

# Protect the World TM

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## THE POWERPOINT PRESENTATION

ONE: Good evening ladies and gentleman [pause. Then sotto voce] where's the music?

TWO: [eating a bun] Broken. Sorry, meant to tell you before you went on.

ONE: Ladies and Gentleman it is an exciting opportunity for us to [music blares] announce today the important results.

TWO: Working.

ONE: Turn it off. [Cutting gestures]

TWO: Drama queen.

ONE: We are very privileged to be able to present to you the results of the study that you commissioned.

TWO: Before this goes any further, can I just say that there might be some aspects of this research that might need further testing.

ONE: As with any study – but we can assure you that we are fully confident in all areas.

TWO: Sorry, just a quick note – there were some holes in our methodology.

ONE: Quantitative data has been amplified by qualitative narratives and some... common-sense assumptions that help us to form the response.

TWO: We asked Twitter.

ONE: Perhaps with more time, and more funding, the exciting early findings of this study could be widened and corroborated further.

TWO: In truth, we only started this last night. We tell ourselves that we work best under pressure, but it's not really true.

ONE: However, with such a complicated brief, we had to work imaginatively.

TWO: We imagined most of the answers to the questions and wrote them in.

ONE: But as bona fide 100% members of the general public, are we not also to be considered a very reliable source?

TWO: Though some answers we just totally made up to freak you out.

ONE: To see if anyone would notice.

TWO: We were drunk.

ONE: We were young.

TWO: We were suggestible.

ONE: We were impressionable.

TWO: We did some impressions of the most popular faces.

ONE: The faces that people think are the most compelling.

TWO: That people are most likely to give money to.

ONE: That will motivate the give. That will convert the supporter to member to legacy signer.

TWO: It needs to be worthy. But not too sad. If it's too desperate, we think 'why bother'. There has to be that bit of hope. We got that from Oxfam.

ONE: Think of each face you use as your brand representative.

TWO: Think two-stream. The silver-pound wants a relationship; the millennials want a one-night stand.

ONE: Each face is your chance to open a window.

TWO: Open a wallet.

ONE: That's not actually very helpful.

[They have researched the photos they do and don't want and have some. They demonstrate the right and the wrong images of 'positions' and 'poses' that the public respond to on their PowerPoint presentation. They then turn the question around to the audience]

ONE: You can be that face.

TWO: This story needs a human face.

ONE: Maybe your story, a different face.

TWO: We can change your face.

ONE: We can change a few things around.

TWO: We can change some words.

ONE: We can change your story, a bit.

TWO: Make your story a bit more...

ONE: A bit more like the one here.

TWO: I have one here that I thought you could tell.

ONE: Have a go. See how it feels.

TWO: Like putting on a comfortable pair of slippers, I'll bet.

ONE: This could almost be your story.

TWO: Think of the bigger picture.

ONE: You'd be helping a lot of other people.

TWO: You'd really be helping me out.

ONE: Happy to sign?

TWO: Can you just say this for the tape for me?

ONE: A bit louder.

TWO: Speak up.

ONE: It's all part of being empowered.

## **WE ALL HAVE A ROLE TO PLAY IN THIS WAR**

[The piece opens with one of the women reciting a slew of statistics and report facts about the position of women in refugee camps (the in-the-field dimension is important to the formation of the narrative, but the topic can be changed). She speaks directly into the table microphone, urgently looking through the reams of paper on the table to find the right, the compelling information. The paper begins to disorganise and spill everywhere. Even though this is carefully scripted, a mild air of panic settles as she tries to keep our attention. Then emerging from these stats, first as voice-over, and then as performance comes the ‘real’ testimony of one of these women. Detailed, complex and dignified. The original speaker notes her presence as the woman emerges.]

ONE: [selects from a list of the following] Worldwide, 50 per cent of victims of sexual violence are 15 years old or younger.

1 in 3 displaced girls are exposed to exploitation, abuse, and sexual violence.

Adolescents in regions affected by conflict and war and who live in unstable situations and camps are highly vulnerable.

Camps are often poorly lit, putting girls and women at risk at night, even on their way to the toilet. Over 70% of all monitored refugee camps worldwide do not have segregated toilets, despite international guidelines developed in 2006.

More than 60 million girls and young women—some as young as 10 years old—in developing countries get married before the age of 18.

Young brides are more likely to experience gender-based violence, over 70% drop out of school and 40% will contract sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV.

The risk of pregnancy-related death is twice as high for girls ages 15-19 years and five times higher for girls ages 10-14 years compared to women ages 20-29 years.

An infant’s risk of dying in his or her first year of life is 60 per cent higher when the mother is under age 18 than when the mother is 18 or older.

Between 6 and 14 per cent of all displaced women of reproductive age (15-49 years) could be pregnant at any given time.

Fifteen per cent of women who are pregnant while fleeing from conflict may experience a life-threatening obstetric complication like a postpartum haemorrhage

In the world's conflict zones, 10 million girls are not in school; girls account for only 30 per cent of refugees enrolled in secondary school.

Education reduces the likelihood of early pregnancy by 40%: the more years of schooling, the fewer early pregnancies.

TWO: I was walking to work in the fields when I suddenly there was this loud cracking noise from behind me, and I saw spires of smoke coming from off the ground. And then suddenly there was this great pain in my heel. I looked down and it was ripped away. But still I ran. As we ran we saw people lying on the ground who had been killed. When I saw that I felt so much fear. Everyone fled. They were my neighbours. We had to leave them behind on the ground. I used to play with Josef, but now he was twisted and broken on the floor, his favourite yellow t-shirt bloodied. It took four hours to get to the nearest town. I was so tired – we didn't have anything to eat or drink and I had to carry my sister for some of the way. I didn't know where my mum had gone and we were all on our own. I felt desperate but I couldn't show it. When we arrived in the town, we found a church and waited outside. People were asking me why we were sitting outside. When I told them about the shooting, they hurried away. One woman came back with water and a blanket but she wouldn't look at us. We stayed there overnight outside – I stayed there as I thought maybe my mum would find us there. I was so scared sleeping outside. My little sister cried the whole time – she kept calling for our mum. The next day we were picked up and taken to the camp. And that was just the beginning.

DIRECTOR: That's better already isn't it? You can feel that's better.

ACTOR: I can really picture it all now. That really helps my process.

DIRECTOR: Just one small note. I don't think the accent is quite there yet.

ACTOR: Sure. I can do more 'African' if you want.

DIRECTOR: It's... Liberia. Where are you from?

ACTOR: Sheffield.

DIRECTOR: Yes. But where are you from, from?

ACTOR: St Lucia on one side and Jamaican on the other.

DIRECTOR: Perfect. We all come from Africa, right? Though you might want to wear your hair ‘natural’ for the performance. Shall we go again from the top?

ACTOR: Okay, sure – I’ve just got to find it first in my head.

DIRECTOR: No problems. Take all the time you need.

ACTOR: I have it. I have it. Shall we go for it again? Before I lose it!

DIRECTOR: Excellent. Thanks so much. With you.

ACTOR: (Broad) I was walking to work in the fields when I suddenly there was this loud crackling noise from behind me, and I saw spires of smoke coming from off the ground. And then suddenly there was this great pain in my heel. I looked down and it was ripped away. But still I ran.

DIRECTOR: Can I stop you there?

ACTOR: Yes. No. Of course. You know, I really wasn’t feeling it that time.

DIRECTOR: I just wonder if you are giving it a bit too much emotion?

ACTOR: Too much? I felt I was holding back.

DIRECTOR: Audiences don’t like too many tears. We had a focus group.

ACTOR: More neutral?

DIRECTOR: Think stoical. Think on the verge of tears but managing to soldier on. If that's not a bad word to use in this context.

ACTOR: A little wobble perhaps?

DIRECTOR: At the right moment. People are paralysed in the face of someone still in the grip of psychological trauma. People act when they see recovery, when they can sense hope.

ACTOR: Hope. Yes. I can do hope. Can we go again?

DIRECTOR: Think Malala Yousafazi standing before the UN: and going in  
5,4,3,2,1 -

ACTOR: (Broad) I was walking to work in the fields when I suddenly there was this loud cracking noise from behind me, and I saw spires of smoke coming from my heel. I looked down and it was smoking. But still – no. Lost it. Sorry. I was trying noble and I think I went too Nelson Mandela.

DIRECTOR: It's a difficult script.

ACTOR: God. Yeah. Really draining. This takes you to some dark places.

DIRECTOR: Sure. I meant more the language. She doesn't really finish her sentences properly, the word order is a bit clumsy, the vocabulary is a bit – well – gauche.

ACTOR: She's twelve.

DIRECTOR: I know, right? She's nothing like the 12 year olds I know. It's part of the appeal that she's so 'unwordly', gives it that ring of authenticity, but I've had to totally rewrite bits of the speech just for it to make sense. The original text was really disjointed. It went round and round in circles – rambling in parts. I had to really work hard to find any kind of narrative arc.

ACTOR: People need to understand the story.

DIRECTOR: And that's our job. We're the conduit.

ACTOR: The pipeline.

DIRECTOR: The facilitator.

ACTOR: The medium.

DIRECTOR: The friend.

ACTOR: It's a really amazing thing you do. Telling these stories.

DIRECTOR: No you're amazing. You've really breathed life into her.

ACTOR: I think you've really captured her voice

DIRECTOR: I think we've given her a voice.

ACTOR: So important.

DIRECTOR: So important.

TWO: Too much emotion that time?

ONE: No. I thought you pitched that just right?

TWO: Did I come across as a bit vapid? Self-obsessed? Because I don't like it when people make that assumption about actors.

ONE: No. no. But look, you just have to play the script. You can't do anything more than that.

TWO: But I want to give it an air of honesty.

ONE: Authenticity.

TWO: Relatability. I can relate to her.

ONE: It's like, you know there's a problem out there, you see the headlines, you hear the news, but then when you can meet, get to know, someone going through it, then you refocus, you pay attention.

TWO: Sometimes the problem is too big when it seems like it's happening to thousands and thousands of people. Just numbers, numbers, numbers and it becomes - meaningless.

ONE: Get to spend some time with someone, and you can take it in. You can see that it's happening to human beings. It's all about people again, it becomes more real.

TWO: And we miss that, don't we? Connection with real people. When everything seems so processed, so managed, so artificial. We are desperate for time with real people.

ONE: We need to find some real people.

TWO: We need to be real people.

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

VISITOR: Problems? It's a complete shithole. No wonder she looks so miserable. Still, better than the alternative, I say.

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

VISITOR: It's wet. Oh my god, it's wet. Don't flinch. You're only here for a short while. Remember that. 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: Please no. Not another one. 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. 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. Of course, I say, it's just....

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 what the last woman said. Recognition? It came out more as notoriety.

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: Well 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 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 - 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, 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. This is incredible stuff.

HOST: I am on the conveyor belt.

VISITOR: The room is tilting sideways.

HOST: Her head is really tilting sideways.

VISITOR: You can endure this.

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 is swimming underwater. 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, to endure what you went through.

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

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

HOST: It's 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. God, what an awful assumption to have made.

HOST: It's a game I like to play. With the ones who have pissed me off.

VISITOR: Twitter? I say. It's like sending out little messages to the world. You can talk to people anywhere, make contact with like-minded people -

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

## **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 ONE: THE LAST PRISON VISIT**

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. You said that.

MONIKA: It was mine -

PATRICE: It was ours. All of ours. You sold yourself like some reincarnated spiritual leader, like 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 side of the story. 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 galvanise this attention, this media focus, act on 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.

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? Too busy spilling the coffee over them....

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.

[CUT TO TELEVISION STUDIO]

## PART TWO: WORLD VISION TONIGHT

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 one-woman 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, thank you.

SEBASTIAN: Thank you Penelope. Good to see you again.

PENELOPE: Sebastian, how is Monika?

SEBASTIAN: Fragile. Very fragile to be honest. As 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. 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: And the Deputy Police Chief came to a meeting with you and the group yesterday.

SEBASTIAN: Yes, 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 that kind of person. 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.

PENELOPE: She just seems to be one of those amazing stories of 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 all.

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

SEBASTIAN: Monika did have a number of – 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 them, what we need now is to focus on is getting this one incredible girl back to freedom.

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

[READING OUT]

### **PART THREE: TWITTER STORM**

[This scene could be accompanied by noises of phone-calls and notification sounds]

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 and @amnesty

TWEET: Thanks @amnesty. Incredible story. Needs sharing. Justice for Monika Sarsdam.

TWEET: @amnesty. Read our lastest 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 @amnesty.

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

[CUT TO THE OFFICE – JAY and KIT are looking at photographs]

#### **PART FOUR: REWRITING THE RULES**

MONIKA: [dictating] I want other women to talk.

KIT: [writing] I want other women to talk. They shouldn't be scared 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: Left to swing in the wind.

MONIKA: We used to have a farm – four or five hours away from here by boat. We left because of the militia. They were illegal.

KIT: But the police gave them weapons.

MONIKA: It was very dangerous. I remember one night there was a massacre – when we woke up there were bodies outside. I've never been 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.

[CUT TO]

## PART FIVE: OFFICE POLITICS

JAY: Is that one after the arrest?

KIT: Before.

JAY: And that one?

KIT: Before.

JAY: Any pictures where they're not shouting?

KIT: No. They were angry about a few things.

JAY: But any pictures where it's that quiet, dignified sort of anger? These are all the red faced, shouty kind. All 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: The problem is they look like the aggressors. They look like they're starting the fight. It looks like a Saturday night out in Newcastle.

KIT: Comms will crop.

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

KIT: Mousey.

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

KIT: I'm seeing a bit player.

JAY: They've all done their bit. And that might be part of the problem. Our problem.

KIT: No leadership. They wanted to '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.

KIT: Not unless the mob went to private school.

JAY: We need to focus on one individual. Tell everyone's story through the voice of one person.

KIT: That's what we do. That's what we're good at.

JAY: Is she Patrice? Have you read the interview transcripts? Patrice has the most amazing story.

KIT: Patrice is that one.

JAY: She's like an attack dog in a bad dress.

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

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

KIT: I have 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: No idea.

JAY: Me neither.

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

JAY: Give me something better.

KIT: She said it gave her purpose in life. A newfound sense of purpose.

JAY: I like that. We can work with that.

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

JAY: Yes. 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: Brave, brave woman.

KIT: She said that she had been scared.

JAY: Who wouldn't be?

KIT: She said that she would do it all over again in a heartbeat.

JAY: This is no mouse. This is a lion. This is the new Anne Frank.

KIT: That doesn't work.

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 home.

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

KIT: A compression. A refinement.

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

KIT: A prop.

JAY: A peg. For the public to hang their sympathy on.

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. You write up the long form copy.

KIT: I'll work up the story.

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

[CUT TO]

## PART SIX: A STATEMENT

PATRICE: I want other women to talk. They shouldn't be scared to talk. I have spent my life here being frightened to talk. There is a problem of physical abuse here of women by men. Some women get used to this abuse and they never report it, but it's difficult. As a mother, it's difficult to bring up a child here. Here women are never employed, we have the skills but there are no opportunities. I don't like life here. Life here is hard. Life here is dangerous and short. Life for women is the worst. Sometimes they are killed just for fun. Left to swing in the wind. So now talking is the only option. People have to hear our voices.

[BLENDS OVER - ]

## PART SEVEN: EVERYBODY NEEDS TO KNOW THIS

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. They 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 if they hear our story, what has happened to us, then somebody will do something. They can't let them 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: 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: 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? There's nothing out the ordinary.

RANIA: Tell me a bit about you. People will want to hear about you, get to know you a little.

MONIKA: 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 she hadn't been there, where she had been.

RANIA: Go right back to the beginning. I want to hear all about you, how your story develops.

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.

MONIKA: We used to have a farm – four or five hours away from here by boat. We left because of the militia. They were illegal. But the police gave them weapons. It was very dangerous. I remember one night there was a massacre – when we woke up there were bodies outside. I've never been back, but I promised I would never let myself see anything like that again.

## 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? Now, where were we?

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.

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

KARINA: When I have the time.

KATE: You must make the time.

KARINA: I don't know where you find the time.

KATE: 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. It's all part of the way that we communicate.

KARINA: Which is what I wanted to talk to you about.

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: 'You know 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 one from stock instead.

KATE: Her, but 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-through 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. 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 aura of dishonesty here?

KATE: Dis-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: 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.

## **INTERVIEW BOOT CAMP**

[Chris is a bullish trainer. Les looks like he is taking notes at the back of the classroom, but he is in a different scene preparing to give his testimony to a charity worker trained previously by Chris. Les talks directly out to us in the audience. Chris remains oblivious to Les' presence. Both characters are played by women. Some of the questions that Chris asks can be on the PowerPoint presentation screen, or on signs]

CHRIS: Morning everyone. Phones off. Anything bleeps it goes out the window.

LES: Five seconds and I have taken you in.

CHRIS: Pens at the ready everyone. What I'm about to give you today is gold dust.

LES: Your clothes, the state of your shoes, the state of your teeth. How you smell. How you have been careful not to try to hard. I classify you. I rate you.

CHRIS: We start with some general questions – get them relaxed, get them talking, they'll be wary, guarded, no matter how much they are smiling, how eager they seem to please, they'll be watching you carefully, testing out if they can trust you.

LES: You think I'm your discovery. But I've been handed to you. This has been brokered. I am in the system. I am not in the margins.

CHRIS: Don't ask 'how are you', that never gets a good response, makes you look like a bit of a prick. Instead go for things that are specific, small, so you're sounding like a human, not like their brief, not like the bill.

LES: I like you. You mean well. You want to do well in the world. The world needs more people like you, not less.

CHRIS: But be warned even seemingly innocent questions might raise hackles. 'What was your journey like?' They might be skint and have had to walk. 'Have you got any plans for the weekend?' They may be on curfew or tagged.

LES: You tell other people you are an activist, and yet mostly forget that I am activist too. Forget that I have been campaigning, agitating, raising hell out on the streets for years. You forget that all the words you choose, that I owned them long before you.

CHRIS: Then go for the factual questions next. Things that need a direct answer. Think about this as taking the first layer off: Can you tell me how long you've been involved with this project? How did you first come into contact with them? Can you tell me of anything that has changed since you came into contact with the service?

LES: Like an actor waiting in the wings for his cue – I step on the stage and the performance begins.

CHRIS: And now you are beginning to get them to give more descriptive answers, and we have moved from the quantitative to the qualitative – and we are into the second phase – the crack zone as I like to call it - when you can really get them talking.

LES: Some people think that the speech act is somehow more honest, less planned, more off the cuff, more authentic. It's just composition at a faster speed. Have you ever been in an argument? Well, you will know what great improvisers we all are when the stakes are high.

CHRIS: Piece by piece. You can slowly prise the shell off with each question.

LES: But you're nice person. It's nice to talk to you. Asking all the right questions. I'll give you something. I'll throw you a bone.

CHRIS: What else do you think that they could do to help with your situation at the moment? If you could change one thing about your life at the moment what would that be? If you could go back and change one thing about your past, what do you think that would be?

LES: Drop in seeds like bombs in earth. I can position you cosily in front of the fire and fan the flames. Now I can begin to talk about the things I want to.

CHRIS: No one can resist that question. All of us have regrets. It sets the hares running. Don't be frightened if it starts leading them into dark waters. This is what we are here for after all. We're all adults and at the end of the day, they can always refuse to answer. And its best not to piss about, so you're not wasting your time, and you're not wasting theirs.

LES: I can tell what lights your heart, your bleeding heart. And I carefully sculpt my story to fit your needs.

CHRIS: Now we can get into all the deep and meaningfuls. Can you tell me a little about your family background? Are your parents still around? What did your family think about your situation? Was there anyone around who tried to help you? Why do you think you got into trouble?

LES: We know that there are no such things as clairvoyants, right? We're not children taken in by the fairground banter. We know how the psychics work. We know that they teach themselves to read other people's cues. We all have that skill. It helps us survive.

CHRIS: It's a game of cat and mouse.

LES: It's a game of cat and mouse.

CHRIS: What we try and do is to get them to tell us their story three times.

LES: That gives me ample opportunity to get my point across.

CHRIS: Why would we do that, you might ask. To wear them down.

LES: But you're a good person. Well meaning. I can see that. I'm happy for you to think you're in control. I wouldn't let most people get away with that.

CHRIS: The first time they tell you the story as they plan to. So you listen, and you nod in all the right places.

LES: But I need you. For now.

CHRIS: And just when they think they have finished with their script, you go in again. Direct question. Disarm. Throw them a bit off balance. What was prison like? Did you ever experience any violence in prison? What was the most enjoyable aspect of committing your crime?

LES: Because really I'm in control. My survivor status. I am victim grade weaponry. I am the Other you are scared of. I have cache. There are lines that you will not cross with me.

CHRIS: This is where we get most of our shock and awe moments. The good bits, the sit up and take notice bits. The 'make them stop reading the celebrity gossip bits'. Remember if someone offers you even a small bit of detail, pursue it, it usually means that they want to talk.

LES: I'll set the agenda. I'll lay the net under the water. I'll give you the hook. You bite.

CHRIS: Then the final go-round, you ask them to reflect, to evaluate. Do not ignore this part of the process. Many will think they have already harvested all the good stuff they are going to get, but here's where you get some of the best copy.

LES: It's not unethical. It could be a matter of life and death.

CHRIS: Think front cover of the Annual Report.

LES: I'll tell you what I want you to put on the front of every report.

CHRIS: If you could speak directly to the prime minister, what would you want to say to him? What do you think he should do?

LES: And I want you to do well. I want you to do well in this life.

CHRIS: What are you good at, what do you enjoy doing? Where would you like to be in 12 months time, 5 years time, 10 years time?

LES: It's been nice talking to you. I do love a chat.

## **MAKE YOUR MEETINGS FUN**

[For the opening of this scene, there is no sudden moment where they 'become' Gemma and Johnny, more that both performers are always in the process of 'becoming' Gemma and Johnny in this scene – until they need to take on the role of someone else.]

ONE: Oh my god. Typical. Absolutely typical.

TWO: (covering) As I was saying. We'll just begin the next section shortly when – we've managed to –

ONE: Bloody technology. Why do we use it for things like this? It always breaks down; it always goes wrong.

TWO: Sorry. Well, this is a bit awkward... Perhaps you ought to talk amongst yourselves while we just sort this –

ONE: Nobody talk. Nobody utter a bloody word. I need to focus. I can't come out of role.

TWO: Of course. Sorry. (To audience) Prima Dona. None of the crew are allowed to look him in the eye. Only eats red M&Ms.

[Actor One hands a member of the audience a random and useless remote control]

ONE: Could you just press these buttons. Any buttons. Any order. This is really not my thing. I'm a creative.

[Actor One eye-rolls at the poor audience member unable to cause any effect with the controller and witheringly takes it back]

GEMMA: Can I take a look?

ONE: Do what you like, love. I normally would have someone do this for me. Could you do this for me? No actually, stay right there, it's better that there are only recognised professional people on this stage.

GEMMA: So, this bit seems all to be switched on -

JOHNNY: I know that. I can see that. It's broken. That's all. It's bloody broken.

GEMMA: I think it might be this part of the -

JOHNNY: It's totally bloody well knackered mate, that's what it is.

GEMMA: It just might have gone to sleep that's all -

JOHNNY: Just like everybody else here will, if we don't get this movie show powered up.

GEMMA: It's just a few slides. We can always work without them.

JOHNNY: Did I not send you the booklet '10 ways to run a fab meeting?

GEMMA: Yes. Of course. I just still think we can get the message across without the need -

JOHNNY: Just because we are an activist group campaigning for human rights in some of the worst places in the world, with the cruellest dictators meting out the most brutal punishments to some of the most vulnerable people, doesn't mean that it can't be fun. Fun. Even you know how to have fun, right?

GEMMA: I'm fun. People have told me I'm fun. I can do fun.

JOHNNY: You know my mantra. We engage while we inform. We entertain whilst we incite. We write the postcards and then go down the pub. And the next time we're down the pub, turn off the bleeding heart stuff.

GEMMA: She asked me to see the pictures. She was really moved.

JOHNNY: You moved her so much she never came back. The karaoke really lacked energy after you brought up the Congo. This isn't what I want us to be known for.

GEMMA: Best local society two years running.

JOHNNY: And I guard our reputation very carefully. That's how we grow our membership. That's how we write more of those postcards. I had to buy everyone a double shot after your little movie display.

GEMMA: I've got the display working again.

[A slide comes up behind them.]

JOHNNY: Good girl. Just in time.

GEMMA: (reading) Kamal Uddin – Human Rights Defender.

JOHNNY: Let's start getting them all in, they'll be champing at the bit for the tea and biscuits.

[Johnny 'welcomes' in the already present audience members to the meeting. He is charming and knows everyone by name]

JOHNNY: Gemma, can you get those biscuits handed out please.

GEMMA: Oh. Yes. Sure.

[Gemma puts out plates of biscuits for all the meeting attendees.]

JOHNNY: Dig in everyone. Otherwise Gemma will only end up eating them all. That's our first action for tonight! Save her from herself.

GEMMA: Perhaps we could all finish these before the guest speaker comes in -

JOHNNY: No, there's enough for one extra. I'm sure he'll appreciate a few of these. These aren't any old supermarket brand.

GEMMA: Just that it might be a bit rude. To be eating. When he's speaking. He went on hunger-strike....

JOHNNY: So, ahead of Kamal arriving, I thought we'd just give you a quick heads up about who he is, why he's been invited here today, and a bit about his past. With all the names of the different jails, the different airports, it gets a bit confusing. They all start to blend into one after a while. So -

[Johnny begins the slide presentation, reading from the slide text]

GEMMA: But I think most of you know who Kamal is, right?-

JOHNNY: Gemma, they're not all professional do-gooders like you. We're here to teach these good people the human rights from the human wrongs.

[He returns to the presentation]

JOHNNY: So - Kamal who? He's Kamal Uddin, we championed his release. In fact, we campaigned our asses off for him. He was one of our individuals at risk. What's one of those?

GEMMA: (she repeats in disbelief) "What's one of those?"?

JOHNNY: (reading) That's people put in serious danger by their own government. Why was he at risk? He wrote a newspaper where he said some bad things -

GEMMA: 'bad things' - I don't think that quite encompasses his writings -

JOHNNY: Now, now, we can't afford to be elitist Gemma. We need to reach out to everyone in the room. There are some quite elderly people in here after all - let's not be ageist, love.

[A slide comes up of a sad faced Kamal]

Anyways - Kamal wrote some bad things about those in charge. What happened to him? He went to jail for a very long time. But then we got him out! Why's he here? To tell us all about it!

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

GEMMA: (To Johnny) Are those his real thumbs?

JOHNNY: Lighten up Gemma! I think we can all take a joke. Or are you going to start lecturing us all again about safe spaces, appropriation and trigger warnings! If you had your way, we'd never actually get to talk about anything, we'd never actually do anything. we'd be spending all our time going through the rules -

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

JOHHNY: Look, you were employed as our new media officer to -

GEMMA: This is a voluntary post.

JOHNNY: You were appointed as the 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 Barry! We need new blood, we need new supporters, we need new conversions.

GEMMA: And I am with you on that - that, journey - but we have to build on a legacy, not to alienate some of our long-term supporters.

JOHNNY: Yes, yes, thank you to all the Barries, the Sheilas, the Colins, the Hilarys, the Malcolms, and the Audreys who have manned the barricades over the years. Thanks for all the tie-dye banners and the fair-trade candles. But it's time to hand that hemp jumper on to the next generation now.

[As other 'characters' are mentioned. The actors find audience members to stand for that person. The audience member is not required to do anything.]

GEMMA: I was planning to hold another candle-lit vigil. We all felt it went very well last year. Really magical. Apart from the burns to Audrey's leg.

JOHNNY: And I've changed it to skydiving. You'll thank me for it when you're free-falling 10,000 feet towards the STOP TORTURE logo.

GEMMA: Barry? Shelia? Did you know about this?

JOHNNY: An octogenarian and goggles in a flying suit? That's catnip to local papers.

GEMMA: If we want to inspire local people, then we tell them about how their work helps.

JOHNNY: Colin's agreed to kick off our new 'Spend A Week In A Box' campaign. It'll go viral. Interstellar. It'll be ice-bucket challenge mark 2 – It'll break the bloody internet.

GEMMA: People see right through gimmicky stuff like that. It's got to have heart. It's all about personal connections. Making people matter to other people.

JOHNNY: Malcolm can't keep rattling that bucket in the street – his glory days of chugging are long gone –

GEMMA: People want to connect with other people. Real people. Which is why meeting people, real people like Kamal, matters. This is what will make the difference

JOHNNY: Hey, its Head office babe. They've analysed this stuff. They know what gets people motivated, campaigning, donating. I'm just following orders.

GEMMA: But there are all sorts of orders aren't there? Really? There are all sorts of messages out there about what we should be, do, stand for. And the organisation's always encouraged us to use our initiative. We're encouraged to be independent. We were founded on that spirit.

JOHNNY: Well, yes. To a degree...

GEMMA: To campaign in a direct and personal way.

JOHNNY: Yes....

GEMMA: When you purposefully recruit intelligent, compelled, activist folk, you need to expect that people will be able to find the right path. The organisation stands for independent thinkers; it empowers independent action. You're an independent thinker aren't you?

JOHNNY: Look. I don't want to see anyone exploit anyone else. I don't like bullies. I don't like people abusing power. I don't like injustice. That's why I joined. That's why I'm doing what I'm doing. I want to do it. Do it well. And well, hang out with a few people who also care about the same things I do.

GEMMA: So. Why don't you do the hanging out? The beers, the bantz. The pub quiz and supper nights and even the skydiving if you want.

JOHNNY: Barry's a natural. And I know Sheila will be right back on it once the pelvis has clicked back into place.

GEMMA: And let me take care of the serious stuff. I'll do all the heart-to-heart stuff so you don't have to.

JOHNNY: Do you still want to use my slides?

GEMMA: [patronisingly] I think I'm going to be fine without them.

JOHNNY: You'd better invite him in then.

[Gemma goes across to a member of the audience and bids them to come with her, handing them an envelope. On the front it asks – please remain silent until you are cued to open the envelope. Whatever is said and done, Gemma persists in her speech and at each point that we think Kamal might get a right to reply, she continues to deliver her speech.]

If a person in the audience is not suitable, then the performer playing 'Johnny' can take this part.]

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. To really talk to us, talk to us from the heart, person to person, as one human being to another. We value these human connections. We value the voice of real people. For too long, people who are on the margins have not been given a voice, have been silenced. And we are here to give Kamal his voice back.

Now Kamal is an incredible real-life human rights defender who came to the UK from being incarcerated in the most terrible prison conditions. Still. I bet that being here, in this UK weather, it sometimes feels like prison. I bet that sometimes you wish you were back there just to avoid our terrible weather.

No. Of course you don't. Of course. Because that was a really horrible, horrible place that you were in. Frankly, it is a miracle that you survived. I don't know how you kept mind and body and spirit together. I mean, it's clearly had an impact upon you. That's obvious. And not just the weight loss – though maybe I wouldn't mind some of that myself – But we can read that by all the dreadful lines on your face and those great big marks on your body. Can we all see that? At the back? Can we all see the scars on Kamal's arms? Can we all see the legacy of the terrible beatings that Kamal suffered in jail.

And I've been reading the memoirs that you wrote from your time in jail. They are amazing. Really moving. Really powerful. Have we all seen Kamal's book? No, well perhaps you'll shift a few copies after tonight!

And I know that you are going to be doing some readings from your book tonight, but before you do, I just wanted to read out some of the best bits – of course, when I say 'best bits', I really mean the worst bits. But they are good. Dramatic. Well put together. I know you had help with the translation, so maybe that's why it's so readable as well as harrowing.

"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 tried every means to make me say what they wanted me to say. They stripped me naked to humiliate me. They called me a dog. A homosexual" Which is not necessarily an insult. I'm sure you don't think of that as an insult anymore. Now that you're living in the UK.

Anyway - "At other times, they used beatings and electric shocks. 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. How demeaning. It was as if you had just become a means, to them, a symbol of a wider struggle, 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 you sat out there in the audience tonight – got involved and campaigned relentlessly for a number of weeks to ensure that Kamal was freed. And we did it. We actually bloody did it. We managed to get this man released! You know what, let's give ourselves a round of applause. Come on let's give ourselves a big clap.

Don't be shy. Well, I'll clap for you. I know that some of you weren't here for that campaign. Some of you obviously hadn't joined, and some of you were off doing other things, hadn't turned up for a while (Margaret) but think of this as a clap for all

the future things that you're going to do, all the people in the future that you're going to save. And there's always someone who needs saving!

We are so lucky that Kamal has come here to be with us today to teach us about the suffering that he endured, how became a survivor and to teach us how he has triumphed and built an amazing new life for himself. As a new member of our community, we have done brilliantly to welcome him with open arms. Even when certain parts of the UK are wanting to close their doors, and their minds – and borders! – this man has managed to get a job here, gain status and purpose again. So, if you do use the Co-Op on St Peter's Road – other supermarkets are available – do pop in there and say hello to him. If you're a night owl that is. Give him a hug or something.

In fact, can I hug you now? Is that okay? Well. Maybe later. Maybe we can have a picture of us hugging later. For the website. Don't worry if you don't get a picture of Kamal tonight, we'll be tweeting some photos of him from the event. And do share them on 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 – though make sure you don't accidentally use the word Camel by mistake! And thank you to Ann for pointing out that typo on the newsletter. Autocorrect. You must get that all the time. Well. I'm sure it must happen loads. As soon as you have a funny name, it'll just change it. Sometimes I think our phones are racist! But then they're from Africa, really, aren't they, when you think about it.

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

[‘Gemma’ ushers the audience member to open the envelope. There are instructions on the top of the page to please read the following as clearly as possible. There is no need to act. Just to read]

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 being here. Of me having lived here. Payslips. Official letters. Anything that has my name on it. Yes. But also, receipts. Bus tickets. Chits from café cup of teas. Little traces of my now life. Little proofs I was here.

In the other box I am remembering my memories. I have no photographs from my childhood. From my wedding. They took all those away from me. The people who can rebuild them for me are dead, are too scared to speak with me, or still believe the lies that were told about me. So I make little lies about my then life.

So I collect pictures of things like I remember. Pictures of moments to light the slide-show in my head. I am always better looking in this remake.

This is what I might say if you asked me.

[The slide of Kamal with thumbs up appears behind the performers.]

## A PICTURE TELLS A THOUSAND WORDS

[FIONA and SAMER sit in different parts of the space. They never meet each other directly in this scene, but speak to each other on the phone. When they speak on the phone. No mime is necessary.]

FIONA: It all started with a photograph.

SAMER: It all started with a photograph.

FIONA: A lot of things start off with a photograph.

SAMER: A photograph can start off a lot of things.

FIONA: I've taken down all the photographs around my desk.

SAMER: I've taken down all my photographs online.

FIONA: Even my holiday ones. The ones of my family.

SAMER: Especially the ones of my family.

[Cut sharply to a telephone conversation between Fiona and Samer. The interaction is warm with a strong current of mutual respect and knowledge about the other]

FIONA: So, how's the family?

SAMER: Good. Good. Growing all the time.

FIONA: Ha! Well, you'd best save all your energy up while you can. You'll soon be running the whole show.

SAMER: I know, I know. And I need to not make any mistakes. Never. Whenever I am away, Sara runs the whole thing like clockwork. Nothing ever goes wrong. It's a trial living with someone so perfect.

FIONA: My partner has exactly the same problem.

SAMER: But I'm cancelling all jobs from the end of November onwards.

FIONA: Well. I guess you have to.

SAMER: So it'll be easier when I'm at home full time.

FIONA: You'll be prowling around like a caged cat.

SAMER: Maybe. Some might say I have good training in that.

FIONA: (embarrassed) God. What a crappy thing to say.

SAMER: If you want to mock my past history.

FIONA: I'm an idiot. What can I say?

SAMER: That you'll babysit?

FIONA: I'm not that sorry. Sorry. You've every right to make me squirm.

SAMER: Ah. I know you mean well.

FIONA: That's an even worse thing to say! Does that mean we're evens?

SAMER: You were never in my debt. Only for the photograph.

FIONA: It's incredible. It's bloody awful. Piercing. Shocking. But it's incredible.

SAMER: I can only hope it does something.

FIONA: And we're going to try and make that happen. With your permission – it'll be up front and centre on the website.

SAMER: That's the reason I went there. (pause) It was hell there. Truly hell.

FIONA: You were very brave to go there.

SAMER: Nonsense.

FIONA: Nonsense yourself. After everything that's happened to you, you took incredible risks. It's an incredible photograph.

[FIONA moves out of the phone call scenario and addresses the audience directly]

FIONA: It's an incredible photograph. It's an artefact. It's evidence. It will stay with you, even as you try to look away. It will announce itself in your mind in quiet moments. It's made you accountable. It's made you part of the problem. He must only be 15. No more. His arm is as thin as a table leg. He is punching with one arm and already drawing back the next. His face is hot and he is scrapping back tears. The punch has connected with the thick sandy hair of another in the crush on the platform. It is poorly aimed. But then, he is young. His panic at being pulled back into the sea of people has shown up his young body for what little it is. His skin is beautiful. But his face is contorted with a child's grief.

[SAMER now takes over the narration]

SAMER: To be honest. I'm not entirely sure I saw the moment that his punch landed. I was being swept by the crowd on the station platform and I was having to shoot over my head. Hold the camera up at arm's length and pop, pop, pop. It's not my favourite way to take a photograph. Some people when they see the picture, they think that the crowd is trying to pull him off the train so that they can take his place. But that wasn't the case. The people on the platform were trying to prevent the train from over-crowding, to restore order. Many of them had wives, children, parents on the train and didn't want a crush. But of course, there were many, like the young boy, who were just scared. That this was the last train, of the border police, of being

returned. Of course, there were plenty on the train who were scared of where the train was going. Trains have a bad history in a time of crisis.

[FIONA is now working away at her desk when she takes a phone call. Where the line breaks, she is listening to someone else speak]

FIONA: I know. I know. Totally. Good. Bloody good.

FIONA: The bloody Daily bloody Mail. I know.

FIONA: Exactly. This isn't preaching to the converted anymore. If this lot are moved, if this lot now speak up, then the government might actually do something about it.

FIONA: This could be a turning point. This could mean pressure on the right people.

FIONA: How could anyone see that set of pictures and not care, not do anything about it.

FIONA; Yes. Yes. I told her she could use it for web and print.

FIONA: They need to use it as many times as they can.

FIONA: A credit on every picture.

FIONA: I know. I know. This could be his big UK break.

FIONA: Nothing. No fee. But they said they'd link it directly to the campaign pages.  
So -

FIONA: But here's the thing -

FIONA: I know, but it's a trade-off isn't it?

[SAMER's voice breaks in over the top of the phone call, but he does not stop the flow of the conversation]

SAMER: He had lost his rucksack. It had been kicked under the hundred feet in the crowd. But when they saw that he wasn't coming off the train, they let found it, and passed it up to him. It's a trade-off

FIONA: But here's what I think will get them all really interested. I told them about Samer's own story.

SAMER: I lost my own rucksack that day. Well, I gave it away. I lost a shoe too. I did not give that away. But I've been through worse. I took the other one off. I hope someone reunited the pair. You can't cross too many countries in flip-flops.

FIONA: Of course they did. She was practically hyperventilating when I told her.

SAMER: If you read the paper that day, you might think that this was the worst moment to happen that day. A boy punching his way out of the crowd. But no, an old woman had some sort of fit waiting on the platform. Eventually the paramedics got there. But she was dead before they reached the hospital.

FIONA: I'll call him with the good news when I know more about when and where they're going to publish it.

FIONA: I will. I will. But what I also need to do is to think of how to write this into our campaign, how we're going to use this syndication to do something, make something happen, get somewhere.

SAMER: In the end the train didn't leave the platform for 12 more hours. The border police were playing games again.

[Fiona addresses the audience once more]

FIONA: A picture can tell a thousand words. That's the cliché isn't it. And it can tell a thousand more. And a thousand more after that as well. An artefact. Evidence. They got their evidence. It's made you part of the problem.

[Telephone call between Fiona and Samer.]

SAMER: Read it out to me.

FIONA: Please.

SAMER: Go on. Just read it out to me.

FIONA: I'm not sure how that's going to help.

SAMER: Let me read it for you then (reading) "There was fresh horror today as new pictures emerged from the Central European Capital that has been the flash point for so much recent immigrant trouble. Photographs captured the chaotic and violent scenes as young men fought to get on to the trains provided for them. Clashes flared up between big factions of the Middle Eastern asylum seekers who were hoping to board the trains that would take them towards the ports of France and the UK. "

FIONA: I never in a thousand years, thought that -

SAMER: No wait, later on, -

FIONA: When I took the call from the paper, I thought - we thought that we, at last had an opportunity to -

SAMER: Here, here it says (reading) It emerged that the photographs were taken by another asylum seeker - What? - living in the UK -

FIONA: Now. I never said that you were an asylum seeker. I never said that -

SAMER: You didn't have to. Did you not realise that's how they would twist things, that's how they manipulate the whole story -

FIONA: No. No. She was interested in the story. She knew the coordinates. She was saying that she wanted to-

SAMER: What does it matter to her editorial team? To the people who set the agenda. Or does my twenty years in journalism teach me nothing?

FIONA: We thought that we could do so much for the campaign, for the things that you care about, for the very reasons you went there -

SAMER: I did not go there to sell desperate people down the river.

FIONA: Look. I've been used too.

SAMER: Poor you. No, really. Poor little you.

FIONA: Samer. I'm sorry. Look. I've said I'm sorry. I don't know what else to say. I've said I'm sorry. What more do you want me to say?

SAMER: All debts are cancelled.

[The scene returns to Fiona as she addresses the audience]

FIONA: In the photograph you will see that he is wearing a gold chain around his neck. There are two crosses suspended from it. In the photograph they are caught mid-air, sparking off one another in the melee. Double the luck. Double the hopes.

I hope he gets to keep them.

## **WE DON'T RUN A SUPPORT GROUP HERE**

[The women move chairs to the front of the space. This begins in the style of an AA meeting]

ONE: It is not my real name. You don't have to use my real name do you?

TWO: There are people who – I would be in danger if you used my real name.

ONE: I have a family to think about. I have children – there are mouths to feed.

TWO: Thank you for transferring the money straight into my account.

ONE: My name is Cassie. I tell stories.

TWO: My name is Layla. I tell stories about other people's stories.

CASSIE: I was born where the hills rise up out of the earth to avoid the constant rain,

LAYLA: I was born where the east-west winds blow the chip wrappers and styrofoam cups,

CASSIE: I was born in a place where the men fight on a Saturday night and the women are sick on their shoes

LAYLA: We were born into a middle-class, middle-of-the-road, middle-England family and had no culture that I was permitted to, no culture that I could celebrate and call my own.

CASSIE: No national dress, no national dance, no one from National Geographic was ever going to photograph my face.

LAYLA: With such limited opportunities, and limited - colour - in my life, it was only a matter of time, before I began to understand that I was here to help with other people's causes.

CASSIE: With other people's fights and other people's problems.

LAYLA: How else could I really claim the regard, the space in the world that I deserved?

CASSIE: This is not quite how my story goes.

LAYLA: This is not how I wanted to tell my story.

CASSIE: I have always tried to make myself useful.

LAYLA: Tried to use my voice, my skills, to help people, to make the world a better place

CASSIE: To transform, transport, transcend, empower, encourage, enable - what have I forgotten?

LAYLA: Sorry. You see, there's a list.

CASSIE: We usually have a list written up.

LAYLA: People see me and they make assumptions.

CASSIE: They might think that because they see me smile, because sometimes they might see me shopping in Shoreditch, eating on the South Bank.

LAYLA: Because they might catch me necking prosecco in a Dalston bar - that things are all right for me.

CASSIE: Yes, there might be glimpses of the old, younger, me now and again, but inside, inside I am thinking about it. Those things.

LAYLA: Those terrible things.

CASSIE: They don't know what it is like to carry all these conversations in your head. All the time.

LAYLA: Some of the time.

CASSIE: From time to time.

LAYLA: They have no idea what it can do to you: listening to people talking, giving you their stories, telling you what awful, awful deep sadnesses there are in their lives.

CASSIE: You can't walk away from those encounters unscathed.

LAYLA: Your cab ride home is interrupted with the memory of their face, your mind is disturbed again and again with the echo of their frightful words.

CASSIE: I can't tell you how many stories of rape I've had to endure.

LAYLA: And it's not just all the raping, but the beatings, and bullyings, and deaths, and dismemberment, and running for your life, and the suicide attempts, and the dead babies.

CASSIE: There's something for everyone really.

LAYLA: I don't think that's what I said.

CASSIE: I don't think that's how I said it.

LAYLA: Mothers will tremble, fathers will rage, grandmothers weep, and even the teenagers sit up in their seats at the body count.

CASSIE: The gory details, details that I'd rather not know.

LAYLA: That we protect you from.

CASSIE: That we know won't be to your taste.

LAYLA: And I am glad to have helped.

CASSIE: I am pleased that I have been able to give you the gift of moral superiority, of otherness, of false sense of security, of actually having done something about it.

LAYLA: We went through it so that you don't have to.

CASSIE: I went through 5 long hours to do an interview in a grotty basement in Surbiton where I used my notebook to sit on because your sofa was so shitty and having to hear about your stupid boring problems with your neighbours, and your ugly dead dog, and your stupid boring love of needlework.

LAYLA: And all of the stupid boring photographs of your missing child.

CASSIE: We.

LAYLA: We go through all of that and edit it down to a nice packaged two pages, all so you don't have to.

CASSIE: I don't want to have to say this.

LAYLA: I don't want to be known for this.

CASSIE: But perhaps the most testing time of all is afterwards.

LAYLA: Afterwards when they call you asking if they can have a transcript of their interview, their testimony – transcript? Come on, love, be real, we only type up the best bits.

CASSIE: Or they want to change things, or take stuff out – I mean, don't they know what a compromise it is to artistic integrity, to journalistic principles? Don't they know what a total pain in the arse that is? It's like these people don't have any empathy for anyone else.

LAYLA: Really, really? A threat to your safety, really? I mean who cares, I have enough trouble trying to get people to care about your story, and I am a professional.

CASSIE: And sometimes they might have a complaint – that wasn't what I said, that wasn't the way I said it, it's totally out of context. Look. I explained all of that at the time.

LAYLA: It was in that leaflet we gave you.

CASSIE: Friends might be more successful, might be earning five, six figures, might have second houses and holiday in the places I save – but I still have the power of earnestness, the power of righteousness.

LAYLA: I think I heard the word 'saintly' attached to us once.

CASSIE: I hear words that are nothing like my own.

LAYLA: I see words that I no longer own.

CASSIE: We're saving the world one testimony at a time.

LAYLA: Though there are mistakes from time to time.

CASSIE: We have been told that there are mistakes from time to time.

LAYLA: We do make mistakes from time to time.

## **FINAL CONFESSIONS**

[The women then move once again to the rear of the space and start to grab handfuls of paper off the table. These sheets are full of confessions. Each one is spoken directly into a microphone.]

ONE: We hugged the wrong woman at the survivor's event.

TWO: I got her name wrong. Twice.

ONE: I got her country wrong.

TWO: It was one of the ikistans.

ONE: We spilt coffee on her best chair and didn't tell her.

TWO: She didn't even have coffee herself.

ONE: We pretended to go to the loo to answer some emails.

TWO: He was really horrible so I stopped trying to talk to him.

ONE: I told him he was 'way off the mark' when he called me 'middle-class'.

TWO: I gave him a bit less money. I knew he was lying about what he needed it for.

ONE: I rewrote the questions I'd asked in the transcription to make myself sound better.

TWO: I took out the bit about her wanting to kill him.

ONE: I put in the bit about the dead child.

TWO: I could picture him in his inappropriate Disney t-shirt. So I thought, if I can picture it, then it should go in.

ONE: It was like something that might happen.

TWO: I asked her to keep the children's toys in the photograph, even when she wanted to tidy them away.

ONE: I told her the picture would only be used for internal purposes.

TWO: We told her she should be proud that her face was on the side of the bus.

ONE: We laughed in the office at his social media posts.

TWO: We called them 'sweet' and we said 'Bless. He's trying, though'.

ONE: We used him to tell dinner parties that we knew someone with Asperger's.

TWO: That we had a close friend who was transitioning at the moment.

ONE: We told him to 'hang in there'.

TWO: We told him 'never give up'.

ONE: We were applying for other jobs at the time – and took our eye off the ball.

TWO: We were out of our depth.

ONE: We felt bullied by the size of the organisation.

TWO: By what it stood for.

ONE: What it meant to everyone else.

TWO: What powers we thought it might have.

ONE: I told her that she could easily move house.

TWO: I told her that we would help her move house.

ONE: We told her that we would help her get to safety.

TWO: We told her that she would be safe if she told us her story.

ONE: We had no idea.

TWO: In reality. We had no idea.

ONE: When she came to the headquarters. We pretended to be out of the office.

TWO: We always avoided him because he was so – intense.

ONE: He never had anything new to talk about.

TWO: Like a broken record.

ONE: We finished an email to her with 'catch you later'.

TWO: We signed off with 'stay lucky'.