* of our interests, mine and yours,
we will have no choice but to act. Don't
push this, Prime Minister.

With that, Samantha disconnects. Leaves the Prime Minister by himself,
in a room that feels even emptier than before.

75

INT. OUTSIDE COBRA. MOMENTS LATER

Exiting, the Prime Minister points at a CERT Member nearby-

PRIME MINISTER

I want a word with Jonathan, immediately.
Have him call me.

Without waiting, the Prime Minister sets off at a jog.

76

INT. APARTMENT. NUMBER 10. SAME

At her desk, bleary-eyed, Juliet flicks through something on her iPad. Scanning a document. Her phone rings. She answers:

JULIET
Harvey? What is it??

HARVEY (V.O.)
Mum? I- I think I messed up...

77

INT. BASE OF GREAT STAIRWELL. SAME

Moving quickly, tunnel-vision, the Prime Minister grabs hold of the bannister-

CARO (O.S.)
Sir?

He turns. Sees Caro, coat on. She's wearing a nice dress under her coat. Carries high-heels.

PRIME MINISTER
Caro. What are you doing here?

She stares at him blankly.

CARO
You... asked me to come?

PRIME MINISTER
No, I didn't.

CARO
Your wife- she said you asked. For me to find information on Kevin Brady, at your son's college.
(off his look)
Is everything alright?

PRIME MINISTER
Don't send her anything. For Christ's sake,
don't.

CARO
(beat)
I- I already have.

For a moment, it looks like the Prime Minister's about to shout at her- he gets a hold on it, just.

PRIME MINISTER
Go home, Caro. I'll see you in the- later in
the morning.

CARO
Yes sir.

She goes to walk away. The PM remembers something.

PRIME MINISTER
Caro, I'm- how- how was the date?

CARO
It was good. Really good.

PRIME MINISTER
OK. Wonderful. You'll see him again?

CARO
(beat)
No. No, I don't think so.

On that, she leaves. Her footsteps echo in the hallway.

Swallowing whatever he's feeling down, the PM climbs the stairs. Doesn't look at the pictures of Prime Ministers past.

A wide, white, open space with very little furniture.

To one side, stood deliberately beneath a CCTV camera, stands TERRANCE GLOVER. The heavy brow, gentle limp and thinning white hair speak of a man whose history is as long as it is secret. He's wiping fluff from the label of a faded jacket when the Prime Minister enters. Puts on a smile.

PRIME MINISTER

Terrance. Thanks for coming in.

TERRANCE GLOVER

Both an advantage and disadvantage of old age. I need very little sleep, but when I do nod off, I rise every 45 minutes to urinate.

PRIME MINISTER

I once saw a guy on TED talk about growing new bladders.

TERRANCE GLOVER

Oh it doesn't end. My GP thinks I should get metal knees. No, no. When I go, I'll deny the worms nothing. Decrepit knees and all.

Just as the Prime Minister goes to respond- his phone begins buzzing. He presses something to silence it.

PRIME MINISTER

Saw you on the beeb this evening.

TERRANCE GLOVER

Well, I suppose if *someone* is willing to listen to what I've got to say, I might as well seize the-

The PM's phone buzzes once again.

TERRANCE GLOVER (CONT'D)

Answer it.

The Prime Minister pulls his phone out - sees it's Harvey calling. Glances up at Terrance. Silences the phone.

PRIME MINISTER

Terrance. I need to know what we're signed up to. The whole truth, not a fraction of it. Ramifications for me aside- and I'm sure you can imagine the headlines- there's a fear that's got me on edge. Evenings don't go like this unless... I don't know.

TERRANCE GLOVER

Unless something quite substantial is at stake. Agreed? You know, I don't read papers these days. If I want mindless criticism I speak to my boys. See the press, like you it would seem, are never satisfied. They want to know *everything*.

PRIME MINISTER

Terrance, I know we've disagreed on the privacy charter in the past, but-

TERRANCE GLOVER

I have spent more years defending this country than you have alive. I trained Gulbuddin Hekmatyar for his attack on the Soviets in 1984. I oversaw the recruitment of Saeed Sheikh. His betrayal, the financing of 9/11. I do know how many men and women I've sent on missions they haven't come back from, but I don't care to repeat it.

PRIME MINISTER

I understand.

TERRANCE GLOVER

No, you do not. Otherwise, you would've listened to what I had to say.

(MORE)

TERRANCE GLOVER (CONT'D)

You would damn well respect our need to do what we do unabated.

PRIME MINISTER

Are you going to discuss CORTEX with me or not?

TERRANCE GLOVER

Your privacy charter. Do your best to apply it to the private sector. But you will not ask your secret service to protect the country one day, then bind our hands the next.

Once more, the PM's phone begins to buzz. He ignores it.

PRIME MINISTER

You cannot be serious.

TERRANCE GLOVER

To spare the defenders of our country from having to ask permission to do their job? I most certainly am.

PRIME MINISTER

The government leads by example. We have a system that means security standards will be maintained.

TERRANCE GLOVER

You and I both know that's impractical to the point of impossibility.

PRIME MINISTER

For Christsake Terrance, people have a right to privacy!

TERRANCE GLOVER

I'm afraid guilty people take that right away from the innocent.

PRIME MINISTER

Sorry Terrance, but I do not accept-

TERRANCE GLOVER

Because what happens next? When people truly understand this privacy you've gifted them with. You know the Prometheus myth, I'm sure. So what happens after you give them fire? They'll want more. It won't be "do I chose privacy". It will be "are they giving me enough", "how do I know", "make them prove it". And you cannot have the brave men and women who namelessly die for this company bogged down in this ethical bullshit when the decisions they-

(the PM's phone rings)

-WILL YOU ANSWER THAT DAMNED PHONE!

Momentarily stunned, the PM fumbles for his phone. Answers.

HARVEY (V.O.)

Dad, Dad, he's- I'm so sorry, I tried to speak to Kevin and- and he thought I was threatening, he's- he's on his way to the police and-

THE PM HANGS UP. Stares at the phone, caught between panic and disbelief. The silence stretches.

PRIME MINISTER

Terrance I'm going to- I need to wrap this up.

TERRANCE GLOVER

Do you want to hear what I have to say or not?

PRIME MINISTER
 (long beat)
 We won't include government bodies in the
 privacy charter. For now.

Terrance considers this a moment. Eventually, he takes out his mobile phone. Holds out his hand, indicating the Prime Minister hand over his. After a moment, he does.

Approaching a metal bin in one of the corners, Terrance takes the lid off. Tips the rubbish out onto the floor. Deposits the phones in the now-empty bin-bag.

PRIME MINISTER (CONT'D)
 What're you doing?

Avoiding the CCTV camera, carrying the bag at arms length, Terrance approaches a window. Opens it. Hangs the bag outside-

PRIME MINISTER (CONT'D)
 Hang on a second-

-shuts the window. Traps the bag so that it dangles outside.

Satisfied, he indicates the Prime Minister follow him into the deepest corner of the room. Once they're both there-

TERRANCE GLOVER
 (sotto)
 Recruitment to MI6 is emotionally and physically rigorous. It takes a particular type. Most go on to do work that's diplomatic in nature.
 But a few don't. We call them "wet operatives". There's only ever a few; they have a considerable, uh. Turnover. But about 20 months back, GCHQ put in a request. They wanted to know if they could siphon off any spillover.

PRIME MINISTER
 GCHQ was recruiting field agents?

TERRANCE GLOVER

No, not field agents. Wet Ops.

PRIME MINISTER

Why, what do they do?

TERRANCE GLOVER

(a long beat)

For Jonathan Bull, I can not say. But if the Americans are nervous- it could be a factor. Just, be careful Prime Minister. Your safest course of action is inaction. Do not become a target.

PRIME MINISTER

I think I've had enough implied threats for one evening, Terrance.

Terrance pauses. Considers. Sighs.

TERRANCE GLOVER

At times it is worth hanging up the shovel. Some holes run so deep, if we dig we lose all hope of emerging.

79

INT. OUTSIDE WHITE ROOM. MOMENTS LATER

Erupting from the White Room, the PM is on the phone-

PRIME MINISTER

I'm coming, right now.

80

INT. OUTSIDE APARTMENT. NUMBER 10. MOMENTS LATER

Almost sprinting, the Prime Minister reaches the door to the apartment. Takes a DEEP BREATH- PUSHES IT OPEN-

81

INT. LIVING ROOM/KITCHEN. APARTMENT

-Juliet, pale as hell, is on the phone. Vodka glass in hand.

JULIET

He's here, he's here, let me put you on hold, one minute.

She presses at her phone as the PM approaches. Although he grabs her shoulders, the action isn't devoid of tenderness.

PRIME MINISTER

Talk to me. What happened?

JULIET

Harvey saw Kevin coming out of his room. Harv surprised him, and we don't know- we don't know.

PRIME MINISTER

I'm going to get Eve up here, we'll get Nicky on speaker, we can get a handle on this before the press...

The PM trails off. He's seen the look in Juliet's eyes.

PRIME MINISTER (CONT'D)

Juliet. Who is that, on the phone?

JULIET

If you speak to him. If you just speak to him, he'll stop.

PRIME MINISTER

You've got to be joking.

JULIET

He said it! And alright, and fine, maybe it's a game, a power-play but he won't go if you'll just talk-

PRIME MINISTER
Are you out of your mind? Are you?!

JULIET
(quiet)
Maybe. Maybe I am going crazy because
my husband will not-

PRIME MINISTER
Do not keep *saying that*-

JULIET
Why not, it's true isn't it, that you won't
help my boy-

PRIME MINISTER
Our boy!

JULIET
No. No, Peter. Did you change those
nappies? Did you have to explain where *I*
was when he had the lead in his school
play, when he wet the bed, when he failed
biology.

PRIME MINISTER
You told me- you *said* you understood.

JULIET
You were paving your way to here. Always
to here. And I supported you, I *agreed*,
because I knew when we needed you most
you'd be there.

PRIME MINISTER
I- I can't do it. Juliet, I can't.

JULIET
Yes you can.

PRIME MINISTER
Try to understand what it means.

JULIET

This is not about morality.

PRIME MINISTER

Yes, it is!

JULIET

No, this is about you protecting your own neck or your son's!

PRIME MINISTER

Alright!! Alright.

Both the PM and Juliet glare at each other. After a beat, the PM holds out his hand for the phone. Juliet passes it.

And the Prime Minister... hangs up.

There's a silence that follows. A long, horrible silence.

SMASH!! as Juliet HURLS HER GLASS AT THE WALL, MISSING THE PRIME MINISTER BY CENTIMETRES. Silence.

PRIME MINISTER (CONT'D)

Juliet, listen to me.

JULIET

Get out. You spineless coward. Out.

It would be so much easier if she'd just shout. If she'd scream, if she'd push. But she doesn't. She just glares at the Prime Minister... who retreats.

The PM closes the door. Leans his head against it. Does his best to just keep it together.

83

EXT. LONDON. NIGHT. ESTABLISHING

Gliding above Number 10, staring down, the building looks so small, crammed in amongst the grit and stone of London.

84

INT. COBRA. SAME

A state of frantic energy in COBRA, as the Analysts call out to one another - "Jimmy Miller at the *Times*", "Dolan Stone, *Metro*", "Suzie French, *Economist*". Every time they look to Bull, who gives them nod.

JONATHAN BULL

Malick, you and Ted start drafting the press release, we need damage control when it comes to questions-

Abandoning his station, Marc approaches Bull.

MARC

Sir, just so you know: Terrance Glover has just left. And... Well, the emails. Kevin managed to get through the encryption too. None of them are being sent from London. They're coming from Oxfordshire.

Bull considers. Seems troubled by the news. He nods in thanks. Takes out his phone. Dials.

85

INT. THATCHER'S OFFICE. SAME

Eyes red from exhaustion, Eve stares blankly at her phone. It's ringing, but she just can't bring herself to answer it.

She looks up as the door to the office opens. In steps Bull's quiet Assistant. Eve frowns at the sight of her, just standing there, silently.

EVE HENTLEY

Can I help you?

ASSISTANT

I hope so. Someone mentioned you knew a good babysitting agency. People to call in a crisis?

EVE HENTLEY

Oh. Uh, yeah. Nighthannies they're called. I've got their number-

ASSISTANT

Nighthannies. I've heard of them.

EVE HENTLEY

I think they're quite well known.

ASSISTANT

Incredibly unreliable. I've heard some real horror stories about them.

EVE HENTLEY

Oh. I've never had any problems.

A deep silence suddenly falls. The Assistant's eyes bore into Eve. Eventually, she gives a little shrug. Turns to leave.

ASSISTANT

Have a good night.

Just like that, she's gone. Eve ponders. She's shaken, but doesn't quite know why. Takes out her phone. Makes a call:

EVE HENTLEY

Hi there, my name's Eve Hentley, I just wanted to confirm the sitter's still at my residence.

NIGHTNANNIES (V.O.)

Eve... Hentley with two e's, yeah?

EVE HENTLEY

Yes. Not together, obviously.

NIGHTNANNIES (V.O.)

*Yeah, see I've got your account Ms.
Hentley, but it's saying you haven't used
our service in about a month.*

EVE HENTLEY

I- I spoke to a colleague of yours. He said
his name was Chris?

NIGHTNANNIES (V.O.)

*No Chris' work here, miss. Are you sure
you got the right place?*

Panic spreads across Eve's features.

86

INT. ATRIUM OUTSIDE THATCHER'S STUDY. MOMENTS LATER

Dragging himself forward, the Prime Minister approaches the doors to the study. We can see, clasped in one hand, the USB drive from Simon-

-the door opens. Eve, packed up and leaving, hurries out. JUMPS as she spots the Prime Minister.

EVE HENTLEY

Fuck. You scared me.

PRIME MINISTER

Eve, what's... what's going on?

EVE HENTLEY

I don't know. Honestly, I don't. But I need
to get home. I- I think Merryn's in danger.

PRIME MINISTER

Eve, calm down. The babysitter's still
there, no?

EVE HENTLEY

I don't know. Fuck, I don't know.

PRIME MINISTER

I need you, Eve. I don't know what to do
anymore.

(then)

There's something I need to show you. I
think it's the key to what's-

EVE HENTLEY

No. I don't want to know, I don't want to
see it, please. Please.

(holding up some paper)

We need to get out. All of us. I didn't- I
started a resignation speech. For you, as
an escape. It's just bullet points, really
but. I didn't know what else to do.

She hands it to him. After a moment, the PM takes it. His hand shakes. As
she tries to go past- he reaches out to her. His hand, on her stomach,
just for a second.

PRIME MINISTER

I need you. Please, stay. For me.

EVE HENTLEY

Don't- don't do that. Please don't.

PRIME MINISTER

Eve, look at me. I need you.

EVE HENTLEY

(beat)

No. No, you don't. And I've always, always
known it.

She pushes past him. Goes to leave.

EVE HENTLEY (CONT'D)

That resignation speech. Consider it mine
too.

Eve leaves. Her footsteps recede into the bowels of the house.

Life appears to drain from the PM as he unspools in front of us. His watch reads 4:13am.

For a moment the PM looks ready to surrender- when his fist TIGHTENS around the USB drive.

87 INT. STAIRWELL. NUMBER 10. MOMENTS LATER

Almost tumbling downstairs with a slight manic energy, the PM takes them three at a time-

88 INT. GARDEN ROOMS. MOMENTS LATER

The PM bursts into a room filled with photocopiers and desktops. Black ergonomic chairs stand like silent sentries.

Approaching a desktop, the PM flicks a mouse. The screen comes to life. He punches in a few details.

Tinted blue by the glow of the screen, the Prime Minister carefully plugs the USB in...

89 INT. COBRA. SAME

A group of Analysts huddle around Marc's laptop. On the screen, a piece of software scans through a map of OXFORDSHIRE, checking IP addresses as it goes.

Two CERTs write up a doc on one laptop. Bull reads for a moment, then begins to wander the room, restless. His eyes fall on Argyle's laptop. Stares at it, thinking.

Suddenly, an Analyst jumps up-

ANALYST

Sir- sir you need to see this, now.

Snapping out of it, Bull hurries to the screen, on which:

A WEB-CAM feed of the Prime Minister, staring at the screen. Beside the video-stream, a window showing what's on the PM's screen; an endless compilation of numbers and code.

The tiniest flicker of panic from Bull who straightens up.

JONATHAN BULL
Somebody find Simon, now. And Robin.
Robin?

Head against the wall, Robin STARTS as he wakes.

JONATHAN BULL (CONT'D)
Contact the Americans. Immediately. Get
JIC here. Make sure we have a damn good
reason ISC didn't show up.

ROBIN SHAW
Are you sure that's wise?

JONATHAN BULL
I'm sorry?

ROBIN SHAW
We need to focus on settling things.
Calming the water. Calling them...

Trailing off, Robin shrinks under Jonathan's gaze.

JONATHAN BULL
Do we need to have a discussion?

ROBIN SHAW
(beat)
No.

JONATHAN BULL
Do we need a talk about why we need no
discussion?

ROBIN SHAW
Please, look, I'll do it, alright.

A beat. Bull nods. Without another word to anybody, he leaves COBRA. Off Robin, visibly shaken by the encounter.

90

INT. GARDEN ROOMS. SAME

Frowning at the screen, the Prime Minister clicks off the incomprehensible stream of data. He searches the files of the USB - endless data-files, text-

A FOLDER. Labelled CORTEX.INIT/PS13-29215. The PM clicks on it. Finds a bunch of VIDEO files. He clicks on the first:

CCTV footage of a CROWDED CAFE. Surrounded by chatter, there's a barrage of sound, a mindless stream of incomprehensible noise. And yet... a software appears to be tracking all of it. COLOURED NUMBERS compile at the edges of the footage. Above each stream of numbers, the NAMES OF THE SPEAKERS.

But our focus seems to be on two specific CHATTERS; a suited, cross-legged man, and a keen-eyed woman carrying a notepad. The name above her numbers reads: PIPPA SHRIVER.

The footage STOPS. The PM clicks on the next file. It's the front camera of an iPhone, staring up at Pippa.

PIPPA SHRIVER

-the Somalian settlements on piracy story.
But what I'm more interested in is *this*.
State surveillance.

The numbers, still compiling, have CHANGED COLOUR. They're a deep shade of orange now.

The clip ends. The PM clicks on the next:

The screen FILLS with STREAMS OF INFORMATION. A web-cam within her home, her Twitter feed, her Facebook, her medical history, her employment profile, her online search records-

Sounds too, invade: we catch snippets of conversation- “I’m almost there”, “someone inside the Domestic Office will-”, “Mum, please don’t worry-”, “What can you tell me about a system called CORTEX”, “Anything at all” etc.

Too much information for a human to process, this is CORTEX working at FULL-SPEED. More, more, snippets of a journalist chasing a story- numbers compiling are now a deep RED-

-when it stops.

One last clip left in the folder: *EC-STRAP2.TERMI.PS*

The PM hesitates. Not sure he wants to know what this is.

He clicks anyway. A WEB-CAM feed of PIPPA SHRIVER’S bedroom. She sleeps on her side, facing away from her bedroom door.

The video is noticeable for the lack of numbers compiling. It is simply and only a web-cam feed.

A few moments pass. Nothing, until THE DOOR TO HER ROOM OPENS-

A FIGURE, dressed in black, face obscured by a modern gas-mask, enters. They watch Pippa as she sleeps for some time.

Then, very carefully, the figure pulls out a syringe- preps it- THE PM LEANS INTO THE SCREEN-

The Figure INJECTS something into Pippa, just under her arm-pit. She STARTS, awake, but FIRM HANDS now hold her in place-

PRIME MINISTER

No! NO!

She THRASHES, trying to resist- but slowly, strength fails her. Eventually, she stops moving. Completely.

The Figure checks her pulse. Satisfied, they withdraw from the room. A few more moments pass...

WHEN AN ALMIGHTY EXPLOSION SMASHES ITS WAY THROUGH THE WALL
TO PIPPA'S BEDROOM- THE IMAGE CUTS OUT-

And the screen goes black.

A silence lingers. A horrified PM goes to watch it again-

JONATHAN BULL (O.S.)
I think we'd best have a talk, Prime
Minister.

Bull, standing in the doorway. Eyes boring into the PM.

PRIME MINISTER
Jonathan. What have I just watched?

JONATHAN BULL
There is a place better suited to this type
of discussion.

The Prime Minister pockets the USB drive. Stands.

91

INT. ELEVATOR. LOWER-GROUND CORRIDOR. MOMENTS LATER

Leading the Prime Minister, Bull approaches an old elevator.

PRIME MINISTER
Where are we going?

No response, as the doors open. Stepping inside, he carefully presses in a code ("3245").

JONATHAN BULL
Coming?

The PM climbs into the lift. The doors close.

92

INT. TUNNEL. BELOW NUMBER 10. MOMENTS LATER

With a quiet PING, the doors open and both the PM and Bull step out into a dank, brick tunnel. Moisture percolates through brick walls, illuminated by a string of LEDs.

Up ahead, the tunnel appears to split into three, although where they go, the darkness obscures.

Staring around in surprise, the PM takes it all in.

PRIME MINISTER
World War II?

JONATHAN BULL
Originally. Some work was done during the
refurb in the '70s.

PRIME MINISTER
You know, Churchill liked it up there. He
used to eat and sleep in Number 10, even
during the Blitz. Not sure how that squares
with taking his cabinet to Savoy Grill the
whole time, but...

JONATHAN BULL
He understood the building's significance.
As, I think, do you.

PRIME MINISTER
(re: the tunnel)
Where does it end up?

Silence from Bull. The Prime Minister shakes his head. Turns to Bull. They both wait for the other to talk for a moment.

PRIME MINISTER (CONT'D)
This'd be a good place to get rid of pesky
MPs that ask too many questions, wouldn't
it?

Once more, silence from Bull.

JONATHAN BULL

A great deal of this evening is a question
of perspective.

PRIME MINISTER

Virtual profiles, for criminals, but also some
innocent people. A more general
surveillance of everyone, fed back to,
presumably, tech and finance giants.
CORTEX decides when risks, to the country,
the system, the economy, emerge and then
these, these “wet operatives” they- you-

JONATHAN BULL

It was a gas-leak. At Pippa Shriver’s
apartment. A gas-leak.

If the Prime Minister weren’t so furious, perhaps he’d laugh.

PRIME MINISTER

I might not have everything, Jonathan. But
I have enough.

JONATHAN BULL

(beat)

Did it ever strike you how democratic this
system could be?

PRIME MINISTER

You have got to be fucking joking.

JONATHAN BULL

CORTEX. It sees the passions of men
without experiencing them. It has no
affinity with our nature and yet knows it
thoroughly. To paraphrase Rousseau. Yes, it
has security advantages, but think about
people. CORTEX knows them. All of them. It
knows friends better than they know one
another. Fathers better than their sons.

(MORE)

JONATHAN BULL (CONT'D)

Can government even get close, just by having people vote once every 5 years? With CORTEX, people escape the influence of media, circumstance, loyalty. CORTEX simply *sees* what they believe. Feed that into policy, into governance? You have a system fit for gods.

PRIME MINISTER

And the people- they asked for this system, did they? Agreed to it?

A silence from Bull.

PRIME MINISTER (CONT'D)

What I can't understand- why would you *help* with the privacy charter? If you were going ahead with...

(sinks in)

You had Terrance. You knew he'd negotiate for me to shut it down.

JONATHAN BULL

The truth is, CORTEX has been safely embedded in the private sector for most of this year. Thanks to your Home Secretary.

PRIME MINISTER

Our government will not be held accountable for what you're doing.

JONATHAN BULL

I'm afraid it already is.

PRIME MINISTER

We will jettison Sarika if we must, she can take responsibility for the mistakes she's made.

JONATHAN BULL

And how will you explain all the orders that originated from here. From within Number 10.

PRIME MINISTER

Excuse me?

JONATHAN BULL

Are you so trusting that you didn't once question why we're here, now? Why I insisted all our planning for the privacy charter took place *within* Number 10? Prime Minister. Do you really think this is the first time we've had to deal with someone trying to leak CORTEX?

PRIME MINISTER

What- what have you done to them?

JONATHAN BULL

The question is rather what have *we* done to them. Every order, traceable back to within these walls. Right back to here, the centre of power.

A long silence follows.

PRIME MINISTER

You know, I really did trust you.

JONATHAN BULL

I'm asking you, one final time. Take a step back, and leave me and my team to deal with this.

The Prime Minister reels a moment. Wanders down a part of the tunnel. Feels the slimy stone that makes up the walls.

PRIME MINISTER

When I started here, my predecessor told me a story. About this place.

(MORE)

PRIME MINISTER (CONT'D)

During the refurb in the '70s, some decorator realised that the bricks of Number 10 are actually yellow. Yellow bricks, he said. It just turns out they've turned black after years and years of pollution.

(turns to Bull)

Maybe I can't leak CORTEX myself. But I can make damn sure somebody does.

With that, the PM WHACKS THE ELEVATOR DOOR- Bull walks over to enter too-

PRIME MINISTER (CONT'D)

Take the stairs.

The door closes, leaving Bull alone in the darkness.

93

INT. ELEVATOR. 1ST FLOOR. MOMENTS LATER

Doors open, and the PM springs out. A new-found energy.

94

INT. DOOR CONNECTING NUMBER 10 AND CABINET OFFICE. LATER

Running now, the PM waves at the Guard to open the door. A second GUARD has arrived, taking over from his partner.

95

INT. CABINET OFFICE CORRIDOR

The earliest signs of life in the halls. A few CIVIL SERVANTS and CLEANERS. They glance at the PM as he rushes past-

96

INT. OUTSIDE COBRA. MOMENTS LATER

The PM stops outside the airlock door. Impatiently waits for them to open, muttering under his breath for them to- HE'S IN-

97

INT. COBRA

Clapping his hands for attention, the PM moves around the room as people turn to him. Forcefully closes laptop screens.

PRIME MINISTER

That's it. Enough, enough. All out, right now. No more, you pack up, get in your cars, and piss off back to Cheltenham to await- can you hear me? Are you listening?

Nobody moves. One or two of them REOPEN their laptop screens. As the Prime Minister moves to SLAM ANOTHER SHUT-

-Robin Shaw reluctantly presses a button on a remote control. The screen FILLS WITH THE IMAGE OF SAMANTHA THORNTON.

SAMANTHA THORNTON

I'll take it that's your answer?

PRIME MINISTER

Samantha? You-

SAMANTHA THORNTON

Every word. Your Cabinet Secretary has already made your intention to leak CORTEX yourself crystal clear-

The Prime Minister spins to Robin, who cannot meet his eyes.

SAMANTHA THORNTON (CONT'D)

-so let me be equally definite.

PRIME MINISTER

Do you know what we've been doing?
They've been killing people, Samantha. Our own people, spying on them and- wait.
You're not surprised.

SAMANTHA THORNTON

My understanding was that that approach
was a last resort. There are more-
intermediate measures.

PRIME MINISTER

You knew? The President? Surely she's not
onside with this.

SAMANTHA THORNTON

The President understands that plausible
deniability ends when she starts
demanding answers to the wrong goddamn
questions.

PRIME MINISTER

If I am the head of this government-

SAMANTHA THORNTON

Prime Minister-

PRIME MINISTER

-my party and I cannot be held to account
for illegal actions conducted without our
knowledge-

SAMANTHA THORNTON

-you want to think carefully about where
you're going-

PRIME MINISTER

-we'll make sure blame lands right where it
is deserved, on the shoulders of your and
our cyber-security agencies.

SAMANTHA THORNTON

You do this, and you will single-handedly
drive thousands of jobs and billions of
dollars from your economy.

PRIME MINISTER

How dare you threaten me!

SAMANTHA THORNTON

Diplomatic and economic isolation. We've discussed it with every country that uses CORTEX, and our partners in enterprise. This story breaks, you will be blamed for embroiling us all in an unnecessary scandal your press already plans on crucifying you for. You'll be punished, by us and them, accordingly. We will not suffer as a result of your arrogance.

PRIME MINISTER

Arrogance?! For trying to do the right thing? For trying to save people's lives?

SAMANTHA THORNTON

For thinking you have a monopoly on what is right and what is wrong.

PRIME MINISTER

It is not a question, it's not! If something is jeopardising the life of one citizen, it is wrong.

SAMANTHA THORNTON

If that's truly your stance Prime Minister then, put bluntly, history is going to remember you as the man who drove his country into the wall-

MARC (O.S.)

I'VE GOT IT!!

Spinning to find Marc gazing excitedly at his screen-

MARC (CONT'D)

It's a residential property, just outside Somertown. Where the emails have been originating from. I've got the uh- the exact address here.

SAMANTHA THORNTON
What's going on?

MARC
The emails, the ones to the press. They've travelled round the world and back but they come from here.

A horrible silence. Samantha's eyes burn into the PM.

SAMANTHA THORNTON
Ignore this, and we begin the process. Just stop for a moment, and *think* what it will mean. Think how you'll be remembered. Do the cost-benefit, Prime Minister.

All eyes on the Prime Minister. He turns to Robin Shaw, who nods his head slowly. Can't hold the PM's gaze. Eventually-

PRIME MINISTER
Dispatch a team. Under no circumstances is anyone to be hurt.

ROBIN SHAW
(instructions to Analysts)
You two, liaise with SIS Oxford-branch to organise a covert ART. I want satellite, video-transmission, live-feeds, audio channels. You, and you, I want an RA report and a CESQ crew on their way now. If you can get hold of Dominic from JIC, get him here immediately. Chop chop, chop chop!

Seething, the Prime Minister watches Robin martial the troops. He turns back to Samantha, WHO OPENS HER MOUTH-

-CLICK! The PM switches off her video-feed.

98

INT. OFFICE. NUMBER 10. SAME

Lights click on in the office Simon met the PM in. Bull enters. Looks around. Spots the bin. Pulls out ARGYLE's badge.

This hits Bull quite hard. He leans against the desk. Deflates. Eventually, takes out his phone. Makes a call-

JONATHAN BULL

You were right. I- should've listened. I just-
it doesn't matter. Get eyes on him.

He hangs up. Considers.

99

EXT. EVE'S HOME. NIGHT

Leaping from a taxi, Eve rushes to her front door-

100

INT. LOUNGE. EVE'S HOME

The door opens with a BANG. A feral animal, Eve's inside, mounting the stairs, up, up towards-

101

INT. MERRYN'S BEDROOM

Through an open door we see Eve, ragged breathing, stumbling on the last step, desperately hurrying to reach-

-there she is. Merryn. Asleep in her crib. Tucked in very neatly. Perhaps- perhaps too neatly.

It's then that Eve notices the window. Open, just a crack. Eve approaches. Closes it. FREEZES, as she sees-

102

EXT. EVE'S HOME. NIGHT

A solitary BUILDER, wearing a HI-VIZ jacket finishes a cigarette. He's looks up at Eve. Stubs it out. Walks away.

103 INT. ARMED RESPONSE TEAM VAN. EARLY MORNING

Dressed head-to-toe in armoured gear, an ART TEAM perch in the back of a van, rumbling along. After a moment, it stops.

104 EXT. COUNTRY LANE. OXFORDSHIRE. EARLY MORNING

A single country path. Grass banks. Flimsy barbed wire fence. Listen hard, maybe you can hear the cows mooing.

Boots HIT tarmac as the Team surge from the van. They're all armed with tactical rifles. The ART LEADER positions a camera on the front of his rifle. Taps it to make sure it's secure.

105 INT. COBRA

Filling the wall-mounted screen, a live-feed of a SMALL COTTAGE is streamed back. The Analysts and Robin watch it intently, while the PM seems to watch through glazed eyes.

ART LEADER (V.O.)
Testing. Testing?

ROBIN SHAW
We hear you.

106 EXT. COTTAGE ENTRANCE. SAME

The team approach a front door. Curtains, drawn, obscure inside. The leader reaches out. Tests the door. Locked.

Somebody steps forward. Forces a small, white putty into the lock. Pulls something from it. Whispers "TURN"-

-the unit, as one, look away. There's a BLINDING, SILENT FLASH- they look back at the door-

The locks been almost completely eviscerated. They try the door once against. Swings open with the tiniest CREAK.

107

INT. COBRA

On the screen, we see the Unit padding their way down a near-bare corridor. The carpet, the furniture, it all feels very elderly. Oddly reminiscent of the inside of Number 10.

ART LEADER (V.O.)

Approaching what looks like an office. No sign of life so far.

PRIME MINISTER

If there is, do not to shoot them.

ART LEADER (V.O.)

Sir. Rubber bullets are ready as a final precaution.

PRIME MINISTER

I'm pretty damn sure you shoot rubber bullets, so. Don't.

ART LEADER (V.O.)

Place seems deserted.

ANALYST

IP on a pre-paid dongle pinged to this exact address.

PRIME MINISTER

Who owns the property? Hey?

But the Analyst has gone silent.

108

INT. LIVING ROOM. COTTAGE

Outside what looks like a small study, huddled beside a piano and mantelpiece covered with china statues, one of the team prepares a FLASH-BANG. They silently count down- THREE, TWO-

-edging the door open, they ROLL THE GRENADE IN-

-a small SCREAM nearby as the flash-bang EXPLODES- the UNIT PILE INTO THE ROOM TO FIND-

109 INT. OFFICE. COTTAGE

-an OVERWEIGHT TECHNICIAN on the floor, his hands over his head, blubbering into the ground.

TECHNICIAN

He paid me like, I fookin' swear, two grand, outta the blue, my cousin, I ain't seen him in years. To sit here all night, I dunno-

Nearby, a laptop sits hooked up to a hard-drive and a dongle. Otherwise, the room looks like it might belong to a Grandma.

Several of the ART men approach the Technician. One roughly cuffs him, while two check he's unarmed. The ART Leader watches, before pressing at a headset-

ART LEADER

Sir, please advise on next steps.

110 INT. COBRA

Fully engaged now, the PM stands.

PRIME MINISTER

If he's not the man we're-

ROBIN SHAW

Bring him in to Thames Valley's secure location. CESQs are waiting there with questions. Thank you.

With that, Shaw disconnects the screen. A general HUBBUB breaks out as Analysts discuss what they've just seen. Slowly, Shaw picks his way over to the Prime Minister.

ROBIN SHAW (CONT'D)
Don't worry. We'll find him.

Snapping out of it, the Prime Minister GRABS ROBIN BY THE SCRUFF OF THE NECK, ALMOST HAULING HIM OFF HIS FEET-

ROBIN SHAW (CONT'D)
NO, PLEASE, I HAD TO, PLEASE!

Covering his face in fear, Robin's never quite looked so pathetic. The Prime Minister gets a hold of himself. Eventually, Robin lowers his hands. It dawns on the PM.

PRIME MINISTER
What do they have on you, Robin?

ROBIN SHAW
Something I- I can't control.
(then)
I'm sorry. But it's done now. We'll be
alright. It'll all be alright.

PRIME MINISTER
I will have your resignation, on my desk,
before the sun is up. Do you understand?
DO YOU UNDERSTAND?
(to GCHQ's people)
As for the rest of you. Get the FUCK OUT.
GO, NOW, GO! GO!!

Losing control for just a moment, the Prime Minister GRABS A LAPTOP- GOES TO THROW IT DOWN ON THE GROUND-

-when he stops. Looks around at the Analysts, stuffing this evening into bags. They look scared. Confused, even. The PM lowers the laptop.

PRIME MINISTER (CONT'D)

When you go home, when you sit with your families, your friends, in the pub, around the fire, at any single moment, and they ask you what it's like protecting the country. I want you all to know, whatever you say. The only honest answer you can give is "I don't have a clue".

111 INT. OUTER OFFICE CORRIDOR

Zombie-like, the Prime Minister stumbles towards his office. Early morning sunlight glistens. It's a beautiful day.

The halls are filling up with workers. They nod or smile or greet the Prime Minister. He ignores every last one of them.

From here, he can hear a chatter growing louder-

112 INT. OUTER OFFICE

A small gathering of Ministers and SPADs we may recognise from late last night- Tarquin, Nicky, Oz...

TARQUIN

Morning sir, you- bloody hell. Did you- are you alright?

PRIME MINISTER

The briefing. Christ. Just, uh. Just give me a minute.

Without waiting for a response, the PM enters his office. Shuts the door. The group turn to one another, baffled.

113

INT. PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE

Heading over to his large window overlooking St. James' Park, the Prime Minister just stares for the longest time. Two runners slowly make their way between the trees.

Eventually, he drags himself away. Passes the bookshelf he and Eve were looking at, centuries ago. The autobiographies.

Crumpling to the floor, the PM leans against the bookshelf. Hidden behind his desk, he looks so small and wretched.

There's a knock at the door. The Prime Minister doesn't move.

The door opens. Closes. Two feet approach, although the PM doesn't ever look up to see who's coming.

Sitting down beside the Prime Minister, Jonathan Bull remains in silence with him. Eventually-

JONATHAN BULL

There's an imagining of what a democracy looks like. We've waged wars. Slaughtered millions. Passed, broken, and ignored laws that preserve or shatter the idea. Over and over. Like monkeys with cymbals. All of us.

(beat)

It's all a matter of perspective. What you see is a monstrous system.

PRIME MINISTER

What you see is the future. Right?

JONATHAN BULL

What I see is hope. For us all.

(silence stretches)

Child cruelty, domestic abuse. We'd know immediately. No relying on people coming forward. Tax dodging, theft, murder- no one can hide. Green energy. Do people want it, need it?

(MORE)

JONATHAN BULL (CONT'D)

Why aren't they recycling, how can we get them to drive more safely. With CORTEX, we can *know*.

PRIME MINISTER

You know, I used to sing to Harvey. When he was a baby, I'd go to him, rock him in my arms, sing Elvis to him. The classics. And Christ, I'm sure your damn system can tell you how bad my voice is, but it worked. Every time it worked.

(then)

I don't want you to know those moments. They are mine, my family's. They don't belong to you.

JONATHAN BULL

(beat)

With our help. You'll know what the public wants long before the opposition. Before people even know themselves. You'd serve a long time.

PRIME MINISTER

And they say the system's broken.

JONATHAN BULL

It is broken. We all know it is.

PRIME MINISTER

You need a little faith in people.

A silence, as Bull considers this. Seems wistful.

JONATHAN BULL

I doubt you knew Simon. I'm not sure anyone ever really did. But what I saw in him. Such potential.

PRIME MINISTER

You trusted him.

JONATHAN BULL

Didn't need to. His mind doesn't work like that. Or, at least. I thought it didn't. Maybe that's why we need a system like this.

PRIME MINISTER

Can CORTEX predict how people will react when they find out about this?

JONATHAN BULL

(beat)

No. No computer could know that.

PRIME MINISTER

At least I'll know I did the right thing. There'll be a peace in that.

Bull sighs. The sense of regret lingers. Climbs to his feet.

JONATHAN BULL

Christ, it never gets any easier.

PRIME MINISTER

Catches up with us all in the end.

Bull nods slowly. Goes to leave... Stops by the PM's desk. Opens his laptop. Plugs in his own small hard-drive.

Finger hovering over a button, Bull hesitates, just for a heartbeat. Clicks. Opens a file. Inside, two video clips.

JONATHAN BULL

I want you to know something, Peter. It's something that you may not believe, but I truly mean it. This was never personal. And I wish we didn't find ourselves here.

The Prime Minister looks up. Frowns.

PRIME MINISTER
What're you talking about?

JONATHAN BULL
Your faith in people. I always knew one day
you'd need to let it go. When we feared, a
week or so ago, that we'd been
compromised, we set in motion several
defensive measures. This was one, I'm
afraid.

Silence from the Prime Minister. Bull presses the mousepad. We hear the sound before we see the video:

HARVEY (V.O.)
*Please, Dad. I'm begging you. Just tell me
what to do.*

Slowly, painfully, the PM drags himself to his feet. Approaches the desk. Sees a subtly edited version of HIS AND HARVEY'S SKYPE CALL.

PRIME MINISTER (ON SCREEN)
Here's what we can do. I will call the Dean,
and depending on what he says, we can
choose the *appropriate* next steps. Alright?

PRIME MINISTER (CONT'D)
Turn it off.

HARVEY (ON SCREEN)
Thank you. Thank you, Dad.

PRIME MINISTER
TURN IT OFF-

He grabs for the laptop, but Bull just moves it out of reach-
A sickening silence, as the clip ends.

JONATHAN BULL
Do I need to show you the second?

Nothing from the Prime Minister who stands, sullen and defeated. Perhaps to hammer the point home, Bull clicks-

-a second video. The feed from Harvey's computer's webcam. The image is grainy, but we can discern Harvey in bed with a MAN. Harvey is on top. The sex looks rigorous. Ambiguous.

JONATHAN BULL (CONT'D)

Our man- the student with your son there.
He has disappeared already. No one will
ever find him. Let us deal with Simon, or
this footage will be released. We can leave
the world to decipher what Prime Minister
Peter Fisher meant when he said
"appropriate next steps".

Totally broken, the Prime Minister stares blankly at the screen. Eyes glazed.

PRIME MINISTER

How did you- how can you do this?

JONATHAN BULL

Because I have to. Every day, the world
gets bigger, more complicated, more
populated, more polluted. Every second,
our enemies multiply. But there's a
chance. With this system, horrors, faults
and all. Maybe we'll be alright.

Silence stretches.

PRIME MINISTER

You've found him?

JONATHAN BULL

The cottage belonged to Simon's aunt. He
would never have made much of a spy,
but as an analyst, he... If he gave this
information to you, he could give it to
anybody. We can't risk it.

PRIME MINISTER
We.

JONATHAN BULL
You're not just doing this for your family,
Peter. You're defending everything and
every body. You are saving this country.

PRIME MINISTER
What will you do to him?

JONATHAN BULL
I need an answer, Peter. Yes or no.

Slowly. Painfully slowly, the Prime Minister... draws Simon's USB from his pocket. Places it beside Bull.

PRIME MINISTER
Please just- don't hurt him.

JONATHAN BULL
Thank you, Prime Minister.

Bull turns to leave-

PRIME MINISTER
Why didn't you just-

Stops himself short. Horrified he almost even asked.

JONATHAN BULL
Because now you understand what it takes
from a person to keep a country safe.

PRIME MINISTER
Wonderful.

With that, Bull turns to leave. As he reaches the door.

PRIME MINISTER (CONT'D)
He didn't do it? Harvey. He didn't.

Bull doesn't answer. He simply takes out his phone, and makes a call. Neither Bull nor the Prime Minister realise that Bull has left his hard-drive in the PM's computer.

114 INT. EUROSTAR CARRIAGE. SAME

Trying to be inconspicuous, Simon Argyle fidgets in his seat. Keeps folding and refolding a napkin. A WOMAN sitting across at him smiles sympathetically. He glances at her, suspicious.

Several seats down... familiar BLACK HAIR. In between the seats, a direct line of sight to Simon.

Bull's Assistant withdraws her phone as it rings. Answers. Listens for a moment.

ASSISTANT

Yes sir.

Disconnects. Pockets the phone. She allows herself the smallest of smiles as the train begins to depart.

115 INT. PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE. MORNING

Hands shaking slightly, the Prime Minister tries to do up a tie. He's trying to concentrate, but can't get it right. He gives up. Takes out his iPhone. Makes a call. Voice-mail.

PRIME MINISTER

Harvey, I need you to know. Whatever you think of me, of this evening. I'm here. I always will be, whatever happens. And, I-

The door behind him opens. The Prime Minister goes to continue his call-hangs up. Leaves the phone on his desk.

JULIET

A tie? Not very you.

PRIME MINISTER

My silent protest. If I could bloody make it work.

JULIET FISHER

You need to do your top button up.

PRIME MINISTER

But what would Elvis say?

Juliet gives a small smile. She doesn't offer to help, nor does he try and ask. Eventually, he succeeds in tying it.

JULIET FISHER

He never went to the police. I had someone call Thames Valley.

The PM nods.

JULIET FISHER (CONT'D)

What's happened to you, Peter?

Turning to her, the PM tries to have her look at him. But she won't meet his eye. She can't. She just stares at his desk.

Which the PM turns to. Notices the laptop. The hard-drive.

The Prime Minister goes over and opens the screen. The video files, still loaded up.

He walks back, to leave. As he passes Juliet-

PRIME MINISTER

I did my best. I just- I'm so sorry.

He touches her shoulder, but she shifts her weight, shaking his hand off. Nodding, more to himself than her, the Prime Minister leaves his office.

Off Juliet, as she gazes at the laptop, lost in thought.

116 INT. NUMBER 10 ENTRANCE. MORNING

The building heaves with people. They writhe, lunge, talk at half-speed. Holding out papers, SECRETARIES natter at the PM, who isn't listening. No sound filters in as he passes his Home Secretary Sarika, who fixes him with a curious look-

-still he walks to the door, ignoring everybody, eyes glazed. Waiting by the door stands Robin Shaw and Jonathan Bull.

He reaches them. Jonathan hands him a piece of paper- he seems to be saying something about a speech. Glimmers of comprehensible language sneak in, but the PM only gets one syllable at a time. Someone nearby applies MAKE-UP to the PM.

With a reassuring hand to the shoulder, Bull guides the Prime Minister towards the door to Number 10. Just as they reach it, the PM turns to Bull.

PRIME MINISTER

Maybe- maybe you were right. Maybe it is better. For everyone.

Bull pats the PM on the shoulder. Nodding, perhaps more to himself, the Prime Minister turns to go outside- the doors open out, and he's greeted by a BANK OF PHOTOGRAPHY FLASHES-

117 EXT. NUMBER 10 DRIVEWAY

Raising a hand against the light, the Prime Minister feels an aide tugging at his sleeve. He's blocking his face.

Realising, he lowers it. Fixes on his big smile.

PRIME MINISTER

Wonderful. Great. OK.

118 INT. LOUNGE. EVE'S HOME. MORNING

Sat with Merryn in her lap, Eve's eyes are glued to a TV set - the BBC, broadcasting the Prime Minister as he steps out.

EVE HENTLEY
Come on, Peter. Come on.

119 EXT. NUMBER 10 DRIVEWAY

Two steps more, and the Prime Minister is behind a podium. Out front, a semi-circle of JOURNALISTS shuffle closer.

Placing the paper handed to him by Bull onto the podium, the PM allows his fingers to run over the chipped wood surface. His nail picks at a small chip of wood that comes loose.

He pulls out the crumpled-up resignation speech Eve handed to him before she left. Places that beside Bull's speech.

The Journalists shuffle awkwardly. Several look at one another, frowning- what's going on? Why isn't he talking?

120 INT. NUMBER 10 ENTRANCE. SAME

Watching on a screen, MINISTERS, CIVIL SERVANTS and SPADs look on as the Prime Minister. Bull, amongst them.

121 EXT. NUMBER 10 DRIVEWAY. SAME

Clearing his throat, the PM picks up Bull's speech.

PRIME MINISTER
Thank you all for- for coming here on such
a- such a lovely morning.

He clears his throat again. Blinks hard. Wipes a bead of sweat from his forehead. He seems lost. Confused. A man without direction. As he goes to continue-

-he feels SOMETHING. A tingling. A glimmer of a feeling, at the back of his neck. Slowly, the Prime Minister turns back towards Number 10-

And, up in a window just above the main door... The Prime Minister sees her. Juliet. Looking down to him.

She stands, staring out at her husband. He's surrounded. On one side, by the press. On the other his aides, his party, his front door.

She gently lifts a hand. Places it on the window. She need say nothing. Nor he. In that instant, they are the only two people in the whole world.

Finally, an eternity later. He turns back to his podium. And somehow... seems different.

Peter Fisher takes a deep breath.

His hand reaches up to Bull's speech- his other takes Eve's. TURNS THEM BOTH OVER.

He licks his lips. Grips the podium.

And, with all his remaining energy and conviction focused on the mob in front of him-

PETER FISHER
I- I have something to say.

And, as certainty swells, as he we see him go to launch into an improvised speech, a confession, an explanation perhaps-

WE CUT TO BLACK.

THE END



BLACK BEAR

PICTURES