

WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE PLIMPADOO?

Written by Tom De Val

Int. - A non-descript office setup. There are two tables (with chairs), one with a typical pile of papers, computers, and paraphernalia on them. The second table has coffee making facilities and a radio, and there is a small waste paper basket on the floor. Enter JEMMA FROGGATT, a civil servant dressed in a raincoat and casual business attire. She appears a bit bedraggled, and talks through the fourth wall as she takes off her coat and prepares herself for the day ahead.

JEMMA

First one in again. Also last out yesterday. And up till midnight, working on this.

She holds up a thickish binder with papers tin it.

JEMMA (CONT'D)

Report summary for GLOBCRAT.

(pause)

You know?...GLOBCRAT. The Global Conglomerate of Restitution and Trade. It's a multi-national, bi-lateral meeting of respective government departme...ugh, I need a coffee.

She wearily goes over to the coffee table and starts making a cup.

JEMMA (CONT'D)

Sorry, it's hard to keep up the enthusiasm for long. But seriously, it's different this time. Among other things, we're going to make real progress for the left-behind areas of Britain. I wonder if anyone else on the District Line realised the significance of it. They'd have to raise their head up from their phones just long enough for me to explain the acronym, but still...

As she brings the cup to her lips the office door opens and DAVID BERKSHIRE comes in, coat and ministerial red box in hand. He is immaculately dressed in a tailored suit.

DAVID

Morning Jemma.

JEMMA

Morning Minister. How was the trip?

DAVID

Oh my god! It was amazing! Never been to the Caribbean before. I could definitely get used to that hospitality. And the weather...

JEMMA

Did you get much done?

DAVID

Well you know, these negotiations take time. We haven't quite got the clout with these corporations we once did.

He goes over to a mirror and adjusts his tie.

DAVID (CONT'D)

But there's plenty of goodwill to work with for next time.

(pause)

How was the District Line?

JEMMA

The works have finally finished so...only had to change twice.

DAVID

Oh good. (pause) You know, it was such a smooth ride in this morning. (pause) Wow, my own driver! It'll be a while before that novelty wears off, I can tell you.

JEMMA

Glad to hear it.

DAVID

Have we got a GLOBCRAT report?

JEMMA

We do, but...

DAVID

(interrupting)

Ah, the Global Conglomerate of Restitution and Trade.

This will be the making of me, Jemma. Once the PM sees it - "David Berkshire, strong as an...ox!"

JEMMA

I think the headline writers can do a little better than that minister.

DAVID

The papers don't matter anymore. They've never been able to find a rhyme for Berkshire anyway. I'm talking about the podcasters. "He doesn't take crap from anyone." "Berkshire stands up to GLOBCRAT...gangsters".

JEMMA

I think the podcasters can come up with better clickbait titles than that...minister.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Whatever - it'll be the big leagues - Foreign secretary, Home office.

(pause)

Not chancellor though, too many spreadsheets.

JEMMA

Yes, but my advice for now is to concentrate on this GLOBCRAT report.

Jemma offers the folder, David takes it.

DAVID

Hmm, very well. What's the gist?

JEMMA

I'm just finishing section 22. I think we should aim for significant investment in targeted regional towns, specifically West Eastford.

DAVID

(nodding)

West Eastford?

(pause)

North of the river obviously, the south of the town is already well served by industry.

JEMMA

Well, actually the southern area is more economically disadvantaged according to the ONS dat...

DAVID

(interrupting)

I think you'll find there's some figures...somewhere that show the north of the town is where help is really needed.

JEMMA

You mean the bit that's your constituency?

DAVID

Is it? Well now you mention it...

(pause)

Yes, I think section 22 should be in respect of the left-behind, hard-working people in the north of West Eastford. Let's make it happen.

JEMMA

But I'll have to redo all the calculations for demographics, median income, population density...

DAVID

You grew up there didn't you? Shouldn't be that difficult.

JEMMA

(sarky)

Yes, but I went to school at West Eastford North Comprehensive. We didn't have the resources to carry the one.

DAVID

It's not easy being an elected representative of the people, Jemma. We can all be anonymous civil servants.

JEMMA

We have to stick to the south of West Eastford, the poverty levels there are rising sharply. The north has had the leisure centre and the art gallery. It's just my considered advice...

DAVID

Consider your advice considered. I've made my decision.

(with a noticeable disdain)

Is there anyone around who can make me some coffee?

David sarcastically walks the office, looking in every nook and cranny.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Anyone?

JEMMA

Kettle's boiled. There are mugs in the cupboard.

(pause)

And some others scattered about.

David reluctantly picks out a mug and silently makes a coffee.

DAVID

(sips his coffee)

Mmm. Bitter.

(pause)

Ah these few precious moments, when the journalists are still hungover, and the trolls aren't awake yet.

They both stand with their mugs for a moment, contemplating the silence. The door flies open and in strides SELINA URQUART, special advisor to the minister. She is very energised, strikingly dressed in business attire and heels, carrying a bag and a takeaway coffee. She talks very quickly.

SELINA

Morning, morning, morning, morning.

DAVID

Morning Seli...

SELINA

(interrupting, pulling out some papers from her bag.)

Here's the speech for today. Should wake up the GLOBCRAT rabble. Where's the report? Have you got it?

Selina puts the speech on Jemma's desk and her takeaway coffee in the bin.

JEMMA

(holding out folder)

Here it is Selina. Just need to finish section...

SELINA

(interrupting, snatches folder)

This is the big one David. We have got to seize the day. Can't give anyone a chink of light to exploit. Get this right and you'll be a proper party grandee. No more...

(pause)

What are you again?

JEMMA

Internal and External Affairs.

DAVID

(sternly correcting)

Minister for Internal and External Affairs.

SELINA

Oh yes, MINEXA. The background matte painting of portfolios. Soon we'll be in the foreground, three-dimensional, primary colours, front and centre..

She trails off, starts to flag and lose energy.

SELINA (CONT'D)
Oooh...I need a coffee.

JEMMA
You just had one.

SELINA
That was only a stop-gap. I left my first of the morning on the bus. Really fucking annoying.

Selina throws the report on the coffee table, talks to herself while spooning a huge amount of coffee to make a very strong brew.

SELINA (CONT'D)
Maybe it's about time we PFI'd TFL. Perhaps if someone was making a profit on my journey, the greater efficiency would have made me pick up my double latte.

Jemma goes to pick up her report from Selina's desk.

JEMMA
That's ridiculous.

Selina takes a sip of her new coffee. She suddenly has energy again.

SELINA
Is it? It got us through the 90s with aplomb! Those were the days. You could throw money at everything.

JEMMA
Well that isn't an option now.

SELINA
Oh and don't we know it! Tell us how we're going to get everything proposed in your GLOBCRAT report without some private enterprise?

Selina faces up to Jemma

JEMMA

It's nearly all private enterprise. Just a case of enticing it to where it's needed.

SELINA

Tax breaks I'm sure. We'll have to make cuts to the public purse...somewhere.

JEMMA

There's considerable scope for savings in the GLOBCRAT report, section 14.

DAVID

Now now, less natter and let's prepare.

SELINA

Speech is on your desk.

David picks up the speech.

SELINA (CONT'D)

Shoulders back - remember, you're riding in on a white stallion, bringing pride, jobs, and prosperity back to provincial Britain.

Selina pats David on the back, he starts to read the speech.

DAVID

'Good afternoon, welcome to the Global Congl...'
Am I doing the thist?

David demonstrates the thist - the familiar thumb-over-the-fist pointing pose.

SELINA

Always the thist. With occasional double thist - I've marked it in the speech.

David demonstrates the double thist. Him and Selina continue their discussion, silently miming various hand movements while Jemma breaks the fourth wall.

JEMMA

Best minds in the country.

SELINA

Double-thist me David!

JEMMA

Suppose I'd better do the emails.

(she reads the emails on her computer screen)

'Hey wanker...'. Ok, do they actually make a point?

(she scans the page)

Mmm...nope, standard letter.

Jemma clicks the mouse, and reads the next email.

JEMMA (CONT'D)

'Dear right honourable David Berkshire MP esquire, I am one of your constituents in West Eastford North'. Ah, that's more like it. 'yada yada yada...an abomination to God...'. Okay, standard letter.

Jemma clicks the mouse, then a computer-generated tweet notification goes off.

JEMMA (CONT'D)

Hashtag thenationwantstoknow...Do they really? Hmm, looks like everyone's been tagged. Health have already replied, Education as well.

(quizzically)

'What's your favourite...Plim...Plimpadoo?'

Selina immediately stops coaching David.

SELINA

Did you say Plimpadoo?

JEMMA

Yes, what are...

SELINA

(interrupting, like an excited teenager)

Oh my God, Plimpadoos are amazing! They are the biggest thing right now.

DAVID

Can someone explain th...

SELINA

(interrupting)

We have to get this right, quickly. Oh wow, Plimpadoos!

Selina gets out her mobile and starts scrolling.

DAVID

(to Jemma)

Is this some new kid's thing?

JEMMA

No idea, I haven't been home before their bedtime for weeks.

Jemma gets back to emails and preparing for GLOBCRAT.

DAVID

(to Selina)

Is this fuss really necessary? The PM will be watching the GLOBCRAT negotiations like a hawk. Let's just pick a Plimpadoo and get on with the prep.

SELINA

Are you mad? A solid GLOBCRAT might get you up there in the PM's thinking, but a wise Plimpadoo choice will ensure you get to stand for election next time.

DAVID

Really?

Selina puts her arm round David, as they both look wistfully into the distance.

SELINA

You don't want to be subject to a recall petition, do you? Then a by-election challenge from the Plimpadoo Alliance?

DAVID

The Plimpadoo Alliance? In West Eastford North?

SELINA

Not yet registered with the Electoral Commission but...there's rumours...

DAVID

Rumours?

SELINA

...on Tik-Tok.

DAVID

(suddenly relaxed, releasing Selina)

Oh for god's sake, so what? Let's just...

SELINA

(interrupting, walking away)

Of course, we could just stand tall. Let the chips fall where they may. We're above these...frivolous fads.

She takes the GLOBCRAT report from Jemma's desk.

JEMMA

Hey, I need that.

SELINA (CONT'D)

(mockingly, tapping the paper, imitating David)

Look at these economic figures! No GDP like it this side of the Y axis!...What's that you say?...Yes, it is relatable to your day-to-day lives in West Eastford North isn't it?...Was that another question?

(she cups her mouth, mock shouts to make what she says muffled)

What's your favourite Plimpadoo?

(back to mocking voice)

...I'm sorry, we don't discuss things that have no bearing on the august workings of government.

(she cups her mouth, louder)

What's your favourite Plimpadoo?

*Selina triumphantly dumps the report back on Jemma's desk.
Jemma sheepishly takes it.*

DAVID

Have you quite finished?

(pause)

So how do we go about this? And is there some foreign travel involved?

SELINA

It's very delicate.

(pause)

We need to get some Plimpadoo polling data. Jemma, see what YouGov have got.

JEMMA

I'm busy with the 22nd section for this afterno...

SELINA

(interrupting)

Busy? Busy? What do you think I am?

JEMMA
But GLOBCRAT...

SELINA
(interrupting)
GLOBCRAT can wait.

JEMMA
But I've worked on this for months! I'm actually rather proud of it, it's one of the best pieces of work I've done here.

SELINA
Pfff! Pride is a deadly sin you know.

Jemma talks as she goes offstage to the "printer".

JEMMA
What? God'll smite me down should I give myself a pat on the back and a well-done-you packet of Maltesers?

Jemma returns with a piece of paper.

JEMMA
The YouGov Plimpadoo polls.

SELINA
See? Didn't take a second did it?

Selina takes the paper and peruses the detail.

SELINA
(gesticulating at David)
You love Plimpadoos, your wife loves Plimpadoos, your kids exemplify all the Plimpadoo wisdom.

DAVID
Plimpadoo wisdom?

SELINA
(looking at the paper)
61.2% of the electorate think a candidate's choice of Plimpadoo is vital when deciding who to vote for.

DAVID
So we have to get it right then?

SELINA

Every Plimpadoo says something different about today's society. We have to appeal to swing voters in the marginals, while at the same time not put off our core support.

She goes to make another coffee.

DAVID

Those pesky swing voters. Never used to be a problem in West Eastford North, where have they all come from? So much better to be decisive, grab the bull by the horns. Like those oiks in West Eastford South, returning the same rosette every time. It's not our rosette, but at least we know not to bother humouring them.

SELINA

Maybe we could?...Damn, no, we haven't got time for a focus group. We'll just have to use our best judgement based on our expertise and experience.

JEMMA

Of Plimpadoos?

SELINA

Of Plimpadoos. Really Jemma, if I could PFI you...

DAVID

Let's see this polling data.

Selina hands the paper to David, while still making coffee.

DAVID

Looks like we don't want to alienate the affluent, South-East DINKY 25 to 35 bracket.

SELINA

Mmm.

DAVID

Not to mention the working-class North-West,...

SELINA

Aha.

DAVID

...retired boomer, 65+ contingent.

SELINA

(with realisation)

Yes, but this isn't about Plimpadoos at all you see. This is about how you reflect Plimpadoo glory. Okay, you're a government minister, man of the people. You like a laugh, a bloke you can have a beer with - so...what's your favourite Plimpadoo?

DAVID

(reading the paper)
It's a minefield.

SELINA

There's Honey Trumpet. A bit too sickly sweet, perhaps. Doesn't show your rugged yet vulnerable masculinity, won't play well with the younger male demographic.
(pause to think)
Maybe Boomerang Bookmark? Gotta watch the colonial angle there though.

JEMMA

Boomerang book...?? Look, shouldn't we be getting on? We've got to leave in less than two hours.

DAVID

Shush Jemma! It's not like you're the one giving the speech.

Jemma taps a few keys on her keyboard. Multiple phone notifications go off, and Selina and David look at their respective devices. Jemma also looks at her phone and calmly puts it down.

SELINA

Aargh!

DAVID

Aargh! Russell's coming!

Jemma gives a knowing smirk.

SELINA

Shit shit shit.

DAVID

Fuck! I told you we should have just picked any old Plimpadoo. He's gonna want to see what we're taking to GLOBCRAT, and we've barely prepared.

SELINA

Ok, let's think - you've got the thist down, yeah?

DAVID

Single, double, left, right.

SELINA

And the invisible beachball? The accordion?

Selina mimes the "beachball" and "accordion" hand movements. David copies her. They nod and thumbs up.

SELINA

And we've got the speech. Jemma, have we got a report?

JEMMA

I suppose...I can fudge the 22nd section for the moment.

SELINA

OK. Oh god, have I got time for a wee? That coffee's gone right through me.

A distant door opens, there are heavy footsteps approaching. Everyone is on tenterhooks. Selina is needing the toilet. A closer door opens, and RUSSELL steps in.

RUSSELL

Good morning.

SELINA

(trying to be relaxed, but really needs the toilet)
Hey Russell! How's it going?

DAVID

(suddenly easy-going)
Wow, the biceps! Have you been working out?

RUSSELL

Thank god I'm here.

DAVID

Yes...we um...might need your help putting some finishing touches to...

RUSSELL

(interrupting)
Stop jabbering, we haven't got much time.

DAVID

Indeed. Would you like a coff...

RUSSELL

(interrupting)

...iced...tea.

DAVID

Selina?

SELINA

Jemma?

Jemma looks to her side, to see that there's no-one below her to delegate to.

JEMMA

Um...oh...okay.

Jemma frantically looks in cupboards, etc.

JEMMA

Have we even got any? I mean, who drinks iced tea these days?

RUSSELL

The PM received a communique, he's very concerned. He fears you're not up to speed.

David picks up the report, quickly rifles through some pages.

DAVID

Well, we've um...we've done all we can to avoid arbitration in the courts.

SELINA

(snatches report from David, still struggling with her bladder)

And we...ah...have...oooh...

RUSSELL

(interrupting, not listening)

This could secure the future of this government. We need all the details for analysis. So make it clear to everyone concerned,...what's your favourite Plimpadoo?

SELINA

What?

DAVID

Um..

RUSSELL

The south west A to Cs are all over this stuff. Not to mention the voters of tomorrow. You need to get it out pronto.

DAVID

Well yes, obviously, it's all we've been doing, all morning. Selina and myself at least. Jemma's been preparing for some meeting of the Global Conglomerate...

RUSSELL

(interrupting)

GLOBCRAT can wait.

SELINA

But I can't!

Selina goes offstage to the toilet.

DAVID

(to Russell)

Oh I quite agree, but these civil servants...

Jemma is still rummaging for an iced tea, but stops now. Russell sidles up to her.

RUSSELL

(over-calm)

Hello Jemma, I hear you've been working on the GLOBCRAT report?

JEMMA

Yes, I've still got to finalise the 22nd section.

RUSSELL

(immediately shouting)

The fucking 22nd section? Get some Plimpadoo shit out there now!!

JEMMA

But...but...that's really not government business.

RUSSELL

As far as you're concerned, how much the minister loves Plimpadoos is government business - same as filling in potholes, sometimes finding a fucking iced tea, and way below all of that is farting about with the 22nd section of some bullshit report for the Global Conglomerate of who cares.

Russell pulls out a scrap of paper from his pocket.

RUSSELL (CONT'D)

(calmer)

This is a list of Plimpadoos, pick one. The ones crossed out are already taken by the other departments.

Russell pins the paper to Jemma's forehead with his finger. Jemma takes the paper and quickly goes to her machine.

JEMMA

Ok, so...we'll go for...Purple Sunflower. That's the minister's favourite Plimpadoo.

Jemma dramatically taps her keyboard to send.

JEMMA (CONT'D)

The nation rejoices.

Almost no time has elapsed before there is a cacophony of phone buzzes, alerts, etc.

DAVID

Ooh it does, doesn't it?

Selina enters looking at her phone.

SELINA

Hitler?

DAVID

Hitler?

RUSSELL

Hitler?

SELINA

Who chose Purple Sunflower!?!

JEMMA

Russell said pick one.

Everyone goes to their phones.

SELINA

You imbecile! Even my gran knows that Purple Sunflower has distinct Nazi overtones.

JEMMA

But you didn't...

RUSSELL

There's already an AI mock-up of David covered in purple swastikas.

DAVID

(reading the polling data)

63.4% of the public voted Purple Sunflower the Plimpadoo that Hitler would have liked. I've only just found this out, how come you didn't know beforehand?

JEMMA

I...

SELINA

(interrupting)

"Brownshirt Berkshire".

DAVID

Oh great.

SELINA

We could get away with Pol Pot, Castro, even Bin Laden. But Hitler? Hitler? It even rhymes with Shitler!

RUSSELL

This is a gift to the Mail. You need to clean it up. Selina, see if you can get David on the Plimpadoo podcast.

SELINA

Plimpapod or Talking Plimpadoos?

RUSSELL

Ooh, tricky. (pause) Talking Plimpadoos - they record every day. Jemma, try and get a photo op with the Plimpadoo creators.

JEMMA

Who would that be?

RUSSELL

I don't know, google it. And David, you work out what the hell you're going to say to convince people you're not about to occupy the Sudetenland.

DAVID

Ok.

RUSSELL

Now I need to check with Defence that they've got their Plimpadoos in a row. I'll be back this afternoon - but fix this quickly.

Russell leaves. David goes to the coffee table.

DAVID

This is unbelievable.

JEMMA

(breaking fourth wall)

Yes it's a parody..

SELINA

(exasperated)

It rhymes with Shitler!

JEMMA

(breaking fourth wall)

...but I think you'll agree there's at least a 43% amount of truth to it.

SELINA

(looking at her phone)

The Plimpadoo Alliance have announced they're running against you.

DAVID

Fuck!

JEMMA

(breaking fourth wall)

Now I can see why pride is a deadly sin, if this lot are proud of themselves right now.

(back in the room)

GLOBCRAT's only an hour away!

SELINA

(with phone to ear)

Priorities Jemma! Purple Sunflower is the Plimpadoo that Hitler would have liked. And Hitler rhymes with Shitler!

David realises that they've run out of coffee.

DAVID

And we've run out of coffee.

ALL

Aargh!

Selina come off her phone.

SELINA

Ok, I've left a message with Talking Plimpadoos. Jemma, how's the photo op coming along?

JEMMA

Delphinex owns the trademark, I'm waiting on access to the actual creators.

SELINA

It's all too slow. We need to action this now.

(she thinks)

Ok, let's get something on YouTube. There's a tripod in the cupboard isn't there?

Jemma is working at her desk. She shrugs.

SELINA

Oh for god's sake! David, get ready.

Selina goes just offstage and brings back a tripod. David is standing, bracing himself for the video shoot. He is straightening his tie, picking his teeth, stretching his neck, etc. Selina is fussing with her camera phone, struggling to get it in the tripod.

SELINA

Goddammit!

DAVID

Why don't we do it selfie-style? You know, like the influencers?

David does a mime with his hand as a phone, pouting his lips, as if doing an influencer video.

SELINA

You're not influencing anyone, you're a politician. And in this moment, a figure of static-framed solemnity.

She continues to struggle with fixing the phone to the apparatus.

SELINA (CONT'D)

Christ almighty, how do you do this? Jemma!

JEMMA

Mmm?

SELINA

Do you know how to get this phone on the tripod?

Jemma slowly walks towards the tripod.

JEMMA

Can't the private sector do it?

Selina is silently amazed yet unamused at Jemma's comeback, glaring at her as she walks past. Jemma nevertheless goes to fix the situation.

JEMMA

Done.

DAVID

Good. Let's get on with it then.

Jemma presses a button on the phone. Selina sits down to observe, but gradually falls asleep.

JEMMA

Rolling.

DAVID

(speaking softly into camera)

Good afternoon. I'm recording this message for each and every member of our Great British society. Earlier today, I said that my favourite Plimpadoo was Purple Sunflower. However...I misspoke...

JEMMA

(breaking fourth wall)

I don't know what the exchange rate is - four minutes
contrition, multiplied by posting to five platforms, equals
200 negative Twitter comments, plus three angry calls to LBC?

DAVID

...to my family, the dedicated staff here at MINEXA, and my
constituents...

JEMMA

Yada, yada, yada.

DAVID

...visiting the Holocaust memorial in Hyde Park...

JEMMA

Ah, nice touch.

DAVID

...the Great. British. People.

*David has evidently finished his piece to camera, but Selina
has fallen asleep.*

DAVID

Selina!

Selina jerks awake.

SELINA

(half-asleep)

Er...what?...

DAVID

I've finished. Hopefully that should stop the idiots in West
Eastford North voting for the Plimpadoo Alliance.

SELINA

(half-asleep)

Okay let's get it out. Jemma, you know how to...meh.

*She waves in the general direction of the camera tripod
infrastructure, and leaves it to Jemma to clear up.*

JEMMA

I'm just finishing up the 22nd section, calculations almost done.

SELINA

(still drowsy, getting yawnier)

Mmm, always the excuses. You know if you could just get me an Espresso...right now...mmm...maybe I'd forgive you for being such a work-shy...layabout.

Selina falls into a deep sleep. Jemma is doing some final arithmetic on a notepad.

JEMMA

..Then carry the one, divide by the mode, aaaand...finished.
GLOBCRAT ready to go!

Jemma gets up positively, takes the phone from the tripod and hooks it up to her computer, clicks a few buttons.

JEMMA

Ok, video uploaded. All is well with the world.

A window is heard breaking. Selina rustles slightly in her sleep.

DAVID

What's that?

SELINA

(dreaming, giggling)

No Anton, the kids will hear!

Jemma goes slightly offstage and comes back with a brick.

JEMMA

More outrage?

DAVID

But I don't understand. I did the video. I apologised...ish. I said "Great British people". Are we any nearer to getting on the podcast?

JEMMA

I don't know, I think they're doing a livestream.

Jemma holds her phone out so that David can also hear.

PODCAST HOST 1

...and can you believe it! We had a message from Mr Berkshire's team reaching out to us after the Purple Sunflower fiasco.

PODCAST HOST 2

You didn't? Oh my god...

PODCAST HOST 1

...I know! He obviously did not realise that that is just not the way we do things here at Talking Plimpadoos.

PODCAST HOST 2

And to be honest, that stunt in the video...with the tie...

PODCAST HOST 1

...with the tie!!

PODCAST HOST 2

...just shows he's a radical left socialist anyway. People are not united on many things, but if anything brings Plimpadoo fans and haters together...

David snatches Jemma's phone and taps at it.

DAVID

What are they talking about?

The other Plimpadoo podcast starts playing.

PODCAST HOST 3

...and Belinda, Plimpadoos play a big role in your teaching?

BELINDA

They do. The benefits to the children are enormous. Of course, I'll have to have difficult conversations with the pupils about the behaviour of an elected representative making such rash Plimpadoo choices. Now, I don't think Mr Berkshire meant for his tie to be taken literally, but he has to realise that he is the minister for internal as well as external affairs...

DAVID

Surely LBC are defending me?

David taps at the phone again. A caller is mid-way through his point.

CALLER 3

...Marxist, liberal, traitor. I don't want my family, my wife and kids, running around with communist Plimpadoos. I've always said they'll be blood on the streets, and he's provoking people with that tie...

David turns the phone off and hands it back to Jemma.

JEMMA

Should have clocked the tie.

DAVID

(looking at his tie)

It's that obvious is it?

JEMMA

Well, the Great British people certainly noticed.

DAVID

So get them to un-notice it!

JEMMA

We've only got 10 minutes before we have to go...

DAVID

I don't want to hear about GLOBCRAT right now.

JEMMA

Plimpadoos are not in my job description.

DAVID

Do you think it's in my job description to give a shit about Plimpadoos? To post pathetic videos because some idiots are upset about a...I still don't know what it is...?

JEMMA

Then don't! Do something useful, like GLOBCRAT.

DAVID

GLOBCRAT?! What a joke. The only reason it exists is so that grubby money from fuck-knows-where can get a piece of the pie, whether that's West Eastford or some other hellhole.

JEMMA

It could do wonders for West Eastford.

DAVID

All that matters are the swing voters, who seemingly love this bollocks. So do as you're told and pull together a press release, or a podcast, or fucking...digital semaphore - about how much I fucking love Plimpadoos, apart from Purple Sunflower, and I'm not a commie. Please love me and do me good and hard when you're in the polling booth.

JEMMA

No!

DAVID

(more menacing)

You've got to decide if you're in or out of the tent young lady. We really don't like civil servants that aren't fighting for the working man - ie. me. How do you fancy the job centre in West Eastford...South?

(pause)

Those swing voters, you need to get them swinging for m..

Jemma hits David with the GLOBCRAT report. He falls to the ground.

JEMMA

Ooh. That's not good.

Jemma's phone rings, she answers it.

JEMMA

Hello?...Yes, I was looking for the creators of...um...well yes, but I'm about to go to an important meeting...

Jemma grabs her coat and bag, and leaves the stage while on the phone. Brief blackout, then lights up. David is in the same position and Selina is comically draped over the sofa that she's been sleeping on. Jemma walks in from outside, whistling, and carrying all the bumf from the GLOBCRAT meeting. She puts down her coat and everything else in her hands. David starts to come round, holding his head.

DAVID

What the hell happened? Hang on, you hit me...with the GLOBCRAT report!

JEMMA

Packs quite a punch doesn't it?

DAVID

What time is it?

JEMMA

Five thirty.

DAVID

Five thirty! But that means...

(pause)

I missed GLOBCRAT. You made me miss GLOBCRAT. I'll never get as good a chance to impress the people who matter.

Jemma is silent.

DAVID

Say something woman!

David invades Jemma's personal space, seemingly about to do some physical harm when Russell walks in the door, carrying an iced tea. David immediately backs away.

DAVID

Russell.

Selina lunges for Russell's iced tea and downs it. She regains energy.

RUSSELL

What's going on here?

SELINA

(wiping her lips)

Sorry, we ran out of coff...

RUSSELL

(interrupting)

Because I hope it's...a party!

DAVID

What?

RUSSELL

You nailed GLOBCRAT! A shame you and Selina fell ill and Jemma had to go alone, but the report you prepared was fantastic.

SELINA

Oh...yes...

RUSSELL

Investment and growth for several areas of the country. And the clincher in section 22 - manufacturing official Plimpadoo merchandise in West Eastford South. Bringing a beloved cultural icon to these shores.

SELINA

Well that's...fantastic.

DAVID

For West Eastford South.

RUSSELL

And Plimpadoo lovers everywhere. It's all but quashed the threat from the Plimpadoo Alliance. 83.2% of the nation feel that this is a positive for the country.

JEMMA

There's provisional plans for a Plimpadoo theme park and museum.

DAVID

In West Eastford...South?

JEMMA

Plenty of the staff will come from West Eastford North, get a grip.

RUSSELL

Might even spill into North Westington South East, but that's ours as well!

DAVID

But...I'm confused...What's my favourite Plimpadoo? Am I still under threat from...

David points left, then right, swaps his hands over, looks confused.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Who's going to kill me again?

RUSSELL

No one's going to kill you.

(pause)

Sandpaper Sausage.

SELINA

Of course! Sandpaper Sausage! That's your favourite Plimpadoo.

DAVID

It is?

SELINA

The perfect balance of old-school patriotism, blended with the fresh optimism of today's fast-paced world.

JEMMA

I updated your Wiki page.

SELINA

If we'd had the time for a focus group, we would have surely come to the same conclusion ourselves.

RUSSELL

And David, the rights to Plimpadoo merchandising are held by Delphinex, parent company Klabitsu Corporation.

DAVID

Klabitsu Corporation?

RUSSELL

Yes, the PM thinks it's definitely worth you visiting their head office sometime in the near future. Y'know, grease the wheels of prosperity a bit.

DAVID

Sometime certainly, but if today has taught me anything it's that I should concentrate on my constituents' needs for a better future.

(pause)

Where is the head office out of interest?

RUSSELL

Bali, would you believe?

DAVID

Oh.

RUSSELL

With a secondary sub-office in the Maldives!

JEMMA

Wait? What? I talked to someone in Reading.

RUSSELL

That's just the UK arm, Klabitsu is a worldwide operation.

DAVID

Y'know, on second thoughts I think West Eastford North is in good hands, and my staff can hold the fort for a few days while I save Britain.

RUSSELL

Great, it's very important that you shore up that business for the long term. Jemma can sort out the flights, can't you?

JEMMA

Suppose so.

DAVID

Yes, I can fly out from West Eastford Airport. So convenient to have that near home.

RUSSELL

Apparently there's a 70% margin on Plimpadoo chic.

SELINA

Margins in the marginals!

RUSSELL

Indeed Selina! And great job securing all that private equity for GLOBCRAT. I'm sure we can chat about those further privatisation proposals of yours. Intriguing stuff. Well done both of you.

Russell hugs David and Selina.

DAVID & SELINA

Thanks.

JEMMA

Wait...this was all down to me! I did all the work.

RUSSELL

Well done...You'll get your salary at the end of the month.

JEMMA

But they did nothing!

DAVID

(putting his arm round Jemma)

Jemma, Jemma, Jemma. You know what? I forgive you for your actions earlier. I think you just...misspoke. I'm sure Selina feels the same.

SELINA

Meh. I've got caffeine now.

DAVID

Well this definitely requires some champagne. Could you get some glasses Jemma?

Jemma wearily goes to fetch some champagne glasses.

RUSSELL

(aside to David)

You've really impressed the PM with that report David. Maybe it's about time you came over for supper. How do you fancy chewing the cud over crumpets and Earl Grey?

DAVID

Really? I've got some great ideas about how we can move forward in this parliament.

RUSSELL

Yes. In fact, I think he's got a free slot tonight. Why don't we go to no.10 now? Don't want to get caught in rush hour traffic.

DAVID

Fantastic idea. Your driver or mine?

David and Russell laugh and begin to walk off.

RUSSELL

Sandpaper Sausage. Came as quite a surprise I can tell you.

DAVID

Well I've always been a fan Russell. I was saying only the other day, what government needs is more Plimpadoos...

Jemma has found the glasses.

JEMMA

Found them!

She sees Russell and David gone. Selina walks in with her coat on and bag, ready to leave.

SELINA

Well, better be going. Got to finish the speech for the CLUMDIT conference.

JEMMA

What?

SELINA

CLUMDIT. Get up to speed Jemma - the Confederation of Lower, Upper, and Middle Income Territories. It's one of our biggest internal and external affairs.

JEMMA

Oh...yeah...costings are almost done.

SELINA

Nose to the grindstone. See you tomorrow.

JEMMA

See ya.

Selina leaves.

JEMMA

Last one out again.

Jemma goes to leave but sees Selina's phone left on the table.

JEMMA (CONT'D)

(shouts out the door)

Oh Selina, you've left your ph...

(she picks it up)

How do you lock this thing?

Jemma prods at the phone, but it starts playing an outtake of David's video from earlier.

DAVID

(on phone)

Hopefully that should stop the idiots in West Eastford North voting for the Plimpadoo Alliance.

Jemma taps at the phone trying to stop the video.

JEMMA

How do you turn this thing off?

DAVID

(on phone)

...idiots in West Eastford North voting for the Plimpadoo
Alliance.

...idiots in West Eastford North.....idiots in West Eastford North.

Finally, the phone stops playing.

JEMMA

Maybe pride isn't worth it after all, but it's no sin for me.

Jemma exits.

END