



Looking Ahead...

Original Scripts for KS3 Drama

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Teacher's Introduction

What kind of plays?

Looking Ahead is a set of short plays, each of which can be read aloud or performed in 10 minutes. Each play deals with an important current issue, such as social media, knife crime or climate change. The main aim is to explore interest in these issues, and to encourage pupils to develop their own responses, through improvisation and in their own writing.

The plays vary in the extent to which they are suited for dramatic performance:

- Nos. 3, 5 and 8 are most suited to dramatic staging.
- Nos. 2, 6 and 9, are closer to a kind of video documentary, containing a mixture of dialogue and reporting.
- Nos. 1, 4, 7 and 10 consist mainly of talk rather than action, exploring different points of view towards the issues raised.

There are stage directions in each of the texts, and some tasks which directly encourage pupils to consider such aspects as action, movement, lighting and costume.

Topical topics

These plays are based on detailed information, and the notes provide sources if there is a need to research further. The texts were written in January 2020 and revised in September 2020. There is scope for teachers and pupils to carry out their own research into recent developments in penal policy, for example, or immigration or social media, and incorporate them into these activities.

Different views

A key aim of this pack is to develop an awareness of what's involved in considering these issues, through grasping a range of viewpoints. The different ways in which various characters view the same situation is a key part of this learning, and students should be reading and discussing together, in small groups and as a whole class, as well as working on their own.

Tasks

Pupils are most likely to be engaged in this work if they have some scope to make their own decisions – rehearsing a performance, presenting their own proposals, or improvising or writing a scene which involves varied characters. There are a lot of possibilities here – the task could be spoken or written, in small groups or by the class as a whole. There isn't a specific order in which to complete these activities. There are opportunities for reflection and discussion, and rehearsal and creation, and only the teacher can decide which route suits the time available and the needs of their class.

A footnote on Covid-19

These plays were written in January 2020, after a decisive election ended an eventful year. It seemed a good time to be encouraging pupils to think about the future, hence 'Looking Ahead.' Since then we've had a global pandemic, which in one sense changes everything. But these issues remain important, and I've resisted the temptation to revise the plays in the light of the pandemic.

Note: sensitive contents

Sensitivity in teaching this resource is important as it deals with very sensitive content that may be upsetting or difficult for some students. It is vital that the teacher checks any content carefully beforehand to judge its suitability for their class. In particular, the fictional scripts discuss topical themes that may upset some students, such as racism, online abuse, drug addiction, knife crime and terrorism. These fictional scenarios are the author's own interpretation of a certain idea or concept and do not reflect the views of ZigZag Education. Please ensure that the scripts are viewed, along with any additional content you intend to use, before using them in class.

Note: Topical Issues

In dealing with topical issues, there's the risk that you quickly get out of date. When I wrote 'Think before you tweet', the most recent online controversy involving a well-known footballer concerned Bernardo Silva, in November 2019. Now I'm revising this pack, the most recent is Edinson Cavani, in November 2020. By the time you read this, there could be someone else. For your classroom treatment to be up to date, you may need to add your own updates to this material.

June 2021

1. Think before You Two

Cast

- Karen (physiotherapist at a football club)
- Ashley (young footballer)
- Jack (young footballer)
- Mason (young footballer)
- Wayne (young footballer)
- Nasreen (visiting expert on social media)

A seminar room in a football team's training centre.
Jack, Ashley and Wayne standing around a table. MASON comes in.

MASON: So what's this all about? Are we missing training?

JACK: We don't know any more than you do. They just

MASON: I bet it's Ashley. Have you been causing trouble?

JACK: Leave him alone. It's not his fault.

WAYNE: Are you his protector all of a sudden?

JACK: We're in the same club. He shouldn't need a pro

MASON: Meanwhile. This is the week I break into the first

WAYNE: In your dreams

MASON: – and we're festering in this classroom.

(KAREN enters.)

KAREN: Morning, lads.

JACK: Is this a physio session?

KAREN: Oh no. Not in the simple.

MASON: So what's going on?

KAREN: Social media training.

MASON: You are kidding me. We know more about that

KAREN: Agreed.

WAYNE: And the boss is even worse. He keeps getting me
he just can't get the hang of it.

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KAREN: And that's true, too. Which is why we've called it

JACK: You've got someone in to show us how to use our

KAREN: Not quite. Someone to help you think more clearly

(NASREEN enters.)

KAREN: And here she is. Nasreen?

NASREEN: Karen, right?

KAREN: Pleased to meet you. And these are Jack, Mason

NASREEN: and Wayne. Good morning. Please sit down.

(She remains standing as the boys sit down and Karen takes a seat at the back.)

WAYNE: OK, Karen. We're good. We'll take it from here.

KAREN: I don't think so.

MASON: You're not scared we might misbehave?

JACK: You're reporting back to the boss?

WAYNE: Like a spy, right? (They look at her, but Karen doesn't

NASREEN: We need to make a start. So I'll make this clear. I'm
to run this session on behalf of the club. He thinks I'm in the right
place, and he'll need to know what went on. So I'm running the session, and from now on if you
I'm running the session, and from now on if you have anything to say,
you should talk to. I'll start by asking – why do you think you

JACK: He's not keen on social media. He reckons it gets in the way of
talking to each other.

KAREN: And maybe he could have a go at it himself.

MASON: And maybe he could have a go at it himself, that's what someone your age

WAYNE: says, really. It's not as though going on Twitter means

NASREEN: You're sure about that?

WAYNE: It's common sense.

NASREEN: So it's worth testing, right? Scientists in Brazil did an experiment
with footballers to play FIFA or go online before playing. They found
there was a negative effect – online activity affected how well they
concentrate, how clearly they picked up details of the game.

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ASHLEY: Was that because of online comments – getting

NASREEN: That's part of it. But not all. Just the fact of being
in your head, could actually affect the way the brain
do it just before an actual match. But that's not
Think about the social context. You've heard of

WAYNE: You might need to explain that to Ashley.

ASHLEY: I know what sexting is.

NASREEN: OK. How many children under 14 do you think have
police for sexting?

MASON: Come on. Who'd shop a kid for a cheeky photo?

JACK: Speak for yourself.

WAYNE: Yeah, right. Don't tell me you and Jackie don't post

KAREN: That's enough of the banter, Wayne.

NASREEN: Nobody's answered my question.

ASHLEY: What was the question again?

NASREEN: How many children under 14 have been reported

JACK: Oh, 20?

MASON: How about 100?

NASREEN: How about 6,000, in three years?

JACK: You're serious?

NASREEN: Absolutely.

ASHLEY: And that's bad?

WAYNE: Well, it could even be a crime? If they want to, why

NASREEN: In lots of countries, this isn't a crime. I'm not saying it's
widespread. If a lot of young people are in the habit of taking
pictures and sending them to each other, that's

JACK: Why is it a risk?

NASREEN: Because people fall out. They make jokes, they get
hurt. And when you want to fight back, you've got to do it
can put online.

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MASON: Has this happened to you?

NASREEN: Not yet. I work quite hard to make sure it doesn't.
But if any of you lads really make it in football, your
private parts plastered across social media.

WAYNE: I'll be OK. I'll have my England cap by then.

NASREEN: And you think that will protect you?

WAYNE: I'll be able to do what I want.

NASREEN: Not quite. There's an England footballer, with 12
spots. He got six years for grooming a 15-year-old.

ASHLEY: Is that true?

KAREN: You think she's making it up?

MASON: What's that got to do with us?

NASREEN: Part of the evidence which got him convicted was
a girl.

WAYNE: He's an idiot. Should have wiped them.

MASON: But the police can still find them, yeah?

JACK: Is it anyone we'd have heard of?

NASREEN: Maybe not. Because he hasn't been on the back
been sitting in a cell wondering why he was so stupid.

JACK: But if we stay away from girl fans, we'll be OK?

NASREEN: Not necessarily. Have a look through Google search
Twitter. It's not a happy story. A guy who says he
his new car, or a row over a racial comment. The
swore blind the police didn't go in the goal, but they
did. There are so many ways of ways of getting into

JACK: I heard about this Man U player who opened a Twitter
without putting out a tweet. He couldn't cope with

WAYNE: Twitter's not for wimps.

NASREEN: You don't think online abuse is a problem?

WAYNE: I didn't say that.

ASHLEY: I heard about Bernardo Silva.

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NASREEN: Go on.

ASHLEY: Didn't he get done for making a joke with his ma

MASON: Mendy. Also of Man City.

JACK: What sort of joke?

NASREEN: Well, that's the point. He compared Mendy to a sweets firm, Conguitos. But the mascot's made of

WAYNE: Silva isn't racist. He's just sitting at Mendy because

NASREEN: You're right. And the club recognised that.

MASC So he's OK?

NASREEN: Depends what you mean by OK. He gets fined £500 for every game.

WAYNE: That's crazy.

JACK: It seems harsh. Just for a joke between friends.

NASREEN: It would be, if it were just between friends. But it's not. It's access to 600,000 people. That's what makes this different. Because he thinks he's on home ground, it's all about how he sees it. But out there can read it differently. You need to think about it differently.

MASON: I'll say.

NASREEN: In a minute I'll stop, and you can ask any question you like. I'll tell you more story for you to think about, and this one's

WAYNE: Fine. He got what was coming to him.

ASHLEY: That's not fair.

WAYNE: You like referees, don't you, Ashley?

JACK: I didn't want to play without one.

NASR. Well, you can each decide for yourselves. This is a free society. It's all on social media. A journalist wrote that he was getting a lot of abuse, but he was worse as a result. It's his daughter's sports coach who's in grief from parents about whether or not he'll coach her. It's not nasty – just some friendly banter. They're just kidding. It's – that kind of thing.

MASON: So what's the problem?

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NASREEN: There's a disabled guy walking in front of his car. I told it to a friend saying, 'I reckon I might have a chance'.

WAYNE: And that's it?

JACK: You think that's Ok?

WAYNE: It's not nice, but it's no big deal.

MASON: Why did you tell us this?

NASREEN: I haven't finished this one. The friend is a bit like me. He's the referee. A bit earlier, he puts the message to the referees' board. They look at it, and he's been refereeing since he was 15, he loves it and he's told he can't do it any more.

JACK: That's ridiculous.

MASON: Wait a minute. You said with the Silva one what you said went to lots of people. Was this a WhatsApp group?

NASREEN: No. Just one friend. As it happened, the wrong friend.

ASHLEY: That is so cruel.

WAYNE: No it's not. He had it coming. Think before you tweet.

NASREEN: What did you say?

WAYNE: *(Mumbling.)* Think before you tweet.

NASREEN: Sorry, I'm not sure everyone caught that. Again?

WAYNE: What are you getting at?

NASREEN: Again?

WAYNE: *(Shouting.)* Think before you tweet.

NASREEN: Thank you, Wayne. I think my work is done. Queue up.

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2. Kicking the Habit

Cast

- John Marks (*a new doctor*)
- Sheila (*a receptionist at the surgery*)
- Sydney (*a patient*)
- Denise Newcombe (*another doctor*)
- Julia (*a patient*)
- Asya (*an interviewer*)
- Neil (*an ex-policeman, and author of a book about drugs*)

Scene 1: Widnes, 1982

(Sheila is showing Dr John Marks around the surgery.)

SHEILA: Well, Dr Marks, is there anything else I need to show you?

JOHN: I don't think so, thanks. You've been very kind. I'll be back soon.

SHEILA: Some people are very rude about Widnes. It's not a nice place. There are a lot of shipbuilders built ships here. But there's some good people. I've said you should take over the addicts.

JOHN: Addicts. You mean drug addicts?

SHEILA: Yes. Heroin, mostly.

JOHN: Is that legal?

SHEILA: Apparently. The Americans tried to ban it all over the world, but we found a little loophole, and we have a small group – about 100 people. They pick up their prescriptions and go on their own.

JOHN: It's not something I'm that keen on.

SHEILA: Well, see how you feel when you've met them.

Scene 2: Consulting room

(John and Sydney are sitting facing each other.)

JOHN: Good morning, Sydney. What seems to be the matter today?

SYDNEY: Just the usual, please, doctor. I have a heroin problem.

JOHN: How long have you had that?

SYDNEY: About 20 years now.

JOHN: You don't think you should be giving that up?

SYDNEY: You think it's that easy?

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JOHN: Have you tried to give it up?

SYDNEY: Doctor, you're wasting your time. You think the
I need, and it keeps me healthy.

JOHN: Well, yes. You do seem...

SYDNEY: Almost normal, right? I haven't robbed anyone for
a joke, right?

JOHN: What did you do when you worked?

SYDNEY: I was a doctor. I swam. Now that was tough
swimming with the kids.

JOHN: So... normal family life... everything fine?

SYDNEY: Yes, doctor. But I still need the heroin.

JOHN: Very well. *(Writes the prescription.)* Here. *(Hands it to her.)*

(As SYDNEY leaves, SHEILA comes in.)

SHEILA: Sorry to bother you, Doctor, but I thought you could help with
government regulations.

JOHN: *(Reads through.)* Well. Now that is a coincidence.

SHEILA: How do you mean?

JOHN: To be honest, I wanted to close down this heroin problem. We
have to have an anti-drugs policy. Not just that, I need a proper
analysis to see whether it's working. It'd be a waste of money to
new, so we might as well keep it for now. Is there anything you can
check it over for us?

SHEILA: Dr Newcombe knows about the programme, and I can
ask her?

JOHN: Thanks very much.

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Scene 3

(Two weeks later, in Dr Marks' office. He's at his desk, when Denise Newcombe comes in.)

DENISE: John, would this be a good time to report back?

JOHN: Yes, please.

DENISE: I think you may be a bit surprised.

JOHN: Go on.

DENISE: Well, you know the public image of heroin addicts, high unemployment, high death rate.

JOHN: Of course.

DENISE: This group is nothing like that. They're all very happy alongside other patients, no one could tell the difference.

JOHN: Really?

DENISE: This is a port area. You'd expect HIV, a high rate of infection. You'd expect overdoses, abscesses, disease. Most of them don't and lead normal lives.

JOHN: Wow.

DENISE: And that's not all. Have you noticed their skin?

JOHN: I'm sorry?

DENISE: When you say 'heroin addict' you think scabs and sores, not like pizza.

JOHN: I suppose so, yes.

DENISE: There's nothing like that. And it makes sense, if you think about it. We've used heroin in hospitals. Not often, but we have. And none of those symptoms. The risks come in with the new drugs, to make more profit, so they mix it up – brick dust, or something they can't find. It's not the heroin that kills the addicts, it's the new drugs.

JOHN: That's really interesting.

DENISE: I'm sorry, but if you're thinking of closing this group, I'd like you to think again. You've got something very special here. It's a shame to lose it.

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Scene 4: John's consulting room, three months later

(John signs a prescription and hands it over.)

JULIA: Thank you, Doctor, thank you so much. You've done so much for me, really.

JOHN: Well, don't be too hasty –

JULIA: No, I mean it. That's it. *(As SHEILA enters,)* Isn't he brilliant?

SHEILA: Well, you've certainly made Julia's day.

JOHN: I thought expanding the programme would be a good idea, but it wouldn't be popular. She's talking of packing it in.

SHEILA: I'd say that was a really good idea.

JOHN: You don't think it's a risk?

SHEILA: Not as big a risk as keeping working. She's a sex addict.

JOHN: Oh. Right.

SHEILA: If she gets her heroin from dealers, she has to do a deal with you. If you supply her, she doesn't. It's as simple as that. Inspector Lofts wants to see you.

JOHN: Am I in trouble?

SHEILA: He didn't say. Do you want to make a run for it?

JOHN: No, I'll go quietly. Inspector? *(INSPECTOR comes in.)* Do sit down. *(Inspector sits.)* What can I do for you?

LOFTS: I wanted to talk about your heroin scheme.

JOHN: Yes. Well, I can see it may look unusual, but I do it for a while yet –

LOFTS: I disagree.

JOHN: Sorry?

LOFTS: You should keep it going for ever. There's a massive problem with heroin. Addicts who used to look wild and threatening are now becoming abiding citizens, and the dealers have lost interest. I'm telling my bosses that this is the best thing since sliced bread.

JOHN: Oh. Right. That's really good to hear.

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Scene 5

SHEILA: (Spotlit, speaks to audience.) And it was. The scheme got papers got interested and the story spread. They were worried, because it didn't fit with their idea of the British government to close it down. Dr Marks moved to New Zealand.

Over 13 years, from 1982 to 1995, Dr Marks never among his patients. After the scheme was closed were dead within six months and 41 within two Julia. Many others had raised serious illnesses.

Scene 6: A TV studio (Asya interviews Neil Woods sitting.)

ASYA: And in the studio today we have Neil Woods, who his life as an undercover cop. Hello, Neil, and welcome.

NEIL: Thank you.

ASYA: You certainly seem to have had an exciting time. It's true that at one time you had a samurai sword in your belt.

NEIL: That's right. But things are quieter now.

ASYA: Your book's title is *Good Cop, Bad War*. Could you mean by that?

NEIL: We've got this idea, from the US, that dealing with the drug gangs. Infiltrate them, attack them from within.

ASYA: But you spent 14 years doing that.

NEIL: I did, and I was good at it. That's how I know it was a waste of time.

ASYA: Really?

NEIL: If I read up the sentences of people I got arrested over 1,000 years in prison.

ASYA: That must have made a difference.

NEIL: It did to the men. It didn't to the trade. Those that slowed the trade down by about 10 minutes at a time up like that, while it makes that much money, they're ready to move in.

ASYA: So what's the answer?

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NEIL: The answer is to treat drugs as a health issue, not a criminal one.
Take out the criminal bit and treat the medical problem.

ASYA: Has anyone tried doing that?

NEIL: It's being done in Switzerland, Portugal and Uruguay.
The first time it took place in the UK, in Widnes, between 1982 and 1984.

ASYA: Is that true?

NEIL: I'm not surprised you don't believe me. Dr John Marks would
be famous, but no one's heard of him and we treat him as a joke.
and my work is to try to put into practice the ideas that he's got.

ASYA: And how do you plan to do that?

NEIL: I'm chair of LEAP – that's Law Enforcement Against
Prohibition. The criminal involvement in the drug trade is dangerous,
the criminal involvement in the drug trade is dangerously
violently dangerous. A clean, controlled supply of drugs will
give us a safer society, and save us a lot of money.

ASYA: But that's not what we hear on the news.

NEIL: People are scared of saying this, because they'll be
people who sound tough who cause the damage, the damage
going, of arrests, violence and death from drugs. It's not
this. How do we know? Because John Marks showed us that.

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3. Taking back Control

Cast

- Colm (senior case officer at the Home Office)
- Mark (junior Home Office officer)
- Meera (junior Home Office officer)
- Phil (junior Home Office officer)
- Janine (supervisor)
- Sally (reporter)

Scene 1

(An office at the Home Office. Meera and Mark are working at desks as COLM comes in.)

COLM: Hi, kids, how are we doing?

MARK: We're coping, thanks, Colm.

MEERA: Why are you always so cheerful?

COLM: Maybe it's just my sunny nature. Or it could be that I've just been to see Janine.

MEERA: That's a good thing?

MARK: I'll tell her you said that.

MEERA: You'd better not.

COLM: Children, children. You need to stop that, because at the New Year, you will be looking after yourselves far away.

MEERA: You're joking?

MARK: You're retiring?

COLM: Correct. The time has finally come, and I'm on my way.

MARK: Congratulations.

COLM: Well, thank you. Though I'm guessing it'll also be a bit of a step up the ladder?

MEERA: But they'll replace you, won't they? I mean, someone else.

COLM: Don't bet on it. Very expensive, us old men. Much more than a keen young whippersnapper. Like Mark. Hardly a day goes by and he could run the place next year.

MARK: Not that soon.

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COLM: But some day, yeah? It's nothing to be ashamed of. I can remember when I started, just an immigrant myself.

MEERA: Yeah, right.

COLM: You think I'm kidding you. They had signs, those days.

MEERA: And you think it's the same? The Irish and the Poles?

COLM: None of us were welcome, I can tell you that.

MEERA: But nobody just looked at you and said, 'Go home'.

COLM: You're right, but they did when I opened my mouth.

MARK: And they didn't have to wait long for that, I'll bet.

MEERA: You don't get it, do you?

COLM: You're right, Meera. There is a difference. And that's the difference here. I mean that.

MEERA: Thanks. My dad's very proud.

MARK: So she's better than us?

COLM: It's not a competition. She's part of the team. And that's what it's like on both sides of the desk. When we were white public schoolboys making all the rules. Not now.

MEERA: The good old days, right?

COLM: Things have changed. Like they have here. When we had professional standards, personal judgement. Now we have software sorted, the algorithms will do it all for you. No people at all.

MEERA: Stop messing, Colm. This is important.

COLM: I know. I'm going to change, whether I stay or not. But what about Phil?

MARK: He went out, 20 minutes ago.

COLM: That's why I'm asking. When I came out from seeing him go in.

MEERA: You think he's in trouble?

MARK: Think about it. Phil talking to Janine. Do you think he's looking forward to that?

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Scene 2

(A separate office in the same building. Janine is busy working behind her desk. Phil is waiting.)

JANINE: Phil, what can I do for you?

PHIL: Um...well, you know the initiative thing ... that project?

JANINE: Yes?

PHIL: I don't know if this is important, but...

JANINE: I don't have all day ... I'm busy. You need to come to my desk.

PHIL: Sorry. Well... *Panorama*, last night.

JANINE: I didn't think your generation watched the BBC.

PHIL: My grandad does. I was visiting him.

JANINE: And?

PHIL: It was about this racket. Indian students cheating on exams so that they could stay in the country.

JANINE: Really?

PHIL: I knew I shouldn't have bothered. I'll get back...

JANINE: No, Phil. I am interested. Really interested. This was what I wanted to encourage.

PHIL: So I was right to come.

JANINE: Absolutely. Thank you. And now you can get back to work.

Scene 3

(A quiet part of a pub. Colm is sitting, as Sally Yew comes across with their drinks.)

SALLY: That's all you go. One pint of Guinness. (She sits.)

COLM: Thanks, Sally. Very generous.

SALLY: No problem. It's a big day. But I'll miss you.

COLM: All those hot inside tips, eh?

SALLY: What about your colleagues? Should I chat up a few more?

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COLM: I don't think so. I mean, they're kids, really. Things like this ... You and I built up this ... um ... understanding between us. I wouldn't have started it after she came.

SALLY: You're not feeling guilty?

COLM: No way. It's important you understand how things are. The full picture, right?

SALLY: Of course. I appreciate it.

COLM: It's worked well. But it won't have lasted. Even if this thing about the UK being a place of refuge, that's all over.

SALLY: Tell me about it. Every Home Office release, there's a story.

COLM: Yeah. Well, since the Brexit vote I think you can't have targets, send them all home.

SALLY: And I can quote you on that?

COLM: Definitely not. I'm going, but I'll need my pension.

SALLY: Just kidding, Colm. I've never shopped you yet, so I can't.

Scene 4

(Six months later. A press conference, with Janine in charge.)

JANINE: So although we're facing serious challenges, I'm confident that with the help of new technology we'll be able to overcome them. We've made since the Brexit result. Any questions?

SALLY: Could you give us a few more details about the challenges?

JANINE: I'm not sure what you mean?

SALLY: I understand from Home Office staff that they have to meet, numbers of refugees from foreign countries.

JANINE: That's not true. Could I ask for the names of people who've been released?

SALLY: No, I'm afraid that's not possible.

JANINE: As I thought, this is just a rumour. There are no real challenges. We have a great pride in its tradition of treating each case on its merits.

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Scene 5

(The same day. Mark, Phil and Meera at their desks, with large piles of paperwork.)

MEERA: I could do with a Colm joke right now.

MARK: You always said they were corny.

MEERA: They were. But I still miss them. And him.

PHIL: Me too. When a tricky case came up, you could
like it – or he'd tell you about some mistake he'd
feel better.

MARK: Another lot of hands would help. Mind you, I'd
get promotion by now.

PHIL: Leave it, Mark.

MEERA: What are you taking about?

MARK: Hasn't he told you?

PHIL: He's just messing.

MARK: No I'm not. You know the big new idea – the ch

MEERA: Yeah. Course. It's crazy.

MARK: Maybe. But guess who started it all?

MEERA: Phil? How could he do that?

PHIL: There was this programme on telly. About how

MEERA: Yeah, I heard.

PHIL: Well, I told Janine. That's all.

MARK: Didn't get much thanks for it, mind.

PHIL: I don't know if it made any difference. Maybe sh

MEERA: It made a difference to me.

PHIL: How d'you mean?

MEERA: My cousin was detained. As in, locked up. His fia
with his parents. His dad told him not to come by
innocence. He's talking suicide. Do you know how
by this?

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MARK: It's big. Thousands.

PHIL: Don't be daft. This programme was just about a

MEERA: Maybe. But it didn't stay that way. Thirty thousand
cheating. Ten thousand left the country.

PHIL: That's crazy. The programme was about 20 or so

MEERA: That's all they needed. An excuse.

PHIL: But they must have *looked* into it.

MEERA: Thirty thousand cases? With staffing the way it is
to them 97% of the students who took that test
that's likely?

MARK: Phil couldn't be expected to know that would ha

MEERA: Maybe he thinks before he opens his mouth nex

MARK: It might not be his fault. Janine could have got in
an official secret.
(*PHIL gets up, goes.*)
Phil, it's not a big deal.

MEERA: You think?

MARK: Well, obviously it's a big deal to the people affe

MEERA: But they're not your people, are they? They just
maybe it makes a difference to me –

MARK: Look, Meera, I'm really sorry.

MEERA: Forget it. We've work to do. More than enough

MARK: Meera –

MEERA: I don't want to talk about it.

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Scene 6

(Janine's office. PHIL knocks on the door.)

JANINE: Yes?

PHIL: Can I speak to you?

JANINE: I've got a lot on, but all right, if it's quick.

(She hardly looks up. He walks in, hesitates, decides to sit down.)

PHIL: When I came before

JANINE: Yes, to say... I was grateful. Appreciate it, but I
I have any jobs at the moment. As I'm sure you

PHIL: It's not about money. All those students, accuse

JANINE: Not your problem.

PHIL: But if it was my fault –

JANINE: It was a TV programme. You passed on informati
story. Unless –

PHIL: Yes?

JANINE: A reporter from the local rag was asking me abo
said she got that from somebody working here.
be you?

PHIL: No. No, of course not.

JANINE: Any idea who it might be?

PHIL: No. Not Meera. And certainly not Mark. Really,

JANINE: Fine. So we can both get back to work.

PHIL: But –

JANINE: Didn't I make myself clear? (Fade.)

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4. Living with Fear

Cast

Local residents at a meeting:

- Ruth (chair)
- Sadia (Somalian refugee)
- Pauline (volunteer at youth club)
- Conor (local councillor)
- Mick (teenager)
- Terry (policeman)
- Marlon (ex gang member, film-maker)

(A community hall in East London. Ruth is at a table, facing them.)

RUTH: Good evening, and thanks so much for coming. The business of the evening is to celebrate our local wonderful film (*Enthusiastic cheers.*)

But it's also to share our worries about knife crime in this area. Sadia, do you want to start?

SADIA: (*Stands*) OK. Some of you know me. I'm from Somalia, refugees, to keep our children safe. Last week I saw a man from Somalia. He begged me to send him – 'Mum, I'm scared. They know where we live.'

RUTH: How did he know these people?

SADIA: They kidnapped him. I'm not joking. He was here, we were trying to trace him through his phone. They told him to sell drugs and carry a knife. He was so scared, he was in *his hand.*

RUTH: Mr O'Leary?

CONOR: Thank you. (*He stands.*) Conor O'Leary, local councillor. Statement of the problem, and it makes it all the more difficult to find a solution. Obviously, we need more police officers, more prison sentences. If you look at the figures, half of the people who have previous convictions for carrying knives are still in the area.

RUTH: So whatever we did last time, it didn't work?

CONOR: We didn't do enough. We need to hit them hard. Carrying knives need to know that they're much more likely to go to prison and that they'll go to prison for longer.

(*He sits, and looks around. Some murmurs of support. Pauline stands.*)

RUTH: Yes?

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PAULINE: My name's Pauline. I used to be a social worker at a youth club. Just making teas and coffees, helping out with a stabbing that didn't take place. It was last week at the youth club. We had a lot of kids in, nothing special, just a rumour. People have seen kids from Hackney on the patch, and they're thinking they need to get out of the area. We have to have another think. They're in the youth club, and we're really strict about this, and they know it. So they go back to the table tennis, the art work, and they all stay alive.

RUTH: I didn't know there were any youth clubs still going.

PAULINE: There's not many. Oh, yes, I've just remembered, about 30 years ago, when we had our own workshops, we set them for jobs. We had a gang who'd be in the street fighting where a kid got killed. Our project was to get them up for earning a living, so they wouldn't go back to the streets.

CONOR: And did that work?

PAULINE: For some of them, certainly.

RUTH: But we've had council cuts since then. The money's gone. *(Looks out at audience. Cal stands.)* Yes? I'm sorry.

CAL: No, you don't know me. And you don't have a clue. I saw three people stabbed while I was growing up. In the school hall, I saw someone I knew get his face carved. He'd been warned off, but he didn't listen. So this guy's got to be the one.

RUTH: What do you think the problem is?

CAL: It starts with defence. There's some psychopaths out there. Some people in gangs are normal. They have morals, and they look after themselves. But if someone knows where you live, they wait for them to arrive. You get in first. You've got to be first.

RUTH: That sounds like a bleak outlook.

CAL: You're not wrong. I don't see any answers. It's like I might move a sofa over it, but it's not going to get rid of it. *(He storms out of the hall, slams the door.)*

RUTH: And thank you. But it's not the last word, and we need more answers. Terry, did you want to come in?

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TERRY: Thanks, Ruth. (*He stands.*) Terry Bates. I'm a police officer. I can move in and stop all this, but you know that's not the solution. We are a part of it, but only a part. It's very easy for people to get lost and fix on numbers, but this is complicated stuff. It's not just knife attacks last year. Which is a lot. But 10 years ago it was 26,000. That doesn't mean it's OK. But it's not the solution.

RUTH: What about what Sadia said?

TERRY: Heart-breaking. I mean that. I'd love to say that Sadia's son safe, but he doesn't think so, and he's right. The lines stuff is really difficult. It's a business, big money, very organised. There are no kids picking up a knife and people working out how to use vulnerable kids to spread fear.

RUTH: And what would your answer be?

TERRY: It's like a business, so we've got to be organised. We can stop it.

CONOR: It's not that complicated. You need more bobbies.

TERRY: OK, we've lost 20,000 officers, and that's bound to be getting more officers and stopping and searching. It's not the solution. We used to stop thousands of kids in trouble than it was worth.

MARLON: (*Standing.*) Because it was always the same sort of kids, the kids in care, the kids excluded from school, they are scared they're going to be attacked. They're easy to choose, because they know they're easy to push.

RUTH: So maybe this is the right time to introduce Marlon here, and he won't mind me saying that as a young man he wasn't exactly a model pupil.

MARLON: That's right. I came from a Christian family, I played in a grammar school – but that didn't last. I got expelled. I went to another school, and then to a secure unit. That's where you go when everyone's given up on you.

RUTH: So what did you do?

MARLON: I became a roadman. I dealt heroin and crack to a gang, but I did get stabbed. Seven times – chest, back, this nightclub, and there were a gang of lads, and they started attacking me, and it was only when the police realised I'd been stabbed.

RUTH: So what happened then?

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MARLON:I wasn't sure that I'd ever see my family again. In that I would try to help young people who might be in crime. That's why I'm here, doing this. When I was a model, somebody like me that I could relate to. I can tell these kids – I've been in your shoes. I know.

RUTH: And do you have anything to say to their parents?

MARLON: It's about learning a bit more from your kids, and it shouldn't be about how it was then, and why and how we used to be. Times have changed.

RUTH: And what's your message to the kids themselves?

MARLON: You've got to make key decisions about the future. It's easier said than done. It's easy to say, 'Put the knife down.' In actual every day it's very difficult to say it but the other side isn't going to. So if you can't do it in the first place, that's much better than getting involved.

PAULINE: What about the council? And the government?

MARLON: They're thinking headlines, numbers. Pick up the phone, need to get the whole picture. What's life like for you? You've got to look forward to? There's a whole lot of things about – schools, youth clubs, prisons, probation, police agencies, working together. Not just a quick fix.

RUTH: If I can add a personal note here, I come from Scotland. Christine Goodall, was a doctor, who helped to bring it out in Scotland. They did what you're talking about. It was seen as a health issue, not a crime issue. In the end, the police said: Christine said: 'You can arrest as many people as you like. You can throw away the book. It won't solve the problem.'

CONOR: Wait a minute, Ruth. You've just dismissed the fact that I know a lot of voters agree with me. Are you saying your friend disagrees with us?

RUTH: It's not because she's my friend. It's because she's watching kids being killed. She's just looking for a way out. Medics Against Violence in Scotland has been a success for yourself. So, Marlon, where does your film fit in?

MARLON: OK. We have to do stuff – make decisions, spend time on work. But we also have to tell stories. Not just the story of an innocent kid who got killed by accident. There's so many amazing things, who started off badly but then turned around. That's what my film is about. See what you think of *this film*.)

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5. Another World – Next I

Cast

- Karim and Anita (*a couple living on a housing estate*)
- Mr Harris (*manager for Windsor Estates*)
- Chris (*reporter*)
- Roberto and Windsor Terrace

Scene 1

(Karim and Anita in their flat.)

KARIM: Is Ahmed asleep?

ANITA: Yeah, yes. I've never seen him so happy.

KARIM: What's he been doing?

ANITA: Playing football. With Pedro and his mates.

KARIM: Where did they go?

ANITA: On the playground. In front of the flats.

KARIM: The posh flats. Windsor Terrace?

ANITA: That's the one.

KARIM: Are you crazy?

ANITA: No, Karim. I'm not crazy.

KARIM: But you know... we tried to, when we first came...
cried so much...

ANITA: And you thought I'd forgotten that?

KARIM: Of course not. But...

ANITA: You know his friend Pedro?

KARIM: Little fellow. Slightly winger with the deadly shot?

ANITA: If you say so. Well, his mum let us in. I was as scared as you, she says, 'No, come on. We should share this.'

KARIM: Why would she do that?

ANITA: You think she was wrong?

KARIM: No, I'm just surprised. I'd have thought if you'd...
want to keep things to yourself.

ANITA: Look, Ahmed had a great time. So just enjoy it, n

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Scene 2

(The offices of Windsor Estates. Chris is interviewing Mr Harris.)

CHRIS: So, Mr Harris, you're the manager for Windsor Estates.

HARRIS: That's correct.

CHRIS: So you know that people are worried about the estate?

HARRIS: I'm not sure about that. Gossip and rumour, maybe.

CHRIS: But this used to be a nice place, didn't it? It was a nice place with a lot of people in the area.

HARRIS: I can't tell you about its history. All I know is the residents have paid a lot of money to occupy the estate. And that's why they're the only ones allowed to use the land.

CHRIS: But there is social housing which also overlooks the estate. They can look at the land, but they're not allowed to use it.

HARRIS: And that's for the very good reason that they have to maintain it.

CHRIS: So there are children who go to the same school but they're not allowed to play football together?

HARRIS: That might be sad, but it's not my problem.

Scene 3

(Windsor Terrace, in Roberto and Joanna's sitting room. He hands her a letter.)

JOANNA: Mmm. Looks boring. Are they putting up the security cameras? They haven't.

ROBERTO: You know what this is about?

JOANNA: Yes I do. Pedro and Ahmed wanted to play football through into the playground.

ROBERTO: Why couldn't they open the gate?

JOANNA: That's right. Like all the other residents in this block, so I used it.

ROBERTO: I don't see why you would do that.

JOANNA: Ahmed is Pedro's friend. He can't open the gate for him. It makes perfect sense to me.

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ROBERTO: But not to the people who run the flats. This lets the rules of the agreement we signed.

JOANNA: When we bought this place. When we didn't have realised what a stupid rule it is.

ROBERTO: That's all very well, Jo, but –

JOANNA: Don't you want Pedro to have friends? Didn't we we liked the idea of the local school, him mixing with

ROBERTO: Of course we did. But it's not just up to us.

JOANNA: Some of the other mums thought it was a good

ROBERTO: I'm sure they did. But some of them probably did the dads would be against it.

JOANNA: The guy with the dog, for instance.

ROBERTO: Him especially. He threatened to set the dog on to play there. He didn't know Pedro was allowed going to set his dog on anyone he didn't like.

JOANNA: And we should give into him?

ROBERTO: I'm not saying that.

JOANNA: And then there's the homeless. The wardens are move in, and sleep in the park. It's as if they were

ROBERTO: Look, this is complicated. There's two sorts of home. That's the way they run things here.

JOANNA: It hasn't always been like that. My grandad was one back. They were really proud of what they called of public and private. Big, small, expensive, cheap

ROBERTO: It's a great idea. But it's a long time ago.

JOANNA: So, we should try to bring it back?

ROBERTO: Really? You're going into politics?

JOANNA: Not full-time. Just a bit of local agitation.

ROBERTO: Do us a favour, eh? I like this flat. Try not to get

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(Chris knocks on Karim's door. Karim opens it.)

ANITA: I tell him he can't play there. He thinks it's just me
him having fun. What am I supposed to say? 'You
he gets to play there and you can't'?

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CHRIS: Is there anything you can do to change this?

ANITA: What can we do?

KARIM: You think the people who run Windsor Terrace

Scene 5

(Roberto and Joanna's sitting room. He's sitting reading the paper when she enters)

ROBERTO: How was your day?

JOANNA: My day was pretty good, thanks.

ROBERTO: So you're winning?

JOANNA: Not sure. They hate to give anything away, and I have to give to someone else. I go to the council, and they say to the developers that make the rules.

ROBERTO: What about the developers?

JOANNA: They say it's not up to them. Talk to the council.

ROBERTO: So you're stuck?

JOANNA: Not for long. This is about men with money.

ROBERTO: Well, there's a surprise.

JOANNA: But then I get an idea. What are the council for?

ROBERTO: Good question.

JOANNA: We vote for them, we give them money. Don't we?

ROBERTO: Now and again. Election time.

JOANNA: Can't wait that long.

ROBERTO: If you're being so cagey, why are you so pleased?

JOANNA: We have this gang of women, from here and from there. They know what we want, and we get on really well. They've got some serious talents there –

ROBERTO: I believe you. Anything else?

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JOANNA: Yes. They're scared. The council, and the development in the local paper, and TV news has picked it up, they've got it wrong. They might just decide that and make it all go away.

ROBERTO: That'd be great.

JOANNA: For Pedro and Ahmed, sure. But what about all the rest of the country?

ROBERTO: What can you do about them?

JOANNA: I'm not sure. I'm not thinking about that. *(Fade.)*

Scene 6

(The Windsor Estate offices.)

CHRIS: Mr Bernard Harris, manager of Windsor Estates, reads a statement regarding the playground facilities there.

HARRIS: I should like to clear up the situation regarding Windsor Estate. I should like to correct rumours circulated by the press and social media. I am able to resolve the difficulties which meant that some children were kept out of the playground. It was never our policy to do this. Our rules meant that some children were kept out, but not all. From now on, all the children neighbouring the central playground. Thank you very much.

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6. Kicking down the Door

Cast

Following the London Bridge attacks.

- **Lucy** (interviewer)
- **Shami** (spokesperson for the government)
- **Dave** (father of Jack Merritt, who was killed in the attack)
- **Serena** (interviewer)
- **Steve** (prisoner, involved in the Learning Together scheme)
- **Darryn** (volunteer with the Learning Together scheme)

(A TV studio, in December 2019. Lucy sits at a desk, directly to camera.)

LUCY: And tonight, we'll be looking back to last week's attack, where two people were killed and three seriously injured. That convicted terrorist Usman Khan was arrested, he produced two large knives and said he was wearing a vest. Jack Merritt and Saskia Jones, who were Cambridge students, were on the course. Other people attending the course of the course onto London Bridge. They held him at bay until he was shot. It turned out later that the suicide vest was a hoax. Our government spokesman, said this:

SHAMI: Our sympathies are with the families of the two people killed. But this incident shows the need for longer sentences for crimes are involved. We're all in favour of education, but why we're spending an extra two-and-a-half billion pounds, we need to be realistic. The opposition have argued for release, but we hope to bring in longer sentences for terrorists. After the election, we'll be able to do that. I've been accused of being soft on the situation. That's not true. I've been demanding for longer sentences.

LUCY: And this was the reaction of Jack Merritt's father:

DAVE: I don't want my son's death to be used for electoral purposes. He was a talented young man, but he was also angry, because of the people in need. He gave all his energy to this project, which means bringing university students and convicted prisoners together for their benefit. Jack believed in goodness, not in a world of hate. As he saw it, there was a door standing in the way, keeping out any light or future hope. In his Document, he wanted to kick that door down, and open up a world of new opportunities. He was concerned, he still marches on, and we should not be afraid.

LUCY: Earlier today, my colleague Serena MacDonald visited the prison. Gallant is held. He was one of the prisoners involved in the attack. This is what he told her.

(Serena and Steve sit facing each other, in a room at the prison.)

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SERENA: So, Steve, can I start by asking how old you are, and how long you've been there.

STEVE: I'm 43. I was convicted of murder in 2005. My next release is so it'll be 2022 before I'm eligible for parole.

SERENA: How do you cope with that?

STEVE: When I came in here, I could hardly read. I've been writing plays. I had a play read in rehearsal at the National Theatre in London.

SERENA: And how did you meet Jack Merritt?

STEVE: I met him in 2016, when he became a course coordinator at the prison you were in; he cared about you and your future. He helped me and did not define you by your past.

SERENA: Could you tell me what happened on 29th November?

STEVE: When I heard the noise from downstairs, I went down.

SERENA: Wasn't that dangerous?

STEVE: There were orders to stay in the hall, but I couldn't. I had to help. On my way downstairs I saw Khan.

SERENA: Could you tell who was responsible?

STEVE: It was obvious. Khan was standing in the foyer with his hands behind his back. He was a clear danger to all, so I didn't hesitate.

SERENA: But you weren't armed?

STEVE: There was a big tusk on the wall, so I used that, and I used a chair to hold him back and prevent him from harming anyone.

SERENA: What about the suicide vest?

STEVE: He showed me his bomb around his waist. He was a clear danger. I chased him to London Bridge and restrained him.

SERENA: Restrained him how?

STEVE: I was sitting on top of him. Officers told me to stay on him. It was only later they found the vest was a fake.

SERENA: Thank you, Steve. Is there anything you'd like to say?

STEVE: Just to thank everyone who did their best on that day. I passed me that tusk, I could have been killed. It was a close call.
(Fade.)

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(Lucy speaks directly to camera.)

LUCY: And thank you for that, Serena. Steve mentioned the fight by Darryn Frost. Darryn's a civil servant who's been in the studio and he's joined me in the studio.

(Camera moves back to show Lucy and Darryn, seated in the studio.)

LUCY: So, how does it feel to be a hero?

DARRYN: I don't feel like a hero. I feel guilty, to be honest.

LUCY: But you've done nothing wrong.

DARRYN: Sarah and Saskia were killed. That's made a huge impact.

LUCY: in what way?

DARRYN: I really respected them, and I'm gutted that they had that huge drive within me to challenge hatred and intolerance.

LUCY: And how do you feel about Usman Khan?

DARRYN: Well, he comes from this country, and people may have been so extreme. I'd guess he was influenced by the extremists, because of our actions abroad.

LUCY: When you say our actions –

DARRYN: I'm talking about the West. Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria. We're the judge, jury and executioner. That's the sort of actions.

LUCY: And in the fight with Usman Khan, it was you who was the hero, Steve Gallant.

DARRYN: That's right. There were these two tusks fixed on the wall, and we were so careful, didn't want to break the point.

LUCY: But it worked?

DARRYN: In the end, yes. John Crilly had a fire extinguisher, and he threw it at Usman Khan into the street. We shouted at people to get out, and he had killed people. I managed to stab him in the back of the head, and he died of him.

LUCY: Weren't you worried about the bomb?

DARRYN: Of course. Then the police shot him and you could see the bomb and a bit of cardboard. But we didn't know that.

LUCY: And how do you feel now?

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DARRYN: It's been strange. The first two weeks were horrible depression, feeling guilty. Why should I enjoy my life now I can't? But I'm proud of what we did, and that's all I can be.

LUCY: Thanks to Darryn for that. And here are some of the tweets sent in:

- 1: Khan was a convicted terrorist. What did you expect?
- 2: Jack and Saskia's work has to go on – we owe it to them.
- 3: Is Darryn some kind of terrorist sympathiser?
- 4: What a waste. Two young lives, full of hope and potential, lost like that.
- 5: I've spoken to former prisoners whose lives have been saved all thanks to good teachers. None of them wanted any longer punishment that helped.
- 6: We don't need to talk about this. Just lock the door and turn the key.

LUCY: And if you want to have your say, tweet on #long

(Blackout.)

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7. Picking up the Piece

Cast

- Mary
- Hilda
- Diane
- Sadiq
- Ken

(The office of a TV company, in the week after the election results, 11 December 2019.
large table.)

MARY: Good morning, everyone. So, what did we make

HILDA: A historic victory, I'd say.

DIANE: Victory for what, exactly?

MARY: That's the point, isn't it? In a fortnight, we have to
our viewers – *That Was the Vote That Was*. So, what

SADIQ: 'Get Brexit done.' That was the slogan, and that's

DIANE: Even if it's a lie?

SADIQ: You're saying the voters didn't know what they

DIANE: I'm saying Brexit's nothing like done. There's got to be
negotiations, some of them nasty. Nobody who's ever
end up with.

KEN: That's always been true. Go out into the street and
difference was between May's deal and Johnson's deal. I can
tell you.

HILDA: But they would say they don't want to go back to

DIANE: She got a rough time because she was a woman

HILDA: She got a rough time because she kept dithering
with Remoaners asking for another vote, so that's

DIANE: If they'd had another vote, they might well have
in favour of Remain than of Leave.

SADIQ: Such a shame that they couldn't get their act together

MARY: OK, folks. That's enough bickering. Brexit's obvious

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KEN: For some Labour voters, it's the only factor. They went down the country, saying, 'I've always voted Labour. Brexit was the reason.

DIANE: They're that desperate to be out of Europe?

KEN: They're desperate to be taken seriously. That's why they voted the Brexit vote. Nothing to do with Europe. For the first time, everybody knew that their vote mattered.

MARY: I'm sure that's important.

DIANE: Even if the campaign was full of lies?

HILDA: A recent history. We can't keep going backwards.

DIANE: You don't think lies matter?

HILDA: I think the future matters. In a way, voters were disappointed over Corbyn.

SADIQ: People hated Corbyn. Couldn't stand the idea of him.

HILDA: Maybe, but that's not what I'm saying. My point is that Johnson over May. They've had three years of government. Suddenly someone comes up and says, 'I'll sort it out.'

MARY: And was that the reason for the Conservative success?

SADIQ: Has to be. There wasn't anything else.

HILDA: That's not true. There were spending promises – 20,000 policemen.

KEN: If you believe that, you'll believe anything.

HILDA: You don't think we need nurses?

KEN: I don't think we'll get them by getting crowds to go like going into a shop and buying toy soldiers – People have to apply, be selected and be trained. It costs money.

SADIQ: Yes, there were promises, some of them dodgy. No other cabinet ministers, no serious manifesto.

DIANE: I thought it was terrible.

SADIQ: But it worked.

MARY: What about the Labour manifesto?

HILDA: Must we – really?

DIANE: There were some popular ideas in there...

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SADIQ: But you had to dig to find them. There were so many that all that was going to happen.

HILDA: When was the last time Labour ever really delivered?

MARY: Is that why Labour lost?

KEN: How long have you got? There were lots of reasons the programme was left-wing –

DIANE: They were disorganised. Nobody knew what was going on. They targeted the wrong people.

SADIQ: Not for the reason anti-Semitism.

DIANE: But the Tories have a problem with Islamophobia.

SADIQ: Not as big a problem.

DIANE: It's not as well publicised, because the media hate him. They know it's a great way to undermine him.

HILDA: Here we go again. The left-wing saint undermining the right-wing saint. This is what happened. There were examples of people working in the Labour Party tried to put a stop to it, but the officials interfered.

DIANE: It's a management problem, not hatred of Jews.

HILDA: OK, so they're incompetent rather than nasty. But they're not sorting, and Labour didn't sort it.

SADIQ: And that definitely cost them votes.

KEN: Not being sure about Brexit didn't help. Were we supposed to leave Europe, get another deal, and then have a vote on it? It's a really decent guy, but there's no way he gets 10% in this election.

MARY: So here's the problem. There are more people in the UK than in Europe that want to leave it, but that's not how you count up the seats. Why's that?

DIANE: It's Nigel Farage, again.

SADIQ: What are you talking about?

DIANE: He was the one who made the difference in the 2016 election. He got most seats in the European elections. And now he's not to be sorted, he pulls out most of his candidates and they don't run. I can't stand him, but the guy's a genius.

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MARY: So why did he do that?

HILDA: I don't think they had the organisation. They could have had many candidates.

SADIQ: These days it's all online. You don't need that much money.

DIANE: Labour have got more members than the Tories. It's not much difference.

KEN: And then there's the electoral system. First past the post. Millions of people it just doesn't matter how they vote.

DIANE: That can't be right.

MARY: Look at the Liberal Democrats. Their vote went from 13% to 8%. They lost 14 seats. It's crazy. The number of seats you get doesn't match the votes cast across the country.

DIANE: When will that get changed?

KEN: At this rate, never.

SADIQ: Labour had a chance. Back in 1997 they'd agreed that the electoral system needed to be changed.

DIANE: So what went wrong?

KEN: Labour won a landslide. That's what went wrong. They had a majority, why would you vote to change the system?

MARY: If we look ahead, it's even less likely that there'll be a change. There's no chance that Scotland will be looking for independence. Neither half of Ireland is happy with a border in the middle. They don't want to be together and pull out. Take away Ireland and Scotland. You'll have a majority in England that could last forever.

DIANE: Oh, great.

SADIQ: Why is it so hard?

DIANE: Really? Racism, poverty, inequality, homelessness.

MARY: OK. Leave the bickering, guys. Concentrate on what we can do. They look ahead to the future, what should they be doing?

HILDA: Even if we're out of Europe, we're not just on our own. We're still part of the rest of the world?

KEN: The USA? Johnson's friends with Trump, and a lot of other things. Are we looking to get closer to them?

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DIANE: What will that mean for women? They've been through austerity. Things we thought were improving come along like abortion, domestic violence. And by the way, did you know that if there were around, come election time?

MARY: Look around you – China, Brazil, India, Turkey, Hong Kong – to prefer a guy who talks tough.

DIANE: So governments will all be run by bullying men?

MARY: I hope not – but it's not looking hopeful. People

SADIQ: And then there's the technology. AI doing people's jobs, Google, Facebook; Huawei, 5G, security and surveillance there.

KEN: A lot of it depressing. We still haven't sorted out what we were involved in the Brexit vote –

HILDA: Here we go. Back to the past again.

KEN: In the last week of the campaign, Vote Leave announced huge amounts of targeted digital advertising, within the limits allowed. But if you add all that together, it's like the Russians were putting out.

MARY: Is that right?

KEN: There was a report. We're still waiting for the full details.

SADIQ: But the rest of the world isn't. Big shock – Brexit supporters want to know?

DIANE: You don't think our viewers need to know that?

HILDA: I don't think they want to. And I think they're sick of being told them that they need to.

SADIQ: Then there's the way we get our news.

MARY: What's wrong with it?

SADIQ: It's changing. My mum and dad sat down at 10 o'clock and watched what the BBC had to say. We don't do that any more.

DIANE: Johnson's certainly got it in for them – doesn't want the BBC, wants to close Channel 4 down.

SADIQ: It's not just personal. It's an old model; things have

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MARY: All right, you two, that's enough. But the future's there. At the moment, Johnson's on a roll, but what happens if he isn't a success?

KEN: There's no way he can do everything he's promised. Level up these towns in the North and the Midlands, stop neglect, factories dying, council taxes cut. He can't do it in a couple of years.

MARY: So what happens then?

KEN: Maybe that's Labour's chance – working at the grassroots, trying to nip the heart back.

SADIQ: Or maybe people just give up. Get angry, stop voting.

HILDA: You're not very hopeful, are you?

SADIQ: Honestly? No.

MARY: Maybe we've got enough to work on as it is. We've got what we have already, and decide how to tackle it. Is that all right?

DIANE: Yes.

SADIQ: You don't give up, do you?

DIANE: On this particular one, no.

MARY: Go on, then, Diane.

DIANE: Why do the old always decide things for the young?

KEN: Because they always have. You'll get your chance.

DIANE: I don't think so. Brexit? More than 60 per cent of the over 65s do. Less than 30% of the under 25s do. In the 2017 election, it was the Tories, and the same this time.

HILDA: Would you stop them voting?

DIANE: I'd stop them writing off the planet. Whatever happens.

HILDA: It's too big, too difficult...

KEN: It didn't feature in the election.

DIANE: And why was that, do you think? Why did the whole country all decide 'You know what? Whether the deal's big or small, it's the only way forward.' (Fade.)

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8. Taking It Seriously

Cast

- Winston Jackson
- Carol Jackson (*his wife*)
- Nina Jackson (*their daughter*)
- Mr Phillips (*part of the Prevent campaign*)
- Mr Choudry (*teacher at the Nelson Mandela school*)
- Ms McCann (*teacher at the Nelson Mandela school*)

Scene 1

(*The Jackson home, in the morning*)

NINA: No, Dad, I'm not going in.

WINSTON: Don't you care about your education?

NINA: Of course I care about my education. I care about the strike is about.

CAROL: Winston, we've talked about this.

WINSTON: Yes, and we don't agree.

NINA: But you can't stop her now. She's made her choice.

WINSTON: Which happens to be the same choice that you've made.

CAROL: That's not the point. She's made it.

WINSTON: And what do you think the school are going to do?

CAROL: I don't know. We'll cope with that when they decide.

WINSTON: Oh, that's great.

CAROL: But now is not the time to be talking about this.

WINSTON: You see, this could be trouble?

CAROL: All sorts of things can be trouble. But Nina's thought about it, and for me that's enough. Good luck, Nina.

NINA: Thanks, Mum. (CAROL goes.)

WINSTON: She's as bad as you are.

NINA: Yeah. Maybe she gets it from me. Bye, Dad. (She goes.)

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Scene 2

(A phone conversation, between Mr Choudry and Mr Phillips.)

CHOUDRY: Hello? Is this the Prevent hotline?

PHILLIPS: Yes, sir. How can we help?

CHOUDRY: I'm a teacher at the Nelson Mandela Academy.

PHILLIPS: Go on.

CHOUDRY: I'd rather not give my name at the moment.

PHILLIPS: That's fine. We're grateful for any information, and we'll keep it with total confidentiality.

CHOUDRY: We had this briefing about extremism, looking for signs of radicalisation.

PHILLIPS: Yes?

CHOUDRY: It's difficult, you see...

PHILLIPS: This is regarding a pupil at the school, right?

CHOUDRY: That's correct.

PHILLIPS: If you think there's cause for concern, then you have to report it. That's all you need to do. There's no need for you to be worried. ... and nobody need know that you were the source of the information.

CHOUDRY: You're sure about that?

PHILLIPS: There would be no point in us putting in all this effort if it was immediately exposed. We're used to working that way.

CHOUDRY: So what do you need?

PHILLIPS: The pupil's name and address. A brief outline of the concerns.

CHOUDRY: As simple as that?

PHILLIPS: Yes, really.

CHOUDRY: Very well. Nina Jackson. Year 11 – she's 16. Lives in the local area. Member of the local XR group, and she's been in the school strike earlier this week. Very vocal, keen to discuss campaigning issues in my lessons.

PHILLIPS: And that's quite enough. Leave it to us. We can handle it.

CHOUDRY: What will happen to her?

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PHILLIPS: It all depends. We'll have a chat, with her and her mother. If there's no need for further action. If there is cause to believe she's involved, we'll know what to do. But you were right to call.

CHoudry: Thank you. *(Call ends.)*

Scene 3

(Winston at home, watching TV. The doorbell rings. He turns the TV off and opens the door.)

PHILLIPS: Mr Jackson?

WINSTON: Yes?

PHILLIPS: I'm a member of Nina Jackson, at the Nelson Mandela?

WINSTON: Are you the police?

PHILLIPS: My name's Phillips. I'm part of the Prevent programme.

WINSTON: Prevent what?

PHILLIPS: Can we sit down and talk about this?

WINSTON: OK. Come in. Sit down. *(Phillips enters, and they sit down.)*

PHILLIPS: Thank you. We were set up to counter extremism.

WINSTON: You're saying Nina's an extremist?

PHILLIPS: If there's the possibility of her getting involved, yes.

WINSTON: Well, of course.

PHILLIPS: All we're saying is, she might be at risk. The aim is to identify potential risks before they develop, nip them in the bud.

WINSTON: This is the school strike - is it?

PHILLIPS: Tell me about it.

WINSTON: A group of them stayed off school last week. We were linked up with other schools. But I don't think they're serious.

PHILLIPS: That's good. And your daughter was involved in it?

WINSTON: Oh yes. She takes after her mother. If she thinks there's a risk, she's in there. But you're not saying she's been violent?

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PHILLIPS: Things can get out of hand. You start off warning you end up fighting on top of a Tube train. Is it p with Nina?

WINSTON: You can when she comes home. She's out with meetings. XR, I think they call it.

PHILLIPS: But you're not involved in that?

WINSTON: Not me, no. I'm not the organising type. Me and She's always been active, gone to groups, been of that, keep out of trouble

PHILLIPS: That sound sensible.

WINSTON: I've tried to warn Nina, told her she needs to co There'll be plenty of time for the other stuff wh

PHILLIPS: And in this XR group, do you know what she doe

WINSTON: You'd have to ask her. I try not to get involved. N feels very strongly. But she's not violent.

PHILLIPS: That's good to hear.

(CAROL and NINA come home.)

CAROL: and we can get the local paper in.

NINA: Nobody reads that, Mum. It's social media that

(Carol notices Phillips.)

CAROL: Good evening. Who's this, Winston?

WINSTON: Mr Phillips, from the Prevent programme.

CAROL: You're kidding me?

WINSTON: Hang on, Carol.

CAROL: Hang on, hang on. You know what these people c exercising their rights. In the name of counterter mess up people's jobs, basically make trouble.

PHILLIPS: That's not fair, Mrs Jackson.

CAROL: Isn't it? So why are you here? Do you have a wa

PHILLIPS: We're a long way from that.

CAROL: So where are you, exactly?

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PHILLIPS: Concerns have been raised about Nina...

NINA: Me? What have I done?

CAROL: What concerns, exactly?

WINSTON: Wait a minute –

PHILLIPS: There's no need for this to get heated. But if the
it seriously.

NINA: You're right. There is a threat, and I take it very
some kind of... Nina's feeling a bit stropky

PHILLIPS: It's not what I'm saying.

NINA: Unless drastic action is taken, the climate crisis
of young people.

PHILIPS: We can't possibly know that.

NINA: Yes, we can. American research, into six million
those numbers would be like if the temperature

PHILLIPS: Wait a minute.

CAROL: Wait for what? Our daughter to get in trouble be
source thinks she's just a bit too excited about c

NINA: What exactly am I supposed to have done?

PHILLIPS: There's no actual charge involved.

CAROL: Who put you up to this?

PHILLIPS: We can't reveal our sources, I'm afraid.

CAROL: It's not the police. You've had trouble with t

NINA: Mum?

CAROL: So it's the school. Someone at the school has sa

PHILLIPS: Concerns have been raised –

CAROL: Well you can just unraise them. And you can lea
come back until you have a specific charge you
my daughter.

PHILLIPS: (Stands.) Mrs Jackson –

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CAROL: I thought that was clear. Have I not been clear?

PHILLIPS: Yes. Right. Well, I'll be off.

(PHILLIPS goes.)

WINSTON: Terrific.

CAROL: What do you mean, terrific?

WINSTON: Nosey man comes sniffing around, thinking we're making him to get lost.

CAROL: Why didn't you tell him to get lost?

WINSTON: Because I didn't know what he was talking about. It's always as simple as you think. You start off warm and end up fighting on top of a Tube train.

CAROL: Seriously? That's what we're arguing about here.

NINA: Can someone tell me what I'm supposed to have?

CAROL: You've raised your voice. You've been involved in

NINA: And that's it? That's a crime.

WINSTON: It's not as simple as that.

CAROL: You think? OK. I'm working tomorrow but you've got to. So don't you go round to the school and find out what

NINA: No, Dad. Please. There's no point.

CAROL: There's no way Ellie McCann would be reporting

WINSTON: Maybe she has to. Maybe those are the rules now.

CAROL: Fine. In which case we need to know. So you go and find out.
(Blackout)

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Scene 4

(At Nina's school next day. Winston is sitting in a waiting room when Ms McCann enters)

WINSTON: Thanks so much for seeing me.

Ms McCANN: You're lucky, but I'm afraid it'll have to be quick.

WINSTON: We had someone round last night, from Prevention.

Ms McCANN: They were asking about Nina?

WINSTON: That's right. I mean, I know she can be a pain –

Ms McCANN: Nina's got a right to say what she thinks, fine –

WINSTON: Gets that from her mum.

Ms McCANN: – but there's no way she's a violent risk.

WINSTON: You didn't report her?

Ms McCANN: Mr Jackson, there is no way I would ever report her.

WINSTON: But you got her into this –

Ms McCANN: Hang on. Let's be really clear about what's going on. Nina's got a right to say what she thinks in English, she's a really good student and she's doing well in her environment club, and she chooses to come to the environment club ask what else they can do, I tell them that includes XR. But I'm not recruiting in school, she decides for herself. You must know that?

WINSTON: Of course. But you have been asked to ... well, keep an eye on her.

Ms McCANN: That's right. But it all depends on what you mean by 'violent'. A definition would be anywhere near theirs. I mean, we're not here to deal with Islamist terrorists and far-right thugs, we're here to deal with climate change. Do you see Nina being capable of that?

WINSTON: I guess not. But things can get out of hand. I mean, you can talk about climate change, and you end up fighting for it.

Ms McCANN: Mr Jackson, I'm involved in Extinction Rebellion.

WINSTON: I know that.

Ms McCANN: I don't know anyone in the organisation who thinks the Tube train was a good idea. It was a mistake, right?

WINSTON: But Nina is angry about climate change.

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Ms McCANN: Of course. And she's every right to be. Her general feeling is that she's got the pieces from our failure to take action.

WINSTON: Well, we could argue about that. I'm not that fussy. But obviously, it's Nina I'm worried about. Is it possible that the school has reported her?

Ms McCANN: I'm afraid so. It's quite possible. We've all had the experience of reporting pupils, but we don't all have the same level of concern. It's the catch. This stuff is very secretive. Nobody's supposed to know. It's hard to know what's going on. But if I find anything...

WINSTON: Thanks very much. And thanks for your time.

(She goes back to work in the corridor; he goes out.)

Scene 5

(Later, in the staffroom. Mr Choudry is sitting at a table, marking some papers. Ms McCann remains standing.)

Ms McCANN: Mr Choudry?

Mr CHOUDRY: Yes.

Ms McCANN: I've just been talking to Winston Jackson. Father...

Mr CHOUDRY: I know Nina.

Ms McCANN: And do you also know why she's been referred to you?

Mr CHOUDRY: How could I know that?

Ms McCANN: That's why I'm asking.

Mr CHOUDRY: You must know that referrals to Prevent are confidential.

Ms McCANN: I know that. I got the same feeling that you did. I think anyone could regard Winston Jackson as a credible source.

Mr CHOUDRY: But you would agree that the terrorist threat is serious.

Ms McCANN: That's not the point... But now you mention it, now I see it.

Mr CHOUDRY: You don't think terrorism is a serious threat?

Ms McCANN: Over 20 years in this country it's killed, what ... 13

Mr CHOUDRY: And you don't care about them?

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Ms McCANN: Sure. But I also care about the 1,800 victims of what, 15 times more?

Mr CHOUDRY: And they matter more because they're women?

Ms McCANN: Not all of them, no. But they all matter. And I find all this time and money into tracking down terror people at home.

Mr CHOUDRY: Luckily, it's not your choice. We don't make the who decide.

Ms McCANN: Experts in what, exactly?

Mr CHOUDRY: I don't know, and nor do you. I don't set myself or to decide exactly why officials have got it wrong.

Ms McCANN: So you did report her?

Mr CHOUDRY: I didn't say that. But I don't think Nina Jackson is government policy is misguided, and I don't think interrupt her education as a result.

Ms McCANN: Luckily, that's not your choice.

Mr CHOUDRY: No. It's another case where you and I take opposite agree to differ. *(Fade.)*

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9. Changing the World

Cast

- **Muptaz Saleem** (*IT whizz-kid, later tech businessman*)
- **Danny** (*his friend and colleague*)
- **Sharon** (*colleague*)
- **Maria** (*interviewer*)
- **Jim Marshall** (*colleague*)

(California. 2020, but remembering 20 years before that. A spotlight on Danny, speaking to the audience.)

DANNY: Do I know Muptaz Saleem? Of course. We were the kids with the magic box of tricks that no one else knew. We knew, you know, that computers were the future. Whatever we could do so much, could work so fast. But we didn't have said who was in charge. But that was the problem.

(The spotlight moves, as Danny moves to join Muptaz.)

MUPTAZ: You know what, Danny? I think this could be real.

DANNY: Sure. But we're not charging people, right?

MUPTAZ: No way. If you charge – like the phone company – you lose customers. You lose the people who can't afford it.

DANNY: And we want them, right?

MUPTAZ: We want them all. We are going to change the world.

DANNY: And no adverts, yeah?

MUPTAZ: Course not. Adverts would kill the whole thing down.

(Danny moves briefly forward to address the audience.)

DANNY: But then, along came Sharon.

(And then rejoins Muptaz as SHARON approaches.)

SHARON: Hi, boys. How're you doing?

DANNY: Fine, thanks.

SHARON: Muptaz?

MUPTAZ: Hi, Sharon. I'm guessing you're after something.

SHARON: Yup. I want to make you rich.

DANNY: I'm not sure I like the sound of that.

SHARON: Course you do. Everyone wants to be rich.

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MUPTAZ: Go on, then.

SHARON: All this stuff you're collecting – it's data. You may

DANNY: Someone's going to pay us for people's names?

SHARON: Not just names. Addresses, friends, things they like. We collect all that lot into a bundle, lots of little bits of stuff. Big stuff will be very interested.

DANNY: But we're not doing adverts.

SHARON: And you're not making a profit. So you can't expect anyone to pay for it, and you'll make a fortune. Maybe we'll want your company to grow – and if you can't do it on your hands.

DANNY: Nice try, Sharon. Always good to see you.

SHARON: What d'you think, Muptaz?

MUPTAZ: I'll think about it.

(Freeze, as Danny moves forward again.)

DANNY: And for me, that was the beginning of the end. Not about connecting – putting people in touch with each other. It was all about collecting – building up the data, so we could be a household name.

(A TV studio, in which Maria is interviewing Muptaz. Both are seated, facing each other.)

MARIA: And today I'm talking to Muptaz Saleem, the billion

MUPTAZ: Do I look like a businessman?

MARIA: Is that deliberate – the clothes, the style, the car?

MUPTAZ: I look like other people my age. I don't think we should worry about it. It doesn't matter how I talk. What matters is – do we live in a better place?

MARIA: And what's your answer?

MUPTAZ: I'd say we do. Think of the things computers can do. Buy tickets, download music, plan our journeys. If we have a broken computer, we can use the computer to fix it. And we get enough of them.

MARIA: Are they addicts? Are you giving them a drug?

MUPTAZ: Not at all. Some older people will get scared. The way of life, a lot of the stuff which made them feel safe isn't there. We need to provide a future that works for everyone.

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MARIA: That sounds very ambitious.

MUPTAZ: We're sure that we can help citizens to be more

MARIA: Really?

MUPTAZ: We ran this experiment, trying to get people to vote about polling places, and there was a button that said 'Vote' that, and all your friends knew what you'd done, and people voted who wouldn't have done. We made

MARIA: So what does the future look like to Muptaz Saleh?

MUPTAZ: It's exciting, it's a new frontier.

MARIA: Where there don't seem to be any rules.

MUPTAZ: And that's what makes it great. It's governments that go three times slower than businesses. And most governments are slower than we do. So the last thing we want is a government that takes nine times as long as we do to make a

MARIA: And where will this end up?

MUPTAZ: We'll end up knowing every book, film and song in this strange city, we can tell you which bar to go to, which bartender has your favourite drink ready. You know, we'll be people just like you.

(Fade, as Danny steps forward into the spotlight.)

DANNY: Bless. Don't that just warm your heart? But our city is more – they were a source of revenue. Take Jim

(Danny points to JIM, who steps forward.)

JIM: I bought this diamond ring for my girlfriend. It was my Year. Next day, I get this call from a friend, congratulating me on my engagement. It's all there, on my page, telling everyone my girlfriend, what I'd bought, how much it cost, how much it wrecked what was supposed to be special between us, this, without my knowledge or consent.

(Fades, as Muptaz anxiously approaches Sharon.)

MUPTAZ: What do I do?

SHARON: Say it was a mistake, the program went wrong.

MUPTAZ: We have to stop, right?

SHARON: Are you crazy? We're on a goldmine here. We have to keep growing. But we're going to keep on growing. Here's a list of things you ought to buy. *(Hands over sheet.)*

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MUPTAZ: (Reading through.) Really? Some of these are hard

SHARON: Some of them are losing money.

MUPTAZ: But it's smart for us to buy them?

SHARON: Absolutely. They're not doing good business, but
and data collection is what we do. Trust me, Mup

(Fade, as Danny comes back into the spotlight.)

DANNY: For old times' sake I'd a few shares. Because
Muptaz was the one to get a taste of the good time
extra money coming in. But I hadn't a clue what
in decisions, he made all the deals. This is the
and it has to be done fast. Didn't want anything
questions, or worrying if Sharon had got it wrong



(Fade, and back to the TV studio. As before, Maria talking to Muptaz. But this time)

MARIA: So, Muptaz, we haven't talked for a while. You've

MUPTAZ: That's right. It's going well.

MARIA: You're not worried about reports that social media
the Brexit vote and Trump's election depended

MUPTAZ: No, that's crazy. There's no way that could happen

MARIA: What about the rumours that you shared data with

MUPTAZ: Certainly not. Totally untrue.

MARIA: But there are political adverts on your platform
worried about controlling them?

MUPTAZ: We put in a lot of effort to make sure we remove

MARIA: But you don't remove adverts that tell lies?

MUPTAZ: It's not our job to tell people what to think.

MARIA: But you have monitors, whose job it is to look at
Can you tell us a bit about how they work?

MUPTAZ: Our actual procedures have to remain confidential

MARIA: But they do suffer from mental stress and illness

MUPTAZ: I didn't say that. There's a lot of hysterical reports
you've changed your tone since the last time we

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MARIA: What's changed, Muptaz, is that we've learnt a lot. For instance, you've changed your rules about privacy.

MUPTAZ: That's true. Society moves on, so things have to change. They aren't set in stone. We decided that things are different and we went for it.

MARIA: That's your decision? You don't want to ask people about their privacy?

MUPTAZ: They're not in a position to decide that. We're the ones who are happening. We know what you know, and what you don't know, and how to organise the world so that we can solve the problems.

MARIA: And your plans for the future?

MUPTAZ: We want to connect everyone, and understand everyone. We have more tools to help them share. We can help to build a world which connects the world's people to something better.

MARIA: That's serious stuff.

MUPTAZ: Of course. Did you think we were joking?

MARIA: Are you serious about the impact you have? The people who suffer from mental illness, the bright young people who work for you than go into public service?

MUPTAZ: We don't kidnap them. They're free to choose.

MARIA: So you're not worried what your critics say?

MUPTAZ: A lot of people can't adapt to change. We either move forward, to new possibilities or we go backwards, to how it used to be.

MARIA: It's as simple as that? All or nothing? Isn't there a middle ground?

MUPTAZ: We have a full road map of products to help build a more informed society, to keep our communities safe and healthy here. *(Focus a spotlight back on Danny.)*

DANNY: Some journey, huh? You start off as a kid in a shelter, and you're God. He didn't use to talk like that. But he's changed. He's selling products, and all he cares about is selling.

He'll tell you that that's the way it has to be, that the world is controlled. But he's wrong. I know that it could have been so much better. It all depends which way you look at it.

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10. Teaching the Truth

Cast

- Carwyn (head teacher at a junior school)
- Manjit (teacher at the school)
- Simon (teacher at the school)
- Gerald (teacher at the school)
- Fiona (teacher at the school)
- Astrid (visiting teacher)

(A junior school staff meeting. Carwyn is seated at the head of a large table. Around it are the other teachers.)

CARWYN: We're just waiting for Gerald, then.

MANJIT: And we shan't be starting that next year.

SIMON: Is he finishing, then?

GERALD: (Enters.) Sorry about that. (He sits down.)

CARWYN: We need to make a start, as we've a lot to fit in our agenda. So, Astrid –

SIMON: Carwyn, does this have to be the first item?

CARWYN: What's the problem, Simon?

SIMON: I'm sure it's very interesting, but it's an optional extra.

MANJIT: To you, maybe. To some of us it's more important.

SIMON: So this is your idea?

CARWYN: Simon, I'm the head teacher. I put it at the top of our agenda. We're starting with. My apologies, Astrid. Over to you.

ASTRID: Thank you. And thank you all for making me so welcome. I'm grateful. I've been talking with Carwyn, and we've agreed for me to outline a scheme I was involved in when I was in primary school. It is to encourage all pupils to examine information.

GERALD: This is in primary schools?

ASTRID: It's in all schools. Across the country, and all ages. When I was in primary school, I was in a primary school. We often did it. We were doing.

SIMON: It's a nice idea, but –

ASTRID: It is a nice idea, but it also works. Transparency in how clearly young people can see through disinformation came third, out of 180 countries.

FIONA: What about the UK?

ASTRID: Eleventh or twelfth, I think.

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SIMON: Which is not bad.

MANJIT: But could be better, if we learnt from the people Parliament did a survey on how many British children
difference between fake and real news.

CARWYN: Well, how many was it?

MANJIT: Two per cent.

SIMON: You've really prepared for this, haven't you?

MANJIT: It's not a plot. I just want us to be better. I think Astrid's talking about could help us to change this.

FIONA: So if I was teaching this, what would I actually be

ASTRID: Well, analysing adverts...

GERALD: So it's English teachers?

ASTRID: No, it's all teachers, all subjects. That's the point of the campaigns, Art teachers show children how to read, all teachers examine examples of misleading statistics, all teachers put in their own effort, with all teachers putting in their own angle so that the little bits add up to a programme.

FIONA: That's amazing.

GERALD: Exhausting, more like.

ASTRID: You're both right. It's a lot of work, but the work is worth it.

CARWYN: It sounds great, but I can't see it happening here.

MANJIT: Why not?

CARWYN: In the UK we can't agree on anything. And the way we think is different.

MANJIT: Right. Finland is a cool, rational place where they don't have the UK's divided mess dominated by its colonial legacy.

GERALD: Is that how you see this country?

MANJIT: Well, let's just say we're different. But in this case we'd be better off. That's a good reason for making changes.

SIMON: So this is political?

ASTRID: It's not political in Finland, not so far as parties are concerned. All parties support this. If it has a bias, it's a bias in favour of not taking things on trust.

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GERALD: And you think our kids would be up to that?

MANJIT: Do you think they wouldn't?

ASTRID: It may sound very serious, but it can be fun too, and getting children to be detectives – they love

SIMON: But there is a serious aim?

ASTRID: Of course. We looked at our children, and what TV, social media. There are so many new pressures so fast – it's easy for the children to get swamped. They don't know what to believe.

FIONA: It's not just the kids. That's how I feel.

CARWYN: So Astrid, you've been here since September. Do you see something like this here?

ASTRID: Absolutely. The organisation of schools is different, very different –

GERALD: You can say that again. When I was younger we were a bit different, and it was all over the papers. Lies.

FIONA: But who reads the papers, nowadays? Our kids don't

MANJIT: It doesn't stop the government being scared of

ASTRID: There's different ways to get your information. You can look things up, not just Wikipedia. They must get

CARWYN: I like the sound of that. I listen to some of our kids

SIMON: Just because our kids might benefit doesn't mean it's good. This sounds to me like the sort of scheme that

ASTRID: Of course, it's easier to do, and it's more likely to

MANJIT: But doing something is better than doing nothing

SIMON: So you're in a hurry to dive in.

MANJIT: Yes, I am. OK, so we don't have the Finnish set-up as part of a national effort, but that's not going to be an LGBT business.

CARWYN: No, please. Don't let's get into that.

MANJIT: All I'm saying is, our government won't have the chance to do this. If some schools do it, and make it work, then we can take it up.

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CARWYN: So we'd be pioneers?

GERALD: I'm not sure how I feel about that.

FIONA: I think it's exciting.

MANJIT: Me too. I'm glad you agree.

SIMON: Before we all get carried away, let's think about these materials for this, a course that's been put together to make it up ourselves as we go along?

MANJIT: I'm not sure that's a bad thing.

SIMON: If we do that, what don't we do instead? With all the things we have to do, we're working hard enough. We don't need to add another layer of work on top of what we're already doing.

CARWYN: I must say that is a worry for me. I like the sound of it, but I'm not sure we could take it on in a big way, across the school. What ideas about what we might do?

ASTRID: I've thought about this, and I know it has to start somewhere. Especially in Art, I know there are things we can do. I've seen things in Finland. I'd be happy to make those available. I'd like to share these ideas with other classes.

MANJIT: There's a lot of work we already do in English, and in History. That needs bringing up to date, with social media. It's a bit of a mean, if you look at the Brexit campaign, or the

CARWYN: No, Manjit. We're not getting into that. And we're not

MANJIT: These are key moments in our history. Our kids' parents

SIMON: And this school's future will be finished if you stop

FIONA: It's a shame, though. I do think it's important.

ASTRID: So we need to be sensible and think about what we can teach. Stay away from politics, maybe, but think about the things that are going on -- what kind of power do they have, and how can we protect ourselves against it?

SIMON: So the enemy is capitalism?

MANJIT: The enemy is lies.

ASTRID: It's not as simple as that. We're not giving answers. We're asking questions, to find their own answers.

CARWYN: And how does that work?

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ASTRID: We're not just dealing with lies. We have three
disinformation, and malinformation.

FIONA: What's the difference?

ASTRID: Misinformation is things that aren't true, maybe
is deliberate lying, setting out to deceive. And mal-
might not be true, but is setting out to hurt.

SIMON: That's really complicated. Don't tell me all Finnish

ASTRID: Why not? They all need to know if you stop a Finnish
know the difference. They'll have interviewed Mr. Mockingbird
mockingbird. If they see someone talking on the phone, the questions they would ask.

SIMON: That's very impressive, but it's not in the National

MANJIT: Which is a shame. But there's a lot you won't find
foodbanks. A serious approach to climate change.

CARWYN: All right, Manjit, let's not get carried away. This
we have to try to agree what's practical.

I'm assuming that Astrid and Manjit both want to

FIONA: I think it sounds great.

SIMON: But not the best thing to dominate your first year

MANJIT: Why not? I can't think of a better way to train you

SIMON: Maybe you can't, but I can.

CARWYN: There's no need for you two to fight about how
discuss that with her later. So we'll encourage Astrid and Manjit
work with their own classes, in a small trial run, as
they've done next term.

GERALD: Carwyn?

CARWYN: What is it, Gerald?

GERALD: I'd like to be included in this.

CARWYN: But ... well, you'll be finishing soon, Gerald.

GERALD: I know. I'm old, and a bit set in my ways. But I like
me of how I was when I started teaching. We're doing much
much more than I do now, but I can remember when you
you think it's important, and the kids get interested in the
work. The work's more satisfying, for you and the kids, and
a bit more. *(Fade.)*

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Tasks

These scripts can be used in different ways. They can be read in groups, and then discussion and/or written work. They could be performed, in class or in an assembly, whole class or in small groups. There is no obligation for pupils to attempt every task – that's a choice for the teacher.

With each play, there is a Write/Improvise task, offering the chance for fuller exploration of the themes – writing a long script on your own or working in a group towards a presentation, different, and it must be a teacher choice about whether you wish to choose one task or give pupils a choice.

Some of the plays are better suited to reading in groups, and some are more suited to a middle group, which are more like a discussion, and if the technology is available, of working – pupils presenting their own video reports.

A further option is an ambitious programme which takes on a number of themes.

The Group Circus

The class is divided up into four or five small groups. Each group gets copies of one of the plays (3, 5, 6, 8, 9), which they have to read through and then discuss. A possible assignment is to identify the most important speeches in this play. Say why they matter, and what your group have had time to read through, discuss and prepare, each then does a presentation (an extract from it) and presenting their findings. That would require careful organisation, and ground in three hours, and the fact that each group is presenting a different script adds a unique interest – only the performers know what's coming.

A possible follow-up assignment would be for each member of the class to write a short piece of free choice between the five themes that have been covered.

1. Think before You Tweet

- A. This scene is about footballers, but the problems of social media affect everyone. Identify the problems relating to social media which have happened in the last month, and rank them by seriousness – No. 1 is the most important.
- B. Imagine that you're offering advice to junior school pupils about using social media. You could offer them of how social media could go wrong, and three pieces of advice you find useful.
- C. Imagine that one of the footballers in this scene has a problem relating to social media. Write a play scene involving the footballer, a close friend, one parent, a representative of the media.

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2. Kicking the Habit

- A. What's wrong with the following statement?

'John Marks was a drugs reformer who got carried away by his own ideas. He used methods that he failed to see that they were a threat to the health of his patients in his town. In the end he had to be stopped from doing further damage.'

Write your own version, which gives the true story.

- B. Neil Woods, promoting his book in 2016, goes out of his way to mention a doctor more than 20 years ago.

Why does he think John Marks is so important?

- C. Imagine that today a group of people is set up to try to agree about how drugs should be handled. Include a doctor, a police officer, a young addict, the parent of a youngster with a problem, and a journalist.

Write/improvise a script like this one, which mixes drama and a TV interview.

3. Taking back Control

- A. According to Colm, how has the job at the Home Office changed?
- B. In the final scene between Phil and Janine, neither of them says in full what they think. Write two paragraphs, one for each of them, giving their full thoughts at that time.
- C. Meera is upset by what's happened to the students accused of cheating. Imagine her thinking of giving up her job. Some of her relatives agree with her; others don't.

Write/improvise a play scene about what happens next.

4. Living with Fear

- A. Imagine that you were going to perform this play to an audience. Draw a diagram of the stage it – where would the various actors be in relation to the audience?

Write notes for each of the characters, saying what they should wear, and how they should move.

Plays aren't the same all the way through – they build up to important moments. What are the most important moments in this play?

- B. CONOR: You've just dismissed the things that I believe in, and I know a lot of people who believe in them.
RUTH: I know, but we've got results.

Conor and Ruth disagree, but one of the disagreements between them is what is important. Which facts are important?

Find out about the SVRU (Scottish Violence Reduction Unit) and find evidence to support your discussion.

- C. This scene gives you some clues about what Marlon's film might be like. Write and improvise/write in detail one scene in the film.

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5. Another World – Next Door

- A. Why does Mr Harris change his mind?
- B. This is a short play, which moves quickly between three settings. In a perform set to show what kind of a place each of these is?
- (a) Karim and Anita's home
 - (b) Windsor Estates offices
 - (c) Roberto and Joanna's home

How could costume help with this?

- C. This play shows a campaign against inequality.

Write/improvise your own play, a campaign against inequality, which might include:

- (i) The children of immigrants get better exam results, and are likely to live longer.
- (ii) Men and women's sports teams are treated very differently, so far as pay and status are concerned.
- (iii) BME (black or minority ethnic) MPs are treated differently from white MPs.

Think about what you're attacking, why you think things should change, and how you can get public support.

6. Kicking down the Door

- A. Imagine that after this programme, Shami Roy and Dave Merritt bump into each other. Write their conversation as a dialogue, showing the differences between them.
- B. Write one chapter from the autobiography of Steve Gallant.
- C. This play is in the form of a TV documentary. It includes straight reporting of events, interviews with people involved (a government minister, and the father of a victim) and two fictional characters.

Use a similar mixture to tell the story of an event which has happened in the last 10 years. You can write it as a script, or you write yourself OR in a group improvisation.

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7. Picking up the Pieces

Name	Age	Costume	Approach to
Mary			
Hilda			
Diane			
Sadiq			
Ken			

A. Fill in the chart above for the characters in this play.

B. 'Why do older people always decide things for the young?'

Write a letter to the government, outlining the ways in which you think young people are treated, and how things could be changed to give them a better future.

C. This scene shows a group of people comparing notes on something that's just happened – but which they see differently.

Write/improvise your own play scene about one of the following situations:

- (i) A sports team which has just lost an important match
- (ii) The people involved in making a film, who've just watched it for the first time
- (iii) A school council (involving teachers and pupils) who look back on what's happened in the school year, and plan improvement for the future

8. Taking It Seriously

A. What do you think the main differences are between Carol and Winston? In what ways are they similar? Think about how they treat Nina, how they speak to her, and their relationship with the school.

B. Imagine that the head teacher hears about the disagreement between Mr C and Mrs C and arranges a meeting with them to try to agree on how they should deal with the situation about that meeting.

C. XR members feel strongly that climate change is a real issue, which needs urgent attention to the issue, and that might involve stopping traffic, blocking roads, digging up the lawn of a Cambridge College. Different members have different ideas about what should go and which approach will be best for the campaign.

Write/improvise a play scene in which XR members discuss their tactics for a campaign. This play uses contrasts (between Carol and Winston, between Mr C and Mrs C) to show the disagreements involved; think about what contrasts you want to use.

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9. Changing the World

- A. This script covers the development of Internet platforms over more than 20 years and BAD, make notes on the different effects it describes.
- B. Muptaz Saleem is imaginary, but he's based on some real-life characters. The character of Muptaz is based on Mark Zuckerberg, a Facebook executive, in 2016:

'We connect people. That can be good if they make it positive. Maybe someone saves the life of someone on the brink of suicide. So we connect more people. Maybe it costs a life by exposing someone to bullies. Maybe someone is coordinated on our tools. And still we connect people. The ugly truth is that we connect so deeply that anything that allows us to connect more people more often is a mistake, growth tactics are how we continue.'

Write a dialogue in which you imagine a conversation where you ask him about the future.

- C. This is a large area, covering complicated information and a lot of details. Pick one and find out as much as you can about it.
- (i) How digital advertising has affected politics
 - (ii) The effect of social media on young people
 - (iii) Better ways of protecting people's privacy

Write/improvise a play based on what you've found out. Try to use a mixture of dialogue; TV interview; and a character who's also a narrator, telling the audience.

10. Teaching the Truth

- A. Collect a list of ways in which important truths are hidden.

Possible areas include:

power money land health environment media

Who's doing the hiding, how and why?

What should we know that we're not being told?

Complete the following chart for the characters in this play:

Name	Age	Costume	Approach
Carwyn			
Manjit			
Simon			
Gerald			
Fiona			
Astri			

If you were designing a course to help secondary school pupils check the truth, what would it include? What do they need to know about? What should they be doing? In teaching this course, what would actually be happening in the lessons?

- B. This is important, but it's also controversial. Not all teachers will agree about what to teach, and parents and pupils will also have different views. Imagine that a school is going to do this and they call a meeting of parents, pupils and teachers to discuss it, to try to agree on what to teach.

Write/improvise a scene about that meeting.

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Notes on Sources

All dated reports are from The Guardian, unless otherwise specified.

1. Think before You Tweet

- The report of the impact of social media on performance comes from
- The England player referred to is Adam Johnson, sentenced in February
- The report of Bernardo Silva being fined was 13 November 2019.
- The referee Bobby Madley was removed from the referees' list in August
- [zzed.uk/11023-1-bobby](https://www.zzed.uk/11023-1-bobby)

In the month after I wrote this scene, there were no further cases of football social media posts.

2. Kicking the Habit

- The story of John Marks in Widnes is reported in 'Junk Policy', an article [zzed.uk/11023-2-marks](https://www.zzed.uk/11023-2-marks)
- 'New Woods' book was published in August 2016.

3. Taking back Control

- The original accusations that 34,000 students had cheated were made. I wrote a number of articles about the impact on individual students in 2016. It was criticised for its treatment of the students by the National Audit of Education. [zzed.uk/11023-3-cheating](https://www.zzed.uk/11023-3-cheating)

4. Living with Fear

- One of the key sources for this play was this article: [zzed.uk/11023-4-fear](https://www.zzed.uk/11023-4-fear)

5. Different Worlds – Next Door

- This draws on articles about the exclusion of social tenants from garden. A campaigning group organised to fight it: [zzed.uk/11023-5-gardens](https://www.zzed.uk/11023-5-gardens)

6. Kicking down the Door

- The London Bridge attack, in which Jack Merritt and Saskia Jones were killed, took place on 29 November 2019. Steve Gallant's statement was reported in [zzed.uk/11023-8-bridge](https://www.zzed.uk/11023-8-bridge)

Since I prepared this material, there have been reports of the Durham rehabs shown on Channel 4 in *How to Stay Out of Jail* on 18 February 2020: [zzed.uk/11023-9-durham](https://www.zzed.uk/11023-9-durham)

7. Picking up the Pieces

- This scene draws on a wide range of sources following the general election

8. Taking It Seriously

- The article about listing XR as an extremist organisation was reported in [zzed.uk/11023-8-attack](https://www.zzed.uk/11023-8-attack)

9. Changing the World

- The main source for this play was Shoshana Zuboff's monumental book *Capitalism* (Profile Books, 2019) – 500 pages but riveting and essential

10. Teaching the Truth

- This was based on a *Guardian* article in 'The Upside' series, published in [zzed.uk/11023-10-upside](https://www.zzed.uk/11023-10-upside)

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