

PROTECT THE WORLD TM: SCREENPLAY

THE PAST IS A DIFFERENT COUNTRY

[These set of scenes run backwards in time. Each scene is introduced with a title on the screen to help orient the audience.]

PART SIX: THE LAST PRISON VISIT

[MONIKA is visiting PATRICE in prison.]

MONIKA: I don't want to waste time arguing.

PATRICE: I don't want to waste time talking.

MONIKA: I have never tried to set us apart.

PATRICE: So, are we leaving together?

MONIKA: You know we can't.

PATRICE: I don't know anything about you anymore.

MONIKA: I never said - those things - I didn't say those things, not like that.

PATRICE: That it was your campaign. I heard you on the radio.

MONIKA: It was mine -

PATRICE: It was ours. All of ours. You sold yourself like some spiritual leader, some charismatic guru leading a group of nodding disciples.

MONIKA: That was never what I said -

PATRICE: We let you take the minutes and make the bloody coffee.

MONIKA: I was only trying to tell our story and -

PATRICE: And you can't even get that right.

MONIKA: They wanted me to tell my story. What had happened to me. I had no idea that this would happen -

PATRICE: And when your fancy solicitor arrived? And when your big guy in the suit shows up? These are exactly the kind of people we've been fighting.

MONIKA: That's not true. Sebastian says -

PATRICE: 'Sebastian' is not your friend.

MONIKA: Sebastian says that we need to exploit this attention, this media focus, act for the campaign while the world is looking.

PATRICE: Rich boy wants to steal our fight from under our noses and you're just handing it to him on a plate. He's in their pocket.

MONIKA: Out there. On the outside. I can fight for our case better on the outside.

PATRICE: No. We all could have fought our case by sticking together. Solidarity. Solidarity. Did you ever even read your own minutes?

MONIKA: I can tell our story. On the television. They'll listen. I can set the record straight. They'll listen. I promise, I'll make them listen.

[PATRICE and MONIKA stand]

PATRICE: It's time.

[CROSS TO TELEVISION STUDIO]

PART FIVE: WORLD VISION TONIGHT

[PENELOPE addresses the audience through the 'camera']

PENELOPE: And finally on World Vision tonight we bring you the latest on a very troubling and moving story that can't have failed to come to your attention this week. This is the case of Monika Sardash and her incredible campaign to claim a voice for all her fellow women in the lower districts of the City, protesting against a lack of economic opportunity, the high levels of violence directed towards them, and frustrated by a corrupt police force. Tonight, we are lucky enough to have here with us in the studio, her lawyer, Sebastian Merchant. Sebastian, how is Monika?

SEBASTIAN: Fragile. Very fragile. We know she is one tough little lady. But she needs to get out of there. We need to get her out of there.

PENELOPE: Do you think there is any hope of that?

SEBASTIAN: We've put her story before the judge, and now we need to wait. And hope.

PENELOPE: And what has happened to her campaign in the meantime?

SEBASTIAN: We are managing to keep the campaign going. It's been really tough, but we've picked up some high-profile supporters, and well, it's just so easy to be inspired by Monika.

PENELOPE: The Deputy Police Chief met with you yesterday?

SEBASTIAN: A wonderful display of generosity and openness, and I think we reached a very progressive agreement about police access to the lower district that is the right outcome for everyone. But such is the power of Monika. She's an inspiration.

PENELOPE: An incredible journey from poverty, sexual abuse, domestic servitude, to single-handedly running a crusade, galvanising people, providing leadership, for greater social justice, safer spaces and anti-corruption.

SEBASTIAN: I don't think 'corruption' is a word we are happy using.

[THE SCENE CONTINUES AS THE TWEETS IN PART 4 ARE PROJECTED ON SCREEN]

PENELOPE: It just seems to be one of those amazing stories about someone who comes from nothing to achieve incredible prominence. You almost couldn't write it.

SEBASTIAN: Monika doesn't seek the limelight. She seeks the light of truth and equality for everyone.

PENELOPE: What about the other women she went to prison with? When will they be getting out?

SEBASTIAN: Monika did have a number of associates – followers – to be honest, some of whom were threatening to bring her campaign into disrepute through their more – fundamentalist – strategies. She can't be responsible for the fanatical wing, what we need now is to focus on getting this one incredible lady back to freedom.

PENELOPE: Thank you. We hope that people will keep listening to her story.

PART FOUR: TWITTER STORM

[The following tweets appear sequentially on the screen accompanied by noises of phone-calls and notification alerts.]

TWEET: Please sign our petition of international solidarity for #MonikaSardash #solidaritywithMonika #FreeMonika

TWEET: Get #MonikaSardash out of solitary now. Stand with #Monika

TWEET: Monika I hope they let you read this. You are an amazing inspiration to all women old and young #freemonika

TWEET: Listen @horseeye she stood against a line of policemen with batons and guns and she didn't blink. That's women's brave - what you done? #Monika #freemonika

TWEET: RT: amazing article about #MonikaSardash. You need to read this. You need to know all about her story. Another great piece by @nickwall

TWEET: RT: @nickwall read here all about #MonikaSardash and her incredible 1 woman stand against corruption and injustice @globenews

TWEET: @Globenews call out. Does anyone know #MonikaSardash? DM our newsdesk

TWEET: Spread the word my friends. Story of #MonikaSardash who's in prison for defending the roadblock. Need to get this out there RT pls @globenews

TWEET: Have you read this? Keeps coming up on my thread. Someone ought to do something for #MonikaSardash. Full story @protecttheworld

TWEET: Thanks @protecttheworld. Incredible story. Needs sharing. Justice for Monika Sardam.

TWEET: Read our latest @protecttheworld blog post about #Monika Sardam. Organising an international solidarity campaign to get released from jail.

TWEET: Call to action for Monika Sardash who has been imprisoned for leading an anti-police corruption demonstration. Read her full story here @protecttheworld.

TWEET: Alert to @protecttheworld supporters - women's alliance imprisoned for holding the line in the lower district. Act now local authorities must overturn trial hearing.

TWEET: They're arresting them now. Right now. More pictures soon. Had camera taken by police. Get news cast down here.

[CROSS TO MONIKA AND KIT IN DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE SPACE]

PART THREE: REWRITING THE RULES

[MONIKA is speaking as if being interviewed in prison, whilst KIT is reading through her story, and then rewriting it, tweaking it, using parts from other testimonies that he has on his desk.]

MONIKA: You will speak to the other women? I want the other women to talk as well.

KIT: [writing] I want other women to talk.

MONIKA: I have spent my life here being frightened to talk.

KIT: I have spent my life here being frightened to talk. But now talking is the only option. People have to hear our voices.

MONIKA: Here women are never employed, we have the skills but there are no opportunities. Life here is hard.

KIT: Life here is dangerous and short.

MONIKA: Life for women is the worst. Sometimes they are killed just for fun.

KIT: Killed just for fun. Left to swing in the wind.

MONIKA: We left because of the militia. One night there was a shooting – they just left the bodies outside. I never went back.

KIT: But I was determined to change things.

MONIKA: I promised I would never let myself see anything like that again.

KIT: I promised that I would tell my story.

[JAY WALKS INTO KIT'S OFFICE]

PART TWO: OFFICE POLITICS

[KIT and JAY are looking at images on their laptop screen. JAY is brash and big-picture. KIT is jaded and sardonic]

JAY: Any pictures where they're not shouting?

KIT: No. They were angry.

JAY: But any pictures where it's that quiet, dignified sort of anger? They're all red-faced and shouty. Bulgy veins, sweat patches and bingo wings -

KIT: Sometimes it's hard to do your mascara when you've got a baton in your back.

JAY: They look like the aggressors. They look like they're starting the fight.

KIT: Let the Picture Eds work their magic.

JAY: [points at photograph] What about this one though?

KIT: Errrr. Mousey.

JAY: I'm seeing quiet. I'm seeing dignified.

KIT: I'm seeing a bit player.

JAY: Who was the leader?

KIT: No one. They wanted to (bored) 'challenge traditional male hierarchies of power.'

JAY: And that is why they look like a mob.

KIT: They held out for two weeks.

JAY: A mob is justified in going to jail. The good people of Chalfont St Giles do not want to support a mob. We need to focus on one individual. Tell the bigger story through the voice of one person.

KIT: Yup. That's what we do.

JAY: That's what we're good at. Is she Patrice? Have you read the interview transcripts? Patrice has the most amazing story.

KIT: Patrice is that one.

JAY: Bloody hell. It's like an attack dog in a bad dress.

KIT: She broke an officer's arm during the arrest.

JAY: So who is mousey, sweet little Jane Fonda over here?

KIT: No idea.

JAY: [looking through paperwork] Amma? No. Filiz? No. Ahhh. Monika.

KIT: Monika Sardash.

JAY: Do you remember her story? What was her testimony?

KIT: [scanning the transcriptions] She joined because her sister did.

JAY: Give me something better.

KIT: She said that she had lost everything. There was nothing left to lose.

JAY: I like that. We can work with that. I can see the story forming.

KIT: She said that her home had been raided.

JAY: Brilliant. Awful. Of course, awful.

KIT: She said that she had hidden a fellow member under her bed.

JAY: Not a mouse. A lion. This is the new Anne Frank.

KIT: Anne Frank was the one being hidden.

JAY: Not Anne Frank, then. But this Monika will be the new something or other.

KIT: She says that she wants to get home.

JAY: Then we are going to get her home.

KIT: All of them?

JAY: Of course, all of them home. She's just a figurehead.

KIT: A mouthpiece?

JAY: A pair of eyes that we can look into. Feel we know.

KIT: A person.

JAY: Of course a person. A person that needs our help. A person whose story needs sharing with the world. A person who if we don't act fast is going to be sentenced and then locked up beyond our reach.

KIT: She's got a certain Aung San Suu Kyi about her.

JAY: I'll take social media.

KIT: I'll work up the story.

JAY: Use some of the lines from that Patrice's interview. She has the most amazing story.

[CUT TO MONIKA WAITING IN THE VISITING ROOM]

PART ONE: EVERYBODY NEEDS TO KNOW THIS

[MONIKA is waiting in the visiting room of the prison. RANIA comes in with notebook]

MONIKA: Here. I'm here. I'm over here. This one. Me.

RANIA: Hello Monika? Monika Sardam?

MONIKA: Sardash. Monika Sardash.

RANIA: So sorry. Our notes always get a bit rushed in situations like this.

MONIKA: That's okay. That's really okay. Have you spoken to any of the others?

RANIA: Yes. I have. [Turns around to look at the 'guards'] But as you know, Monika, I'm not allowed to tell you anything that they might have said to me.

MONIKA: Yes. Yes. I know, of course. But it's just if you speak to Filiz, to Patrice, to Carolina - they will tell you about what we want to say.

RANIA: And I promise you, I will. I am here to collect statements from all of you women held here in the prison. I will speak to everybody.

MONIKA: Good. Good. They need to know. Everybody needs to know.

RANIA: And we will tell your story to as many people as possible.

MONIKA: Because somebody has to do something. They can't get away with this.

RANIA: And you know I can't promise anything but -

MONIKA: But I need to get out of here.

RANIA: And we think we can help you. All of you. And your words, your story -

MONIKA: (desperate to deliver what Rania wants) What can I tell you? We drew up a manifesto. We put it on the internet and we stapled it to the telegraph poles.

RANIA: Look. Why don't we start from the beginning? Why don't you tell me a little bit about yourself?

MONIKA: Who would want to know about that? It's nothing important.

RANIA: People will want to hear about you, how this is impacting you.

MONIKA: (hurried, desperate) My sister, she stopped coming around to the house, and at first I was offended. I shouted at her, and then she told me why and -

RANIA: (reassuring) Go right back to the beginning. I want to hear all about you, how your story unfolds.

MONIKA: Well, what can I tell you? What is my story? I don't know anymore. It's so muddled with other stories; all our stories seem to blend into one.

RANIA: Try for me. Trust me.

THE FASHION BLOG

KARINA: Hello Kate.

KATE: Karina, come in, come in. God, sorry. No coffee. No coffee in here.

KARINA: Sorry, no I'm sorry. Of course.

KATE: Angela! Angela! We don't let poisons in here now do we? And zen is restored.

KARINA: Thank you for making the time to discuss this - situation - we can't afford to let this-

KATE: I am always so impressed when I see female colleagues without make-up. Bravo you. How brave I always think.

KARINA: Well. You look amazing as ever. You could wear anything and get away with it.

KATE: And that is precisely the mistake that many - novices - will make. As I always say, 'Know your limits and work creatively within them.'

KARINA: And it was a certain matter of 'creativity' - creative licence - that I needed to talk to you about -

KATE: And for you, it's all a matter of working with your shape instead of against it. (KATE rearranges KARINA's clothing in some dramatic but ineffective way) Now, for your 'dimensions' you need to try and achieve some more height. See?

KARINA: I look - I look extraordinary.

KATE: I have more hints and tips for people like you. Bonus content is what keeps people coming back. Have you read my fashion blog?

KARINA: When I have the time.

KATE: You must make the time. Talking is so yesterday. What would any of us do without Instagram?

KARINA: Yes - quite - and that's part of the reason that I wanted to speak with you -

KATE: It's very popular. My blog. All the people who work here are really into it.

KARINA: We're certainly all signed up.

KATE: Fashion. How we look. How we choose to look. We are communicating something about ourselves, are we not? Our tribe. Our values. And you are quite desperate to tell me that you are all about charity shop chic.

KARINA: Well, I... I can't really remember where -

KATE: No, well done you. Very brave to carry that look into middle age too. It's nice to portray a softer side.

KARINA: Which is what I wanted to talk to you about. The gap between what we portray -

KATE: So, we photoshopped out a tattoo. Do you know what kind of incendiary wording was on that tattoo?

KARINA: I'm not talking about Diem's tattoo.

KATE: It said 'I only kill those who deserve to die'

KARINA: There was a question about the translation.

KATE: 'But sometimes I just do it anyway'.

KARINA: He was young.

KATE: How do you think that goes down with Linda and Roger at the Norwich local Protect the World Group? How does that go down with Paul at the Daily Mail? It was already too complicated. Too messy.

KARINA: I'm talking about a different person. You know I'm talking about a different person -

KATE: Protect the World Communications and PR guidelines, page 2 'The message works best when it is simple.'

KARINA: Comprehensible.'

KATE: 'Perceivable.'

KARINA: 'About people. About individuals.'

KATE: 'About individual stories'. The crowd is too hard. We don't want to feel jostled. We want to meet someone we can hold hands with. Get to know properly.

KARINA: And we're getting to know Jenna, properly, are we?

KATE: Yes. 6,000 signatures already since the campaign went live last night.

KARINA: But it's not her. It's not her is it?

KATE: Of course it's still her.

KARINA: At first I thought it must be a mistake.

KATE: Just a bit less of her.

KARINA: But then I checked with the Picture Eds and they confirmed that you had approved a different picture from stock instead.

KATE: Her, but just twenty sizes smaller.

KARINA: And don't you think that someone might notice?

KATE: Don't worry about details - that's the size she will be when she finally gets out of jail. Terrible conditions in there, food is ghastly, or weren't you aware of that?

KARINA: And she'll have grown a foot in that time as well?

KATE: Listen. We both know that fat is - well - 'unappealing'. The general public see a body like Jenna's and they think self-indulgence, self-neglect, luxury, laziness. And they don't want to help. They infer that somehow she must have brought it upon herself. I am doing her a favour. I think I have single-handedly knocked four years off her jail sentence.

KARINA: I think you underestimate our supporters.

KATE: You know the stats. Show them someone in a keffiyeh and the click- rate grinds to a halt.

KARINA: But it just isn't her. We are asking people to sign up to something - for someone - that isn't really real.

KATE: Of course she is real. She is still really in prison and we need to communicate that. Communications - it's all about how we look. How we choose to look. We can make that choice on Jenna's behalf. We have to, it is our moral duty.

KARINA: Isn't there some faint residue of spin here?

KATE: Sp-what? I will pretend I didn't hear that.

KARINA: A certain 'artfulness' then?

KATE: We clip, crop, recolour images all the time. We wash out the colours for the sad bits and crank up the sunshine for the happy bits. We lather on the mood music and ask everyone to stare meaningfully into the middle distance. Using Jenna 2 is just an extension of what we do all the time. And she will have freed Jenna 1 in next to no time at all.

KARINA: We seem to be defending discrimination, easy judgements - the very politics that we are fighting against.

KATE: Whatever the politics, the 'sensitivities', at the end of the day, question: what have you done in your lifetime to give people the chance for freedom, security and justice.

KARINA: Doesn't this fly in the face of everything we stand for?

KATE: This is us protecting everything we stand for. This is the end justifies the means. This is protecting the campaign. This is getting results. This is supporting your story in the best way I know how.

KARINA: It's just... I feel a great responsibility to this story.

KATE: The story is still the same story. Not a word of the story has changed, correct?

KARINA: Well. Of course, the web-copy is an edited version of the story. Of course.

KATE: Goodness! You don't mean to say that the story has changed do you?

KARINA: We can't publish the story word-for-word.

KATE: Oh? Do please elaborate.

KARINA: There a number of things that we have to practically, personally, paternally, presentably, tastefully, leave out.

KATE: A faint aura of artfulness?

KARINA: But it doesn't change the reality of it. It's just a compression.

KATE: A modification.

KARINA: A transformation.

KATE: A rebirth.

KARINA: It's just her, but tidied up.

KATE: Made more visible. Well done. Well done on a brilliant campaign.

IT'S ALL A MATTER OF INTERPRETATION:

VISITOR: I come with a packet of biscuits. To treat ourselves, I say.

HOST: I don't know what to do with them. Thank you, I say.

VISITOR: The room smells funny. The chair has stains on it. I don't want to sit down. What a great place you've made here, I say.

HOST: Does she think it's too much? Is this a test? It has its problems, I say.

VISITOR: Problems? It's a complete shithole. Still, better than the alternative, or no alternative, I say.

HOST: I am a little rusty. It is a while since I traded platitudes. I must appear to be grateful, but I need to tell her. Please sit, I say, thank you for coming to talk to me.

VISITOR: It's wet. Oh my god, the seat's wet. Don't flinch, just subtly shift. I'll just get out my tape-recorder and notebook, I say.

HOST: I say, I need to leave. Shut up. Shut up. Not so fast.

VISITOR: Not another one. Please no. I say, no, there's no need to worry. As you will have seen from our leaflet, none of this will have your name anywhere.

HOST: Yes the leaflet.

VISITOR: Please. Not another wasted journey.

HOST: The picture of the smiling woman. The big logo. No, I say, I meant I need to leave this place. To leave this house. I was hoping...

VISITOR: I say, and I'm sure someone will help you to... I'm not sure at all. This feels awful. The wet chair is seeping into my trousers.

HOST: Idiot. Don't rush. It's just that, I say, I need....

VISITOR:... and telling your story today is part of getting that help.

HOST: Yes

VISITOR: Of getting you, and everybody like you, the help and recognition that your story deserves.

HOST: That's just what the last woman said.

VISITOR: We need to have people hearing your story, talking about your story, buying into your story.

HOST: And the expenses payment for today is very welcome.

VISITOR: No. You're very welcome.

HOST: But what about right now? What do I do about my situation now?

VISITOR: Now you tell me the story of how you came here.

HOST: And which story do I tell her? The story of the sexual violence (too dangerous, too graphic), how I got disowned by my family (too stereotyped, too simplistic), about trying to hang myself (too weak, too comedic) about my campaigning (too partisan, too assertive) about wanting revenge, about paying those bribes - no. Keep it simple. Keep it humble.

VISITOR: Do not look at your watch. Do not look at your watch. Do not look at your watch.

HOST: It's a long story, I say, I can sense you are short of time.

VISITOR: No, no, I say. We have all the time you can spare, I say. Until 3 o'clock. I reset my listening face.

HOST: Now she has her head on one side. She actually has tilted her head to one side.

VISITOR: I lean in. I touch the table near her elbow. We have been advised against physical contact. I'm here to listen, I say.

HOST: What do you most want to hear?

VISITOR: We know that you were a victim of sexual violence - sadly - awfully-tragically- can you tell me about your experience, I say.

HOST: So I start. I don't even know why they bothered with me, I say, I was so skinny. And I give it the usual narrator's flourish. Hard to believe now, I know.

VISITOR: Here we go.

HOST: And there was nothing I could do.

VISITOR: I feel sick.

HOST: And I felt so sick. I wanted to die.

VISITOR: This bit always makes me feel sick.

HOST: I feel nothing. These words barely belong to me anymore. I have told them so many times. They feel like they are moving of their own accord.

VISITOR: I concentrate on her moving mouth. The numbers tick upwards on the Dictaphone. The room is tilting sideways.

HOST: Her head is really tilting sideways.

VISITOR: You can endure this. You are a survivor

HOST: I talk her through the marks that have been left on my body. She seems to be struggling to focus. She looks like she has run out of air. Are you okay, I say.

VISITOR: Yes, yes. Yes, I say, of course I'm okay. I mean, I'm fine. I'm really fine. I'm embarrassed to get like this, we're told not to get like this.

HOST: She motions to wipe away a tear. I take hold of her elbow.

VISITOR: It's just that story - your story - nobody should have to go through, what you went through.

HOST: So, I picked the right story. The right edit. That's all in the past, I say, it's what's happening right now -

VISITOR: You're amazing, you know that? You are incredible. Incredible stuff.

HOST: I'm worried about what's happening to me now -

VISITOR: Yes, I say, and what will be happening now is that this story will go on to our database and every time there is a campaign around this sort of problem, we can use what's happened to you to raise awareness.

HOST: How will I become aware? I say. How will I become aware of this awareness?

VISITOR: Do you follow us at all on Twitter? I say. She looks at me blankly. Twitter? I say. It's like sending out little messages to the world.

HOST: I let the rest of her words knock against me.

VISITOR: You can talk to people anywhere, in totally different parts of the world.

HOST: I crumple the £45 in my back pocket.

VISITOR: And do you mind if we take a photograph too? The release form is just on the other side of this piece of paper.

HOST: Do you want to take it outside? The light is very dark in here, I say.

VISITOR: No. It's perfect. Now, if you could just tilt your head a little towards the floor.

MAKE YOUR MEETINGS FUN

[GEMMA AND JOHNNY are finishing setting out the room for their local Amnesty group. There is much tension between them as they adjust and readjust each other's preparations.]

GEMMA: [*sotto voce*] I don't know why you get to do the introduction?

JOHNNY: Because I was elected President and you were not.

[JOHNNY clicks on his PowerPoint presentation and reading from the title slide. The slides are more factual and nuanced than JOHNNY's extemporising comments]

JOHNNY: Now. Kamal Uddin: champion of free speech. Kamal Uddin championed by Protect the World.

GEMMA: Who I actually invited here today. I met him on this incredible activists' weekend retreat -

JOHNNY: So - Kamal who? He's Kamal Uddin, totally legendary fighter for freedom of expression. And we championed his release. Why was he at risk? He wrote for a newspaper where he said some bad things -

GEMMA: 'Bad things' - I don't think that quite encompasses the risks he took with his writing -

JOHNNY: Anyways - Kamal wrote some provocative things about those in charge. So, what happened to him? He went to jail where he experienced horrific conditions. But then Protect the World got him out! Why's he coming here? To tell us all about it!

[Followed by a photoshopped slide of Kamal doing a thumbs up]

GEMMA: [To Johnny] Did you do that? Did you put those thumbs on?

JOHNNY: [To Gemma] Lighten up, Gemma! I think we can all take a joke. Did I not give you the Protect the World handout '10 ways to run a fab meeting'?

GEMMA: I just think that a man who has been through some seriously awful things, deserves a more serious introduction -

JOHNNY: Just because we are an activist group defending democracy in some of the worst places in the world, with the cruellest dictators meting out the most brutal punishments, doesn't mean that it can't be fun. Fun. You were employed as our new media officer to -

GEMMA: This is a voluntary post.

JOHNNY: You were appointed as media officer to drag this group kicking and screaming into the twenty-first century - well, to breathe new life into some old dogs. No offence Kenneth!

GEMMA: And I want to reach out to people. Inspire them.

JOHNNY: With another candle-lit vigil? Yawn.

GEMMA: It was really magical last year.

JOHNNY: Until Audrey was hospitalised with 3rd degree burns. Look, Colin's agreed to kick off our new 'Spend A Week In A Cage' campaign. It'll be Ice Bucket Challenge 2.0 - It'll break the bloody internet.

GEMMA: People see right through gimmicks. People want to connect with real people.

JOHNNY: Head Office. They've analysed this stuff. They know what gets people motivated.

GEMMA: Real people, that's what matters to the members. And that's why I invited Kamal here today.

JOHNNY: You'd better invite him in then.

[Gemma gestures off camera for 'Kamal' to come in.]

GEMMA: Ladies and gentlemen. Good evening. It is with great pleasure - well, I mean 'pleasure' is a bit of a funny word - but it is with great pride that I introduce you here today to Mr Kamal Uddin.

I invited Kamal here to talk to us as an incredible real-life defender of democracy and freedom of speech. To really talk to us, talk to us from the heart. Those of us who campaign for Protect the World value these human connections. We value the voice of real people. We are here to give Kamal his voice back.

Now, I've been reading the memoirs that you wrote from your time in jail. They are really moving. I know you are going to be doing some readings from your book tonight, but I just wanted to read out some of the best bits - of course, I really mean the worst bits. It's good, of course, well written. Otherwise you wouldn't be sitting here tonight. Perhaps this'll help you sell a few copies.

"During that time, the interrogations did not stop for one minute. Investigators came in one after the other, a line of grey faces in grey uniforms. They stripped me naked to humiliate me. They called me a dog. A homosexual" - Which is not necessarily an insult, of course. I'm sure you don't think of 'homosexual' as an insult anymore. Not now that you're living here

in the UK. I don't know how you kept mind and body and spirit together. Can we all see the scars on Kamal's arms? At the back?

Anyway - "They held my head in cold water over and over again, and again threatened to rape me if I didn't confess."

Did they actually rape you, I can't remember now? Yes, yes, that's right you were raped and they sent the film to your family. They put it on the internet. So demeaning. It was as if you had just become a symbol to them, as though they didn't see you as a real person anymore.

But that was before we got involved. Right? That was before we - and I'm talking about all of you sitting out there - got involved and campaigned for weeks to ensure that Kamal was freed.

Let's give ourselves a round of applause. Don't be shy. Well, I'll clap for you. I know some of you weren't here for that campaign, but think of this as a clap for all the future things that you're going to do, all the people in the future who you're going to save. And there's always someone who needs saving!

We are so lucky that Kamal has come here to show us how he became a survivor and built an amazing new life, managed to get a job here, gain status and purpose again. As a new member of our community, I think we have all done brilliantly to welcome him with open arms. So, if you do use the Co-Op on St Peter's Road - other supermarkets are available - do pop in and say hello to him. If you're a night owl that is. Give him a hug or something.

Maybe we can have a picture of us hugging later. For social media. It's really important that we get as many shares and likes for this event - for Kamal's story - as possible. You can use the hashtag #caringforkamal

Well, without further ado, I present to you, Mr (do I call you mister?) well, Kamal Uddin.

[Gemma applauds enthusiastically. Kamal appears as VO]

KAMAL: I have two shoe-boxes in my flat. I have only one pair of shoes in this country. But I have two shoe-boxes.

But you won't ask me about that.

In one I collect everything that gives evidence of my existence. Of me having lived here. Payslips. Official letters. Anything that has my name on it. Yes. But also, receipts. Bus tickets. Little traces of my now life.

In the other box I am re-remembering my memories. I have no photographs from my childhood. From my graduation. From my wedding. They took all those away from me. The

people who can rebuild them for me are dead, or too scared to communicate with me, or still believe the lies that were told about me. So I make little lies about my then life.

This is what I might say if you asked me.

[The slide of Kamal with thumbs up appears on screen.]