

**THE POLITICIAN'S HUSBAND**

by

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EPISODE ONE

"The Body Politic"

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Executive Producer David Aukin  
Producer Hal Vogel  
DAYBREAK PICTURES

"Corruptio Optimi Pessima"

*Corruption of the best is the worst of all.*

1 **EXT. HOYNES HOME - CARLINGWORTH - DAWN** 1

A dawn blistered sky - a frail DAWN CHORUS -

We're somewhere indistinguishable in ENGLAND -an Edwardian semi-detached house - homely rather than ostentatious -

2 **INT. MASTER BEDROOM - HOYNES HOME - DAWN** 2

Dawn light filtered through shuttered curtains. CAMERA is tracing a tremulous crack in a ceiling - it's in the shape of A QUESTION MARK -

A MAN lies in bed gazing up at it - he's not noticed the crack before - AIDEN HOYNES - early forties - dynamic and driven but a man not disenfranchised from his own humanity -

His ALARM bleeps - startling him. He stabs it off - his wife FREYA rouses. He draws her to him - kisses her forehead -

FREYA  
...Is it time?

He assents - his gaze drifts up to the QUESTION MARK again - it disconcerts him without knowing why -

*BBC TV REPORTER (O.S.)  
Surprise resignation today of Aiden  
Hoynes -*

3 **EXT. COLLEGE GREEN - PALACE OF WESTMINSTER - DAY** 3

The neo Gothic spires of Westminster -

*BBC TV REPORTER (O.S.)  
- Secretary of State for Business,  
Innovation and Skills and regarded  
as one of the high flyers in the  
cabinet -*

CUT BACK;

CAMERA tilts down over to COLLEGE GREEN - an array of TELEVISION JOURNALISTS address respective CAMERAS - focus on A BBC REPORTER -

*BBC TV REPORTER (cont'd)*

*- For weeks Westminster been rife with rumours about his growing discontent with current Government policy - yet in his letter to the Prime Minister while he doesn't actually use the cliché that he's resigning to "spend more time with his family" but that's the essence of it -*

5 **INT/EXT. AIDEN'S MINISTRY CAR/INT. LOBBY WESTMINSTER PALACE-5 DAY**

Traffic laden street adjacent to COLLEGE GREEN - a MINISTRY CAR is passing - Aiden is in the rear - his driver is KENNY MOSS - solidly dependable if inclined towards self importance -

They catch sight of the REPORTERS on the green -

KENNY

All kicking off now, Minister.

Aiden's face -

6 **INT. BUSINESS, INNOVATION AND SKILLS (B.I.S.)- SEC. STATE OFFICE - VICTORIA ST. DAY 6**

- The BBC reporter now on a TV SCREEN - PULL BACK to reveal a blur of MOTION - a LARGE MODERN OFFICE - a panoply of WINDOWS - MEN in OVERALLS are removing PICTURES - FLOW CHARTS - BOX FILES - RED BOXES -

*BBC TV REPORTER*

*-Of course he's not the first senior cabinet minister to use the family alibi in resigning -*

Aiden is now by his desk surrendering the trappings of power to A CIVIL SERVANT - GOVERNMENT MOBILE PHONE - LAP TOP - I.D. PASS - the KEY to his RED BOXES -

*BBC TV REPORTER (cont'd)*

*"Spend more time with the family" has become the favoured euphemism for politicians to disguise their true motives for resigning -*

FREYA is present also - see her properly now - forty - ex Oxford graduate - insightful intelligence lends her an understated gravitas. She knows all about side-lining ambition for husband and family. She refuses to have rancour over this -

*BBC TV REPORTER (cont'd)*  
*- Aiden Hoynes and his wife Freya Gardner, junior Treasury Minister and a rising star in her own right - have two young children. Often dubbed "The Golden Couple" the marriage is known to be solid but the demands of a political marriage are bound to put pressure on any family -*

She is emptying DESK DRAWERS into a CARDBOARD BOX - A FAMILY PHOTOGRAPH is on the desk - AIDEN, FREYA and their TWO CHILDREN - this too goes into her box -

Aiden and Freya are now by the door - he, suddenly bereft, looking back at his dismantled office. Freya glances at him, slides her hand into his -

7

**INT. B.I.S. SEC. STATE - OUTER OFFICE - DAY**

7

Aiden steps out to be greeted by an array of CIVIL SERVANTS, ADVISERS and OFFICE STAFF - he halts by each one to shake hands - "*been a privilege, Minister*" "*An honour, sir*" SECRETARIES fight tears - Kenny Moss is there also - also DREW BAILEY, one of Aiden's SPECIAL ADVISERS - a deceptively studious demeanour camouflages Teflon ambition - lastly his other SPECIAL ADVISER - LEO HOOPER - thirties - a roll up your sleeves guy who knows where the bodies are buried -

*BBC TV REPORTER (O.S.)*  
*And as Corleone said in the Godfather "a man who does not spend time with his family is not a real man" -*

As Aiden and Freya thread out - Leo leads THE STAFF in a noisy round of APPLAUSE -

*BBC TV REPORTER (cont'd)*  
*So perhaps we should take Aiden Hoynes at face value - he will prove he is not only a real man - but a new man.*

8

**INT. LOBBY - PALACE OF WESTMINSTER - DAY**

8

A GREEN TV SCREEN in the vaulted LOBBY - A WRITTEN ANNOUNCEMENT there - "*3:30pm PERSONAL STATEMENT MR. AIDEN HOYNES M.P. FOR CARLINGWORTH*" - the gaggle of PRESS nearby -

9

**EXT. ST. STEPHEN'S GATE - WESTMINSTER - DAY**

9

A REPORTER is pacing outside the ENTRANCE on his MOBILE - CLIFF LYMAN, veteran Broadsheet political journalist. He catches sight of THE PRIME MINISTER'S CAR drawing up - quickly disengages.

The grim faced PRIME MINISTER alights, pushes towards the entrance. Lyman quickly dives up to him- *"any comment on Aiden Hoyne's resignation, Prime Minister? - What do you think he'll say in his speech today?"*

The PRIME MINISTER ducks the question - strides on -

10

**INT. CORRIDOR - MALE MEMBERS TOILET/WESTMINSTER - DAY**

10

Faded GOTHIC opulence - Freya is outside the MALE MEMBERS TOILET - she carries a JACKET in a CLEANERS BAG and some PAPERS - discreetly taps on the door -

BRUCE BABBISH emerges - early forties - sallow complexion - scalpel sharp intellect masked by a supine confidence which is acquired rather than congenital- a man who makes Mandelson look like Mandela-

He takes the SUIT from her -

FREYA

...How is he?

He flips his hand "so-so" - she passes the PAPERS -

FREYA (cont'd)

His speech - tell him to check my amendment on para two -

Bruce nods - withdraws back inside - Freya - fractiously glancing at her watch -

SPEAKER (O.S.)

- Order! Personal statement, Aiden Hoyne -

11

**INT. MALE MEMBERS TOILET - WESTMINSTER PALACE - DAY**

11

The glint of tiles - faded grandiosity here also - AIDEN now in SHIRT SLEEVES stands before the mirror shaving with an ELECTRIC SHAVER --

AIDEN (O.S.)

Mr. Speaker, for the past four years it has been my privilege to serve in My Right Honourable Friend's Government and share in the many advances we have achieved together -





AIDEN (cont'd)

*So you can imagine how I felt, Mr Speaker, after months of complex and demanding work, when the Prime Minister suddenly told me he had resolved to include his immigration moratorium in his election manifesto without waiting for our findings -*

Beyond THE TELEVISION on A PINBOARD - an array of PHOTOGRAPHS - many show BRUCE and his wife WANDA, Aiden, Freya and their CHILDREN - blowing out BIRTHDAY CANDLES - the TWO FAMILIES on a SKI SLOPE - Aiden and Bruce tending a BBQ -

Brothers in arms -

16 INT. FREYA'S OFFICE - PORTCULLIS HOUSE - DAY

16

A paper strewn desk - Leo, Drew and a bunch of PARLIAMENTARY RESEARCHERS grouped around THE TELEVISION -

AIDEN

*I did my best to persuade My Right Honourable Friend that his unilateral decision would play into the xenophobic prejudice of those who seek to turn us into Fortress Britain ...*

Leo and Drew exchange a wryly complicit look -

17 INT. HOUSE OF COMMONS - DAY

17

Aiden, on his feet addressing the HOUSE -

Freya looks up at the PRESS GALLERY - the rapt faces of the REPORTERS there -

AIDEN

*Then what? We follow the example of the Dutch - put asylum seekers and immigrants on television Big Brother style? Let the audience decide who stays and who goes?  
(then)  
...But I could not dissuade him.*

Bruce on the FRONT BENCH - sliding a covert look over at Freya -

AIDEN (cont'd)

Mr. Speaker, while I appreciate the Prime Minister's poor approval ratings are a matter of concern for him, his readiness to trample on human rights in a craven attempt to attract votes is of greater concern to me. Add to this his lack of joined up thinking on the perilous state of our economy or any kind of coherent growth strategy to resolve it -

MP'S on both sides, exchanging glances at this incendiary statement -

AIDEN (cont'd)

- I came to the reluctant conclusion that I could no longer accept my Right Honourable Friend's increasingly autocratic style of leadership.

(then)

I know some in the House will condemn my resignation is an act of disloyalty, Mr. Speaker. But I do so because it is the right thing to do. Because my loyalty lies not just to my Party, but to my country.

(beat)

It is for others to decide where their own loyalty lies.

He takes his seat; the HOUSE sits in stunned silence - the REPORTERS excitedly evacuate PRESS GALLERY - only Cliff remains, thoughtfully gazing at Aiden as BACK BENCHERS reach to clasp his shoulders in support -

The Prime minister sits motionlessly, his face a mask. Bruce nearby, sliding him a look -

Freya, looks back at Aiden, fighting unshed tears of pride - he meets her eyes -

18

**INT. CORRIDORS - WESTMINSTER PALACE - DAY**

18

The feet of REPORTERS pounding excitedly back up the corridor BLACKBERRIES in hand -

*SKY REPORTER (O.S.)*

*- Westminster is in leadership crisis mode since Aiden Hoynes incendiary resignation speech which can only be interpreted as a bid for the leadership -*



The TELEVISION showing a RE-RUN of Aiden's resignation speech - Aiden dials on his MOBILE - the dialogue is adrenaline fuelled - overlapping -

LEO  
(to Aiden)  
- I'm on live blogs, Drew's on  
Twitter -  
(to RESEARCHERS)  
Clock's running, guys! Let's beat  
the grass on this!

Freya is checking her own BLACKBERRY -

FREYA  
James Lesser tweet - "Chancellor  
due on the World at One" -

LEO  
We know which way he'll jump -

DREW  
No Cabinet Ministers have  
commented yet - nothing on  
*Politics Home* -

LEO  
(Re. Twitter)  
Trending big time now!

Aiden, coiled tension about him now. Beyond the cacophony of RESEARCHERS rallying support - ringing PHONES - TEXTS pinging -

LEO (cont'd)  
Tweet from Downing Street - "a  
statement will be issued shortly"

DREW  
- A statement from Draycott!

AIDEN  
First out the gate - good man!

They fix expectantly on DREW as he skims through the blog - his expression changing -

AIDEN (cont'd)  
...What?

DREW  
(reading blog)  
Given the challenges the country is  
facing, Aiden Hoynes leadership bid  
today is badly misjudged and not  
supported by his cabinet  
colleagues...

Aiden and the team reeling -

AIDEN

...Self serving little shit -

LEO

(to Drew)

I thought he was solid?

DREW

He was last night -

FREYA

- He's been got at -

LEO

- After that European Commission  
job more like -

Glances are exchanged - Freya looks over at Aiden -

FREYA

...Bruce?

AIDEN

(dissents)

Voice mail -

(then)

Is he tweeting yet?

They dissent also - Aiden - tension escalating -

DREW

- Guardian Blog - ..."no comment  
as yet from the Home Office or  
Treasury" -

LEO

- "Stephen Bartlett - Education -  
backs beleaguered Prime Minister"

AIDEN

Who tweeted that?

LEO

Sky News -

DREW

Lance Slattery, Attorney General  
and Marjorie Lowe, Northern  
Ireland "full confidence in the  
Prime Minister"-

Aiden and the OTHERS - expression altering - Freya catches  
this -

FREYA

Too early to blink yet - Bruce  
will turn it round -

AIDEN

Then where the hell is he?

DREW

Statement from Downing Street -  
"in such times of austerity -  
disappointing a senior cabinet  
minister chose to put career  
ambitions ahead of Party and  
country" etc --

LEO

-- Tweet from Jenkins at the Mail  
"resignation speech more a  
suicide bid than a leadership  
bid"-

Aiden - this impacts - Freya glances at the TELEVISION -

FREYA

(relieved)  
Bruce is out!

LEO

We are wheels up, guys! -

AIDEN

Finally -

The TEAM gather round the TELEVISION, Freya pumps the  
VOLUME -

*BBC TV REPORTER*

*- Joined by Bruce Babbish,  
Secretary of State for Work and  
Pensions - can I ask where you  
stand on Aiden Hoynes and his  
leadership bid, Minister?*

Aiden, Freya and the team, laced in anticipation -

*BRUCE*

*Let me start by saying this. Aiden  
Hoynes is a close personal friend.  
I've known him since University, he  
was Best Man at my wedding, I'm  
Godfather to his children. I know  
him to be a man of steadfast  
principle and complete integrity -  
(then)  
Which makes his actions today all  
the more baffling -*

Aiden and the others, hope evaporating -

*BRUCE (cont'd)*

*- He accused the Prime Minister of cynically using immigration as a vote catcher when arguably he's done the self same thing trying to peddle support for his ill judged leadership bid.*

Aiden - like the air has been sucked out of him - aghast dismay percolating among the others -

FREYA

My God - what is he doing to us?

BBC TV REPORTER

*Given the closeness of your friendship, did he not he confide his intention to you?*

BRUCE

*(reluctant)*

*... He came round to my home a few nights ago to tell me. I thought - hoped - I'd talked him out of it... To be honest I'm still trying to get my head round why he went ahead with it. I'm afraid I'm not alone in that view -*

Aiden reaches for the REMOTE - snaps off the TV - the others sit in toxic silence -

AIDEN

It's over.

DREW

... Not everyone's come out yet - still time to regroup and -

AIDEN

*(cutting in)*

- It's over.

Wretched finality in this - Freya, etched in compassion-

22

**INT. MALE MEMBERS TOILET - WESTMINSTER PALACE - DAY**

22

The empty TOILET - Aiden crashes in riding a tumult of emotions. TWO suited APPARATCHIKS quickly zip up and exit. A WASTE BIN is there - volcanic anger erupts - Aiden kicks it - sending it spinning across the floor.

He grips the basin as if for gravity - head cowed -

23 **INT. WESTMINSTER - TUNNEL TO PORTCULLIS HOUSE - DAY** 23

CAMERA is slung low - a cavernous tunnel - an echo chamber of footsteps - Bruce Babbish approaches flanked by OTHER FRONT BENCH MINISTERS we saw in the HOUSE - a drift of mirth -

24 **INT/EXT. MINISTERIAL CAR - PORTCULLIS HOUSE - WESTMINSTER -24 DAY**

- A DRIVER stands attentively by a MINISTERIAL CAR - Bruce approaches - the DRIVER opens the rear PASSENGER DOOR for him. As the DRIVER circles the car to get behind the wheel - the opposite rear passenger door opens - Aiden abruptly gets in beside Bruce.

The air molecules between them vibrate with tension - the DRIVER spins in his seat in alarm -

Bruce recovers his poise -

BRUCE

- It's alright, Duncan.

Duncan takes the hint, alights from the car.

BRUCE (cont'd)

Will this take long? I'm due at Number 10 - the reception for Putin.

AIDEN

(tart)

...That your reward, is it?

An evasive beat.

BRUCE

We'll need more to win the election than winning the centre ground, it's all about the economy stupid. You've been out of step with the PM on that for -

AIDEN

(overriding)

- This is not about the bloody economy!

(then)

How did it go, Bruce? Resign you said - you'll help rally the big beasts in cabinet you said. I'll be in Number 10 by the recess you said..

BRUCE

He who wields the knife never wears  
the crown. Heseltine learnt that  
lesson -

AIDEN

It wasn't me who wielded the damn  
knife!

He musters control -

AIDEN (cont'd)

Remind me, who was it who held your  
hand when Wanda walked out on your  
marriage? Who had your back when  
your expenses thing blew up? Who  
held you together when you had the  
prostate scare last year and  
covered your arse in Cabinet?

(a different tone)

Wait, that would be me.

Bruce, a flicker of discomfort -

BRUCE

...It was never going to fly. Not  
once the P.M. put the thumb screws  
on everyone

AIDEN

- So you just hung me out to dry?

A depth of feeling in this - he constrains it. Then, brutal  
realization dawning -

AIDEN (cont'd)

... You're eliminating the  
competition -- that's what this  
is.

(beat)

....The office you rented for my  
campaign HQ, the Mobile Phones for  
the troops - it was all for you.  
Along it was for you.

Bruce turns to meet his eyes in a glacial look - his tone  
chillingly regretful.

BRUCE

You take all the oxygen, Aiden.  
You always have.

Aiden, it takes a moment for him to recover -

AIDEN

They say the best place for an  
assassin to hide is in plain  
sight.

(MORE)

AIDEN (cont'd)  
(then)  
Or as a best friend.

He reaches, grips Bruce's balls - twists them -

AIDEN (cont'd)  
Hurts, doesn't it?

Bruce, arched in eye watering pain - Aiden abruptly releases him - alights. Bruce watches his receding figure. Duncan gets back behind the wheel. Bruce catches his curious gaze in the rear view mirror -

BRUCE  
(impatient)  
What the fuck are you waiting for!

Duncan hits the gas -

25      **EXT. HOYNES HOME - CARLINGWORTH - EARLY EVENING**      25

- The Hoynes home - the curtains shuttered - a posse of REPORTERS and MEDIA outside - an army of SATELLITE VANS clogging the street -

AN ELDERLY MAN in an upstairs window pulls aside the CURTAIN - peers out -

26      **INT. NOAH'S BEDROOM - HOYNES HOME - EARLY EVENING**      26

A SPECTACLED BOY is at the desk, myopically hunched over a LAP TOP showing an AIRLINE SCHEDULE - NOAH, twelve years old. He has ASPERGER'S SYNDROME.

His GRANDFATHER, JOE HOYNES is at the window looking out at the PRESS. Late sixties, a retired Professor of Politics; fiercely intelligent, innately decent.

The WALLS of the ROOM are covered in WORLD MAPS with LINES linking various cities with FLIGHT PATHS. Also PHOTOCOPIES of PLANE TIMETABLES and SCHEDULES - myriad FILES labelled with more AIR TIMETABLES. A TEEPEE TENT is erected in the corner of the room -

The BOY is fighting rising agitation - focusing on his LAP TOP helps alleviate his anxiety -

NOAH  
Are they still there?

Joe closes the curtains -

JOE  
Your Dad will give them their marching orders when he gets here-

NOAH  
(puzzled)  
Marching orders? Are there  
soldiers there?

JOE  
...It's an idiom, Noah. Remember  
we talked about those? When you  
don't take a phrase literally?

Noah, not heeding this - his eyes fixed on his LAP TOP -

NOAH  
Air Asia's changed the flight  
times! Their 6:00 o'clock flight  
from Jakarta to Kuala Lumpa is an  
hour later now! I'll miss the  
connection on the Emirates flight  
to Lagos -

JOE  
- Does it have to be Lagos?

NOAH  
It has to start with "L" to be in  
alphabetical order! Islamabad,  
Jakarta, Kuala Lumpa, Lagos -

He fractiously jumps up, checks his WORLD MAP with FLIGHT  
PATHS on it-

NOAH (cont'd (cont'd)  
Wait - Los Angeles! ...Cathay  
Pacific and China Eastern  
Airlines both fly there from  
Kuala Lumpa! -

He scurries back to his LAP TOP - suddenly the HOUSE  
TELEPHONE start ringing - then the FRONT DOOR BELL - he  
instantly freezes in panic - starts to pace flapping his  
hands - Joe tries to calm him -

JOE  
It's alright, Noah - they're not  
coming in. No-one's coming in -

The BOY, still frantically flapping and pacing -

JOE (CONT'D) (cont'd)  
You want to get in your tent  
until they've gone?

The BOY scrambles into his tent - looks back at Joe -

NOAH  
...Stay?

JOE  
(gently)  
I'm not going anywhere.

The BOY closes the TENT FLAP -

27 **INT/EXT. HOYNES CAR - HOYNES HOME - CARLINGWORTH - EARLY EVENING** 27

Falling light - Dita threads through the POSSE of REPORTERS with a TRAY of TEA - flirtatiously laughing with them -

Unseen by them, at a distance AN ESTATE CAR edges into view - Aiden at the wheel, Freya beside him, dismay there as they watch Dita -

FREYA  
Dear God, what is she doing?

AIDEN  
Snatching her fifteen seconds of fame.  
(then)  
Go in, check on Noah, I'll get shot of them -

FREYA  
(firm)  
No -

He glances at her -

FREYA (cont'd)  
We have to be on message together on this - be seen together -

AIDEN  
And risk taking you down with me?  
(then)  
...Hasn't today cost us enough?

She, touched by this. She leans, kisses him, reluctantly goes - he watches as she enters the DRIVE - the PRESS promptly converge on her - she pushes through them - grabbing Dita as she passes her - hustles her inside -

28 **INT. NOAH'S BEDROOM - HOYNES HOME - EARLY EVENING** 28

Noah, still in his TENT: Joe, sitting on the bed nearby. Freya enters - Joe gestures to the tent -

JOE  
(sotto)  
Too much going on, you know how he gets...

He exits - Freya crouches by the TENT -

FREYA

Noah, it's Mum - I'm here now.

She opens the flap - Noah sits inside, agitatedly rocking, hands over his ears. Freya, helpless compassion there.

29

**EXT. HOYNES HOME - CARLINGWORTH - EARLY EVENING**

29

Aiden's car pulls into the DRIVE: he alights, to be engulfed by the clamouring REPORTERS -

Aiden - raising a hand -

AIDEN

A short statement only- no questions -

MICROPHONES and CAMERAS are thrust at him -

AIDEN (CONT'D) (cont'd)

...I am hardly alone in having misgivings about the Prime Minister's leadership. But whoever is promulgating these malicious rumours that my resignation is a leadership bid of my own is judging me by the paucity of their own moral standards.

(then)

Surely a man can be a dissident without seeking high office? Arguably, he can be more effective challenging the prevailing doctrine than joining it.

(beat)

That's all I have to say.

He pushes off to the FRONT DOOR - the PRESS still clamouring their questions -

30

**INT. HALL - HOYNES HOME - EARLY EVENING**

30

Aiden, entering - a SEVEN YEAR OLD little GIRL runs from the kitchen to greet him - Joe also steps into the hall -

RUBY

Daddeee! Daddy!

The sight of her invigorates Aiden - he swings her up into his arms -

AIDEN

How's my Ruby?

During this, Noah descends the stairs with Freya - he halts at the sight of his FATHER holding Ruby -

RUBY  
You were on TV, Daddy - I saw you!

AIDEN  
(light)  
No, no - it was someone who looked like me...

RUBY  
It was you, Daddy - you had the same tie!

Aiden - lifts her above his head - she squealing in delight. He swings her around singing the KAISER CHIEF'S song "RUBY, RUBY-RUBY!"

Noah, watching them. It's hard to decipher his expression. He turns on his heel, ascends the stairs.

Joe observing this - he meets Freya's eyes -

31

**INT. KITCHEN - HOYNES HOME - EVENING**

31

Joe, pouring shots of WHISKEY - Aiden is checking the LAND LINE VOICE MAIL - a weariness of the soul evident now -

ANSWER MACHINE  
*Andy Cole - Daily Mail -*

Aiden stabs ERASE -

ANSWER MACHINE (cont'd)  
*Morris Seaborne - Independent -  
we'd like to run a story on your -*

Aiden erases this also. During this, he reaches to remove the PHOTOGRAPHS of BRUCE from the PINBOARD - bins them.

Joe, catching this -

ANSWER MACHINE (cont'd)  
*Denise Craig from the Asperger's  
clinic? About Noah's appointment  
next week -*

Aiden FAST FORWARDS -

ANSWER MACHINE (cont'd)  
*Miles Brock, Aiden. The  
Constituency officers want a  
meeting with you ASAP.  
(taut)*

(MORE)

ANSWER MACHINE (cont'd)

*You owe us an explanation,  
wouldn't you say?*

AIDEN

Can this day get any better?

JOE

...Did you not forewarn them what  
you were doing?

AIDEN

- And risk the loyalists leaking  
it?

(rueful)

...You're only a traitor if you  
fail, aren't you?

Joe hands him A WHISKEY, they sit at the table -

JOE

A story I used to tell my L.S.E.  
students... ... A Comintern  
agent radioed Vladivostok to  
relay a message to Stalin,  
requesting to blow up Hitler in  
some Munich cafe he frequented.  
Three times the agent radioed,  
three times Stalin never  
responded.

(then)

He'd made his own Faustian pact  
too. In his case, his non  
aggression pact with Hitler.

An acidic beat -

AIDEN

Except there was no pact between  
the PM and Bruce -

(then)

He's after a clear run for  
himself.

Joe's face -

AIDEN (cont'd)

I knew he was the past master of  
the dark arts ... I arrogantly  
assumed twenty years of  
friendship meant I was exempt ...

JOE

Naïve possibly - arrogant? -

AIDEN

(overriding)

- It was arrogance made me listen  
to him!

(MORE)

AIDEN (cont'd)

How the cabinet is full of ineffectual pigmies - only I had the X Factor to win us the election .. And I bought every damn word!

(a different tone)

- So much for "moral paucity."

JOE

He's not the first to commit political fratricide is he? Milliband senior can testify to that.

They sit in subdued silence; Aiden constraining emotion -

AIDEN

...It physically hurts, Dad. It actually hurts.

This is plaintive - like the child he once was. Joe reaches, clasps his son's hand. During this Dita appears at the door, she stands tugging on her coat, looking at them curiously.

DITA

I go out now, is it okay?

Aiden abruptly pushes away from the table, turns his back. Dita's gaze rests on him-

DITA (cont'd)

Freya asks you say good night to the children.

JOE

He'll be right up.

She reluctantly tugs her gaze from Aiden, goes.

Aiden catches sight of the PINBOARD - he missed a PHOTOGRAPH of BRUCE tucked behind a TAKE-OUT MENU. He tugs it out; it depicts he and Bruce walking along Downing Street to Number 10.

AIDEN

"The villainy you teach me, I will execute and better your instruction."

Joe, disconcerted by the venom in this. Aiden scrunches the PHOTOGRAPH, discards it in the PEDAL BIN -

Joe, foreboding there now -

32 **INT. UPPER LANDING/NOAH'S BEDROOM - HOYNES HOME - EVENING** 32

A DOOR marked "RUBY" - Aiden withdraws -

AIDEN

Sleep tight, precious girl.

He steps across the hall, looks into Noah's room. The BOY is painstakingly drawing AIRLINE FLIGHT PATHS between WORLD CITIES on his MAP. Each is meticulously labelled with the AIRPORT CODE INITIALS -

AIDEN (cont'd)

Ten minutes then bed, Noah.

The BOY obsessively focused on his task with the MAP. Aiden, fighting confliction.

He wordlessly withdraws.

33 **INT. HALL - HOYNES HOME - NIGHT** 33

Joe, pulling on his COAT - Aiden seeing him out. Joe turns, meets his eyes, pulls him into a clumsy embrace.

JOE

...This too shall pass, son.

The two of them, briefly lost in the moment. Joe disengages, quickly goes.

On Aiden -

*NEWSNIGHT PRESENTER (O.S.)*

*So, do you buy Aiden Hoynes's claim, that his resignation was that of a dissident?*

34 **INT. MASTER BEDROOM - HOYNES HOME - NIGHT** 34

A FLAT SCREEN TELEVISION - NEWSNIGHT is on - Freya is in bed watching it -

A NEWSNIGHT PRESENTER there - a supine, suited POLITICIAN there also - a veteran of Westminster's "real politik" -

A CAPTION tells us he is MARCUS FITZWALLACE - CHIEF WHIP -

MARCUS

*At best he's being disingenuous -  
at worst duplicitous -*

Freya glances at the EN SUITE BATHROOM door - the sound of AN ELECTRIC TOOTHBRUSH can be heard within -

MARCUS (cont'd)

*When Robin Cook resigned, did he impugn Tony Blair's entire premiership? No. He made it clear his resignation was over the single issue of Iraq -*

NEWSNIGHT PRESENTER

*--So Hoynes's resignation was more in the vein of Geoffrey Howe - which led to Thatcher's downfall?*

MARCUS

*It's no coincidence he used virtually the same phrase "It's for others to decide where their loyalty lies" is it? ... Hoynes did it to force a leadership contest and put himself in pole position.*

*(beat)*

*Instead of which - at the risk of mixing too many metaphors - he's put himself out in the wilderness.*

The sound of the ELECTRIC TOOTHBRUSH ceases, Freya quickly changes CHANNELS to a MOVIE CHANNEL. Aiden enters, gets into bed beside her. A hollow fatigue about him now. She threads her fingers through his, clasps his hand.

AIDEN

*...Don't go all mushy on me.*

She smiles: an hiatus.

FREYA

*Are you going to the climate change debate tomorrow?*

He doesn't respond.

FREYA (cont'd)

*...You have to show your face in the House, Aiden - show you're not cowed or -*

AIDEN

*(overriding)*

*- I need to shore things up here first. Square the circle at the constituency.*

She, unconvinced. He reaches for his PHONE -

FREYA

*No tweeting, not tonight.*

She removes the PHONE - switches off the BEDSIDE LIGHTS - nestles against him. The only illumination, the flicker of the TELEVISION -

FREYA cont'd)

...I've the Select Committee first thing. Can you drop Noah off at school tomorrow?

Something in his face -

FREYA

...This could be a chance for you to spend more time with him, Aiden.

AIDEN

Must we have this conversation again now?

FREYA

(light)

Oh, did we have it already this month? Did I blink and miss that?

He, his mood fracturing -

AIDEN

Pity's sake, Freya, not tonight.

She - relenting - nestles to him - they lie a moment.

AIDEN (cont'd)

What a bitch of a day.

FREYA

...Not over yet, is it?

She kisses him again - it takes a moment for him to reciprocate - intimacy and tenderness intensify into passion - he reaches for the REMOTE - turns off the TELEVISION.

AIDEN

You and your crap movies.

FREYA

(mischievous)

How does it go? What was it? ...  
"I could have been a contender -  
I could have been somebody.."

AIDEN

Sod off -



FREYA (cont'd)

Pack lunch?

Ruby spins back again to get it -

RUBY

(as she goes)

Bye Daddy!

AIDEN

(distracted)

Bye sweet.

Ruby and Dita go - Freya leans out the kitchen door to call out after Dita -

FREYA

The car needs petrol - my card is in the glove box!

She turns to shout upstairs -

FREYA (cont'd)

Noah!! Hurry up - you'll be late!

Aiden, absorbed in the NEWSPAPERS - oblivious to the early morning family mayhem -

37

**INT. HOYNES CAR - SUBURBAN STREETS - DAY**

37

The HOYNES CAR - nudging through TRAFFIC - Aiden at the wheel - Noah beside him - he's playing with A TRANSFORMER TOY, expertly rotating its parts - myopic focus there once more - the RADIO is on -

*RADIO NEWSREADER*

*...Downing Street spokesman said the Prime Minister will not be rushed into the reshuffle - He is considering all the options -*

Aiden reaches to switch off the radio. Slides a cautious look at Noah -

AIDEN

So ...what have you got in school today?

NOAH

Just stuff.

AIDEN

...What kind of stuff?

Noah is silently gazing on a the flicking INDICATOR - The CAR has reached TRAFFIC LIGHTS - Aiden has indicated left -

AIDEN (cont'd)  
(gently)  
It's a conversation, Noah. I ask  
questions, you answer, remember?

NOAH'S POV -

*FX - the "click click of the INDICATOR - eerily magnified  
like a deafening pulse -*

Noah flashes a look out of the window - anxiety percolating -  
his breathing sharpens -

- Aiden pulls away from the lights - turns left -

- Noah arches his body - lets out a gut wrenching howl -

NOAH  
NO! NO! NO!! NO!!!!

AIDEN  
Jesus H!

He slams on the BRAKES - Noah howling like a wounded animal -  
body rigid - hands flapping in panic - Aiden pulls the car  
into the road-side - looks at his shrieking, flapping son -  
tries to restrain his flailing hands -

AIDEN (cont'd)  
What did I do - what is it!

NOAH  
WRONG WAY - WRONG WAY - WRONG  
WAY!!!! -

AIDEN  
We avoid the traffic this way -

The BOY still arched and howling - No - No - No!!

AIDEN (cont'd)  
Okay, okay! We'll go the other  
way. Look, I'm turning round -  
we're going the other way!

CUT TO:

Aiden's CAR - screeching into a THREE POINT TURN - heading  
back the way it came -

38 INT/EXT. AIDEN'S CAR - SPECIAL NEEDS SCHOOL - CARLINGWORTH 38  
AREA - DAY

A modest INDEPENDENT SCHOOL behind wrought iron gates - KIDS  
arriving - A TEACHER greets them at the entrance -





45 **INT. CHIEF WHIP'S OFFICE - 9 DOWNING STREET - EARLY EVENING** 45

- Modest book lined grandeur - Fitzwallace enters - sits at his desk gathering his thoughts; he keys up A CONTACT list on his COMPUTER -

Reaches for the TELEPHONE -

46 **EXT. HOYNES HOME - CARLINGWORTH - EARLY EVENING** 46

- The sound of a TELEPHONE ringing within -

47 **INT. KITCHEN - HOYNES HOME/CHIEF WHIP'S OFFICE - EARLY EVE** 47

A flower flecked Freya is making A CAKE with Ruby, stirring the ingredients in a bowl. Dita is beyond at the sink- she reaches for the PHONE -

DITA (INTO PHONE)  
Hoynes residence, Dita speaking?  
(then)  
Who? ....Wait please -

She holds out the PHONE to Freya -

DITA (cont'd)  
...Marcus Fitz-someone?

Freya, barely glancing up from the cake stirring -

FREYA  
Fitzwallace ... It's Aiden he'll  
want - tell him to try his mobile.

DITA  
It is you he asked for.

Freya, puzzled at this. She wipes her hand, takes the phone - moves to another part of the kitchen -

FREYA (INTO PHONE)  
Freya Gardner? .....

The CALL is TWO WAY with Fitzwallace in his OFFICE -

FITZWALLACE (INTO PHONE)  
Bad moment?

FREYA (INTO PHONE)  
Not at all. What can I do for you,  
Marcus?

Hold on her as she listens; her expression alters -

FREYA (INTO PHONE) (cont'd)  
...Sorry - say again?



Aiden, still wrestling with the logic of it-

AIDEN

Because you're far and away the best woman at Minister of State level and everyone knows it. ...The press are always banging on about the gender balance in cabinet... He overlooks you, he'll be accused of petty revenge and misogyny - how will that play with the women voters?

A beat.

FREYA

Risky little game. What if I took the damn job?

AIDEN

There is no risk is there? He knows you'll reject it out of loyalty to me. By making the offer he looks statesmanlike and magnanimous, he's off the hook.

Freya, assimilating this - beyond, Ruby can be heard shouting.

RUBY (O.S.)

*Mummy! Noah....pulled my hair and spitted at me!*

Freya moves to Aiden, hastily kisses him -

FREYA

...I'll call Fitzwallace in the morning, tell him to shove his offer up his wool sack.

50

**INT. MASTER BEDROOM - HOYNES HOME - DAWN**

50

Dawn light filtering through the shuttered curtains. The tremulous QUESTION MARK crack in the ceiling like an arterial vein -

Aiden in the bed, gazing up at it; it resonates with him.

He glances at Freya asleep beside him, eases out of bed -

51

**INT. AIDEN'S STUDY - HOYNES HOME - DAWN -**

51

A light snaps on - a well appointed OFFICE - a HIGH TECH clutter of office gear - A PHOTO COPIER - FAX MACHINE - SCANNERS, COMPUTERS, PHONE LINES.



Aiden is standing there, his back turned. As Freya enters, he turns, meets her eyes -

AIDEN

Just run with this, okay?

(then)

You call Fitzwallace in the morning, tell him you've discussed his offer with me, I won't stand in the way of such a fantastic opportunity for you.

(beat)

So you will accept the post and agree to the condition on the immigration issue -

She, uncertain she is hearing this right -

AIDEN (cont'd)

- By accepting the job the P.M. will assume you've put ambition ahead of your loyalty to me, won't he?

(beat)

You work with that, use it to win his trust -- Then, when the time is right - choose your venue - anywhere with maximum impact - Policy Forum dinner - Newsnight - Andrew Neil - and condemn his immigration stand! -

FREYA

...Before or after I've cleared my desk?

AIDEN

He can't fire another Cabinet minister - especially my own wife - over the same issue, without looking petulant and vindictive! He'll play into the hands of his critics that your appointment was just gender tokenism! Further proof that he runs the Cabinet like his personal fiefdom, crushing dissent, briefing against anyone opposing him -

She, still trying to keep pace with all this -

AIDEN (cont'd)

You publicly challenge him on a crucial part of his manifesto, you challenge both his authority and his credibility -

(a different tone)

Coups have been sparked by less.

She, assimilating this -

FREYA  
A long shot at best.

AIDEN  
Still a shot.

A beat.

FREYA  
It'll just open the way for Bruce  
and the leadership -

AIDEN  
-It'll open the way for a  
leadership contest between us!

FREYA  
- But he has the inside track with  
the heavy weights in Cabinet -

AIDEN  
And I have you on the inside,  
tracking him.

She, as this impacts. She sinks to a seat-

AIDEN (cont'd)  
- You play the ambition card with  
him too. God knows he'll relate to  
that! Find out who's in his cabal,  
who's on the fence, who's funding  
him -

FREYA  
- He's not a fool! He'll know I'm  
trotting home to leak it all back  
to you.

He allows a moment -

AIDEN  
...At university, before I came  
along - you and he -

FREYA  
(impatient)  
- There was no he and me -

AIDEN  
Exactly. You were the one who got  
away.  
(then)  
- It's not about ideology with him,  
it's about outwitting the other  
side - the thrill of the chase -  
(then)  
(MORE)

AIDEN (cont'd)  
All you have to do is flatter him.  
His ego will do the rest.

She meets his eyes.

FREYA  
So I'm not just your mole, but your  
pimp?

His face.

FREYA (cont'd)  
Can you think of another name for  
it?

A beat.

AIDEN  
Agent provocateur?

This finds its mark on her. But he senses her reluctance. He  
crosses to crouch before her, folds her hands in his -

AIDEN (cont'd)  
Sometimes you have to do bad things  
to get into power, to do good  
things when you get there...

She, still uncertain -

AIDEN (cont'd)  
Ok, worst case scenario - the P.M.  
boots you out? You'll have put down  
a marker, Freya! ... As someone of  
principle - someone worthy to hold  
high office in Government -  
(then)  
All these years, the sacrifices  
you've made for my career, taking  
the load of Noah and the family...  
(beat)  
Haven't you earned this chance?

Her face -

56

**EXT. DEPT. BUSINESS, INNOVATION AND SKILL - DAY**

56

Contemporary GLASS and CHROME edifice - the swirl of TRAFFIC  
in VICTORIA STREET -

O.S. A MOBILE is ringing -

57 **INT. SEC STATE OFFICE -DEPARTMENT OF B.I.S./CHIEF WHIP'S OFFICE - 9 DOWNING ST. DAY -** 57

- The office which Aiden recently vacated - a blur of MEN in OVERALLS there unpacking Bruce's OFFICE paraphernalia - FILES, BOOKS and COMPUTERS. He is in the midst of it overseeing - he tugs out his MOBILE -

BRUCE (INTO PHONE)

Babbish?

The call is TWO WAY with the CHIEF WHIP -

FITZWALLACE (INTO PHONE)

You'll regret now you didn't wager more than a fiver.

BRUCE (INTO PHONE)

...She accepted it?

FITZWALLACE (INTO PHONE)

With alacrity -

Bruce, taking this in --

BRUCE (INTO PHONE)

And the condition?

FITZWALLACE (INTO PHONE)

The whole caboodle.

A beat.

BRUCE (INTO PHONE)

She must have done a heck of a job on Aiden.

FITZWALLACE (INTO PHONE)

As you did with the P.M.,  
persuading him to go with her.

(then)

I'm sure she will be duly grateful.

He disconnects. Bruce, the glint of a man who's plan is coming together -

58 **INT.CORRIDOR - PALACE OF WESTMINSTER/AIDEN'S STUDY - HOYNES HOUSE - DAY** 58

A blur of MINISTER and STAFF - Leo and Drew striding through them - Leo's MOBILE rings - the call is TWO WAY with Aiden in his study at home -

LEO (INTO PHONE)

How's it going?

He mouths "Aiden" to Danny -

AIDEN (INTO PHONE)  
Still trying to ply your trade  
round the estate?

LEO (INTO PHONE)  
For all the good it's doing.

A beat.

AIDEN (INTO PHONE)  
Freya got Work and Pensions -

This halts Leo in his tracks - Drew skids to a curious halt  
beside him -

AIDEN (INTO PHONE) (cont'd)  
Downing Street will confirm it by  
the end of play.  
(beat)  
I told her to bring you and Drew in  
as her advisers. ...I want a ring  
of steel round her, Leo -

LEO (INTO PHONE)  
You got it.

They disconnect - Leo meets Drew's eyes.

LEO (cont'd)  
We are back in the game, my son -

59 **EXT. CAR PARK - WESTMINSTER/AIDEN'S STUDY - HOYNES HOUSE --59  
DAY**

Aiden's former driver KENNY meticulously polishing his car.  
Other MINISTERIAL CARS can be seen beyond.

His MOBILE rings - the call is TWO WAY with Aiden in his study  
at home -

KENNY (INTO PHONE)  
Hello?

AIDEN (INTO PHONE)  
Tell me, have you been allocated  
another Minister yet?

KENNY (INTO PHONE)  
Back in the pool for my sins.  
(beat)  
Word has it your better half got  
Work and Pensions?

AIDEN (INTO PHONE)

(wry)

...You make the Westminster grape vine look positively arthritic, Kenny.

(then)

..I told her to put in a request for you drive her... I need to know she's in safe hands.

(a different tone)

Precious cargo and all that -

60

**EXT. ST. STEPHEN'S GATE/WESTMINSTER/STUDY/HOYNES HOUSE - DAY**

CLIFF LYMAN, veteran Broadsheet political journalist, pushing towards the Houses of Parliament - his MOBILE rings, he picks up - the call is TWO WAY with Aiden in his study -

CLIFF (INTO PHONE)

Starting to think you've been hibernating --

AIDEN (INTO PHONE)

Freya got Work and Pensions -

CLIFF (INTO PHONE)

I heard.

AIDEN (INTO PHONE)

Any chance of a few column inches to sweeten her entry?

A beat.

CLIFF (INTO PHONE)

You'll owe me.

AIDEN (INTO PHONE)

...Noted.

He disconnects, ticks another item of his "to do" list - reaches for the phone again -

**FADE DOWN**

61

**EXT. HOYNES HOME - CARLINGWORTH - EARLY MORNING -**

61

**FADE UP** - Kenny's MINISTERIAL CAR is parked outside the house; he is reading a PAPER, listening to the RADIO, drinking tea from a THERMOS -

*TODAY PROGRAMME*

*Surprise appointment to Works and Pensions of Freya Gardner, wife of Aiden Hoynes who recently resigned in what is believed to be a failed leadership bid --*

See Kenny's PAPER - a picture of FREYA there - "OUT FROM HER HUSBAND'S SHADOW"

62 **INT. KITCHEN - HOYNES HOME - CARLINGWORTH - EARLY MORNING -62**

A harassed Dita serving BREAKFAST to the TWO CHILDREN - the KITCHEN RADIO is on -

*TODAY PROGRAMME*

*- A Downing Street source said "the Prime Minister has long since recognized Ms. Gardner's outstanding potential and does not regard Aiden Hoynes recent actions as an impediment to realizing that potential"...*

Dita sets down a plate of scrambled eggs in front of Noah who promptly starts rocking in distress -

RUBY

They're touching, Dita! His eggs and toast - he doesn't like it when they touch!

Dita resignedly returns, separates the eggs from the toast.

DITA

Enough fuss, eat.

She bustles off. The BOY still rocking and whimpering -

63 **INT. MASTER BEDROOM - HOYNES HOME - EARLY MORNING**

63

A tense Freya, in stockinged feet, shirt and pencil skirt, trying on various JACKETS; Aiden in T SHIRT and PYJAMA BOTTOMS is selecting various JACKETS for her to try on.

AIDEN

Confidence is the key. The second you step inside the department, don't let the mask slip, not to anyone. Kevin Russell is your Permanent Secretary - old school but no-body's fool. Insist on a structured induction, don't let him bounce you into decisions before you're fully briefed...

During this her MOBILE bleeps a text message -

FREYA  
Another well wisher. Who knew I  
had so many friends?

AIDEN  
(caustic)  
Get used to it.

He gives her a BLACK JACKET to try - briefly inspects her -

AIDEN (cont'd)  
Too funereal...

He reaches for another -

AIDEN (cont'd)  
When you arrive, remember to  
connect personally with all the  
staff, especially those who could  
be toxic. ..But don't ignore the  
ones lower down the food chain.  
They're your shock absorbers - the  
keepers of your secrets -

She has put on a PURPLE JACKET - spins for his approval -

AIDEN (cont'd)  
Better -

He catches sight of her LEOPARD PATTERN SHOES -

AIDEN (cont'd)  
Shoes are too Theresa May -

She kicks them off, he selects a more sedate pair - stoops to  
slide her feet into them. She looks down at him, touched at  
his solicitude -

AIDEN (cont'd)  
And if you need something doing,  
forget appealing to their altruism.  
Appeal to their self interest -

Her MOBILE bleeps another TEXT.

FREYA  
Bruce.

Their eyes meet -

FREYA (cont'd)  
(reading)  
"Off to Brussels on a trade junket,  
back Monday - do the handover then -  
Good luck."

AIDEN

...Give us time to get your ducks  
in a row.

She checks her appearance in the WARDROBE MIRROR. He crosses to stand behind her, smooths out her jacket - removes some fluff on her collar whether real or imaginary -

FREYA

When I was first pregnant with  
Noah, I remember thinking anything  
I hoped to achieve must fit round  
the edges. He comes first.

AIDEN

Now it's your turn to come first.  
And my turn to pick up the slack  
for a while.

A moment between them. She turns to go, he tugs her back.

AIDEN (cont'd)

I forgot rule number one.

His tone alerts her -

AIDEN (cont'd)

To stay top dog you may have to  
unleash the bitch in you, Freya.  
(then)  
Don't be afraid of that.

FREYA

(wry)  
And rule number two?

AIDEN

-- Re-read rule number one.

He kisses her neck. She arches against him, fixed on her reflection.

64

**INT. EXT. HOYNES HOME - CARLINGWORTH - MORNING**

64

Freya, BRIEF CASE in hand, being ushered into the LIMO by Kenny. Aiden, watching her. She waves to him - the CAR pulls away.

Aiden's expression alters; this is harder than he thought.

CUT TO:

*TREMBLING LENS of a PAP CAMERA fixed on the dishevelled  
pyjama clad figure of Aiden gazing after the departing car -  
SNAP! SNAP!*

65

**INT. KITCHEN - HOYNES HOME - CARLINGWORTH - MORNING**

65

The TODAY programme burbles - the chaos of breakfast again - kitchen is a debris of school paraphernalia - a LAUNDRY bin on the kitchen table - Ruby is trying to use a HULA HOOP - a harassed Aiden (now dressed) is ferrying dishes into the dishwasher. Noah sits on the floor in the corner of the room, myopically playing with his TRANSFORMER -

AIDEN

Not in here, Ruby, okay?

She ignores him, keeps spinning the HOOP - Dita enters -

DITA

Ruby - we go! Come!

Ruby tugs on her SCHOOL COAT - Dita looks over at Aiden -

DITA (cont'd)

Pack lunch?

He, askance -

AIDEN

...She can have school dinner today.

RUBY

School dinners are yucky!

AIDEN

No time to do your pack lunch now.

She clamps her lips in a sullen line -

AIDEN (cont'd)

It's one time, Ruby. Deal with it.

DITA

School bag?

He casts about for it - hands it over.

DITA (cont'd)

She has ballet today -

Aiden spins to locate the BALLETT SHOES- passes them also - Dita exits with Ruby -

Aiden turns back into the kitchen - his gaze rests on Noah hunched in the corner, obviously hunched over his TRANSFORMER.

Aiden - his heart sinks at the sight - he wishes it were otherwise -



72 **INT. WAITING AREA - CHURCH HALL - CARLINGWORTH - DAY** 72

The familiar row of CONSTITUENTS patiently waiting their turn. The TWO PENSIONERS among them, sharing a FLASK of TEA and a SUDOKU puzzle.

Through the GLASS DOORS beyond Aiden can be seen in the CHURCH HALL dealing with an angrily gesticulating CONSTITUENT -

73 **EXT. CHURCH HALL - CARLINGWORTH - DAY** 73

Aiden, emerging - crosses to his car - gets in - triggers the ignition, the RADIO comes on.

CAR RADIO

*"Coming up, Today in Parliament" -*

He snaps the radio off: he sits, his head resting against the car window - an ache in him more than just physical.

74 **EXT. WOODLAND AREA/PARK - CARLINGWORTH - DAY** 74

A canopy of TREES - fractured light. Aiden, now in RUNNING GEAR gear, sprinting down a track through the woods - his father JOE beside him.

CUT TO:

Father and son emerge from the woods into the PARK - a BENCH is nearby. Joe stumbles to a breathless halt -

JOE

Too old for this damn malarky.

He flops to the bench, Aiden does likewise. They sit a moment, catching their breath. Aiden's PHONE BLEEPS a TEXT.

AIDEN

Freya - she's invited for a welcome drink at Number 10 tonight.

Joe glances at him, allows a moment.

JOE

This isn't game over for you, Aiden. Not by a long way.

AIDEN

Sooner or later most political careers end in ignominy, don't they? Sacrificed on the alter of the party or guillotined at the ballot box by disenchanting voters. Why should I be the exception?

JOE

You don't mean that.

Aiden makes no comment which is a comment in itself.

JOE (cont'd)

Blair never sacked Gordon Brown because it was safer having him on the inside of the tent pissing out than outside pissing in.

(then)

He knew the damage he'd wreak rampaging on the back benches, he knew the support he commanded there.

(pointed)

As you do, Aiden.

Aiden's face.

JOE (cont'd)

And think of this a chance to reconnect with why you first went into politics. ... You left Oxford and went straight into the hot house of Westminster, didn't you? You barely lived in the real world, barely experienced the reality of people's lives -

AIDEN

(impatient)

Of course I bloody experience it! - I meet them in my damn surgery every-

JOE

(blunt)

- Virtual reality. Not the same.

This finds its mark. Joe hesitates before continuing -

JOE (cont'd)

I saw the same thing when you were first told about Noah's Aspergers. How you ...stepped back from him.

(beat)

Isn't that when you let yourself get sucked into the cesspit of Westminster power politics? When it stopped being about conviction and became about control?

Aiden, this too hits a nerve. Joe briefly rests his hand over Aiden's -

JOE (cont'd)

Thus endeth the first lesson.

(then)

Best get myself home, before my  
damn legs seize up.

They rise from the bench. Joe starts to set off. Aiden abruptly calls out after him -

AIDEN

If I did step back from him, it was  
because of you.

This halts Joe -

AIDEN (cont'd)

I knew I'd never touch his life as  
you have mine.

Joe holds his gaze -

JOE

Never say never.

He jogs off - Aiden watches until he turns a corner and is lost to him -

75      **INT/EXT. HOYNES HOME - CARLINGWORTH - EARLY EVENING**      75

Dita, at a window. She's watching Aiden by the HOUSE GATES stretching after his run. Is it desire in her face - or a trick of the light?

CUT TO:

Aiden, glazed in sweat, stretching. He senses he is being observed, looks up at the house.

Dita has gone. It's like she was never there.

76      **INT. HALL - HOYNES FAMILY HOME - CARLINGWORTH DAY**      76

O.S. the sound of CBBC on TELEVISION - also the whirr of a PHOTOCOPIER.

Aiden freshly showered, descends the stairs. The PHONE in the kitchen is ringing. Dita answers it -

DITA (INTO PHONE)

Hoynes residence? Ms. Gardner is  
not here at present.. Mr. Hoynes  
is here if you...

(beat)

He's right here if you --

(then)

Ok, I will get her to call you.

She glances at Aiden in the doorway -

DITA (cont'd)  
Deputy Prime Minister -

Aiden, it's only a minor humiliation but the first cut is the deepest.

He catches the sound of the COPIER. He glances into the STUDY -

Noah is there stooped over the PHOTO COPIER, fractiously flapping as he watches realms of COPY flop out of the COPIER.

Aiden, this impacts also.

77 **EXT. NUMBER 10 DOWNING STREET - LONDON - EARLY EVENING** 77

Freya, approaching NUMBER TEN - a battery of REPORTERS behind their cordon shout questions at her - CAMERAS FLASHING - *"Is your husband joining you tonight, Ms. Gardner!" "What does he think about your promotion, Minister?" "Where do you stand over the immigration ban, Minister?"*

Freya halts outside NUMBER TEN to wave and pose for their CAMERAS - *"This way, Minister! Over here, Minister!"* -

She, blinking in the searchlight of the media - so this what the thermal of fame feels like -

78 **INT. HALL/CORRIDOR - NUMBER 10 DOWNING STREET - EARLY EVENING**

Modest Georgian grandiosity; Freya and Marcus Fitzwallace pad up the corridor towards us -

MARCUS  
--Thrilled to have you on board -  
always said we'd neglected you too  
long --

They reach A DOOR -

MARCUS (cont'd)  
I'll tell him you're here.

He indicates a chair - enters the DOOR - glimpse the fractious figure of the PRIME MINISTER within surrounded by ACOLYTES. Freya sits, prepares to wait. THE CABINET ROOM is nearby - the DOOR is ajar - the BOAT SHAPED TABLE can be seen within -

Her face.

79 **INT. CABINET ROOM - NUMBER TEN DOWNING STREET - EARLY EVENING**

The empty CABINET room. Freya cautiously nudges the door open, enters. She crosses to the table, her fingers brush the surface of the TABLE in gossamer contact -

She circles to a CHAIR opposite the PRIME MINISTER'S CHAIR, pulls it out, sits. She spreads her hands on the table as if communing with history -

So this is what the thermal of power feels like -

80 **EXT. HOYNES HOME - CARLINGWORTH - DAY** 80

Kenny, waiting by the MINISTERIAL CAR outside the house -

Aiden on the front step in PYJAMAS, Ruby beside him in her NIGHTIE. Freya is heading to the car carrying her RED BOXES.

Aiden stands watching as the car pulls away, like someone marooned on a beach when the tide has gone out.

81 **INT./EXT. AIDEN'S CAR - CARLINGWORTH AREA - DAY** 81

Aiden at the wheel, Noah beside him, working his TRANSFORMER.

NOAH

The O's were easy - Ohau, Oakland,  
Oamani - and they all have  
airports. Q's are okay too, like  
loads of them to choose from -

AIDEN

(gently)

- Didn't Mum make a rule, how you  
can only talk about the airport  
thing at home? Nowhere else?

The BOY, his eyes obscured his glasses -

AIDEN (cont'd)

You know why she made that rule?  
To free up your brain to think  
about other things.

Noah, wordlessly working his TRANSFORMER -

AIDEN (cont'd)

(persevering)

Because if you focus on just one  
thing all the time, your brain gets  
stuck on it. That's how it turns  
into an obsession...

(beat)

Shall we talk about something else?  
You choose, any subject you want.

Noah, apparently pondering on this - Aiden glances at him -

AIDEN (cont'd)  
Anything you like, up to you.

Suddenly Noah starts to tunelessly sing - it's the Kaiser Chiefs song "RUBY, RUBY-RUBY!" -

NOAH  
-- Ruby, Ruby, Ruby - do you know  
what you're doing to me -- Ruby,  
Ruby, Ruby, Ruby

On Aiden - the implications of this impact -

82           **EXT. SPECIAL NEEDS SCHOOL - CARLINGWORTH AREA - DAY**           82

The KIDS pushing through the gates - Aiden by the car watching as Noah trudges towards the school -

He becomes aware of the drift of giggling - a bunch of MOTHERS are nudging each other.

He glances down, he'd forgotten he's wearing his PYJAMAS under his ANORAK.

83           **INT. RESTAURANT - WESTMINSTER AREA - LONDON - DAY**           83

AN INNER PAGE of THE MAIL - A PHOTOGRAPH of the pyjama clad AIDEN there on his door step - the caption reads - "FROM POWER HOUSE to HOUSE HUSBAND" -

Pull back to reveal BRUCE reading it; he's at a TABLE for TWO in a discreet corner of the restaurant.

Beyond the swish of WAITERS - a blur of DINERS scattered around white starched TABLES - Freya enters, spots Bruce, threads to join him.

He quickly stows the PAPER, rises to greet her; a glacial formality about her.

BRUCE  
Good to see you.

She sits - arranges her napkin and her features.

FREYA  
How're Wanda and the kids?

BRUCE  
All in the vertical and free from  
infection.

She doesn't rise to this attempt at humour. An awkward hiatus.

BRUCE (cont'd)  
We have more in common than divides  
us, Freya.

She, coolly quizzical -

BRUCE (cont'd)  
Our two departments have adjacent  
interests.  
(beat)  
If we're to work together  
effectively, we have to find a way  
of putting aside our personal  
issues.

FREYA  
Is that what you call it?

He's spared from replying by the arrival of the WAITER -

FREYA (cont'd)  
Salad Nicoise -

BRUCE  
Calves Liver. Rare. Extra Spinach,  
hold the fries.

The WAITER departs; an hiatus.

BRUCE (cont'd)  
The week before Aiden resigned, he  
stayed over at my London flat -

FREYA  
(flat)  
- To discuss strategy, he told me.

BRUCE  
Did he also tell you I warned him  
against it? I'd taken soundings,  
the omens weren't good? He'd find  
himself dangerously exposed?

She, disbelieving -

BRUCE (cont'd)  
He was on this ...adrenaline rush -  
like an actor in a play whose lost  
sight of the plot --  
(beat)  
I couldn't get through to him. I  
couldn't reach him.

FREYA  
Curious he never mentioned any of  
that to me.  
(a different tone)  
(MORE)

FREYA (cont'd)

Or - given your concern - you  
didn't call to give me a heads up -

BRUCE

- I wish now I bloody had called  
you. It seemed ... disloyal.

She, constraining impatience -

FREYA

And publicly shafting him wasn't?  
(beat)  
You could have done a Pontius  
Pilot, Bruce, refused to comment.

BRUCE

He and I were too close. If I  
hadn't come out publicly against  
him, I was guilty by association.  
...What was I supposed to do?  
Commit political Kamikaze along  
with him?

(then)

If you think I did it lightly,  
think again. I knew we'd never get  
back from it.

(then)

Like cutting off my right arm.

Emotion in this; but her scepticism is still apparent - he  
sees this, artfully changes tack-

BRUCE (cont'd)

He has this... sense of  
entitlement. As if the world owes  
him something.

(then)

I don't know if it's about Noah  
or...

He slides her a look to see if this impacts on her - it has -

BRUCE (cont'd)

When I put your name forward to the  
P.M. - even though it's a chance in  
a lifetime for you - I was afraid  
he'd veto it.

(beat)

Or even if you took the job, he'd  
try to use you to get back at me  
somehow.

(a different tone)

I should have known he cares too  
much for you, to put you in such an  
invidious position.

This impacts on her also. She deflects -

FREYA

Just why did you put my name  
forward, Bruce? To assuage your  
guilt?

A beat.

BRUCE

I've lost count how many times you  
stepped aside for him over the  
years. When that shadow Transport  
job came up, you had a shot at it  
too. But you ruled yourself out for  
him. Same later with environment.

(then)

And he let you do it. Every time.

FREYA

It wasn't for him. I have a family  
to -

BRUCE

- It's his family too.

This too finds its mark. The WAITER returns with BREAD and  
OLIVES. Bruce allows him to clear before speaking again -

BRUCE (cont'd)

...As I told him that night in the  
flat, a leadership bid isn't just  
about hubris, it's about picking  
your allies.

(then)

If a week is a long time in  
politics, a year is a lifetime.  
....In the end you're only as good  
as the support you have.

This too finds its target -

84 **EXT. HOYNES HOME - CARLINGWORTH - NIGHT**

84

The house in a shroud of darkness -

AIDEN (O.S.)

The fact he wanted to see you alone  
is a good sign!

85 **INT. EN SUITE BATHROOM - HOYNES HOME - NIGHT**

85

Aiden is in the bath, Freya in her night clothes is at the  
basin -

AIDEN

-It means he's rattled - he wasn't  
sure which way you'd jump.

He reaches for some NAIL CLIPPERS - holds them out to her.

AIDEN (cont'd)

Can you?

She takes the CLIPPERS -it's hard to read her expression - he rests a foot on the side of the bath as she starts to clip his TOE NAILS -

AIDEN (O.S.) (cont'd)

You need to start a paper trail.  
Texts at first - he'll feel safe  
with those. Then ramp them up into  
e mails - get the time frame on his  
campaign - strategy - allies -  
whatever you can coax out of him -  
(beat)  
Get him on paper, we leak it to the  
press, it's a slam dunk! -

She, her expression still indecipherable -

AIDEN (cont'd)

I'm tempted to hide a camera on  
you, catch him bad mouthing the  
P.M., put it on You Tube that would  
nail his treacherous sorry arse!

Catching her face -

AIDEN (cont'd)

- I'm kidding, obviously.

On Freya.

86 INT. MASTER BEDROOM - HOYNES HOME - NIGHT

86

Freya, now in bed. O.S. the unappetising sound of AIDEN gargling in the bathroom -

She, gazing up at the QUESTION MARK in the ceiling -

87 INT. STUDY - HOYNES HOUSE/PORTCULLIS HOUSE TUNNEL - DAY

87

A BROADSHEET WEB SITE fills the screen - Cliff Lyman's article there - a picture of FREYA - "*OUT FROM HER HUSBAND'S SHADOW*" -

Aiden is at his COMPUTER, reading it. He flicks to another WEB SITE - locates another PICTURE of Freya, waving and smiling on the steps of NUMBER TEN -

He locates another WEB SITE - a PICTURE of MINISTERS smiling into CAMERA, sitting at the BOAT SHAPED CABINET TABLE - Freya there sitting next to Bruce -

The discomforts him --

Aiden's gaze drifts up to the FRAMED PHOTOGRAPH of he and Bruce with other MINISTERS seated around the CABINET TABLE -

Unseen by him, Dita has arrived in the doorway. She just stands, watching him - she coughs discreetly. He flashes her a distracted look.

DITA

I go to the shops. Is there anything you need?

He dissents. Still she stands there - he flicks her a look.

AIDEN

I'm good, thanks.

She seems about to speak, thinks better of it, goes. His PHONE rings - the call is TWO WAY with Freya approaching up the cavernous tunnel to PORTCULLIS HOUSE -

FREYA (INTO PHONE)

...Someone's baled out of tonight's QUESTION TIME - Number 10 asked asked me to step in...

Aiden, assimilating this - her BLACKBERRY starts ringing -

AIDEN (INTO PHONE)

The PM knows you'll get asked about supporting me on the immigration issue - he's trying to flush you out...

FREYA (INTO PHONE)

I can't refuse to go on, can I?

A beat.

AIDEN (INTO PHONE)

Then it's carpe diem. You do the deed tonight.

She - dismayed - during this, fumbling for her BLACKBERRY in her bag - checks the CALLER I.D. -

AIDEN (INTO PHONE) (cont'd)

We'll get you word perfect - I'll draft your response - e mail it over - we can -

FREYA (INTO PHONE)

- I'll call you back -

She disconnects from Aiden, he - a stab of frustration there.

FREYA (INTO BLACKBERRY) (cont'd)  
Marcus, hello...  
(she halts, puzzled)  
Now? ....  
(glancing at her watch)  
No, it's fine... On my way.

She disconnects - turns on her heel spins back the way she came.

88 **INT. CHIEF WHIP'S OFFICE - DOWNING STREET. DAY** 88

Marcus Fitzwallace at his desk disconnecting the call also.  
Bruce lounges against a bookcase.

MARCUS  
Best make yourself scarce.  
...Don't want her thinking its a  
pincer movement, do we?

Bruce gives a wry salute; some GRAPES are in a bag on  
Marcus's desk.

Bruce reaches for one, lobs it to catch it in his mouth,  
swings out.

89 **INT. CORRIDOR - DOWNING STREET - DAY** 89

Freya is approaching up the corridor. She halts outside the  
CHIEF WHIP'S OFFICE - knocks -

MARCUS (O.S.)  
Come!

She enters -

90 **INT. KITCHEN - HOYNES HOME - CARLINGWORTH - LATE APERNOON** 90

Ruby, drawing at the kitchen table. Dita is at the sink  
washing up. She is looking out of the window -

Her POV: Aiden is pacing in the garden on his MOBILE -

91 **EXT. GARDEN - HOYNES HOME/DWP OUTER OFFICE - LATE APERNOON** 91

Aiden, fractiously pacing -

AIDEN (INTO PHONE)  
I've been trying to reach her all  
bloody afternoon! -

The CALL is TWO WAY with LEO in the DWP outer office -

LEO (INTO PHONE)

On her way to Norwich for Question  
Time -

AIDEN (INTO PHONE)

Get her to call me..

He disconnects - Leo and Danny exchange a look -

92 **INT. MAKE UP DEPT. QUESTION TIME LOCATION/STUDIO - NIGHT** 92

A BCU of RUBY RED LIPS fill the screen -

Pull back to reveal a tense FREYA in front of a MIRROR as A  
MAKE-UP ARTIST tends to her -

Her MOBILE rings, she checks the caller I.D. "*Aiden calling  
(6)*"

She meets her eyes in the mirror -

93 **INT. QUESTION TIME LOCATION/STUDIO - NORWICH - NIGHT** 93

The AUDIENCE raggedly arriving to take their seats:  
TECHNICIANS running SOUND and CAMERA tests -

94 **INT. CORRIDOR - QUESTION TIME LOCATION/STUDIO - NIGHT** 94

The CORRIDOR - a mayhem of CABLES and MORE TECHNICIANS - A  
FLOOR MANAGER threads Freya through it to some DOORS; a RED  
RECORDING LIGHT taped to it - the F.M.'s ear piece goes -

FLOOR MANAGER

(to Freya)

Hang here one sec, can you?

He hustles through the DOORS. She leans against the wall,  
flushed in terrible confliction -

95 **EXT. HOYNES HOME - CARLINGWORTH - NIGHT** 95

The canopy of night - a LIT WINDOW downstairs - O.S. the  
sound of APPLAUSE -

96 **INT. LIVING ROOM - HOYNES HOME - NIGHT** 96

- QUESTION TIME on the TELEVISION - the audience APPLAUDING -  
Aiden and Joe watching, a DEBRIS of PIZZAS there and a half  
finished BOTTLE of RED WINE.

DAVID DIMBLEBY (TV)

*Our next question is from Martha  
Bailey -*

CAMERA CUTS to a MIDDLE AGED WOMAN in the AUDIENCE -

MARTHA BAILEY (TV)

*Was Aiden Hoynes correct when he said the Prime Minister's moratorium on immigration plays "into xenophobic prejudice of those who seek to turn us into Fortress Britain?"*

Aiden, tensely fixed on Freya on the TELEVISION -

DAVID DIMBLEBY (TV)

*This was the dramatic resignation of Aiden Hoynes last week.*

*(then)*

*Freya Gardner, do you support your husband's position on the issue?*

*She tries for a disarming beat -*

FREYA (TV)

*...What you call the deep end, is it?*

*(beat)*

*As Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills as he was then, my husband was uniquely placed to appreciate how ideas from those outside our culture can re-invigorate and stimulate the economy.*

*(beat)*

*It was he who initiated the all party committee to make an impartial assessment of the impact immigration has on the country...Having said that --*

*She halts - paralysed in uncertainty -*

97 INT.(B.I.S.)- SEC. STATE OFFICE - VICTORIA ST. NIGHT 97

Bruce fingers steepled, watching Freya on the TELEVISION in his office - Marcus is there also -

98 INT. LIVING ROOM - HOYNES HOME - NIGHT 98

- Aiden and Joe, also fixed on the TELEVISION image of Freya -

99 INT. QUESTION TIME LOCATION/STUDIO - NORWICH - NIGHT 99

Freya, still paralysed in uncertainty - HER POV of the AUDIENCE expectantly fixed on her - she musters resolve -

FREYA (TV)

*Having said that ... Ordinary working people - and indeed those not in work - are understandably concerned about the pressure immigration places on housing, hospitals and other public services. -*

The AUDIENCE clap - Aiden, alarm percolating - Joe flicks him a look -

FREYA (TV) (cont'd)

*...And the idea that the Prime Minister's initiative for a moratorium on immigration was a merely cynical vote catching exercise is completely untrue. It's a long overdue response to the very real anxiety the majority of people in the country feel about the whole issue of immigration -*

Aiden stricken - Joe, foreboding there again -

100      **INT. WORKS AND PENSIONS OUTER OFFICE - LONDON - NIGHT**      100

Danny and Leo fixed on the TELEVISION - other DWP STAFF raggedly grouped around them -

DIMBLEBY (TV)

*One of his cabinet colleagues called your husbands resignation a cynical bid for the leadership, do you agree with that?*

101      **INT. LIVING ROOM - HOYNES HOME - NIGHT**      101

Aiden, dazedly gazing at the television - Joe beside him -

FREYA (TV)

*As I say, immigration is something he always felt - feels - extremely strongly about -*

DIMBLEBY (TV)

*- So we can take from that you will be supporting his stand on it ...?*

*Freya, in another void of hesitation -*

CUT TO SEE - Bruce- Leo and Danny tensely watching in their respective locations-

CUT BACK TO  
AIDEN -

*DIMBLEBY (cont'd)*  
*I must press you for an answer,*  
*Minister -*

*She, mustering resolve -*

*FREYA (TV)*  
*Because you don't agree with*  
*someone, it doesn't mean you don't*  
*respect their right to an opinion*  
*does it?*

*DIMBLEBY (TV)*  
*- We'll take that as a "no" then.*

Guffaws and laughter greets this. Aiden, the GLASS of RED WINE he's gripping shatters in his hand -

CUT TO - blood, dripping on the carpet -

102

**INT. KITCHEN - HOYNES HOME - CARLINGWORTH - NIGHT**

102

Joe and Aiden by the sink, A FIRST AID BOX there. Joe is wrapping a GAUZE and LINT BANDAGE round Aiden's cut hand. He glances at his son, trying to assess his mood.

JOE  
By rights a doctor should check it.  
You might need stitches.

Aiden doesn't respond. The BANDAGING is complete now. Joe stows the FIRST AID BOX away.

AIDEN  
Best leave me to my own devices,  
Dad.

A beat.

JOE  
I can't, not like this.

Aiden musters a smile -

AIDEN  
It's politics. The survival of the  
unfittest. She did what she had to  
do.  
(then)  
Get on home, Dad. I'm good,  
really.

Joe, unconvinced. Aiden starts to load the DISHWASHER. Joe watches him a moment, reluctantly scoops up his coat.

JOE  
I'll call by tomorrow.

Aiden doesn't respond, intent on the business with the dishes. Joe exits.

O.S. the sound of the FRONT DOOR closing. Aiden straightens up, stands motionlessly, his back to us.

103 **INT. NOAH'S BEDROOM - HOYNES HOME - CARLINGWORTH - NIGHT** 103

Noah, jerking and restless in sleep, he's still wearing his GLASSES.

Aiden stands gazing down at him, fighting a welter of emotion, the BANDAGE wrapped round his hand. He reaches, carefully removes the boy's glasses, places them on the bedtable.

The WINDOW is ajar. He crosses to close it, stands gazing out at the darkness.

His face, reflected in the blackened window; his eyes, glistening with unshed tears -

104 **EXT. MINISTERIAL CAR - HOYNES HOME - CARLINGWORTH - NIGHT** 104

The MINISTERIAL CAR gliding to a halt outside the HOUSE -

105 **INT. MINISTERIAL CAR - HOYNES HOME - CARLINGWORTH - NIGHT** 105

Freya in the rear, infused in trepidation.

Kenny, watching her in the rear view mirror. She looks through the window at the house much as one might an adversary. She gathers resources, reaches for her RED BOXES.

FREYA  
Goodnight, Kenny.

KENNY  
'Night, Minister.

She alights from the CAR. He watches as she approaches the house - his expression indecipherable.

106 **INT. HALL - HOYNES HOME - CARLINGWORTH NIGHT** 106

Pools of shadow; the sound of a key in the door. Freya enters. She sets down THE RED BOXES, stands listening.

The HOUSE is silent. She, a temporary reprieve is better than nothing.

She tugs off her COAT, slings it over the BANISTERS, crosses to the kitchen -

