

THE IMPLOSION RESISTANCE

written by

John Stone

A One Act Stage Play

CURTAIN UP:

OVER BLACK SFX: The deafening sound of a tube train entering then leaving a platform.

Enter a heavily built HOODIE. He wears dark clothing and carries a small rucksack.

He plasters a poster to the wall. It shows a colourful print of an incandescent Planet Earth.

He turns to gain attention.

HOODIE

The impending implosion will
annihilate our existence! And the
people responsible for this are
stealing your right to protest!
We cannot let this corrupt
government policy destroy our
planet, or we will all pay the
price of our pending extinction!

(pauses)

JOIN US AND HELP US TO DESTROY
THIS CORPORATE IDEOLOGY BEFORE IT
DESTROYS US ALL!

Lights down.

LIGHTS UP:

A HOUSE IN MUSWELL HILL

Dance beats play through a loudspeaker system as petite blonde keep-fit fanatic DAWN 30, builds up a hot sweat whilst astride an exercise bike. She wears black lycra and a white headband.

The music is soon replaced by a newsflash. She stops pedalling and leans back on the bike to catch her breath as she listens.

V.O

Sixty people, including riot police have been seriously injured during violent clashes in London as Implosion Resistance battle with Anti-Rebellion supporters. All roads around Westminster have been sealed off and police are urging the public to avoid the area. A curfew will begin at Nine o'clock tonight.

She shakes her head in disapproval and climbs off the bike before she grabs a towel and wipes her face.

Her iphone vibrates on the side table. She picks it up and puts it to her ear.

DAWN

(on phone)

Oh, hi Dad.

DAD V.O

(gruffly)

Are you all right? Your breathing sounds heavy.

DAWN

Oh no, I've just got off the bike. I had a work out before Orbis gets home.

DAD V.O

Have you seen what's going on out there?

DAWN

Yes, I know. I just heard on the radio.

DAD V.O

And what about Orbis, what's he doing about it?

DAWN

Oh, he's disgusted like everyone else.

DAD V.O

How's he coping with all these dissenting voices for him to be sacked over his lack of support for the banning of fossil fuel?

DAWN

Oh, it's water off a duck's back to him. You know, Orbis, nothing phases him.

DAD V.O

Well, tell him I said to watch his back.

DAWN

I will let him know what you said.

DAD V.O

They're out to get him, Dawn.

DAWN

Oh, I think he knows that, dad. He receives threatening mail constantly.

DAD V.O

Well, I worry about you.

DAWN

Oh, thanks dad, but there's really no need. We're fine.

DAD V.O

Let Orbis know I'm on his side.

DAWN

I'll let him know. And you should stay home too. No one's safe walking the streets anymore.

DAD V.O

I'm not going anywhere, Dawn. I've got nothing to go out for anymore. I get everything delivered straight to my door.

DAWN

Good for you.
(pauses)
OK.

DAD V.O

So when will I see you?

DAWN

All being well, we'll drive down
at the weekend for a Sunday
lunch.

DAD V.O

All right, I'll book us a table
at The Swan. It's been quite a
while.

DAWN

Yes, I know. We've just been so
busy, what with one thing and
another.

DAD V.O

I understand. See you Sunday,
then?

DAWN

Yes you will. Love you dad. Take
care now. Bye.

DAD V.O

Bye, my love.

She ends the call then discards the phone as she exits.

Lights down.

LIGHTS UP:

EN SUITE.

She slips out of her lycra, then turns on the shower and
steps inside.

Lights down.

LIGHTS UP:

LOUNGE.

The minister for climate - ORBIS 47 enters. He's overweight
and wears a cycle helmet, high viz jacket and bicycle clips.

He seems visibly shaken as he lifts off his cycle helmet and
unclips his bicycle clips, before he dims the lights.

He goes directly to the window, covered by vertical blinds and peers through.

Dawn appears, dressed in a slim fitting, black summer dress. She shows him a look of concern.

DAWN

Orbis, what are you doing?

He doesn't turn around, instead waves her away.

ORBIS

Shh. I think someone's been following me.

DAWN

Don't tell me to shush. What's going on?

ORBIS

Someone just tried to bloody well kill me in the cycle lane.

DAWN

(aback)

What?

ORBIS

It's probably rent-a-mob, Dawn.

DAWN

(tuts)

Did you call the police?

ORBIS

No, I didn't. It happened too quickly.

DAWN

Haven't they got anything better to do?

ORBIS

That's the whole problem, Dawn - They haven't. They want to put the world to rights.

DAWN

(sighs)

Or wrongs, the way I see it.

ORBIS

You know if it hadn't been for my quick reflexes I'd be toast. I was in the bloody cycle lane for heaven's sake. He deliberately took me out. He literally intended to kill me, Dawn.

DAWN

Did you get his registration?

ORBIS

No, I didn't. It happened too quickly. Anyway, he'd already gone by the time I climbed out of a manhole.

She goes towards him with an outstretched arm.

DAWN

(empathetically)

Are you hurt?

He backs away.

ORBIS

Not physically, no. I'll be fine.

DAWN

Are you sure, Orbis? Have you checked all your bones?

ORBIS

Apart from a slight graze, I'm okay.

He steps back from the window then slips off his florescent jacket and hangs it on a hook on the back of the door.

DAWN

I bought a Neapolitan pizza. Your favourite. Shall I put it on?

ORBIS

In a minute.

DAWN

Why don't you take a nice shower and I'll put it on? By the time you get out it'll be ready.

ORBIS

I'm too on edge to wash, Dawn.
Anyway, don't you want to hear
what I've been doing all day?

DAWN

Not yet. Bore me later.

ORBIS

Oh. Right. Fair enough.

He stomps over to the armchair and slumps down.

She exits.

SFX: Heavy boots run past the window followed by the sound of
police sirens.

He looks up in anticipation, then gets up and covertly spys
through the blinds once more.

A protracted silence as the lights flicker.

Dawn re-enters and shakes her head in annoyance.

DAWN

Did the lights just go out?

ORBIS

They flickered if that's what you
mean. There must have been an
electrical surge of some sort.

DAWN

Oh, come away from that window,
Orbis. You're making me feel
quite nervous.

ORBIS

(suspiciously)

Shush. There's someone out there.
I heard footsteps.

DAWN

Well, ignore them. They can't
hurt you if they're outside, can
they?

ORBIS

It's difficult to ignore anything
when your life's just been
compromised, Dawn. I'm a target.

He sits back down.

DAWN

I was listening to the radio
while I was on the exercise
bike. They said dozens of people
have been injured during clashes
with protesters in Westminster.
Did you witness anything?

ORBIS

I witness something everyday,
Dawn. If it's not one thing, it's
another.

He opens his briefcase and sifts through some A4 headed
papers.

She shakes her head as she exits.

Landline phone rings.

He leans to his right and picks up the telephone receiver.

ORBIS

Hello-? Hello-? Hello-? Oh just
go away and die will you!

He slams the handset down, then sifts through his notes.

SFX: Sirens volumetrically increase.

Dawn enters with a large pizza and places it down on the
dining table. He opens a bottle of red, before he takes his
place at the table opposite her.

DAWN

Who rung?

ORBIS

I don't know. They wouldn't
speak, so I hung up.

SFX: Emergency sirens and choppers overhead.

Their eyes shift towards the door.

DAWN

The police have really got their
hands full by the sound of
things.

ORBIS

(irked)

That wasn't a police car. It was
a fire engine, Dawn.

They continue to eat and drink.

SFX: A wastebin knocked over as a big dog repeatedly barks.

Her ears prick up. She stares at the door and frowns with
concern.

DAWN

Orbis, what is that?

ORBIS

I don't know. Let's just eat,
shall we?

DAWN

It sounds like someone's outside
our door.

ORBIS

Hm. Ignore it.

SFX: An ear splitting crash, followed by screams, yells and
bottles being thrown.

They jump to her feet in unison, bearing an horrified
expression on their face.

DAWN

Orbis, I'm scared. I think
there's somebody outside our
house. Go and see who it is.

ORBIS

I should coco! I'll look through
the window.

DAWN

(panicked)

But I'm so...

ORBIS

...Nothing is going to happen to
us inside here. Your words, not
mine, Dawn.

DAWN

Well, people do sometimes get
attacked in their homes you know.
It's not unheard of.

ORBIS

Well, nothing is going to happen.
We've got uber tight security
patrolling every thirty minutes.

DAWN

Where are they now? There's
someone out there, Orbis.

ORBIS

OK. I'll put your mind at rest,
shall I?

He stomps towards the door with his chest out and his fist
clenched.

SFX: SMASH!

Dawn screams as an object hurtles through the window and hits
Orbis in the chest.

*He collapses to the floor as the room begins to fill with a
thick blue smoke. Dawn quickly exits.*

SFX: Shrilling screams to a cacophony shouting and sirens.

Lights down.

LIGHTS UP:

BEDROOM.

Dawn lies gagged and tied to a wrought iron headboard whilst
supine. MASKED INTRUDERS film themselves just for jolly with
their iPhones as they roar with laughter.

Lights down.

LIGHTS UP:

LOUNGE.

A long eerie silence as the smoke begins to disburse and the
tall, thin silhouette of OTTO 68 appears inaudibly in the
open door frame. He wears a long raincoat and Trilby hat.

Orbis lies motionless on the floor.

Otto cautiously enters and scans his surroundings.

He holds a handkerchief to his mouth as he spots *Orbis*. He steps towards him and gently shakes him.

OTTO

Hey. Are you okay, mister? Wake up.

Battered and bruised, *Orbis* slowly regains consciousness and opens his eyes. He begins to cough violently.

Otto hands him a fresh handkerchief as *Orbis* looks up at him in dismay.

OTTO /

You okay?

ORBIS

(disorientated)

Who are you? What are you doing in my house? How did you get in here?

OTTO

My name is Otto. Your door is open. Can I get you a glass of something?

ORBIS

No, you cannot. Who let you in, Dawn?

OTTO

No. Your front door is wide open. I heard a commotion and saw smoke billowing out. I thought there was a fire, so I was checking to see if anybody was still inside.

ORBIS

Did you throw that smoke bomb through my window?

OTTO

No, of course not. Why would I do something like that?

Orbis gets to his feet and brushes himself down.

ORBIS

Who, then?

OTTO

You mean to say you don't know
what happened?

ORBIS

The only thing I know is I was
attacked in my own house.

(splutters)

Look, who the hell are you? Why
are you here?

OTTO

I think you should calm down and
take a breather.

A protracted silence ensues as *Orbis* pulls himself together.

ORBIS

(recalculates)

Shit! My wife! Dawn. Where is
she?

OTTO

(shakes head)

I-

ORBIS

I need to find her.

OTTO

Would you like me to come with
you?

ORBIS

No! You stay here. I'll be back
in moment.

He exits.

Otto methodically walks towards the door and quietly closes
it shut.

Lights down.

LIGHTS UP:

BEDROOM.

Orbis sees *Dawn* gagged and tied to the bed in just her
underwear.

ORBIS

Dawn? Dawn, wake up. It's me,
Orbis. Dawn, wake up.

He quickly removes the gag and unties her, then covers her with the duvet.

ORBIS /

Dawn, it's me, Orbis.

She opens her eyes. Her mascara smudged. Her hair dishevelled. He consoles her.

ORBIS /

What on earth happened to you?

She bears a blank expression. Her usual sparkling eyes, dull and dispassionate.

DAWN

(sniffles)

Somebody was in the bedroom when
I came in.

(cries)

Have they gone? I'm so
frightened.

ORBIS

Yes. There's nobody here, except-

DAWN

(sobs)

-Where were you?!

ORBIS

(broken)

Oh Dawn, I am so sorry. I blacked
out. The smoke and everything, I
just completely blacked out. I
don't know what happened, until-

DAWN

-We can't stay here. We have to
leave now, Orbis.

ORBIS

Yes, I know. You are right.

DAWN

(angrily)

But why didn't you stop them?
Where were you?

ORBIS

I told you what happened, Dawn.

DAWN

I'm scared. We have to get away from here in case they come back.

ORBIS

We'll get the bastards who did this to you, don't worry, Dawn. They won't get away with this.

DAWN

But we won't, Orbis... and you know it.

ORBIS

We will. You'll see. We'll find these bastards and make sure they go down for what they've done. You just wait and see if I'm wrong.

DAWN

Well, have you called the police?

ORBIS

Not yet. I've only just woken up myself. I wanted to check to see if you were okay first.

DAWN

I heard voices outside. Was that you?

ORBIS

Oh shit! There's someone here. He's waiting in the lounge.

DAWN

Who is it?

ORBIS

Someone who came to help.

DAWN

Who?!

ORBIS

I'll go and find out.

DAWN

Oh, call the police, Orbis. He
might be one of them who tied me
up.

ORBIS

OK. I will. I will.

DAWN

Do it now.

ORBIS

OK. OK. I shall.

He kisses her cheek, then climbs off the bed and exits.

Lights down.

LIGHTS UP:

LOUNGE.

Otto stands centre, as Orbis enters with a bottle of water in
hand.

OTTO

Oh, you're back. Did you find
your wife?

ORBIS

Yes, I did.

OTTO

Is she all right?

ORBIS

(suspiciously)
Why'd you want to know?

OTTO

What's happened to her?

ORBIS

(discombobulated)
What'd you know about that?
(distressed)
I need to call the police.

OTTO

(casually)
Go ahead... Be my guest.

He grabs the landline phone receiver and brings it to his ear.

ORBIS

(irked)

There's no sodding dialling tone.
What the hell is going on? Why
isn't there a bloody dialling
tone?

OTTO

It's down.

ORBIS

Where's my mobile phone?

He spots his iPhone lying on the floor and picks it up. He attempts to make a call.

ORBIS /

(on phone)

No sodding networks available.
What the blazing hell is going
on?

He angrily discards the iPhone. Orbis studies him carefully.

ORBIS /

(splutters)

What's happening for heaven's
sake?

(scratches head)

D'you know who it was who
attacked us? And where's security
tonight? Why aren't they bloody
well here, either?

OTTO

Tik Tok wannabes, I guess. If
it'd been Implosion Resistance,
you'd probably be dead, or
seriously injured at the very
least.

(sighs)

Here, read this.

Otto hands him a flyer from his coat pocket. Orbis glances at it briefly.

ORBIS

(vexed)

What is this bloody rubbish?

OTTO

Read it. You'll see for yourself.

He studies the leaflet more closely.

ORBIS

This is just a propaganda pamphlet. It's been printed up by those Implosion Resistance lunatics.

Otto casually shrugs his shoulders.

ORBIS /

Where'd you get this?

OTTO

Are you sure you want to know?

ORBIS

Well of course I want to bloody well know! Where did you get it for heaven's sake?

OTTO

Actually, I was driving home when I witnessed your attempted hospitalisation earlier this evening.

ORBIS

You mean, you saw what happened?

OTTO

Yes. That nut job who tried to bury you, ended up, upside down on the verge further down the hill. I went to check to see if he was injured, but he'd vanished somehow, before I got there.

(sighs)

That leaflet you're holding was on the front seat of his car. In fact, there were quite a few boxes of them. The car boot was open when I arrived.

ORBIS

What do they want with me?

OTTO

Well, they have specific targets in their sights that they blame for the impending implosion of our planet.

ORBIS

But what's that got to do with me? I'm not God. I don't have magic powers to stop the planet spinning.

OTTO

No but you're the minister for climate change as far as I'm aware.

ORBIS

So what!

OTTO

Using your position to influence legislation and prop up fat cats at COP 28 will have an adverse effect on the planet... not to mention people's pockets.

ORBIS

How'd you mean?

OTTO

Surely you're aware that the forthcoming implosion will be the final chapter of our civilization. The Implosion Resistance blames fascist corporate ministers for the destruction being caused right now.

ORBIS

So, are you here to finish me off on their behalf?

OTTO

(chuckles inwardly)

No. I was simply en passe. And like I told you, I noticed your front door wide open and smoke billowing out. I came to offer you a helping hand.

ORBIS

So why are you still here? I'm fine now. You can leave. We're okay thank you very much.

OTTO

I need to convince you of your dire situation. You are in imminent danger. You and your wife.

ORBIS

Well, you're a bit late. The damage is done, I'm afraid.

OTTO

Those thugs that entered your property and attacked your wife were Tik Tok exhibitionists. They film themselves entering people's homes, then video their violent attacks to gain clicks.

ORBIS

Dontcha mean kicks?

OTTO

No. Clicks. The more clicks they get, they eventually get paid a salary by the administration to sell products like bitcoin.

ORBIS

And they become millionaires, I suppose?

OTTO

Yes.

ORBIS

That's insane.

OTTO

Yes, it is.

ORBIS

Look, I don't mean to be rude, but would you just leave me alone?

OTTO

OK. But I must warn you first,
that's the very last thing you
should be wanting. I'm afraid the
night isn't quite over.

ORBIS

(irritatedly)

What'd you mean?

OTTO

This imminent threat to your
life.

ORBIS

What are you talking about for
heaven's sake?

OTTO

You and your wife will be
seriously vulnerable if you stay
here tonight.

ORBIS

You're beginning to sound like my
Mother.

OTTO

No, but I must warn you that the
Implosion Resistance arbor a dark
secret.

ORBIS

And what's that?

OTTO

A list of names they refer to as
the annihilators. They lay blame
upon the people on that list.

ORBIS

And am I on that list?

OTTO

I'm afraid you are.

ORBIS

And how d'you know this?

OTTO

Because I have my sources.

ORBIS

But I haven't done anything to hurt anyone.

OTTO

Doesn't the planet count?

ORBIS

Is that what this is all about?

OTTO

Not entirely. But even you should be aware of the reasons you've made yourself a target for Implosion Resistance.

ORBIS

Look, I'm in discussions with energy firms regarding nuclear reactors, which is far cleaner than fossil fuels.

OTTO

You say that, but then why do you prop up the anti-rebellion?

ORBIS

That's utter rubbish, I support the banning of fossil fuels. Nuclear energy produces zero carbon emissions and doesn't produce other noxious greenhouse gases through its operation. The life cycle emissions of nuclear energy are also significantly lower than in fossil fuel based generation. Look it up, if you don't believe me.

OTTO

There, you see.

ORBIS

See what?

OTTO

Stop supporting the anti-rebellion hate mob. They're feral and would stop at nothing to take this country back two-hundred years.

ORBIS

I'm not supporting them.

Otto walks towards the window and inspects the damage.

OTTO

You should get this window fixed as soon as you can, otherwise those Tik Tok merchants might return.

ORBIS

I'm going to.

OTTO

It's going to be an extremely difficult night for you and your wife if you fail to listen to my advice.

A protracted silence as *Orbis* marches around like a headless chicken.

ORBIS

So, did you manage to get the details from that car that tried to run me off the road?

OTTO

Yes, I did. I have everything you need. I recorded the whole episode on my dashcam.

ORBIS

You're not a supporter of Implosion Resistance, are you?

OTTO

I'm not Devil's advocate, Orbis.

(pauses)

Many of Implosion Resistance members are, in fact, ex forces... disgraced police officers. They're drawn in by the militant side of the organisation. And since they have an axe to grind, they're extremely loyal to the cause. They have a proficient hardcore army. I've uncovered at least three disgraced ex-members of parliament that support them politically and financially. The ex Home Secretary included.

ORBIS

(reflectively)

You know I saw my life flash past me for the second time this evening. I cannot believe that I wasn't physically attacked. I thought you were here to kill me.

OTTO

Then let's hope there's not a repeat of that.

Orbis shakes his hand warmly.

ORBIS

I never asked you what you did for a living?

OTTO

Actually, I'm a retired journalist. I used to work for The Times, during my time as an investigative journalist.

Orbis opens the door for him to leave.

OTTO /

Just remember those dark forces at work in this country. These ongoing riots between the Implosion Resistance and the anti-rebellion supporters bear all the hallmarks of a highly supported catastrophe.

ORBIS

You're not suggesting a coup, I hope?

OTTO

Wake up and smell the coffee, Orbis, before it's too late. Our wonderful country is on the verge of anarchy. And you are condoning it by supporting the hate mob.

He spots a CCTV camera lying on the floor.

OTTO/

Oh look, you have a CCTV camera on your floor?

ORBIS

Where?

Otto points at the discarded CCTV camera situated under the dining table.

OTTO

Just there.

Orbis picks up the CCTV camera and studies it.

ORBIS

What the blazing hell-

OTTO

-I filmed Implosion Resistance using ones exactly like these as missiles.

ORBIS

So it was them.

OTTO

-It's true.

(pauses)

I'm afraid you're in grave danger, Orbis. You and your wife should get out of here, quicksmart.

ORBIS

I'm not being driven out of my own home by anyone. I will stay for as long as it takes. I have great faith that our police will arrest these lunatics and lock them up.

OTTO

They're not going to back down. At least not until you and your entire administration has left office.

ORBIS

How'd you know this?

OTTO

Implosion Resistance sees you as the main player within Earth's killing machine.

ORBIS

OK. I've heard enough. I really don't mean to be rude, but would you mind if you just left? I need to think about what I need to do. I cannot do that with you in my face, telling me how dead I am... or I'm going to be if I stay here any longer.

Orbis attempts to usher him out of the house and opens the door.

Dawn enters, her make-up removed, her hair brushed.

Otto acknowledges her and politely removes his hat.

Orbis shuts the door and sighs.

ORBIS

Dawn, go back to bed. I'll be in, in a minute.

DAWN

I can't sleep with all this noise.

ORBIS

This is the man I was telling you about. He saw the door open and came to check on us.

Otto has an outstretched hand.

OTTO

Otto.

DAWN

Good to meet you, Mister Otto.

She shakes his hand and painfully smiles.

OTTO

Hello, Dawn. How are you coping?

She gives him a suspicious look and shakes her head.

DAWN

Would you like a drink, Mister Otto? Tea, or coffee?

OTTO

A cup of tea would be nice, since you're offering.

DAWN

Milk and sugar?

OTTO

Yes please, Dawn. Thank you.

She exits.

ORBIS

(reluctantly)

You better sit down then. Make yourself comfortable.

He places the CCTV camera down on the table, then searches the sofa for broken glass.

OTTO

I'm very grateful.

ORBIS

No glass.

OTTO

Is it safe?

ORBIS

Yes.

OTTO

Would you mind if I take off my coat?

ORBIS

No. Go ahead.

He takes off his coat to reveal a smart black suit and white shirt.

Orbis takes them and hangs them on the coat rack behind the door.

ORBIS /

There's a draft. I better fix the window.

OTTO

Would you like a hand?

ORBIS

No thanks.

Orbis exits.

Otto picks up the CCTV camera and begins to study it.

SFX: Choppers overhead.

Orbis re-enters clutching a sheet of hardboard and a hammer.

He goes to the window and begins to board it up.

Dawn returns carrying a tray with a pot of tea and three cups.

DAWN

Here we are, Mister Otto.

OTTO

Thank you, Dawn.

Orbis checks over his shoulder.

ORBIS

Almost done.

She sits down on the sofa next to *Otto*.

DAWN

What's going on out there, Mister Otto? Who would do such a horrible thing?

OTTO

Implosion Resistance, Dawn.

She looks at the CCTV camera in his hand.

DAWN

What's that you're holding?

OTTO

A surveillance camera. Here, take a look.

He hands her the camera.

ORBIS

It was tied to that smoke bomb.

DAWN

I ran when it crashed through our window. But there was someone in the bedroom when I got there.

OTTO

Did he hurt you?

DAWN

Yes. I was tied up and assaulted.

OTTO

You mean to say that you were sexually assaulted?

DAWN

Yes, I think so. I passed out.

OTTO

But this is terrible. I am so sorry, Dawn. This must be reported as soon as the telephone networks are back to normal.

DAWN

I will. I'm just glad they're gone.

OTTO

No one should get away with something like that, no matter what.

ORBIS

(interjects)

If it hadn't been for Otto who knows what would have happened to us, Dawn... What with the door wide open and the pair of us just lying there. We would've been sitting targets for any fly-by-night fancying a quick rummage.

DAWN

That is what actually happened, Orbis. Or have you forgotten I was assaulted?

ORBIS

No of course not, Dawn. I am sorry. I wasn't thinking straight.

Otto eyes the camera in her hand.

OTTO

That's the nine-hundred series. It has the capacity to house four-hundred and twenty lines. It came out of a subway, I would say.

DAWN

Oh, really? I wasn't aware of them.

OTTO

Yes. If you use the underground you'll see them.

She puts the camera down and begins to pour the tea.

Silence as they drink.

SFX: Voices shouting in the distance as Boots run past the window.

VOICE O.S

CAPITALIST WANKER!

They look up in unison. *Orbis* reacts.

ORBIS

OH GO AWAY AND DIE YOU CRETIN!

A mortified *Dawn* confronts him.

DAWN

Orbis, what are you doing?!

ORBIS

Well...! He was probably the culprit who threw that bloody camera through our window, Dawn.

DAWN

For goodness sake. If you're going to behave like a juvenile, then there's no point boarding up the blimming window, is there?

ORBIS

OK. I'm sorry. I'm sorry. It won't happen again.

OTTO

Well, I doubt if you'll be able to find yourselves a glazier in the next few days. I've seen more broken glass than I saw during the poll tax riots.

DAWN

Is it really that bad out there, Mister Otto?

OTTO

Oh yes, I'm afraid it is, Dawn. And far worse than that. The problem is that the public have completely lost patience with protesters, and therefore their tolerance is at an all time low. They're now getting physically involved by taking the law into their own hands.

ORBIS

(interjects)

They should kettle 'em. That seemed to work well enough before. Or better still, get the water cannons out.

OTTO

This isn't the nineteen-seventies, Orbis.

DAWN

They're not allowed to do that, anyway.

ORBIS

God forbid. The law lords would come down us like a ton of bricks. They'd liken us to Pol Pot.

OTTO

The problem is that the riot police cannot distinguish the difference between themselves and the anti-rebellion. I even spotted one or two riot police charging at one another. The whole thing is a complete and utter shambles.

DAWN

Oh God! How come?

OTTO

Believe it or not, Dawn, the anti-rebellion are wearing the same riot gear, and have even managed to infiltrate the riot police. I spotted one officer being tasered by a rioter dressed exactly the same as him. His dreadlocks gave him away as being a police officer. I have it all on my smart phone. I'll email you the carnage later if you like?

ORBIS

Please do... Though it sounds absurd.

DAWN

Surely, you're not serious? That sounds to me like a surreal notion.

OTTO

Unfortunately I am deadly serious, Dawn. They are very well equipped. They've been preparing for this very day in my opinion.

DAWN

Sounds like it.

Orbis finishes boarding up the window and sits down.

DAWN

Oh dear. It all sounds so depressing, doesn't it?

OTTO

Yes, it does. And those sirens penetrate, don't they?

ORBIS

You can say that again. They're driving me to insanity.

DAWN

Why can't they put them on silent, or something?

OTTO

Ah, a beautiful song in Greek mythology, Dawn. However, it is their silence that is more deadly than their sound, according to Odysseus, King of Iliad. But at least we know where the trouble is.

DAWN

Oh really? I never knew that.

OTTO

You needn't to understand that the sirens are not the enemy. In fact the real enemy is fear. And even cameras like this one are only responsible for four per cent of actual convictions when relied upon in our judiciary. It's a very expensive business to justify surveillance operations. Anyway, it's all part of the greatest conspiracy to cause fear societies.

(drinks)

I'd remove them altogether. They never had them when I was growing up. And we felt quite safe back then.

(drinks)

But then, with or without surveillance street crime is very much a part of urban life. For example, Tik Tok celebrities who go out with the sole purpose of committing a violation are oblivious to surveillance anyway. Basically they welcome it. Just dot-com your local council to find out the true crime figures for your neighbourhood.

DAWN

I'll do that, Mister Otto. Thank you for letting me know.

ORBIS

There's no flipping Morale anymore, that's the problem.

OTTO

Life can be so very cruel, Orbis. It just depends on what side of the fence you are born.

Otto finishes his tea and gets to his feet.

OTTO /

Well, I better be off. I think I've overstayed my welcome long enough.

DAWN

Are you sure you won't stay for a bit longer, Mister Otto? I feel safer with you around.

OTTO

No thank you, Dawn. I better get off. I think it's time for me to get going.

ORBIS

Well, thanks for stopping by. We have been enlightened and will certainly think about what you said.

OTTO

It's been a pleasure.

(pauses)

Actually, would you mind just switching on your TV for a moment? I just want to catch up with what's happening before I leave.

ORBIS

Of course.

Orbis turns on the TV. A news bulletin.

They watch with interest the running battles between riot police and anti-rebellion on the streets of London.

DAWN

This is what I heard earlier on the radio.

The images switch to a FEMALE NEWSREADER.

NEWSREADER V.O

Fires rage and widespread looting continues as police forces from around the country engage in running battles with organised rioters. Both the Prime Minister and the London Mayor have cancelled their holidays to the Seychelles. They are returning home together in a private jet. The Police Commissioner has repeated his warning to the general public not to leave their homes as the army takes up positions in the worst affected areas. A curfew remains in place. Anyone seen out now will be arrested and taken off the street.

(short pause)

And some news just coming in to us from Scotland Yard, says the minister for energy, David Pyne has been found dead in his own home, along with his wife. Police want to trace the owner of a red BMW seen in the Muswell Hill area at around seven-o'clock this evening. If you know of this car's whereabouts, or have any information please contact Scotland Yard immediately. And under no circumstances should you approach this vehicle, or its driver as he is thought to be extremely dangerous. There will be a direct phone number to Scotland Yard at the bottom of your screen following this bulletin.

Orbis covers his mouth in deep shock.

ORBIS

(to Dawn)

Oh no! That's David and his wife.

She grabs Orbis's arm.

DAWN

(fearful)

Oh, Orbis what are we going to do?

He comforts her.

ORBIS

(to Otto)

That was my colleague and his wife. This is a bloody outrage! Where are the sodding police? Something has to be done to stop these people.

OTTO

And that was the vehicle I witnessed bump you off the road earlier. You need to find a safe haven tonight. You can always stay at mine if you like.

DAWN

Oh, are you sure?

OTTO

Of course, Dawn. I have the room.

ORBIS

That's very noble of you, Otto.

OTTO

It seems to me you've been lucky. If you want to get your things together, then do it quickly. We don't have much time.

DAWN

We'll do it right away.

ORBIS

We'll be right back. Don't move!

They quickly exit. Otto stands in the open doorway and keeps guard.

A gloved hand comes from behind him and slits his throat from ear to ear. He falls silently to the ground, before the *ASSAILANT* drags his body out of the door.

Lights down.

LIGHTS UP:

BEDROOM.

Dawn places a sports bag on the bed, then begins to pack clean underwear from the chest of drawers.

DAWN

Otto's such a nice man. D'you think he'll mind if we offer him something to show our gratitude?

OTTO

(impatiently)

I don't know, Dawn. Please hurry up with that. We need to go.

DAWN

I'm going as fast as I can. Go and fetch the toothbrushes and paste.

He exits briefly, then returns with toothbrushes and a tube of toothpaste.

She finish packing before they exit.

Lights down.

LIGHTS UP:

LOUNGE.

The tall, thin Assailant stands with his back towards them in the open doorway. He wears Otto's hat and coat.

ORBIS

(unaware)

OK. We're all done.

As they exit the house with their bags, the Assailant turns and narrows his small round eyes with mischievous intent.

A protracted silence ensues after they close the door shut and exit.

SFX: SHRILLING SCREAMS BEFORE A DEAFENING EXPLOSION.

38.

Smoke fills the room to cause an eerie blackness.

BLACK OUT.

CURTAIN