

EDITED DB 23/05/17

PILOT EPISODE AND TREATMENT FOR 6 PART SERIES

-

BRIEF LIES

INSIDE A NEWSPAPER AS IT FACES THE INTERNET CRISIS

BY

DANAE BROOK

71 OXFORD GARDENS  
LONDON W10 5UJ  
MOBILE: 0788580173

## SCENE 1

INTERIOR: Editor's office, Shard Newspapers, November 2009

LARGE DESK, LARGE WINDOWS OVERLOOKING LONDON STREETS.  
SIRENS WAIL.

PILES OF NEWSPAPERS AND MAGAZINES ON THE DESK.

THE EDITOR IN CHIEF, JACK HARWICH, IS ON THE TELEPHONE. HIS  
SECRETARY ENTERS AS HE SLAMS IT DOWN.

JACK  
Shit. Shit. Shit.

SECRETARY PUTS A CUP OF COFFEE CAREFULLY ON THE DESK.

EDITOR SWIPES A PILE OF PAPERS OFF THE DESK SENDING THEM  
CRASHING TO THE FLOOR.

SHEILA  
What's new?

JACK  
Circulation's down by 5% on the  
last month, ad revenue by 12%. It  
looks like we're fucked.

SHEILA  
Cancel lunch?

JACK  
Cancel everything. Conference  
first and I want them ALL  
THERE...NOW

SHEILA  
All?

JACK  
Get that lazy bastard Greg in my  
office BEFORE conference and get  
the rest of those fuckers moving  
NOW...

SHEILA PICKS UP THE TELEPHONE TO DIAL, DRINKING JACK'S  
UNTOUCHED COFFEE. ON THE DESK IS A MAGAZINE ARTICLE WITH  
THE HEADLINE: WEBILLIONAIRES SNAPPING AT SHARP HEELS!

CUT TO:

INT: GREG'S OFFICE

GREG'S SECRETARY LUCY LOOKS UP AS JACK CHARGES INTO THE  
ROOM.

SECRETARY (REACHING FOR MOBILE)  
Stuck in traffic.....

JACK  
Get him in here.

THE EDITOR ALMOST BUMPS INTO SHEILA AS HE STRIDES OUT OF THE DOOR. SHE STEPS ASIDE.

SHEILA  
Joe's getting the others. Your office?

JACK  
My office and tell Joe to get some-one from advertising.

SHEILA  
I'll ask Olive....

JACK  
Get that fucker Greg to get his arse in here right now!

SHEILA  
I'LL do it.

SHEILA REACHES FOR LUCY'S TELEPHONE AND SPEED DIALS A NUMBER.

FADE TO BLACK  
SCENE ENDS

## SCENE 2

INT. SMART LEATHER-UPHOLSTERED JAGUAR, JACK'S DEPUTY GREG IS CHECKING HIS MOBILE, SCREENING JACK'S CALL. POV: HIS DRIVER WATCHES HIM CAREFULLY IN THE MIRROR. WHEN THE WIND-UP SIGN COMES HE PUSHES THE WINDOW BUTTON TO CLOSE IT.

Greg'S COMPANION IS A SLENDER FINE BONED BRUNETTE, CATHERINE, DIARY EDITOR, DRESSED IN LEOPARD SKIN COAT, KNEE BOOTS, mini skirt. GREG KISSES HER BRIEFLY ON THE VERY GLOSSY LIPS BEFORE TAKING CALL FROM JACK'S SECRETARY.

SHEILA (V.O.)  
He's on the war path. Watch out. Circulation's down, readership down, its the internet thing again. Heads will roll.

GREG  
They have already.

SHEILA  
More to come.

GREG  
Nearer home?

SHEILA  
Could be. You better be careful.

GREG  
Blood on the walls. Again.

CATHERINE IS APPLYING LIP GLOSS WHERE IT HAS BEEN SMEARED BY THE KISS. SHE GLANCES AT HIM THROUGH HER COMPACT MIRROR AS HE TALKS TO HIS EDITOR'S SECRETARY (IN LOWERED TONES).

SHEILA (V.O.)  
What happened last night (PAUSE).  
Have fun?

GREG  
Another of those wanky arts  
events full of gender benders...I  
left early..

SHEILA  
I bet. Blond or brunette?

GREG  
You know me, Sheels, anything  
goes....see you in five!

GREG'S DRIVER STOPS THE CAR, CATHERINE GETS OUT LANGUIDLY, THE DRIVER TURNS THE JAGUAR QUICKLY TO DRIVE INTO THE UNDERGROUND GARAGE. ABOVE THE PARKING LOT A SIGN SAYS: DEPUTY EDITOR, SHARP NEWSPAPERS

CUT TO:

INT. EDITOR'S OFFICE, JACK SITS BEHIND HIS DESK, MANAGING EDITOR CARL AND 2 PEOPLE FROM ADVERTISING AND PROMOTIONS STAND UNCOMFORTABLY IN FRONT OF HIM, LIKE NAUGHTY SCHOOLBOYS.

JACK  
The Chairman had his 19th nervous  
breakdown before breakfast this  
morning and he'll pop an artery  
if we don't do something.  
Something more effective than  
firing the whole deparment.

CARL (MANAGING EDITOR)  
Revenue's down by 15% for January  
and this month's looking worse.

The newspapers used to bring the cash into this group and now we're providing less than half the profits and that makes us vulnerable.

JACK SMACKS HIS HAND ON THE TABLE.

JACK

Talk to me about advertising.

MIKE

We just lost the Sony account. They're going with the net.

CARL

Why the hell would they want to do that?

MIKE

It's the way kids do it now - download their music free...on their tablets, Youtube...Twitter.. all that stuff...They get it off their computers.

JACK (SARCASTICALLY)

You're supposed to speak English on this newspaper -

CARL

Gotta keep up with the times Jack. That's the jargon. There's going to be more. We've got to get someone who really knows what they're doing.

JACK

What can we do NOW?

MIKE

More advertising on the box but television costs.

CARL

And what the hell would we be promoting.?

JACK (SARCASTIC)

Oh you know, family holidays in Afghanistan, skiing in the Bolivian glacier puddles....

PROMO MAN

We can make deals, I know the  
Managing..

JACK

Cut the crap. Come up with  
something new.

MIKE (SHIFTING FROM FOOT TO FOOT)

There's always special offers -  
Whitney Houston's new CD is due  
out now.

JACK

Next you're going to sell me  
Shirley Bassey singing  
Goldfinger.

CARL

Even my five year old knows Whitney  
is a clapped out junky with a voice  
like a strangled rabbit.

PROMO MAN

Ok ok so she's old hat but  
Warners are putting a lot of  
money behind it.

JACK

What about Jay Z?

PROMO MAN

Jay Z and Beyoncé, something with  
the two of them? Cool....

MIKE

She's releasing some tracks on  
the internet first...

CARL (TURNING TO PROMO MAN)

Does that mean ANYONE can download  
it free?

MIKE

No, that's streaming - technically  
illegal.

PROMO MAN

Some is illegal some isn't -

JACK

So there's lots we don't know.  
But what we *do* know is no more  
selling smart newspapers with  
shit CDs or we're all down the  
tubes.

JACK (PACING, JABBING HIS FIST AT THE WINDOW)

JACK

The Internet. You can't see it,  
you can't put your finger on it  
and we can't get to grips with it  
so where do we go from here?

JACK COMES AWAY FROM THE WINDOW. PICKS UP A TELEPHONE. THE  
PRE-CONFERENCE MEETING IS OVER.

GREG

So we're changing what to what?

CUT CLOSE UP ON JACK'S LIVID EXPRESSION.

JACK

OUT! See me with a list in two  
hours. In my office.

JACK TURNS TO SHEILA

JACK (CONT'D)

Get Olive in here I need  
something with an idea between  
its ears!

SHEILA

The Boss has been on the phone.  
He wants a run down now...

JACK

I know. Get Greg. I want him in  
here before conference and paying  
attention not reading fucking GQ.

SHEILA

Anyone else?

JACK

We need sexy. You better get  
Catherine as well, and I want to  
know what story everyone's on.

SHEILA

She wasn't in when I rang the  
Diary...late night I think.

JACK

Well it's her job, but get the  
rest of these lazy wankers to  
MOVE.

SHEILA GIVES A MOCK SALUTE AND BACKS OUT OF THE ROOM

JACK GLANCES UP AND PUTS TWO FINGERS TO HIS TEMPLE

FADE TO BLACK  
SCENE ENDS

SCENE 3

EXT. OFFICE BUILDING, SHARP NEWSPAPERS ASSOCIATED IN HUGE LETTERS ALONG THE FRONT. CATHERINE AND HER DIARY ASSISTANT ADAM PUSH THROUGH THE SWING DOORS, ENTERING THE BUILDING

CATHERINE STRIDES AHEAD TALKING OVER HER SHOULDER

CATHERINE

That party last night was so  
shit. I should have left earlier.

ADAM

If you'd left any earlier you  
wouldn't have arrived.

CATHERINE LOOKS AT HIM SCORNFULLY AND LEAPS ONTO THE ELEVATOR, SHOULDER BAG JUST MISSING HIS FACE.

CATHERINE

You need to stay on your story.  
You didn't email me anything last  
night - let alone a story.

ADAM

I knew I'd see you this...

CATHERINE

Should have had it by now.

ADAM

Well Lady Isabelle was long gone  
so there wasn't much to say.

CATHERINE

You mean I should have got there  
earlier? You know how I LOVE to  
waste my time on rotten parties.

ADAM

Well I met this divine waiter at  
Club 007 afterwards.

CATHERINE

You know the motto.



ADAM

Email first, lay male later.

BOTH LAUGH.

CATHERINE

Did you find out why Lady  
Isabelle and her toyboy split up -  
did she get sick of paying? Boy,  
are toys an expensive habit.

ADAM

Talking about habits I saw Kiki  
looking like she'd just got out  
of bed.

CUT TO NIGHT SHOT, BLUE MERCEDES, DISHEVELLED GIRL IN HALF  
OPEN CAR DOOR. PAPARAZZI BULBS FLASHING, THIGHS ON SHOW.

CATHERINE

Been kicked out more like!  
Probably had - the wrong side - I  
heard she and Sam split up and  
she went off with that guy from  
Manhattan Girls who's turning up  
everywhere.

ADAM

Jill got a line. Sort of.

CATHERINE

She did. Or she didn't?

ADAM

She'll tell you. She heard  
something in the ladies at the  
club. Something about Isabella  
from a girlfriend or something...

CATHERINE

Since when do we stand up stories  
overheard in the loo?

ADAM

Since half the department got  
slaughtered.

CATHERINE

Has Jill filed?

ADAM SHRUGS A NO.

CATHERINE (CONT'D)

Then you better bloody get her to  
do it right now and I'll read it  
on my blackberry once I'm in  
conference.

AT THE TOP OF THE ELEVATOR SHEILA MEETS THEM.

SHEILA  
Conference now you two.

CATHERINE  
Problem?

SHEILA  
Money of course...circulation's  
down. Not just down, we're  
sinking. Drowning. Along with  
other newspapers I'll bet.

ADAM  
Oops. Exes cut. Better get my  
bill for last night sorted.

CATHERINE  
Better be careful what you put in  
for. Carl's watching like a hawk.  
Get me a coffee will you darling?

ADAM (SIGHING)  
All the way downstairs again?

CATHERINE  
Got to check out Jill's story  
before I go in.

CATHERINE WALKS STRAIGHT ON INTO THE DIARY OFFICE LEAVING  
ADAM TO TAKE THE DOWN ELEVATOR.

FADE TO BLACK  
SCENE ENDS

SCENE 4

INT: DIARY OFFICE, SIGN ABOVE THE DOOR, WIDE PICTURE WINDOWS  
ONTO BUSY STREET  
TWO DIRECTORS DESKS FACING EACH OTHER, POT OF SNOWDROPS ON  
ONE OF THE COMPUTERS, FOUR DESKS TO ONE SIDE, ONE OCCUPIED BY  
A WOMAN WRITING BUSILY, ONE WITH A PLUMP YOUNG GIRL READING  
THE MORNING PAPERS.

DIARY EDITOR CATHERINE SWINGS IN THROUGH THE DOOR.

CATHERINE  
Dreadful party. Headache to think  
of it.

THE YOUNG SECRETARY LOOKS UP FROM THE PAPERS, REACHES INTO  
HER DESK DRAWER, PULLS OUT A BOTTLE OF PARACETAMOL, OFFERS  
IT TO CATHERINE WHO SHAKES OUT TWO TABLETS.

THE WOMAN WRITER JILL ROLLS HER EYES, MUTTERS UNDER HER BREATH

WRITER (JILL)  
It's called a hangover.

CATHERINE SLINGS HER COAT OVER THE BACK OF HER CHAIR AND DUMPS HER ENORMOUS OBVIOUSLY EXPENSIVE BAG ON THE DESK

CATHERINE  
A leftover. Who's next on the execution list, anyone know?

OTHER JOURNALISTS DAWDLE INTO THE ROOM

FEATURES SECRETARY DELLA TAKES A CALL.  
Conference in two minutes.

JILL  
Is it just editors or do they want mere mortals in there for roasting?

DELLA  
Heads of department only. Serious stuff.

CATHERINE  
Morning Jill. Hope your evening was better than mine? I see neither you nor Adam bothered to write anything up. What about Lady Isabella Broughton's bust-up with the toy boy?

JILL  
I think I found out where she went, she and the actor.....

CATHERINE WHEELS ROUND, DROPPING HER KEYS ONTO THE DESK

CATHERINE (SARCASTICALLY)  
Because you just happened to see them?

FADE TO BLACK  
SCENE ENDS

SCENE 5

EXT: PLUSH, SHABBY CHIC HOTEL IN LONDON

Cold grey day, London

INT: BREAKFAST ROOM, BROWNS HOTEL

TALL BLONDE GIRL, DAISY GREENE, IS HAVING BREAKFAST WITH AN OLDER COUPLE, HER PARENTS. VOICES ARE RAISED. THE GIRL GRABS A CROISSANT, DIPS IT IN COFFEE, GLARES AT HER MOTHER.

VIOLET

Calm down sweetheart this really isn't the moment to lose your cool.

DAISY

My best isn't enough is it?

VIOLET (HER MOTHER)

You don't give your best.

DAISY

Oh God Mum.

VIOLET (CONT'D)

You don't own the right to spout cliches you know.

DAISY

No I just inherit them.

OSCAR (HER FATHER)

Here, allow me.

HER FATHER LEANS OVER, TAKES DAISY'S CROISSANT, AND BITES.

OSCAR (CONT'D)

How you feeling about the job?

DAISY

I spoke to some-one I know at the paper yesterday and she said it's a snakepit. I'll need a compass to find my way and a degree in engineering not English - language doesn't mean a damned thing any more.

OSCAR

So you'll be fine then.

DAISY

**Without** your help.

OSCAR

You got a degree. Just! Use it.

DAISY

From a crap University.

VIOLET

So it's a crap degree?

DAISY

I'm doing my best. I told you.

OSCAR

Are you doing an interview with old Broughton in the House?

VIOLET

Let's hope that's not just another fantasy.

DAISY

I want to. That doesn't mean I do it. They're not going to give it to the new girl are they?

OSCAR

If you say you know him, they might. He's on the drugs committee, you know. Controversial.

DAISY

YOU know him, you mean. That won't cut it Dad, whatever you think about your Old Boy's network it doesn't extend to daughters any more.

SHE TAKES BACK HER HALF-EATEN CROISSANT.

OSCAR

What did you say about his daughter?

DAISY

I didn't but we were at school together.

VIOLET

Isabelle. I'd forgotten about Isabelle. Another little wildcat if ever there was one.

OSCAR

Was she expelled with you?

DAISY

No. Yes. What does it matter?

OSCAR

It doesn't. She doesn't. She's never been a good influence on you.

DAISY

I know what I'm doing Dad. I'm late. I'm nervous. Thanks for nothing parents.

VIOLET  
Spoiled little....

DAISY FLOUNCES UP FROM THE TABLE AND OUT OF THE DOOR OF THE RESTAURANT IN A FLURRY OF SCARVES, BAGS, GLOVES, HAIR MIRACULOUSLY ESCAPING ENTANGLEMENT, LONG LEGS MADE LONGER BY MICRO SKIRT, VERTIGINOUS STILETTO BLACK PATENT HEELS AND CANARY YELLOW STOCKINGS WITH A BLACK SEAM DOWN THE BACK.

THE TWO UNIFORMED WAITERS HOVERING AT THE SWING DOORS GAZE AFTER HER, EYES POPPING.

OSCAR  
Don't call that a very suitable outfit for the office.

VIOLET  
Oscar, when did you last go into a newspaper office? Probably find they wear bikini tops... Here (she beckons the waiter who gives her the bill)...I'll do that.

OSCAR FINISHES THE CROISSANT WHILE VIOLET SIGNS THE BILL.

OSCAR  
Yes. Sure. In November.

FADE TO BLACK  
SCENE ENDS

SCENE 6

INT: DIARY OFFICE. CATHERINE STILL HOLDING COURT

CATHERINE (IRRITATED)  
If you can't stand it up don't speak, you're giving me a migraine.

SHE TURNS AWAY FROM JILL AND STALKS BACK TO HER DESK.

JILL  
I heard these two 'It' girls talking in the loo. At the party. Isabelle Broughton had left. No-one tailed her.

CATHERINE  
How did THAT happen?

JILL  
Gave us the slip. Drunk as a skunk - don't know how she did it.

CATHERINE

Couldn't have anything to do with reporters drinking on the job could it?

JILL

Well I had to have a pee, and I did go to the loo, and while I was there I heard these girls, these two friends of Isabelle, and they said she'd been busted. But they didn't know where. They'd been messaged on Facebook by a mate.

CATHERINE (SARCASTICALLY)

Brilliant! That's a page lead. Or it would be if you could stand it up. Got any pictures?

THE EDITOR'S DRIVER JOE PUTS HIS HEAD ROUND THE OFFICE DOOR

JOE

Conference!

CATHERINE

Only just got here.

JOE

Sheila just told you. It's a crisis. The Ed wants to see you first Catherine, and Greg, and then get the others in there in five.

JILL

Need a list Catherine?

CATHERINE

No time. Get the picture desk on the Lady Izzy story. Shit I need another aspirin.

CATHERINE PICKS UP HER BAG, RIFLES THROUGH IT FOR HER NOTEBOOK, DROPS THE BAG BACK ONTO THE DESK AND HEADS FOR THE DOOR, PUSHING IT, WHILE ADAM PASSES HER COMING IN.

CATHERINE (CONT'D)

*Latte?*

ADAM IS BALANCING TWO PAPER CUPS AS HE PUSHES THE GLASS DOORS WITH HIS SHOULDER

ADAM

Cappuccino, no sugar, no syrup!

CATHERINE

Come on sweetie you know I don't  
do dairy it's a *soya latte!*

CATHERINE LETS THE DOOR SWING BACK AFTER HER WHILE ADAM  
SLAMS THE COFFEES ON THE DESK

ADAM

You know she really is a bitch.

JILL

She wants pictures of Lady  
Isabella..

ADAM

From last night? OH OH...

I'll do it.

Just take this coffee will you  
and put something into that body  
of yours.

JILL

Hey thanks. No breakfast.

ADAM SWIGS HIS COFFEE, WIPES HIS UPPER LIP, LOOKS AT JILL

ADAM

Why not ducky? Can't boil an egg  
yet?

JILL SHAKES HER HAIR OVER HER EYES AND MUMBLES

JILL

Too many Black Russians. I was on  
my brother's sofa last night.

ADAM

How comfy sweetie pie. Now what  
does she want pictures of?

JILL

Lady Isabelle.

ADAM

And?

JILL

Sam Bronson maybe...or the new  
boyfriend...

ADAM

Well that's not bloody likely is  
it if she hasn't been seen since  
nine o'clock last night?



JILL  
I saw her with some-one, in the  
lift, she was leaving.. with..

ADAM  
Who, you dumbo?

JILL  
I think it was Daniel Craig. It  
looked like Daniel Craig. From  
behind.

ADAM  
YEAH. Right. From the back. And  
no pix, right?

JILL  
You're supposed to be in  
conference.

ADAM  
You're supposed to keep our lady  
of the Diaries happy with a line  
or two (of words my dear, WORDS!)

JILL  
I'll get the picture.

ADAM LEAPS FOR THE DOOR AGAIN, YELLING

ADAM  
Where's that Charlie Mount?  
Charlie I need every pap picture  
you never saw from last night's  
party....

FADE TO BLACK  
SCENE ENDS

SCENE 7

INT: PICTURE DESK

CHARLIE MOUNT, PICTURE EDITOR, THICKSET, IN SHIRTSLEEVES,  
STUBBY FINGERS, IS SHIFTING THROUGH PHOTOGRAPHS LIKE A DECK  
OF CARDS. NEXT TO HIM ON A COMPUTER IS BILL, HIS DEPUTY,  
CLICKING THROUGH PICTURES ON THE SCREEN.

ADAM MINCES QUICKLY PAST THE NEWS DESK, PULLING JILL ALONG  
BEHIND HIM, PAST EMPTY SEATS WHERE THE REPORTERS ARE  
ALREADY OUT ON JOBS.

THE NEWS EDITOR, JED, IS HEADING FOR THE EDITOR'S  
CONFERENCE.

ADAM SNEAKS A LOOK AT THE PHOTOGRAPHS ON CHARLIE'S DESK.

ADAM

Lady Izzy feeling dizzy?

CHARLIE (GOOD HUMOUREDLY)

None of your bullshit this morning you faggot. Does this story come from your fuckin' desk because if it does it's shit, you know we can't stand it up...

BILL (CHARLIE'S DEPUTY) LEANS OVER FROM HIS DESK AND BELLOWS

BILL

Conference five minutes ago and THERE'S TROUBLE IN THE AIR. Can you smell it? Coming in like a stonking thunder storm.

CHARLIE (TO ADAM)

Not unless we got 'em on video in bed..got 'em doing a Paris Hilton..

BILL (TO CHARLIE)

Gimme a break chief. When do you need 'em?

CHARLIE SHRUGS ON HIS JACKET, TAKES A SHEAF OF PRINTS FROM HIS DESK AND HEADS FOR THE DOOR MARKED EDITOR. TURNING TO SHOUT OVER HIS SHOULDER TO BILL, WHO IS DIALLING UP PHOTOGRAPHERS TO GET PICTURES IN FROM LAST NIGHT'S PARTIES. CLOSE UP ON FAMOUS FACES, DANIEL CRAIG, KIKI THE DISHEVELLED SOCIETY GIRL, LADY ISABELLE'S REAR VIEW AS SHE LEANS ON CRAIG.

CHARLIE

By the time I'm out or sooner. Bring them in if you can.

ADAM PULLS JILL IN FRONT OF CHARLIE.

ADAM (TO JILL)

Now tell Charlie what you told me before he puts his head in the lion's mouth.

JILL PULLS HER HOODIE OVER HER HEAD AND WHISPERS (V.O.)

JILL

It was about an hour into the party and I was in the loo and I overheard these girls:

FADE TO BLACK. FLASHBACK TO PREVIOUS NIGHT/MONDAY

## SCENE 8

INT. DARK NIGHTCLUB. PEOPLE LAUGHING, GETTING DRUNK, LOUD MUSIC, DISCO LIGHTS

CUT TO:

TWO SKINNY LONG-HAIRED GIRLS IN STILETTO HEELS, SEQUIN TANK TOPS AND JEANS LEANING ON THE BAR TALKING TO EACH OTHER. JILL LISTENING. GIRLS TOO DRUNK OR STONED TO CARE.

GIRL 1

I just got a text from Izzy.  
She's been busted.

GIRL 2

Busted? Busted? Where for god's sake? What with?

GIRL 1

I don't know, I don't know, WHO WITH is more the question - she's off air, I don't know where she was going...to Mahiki maybe, with that bloke, you know, the one she said she'd never fancied..

GIRL 2

Oh God, she was so out of it....

CUT TO:

REPORTER, JILL, SITTING ON THE LOO SCRIBBLING INTO HER DIARY. SHE SNAPS SHUT THE NOTEBOOK AND SLIPS OUT OF THE CUBICLE LOOKING FOR THE GIRLS AGAIN. THEY'VE GONE. AS SHE LEAVES THE CLUB SHE SEES PHOTOGRAPHER DICK OLDE STANDING SLYLY IN A CORNER WITH HIS CAMERA SLUNG ROUND HIS NECK.

SHE WINKS AT HIM.

JILL (SLURRING SLIGHTLY)

Got a hot one!

JILL EXITS THE CLUB, STILL ON THE LOOK OUT FOR THE GIRLS. STAGGERING SLIGHTLY, SHE HAILS A CAB FOR HOME. SHE TURNS TO FIND DICK OLDE ON THE PAVEMENT OUTSIDE.

JILL (CONT'D)

Who were those two girls I was just talking to?

DICK

No idea darling. You just came out of the ladies.

CAB DRAWS UP TO THE KERB AND JILL GETS IN UNSTEADILY.

DICK OLDE, WATCHING HER LEAVE, CLICKS THROUGH THE PICTURES ON HIS DIGITAL CAMERA, FINDS THE PICTURE HE'S LOOKING FOR, GRINS, AND MAKES HIS WAY TO HIS MOTORBIKE.

FADE TO BLACK  
SCENE ENDS

SCENE 9

INT. CHAIRMAN'S OFFICE. PROPRIETOR TOBY GREENE CALLS JACK IN TO SEE HIM. STEPS OUT FROM BEHIND HIS DESK AND WALKS TOWARDS HIM.

TOBY  
We're up shit creek aren't we?

JACK NODS

TOBY  
If we don't listen to the kids.  
If we don't jump into the future,  
the Fleet Street we know and love  
is rubble. End of newspapers.

JACK STEPS TOWARDS HIM.

TOBY (CONT'D)  
Except there is no Fleet Street any  
more.

JACK  
Ollie has a new web designer she  
thinks can give us a redesign...  
and I'm...

TOBY  
Jack. We're not just in crisis we  
are dying on our feet - losing  
money to cyberspace operations  
where people get music free, porn  
free, news free. It may be  
useless news of screws but it's  
free and in a recession nothing  
beats free. The English love free  
- if it's free they'll take it,  
even if they hate it.

JACK  
One thing that beats free is  
winning -

HE SMACKS HIS HAND ON THE DESK.

JACK (CONT'D)

- being top of your game. Numero uno. We've got to get tougher, better, deeper. Get some of the old forensic team going. I've taken on Margo Smith. She's doing two columns for the price of one. I've talked McDonald into doing more stuff under a pseudonym and you know how long THAT took to negotiate. I need two weeks in the Priory to recover..

TOBY

Not enough. I just heard the Russians are coming in.

JACK

What does that mean?

TOBY

Lebenov. Everybody's favourite -

JACK

Art collector.

TOBY (CONT'D)

The Evening paper's been sold to him. For £1. A symbol. A gesture. He's going to stop selling it on the street and give it away.

JACK

Aha! So where's the money coming from?

TOBY

We're sacking more staff, paring down editorial, beefing up the online and charging for online services, hoping all those urban luvvies pay to read our vitriolic critics online.

JACK

If you're charging online for the Evening you could charge online for the Sunday.

TOBY

Our online operation is like a pregnant tortoise Jack.

JACK

It was.

TOBY

They don't even pick up what's on YouTube. Or Twitter. Did you see the Globe yesterday? It ran with a story that was on Twitter on Sunday for Chrissakes. Sunday.

TOBY REACHES FOR A BOTTLE OF WHISKY ON THE SHELF BEHIND HIM, AT THE SAME MOMENT JACK PICKS TWO GLASSES FROM THE CUPBOARD AND PUTS THEM ON THE DESK. JACK NODS, POURS FROM THE BOTTLE, HANDS TOBY A GLASS.

JACK

The Globe picks up any old tat it can find, the closer to the gutter the better.

TOBY

And if it runs with it half the time the online op gets the story before we do. And the advertising revenue went UP last month.

JACK

It PAYS for what it gets Toby. Get us more money for buy-ups.

TOBY

There's never enough money. You better fucking watch out Jack, honoured member of the team as you are your job's on the line. My arse you need money, you've had money. And whose expense account did that cover? Talent is what we need.

JACK (MULISHLY)

Gotta pay for talent.

TOBY

We're in a recession. Kids are glad if they can clean floors. They're coming out of University with an MA in Classics and driving cabs.

JACK

If we want the written word to survive we've got to write it, and better than anyone else.

TOBY

Newspapers have been the financial bedrock of this group for years and now they account for less than half the profits.

The Independent lost £12.5 million last year. There's got to be another way.

JACK  
We're still the best.

TOBY  
I didn't say we weren't but this is a new game. The Board wants me to divert funds. Diversify. Put money into exhibitions, art collections, sponsoring cultural events...they haven't got a clue about the internet and they don't WANT to know.

JACK  
I fucking know what they're trying to do those bastards, they're trying to break us, bleed us and break us. Make more money in another way in another world.

TOBY  
Adapt and adopt Jack. Irresistible forces mean we move with the times or it's over. If you don't want to be chewed over and spat out like you've been doing to writers for years you've got to master the new method.

TOBY MOVES OUT OF JACK'S ROOM BACK INTO HIS OWN.

TOBY (CONT'D)  
You have to rattle their chains Jack. We've got to get stories which'll blow their socks off.

See what they're made of.

TOBY WAVES HIS HAND. JACK EXITS.

FADE TO BLACK  
SCENE ENDS

SCENE 10

INT. STEEL AND GLASS LIFT, TWO PASSENGERS, ONE TALL AND LEAN, ONE OLDER AND BALD.

GREG, JACK'S DEPUTY, IS MAKING HIS WAY UP TO THE SIXTH FLOOR. SWEATING SLIGHTLY, HE TURNS TO THE OTHER, OLDER, MAN.

GREG

I hear there's more bad news Sir.

OTHER MAN

That's what I hear, but no names.

GREG

Hmmn. You're usually the first to know.

THE OTHER MAN SHRUGS AND FIXES HIS TIE IN THE MIRROR

OTHER MAN

Something in the air. Too much caffeine. You feeling a bit on edge Greg?

GREG

Rough night.

OTHER MAN

Got a feeling it's going to be an even rougher day.

THE BALD MAN STEPS OUT OF THE LIFT AND INTO THE DOOR MARKED MEN'S TOILET, STILL FIDDLING WITH HIS TIE.

GREG IS SILENT AS HE WATCHES THE NUMBERS CHANGE WHILE THE LIFT TAKES HIM ONE FLOOR UP TO THE 6TH FLOOR

AS HE GETS OUT OF THE LIFT HE SEES SHEILA COMING TOWARDS HIM

GREG

What a nice reception committee for a sunny morning...

SHEILA

It's not for you, it's for...

GREG

I know, I saw him in the lift. He got out on the 5th floor.

SHEILA

So you know what's going on?

AS GREG HESITATES BESIDE SHEILA, ALMOST IMPERCEPTIBLY SMELLING HER PERFUME, THE EDITOR'S DOOR OPENS SUDDENLY AND JACK'S DRIVER JOE COMES OUT.

JACK'S VOICE BELLOWS DOWN THE HALL.



JACK

Where the fuck is that bastard deputy of mine if he's out there shagging my secretary I'll have his guts for garters - Greg you lazy son of a bitch if you're not here in five seconds flat you're a...

SHEILA (UNDER HER BREATH)

Dead fuck?

GREG LIGHTLY PINCHES HER BOTTOM AS HE GOES INTO THE ROOM AHEAD OF HER.

FADE TO BLACK  
SCENE ENDS

SCENE 11

INTERIOR JACK'S OFFICE

THE EDITOR IN CHIEF SITS BEHIND HIS MASSIVE DESK AND CONTEMPLATES HIS DEPUTY, GAZING AT HIS FLASHY SILK TIE.

JACK

Good to see you decided to turn up today Greg. I'm briefing on the internet crisis and everyone gets their finger out, I mean everyone.

GREG

I can't wait.

JACK

You won't have time to wait.

SHEILA OPENS THE DOOR. A CRUSH OF EDITORS MAKE THEIR WAY THROUGH, PUSHING, JOSTLING, MURMURING. THEY COLLECT AROUND THE OVAL TABLE, FINDING THEIR SEATS. JACK WAITS TIL THEY ARE QUIET.

JACK (CONT'D)

This is not a normal conference guys. Some things have changed since yesterday and yesterday was bad enough.

GREG

Come on Jack. Stop faffing around. What's happening?

JACK

We've had to lose five more of our best. There may be more.

JACK GETS UP AND STARTS TO PACE ROUND THE TABLE.

JACK (CONT'D)

I want a list of the key news issues this week and where we are on all of them including the City, climate change - the transition into a low carbon economy - Cabinet expenses, the Russian take-over of British newspapers including the Evening Eye and the Glasgow Boot - and some sex and sequins. Get Catherine on it. I haven't seen her yet. Where is she?

JACK LOOKS AT SHEILA, GESTURES AT THE TELEPHONE. SHEILA PICKS IT UP. PUTS IT DOWN, WAITING.

GREG

She's on it already. One of her girls overheard something about Isabelle Broughton, you know - old man Broughton's wild child. She's done a runner, her friends don't know where - parents don't know yet.

JACK

Politics, sex, drugs. Good mix. Is the picture desk on it Charlie? What about News, Jed?

CHARLIE NODS, AND LOOKS AT HIS WATCH. NEWS EDITOR JED WAITS AND LISTENS. IT'S THE FIRST HE HAS HEARD OF THE STORY.

JED

No idea boss. First I've heard of it. But we'll get people out doorstepping.

JACK

Good. I'm sure my old friend Dick Olde is in the frame. Get on to him - stick with it boys and girls. Here's the deal.

JACK CONTINUES TO WALK ROUND THE ROOM.

JACK (CONT'D)

This won't be news to some of you but in the last few years the world has shrunk.

Technology crept up on us - now we all have computers, blackberries, palm pilots, mobiles, Ipods, Sat Navs - we use Twitter, Youtube, Facebook, Bebo, we tune in, turn on and print advertising turns off. Or goes somewhere else. Which means no money, which means no jobs.

Today we've had disastrous new figures. The internet is the biggest threat to the printed word the world has known. We. Journalists, we who write for a living - are all under threat. People don't want to pay for words. If we don't spruce up our act we won't be able to pay the paper bills let alone our mortgages.

GREG

Sharp Newspapers go blunt.

JACK

I pay you to think. Usually we don't involve you guys in this shit we just let you get on with your own, but this time its different. Don't let the shareholders panic. The Board's meeting this afternoon. Lord Faltover has been here all day. He has his own ideas but the Board wants to diversify, even though newspapers are the heart of the business.

You have to know what's going on and pull together.

I've got ads and promos on the case. A new design team. New writers coming in, so don't behave like school children and freeze them out - use them.

Stick to them like glue. Dig up something big we can run with.

TOBY PUSHES THROUGH THE DOOR AND HALTS PROCEEDINGS BY HOLDING UP HIS HAND

TOBY

We are selling the Evening Eye. Decided this morning. To Lebenov.

This is not scaremongering, the Eye is being handed out free on the streets, starting next week - we're keeping some writers but the paper is going online and on subscription.

It might happen to the Sunday. We don't know yet. Today is the first day, so lets see what the heck we can do with it.

THERE IS A DEAD SILENCE IN THE ROOM, EXPRESSIONS RANGE FROM BAFFLED TO DETERMINED TO ANXIOUS.

JACK

By afternoon conference I want a list from Features and News, Fashion, the Diary and Sports. Not lacklustre little bits of other peoples' ideas but something to get the blood pumping.

TOBY

This time tomorrow morning I want to see a layout for Sunday's paper with a list of names and stories so compelling you won't be able to put the LIST down! Now go.

THE JOURNALISTS FILE OUT SILENTLY, EXCHANGING ASTONISHED LOOKS. EACH DIVES FOR THEIR OWN DESK AND STARTS FIRING ORDERS.

GREG AND CATHERINE, STUNNED, LEAVE THE ROOM TOGETHER AND WALK TOWARDS GREG'S OFFICE.

FADE TO BLACK  
SCENE ENDS

SCENE 12

INT. GREG'S OFFICE

AS GREG AND CATHERINE WALK IN, HANDS ALMOST TOUCHING, LUCY COMES BY WITH TWO CUPS OF COFFEE. THEY JUMP APART.

LUCY

Thought you might need these.

GREG

Thanks.

GREG PICKS UP THE CUP, PUSHES ONE ACROSS THE DESK TO CATHERINE, WHO FLIPS HER NOTEBOOK, NIBBLES HER PENCIL AND STICKS IT BEHIND HER EAR

GREG (CONT'D)

The Diary pages will lighten the mix.

CATHERINE

Anything specific in mind?

GREG

I keep hearing about that chick Isabelle Broughton - she just split up with Bronson's son? What happened with that story you were trying to get - why they'd broken up, whether she really has a heroin habit - did you get anything? Or maybe something on her old man.

CATHERINE

Nothing on him yet. We've got a possible on her. I'll need money. For bungs, she's the daughter of the Chancellor and we're about to have an Election. I'll need cash to keep her.

GREG

Give it to me on a canapé.

CATHERINE CROSSES HER LEGS, RAISES HER EYEBROWS AND READS ALOUD FROM HER NOTES.

CATHERINE

Last night Lady Isabelle Broughton goes on a binge with 007 and ends up banged up overnight!

CUT TO CLOSE UP ON GREG'S BROAD GRIN.

FADE TO BLACK  
SCENE ENDS

SCENE 13

EXT: SHARP NEWSPAPER OFFICE

Cold grey wintry day, London 2009

Daisy Greene, flustered, enters Sharp Newspapers building.

At the security desk she is questioned, checked and given a security pass.

RECEPTIONIST  
Daisy Greene?

DAISY  
Yes?

RECEPTIONIST  
That's your full name?

DAISY  
Oh. Yes. Sorry.

RECEPTIONIST  
What department?

DAISY  
Editorial.

RECEPTIONIST  
Features? Or online office?

DAISY  
Oh. Um. Online.

RECEPTIONIST  
That's where all the kids are these days. This is temporary (gives her pass). Take it to the 6th floor They'll take a picture and the ticket will get you through and will work as long as you're working here. (Pause) They're not expecting you til 10.00, you can get a coffee on the first floor.

DAISY  
Thanks.

CUT TO:

INT: FIRST FLOOR CAFETERIA

ALUMINIUM ROUND TABLES WITH LIGHTWEIGHT CHAIRS. ALMOST EMPTY.

DAISY BUYS A COFFEE. GIRL BEHIND THE COUNTER SHOWS HER HOW TO EXCHANGE CASH FOR A CARD, SHE PAYS FOR HER DRINK. BEWILDERED SHE PICKS UP THE PAPER CUP. ONE MAN IS SITTING ALONE AT NEAREST TABLE. DAISY TAKES HER CUP AND MOVES TOWARDS HIM.

DAISY  
Is this chair free?

MAN 1  
Go ahead...

DAISY (NERVOUSLY)  
Thanks. My first day.

SHE DROPS THE CARD.

MAN 1  
Right.

DAISY  
You been working here a while?

MAN 1  
(HE LAUGHS) Yup.

DAISY  
I heard lots of people were just  
fired?

MAN 1  
Yup.

DAISY  
Shit. Wow. How can they do that?

MAN 1  
Just business.

DAISY  
I know. But...it seems so (PAUSE)  
cold.

MAN 1  
You get used to it.

DAISY  
Do you know any of them?

MAN 1  
Everybody knows somebody right?

DAISY  
Oh. I'm sorry. You know, that  
people lost their jobs.

MAN 1  
And that you got one? Don't be.  
It's natural selection. Survival of  
the fittest...or the cheapest.

DAISY  
What?

MAN 1  
It's just a business like any  
other. It's all about making money.  
Now a whole new regime enters.

DAISY

But newspapers must be making money?

MAN 1

Oh they're making money. Just not as much as they were.

DAISY'S MOBILE RINGS. SHE TAKES THE CALL. HE TAKES OFF HIS SECURITY PASS AND LEAVES IT ON THE TABLE. CLOSE UP ON PASS WHICH SHOWS US HIS DEPARTMENT/RANK: DEPUTY FEATURES EDITOR.

DAISY

I'm sorry I didn't catch your name?

THE MAN IS HALF WAY DOWN THE ESCALATOR. DAISY MOVES TOWARDS THE STAIRCASE WHICH TAKES HER UP TO THE ONLINE OFFICE.

FADE TO BLACK.

SCENE 14

INT. JACK'S OFFICE, JACK IS BEHIND HIS DESK, SHEILA IS SITTING AT HER SMALLER DESK.

CATHERINE IS SITTING IN FRONT OF THE EDITOR, MINI SKIRT RIDING UP TO REVEAL LACY STOCKINGS, SUEDE KNEE LENGTH BOOTS.

JACK IS RIVETED BUT PRETENDS NOT TO BE.

GREG IS FILING HIS NAILS AND WATCHING IN AMUSEMENT AS CATHERINE GOES TO WORK.

JACK

What's the deal?

CATHERINE

Jill - she's new, we just got her from Grazia so she's got a handle on the fash/social/celeb scene- Jill heard that Isabelle Broughton was busted last night and maybe being held in a cell.

JACK

Where?

CATHERINE

We don't know.

JACK

Who told her?



CATHERINE  
We don't know.

JACK  
Why was she busted?

CATHERINE  
We don't know.

JACK  
Get outta here.

GREG SITS UP. CATHERINE SHRUGS. JACK FROWNS.

GREG  
There's a bit more to it than  
that. We can dig around. (PAUSE)

THE ROOM IS QUIET, SOUND OF BREATHING. JACK TAPS HIS  
FINGERS ON THE DESK.

JACK  
Get Frank in here from the Crime  
Desk now.

GREG  
Sheila darling will you ask Frank  
to join us in the Editor's office  
for a moment?

SHEILA EXITS THE ROOM. THE THREE SIT IN DEAD SILENCE.

ENTER FRANK WITH NOTEBOOK.

JACK  
We need some police contacts.

FRANK  
Where?

JACK  
Well?

GREG  
West End.

CATHERINE  
The club where she was last seen  
is in Mayfair. Mahiki. Young  
Royals.

FRANK  
Savile Row police station then,  
that's the place to start. I've  
got a mate there. I'll give him a  
call.

JACK  
Let's see what he comes up with.

CATHERINE  
Can I go now? I need to get  
bodies on doorsteps - the family,  
friends.

JACK  
You better bloody identify those  
friends Catherine or your little  
Grazia girl is a...

CATHERINE  
I know. You know I know what to  
do Jack, that's how I can stand  
up a good story nine times out of  
ten.

JACK  
It's also why I pay you extremely  
well to stay on top of these  
things Cathy and you're not on  
top of this one. As from today  
it's 10 or nothing.

CATHERINE, COVERING HER ANNOYANCE WITH A COOL SMILE AT THE  
CRIME HACK, WALKS QUICKLY OUT OF THE ROOM. FRANK LOOKS AT  
JACK.

FRANK  
Shall I?

JACK  
No time to lose. Keep me posted.

FADE TO BLACK  
SCENE ENDS

SCENE 15

INT: SAVILE ROW POLICE STATION RECEPTION DESK. PHONE RINGS.  
STAFF SERGEANT TAKES THE CALL FROM FRANK.

FRANK  
Hi, is Rory there?

POLICE OFFICE  
Who's asking?

FRANK  
Frank Buzzard. I'm a mate. He's  
expecting my call.

POLICE OFFICER  
Not on duty he's not.

RORY, SITTING BESIDE HIM, TAKES THE RECEIVER.

RORY

Frank. Now fancy that. What can I do for you young man?

FRANK

I need a favour. Can you talk?  
(PAUSE) I heard some-one might have been held overnight, some-one who might be of interest. Can you help me with this mate? Got anything we could use?

RORY

Nope. No idea. Er, no comment as they say. Or don't say.

FRANK

Give us a call if you hear anything - I'd make it worth your while - at least a couple of pints!

RORY (LAUGHING)

Dickhead.

RORY HANGS UP. SHAKES HIS HEAD AT THE STAFF OFFICER.

FADE TO BLACK  
SCENE ENDS

SCENE 16

INT: NEWS DESK, SUNDAY EYE

FRANK SITS WITH HIS HEAD IN HIS HANDS, LOOKING AT GREG.

FRANK

Something a bit odd about that. Think I'll make another couple of calls.

FRANK PICKS UP HIS BLACKBERRY, PULLS ON HIS JACKET.

FRANK (CONT'D)

House calls. I'm going to see a man about a dog. See you'all later!

GREG AND CATHERINE LOOK AT EACH OTHER, PERPLEXED.

GREG

OI. Frank. Is that it? What about the other stations - Kensington, Chelsea, Notting Hill?

FRANK

I'll give you an answer when I've got an answer. Later.

GREG

Just give me some contact number.

FRANK

Not on your life Greg. I protect my sources from evil bastards like you!

FRANK EXITS THE OFFICE WHISTLING

CUT TO:

EXT: SAVILE ROW POLICE STATION. RORY IS STANDING OUTSIDE THE SIDE ENTRANCE TALKING INTO HIS MOBILE.

RORY

Is that the House of Commons? The Minister's office? Lord Broughton? (PAUSE) Yes sir. Yes. Lady Isabelle. (PAUSE) Your daughter was picked up and held overnight. She didn't want you called. No, she refused a solicitor. She's been assigned one now. I thought I should tell you the Sunday Eye has been on to us, which means they know something. We don't know what or how. Nobody else knows. (PAUSE) Yes sir. Thank you sir.

FADE TO BLACK  
SCENE ENDS

SCENE 17

EXT: WHITEHALL. LORD BROUGHTON, FORMER CABINET MINISTER, NOW CHANCELLOR, IS BEING DRIVEN DOWN WHITEHALL IN HIS OWN BLACK BENTLEY. HE MAKES A CALL FROM THE BACK SEAT.

BROUGHTON (INTO MOUTHPIECE OF TELEPHONE)

Am I speaking to the Editor?

INT. EDITOR'S OFFICE. JACK AT HIS DESK IS SURROUNDED BY THE DAYS PAPERS, MAGAZINES, TWO TELEVISION SCREENS WITH THE SOUND OFF. A LARGE LEATHER SMYTHSONS ADDRESS BOOK OPEN AT 'B'. HE PICKS UP THE CALL.

JACK

Yes, this is he. Max Broughton, Lord Broughton? Oh. What can I do for you? (PAUSE) Very well. Yes I understand. I'll meet you at Mark's Club in an hour but I'll be on my way to a briefing so not long. Look forward to it.

CUT TO:

INT: BROUGHTON'S BENTLEY. BROUGHTON PUTS DOWN THE CAR TELEPHONE AND STARES OUT OF THE WINDOW AT THE RAIN.

IN JACK'S OFFICE THE EDITOR IS SPEAKING QUIETLY TO HIMSELF, THEN HE GETS UP AND HUNTS FOR HIS COAT.

JACK (CONT'D)

Now where the hell did I put it?  
Like keys. Mind of their own.  
Where's Joe?  
Sheila, I've got to go out. Not long. Call Joe. Tell him I'll see him downstairs in two minutes.

HE LOOKS IN THE MIRROR AS HE WALKS OUT OF THE DOOR, SHRUGGING AN EXPENSIVE LOOKING CASHMERE COAT OVER HIS CRUMPLED SUIT.

JACK (CONT'D)

No brain like a vain brain!

HE SEES THE WEBILLIONAIRE HEADLINE OUT OF THE CORNER OF HIS EYE AND PUSHES THE PAPER OFF THE DESK. RUBBING HIS HANDS, HE EXITS AS THE MAGAZINE CRASHES TO THE FLOOR.

FADE TO BLACK  
SCENE ENDS

SCENE 18

INT: MARK'S CLUB, CURZON STREET, MAYFAIR

DARK, HEAVY ENGLISH REGENCY FURNITURE, MASSIVE FLOWER ARRANGEMENTS, PRETTY GIRL BEHIND THE DESK.

IN A CORNER SITS LORD BROUGHTON, SUAVE IN A PINSTRIPE SUIT AND SLICKED DOWN HAIR, NURSING A GLASS OF COGNAC.

HE STANDS UP AS JACK HARWICH WALKS IN AND STRETCHES OUT HIS HAND. HEADS SWIVEL AS MEN IN THE LOBBY TURN TO LOOK.

BROUGHTON TAKES JACK'S HAND AND HOLDS IT FOR AN INSTANT TOO LONG.

BROUGHTON  
Well, Jack Harwich. Good to meet you at last. Sparring in print has its limits.

JACK  
Indeed so.

BROUGHTON WAVES TOWARDS A CHAIR, INDICATING THAT JACK SHOULD SIT DOWN, WHICH HE DOES.

BROUGHTON NODS TO A WAITER.

BROUGHTON  
What's your poison?

JACK  
I'll have water.

BROUGHTON  
No drinking on duty?

JACK  
Not like the old days. No more liquid lunches.

BROUGHTON  
Even at the Mirabelle?

JACK  
Least of all at the Mirabelle. It wasn't just parliamentarians who were scuppered by the expenses scandal. It was my liver. No more three course lunches on expenses for us - anywhere.

THE WAITER HAS OVERHEARD THE EXCHANGE AND MOVES AWAY TO GET THE WATER.

JACK CROSSES HIS LEGS AND WAITS.

BROUGHTON  
So. Some demons slain then?

JACK  
We all have our weaknesses.

BROUGHTON  
We do indeed.

THE WAITER COMES BACK WITH WATER, LEMON AND ICE ON A SILVER TRAY. HE POURS THE WATER. JACK TAKES A SIP FROM THE CLINKING GLASS.

JACK  
Is it my weaknesses we are here  
to discuss?

BROUGHTON  
Not yours, my daughter Isabelle's.

JACK REMAINS IMPASSIVE, WAITING.

JACK  
Is she your only child?

BROUGHTON  
I also have a son but he lives in  
Australia.

JACK  
So you don't see him?

BROUGHTON LEANS FORWARD SUDDENLY.

BROUGHTON  
Look old boy...(pause)

JACK PUTS DOWN THE GLASS AND LOOKS AT HIM STEADILY.

BROUGHTON (CONT'D)  
My daughter has had some problems  
since her mother died. (Pause).  
So far we have managed to keep it  
out of the media. (Pause). I  
would do anything. Anything, to  
keep it that way. Do you  
understand? My wife is not well.  
I don't want to have to tell her  
Isabelle is in trouble ag..is in  
trouble. They don't...

BOTH MEN ARE SITTING UP, FACING EACH OTHER SQUARELY.

JACK  
I am sorry. Families.

JACK TAKES ANOTHER SIP OF WATER HIS EYES NEVER LEAVING  
BROUGHTON'S FACE.

BROUGHTON  
You knew about it?

JACK REMAINS IMPASSIVE, MEETING BROUGHTON'S GAZE, GIVING  
NOTHING AWAY.

BROUGHTON (CONT'D)  
My information is that someone on  
your paper does.

CUT TO:

JACK  
I have three daughters myself.

BROUGHTON  
It is the only thing which makes  
me feel....

JACK'S HEAD INCLINES ALMOST IMPERCEPTIBLY NODDING.

BROUGHTON (CONT'D)  
Helpless...

JACK  
What happened?

BROUGHTON  
All I know is she was picked up  
and held overnight and she  
refused a solicitor. She doesn't  
want to talk to me, or to her  
stepmother. So far as I know,  
nobody else knows.

JACK  
Except us.

BROUGHTON PUTS DOWN HIS BRANDY AND LEANS FORWARD.

BROUGHTON  
Except you.

JACK GETS TO HIS FEET. NOT A TALL MAN, HE SEEMS TO TOWER  
OVER BROUGHTON WHO REMAINS DEEP IN HIS CHAIR, HUNCHED  
ALMOST HIDDEN.

JACK  
What do you want?

BROUGHTON LOOKS UP AT HIM.

BROUGHTON  
Time.

JACK  
How much?

BROUGHTON  
I need 48 hours to get Isabelle  
out of the country and prepare my  
wife for the news.

JACK  
What will you give me?

BROUGHTON  
My word. And the world exclusive.



JACK LOOKS AT BROUGHTON COLDLY.

JACK  
I will give you 24 hours to get  
Isabelle out then I move on the  
story.

BROUGHTON  
Is this blackmail?

JACK  
This is newspapers.

THE WAITER BRINGS HIS COAT. HE PUTS CASUALLY OVER HIS  
SHOULDERS.

JACK (CONT'D)  
I promise to keep my dogs off til  
this time tomorrow.

AS JACK WALKS CALMLY OUT OF THE CLUB, JOE PULLS THE CAR  
SMOOTHLY INTO THE CURB. THE DOORMAN OPENS THE CAR DOOR AS  
JACK LOOKS AT HIS WATCH BEFORE STEPPING IN. IT IS EXACTLY  
4.15.

FADE TO BLACK  
SCENE ENDS

SCENE 19

INT: BROUGHTON'S COMMONS OFFICE WHERE THE OLD FASHIONED  
GRANDFATHER CLOCK SAYS 5PM

BROUGHTON, WHO HAS BEEN SITTING LOST IN THOUGHT, BECKONS  
HIS PPS TO COME INTO THE OFFICE AS HE SEES HIM WALK PAST

BROUGHTON  
We've got a problem David. It's  
Isabelle.

DAVID  
Not again.

BROUGHTON  
Yes. Again. It's bad. She's been  
kept in Savile Row overnight -  
caught selling crack cocaine.

DAVID  
Who to for God's sake?

BROUGHTON  
To whom. Sorry. You might well  
ask who was the lucky recipient.  
If I knew I'd...

DAVID

Do I dare?

BROUGHTON

It quadruples the problem. At the moment I just need to find a way to shut him up.

DAVID

Shut who up?

BROUGHTON

Jack Harwich.

DAVID

The Eye is involved as well?

BROUGHTON

The Eye knows. They don't know it all, but they know some of it. Enough to make life very very difficult for me, for the Party, for my wife - who, as you know, is becoming increasingly anxious about this unexpected pregnancy.

Not too keen on the junky daughter of my dead wife at the moment, seems to think she might be jinxing the pregnancy...

DAVID

Women, they get so fanciful when they're pregnant.

BROUGHTON

How the hell would you know?

DAVID

Touché sir, I just meant her Ladyship will be feeling a little vulnerable right now.

BROUGHTON

We're all feeling bloody vulnerable.

DAVID

Yes sir.

BROUGHTON

Harwich has given me 24 hours before he sets his dogs on me.

DAVID

Charming.

BROUGHTON  
There isn't much time.

DAVID  
I used to be a hack. It helps.

BROUGHTON  
Time to call in some favours.

DAVID  
Let me see what I can find out.  
I'll have something for you by  
tomorrow.

BROUGHTON  
Soon as you can. And find out  
where Isabelle is now.

HE SINKS BACK IN HIS CHAIR WITH HIS HANDS COVERING HIS EYES.

DAVID EXITS TO HIS OWN SIDE OFFICE, SWITCHES ON THE LIGHT - IT IS ALREADY GETTING DARK, AND PICKS UP THE TELEPHONE, PUNCHING IN ONE NUMBER. THE TELEPHONE IS ANSWERED IMMEDIATELY.

DAVID  
That the Globe? Good. Put me through to Ken Brown will you? Ken? It's Dave. I'm all right mate, and you? Well, you know that story that was going round about five years ago, about Toby Greene's old man? Hmn? Hmn. Yup. That's the one. I think you know what I'm after. I want to see if there's anything on him.

DAVID LISTENS QUIETLY. GRINS. LOOKS UP AT THE GRANDFATHER CLOCK AND GIVES IT A THUMBS UP.

DAVID (CONT'D)  
How about you and I meet for a drink and a catch up at the old Cock and Hen in an hour? Can you do it that quick? There might be something in it for both of us.

FADE TO BLACK  
SCENE ENDS

SCENE 20

EXT: SMALL PUB IN SOHO/ NIGHT/ RAIN ON THE PAVEMENTS

INT: THE COCK AND HEN PUBLIC HOUSE, FULL OF ECCENTRICS,  
GAYS, DRUNKEN OFFICE WORKERS AND PROSTITUTES

IN A CORNER BROUGHTON'S PPS, DAVID, SITS DRINKING ALE AND  
READING THE EVENING EYE

KEN SMITH, REPORTER FOR THE GLOBE, MAKES HIS WAY TOWARDS  
HIM. DAVID CATCHES HIS EYE AND STANDS UP. KEN TIPS HIS HAT  
SLIGHTLY AND PULLS A BROWN ENVELOPE OUT OF HIS BRIEFCASE.

DAVID  
Good to see you Ken. Drink?

KEN  
I'll have a whisky on the rocks.

DAVID  
Right. I'll just go to the bar.

KEN  
Take these. They're burning a  
hole in my pocket.

FOR A MOMENT DAVID SITS MOTIONLESS, THEN HE DRAWS THE  
PHOTOGRAPHS HALF OUT OF THE PACKET AND WHISTLES.

KEN WINKS AT HIM.

DAVID PUTS THEM SECURELY INTO HIS OWN BRIEFCASE AND MOVES  
TOWARDS THE BAR, CLUTCHING THE BRIEFCASE.

THE PEOPLE AT THE BAR TAKE NO NOTICE OF HIM

DAVID (TO NO-ONE IN PARTICULAR)  
Fatso Greene eh? Who would have  
thought it?

FADE TO BLACK  
SCENE ENDS

SCENE 21

FLASHBACK. A WEEK EARLIER. EXT. ELEGANT GEORGIAN COUNTRY  
HOUSE. RAINY DAY, OUT IN THE PARKLAND.

WE ARE IN THE CHAIRMAN'S COUNTRY HOME AT THE END OF THE  
PREVIOUS WEEK. IN THE DISTANCE TOBY'S WIFE EVELYN IS  
WALKING A PAIR OF GOLDEN LABRADORS, CHATTING TO HER OLD  
SCHOOL FRIEND VIOLET ABOUT HER DAUGHTER DAISY, WHO IS  
WALKING WITH THEM, MOODILY.

EVELYN  
So Daisy, you didn't like school  
much?

DAISY

School didn't like me, don't you think Mum?

VIOLET

Well I wasn't going to go into all the..

DAISY

Now I've left University I'm doing a course in IT. To get a grip on the new technology.

VIOLET

More practical skills.

EVELYN

What? Facebook and all that stuff? How brilliant of you. I can't fathom any of it. I need Tom to show me how to send an email.

VIOLET

I feel like a dinosaur. Can't understand a word of it.

DAISY

There's a whole new world in that little black box.

VIOLET

What little black box?

DAISY

My laptop. Except it's silver!

DAISY PICKS UP A STICK FOR THE DOGS AND BEGINS TO THROW, RUNNING WITH THEM, AWAY FROM THE TWO OLDER WOMEN.

VIOLET

She's clever Eve, but wild. She's got to get a job. We're still supporting her and it's not good for her, or us.

EVELYN

I know, with Oscar there's just never any money is there? Being a poet is one thing, supporting a family is another and Daisy isn't easy is she - I can see that. Do you want me to try and help?

VIOLET

I feel awful asking, and she'll hate me for it too.

EVELYN

Don't tell her. I know Toby is keen to get new blood into the paper, especially in the internet department. Online they call it. Things are moving very fast.

VIOLET

If you think you could, if you think it wouldn't upset Toby having his niece - well, you know, nepotism and all that.

EVELYN

I think it might be good. He is locking horns with the old guard at the paper and he needs...well, he needs loyalty and he needs the young.

VIOLET

But Daisy would be so junior.

EVELYN

Yes, but I can see advantages.

VIOLET

I think I should stay out of it. I know it'll make her cross if she thinks I've been..

EVELYN

Well you haven't been anything - stop worrying! It wouldn't be a bad idea to have some-one in the family in the middle of that hornet's nest.

DAISY SLOWS DOWN & LETS THE DOGS GO AHEAD. THE THREE WOMEN CONTINUE THEIR WALK. DAISY LOOKS AT HER MOTHER AND AUNT.

EVELYN (CONT'D)

We're hatching a plot Daisy.

DAISY

Really. Why?

VIOLET

To get you out of the house and into work.

FADE TO BLACK  
SCENE ENDS

## SCENE 22

INT. HIGH CEILINGED SITTING ROOM, BLAZING LOG FIRE, DOGS SNORING IN FRONT OF IT. A HUGE PORTRAIT OF AN ELEGANT SILVER-HAIRED MAN WITH A GREYHOUND HANGS ABOVE THE FIREPLACE.

EVELYN FINISHES TALKING ON THE TELEPHONE AND PUTS DOWN THE RECEIVER, SMILING.

VIOLET COMES INTO THE ROOM ALONE.

VIOLET

Any luck?

EVELYN

There's a place in the online office. She'll have to go and meet the online Editor but she could see him on Tuesday. Leo says they're looking for graduates with IT experience - who'll work for nothing. (PAUSE) Will she work for nothing?

ENTER DAISY

DAISY

If you're talking about me, no. How can I work for nothing Mum? I've got no income?

VIOLET

You may have to. Get your foot in the door.

VIOLET GLARES AT HER DAUGHTER.

VIOLET (CONT'D)

You'll have to give it a go Daisy after all this.

DAISY

I haven't got a better offer, unless you count stacking shelves down the road, so I'll say yes.

VIOLET

You could be a bit more graceful Daisy. Eve has gone to a hell of a lot of trouble and come up with something which starts now, so no more hanging around getting into trouble.

DAISY

What *is* the work Aunt Evelyn?  
Don't I have to go and see some-  
one? Tell them what I can do and  
all that...?

EVELYN

It's just one of those things  
Daisy - Leo has just lost one of  
his work experience girls and  
he's willing to try you out. Just  
go for it.

DAISY

That's never been my problem! Ask  
Mum.

DAISY LOOKS AT VIOLET, HALF LAUGHING, HALF SERIOUS.

VIOLET

Well we don't have to go into all  
your dark secrets right now  
Daisy. Just don't let us down.

DAISY PUTS HER ARMS ROUND HER MOTHER.

EVELYN

It's in your blood Daisy, ink in  
your veins!

EVELYN LOOKS UP AT THE PORTRAIT HANGING ABOVE THE FIREPLACE  
AND TAPS IT WITH HER FINGERTIPS.

EVELYN (CONT'D)

You know who that silver-tongued  
charmer is don't you?

DIASY

Not a clue.

EVELYN

Violet, you haven't told Daisy  
about her reprobate grandfather?

DAISY

I thought I was the reprobate in  
this family?

EVELYN

Well, your Uncle Toby does his  
best but his father far outran  
him - he's been trying to catch  
up ever since! Lucius the Great.  
Knighted for his services to King  
and Country. I'll tell you more  
about the robber barons of  
Westwold when you've spent a bit  
of time in the office he built!



DAISY

This is the first time the idea  
of a job has sounded interesting.

VIOLET

Don't get carried away, they were  
not shining saints and not much  
of an example to the young.

DAISY

But look what he did. He built a  
newspaper empire.

EVELYB

On what? Blood and tears.

VIOLET

And according to Oscar, the sweat  
of others.

EVELYN

Not just sweat!

VIOLET

So don't think of it as a job for  
life Daisy - there's no such  
thing anymore.

DAISY

There is no-one of my generation  
who expects that. I'll be lucky  
if I last a week.

FADE TO BLACK  
SCENE ENDS

SCENE 23

INT. COTTAGE SITTING ROOM. NEXT DAY, LATE EVENING

DAISY IS SITTING IN FRONT OF A COMPUTER, LOGGING ONTO  
WIKIPEDIA, LOOKING UP LUCIUS GREEN. SHE FINDS WHAT SHE  
WANTS AND MAKES QUICK NOTES BEFORE TURNING TO FACEBOOK. SHE  
GOES THROUGH HER MESSAGES, ANSWERS TWO, AND FINDS ANOTHER  
WHICH SUPRISES HER.

CLOSE UP ON FACEBOOK PAGE FOR CHARLOTTE RANKIN. A MESSAGE  
ON IT SAYS 'IZZY HAS BEEN HELD IN A POLICE CELL SOMEWHERE  
IN LONDON BUT WE DON'T KNOW WHERE'.

DAISY FLICKS TO ANOTHER PAGE AND FINDS ISABELLE BROUGHTON.  
THE MESSAGE SAYS: I'M IN THE SHIT. DON'T TELL DAD.

DAISY LOGS OFF AND SNAPS SHUT THE COMPUTER, PICKING UP THE  
CAT AS SHE WALKS UPSTAIRS TO BED.

VIOLET COMES OUT of HER BEDROOM IN BATHROBE.

VIOLET

I spoken to Eve and confirmed everything.

DAISY

Oh thanks Mum. Afraid they might have second thoughts?

VIOLET

Just thought we should give Eve time to talk to Toby about it. But he had to go to London suddenly - some crisis at the paper.

DAISY

So he doesn't know?

VIOLET

No, but it doesn't seem to matter.

DAISY

Might be a good thing. Nepotism doesn't go down well in offices, so I've been told.

VIOLET

Don't worry. Go to bed. We'll have to leave early.

DAISY

What about the train?

VIOLET

We're going to London anyway, so you can stay with us then go to your friends on Wednesday.

DAISY

Apart from the fact I won't know a soul and I've never written an article in my life - I'm cool with it Mum!

VIOLET

As Evelyn says, it's in your blood.

VIOLET STRAIGHTENS AN OLD PHOTOGRAPH ON THE WALL.

DAISY

Is that picture of Dad with Isabelle's Dad, at Oxford?

VIOLET  
Bullington Club outing to Paris.

DAISY  
That's strange...did they go  
together?

VIOLET  
What's strange?

DAISY  
Broughton. The name keeps coming  
up.

DAISY WAVES HER FREE HAND AND ENTERS HER OWN BEDROOM WITH  
THE CAT STILL IN HER ARMS, AND SINKS INTO THE BED.

VIOLET  
You and Izzy are meant to cross  
paths again. God Bless my  
darling, sleep well.

VIOLET SWITCHES OFF THE LIGHT.

FADE TO BLACK  
SCENE ENDS

SCENE 24

EXT: COUNTRY COTTAGE. WINTRY MORNING. AN OLD MERCEDES SITS  
IN THE DRIVE. DAISY'S FATHER OSCAR HAULS DAISY'S LUGGAGE  
INTO THE BOOT.

DAISY, NURSING HER LAPTOP, SITS IN THE BACK, LOOKING AT A  
FACEBOOK PICTURE OF IZZY BROUGHTON.

THE CAT SITS IN THE UPSTAIRS WINDOW, WATCHING.

VIOLET COMES OUT, LOCKS THE DOOR AND GETS INTO THE CAR

CUT TO:

INT: CHROME AND LEATHER MERCEDES

OSCAR CLIMBS INTO THE DRIVER'S SEAT AND REVS THE ENGINE

DAISY LEANS FORWARD FROM HER SEAT IN THE BACK TO TALK TO  
HER FATHER

DAISY  
What's the deal on Broughton Dad?  
He's in the Cabinet isn't he?

OSCAR  
He's the Chancellor now, but come  
May he might not be.

DAISY

I thought you knew him.

OSCAR

Weren't you at school with his daughter?

DAISY

I was.

OSCAR

I knew him at Oxford.

VIOLET

What was her name - Isabella or Isabelle?

DAISY

Isabelle. Only her friends called her Isabella.

VIOLET

Oh. (pause) I thought you called her Izzy.

DAISY

That's different. We're blood sisters.

VIOLET

Blood?

DAISY

We spilled our blood and mixed it. It was a sisterhood thing. She had a really tough time. Her mother committed suicide. While we were at school. She was fifteen.

VIOLET

Good heavens, how dreadful, I had forgotten that. Of course, it was in all the papers.

DAISY

They wouldn't leave her alone. Like vampires they were. She was just about to do her O-levels.

VIOLET

How did she manage?

DAISY

She didn't. She had a nervous breakdown. Starting taking pills..

VIOLET  
Were you close?

DAISY  
Yes.

VIOLET  
Are you now?

DAISY  
Not really. There was a group of us. But when I went to University, she went to London. I didn't see her much.

VIOLET  
That sounds a bit callous. Maybe you'll catch up with her.

DAISY  
Maybe.

OSCAR  
Is that why you wanted to know about her Dad?

DAISY  
Yes. I thought if you were still friends I'll find her through him. I saw the picture of you both at the Bullingdon outing. You look like such a dude Dad!

OSCAR  
I'll try calling his office in the House of Commons. He's an odd bloke. Not my type really.

VIOLET  
Didn't he marry again?

OSCAR  
Yes. A Romanian woman. Very beautiful. Very neurotic. I heard they...

DAISY  
What?

OSCAR  
I think I'd better mind my own business now my daughter's a reporter.

DAISY  
Oh Dad. As if...

DAISY LEANS BACK INTO HER SEAT, SHE LOGS OFF THE PICTURE OF ISABELLE BROUGHTON AND HER EYES CLOSE, AND SHE BEGINS TO DREAM OF FINDING HERSELF ALONE WITH LORD BROUGHTON IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS TRYING TO INTERVIEW HIM BUT UNABLE TO SPEAK.

FADE TO BLACK  
SCENE ENDS

SCENE 25

INT: LIFT, SHARP NEWSPAPERS, NEXT DAY  
DAISY HAS BEEN GIVEN HER SECURITY PASS. SHE IS MAKING HER WAY UP IN THE LIFT, TRYING TO PIN IT ON.

INT: ONLINE OFFICE, SHARP NEWSPAPERS, EDITOR LEO IS SITTING AT COMPUTER FLICKING THROUGH BBC NEWS. LEO IS MAKING NOTES, LEGS UP ON A CHAIR, LEATHER JACKET FLUNG OVER THE BACK OF ANOTHER.

THERE IS A KNOCK ON THE DOOR.

HE LOOKS UP QUIZZICALLY. THE DOOR OPENS AND DAISY ENTERS

LEO JUMPS UP, PULLS OUT THE CHAIR AND OFFERS IT TO DAISY

LEO

Ah. My new helper?

DAISY

My name's Daisy Greene.

LEO

Ah, yes, Daisy Greene. (Pause)  
And I do indeed need a little helper. Tell me Daisy. What can you do?

DAISY

I can write a bit, BA in English, I've emailed my CV - I've got a copy here if you...and I'm in the middle of a course in IT so I know my way around some computers, not all.

LEO

Well I didn't get the CV so maybe you need to finish the course.

DAISY

Can't some-one show me how it works here?

LEO

Some-one could have done, but we have a few hands missing at the moment.

DAISY

I heard.

LEO

From Mrs Greene I presume?

DAISY

No. From some-one who worked here yesterday.

LEO

Well Daisy, things are in a bit of a spin at the moment because the powers that be, the great upstairs, have suddenly realised the internet is out there and waiting to snaffle all their readers and THEIR MONEY if they don't do something about it.

DAISY

Did they suddenly realise they had too many writers and editors?

LEO

Also.

DAISY

So why do they want to take on new people?

LEO

They want young fresh blood to suck. Free. Better anything free than anything you have to pay for. First rules of internet journalism. Get ready to learn a great deal in a very short time Daisy Greene and we'll see how long you survive.

DAISY PINS HER BADGE TO HER LAPEL OSTENTATIOUSLY AND GIVES HIM A NERVOUS SMILE. LEO SMILES BACK.

DAISY

At least I'm free.

LEO PICKS UP A NOTEBOOK, PENCIL AND BLACKBERRY

LEO

I am now going into what will be a roasting - something we euphemistically call conference. When I come out, all will be clear as the light at the end of the tunnel.

DAISY (CONT'D)

So what would you like me to do?

LEO

I would like you to familiarise yourself with our kit. Go along to our support desk, we call it 'systems' and get some instant training in our technology, then look through the papers to see if you can find a good story we can pinch and put on the web.

DAISY

Do you take stuff from the daily paper?

LEO

Sometimes we do, sometimes we don't. After 10 o'clock at night it's a free for all. Before that we have to check with the newspaper.

DAISY

What about other newspapers, their stories?

LEO

Grab what you can! But you won't be doing that yet, you need to find your way around.

DAISY

Where do I find Systems?

LEO

Come with me, I'll point you in the right direction on my way to conference.

DAISY

By the time you come back I'll..

LEO

Know more than those old men upstairs do.

DAISY FOLLOWS LEO INTO THE NEXT OFFICE WHERE ROWS OF COMPUTERS STAND, MONITORED BY MEN IN SHIRTSLEEVES.



LEO (CONT'D)  
Systems. Ask Vic to take care of  
you. He'll show you the ropes.

FADE TO BLACK  
SCENE ENDS

SCENE 26

INT: EDITOR'S OFFICE. LEO IS COMING OUT OF JACK'S OFFICE WITH  
A STREAM OF OTHER JOURNALISTS, AS THEY PEEL OFF INTO THEIR  
SEPARATE OFFICES LEO COMES TO SYSTEMS TO LOOK FOR DAISY. THE  
OFFICE IS EMPTY.

CUT TO:

DAISY, BACK IN THE ONLINE OFFICE, TAPPING AWAY AT A  
COMPUTER.

DAISY  
Is it ok if I use this one?

LEO  
Sure. What are you hammering away  
at?

DAISY  
Well, I've been looking at some  
of these stories and they're all  
pretty much the same - flashy  
cars, flashy people, big names,  
scandals. I had an idea,  
yesterday, about some-one I know,  
which might interest you. I don't  
know. You might know all about it  
already.

LEO  
And then again I might not. Do  
you wanna a coffee? There's a  
canteen downstairs. Not as good  
as Starbucks, but ok.

DAISY  
I thought I should write it up.

LEO  
Don't try to second guess me  
young lady - if I want you to  
write it up I'll tell you.

DAISY LOOKS AS IF SHE'S ABOUT TO ANSWER BACK, BUT THINKS  
BETTER OF IT.

SHE NODS, PICKS UP THE DAY'S PAPER, HER OWN NOTEBOOK AND SHOULDER BAG AND FOLLOWS LEO OUT OF THE DOOR TO THE ESCALATOR

CUT TO:

INT: CAFETERIA

LEO AND DAISY HUDDLE OVER COFFEE.

TWO OR THREE OTHER JOURNALISTS COME AND GO, OCCASIONALLY LOOKING AT THEM CURIOUSLY.

LEO JUMPS UP SMACKING DAISY ON THE BACK

LEO

It's bloody brilliant Daisy.  
That's my girl. You are  
absolutely sure this is the right  
Isabella, she's the daughter of  
the Chancellor?

DAISY

Her name's Isabelle. Her Dad's  
Lord Broughton.

LEO

Did you speak to your friends,  
who know her?

DAISY

I left a message on Ella's mobile  
and Jane sent me a text saying as  
far as she knew it was true - but  
they haven't heard from her since  
that message was posted and that  
was on Monday night. It's  
Wednesday now.

LEO

Okay then. I know the Diary is  
doing a piece on the bust-up  
between her and her toy boy, that  
little guy who she's been seeing  
lately. But I don't know how far  
they've got and they can't run  
til Sunday anyway so I think  
we've scooped them.

DAISY (LOOKING APPALLED)

What do you mean, scooped them? I  
haven't done anything. I was just  
going to type up some notes for  
you.

LEO

Girl. We've got a story. There's a ridiculous race going on between Features, News and the Diary, trying to get one of her friends - or her ex boyfriend to talk - they've got people door stepping half London and Cathy is flapping her cheque book around like it's an Hermès handbag so anything we do will be better than that little circus.

LEO GETS UP TO STRETCH HIS LEGS AND CHECKS THE TIME. IT IS 6.30 PM. ALMOST TIME FOR THE PUB.

LEO (CONT'D)

Ah. Almost time for the pub.

HE LOOKS AT DAISY AND GRINS.

LEO (CONT'D)

Not just between departments and papers, daily and Sunday, but now online and print. Of course.

HE LOOKS PLEASED WITH HIMSELF. DAISY IS IN A STATE OF SHOCK. THERE IS ANOTHER REPORTER IN THE ROOM, JOHN.

LEO (CONT'D)

I'm supposed to run this past Jack but I am so pissed off with those assholes. They don't give a flying fuck what we do in here and Jack's in such a spin today he wouldn't see an online story if it jumped out of the telly and tweaked his/

JOHN (REPORTER)

/he's got the Chairman in there, and half the building by the look of it, I wouldn't worry too much. What's the story?

LEO

We've got something on Broughton's daughter. Daisy knows where she is. John this is Daisy. She's joining us for work experience. Wants to be a reporter. What can we do to dissuade her from this scurrilous profession?

JOHN

She's come up with a good story on a bad day - well a good story on her FIRST day. I should try to persuade not dissuade.

LEO

Well said young man. And well done young lady. You, I think, deserve a drink!

DAISY

Look I haven't done anything. We haven't spoken to anyone. We don't know what's happened to Izzy. We haven't got a story.

LEO

Don't let a little thing like that worry you, we're all entangled in brief lies which disappear the next day/

DAISY

/But this is my friend. I don't want to...

LEO

They are none of them our friends, Daisy. They just use us when they want to, and we use them.

JOHN

It's been a long day. I've been following that damned Lib Dem candidate around and getting nowhere, not even a 'no comment'. Shall we grab a drink then Daisy can maybe do those notes up for you Leo?

LEO

It's not such a groovy life as you think Daisy. Get your bag. We're off to the pub.

DAISY

Ok. Cool. But what happens next? Shouldn't we look for Isabelle?

JOHN

There are reporters on the doorstep. News have got it covered.

DAISY

Whose doorstep? Why?

JOHN

Doorstepping is a vital ingredient of this honourable profession and you will, I am sure, very soon be initiated into its treats. The welcome on the doormat, the smiling faces, the bunches of flowers when you've finished your job...

LEO

Mañana, mañana kids...tomorrow is another day. Let's see what it brings and have a pint in the meantime.

EXIT THE THREE, HEADING FOR THE ESCALATOR, DAISY, STILL ANXIOUS, AT THE SAME TIME LOOKS RELIEVED TO HAVE FOUND FRIENDS

FADE TO BLACK  
SCENE ENDS

SCENE 27

INT: ONLINE OFFICE, LEO IS SITTING AT HIS DESK WORKING AT THE COMPUTER FLICKING HIS MOUSE FAST. JOHN COMES INTO THE OFFICE SURPRISING HIM.

LEO

Did you put our little flower in a cab?

JOHN

I did. But you wanna be careful about this Leo. She doesn't know what you're doing, to put it up on the website now is dodgy. I barely know how it works, let alone a novice like her and this girl is her friend, really her friend, like they were at school together - not just a jumped up friendship of convenience, she was telling me some stuff...

LEO

Oh shit John. You know what this game's all about. If she can stand it up, and its a hot story, we have to run with it.

JOHN

So why aren't you running it past Jack?

LEO

Because Jack's a wanker. He thinks Sharp Newspapers will get by without going global, without signing up to cyberspace. He's an idiot. And he makes my life hell. He thinks we steal stories from the paper and never do anything original. It won't be the first time we get a story before Greg does and this time I'm making the most of it.

JOHN

Be careful. I'm warning you. This should be okayed by some-one upstairs even if Jack's not there. What about the lawyers? What about Greg?

LEO

Too late. It's out there. Minister's daughter disappears from celebrity club and is held in cell overnight. Police hold her for 24 hours' questioning. Anyone who knows her whereabouts please contact this email address. Yes.

LEO HOPS ABOUT RUBBING HIS HANDS.

LEO (CONT'D)

Let's see what loonies come out of the bin for this one.

JOHN

I'd say I hope you know what you're doing but I know you don't, so I'm going home.

JOHN EXITS ANGRILY, LEAVING LEO LOOKING PLEASED WITH HIMSELF AS HE CLOSES DOWN HIS COMPUTER AND HEADS TO THE LIFT WITHOUT A FLICKER OF DOUBT.

FADE TO BLACK  
SCENE ENDS

SCENE 28

BROUGHTON SITS WITH A BRANDY, A BOTTLE OF MALVERN WATER, AND A SINGLE RED ROSE IN A BALLOON GLASS ON A SMALL SIDE TABLE. HE IS LISTENING TO BRAHMS.

THE TELEPHONE RINGS ON THE TABLE BESIDE HIM.

BROUGHTON

Yes. Good David. Bravo. Tell Green. I'll see him in the morning - for breakfast - usual place. And I will see you in the office beforehand.

BROUGHTON PUTS DOWN THE TELEPHONE AND GLANCES UP AT THE ANCESTRAL PORTRAITS WHICH LOOK DOWN ON HIM FROM THE DARK RED WALLS OF HIS STUDY.

ON A MAHOGANY TABLE SITS A SILVER FRAMED PHOTOGRAPH OF A BEAUTIFUL DARK-HAIRED WOMAN, A LITTLE LIKE VIVIEN LEIGH, AND BESIDE IT IS ANOTHER, SMALLER, PICTURE OF A GIRL WHO IS SO CLEARLY HER DAUGHTER THEY ALMOST LOOK LIKE TWINS.

HE TURNS UP THE VOLUME ON THE STEREO, PICKS UP A WEIGHTY ILLUSTRATED ART BOOK AND SITS DOWN AGAIN, TAKING A DELICATE SIP OF THE BRANDY.

CUT TO:

INT: CHAIRMAN'S LONDON HOUSE. NIGHT. HE AND EVELYN ARE IN BED. EVELYN IS ASLEEP, WITH A MASK OVER HER EYES.

TOBY'S MOBILE RINGS INSISTENTLY

AS HE WAKES HE REALISES HE HAS PUT IT UNDER HIS PILLOW

SLEEPILY HE REACHES FOR IT

TOBY

Hello. Yes. This is he. Shit. Not now, it's the middle of the night. Right. At the Savoy. 9.00 tomorrow, the River Room.

TOBY PUTS THE TELEPHONE DOWN ON HIS BEDSIDE TABLE AS EVELYN STIRS, AND TAKES OFF THE EYE MASK.

EVELYN

What's up?

TOBY

Some little bastard with the wrong end of the stick in his hot little hand.

THEY ROLL TOWARDS EACH OTHER AS TOBY TURNS OFF THE LIGHT.

CUT TO:

EXT: PICADILLY CIRCUS. DARK RAINY NIGHT. AS BIG BEN STRIKES ELEVEN THE NEWSPAPERS ARE DROPPED OFF VANS AT THE PAPER STALLS IN HUGE PACKETS. THE VENDORS CUT THE STRINGS AND START HANDING OUT THE PAPERS TO PEOPLE AS THEY COME OUT OF THE CINEMAS, THEATRES AND RESTAURANTS. THE TABLOID 'GLOBE' HAS A HEADLINE SAYING: LADY IZZY IN MIDNIGHT POLICE SWOOP, HELD OVERNIGHT. REFUSES TO SPEAK TO FATHER, TORY PEER LORD BROUGHTON.

PASSERS-BY LOOK OVER EACH OTHER'S SHOULDERS TO READ AND ON THE TOP FLOOR OF A BUS A YOUNG MAN STARES AT THE PICTURE OF ISABELLE AS THOUGH HE HAD SEEN A GHOST.

FADE TO BLACK  
SCENE ENDS

SCENE 29

INT: RIVER ROOM, SAVOY HOTEL, FOLLOWING MORNING

BROUGHTON'S PPS SITS AT A TABLE COVERED IN WHITE LINEN AND LADEN WITH SILVER, SIPPING A CUP OF EARL GRAY TEA.

GREG SEES HIM AS HE COMES DOWN THE STEPS INTO THE RIVER ROOM FROM THE LOBBY

GREG

Ah, good morning, David isn't it?

DAVID LOOKS UP FROM HIS PAPER. HE IS READING THE GLOBE. IT IS OPEN ON THE BROUGHTON STORY. HE IS MOMENTARILY PUT OUT NOT TO SEE TOBY GREENE STANDING IN FRONT OF HIM BUT RESPONDS SMOOTHLY.

DAVID

How do you do? You are Jack Harwich's deputy?

GREG

Yes. And you are Broughton's I believe. Now let's cut the crap. Why isn't he here, and where are the pictures?

DAVID

The pictures are, of course, in a safe. However, I do have some rather good photocopies which might interest you, since I gather your boss has declined the invitation to breakfast.

GREG

He has another appointment. But I am authorised to make you an offer.



DAVID  
Not until you have seen what I've  
got presumably?

DAVID SMILES SLYLY AND SLIPS ONE OF THE PICTURES OUT OF ITS  
ENVELOPE, AND THEN ANOTHER.

GREG'S FACE REMAINS IMPASSIVE.

GREG  
How much?

FADE TO BLACK  
SCENE ENDS

SCENE 30

INT: EDITOR'S OFFICE, THURSDAY MORNING

JACK AND GREG ARE FACING EACH OTHER ANGRILY ACROSS THE DESK

JACK  
What the fuck is going on? How  
the fuck did the Globe get this  
story? Who's been on the  
doorstep?

GREG  
They got it because it's in our  
paper, online. They picked it up  
and splashed on it.

JACK  
How the bloody hell did that  
happen?

GREG  
Well I assume you saw it last  
night.

JACK  
I fucking did not you little  
shit. If I had I would have  
pulled it. Who the fuck can stand  
that up?

GREG  
The Globe must have picked it up  
from the internet when they went  
to second edition, pulled  
everything else and splashed on  
it.

JACK

And how come you didn't see this coming?

GREG

If you remember Jack we were all pretty busy yesterday.

JACK

Not so busy as Mr Leon fucking Legge and his fucking online cuties...Where the hell did they get the story?

GREG

I'll get Leon in here.

JACK

Sheila - get Leo in here and anyone else involved in our Isabelle Broughton online story.

SHEILA

But I thought..?

JACK

Just get them in here NOW.

SHEILA LEAVES THE ROOM HURRIEDLY

FADE TO BLACK  
SCENE ENDS

SCENE 31

INT.ONLINE OFFICE

LEO IS SITTING AT HIS DESK STARING AT THE WALL.

IN FRONT OF HIM ON THE DESK IS THE DAILY GLOBE, OPEN ON THE SPLASH, WITH HUGE PHOTOGRAPHS OF ISABELLE BROUGHTON AND A PAGE 3 HEADLINE SAYING: LADY IZZY GETS DAD IN A TIZZY - MP'S ARISTOCRATIC DAUGHTER HELD IN CELL OVERNIGHT!

CUT TO:

CHAIRMAN'S OFFICE. JACK ENTERS, SLAMMING THE DOOR ON ITS HINGE AGAINST THE WALL. TOBY IS READING THE PAPERS.

JACK

I've just been told we have a new girl in the online office.

She not only blew out the biggest exclusive this paper has ever seen, but is the fucking niece of the fucking proprietor.

TOBY

What on earth are you talking about Jack? For God's sake calm down.

JACK

This girl. Daisy Greene. Is she not your niece Toby? Could you not at least come clean about that?

TOBY

Daisy. Daisy Greene? My niece Daisy Greene do you mean?

JACK

YES I BLOODY DO.

TOBY SITS DOWN HEAVILY.

TOBY

Get them both in here.

CUT TO:

INT: ONLINE OFFICE, DAISY COMES RUSHING THROUGH THE DOOR APOLOGISING

DAISY

I'm so sorry I'm late. I got stuck in the traffic and I'm..

DAISY LOOKS AT LEO WHO HAS HARDLY STIRRED

LEO

Yes, you're late.

DAISY

What's the matter Leo?

LEO GETS UP SLOWLY AND PUSHES THE PAPER ACROSS THE DESK

LEO

I can see I'll have to spell it out for you Daisy. The story you came to me with yesterday, the story about the Chancellor's daughter Lady Isabelle, that story -

DAISY

Yes, Isabelle's story. She was held in a cell...wasn't she?

LEO

Well it appears that story could have been an exclusive - a very expensive, very special - exclusive for the paper. The Editor in Chief was in the middle of a very hush hush negotiation to nail the exclusive for his hot new columnist to write, the one brought in to counteract the crushing defeats this newspaper is experiencing under the threat of the worldwide web.

DAISY

Threat? Defeat? I don't understand.

LEO

I am not sure any of us do. But the fact remains I am in deep shit. And by the end of the day I may not have a job.

DAISY

Why?

LEO

Because The Editor hates the online operation because it sucks money away from his precious newspaper. Because the Chairman's niece - you - brought in a story which scuppered the Editor's political plans, and most of all because I, Leon fucking Legge as our esteemed Editor would say, decided to go for it, and NOT show the Editor in Chief his top story. As a consequence rules have been broken and heads will roll.

JOHN COMES OVER AND PUTS HIS ARM ON LEO'S SHOULDER

JOHN

It's what we call 'blood on the walls' Daisy. Such violence. Not pretty. I would stay out of the way for the rest of the day if I were you.

LEO, CONSIDERABLY LESS COCK-A-HOOP THAN THE DAY BEFORE,  
REGARDS HIS COFFEE CUP, AS THOUGH READING THE TEA LEAVES.  
THEN HE LOOKS UP AT DAISY.

LEO

Oh no, not at all. This young  
lady has been summoned to the  
Editor's room with me. This, my  
dear Daisy, is something we face  
together.

FADE TO BLACK

Ends