**BARTHOLOMEW ABOMINATIONS**

by Paul Sirett

A Play for Radio

As broadcast

NOV. 2020

***Music. A digital click***

**SCENE 1.**

*Someone is making a recording using voice changing software to disguise the sound of their voice. Their first attempt might be something deep and almost demonic:*

1. VOICE: At midnight tonight, mass deportations begin…I sound like Satan…

*Typing and a digital click.*

*They try another. This time the voice might sound echoey and distant, like someone trapped in a ravine:*

1. VOICE: At midnight-ight-ight-ight tonight-ight-ight-ight… *(Playing with the echo)*

*They try another. This time the voice might sound like a somewhat robotic, middle-aged man:*

1. VOICE: At midnight tonight…yes, that’s it, agreed, At midnight tonight, mass deportations begin. All deaf, blind, disabled, neurodiverse, and non-English-born men and women not married… yes, that’ll do!

*Music ends.*

**SCENE 2.**

*Setting up for the Wedding Fair at St Bartholomew Exhibition and Conference Centre in London, 2032. The clatter of various stalls being set up in an otherwise empty exhibition arena. A quite boom-y, concrete acoustic – there are no people to soak up the sound yet. Two women – URSULA and ALICE – are setting up a stall offering ‘English Wives’. URSULA is trying to secure some signage.*

1. URSULA: Alice, can you help me with this sign? It keeps slipping…
2. ALICE: Uh-oh. Don’t look now…

*A male POLICE OFFICER approaches.*

1. URSULA: Yes, officer.
2. POLICE OFFICER: Can I see your authorization?
3. URSULA: It was checked on the way in.
4. POLICE OFFICE: We’re doing secondary checks.
5. URSULA: It’s on my phone.

*URSULA gets her phone.*

1. ALICE: Is there a problem?
2. POLICE OFFICER: Just making sure everyone has the required permissions.
3. ALICE: Of course.
4. URSULA: There you go.

*Beeping as the POLICE OFFICER tries to scan a QR code.*

1. ALICE: Be glad when today’s over. We can get back to being a proper country again.
2. URSULA: Is everything all right?
3. POLICE OFFICER: I can’t seem to scan the QR code.
4. URSULA: That’s odd, they didn’t have a problem at the police check on the way

in, did they?

1. ALICE: No, it was fine.
2. POLICE OFFICER: I might have to send it-
3. URSULA: Oh, I know, look, there’s a hairline crack on my screen. Can you see it? It’s tiny, but… You can just about… Just… It must be that. That would explain it, wouldn’t it?
4. ALICE: Yes.
5. POLICE OFFICER: Perhaps…
6. URSULA: I’ve got our letter from the Home Office. I can…
7. P.A. Welcome to the St Bartholomew Exhibition and Conference Centre. Gates are now open. Please make your way to the Wedding Fair registration area ---
8. POLICE OFFICER: *(Handing her phone bac), taking letter)* Thank you.
9. ALICE: Don’t suppose you’re looking for someone?
10. POLICE OFFICER: Looking…?
11. ALICE: A partner?
12. POLICE OFFICER: No.

*The sound of several text, WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram alerts going off at the same time along with a burst of static as the disguised robotic, middle-aged male voice that we heard at the start of the play takes over the P.A.*

1. VOICE/P.A.: At midnight tonight, mass deportations will begin. All deaf, blind, disabled, neurodiverse, and non-English born men and women not married to an able-boded, English-born partner will be arrested and taken to detention centres. If you are being forced to seek a marriage partner at a Wedding Fair today, we have a message for you: Leave now.
2. POLICE OFFICER: I have to go.
3. URSULA: Right. Okay.
4. ALICE: Bye…….That was strange…

*POLICE OFFICER has gone.*

1. URSULA: *(Mimicking Alice)* “Don’t suppose you’re looking for

someone?”

1. ALICE: Shut up.

**SCENE 3.**

*Later in the day.* ***The opening of this scene is heard from TOM’S deaf interior audio POV. Sounds are muffled, like we are under water, we are hearing the world as TOM hears it.******(NB. From here, everything in bold is heard from TOM’S audio POV – words in these sections that aren’t in bold represent the occasional word that TOM manages to identify). TOM is queuing at a stall offering potential marriage partners.******We hear the hubbub of a crowd - the arena is filled with people. NED joins the queue.***

1. **NED: Hey.**
2. **TOM What?**
3. **NED Have you been waiting long?**

***TOM isn’t aware that NED is talking to him.***

1. **NED: Excuse me?**
2. **TOM Mmhhm.**
3. **NED How long… excuse me?**
4. **TOM Huh?** Sorry, what?
5. NED: Have you been waiting long?

1. TOM:                           Yeah.

*Pause.*

1. NED: Where are you from?
2. TOM: Where?
3. NED: Where are you from?
4. TOM: North London. I’m deaf.
5. NED:                             Oh. Can you read lips?

1. TOM:                           I can read lips…

*Audio switches to a hearing POV.*

1. NED: Yes?
2. TOM: Yes.
3. NED: It’s slow. The queue.
4. TOM: Yes.
5. NED: Ned. My name’s Ned.
6. TOM: Tom.
7. NED: Nice to meet you, Tom.
8. TOM: Yes.
9. NED: I’ve been here all day. It’s hopeless.
10. TOM: Sorry, what?
11. NED: I’ve been here all day. No luck.
12. TOM: Are you disabled?
13. NED: No. Polish. I moved here with my family when I was a teenager, so I don’t qualify.
14. TOM: I hope they’ve got some partners left.
15. NED: Yes.
16. TOM: I had an introduction this morning.
17. NED: No good?
18. TOM: No.
19. NED: I’ve had three introductions. It’s cost me a fortune.
20. TOM: Yes.
21. \*P.A.: This stall is now closed. All marriage partners have been allocated. This stall is now closed.

*\*NB. When TOM is in a scene, we have the option of either hearing a muffled version of the P.A. announcements from TOM’S POV and then having another character clearly paraphrase the announcement for TOM, or hearing them clearly and also having another character paraphrase them for him - a question for the mix…*

1. NED: No!
2. TOM: What?
3. NED: Closed. They’ve run out.
4. TOM:                            Run out?

1. NED                             Run out of partners.

1. TOM                             Everywhere is running out.
2. P.A.: Stalls are open in the Albion Exhibition Arena.
3. TOM: What?
4. NED: Stalls are open in the Albion Exhibition Arena.
5. TOM: Where’s that?

*The sound of hundreds of text, WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram alerts going off at the same time.*

1. P.A.: Stalls are ---

*A burst of static as the disguised robotic, middle-aged male voice takes over the P.A. again.*

1. P.A./VOICE: They think that failure to hold the government accountable for their handling of the Covid-19 pandemic twelve years ago has given them permission to do whatever they like.
2. NED: The Voice again.
3. TOM: I got a text.
4. P..A./VOICE They must be stopped. We will stop them. Do not allow yourself to become a part of their plan. The round up begins in three hours. Leave now.
5. NED: What do you think would happen if we just left, like he says?
6. TOM: They’d find us. They can track us. I don’t want to end up in one of the detention places.
7. NED: They’ll send me back to Poland if I don’t find someone. I haven’t been back there for years.
8. TOM: Where did they say to go?
9. NED: Albion Exhibition Arena.

**SCENE 4.**

*Office corridor, SIR MICHAEL BEST MP, the Home Secretary, is walking at speed, intermittently consulting notes as, under his breath, he practices a speech he will be making later.*

BEST: *(Reading/Checking notes)* Today we are present at the birth of a new England. Today we will make England English again… Today… Today-Today… *(Consults notes)* The deaths of many disabled people in the pandemic of 2020 changed the demographic of our green and pleasant land forever and *(Consults notes)* if the deep recession that followed taught us anything, it is surely that we must never again endure such a strain on the economy. Annnnd… *(Consults notes)* Tomorrow we will be a fully fit and healthy nation once again. I care about England. I care about being English. I care about people like us…

*BEST pulls a door open and steps into a room where a media team are conducting interviews. In the background we can hear the low babble of a live news podcast. METROPOLITAN POLICE COMMISSIONER DAME FELICITY HOBBS is waiting in the room.*

1. HOBBS: Sir Michael.
2. BEST: Hello. Didn’t expect to see you here.
3. HOBBS Just waiting to see if they can squeeze me in.
4. BEST: Did you hear that damn Voice thing again?
5. HOBBS: That’s why I’m here. I want the public know we’re onto him.
6. BEST: Are we? Onto him?
7. HOBBS: Not exactly.
8. BEST: You-know-who isn’t very happy.
9. HOBBS: Is the PM here?
10. BEST: Chequers.
11. HOBBS: Sent you instead.
12. BEST: Yes. Although I am getting married today. Getting my license.
13. HOBBS: Really?
14. BEST: The PM wanted someone from the cabinet to be seen going through the motions. So, I thought, why not?
15. HOBBS: Do I know her?
16. BEST: Philippa Purecraft. Ex-NHS. No need for us to tie the knot today, not on the excluded list, but it’ll look good.
17. HOBBS: She doesn’t mind the media spotlight?
18. BEST: She doesn’t know yet. I haven’t had a chance to ask her.
19. BEST: Wanted a word with the producer first, see if I can put the time of my speech back.
20. HOBBS: You’re going to ask her live on air?
21. BEST: Good lord, no. I’m meeting her in a minute. I’ll make the announcement once I’ve done the business.
22. BEST: I’d better find this producer.
23. HOBBS: I can ask her if you like.
24. BEST: Would you? Just say I’d like to put my speech back an hour or so. Tell her it’ll be worth it – but don’t tell her why, I don’t want news of this being leaked before I’ve done the deal, so to speak.
25. HOBBS: I’ll let you know.
26. BEST: Appreciated. Right, I’d better go and pop the question.
27. HOBBS: Going somewhere romantic?
28. BEST: No time. She’s gone to say hello to her son-in-law. Works in I.T.

*Mobile ringtone.*

1. HOBBS: If you’ll excuse me, Home Secretary. *(On phone)* Yes… Keep looking. *(Hangs up)*
2. BEST: Problem?
3. HOBBS: Thought we had a lead. The Voice. Dead end.
4. BEST: Can’t you locate the device he’s using?
5. HOBBS: We’ve tried. He’s something of a tech wizard.

**SCENE 5.**

*I.T. office at Wembley. The tap of half a dozen computer keyboards. JOHN MACALISTER is overseeing the use of the government’s onsite computer consoles. JOHN is Scottish; he is a wheelchair-user. He is with his Mother-in-law, PHILIPPA PURECRAFT (MRS P).*

1. JOHN: What does he want?
2. MRS P: No idea. Had to see me here. Quite insistent. Thought I’d say hello to my wonderful son-in-law at the same time. Busy?
3. JOHN: Bit mad.
4. MRS P: I won’t keep you long. I baked a cake for you and Win. For your wedding anniversary.
5. JOHN: You’re my favourite mother-in-law.
6. MRS P: Not a lot of competition. I hope. How is Win?
7. JOHN: She’s fine. Works too hard.
8. MRS P: Not the only one by the looks of it.
9. JOHN: It’s all bloody nonsense, if you ask me.
10. MRS P: Careful, John, that’s dangerous talk. I might call her. Is she home?
11. JOHN: School. Parents evening.
12. MRS P: I’ll leave her a video message. Can I borrow your tablet? I left my phone at home.
13. JOHN: On the desk.
14. MRS P: Thanks.
15. JOHN: I hate this.
16. MRS P: What?
17. JOHN: Being part of this charade. Bloody English...ach!
18. MRS P: I may have to report you to the Home Secretary if you continue to say things like that.

1. JOHN: I don’t know what you see in him. Sir Michael Best.
2. MRS P: There’s more to Sir Michael than meets the eye.
3. JOHN: Win doesn’t like him. You do know that?
4. MRS P: My daughter isn’t in a relationship with him. I am. I didn’t complain when she decided to marry a Scottish wheelchair-user, did I?
5. JOHN: You got me there.
6. MRS P: *(Using Video Call)* Win! Hello, love. Mum here. I’m at the Bartholomew Wedding Fair thing with your lovely husband. *(To John)* Say “hello” John.
7. JOHN: Hello, John.
8. MRS P: I baked you a cake. I’ll try you again later. Happy anniversary!
9. JOHN: Here we go again…[digital beeping sounds]
10. MRS P: What?
11. JOHN: The terminals have gone down. Third time today.
12. MRS P: Oh dear.

**SCENE 6.**

*BEST walking up a concrete staircase, as he, slightly breathlessly, goes through another part of his speech.*

1. BEST: Not so very long ago, we were part of what they used to call the European Community. Thankfully, it no longer exists. Not so very long ago… *(Checks notes)* We were signed up for the Human Rights Act, an act of law that gave permission for terrorist and foreign born murderers and rapists to live in our country. *(Stops to catch his breath)* Not any more. *(Off up the stairs he goes again)* Not so long ago, anyone could walk our streets without us knowing who they were or what they were doing. Not anymore. Today-Today-Today… *(Checks notes)*

*He pushes open a door. He enters the I.T. office. Tap of keyboards.*

1. BEST: *(Asking someone)* Excuse me, I’m… *(Sees MRS P)* Ah! There she is.

Philippa.

1. MRS P: Hello, dear. Sir Michael – this is my son-in-law, John; John – Sir Michael.
2. BEST: John?
3. JOHN: Macalister.
4. BEST: How’s it going, John? All good?
5. JOHN: The terminals have just crashed again.
6. BEST: What?
7. MRS P: Are you going to tell me why you wanted to meet me here, dearest?
8. BEST: Can you sort it out?
9. JOHN: It’s my job. Unfortunately.
10. BEST: What?
11. JOHN: Nothing.
12. BEST: No. Come on. If you’ve got something to say, say it.
13. JOHN: It’s mad. All this. In my humble opinion.
14. BEST: I see. And why would that be?
15. JOHN: It’s just bloody vindictive.
16. MRS P: Ignore him, Michael. He’s Scottish. You know what they’re like.
17. BEST: Don’t I just. Philippa, there’s something I want to talk to you about.

*BEST’S mobile rings.*

1. BEST: Is there somewhere I can take this in private?
2. JOHN: Out there?
3. BEST: *(as he leaves the office, and on phone)* Commissioner…

**SCENE 7.**

*Continuous. The whoosh of a fire door into a stairwell. The echo of footsteps out into a concrete stairwell.*

1. HOBBS: *(Other end of line)* They’re fine about putting you back an

hour.

1. BEST: Very good. Commissioner, this may be nothing, but there’s someone I’d like you to check out for me.
2. HOBBS: In what sense?
3. BEST: Someone on the inside, a potential mole.
4. HOBBS: Go on.
5. BEST: John Macalister. The I.T. chap I told you about.
6. HOBBS: Your intended’s son-in-law?
7. BEST: He’s Scottish.
8. HOBBS: You want me to find out if he’s legal?
9. BEST: No, I know he’s legal – he’s married to Philippa’s daughter. It’s just…
10. HOBBS: Something…?
11. BEST: He’s a wheelchair-user.
12. HOBBS: I’ll check him out myself.
13. BEST: Thank you. If you could -

*Mobile alerts. A burst of static, the Voice is on the P.A. again.*

1. VOICE/P.A.: You do not need to find a wedding partner. Their “social justice” surveillance system will not find you. Leave now. In two hours, you will receive a message. We will tell you what to do. Leave now.
2. BEST: Find him.
3. HOBBS: I intend to.

**SCENE 8.**

*ALICE in an acoustically porous partitioned space where she has been interviewing prospective husbands. URSULA pops her head in.*

1. URSULA: How’s it going?
2. ALICE: It’s hell.
3. URSULA: Quite a queue.
4. ALICE: How many do we need?
5. URSULA: As many as we can get.
6. ALICE: …
7. URSULA: We volunteered to do this. Remember?
8. ALICE: Yes, Ursula, I know…… I love you.
9. URSULA: And I love you.
10. ALICE: Even when I spend all day speed-dating men?
11. URSULA: Especially when you spend all day speed-dating men - who haven’t got a clue what they’re getting themselves into. Ready for more?

**SCENE 9.**

*The Wedding Fair.* ***TOM’S audio POV. NED and TOM walking through the Fair.******Crowd hubbub.***

1. NED: You just need to get an intention to marry code, don’t

you?

1. TOM: Huh?
2. NED: That’s what I was told when I spoke to them. You need a code and to do the test and you’re done.
3. TOM: You’re speaking too fast.
4. NED: Too fast? Sorry. I was saying, all we need to do is get an intention to marry code, that’s right, isn’t it?
5. TOM: You have to get it confirmed.
6. NED: Do you?
7. TOM: You can do it online at one of the terminals. Or on your mobile if you register.
8. NED: And we have to do this when we get the code?
9. TOM: Yes. After the citizenship test.
10. NED: *(Sees a sign)* Albion Exhibition Arena. I think this is it.
11. TOM: The stalls are closed.
12. NED: No. There’s one down there. Come on.

*TOM and NED run off.*

**SCENE 10.**

*I.T. office stairwell. The office door swings open.*

1. MRS P: *(coming out of office)* Is everything all right?
2. BEST: I want a word in private.
3. MRS P: Out here? What is it?
4. BEST: Look, um…

*BEST is getting down on one knee.*

1. MRS P: What are you doing?
2. BEST: Philippa-
3. MRS P: Get up. The floor’s filthy.

*BEST takes out an engagement ring.*

1. BEST: Will you marry me?
2. MRS P: …
3. BEST: That’s a two-carat princess diamond.
4. MRS P: …
5. BEST: I would have liked the surroundings to be a little more romantic, but...
6. MRS P: We’ve only known each other a few weeks.
7. BEST: Phil-
8. MRS P: It’s a bit sudden.
9. BEST: Marry me.
10. MRS P: …
11. BEST: Philippa?
12. MRS P: Um… All right.
13. BEST: Yes?
14. MRS P: I think so.
15. BEST: You think so?
16. MRS P: All right, then. Yes.

*He struggles to his feet. A kiss.*

1. BEST: You will not regret this.
2. MRS P: I hope not.
3. BEST: We’ll make an announcement.
4. MRS P: Perhaps not just yet.
5. BEST: Nonsense. We must tell the world.
6. MRS P: I might need a little more time to let it sink in first.
7. BEST: It’s good news! The world must know!
8. MRS P: What do you mean?
9. BEST: Why keep it quiet? Today is a day of romance. Love is in the air. All these people getting married.
10. MRS P: Because they have to.
11. BEST: It’s for the best. You know that. No need for us to shy away. If all these Bartholomew abominations can do it, so can we. We can set an example.
12. MRS P: What?
13. BEST: I have to do a speech later; I’m going to tell the nation.
14. MRS P: No.
15. BEST: A love marriage. What could be more perfect?
16. MRS P: Are you sure this isn’t just a, some kind of media thing-a-ma-jig to make you look good.
17. BEST: What? No. Of course not.
18. MRS P: I don’t want you to do it, Michael.
19. BEST: Philippa-

1. MRS P: I don’t like it.
2. BEST: You don’t have to do / anything…
3. MRS P: / No, Michael. I don’t want you to say anything. I need to talk to my daughter first-
4. BEST: Phil/ippa…
5. MRS P: / I am not letting you use our relationship to enhance your standing with the PM.
6. BEST: That’s not what this is about.

*Door swings as she leaves.*

1. BEST: Philippa! … Argh!

**SCENE 11.**

*URSULA and ALICE’S ‘English Wives’ stall. A lot of people. TOM and NED in the throng.*

1. URSULA: All credit and debit cards accepted.
2. NED: How much is it?
3. URSULA: Two thousand guineas.
4. NED: Guineas?
5. URSULA: One pound and one shilling. Proper old English

currency.

1. NED: I still can’t get used to it.
2. URSULA: Twelve pennies in a shilling; twenty shillings in a pound; twenty-one shillings in a guinea.
3. NED: So that’s…two thousand and one hundred pounds.
4. URSULA: Introduction guaranteed. Enter your mobile number and your email, please sir.
5. NED: How long do we get?
6. URSULA: One minute.
7. NED: One minute!
8. URSULA: Speed dating. It’s getting late. Card on the reader, please. Thank you……….Next!

***TOM’S audio POV.***

1. **URSULA: Two thousand guineas.**
2. **TOM: Can you look at me?**

*Hearing POV.*

1. URSULA: Two thousand guineas.
2. TOM: Are you English?
3. URSULA: I am. And proud of it. Email and mobile number,

please.

1. TOM: Are you married?

1. URSULA: Depends how rich you are.
2. TOM: What?

1. URSULA: Depends. How rich. You are.
2. TOM: I’m rich.
3. URSULA: Card on the reader, please, sir.
4. TOM: I’ve got savings.
5. URSULA: Unless there are multiple noughts on the end, I’m not

interested. Card on the reader.

1. TOM: I can sell my flat.
2. URSULA: That’s a new one.
3. TOM: I can give you a split. If you marry me. Then we can get divorced.
4. URSULA: Sorry. I’m not interested.
5. TOM: Please. I don’t know what to do.
6. URSULA: Talk to your speed date about it. Okay? Next!

**SCENE 12.**

*A concourse at the Fair. BEST pursues PHILLIPPA.*

1. BEST: Philippa, Philippa-
2. MRS P: What?
3. BEST: I’m sorry. I shouldn’t have… It was insensitive.
4. MRS P: I won’t be used for media manipulation.
5. BEST: I understand.
6. MRS P: Do you?
7. BEST: It’s the PM. When he gets an idea into his head, he’s… I don’t know. He’s impossible.
8. MRS P: This wasn’t even your idea?
9. BEST: No / I mean…
10. MRS P: / Oh, this just gets better and better.
11. BEST: I’m sorry. It’s this damn speech. I’m a bit… It’s important. I don’t want to mess it up. And… I’ll be straight with you.
12. MRS P: That would be nice.
13. BEST: The PM wanted someone senior to announce they were getting married today. In line with, all this... The thing is, you see, I’ve been thinking about asking you for a while, but then this morning at Cabinet, the PM asked if anyone was in a position to make an announcement today, and I thought…. I’ll ask Philippa.
14. MRS P: So, this is all about political expediency?
15. BEST: It made me get off the fence and ask the woman I love to marry me, didn’t it?
16. MRS P: …
17. BEST: Will you marry me, Philippa.
18. MRS P: …I suppose.
19. BEST: Thank you.
20. MRS P: On one condition.
21. BEST: Name it.
22. MRS P: You say nothing about me in your speech.
23. BEST: Why not? If you agree-
24. MRS P: I’m going.
25. BEST: No, Phillipa! All right! I won’t say anything.
26. MRS P: You mean it?
27. BEST: Yes.
28. MRS P: Because if you do, I will be not be happy.

*[Music]*

**SCENE 13.**

*ALICE is conducting speed dating sessions in the acoustically porous partitioned space. NED is sitting opposite her. A digital buzzer sounds.*

1. ALICE: Name?
2. NED: Ned Sadowski.
3. ALICE: Born?
4. NED: Poland.
5. ALICE: Resident since?
6. NED: Moved here when I was thirteen.
7. ALICE: Are you disabled?
8. NED: No. *(Mumbled, quiet)* I’ve got a lazy eye but it’s not on the list of exclusions.
9. ALICE: Please can you speak up?
10. NED: I’ve got a lazy eye. It’s not on their list of exclusions.

Yet.

1. ALICE: Mum and Dad?
2. NED: Deported. I don’t know your name-
3. ALICE: We’ve been advised not to give names. You should have a number.
4. NED: 127.
5. ALICE: That’s your reference. Occupation?
6. NED: I run a Pound Shop. Used to, before they banned us. It was my

uncle’s.

1. ALICE: Politics?
2. NED: Politics?
3. ALICE: What are your politics?
4. NED: This is romantic.
5. ALICE: Please answer the question.
6. NED: I don’t like politics.
7. ALICE: Why?
8. NED: Why? Because they’re all corrupt.
9. ALICE: All of them?
10. NED: Most of them. Nice tattoo, by the way.
11. ALICE: Thank you. Are you happy with the way things have changed in this country?
12. NED: Yes, it’s great.
13. ALICE: Seriously?
14. NED: Look, I try to keep my head down. Get on with things. I don’t want to cause problems. All I want to do is earn a living and get on with my life.
15. ALICE: Thanks. Nice to meet you.
16. NED: That wasn’t a minute.
17. ALICE: I’ve heard enough.
18. NED: It’s all right for you! I’ve lived here all these years and now just because my mum and dad weren’t born here, you want to boot me out. It’s wrong.
19. ALICE: I thought you weren’t interested in politics?
20. NED: I’m not! I just bloody hate them, that’s all! This whole thing is a farce. And you know it!

*The buzzer sounds.*

1. ALICE: Time’s up. Thank you.

**SCENE 14.**

*A digital buzzer sounds. TOM is speed-dating ALICE.*

1. ALICE: Name?
2. TOM: Tom Price.
3. ALICE: Born?
4. TOM: London.
5. ALICE: Are you disabled?
6. TOM: I’m deaf. But I read lips.
7. ALICE: Mum and Dad?
8. TOM: Mum’s retired. Dad died in the pandemic.
9. ALICE: Occupation?
10. TOM: I’m a copywriter.
11. ALICE: Politics?
12. TOM: I don’t get involved.
13. ALICE: Do you have an opinion?
14. TOM: Er… No…
15. ALICE: You’re not trying to avoid the question?
16. TOM: …No.
17. ALICE: I’m not a government spy.
18. TOM: Okay.
19. ALICE: Are you happy with the way things are going?
20. TOM: …Yes…
21. ALICE: You have no objections?
22. TOM: …
23. ALICE: You can tell me the truth, you know.
24. TOM: …
25. ALICE: Okay….
26. TOM: I hate it.
27. ALICE: What do you hate?
28. TOM: All of it.
29. ALICE: Go on.
30. TOM: I just want things to be all right again.
31. ALICE: All right?
32. TOM: Like they were before Coronavirus and my dad died and they took over.
33. ALICE: Yeah.
34. TOM: I’m sorry. I’ve had enough…… Sorry.
35. ALICE: You don’t have to sit there and take it, you know.
36. TOM: I’ve spent every penny I’ve got here today. I’m going to lose my flat. I’m broke. I’ve got nothing. No one cares.
37. ALICE: There are people on your side, you know.
38. TOM: I haven’t got any choice.
39. ALICE: You have.
40. TOM: I’m deaf.
41. ALICE: That’s not relevant.

*Buzzer sounds.*

1. ALICE: Time’s up.

*Scraping of chair as TOM gets up.*

1. ALICE: Hang on……I’ve got hearing loss.
2. TOM: …You?
3. ALICE: Yes. I have a hearing loss too. (whispering) Please don’t say anything.
4. TOM: You’ll be all right. Just don’t tell them.

**SCENE 15.**

*Live in the media centre. BEST is delivering his speech.*

1. ANNOUNCER: Sir Michael Best, the Home Secretary.
2. BEST: Ladies and gentlemen, I am speaking to you today from the Wedding Fair at the St Bartholomew Exhibition and Conference Centre in London, one of over two hundred Wedding Fairs being held in England today. I have come here in person to celebrate the institution of marriage. I have myself, this very day, proposed to a wonderful English woman and she has accepted. I cannot tell you how happy I am. Like many, I will soon be collecting my intention to marry code and registering online. Today is a day of celebration…

*Speech continues as we cut acoustically to the I.T. Office.*

**SCENE 16.**

*I.T. Office. BEST’S speech is on the radio. JOHN interjects his comments as marked.*

1. BEST: No more scroungers with foreign blood taking our jobs-
2. JOHN: -Me, you mean-
3. BEST: -No more disabled people in wheelchairs draining the state of precious money and resources-
4. JOHN: -Me again-
5. BEST: -The New Puritan Party is here to deliver you, the English people, from the suffocating embrace of equality-
6. JOHN: -Hallelujah-
7. BEST: -We are better than equal. We are English-
8. JOHN: -Hallelujah-
9. BEST: -At midnight tonight all non-English born persons and deaf, blind, disabled, and neurodiverse persons without proof of intended marriage to an English-born, able-bodied English person are to be rounded up-
10. JOHN: -Amen-
11. BEST: -Those of foreign blood will be deported to the country of their birth. Those with disabilities will be re-located to one of the government’s new facilities where they will be held until our proud country is free from the taint of disability forever-
12. JOHN: *[calling to next office]* Turn that shite off, will you?
13. BEST: *(heard under rest of scene)* -People of England, the New Puritan Party is ready. Are you ready? Because together we will be free. We will make England English again!

*[DOOR BURSTS OPEN*. *POLICE ENTER.]*

1. HOBBS: Stay where you are!
2. JOHN: What the….? What’s going on?
3. HOBBS: John Macalister?
4. JOHN: Aye. What?
5. HOBBS: *(To the COPS)* Take all his devices.
6. POLICE: Yes ma’am.
7. HOBBS: *(To the COPS)* Everything.

*The COPS start to remove JOHN’s things.*

1. HOBBS: Hurry up.
2. JOHN: What are you doing? I’m in charge of I.T.! You can’t

take that!

1. HOBBS: Take it.
2. JOHN: How am I supposed to do my job?
3. HOBBS: Your devices will be returned to you as soon as

possible.

1. JOHN: What happens if the terminals go down?
2. HOBBS: Mobile. Give me your mobile. *(To her COPS)* Search him. Is that everything?
3. POLICE: Yes ma’am.
4. HOBBS Check his wheelchair.
5. JOHN: What?
6. JOHN: What am I supposed to have done?
7. HOBBS: You’ll be hearing from us.
8. JOHN: When?

*HOBBS and the COPS go.*

**SCENE 17.**

*Wedding Fair. URSULA and ALICE’S stall. A throng of men are wating to see if they have been successful in securing a wife.*

1. URSULA: Ned Sadowski?
2. NED: Yes?
3. URSULA: This way, please, sir.

*URSULA and NED enter a quieter, partitioned area.*

1. URSULA: Take a seat.
2. NED: Thanks.
3. URSULA: You’ll be pleased to know that number 127 has selected you to be her husband.
4. NED: But it was terrible, we didn’t get on at all-
5. URSULA: She likes a challenge.

1. NED: Have you got the code for the license?
2. URSULA: You’ll be sent a text message with the code at 11.30

tonight.

1. NED: 11.30. Got it. And a date? For the wedding? Her name?
2. URSULA: It will all be in the message.
3. NED: Great. Right. I better go and do the Citizenship Test.
4. URSULA: You haven’t done it yet?
5. NED: No. Have I got time?
6. URSULA: If you hurry.

*NED runs off. URSULA sighs.* ***Switch to TOM’S audio POV.***

***NED passes TOM.***

1. **NED: Tom! I got a wife!**
2. **TOM: What?**
3. **NED: It’s a miracle! I got a wife. I’m going to do the citizenship test. I’ll see**

**you later.**

1. **TOM: Good luck.**

*NED goes. URSULA comes back out. Hearing POV.*

1. URSULA: Thomas Price!
2. TOM: Yes.
3. URSULA: This way, please, sir.

*URSULA and TOM enter the quieter area.*

**SCENE 18.**

*At the Fair. MRS P confronts HOBBS.*

1. MRS P: What was that?
2. BEST: I kept my word.
3. MRS P: You announced that we would be getting married!
4. BEST: Ah, no. I announced that I would be getting married to *someone*, but I did not give them your name.
5. MRS P: You promised you wouldn’t say anything!
6. BEST: I promised I would not announce that you and I were getting married. And I didn’t. I kept your name out of it.
7. MRS P: And what happens when the press come snooping?
8. BEST: I’ll tell them it’s none of their business. Now, shall we go and get an intention to marry code?
9. MRS P: I’m not queuing up to get a stupid code.
10. BEST: No, right. I’ll get one of the Home Office lawyers to forward one to us, then we can register it.
11. MRS P: I don’t know if I want to.
12. BEST: Philippa-
13. MRS P: It’s too much. All. Just-
14. BEST: I’ll make it up to you. I will.
15. MRS P: Give me your phone.
16. BEST: What?
17. MRS P: Give me your phone. I want to call my daughter.
18. BEST: What’s wrong with your phone?
19. MRS P: I haven’t got it. Quickly. Your marriage may depend

upon it!

BEST: Oh very well….

1. P.A.: The final English Citizenship Test of the day will be taking place in the *Land of the Rose* Suite in two minutes.
2. MRS P: *(On phone)* Win? It’s Mum. There’s something I want to talk to you about…

**SCENE 19.**

*Land of the Rose Suite.* ***TOM’S audio POV as he enters the room. General mumble of people – including NED – waiting to sit the test.***

1. **EXAMINER: Take your seats, please. Check the console says, “Test Ready”. *[heard under rest of scene]* It takes about twenty minutes. Come in. Hurry up. Can you close the doors, please?**
2. TOM: Ned, Ned! I’ve got a wife!
3. NED: You’ve got a wife!
4. TOM: I’ve got a wife!
5. NED: Yes!!!
6. TOM: I’ve got a wife!
7. EXAMINER: Have you all paid your test fee?

*Mumbled yeses.*

497 EXAMINER Hurry up, we haven’t got all day!

1. NED: Can you understand her?
2. TOM: Yes. Doesn’t matter how far away people are. Shame that’s not part of the test.
3. EXAMINER: Questions for blind people are pre-recorded. Everyone else can use the screens. It’s a multiple-choice questionnaire. You need to get 75% correct to pass. Ready? Here we go.....ssh quiet please.
4. PRE-RECORDED VOICE: Question 1: What was the name of the last battle between England and France? Was it:

The Battle of Trafalgar

The Battle of Waterloo

The Battle of Hastings

The Battle of Agincourt

Make your selection.

*(Pause)*

Answer: The Battle of Waterloo.

1. NED: Damn!
2. PRE-RECORDED VOICE: Question 2: What was the name of first ever soap opera created by the BBC. Was it:

Eastenders

The Archers

Front Line Family

1. NED: Guess?
2. EXAMINER: No conferring!

Coronation Street

Make your selection

*(Pause)*

Answer: Front Line Family

1. NED: What? TOM: No!
2. EXAMINER Quiet!
3. PRE RECORDED VOICE : Question 3: Which great English composer composed the following piece of music?  
     
   *[Music plays – ‘Land of Hope and Glory’.]*

508. TOM: I’m deaf! How can I answer that?  
  
509. PRE RECORDED VOICE : Was it:

Henry Purcell

Edward Elgar

Ralph Vaughn-Williams  
  
  
  
Make your selection. Answer Edward Elgar

1. NED: Yes! TOM: Yes!

**SCENE 19.**

*Behind the scenes, concrete corridor at the Fair. MRS P and BEST. He is trying to register n his phone.*

1. BEST: There seems to be a problem with registering the code on the government website…
2. MRS P: This is so romantic.
3. BEST: I can’t seem to… No… Hold on… Argh!
4. MRS P: What?
5. BEST: It’s not working. Bloody incompetent…! Now what do we do?
6. MRS P: Let’s do this some other time.
7. BEST: No. I want this done today. We’ll have to use one of the official terminals-
8. MRS P: No.
9. BEST: It won’t take long.
10. MRS P: You’ll be recognised. I don’t want people filming us on social media and putting it online. I don’t want it, Michael.
11. BEST: I really don’t know what else I can do, Philippa.
12. MRS P: We’ll just have to wait.
13. BEST: No. Your, your what’s his name… your, what’s his name - Macalister.
14. MRS P: John? What about him?
15. BEST: He can do it for us. Yes?
16. MRS P: I don’t know.
17. BEST: Course he can. He’s the I.T. person here, isn’t he?

**Scene 20**

*Land of the Rose Suite. The test continues.*

1. PRE-RECORDED VOICE: Question 17: The Independent Living Fund, previously used to support disabled people, was repealed because it discriminated against able-bodied people. True or False? Make your selection.

*(Pause)*

Answer: True.

**SCENE 21.**

*At the Fair – URSULA and ALICE.*

1. ALICE: Thank God that’s over! How did we do?
2. URSULA: About a hundred.
3. ALICE: How do you think they’ll react when they get the text? Do you think they’ll do it?
4. URSULA: You tell me, you were the one that chose them.
5. ALICE: Some of them. Yes. Some of them will.

*Mobile alerts. A burst of static on the P.A.*

1. P.A./VOICE: Their pronouncements are incomprehensible. Their hatred is transparent. We know their secrets. Prime Minister, Home Secretary, we know your secrets. In one hour’s time, we will tell the world. They will not succeed. Leave now.
2. URSULA: One hour … You okay?
3. ALICE: I’m just…….
4. URSULA: What?
5. ALICE: I think I might have done something stupid. Therewas… One of the men I met. A guy called Tom.
6. URSULA: What about him?
7. ALICE: He’s deaf. I wanted to explain what / we were doing….
8. URSULA: / You didn’t say anything?
9. ALICE: I felt really bad about it.
10. URSULA: What did you say? …
11. ALICE: I told him I had a hearing loss.
12. URSULA: You did what? Why?
13. ALICE: I just… I don’t know…
14. URSULA: Alice!
15. ALICE: He’ll think I want to marry him.
16. URSULA: Yes, along with about a hundred other men.
17. ALICE: I wanted to tell him we hadn’t taken his money.
18. URSULA: Do you fancy him or something?
19. ALICE: No! But I felt like such a shit.
20. URSULA: Alice! We don’t have a choice. Your name is on their excluded list. They know about us. They won’t let us be together.
21. ALICE: I’m worried about him, that’s all.
22. URSULA: If he turns up at the meeting place, you can explain it then.
23. ALICE: Yes. If.
24. URSULA: It’s a good job I love you.

**SCENE 22.**

*BEST and MRS P walking up a flight of stairs to the I.T. office.*

1. MRS P: Secrets, Michael? What did that Voice thing mean?
2. BEST: Fake news.
3. MRS P: Fake?

*BEST pushes open the door into the I.T. office.*

1. BEST: Macalister-
2. MRS P: John, Sir Michael / and I…
3. JOHN: / I heard the speech. Very edifying. Congratulations.
4. MRS P: I asked him not to say anything.
5. JOHN: Does Win know?
6. MRS P: I just spoke to her.
7. JOHN: What’s this thing about a secret then?
8. BEST: Fake. We’d like you to process our intention to marry

code.

1. JOHN: No can do.
2. BEST: What do you mean?
3. JOHN: They’ve taken both my laptops. And my tablet. And my phone.
4. MRS P: Who has?
5. JOHN: The police.
6. MRS P: When?
7. JOHN: About an hour ago.
8. BEST: Can’t you borrow something from one of the other…?
9. JOHN: I could. Except, the whole system’s crashed. No one can log on.
10. BEST: Can’t you fix it?
11. JOHN: I could have a go. If I had my laptop…
12. BEST: Can’t you use someone else’s?
13. JOHN: Security. I can only log on, on **my** government laptop.
14. BEST: I’ll talk to them. Philippa, wait here darling.

*BEST exits into the stairwell.*

1. JOHN: Why, Philippa?
2. MRS P: I have my reasons.
3. JOHN: Well they must be bloody good….

**SCENE 23.**

*Continuous. Swish of door into stairwell. BEST on phone.*

1. BEST: *(on phone)* I need Macalister’s laptop returned.
2. HOBBS: I can’t do that-
3. BEST: It’s important- (to me)
4. HOBBS: There’s a link.
5. BEST: A what?
6. HOBBS: The Voice.
7. BEST: He’s…?
8. HOBBS: His devices have been used to access the government’s IT systems today.
9. BEST: That’s his job, isn’t it?
10. HOBBS: He hacked into classified information and deliberately crashed the onsite terminals.
11. BEST: … How do you know?
12. HOBBS: The evidence is right here in front of me – on his tablet.
13. BEST: I see.
14. HOBBS: Your hunch was right.
15. BEST: What are you going to do?
16. HOBBS: Arrest him.
17. BEST: Of course.
18. HOBBS: A bit sensitive for you, what with your association with his mother-in-law.
19. BEST: We need to keep this quiet.
20. HOBBS: We will.
21. BEST: What am I going to do about getting married?
22. HOBBS: Not sure I can advise you about your marriage, sir, but if I were you, I’d steer clear of McAlister for the time being.
23. BEST: Bit difficult. I’m standing right outside his office.
24. HOBBS: Don’t go in.
25. BEST: Why not?

**SCENE 24**.

*Land of the Rose Suite. The end of the test.*

1. TOM: 82%.
2. NED: 78. I just made it.
3. TOM: Just the code and we’re safe.
4. NED: I can’t believe I’m getting married next week.
5. TOM: I know!
6. NED: What’s she like, the one you’re marrying?
7. TOM: She’s really nice.
8. NED: I wasn’t sure about mine, but, what the hell, eh?
9. TOM: Yes.
10. NED: Did she tell you her name?
11. TOM: No. Number 128.
12. NED: Number 127. Oh, the romance! She had this amazing tattoo on her hand, like a scorpion.
13. TOM: A scorpion?
14. NED: Yes.
15. TOM: *[sighs]* …I think…
16. NED: …Shit…
17. TOM: She told me she had hearing loss.
18. NED: Let’s go back. We should report her. Come on.

**SCENE 25.**

*Continuous. I.T. office at the Fair.*

1. MRS P: Win will understand.
2. JOHN: I wouldn’t put money on it.

*Door bursts open. Police burst in*

1. POLICE: No one moves**!** John James Macalister, you are under arrest.
2. JOHN: What?
3. POLICE: Move! Now!

**SCENE 26.**

*Stairwell. Door is pushed open. MRS P enters.*

1. MRS P: Michael!
2. BEST: Yes?
3. MRS P: They’ve taken John.
4. BEST: I know.
5. BEST: I just spoke to the commissioner.
6. MRS P: You have to do something!
7. BEST: I’ve been advised not to.
8. MRS P: Michael!
9. BEST: Sorry.
10. MRS P: What’s going on? Michael?
11. BEST: They think he’s the Voice.
12. MRS P: John?
13. BEST: That’s what- (I was told)
14. MRS P: Why?
15. BEST: Something to do with his devices.
16. MRS P: I have never heard anything so ridiculous in my whole life!
17. BEST: …
18. MRS P: Where have they taken him?
19. BEST: I don’t know.
20. MRS P: Find out!
21. BEST: There’s nothing I can do-
22. MRS P: You’re the Home Secretary!
23. BEST: Let’s get this license thing sorted out first.
24. MRS P: No! I want you to find out where my son-in-law is!

*[Menacing music]*

**SCENE 27.**

*Wedding Fair. URSULA and ALICE’S stall.*

1. ALICE: Should we go?
2. URSULA: We’ve still got half an hour.

*NED and TOM approach.*

1. NED: Excuse me.
2. ALICE: Oh Christ…
3. TOM: What’s going on?
4. URSULA: You’ll get your codes.
5. NED: She was promised to both of us.
6. TOM: You stole our money.
7. ALICE: No, we-
8. NED: Are you going to tell us what’s going on or do we need to report you?
9. URSULA: If you just wait-
10. TOM: You told me you had hearing loss.
11. ALICE: Urs, we need to tell them.
12. TOM: What?
13. URSULA: It will all make sense when-

*They are interrupted by a P.A. announcement.*

1. \*P.A.: Due to a technical problem, marriage code registrations are now suspended. /
2. TOM: / What’s going on?
3. NED: I don’t know.
4. P.A: No further registrations will be permitted. Anyone who has not entered a valid code and remains single should now report to the government checkpoint. Do not attempt to leave the arena. I repeat: Do not attempt to leave the arena.

*[sound of crowd angry and upset]*

1. NED: Marriage code registrations have been suspended… No more registrations… We need to report to a government checkpoint… They don’t want us to leave…
2. URSULA: We need to get out of here.
3. NED: What’s happening?
4. URSULA: Come with us.

*As they walk – at pace.*

1. TOM: What’s going on?
2. ALICE: *(Using BSL as she speaks)* Closed. Early.
3. TOM: *(Speaking/Signing)* You know sign language?
4. ALICE: *(Speaking/Signing)* I’m learning.
5. TOM: *(Speaking/Signing)* What’s your sign name? Tom.
6. ALICE: *(Speaking/Signing)* Alice.
7. URSULA: We should send the message.
8. NED: What message?
9. ALICE: *(Speaking/Signing)* We are working with the Voice.
10. TOM: The Voice?
11. ALICE: *(Speaking/Signing)* Everyone who said they didn’t like what was happening will get a message asking them to join us in the occupation of government buildings…Sorry, my signing is a bit rubbish.
12. TOM: *(Speaking/Signing)* No. It’s good.
13. URSULA: But it looks like it’s all kicking off earlier than we thought.
14. NED: You were never going to marry us?
15. ALICE: No.
16. TOM: *(Speaking/Signing)* No?
17. ALICE: *(Speaking/Signing)* We didn’t take your money.
18. URSULA: We were looking for people who were on our side.
19. ALICE: *(Speaking/Signing)* We need as many people as possible.
20. TOM: *(Speaking/Signing)* I’m on your side.
21. NED: What do we do now?
22. ALICE: *(Speaking/Signing)* We need to go to the meeting place.
23. NED: Where?
24. ALICE: *(Speaking/Signing)* Outside.
25. URSULA: This way.

**SCENE 28.**

*Police interview room. HOBBS and MACALISTER.*

1. HOBBS: The Voice.
2. JOHN: I’m no the Voice.
3. HOBBS: You don’t like the new law, do you?
4. JOHN: I’m married to an English woman; the law doesn’t affect me.
5. HOBBS: No, but it affects your kind.
6. JOHN: My kind?
7. HOBBS: Wheelchair users, non-English-born people.
8. JOHN: This is absurd.
9. HOBBS: How long have you been a wheelchair-user?
10. JOHN: Since I was knocked off my bicycle by an HGV about 20 years ago. Is that okay? Is that the right answer? Why the hell does it matter?
11. HOBBS: You weren’t born like it?
12. JOHN: What difference does it make?
13. HOBBS: Some people are born like it for a reason.
14. JOHN: What are you talking about?
15. HOBBS: Karma. From another lifetime.
16. JOHN: This is ridiculous. Are you paid to come out with this kind of tripe? Look, if the only reason I’m here is because you think I might have committed a sin in a previous life…. Come on! What an antiquated argument. Seriously?!
17. HOBBS: You hacked into the government computer.
18. JOHN: I didn’t hack into anything!

*A fist in the back of JOHN’S neck. JOHN grunts at the blow.*

1. JOHN: Argh!
2. HOBBS: We think you did.
3. JOHN: I’ve done nothing wrong!
4. HOBBS: You stole sensitive information.
5. JOHN: No-

*Several more blows. A cry of pain.*

1. JOHN: Argh! I only accessed what I needed to access for my job.
2. HOBBS: I don’t think so.
3. JOHN: I installed the terminals here. For the licence codes. That’s what I was paid to do. That’s what I did.
4. HOBBS: You accessed confidential data.
5. JOHN: No-

*Another blow. A cry of pain.*

1. JOHN: Argh!
2. HOBBS: You made the system crash.

*[John is hit repeatedly]*

1. HOBBS: My people say, you did.
2. JOHN: Your people are wrong.

*Another blow. A cry of pain.*

1. JOHN: Argh!
2. HOBBS: I don’t think so.
3. JOHN: I can’t tell you what I don’t know.
4. HOBBS: Tell me what you do know, then!
5. JOHN: ………..What?
6. HOBBS: Last opportunity.
7. JOHN: What do you want me to say?
8. HOBBS: That you are the Voice.
9. JOHN: I’m no the Voice.
10. HOBBS: Strip him, sergeant.
11. JOHN: Woah…..Hey! No! No! Hey!

*John is stripped.*

1. JOHN: Get off ..get off me…Get off me…No ….What yis…Will you…

*Sounds of a scuffle as the police strip JOHN. Over the top of which:*

1. HOBBS: The box, sergeant.
2. JOHN: No no no no…..hey he. No no no…
3. HOBBS: That box, Mr Macalister, measures precisely one metre by one metre. You’d be surprised at what you can fit inside.

*More struggling.*

1. JOHN: No……No way, no…Get…You’re hurting me!…

*More struggling as JOHN is forced onto the box.*

1. HOBBS: Let us know when you’ve got something to say.

*The lid of the box is closed. A padlock snaps shut.*

1. JOHN: No no please don’t, please no, please don’t. *(From inside the box)* You cannae! No! I didn’t do anything!

**SCENE 29.**

*ConcrouseURSULA tries a door.*

1. URSULA: Locked!
2. NED: Let me- [try]
3. URSULA: The door’s locked!

*A siren sounds.*

1. TOM: *(Speaking/Signing)* What’s going on?
2. P.A.: Do not attempt to leave the arena. / All exits are closed. Do not attempt to leave the arena.
3. *TOM: / Alice?*

1. *ALICE:* Hold on… Exits are closed. They don’t want us to leave.
2. URSULA: Behind here!
3. NED: Tom! Hide!
4. URSULA: Quickly! Don’t let them see you…

**SCENE 30.**

*Police offices at the Fair.*

1. BEST: What the hell is going on out there?
2. HOBBS: We’ve got the situation under control, Sir Michael.
3. BEST: I should bloody well hope so!
4. HOBBS: What can I do for you?
5. BEST: I have a very angry fiancée standing out there.
6. HOBBS: Not a lot I can do about that, I’m afraid.
7. BEST: Have you questioned him? Macalister?
8. HOBBS: He’s not playing ball.
9. BEST: Will he?
10. HOBBS: Oh yes.
11. BEST: She wants a word with you.
12. HOBBS: I’ve got things to do. We’ve had to move ahead of schedule.
13. BEST: I want you to talk to her.
14. HOBBS: I really don’t have the time.
15. BEST: I want you to explain the situation. Get her to calm down. I need to get this damn license code sorted out and nothing is going to happen until you talk to her.
16. HOBBS: You’re not still going through with that, are you?
17. BEST: Did you hear what I said?
18. HOBBS: Sir Michael, with due respect, I really have got more important things to do…
19. BEST: *(Going for her)* YOU HAVE ALREADY MADE A GOD-AWFUL MESS OF THIS WHOLE DAMN BUSINESS! YOU WILL DO AS I SAY OR YOU WILL HAVE NO JOB IN THE MORNING! DO I MAKE MYSELF CLEAR! HAVE YOU SEEN WHAT’S GOING ON OUT THERE?
20. HOBBS: It’s not my fault.
21. BEST: WHOSE FAULT IS IT THEN? MINE?
22. HOBBS: The system crashed!
23. BEST: SORT. IT. OUT. THEN!
24. HOBBS: I’m trying to!
25. BEST: YOU HAVEN’T GOT A BLOODY CLUE!
26. HOBBS: THIS WAS HIS PLAN! All along! Chaos! Don’t you see that! Crash the license code site and then watch the situation get out of hand. He wanted a riot. But I’m not going to let it happen. I’ve got this whole place in lockdown. No one is getting out of here. I am in control.
27. BEST: I am glad to hear it!
28. HOBBS: If you’d just let me get on with it-
29. BEST: After you explain to my fiancée why her son-in-law is being held here.

**SCENE 31.**

*URSULA, ALICE, TOM, NED – from their hiding place.*

*[sound of shouting and police issuing orders, walke talkies etc]*

1. ALICE: What’s happening?
2. URSULA: They’re kettling people.
3. NED: I can’t see.
4. URSULA: Far side.

*NED goes to move out.*

1. URSULA: Get down. They’ll see you. Police – look. Just there.
2. TOM: *(Speaking/Signing)* Is there no way out?
3. URSULA: All the exits have got police and army on them.
4. ALICE: *(Speaking/Signing)* Underground car park?
5. URSULA: If we can get there.
6. NED: How far is it?
7. URSULA: Other side of the concourse.
8. TOM: *(Speaking/Signing)* What are they doing?
9. URSULA: There’s a senior officer with them.
10. ALICE: Where? I can’t see anyone.
11. NED: Over there.
12. URSULA: What are they up to?
13. TOM: *(Speaking/Signing)* What are you saying?
14. ALICE: *(Speaking/Signing)* A senior officer. With men. Over there.
15. TOM: *(Speaking/Signing)* Hold on…Let me see if I can…

*TOM’S audio POV. Mumbled, indecipherable – to a hearing person – police voices.*

1. POLICE/TOM: When the transport arrives we’ll pick them off a few at a

time…

1. ALICE: Shit.
2. POLICE/TOM: They’ll be moved to the deportation centres. From there disabled will be taken to one of the holding facilities…

*Hearing POV.*

1. URSULA: We really need to get out of here.
2. NED: How?

**SCENE 32.**

*Police offices. MRS P is with BEST and HOBBS.*

1. MRS P: What evidence?
2. HOBBS: His devices have been used to access sensitive government

information.

1. MRS P: It’s his job.
2. HOBBS: He hacked into secret files. We have reason to believe he is

the Voice.

1. MRS P: Oh, please.
2. HOBBS: We have evidence.
3. MRS P: I want to see him.
4. HOBBS: I can’t allow that.
5. MRS P: You’re accusing him because he’s a wheelchair-user.
6. BEST: He’s got an axe to grind.
7. MRS P: He’s a decent man.
8. HOBBS: This isn’t even his country.
9. MRS P: Oh come on!
10. HOBBS: He’s Scottish.
11. MRS P: I have a right to see my son-in-law.

*A knock. OFFICER enters.*

1. HOBBS: Yes?
2. OFFICER: Ma’am…
3. HOBBS: Coming.
4. MRS P: I want to see him!
5. HOBBS: I need to check on him first. I’ll be back as soon as I can.
6. MRS P: Can I use your phone?
7. HOBBS: What?
8. MRS P: Your phone. I need to call my daughter. I left my phone at home and I need to let her know what’s going on.
9. BEST: Hobbs!
10. HOBBS: Fine.
11. MRS P: Passcode?

*HOBBS enters the code.*

1. MRS P: Thank you.

*Door opens as HOBBS goes.*

1. MRS P: Give me a moment will you, I want to call my daughter.
2. BEST: Fine. I’ve got calls to make myself.

*Door closes.*

**SCENE 33.**

*Arena. NED, TOM, URSULA, ALICE, in hiding. Shouts of the crowd being kettled on the other side of the arena.*

1. ALICE: Are they still there?
2. URSULA: Yes.
3. ALICE: We can’t just sit here.
4. URSULA: We need to be patient.
5. ALICE: We need to get out.
6. URSULA: It’s too dangerous.

*NED is panicking, breathing heavily.*

1. NED: I can’t… I can’t…
2. TOM: Ned, are you all right?
3. URSULA: He’s having a panic attack.
4. TOM: Ned...
5. ALICE: This is insane!
6. NED: I can’t…
7. TOM: Ned…breathe
8. NED: I can’t…
9. TOM: Slowly… In. That’s it. Out… 2..3..4.. That’s it… In…
10. P.A./HOBBS: This is a police announcement. You will be held here until further notice. Please remain calm. / You will not be harmed. You will not ---

*The P.A. police voice is interrupted by mobile alerts and white noise, and then the Voice.*

1. P.A./VOICE: One minute ago, the government’s surveillance system crashed. All digital records have been corrupted. / They do not know who you are. They cannot track you. Do not tell them your name. Do not tell them anything.
2. ALICE: / *(Speaking/Signing)* The Voice. Data corrupted. They can’t track us…
3. URSULA: Looks like everything is going ahead.
4. ALICE: Looks like it.
5. TOM: *(Speaking/Signing)* What do we do?
6. URSULA: Come on. We need to go.
7. ALICE: *(Speaking/Signing)* Tom? You ready?
8. TOM: *(Speaking/Signing)* Yes. Ned?
9. NED: Give me a second…

*NED is still trying to regulate his breathing. Crowd running and shouting, sound of panic.*

1. TOM: *(Speaking/Signing)* Which way?
2. URSULA: The concrete pillars – over there. There’s an emergency exit that leads down to the car park.
3. ALICE: *(Speaking/Signing)* Pillars – over there. Emergency exit. Car Park.

Okay?

1. TOM: *(Speaking/Signing)* Yes. Ned?
2. NED: Yes……Let’s get out of here.
3. URSULA: Ready? 3… 2… 1…

*They leap to their feet and run.*

*Music*

**SCENE 34.**

*Police interview room.*

1. HOBBS: What happened? WHAT HAPPENED!?!
2. OFFICER: I think he had a heart attack, ma’am.
3. HOBBS: …
4. OFFICER: …..Ma’am?
5. HOBBS: Get the body out of here. And his bloody wheelchair.

**SCENE 35.**

*Arena concourse.* ***TOM’S deaf audio POV as he runs across the arena with URSULA, ALICE, and NED. Heavy, partially articulated breathing, pounding heart. We hear distant, submerged shouts from the police.***

1. **POLICE: Stop! You! Stop!**

***TOM’s breathing intensifies.*** *Sound of gunfire. Fade as TOM and the others continue to run, with shouts, screams and shots fired in the background.*

**SCENE 36.**

*Police offices at the Fair. MRS P alone. Door as BEST enters.*

1. MRS P: Are they shooting out there?
2. BEST: I don’t know.
3. MRS P: Did you hear what the Voice / just said?
4. BEST: Fake news.
5. MRS P: Yes?
6. BEST: Yes.

*HOBBS enters.*

1. BEST: Commissioner-
2. HOBBS: I need to find out what’s going on.
3. MRS P: I want to see John.
4. HOBBS: You can’t.
5. MRS P: He’s not the Voice, the Voice just made an announcement!
6. HOBBS: If you would please just let me do my job.
7. MRS P: You have to let me see him!
8. BEST: I insist.
9. HOBBS: She can’t see him.
10. BEST: Why?
11. HOBBS: Because he’s dead.
12. MRS P: … Dead?
13. HOBBS: He had a heart attack.
14. MRS P: …..
15. HOBBS: He was being held in one of our cells. No one touched him. He just….It… It happens.
16. BEST: I don’t believe this.
17. MRS P: You bastard.
18. HOBBS: Now, if you’ll excuse me, I need to check something on my computer.
19. MRS P: The entire government network has been wiped.
20. BEST: You don’t believe him, do you?
21. MRS P: Oh, I believe him. Because I am him. And I did it using the commissioner’s phone.
22. HOBBS: You did what?
23. MRS P: And I crashed the license code site using your phone, Sir Michael.
24. BEST: What are you talking about?
25. MRS P: And I made the announcements using both your phones. Like this…

*MRS P takes HOBBS’ phone and becomes the Voice – she can be heard in the room and on the P.A.*

1. P.A./MRS P/VOICE: All data held by the government has now been destroyed or corrupted. All ability to track you has been lost. You are free.
2. HOBBS: Philippa Purecraft, I am arresting you…
3. MRS P: Did you know she’s epileptic?
4. BEST: What?
5. MRS P: The commissioner. She gets epilepsy drugs sent from the United States.
6. HOBBS: Rubbish.
7. MRS P: I have your medical records. Do you remember the NHS? Before we broke it up and sold it? Strangely, it seems you failed to mention your condition when the government did its audit of disabilities.
8. BEST: Is this true?
9. HOBBS: …
10. MRS P: What are you going to do? Lock yourself up?
11. BEST: To think I almost married you!
12. MRS P: I was never going to marry you.
13. BEST: Arrest her.
14. MRS P: You should get them to arrest her, shouldn’t you? For not reporting her disability?
15. BEST: Shut up. Bitch.
16. MRS P: Do you know what I really hate about entitled men, like you?
17. BEST: I don’t care.
18. MRS P: You just said it. You don’t care. You don’t care about anyone but yourself.

BEST: You are in a lot of trouble. I’m going-

1. MRS P: I know why you wanted to marry me. And it wasn’t for love. I know where you were born. Here. Look.

*Takes out a document.*

1. MRS P: It’s a copy. You can keep it if you want. Remember good old paper records…….Recognise it? It’s your birth certificate. Place of birth: Srinagar, Kashmir.
2. HOBBS: India?
3. BEST: It’s fake.
4. MRS P: The only reason you wanted to marry me is because I’m English born. You’re not.
5. BEST: Rubbish.
6. MRS P: Your father was a diplomat. You lived in India with your Mother and Father and your sister for 6 years.
7. HOBBS: What do you want?
8. MRS P: I want you to let those people go. I want you to change the law…….You do know the PM was diagnosed with ADHD - he’s illegal too. I could go on, but the point is there is no such thing as the physical and national purity of the nation. It’s time people like you understood that. Its -

*Gunshot. A body falls to the floor.*

1. BEST: Is she dead?
2. HOBBS: I think so.

*[Pause]*

1. BEST: Shoot her again.

*Two more gunshots.*

**SCENE 37.**

*Stairwell down into an underground car park.*

1. TOM: Come on! Hurry!

*ALICE comes hurtling down the stairs.*

1. ALICE: Tom! Wait!

*Alice arrives. They through a door and outside.*

1. ALICE: *(Speaking/Signing)* Tom!
2. TOM: *(Speaking/Signing)* Where are the others?

*[Sirens in background]*

1. ALICE: *(Speaking/Signing)* I don’t know.
2. TOM: *(Speaking/Signing)* Did they get them?
3. ALICE: *(Speaking/Signing)* I don’t know! What are we going to

do?

1. TOM: *(Speaking/Signing)* We have to go.
2. ALICE: *(Speaking/Signing)* I can’t-
3. TOM: *(Speaking/Signing)* They will kill us! You said there were others waiting.

954 ALICE: Yes.

955. TOM: Which way?

1. ALICE: *(Speaking/Signing)* The ramp. Over there. They’re outside.
2. TOM: Come on…let’s go!

*They run. The sound of their footsteps fade.*

*[Ominonos music plays under next scene.]*

**SCENE 38.**

*The House of Commons. General din of approval – “Hear! Hear!” etc.*

1. SPEAKER: Order… Order… Sir Michael Best…
2. BEST: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Thank you… Today, we have taken the first steps toward being a great nation, a pure nation, a fit and healthy nation again. The struggle for survival is a contest which, of necessity, results in the elimination of unwelcome and unneeded others. This is the expression of our state – not of a weak, babbling democracy – but a new state where everyone is proud to obey, and to do their duty. Because we know: we know, this is what we need to do; we know, this is our time. *[murmurs of Hear hear!]* One day, when we are no more, the coming generations will look back with pride on this day; on this great day, when a great people affirmed their greatness once again. Now, let us take this precious moment, let us hold it tightly in our hands, and let us thank God Almighty for favouring our work, for shaping our will, and for guiding us on the path to physical and national purity.

*Music ends. New music plays under closing credits.*

***Credits:***

Mrs Purecraft was played by Liz Carr, Ursula by Chloe Ewart, Alice by Stacey Ghent, Ned by Michael Golab, Tom by Stephen Collins, Best by Garry Robson, Hobbs by Mina Anwar, and John by Jack Hunter.

Original music was by Oliver Vibrans

Bartholomew Abominations was written by Paul Sirett, after Ben Jonson.

It was directed by Polly Thomas and Jenny Sealey. It was produced by Eloise Whitmore.

Bartholomew Abominations was a Naked Productions and Graeae collaboration for BBC Radio 4.

***Ends***