

THE GOOD LISTENER - EPISODE 4: PRIVATE LIVES

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SCENE 1

(Interior. Sid with Gerry)

SOUND: TICKING CLOCK

GERRY

You've been avoiding me. Why?

SID

No, you've got it wrong.

GERRY

You are a junior analyst now. You are required to attend these employee assistance sessions.

SID

It's been hectic.

GERRY

We are GCHQ. It is always 'hectic'. These sessions can only be of use if you are specific.

SID

Right. Well. We're under attack. A cyber attack.

GERRY

That happens all the time.

SID

This is different. Super sophisticated code. Could do real damage to the national grid.

GERRY

You sound frustrated.

SID

I don't think our eye is on the ball.

GERRY

Why is that?

SID

Because of the G20. Because we're spying on the G20 delegates.

GERRY

How do you feel about that?

SID

Now you sound like a real shrink.

GERRY

What I want to know is are you feeling disillusioned with GCHQ.

SID

No, not at all.

GERRY

Perhaps spying on the delegates is weighing on your conscience.

SID

Only bad people have things to hide.

GERRY

That sounds like the sort of line you think you ought to say at GCHQ rather than what you really think.

SID

Why do you think I'm lying?

GERRY

Perhaps because you haven't talked about what's really on your mind.

SID

And that would be?

GERRY

Your upcoming marriage.

SID

How do you know about that? Am I being monitored?

GERRY

Now why would you think that?

(Pause)

GERRY (CONT'D)

You do know that it takes up to 9 months for your fiancée to be vetted.

SID

I passed Khadija's details to Alison.

GERRY

Your boss.

SID

Yes.

GERRY

Does your fiancée know about your work?

SID

She knows I work for GCHQ. That's not something you can really hide in Cheltenham.

GERRY

And the specifics?

SID
No.

GERRY
She must have asked you for some details.

SID
Well, yes. I mean, naturally. People are curious about what we do here.

GERRY
So do you lie to her?

SID
That's a bit of a personal question.

GERRY
Curious that you would see it that way. I am not asking whether you lie to her about personal matters. That, indeed is your business. But whether you lie about the nature of your work.

SID
I try not to lie.

GERRY
So you divulge secrets?

SID
I didn't say that. All I meant...look, these questions

GERRY
Are necessary.

SID
I get it. I'm careful about what I say. And anyway Khadija is smart.

GERRY
Go on.

SID
Most of the time we don't talk about work but yea sometimes she might crack a joke about it.

GERRY
A joke.

SID
Like she'd ask me if I could drone strike her uncle Rafiq because he voted UKIP.

GERRY
Do you use the staff prayer room?

SID
Excuse me?

GERRY
How rigorously do you practice your faith?

SID
Sorry, what does this have to do with my work?

GERRY
Just finding out how you are settling in.

SID
I pray at home.

GERRY
Is it because you're afraid of your colleagues' reaction if they see you praying?

SID
I just don't have the time at work.

(Pause)

GERRY
How does your community feel about your line of work?

SID
What are you implying?

GERRY
Considering how much of our focus is on the Muslim world, there could be, indeed I would go as far as to say there must be, the feeling amongst your family and friends that you are being disloyal to your community by working here.

SID
I can't believe you just said that.

GERRY
I'm just trying to ascertain what stresses you are under.

SID
I'm British/

GERRY
It's my job/

SID
You do understand that, right?/

GERRY
I wasn't implying/

SID
I think we are done here.

GERRY
If you terminate our session prematurely I'm obliged to pass that on.

SID
 Look I need to go and deal with the cyber attack. I don't think you understand the danger it poses.

GERRY
 It's your choice.

SCENE 2

(GCHQ lobby)

SOUND: CLIVE STOPS JACQUI

CLIVE
 Morning Jacqui.

JACQUI
 Hello Clive.

CLIVE
 May I introduce you to/

KATIE
 Katie Chapman. Europa news.

JACQUI
 I can read your badge.

KATIE
 Right. Sorry. I guess it's your job to be observant.

CLIVE
 Well, shall I leave you to it?

JACQUI
 I can take over from here.

CLIVE
 I'll see you later Katie.

SOUND: CLIVE WALKS OFF

KATIE
 It's an amazing building.

JACQUI
 I'm afraid you've caught me on a rather hectic day so I won't be able to accompany you all the time. Though someone will obviously.

KATIE
 May I ask what you are working on.

JACQUI
 You may.

(pause)

KATIE

But you won't tell me.

JACQUI

It's classified. So what's the focus of your visit?

KATIE

The Snooper's charter.

JACQUI

The fact that that's what you're calling the Investigatory Power's Bill already tells me what angle you'll be taking.

KATIE

Should we not be worried about legitimizing mass surveillance?

JACQUI

We still need warrants to pursue suspects.

KATIE

The bill doesn't even mention suspects. You can go after anyone.

JACQUI

If there is a deficiency in the bill, I'm sure parliament won't pass it and it would have to be redrafted.

KATIE

Let's hope you're right.

JACQUI

Europa news, I heard rumours you were about to go under.

KATIE

We're under threat but talk of our demise is much exaggerated.

JACQUI

Shall we start with a tour of the building?

KATIE

Yes, sure. Thanks.

JACQUI

This way.

SCENE 2.5

(Alison's office)

SOUND: PHONE RINGS. ALISON PICKS IT UP.

ALISON

Alison Granville.

HOME SECRETARY

Is this a bad time Alison?

ALISON

Home secretary.

HOME SECRETARY

I know I usually give you a heads up before I call..

ALISON

Anything the matter?

HOME SECRETARY

The cyber attack.

ALISON

We have it under control.

HOME SECRETARY

Is it anything to do with the G20?

ALISON

We have no evidence of that.

HOME SECRETARY

Do you think it could be someone trying to intercept our intercepts?

ALISON

You mean to let the public know we are monitoring the summit?

HOME SECRETARY

That's old news. What I am more concerned about is some revelation that could jeopardise the trade agreements we are trying to pursue.

ALISON

As far as we can discern the attack has nothing to do with the G20.

HOME SECRETARY

I read the briefing. This is all happening at a delicate time you'll appreciate.

ALISON

We will do everything in our power to make sure the summit is a success.

HOME SECRETARY

I wasn't talking just about the G20.

ALISON

Oh.

HOME SECRETARY

We have to get the Investigatory Powers bill through parliament this time.

ALISON

That is in our interest too.

HOME SECRETARY

The PM is very keen. The bill is her signature tune if you like. Getting it through would be a personal victory. For her and for me.

ALISON

Rest assure home secretary there will be no hiccup from our end.

HOME SECRETARY

Do you have time for a quick story, Alison?

ALISON

Er..sure/

HOME SECRETARY

After I got my first job in government, my boss at the time, the late Sir John Kobs, took me into his office. He served tea, asked how I was settling in then leaned across the desk and said "if I go down, you go down with me".

(pause, a light laugh)

It was a splendid bit of amateur theatrics. I've never forgotten it. Good. Well, I'm glad we've had this catch up. Oh one last thing, did you consider my suggestion?

ALISON

(digesting the story)

What?

HOME SECRETARY

About the press?

ALISON

Yes. In fact I believe a reporter from Europa news is visiting us today.

HOME SECRETARY

It's good to feed the dogs every now and then. Stops them biting.

ALISON

Quite.

HOME SECRETARY

Keep me posted.

ALISON

I will.

SCENE 3

(GCHQ Cafe)

STEVE
Ah, hello Henry!

HENRY
Steve.

STEVE
Sit down. Have breakfast.

HENRY
It seems you want me dead.

STEVE
What?

HENRY
I told you before. I can't have a fry up. The salt.

STEVE
I forgot.

HENRY
You've taken a shine to our full English.

STEVE
Can't get enough.

HENRY
Keep it up and the NSA will have to book you two seats on the way back to Maryland.

STEVE
Why is it that you don't like me Henry?

HENRY
It's nothing personal.

STEVE
It's not?

HENRY
I dislike all xenophobes. That's all.

STEVE
Xenophobe! You're unbelievable.

HENRY
How else can I describe your attitude to Saddiq.

STEVE
You know how many black people I have working for me?

HENRY
That's original. I thought you were going to talk about how many black friends you have.

STEVE

Don't get all high and mighty. I don't see that many black or brown faces around GCHQ.

HENRY

Which is precisely why I resent you picking on Saddiq.

STEVE

You're the racist, Henry. You think ISIS is a bunch of towel heads running around the desert.

HENRY

I didn't (say that!)-

STEVE

They're organized. They're ruthless. They're cunning. You think it's beyond them to infiltrate this place?

HENRY

Sid has been vetted. Thoroughly.

STEVE

My money is on them being behind the APT cyber attack on the national grid. Cyber Jihad, that's the real threat.

HENRY

Why are you here Steve?

STEVE

I told you I'm on secondment.

HENRY

What does that really mean.

STEVE

Means I'm here to watch and learn.

HENRY

Your penchant for empty phrases is rather remarkable.

STEVE

Not as remarkable as your talent for moral indignation.

SCENE 4

(Gents)

SOUND: SID PUTTING A PHONE TOGETHER. CLICKS. SNAPS.

SOUND: FOOTSTEPS APPROACHING

SID

O bollocks.

SOUND: DOOR OPEN.

Hey, dude. ETHAN

Hi Ethan. SID

What's wrong? You look like you've seen a ghost. ETHAN

No, nothing. SID

No pun intended. I know you've got a thing for ghosts. Still hunting for them? ETHAN

I don't really have the time for that right now. SID

Course. The virus. ETHAN

Yeah. SID

Sorry mind if I borrow the soap? This one is out.

Sure, go ahead. SID

SOUND: WATER. HAND WASHING.

So I hear you're getting hitched. ETHAN

News travels fast. SID

I sometime think your people have it right. ETHAN

My people? SID

Arranged marriages and all that. I'm stuck in Tinder purgatory. ETHAN

Right. SID

ETHAN

I thought by now they'd come up with the perfect algorithm. One that can really tap into who you are, what you want and match you up perfectly with someone else.

SID

It's not like that though.

ETHAN

You're also on the Tinder?

SID

Well not now obviously.

ETHAN

Aha.

SID

Deleted my account.

ETHAN

Good for you. I just don't think the best minds work in that field. Dating apps. Like if they put our guys on it, we'd code it to perfection.

SID

You reckon.

ETHAN

Hell yes. It's always the same for me. At the start of the date, I'm optimistic. But twenty minutes in, I'm checking out another profile. And I start comparing the one across the table against the one on the phone. Sorry am I holding you up?

SID

No, no.

ETHAN

You want the soap?

SID

Yeah, actually.

ETHAN

Here.

SID

Thanks.

ETHAN

Are you alright, dude?

SID

Sure.

ETHAN

It's just when I came in, I thought you were on your way out.

SID

No, not really.

ETHAN

I thought like you'd washed and finished. Were you just staring at the mirror?

SID

Er, maybe. Lots on my mind.

ETHAN

You and Nnggg David are on the virus now.

SID

Don't.

ETHAN

What?

SID

David is a mate.

ETHAN

Is he?

SID

Well...even if he isn't.

ETHAN

I didn't appreciate being taken off the case.

SID

That wasn't up to me.

ETHAN

I alerted you to the virus.

SID

I know that.

ETHAN

So it should've been you and me working on it.

SID

Like I said, it wasn't up to me.

ETHAN

Right.

SID

And besides David has a hell of a lot of experience.

ETHAN

And I don't?

SID
I'm not saying that.

ETHAN
It's political correctness gone mad.

SID
What?

ETHAN
Have you even figured out where the virus comes from?

SID
We have a hunch.

ETHAN
You could set up a honey pot.

SID
Actually Dave and I are already thinking about that.

Beat.

ETHAN
Listen, I'm sorry. What I just said. Political correctness.
Yea, I don't know why I said that.

SID
You're angry.

ETHAN
No. Well..yes, a bit.

SID
You told me about the virus. And now it's this big deal. And
you feel left out. But like I said.

ETHAN
It wasn't your decision.

SID
It really wasn't.

ETHAN
I was out of order.

SID
Don't worry about it.

ETHAN
What I said, it's not what I really think.

SID
Sure.

ETHAN
Good. Right. Listen, do you want to grab a coffee?

SID
Had one already. Thanks.

ETHAN
Right. Coolio. Catch you later.

SID
Later.

ETHAN
You really need some fresh air cause you don't look good, dude.

SID
Noted.

ETHAN
Good.

SOUND: DOOR OPENING.

Sid breathes a sigh of relief.

SOUND: SID CONTINUES PUTTING THE PHONE TOGETHER.

SOUND: TAPPING ON BLUEBERRY KEYS.

SCENE 5

(GCHQ cafe)

STEVE
It's in the benefit of your country and mine to know what the G20 is thinking.

HENRY
Snooping on allies.

STEVE
You know the old saying, Henry. keep your enemies close and your friends closer.

HENRY
Sun Tzu. Well then you must also know the saying 'gentlemen do not read each other's mail'.

STEVE
Said by some pompous Brit, I bet.

HENRY
Henry Stimson. Secretary of State. Very much an American, I'm afraid.

STEVE

You're in the wrong line of work, Henry if you believe we shouldn't read other people's mail. Isn't that what you do all day long at GCHQ?

HENRY

I don't have a problem with spying on suspects. But G20 delegates-

STEVE

I bet you were a commie when you were young.

HENRY

What gives you that idea?

STEVE

The idealist turned spy. I've seen it before.

HENRY

Have you now.

(enter Sid)

HENRY (CONT'D)

Ah Sid.

SID

Alright.

HENRY

What's wrong. You seem troubled.

SID

Just had my first session with Gerry.

HENRY

I take it you were not thrilled.

SID

He does dig into your private life, doesn't he.

STEVE

Shouldn't be a problem if you've got nothing to hide.

SOUND: HENRY'S TINNITUS PLAYS UP

SID

Are you alright Henry.

HENRY

It's the tinnitus.

SID

You're not about to faint again.

HENRY

I'm fine.

STEVE
Only in Britain they'd employ a deaf spy.

HENRY
I'm not...how...does everyone know?

SID
It's been talked about.

HENRY
Can't anyone keep a secret in this place?

SID
Have you considered a hearing aid?

HENRY
I'm not ready to surrender.

SCENE 6

(Briefing room)

ALISON
Hello everyone. We are joined today by Katie Chapman from Europa news.

HENRY
That's...er..interesting.

ALISON
This is Henry.

KATIE
Hello.

ALISON
David.

DAVID
Nngg.

KATIE
Oh.

ALISON
Sid.

SID
Hi there.

ALISON
Steve.

STEVE
Nice to meet you Katie.

KATIE
You must be with-

ALISON
Yes, Steve is NSA.

STEVE
Just visiting.

ALISON
And you know Jacqui of course. We have our morning briefings in this room. Agents from all over the world are patched through on these monitors.

KATIE
Syria?

ALISON
Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Libya, Afghanistan, Pakistan.

STEVE
Glad to see the British empire is alive and kicking.

HENRY
Not quite.

STEVE
I'm just kidding.

KATIE
How very exciting. May I ask what today's briefing is about?

ALISON
I'm afraid that is classified. In fact as we are about to start.

JACQUI
Clive will escort you now

KATIE
Right.

SOUND: KATIE AND JACQUI EXIT THE ROOM

CLIVE
Shall we visit the museum?

JACQUI
Clive is our archivist.

KATIE
I know. Can't you give me a hint what the briefing is about?

JACQUI
The museum has an enigma machine in prime condition.

KATIE

This is beginning to get frustrating.

JACQUI

I'll join you later when I have a sec.

SOUND: JACQUI ENTERS THE BRIEFING ROOM. THERE IS A CACOPHONY OF SOUND AS THEY ALL DISCUSS KATIE

HENRY

Journalist here. What's next?

SID

A GCHQ TV channel broadcasting all our meetings.

JACQUI

That's just stupid.

DAVID

Ngg. Our software featured on BBC Click.

SID

That'd be wicked! I love that program.

ALISON

Settle down.

STEVE

Journalists are a definite no no at NSA.

ALISON

I was asked to do it by the home secretary.

HENRY

What for?

ALISON

He thought that with the Investigatory Power's Bill going through parliament, it would help if we won the public's trust.

HENRY

So Katie is part of a PR stunt?

ALISON

I wouldn't put it that way. As you well know Henry we have an active Press and Public Affairs Office. They arranged Katie's visit. Besides, I would've thought you approve of the democratic gesture.

HENRY

'Gesture' is a very apt word in this context.

ALISON

We best press on. The APT cyber attack on the national grid. Where are we on this?

HENRY

It's possible the Chinese are behind it.

JACQUI

What's the evidence?

HENRY

It was Sid and David's finding so it's best if they explain.

SID

The Shaytan virus is just incredible.

STEVE

Could we please find another name for it.

DAVID

We found strange symbols.

SID

Hexagrams.

JACQUI

What's a hexagram?

SID

Right, well, the thing is. It's a figure made up of six horizontal lines. Broken or unbroken. Ying or yang. Generally hexagrams pair with their upside-down equivalents, although in eight cases hexagrams are paired with their inversion.

ALISON

This is clear as the air in London.

HENRY

They are Chinese symbols from a divination text called the I ching.

STEVE

So you're saying the Chinese are behind the virus?

HENRY

We don't have conclusive proof. Not yet.

ALISON

What can the virus do?

HENRY

David.

DAVID

Ngg. It's just sitting and watching. But it can mutate.

SID

That makes it very dangerous.

ALISON

And we're sure of its target.

DAVID

Nng power stations.

ALISON

Jacqui can you brief us on what a power outage would entail.

SOUND: PAPER SHUFFLING

JACQUI

Traffic lights. That's the first noticeable loss. Chaos on the roads. Gridlock in few hours.

HENRY

What about public transport?

JACQUI

No train signals.

STEVE

That's in the first day?

JACQUI

First few hours. If the outage lasts more than a day, things would get much worse very quickly.

ALISON

Go on.

JACQUI

Landlines down.

ALISON

That will affect the elderly.

JACQUI

And other vulnerable people.

SID

What about mobiles?

JACQUI

They'll work but no data. So Facebook, twitter, snapchat all gone.

HENRY

A silverlining.

JACQUI

For Neanderthals.

HENRY

Must you always be antagonistic?

JACQUI

Next you'll say 'people might rediscover the art of conversation'.

HENRY
Wouldn't that be good for us?

ALISON
What else, Jacqui?

JACQUI
Most supermarkets have less than 24 hours back up.

HENRY
If the supermarkets go then/

JACQUI
Looting, yes. Looting is inevitable.

SID
Like the London riots.

STEVE
Or Baghdad.

HENRY
What about hospitals?

JACQUI
Their back up generators would last longer. They would be fine for a few days.

STEVE
Does Britain have a plan to deal with this?

SID
NEPF, right?

JACQUI
Yes, the National Emergency Plan for Fuel.

SID
Fuel trucks would be directed to the places that need it most. Hospitals, fire departments.

HENRY
But it's never been tested.

ALISON
And hopefully never will. What can we do to stop the virus. David?

DAVID
Nggg. Clone the system. Fool the virus so it attacks it.

SID
It's called the honey pot.

STEVE
Is that like the honey trap?

HENRY

I thought the honey trap was when a beautiful woman seduces a man so he could reveal state secrets.

SID

Sounds very James Bond.

JACQUI

And a bit sexist Henry. It could happen the other way round.

HENRY

But it almost never does, Jacqui.

JACQUI

Is it one of your fantasies then?

ALISON

Enough children.

SID

The honey pot is a bit like the honey trap but with computer viruses.

ALISON

How does this honey whatever work? How does it get rid of the virus?

DAVID

Ngg. We can learn more about the virus on the clone system, try to hack back into the computer where it originated. Once we're in. It's check mate.

ALISON

OK, you best get on with it. And keep talking. We will only beat this attack if we are all up to date on each other's activities. As soon as you find out anything new, no matter how seemingly insignificant, pass it on.

DAVID

Ngg.

SID

On it.

ALISON

Henry, Jacqui. My office in twenty.

SOUND: PEOPLE SHUFFLE OUT OF THE ROOM.

SCENE 7

(continues)

STEVE

Hey Jacqui.

Steve. JACQUI

You've got a moment. STEVE

Yeah sure. Anything wrong? JACQUI

Henry. STEVE

Ha. I guessed you wanted to talk about him. JACQUI

He's just... STEVE

Infuriating? JACQUI

I think him and I got off to a bad start. STEVE

You didn't do anything wrong. He started it by asking you to sign his arse. JACQUI

He resents me being here. STEVE

I wouldn't go that far. JACQUI

I don't think he appreciates how things have changed. STEVE

Changed how? JACQUI

Times are uncertain and the NSA is hedging its bets. STEVE

What does that mean? JACQUI

I might be deployed to France soon. STEVE

Sorry to hear that. JACQUI

It's not for sure. STEVE

I -I mean we - liked having you around. JACQUI

STEVE

It would be a damn shame if I am the last NSA agent to come here.

JACQUI

That's very unlikely, isn't it?

STEVE

OK, maybe I'm exaggerating.

JACQUI

Just a tad.

STEVE

Yeah but who the hell knows what's gonna happen further down the line.

JACQUI

Isn't this something you should be telling to Alison?

STEVE

Look. On paper nothing has changed.

JACQUI

That's my understanding. Our security arrangement with the NSA is still in place.

STEVE

But like I said, we live in uncertain times.

JACQUI

Our job is to make them more certain. For Britain and for America.

STEVE

See that's what I like about you. You see things the way I do.

JACQUI

Glad to hear it.

STEVE

Not like Henry who is one of those guys that's anti-American by instinct.

JACQUI

We'd be here all day if we started listing all the things Henry feels anti- towards.

STEVE

He doesn't appreciate what it would mean to lose America as a friend.

JACQUI

That surely is not going to happen.

STEVE

The ground is shifting Jacqui. There is now a 'British question' that just wasn't there before. Some people in Washington are wondering whether Britain is losing value as a strategic partner. I'd hate for our two countries to drift apart.

JAQUI

On matters of security, we are surely united. After all we face similar threats.

STEVE

I couldn't agree more. Which is why I have a proposal for you Jacqui.

JAQUI

I'm all ears.

STEVE

Would you consider a secondment at the NSA?

JAQUI

Wow, I didn't expect that.

STEVE

I've been watching you and I like what I see.

JAQUI

I'm flattered.

STEVE

You've got drive, ambition. And I think you understand how in an uncertain world, it's vital for our two countries to stay connected.

JAQUI

I couldn't agree more.

STEVE

It would give you a chance to see first hand how we do things at the NSA. And when you come back, you'll have more leverage with Alison.

JAQUI

Because...

STEVE

Because you would have been to the centre of power.

JAQUI

It's a tempting offer.

STEVE

Will you take it?

JAQUI

Let me sleep on it.

STEVE

I'd hate for a French or German agent to get your place.

JAQUI

It's a big decision. I need to talk it over.

STEVE

With your boyfriend?

JAQUI

With my family. My mum, actually. She lives on her own.

STEVE

So no boyfriend?

JAQUI

We broke up. Two months ago.

STEVE

Sorry to hear it. Breakups are not easy. I'm still reeling from my divorce.

JAQUI

I wouldn't have guessed.

STEVE

No?

JAQUI

STEVE

I was coasting along in my marriage, not paying attention to all the tension bubbling underneath the surface. Till one day. Boom!

JAQUI

You've just described my relationship.

STEVE

Happens not just between people, but countries also. Which is why I think it's vital for us to keep communicating. Will you think hard about my offer?

JAQUI

I will, Steve.

STEVE

Listen, I'd be happy to answer any questions you have about Maryland over a drink.

(pause)

Or maybe you're not free.

JACQUI

No, no...I'd like that. Sorry, I was just...processing.

STEVE

It would be so good to have you.

JAQUI

Excuse me?

STEVE

To have you over at the NSA.

JAQUI

Right, of course. I better get to that meeting with Alison.

STEVE

You do that.

SCENE 8

(GCHQ museum)

CLIVE

So here we are. The GCHQ museum.

KATIE

I imagined it would be bigger.

CLIVE

We are not exactly open to the public.

KATIE

Of course.

CLIVE

And anyway people would rather visit Bletchley Park.

KATIE

Not me. I'm far more fascinated by GCHQ.

CLIVE

How did you get access?

KATIE

Well I've been trying for months with no luck. But then last week I thought I'd try again and this time round I found, your press office to be very accommodating.

CLIVE

Good. I'm in favour of more transparency. Within reason of course. Now here we have the crown jewel of the museum.

KATIE

The enigma machine.

CLIVE

This one was recovered from Spain, not Germany.

KATIE

How come?

CLIVE

General Franco wanted to secure communications at the start of the Spanish civil war. And Germany obliged by sending him ten of these machine.

KATIE

(sarcastically)

Always nice to have fascists banding together.

CLIVE

To be fair, Franco was a nationalist.

KATIE

So more in the mould of Le Pen, Geert Wilders and Farage?

CLIVE

I think that's an inaccurate and dare I say somewhat hysterical comparison.

KATIE

I'm not going to argue with the GCHQ archivist. May I ask you something Clive, I hope you won't think me impertinent.

CLIVE

I'll be happy to answer if I can.

KATIE

Does it get frustrating to be dealing with the past in a place that is so concerned with the present and the future?

CLIVE

I was an analyst for many years.

KATIE

I knew it!

CLIVE

You did.

KATIE

There is something of the spy about you.

CLIVE

Is that so.

KATIE

A certain old school charm. In fact I'm willing to bet you are better informed than most of the young guns here.

CLIVE

A lot of them fall on the autistic end of the spectrum, I'm afraid.

KATIE

Incredibly smart but not morally aware.

CLIVE

That's perhaps putting it a little too simplistically.

KATIE

You are stickler for accuracy.

CLIVE

That's vital in our line of work.

KATIE

You must have your ears to the ground.

CLIVE

I try to stay abreast of things.

KATIE

Would you agree that too much secrecy can be detrimental to GCHQ?

CLIVE

Secrecy is a must if we are to be effective.

KATIE

But if the public doesn't know about the successes you have achieved, they are liable to question your entire raison d'etre.

CLIVE

I agree. This is particularly important after high profile cases which often times the public are entirely unaware is down to the intelligence we painstakingly gather.

KATIE

High profile...like that dramatic arrest of Suhail Sarwar on the DLR the other day?

CLIVE

I can't comment on operational matters.

KATIE

The man was battle hardened in Syria so clearly a potential high threat. Surely it is the sort of operation that GCHQ would be involved with?

CLIVE

It's not out of the question. But please don't quote me on that.

KATIE

Don't worry, it's off the record.

SCENE 9

(Alison's Office)

ALISON

I think I know why the Chinese are doing this.

HENRY

We musn't jump to conclusions

JACQUI

The code was Chinese, you said so Henry.

HENRY

No Jacqui, what I said is that there are Chinese symbols in the code.

ALISON

There's a Chinese firm investing in the nuclear power station that the French are building in Somerset. But the deal has gone on hold. And now we have this cyber attack.

HENRY

I don't follow.

ALISON

What if the Chinese want to show that our infrastructure security can be compromised. This could force Britain to drive the price of the deal down.

HENRY

It's possible, I suppose.

ALISON

Jacqui could we eavesdrop on the G20 Chinese delegates?

HENRY

Is this really wise?

ALISON

Jacqui?

JACQUI

There is a black hole in the digital ant farm I made as far as the Chinese are concerned. Their phones are very secure and hard to hack into. But there is one delegate.

SOUND: PAPER SHUFFLING

JACQUI (CONT'D)

His name is Zhao Changhai. He's a businessman turned government adviser, used the wifi at city airport. We hacked his phone.

HENRY

If this gets out it could be embarrassing. Might even jeopardize the nuclear plant deal.

ALISON

Right now that's a risk I'm prepared to take. I'll get you the warrant you need Jacqui.

SCENE 10

(GCHQ street)

SOUND: THE HUM OF CONVERSATION. JACQUI APPROACHES KATIE

JACQUI
Would you be able to take over again in half an hour?

CLIVE
Certainly.

JACQUI
Thank you Clive.

SOUND: CLIVE WALKS OFF

JACQUI (CONT'D)
How was the museum?

KATIE
Underwhelming.

JACQUI
Oh.

KATIE
I find our obsession with the second world war verging on the mawkish.

JACQUI
Should we not celebrate the work of the men and women who fought for the freedom we enjoy?

KATIE
Maybe what we need in this time of uncertainty is a museum dedicated to how peace was secured after the war. Anyway I didn't come here to wallow in the past.

JACQUI
What did you come for then?

KATIE
To find out about the here and now. I think it would be good for people to know about some of your recent successes.

JACQUI
Such as...

KATIE
The arrest of Suhail Sarwar. GCHQ was behind it, I take.

JACQUI
I couldn't possibly comment.

KATIE
That's a yes then. What kind of terror plot is he involved with? Was he the subject of this morning's briefing?

JACQUI
You are persistent. I'll give you that.

KATIE
And you are exasperating.

JACQUI
You're not the first to say that.

SCENE 11

(Counter-offensive coding room)

SOUND: HUBBUB OF TYPING

DAVID
The Unix clone system is up and running.

SID
You mean the honey pot.

DAVID
Nng..I hate honey. Allergic.

SID
That could not be more irrelevant right now.

DAVID
Nng..131, 137, 139, 149.

SID
Alright, alright, no need to bring out the primes. I'm sure honey allergy is one of medicine's most underrated illnesses.

DAVID
It is.

SID
OK. Fine. Now, did you manage to learn anything useful about the virus?

DAVID
I've set up packet capture to log incoming signals.

SID
Can we find out where it came from?

DAVID
Not yet. I'm trying to find a vulnerability in the C2 mechanism.

SID
How can that help?

DAVID
If I find the vulnerability I can hack back to the originating machine. But that will take time.

Anything else? SID

Nng...yes, here, these hexagrams. DAVID

Where? SID

These. They correspond to numbers 39, 32, 30 and 51. DAVID

What about them? SID

They keep repeating. Nng...but...but...not part of code. DAVID

So someone put them in there but they serve no function. SID

Nng. DAVID

The hexagrams also correspond to Chinese characters. SID

Nng.. DAVID

(keyboard clicking)

What are you doing? SID

Looking up the I Ching hexagrams. DAVID

Wicked! See I told you, each number corresponds to a character. And the characters are written out phonetically in English. Thank you Wikipedia. OK lets see.. SID

SOUND: RUSTLING OF PAPER. SID JOTS DOWN THE WORDS AS DAVID READS THEM OUT

39 is SID (CONT'D)

Yuan. DAVID

32 SID

Hang DAVID

30 SID

Li DAVID

51 SID

Zhen. DAVID

SID
So the full sentence is yuan hang li zhen. Now we have to find out what it means.

DAVID
Nng...Henry.

SID
Yes, Henry.

SCENE 12

(GCHQ Cafe. Sid approaches Henry who is eating)

SID
Hey Henry. How's the salad?

HENRY
How did kale become all the rage. It tastes like boiled paper.

SID
It's good for you. For your tinnitus.

HENRY
Could we have a moratorium on discussing my health?

SID
Sure, yes, sorry.

HENRY
Was there something you wanted Sid?

SID
I don't want to interrupt your lunch.

HENRY
Please do. It might help me forget the taste.

SID
There's a set of repeating hexagrams in the code. We worked out the corresponding characters. I was wondering if they mean anything. Here take a look.

SOUND: RUSTLING OF PAPER

HENRY
What did I tell you about writing things down.

SID
Oh, sorry.

HENRY
Sid, you have to learn.

SID
So sorry Henry.

HENRY
Memorize everything.

SID
Yes. You're right. You're right.

HENRY
So what's the phrase?

SID
Sorry I'll need to look at the paper.

HENRY
(sighs)
Go on then.

SID
Yuan hang li zhen.

HENRY
Did you ask one of our mandarin linguists?

SID
I thought I'd come to you first.

HENRY
I just started learning.

SID
So the phrase means nothing to you?

HENRY
No...Wait...actually, hang on.

SOUND: FLICKING THROUGH A BOOK

SID
What's the book?

HENRY
It's a translation of the I Ching. I thought it might be useful...because of the hexagrams....

SID
Anything?

HENRY
Ah, just as I thought. It's right at the beginning of the book.

SID
What does it mean?

HENRY
Originating and penetrating, advantageous and firm.

SID
I'm lost.

HENRY
I know, I don't understand it either...wait, there's a footnote. "indicates an an initial offering of further divining".

SID
Initial offering.

HENRY
That's what the footnote says.

SID
So there's more to come?

SOUND: SECURITY OFFICER APPROACHES. HE IS CARRYING A BEEPING HAND-HELD SCANNER

SECURITY OFFICER
Excuse me gents, we have reason to believe one of you is carrying a phone.

HENRY
We're in the middle of something.

SECURITY OFFICER
I'm going to have to ask you to empty your pockets.

HENRY
This is ridiculous.

SECURITY OFFICER
I'm just doing my job.

SOUND: HENRY EMPTIES HIS POCKETS

HENRY
There.

SECURITY OFFICER
And you too sir.

SID
 Sorry I think I need to use the gents quickly.

SECURITY OFFICER
 I'm afraid I can't let you do that. Please empty your pockets.

SID
 It's urgent.

SECURITY OFFICER
 Right. I'll have to pat you down.

SOUND: SECURITY OFFICER PATS DOWN SID

SECURITY OFFICER (CONT'D)
 What have we here.

HENRY
 Sid? Why do you have a phone on you?

SID
 It's not what it looks Henry.

SECURITY OFFICER
 You can explain it to your line manager. Please follow me.

HENRY
 What's going on Sid?

SECURITY OFFICER
 No talking. Follow me.

SOUND: SID AND SECURITY OFFICER WALK AWAY. STEVE COMES OVER

STEVE
 What's going on with the Muslim boy?

HENRY
 He brought in a phone.

STEVE
 Woha! Man, what did I tell you. I knew it.

HENRY
 I don't understand. Why would he do something so stupid.

STEVE
 What's that great word you Brits have? 'Dodgy'. Yeah, that's what he is.

SOUND: HENRY'S TINNITUS PLAYS UP

STEVE (CONT'D)
 Hey, you're OK?

HENRY
I just need to sit down for a minute.

SOUND: JACQUI COMES OVER

JACQUI
Henry. Steve. The situation room. Now.

SCENE 13

(Situation room)

ALISON
Jacqui has managed to track down Zhao Changhai. Jacqui.

JACQUI
He is expecting a guest shortly.

ALISON
Play the recording.

SOUND: JACQUI CLICKS A BUTTON

ZHAO
Hello? Irina?

IRINA
(Russian accent)
Mr. Zhao. How wonderful to hear your voice again.

ZHAO
I don't have a lot of time.

IRINA
The terms have changed.

ZHAO
We can accommodate you.

IRINA
I'll be there in half an hour.

SOUND: CLICK. RECORDING STOPS

HENRY
Is that it?

JACQUI
Afraid so.

HENRY
Not much to go on.

STEVE

It's very clear to me.

ALISON

Enlighten us.

STEVE

The Chinese are plotting with the Russians to slow down the British economy by delaying the nuclear plant deal.

ALISON

You know about the deal?

STEVE

Enemies close. Friends closer.

JACQUI

We've bugged his room so we can listen in.

HENRY

Do we have a warrant for this?

ALISON

Yes.

HENRY

That was quick.

ALISON

We are facing an emergency. The virus could compromise our power stations. We have to act decisively.

STEVE

I bet the russkies helped the Chinese to make the virus. They're balls deep into cyber warfare.

ALISON

Could we have less of the colourful language.

STEVE

Sorry.

HENRY

They're investing in cyber warfare because you are.

STEVE

Wouldn't you rather we're one step ahead of them?

JACQUI

Shush...Zhao is in the room.

SOUND: SOUND OF FOOTSTEPS ACROSS THE FLOOR

HENRY

This is live?

JACQUI
Yes.

ALISON
His guest should arrive any minute now.

SOUND: ICE CLINGING. DRINK POURED. ONE GLASS THEN ANOTHER.

JACQUI
Whiskey?

STEVE
Vodka, I bet.

ALISON
Two glasses.

HENRY
Must know his guest pretty well.

STEVE
They've been hatching this plan for a long time.

SOUND: KNOCK ON THE DOOR

ZHAO
Irina.

IRINA
Mr. Zhao. Good to see you.

ZHAO
Vodka?

STEVE
I was right.

JACQUI
Shush!

SOUND: ZHAO AND IRINA ARE SIPPING THEIR DRINKS

ZHAO
I don't have a lot of time. The British are being very difficult.

IRINA
I am sure you will get the better of them. You always do. On every trip.

ALISON
This confirms it!

HENRY
Do we have any files on this Irina?

JACQUI
The voice recognition software turned up nothing.

STEVE
Probably a new agent. Sounds young.

SOUND: RUSTLING OF CLOTHES BEING TAKEN OFF

ALISON
What's going on now?

STEVE
Can't we get vision?

JACQUI
Afraid not.

IRINA
On the bed, Mr. Zhao.

ZHAO
Yes Irina.

IRINA
I'm not Irina. Not in this room.

ZHAO
I mean yes mistress.

HENRY
Mistress?

SOUND: WHIPPING. ZHAO MOANS (CONTINUES THROUGH SCENE)

ZHAO
Hit me mistress! Hit me harder!

ALISON
Oh dear.

IRINA
You've been a bad boy Mr. Zhao, haven't you?

ZHAO
A very very bad boy.

HENRY
We've turned into bloody voyeurs, listening to people's private perversions.

IRINA
Keep your bottom up!

ZHAO
Yes mistress.

JACQUI
I'll turn it off.

STEVE
No wait. He might just confess something.

HENRY
Beyond being a 'bad boy'? I don't think so.

STEVE
We could use this against him. Get him to confess some real secrets.

ALISON
We are not in the business of blackmail.

IRINA
(cockney accent)
Bloody hell. Did you just fart?

ZHAO
Accent. Accent.

JACQUI
She's not even Russian!

HENRY
This gets better and better.

IRINA
I've got to crack a window open.

ZHAO
Accent!

IRINA
Hang on love.

SOUND: OPENS A WINDOW

IRINA (CONT'D)
That's better.

ZHAO
Accent!

IRINA
I need a sec to get back in character.
(Russian accent)
You've been a very filthy boy, Mr. Zhao.

SOUND: WHIPPING RESUMES.

JACQUI
I'm turning it off.

HENRY
Please.

STEVE
Wait..what if she's MI6.

ALISON
Highly unlikely.

STEVE
It happens all the time with us. The CIA going after our targets.

HENRY
Turn it off please.

STEVE
He could reveal something. Ali?

ALISON
I'm not sure what more we can learn from this, Steve.

STEVE
We've got the warrant. It's all legal.

HENRY
Are you getting off on this?

JACQUI
I'm with Henry.

SOUND: JACQUI TURNS OFF THE SURVEILLANCE. QUIET

HENRY
This is why the public doesn't trust us.

STEVE
You're wrong, Henry.

HENRY
It's because we allow our surveillance to get out of hand.

STEVE
We need more surveillance, not less.

HENRY
That's precisely how the Stasi thought.

STEVE
It's the only way we can tell the innocent from the guilty.

HENRY
Like we did just now?

JACQUI
Zhao is our only lead.

STEVE

We should keep at him.

HENRY

That's how you create a docile, frightened citizen.

JACQUI

Come on Henry!

ALISON

This is not the time for political grandstanding.

STEVE

What we're doing here is targeted.

ALISON

And let's not forget we are facing a national emergency.

HENRY

Listening to a G20 delegate getting his arse whipped surely calls our judgment into question.

STEVE

That's rich coming from you.

HENRY

What's that supposed to mean?

STEVE

You're the king of lousy judgments.

HENRY

Because I refuse to listen in on people's private lives?

STEVE

Because you wanted the Muslim kid to be in our meetings when he didn't have the clearance. And you called me a xenophobe cause I brought it up. Except who was right about that, Henry? Your boy smuggled in a phone.

JACQUI

Sid did that?!

STEVE

You've got to ask yourself why?

HENRY

I think this meeting is over.

ALISON

Henry!

(Henry exits)

SCENE 14

(Alison's Office. Alison comes in, Sid is waiting.
She closes the door)

SID

This feels like an after school detention.

ALISON

I'm afraid it's more serious than that.

SID

But Alison, I've figured something out about the code. I need to tell David. I've been waiting here for ages.

ALISON

There was a sensitive matter concerning a G20 delegate I had to deal with. I'm not going to apologize for making you wait. Now first thing I need to know is how did you smuggle the phone in.

SID

Look this is all very silly. I was texting this-

ALISON

What I need to know is the nature of the security breach. So I'll ask again. How did you get the phone past security?

SID

I took it apart....then I put it back again once I was in.

ALISON

And no one saw you?

SID

I did it in the gents.

ALISON

What were you hoping to record with the phone?

SID

Record? You've got the wrong end of the stick.

ALISON

Then who did you call?

SID

Look, I'm not a double agent if that's what you think.

ALISON

I know you're not. If I thought you were, you would have been immediately escorted out of the building. But you could still face a disciplinary hearing, you could get fired for this, Sid.

SID

I was just texting a girl.

ALISON
What was so urgent it couldn't wait till you got home?

(pause)

ALISON (CONT'D)
Was it your fiancée?

SID
No.

ALISON
Did you terminate your session with Gerry this morning because of this?

SID
What? No. You have to believe me. This was just a stupid mistake.

ALISON
I have a good mind to suspend you.

SID
It will never happen again.

ALISON
Bloody right it won't.
(Pause)

ALISON (CONT'D)
You're lucky we need you to get to the bottom of the cyber attack.

SID
Does that mean I get to stay on?

ALISON
For now, yes.

SID
Thank you Alison. I won't let you down again.

ALISON
So I take it this girl you've been texting is-

SOUND: PHONE RINGS

ALISON (CONT'D)
Excuse me.

SOUND: PICKS UP PHONE. CHATTER ON THE OTHER END

ALISON (CONT'D)
I'll be there right away.

SOUND: HANGS UP PHONE.

ALISON (CONT'D)
It's happening.

SCENE 15

(Situation room)

JACQUI
Henry, Steve, good you're here.

HENRY
What's going on?

STEVE
You sound panicked.

JACQUI
David.

DAVID
The virus, it's destroying the substations.

(Alison and Sid arrive)

STEVE
Ali

ALISON
Steve.

STEVE
Should the kid be here?

SID
I have a name.

ALISON
We need all hands on deck. How could the virus suddenly go malicious?

DAVID
It downloaded a new component. Highly virulent.

HENRY
The code had a phrase. Yuan Hang Li Zhen. Means an initial offering. That was a clue that more was to come.

DAVID
Nng, nng, nng. Why didn't anyone tell me?

SID
I was going to but I got stupidly detained.

DAVID
I could've written code to stop the download.

ALISON

That's spilt milk at this stage.

JACQUI

The screen is going haywire.

DAVID

Nng It's has a destructive payload. It's breaching the substation control systems. DNP, infected. Modbus, infected. Telnet, infected.

HENRY

Can you stop it?

SOUND: FURIOUS TYPING BY DAVID

DAVID

Nng! Nng! Nng! Nng!

JACQUI

Stay calm David, keep focused.

SID

The seven sisters substation is breached!

ALISON

Bring it up on the monitor.

JACQUI

Just did.

SOUND: THE TRANSMITTER SHAKING

HENRY

The whole transmitter is rocking.

STEVE

Why is there so much steam?

SOUND: EXPLOSION

SID

Oh Allah!

JACQUI

I can't believe it just blew up.

HENRY

A computer virus can do that?

DAVID

Nng! It's infecting the Highbury substation.

JACQUI

It's going for the whole of London

ALISON
We have to shut down the substations.

SOUND: PICKS UP PHONE

ALISON (CONT'D)
Put me through to the National Grid Control room. Now!

SCENE 16

(GCHQ foyer. Clive is gently but firmly guiding Katie towards the exit)

CLIVE
I'm afraid your visit has come to an end, Katie.

SOUND: HURRIED FOOTSTEPS

KATIE
Why is everyone in a rush all of a sudden? What's going on Clive?

CLIVE
You have to leave the building.

KATIE
It's not going to look good if I report I was thrown out of GCHQ without an explanation.

(Pause)

CLIVE
We're dealing with a live situation.

KATIE
A terror attack?

CLIVE
I did not say that.

KATIE
Is Sarwar behind it?

CLIVE
This way please.

KATIE
The public has a right to know.

CLIVE
Look I'm sorry-

KATIE
OK, just answer this. Can you confirm that GCHQ played a part in Sarwar's arrest?

CLIVE

You've asked me this already. Now please just go through to security.

SCENE 17

(Situation room. Sound of furious typing)

HENRY

Sid and David are monitoring the virus. I told them to come over if they spot any serious changes.

ALISON

Good. Maybe we need a bigger team. Add Ethan to the mix?

HENRY

Those two work well together. I think it's best to have a focused team for now.

ALISON

Do we have a consensus?

JACQUI

I think Henry is right.

STEVE

I agree.

HENRY

You've changed your tone. I mean about Sid.

STEVE

We're in a different situation now.

HENRY

I think Ethan and his team should tackle this separately.

JACQUI

They're already on it. I will keep everyone briefed.

ALISON

What's this on the monitors?

JACQUI

It's the ant farm. The map of G20 delegates we were tracking.

ALISON

That's just irrelevant right now.

JACQUI

Sure. I'll switch the channel.

SOUND: CLICK.

HENRY

It was always irrelevant.

JACQUI

Let's not go there Henry.

HENRY

If word gets out that we were busy spying on the G20 in the middle of the most coordinated terror attack on British soil since 7/7-

STEVE

You can't worry about that now.

ALISON

Has the journalist left?

JACQUI

Clive showed her out.

ALISON

She couldn't have come at a worse time.

HENRY

Sooner or later the press are bound to know exactly what's happening.

JACQUI

A rep from one of the energy utilities has just given an interview on TV saying that the blackout was due to an unexpected surge in power.

ALISON

So the media don't know about the substations?

JACQUI

Not yet.

STEVE

That cover story won't hold for long.

ALISON

The speed of it is what amazes me. Four substations gone in the blink of an eye.

HENRY

Whoever designed the virus must have known how we would respond. So they attacked all the substations simultaneously.

ALISON

What's the fall out?

JACQUI

Hang on. I'll bring up the traffic cameras.

SOUND: CLICK

JACQUI (CONT'D)

As you can see. Gridlock on the road. Just as I predicted.

HENRY
Jesus. There are no signals anywhere.

STEVE
Any car crashes?

JACQUI
No reports coming through just yet.

ALISON
What else?

SOUND: CLICK

JACQUI
Petrol stations.

STEVE
Hell of a long lines.

HENRY
And they're not moving.

JACQUI
Only 5% of petrol stations have on site backup power. So the pumps are going to be down in most of the city.

STEVE
You'll have people siphoning petrol from each other's cars.

ALISON
Without necessarily asking first.

HENRY
Will the police be able to cope with all this?

ALISON
It's too soon for the army.

STEVE
You don't want this turning into Katrina.

ALISON
We need to respond proportionally, not induce unnecessary panic. Has the MOD been briefed?

JACQUI
Yes but there's a memo from them asking if Vodafone will be affected.

STEVE
Why Vodafone?

HENRY
It's the company the army uses.

ALISON
Are mobile networks operational?

JACQUI
Yes but like I predicted with no data.

HENRY
In few hours, most phone batteries will die out from panic over use.

JACQUI
It's actually hard to make a phone call because the networks are overloaded. It's like New Year's eve.

STEVE
What's happening on the streets?

SOUND: CLICK

JACQUI
Here is a selection of cameras from central London.

ALISON
People are queing outside the banks.

HENRY
The cash machines are not working.

JACQUI
A report just came in. Marked urgent.

ALISON
What does it say?

JACQUI
Bad news.

HENRY
Causalities?

JACQUI
Yes.

ALISON
How many?

JACQUI
Four. All patients at the same hospital. Two were in the middle of heart transplants. One on kidney dialysis. And the last one, a young girl, 15, she was on an artificial respirator.

STEVE
What happened?

JACQUI

The back up generator failed to work. And the batteries on the machines were not maintained.

HENRY

I thought you said the hospitals would be fine for a few days.

JACQUI

That was the assessment I had.

ALISON

Could the virus have attacked the generator?

JACQUI

The backup generators have a very different software from the substations.

ALISON

But perhaps it mutated again.

HENRY

If the virus could target generators then we would expect more hospitals to be affected.

JACQUI

True.

ALISON

Who is responsible for maintaining the generator in that hospital?

SOUND: TYPING BY JACQUI

JACQUI

A private company. Securitate PLC.

ALISON

Don't they run prisons in America?

STEVE

They sure do.

JACQUI

They also won the contract for this.

HENRY

Who thought that was a good idea. They've had one scandal after another.

ALISON

Could they have cut corners?

HENRY

Of course they did.

JACQUI

We don't know that.

STEVE

I hate to say it but Henry is probably right.

HENRY

The stealthy privatization of the NHS is/

ALISON

What did I say about grandstanding?/

HENRY

It's a security issue.

ALISON

We'll have that debate when we're out of the woods. Right now we need to take action. Make sure things don't get worse. Any suggestions?

JACQUI

First thing we have to establish is which substations are infected and which are not.

ALISON

Right.

HENRY

Then reroute the electricity supply away from the infected and towards the virus-free.

JACQUI

And send engineers to fix the damaged substations.

HENRY

Getting them back online is a priority.

ALISON

All that is very well. But the virus is still out there. It could strike again.

HENRY

Whoever designed the virus has been leaving clues in the code.

STEVE

Why would they do that?

HENRY

I have no idea. An ego trip maybe. To taunt us. Whatever the reason we need to comb through the code.

ALISON

The way I see it, we have 24 hours to bring this situation under control.

JACQUI

Oh god.

ALISON

What now?

JACQUI

A Polish centre has just been firebombed.

ALISON

Was anyone hurt?

JACQUI

It's not clear.

HENRY

We would be foolish to underestimate the dark forces this attack could unleash.

STEVE

You've got a lot of pent up anger out there.

ALISON

If we don't bring the situation under control, and soon, the death toll is bound to rise. Henry I want you to head the teams getting to the bottom of this. You'll have to work through the night.

HENRY

We'll need security clearance to stay in the building.

ALISON

You'll have whatever you need.

SCENE 18

(corridor)

JACQUI

Hey Steve...wait up.

STEVE

Jacqui. Good. I wanted to talk to you.

JACQUI

I know. About the drink. It's out of the question tonight, obviously. But perhaps when all this / is over.

STEVE

The drink? / Oh the drink!

JACQUI

Ah, that's not what you...Gosh, I feel a bit stupid.

STEVE

You shoudn't. I'd still like to..but like you say

JACQUI

Not today.

STEVE

I don't think anyone is going home, are they?

JACQUI

The cleaning staff have been dismissed. Hard to fight terrorism with a Dyson in the background.

STEVE

I'm very impressed how you keep your cool under fire.

JACQUI

It's the British way, I guess.

STEVE

And no one swears. That's just insane.

JACQUI

We try to keep that to a minimum. So what did you want to talk to me about?

STEVE

I have a hunch about the attack.

JACQUI

Why didn't you say something at the meeting?

STEVE

Because it's just a hunch. Have you heard of the the Aurora Vulnerability?

JACQUI

Yes of course.

STEVE

Maybe we shouldn't discuss this in the corridor.

JACQUI

Look I need to go and brief Ethan and his team. Can this wait?

STEVE

Yes. In fact I better do some more digging first.

JACQUI

Alright.

STEVE

I'll see you later.

SOUND: STEVE WALKS OFF.

SOUND: JACQUI WALKING ALONG THE CORRIDOR

DAVID

Nngg

JACQUI
David what's wrong?

DAVID
Nngg. There's something you need to see.

SCENE 18.5

(Alison's office. Phone conversation)

HOME SECRETARY
..less than eight hours ago...

ALISON
I know home secretary.

HOME SECRETARY
"There will be no hiccup". Those were your exact words. Now, the G20 delegates are in their hotel wondering what the hell kind of banana republic is hosting them.

ALISON
I realise the timing has been unfortunate.

HOME SECRETARY
Was it necessary to shut down the whole city if only one substation was affected?

ALISON
We couldn't take the risk of the virus spreading to the other substations.

HOME SECRETARY
If this gets out there will be calls for an inquiry. You do realise that.

ALISON
I appreciate the gravity of the situation.

HOME SECRETARY
Your decision to effectively shut down the city will be heavily scrutinised.

ALISON
It was the right decision.

HOME SECRETARY
Who is behind the attack?

ALISON
We don't know that yet.

HOME SECRETARY
This is an intelligence cock-up on a colossal scale.

ALISON
We are going to be working through the night to determine/

HOME SECRETARY

Barn doors and horses.

ALISON

That's not fair. This is a highly sophisticated/

HOME SECRETARY

I am going to call MI6.

ALISON

There's no need/

HOME SECRETARY

This morning you assured me everything was under control. Now our capital is in darkness, people have died, there is chaos on the street and you don't have a clue who is behind it.

ALISON

My team is more than capable of containing this threat.

HOME SECRETARY

That is patently untrue. You will work with MI6. No ifs, no buts. Otherwise the next call I'll place to GCHQ will be with your successor.

(hangs up)

ALISON

Hello?...hell..

SOUND: DIAL TONE. SHE HANGS UP.

ALISON (CONT'D)

Jesus.

SCENE 19

(Exterior. Smoking area. Henry is smoking. Sid arrives)

SID

Smoking in the middle of a national emergency?

HENRY

Just clearing my head for the tasks ahead. What about you?

SID

Could I bum one of yours?

HENRY

Sure.

(Sid lights up. exhale. Coughs)

SID

Still smoking this brand?

HENRY

What's wrong with it?

SID

It doesn't need a health warning, it already tastes like cancer.

HENRY

I don't see you putting it out.

SID

I might be going before a disciplinary hearing.

HENRY

You're lucky Alison didn't fire you on the spot. What were you thinking?

SID

I wasn't that's the problem.

HENRY

Who was the girl you were texting?

SID

Not my fiancée.

HENRY

I gathered as much.

SID

Arpna. A Hindu girl. I had a thing for her at school. She found me on Facebook. We started chatting. It got addictive, you know. It's hard at home. What with my parents. And my little brother barging in to help himself to my comics. So I started smuggling the phone in. Texting at lunch time. I couldn't stop myself.

HENRY

Maybe Arpna is a honey trap. Did you think about that?

SID

I can't imagine ISIS hiring a Hindu infidel just for that.

(Henry chuckles)

SID (CONT'D)

I used to think only bad people had things to hide.

HENRY

Do you love your fiancée?

SID

She's a good person.

HENRY

A good Muslim girl. That's the point, isn't it? Is your family pressuring you into this marriage, Sid?

SID

No...not exactly.

HENRY

Have you ever read The Brothers Karamazov?

SID

No. But I've read all seven Harry Potter books. What's your point?

HENRY

There is a passage in there that is pertinent to your dilemma.

SID

OK.

HENRY

"Above all, don't lie to yourself. The man who lies to himself and listens to his own lie comes to a point that he cannot distinguish the truth within him, or around him, and so loses all respect for himself and for others. And having no respect he ceases to love".

SID

I'm pretty sure Dumbledore says a similar thing to Harry Potter.

HENRY

In that case, perhaps I should acquaint myself with JK Rowling's oeuvre.

SID

It's good advice that. Thanks Henry.

HENRY

You're welcome.

SID

Speaking of lying to yourself. Maybe we rushed to judgment when we found the hexagrams in the virus code. I mean why would the Chinese leave a tell tale sign like that?

HENRY

This has been a strange day, Sid. I've learnt far more than I ever wanted about the private life of one Zhao Changhai.

SID

The S&M guy?

HENRY

How did you-

SID

Jacqui

HENRY

We really have to get better at keeping secrets in this place.

SID

What about Zhao?

HENRY

After he was done having his fun, he got a call from one of his superiors. China is going ahead with its investment in Britain's infrastructure. So it's highly unlikely that they would attack the very thing they wish to invest in.

SID

If it's not the Chinese behind the virus then who could it be?

HENRY

That's what we have to find out.

(Jacqui enters breathless)

JACQUI

Henry, Sid. What the hell are you doing here?

SID

We were just/

JACQUI

It's struck again.

HENRY

Where?

JACQUI

Paris.

SID

How bad?

JACQUI

Total darkness. Utter chaos. Higher casualties.

SID

The virus is spreading.

HENRY

Must be targeting European capitals.

JACQUI

This is beyond a terror attack. This is an all out war.

(The End)

