

Running The Country

The general election was only a month in the past, and Lynda McFearson MP had been as astonished as anyone by the result. The Guardian was calling it "An Amazing and Historic Vitcory" [sic] with their usual skill at typesetting and proofreading. The Independent was describing it as "The most astonishing outcome since John Major won in 1992". The Telegraph was calling it "a Sad Day For British Politics". And The Sun was screaming "GAY ORGIES IN PARLIAMENT?"



McFearson had never made a secret of her sexual orientation. When asked, on her arrival at number ten for the first time, how she felt about those who said that a homosexual had no place running the country, she replied by asking what her majority was. The answer was quickly supplied: over a hundred seats. She then asked what her personal majority was in her own seat. The press were a bit flummoxed, but one of her aides had the answer and supplied it. Twenty one thousand. And all the other challengers had lost their deposits except the Labour candidate. Lynda had smiled at the cameras and said "I think that answers the question. If the people didn't want me here, I wouldn't be here".

Comparisons with Margaret Thatcher were obviously made next - the only other woman Prime Minister of the UK. When asked how she felt about those comparisons. Lynda displayed the charisma that had won her and her party the historic victory. "Oh I wouldn't say I was anything like Baroness Thatcher. This lady turns very nicely indeed!" And she did a little pirouette on one foot, much to the delight of the TV audience.

Her elevation to the leadership of the party had come as a complete surprise, and while she had not expected it, she relished the challenge. The second gay leader of the Liberal party - not that Jeremy Thorpe was open about it - she had campaigned on a platform of equal rights for all, winning a significant vote from minorities of all persuasions. The Christian Right Wing had tried to smear her, but she had responded that Christians were a persecuted minority in some countries and she would see to it that the same thing did not happen in the UK - playing to the fears of radical Christians about radical Muslims without ever being specific. She also charmed the Islamic community, pointing out that as a member of a minority herself, she knew what it was to feel like an outsider, and her primary goal was equality and justice for everyone regardless of race, religion or sexual orientation.

Questioned about the economy, she made good use of her degree in economics, pointing out several flaws in the previous administration's policies and laying out clear and concise answers. Defence, Europe, Immigration, all were issues she had answers to. But nearly always, during the campaign, the question was brought back to her sexuality. Which she answered openly and honestly, and made it clear that she did not consider it an issue.

The result was a landslide victory for the Liberal Democratic Party, their first victory ever, and the first one for the Liberals since David Lloyd George lost to Andrew Bonar Law in 1922.

And now, with Parliament recalled, the state opening of Parliament behind her, settling into Number Ten Downing Street more or less over with, and the civil service brought to heel, Lynda McFearson was finding it lonely at the top. President Biden had contacted her to congratulate her and they had chatted long into the night - at the US taxpayers' expense of course - but it did nothing to relieve the empty place in her heart or the empty side of her bed.

She sat in the cabinet office, this Monday morning, going over some white papers that Sir Malcolm Ashworthy had placed in one of her red boxes. Sir Malcolm was the Cabinet Secretary, and she couldn't help but compare him to the fictional Sir Humphrey Appleby. She had even made the comparison openly, when she was first introduced to him, saying "So, you are my Sir Humphrey Appleby?" He had looked at her blankly. She waited a moment, then said "From the TV series, Yes, Prime Minister?"

Sir Malcolm had considered this a moment and then replied, "Ah, yes, Prime Minister, very droll", with such a straight face that to this day Lynda had no idea whether he was being serious or playing the role. Then of course there was her Principal Private Secretary, Catherine Fairfax. Whether it was someone's idea of a joke or just happenstance, Lynda didn't know, but Mrs Fairfax was about as far from Bernard Woolley as it was possible to be. Not only that but she was quite plainly homophobic and made no secret of the fact. Lynda had considered asking for her to be replaced but dismissed the idea as being totally counter to what she believed in. The woman was entitled to her beliefs and opinions, after all. Even if she was wrong.

And finally, in the room that could seat thirty easily, for this small meeting, there was her own Parliamentary Private Secretary.

Going from under twenty seats in the commons to over four hundred had meant a LOT of new MPs, and with over a hundred and twenty different ministerial posts to fill, including the Parliamentary Secretaries and Undersecretaries, it had taken a while. By the time she had appointed the last cabinet post, a lot of the more promising candidates for Parliamentary Private Secretaries had been snapped up. She could, of course, overrule them, but this would undermine her cabinet's faith in her. And anyway, she'd had her eye on half a dozen of the new MPs, two of which had already received appointments, but of those remaining her first choice was a young-ish Muslim woman from Scotland.

Labibah Chaudhry MP. The woman was, Lynda was forced to admit, really quite attractive. She forced herself to concentrate on the white paper before her. "This is up for its second reading later this week? I think a single line whip on the division. I can't see any of the backbenchers rebelling over this, especially as it was one of our manifesto pledges. Labibah, you agree?"

It was the Parliamentary Private Secretary to the Prime Minister's job to keep an ear to the ground in the back benches and alert the PM to any rumblings of discontent. She waited for the answer, then looked to the two civil servants. "Any other business? Good. What do I have next in my diary, Catherine?"

Fairfax opened the big leather-bound book and consulted the page. "Luncheon with the leader of Her Majesty's Opposition, the Right Honourable Andrew Burnham MP, at the House, followed by Business in the House."

"Good. Come on, Labibah, let's go eat with the enemy! Have my car brought to the back please, Catherine?" Lynda stood up and the others did too. She gathered her papers and headed through the maze of corridors and stairwells that was 10 Downing Street, to the carpark at the rear of the building.



She had always been a bit of an outsider as an Asian woman and a Muslim growing up in the very white and very Christian Western Isles of Scotland, but now here she was right at the very heart of the Establishment, as a newly elected MP and Parliamentary Private Secretary to the Prime Minister. Labibah Chaudhry was born twenty nine years before in Stornoway on the Isle of Lewis in the Outer Hebrides, she was the second child and eldest daughter of Tariq and Daniyah Chaudhry. Both of her parents were born in Scotland, her grandparents having moved to Scotland from Pakistan in the early 60s. Her father's parents moved straight to the island, setting up the stereotypical 'Indian' corner shop. and her mother's parents moved to Glasgow, setting up a restaurant that became a string of restaurants and take away outlets.

The Hebrides is very polarised between the Presbyterian Church of Scotland and the Roman Catholic faiths, so a Muslim family stood right out, while the family was not especially devout, that did not matter to the minority of bigots especially after 911. Labibah and her siblings had grown up immersed in Scottish Gaelic as well as English and Urdu, which sometimes knocked bigots off their stride when they would abuse her or her family in Gaelic, only for her to respond

in the same tongue with no trace of a non-native accent, although she would never resort to the kind of foul and racist language that was sometimes used by their abusers. Preferring to use her wit and intelligence to make them feel small.

She was successfully educated at Sgoil MhicNeacail (The Nicolson Institute), where her fluency in Gaelic had meant that she was part of Addison House. The very epicentre of the school, and one of the keys to her acceptance by this 'old fashioned' society.

It was during her time studying for her highers that she joined the Liberal Democrats, inspired by Charles Kennedy and was part of the rapid growth of the party in the Islands, when many of the existing Independent councillors also joined the party.

After school Labibah moved to the mainland to study Politics & International Relations and Economics at Strathclyde University in Glasgow. It was while at University that she finally felt free to come out as a lesbian, and indeed had her first relationship with another woman. The woman was a faculty member that she met at meetings of the [Liberal Democrats](#) and [LGBT + Liberal Democrats](#). Not only did she come out but she also became active on several political campaigns, most notably women's' issues such as female genital mutilation and justice for all in the Middle East, not just for [Palestine](#) as people expected from a Muslim but also for [Israel](#) because without justice for all there could not be peace for anyone.

Her involvement deepened when she graduated from university, standing for council and being elected at the 2007 election for Steòrnabhagh a Deas (Stornoway South) of Comhairle nan Eilean Siar. Due to her performance in full council and committee she was asked by more senior colleagues to become the group leader. Things had been going well but for Labibah and her group, the coalition agreement with Cameron's Tories was an early hint of the extended suicide note for the party that Nick Clegg was writing in exchange for being Deputy Prime Minister, a job so pointless that the previous Labour Government had given it to John Prescott.

In the 2012 council elections, her group suffered heavy losses, and lost control of the council to a coalition of Scottish Nationalists, Labour and the remaining Independent councillors, and it was clear on the doorstep that this was because of the national coalition with the hated Tories. While she held onto her seat, and actually won on first count, the loss of her colleagues made her vocal in fringe meetings at conferences about the need to change course to avoid the impending disaster. She knew that others in the party, including some of the MP's including Charles who had announced that he was standing down at the next election for health reasons, felt the same way, but collective responsibility prevented them from publically being disloyal to Nick Clegg.

She was selected to stand for Parliament for the seat of Na h-Eileanan an Iar. Which, she initially considered a lost cause, but she was ideally suited to fight the seat after her friend and former council colleague was selected to stand in Charles' place for Ross, Skye and Lochaber.

Fortunately the party managed not only to change course at the 2014 Autumn Conference, where delegates forced a change of leadership. Which resulted in Lynda McFearson being voted in by Conference and later confirmed by a ballot of the entire membership. The party withdrew from the coalition, but needing time to recover did not assist in the immediate toppling of the Government.

But under Lynda's inspiring leadership, the party's fortunes had truly turned and going into the election it appeared that they would take Parliamentary seats from the Tories, Labour and in Scotland from the SNP, as well as council seats and councils across England, in the election that she had only a year or so before feared would see the party almost wiped out.

The polls had indicated that there was a swing to the Liberal Democrats, and the late polls even suggested that Lynda might be visiting the Queen in the morning after the election, having been asked by the Monarch to form the next Government as the leader of the largest party, as tradition dictated. However, the BBC/Sky News exit poll indicated that there would be a sizable majority, which was publically denied by Conservative and Labour representatives on the result shows. While the first few results were the expected wins for the Labour in the working class strongholds of Sunderland in North East England, there were massive swings to the Lib Dems. Which the Conservatives said was a sign of the weakness of Labour. Indeed the first seats to fall were Labour seats around Durham, and the seat of Nuneaton that the Tories had only taken off of Labour at the previous election.

By the time her own result was declared in the early hours of Friday morning, it was already clear that it was not just a Liberal Democrat victory but a landslide and several high profile Tories had already lost their seats.

Labibah was the first Liberal to be a member of Parliament for the seat since 1935, when an alternating pattern of Labour and SNP MPs had been elected. She had taken the seat from the SNP's Angus MacNeill who had attended the same school and university as herself, although many years before her or even her older brother.

Before the final results were in, it was clear about the magnitude of the victory, in all parts of England, Scotland and Wales.

Labibah had been impressed with her new leader at several conferences prior to Lynda's elevation to leadership, not least because Lynda was openly gay, which despite coming out to family and friends, Labibah had always lacked the courage to do so widely. But also for the sheer charisma and political ability that the blonde woman showed.

Life had been chaotic since her election, travelling to London and looking for a flat within easy reach of the chamber, but not one that would have her constituents foaming at the mouth about the waste of money was not easy, in the end she shared a house divided into two flats with her friend and colleague Dr Jean Davis.

She was not only having to adjust to life as a backbench MP planning her maiden speech but to life within the Prime Minister's inner circle having been appointed as Parliamentary Private Secretary to the Prime Minister herself. The call had come the day that Jean and herself had moved into the house, and a day before Jean's appointment as a junior minister in the Department of Health.

A Prime Minister, who was truly groundbreaking, the first ever Liberal Democrat Prime Minister, the first Liberal since Lloyd George, the first single Prime Minister since Edward Heath, only the second female Prime Minister and most of all the first openly gay Prime Minister. Of all the Prime Ministers who served during the reign of the Queen, Lynda was truly unique, but Labibah was certain that the Queen would be as welcoming to Lynda as her previous Prime Ministers, as the Monarch clearly did not let her private feelings about her Prime Minister affect the professional relationship between the Crown and the Executive.

Speaking of professional relationships Labibah found that the Cabinet Secretary Sir Malcolm Ashworthy, was courteous and professional with both the Prime Minister and herself, being a good Head of the Home Civil Service keeping whatever his own opinions were to himself. The same could not be said for the Principal Private Secretary, Mrs Catherine Fairfax, who was openly opposed to Lynda's sexuality and was also clearly Islamophobic, so it was just as well that the woman did not know about her own sexuality, or they would never manage even the merest civil conversation. Why Lynda put up with Mrs Fairfax was a mystery to Labibah, although she guessed that it was a question of not rocking the boat too soon with the Civil Service.

The four of them were in the Cabinet Room and the Prime Minister handed her a document, "This is up for its second reading later this week? I think a single line whip on the division. I can't see any of the backbenchers rebelling over this, especially as it was one of our manifesto pledges. Labibah, you agree?" Lynda said.

"No Prime Minister, the Whips Office can let this one go, it was not exactly the front page of the manifesto, but it was in the manifesto we all signed up to and it had been party policy for more than three years. Just as long as none of us newbies walk into the wrong lobby by mistake" Labibah replied joking about how confusing the corridors of the chamber were to the multitude of new MP's such as herself.

Mrs Fairfax informed the Prime Minister that she had a scheduled lunch with the new Labour leader at the House, which meant that Labibah and her Labour equivalent had to sit through a lunch like they weren't there until their respective Leader had some question that they needed to have the answer to.

They made their way to the car, the driver and the Prime Minister's security officer in the front, and the Prime Minister and Labibah in the back, for the brief ride out of Downing Street, into

Whitehall and then across Parliament Square to the Palace of Westminster. The police officers on the gates of Downing Street and Parliament saluting the car. Labibah wondered how many of them saw her [hijab](#) and thought TERRORIST there were bound to be some, as there were among the members of both Houses and their staff. That was part of the reason she tended to wear it on political business, an open challenge to misconceptions.

The drive from Downing Street to the House was not long and Lynda had at first asked why she couldn't just walk it. Her security detail from Special Branch had at first been amused, then horrified when they realised she was serious. Just because the IRA were no longer a threat, didn't mean that there weren't any terrorist groups operating in the UK, she had been told. She had noticed the sidelong glance at Labibah as this was said and shook her head.

Some Muslims are terrorists, you are a Muslim, therefore you are a terrorist. That was the line MI5 took. It was as logical as *Tables have four legs, my dog has four legs therefore my dog is a table.* She didn't really blame the security services for their paranoia, but it was somewhat irksome.

She had, of course, seen the security file on Ms Chaudhry. She had asked for (and been subtly denied) access to the file on herself - they told her there wasn't one, at which she had laughed and suggested they open one then. Her PPS was hard working, politically active and about as moderate as it was possible to be and still be a Muslim. She also knew that the woman had been in same gender relationships in the past, but none of them had lasted. That thought intruded on her as the car pulled into the car park and she glanced up from the paper she was reading to look at the pretty face, surrounded by the pink cloth of the hijab. Not for the first time, she found herself wondering what it would be like to kiss those lips, run her fingers through the hair concealed beneath the headdress. She smiled, forcing the thought away. It was impossible, it could never happen.

"God, I hate this part of the job!" she said with a grin. "It must be even worse for you. At least I get to chat. All you get to do is flirt with Karen" The leader of the opposition's PPS, one Karen Buck MP, who had managed to retain both her seat and her job in the wake of the election, was a chubby, if cute woman from Ulster in her mid fifties, happily married with a son. Flirting with her was like flirting with a brick wall.

She led the way into the building, managing to avoid the gathered paparazzi, into the commons lobby. As usual there were any number of lobbyists there, trying to raise support for their causes. Several of them spotted her and hurried over. She waved them away, and, spotting Andrew Burnham being likewise besieged, called out "Andy?"

He looked up and grinned, waved and called back, "Be with you in a jiffy". Lynda nodded and led the way past the commons, and the division chambers, and into the Commons restaurant. Her table was reserved for her, of course, and she grinned at her PPS. "Be a good flunky and get me a sandwich? Something with chicken in it please?" She winked and pulled a tenner out

of her purse and handed it to Labibah. "Get yourself something too." Her tone was light and her grin made it clear that she did not really think of the younger woman as her flunky.

Burnham joined her and the two of them discussed business over a light lunch. In spite of being on opposite sides of the house, they had a lot in common. With the Tories relegated to the third place the Lib Dems had enjoyed for almost a century, there was a lot of gloating going on, and Burnham was actively encouraging it from her side of the house as well as his own. The business that was Great Britain needed careful management and Lynda wasn't so proud that she wouldn't accept help from the opposition. Where it concerned party politics, obviously he was opposed to everything she said and did, but when it came to matters of keeping the country running, they were both more or less on the same side, and just glad to see the Tories out of office.

After lunch she made her way into the house and took her seat by the dispatch box to listen to the debate on the issue currently before the house. She didn't have to be there of course, but Lynda always tried to attend the sessions whenever she could. Mostly she took no part in the debates, allowing others to have their say. Only when directly addressed would she respond. The house was relatively quiet this afternoon, there were actually empty seats. No divisions were scheduled for this afternoon and the debate was on a private member's bill that was being introduced by one of her own new backbenchers, basically his maiden speech.

Lynda listened attentively. Her own maiden speech, made all those years ago now, had been on gay rights, a subject close to her heart. This new MP was holding forth on the problems his constituency was facing since the closure of a major manufacturing plant a few years ago and was urging the house to back his bill calling for renewed investment in industries. *All very well*, Lynda thought wryly, *but how the hell do we pay for it?* She caught the eye of the chancellor, Norman Lamb, who was clearly having the same thought. At least it wasn't a manifesto pledge, just one backbencher trying to do something for his constituents. She didn't blame him for trying. The bill would have a second reading in a week's time, followed by a free vote.

Several hours later, she arrived back at Number Ten, again using the back entrance from Horse Guards rather than the main entrance in Downing Street, which was always full of press. If she had anything to say or do, she would use the front but for something as simple as this, it wasn't worth it. She nodded at the security people who let her in and turned to her PPS. "You want to come up for a coffee?"

There was hardly anyone left in the place as she made her way up to her flat, the security people obviously, but all the civil servants had gone home and she almost wished she could too. This "flat above the shop" wasn't home. It was a place to stay while she was working. Her own constituency in the West Country was far too far to commute on anything more than a weekly basis, and in all honesty, with the workload she now had, she rarely got home more than once a month - she still managed to do her constituency surgeries, but very little else.

She made her way to the kitchen and put the kettle on.

As they pulled up in the car park, Lynda looked up from her papers, and Labibah wondered if her boss had realised that she had been watching her as her bright eyes were scanning the endless stream of documents that passed before her daily. Lynda was not only strikingly beautiful but the warmth of her personality shone from her eyes, but Labibah had to keep these thoughts to herself as it would not do to lose her position for being inappropriate with the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom.

Labibah laughed at the joke about flirting with Karen, her Labour counterpart was most definitely not the sort of woman that she would ever consider flirting with, and she was sure that Karen would probably have a heart attack if she did flirt with her. "She is not really my type Prime Minister" Labibah replied, certain that Lynda was more than aware of her sexuality, although she had never been asked, but it must have featured in her inevitable Security Service file.

As they walked through the corridors, Labibah was a step behind Lynda, following her lead, ready to intercept any political correspondent, lobbyist or anyone else trying to buttonhole the Prime Minister for an interview or political pitch. But the ease with which the Boss brushed aside the shoal of political piranhas was a joy to watch. Across the Central Lobby, she could see Andy Burnham and Karen Buck in the midst of a similar feeding frenzy.

When they arrived at the restaurant Lynda made some remark about being a good flunky and fetching her a sandwich with chicken in it. Labibah knew that this was only a joke, and responded in kind with a little curtsy and "As you command my Leader" followed by a little giggle. She made her way to the counter and got a chicken salad for Lynda and a cheese salad for herself and a couple of drinks. As she handed the change and receipt to Lynda, she said "Make sure you declare this expense properly Prime Minister" and gave another little laugh.

As the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition sat discussing the issues that they shared common ground and the current world situation, Labibah and Karen sat off to the side, this was multitasking at its finest, listening to their leaders conversation and taking mental notes, ready to answer any question that might possibly be thrown their way, eating their lunch and in Labibah's case listening to Karen talking proudly about her son's latest achievement, which sort of just washed over Labibah's mind.

After lunch, they went to the chamber, Lynda was in the habit of spending much more time in the chamber than any of her recent predecessors, who basically only attended for Prime Minister's Questions and if there was some controversial piece of legislation that might require a three line whip to try to stave off a rebellion. Lynda did not intervene in the discussions in the House but listened from her position on the often deserted front benches. However, with the presence of the Prime Minister, cabinet members had become more frequent attenders, which put pressure on their Shadows to attend as well.

One of her fellow new members had been lucky in the ballot and was introducing a private member's bill calling for State support for an industry which, if not actually dead, was in danger of dying in the developed world. She knew that the bill would not ultimately succeed as it was not likely to be picked up by Government or Opposition and would therefore not get the time or support necessary to make the statute books, but at least he was name checking his constituency and getting publicity for the struggle. This was confirmed when she saw the looks that passed between the Prime Minister and Chancellor.

Labibah questioned in her own mind whether she had deliberately picked her position on the green benches for its view of the Prime Minister, even before she was given the role of the PM's PPS. But this seat was most definitely hers, and heaven help any of her colleagues who tried to sit there on any occasion when the chambers were full.

When the Prime Minister eventually rose to leave the chamber, Labibah immediately followed suit, joining up with her boss, at the door to the chamber. They walked back through the corridors, to where the Prime Ministerial jaguar was waiting for the brief ride back to Downing Street.

As they got to the door, it was opened by one of the officers from the Royal and Diplomatic Protection Squad of the Metropolitan Police. "You want to come up for a coffee?" Lynda asked as they stepped into the more functional than homely official residence of the Prime Minister. Labibah thought for a fraction of a second to make some remark about the life of a flunky, but answered "That would be lovely Lynda" following Lynda up the stairs lined with portraits of former Prime Ministers, saying a silent prayer to Allah as she past the smiling evil of Blair and the cold callousness of Thatcher.

Sitting in her lounge, Lynda relaxed, kicked her shoes off, and turned the TV on, set to BBC News of course. Sometimes she wished she could be an ordinary human being again, not have the responsibility of running what at one time had been the greatest nation on the planet - the fact that Britain was no longer Great was not the point, the fact was that the echoes of the British Empire still reverberated around the world, not least in the fact that English was the *de facto* international language. The Muslim woman sitting next to her on the sofa was another part of the legacy of Empire - Being British had meant something back at the time of the Second World War, and when the Empire had been stripped away, changed into the Commonwealth, people who saw themselves as British had come to the sceptred isles in droves.

And British interests still extended around the world. She could not rely on the FCO to tell her everything, this she had learned very early on, and so she watched the news almost constantly when she was not doing anything else. Situations developing in the Middle East, the Far East, Africa, South America... These all required her notice if not her attention. Plane crashes, terrorist bombings, Israel and Palestine, Pakistan and Al Qaeda, Pakistan and India... Never mind the ongoing situation in Afghanistan, which was all Russia's fault, originally.

She sipped her coffee and felt eyes on her, turned to look at the woman next to her. "Hmm. It's funny, but... if anyone had told me, twenty years ago, that one day I would be prime minister, I would have laughed at them. Heh, take it back thirty years, I would have punched them in the face! God, back then I hated the idea of politics. But then that was when Thatcher was in power..."

She smiled at the younger woman, who had barely been born when Thatcher was wrecking the country. She was so pretty, especially without the hijab concealing her hair. Lynda resisted the temptation to reach out and tuck the stray dark locks back behind the delicate earlobe. Instead she sipped her coffee again and turned back to the TV, watching the news ticker scrolling across the bottom of the screen.

"If you ever regret taking the job," she spoke softly as the ticker informed her that the Dow Jones was up, the FT index was up, and the pound was up against the dollar, the yen and the Euro, "just do what I do and think about what the world would be like if someone else had got the job!" She giggled suddenly, stood up and went to a small cabinet, pulled out a small bottle of brown liquid and tipped a small amount into her coffee. She turned to Labibah. "You can have some if you want, I won't tell..."

"Would the Prime Minister list her official engagements for the day?"

This was the standard opening question, the question that must be submitted in writing prior to the start of Prime Minister's Questions. The question was, now, a mere formality. In years gone by, each questioner would refer back to that question and re-ask it and the PM would refer to the answer given a few moments ago. Now, of course, the procedure has been streamlined. Even though the supplementary questions were not listed in advance, and in theory could be on any subject, in practice the briefing that morning had covered just about every topic that could possibly be asked.

Lynda stood, leant on the dispatch box as custom dictated, and gave the standard answer; "This morning I had meetings with ministerial colleagues and others. In addition to my duties in this House I shall have further such meetings later today." She sat down again.

Now came the actual question: "Will the Prime Minister acknowledge that the deteriorating situation in the Middle East requires some form of action by Britain?"

Oh dear god, that one. There was a move afoot by the few surviving Conservative MPs to try and discredit her in the eyes of the Americans, the British military, and ultimately the general public, by labelling her as weak, a pacifist who would not stand up for Britain's interests. She had very deliberately, during the election campaign, made clear distinctions between herself and the only other woman to ever hold the office. Unfortunately, the Tories had now picked up on that (too late to save them) and were saying that if she had been in power in 1982, the Falkland Islands would now be known as Las Malvinas.

Lynda's reaction to that was always to point out that if she had been in power in 1982, schools would all have been closed, dentists would be executed on sight and everything would be made of chocolate!

But that didn't help answer this question. She stood up again. "According to intelligence reports and briefings I have received, the situation in the Middle East does not directly threaten British interests," she paused as there were shouts from the opposition back benches and the Speaker called for order. "So unilateral action by Britain would not be justified. HOWEVER..." She paused again. "However, I am more than willing, with the full backing of this house, to support any action mandated by the United Nations, for humanitarian purposes". There, that should keep them quiet for a bit.

Burnham stood up as she sat down. "Would the Prime Minister not agree that proposed budget cuts to Britain's armed forces would considerably hamper our ability to support any such action, while still protecting our international interests?"

Oh, so that was where this was going! Lynda stood again, smiled at Andrew. "The Honourable Leader Of The Opposition must surely be aware that the defence cuts in question were instigated by the previous administration. They are currently under review by the Minister of Defence, and he will present a written answer to the House in due course."

That ended that. Although the Defence Minister, Nick Harvey was giving her a seriously dirty look from further down the front bench. She and Andy had talked about the Tories' defence cuts on Monday, and Lynda had been deliberately non-committal, mostly because she didn't have any facts and figures yet. The MoD was stalling her, that was all she knew. Burnham had tried to force her hand and instead had played right into it, enabling her to force the MoD's hand. Harvey had, apparently, 'gone native' already. What the 1980's comedy series *Yes Prime Minister* referred to as being 'House Trained', by the civil service. By stating publicly that the review was already happening (as she had ordered last week), she would force the MoD to do as she wanted.

Suddenly it clicked. She looked at Burnham sharply and he winked at her. She rolled her eyes back at him, and paid attention to the next question...

"Coffee?" Lynda closed the red box she was working on, smiled at her PPS who was sitting at the table next to her. It was late and the remains of a meal provided by the Number 10 staff kitchen - that Lynda had of course had to pay for, not being a member of staff - lay on the table. "Come on Labibah, knocking off time. Let's go get some decent coffee, not this disgusting instant stuff..."

Upon entering the apartment Labibah removed her shoes as was customary, and followed Lynda to the kitchen.

While Lynda was making the coffee, Labibah asked if Lynda had any objection to her removing her hijab, and as she had suspected receiving no objections, she began unpinning the head scarf, removing first the scarf and then finally the black bandana she used to cover her hair. Placing the pins and the carefully folded material into her bag.

In the lounge, she watched as arguably the most powerful woman in the World toed off her shoes and relaxed in front of the television. It did not surprise Labibah that when the TV came on it was on the BBC News channel. It was the usual diet of illegal immigrants attempting to enter either the UK or the wider EU, economic turmoil and tales of terrorist outrages in some part of the world usually committed by people who professed to follow the same religion as her, but were espousing a brand of hatred that she had never read in the Quran or heard in a more moderate form from any Imam.

Despite the litany of doom and gloom from around the world, Lynda did look so much more relaxed and that relaxation made the blonde woman look even more beautiful in Labibah's eyes. She turned away as Lynda looked at her, not wishing her Boss to see that her PPS had a crush on her.

Labibah turned back to look at her, when the blonde began to tell her that twenty years earlier she would have laughed at anyone telling her she would one day be Prime Minister, and thirty years ago would have punched them because she hated politics due to the late Lady Thatcher.

"So no speeches from you about there being no such thing as society or not being for turning, Prime Minister" Labibah said with a laugh.

As Lynda said about how much worse things would be if someone else had been in charge, Labibah could only agree, another dogmatic Tory administration without whatever mitigation Clegg had managed would be a disaster for the Country, and a Labour administration under Miliband would have been a disaster for UK plc. Fortunately British politics had moved on, well except for the Tories who were deep into an internecine conflict between the supporters of Theresa 'kitten heels' May, Andrea 'Loathsome' Leadsom and Boris 'BoJo' Johnson for the leadership of the deeply divided remains of the party. It amazed her how rapidly they fell on each other when they no longer had their coalition partners to blame for the damaging cuts to services and the living standards of the working person in the street.

"No thank you Lynda, I may not be the best Muslim but I do follow the rules most of the time" Labibah said in response to the offer to stiffen her coffee slightly. They shared a few peaceful moments over coffee and the news before Labibah said her goodnights to her Leader and made her way to Victoria Station and the train to her flat.

Next morning she was up bright and early and made her way into Westminster, quickly checking in with her office staff to make sure she was up to date with constituency matters before 'touching

base' with Tom Brake, the Chief Whip and some of his team at 9 Downing Street before making her way to the Prime Minister's office to discuss what was likely to come up in Prime Minister's questions later.

Just before midday Labibah took her place, her seat she reminded herself of, a seat that offered a wonderful view of the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition and his front bench team. The view was not so good for the Cabinet members on their own front bench but she would probably watch back the entire session later.

The Tories began with what was now a formulaic question trying to portray Lynda and by extension the whole Government weak, but that was again firmly nailed. Indeed all was well until the exchange with Andy Burnham, when things took a twist she had not foreseen. The Labour leader seemingly piling in on the previous question about defending Britain's national interests by bombing a Muslim state or two, by asking about cuts to the defence budget.

Labibah remembered the subject of defence cuts coming up at lunch, but not really joining the dots until the end of the supplementary questions, where Lynda and her opposite number had effectively strong armed Nick Harvey and the mandarins in the MoD in Whitehall to bring to the House an impact statement for the effects on the frontline Armed Forces. Labibah was sure that there had been no tactical discussion, but it was clear that the Prime Minister had picked up the stick that the Leader of the Opposition had so conveniently given her, and promptly issued a beating to the Defence Minister and his Department to encourage the others. She could not see Nick's face but she was guessing that it would be a picture on BBC Parliament, as he was publicly reminded in the coded language of politics that he worked for Lynda and not the Permanent Secretary at the Ministry.

The rest of PMQs was really uneventful, even the question from Lady Sylvia Hermon, the member for North Down and the only Independent MP in the House, about the Police Service of Northern Ireland, which before the Good Friday agreement was known as the Royal Ulster Constabulary, a force which of course had been commanded by her late husband.

After some time apart during the afternoon as they both dealt with their workloads, Labibah returned to the Prime Minister's office early evening to share a working supper and making sure that all was in place for the next day.

"Coffee" Lynda asked and Labibah instantly said "Yes" following the blonde up to the apartment.

Sitting in the lounge in her flat with her PPS and sharing a coffee was about a close to a family life as Lynda had ever come. The two of them sat together and discussed the day's events, talked about tomorrow's agenda, and the state of the world in general. The subject of Islamic terrorists came up and Lynda very quickly dismissed it. "Labie, I know as well as you do that the eighty-twenty rule applies in this as in anything else." She had started calling the girl by an abbreviated version of her name in private, insisting that Labibah call her Lynda as long as they

were alone together. "You're more than just an employee," she had insisted, "You're a friend, so call me by my name, please?"

She looked at the TV screen where images of the latest atrocities from the Middle East were accompanied by the usual BBC sensationalist reporting. "Damn it, I'm going to have to get John to do something about the BBC news." It was a personal bugbear of Lynda's that the BBC reported opinion as if it were fact, and reported fact as if it were opinion, and did so according to a set formula. The BBC breakfast show was a magazine programme, not a news programme, it was highly editorial and sensationalist and presented "human interest" stories with a pre-prepared bias, that sadly the general public were almost always led by. She had already spoken to John Leech, Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport about maybe doing something but so far the Civil Service was stalling, as the BBC was technically independent of government control.

At the moment, Auntie Beeb was on her side, but how long would that last? She shrugged. "But yeah, we all know that the bad stuff is done by the minority of Muslims and most of you would be more than happy to make them go away. Unfortunately, that's not the way the press presents it, and there is a growing problem of young people being radicalised..."

Lynda smiled at her friend and shrugged again. "We do what we can, educate, inform, make it clear that the radicals are wrong. But the internet is there and there is nothing we can do to close it down, nor would we want to." She sighed, and suddenly looked really miserable and deflated. "It's worth it, Labie, it has to be. Every compromise, every wasted opportunity, every concession I give away, it has to be all worth it in the end, to try and make this country a better place to live?"

The look in Lynda's eyes was hungry, pleading, needing reassurance. But more, she needed a contact, a touch, just a gesture.

As they sat drinking their coffee, watching the news and discussing the day, the plans for tomorrow and the rest of the week, and issues in general, Labibah felt incredibly comfortable, even as they discussed the complex issue of Islamic terrorism. She pointed out the similarities between the Sunni and Shia conflict with the Catholic and Protestant conflict of the Ulster troubles. Also the similarity of the leaderships being men with more interest in power than the benefit of the people or any tenuous link to a religion.

"You're more than just an employee, you're a friend, so call me by my name, please" Lynda had said to her, and Labibah responded somewhat flippantly "Actually Prime Minister, I'm not actually an employee" and laughed. "I am proud that you think of me as a friend, Lynda, but I would prefer Biba, than Labie" she continued looking into the blonde's eyes in the hope that the other woman would see into her soul.

As Lynda had a bit of a rant about the BBC, Labibah said "Who will rid me of this troublesome BBC? Lynda you sound like Thatcher, Blair and Cameron" and then she laughed again so her friend and Boss knew she was joking with paraphrasing of Henry II and the comparison with the forces of darkness. Not least because the others all complained about the BBC bias against them, whereas Lynda was commenting on the editorial policy of the BBC News and their inability to get fact and opinion sorted out.

"There is a growing problem about radicalisation, and the press portrayal of Islam is not helpful as it goes to further the isolation and resentment, also while Daesh does have a skillful internet propaganda arm, it also provides an excuse for the community to blame others for their failure to educate the young especially the men, in the true nature of the faith. Plus there will always be those that are drawn by the ability to be evil under the guise of religion or seek excitement".

On hearing the doubt in the voice of her friend, Biba took hold of her hand and looked deep into the blue pools of her eyes "Yes, it will be worth it, the compromises are tactical to achieve a better Britain in a fairer world, and that is no easy task, but **you** are the person to lead us all to a better world".

"Biba? Okay, yes. It does sound a little less lickable..." Oh god, Why had she said that? Was she flirting with the woman? That was never going to wash.

The younger woman took her hand and looked into her eyes, the dark orbs seeming to be sending a message that Lynda couldn't decipher. But the contact was what she needed most. With a sigh, she pulled herself together. "Thank you, Biba. See, you are a good friend. And call me Lynda! That is a Prime Ministerial Directive!" She laughed.

Lynda sat back, for some reason reluctant to let go of Labibah's hand. She forced herself to release it. "It's tough at the top. Tough and lonely. Edward Heath was the last unmarried person to hold this office. Oh, hey, did you ever see the movie *Love Actually*? I always wondered what Hugh Grant's character in that must have felt. And now I know, at least part of it."

Lynda sipped her coffee and sighed. "Thank you, dear. You have no idea how much these evenings mean to me". She stood and escorted her PPS to the door, stood facing her for an awkward moment. "Well, goodnight".

Lynda went back into the flat and got into the shower. It's tough at the top, she thought to herself. Most people meant that ironically, but the double irony was that it was far too true. How could she be a woman and a leader? People looked up to her, saw her as some kind of saint. The fact that she was gay barely registered with most voters, who saw a strong woman with charisma and a will to lead. What they didn't see was the loneliness, the isolation. And the frustration, the apparent inability to change anything no matter how hard you tried. Politicians come and go but the Civil Service remains. Lynda had already had to fight them for information, fight them to get even some manifesto pledges started down the path to legislation.

The biggest one, of course, was some simple and easy to comprehend version of proportional representation. An all party Commons committee had now been set up to look into the various methods. The one offered by the Conservatives had been ludicrous, deliberately so, back in the early days following the formation of the coalition: It was incomprehensible to most people and the fact that it was obvious that someone who had not received the most votes could win a seat made it totally unfair and left the British public voting to keep the existing system that at least meant their vote would count for something, and left the Lib Dems with a nasty taste in their mouths.

Lynda had her own ideas, but it seemed that every suggestion she made was met with a myriad of reasons why it was unworkable - all from the civil service. It *would* go through, the country *would* have a PR voting system before the next election, but the compromise had been the committee to look into the various options. They had a year in which to report. If, at the end of that time, they had not selected a workable system, Lynda would choose one of the options and push it through on a three-line whip and the 1911 Parliament Act if she had to.

She went to bed, lay there in her pyjamas, exhausted yet unable to sleep. What she wanted most, right now was... A certain really pretty young Parliamentary Private Secretary, lying beside her. Just to cuddle, hold and ... and wake up next to! But that was impossible. The girl was probably seeing someone anyway... Although the security file had not mentioned a current girlfriend.

Lynda picked up the book that was beside her bed and read for half an hour, then put the light out and fell asleep.

"The education of our children is, and must always be, the highest priority", Lynda stood on a podium at the front of the hall of her Alma Mater, Lucy Cavendish College, Cambridge. Two weeks had gone by, the internal enquiry into the effects of the defence cuts had reported, and under consultation with the Chiefs Of Staff Committee and the Treasury, the cuts had been moderated to something that, while still higher than the forces would like, at least left Britain with enough armed forces to respond to an emergency. The two carriers were still in production, the air wings for them cut by a third instead of by half. The existing Trident submarines were to stay in service another five years before being replaced. The new frigates necessary for the screening the carriers would be bought from Australia rather than the USA (and definitely NOT built in the UK, that was something the treasury was adamant on), the army would keep its current size, but would also keep its current vehicles instead of replacing the Challenger 2s and Warriors. And the RAF would still get the Eurofighters, but only half of them. The surviving Tornados would be refitted, yet again.

And with that, the defence issue had gone away. The Defence Review Bill was on its third reading when Parliament had risen for the summer. It would pass into law in the Autumn. The

cut on fuel duty would be in the autumn budget too, paid for by the mansion tax and a re-introduction of higher rate income tax.

And now, just at the start of the silly season, Lynda had been invited to address the staff and students at her alma mater. She was, of course, talking about education. Her pledge to reduce the hardship of student loans was high on the agenda and it was something she needed to get moving. The Treasury was opposed, Education and Business both in favour, of course. But the Treasury was opposed to virtually everything. Norman was fighting the civil service tooth and nail at every corner, struggling to get any money out of them for anything. About the only thing that had them scared was when he mentioned the possibility of swinging cuts to the Home Civil Service budget in order to pay for government policies at which point the Permanent Secretary To The Treasury had visibly gone white, Norman had reported to the Cabinet Committee, and said he would see what he could do.

"...And so, in conclusion, it is the policy of this government and indeed my personal ambition, to increase funding to Universities and increase the number of students attending them. Thank you".

Lynda was about to step away when someone near the front of the auditorium stood up and called out "And what would you know about children, dyke? You want to wreck family life, destroy family values..." He got no further as he was shouted down.

Lynda quickly returned to her microphone "QUIET!" She called out, the word reverberating with feedback. When a hush fell on the room, she turned an angry gaze on the assembled students. "How *dare* you deny someone their right to free speech? You will all sit quietly and listen to what this gentleman has to say. You sir!" She directed her attention to the heckler. "As Evelyn Beatrice Hall wrote in *The Life of Voltaire*, 'I disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it', please continue!"

The man looked dumbfounded. The very person he was attacking was inviting him to continue his attack? "I... uh... was saying, you wanted to wreck the family unit, take away our family values, destroy Christian principles enshrined in the Bible, teach our children that perversions are n... natural...I... Uh, that's it..."

The words were still there, but his tone was milder, less vitriolic. Lynda nodded. "Okay, I will answer your points one at a time if I may, because although they are all related to my personal sexuality, they are actually separate issues."

She took a drink of the glass of water on the podium. "What would I know of children? I have two younger siblings, both of whom are married to members of the opposite sex, both of whom have families. I'm Weird Auntie Lynda. I enjoy being around children as much as anyone. I would love to have had children of my own, but being attracted to women, the only way to do this would be via artificial insemination, and that procedure is not exactly guaranteed to

succeed." She shrugged. "I have no desire to destroy family values. Far from it. I actually consider family values to be key to making our streets safe and cutting crime. Family values are key to reducing the radicalisation of our young people. The misconception here is that gay couples cannot be families. A woman can be as much of a father figure as a man, and a man can be as much of a mother figure as a woman, it all depends upon your viewpoint."

She paused and sipped again as the audience murmured in agreement. "Christian principles enshrined in the bible. I always thought Christ taught love and forgiveness? 'Let he who is without sin cast the first stone!'" Her eyes swept the audience, challenging them, daring them! "Finally, you mention perversions and what is natural. Let me ask you this: Have you ever had your leg humped by a dog?" The entire audience laughed. "Is that a natural act? Or is the dog committing a sin? Of course it's natural. In fact, look at the facts: homosexuality exists naturally in almost every animal species from bees having sex with flowers" a small titter "to male pigeons mounting each other, to male dogs humping each other to dolphins, to butch lesbian cows in lager adverts!" That got another laugh. "In fact, it could be argued that only humanity, with our false sense of moral superiority and disregard for nature, have become perverted by making the perfectly natural sexual act between members of the same gender into something to be despised and vilified".

She stepped away from the mike to a sudden standing ovation.

'Oh my, did she really just say lickable?' Labibah thought to herself as Lynda spoke, if only she would, but it would be wholly inappropriate to respond to that, better to pretend not to have noticed, rather than cause any offence.

She joined Lynda in a laugh when the blonde mentioned the Prime Ministerial Directive, it was so good to see Lynda laugh as she lit up when the weight of the office was lifted from her, no matter how temporary that was.

As Lynda mentioned how tough it was at the top and how lonely, she could only nod, she could see it but she could not truly understand it as did not directly affect her. In response to the question about Hugh Grant and *Love Actually*, Labibah had to confess "No I have never seen it, I am more a Bollywood sort of girl" and followed the comment with a half giggle. "But remember Lynda you are never alone, but that said I really have to be getting home."

As she was preparing to leave Labibah was certain she heard Lynda call her dear, and wondered if that was just the use of a term of endearment as a punctuation mark that English people often seemed to do. As they stood at the door, while Biba slipped her shoes on, she felt so tempted to lean in and kiss the beautiful blonde, but her friend and favourite fantasy Lynda was also Lynda McFearson MP, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom and her Boss.

The walk to Westminster tube station for the journey to Victoria and her flat, was getting to be a regular occurrence and it was beginning to be something she could do on autopilot, which

allowed her mind to focus on the next day and the rest of the week, meaning she could get to bed earlier, but when she got there her mind switched to thoughts of a certain blue eyed goddess and how she would look naked and sated in Biba's arms.

Things were progressing well in Parliament, insofar as the finances allowed, every Department was screaming for more of the pie, and the Chancellor was caught between a rock and a hard place, as his own civil servants told him there was no more money and indeed there still needed to be further cuts in spending. The Defence Review Bill had been resolved with some extra money and some increase in the proposed force levels over what the supposedly pro-Forces Tories had originally proposed, with the third reading due to be out of the way before the summer recess.

The business of the Government was about finding parliamentary time for everything it wanted to do and dragging the civil servants kicking and screaming along for the ride. This was made easier by an almost total lack of trouble from the backbenches and a professional working relationship between most Ministers and their Labour shadows, which headed off a great deal of unnecessary problems, while still ensuring proper parliamentary scrutiny of the programme.

The keynote event of the Cambridge trip was a speech by the Prime Minister at her alma mater, but the trip also featured other meetings and discussions during the day, so [Labibah](#) picked an outfit that was modern, respectable and sent the right messages to anyone that wanted to receive a message. It was an impressive convoy that descended on the dreaming spires, the Prime Minister, her Principal Private Secretary Mrs Fairfax, Labibah, Julian Huppert MP member for Cambridge and Home Secretary, Gerald Vernon-Jackson MP, member for Portsmouth South and the Minister of State responsible for universities, the Prime Minister's and the Home Secretary's protection detail, a smart looking female Lieutenant Commander from CTF 345 carrying 'THE' briefcase and a horde of journalists following up the road.

All was well until the end of Lynda's speech when a homophobic heckler stood up and began abusing her. From her position Labibah could see Lynda's security people first tense and then prepare to evacuate the Prime Minister and seize the man. She could also see the meeting stewards moving towards the man and the crowd began to shout him down. What happened next should not really have been a surprise knowing what she did about the blonde, but it was still a surprise. Lynda silenced the crowd, with a gesture stayed the hand of her protection officers and allowed the homophobe to continue, much as Labibah wanted to go down and punch him personally for his attack on gay people in general but Lynda in particular.

Biba listened in awe as Lynda spoke from the heart and destroyed each of his arguments one by one, but what touched her most was the sincerity in her voice when Lynda said that she would have loved to have had children of her own but that IVF was not a guarantee of success. Had Lynda tried to have children on her own or with a partner who was now off the scene, or was it a wish that had never made it that far. The hall erupted into the most tremendous standing ovation when she had finished and Labibah walked towards her friend and Boss totally

awestruck, even the contemptible Mrs Fairfax almost seemed to crack, if not burst into rapturous salute.

The drive up the M11 had been a somewhat boisterous affair. Lynda, Labibah, Catherine Fairfax and Gerald Vernon-Jackson all crammed in the back of the Jag, with a massive armed copper and equally massive and equally armed driver in the front. Labibah had been junior, and more-or-less relegated to sitting on the jump seat on the back of the driver's seat, while Fairfax was squished in between Lynda and Gerald. There had been much passing of papers, shuffling of papers, answering of phones, calling of other phones. The car behind held several others of the party and the police outriders, Lynda thought to herself, made quite sure they were a pretty target for anyone with a rocket launcher!

But that sort of thing only happened on NCIS, and she wasn't really worried, just amused.

The dinner in her honour was a sumptuous banquet, attended by all the faculty and several famous alumni including Dame Judi Dench and Anna Ford. She had been separated from Labibah, and even Catherine Fairfax, during the meal. The only people she really knew who were within a reasonable distance were her security team and the Lady With The Button, as Lynda secretly thought of Lt Cdr Anne Derritan. Those people were actually seated at a table immediately behind her, backs to the wall, taking it in turns to eat. She made small talk with the Dean and the Bursar, seated respectively to her right and left, and cast almost longing glances down the table to where her PPS was flanked by the head of Arabic Studies and the Bishop of Cambridge. Lynda was going to find out who did that to the girl and rip him or her a new arse hole!

But now, on the way back to London, it was quiet. The home secretary had elected to stay in Cambridge - it was his constituency, after all, and his PPS and security detail had stayed with him, leaving one car almost empty. A quick re-assignment of bodies to vehicles - Lynda had jokingly said the word "reshuffle" and grinned while everyone looked flustered - had resulted in herself, the lady from the Navy and Labibah sharing one car. The sailor with the bombs stared out of the window at the blackness as they drove South, and Lynda was quite sure she was asleep.

It wasn't long before she felt a warm, comfortable pressure against her side. Looking down, she smiled warmly. 'Biba was curled up against her, eyes closed, breath even. Lynda carefully moved her arm from where it was trapped by the sleeping young woman, but then realised she had nowhere to put it... except to wrap it around Labibah's shoulders.

The Lieutenant Commander stirred and looked at her, shrugged as if to say *none of my business* and turned back to the window.

When they arrived back in Downing Street, the woman from the RN vanished into the Admiralty building next door, and Lynda woke with a start. Labibah was practically curled up on her lap

and it was a good job there were no press around. She gently shook the woman, who stirred but didn't wake. She checked the time. It was past midnight. Looking at the big plain clothes policeman who was waiting for them to get out, she said, "Help me get her up to the flat? She can sleep in the spare room tonight"

The copper nodded and between them they managed to get the younger woman out of the car. The policeman lifted Labibah's slight form easily and carried her like a sleeping baby up the stairs and into the PM's flat. Once he was gone, Lynda debated to herself what to do. She took Biba's shoes off, and gently eased the younger woman out of her trousers and shirt, paused to have lustful thoughts as she admired the beautiful PPS, in her underwear, then covered her with the duvet. "Sleep well dear," she muttered and, unable to resist, planted a gentle kiss on Labibah's forehead, before putting the light out and shutting the door, heading to her own room.

When she woke, Labibah tried to work out where she was and why she was in a strange bed in nothing but her bra and knickers.

Had something happened to her in Cambridge? Given a date rape drug or something? No, she remembered getting into the car with Lynda and the Navy Lady for the journey back to London, the protection officers sitting in the front seats.

Had there been an accident or something? No, that could not possibly be it as this was clearly not a hospital.

She found the light switch and turned the light on, looking at her watch she could see that it was four thirty, and this was most definitely not a hospital room, it had the look of a quality hotel, well equipped but not regularly lived in. Her blouse, trousers, braces and shoe liners carefully placed on a chair against the wall and her shoes under the chair. Someone had undressed her, as she would not have been so particular in the folding of her clothes.

'Time to investigate Labibah' her brain informed her body, putting her clothes on and running her fingers through her hair, she opened the door and walked outside. Even in the limited light she recognised where she was. This hallway was part of an apartment that she had been visiting a lot regularly, more so than her duties actually required.

Then something hit her like a bolt out of the blue, had it been Lynda that undressed her and put her to bed? Was it the Lieutenant Commander? Was it someone else? Were they a man? She shook her head at the last question, no Lynda would not have allowed that, putting her in that position.

Should she stay or go home? Well that decision would have to wait, she needed to answer the call of nature, clean up and then have a coffee while sitting and thinking. Returning to the room, Labibah used the luxurious en-suite, and then redressed and went to the kitchen, fixing herself some of her favourite coffee, which was now in the cupboard. Taking the saltire mug into the

lounge and flicking on the BBC News 24 to get up to date with everything that has happened since they left for Cambridge at lunchtime the previous day. Nothing major had happened until the journey back to London or Lynda would have been informed, if not by the civil servants then by someone from the party.

Labibah decided to stay, and she put her shoes back in their now familiar position by the door to the private apartment, before padding back in bare feet to the lounge. If possible she would make her morning prayers from there, the most frequent recently being for Allah to grant her the strength not to make a fool of herself with Lynda.

It was the smell of coffee that woke Lynda. The sun was gilding the top of the Admiralty building on the other side of Horse guards Parade and she checked her alarm clock. Five thirty? She'd got about five hours of sleep, then, not counting maybe ten or twenty minutes in the car. "Ugh!" She would probably suffer for it later that day. It was a Saturday, at least, so no official business to worry about. The sound of the television on low reached her ears and she managed to drag herself out of bed.

Stumbling into the lounge, in her pyjamas, no makeup on, hair all over the place. A photographer's dream. Thank goodness for the reflective glass that was on all the windows of Number Ten - put in during the Cold War to prevent spying, it worked just as well to keep the paparazzi out.

She paused, seeing Labibah. "Morning. Did you make some coffee? I'd murder for a cup." She giggled and then looked at the TV. "Oooh, hey, that's me! Look ma, I'm on t' telly! Turn it up!"

She sat and watched the BBC report on her speech at the University banquet last night, rolled her eyes at how far more attention was given to the heckler and how she'd handled him than the actual speech itself. Oh well, both messages were important. If she could get across the fact that she wasn't Satan Incarnate, out to force everyone into gay relationships, then perhaps people would start listening to what else she had to say?

Of course, the fact that she was sitting here drinking a coffee in the Prime Minister's Flat, meant that people had already listened to her, but she needed more of them to open their ears to her, and not concentrate so much on her personal life. It wasn't like she'd had a girlfriend or anything, not for years - decades, even. The last relationship she'd had... Lynda sighed softly. She could barely remember what the woman's face looked like. She remembered the scent she wore though.

The report finished and moved on to something else. Nothing vital had happened overnight, and the BBC were concentrating on human interest stories as usual. "What do you want for breakfast? Uh.... I would normally do a bacon sandwich, but if that's a problem I can just go with toast and marmalade?"

It was so very... *homey*. Lynda headed to the small kitchen area, thinking *I could get used to this*. She wondered what the press would make of it if she invited 'Biba to move into the spare room here on a more permanent basis. Her PPS' sexuality was not generally known, but someone was sure to leak it, and then the rumours would fly. No, it wouldn't do. Plus there was 'Biba to think of. Something like that could wreck her career. Not to mention the stigma of being a gay Muslim, under permanent sentence of death in certain parts of the world!

She made breakfast, and they sat and ate, then Lynda showered and dressed and went through her red boxes, with Labibah's help. By then it was ten o'clock. "Put it on BBC One, let's watch Saturday Kitchen!" Lynda grinned. "A little bit of food-porn never hurt anyone".

As Lynda walked in looking dishevelled but gorgeous, the news was just repeating itself again, and leading on the speech last night, well not so much the speech but the heckler and Lynda's superb performance at destroying his arguments. Biba was pleased when her friend said that she would kill for a coffee, as that gave her the opportunity to leave for a few minutes, and she only hoped that her observant Leader did not notice the full meaning of her own reaction to the verbal attack he made on lesbians in general and Lynda in particular, because to Labibah her reaction showed that it was more than a reaction to the vile abuse but an attack on someone she cared deeply for, even though she knew that her crush on the blonde was totally futile.

When she returned she handed her friend the coffee, and sat next to her on the sofa watching the television. When Lynda asked about breakfast, and apologised about the bacon sandwich, Biba said "Lynda you never have to apologise to me about eating pork or drinking alcohol or sleeping with women, just because they are proscribed by my faith, I will have toast while you have your infidel sandwich" finishing with a giggle. 'Why did I mention sleeping with women?' Biba thought to herself, mentally kicking her bum for her stupidity.

After breakfast, Biba sorted the PM's red boxes, looking hard at the bottom third of each box, especially the last to see what the Fairfax woman was trying to hide in plain sight as Lynda was getting showered and changed. The work could have waited but Labibah needed a distraction from the thoughts in her head about the blonde being naked only feet away.

As they sat watching James Martin and his guest chefs cook, Labibah finally summoned up the courage to deal with what to her was currently the elephant in the room. "What happened last night Lynda, I remember us leaving Cambridge but then nothing at all until I woke in my underwear in the spare room".

The Prime Minister blinked at her PPS and gave the young woman a funny look that could have meant anything at all when she mentioned not apologising for sleeping with women. *If only you knew, my pretty Private Secret desire*, she thought, and went ahead with getting the bacon out of the fridge.

As she cooked she went over something in her head that she had noticed on the news report. During the heckling, when the camera zoomed out and swung around to try and focus on the heckler, it had, for a few seconds, shown her PPS, very clearly, and Lynda was trying to decide what to make of the expression on her face. The younger woman was clearly angry, but the direction of her gaze was not at the Heckler but at Lynda. Was she angry with Lynda for letting the man continue? No, because this was before, when he first began his tirade, before he was shouted down.

The only conclusion Lynda could come to that made sense was that 'Biba was angry *for* the Prime Minister. Lynda knew she had something of a cult following among the backbenchers and that many of them would throw themselves on a grenade for her (Something that, when one of them had mentioned it to the press, had caused a total panic in Special Branch and MI5, partly because just saying that sort of thing publicly could precipitate the event, but mostly because the last thing they needed was overzealous politicians trying to do the job of trained professionals). The fact that Labibah might be one of these Phearsonites - as the press was calling them - was something of a surprise. Lynda knew the woman admired her, it was one reason she got the job, but hadn't realised she was fanatical about it.

It did fit the facts, though. Well she would do no more about it, and say nothing, as long as it did not interfere with the woman's work.

Sitting watching two guest chefs try to make an omelette in under 20 seconds, suddenly Labibah asked a question out of the blue. Lynda looked at her friend in an odd way. What did she think had happened? "You fell asleep in the car. Actually so did I, but don't worry, everyone in that car signed the official secrets act, they won't tell anyone we slept together..." Lynda smiled and then blushed. *Oh god. Why did I say that! Lynda, for one of the greatest politicians of the early twenty first century, sometimes you can be such a klutz!* She rushed on, "When we got back here, you were so fast asleep that we couldn't wake you so I got one of the security people to carry you upstairs, and I put you to bed." *And forced myself to put you in the spare bed not mine, and to leave you alone. Apart from a stolen kiss to the forehead.* But she didn't say that. It wouldn't do.

Instead, Lynda tried to make light of the situation. "Why what did you think I did, slip you a roofie and have my wicked ways with you? God the press would live that!" *And you have no idea how much the idea actually appeals to me. Except for the roofie.*

She smiled warmly at her friend. "Nothing else happened, I promise you".

As Lynda began to explain to Labibah about the previous night, she made cheeky little comment about sleeping together, and Labibah had to turn away to hide the blush that filled her cheeks. 'If only that were true' Biba thought as her friend continued the explanation of one of the security officers carrying her upstairs to the spare room, because for all her other accomplishments Biba could not imagine Lynda being able to carry her upstairs.

As Lynda explained that she put Labibah to bed and therefore was the one that had undressed her, two thoughts flashed through her brain, the first was that she was grateful that she had put on some of her better underwear that day, and the second was an image of Lynda carrying her into the Prime Ministerial bedroom and them undressing each other.

"God no Lynda, I never for one moment imagined you giving me a roofie, but when I woke I wondered if someone else had, until I remember the first part of the journey back to London. When I came out, and saw where I was, I knew I had been nothing but safe the whole time. I am just surprised that I slept that heavily." Labibah explained "Besides you wouldn't need a roofie to have your wicked way with me" as she realised what she had just said, Labibah added "or anyone else" hoping that it covered over her wishful thinking and would not damage their developing friendship and excellent working relationship.

Turning her attention back to the television to avoid any further embarrassment Biba noticed that James was discussing the food heaven and food hell of some bit part actress from a soap opera. "Hell" she said rather louder than she had actually intended.

Lynda sighed in relief as her PPS said she never thought she had been drugged. She was about to say something trite about being with the safest person in the United Kingdom, until the girl blurted out something Lynda almost couldn't believe. The hastily added modifier did nothing to disguise the meaning behind the words, and Lynda's mouth fell open. In fact the addition that she could have her wicked way with anyone was so blatantly untrue that it only made the hole Labibah had dug for herself even deeper. The PM was so busy trying to process the information that she barely noticed the TV program, so 'Biba's exclamation as she stared at the screen made Lynda jump then giggle, and turn her attention to the television too. "Oh definitely hell. How could anyone not like mushrooms? Honestly, that recipe sounds so delicious!"

The conversation turned to food, in particular Indian style food. Lynda admitted to loving all variants of curry and tandoori, except the stupidly hot variety that tasted of chilli powder and nothing else. "I love the really tasty curries, the ones with all sorts of different, complex flavours competing for your taste buds' attention". She grinned. "My one failing is that I *really* hate cooking. I'm not exactly bad at it, I just hate handling raw ingredients, not just meat, but some vegetables as well. Eggs, oh god, don't get me started on eggs. Disgusting things, but so delicious when cooked, and so good for you. Kidney beans? Damn things are poisonous if you don't cook them properly!" She laughed. "My ambition is to marry a woman who can cook."

She smirked. "Well, that is my only remaining ambition, seeing as I recently achieved my primary ambition in life...!"

But all the while she was wondering just how she should react to the knowledge, blurted out randomly by her friend and confidant, that she could take the younger woman to her bed any time she wanted. The worst part of it was, she wanted, right now, to grab Labibah and drag her

into the bedroom. But ... there was no way. She simply couldn't. The press would crucify her, the opposition would dismember her and the voters would dance on her crucified, dismembered political corpse.

The program finally ended and Lynda stood up. "You should probably go, dear. Much as I'd love to sit and watch Mr Hamilton win yet another pole position with you, I feel it would be best if we got on with the job of running the country."

She escorted Labibah to the staff entrance to the building on Horseguards. "Well, see you Monday".

No one would comment on the fact that the PM's PPS had spent the night at number ten. In fact there were only a few people who even knew.

"Prime Minister, I have an urgent call from Mr Farron at the FCO?" Fairfax poked her head into the PM's private office, where Lynda was mulling over a report from the Scottish Office. For a moment she was confused as the SNP's calls for independence were becoming more strident again. The one thing she desperately needed to avoid was becoming known as the Prime Minister who presided over the break-up of the Union. *Not On My Watch* was the buzzword that the Scottish Office were using and she agreed with it.

The irony was that a good deal of public grassroots feeling in England was in favour of Scottish independence, and Union flags had started appearing without the blue triangles again, along with the slogan "Go Scotland!". So given her current train of thought her immediate reaction was: "Hi Tim, please don't tell me they've declared UDI?"

Foreign Secretary Tim Farron hesitated, then said, "What? Who have?"

"The Scots, of course, who else would I be talking about?" Lynda's voice was sharper than she intended.

Farron sounded even more confused. "The Scots? When did they do that?" his voice sounded muffled as he asked the Permanent Under Secretary to The Foreign Office, Sir Simon Fraser, "Why was I not informed of this?" Lynda heard an even more muffled "Of what, Minister?" and the reply "The Scots have declared UDI!"

"Tim? TIM? **TIM!**"

"What? Oh, sorry Lynda, it appears we may have a crisis on our hands, Scotland has unilaterally declared independence without our knowing about it..."

"Huh? Tim, I was joking."

"With respect, Prime Minister," Sir Simon's voice came on the line, clearly she was now on speaker, "Scotland unilaterally declaring independence is not something the Foreign Office finds amusing. We have contingency plans for just such..."

"You what? Oh my god! That is hilarious. I bet Antony Jay and Jonathan Lynn would have loved to have come up with that one! Tim, sorry, I was reading the latest reports from the Scottish Office, and you phoned, it just slipped out. Sorry. What did you call about?"

It took another five minutes to calm Farron down and convince him it was just a slip of the tongue by the PM. Finally she managed to get him to tell her what he was calling about.

"Syria," he said, bluntly, and Lynda groaned. "Yes, I know. But seriously, the situation is getting worse, America is pushing for action in the UN, Israel is threatening uni-" he coughed, choking on the word, took a breath and tried again, "Unilateral action. Russia is accusing the west of acting in the interests of the oil companies and not the people, saying we were quick enough to intervene in Iraq and Libya, and things are going to come to a head. We need a policy decision, but not only that, we need support in the Arab League for taking action."

Lynda nodded. "Yes, there's enough bad feeling between the Arab world and the West as it is. The most important thing of all is to keep the Israelis out of it. If they get involved..."

"Exactly, it will unite the Arabs against them on the side of I.S." Farron sounded relieved that Lynda understood.

"So why call me? This is your department." Lynda was genuinely curious.

"With all due respect to this great and noble government department, I'm quite certain that Sir Simon would agree, the strength of the FCO lies in damage limitation, not in crisis prevention". Tim's voice held a note of amusement as he said this, and Lynda clearly heard a grunt from the PUS in the background, although whether it was agreement or disagreement she couldn't tell. "We think that you are easily the best person to drum up the support we need with our Middle Eastern friends, plus you're on reasonable terms with Sara Netanyahu".

"I know Sara, yes. I don't know where you get the impression I'm on reasonable terms with her though, I can't stand the woman!"

"Be that as it may, Prime Minister," Sir Simon interjected, "the general consensus of theories abounding in the department would give rise to the belief that the greatest likelihood of achieving a successful outcome and preventing a conflagration of apocalyptic proportions, whilst collaterally proliferating the consensus amongst geographically contiguous and proximate nationals that intervention is imperative would rest upon the individual currently being addressed...!"

"You think I have the best shot at preventing a war while convincing the Arabs that we have to do something..." Lynda translated. "Fair enough. What do you suggest?"

"A whistle-stop tour of the Middle East..." Farron said smugly. This was clearly his idea. He went on to outline the plan, making it sound more and more like the only possible option.

Lynda was not fully convinced, but it did sound like it could work. "Okay, bring me a draft proposal to Cabinet Committee tomorrow. Also, I want a written statement on what the Yanks' official position is. I'll give President Biden a call later to see what he thinks. Thank you, Gentlemen."

Lynda looked up as her Parliamentary Private Secretary came into the office, wearing the Hijab as usual. "You'll have to show me how to put one of those on, 'Biba dear," she smiled. "We're going on a little trip. Ankara, Tel Aviv, Cairo, Riyadh, Bahrain, Abu Dhabi, and Islamabad. Seven countries in fourteen days. " Lynda shrugged. "It's probably going to be as exhausting as it sounds. We leave on Monday. Oh, and this is an absolute top secret..." She put on the face that she only usually wore when addressing the opposition or the Civil Service. "Seriously, 'Biba, I mean it, you can't tell anyone. MI6 are doing their nuts as it is over the security issues, and frankly, they almost told me you couldn't go." She shook her head.

"I protested, said you're no more of a security threat than I am, and you know what? They said that wasn't the issue and they were concerned for your safety, because of your... ah... orientation. Well, I pointed out that aside from you, me, your parents, them, MOSSAD and the SVR, no one else knows you're a lesbian, but the entire world knows I am, so if anyone should not be going it was me, and they backed down!"

Lynda smirked as she blithely assumed that anything the British security agencies knew, the Russians and Israelis also automatically knew. "Anyway, you need to pack two weeks worth of warm weather clothes".

As they watched the rest of Saturday Kitchen, it seemed like her blurted admission had been allowed to slide by, because the rider added at the end was so unconvincing Labibah was not sure why she had even bothered.

Lynda explained her love of food, especially Indian style food, which was a better choice of words than most people who said Indian food, ignoring the fact that most 'Indian' restaurants and especially take away were in fact Bangladeshi owned and operated and the food served was only passingly related to any genuine South Asian cuisine, being altered to meet the taste of the British palate. But Lynda was not a 'Friday night curry eater', the sort who filled curry houses after a skinful of alcohol and then ordered the hottest thing on the menu. It was clear from what she was saying that she did indeed love the complex flavours of true South Asian cooking.

When she said that her one failing was really hating cooking, Labibah gave a comic eye roll and said "So you only have the one failing Prime Minister" and then giggled before returning her attention to the screen, as Lynda went on to explain her dislike for handling the raw ingredients, before she laughed. A laugh that was something that Labibah loved to hear. As Lynda explained her ambition to marry a woman that could cook, given that she had now achieved her primary ambition. "Just as well my Mum is already married then" Biba said ignoring her own cooking skills, learnt at the side of her mother and grandmothers in her childhood, as most Asian girls learn the essential skills required to be a good wife in the future.

When the show ended Lynda seemed quite dismissive, with her remark about running the country. But Labibah did need to get home, and deal with some constituency matters and preparation for the coming week.

"Yes, Monday morning Prime Minister" Labibah said as she walked out of Number 10, and given that it was such a lovely morning, set off across the park in the direction of Victoria Station and her train home.

Her office staff had done most of her work for her, but it still required her input, because much as she was the Parliamentary Private Secretary to the Prime Minister, she was also the MP for the people of Na h-Eileanan an Iar, or to English speakers the old Western Isles constituency. They were her people, she had represented them in council and now at Westminster.

She spent more than an hour on the phone to her office in Stornoway, there were the usual amount of people complaining about developments to the islands and a similar amount complaining that nothing was being done to develop the islands. One of the hot issues was the latest planned wind farm, which was dividing opinion. Labibah herself did not consider wind turbines an eyesore, indeed they were actually quite interesting to look at.

On Sunday, she did more paperwork, and her washing ahead of the week in Parliament, of public appearances and her trip home next weekend, for surgery in Stornoway on Saturday daytime and a party fundraiser in the evening.

It seemed another 'normal' day as Labibah made her way to the Prime Minister's office, and was shocked to hear Lynda tell her that she would have to teach her how to put a hijab on. The shock clearly showed, as Lynda went on to explain that they would be taking a trip to the Middle East, and that this was classified so highly that she could not tell anyone at all. Lynda also explained that SIS or more commonly known as MI6 did not want her to go. Her original thoughts were because of the fact that she was a Muslim and not to be trusted. But Lynda explained that it was actually because she was a lesbian. Labibah laughed when Lynda explained that she told them it was not widely known except to MI5, MI6, SVR RF the foreign intelligence service of Russia and HaMossad leModi'in uleTa kidim Meyuhadim or more commonly Mossad, the security service the State of Israel. But Labibah suppressed her laugh

when Lynda continued saying that she would need two weeks worth of warm weather clothing, not that the compliant Islamic dress was particularly exactly holiday style warm weather clothing.

The President of the United States of America has his own dedicated long-range aircraft, called Air Force One, that is actually equipped to act as a flying command post in the event of a Zombie Apocalypse, which is the current US paranoid fantasy and replaced Nuclear war a few years ago. He also has a large, well equipped military helicopter based at Quantico Marine Base, to take him from the White House helipad to the steps of Air Force One with a minimum of fuss.

The Prime Minister of Great Britain, on the other hand, has to ride in the official car up the busy M40 motorway to RAF Northolt, where the aircraft of No. 32 (The Royal) Squadron RAF are based. Interestingly, the Queen has to make the same journey.

The [BAe 146 CC.2](#) was really quite luxurious inside, with seating for only nineteen passengers, where the civilian version would seat up to five times that number. The four cabin crew were thus generously distributed between four or five passengers each rather than almost twenty each. And of course the most important passenger on board - in this case Ms Lynda McFearson - had the undivided attention of one crew member.

The aircraft was only about half full anyway, Lynda, Labibah, Tim Farron and his PPS occupied one set of seats, with Sir Malcolm, Fairfax, Sir Simon and the other civil servants further back. The security detail was on a different aircraft flying ahead of this one. The two RAF Typhoon fighters escorting them weren't even visible. Lynda couldn't help but grimace at the amount this little jaunt was costing the British taxpayer, but it was better than the alternative.

The first leg of the journey she spent discussing the strategy she would use to talk the various arab states into supporting action. Her line with the Israelis was already decided - stay out of it unless you want every Muslim nation to side with IS.

The aircraft touched down at Aeroporto di Sigonella in Sicily to refuel. Ankara was just barely within the BAe 146's range on a straight flight, and they didn't want to risk flying across Eastern Europe, not to mention some of the former Communist countries were still a little hesitant at allowing military overflight by their former adversaries. So instead they went south, across France, down the Italian coast, refuelled in Sicily, and then headed East across the Ionian Sea, Greece, the Aegean and Turkey, touching down at Etimesgut air base and airport - the Turkish equivalent of Northolt, to the South West of Ankara. The security detail was already there and the red carpet was out as Lynda stepped from the air conditioned aeroplane into the sub-tropical heat of the Turkish summertime.

The Prime Minister, Ahmet Davutoğlu, stepped forward to greet her as a Military band played "God Save The Queen" rather badly, followed by the Turkish National Anthem.

Lynda wore a hijab of purple silk, a gold silk blouse and cream silk slacks, with a pair of open toed sandals on her feet. This, she felt, was quite enough of a compromise, and was actually quite cool. She shook her Turkish opposite number's hand, introduced him to the important members of her retinue, posed for the television and newspaper cameras, and then headed for the official car that would carry her and her party to the Ankara Sheraton. Checking in was a formality of course, they had the entire top three floors, the lower ones being occupied by the security people. The presidential suite was far more luxurious than anything she had ever imagined and Lynda just threw herself onto the massive bed in the master bedroom. She wandered out into the lounge area and noted a second bedroom. "Who is in that one?" She asked the steward who was bringing in her luggage.

"No one", he replied with a shrug.

"Oh..." Lynda shook her head and then, feeling suddenly magnanimous, dialled 'Biba's number on her cellphone. "Biba? You settled into your room yet? No? Good. Come join me in mine. There's a spare bedroom in this massive suite and I'd quite like to keep you close". She paused, realised how that might sound and quickly added, "In case I need you for anything like sending urgent messages or what have you..."

Labibah had spent the weekend in her constituency, as to cancel pre-booked functions might have given away that something was happening, and she found it hard not to tell her parents of the journey she was about to go on. But she knew the importance of secrecy not only for National Security but more importantly that of the safety of Lynda, so she kept the secret, returning to London late on Sunday night after her flights from Stornoway and Glasgow.

Packing was difficult, for while she did not have baggage allowance to worry about, she was mindful of the needs of diplomacy. The majority of her clothing was a combination of Pakistani style Salwar Kameez, and the more suitable for Arabia Abaya styles, with hijabs, plus some western outfits for the Israel stopover and other eventualities.

For the first leg she picked a predominantly blue and green [salwar kameez](#) with a matching hijab. Labibah got a taxi to Whitehall, to meet up with the Prime Minister for the journey down through West London to RAF Northolt and the flight to Ankara, and the meeting with the Turks. She had read up on the information on issues that the Turks had with the Kurds and the PKK in particular, because as with the troubles in Syria it was not a simple two sided conflict with IS. While the Kurds had been carrying most of the land based fight against Islamic State, there had also been an increase in hostility between the Turks and Kurdish minority, including several terrorist attacks against Turkish police and military personnel.

Labibah and Tim's PPS Martin Lewis were seated behind their respective bosses, and behind them were the civil servants in rank order, but there was plenty of room on the aircraft.

As they flew, she looked out of the window to try to spot the RAF fighter escort, which she knew accompanied these aircraft when carrying VIPs like the Royal Family or the Prime Minister. They were there to intercept any aircraft coming too close to the plane or to put themselves in the path of any missile fired at the plane, but there was no sign of them.

They did not disembark from the luxury aircraft during the brief fuel stop in Sicily, and when the door of the aircraft opened in Turkey Labibah found herself further away from Lynda than at any time since she arrived at Downing Street that morning. Lynda looked utterly stunning, with her long blonde hair totally covered by the purple silk of the hijab which hung perfectly over Lynda's gold blouse which positively glowed under the hot sun.

After the formalities of the diplomatic protocols and the somewhat dubious rendition of the British National Anthem by the Turkish military band, which caused Labibah to wonder how well the Stornoway Army Cadet band would manage the Turkish National Anthem, they moved to the cars for the high speed journey into town and their hotel.

They breezed by check in, as one would expect as someone from the Embassy staff would have been liaising with the hotel from the time their visit became official. Labibah's room was on the top floor, and while not the exclusive suites that Lynda and Tim occupied, it was a very substantial room, with a huge bed and a similarly massive bathtub. She had barely started to unpack when her phone rang, it was Lynda, and so she stopped what she was doing and headed to the corridor and her boss, imagining that Lynda wished her to do something or wanted to discuss something. Her legs almost gave away when she actually heard what the Prime Minister was saying.

"Biba? Have you settled into your room yet? Lynda asked her, "No Lynda, I was just getting around to unpacking".

No? Good. Come join me in mine. There's a spare bedroom in this massive suite and I'd quite like to keep you close" Lynda continued, and Labibah almost melted into the thick carpet of the corridor, if only Lynda actually meant it the way it sounded to Labibah's besotted ears.

The next words into her ears seemed a little rushed as if covering something, not unlike her own cover up a few Saturdays ago, "In case I need you for anything like sending urgent messages or what have you..." Biba heard as she turned on her heels back towards her own room to throw the items she had managed to unpack into case for her upgrade "I'll be with you shortly Lynda" she replied hoping not to sound too eager like the ugly girl asked out on a date.

As she finished throwing things as skillfully as possible into the open case, Labibah contacted the Head of the Prime Minister's security team, to inform him of the change to the room allocation, so there were no misunderstandings. Before she was finished, there was a knock on the door and one of the enhanced security team was there offering to carry her bags for her. She guessed he was probably either SAS or SBS, but she knew better than to ask, he was not

massively built, but he had an aura of strength and power that was not to be messed with, by anyone with half a brain, but of course that counted for little when dealing with those prepared to blow themselves up for their twisted version of the glory of Allah.

She felt the breath leave her as she showed the beauty before her as the door open, and the massive suite was almost as stunning as Lynda. "Which is my room Prime Minister?" Biba asked, deciding it was better to be formal in the presence of the security officer.

This was a mistake. Lynda realised it the moment the beautiful young woman walked into the room with the security guy. "Prime Minister, I would much prefer it if you stayed at the Embassy?" He tried again, one more time.

Lynda laughed. "Oh god, no. The British Embassy rooms here are like prison cells. This is so much nicer. And seriously, if someone does want to blow up the hotel, just to get me, they could just as easily blow up the British Embassy. And I think to be honest that Mr Van Paasschen and his people probably have a lot more clout in the Muslim world than the British Diplomatic Service?" She shrugged as she named the outgoing CEO of the company that owned Sheraton Hotels.

But it was a mistake. "That's your room dear," she said with a shrug, indicating the slightly smaller of the two bedrooms in the suite. *Or you could share mine...* But she didn't say it. She didn't dare. Not here and definitely not now. It was a mistake to have Biba so close. She would resist the temptation, that was all.

The Turkish Government was not at all happy. Lynda was her usual charming and charismatic self, and pointed out that the worst thing possible for the Muslim world would be for the United States to take unilateral action in Syria. The US Sixth Fleet was conducting exercises in the Eastern Mediterranean as a show of strength, sabre rattling and being provocative. If the US took action against Syria, with or without UN approval, it would only cause trouble, resentment against the USA's involvement in Arab affairs since the 1990s had led to 9-11, and was still deeply ingrained. Turkish Membership of NATO hung in the balance, the problem with the Turkish claim to Cyprus and the Dodecanese, the Greek claim to Macedonia and European Turkey, always causing unnecessary tension between the two supposed allies.

And then there were the Kurds.

The second night after they arrived, after a day of almost manic diplomacy and negotiation, during which Lynda had come to dread the word "Kurd", she sat in the lounge area, eating a kebab that had been delivered to her room after being screened by security - whom she suspected just wanted to taste it, rather than actually check to see if it had been tampered with - and looked across at Labibah. "Okay, fount of all knowledge, brief me. We have to find a whey for the curds to separate, which the big cheeses here in Turkey will go for..." She kept a straight

face as she said it, because levity was inappropriate, "Otherwise this whole trip will just be one massive waste of time".

She was, she knew, inadequately informed regarding the local situation. Why the Foreign Office hadn't briefed her properly she put down to Civil Service inertia, and a desire by the FCO to play their cards close to their chest. She knew a bit about the situation, but as her PPS talked, she came to realise the full extent of the problem. "Hmph. So, My enemy's enemy is also my enemy? Ouch. We need to talk to the Kurds!" Easier said than done. The British Government does not negotiate with terrorists, and that is how the Turks saw the Kurds.

Lynda sighed, finished her food, drank her coffee, and headed for her room, wishing once again that she could simply invite the younger woman to join her.

As they entered the room, the security guy again tried to get the Prime Minister to reconsider staying in a large commercial hotel rather than inside the more secure British Embassy, but he was left in no doubt that she would not be swayed, but of course it was done in her usual charming way. Labibah's previous room had been more than large enough but it did not compete in terms of size or fittings with the smaller bedroom in Lynda's suite. However this room was decidedly uncomfortable, not because of anything that hotel management could fix but due to the closeness of the beautiful blonde, and the almost constant arousal she now felt when around Lynda.

She had trouble sleeping for thoughts of her boss, and when she did sleep she was sure that her dreams were all about the older woman, and not to be too bashful about it, the awesome sex they shared. Something Labibah craved but knew could never ever happen, even if Lynda did feel the same about her as she did for the older woman.

Her inability to sleep and her need to stay out of Lynda's way meant that she spent hours reading all of the papers, and whatever other information she could find not only about the situation regarding their hosts, Syria and IS, but the major elephant in the room, the situation regarding the Turkish Government, the HDP and the PKK. The Turkish Government with some justification called the PKK terrorists, and the PKK accused the Turkish Government of oppressing and murdering the Kurdish people, something that was sadly also not without some foundation, although the latest claims that the Government was at the very least turning a blind eye to Daesh, so it could attack Kurds in Turkey in response to Kurdish operations in Syria and Iraq were by no means as clear.

Their meetings with Turkish Government officials, as well as the sessions with the President and Prime Minister were difficult. Understandably the Turks did not wish to get too involved in the conflicts in Syria or Iraq and would rather concentrate on defeating any terrorist operations on Turkish soil. Although the words were not spoken it was clear that to the Turks this meant the war against the PKK, rather than IS.

There had been IS attacks in Turkey but these were mostly focussed against the Kurds, and while the Ankara Government was almost certainly not party to these attacks, they were also not completely grief stricken or driven by revenge. Even the recent attack on the peace rally in Ankara itself, while condemned by President Erdogan and the Government, was not enough to push them to war with IS. The rally was organised by the HDP and other opposition groups.

Lynda was utterly charming in her meetings but left the Turks in no doubt that if nothing were done IS would be a threat of immense magnitude to Turkish interests and safety going forward. She also pointed out that the Americans would not wait forever, which if it happened unilaterally would only serve to increase support for the terrorists, also Israel would not stay on the sidelines if it felt there was a real danger of IS taking control of Syria. Much as they detested Assad, they could not possibly allow a Caliphate to be established on their borders. Either event would be a recruiting sergeant for IS from those currently not necessarily extremists from across the Muslim world and from Muslim communities in the wider world.

As they shared a kebab meal in the suite, Labibah could not help rolling her eyes as Lynda said "Okay, fount of all knowledge, brief me. We have to find a whey for the curds to separate, which the big cheeses here in Turkey will go for otherwise this whole trip will just be one massive waste of time". The cheesy references were almost too much to bear, and Lynda managed to deliver it with a total deadpan style which only made things worse.

"Well blessed are the cheesemakers Prime Minister" Labibah said in response, referencing Monty Python, which was misquoting the Prophet Isa or Jesus and the Sermon of the Mount. "However, I fear that you are right and that the Defence Ministry and the Nationalists have more a sway over Turkish policy than the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. We need to have something which is too much of a good thing to be resisted by the naysayers"

Labibah then gave Lynda the thoughts that she had been developing, outlining each thread, firstly moves to promote a peace process between Turkey and the Kurds in the form of the PKK, this should be fostered through the Halkların Demokratik Partisi or as they are known in Kurdish the Partiya Demokratîk a Gelan. Because the British Government can't be seen to be dealing with terrorists, the HDP with its strong ties to the Kurdish position but having the legitimacy of representation in the Turkish Parliament even though the Turkish Government considered the party and its members as nothing more than terrorists. The second thread was to agree to press the Greeks to back away from the provocative actions that the Hellenic Navy and Air Force had recently been carrying out in and around the disputed areas between the NATO member states. The third was even more controversial, dangling the carrot of British support for Turkey's entry into the European Union in the future, hopefully expressed in vague enough terms that they could never actually be held to it, although the French, Cypriots and Greeks were certain to veto it anyway.

Labibah suggested that she should be the initial contact with the HDP as she had met the current co-chair [Figen Yuksekdağ](#) and a previous co-chair and current member of parliament for

Istanbul [Sebahat Tuncel](#) at conferences about women's rights and in particular those of Muslim women. This could be the cover story supplied to the Turks and the press if anyone commented. She also suggested that they needed to get right on with it, as their stay in Turkey would soon be over and it would make it more difficult to implement later. "We probably will not get anything like the Good Friday Agreement, but that is not the aim, it is merely to get the Turks and Kurds focusing on the common enemy of Daesh at least for a while, and as you said if we can't get Turkey fully onboard with this the whole trip is a waste of time and your international prestige".

Finishing off the last of her kebab and mint tea Labibah said "If there is nothing else Lynda, I could do with some rest, so if you forgive me, time for bed for me". Without waiting for the reply she rose and headed to her room and she was sure to have another night of disturbed sleep.

Leaving Turkey with things only half begun left a bitter taste in Lynda's mouth. The Kurds wanted their own place, the Turks, Iraqis and Syrians didn't want to give it to them. And Britain's involvement was being referred to as meddling. One Turkish diplomat had even gone so far as to compare the situation with the British Mandate on Palestine that had ended so disastrously in 1947 and resulted in the current unacceptable situation. Lynda could only thank whatever gods might be watching that the session was behind closed doors, given that her next stop was Israel.

The flight to Tel Aviv was mostly spent in discussion with the Justice Secretary on a secure satellite phone regarding the latest revelations regarding Britain's prison service and the threat of a strike by prison officers. Not something she needed to be dealing with and she told him as much. "... Adrian, as much as I would love to be there and hold your hand on this one, I am a couple of thousand miles away and trying to get my head around somehow preventing World War Three. I think you ought to be able to handle a few unruly gaolers. ... I don't know, offer them a pay rise... Seriously, Adrian, I put you in charge of the Justice Ministry because I thought you were the best man for the job. Now I suggest you prove to me that I was right..."

Lynda McFearson had another nickname amongst those who had crossed her - McFearsome. The threat implicit in her reprimand of the Justice Minister - that she had given him the job and if he didn't prove he could do it she could just as easily give it to someone else - would not be lost on him. Her voice was as calm and collected as ever but inside she was seething. She hung up the satellite phone and swore softly. "The man is either a fool or a child!" She muttered angrily. Her irritation was partly due to lack of sleep but mostly due to a growing sense of sexual frustration. Her favourite toy was back in a drawer in her bedroom at Number Ten, and she hadn't wanted to use her hand, mostly because 'Biba was sleeping in the next room.

Arrival in Tel Aviv was a little warmer than in Ankara. This time the Prime Ministerial party stayed in the King David Hotel, with the IDF providing security and the men from Her Majesty's Special Boat Service able to take things a bit easier. The Palestinians in Gaza chose the occasion to mount a "peaceful" protest - their version of which involved throwing stones at the IDF troopers

guarding the border. while the Palestinian Civil Police stood by and watched. The Israelis, for their part anxious to show how peaceful and civilised they were and not give the British and Americans an excuse to side with the Arabs, responded with water cannon, dampening the enthusiasm of the protestors.

Sitting down to a late lunch of cured beef and unleavened bread, Lynda took a deep breath, turned to Labibah and with a wry grin, said, "Analysis, Mr Spock? Do we comment on the situation in Gaza, or do we just ignore it? If we ignore it, are we giving tacit approval to the situation, or are we simply concentrating on the more important issues? And even if the latter, should we relegate the Gaza situation as it stands to that of 'less important issue'? God, I'm not cut out for this. I just want to go home and curl up in bed with..." *you...* "A good book and a glass of wine". The pause was barely noticeable, but it was accompanied by a steamy glance at the only other person in the hotel suite. Once again, 'Biba was in a room that adjoined Lynda's. Once again it was a mistake, but this time she didn't care. Having access to her PPS had been so convenient in Turkey, that she had simply told people that it was to be the same arrangement for the rest of the trip.

They had made some progress in Turkey but for every two steps forward there was at least one and a half steps back. The Kurdish problem was going to be a thorn for a long time yet, none of the countries in the area wanted a Kurdish state on their borders, far less to give up territory for the creation of such a country.

The flight to Israel was really only notable for the phone call with Julian. Lynda had certainly given Adrian something to think about, a bunch of militant Prison Officers would be easy rather than come back to the Boss with news that there was a domestic crisis, and that they needed the Army to look after criminals instead of being on call to deal with terrorists and other enemies of the Realm.

As with any high profile visitors, especially political leaders on their first visit to Israel, they had the tour of Yad Vashem, Israel's Holocaust memorial and museum. She did not miss the irony of their accommodation in the King David Hotel, with an Israeli government sworn not to talk to 'terrorists', they were putting the British Prime Minister and her party in a hotel that had been blown up by what the British had considered terrorists but the Israeli state considers to be heroes of the freedom struggle, and later members of the Government including at least one Prime Minister.

When Lynda called her 'Mr Spock' again, Labibah gave a little smile. The first time, she had been sort of insulted, but the more that Lynda did it, the cuter that she found it. "I'm sure the advice from Tim and the FCO is to say nothing or even less, but perhaps there might be some room to press the Israelis and Palestinians to make progress. However, the big issue would of course be the Hamas Government of Gaza, rather than the mainstream Palestinian Government of the West Bank. This would be too much of a distraction given the issues we have on our plate at the moment" this caused her to look down at the plate of beef and bread.

As she looked back up, her eyes held for a second on the Prime Minister's long slim fingers 'easy, she is the Boss, no matter how much you want her to want you' was the warning that flashed through her brain. Causing her to shake her head slightly as if trying to shake the thoughts from her head. "On this occasion I actually agree with Tim and the FCO, we should say as little as possible, and certainly stay as neutral as possible regardless of the pressure both sides apply".

The thought of Lynda curled up in bed, had an arousing effect on her, all these sorts of thoughts had no place in the same room as her Boss and the Prime Minister of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Even if Lynda did want her as badly as she needed the blonde, how could they possibly be together. Another shake of the head, "why is the world so difficult" she said in part due to the personal issue she had to live with and partly the international and national problems that leapt out to trouble them.

"Right, that's settled." The Prime Minister nodded decisively. "If all my official advisors and my unofficial advisor agree, then that has got to be the best course."

She popped the last piece of meat into her mouth, washed it down with fresh orange juice, then used the last bit of bread to mop up the remains of the horseradish sauce. "Say what you will, I do love Jewish food!" She grinned and swallowed. "Mind you, last time I was in Israel, it was for a week and by the end of it I was ready to kill for a bacon sandwich. Say, that's an idea; maybe we could threaten to bombard the entire Middle East with bacon sandwiches unless they stop behaving like spoiled brats and work it all out between them?" She giggled and piled the plates up. A knock at the door heralded the arrival of the escort who was to take them to the Knesset building where they would meet with Lynda's opposite number.

Her message was simple. Don't get involved in Syria, let the international community handle things. For the first time since taking office, Lynda was in a meeting without her PPS, the Israeli security people had insisted rather bluntly. A Muslim could not be allowed into the presence of the Israeli prime minister. Unless the woman was willing to submit to a strip search. Lynda was livid, but rather than have the young woman submit to such an indignity, told her to remain at the hotel.

Lynda stuck to her guns, flatly refusing to negotiate on anything, until she received an assurance that the Jewish state would remain neutral in any conflict that developed in Syria. Of course Israel would be allowed to defend itself and its borders, but any offensive action, any buildup of troops in the Golan Heights, would jeopardise any possible lasting settlement in the region.

Sara Netanyahu asked, quite bluntly, "Are you threatening my country?"

Lynda laughed. "Who me? No, of course not. We're allies. At least, I *think* we're allies?" She paused, then went on, "But you know as well as I do that if Israel acts against any of the Arab

states, whether unilaterally or as part of an alliance, the rest of the Arab world will close ranks. If you stay out of it, like you did with Iraq, then there is a chance that we can bring some of the more moderate Muslim countries into a coalition against the IS in Syria. Any action by the west without the backing of the Arab League and the United Nations will be seen as provocative. We're in enough trouble over Iraq and Afghanistan, not to mention the civil war in Libya, without wanting to go in all gung-ho. If the Yanks want to bomb the crap out of Syria, that's up to them but the UK will not support unilateral action by them either!"

And it worked. She had received Mrs Netanyahu's assurance that Israel would not take any military action against Syria, unless to defend itself against an actual threat.

The following morning the BAe 146 CC.2 took off again, heading for the British Sovereign Territory and RAF Akrotiri in Cyprus. Not to refuel, but so the aircraft did not fly directly from Israel to Egypt.

The rest of the tour was much the same... trying to talk to unsympathetic Arab leaders about the need for concerted action to re-stabilise Syria in order to prevent the whole region devolving into a bloodbath. An invasion of Syria by Jordanian, Turkish and Egyptian forces, backed by Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, and with the support of the USA, UK and the mandate of the United Nations, would restore order, re-stabilise the country, and ensure the security of the region. With the Russians always watchful of what they considered to be their backyard, much as the US regarded the Caribbean, they would be the first to interfere if they thought their own interests were threatened, as was already proven time and time again. The question of Israeli involvement was raised each time, and each time Lynda had repeated Mrs Netanyahu's statement to her.

Two weeks was exhausting though, and by the time the CC.2 touched down again at RAF Northolt, she was ready for a rest.

A week in her Somerset constituency would help, then it would be the conference season. The late night journey back into the centre of London up the A40 saw herself and Labibah both yawning. "Stay over tonight, dear", Lynda told the PPS. "We will have a mountain of stuff to do in the morning and it would be good to get an early start." Plus, she had grown so used to the young woman's company during her Middle East tour that she didn't want to be parted from her. "I'm sure the spare room will be made up for you..."

While she to a certain degree understood the Israelis banning her from the [Knesset](#) and Lynda's acceptance of the ban, she also felt terribly insulted as a person and as a Muslim that she was treated that way, and let down that Lynda allowed it to happen. But the Israeli leg of the trip went as well as could be expected. While Lynda was with the Israeli leadership, she met several representatives of the Palestinian Authority expressing her personal support for a credible Palestinian state, while cautioning against extremism.

The next day saw them drive in a heavily escorted convoy to an Israeli military airfield and their waiting Royal Air Force plane, which due to sensitivities in the region headed to Cyprus, landing in British Sovereign territory before taxiing to the other end of the runway and heading straight back into the sky and off to Cairo.

Each leg of the tour was a balancing act, and Lynda dealt with each successive country in as openly as possible given the needs of diplomacy and the situation in Syria and Iraq, which was complex even by Middle Eastern standards.

For all the luxury hotels, Labibah was very happy when they boarded the plane for the flight home, travelling, the meetings and being so close to Lynda for so long was taking its toll on her. A bit of a break, back in Scotland would be a lifesaver. She would get a short break before joining Lynda in Somerset before heading back to London.

Labibah had slept for much of the flight back to Northolt, well more power napped, as she kept being disturbed by someone or other. If it wasn't someone on the plane, it was Lynda in her dreams.

As the convoy swept down the A40 before turning south towards Downing Street, she heard Lynda say "Stay over tonight, dear, we will have a mountain of stuff to do in the morning and it would be good to get an early start. I'm sure the spare room will be made up for you." The final remark seemed to hang there, as Labibah imagined another bedroom in the residence. But channelling the famous television series, she confined her response to a simple "Yes Prime Minister". Cue the theme tune and end credits, she thought as the London streets flashed past outside. After the last couple of weeks, what is another night not in your own bed, she thought, before thinking about yet another night only feet away from where she so wanted, no need to be.

It was a mistake, again. Lynda lay in her own bed - well, the one she had become most used to over the past weeks, unable to sleep despite the physical and mental exhaustion. What she wanted... No, *needed*, was to have that warm, sensuous body next to her. Having Labibah curled up next to her in bed, not *doing* anything, just sleeping. That was something the Prime Minister couldn't resist thinking about. She had to resist doing it, though.

She had seen the occasional glances, heard the odd slip of the tongue, she knew that her PPS was gay, and had a sneaking suspicion that if she had invited the girl into *her* bed, the invitation would not have been turned down. What was it she felt for this young woman? Admiration, certainly: the academic and political achievement to become a Member of Parliament at such a young age, to be a Muslim and have the guts to have a homosexual relationship, these things were worthy of admiration. The young woman's political savvy was admirable as well. She had taken to the job of Parliamentary Private Secretary to the Prime Minister like a duck to water... No, like a *fish* to water! Lynda chuckled to herself. People had used the same expression of herself in her early days in Parliament. It was an interestingly mixed simile. Take her out of the

political environment, Lynda knew, and she would be a fish out of water. She would have no reason to go on. And this young Scottish Muslim woman was the same, taking to the cut-and-thrust of British politics like she was born to it.

Lynda sighed. So, yes, admiration. But there was more. She blushed as she thought about what she would like to do to the woman. Lust, definitely. A hand slipped cautiously between Lynda's legs, rubbing, easing apart the lips, finding her sensitive nub and her hot, wet opening. She stifled a low moan of pleasure. The walls up here were paper thin and it wouldn't do.... NO! She changed her mind and relaxed, enjoying the sudden realisation that the object of her masturbatory fantasies was in the next room, and could probably hear every creak of the bed - if she was awake. Well let her hear! "Hmmmmg..... Mmmmmhhh.... Ghhhh, huu, huuuu, huuuu.... AH! Ahhhh, Hu-hu-hu-hu-ah-ah-ah.... AUUGH! OH god.... Ahhhhhh, whhhhew. Huhhhhhh!" Her breathing now a lot deeper, she rolled over onto her side, wiped her fingers on her pyjama jacket. "Goodnight sweetheart", she muttered, too softly to be heard in the next room. And with that she slept.

Lynda was up first the next morning, filling the kitchen with the smell of frying bacon. After two weeks touring Muslim countries, she just craved the delicious saltiness. Coffee too. She was needed back in her constituency that evening and there was much to sort out. Negotiations between the Prison Officers' Association and the Prison Service were apparently progressing well, focussing mostly on working hours, staffing levels and recruitment rather than pay. There was a whole stack of red boxes sitting on the desk in her office last night and she lifted the phone, dialled the switchboard and asked if they could be brought up to her in the flat.

A few moments later there was a knock on the door and one of the civil servants stood there, looking far too efficient for seven thirty AM, paying no attention whatever to the fact that his boss was standing there in her pyjamas clutching a cup of coffee. Lynda couldn't resist teasing him. Most of the staff here were career civil servants, high fliers destined for the top, and she just needed to poke holes in their stuffiness. "Excuse me for opening the door in my pyjamas..." She began.

He snorted. A noise so unlike the upper echelons of power that she actually stopped what she was about to say, looked at him. He was clearly struggling to keep a straight face. Lynda grinned at him and raised an eyebrow as he deposited the red boxes on the table in the lounge. The poor man couldn't resist, he simply blurted out the punchline, "That's a funny place to have a door...."

My god, a human being! This one won't go very far. Lynda laughed with him and thought about inviting him to have a coffee, but he excused himself and vanished back down to his accustomed office. She sat and ate her breakfast and opened the first box, waiting for her PPS to join her.

Alone in her room, merely feet from the woman that she desired more than anyone ever before,

Labibah stripped off her clothes and put on her nightie. Another night of frustration and disturbed sleep awaited, and like so many nights since she started to fall for Lynda, Labibah placed her hand between her own legs.

She had admired Lynda long before the blonde became Prime Minister and she was appointed PPS, but when she had started working closely Labibah's admiration and respect had grown into many other emotions, which she confessed to herself included lust but she was increasingly certain that it also included love. A forbidden love, and probably an incredibly one sided love, but she was in love with Lynda.

With her nightie up under her breasts, she ran one hand across her thighs imagining Lynda exploring her body, as the middle finger of the other hand rubbed her clit. Teasing it, with the softest of touches, slowly working herself to another orgasm while thinking of the woman only feet away. 'If only I could go next door to her and let her know how I feel about her' was the last thought in her mind until she surrendered totally to the needs of her body.

When she woke, Labibah showered and dressed, she knew she could probably have just worn a robe over her nightie, but she thought it better to be properly dressed, as they were going to work Lynda had said so, that was why she had said in Downing Street last night instead of returning to her own place.

As she walked into the kitchen, she could smell the bacon. That was predictable, she knew that Lynda loved her bacon sandwiches and after a prolonged period in Islamic and Jewish countries that love was likely to have changed to a physical craving. 'Like I feel about her' she thought, and forced herself to put those feelings aside. "Good morning Prime Minister" she said cheerily as she notice the huge pile of red boxes to one side and Lynda sat at the table in a robe and pyjamas, a thick bacon sandwich in her hand.

A day of hard work. Running a country was a lot like running a business. True, a lot of the decision making and day-to-day management was done at a lower level by her subordinates, much as it would be in a business, but everything decided by cabinet or cabinet committee or by the cabinet office came across her desk. Major policy decisions, anything affecting Great Britain's status in the world, she needed to know about. The amount of paper in the red boxes was staggering at first. Catherine Fairfax tapped on the door at about ten in the morning. Lynda had already sent Labibah to make more coffee as the two of them worked through the boxes and was now on her third cup. "Damn, go see who that is, pet, I need to pee..."

She headed for the bathroom as her PPS headed for the door. *Did I really just call her 'pet'?* she asked herself, as she closed and locked the door behind her, pulled down her pyjama trousers and sat.

Catherine Fairfax had come to the flat because the Prime Minister had not appeared in her office. True, the red boxes had gone, but it was the Principal Private Secretary's job to ensure

that the Prime Minister was not, in fact, slacking off. The role of PPS (the Civil Servant, rather than the back Bencher) had been made somewhat infamous by that damned television series that the PM kept referring to as if it were some sort of handbook for running the country... Or, perhaps, how *not* to run the country! If that were the case, then she supposed it wasn't too bad as a reference...!

But her job was to make sure the PM was working, make sure the PM was getting all the information required from the Civil Service, and act as liaison between the PM and the Cabinet Office. The job was only ever given to high-flyers, and Fairfax knew she was the first woman to hold the job, and would probably be the first woman to be Permanent Under Secretary to The Cabinet. Provided she could maintain the balancing act and keep both her political master and her boss happy (she refused to use the word *mistress* - it had lewd overtones).

So when she heard from one of the office staff that the PM was "working from home", she nodded and after clearing her own desk, headed up to the flat. The door being opened by the little Muslim freak that the PM had chosen as her Parliamentary PS was not a surprise. The two of them were pretty much inseparable and did, Fairfax was forced to admit, work well as a team. But the fact that the girl was clearly wearing the clothes she had worn the night before, was something of a shock. The woman had spent the night, again. This was becoming a habit after that first time.

Fairfax brushed past the younger woman. "Where is the PM?" she demanded.

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Lynda washed her hands and unlocked the bathroom door, made her way to the front room again only to be accosted by Fairfax. "Prime Minister..." The woman looked her up and down, glanced at Labibah, who had clearly been suffering under the civil servant's least civil level of service, then back at Lynda. "Prime Minister, may I have a word?"

"Of course..." Lynda maintained her composure. "Speak freely".

"In private?" Catherine glanced at Labibah again

"We are in private..." Lynda noted the glance. "Catherine, you and Labibah are my two most trusted advisors. I need the two of you to work together otherwise I might just as well give up and go home! Whatever you have to say, you can say it in front of my PPS." She put her head to one side, an expectant expression on her face.

Catherine blushed, looked away, looked up again. "Very well, Prime Minister... The current state of attire of both the individual you say I may freely impart information in the presence of, and that of, ah, yourself... would suggest the obvious yet unfortunate conclusion that both present occupants of the Prime Ministerial Residence, excluding oneself, have spent the preceding nocturnal interval in each other's... ah... presence?"

Lynda hesitated, not because she needed to work out an answer, but because she needed to work out the question... "Wait... Are you asking if we slept together?"

Catherine opened her mouth, closed it, and nodded. "You are both of that persuasion, and ... While I may not be the most perspicacious individual, your apparent mutual allure has not passed these senses without cognizance, Prime Minister".

Lynda's mouth dropped open. "Wait, what? No! We haven't. Labibah spent the night in the spare room... Honestly, what is this? Tabloid Press Day? Catherine, I am honestly shocked at you even ... even thinking such a thing!"

"Nonetheless, Prime Minister", Fairfax's expression was suitably embarrassed, but she felt compelled to continue, "Glossal appendages have commenced a certain degree of movement..."

Lynda was so put out that the meaning of that one went totally over her head. "What? Damn it woman, speak English...!"

"Tongues are beginning to wag?"

"Oh... Heh... Well so bloody what? I have never made a secret of my sexuality. Miss Chaudry, on the other hand, has endeavoured to keep hers out of the public eye because of her religion and the fact that the two are, sadly, somewhat at odds... So if anyone's tongues are wagging, those tongues have got to be senior civil servants who are all constrained under the official secrets act not to divulge anything they may find out in the course of their duties..." There. The threat was made. If anyone started any rumours about Labibah and herself, it would come down on those at the top, the only people who were in the know about the PPS' sexuality.

Catherine went white. "Y- Yes Prime Minister...."

Lynda smiled at the young woman she was, in fact, hopelessly in love with. "I mean, it wouldn't be so bad if we actually *were*..." She blushed and led the way back into the lounge. "Well, anyway, Catherine, While you're here... Oh, 'Biba, fix Catherine a cup of coffee would you? Thanks".

Biba padded back over to the coffee machine and fixed the not so civil Civil Servant a coffee, wondering if she shouldn't poison the woman, but that was only a fleeting thought as it would only draw further attention that she had stayed with Lynda again. Perhaps the Fairfax woman was right and her staying here was potentially damaging to Lynda, the Government and herself if the media ever came to know about it, even though it was totally innocent.

The fact that it appeared that Lynda didn't think it would be bad if they were lovers, only made things worse for her. All the time it was just a wild fantasy for her, Labibah could put her feelings into a box, but to hear the woman she was falling heavily for, a woman that was not only her boss but the Prime Minister and Leader of her party express a view that it would not be so bad if they were lovers made her desires all too real.

"Here you are Catherine, a cup of coffee from Lynda's private stash" Biba said as she handed over the beverage in the fine china from the official crockery, turning away from the both women, she walked out saying "I'll just pop to the office to get the Prime Minister's diary" over her shoulder. Her dress swished around her legs as she walked from the room. Some, including her mother might have described more as flouncing out, although in Urdu there was no direct equivalent word.

Labibah returned to Lynda and Mrs Fairfax, and determined to be professional no matter the provocation from the civil servant. When she was alone with Lynda, she was also determined to resign as Lynda's PPS. Their close proximity was a threat to Lynda and her vision for the country. It could never work between them and Labibah was not going to allow her lust for the gorgeous and brilliant blonde to derail Lynda's plans to finally make the country a success for the great majority of the people rather than harking back to the days of the Empire or blaming everything on their European partners.

There was no way that she would give the civil servant the impression that she had won, and delay her departure from the Prime Minister's inner circle until they had both returned from their brief sojourns in their respective constituencies following the extended overseas trip.

Lynda was running through the boxes, sorting out various legal matters with Fairfax when Biba returned with the extra coffee. The PM had her trot down to Lynda's office and fetch the diary. "Right... There is nothing pressing and no engagements for the next week", she told the two women. "I deliberately kept that week clear in case the Middle East trip over-ran, but as it is still clear I think it's a perfect time for Miss Chaudhry and myself to spend some time with our constituents and leave the ... ahem... professionals to keep the country going in our absence."

Catherine nodded, "Of course, Prime Minister. I am quite sure everything will still be much as it was when you get back!"

Lynda glared at the civil servant. The woman had been deliberately rude, in the coded language of Whitehall, but in a way that the PM was unable to call her on. "Good, I'd *hate* to think anything ever actually *changed* around here", she shot back, and stood up. "Well, thank you both for your help this morning. Biba, you can use my car to get you back to your flat. If you're catching a plane to Stornoway, you should probably get a wiggle on. And if you're going by train.... Well, anyway, I honestly don't want to think about that..."

She stretched and shook herself. "Could you two please take the boxes back down? I need to get dressed and get gone myself. Catherine, please arrange for my car to take Miss Chaudhry to her flat then come back here to take me down to my constituency? Thanks".

With the other two effectively dismissed, she ushered them out the door, both loaded with red boxes, and then leaned against it with a sigh of relief.

"Okay, Lyn, let's get packing".

She headed for the shower, then her bedroom. By the time she was dressed and packed, and had made her way to the back door, the official car was waiting for her, along with Lt Cdr Anne Derritan. "Ah, good, er..." She checked her watch, "...Afternoon, Lieutenant Commander Derritan.... Um, May I call you Anne? After all, If I ever need to call on your services professionally, I would like to think that my last three minutes will be spent with someone with whom I am on a first name basis".

"Er, of course Ma'am". The Navy lady with the locked briefcase said softly.

"I don't suppose I could persuade you to call me Lynda? No? Well, if I ever need to open that case, I shall order you to call me by my first name from then on. Okay?"

"Yes Ma'am". The woman actually laughed.

"Right, Let's get on the road. Cheddar is quite a way to go!"

Labibah had actually expected some kind of comment from Catherine as they left the apartment, but Mrs Fairfax was actually silent as they went downstairs, and made their way to the office. The silence continued as Labibah waited for the car to arrive, it appeared that Catherine was ignoring her, which to be honest was fine with her, better than getting into an argument, even one in Civil Service code with the other woman.

When the car arrived, Labibah quickly got in, choosing the front seat next to the driver, a seat usually occupied by a security man when the car contained the Boss. "Another quiet week ahead Gary, with the Boss off to Somerset later" she said to the former Royal Marine who was the regular driver for Lynda as they headed out of Downing Street and off towards her flat.

As soon as she got inside her flat, she emptied her suitcases and repacked a small case, while baggage was not particularly an issue on the flight from Gatwick to Glasgow, it was more of a concern on the flight to Stornoway. She made sure to pack the gifts that she had picked up on their travels for the family. Her stomach rumbling as she thought of home and her mother's cooking.

Being back with her family would allow her the time to work out how she could best deal with her resignation as Lynda's PPS. She hated the idea, not wanting to be away from the side of the woman that she admired so deeply, but it was clear after this morning that it was necessary for the future of Lynda and by extension the country.

On the drive along the M4, relatively quiet at this time of day, Lynda distracted herself with similar thoughts. Only her ideas were heading in a totally different direction. There were, she knew, at least three married couples currently sitting in the house, and had been more before her own landslide victory had ousted two of the conservative couples and one labour pair. As for ministers sleeping with their secretaries, well that went back to Robert Walpole, she was quite sure. Not that Walpole slept with his secretary, necessarily, but she was reasonably sure that the country's elected representatives had been banging the hired help since Parliament first sat!

Her one main concern, really, was Labibah's safety. If it became widely known that the muslim woman was also gay, it could cause a nasty backlash in the muslim community. The political fall-out was something Lynda felt eminently qualified to deal with. But the possibility of a physical attack on her PPS was something that definitely worried Lynda.

The other problem she could see, apart from the gutter press having a field day, would be the potential conflict of interests. But would there really be a conflict? After all they were both on the same side, in the same party, they worked well together as a team... If there were any sort of conflict of interests, Lynda could not see it.

What about the nepotism angle? Her subconscious demanded it. She shrugged that off. Labibah had been appointed to the role of her PPS *before* their mutual attraction made itself felt. Could she prove that? Well as the first time they'd met was when a very nervous young Muslim woman had turned up at the front door of Number Ten saying she was supposed to start work there, she felt reasonably confident on that score.

And *Damn It*, Why *shouldn't* she have a little love and happiness in her life? In the movie "Love, Actually", Hugh Grant's Prime Minister character fires the girl he's fallen in love with, because he thinks it would be inappropriate to have the relationship. And then he regrets it and goes wandering down a street in Wandsworth knocking on doors on Christmas Eve, looking for her...!

Lynda laughed out loud and attracted a look from Anne-the-bomb-lady and Detective Sergeant Raymond Griffin of the Royal and Parliamentary Protection Unit of Scotland Yard's Special Branch. She blushed and then decided to confide in the three people she knew would never share what she said with anyone.

"I was just thinking. Did any of you ever see the movie 'Love, Actually', where Hugh Grant plays a lonely Prime Minister, who falls for this girl on Number Ten's domestic staff?"

Her question prompted a raft of agreements and several quotes of favourite scenes from the movie as a whole.

“Well”, she went on, once they had quietened down again, “I was thinking about what might have happened if Grant’s character hadn’t fired the girl first. What if he’d decided that it was fine for him to have a relationship with her, even marry her, without all that unnecessary palava of having her fired? Would that actually be so bad?” She paused and then added, “And please, you three are non-political, you’re the sort of people who, in larger numbers than I ever thought possible, voted me into office. So please, be honest? I really need to know!”

A week in her home constituency, in her home town of Cheddar, famous for cheese and a spectacular limestone gorge. Her constituency office was just down the road in Wells, along with a beautiful cave system called “Wookey Hole”. And a little further, Glastonbury, site of the famed rock festival (where Lynda had in fact had her first lesbian experience) and the Tor, alleged burial place of Merlin the Magician.

Her constituency office handled most things, but the PM was finding that she was spending less and less time here. She sat her first surgery for two months and listened to the stream of people who poured in with their requests, petitions and complaints. Something many of them didn’t understand was that being Prime Minister didn’t give her the power to simply do whatever she wanted. Her standard reply of “I’ll see what I can do, no promises mind”, satisfied most people, but there were a few who had come back at least once already with the same complaint. These she usually managed to either explain why she was unable to do anything herself, or, more usually, explain the measures she was working on.

One elderly gentleman came in and began telling her all about the damage that was being done to his eardrums by some excessively noisy hoodlums! On enquiring further Lynda managed to find out that he lived in Pilton, a small village right on the edge of her constituency, and one that was actually host to the world famous rock festival. The festival itself was already over and everyone had gone home weeks ago, but the man was adamant that he could still hear the rowdy yobbos and what was she going to do about it?

Lynda kept a straight face. This was a serious matter. Had he contacted the police? And what did they say? That there were no noisy people left? Very odd. What about the local council? They had said the same? Hmmm... And when did this noise begin?

It was when the man said about the beginning of April, that Lynda realised there was something she was missing. She took the man’s address and invited herself to afternoon tea at his house.

Her car pulled up outside a quaint little cottage that she almost fell in love with - except for the thatched roof. She commented that it must be a devil to maintain and the old man agreed. He

led her inside and made her a cuppa and she sat and drank it and discussed the weather and England's performance against Pakistan in the test series, and then to her astonishment there was the most god-awful racket from outside - the sound was like a hundred schoolboys all yelling to each other at once...

Lynda hurried out to find the source of the din. She looked around but could see nothing... But while the old man's hearing was failing, Lynda's was still sharp. She turned her head, trying to tell where the noise was coming from. She led the old man around to the back of his house and laughed, then pointed to a magnificent old chestnut tree that stood in the middle of the field his garden backed onto. Flying around the tree was a vast number of large black rooks. "There's your rowdy rabble", she said with a laugh. "A Parliament of Rooks, and making as much of a racket as a Parliament of Elected Representatives!"

The flight from Gatwick to Glasgow passed quickly and peacefully, and although she had booked economy, the young woman on the check in desk for British Airways had upgraded her to business class, and while the upgrade was neither requested nor expected Labibah made a note to ensure it was declared. As PPS to the Prime Minister she really had to be squeaky clean when it came to anything that could be considered a gift or bribe.

Sitting in the lounge at Glasgow airport waiting for the connection to Stornoway was approached by an elderly couple. The lady saying "I know you have the ear of the Prime Minister, so please I beg you, do not send our grandson to Iraq or Syria to die, his father fought in the Gulf War and then died in Afghanistan and we could not bear another loss", the man keeping a dignified silence, the badge on his blazer Labibah recognised as being that of the Parachute Regiment, so it was clear that the young man was at least the third generation of his family to risk his life for the country.

"The Government appreciates the service of our Armed Forces and I know that the Prime Minister would not risk lives unless it was absolutely necessary, and there is no intention to send British troops to the Middle East in anything other than the current training role in Iraq. Indeed I am sure you are aware that the Prime Minister and I have just returned from the region to encourage them to sort out their own problems, rather than have us and the Americans attempt to sort it out" she wished she could give a stronger promise but to do so would make her a hostage to fortune as the Middle East in particular was an unpredictable powder keg.

The gentleman then spoke for the first time, "Thank you Miss Chaudhry, I am sure that you and the Prime Minister will do your best to keep our boys safe, and that is best we can ever hope for".

As the couple left, the announcement was made for her flight, the Loganair operated SAAB 2000 for the nearly one hour hop out to Stornoway Airport, and her waiting family. Labibah made sure that she fixed her hijab before boarding, as trying to fix it in the cramped toilet

of the plane was too stressful and to not be wearing it when she greeted her grandparents was unthinkable.

As the plane landed at [Port-adhair Steòrnabhaigh](#), as it known in Gaelic, Labibah was one of the first off the plane and collected her luggage in the small single storey terminal. It did not take long before she was back in the arms of her family. With everything in the car, they were soon on the A866 and heading back to her parents house on Balmerino Drive and the waiting homecoming feast with a gathering of the family.

Hours later she drove her grandparents home, and while her grandfather turned on the highlights of the cricket, Labibah sat with her grandmother in the kitchen of their home.

“Nanna, how did you know that Pappa was the one for you?” Labibah asked in Urdu.

“Our marriage was arranged by our parents and the matchmaker little one, why do you ask, have you found yourself a lovely lady in London”

“Yes Nanna, but I don’t know if she feels the same way and there are big problems with us being together. She is not a Muslim, she is white and English and there would be big problems if she were to have even a Muslim girlfriend or worse still a wife.”

“If you love each other let no one stand in your way little one, but how did you fall for your boss?”

“Nanna, how did you know”

Her Nanna just raised an eyebrow “It is our secret little one, until you say otherwise”. She then explained how she had fallen so deeply for the Prime Minister of Great Britain, and her Nanna smiled all the way through the outpouring of Labibah’s heartfelt tale.

Labibah spent most of the next week in her own flat by the harbour and working out of her constituency office a few doors down from her flat, with day trips to run surgeries on other islands. One of her more notable pieces of casework involved an old crofter, who turned up at one of her surgeries.

“Halò, ciamar as urrainn dhomh do chuideachadh?” (Hello, how can I help you?) She asked in Gaelic, of the distressed elderly crofter that had just come into her office, accompanied by his faithful sheep dog.

“Tha a 'chomhairle a tha a' bagairt a ghearradh dheth le mo chroit ùr a leasachadh.” (The council are threatening to cut off my croft with a new development.) he replied

Labibah continued in Gaelic, asking him for more detail and who had told him that the council was going to develop the area between his croft and the road. When he produced a letter in English from the Highland and Island Development Board she saw that part of the problem was a poor translation of the Gaelic title documents by someone at the Board or their business partners for the project and partly because someone in an office somewhere was unaware that the seafront in the area was still used by the last of the old style crofters, and therefore protected under Scottish law. Also he had misunderstood the English and it was not a done deal with the Council, the letter said that the Board was submitting it to Council for approval.

She finished this particular meeting with a promise to get the HIDB to reconsider their entirely inappropriate proposal, and reassured him that he would not be cut off or forced out of his croft because of his protected status under Scottish law. A much relieved old man and his equally aged dog left the office.

The week away from London and Lynda ended with another family meal, before she headed to the airport for the flight back to Glasgow and then London. Back in her South London flat, Labibah tried to sleep before returning to work, but every time she closed her eyes she saw Lynda and it tore at her heart, that for the greater good she should have to give up the chance of what might be her only chance of personal happiness.

“You know, sometimes I think the Russians had the right idea!” The unmarked black Jaguar S-Type was moving at approximately fifteen miles per hour, back up the M4 towards London. Lynda was bored. She had actually suggested that they stop at one of the motorway service areas for a break, an idea instantly vetoed by Gary and Ray. A journey that should have taken just under three hours total, had so far taken over that and they were barely half way.

“How so, Prime Minister?” Lt Commander Anne-Bomb took the bait that the two coppers refused to bite on.

“All their major roads used to have a lane that could only be used by politburo members...”

“Actually, Prime Minister, I believe there were only two *Zil Lanes* in Moscow, and one of them is no longer in use”. Garry informed her. The former Royal Marine, now her driver, was apparently a wealth of information.

“Well, okay... But I still think it would be a good idea....” Lynda sighed. “Or maybe put a helipad in Horse Guards Parade and let me fly out of Downing Street...” But she was only joking. She could just imagine the reaction of the opposition if she started spending taxpayers’ money on herself like she was some Conservative... Never mind the headlines...!

The traffic began moving again and Lynda breathed a sigh of relief. “You know, we are going to have to stop soon, because the Prime Minister does not wee in a bottle in the back of the car!”

She arrived back at Number Ten much later than planned, and made a random decision to go in the front. It was late on a Friday Evening and the traffic had mostly died down. The armed police on the gates recognised the car instantly and opened the gates, lowered the bollards and they were swept by the assembled press and photographers, most of whom hadn't managed to get their cameras out before she passed.

Anne did a disappearing act that Lynda somehow envied her. The woman was just another civil servant in a plain grey suit and carrying a briefcase (that just happened to be chained to her wrist). She was in the door and heading for the Admiralty before Lynda had paused on the step to wave and smile at the assembled press.

This was an opportunity... She had always loved impromptu press conferences like this. One could tell a lot about the mood of the British Public from the questions the press asked their political leaders.

"Prime Minister, Prime Minister, is Britain going to send troops into Syria?"

"There are currently no government plans to do so. We are hoping to encourage the moderate middle eastern nations to act on their own behalf and in their own interests to put a curb on Islamic State."

"When you say there are no plans to send troops, does that mean Britain will stand by and watch if our allies send forces?"

"I honestly cannot comment on what other NATO countries may or may not be planning. Allow me to clarify: It is the policy of this government not to get involved in overseas conflicts unless it becomes absolutely necessary!"

"Is President Biden's visit anything to do with this policy?"

Lynda hesitated. She had just been blindsided and that was not something she appreciated. She recovered quickly, as ever. "The President and I will no doubt be discussing the situation in the Middle East, along with many other important aspects of the relationship between Britain and the United States. That is all for now, thank you!"

She turned away, signalling an end to the conference, ignoring the cries of "Prime Minister...?" With the door closed behind her she allowed her smile to slip. "Would somebody please explain to me why the first I hear of an impending state visit by the most powerful man in the world is from Romilly Weeks, on the step of Number Ten?"

Lynda McFearsome was not someone you wanted to encounter by accident and civil servants vanished, as did the few of the domestic staff who happened to be in the lobby. "Someone get me Tim on the phone? NOW!"

A phone was handed to her. "Ah, Lynda, so glad you're b...."

"Ah, *Foreign Secretary*", Lynda deliberately addressed the man by his title, interrupting his cheerful greeting. "Please could you pop over to Number Ten and brief me on the impending visit by the US President? Thank you!" She hung up before he could say anything else.

Tim was in her office inside ten minutes, apologising for not getting the information to her but saying that as she was in her constituency... She interrupted him by slamming her smartphone down on the desk. "You didn't think it was important enough to send me a goddam text? Damn it, Tim, I was just blindsided by ITN out there. That bitch Weeks asked me if Biden was coming to discuss Syria. I didn't even know he was coming! So I gave her a non-answer. I can't imagine any summit between the UK and USA *not* covering mutual interests *etcetera, etcetera*. But I know I hesitated, and the hounds are not stupid, they will have noticed!"

She sighed. "So, fill me in?"

It turned out not to be as bad as she had imagined. The President was actually on his way to Russia to a summit with President Putin, and had decided on a whim to stop off in London and say hello in person to his latest ally.

Air Force One was due to arrive at Stansted airport on Tuesday evening. Somewhat mollified, Lynda signed a couple of documents approving the use of the airport and agreeing to put the President up at her official country residence. "Funny", she said with a giggle, her good mood restored. "I've never been to Chequers. First time for everything. Have the Royal Marines Band been practising the Star Spangled Banner?"

Something struck her suddenly. An official flying visit by the US President was going to cost the British Taxpayer rather a lot. She made a note to ask about the full cost at the next cabinet committee meeting, and to check whether it was possible to invoice the US government...

Saturday morning arrived and Lynda made her usual bacon sandwich, and felt that there was something missing, something she was forgetting or that wasn't there. She sat and went through one of the red boxes she had brought up to her flat last night, sipping her coffee, and realised what it was - or rather, who it was.

She pulled out her phone and speed-dialled a number. It went to voicemail. "Biba, hi. Look, I know it's a Saturday, and it's still technically your week off, but you've probably already heard about the Pres coming to stay, and oh-my-god, this is a headache. I need you. Please could you get here as soon as possible? Thanks".

Lynda shrugged, put the phone down on the table and headed for the shower, then her bedroom to put some clothes on. Not out of any modesty, her PPS had seen her in her pyjamas enough times, but she felt that Catherine's warning might be worth taking seriously. Better to be dressed.

Labibah gave up trying to sleep at 4am, getting up and watching BBC News 24, it featured Lynda being clearly blindsided by Romilly Weeks over President Biden visiting, not that it was too obvious, but she knew Lynda and her reactions better than just about anyone. The BBC didn't pick up on it or were too polite or embarrassed that it was ITN that asked the question to mention it.

She was sure that Tim would have felt Lynda's wrath for it. She would have a word with Tim to try to get a handle on how it happened. Largely to ensure that something similar never happens again, it was sure to be a communication breakdown rather than any deliberate action by either Tim Farron, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office or the Cabinet Office.

Around 5.30 still in her nightie, she opened her laptop and began to compose her resignation letter. It was really hard, and because it would eventually become public, it was full of the usual trite phrases. Concentrating on representing her constituents being the principal one, as she could hardly claim it was to spend more time with her family as she did not wish to invent some crisis involving her family. She did include a brief paragraph on making way for more talented colleagues.

At 7.30, she showered and dressed, and then continued to work on the exact wording of her resignation letter, while eating toast and drinking coffee. She really did need the caffeine this morning to keep her going. When she decided that it was as good as it was going get, she printed it off, signed it, put it in the envelope and then her briefcase.

Her phone had managed to bury itself at the back of her sofa, so she didn't hear it ring when the call came in, and it was mid morning by the time she actually went looking for her smartphone. When she heard the message that Lynda had left, Labibah grabbed her briefcase and handbag and was out of the door in no time.

She made the station in time for the train to Victoria, phoning Lynda back to say she was on the way. She flew through Victoria Station to the Tube, on to Westminster, then up Whitehall dodging tourists who seemed to stop without warning to take photographs or selfies. As she got to the gates of Downing Street, Labibah fished in her handbag for her ID, and couldn't find it. Had she left it at home? Well one thing for sure, she was not going to say 'Don't You Know I Am' and she would most definitely not abuse the police officers on the gates.

"That's ok Ms Chaudhry, I recognise you and we were informed that you were on your way in, but please make sure that your pass is not lost" a female sergeant with a submachine gun

secured by quick release clips to her chest. As she said "Thank You" Labibah put her hand in her bag again, and pulled the pass out. "Knew it was here somewhere" she bluffed as she held it out for inspection.

The officers on the gates communicated with Number 10 and the door opened as soon as she got to the doorstep. Labibah asked if the Prime Minister was in her office or the apartment and was informed that she was in the apartment, so Labibah made her way directly there.

Labibah took a seat, and opened her briefcase, taking the letter from the case. "I am here to help Prime Minister, but I wish to resign as your PPS" she said as she handed the crested House of Commons envelope across to Lynda.

Lynda was on the phone to the American Ambassador when Labibah came in. He was most apologetic about the sudden change of plans but was quick to point out that he had no more control over the President than the British Ambassador in Washington DC had over her. Lynda chuckled. "Oh, you'd be surprised..." she told him. "The Queen, maybe, but me? I am definitely under the thumb of the civil service... Well, thank you, Mr Ambassador, you have been most helpful... Yes, thank you, and the same to you."

She looked up and smiled. "Ah there you are Biba. Thank you for coming in, please sit down, and let's sort out this mess..." She paused and her face fell as the Muslim woman made her announcement. "Oh.... But.... Why?"

Lynda was actually stunned. The girl was brilliant at the job, they worked well together as a team, in fact she couldn't have asked for a better PPS. She took the letter in a hand that actually shook, tore it open and read. As she did so, shock turned to anger.

"You know what?" she said coldly, "This is bullshit and you know it. Request is denied!" She tore through the letter twice, screwed up the pieces and tossed them into her confidential waste bin to be shredded. "You spend more time with your constituents than I do with mine and you don't see me resigning. And reports I get from the Scottish Office", she nodded towards a red box that she had been through earlier that morning, "tell me that you are one large thorn in their side when it comes to your constituents."

The Prime Minister took a deep breath, and contained her anger. Getting mad at the younger woman wouldn't do any good. She reached for her cold coffee, sipped and grimaced. "And as for that crap about more talented colleagues, name one! Seriously! Name one person you think could do the job better than you? For one thing, you actually know how to make a decent cup of coffee, and as I am not accepting your resignation, you can damn well go and make me a cup!"

Lynda sighed and turned back to the god-awful mess that was created by the UK Civil Service trying to deal with American Civil Servants.

When her still employed PPS came back with the coffee, Lynda patted the seat next to her on the sofa. "Sorry I yelled at you, dear. This job is stressful as you know. And frankly, I don't think I could do it without you. So, here's the deal. If you really want to resign as my PPS, then okay, but I will also resign as Prime Minister, and I will marry you and we can both live together in some obscure little village on an island that no-one has ever heard of, and the devil take the country!"

She paused and held up a finger. "But, if that is unacceptable to you, then you have to remain as my PPS for the duration of the parliament. And we will allow the court of Public Opinion to judge whether we are doing a good job, or whether we should both step down."

She put a hand on Labibah's shoulder and gave it a gentle squeeze. And suddenly realised that she had just proposed to the woman, however indirectly. It was somewhat fortunate that at that moment the phone rang. She picked it up. "Yes?"

"Ah, Prime Minister, good..." Nick Harvey's rather curt tones set her teeth on edge for some reason. "I've spoken to General Magowan, and he says the Marines band are ready and up to the task... Also, Sir Stephen said that a couple of typhoons will be available as an honour guard to Air Force One. Sir Nick is a bit put out that the RAF and Navy are having all the fun, so I promised him that Guards will form the core of the honour guard and that the Guards Band would play Star spangled whatsit when his nibs leaves..."

Lynda nodded, in spite of the fact that Harvey couldn't see her, and made "Mmhmm" noises at appropriate points. When the Defence Minister stopped talking, she breathed a sigh of relief. "Good, well done, Nick, I'm sure you are on top of the situation. Keep it that way, hmm? I don't want any foul-ups, with the wrong band turning up at the wrong place or playing the wrong anthem!"

She hung up, looked at her PPS and said, "Right, let's get on with it, shall we? And no more talk of resigning!"

Labibah had not expected Lynda to be happy with her resignation, but the coldness and undisguised anger had come as a shock to her.

"Yes, it is what you say, but the reason was for public consumption, rather than the real reason. Mrs Fairfax was right and my staying on is a threat to your Premiership, and that is the important thing for you and the country, as for who could do the job Lauren Keith (Brent Central) or Stephen Robinson (Chelmsford) are at least as good as me"

Lynda made the comment about her making coffee riled her a little, as she was more than a drink making flunky but she was not going to turn this into a shouting match, and have it overheard by someone that might sell the story to media or blog it. She got up and went through to the kitchen and fixed them both a coffee.

When she sat back down, she could not believe that Lynda was apparently offering to resign and marry her. "The last thing I want is for you to resign, I offered my resignation to protect you and your premiership, as you are the best thing that happened to this country, and the party really lacks a suitable replacement for you, so it is easier to replace me".

Lynda's hand returned to her shoulder, and this time it was giving it the slightest squeeze. It was then that destiny intervened, or more accurately Nick Harvey ringing from either home or from the Ministry. She thought probably knowing Nick, he was probably in the office, being bamboozled by the Ministry's duty officer.

The military side of the short notice visit was not a concern for Labibah, as she knew that they had plans for just about everything, ready to go at a moment's notice. She just hoped that the Americans that flew as a escort for Air Force One weren't trigger happy when the Typhoon escort came up to join them. A guard of honour provided by the Coldstream Guards and the Queen's Colour Squadron of the RAF as well as whichever Royal Marine Band that General Magowan sent to Stansted would make the usual excellent impression.

"If you really think we can carry on without risk of scandal, then I will not mention resignation again, but at the slightest hint of risk to your leadership I will take any necessary action to protect you and your governance of the country".

Labibah picked up the phone and rang the Duty Officer at the Metropolitan Police, for the contact details of the Assistant Commissioner Mark Rowley of Specialist Operations, which included Protection, Security and Counter Terrorism Commands. She would not give too much detail but would arrange a meeting on Monday, but again she had faith in their ability to roll out plans that were sure to exist from previous Presidential visits.

The next call was to Chequers, to the Head of Housekeeping, informing them that the Prime Minister would be coming to stay, along with a Foreign Head of State and their entourage, with further details to be sent when they were known about numbers and any special dietary requirements and other information.

NATS would not need the flight plan until much closer to the arrival, the Met Police would liaise with their colleagues of Thames Valley Police, setting up the meetings with American Secret Service, British Intelligence Services and Special Forces.

"Julian and Nick will be all over Norman and Tim for additional funds for this of course".

"If Major could survive the sleaze scandal and win a second term then I think our little relationship is hardly more than a few ripples in a coffee cup!" Was the Prime Minister's response to her PPS agreeing to continue as long as there was no scandal. The rest of the day

went by relatively smoothly and at the end of it, Lynda sat in the cabinet office with Labibah - they had moved downstairs as more people became involved - drinking a cup of tea and with a satisfied smile on her face.

“Thank you my dear, that was not a day I would wish to repeat, and I honestly could not have done it without you!” She considered asking Biba to stay but thought better of it. “You get on home, and I’ll see you Monday, okay?”

Lynda went back up to the flat and made herself a lonely dinner - a pre-frozen curry that she’d had delivered from a local supermarket. She idly wondered what Labibah was having for dinner. Probably either something much the same, or some home-cooked, hand-prepared asian meal, she decided. She thought about ringing the woman and asking her, but didn’t want to force herself on the PPS any more. It was probably better that they keep a respectful distance from each other for now, let things cool down a bit.

Except, as she lay in bed unable to sleep, Lynda realised that she didn’t want things to cool down, she wanted them to heat up. “Bad idea, Lyn, bad idea”, she told herself and got up, took a cool shower - she couldn’t quite bring herself to actually take a cold one as required by tradition for those suffering from lust - and went to the window in her sitting room, looking out over Horse Guards and St James Park, and hummed a quiet melody to herself.

“All alone at the end of the evening,
When the bright lights have faded to blue,
I was thinking about a woman who might love me,
And I never knew....

“You know I’ve always been a dreamer,
Spent my life running around,
And it’s so hard to change,
Can’t seem to settle down,
But the dreams I’ve seen lately, hmm hmmm,
Keep on turning out, and burning out, and turning out the same,

“So put me on a high road and show me a sign,
And take it, to the limit, one more time....”

The song by The Eagles relaxed her, and she went back to bed and managed to sleep.

Chequers.... The official country residence of the Prime Minister, donated to the country in 1917 (supposedly in gratitude at deliverance from the first world war if the stained glass window were to be believed), by Lord Arthur Lee. The real reason, Lynda knew from her research, was that

Lord Lee was concerned that Prime Ministers were becoming more common, with the rise of the Labour Party especially, and he was concerned that nobles from other countries would be greeted by the Prime Minister of Great Britain and entertained in a two-up-two-down terrace in Jarrow. At least, that was the interpretation Lynda put on the text she read. So the Lees had donated the house to the Nation to be the Prime Minister's official country residence in perpetuity.

[The front gate of the estate](#) was somewhat imposing, with its guard houses and bollards and gates, but the side entrance, that the black Jag drove through without stopping, the security barrier lifting before the car had even got close and closing again behind it, was totally nondescript from the road. A simple sign saying that the property was private and trespassers would be prosecuted was all that was visible. The barrier was a little way down the lane and almost concealed by the hedge, then off to the right was the staff car park, the staff offices and residences, and the walled garden that made the estate somewhat self-sufficient when it came to vegetables.

The Jag swept past and then turned right, down a short side spur off the drive and swung left into a courtyard, pulled up in front of the magnificent red brick mansion. It was Monday evening, the sun was slowly sinking in behind the woodland to the west, and Lynda was taking the opportunity to familiarise herself with her official second home, so that she didn't look like a complete noob in front of The President.

She stepped from the car as the door was opened for her, grinning at her PPS. "Wow! One day, my son, all this can be yours!" She joked, putting on a croaky old woman's voice. Then she looked at the head of Housekeeping services, who was standing by the door to welcome her and smiled warmly. "Thank you for your trouble, I'm sorry to impose on such short notice."

The man, clad in a traditional Butler's tuxedo complete with raised collar and black tie, bowed slightly and assured her it was no trouble at all. Lynda thanked him again anyway. She allowed herself to be shown into the mansion, and given a guided tour, ending with her own suite on the first floor. She noticed that her suitcase was already sitting at the back of the large wardrobe, empty and all her clothes were already unpacked and put away. That made her blush a little, because some of her underwear was distinctly ...um... sexy, and she wasn't exactly sure she wanted anyone else to see it!

But the staff of Chequers were not only bound by the official secrets act, but by a moral code far stronger than any act of Parliament. She knew she could rely on their discretion. She spent a short time exploring her suite, finding which doors opened onto cupboards, and where the bathroom was, then went in search of Labibah, whom she had insisted be given a room in the main house, and not the servants quarters.

Sunday had been a quiet, contemplative day for the PM, and she had spent it doing some research on the mansion house, and also typing up a letter that she had in her briefcase. The

Monday morning meeting with the security chiefs had gone pretty much as expected, and everything had been arranged. Stansted would be shut down while the President was there, a remote hard-stand had been arranged for Air Force One, the road closures to get the President from Stansted to the American Embassy's back entrance on Blackburn Mews were in set up as a contingency, but the idea was that the President and First Lady would stay overnight at Chequers in the Presidential Suite. It was a lot easier, so MI5 informed her, to close roads from Stansted to Chequers than from the airport into the centre of London, even though it required cooperation between three different county constabularies (Essex, Hertfordshire and Buckinghamshire).

And now she was here, at her own (well, for the time being, as long as the British Public considered her worthy of it) country estate. If she thought Number Ten Downing Street was vast and complex, Chequers was more so. Actually the layout was simpler, but the place was laid out on a scale that would befit a royal palace. In fact, the place had, at one time, been a royal prison, she'd learned. Lady Mary Grey, younger sister of Lady Jane Grey, the nine-day queen, had been confined there on orders of Elizabeth I, because she had married without permission.

Lynda finally found her Parliamentary Private Secretary in the Long Gallery, admiring the Cromwell Collection. She crept up behind the younger woman and placed a gentle hand on her shoulder. "Hi. Impressive isn't it? To think that he was actually offered the crown, and turned it down! An amazing man, true to what he believed in. It's a damn good job his son was a total klutz, or constitutional democracy would not exist!"

She giggled, and kept her hand resting gently on Biba's shoulder.

Labibah was surprised when Lynda mentioned John Major and his Government, while it was scandal prone, it wasn't until after his election defeat to Tony Blair and subsequent resignation as party leader that his own personal scandal was publically revealed. So there was no direct comparison to their situation. However, if Lynda was insistent that she stay, she would, and just attempt to keep control of the situation.

As others arrived to work through the detail of the visit, they moved downstairs, Labibah taking another coffee with her. She was really overdoing it with caffeine but then she didn't want to doze off at some critical point. Things were either settled or meetings arranged for first thing on Monday.

During the meeting, Lynda announced that she would be going down to Chequers in the run up to the meeting, which meant that Labibah would also have to go. She hoped that the electorate didn't start to question her need for a flat in London, as she currently seemed to be staying everywhere but the flat paid for by her expenses.

As she was leaving, Lynda thanked her for her efforts and Labibah thought she was going to ask her to stop, but thankfully that never happened as she was not totally sure what her response would have been. But instead they would see each other again on Monday, and she would arrive at Downing Street with enough clothes for a week, including something suitable for meeting the US President. Labibah decided that a taxi would be in order, rather than trying to struggle with it through rush hour and getting in the way of others.

When she got home, she briefly considered cooking something, then with a check on the state of the fridge and cupboards decided against it. This was one of those occasions when if she had not been Muslim, she might have curled up on the sofa with a bottle of wine, a box of tissues and a chick flick marathon, but she settled for a bottle of Pepsi Max, a takeaway pizza from a local pizzeria that claimed to be Halal and cable TV. Love Actually was on, but there was no way she was putting herself through that particular drama when she was living the real trauma.

She actually fell asleep on the sofa while watching a programme about Indian independence and the partition of India, something that the world had still not successfully resolved, given the perilous state of relations between India, Pakistan and Bangladesh and within those three countries. Labibah woke, with a repeated showing of something she had seen in the evening playing away to itself. Stopping only long enough to turn off the TV and cable box, she dragged herself to bed and actually managed to sleep well.

She rose early on Sunday and went for run on nearby Clapham Common, before returning home to complete her washing, ironing and packing for the week away, when those chores were finished she had a light lunch before settling down to the recording of the various politics shows. Tim gave a good account of him and Government policy regarding the Middle East, Russia and North Korea on Andrew Marr's show.

Over breakfast, she watched her usual sample of BBC News 24, Sky News, Al Jazeera English, CNN, Russia Today and for economic news CNBC. Fortunately, there didn't appear to be any major crisis being reported on any of the august news media, so when her phone beeped to inform her the taxi was outside, there was lightness to her step.

The taxi ride to Whitehall was not such an uplifting journey, with Monday morning traffic and a driver that felt he should be the Prime Minister, Chancellor and Foreign Secretary all rolled into one, with additional views on law and order especially regarding 'foreign criminals coming here and breaking our good British laws'.

She wheeled the bag through the control gates to Downing Street, and the sergeant from Saturday smiled as she waved her pass, without prompting. She put her bags in a cupboard where they wouldn't cause a security alert and carried on with her work. When all of the meetings were complete, she handed her case to one of the security officers from the Range Rover that was part of the Prime Minister's convoy and joined Gary and Ray as they waited for

Lynda. When the blonde was in the car, the small convoy headed off to Buckinghamshire and Chequers.

Labibah joined Lynda and the Head of Housekeeping on the tour of the house and its immediate grounds, and she tried to remember the layout of the rooms and the potted history that was part of the tour, as she was sure the American visitors would be interested in everything.

When the formal tour was complete, she continued to walk in the grounds, and was unaware that her movements were being observed by the covert security. But of course that was the point, and if she had thought about it, it would not have surprised her.

When she re-entered the house, she returned to the Long Gallery, and took in the history that was present. The Cromwell collection was the star, but there were many other items, including Admiral Nelson's diary, not for the period of Trafalgar but still belonging to the Admiral.

She was lost in her world, when she felt a hand on her shoulder, which caused her to jump, it was Lynda, talking about Cromwell and how if, things could have been different for democracy if the Lord Protector's son had not been such a 'klutz'. "Yes, the entire world's history could have been different, President McFearson" Labibah joked.

"President...?" Lynda was puzzled for a moment, then burst out laughing. "Oh, I see, yes, if the monarchy hadn't been restored, the head of the parliament would be head of state as well as head of government which would, technically, make me president!"

She smiled and gave the shoulder a gentle squeeze. "Look, I've got something for you. A letter. Feel free to tear it up if you really want, but... Well, it's sort of the opposite of yours..." She handed Biba the envelope that she now regretted actually bore a slight trace of her lipstick on the seal. "Regardless, know this. I don't want to lose you. I want to keep you as my PPS and if that means I have to back off, then I will, but, damn it, I'm the Prime Minister of Great Britain, I should be able to get what I want, and I want pudding *and* pie!"

With that, she turned and began to walk away, then paused. "I will respect your decision whatever you choose, but I'm hoping... Well, it's up to you".

Lynda walked away and went down to the room they said was her office, sat in it and read a report from the DEFRA about the declining fishing fleet and the need to increase fisheries protection. "Well, gee... Tell that to the MoD!"

My Dear Labibah

After your attempted resignation on Saturday, I feel the need to express my thoughts and feelings to you in a way that, while less personal than actually telling you, gives me the opportunity to tell you everything I want to say without fear of interruption. So, I hope that you will read this letter with an open mind, which I know you have, and will then act upon it according to how you feel.

I have fallen hopelessly in love with you. There, it is said, the moving finger writes etc... And I know you feel the same way about me. My only slight concern is that your affection for me is tainted by admiration for what I have achieved so far; but if so, I think I can live with that.

So, I am writing this letter because I inadvertently proposed marriage to you the other day and I want to make it absolutely clear that I'd much rather live in sin with you... Ha ha! No but seriously, I very much doubt if we could even agree on a form of service, let alone a venue, given that you are a Muslim and I am ... well, I was raised in the Church of England, but I think my personal beliefs are closer to some kind of Wicca...! (By the way, you must eat this letter after reading it. If I forgot to put the sachet of ketchup in the envelope I'm sure the kitchen will supply you with one...)

Anyway, I have several things I wish to say. Firstly, there are a number of married couples in the House, and no-one complains about them. For that matter there are plenty of siblings, there are parents and children. Having a relationship with someone else in the House Of Commons does not disqualify you from holding office.

Secondly, there is no conflict of interests here. We are on the same team, working for the same goals. Our interests coincide exactly. If we end up in the same bed... Well, they do say, "Politics makes strange bedfellows", ha ha! (Actually that is a misquote from The Bard, it was originally "Misery maketh for strange bedfellows"). Um anyway, regardless - there is no way that my sharing my life more intimately with you could possibly be construed as a conflict of interests.

Thirdly, there are those who might scream "Nepotism". To this I would answer, that aside from the fact that nepotism is pretty much established in politics across the world, the simple fact of the matter is that I appointed you as my PPS before I'd ever met you. I did so on the basis of your resumé, your track record, your outstanding political common sense and your security file. The first time I saw you was when you showed up at Number Ten looking lost and someone had the good sense to show you into my office while they created your pass! I fell in love with you over the succeeding weeks and months. That cannot possibly be nepotism.

Fourthly, there are those who will say that the love we share is wrong. They will try and make out that a lesbian couple have no place running the country. But my dear Biba, those people have been saying that since I won the election back in June, and will

continue to say it no matter what I do. Okay, so maybe us having a relationship will give them extra ammunition to use against me, but frankly, I don't care. They are a bunch of bigoted hypocrites and if I cared what they thought I would never have run for office in the first place!

Fifthly, (Don't worry, I'm almost done...) I have actually asked, discreetly, of three trusted people (whom you know) what they would think. Actually I asked them what they would have thought if Hugh Grant's character in Love Actually had not fired Natalie, but had just taken her to bed. The consensus was that the film would have been a lot worse, but that the PM would not have suffered politically for doing so. And you know, the three of them knew exactly what I was getting at... They all saw me cuddling you on the way back from Cambridge. (Except you don't remember that, you were so cute, but totally exhausted).

I also think it is worth pointing out that the British Public is firmly behind illicit relationships. I should start by mentioning Edward VIII and Mrs Simpson. Then let's include Charles and Camilla, Diana and Dodi, John and Eddie... Uh... No... Strike the last couple, that is an image I do not want in my head, ha ha!

Anyway, I honestly believe that if we actually go on The One Show and tell the world how we fell in love, I will win not just a landslide but a super-landslide if we call an election straight after!

Finally, (and yes this is the last point), let's forget everything else. As W.S. Gilbert said in HMS Pinafore, "Love is a platform upon which all ranks meet". This is something with which I happen to agree. And I would like to ask you this: Why should we not be happy? Why should we sit next to each other and stare at each other and wish that things had been different, that we had met under other circumstances? If circumstances had been different we would never have met at all.

I feel that we should not allow anything, be it the disapproval of certain "civil" servants, the possibility of the gutter press being their usual selves or anything else for that matter... Nothing should be allowed to get in the way of what we could have if we are both bold and strong and decide to roll the dice.

Love is always a gamble. I am willing to take that risk. Are you?

Your humble and obedient servant (irony!)

Lynda

PS: If we try and it doesn't work out, then I'll accept your resignation! (Ha ha).

PPS: Do you remember the Sun's headline when I won? We should at least give them something!

Lynda walked into the dining room and sniffed, her mouth watering. "Oh boy, I do hope that smell is *my* dinner? Do you know, at Number Ten I have to cook for myself or pay for food from the staff canteen?" She took her seat at the head of the table and waited while the rest of her retinue arrived. Her first experience of dinner at Chequers, and it smelled divine!

Labibah was shocked with the things Lynda said, as the blonde handed her an envelope, she allowed Lynda to walk away before she really looked at it, and if she was not mistaken there was the slightest hint of lipstick on the seal, a shade she had come to associate with Lynda.

Carefully opening the envelope and taking out the letter within, Labibah shifted a couple of feet to her right, to get more light to read whatever it was, although deep inside she thought she knew what it might contain and her heart filled with hope.

A hope that built as she read more and more of what was for Lynda a very rambling letter, full of emotion and lame jokes and cultural references. As she read the letter Labibah began crying, her tears running down her cheeks as she took in the heartfelt words of the most wonderful woman.

She wondered about Lynda's comment about admiration, how could she possibly separate her love and her admiration. Sure she had admired Lynda long before she came to work for her, and falling in love with her.

The point that Lynda made about their respective religions was one of the major issues in her mind, as neither Islam or indeed the Church of England were particularly welcoming when it came to same sex relationships. While this was clearly not an issue for Lynda, she was a practising Muslim if not a very devout one.

She found herself nodding as Lynda dealt with couples in Parliament, conflict of interest and nepotism; the mention of her security file raised a flag in her mind for another time. She was not certain that Lynda was right about it not being potentially damaging to Lynda's governance of the country, and the examples of couples did little ease that concern, although she felt a little sick at the thought of 'the grey man' and 'eggwina'.

When Lynda mentioned discussing it with three people and the journey back from Cambridge confirmed that it was Gary, Ray and Anne the Bomb, she was not overly surprised. What was

shocking was that Lynda had cuddled her in the car, but as Lynda said she had no memory of it, and now that strangely hurt.

Catherine Fairfax would probably explode on the spot when she found out about them being a couple, if there was any sort of justice in the world. The 'gutter press' would indeed have a field day until the next story came along, a 'reality tv star' being arrested for drugs or something. She chided herself, at the idea of having a word with some friendly police officers to make it happen. No she was one of the good ones, and would take whatever come, if that was the road that she decided to travel with Lynda.

The question was then what to do about Lynda's letter, her head was still telling her that it was a bad idea to follow through on the invitation to a possible happy future or the mother of all train wrecks, but her heart was sold on the possibility of finding happiness. She walked through the mansion on auto-pilot, and when she reached her room, she picked up another crested envelope and sheets of paper.

She needed to get Lynda alone, as the last thing she wanted to do was cause a scene in the presence of people that she did not know, and therefore could not trust. She placed Lynda's letter into her briefcase and her new letter into her handbag and fixed her makeup before she made her way to the dining room for dinner, with Lynda and the assembled team.

"Good evening Prime Minister, can I have a private word after dinner?" Labibah said aware that there were people around.

"Good evening Miss Chaudhry. Of course you may". Lynda smiled, a calm, warm smile, but inside, her heart was beating so fast. The Prime Minister's guests at dinner were her Principal Private Secretary, her Parliamentary Private Secretary, the Foreign Secretary, the American Ambassador, the two "PPS"s to the Foreign Secretary and the US Ambassador's aide. Most of them would be heading back to wherever they usually stayed that evening and return again to accompany the President. This dinner was more of a dress rehearsal for the one the following evening. Lynda's security detail had handed over to the Chequers security people, and Anne-The Bomb was waiting with them in the staff guest accommodations, because the house had its own war room in the cellar complete with a secure link to HMS Northwood, the same as the one in the basement of Number Ten.

In fact, the only three people who would be staying the night were Lynda, Labibah and Catherine. And Lynda had somehow managed to arrange that Catherine's room was at the far end of the opposite wing from her own, while Labibah's was just across the corridor.

Dinner was served by the house staff in impeccable manner, the food was superb, the wine was excellent. Lynda noticed that her PPS asked for fruit juice and was easily accommodated. Her dinner companion, the Ambassador, also asked for mineral water. Lynda felt obliged to ask if he

indulged at all. He smiled and said that in fact he usually did but he was currently trying to lose weight. Lynda refrained from commenting that if he reduced the amount he ate by half, it would help far more with the weight loss than just cutting out alcohol!

“But President Biden enjoys a nice glass of wine?” She asked instead.

“Oh hell, yeah, Joe loves a drop or two... Uh... That goes no further than these four walls, right?” The man looked suitably embarrassed.

“Of course not, Mr Ambassador!” Lynda smiled warmly and touched his arm, filing the information away. It could certainly be useful to know.

After dinner she waited to see the others off, then yawned. Catherine was ensconced in a small office that had been set aside for her in the more modern part of the building, and Lynda spoke to the butler. “Could we have two coffees please, large ones, in my private lounge? Thank you”.

Lynda led Labibah to the room in question. It was a very comfortably appointed sitting room with a settee, two arm chairs, a television that she turned on to BBC News 24 and turned the sound down, and a large fireplace with a currently laid but unlit fire in the grate.

Lynda sat on the sofa, kicked her shoes off and relaxed, indicated that Labibah should sit next to her, and then waited for the coffees to arrive.

The butler brought in a silver and bone china coffee service on a silver tray, poured the coffee the way they wanted it, then said softly, “Will there be anything else ma’am?”

“Uh, no, thank you, that will be all”.

“Very good, ma’am”. He bowed slightly and left, closing the door behind himself.

“Wow!” Lynda breathed, then giggled softly. “I could definitely get used to this! What’s the maximum number of successive terms served by a British Prime Minister? I don’t think there’s any constitutional limit like there is on the US President...” “ She sipped her coffee and waggled her eyebrows at Labibah, then set the large cup back in its saucer and turned serious. “So, what was it you wanted to talk to me about, as if I didn’t know...?”

As she waited for Biba to speak, Lynda was outwardly calm, but inside she was all butterflies and nerves. So much depended on this moment. So very much hung in the balance. She didn’t even realise that she was holding her breath.

As they sat there side by side on the settee, Labibah had intended to make a silly gesture of tearing up the envelope and blank paper that was in her bag, but looking into the eyes of the

beautiful and nervous woman, Labibah could not bring herself to potentially hurt her, with a stupid 'joke'.

"Firstly, thank you so much for putting your feelings down on paper like that" Labibah took the cup from Lynda's and placed it on the table, before taking hold of her hands and cupped them between her own.

"Please don't say anything until I finish as this is really difficult. Much of what you said is true, especially about me being madly in love with you, and that was the real reason for my resignation as I am sure you knew, despite your outburst about my use of parliamentary code in my letter" she then paused to compose herself "I am not a confident as you that the press and especially the public would understand and accept their Prime Minister having an open affair with 'the hired help', as for what the Fairfax woman thinks, well frankly I don't care, she is both homophobic and Islamophobic so I am never going to be top of her Christmas Card list. But I do not want to harm your leadership of the party and the country. We all need you Lynda McFearson, and my love for you does nothing to affect the admiration I have felt for you for a very long time". This was the truth, she had two icons in the Party, Lynda for her charismatic leadership and the now sadly late Charles Kennedy for getting her interested in politics especially the politics of the Highlands and Islands.

"Believe me when I say there is nothing I want more than to spend the rest of my life with you, but I really need you to be sure that it will safe for you in a personal and political sense to take whatever we may have further".

With that Labibah lifted Lynda's hands to her lips, kissing the blonde's hands. "Right now you can speak if you want".

You don't get to be Prime Minister by not learning to listen. In fact it was one of Lynda's greatest skills. She listened carefully to what her PPS was saying, analysing it with her political skills as well as taking the warm words to her heart. When 'Biba confessed that she was madly in love with Lynda the breath the PM had been holding without realising came out in a soft whoosh. That was all she needed to hear. But she kept on listening, waiting until the younger woman had finished.

She smiled happily, and after Biba kissed her hands, Lynda kept hold of the other woman's. "For 'hired help' you can be awfully bossy!" She said softly and giggled.

"Labibah Chaudhry MP, will you trust me?"

The question could have only one answer, and once it was given, Lynda nodded, released the younger woman's hands and moved to sit closer, wrapped an arm around her. "Okay, your points are well made, my darling..." She paused, enjoying the feel of the last two words on her

tongue, then said them again, "... My darling, mmm, I like that. Anyway, what was I saying? Oh yes... your points are well made. But you are not 'The hired help', you are an elected representative. You are a woman, and you are a citizen of the United Kingdom". She paused and sniffed at Labibah's hair gently, then went on, "So, you have the right to marry whom you chose, with the exception of those persons laid down in the incest laws. And if you chose not to marry, but to simply live with someone, then although technically those same laws do apply, they are in fact unenforceable!"

She placed a finger gently on the woman's lips and went on, "My point being, dear one, that if we choose to have a relationship, then that is between ourselves and whatever gods we happen to believe in. Now, I know that I am very much a public figure, and if we do pursue a relationship, it will inevitably become public knowledge. Now, you know me, you have said that you have admired me for a very long time. You know that, quite frankly, I'm damned good at this game!"

She grinned and chuckled softly. "You know that I won the election on a single issue, don't you? My sexuality. That was all the press was interested in. I had answers for every policy, I had policies for every question and all the press kept asking me was, 'Do you think being a gay woman will hamper your campaign?' Well clearly it didn't!"

Lynda laughed and hugged Labibah a bit tighter. "So, I'm asking you to trust me to put the right spin on this with the public and the press. If we let them find out by accident, if we wait until someone leaks something, then it will be a disaster! That is my greatest worry, that *someone*", and she nodded in the direction of the office where Fairfax was doing whatever it was she did, "will leak something scurrilous. But Biba, my sweet, if we come right out and say it, declare our love before the world, then you know what? The British Public, who give more each year per capita to animal charities than to those that support people, who watch soap operas in preference to the news, and who's favourite novel genre is romance; they will look at us and say 'AWWWWWWWW! Aren't they cute!'"

She smiled, and said softly, "I'm confident in this. Tell me, is Elton John still popular? What about George Michael? Being gay is actually in at the moment!" She laughed a little, then sobered again.

"Biba, sweetheart, my biggest concern here is you. You are not officially 'out' yet, and I don't want to have the two of us standing on the steps of Ten Downing Street and announcing our engagement to give your grandmother a heart attack. That wouldn't be fair. Also I don't want radical Muslims lobbing stones at you or taking potshots at you. Admittedly as the PM's consort you would get the same level of protection as myself, but that is hardly the point."

She sighed softly and put a hand under Labibah's chin, lifting and turning it slightly. "So, I want you to think about it, and let me know what you want to do. But at the very least, we can be together here at Chequers."

With that, she leaned forward and gently touched her lips to Labibah's. The soft kiss sent a shockwave through her nervous system, and she pressed her mouth more firmly on the other, for a moment, then pulled away, breathing heavily, mouth open, eyes slightly glazed. "I.... I'm going to bed. You're welcome to join me..."

Lynda stood, on legs that were suddenly shaky, noticed she hadn't finished her coffee, downed the cup in one go, and walked somewhat unsteadily toward the door.

Labibah laughed when Lynda said she was bossy, and thought to herself, 'if she thinks I'm bossy as a PPS, Allah only knows what she will think of me when I am her girlfriend or wife'. When Lynda asked if she would trust her, Labibah responded instantly and from her heart "Of course I trust you, totally".

When Lynda mentioned Elton John and George Michael and the fact that they were popular regardless of their sexuality, Labibah confessed "Difference is, I can't sing, and if I did I wouldn't have any public support at all, I can assure you of that".

As Lynda continued to explain her concerns for Labibah and her safety, Labibah was touched by Lynda worrying so much about her, but she spoke to try to allay some of these fears.

"My family already know about my sexuality and Nanna even knows that I love you, I talked with her about it when I was at home last week, indeed she said and I quote 'If you love each other let no one stand in your way little one', however it will probably not go down to well with many of my electorate, including many that voted for me, but that is for another time".

"I'm hardly a traditional naive Pakistani girl from Southall, Leicester or Bradford, so as far as radical Muslims are concerned, I think I have already put myself in their sights as it were, a female politician at the heart of British democracy, with outspoken views on the rights of Israel and Israelis which they will not see as a balance to my equally outspoken views about Palestine and Palestinian rights, and my statements about Al Qaeda and Daesh not being Muslim warriors but being criminal gangsters, so the revelation of my sexuality and my relationship with you will not greatly impact, another thing is that there are always be some people that will find provocation in even the most beautiful of things, but we must never pander to them, but stand up for what is right" she said as she tried to convince herself and reassure the beautiful woman with whom she shared a deep love.

She felt herself blush slightly as Lynda mentioned that they could at least be together at Chequers, as if the country retreat of the British Prime Minister was some sort of seedy Las Vegas, 'what happens at Chequers, stays at Chequers'. Then she felt Lynda's hand cup her chin and the softest touch of the blonde's lips against hers, the electricity flowing through her

body increasing with the pressure of the lips against each other. There was a feeling of disappointment when Lynda backed away.

"I.... I'm going to bed. You're welcome to join me..." Labibah could hardly believe her ears, it was certainly not the most romantic offer she had ever heard or even the most confident, but the honesty and underlying nervousness of it were so appealing.

As Lynda finished her coffee and started out of the room, Labibah stood and followed "Lead the way darling". Whatever the future held, it started right here and right now. With a silent prayer to Allah for his blessing, she walked after the woman who was her world.

Lynda held the door open for her "consort", then with a soft giggle swept the younger woman off her feet and carried her across the threshold into the huge bedroom. "There, what do you think?" she asked softly as the door swung closed behind her. "It's magnificent. This bed has been slept in by every prime minister since Andrew Bonar Law! I have been reliably informed that the mattress has been changed at least once in the last hundred years though..." She joked. Sleeping on a mattress that was almost a hundred years old would not be the most comfortable thing.

The bed was a magnificent carved wooden four-poster, strewn with pillows and a thick antique-looking counterpane. As with much of the house the furniture was a strange dichotomy of antique and ultra-modern, a flat screen television on one wall and an antique mirror on the other. The view from the windows was out across the lawns and surrounding woodland, dark now, but Lynda had seen the view earlier. She carried Labibah over to the bed, ignoring any possible protest. "You're a lot lighter than you look, you know?" she said with a wink before lowering her beloved onto the mattress.

"Uh, just so you know, sweetheart, I'm a little bit out of practice..." The most powerful woman in the country blushed and reached behind her back, eased the zip down on her evening dress, and allowed it to slip from her arms, revealing her white lace bra, tights and white lace panties. She stepped out of her shoes and the dress at the same time, then bent, picked up the dress in one hand and shoes in the other and carried them both to the huge oak wardrobe that faced the bed. "The staff here are really good, you know?" She said softly, opening the wardrobe to reveal all her clothes neatly folded or hung. "I'll bet you'll find the same in your room..." She grinned as she hung the dress up, giggled and added. "In fact, I'm half willing to put money on the probability that come tomorrow night we'll find your clothes hung up in here! And not a word said by anyone!"

She turned and stood in front of the younger woman. "You know, I'm not as young as I was. I hope you don't mind?" And with that she eased her bra off, threw it onto a nearby chair, then biting her lower lip, slipped her fingers inside the hem of her nylons and panties together, slowly,

almost gingerly, sliding them down over her thighs before stepping out of them and tossing them on the same chair. "Well, that's me.... I hope you like. Your turn, my darling".

When they reached the door to Lynda's suite, Labibah was surprised as she was suddenly swept off of her feet, and carried through the door and into the spacious room, later she would notice the furnishing but now she was totally enthralled by the woman who was carrying her towards the large four poster, the history of which Lynda seemed taken on.

When Lynda said about her being lighter than she looked, she thought of saying something, but the cheeky little wink, not only halted her response but actually made her smile broadly.

As she was lowered gently onto the bed, Labibah could feel that the mattress was most definitely not over a hundred years old, indeed she was certain that it was as new as her lover's premiership.

The bed had a bolster and pillows, and clearly a sheet and blanket rather than a duvet, there were also pillows on the bed, which she kicked off onto the floor. She propped herself up as she watched Lynda unfasten her dress and allowed it to slide down her body, leaving her standing in a white lace bra and panties, with tights. Labibah hoped she didn't look like a starving woman faced with a feast of all her favourite foods, as she watched Lynda take the dress and shoes from the carpet and over to the antique wardrobe and hang the dress next to the rest of her clothes. The blonde was saying something about the staff but Labibah was taking in nothing but the view of Lynda in her underwear.

As Lynda turned back to her, Labibah heard her say that she was not as young as she was. "You are divine, there is no doubt about that" Labibah reassured as Lynda reached behind herself again, unfastening her bra and throwing it to the chair against the wall. She thought it was so cute, when the most powerful woman in Britain and the love of her life gave her bottom lip a little bit as she slide her fingers under the waistband of her tights and knickers and eased them over her hips and down her legs, before they joined her bra on the chair.

"Well, that's me.... I hope you like. Your turn, my darling" Lynda said, and Labibah wondered if she looked like one of those cartoon characters whose eyes pop out of their heads. "Oh yes my love, I more than like, I love" she replied, as she slid to the edge of the bed and stood as gracefully as she could manage.

She really wanted to just tear off her clothes and leap into bed with Lynda, but she decided that she really should show some restraint and give Lynda more to see. She began by toeing off her shoes as she unfastened the black jacket, and when her arms were free throw it on top of Lynda's underwear. With her eyes locked on Lynda, her fingers began deftly unfastening the buttons of her ivory blouse, each button giving her lover a view of more of her skin. It was not lost on her that Lynda had already seen more of her, but it was all about context.

The blouse followed the jacket, revealing her powder blue bra. She danced towards the bed and the waiting blonde. Offering Lynda the chance to unfasten her trousers, which when undone were allowed to fall to the floor, before she bent down and picked them up, and she danced over to the chair placing them on the growing pile of clothes. Here she was standing in a bra, knickers and tights in front of a truly beautiful woman in an historical bedroom, and she was so aroused.

Her nipples were so hard, when she undid the clasp and removed her bra, she cupped her breasts as if plumping up her pert small boobs, she said "Look what you do to me Lynda, you are so gorgeous, I am so aroused". With that she slipped her fingers along her sides, over her hips, pushing her panties and tights down, exposing herself totally to her lover's gaze. She balled up her knickers and nylons and threw them towards the rest of the clothes. She was tempted to leap onto the bed and Lynda, but decorum took over and she slid onto the ancient bed, next to Lynda.

Placing a kiss on the older woman's lips, she slid her arm between Lynda's neck and the mattress and slipped her fingers through the blonde hair, cupping Lynda's head as their kiss became more and more passionate as Labibah gave herself over to the needs inside her.

Lynda grinned at the compliment, resisting the urge to cover herself with her hands. Why would she want to? She had quite literally dreamed of this moment - although in her dream she was younger and a bit less saggy up top! And in her dream her mouth wasn't dry, her heart wasn't pounding and she wasn't feeling a weird wet trickle leaking from between her legs!

She sat as Labibah stood and watched as the younger woman did what she could only describe as a striptease. *All it needs is the music*, she thought to herself, which was a mistake because the tune got into her head and wouldn't go away. *Da-rum-pum-paaaa da-rum-pum-pum da-rum pum pum pum pyum-pum-pa-pa pum (pum-pum) pa-dum (pum-pum) pa-dum paa du-dum duuuuum...*

The offer to undo Biba's trousers was taken up willingly, but Lynda resisted the urge to run her hands over the smooth latte-coloured skin, contenting herself with undoing the button and pulling the zip down, then easing the waistband of the garment over the woman's hips.

"Look what you do to me Lynda, you are so gorgeous, I am so aroused"

Lynda was practically drooling at the sight as her lover-to-be took her bra off and then cupped those delicious mounds with their dark brown nipples. She took a deep breath and looked down at her own breasts: larger than Labibah's but not quite as firm, her rose pink nipples were standing up like guardsmen outside Buckingham Palace. "You do the same to me, my love!" She breathed.

The PM watched in awe as her PPS wiggled out of her last two items of clothing. "Oh my...." She moaned softly. The dark triangle that covered the woman's mound hinted at darker mysteries beyond it. The older woman couldn't help licking her lips, as she moved the covers out of the way and slid gracefully into the ancient bed with its brand new (memory foam, she noticed) mattress, scooching over so that Labibah could join her.

As the dark haired woman's fingers entangled into her blonde locks, Lynda still resisted. Anticipation of what she was about to do making the desire all the stronger. It was only when she felt Labibah's tongue pushing urgently into her mouth that Lynda finally gave in. The arm that was trapped between them moved first, her hand shifting from its 'parked' position on her own shoulder, to turn and settle briefly on the other woman's lower shoulder, before sliding down, gently tickling the smooth armpit for a moment, then moving to cup the soft but firm breast closest to the mattress.

Her other arm moved too, her hand had been resting on her hip but now it sought out Biba's hip, finding it easily, stroking the warm skin, moving around to grasp the firm buttock, squeezing and then pulling gently, moving their hips closer.

The warm pressure of her lover's belly against her own felt wonderful, the soft curls of dark hair that covered the woman's mound tickled her own baby-smooth mound, kept that way for reasons of comfort more than anything - catching a male politician scratching his crotch on camera is one thing, but for a female one it would be terrible!

And all the while she was playing tongue-tag with the younger woman, as they explored each other's fillings, lips sliding over each other in a kiss that lasted longer than any Lynda had known since she was at Cambridge.

Her free hand explored further, finding the deep crevice between the two mounds, gently tickling the tight little pucker she found there, then moving on, deeper. Fingers found soft, wet folds of flesh, spread them gently, explored within, found their target and slipped easily into the warm wet hole.

Other fingers, trapped by the weight of two entwined bodies, found a hard nipple and squeezed it gently, then stroked it, enjoying the delicate feel of it.

Finally she pulled her mouth away from Labibah's, breaking the kiss. "Oh god... It's been such a long time..."

Lynda rolled onto her back, and pulled her lover on top of her. The PM spread her legs so that Labibah was lying between them, their mounds pressed together, Lynda's softer boobs squashed under the younger woman's firmer ones. Fingers ran up and down Labibah's back before settling on her buttocks. Lynda began grinding her mound against her lover's, using her

hands to move the woman on top of her in the way she wanted, while squeezing her cheeks as well. Her swollen clit came in contact with the other woman's and she gasped.

"Ahhh! Oh yes, Oh my sweet, this is wonderful"

The hard pink nipples on Lynda's beautiful breasts showed Labibah that she was not the only one that was aroused, which was confirmed by the blonde. As she removed her knickers, Labibah was sure that she saw Lynda lick her lips, which was great to see.

As Lynda moved over, she slipped in next to her, as they kissed, tongues exploring each other's mouths. Labibah moaned softly into the kiss as she felt Lynda explore her body, a hand trailing down along her spine to her buttocks, spreading the cheeks and fingertips brushing across her anus before pushing further between her legs, teasing her pouting lips. Then Lynda's finger was inside her, the blonde also gently squeezing and teasing her hard nipple as they pressed together.

When the kiss was finally broken by Lynda pulling away, the blonde remarked that it had been a long time, Labibah could honestly reply "Same for me darling", a little voice in her mind wondering if courtesy of the Secret Service Lynda was aware of her entire dating history, limited though that was.

Lynda rolled herself onto her back, pulling a non-resisting Labibah on top of her. With their breasts mashed together and their mounds against each other, Lynda took control from the bottom, using her hands on Labibah's buttocks to both massage the firm muscle under soft skin and to guide her movement, so that their clits rubbed against each other in the most wonderful way.

"Oh yes, oh darling" Labibah moaned as the two of them moved as one, breast against breast, labia against labia, clit deliciously rubbing against clit. Labibah wondered about changing their position and the dynamic between by sitting up and putting one of her lover's legs over her shoulder as they continued to grind against each other, but she decided that she would let Lynda take the lead, at this for this time. For this was most definitely not going to be a one off or even whenever we at Chequers thing.

Whatever happened, she had loved Lynda before, and now the sex was so much more intimate due to the special connection she felt, she had never experienced this with her other lovers, even though they were all actually quite talented in that regard. This was a physical manifestation of their love rather than just an expression of physical lust.

Lynda too was expressing her love, rather than satisfying mere lust. This woman in her arms was everything she had ever wanted, friend, confidant, companion, colleague, team-mate, and

now lover. How could she not express her love and admiration physically? And yes, there was admiration there too: Labibah was an amazing woman and Lynda could see qualities there that she also possessed. Strength of will, compassion, political savvy, intelligence, and leadership too. Only time would tell, but Lynda had a good feeling about Labibah's future: Third woman Prime Minister, second openly gay Prime Minister, first Muslim Prime Minister! That would be a real turn-out for the books!

Not that she had any intention of letting the younger woman replace her any time soon...

After a while, Lynda decided that it was time to change position. She eased the younger woman off her and slid down the bed, which was easily big enough for her to achieve her objective without dangling over the end. Rolling the young coffee-skinned woman onto her back, the Prime Minister indulged herself in something she'd only ever done once before. She buried her face between Labibah's legs, breathed deeply of the exotic scent, then carefully spread the soft, puffy lips with their fine black fur. She took a moment to enjoy the sight of another woman's sex so close to her face, so intimate a position, then she pressed her mouth against those soft, wet folds, pushed her tongue out and into the warm opening as far as she could. "NNG!" She told her lover, delighted at the spicy taste of the woman.

Her tongue lapped powerfully from Biba's vagina to her clit, then Lynda sucked the sensitive bud into her mouth, bit it gently and used her tongue to tease out the small glans.

A hand went up to grasp one of her lover's breasts, while two fingers of her other hand curled deep into Biba's core, finding and caressing her special spot. This was something that Lynda loved doing but had only ever had the one girlfriend who had let her, before now. She relished the feel of her lover's fur-covered mound against her face, used her mouth and fingers to control her lover's passion, stimulating then easing back, bringing her closer each time, but never quite letting the younger woman get there.

When Lynda changed their positions Labibah tried to prop herself up so she could see her lover, but instead she gave herself over to the pleasure the blonde was giving. Lynda certainly knew how to eat pussy, tongue and lips working against her sensitive core. The way that Lynda's tongue flicked her clit and then the older woman sucked on it.

As Biba saw her lover's hand claim a breast, squeezing and toying with the flesh and the hard nipple, she felt two fingers push slowly into her, and then hook, so that they were rubbing her g spot. Each time she came close Lynda would ease down, backing Biba away from her orgasm before taking her to the edge time and time again.

"Oh yes darling" and "Please let me come" she moaned repeatedly, in English, Gaelic and Urdu as Lynda continued to pleasure her, but denied her the release that she increasingly needed. While she was not by any stretch of the imagination a 'pillow princess', Biba was loving every bit

of attention that her gorgeous lover was giving her, but she knew that she would 'pay back' Lynda for this glorious feeling, but they had all night and hopefully the rest of their lives to bring each other love and pleasure.

Labibah wrapped her legs around Lynda, holding her in place as the older woman fingered and licked her over and over, driving her wild with her need for release as Lynda continued to take her to the edge but not let her cum. "Please let me cum" Labibah whimpered, her brain overloading.

Lynda giggled as her lover began to whimper and beg. "Say 'Please may I cum, Prime Minister'". She spoke the words into Labibah's soft, wet folds, enjoying the spicy taste of the woman, so different from any previous lover (so far as she could remember). But she took pity on the girl and gently bit on her sensitive nub, sucked hard and began vigorously licking the tip, while her two fingers delved deep inside the younger woman, sought out her g-spot and began caressing it.

This time, she didn't back off when Labibah began to moan and move her hips, but kept going, allowing her pretty bed-mate to finally arrive at her destination.

Lynda rolled over and crawled up the bed to lie alongside her precious sweetheart. She smiled and kissed her on the mouth, knowing that her face was smeared with the woman's juices. "You taste really nice, darling. Spicy and exotic". She giggled a bit, then frowned. "I hope you like how I taste?" Then she shrugged. "Doesn't matter if you don't, I love giving oral, I don't mind if I don't receive it."

She held her lover for a few moments, allowing the younger woman to come down off her high, stroking her face and kissing her gently. "I wonder if we could get away with claiming for one of those double-ended dildos on expenses?" She laughed, and rolled onto her back, wiping her face on the back of her hand.

Labibah was about to beg for her orgasm as Lynda had said, the words clear despite the fact that she felt every breath of them against her intimate lips. But before she could beg again, Lynda was pushing her over the edge. The blonde rubbing her g spot as well as sucking and licking on her clit. Labibah's body shaking as she bucked on the bed, moaning Lynda's name as she came harder than she had ever before.

As she recovered from the physical and emotional high, she looked at the beautiful woman laying beside her. Lynda's gorgeous face coated in her juices, truly one of the wonderful sights she had ever seen in her life. She could not believe that the Prime Minister was saying how good she tasted, and giggling and then being overcome with her own doubts.

“Darling, I love your taste to, and believe me, I will give you oral sex for as long as you me to” Labibah said as she watched the older woman lean in to kiss her, a kiss she welcomed. When Lynda joked about buying a double dildo on expenses, she could not resist a giggle and then said “Well I doubt it, imagine the fallout after Sir Peter Vigger’s duck house and Jacqui Smith’s husband’s hotel porn films, even the most tired hack would have a field day”.

Not that she was ruling out the idea of the purchase, she had never had a partner to share such a toy and had therefore never considered one until now.

With that she leaned closer to Lynda and licked some of her own fluids from face and her hands. Kissing each of Lynda’s fingers as her lips brushed the moistened flesh.

The morning would bring whatever it may, until then she would revel in the company of the woman she loved.

“Poached eggs on toast, bacon - back bacon, not streaky, and make sure it’s nicely crisp please, a large glass of orange juice and plenty of coffee, please, with milk”.

Lynda was still in bed, snuggled up to the love of her life, both of them stark naked, when the polite but insistent tap came on the door and the butler asked in quiet but none-the-less audible tones what she would like for breakfast. She was hoping and praying to whatever goddess looked after lesbians that the man would have the decorum not to enter the room without being invited. He didn’t, but he managed to mortify both of the room’s occupants all the same by asking in the same quiet tone, “And what would Miss Chaudhry like?”

Lynda shrugged and looked at the woman in her bed. “Told you...” She whispered. “He knows you’re in here, you may as well order your breakfast”. She giggled then kissed the younger woman on the cheek and slipped out of the bed. She found a robe and pulled it on then padded barefoot to the door and opened it.

The man who stood outside, dressed in a traditional butler’s uniform was in fact, she knew, a serving chief petty officer in the Royal Navy. CPO Justin Ward stood stiff and straight, and Lynda smiled at him. “Justin, the staff here have a reputation for discretion unequalled in the world. Miss Chaudhry and I ... will make our official announcement at a later date. You understand?”

“Yes Ma’am, it goes without saying”. He gave a curt bow.

“Thank you so much”, Lynda smiled and put a hand on his upper arm in a gesture of friendship, then turned back into the room. “Going to the bathroom, Biba. I’ll be back in a jiffy”.

At about 4:00pm that afternoon, Air Force One touched down at Stansted airport. The Prime Minister watched on TV as the band played the Star Spangled Banner, and Joseph Biden walked sedately down the steps, waving at the cameras, greeted the US Ambassador, and was ushered into a random car out of four that were taking different routes to the Buckinghamshire mansion.

It had been decided (by Mi5 and the US Secret Service in consultation with the FBI and the Official Protection Unit of Special Branch, not by Lynda herself) that to have two such high profile world leaders meet at the airport would present too tempting a target for terrorists, and so Lynda had been *advised* to wait for the President at Chequers. The rest of *her* staff had turned up shortly after breakfast, a wonderful meal that she had shared with her blushing lover in the Breakfast room. Mrs Fairfax had, fortuitously, chosen to take breakfast in her room rather than join the PM and her PPS, so the two of them were able to share goofy looks and the occasional hand touch as they sat next to each other.

With the breakfast things cleared away, the business of the day began. Lynda checked through the one red box that was delivered to her by the arriving Cabinet Secretary, noticing that it was all to do with the security arrangements for the President. She signed those papers that required her approval and passed them back. Sir Malcolm took the box away and vanished.

Everything seemed to be running smoothly and the aircraft landed on schedule, it's escorting F22 fighters landed at RAF Lakenheath, while the courtesy RAF Typhoon escort returned to RAF Coningsby. The motorcade left the airport on time and Lynda took a last sip of her mineral water before giving Biba a steamy look, then vanishing into her room to make sure she was presentable.

When the tapping on the door woke Labibah from her contented sleep, she reached for the covers so as to hide herself, at least in part should the person seeking their attention actually come in, although she thought that the military serving staff were probably well disciplined and would wait for actual permission to enter.

The voice she recognised as Chief Petty Officer Steward Justin Ward, who had been in charge of the dining room the previous evening. He asked Lynda what she would like for breakfast, but after taking Lynda's order, she nearly died when he continued "And what would Miss Chaudhry like?" Lynda seemed very nonchalant, giving a shrug and whispered "Told you" before telling Labibah that she might as well order her breakfast.

"Urm, the same as the Prime Minister but no bacon of any kind please Chief Ward" Labibah said trying to sound as confident as possible.

Lynda kissed her on the cheek, and slipped from the bed, the vision before the older woman found a robe was enough to make Labibah believe that she was probably drooling. When

Lynda opened the door and spoke to Justin, Labibah covered herself so that only her head was exposed.

When Lynda had finished with her conversation with the sailor, the blonde closed the door and told her that she was going to the bathroom and would be back shortly. Labibah took this time to get out of bed and put on last night's clothes for the short trip back to her own room.

She held Lynda, told her that she loved and gave her a passionate but brief kiss before returning to her own room to shower and change for the day ahead.

Fortunately there were only the two of them taking breakfast, the Fairfax woman having decided to breakfast in her room. Labibah could not help but blush as they ate, the smile from their waitress, a Royal Air Force Corporal made it clear that the staff were all aware, but would not say anything to anyone else.

After breakfast Labibah had to throw herself into work, ensuring that all arrangements were finalised for the arrival of President Biden, the Duty Officer at the Ministry of Defence confirming that the Royal Marine Band and honour party from the Guards and Air Force were all in place, she could tell that she had not been the only person to check, indeed he had probably taken phone calls from Nick Harvey, the Minister of State for the Armed Forces Colonel Rupert Marsh MP, who was elected as MP for Aldershot as part of the Lynda McFearson tidal wave and probably Adam Swan, Nick's PPS as well. Rupert's service in several war zones with the Parachute Regiment was ideal preparation for politics, although with their majority things were more civilised than might have been the case with a tiny majority.

The duty Gold Commander at New Scotland Yard also seemed to have been contacted by several people before her, checking on the police operation. The professionals might take these things in their stride but this was the first major visit since the election and it was all new to them.

It was as she was making these calls that a small convoy of civil servants arrived bearing Lynda's daily paperwork under the guidance of the Cabinet Secretary.

Her next call was to Martin Lewis, the MP for Stone and Tim Farron's PPS, to ensure that Tim would be there. Lynda should have been meeting the President, but the Secret Service and the Americans had vetoed that, saying that it was an unnecessary risk given the short notice of the visit, but Her Majesty's Government had to be represented and therefore it fell to the Foreign Secretary.

With that out of the way, she rang the Whips Office and touched base with Tom Brake, reassuring herself that all was well internally with the party. Apart from a couple of MPs that were too ill to attend Parliament everything seemed fine. With that complete she phoned her own office and checked on her constituency business, which led to another couple of calls to

various locations in Scotland. As she worked, the gnawing ache of missing Lynda was never far below the surface, but she had work that needed completing and only had time for a sandwich at her desk at lunchtime. Corporal Jenny Turner brought her a cheese salad sandwich, coffee and bottle of water in respectful silence.

Shortly before the arrival of Air Force One at Stansted, all the politicians and civil servants that would be present to meet the President and his entourage assembled in front of screens to watch the coverage of the arrival of the [converted Jumbo Jet](#) and 'The Leader of the Free World'. President Biden was greeted by the British Foreign Secretary and the US Ambassador, as they began to inspect the honour guard, first the flight of [F22's](#) and then [Typhoon's](#) did a fly by, which was not in the original programme and Labibah wondered if one or more of the pilots was channelling their inner Tom Cruise and the rest decided to join in. She would contact the Commanding Officer of 3 Squadron at Coningsby later, but it did look impressive as the respective fighters ripped the sky above the airport. She watched the Presidential party get into the vehicles, and begin the road journey to Chequers. She knew that there were three identical convoys waiting out of sight, and that each would sweep through the roads of the Home Counties so that no one watching could be certain of the route being taken by POTUS. She guessed that there were several people within the American Secret Service that were unhappy with a Muslim knowing the details of Presidential movements, indeed there were probably some in MI5 that felt the same, but she knew that these were a minority.

Less than an hour later, the Presidential convoy and the three decoys had all swept at speed into the grounds of Chequers, only the true convoy arriving at the house and being greeted by the Prime Minister and her party. Rather than risk upsetting any trigger happy American further Labibah decided to forego a hijab but was dressed in [fitted trouser suit](#), being both demure and yet stylish.

Lynda employed her own stylist and fashion consultant, paid for out of party funds rather than at the taxpayer's expense, and had managed to get the man some sort of security clearance, but he was actually late getting to Chequers. His own personal preference was for the beefy muscle-men often found in the gymnasium of Bristol City Centre. So far, he had not visited her in London, but to meet with the Most Powerful Man In The World and his wife, Lynda had summoned him to Chequers.

She emerged from her bedroom looking even more stunning than usual, blonde hair in a French pleat, just a touch of eyeshadow and lip gloss, and [an elegant yet business-like dress in silver-grey](#). She deliberately ignored her PPS, because there were simply too many people present.

The motorcades swept through the English countryside, the one with the President arriving second having avoided the traffic on the main roads and instead coming almost exclusively via country lanes, the drivers actually passing the side entrance to the estate to turn in at the main

entrance to the south, and drive up the long avenue, then turning left, to head to the house's main car park, only the president's car turning right to head to the house's front door.

Lynda had her best "politician's" smile on. She'd spoken to Joe Biden on the phone a couple of times, but this was her first time meeting him in person. *We are equals*, she told herself. *He shits and farts the same as everyone else!* The car pulled up and the silver haired comedian who had somehow managed to keep the orange-skinned buffoon out of the white house the year before trotted nimbly across the gravel, as Lynda emerged with perfect timing and grace from the mansion.

"Mr President, it's a pleasure to meet you at last".

"Madam Prime Minister, It's good ta see you too", Biden grinned that ridiculous but infectious grin that had apparently endeared him to the American electorate. They shook hands and smiled for the assembled press. "Funny, you don't look like my idea of a dyke..."

The collective gasp from the staff behind and around them was clearly heard on the TV news later. Lynda's smile flickered, faltered for a moment, then with her usual panache, she laughed and replied, "Well you know, if we all had labels broadcasting our sexuality, it would make finding a partner a whole lot easier!"

She smiled and gave a hug to the First Lady, who whispered in her ear, "Ignore him, dear, he likes to think he's funny!" The official party turned and headed inside and the press were ushered out by the security people.

"Did you have a good flight over?" Lynda asked, making small talk, as she walked arm-in-arm with the president, leading him into the reception room where such meetings invariably took place.

"It wasn't bad", he commented. "But you know, I could really use a restroom right about now? I'm bursting!"

Lynda giggled softly. "Of course, Mr Pre-"

"Call me Joe, please".

"Joe. And please call me Lynda. Corporal? Please escort the President to the bathroom? Thank you"

The army lance-corporal who was acting as footman, nodded. "Yes Ma'am. This way please Sir?"

Lynda sat and offered her remaining guest a seat. "Please, call me Jill", she said with a smile, then frowned. "God, he can be such an ass, sometimes, but he gets away with it, Lord knows how..."

"It's what makes us great politicians", Lynda replied. "The ability to say whatever we like and have the public love us for it! He and I are not that different." She chuckled softly and caught Labibah's eye as the younger woman was standing in the background.

Now that would be a real showstopper... she thought, carefully keeping her expression the same. Joe, Jill, I'd like you to meet my fiancée, Labibah Chaudhry... No, that would really cause a massive stink. Behave yourself, Lyn!

The president returned looking far more relaxed and happy, the corporal resuming his station by the door, standing at ease. CPO Ward bustled in looking far more important than anyone else in the room, and served tea, smoked salmon sandwiches and victoria sandwich cake.

After tea, Lynda went to her room to freshen up a little, re-emerged wearing a brown blouse and cream slacks, her hair in a ponytail, and suggested to the President that they take a walk in the grounds.

The sun was shining and the evening was warm, and as they strolled through the gardens, Lynda discussed her recent trip to the Middle East and the mixed outcomes from it. "So, in summary, any unilateral action by any Western country is likely to be regarded as provocative. The consensus is that we've meddled enough already. But getting a multilateral coalition with a UN mandate is going to be impossible. Israel knows they need to stay out of it, unless attacked. The best option is an Arab League force going in to restore order, much as happened in Uganda in the nineteen seventies..."

When Labibah saw Lynda she had to fight the desire to let out a wolf whistle, a skill that she had learned from her elder brother and his friends and that had earned her one of her most serious tellings off from her mother. The fact that she had been caught whistling the daughter of the Church of Scotland Minister had not helped. Lynda looked so damned hot, and Labibah wished that she could just take her girlfriend off to her room and ravage her.

She took her place in the background, several Cabinet Ministers and Senior Civil Servants taking precedence ready to greet the President, his wife and other American luminaries. There was of course a substantial press corps present to capture the greeting. All seemed perfectly civilised until the American President made his remark about Lynda not looking like his idea of a dyke. There was an audible gasp from those gathered outside the country residence of the British Prime Minister. Labibah had faith in Lynda to be able to deal with it, but she could not help but notice the cameras all locking onto Lynda to catch her response. Lynda's response

was controlled and humorous as one would expect from a consummate politician but for some reason the whole exchange grated on Labibah.

She fell into the line of people coupled with some minor functionary of the State Department no doubt, who was asking an endless stream of questions about Chequers, Lynda, the state of politics in Britain and just about anything. She answered as well as she could, endeavouring to be a polite and helpful host. She could not help but think what it would be like to be walking next to the First Lady in her capacity as the spouse of the British Prime Minister.

The staff served afternoon tea to them, and she continued to be engaged in small talk by the American man, who was called Chuck or Chip or some such she was sure. It would serve to hold their hunger until the evening meal. Of course only being a very low level politician she would not be eating with Lynda and the Biden's indeed her status did not warrant a place at the meal and she would probably have a meal in her room, watching TV as she ate.

When tea finished, she went back to her room and checked her phone messages and social media. Already she was getting comments from people about Joe Biden's remark to Lynda, some of which was bordering on hysterical. She also received a call from Tim, it seemed that Secretary of State Tony Blinken wanted to speak to her about the Middle East trip. The Americans had received as full a briefing as possible about their mission, and she was sure that it would be a key item in the discussions between Lynda and Joe Biden as well, so she was not sure what she could add.

She met the two men in the library, the three taking a seat in the huge leather chairs. It seemed that he was interested in her personal opinions regarding the situation in Turkey and the prospects for the Arab League to work together despite being split between Sunni and Shia and the tensions that the division creates. They discussed the Middle East situation, Tim and Tony having a glass of fine Scottish whiskey as the discussion continued. Labibah wondered if she could get a couple of bottles of Abhainn Dearg Distillery's recently released 10 year single malt, which according to many experts is one of the finest anywhere and the produce of the only legal still in her constituency for Tony and the President. If it could make the morning flight it may arrive in time, and if not she could get sent on. So while on a toilet break, she rang the owners and informed them of the opportunity, she also rang her office manager who began the drive across the island to collect presentation boxes. Later she would arrange for a certain former Royal Marine driver to go to the airport to pick up the bottles of single malt and new spirit, the latter she knew was too young to be called whiskey and served as a tempter for whiskey drinkers for the future malts.

After the meeting she was discretely approached by one of the staff "The Chief asked if we should move you into the Prime Minister's suite Ma'am" the clearly embarrassed soldier enquired.

“No, I don’t think so for the moment, but thank the Chief for his thoughtfulness” she replied, uncertain where she and Lynda actually stood, as they had no real chance to discuss what last night actually meant going forward.

Dinner was served. As guest of honour, the President sat to Lynda’s right. Someone had, without consulting, put Labibah at the foot of the table, directly facing Lynda, something that was not lost on the prime minister. The position was not, in fact, an insult to the young woman although it might appear so to be so far away from her boss, but actually was a subtle way of complimenting her. The foot of the table being the position traditionally occupied by the host’s spouse.

It was unlikely any of the Americans present would notice the significance, and even if those in either civil service - American or British - noticed, they would most likely put it down to a diplomatic gaffe that was easily ignored. In fact, Lynda overheard the American Ambassador who was sitting to her left, remarking to Sir Simon of the FCO that “The pretty Arab woman at the end of the table shouldn’t be there, should she?” And Sir Simon replied “Oh? You mean Miss Chaudhry? That’s the PM’s PPS. She tends to be wherever the PM is. Probably just there to make the numbers up. Can’t have thirteen at dinner, tends to result in the leader getting crucified the next day, hmm?”

The other thing that Lynda found amusing happened as they were heading in to dinner, and she offered the President her arm, while Sir Simon offered his arm to the First Lady. Joe Biden leaned closer, and murmured “A real swinger’s party, hmm? Swapping partners?”

Lynda almost burst out laughing and murmured back “If it were, I’d be paired with your wife...!”

The food was, as ever, excellent. The wine likewise. By the time they reached the cheese and biscuits, Lynda was totally stuffed. She was fully aware that, originally at formal dinner parties, it was customary for the ladies to withdraw, to leave the men to talk about business and politics. But as the two most important people in the country were now both women - herself and the Queen - and she was playing host, she was not going to “withdraw” from her own dinner.

The slight dilemma was solved for her by CPO Ward coughing politely and saying in measured butlerian tones, “If the ladies and gentlemen would care to move into the drawing room, coffee is being served.”

The man deserved a medal! Lynda rose and again offered Biden her arm, led the assembled guests into the comfortably furnished drawing room, where she mingled and chatted and sipped coffee, and waited for people to begin leaving.

Finally it was down to herself, her PPS, the President and the First Lady, plus a handful of other Americans who were important enough to be staying the night at Chequers. Everyone else

either had somewhere else to be and had already left. Even Fairfax had headed home in one of the official cars bound for London.

As hostess it fell to Lynda, with a discreet word to Chief Ward, to escort the President and his wife to their suite, and then with a yawn and a sigh, she headed for her own bed. It had been a busy day, and the Prime Minister just wanted to collapse. But as she undressed, she realised that there was one important thing missing or rather, one important person. But she didn't dare. Not tonight, not with other people in the building whose loyalties did not lie with her.

Lynda fell into bed, alone, and wondered if there would ever be a time when she could spend every night cuddling the woman she was so helplessly in love with.

She had only just got back to her room after seeing Gary, the Prime Minister's driver, to ask for his assistance in the morning with her special delivery at Heathrow when there was a knock on the door. CPO Ward was standing there and she wondered if it related to her early conversation with the embarrassed staff member, but she was surprised when the sailor spoke.

"Ma'am, you couldn't do me a big favour and dine with the President, someone slipped up and the numbers aren't balanced, in fact there are 13 which is unlucky. It would be more than awkward to ask the Americans to withdraw one of their party, if you could attend it would be appreciated by everyone"

"Well Chief, in light of your discretion and your consideration, it is the very least I can do, in the name of good Anglo-American relations, just don't pair me with that Chip chap" the last bit causing her laugh and the Chief to grin.

"That's alright Ma'am, he is too junior to get invited anyway" the Chief replied with a lightness in his normally perfectly modulated voice.

She knew that she was not only taking the numbers from 13 to 14 but also restoring the gender balance and that a trouser suit was not really appropriate, so she went to her limited collection of [evening dresses](#).

It transpired that she was partnered with the President's Press Secretary Reuben Stein, a tall man in his mid 50's, and he seemed to be well informed and interesting, so a more than suitable dinner 'date'. The meal was exceptional, and she was pleased to see that an alternative starter was placed before her and the Press Secretary, when everyone else appeared to be eating something containing pork. "So that is why they paired us together Miss Chaudhry" he said as he noticed that they were the odd ones out due to their respective religions culinary regulations. "It would appear so Mr Stein, there is more that unites us than divides us" she said with a smile.

After the meal Lynda, the President, Sir Malcolm and the First Lady lead them to the drawing room for coffee, eventually there was only Lynda, the President, Mrs Biden and a couple of other Americans remaining.

The Chief guided the Biden's to their suite, and Lynda made her way from the drawing room, without saying anything either way to Labibah, so she went back to her own room. Labibah knew exactly why, they were not alone and the Americans were not loyal to Lynda understandably.

As she undressed for bed, she picked up her private mobile and sent a single emoji to another private number. In a room not too far away, the phone sounded an alert and a heart appeared on the screen. She said her prayers and attempted to sleep, missing the closeness of the woman that held her heart.

In the morning Labibah rose, showered, dressed and prayed before turning on the television to catch up on the overnight news before going down to breakfast, all the while hoping that Gary was having no trouble collecting her package from British Airways. She had received confirmation that the three packages she arranged had made it to the flight from Glasgow to London. It had become three packages late last evening when she realised that she also needed a present for Jill Biden, and was happy to hear from the Ambassador that Mrs Biden liked Gin, so she had a special presentation bottle from the Harris Distillery at Tarbet.

The soft *bing* of her personal phone receiving a text distracted the PM from her thoughts and she picked it up. The number was one she had programmed into her phone and the single emoji in the text made her smile. She sent back a pair of kissing lips, followed by two words: *Caution; Squidgygate!* Her message, that mobile phones were not secure - especially with Americans in the vicinity, was clear enough, she hoped.

But it was good to know that Biba was thinking of her. She fell asleep content and comfortable in that knowledge.

Next morning she showered and dressed in a simple trouser suit. The cocktail dress she had worn the night before was hanging on the door to her wardrobe and would no doubt be laundered and fresh by the end of the day. Breakfast was taken on the terrace overlooking the walled garden, the president and his wife joining her, but no-one else. She talked about the future relationship between the two countries, very much mindful that it had been getting too close to the Americans that had brought down Blair's government. Going to war over the issue of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq had been the man's undoing, and while Lynda was not going to be a weak pacifist like the few surviving Tories were trying to paint her, equally, she was refusing to consider becoming embroiled in a conflict that did not have the UN's mandate.

The private chat was easygoing and friendly, but she did notice an underlying threat that Biden made, saying that in the event the USA did become involved in “Any ongoing situation that threatened US interests”, to use his exact words, that he would expect the full support of his country’s allies.

Lynda smiled warmly and said “Of course, Joe, you know you can count on Britain to give our full support in the United Nations to any action the United States might propose”.

He bristled at her and was about to say something when Jill put a hand on his arm. “More coffee, dear?”

Lynda smiled at the woman, then accepted a refill herself.

The American entourage left at around ten, for the drive to Stansted. Three convoys and a helicopter left Chequers at about the same time, splitting up to go via different routes. Lynda knew which one Biden was in, but few other people did. With everyone finally away, Lynda sank back into a soft armchair in her private lounge and put the television on BBC News 24.

The lead story was, of course, the presidential visit, and the Beeb was speculating about what might have been discussed, actually playing down Biden’s “Dyke gaffe”. Lynda was grateful for that. Five News had been all over it according to her press secretary, and the Sun was having a field day with her rejoinder: PM WANTS TO LABEL GAYS!

Lynda sighed. That was one newspaper that would probably never offer her support. Fortunately, since losing Page Three, the paper’s circulation had fallen dramatically, as had all the others due to the internet, and it no longer held the influence it once had.

One of the navy stewards, a rating she recognised but for the life of her could not remember the name of, came into the room with more coffee, and deliberately left the door open. Lynda smiled. “Come in and sit with me, sweetheart”, she said, without looking around.

As Labibah took a bite from her toast, her private phone pinged again, it was Gary, saying he was back with the packages. She sent back her thanks and said she would be out to meet him. She had watched the various television news coverage and it was generally well balanced with everyone except Channel Five downplaying the President’s ‘gaffe’. As she ate her scrambled egg, she worked her way through the front pages and editorials of the written media, who were less measured in their responses. Daily Mail: PRESIDENT SPEAKS OUT AT GAY MENACE, Guardian: US PRESIDENT INSLUTS PRIME MINISTER WITH GAY GAFFE (SIC) Morning Star: McFEARSON OFFENDED BY AMERICAN PRESIDENT, being some of the comments, all of which really missed that it was just another Bidenism and that Lynda gave as good as she got.

Labibah met with Gary and collected the presentation packages and went in search of Secretary Blinken. She caught up with him in the Long Gallery and handed over the spirits from two small scale distillers in her constituency. Not only had she given the Bidens and the Secretary of State some of the finest that Scotland has to offer but given two businesses a boost. Soon, the Americans were off on their way to Stansted and the Boeing jet for the flight to Moscow.

When they were gone Labibah finished off some constituency work and her daily check in with the Whips Office then went to find Lynda, who she was informed was in her private lounge. As she walked down the corridor, she noticed a steward about to enter. The naval rating spotted her too and gave an acknowledgement before entering to give Lynda more coffee. Labibah waited outside until the steward returned, the door remaining open the whole time.

“Come in and sit with me, sweetheart” Labibah heard, which indicated that Lynda knew she was standing outside. Without saying anything she entered, closing the door behind her and walked across the room to sitting beauty. Labibah bent down and claimed Lynda’s lips with her own, sharing a brief kiss “Just collecting on last night’s manifesto pledge Prime Minister” she said as she stood back up and walked over to the armchair next to her lover.

“Well that went as well as could be expected other than the Bidenism, maybe the Americans should have elected Jill and not Joe” Labibah said with a laugh.

As she sat there, she reached out for the hand of her girlfriend. Just holding hands with this wonderful woman was enough for now, but she wanted so much more for them.

Labibah hoped that it would not break the mood, but she knew that personally and professionally she had to ask the question. “When are we going back?”

Lynda smiled as her young PPS claimed the prize of a kiss. She wanted more, so much more, but right now, this was enough as the beautiful coffee-skinned woman sat down on the chair next to her and reached a hand out. The Prime Minister’s hand was reaching too and they met in the middle, a warm and comfortable gesture that conveyed so much. “Yes, Biden is an ass, but at least he’s better than that other idiot! Jill is actually quite nice. If she were thirty years younger she might give you a run for your money!” Lynda winked at Labibah, teasing her sweetheart.

The next question was a serious one and demanded a serious answer, but Lynda couldn’t help respond with “If I said never, would you mind?” She shrugged. “No but seriously, Parliament doesn’t reconvene until October, the party conference ... Oh god. I better check with central office that they’ve managed to book somewhere suitably grand... we’ll have a lot more attendance this year than last year... But that’s in the first week of October.”

Lynda sighed softly and looked at her PPS. “Do you remember last year’s conference? Clegg stepping down and someone, gods alone know who, some idiot proposing yours truly for the leadership? And I was dumb enough to accept the proposal, got up there and gave a speech and the next thing I knew I’d been voted in...! What a nightmare!” She laughed. Seriously, lover, I was petrified. It was what I’d fought for and worked for my entire life and suddenly I had it and all I wanted to do was run! And then with just six months to prepare, suddenly there’s the general election and ... Oh, but I’m being a politician. We have the entire week here, my love, to behave as badly as we wish, because no-one else is invited. It’s just the two of us!”

And with that, she stood, pulled Labibah to her feet and wrapped the younger muslim in her arms, kissed her passionately and then sat down again, dragging the PPS into her lap.

When Lynda said about if Jill Biden had been thirty years younger, Labibah agreed with her, “Jill is an attractive woman for her age, and if she were thirty years younger, she might be giving you a run for your money to darling” finishing with a sly wink.

Her heart screamed that they should just be together and mostly alone forever, but her head and her political brain knew that things would have to be different. Lynda picked out the Conference and the reconvening of Parliament in October leaving a large window for loving, that sadly the outside world was always going to fill to some extent or other.

“Just leave planning of things like Conference to the worker ants, but yes, following the election it was clear that Bournemouth would not be large enough, so it was decided to change dates and venues with the now much depleted Tories. So it’s off to Manchester and the hotel rooms previously booked by the Conservatives. So all you have to do is look sexy and give another one of your stunning conference performances”.

“Yes darling, I do remember it very well, I for one had been pushing for a change of leadership ever since the disaster that was the coalition and the destruction of my council group which was foretaste of the electoral collapse we would have suffered if we hadn’t found a miracle worker hiding away as MP for Wells. As for the person that suggested you, well you made one of your biggest cheerleaders the Attorney General” Labibah was referring to Chris Clements QC and newly elected member for South West Surrey, who had defeated Jeremy Hunt. “The only reason I wasn’t in the vanguard of your cheer squad was that I was slow off the mark and beaten to it by many others from no end of fringe meetings at conferences and other meetings I attended”.

The next thing she knew she was being pulled to her feet and kissed with passion before ending sat in the lap of the Prime Minister of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, What could a poor Muslim girl from the islands of Western Scotland do but kiss the beautiful blonde back with equal passion, and at that moment the world could not have seemed more perfect.

Taking her lover to bed early that evening, after having the staff move Labibah's clothes and personal effects into the master bedroom, was Lynda's most important manifesto item that day. The bed was easily big enough that, with her head at one end, and her crotch pressed firmly against the Scot's, their legs entangled, 'Biba's head was nowhere near dropping off the other end. It was less intimate making love this way, but far more intense, with their clits rubbing and their wet lower lips mashed together, holding hands partly to keep from moving apart but mostly for the contact. Lynda's cry of pleasure was muffled by the room's sound-proofing as her first climax hit. She didn't stop, but kept moving her hips, rubbing her sex firmly against the younger woman's, bringing them both to the peak time and again.

Finally exhausted - temporarily, the two lovers took a break, cuddling and kissing. "Going to have to try that with one of those long double-ended things I've seen on the internet", the Prime Minister said, with a soft giggle. I could probably order one online and have it delivered here. It would be interesting to see what the security people would make of it!" She chuckled. With her breath back and still feeling horny because of the naked woman lying next to her on the bed, she slid down Labibah's body, kissing and nibbling as she went, pausing at the dark brown nipples to suck and bite them both, then moving on downwards until her lips could encompass the younger woman's clit, pulling it into her mouth, holding it firmly with her teeth while her tongue teased and stimulated the end.

The following day, after breakfast, Lynda took Labibah by the hand and led her into the orangerie. Instead of citrus trees, there was a beautiful indoor swimming pool. Having been assured by the security staff earlier that the glass was one-way and looked like a mirror from the outside, she closed the doors and quickly stripped off, before diving naked into the pool, swimming most of the length underwater and surfacing to turn towards her PPS. "Come on in sugar, the water is wonderful. I've always wanted to try skinny-dipping!"

A week, as Lord Wilson of Rievaulx put it, is a long time in politics, but it is always a very short time on holiday, when one is enjoying oneself. Far too soon, the respite was over, and the lovers were packing to leave. Lynda reassured her PPS, "Don't worry, darling, we'll be back soon enough". The PM's country retreat was there for Lynda to use not just as a place to entertain foreign dignitaries, but as a place to go where she could relax.

The official car drove them back to London on Monday morning. They had discussed what was to come, and Lynda had done her best to allay her love's fears. This was the best way to do it.

While she would have loved to have the young Muslim woman move in with her at Number Ten right away (She had actually pointed out that 'Biba could use this as a positive thing with her constituents - she would no longer be claiming expenses for her London apartment) Lynda knew that would not be a good idea. They needed to officially announce their relationship first.

A few weeks after their return from chequers, Lynda was asked to appear on the BBC's Sunday Politics show with Andrew Neil. She replied favourably to the request and asked the producer if her Parliamentary Private Secretary could accompany her, and appear on the show with her. While the BBC felt this was a little unusual, they could not really object, and so it was arranged.

Lynda wore an [off the shoulder dress in plain navy blue](#). Daring in its cut, fashionable, but conservative in its colour. She walked into the TV studio, allowed the makeup people to primp her a bit, let the techies clip a microphone to her and fit her with an earpiece, watched them do the same to her PPS, who was clearly nervous. She giggled, "Come on, 'Biba, this is not exactly your first time on national television!" She gave the dark-skinned woman's shoulder an affectionate squeeze.

They were settled into the interviewees chairs as the theme music played. Lynda had already hinted that she had an important announcement to make, and left it at that. Andrew and the production team were left to speculate, and Lynda enjoyed herself as she listened to some of the wild theories that were whispered around the studio. One cameraman actually hit the nail on the head, but no-one else accepted his theory.

"Good morning and welcome to Sunday Politics. With me today in the studio are the Prime Minister, The Right Honourable Lynda McFearson MP and her Parliamentary Private Secretary, Ms Labibah Chaudhry MP. Prime Minister, before we discuss recent events in government, I understand you have an important announcement for us, that you are being very mysterious about?"

"Yes, good morning, Andrew", Lynda smiled at the host and then turned to face the camera who's operator had guessed correctly. He deserved this!

"As you know, I have never made any secret of the fact that I am a homosexual. In fact, my maiden speech to the house was on the subject of gay rights. The media made a massive thing out of my sexuality during the election campaign, but as we all know, the British public would rather have a gay leader who talks straight than a straight leader who doesn't". That had been one of her catchphrases during the election, and she trotted it out again now to remind people why she was in Number Ten.

"What is not quite so well known is that my PPS here, Ms Chaudhry, shares my preference for women, except she likes them a little older than I do. Now, I would like to quickly state that, until her appointment as my PPS, Labibah and I had never actually met. Her election to the house by one of the farthest flung constituencies of these sceptered isles was not something I could have predicted in any way, and appointing her as my PPS was a political decision based upon her *curriculum vitae*.

“That said, since we have been working together closely over these past few months, we have fallen very much in love with each other, and intend to be married later on this year in a civil ceremony.”

Lynda smiled at the woman who had stolen her heart and took her hand, leaned in and, live on British television, kissed her fiancée in public for the first time.

Labibah did not need telling twice when Lynda said they were off to bed, and Labibah revelled in stripping off her lover. Kisses and gentle caresses were followed by the two women tribbing, their movements causing them to grind intimately together, giving orgasm after mind blowing orgasm until they were too exhausted to continue. Labibah crawled up Lynda's body, snuggling tight and kissing her lover with a soft but long lasting kiss.

This was the calm before the storm, as Lynda kissed, licked and sucked her way down Labibah's body, from mouth, to collar bone, then chest, breast and belly before finding her core and her clit. Labibah was more than willing to allow her lover to eat her, and she would return the pleasure later. Again she kissed and licked that beautiful face clean of her juices when Lynda had finished, tasting herself on her lover.

The following morning the couple shared breakfast and then Lynda led Labibah to the pool, the blonde casting off her clothing and diving in.

“Come on in sugar, the water is wonderful. I've always wanted to try skinny-dipping!” Lynda said when she resurfaced. “What if someone sees” Labibah wanted to know, it was one thing making love like randy rabbits in the privacy of their suite, but in a pool where they might be seen by the staff or some paparazzi with a longer lens than sense of morality. But assured that it was ok, Labibah shed her own clothing, making sure that none of it ended in the water, as walking naked through Chequers might push the tolerance and discretion of the staff. She decided to channel her brothers in their childhood, and gave Lynda a running bomb, like the boys used to do to her, until the staff threatened to tell their mother if they didn't behave. “Geronimo” she shouted as she flew through the air, her arms wrapped around her knees.

Monday morning marked a return to what was their normality, while Parliament was not sitting, that did not mean that the business of Government, party politics or the Liberal Democrat party stopped. The Civil Service loved their red boxes, and each needed to be checked for the items that Sir Malcolm and Mrs Fairfax were trying to hide in plain sight. The journey back was spent discussing the way ahead for their personal relationship, and business would begin when they arrived at Downing Street.

When the request for Lynda to appear with Andrew Neil, Lynda seemed especially keen to appear, and after they spoke about it Labibah was equally keen. She wasn't sure that he

deserved the exclusive but someone had to get it and it was not going to Adam Boulton on Sky News and after the Presidential visit ambush it was not going to Romilly Weeks either.

Labibah picked [black trouser suit](#) with a blue top underneath for the interview, her nerves building as they were prepared by the women from makeup and the technicians from the sound department. Her legs barely carried her onto the set, but as she sat next to the woman she loved Labibah felt her calm returning. As Andrew introduced them, Labibah made a silent prayer but she listened in what would later be described by some as undisguised awe to Lynda as her lover announced to the whole world their love and plans for a civil service later in the year.

What she had not known was that Lynda planned to kiss her, live on the BBC, but they shared a sweet kiss in front of a dumb-struck presenter. Nanna Chaudhry was so going to love this woman, Lynda may not be a Muslim but she was such a perfect match for Labibah, and full of fight and sense of style.

After the kiss which was really not much more than a peck on the lips, and actually left Lynda wanting to pull the younger woman into her arms and ravish her right there on the television, the Prime Minister turned back to Mr Neil, waited for the applause from the studio crew to subside, and said, as though nothing whatever had just happened, "Now,, Andrew, I understand you wanted to ask me about the President's recent visit?"

The TV presenter was looking at them both, utterly stunned. Gobsmacked would actually be a particularly appropriate adjective. "I... Uh... Wow, um, yes... Congratulations Prime Minister, Miss Chaudhry, uh, may you both be very happy....!" Andrew pulled himself together quickly and took a deep breath and a sip of water. "Um, yes, the presidential visit - there has been much media speculation regarding what was discussed, but so far no-one has confirmed anything...?"

Lynda smiled and said in measured tones totally at odds with the excitement she felt inside, "Yes, well, much of what was discussed was actually highly sensitive, but after last week's vote by the United Nations Security Council to approve a multinational force from the more moderate muslim nations of the world, with logistical support from NATO as required, to re-establish the rule of law in Syria, I can in fact now reveal that this was the subject under discussion...."

The interview lasted an hour in total and covered not only the presidential visit but also her previous whistle-stop tour of the Middle East, and Britain's possible involvement in any conflict. In fact, even if she had not planned to announce their relationship live on the show, Lynda would have wanted her PPS there, because a number of the questions that were thrown at her she passed on to Labibah, who was actually better able to answer them. At the end of the show, As the credits were rolling, the cameras stayed hot, because someone on the production team had been amazingly thoughtful and sent someone out to find a supermarket where they had

purchased two bouquets of flowers at the licence-payers' expense, which were presented to both the show's special guests 'On behalf of the nation'.

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"Guess what the lead news item is going to be on the one O'clock News, darling?" Lynda sat with her arm around her lover in the back of the Jag on the way back from Shepherd's Bush. "Take us to the front door please Gary. We should face the press barrage sooner rather than later..."

Ray phoned ahead to inform Downing Street security that they were heading for the front entrance, and to allow the press the usual access. Lynda took a deep breath as the car swept down Birdcage Walk and turned left into Whitehall. "Ready, darling? This is likely to be tough, they will all have heard and will be ready with all sorts of stupid questions. If you're asked something you don't want to answer, just pass it to me or say no comment!"

The security barriers whooshed into the ground just ahead of the car and snapped back up immediately behind it, the armed police that Lynda really wished didn't have to be there, held weapons ready and the members of the press were searched and IDs checked before they were allowed in.

Ray opened the door on Lynda's side of the car and she stepped out, helped Labibah from the car and held her hand as they faced the cameras together.

"Prime Minister, is this a sudden thing or something you've been planning for a while?"

"Well, I wouldn't say it was very sudden, but I suppose that depends on what you mean by a while. As I said in my interview with Andrew Neil a few minutes ago, we've only known each other a few months."

"Would you say it was love at first sight?"

"Well, no, not at first sight. The first time I saw Labibah was when this nervous young woman was shown into my office here at number ten and introduced as my new PPS. And while I have to admit she looked incredibly cute, I wouldn't say I fell in love with her at that *exact* moment. No, I'd say it was more a process, a thing born of time spent working together, in each others' company, and a mutual attraction that we honestly could not resist!"

"Have you slept together?"

That was the reporter from the Sun. Lynda laughed. "Wouldn't you like to know? Well, I'm sorry to tell you but Number ten is regularly swept for bugs by MI5 and there will be no saucy videos of us appearing on Youtube!"

“Miss Chaudhry, how does it feel to be the fiancée of the first lesbian Prime Minister?”

The questions continued in a similar vein for a while, one reporter having the nerve to ask Labibah if Lynda was good in bed. Lynda interrupted. “I’ll answer this if I may, sweetheart? I’m good at everything I do, because I apply myself to it, and make sure I do everything to the best of my ability. So I’m pretty sure that sex will be something I’m also good at!”

She was about to draw the conference to a close when someone asked the question she had been expecting most, dreading most and yet was most prepared for. “Prime Minister, your fiancée is a muslim. Isn’t that a security risk?”

“Not at all. Labibah has the highest security clearance available to a politician, with the exception of myself and the Defence Minister. She has been privy to just about everything that goes on in Downing Street and I trust her with my life”.

It was the follow-up question that Lynda had dreaded. “But what about her security? As a Muslim, isn’t she automatically under some sort of death sentence as a lesbian?”

Lynda deliberately put an arm around her lover, and her expression grew serious, she looked directly at the ITN television camera. “Understand this: Britain is a free country and her people will never bow to terrorist threats. While women in other parts of the world may suffer under the yoke of extremists, that is not the case here. If a woman - in fact, if a man - who is a Muslim by birth or by upbringing or by choice, should also be gay, they should have nothing to fear from extremists, if they are British citizens and living in the United Kingdom. Anyone found to be preaching hate against *any* minority, be they gays, Muslims, coloured, trainspotters, or Conservative MPs, will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law... “

She paused, then added, “Well, maybe not Conservative MPs... ‘Biba, do you have anything to add to that?”

With the press conference over, the two of them went inside to be greeted by applause from the staff at Number Ten, in almost the same way that they had applauded Lynda the first time she had stepped through the door as Prime Minister.

“Ugh! I’m heading upstairs, darling. I need a shower!” Lynda grumbled. “The press always makes me feel grubby!” She started to head for the flat, then turned and grinned. “You can join me if you want, the secret is out. We didn’t deny it and everyone will assume we are, so we may as well...!” She chuckled softly and continued to head up to the flat.

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The host regained his composure admirably quickly given the nature of the announcement that had just been made by Lynda. Ok, she had helped him out by restating the actual reason for the interview for him, but considering the bombshell that had just been dropped he still did well.

As the subject changed to the Middle East trip, Labibah became more involved, revealing what she could of the discussions, being totally open would be completely counterproductive. But of course that was the art of diplomacy and politics. She was particularly proud of some of her ideas regarding the Turkish/Kurdish problem, but most of that had to remain private.

It was touching that the production team of Sunday Politics brought them bouquets and presented them on the overrunning programme although they would probably be cursed by people who missed the end of their recorded programme as a result, and fortunately neither of them said anything inappropriate with the cameras still running, unlike many politicians that thought microphones or cameras had stopped recording.

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On the journey back to Downing Street when Lynda mentioned the lead story on the One O'Clock News, Labibah said "Probably the cricket" and laugh as she snuggled closer to her lover in the back of Prime Minister's official Jaguar, not a regular make out location but if it didn't cause Gary and Ray too much of problem, maybe they could change that.

The Jaguar swept into Downing Street, and Lynda asked "Ready darling?", with a squeeze of the older woman's hand Labibah steeled herself for barrage ahead. Feeling a bit like Butch and Sundance at the end of the old movie with Paul Newman and Robert Redford that her Dad liked so much she left the car, her hand linked with Lynda's.

After several questions to Lynda, the pack of baying journalists turned to Labibah.

"Miss Chaudhry, how does it feel to be the fiancée of the first lesbian Prime Minister?"

"It feels wonderful to be the fiancée of Lynda McFearson, the most wonderful woman in the world, I love the woman not the job title does that answer your question"

She could hardly believe that one of the so called respectable journalists actually asked her if Lynda was good in bed, she was about to turn the question back, asking the offending reporter to define exactly what constituted being good in bed, but Lynda took the question and she could not help but smile as her lover told the assembled reporters and the world that she was good at everything she did.

Then the question of whether she was a security risk was rehashed again, because she was a Muslim. Labibah found this offensive both personally and to everyone who followed her religion and served the country faithfully. But Lynda shot down that particular argument.

The next question brought up the question of her own safety given the teachings of Islam regarding homosexuality, again Lynda fielded the question and Labibah struggled not to laugh when Lynda mentioned Conservative MP's and then retracted them as a group that deserved protection.

"We live in times when everyone is at risk from those who lack tolerance, regardless of religion and race and as an MP I am better protected than most people".

Then it was through the famous door, for the first time in the new circumstances of her life, and the assembled staff, who to a man and woman, were lined up and clapping. Well almost to a man and woman, at least one was missing, but frankly Biba did not care.

As Lynda headed to the apartment and its shower, Labibah followed the perfect backside up the stairs as fast as she could while remaining dignified and keeping her lover's pert buttocks in view.

When she reached the Prime Ministerial bathroom Biba stripped off her clothes and joined the blonde under the water, her hands taking a squirt of the Lynda's shower gel and began to run the gel covered hands over the white flesh of her lover.

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Next morning Labibah rose early and wandered through the flat in only her silk robe to the kitchen to fix Lynda a bacon sandwich and coffee.

Waking the sleeping beauty with a kiss and a whispered "Your breakfast is ready my love", the plate and cup on the bedside cabinet, on what had become Lynda's side of the bed.

Later today she would go to her place and begin really moving in as opposed to the slow trickle of her stuff from her place to their place, now they were out as an engaged couple there was no point in hiding their relationship any further. She would arrange for a driver to take her, as she wouldn't be able to carry everything of her personal stuff.

Gary and Ray were unavailable as they were needed by Lynda, but an alternative driver was not a problem as they all have a military background and personal protection training.

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At ten o'clock Labibah and her driver, a former paratrooper called Nicholas left the back entrance and made their way to South London. When they pulled up at her flat, the pair entered, Biba didn't think it necessary but Nick insisted, given the revelation of the previous day and the fact that she had not been at home since, he wanted to ensure that the flat was safe and secure before he allowed her privacy to do her packing, while waiting outside.

“No need for you to stay Nick” Labibah said to him when he was happy that there was no one hiding in wait to attack her.

“I’ll just be outside Ma’am, if you need me just shout”

Biba went to her bedroom and began to pack her clothes into two large suitcases, and Nick sat in the car, scanning the street for signs of any trouble. He knew something was wrong when the white van pulled up in front of his car, this was borne out when two men wearing scarves over their faces leapt from the van and threw petrol bombs at Biba’s flat. He radioed a call for police and fire brigade assistance and exited the car, pulling his pistol as he cleared the door.

The glass bottles full of liquid crashed through the front window and door, burning fuel spreading across carpet and furniture. Nick fired three shots, taking one of the attackers down, the other running off. Nick was torn between his desire to deal with the attacker and his duty to protect Labibah. He chose the latter, running to the rear of the building, smashing down the gate at the side of the building with a shoulder charge.

The apartment was rapidly filling with thick and acrid smoke, Labibah tried to get out into the hall, but the smoke and flame clearly barred her way. So, she returned to her bedroom, pushing the duvet against the door to try to stop smoke from getting in. She tried to remember the lesson they had received at school about what to do in the event of a fire, she rang 999 and the calm voice told her that help was already on the way, and if she could not get out to stay as low as she could, so she lay on the floor by the rear window, as she cursed having double glazed windows that didn’t open beyond about five centimetres.

Nick tried to break a window with his elbow, but the double glazed window would not give, so he considered his options. The windows would give if he fired his pistol at it, but he had no idea where his protectee was and shooting the fiancée of the Prime Minister was not a good career move even if you were trying to save her life. So he reversed his weapon, holding it by the barrel and using it to smash the twin panes of glass with the vacuum between.

All the time the sound of sirens was getting louder as police, fire and ambulance units rushed to the scene in response to the call made direct to the Metropolitan Police Gold Command Centre.

She was coughing due to the smoke when she heard Nick shout to her “Miss Chaudhry stay down and cover your eyes” and then there was a thud, followed by another, then a cracking sound followed by the glass shattering and her being showered with glass as the former soldier smashed out the window. Labibah was barely aware of it as she slipped into unconsciousness.

Placing his jacket across the bottom and ensuring that no glass could either cut them or fall out. He climbed inside to find her, which was easy as he nearly stood on her as his feet touched the floor. Searching the floor, Nick cut his hands on the broken glass but soon found the prone

body of his protectee. Scooping her up, he stood and made it to the window, seeing another person there passed the limp body out before climbing back out.

As they were carrying Labibah towards the front of the house, there was an explosion as the kitchen burned. The police are torn between conflicting operational needs, evacuating the neighbouring properties, preserving the crime scene and attempting to arrest offenders. The arrival of the first armed unit caused a degree of confusion as they made Nick lay down, his firearm clearly visible and a body lying on the tarmac in a pool of blood in unknown circumstances. This did not last long as the policeman approached to disarm him, Nick told him where to find his ID, which when it was seen by the officer resulted in Nick being allowed to regain both his feet and his weapon.

Two fire engines from Battersea fire station arrived and began to fight the fire, the Officer in charge calling for further support, as her crews attacked the fire from both front and back of the property. One of the fire fighters gave oxygen therapy to Labibah and the neighbour, Nick toughing it out, and working with police to hunt down the other attacker. The Watch Manager was glad that it was certain that no one in the upper flat of the house conversion, with the other tenant was also an MP, Dr Jean Davis and she was known to be at Westminster, so there was no need to commit any of her crew into the property, which was a big safety plus for the firefighters.

Throughout this time Labibah was unconscious but breathing, the oxygen helping offset the effects of carbon monoxide, the firefighter handing over to paramedic from the rapid response vehicle before the arrival of the first ambulance. As the ambulance arrived Nick peeled away from the manhunt to be with Labibah, he was totally devastated at his failure to protect the young woman.

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It was breaking news on all of the rolling news channels, who were scrambling to get reporters to the scene and to find an angle or an eyewitness which would make their coverage unique and the one to watch. Jane Hill on BBC News 24 said "We interrupt Sports Desk to bring you breaking news, reports are coming in of at least one fatality and other injuries after an attack by two or more men on the South London home of two members of parliament, one believed to Labibah Chaudhry, the Prime Minister's fiancée and the other Doctor Jean Davis, a Junior Minister at the Department of Health. We cross now to Danny Shaw at Scotland Yard where we are expecting a statement from Commissioner Cressida Dick".

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Having a shower with someone was a new experience for Lynda. Her previous girlfriends had either never given her the opportunity or had declined to try. Fortunately the shower cubicle in her bathroom was large enough that the two of them fitted in comfortably, and Lynda held her naked PPS against her for a moment, kissing the younger woman passionately, before releasing her, taking the shower gel from her and coating her own hands liberally (pun intended), before rubbing them all over her lover's coffee coloured skin.

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“Mmm? Oooh, woken with a kiss and breakfast in bed! Thank you my precious. Um... Isn’t it supposed to be sinful to even handle pork? Or is that Jews?” Not that it mattered. If Labibah was comfortable making her a bacon sandwich, that was what counted, and she wasn’t going to complain. She said as much as she licked the HP sauce off her fingers and washed it down with the coffee. “Mm, thank you. That was delicious. I suppose I have to go and clean my teeth before I can kiss you?” She teased.

Dressed and ready, with Labibah dressed in one of the makeshift outfits she’d brought over piecemeal during the week since their return from Chequers, the two of them descended in a style most stately. Lynda had an appointment at Hamilton House in Kings Cross to see Christine Blower, general secretary of the National Union of Teachers, to discuss a time-table for implementing some of the Lib-Dems’ [manifesto pledges](#) - Establishing an independent Education Standards Authority to pilot, phase-in and resource future policy changes in consultation with professionals and experts; Reform Ofsted inspections so that they include a focus on longer-term outcomes and sustainable improvement as well as teacher workload, sickness and retention and Support the establishment of a new, independent Foundation for Leadership in Education, working under the umbrella of the Chartered College of Teaching, to promote high-quality, evidence-based leadership and help the best leaders into the most challenging schools.

‘Biba, meanwhile, having thoroughly briefed the PM on a subject Lynda was fully conversant with (as she had been the Lib Dem’s Education spokesperson for several years) as they lay in bed the previous night, exhausted, sated, but unable to sleep; found herself with some free time and so determined to head over to her old flat and move her things officially into the PM’s flat. Lynda flatly refused to let her go by her old route of tube and walking, insisting that she have an official car with an official bodyguard. She even used the argument that Biba would be able to bring back everything at once that way rather than continue to make multiple trips.

Her own car was in use, taking her to and from Kings Cross - not the most salubrious part of London, but one where she actually had solid support, with the retirement of Labour’s Frank Dobson, a man she deeply respected, the Lib Dem candidate Jill Fraser had surprised everyone including herself by sweeping the floor with everyone except Natalie Bennett of the Greens. Of course it was Lynda people were voting for but Jill was as much an up-and-coming politician as Labibah and was currently PPS to the Minister for the Environment etc.

So, the Special Branch found an alternate vehicle and driver/bodyguard. Lynda was assured of his competence and loyalty, and kissed her love goodbye at the back door as they went their separate ways.

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Ray Griffin burst into the private meeting, with his gun out and a flak jacket on, another in his hand. His face was pale. "Security state is Red! Prime Minister, we need to get you to a place of safety at once!"

"What? Why?" Lynda was on her feet in an instant.

"There's been an attack..." Ray thrust the bullet proof vest at her, waited until she had it fastened over her clothes, then ushered her towards the exit where Gary was standing, similarly clad and with his pistol held at the ready.

"Where? How? By whom, with what, how many casualties?"

"Reports are sketchy, but ... Prime Minister, it's Labibah. Someone threw a firebomb through the window of her flat. The protection officer got her out and ..."

"Oh Sweet Goddess! No. Is she okay?"

"We don't know yet. She's being rushed to Tommy's ``That's the closest A&E."

"Take me there!"

"Prime Minister, our orders are..."

"Given by me! Take me to her. NOW!"

Lynda was practically in tears, anger the only thing keeping them at bay. She slipped into the back of the car, pulled out the secure satellite phone and called Downing Street. She was put straight through to the security desk and demanded an immediate briefing.

And all the while the only thing she could think of was: *They tried to murder my love!* She hung up the phone when she had learned everything she could. The car had a television set, and as ever it was tuned to BBC News 24. She turned up the volume to listen to the commissioner give a far less detailed version of the briefing she had just received.

Security at St Thomas' Hospital Accident and Emergency department was the tightest it had ever been. Armed police swarmed the place, checking IDs of staff, keeping an eagle eye on any patients that could not be moved, supervising the removal of those that could be. And keeping the press at bay.

The jag swept past the cordon, spotted at once by reporters, who swarmed to the instantly closed hole it didn't quite leave in the black-clad lines. The PM's guards got out first, weapons ready, then the Prime Minister herself stormed past them into the building, ignoring all security

measures, marched up to the reception desk and demanded, "You know who I am? Where is she?"

The poor woman on duty who had already been frisked twice and interrogated once, didn't need an angry Lynda McFearsome in her face. "Room three B. Corridor to you left, second left third on the right. You can't miss it, it's the one with all the guns outside!"

The woman's own anger, fright and frustration penetrated Lynda's. "Thank you", she said in a softer voice. "I really appreciate your help. This must be terrifying for everyone here. Well, rest assured, I will have things as near back to normal as I can as soon as I can. Thank you again!"

A tear trickled down Lynda's cheek, and in that moment, a true blue Tory supporter decided to change her vote at the next election.

Lynda hurried off, ignoring her security people who had finally caught up with her and already knew which way to go. She wasn't stopped by the ring of police, who recognised her and parted like the red sea. She was, however, stopped by the man in the green scrubs with a stethoscope stereotypically dangling around his neck.

"Ah, Ms McFearson. I'm Doctor Goldstein, I am the senior consultant here. Your fiancée is being treated for smoke inhalation, as well as minor cuts and abrasions. She is very much alive, is responding well to treatment and is expected to make a full recovery. That's all I can tell you really".

"Can I see her? Please?"

"Well, as you are ultimately my boss, I would be a bit silly to refuse..." the doctor laughed inappropriately, then shrugged. "Of course you may, Prime Minister".

Lynda nodded thanks and walked into the room where Labibah was lying on the hospital bed. "Oh, 'Biba, darling, I'm so sorry. I really am. I should have sent a brigade with you. I should never have let you go!" Tears rolled down her cheeks as she held the young woman's hand. "They tried to kill you! I almost lost you! I should never have made it public!"

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Nick continued to refuse any treatment even as the first ambulance was allowed inside the police inner cordon. It was soon joined by a second ambulance and Nick insisted that the green suited crew look after the neighbour who had put himself at risk to assist.

When Labibah was loaded into the ambulance, he climbed in, not in the back where the crew had wanted him to be, but against their wishes and London Ambulance Service rules upfront next to the driver. She was not happy but one look into the former soldier's eyes told her not to question him further on it.

The driver was a little surprised that as she pulled away, with blue lights flashing and two tones sounding that she had two police motorcyclist leading the way and clearing the path at junctions as she headed to St Thomas' hospital being the nearest A&E department, although it was a tight call between Tommy's, King's College and St George's at Tooting. Had the helicopter, which had been on standby actually been called then her patient would be going to Tooting being the hospital with a helipad linked to its A&E. Throughout, Labibah had been unconscious, the former soldier booking her in and then handing over to colleagues and finally receiving the treatment he so urgently needed.

Biba briefly regained consciousness in Resus, and tried to pull the oxygen mask from her face, not entirely sure what was happening, the nurse holding the mask to her nose.

"Miss Chaudhry please, you need to just breath naturally, the oxygen will help rid your system of the toxins" the nurse calmly reassured Biba, who slipped back into unconsciousness, the registrar happy that everything was ok but still paged the A&E consultant, as she had seen both the Sunday Politics and the return to Downing Street of the Prime Minister and Ms Chaudhry and was aware how closely this was going to be monitored by the powers that be.

When Dr Goldstein arrived Dr Amira Patel gave a clear and concise report of Biba's condition, her treatment to date and everything that was known about the patient and any relevant parts of her medical history. Dr Goldstein called the hospital manager, who agreed that the increasing police presence and the imminent arrival of the press meant that the A&E department should be closed except for Code Red patients who would not survive the additional delay of a journey to Guys, King's or George's.

The medical staff were clearing those that could easily be dealt with, and relocating where possible the others. The triage staff were under great stress as they assessed and reassigned the full department of patients. Which was now closed to walk-ins and new ambulance cases.

The growing number of armed police at the entrance to the department and outside Resus were a source of annoyance to the medics, because while they could understand why they were there, they were still getting in the way of doctors, nurses, paramedics and porters doing their jobs.

The scene became even more chaotic when the Prime Minister arrived and the press who had been kept at a reasonable distance by police and hospital security pushed forward towards the entrance and the Prime Minister.

Biba was sure that she heard Lynda's voice, she wasn't clear what Lynda was saying to her, but she knew it was Lynda, and she needed to get back to her love. As she came to, she was still confused but seeing the beautiful blonde made her feel better and safe. She wished she could

remember what Lynda had said, because in her heart she knew they were words of love but she could not place a single word.

Lynda was sitting holding her hand, the one without a cannula in it attached to a bottle of liquid, the blonde sat quietly, evidence of tears showing in her makeup. Biba tried to speak, the word 'darling' coming out as a rasping breath barely audible above the sound of the flowing gas in the mask covering her nose and mouth.

Biba tried to move her hands up and remove the mask, but the effort was too much and she slipped back into a semi conscious state.

It was then that Labibah started to fit, causing a flurry of activity by the medical team and a nurse trying to guide Lynda from the room. "Please Prime Minister, let us deal with this," Dr Goldstein said. When they had stabilised Labibah, Dr Goldstein turned to one of the junior doctors "Check with Whipps Cross hospital about the availability of their hyperbaric chamber, just in case at the moment".

Seeking out the Prime Minister he sat with her "It is one of the known complications of carbon monoxide poisoning, the brain suffers seizures in about ten percent of serious cases, we have stabilised Labibah and will continue with the oxygen therapy, I am going to have her moved to the high dependency unit, where I will ensure that she has constant nursing attention in case of any further complication which are impossible to predict, but we know all the possible complications and the responses to them".

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Detective Chief Inspector Keith Andrews of the Major Case Squad at Scotland Yard was chatting outside the burnt out flat with Station Manager Carl Taylor, of the New Cross Fire Investigation Team. The initial investigation showed that the bottles had been full of an improvised napalm rather than just 'pure' petrol. This explained why Ms Chaudhry had been overcome so quickly, the burn creating Carbon Dioxide and Carbon Monoxide far more rapidly than would normally be expected. In fact it was a miracle that her bodyguard had remained capable of assisting the police after he saved her. The burn patterns were in keeping with the witness statements that there were two bottles, one that smashed into the living room and the other through the glass panel of the door.

The living room one sticking to and immediately igniting a fairly substantial dvd collection, creating Hydrogen Cyanide in relatively large amounts in addition to the other products of combustion.

The firefighter asked if the terrorists had been identified, the policeman nodded but it was clear that he was not going to actually say what he discovered. At that moment police were setting up raids on three addresses in London and one in Watford, which he hoped would net them the

second terrorist and possibly a network. It was for this reason that they were not naming the dead attacker or his probable motive.

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In the Sky News studio Jayne Secker announced that “Labibah Chaudhry MP, yesterday announced as the fiancée of the Prime Minister is definitely one of casualties from the attack, whether this closeness to the Prime Minister is the reason or whether it is Ms Chaudhry’s outspoken pro-Israel position which has her branded as a traitor and heretic by some Muslims is unclear, but it is clear that this is another attack by Muslims on British soil. Others being treated under the protection of armed police officers are thought to be her SAS bodyguard and a member of the public who was caught in the crossfire. One or more terrorists are said to be at large in South London.

We now cross to our reporter Joe Tidy outside St Thomas’ Hospital where the Prime Minister has just arrived to visit her lover. Joe, do we have an update on the condition of the victims”

“Yes Jayne, the hospital has just released a statement saying that they are treating three people for conditions related to exposure to smoke, none are thought to be life threatening injuries but all three will be kept in for observations. It has also been confirmed that one fatality has occurred, and that is an unnamed terrorist.

Prime Minister McFearson arrived a couple of minutes ago, and is reported to have stormed into the A&E Department like a woman possessed, ignoring a meeting with a delegation from the steel unions who are waiting in Downing Street, for now it’s back to you in the studio Jayne”.

The BBC reported that the Prime Minister had cut short a meeting with the NUT to rush to her fiancée’s bedside and even featured an interview with Christine Blower, where on behalf of her union and its members she sent best wishes to the Prime Minister, Miss Chaudhry and all other innocent people caught up in this evil act.

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Ushered from her fiancée’s presence by the medical staff, the PM took a deep breath and decided that the best thing she could do right now was address the nation. Her security people advised strongly against it, but Lynda was about to acquire another nickname: McFearless. She stripped off the flack jacket, pointing out that if anyone was going to shoot her they would most likely do so using a sniper rifle and go for a headshot, so a bullet proof vest was particularly useless, and anyway the attackers had used molotov cocktails, not guns.

She strode out to the front of the hospital and was instantly the focus of the eagle-eyed paparazzi. Questions were shouted at her and she ignored them, held up her hands and made a “settle down” gesture. “Ladies and gentlemen of the press, I will give a brief statement to you. I will not be answering questions at this time.”

She waited until the assembled reporters had quietened down. Microphones and tape recorders were thrust at her. She selected the ITN camera as her main focus, simply because it was in the middle. Rohit Kachroo noticed, muttered into his microphone, then mimed to Lynda, "Live in ... Three, two, One..."

"Ladies and Gentlemen of the United Kingdom, I would normally greet you with good morning, but this is not a good morning. As you may already know, yesterday I announced publicly my engagement to my good friend and loyal colleague, Labibah Chaudhry. And this morning two masked individuals, too cowardly to show their faces, too cowardly even to stand up publicly and declare their views, committed an act of terrorism against my fiancée, throwing two firebombs through the windows of her ground floor flat in South London.

"Thanks to the swift actions of her bodyguard, one of the attackers was brought instantly to justice for his cowardly actions, and Ms Chaudhry's life was saved by the actions of the same bodyguard and a concerned neighbour. Labibah is in a stable but critical condition, however she is receiving the best of care and is expected to make a full recovery.

"As for the perpetrators of this cowardly act, I say this: You will be hunted down like dogs, you will be brought to justice and you will go to prison for the rest of your lives. And while I am not normally a vindictive person, I think in this particular case the British public will excuse me for saying that I hope while you are locked up in maximum security, you meet some charming gentleman who decides to knock your soap on the floor in the showers!"

Her innuendo about the alleged sex-lives of prisoners was not lost on some of the reporters, who sniggered. But Lynda was not joking, the pure venom in her voice as she said it, and the fire burning in her eyes, coupled with the set of her face, soon silenced the titters.

"Any attack on *any* member of the house, from the greatest to the least, should be considered an attack on democracy by the nation as a whole. From the gunpowder plot, which we commemorate the *failure* of on November the fifth, to the murders of Airey Neave, Ian Gow, Sir Anthony Berry, the attacks on Nigel Jones - and the murder of his aide, and the stabbing of Stephen Timms. I say again, any and all attacks, for whatever imagined reason, against any member of this house, must be considered as an attack upon the rights and privileges of the people of this great nation, and against Democracy as a whole. If anyone has any information regarding the whereabouts of those behind this cowardly act, I urge you to contact the police immediately!

"Thank you".

Lynda paused to wipe away a tear from her face and turned her back on the renewed questions. She headed back inside, and was escorted to Labibah's bed in the High Dependency Unit. She called Downing Street and told them to cancel all her appointments for the next few days, then

summoned the person in charge of security at the hospital, asked him nicely if they could please allow the hospital to get back to something approaching normal?

That taken care of, and reasonably certain that visiting hours would not apply to the Prime Minister, she settled into an armchair by her lover's bed, to wait.

At some point, someone brought her a coffee, and later someone brought a sandwich. She left the room briefly to find a toilet, came back and resumed her vigil, holding the hand of the woman she loved and waiting for her to regain consciousness properly.

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The HDU consultant Dr Karen Gordon introduced herself to the Prime Minister and gave her an update on Labibah's condition and current treatment.

"We are slowly reducing the sedatives which are suppressing the overactive synapses and everything appears to be settling down. We are also continuing with 100% oxygen and the latest blood gases are showing great progress at purging the carbon monoxide from her system".

Letting the Prime Minister absorb the good news, she continued "I do need to warn you that there might be some ongoing concerns, they are unlikely but I would be negligent in my duty if I did not tell you about them. Firstly there is a possibility of neurological issues which could range from a degree of memory loss to a reduction in cognitive function, I do stress that it is unlikely as there is no indication of any problem. Also because of the carcinogenic nature of the smoke from fires, there is an unquantifiable increase in the risk of cancer in later life".

As the sedatives wore off, Labibah gradually eased back into the world, and when she somewhat wearily opened her eyes, she saw the beautiful but now somewhat haggard looking woman she loved, and she had feared she would never see again.

As her mind slowly started to function normally, an image came forward from her memories, it was the time that she first really became aware of Lynda, although not in a romantic or sexual way, she had probably seen her before many times at conferences and on television. The blonde was an MP after all, but it was during the 2013 autumn conference in Glasgow after the Scottish conference, when Labibah had seen Lynda in the Conference itself and up close during a fringe meeting. This conference came after the disasters that were the 2011 Holyrood election, 2012 Scottish Council elections and 2013 Council elections. The English woman was an inspiration, something she told several people including her hero and her former council colleague during a private meeting over a meal and several bottles of sparkling water.

As her eyes opened again and she saw the beautiful face again, she said "Love you" to the love of her life. This time much more clearly than her single word earlier, and weakly squeezed the hand holding her own. Her voice cracked as she tried to speak, her throat dry from the smoke

and the oxygen. "Water please" Labibah croaked, unable to reach the sipping cup on the side. Before Lynda could respond, the nursing assistant on the unit had put some water in the cup, lifted the mask from Biba's nose and mouth and offered the plastic straw.

Biba took a sip of the water, and it felt so good, then the mask was back, and the hissing oxygen began to fill her lungs again. Nurse Eva Gomez had already paged the on call Registrar as Biba came around.

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In East and South London, as well as the Hertfordshire town of Watford, teams from SCO19 of the Metropolitan Police and their colleagues from Hertfordshire Police raided properties known to be associated with the dead terrorist. They believed that they would find the other attacker at one of these properties. In kevlar helmets, balaclavas, fireproof overalls, body armour and tactical boots as well as an array of firearms they could not look more different from the smiling unarmed bobbie image that the Police still liked to portray and the British public wanted to be the daily reality. Gone was the knock on the door and the 'can we come in for a chat' to be replaced by explosive charges blowing the hinges of the door, followed by bodies crashing in accompanied by shouts of 'Armed police, don't move'.

Hiding in a built-in wardrobe of the back bedroom of an otherwise unremarkable semi-detached house in a quiet side road of an ordinary suburb was the terrorist who was currently at the top of target list for UK Police forces and British Intelligence agencies.

In total the raids resulted in six arrests, and white suited forensic teams began the painstaking work of acquiring every last bit of evidence. Computers and mobile phones were taken away in the first moments, after their respective locations were recorded in writing, drawing and photographs.

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While the cannula in her hand was ensuring that her electrolytes were maintained but did nothing for her thirst or the rawness of her throat caused by the hot gases she had breathed in. But taking regular and increasingly larger sips of water from the cup offered up by the nursing staff and Lynda made her throat feel better and her voice sound less and less like a frog with laryngitis.

As she took in her situation, Labibah became acutely aware of the total lack of modesty caused by the hospital gown. Obviously she was not concerned that Lynda could see her, as they had seen far more of each other than was currently exposed. While according to Islam it was acceptable for female staff to see her but not male staff. Biba however was unhappy with any of the medical staff being able to see her so exposed.

"If I have to stay here, please get me one of my respectable nighties, darling" she said to Lynda when she was sure that no one except her lover could hear.

Doctor Gordon returned shortly after with good news "All of the last two batches of tests have come back fine, but we would like you to stay overnight for observations. But in a private room rather here in the High Dependency Unit for your benefit and the smooth running of the unit".

This would also be echoed by the officers from SO1 if anyone actually asked them for their preference. It is much easier to protect a patient and a visitor in a private room than on a public ward.

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A police officer dressed as a motorcycle sergeant of the Traffic Division entered the room, and gave the Prime Minister a report into the progress of investigation, including the names of all those arrested and their alleged involvement. The final page was a statement that would be made at Scotland Yard if the Prime Minister agreed. Assistant Commissioner Rowley had sent it by hand, as he didn't want to run the risk of it leaking to the media ahead of Prime Ministerial approval. The motorcyclist was not a traffic policeman or a sergeant but actually a Chief Inspector out of Mark Rowley's own command.

The statement read.

Following the terrorist attack earlier today on Labibah Chaudhry MP, during which one of the terrorists, who I can now name as Mohammed Ali Khan of East Ham in East London, was shot and killed. A manhunt began for the second attacker and any others involved in the planning and carrying out of this attack. I can now confirm that following a number of raids by the Metropolitan and Hertfordshire Police six people have been taken into custody and are being questioned in several police stations across London. I can name the second terrorist as Michael James Allenby of South Oxhey in Hertfordshire.

Speculation has been made that this was an Islamist attack, I would now ask you to stop such idle speculation. While the investigation is still carrying on it is clear that the attack was not something ordered by IS or any other Islamic terrorist organisation, despite claims to the contrary. Comment has been made by certain elements of the media about it being 'merely' a hate crime on the ground of Miss Chaudhry's sexuality, there is no such thing as merely a hate crime, as any such crimes are an abomination to a civilised society. However it remains a terrorist crime not only because of the victim, that the property attacked was the residence of two members of Parliament, regardless of possible risk to life, but also because of the nature of the weapons used in the attack by the terrorists.



could only be handled by the PM herself. After subordinates were denied access unless they allowed the police to search the red boxes, something Lynda thought was a bit draconian but the cops on the doors had their orders, Sir Malcolm had brought the boxes over himself, Presenting his ID at the security checkpoints, telling them that he personally guaranteed that the boxes contained only papers, he had packed them himself, and if *he* wanted to kill the Prime Minister, he would certainly have plenty of opportunities that didn't involve blowing up a hospital!

He also brought one of Labibah's night gowns and her dressing gown. Lynda helped her lover change after the Cabinet Secretary had left, and then went through the red boxes. A sure sign that 'Biba was recovering was when she started to show an interest in the contents.

That afternoon a man in uniform entered the room and handed Lynda an envelope. She read the content and a hard smile settled on her face. "Good work", she told the policeman. Then she read the last page. "Hmmm... Pen..." She pulled one out of her handbag and began scribbling on the page.

She circled "shot and killed. A manhunt", wrote "*One sentence. Comma instead of full stop and no capital A*". She crossed out "police stations across London" and wrote "*secure locations*". A brief pause for thought and she replaced "I can name" with "*I am now able to identify*". "Still carrying on" she replaced with "*still ongoing*", She replaced the comma after "Islamic attack" with a colon, then replaced the following clause with "*I urge you to refrain from such idle speculation.*" "carrying on" she changed to "*underway*", she changed the comma after "sexuality" to a full stop, and added the words "*I must stress that*" to the beginning of the newly following sentence.

At the end she wrote, "*Good effort, G+. Ha ha! Lynda*"

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That night, at the insistence of the medical staff, her security guards and Sir Malcolm, Lynda went back to Downing Street and slept in the flat. It was lonely. More than it had been before in fact. She managed to sleep though, better than she had in the chair at the hospital, and a shower and change of clothes the next morning made her feel much better. As did a bacon sandwich and some real coffee.

She caught up on the red boxes and other work that had accumulated in her absence, noticed that there was a full cabinet meeting scheduled for the following week in order to discuss plans for the upcoming conference, followed the next day by the Electoral Reform cabinet committee that she personally chaired. She growled softly. She would need Labibah by her side for those.

She headed back to the hospital and was overjoyed to learn that her fiancée would be released from hospital that afternoon. She headed to the room Labibah was in, calling Garry, her driver, as she did so to arrange for some of her lover's clothes to be sent over.

“Hi sweetie, how’re you feeling? The doctor said they are letting you come home today. I thought we could spend a few days up at Chequers, because next week is busy! Would you like that?”

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A tear formed unbidden in Labibah’s eye when she heard Lynda say ‘I thought I’d lost you there’, giving Lynda’s hand another squeeze. “Don’t get rid of me that easily darling” she replied, hiding her own fear that she might have lost Lynda, but she was back now and she intended to be with the blonde forever.

Biba laid there as Lynda sorted the insurance claim, and spoke to someone in the office asking for a nightie and dressing gown to be sent across the river. But she was shocked when Lynda slid her hand under the sheet and up her leg, briefly playing with her. Labibah noticed that Lynda was constantly ensuring no one could see. When Lynda said that she quite liked how exposed she was and that they should get one of them for play time, Biba could only laugh. Although it was reassuring that even in her current rough state, Lynda still was full of desire for her.

Sir Malcolm brought her nightie with him when he brought the red boxes, clearly there had been a row between the usual messengers and the police that were now standing guard, and he had got around their insistence at seeing what was in the boxes by pointing out that he unfettered access to the Prime Minister so he could hardly be considered a security threat, Biba did not doubt that he could be intimidating if he really wanted to be, especially when dealing with those employed even loosely by the State.

Biba made sure that she was thoroughly covered all the time Sir Malcolm was there, she did understand that he needed to deal with the day to day practicalities of Government, regardless of the unusual setting, and so there were only the three of them in the room during his visit. All medical staff banished, much to the disgust of the nursing staff. But the medical staff seemed to be fawning when it came to Lynda, perhaps it was that in accordance with party policy one of the first things that happened following the election was the end of the 1% pay cap, and a guarantee of genuinely independent pay review bodies for all public sector employees.

As soon as Sir Malcolm left, Biba changed into her [nightie](#) and [dressing gown](#), feeling a lot less exposed than wearing that piece of material they called a hospital gown. Also now being in a side room meant only fleeting visits from medical staff and no police presence in the room. While she was sure that the police were overreacting, but that was a repeat of the incident that put her in here in the first place.

A police sergeant in full motorcycle gear appeared, and after identifying himself as a Chief Inspector from Assistant Commissioner Rowley’s office handed something to Lynda, who read it, clearly taking in each word. While the exact contents were unknown to Biba, it was clearly an update on the investigation, which Lynda seemed pleased with. When she finished reading the

short document, by the standards of something produced by the Civil Service at least, Lynda read a single sheet of paper, and took a pen to it, making corrections before handing it back to the Chief Inspector, who immediately departed. When he was gone, Lynda gave Labibah a summary of the report. It appeared that it was a homophobic attack, carried out by a group that contained both Christian and Muslim religious zealots brought together by their hatred of LGBT people, and in the initial interview it was being claimed that it was not an attempt to kill, Allenby claiming that they did not know anyone was home. The initial interviews had failed to establish how the terrorists even knew where Labibah lived.

But Mark Rowley had given his personal assurance that everyone involved in this attack would be brought to account, and Biba had complete faith in that, as she had the highest regard for his professionalism from the dealings she had with him and his team, most recently regarding the short notice Presidential visit.

Later as they watched the television news, Biba couldn't help notice a sly smile on Lynda's face as AC Rowley briefed the waiting media on the current state of the enquiries. "So you are a scriptwriter for the Police now are you my love, is there no end to your talents" Biba joked certain that the corrections Lynda made earlier, were now coming out of the mouth of one of the country's leading police officers.

They spent a couple of hours sharing small talk, discussing the contents of the boxes and discussing the forthcoming autumn conference. Lynda's second as leader but first as Prime Minister and the party's largest ever, with huge numbers of new MPs and councillors as well as a greatly increased party membership to be dealt with. The move from Bournemouth to Manchester had been dealt with efficiently by the Conference team. Arranging the Conference venue, fringe venues outside the Conference Centre where necessary and hotel rooms for key delegates.

Apart from large numbers of press interviews, the three main events for Lynda at Conference were the Celebration Rally on Saturday evening, a question and answer session on Sunday afternoon and the finale, the Leader's Speech on Tuesday.

Eventually Biba, the medical staff, the bodyguards and finally Sir Malcolm managed to persuade Lynda to return to Downing Street for the night. Biba slept well considering everything that had happened and the fact that she woke up a couple of times, by nursing staff checking on her progress. It didn't surprise her that Lynda was back earlier, indeed arriving almost as soon as the doctors had finished morning rounds. They had informed Biba that all was well and that she could go home later, with a small pharmacy of drugs to take or to have on standby if anything unexpected happened. That made her smile, she was being given medicines for if the expected unexpected happened. Her mind goes back to Donald Rumsfeld and his unknown knowns etc etc.

When Lynda got the news she was coming home, the blonde was straight on the phone to arrange for some clothes to be brought to the hospital, which Biba thought was cute that Lynda wanted to take care of her, but she had already arranged with the staff of Number 10.

Lynda asked how she was feeling and whether she would like to spend a few days at Chequers. Biba brought a finger to the edge of her mouth in a 'hmmm let me think' gesture. "I'm feeling fine darling, and of course I would like a couple of days at Chequers but I don't care where I spend a couple of days as long as it is with you" she said slipping out of bed and taking the blonde in her arms, kissing her passionately, no doubt to the embarrassment of some present, but frankly Biba didn't care.

A small case arrived with some clothes shortly after, and with only Lynda in the room Biba got changed into a [jumper and jeans](#) ready to leave when her medication was finally sorted. She made a mental note to have a word with Paul Burstow, the Health Secretary or Finbarr Cronin, the Under Secretary responsible for NHS Productivity to see if anything could be done to speed up discharge procedures and free up beds sooner. Although she knew it was a minor issue compared to people 'bed blocking' due to them being kept in hospital when no longer needing to be there, as community care was not in place to support them in their own homes.

Lynda might be expecting Biba to rest and recuperate, but she had other plans, there was a lot of work and no small amount of shopping to be done before they left for Manchester. Biba would be there for Lynda, during her key moments, but she had committed to attend several fringe events and some training sessions, on behalf of Liberal Democrat Women/Ethnic Minority Liberal Democrats and ALDC/LGA. The party's success had been so fast they were now critically short of candidates for councils and Assemblies as well as activists for bread and butter work in constituencies that MPs, MEPs, MSPs, AMs and Cllrs don't have time for. The pair of them had so much to do, and Labibah also had to bear in mind that she was now also the fiancée of the Prime Minister and Party Leader.

As they walked out of the hospital, she was not surprised to find reporters and camera crews, shouted questions to both Lynda and herself, some that just made her want to slap the person shouting out, but others that deserved answers. So Labibah paused, and made a brief statement that answered some of the sensible reporter's questions.

"Firstly I would like to thank all the staff at the hospital and apologise to those inconvenienced by my stay and the chaos that followed. My special thanks go to those who risked their own lives to save me from the fire caused by the terror attack on my home.

I am well and ready to return to work, the business of Government and the needs of my constituents don't stop because two terrorists tried to kill me with petrol bombs.

My fiancée has been by my side throughout my recovery, but she has also continued to run the country even from my bedside. The intolerant will never succeed, those who seek to divide us will fail and in failing will make us stronger and more united”.

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Lynda walked with her fiancée out of the hospital, grateful for once that the Compensation Culture that had resulted in American hospitals refusing to allow perfectly fit patients to walk out of hospital was not yet that prevalent here. While she understood the desire of the hospitals not to be sued if a discharged patient tripped and fell, it would not look good for ‘Biba’ to exit the hospital in a wheelchair. She stood by her love, an arm gently around the younger woman’s waist, as ‘Biba made her short statement to the press.

Someone asked them to kiss, and Lynda glared. “Don’t be obscene!” She responded. “Unless *you* want to get up here in front of the cameras and kiss *your* boyfriend?” The fact that the reporter who made the request was male was not lost on the assembled reporters, who mostly chuckled as the man blushed. Lynda shrugged. She was making a point by accusing the man of being gay, she neither knew nor cared whether it was true. “That is all for now, thank you ladies and gentlemen”.

She led Biba to the car. “Back entrance, please Gary. We’ve had enough excitement for one day!”

Back at Number Ten Lynda led the Muslim woman up to their flat. No longer *her* flat, she decided, but *theirs*. “Right, precious, you are now officially living here. We may as well make it official as everyone knows anyway and you don’t have anywhere else to live”. She paused at the entrance, giggled, and scooped Labibah into her arms, easily lifting the slim young woman off the floor, carried her over the threshold, and set her down again. “Sorry, I just had to do that”.

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Waking up the next morning was one of the most pleasant things ever to happen to the Prime Minister. The soft, warm naked skin of her lover was pressed against her own warm naked skin under the duvet, and she very definitely wanted to get used to finding it there. They had fallen asleep after making love gently, Lynda using her fingers inside and thumb on her clit to give Labibah her first climax since the attack.

‘Biba’s response had been far more energetic than Lynda expected, a sure sign in her opinion that the young woman was feeling better. They had fallen asleep in each other’s arms.

Now, Lynda yawned and blinked at the sunlight that was creeping around the curtains. She felt languid, content, unwilling to move. ‘Biba’s naked body was curled up as the small spoon, her back to Lynda. A soft, cute whistling noise came from her nose as she breathed evenly, still asleep. Lynda lay still enjoying the feeling of waking up next to someone, the wonderfully comfortable feeling of a pair of warm, naked buttocks pressed into her belly, a feeling she had

only experienced a few times recently, and before then not for a couple of decades. Celibacy is not what it's cracked up to be, she decided.

Something she had always wanted to do now occurred to her. On the few occasions prior to this that they had slept together, Biba had been awake before her. She smiled wickedly and gently moved her arm from where it was draped over her sleeping lover, eased her hips back a touch and slipped her hand between her belly and Labibah's bottom. She found the younger woman's lower lips, eased them apart and began stroking the softer, smoother flesh between them.

As her lover stirred, Lynda slipped two fingers into Biba's core. She had always wanted to wake someone up in this way, and moreover, had often wondered what it would feel like to be woken the same way. Treating her precious PPS fiancée to the 'erotic alarm clock' was definitely a requirement of their relationship that she knew she would do from now on whenever she got the chance.

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Before they went to bed the first night out of the hospital Labibah had been concerned that she might suffer from bad dreams brought on by the trauma, however Lynda had the perfect solution, because she had fallen into a sated sleep in the blonde's arms, and the comforting presence had driven away any night terrors that had been waiting to visit her.

Biba was not entirely sure if she was awake or dreaming as she felt soft touches against her sensitive centre. She was certain she was awake a fraction later when she felt Lynda slide two fingers into her aroused sex, or just maybe she had died and gone to heaven. "Oh yes Lynda" she softly purred as she wiggled her backside against Lynda's belly "I love you so much darling, but this is one amazing way to wake" Biba continued. She could get used to this sort of wake up call, and she would certainly love to reciprocate on other occasions.

She wanted badly to kiss her lover, but that would involve breaking the contact between them and Biba was enjoying the attention too much to change things, at least for a little while. "Oh" Biba let out in a long soft moan as she felt the nature of Lynda's touch change, and the English woman's thumb brush against her clitoris. She adjusted her position slightly to give Lynda more room, but remained wrapped in Lynda's arms.

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All too soon their love making had to give way, because although it is a commonly held belief by the public that MPs do nothing but holiday during recesses of Parliament, that is barely true of any Member and most especially untrue for the Prime Minister. Sure, the number of red boxes and papers contained therein reduces slightly as the Civil Service takes something akin to a summer break, but affairs of State, constituency business and Party matters do not stop.

Coming up in the next couple of weeks was a working visit by the newly elected President Andrzej Duda of Poland and the Party Conference. Both events would be closely scrutinised by the world's media.

The visit had been organised before the Polish President and British Prime Minister had been elected. However, has been given an additional aspect, due to the new President having spent his political career representing a strongly right of centre and social conservative Law and Justice ([Prawo i Sprawiedliwość](#)) party and both [he and his wife](#) having very strongly expressed Catholic views, which did not sit easily against the Liberalism and lesbianism of 'The Second Couple'. Biba smiled as she thought of this description for Lynda and herself; she viewed the Queen and Prince Philip as the country's First Couple.

One area where there was some agreement between the British and Polish Governments was the need for reform in the European Union. While the massive landslide for a pro-Europe party had killed off David Cameron, the Referendum and most of all UKIP, it was long standing Lib Dem policy that Europe needed reform in all of its institutions, and the Poles were quite open in their opposition to what they saw as a Franco-German lock on change.

Nick Harvey would meet the President at RAF Northolt, where the pair would be among the wreath layers at the adjacent [Polish War Memorial](#) and be at the formal opening of the Polish War Memorial Remembrance Garden commemorating the Polish participants in the Battle of Britain. Before the President attended an event at the Polish Embassy in the evening.

On the second and final day of the visit, Lynda would attend the commemoration service at St Paul's along with the Polish President and his wife as well as Prince Edward representing the Queen. After the service the President would lay a wreath at the memorial to Polish pilots in the crypt and then return to Downing Street for a luncheon followed by a formal meeting in the afternoon. The final event of the visit would be a reception at Lancaster House, hosted by Nick and the President for Polish WW2 veterans and personnel serving in British Armed Forces of Polish origin.

The Downing Street discussions were certain to involve immigration issues, both within the EU and the migrant crisis, as well as security issues given the increasing threat from Russia, in the minds of the former Soviet satellites.

After checking with the FCO and MOD, as well as Tim and Nick's offices Biba was sure that the Presidential visit was all in hand, and that all other appropriate Departments would provide full briefings ahead of the formal and informal meetings with President Duda..

"Everything is set for the Duda's visit, and as they are staying at the Polish Embassy, so the Downing Street staff only have the luncheon to deal with" Biba said to Lynda as she stood behind the blonde and began to give her a shoulder massage.

At Conference Lynda would have two big set piece moments, the opening Rally, where she would lead the celebration of the Party's success of the election, or more accurately Lynda's success, but also inspire the Party onward rather than resting on their laurels. Then there would

be more public and set piece Leader's speech in the face of the World's media. There would also be endless meetings with journalists, politicians and others. Labibah needed to be all over Lynda's programme as well as attending various events in her own right. Her position as both a PPS and now as Lynda's partner would seriously compromise her ability to say anything too political but she would definitely be able to contribute to training of future MP's, councillors and activists, as well as show her support for her friends.

"How are the Leader's Speech and the Rally Address going, I don't doubt you will have the party and country eating out of your very talented hands" she continued as her hands cupped the Prime Ministerial breasts and softly squeezed. "Not distracting you, am I?"

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"Ugh! It's almost a shame that Communism fell... At least we wouldn't have to deal with Catholic extremists..." Lynda muttered. Then blushed. "God, I really shouldn't say things like that, should I? That's almost Reaganism. Still, if I can't say what I really think, to my most trusted advisor, in the privacy of our home, what hope is there for democracy?" She smiled, then groaned softly as she leaned back into Labibah's strong fingers as they worked away the knots in her neck and shoulders.

"That guy is such a bigot. There is no way we are going to see eye to eye. And you, my love, are going to be on my arm the whole time. You are my life partner, and I don't care what anyone else says, I am not going to bow to pressure on this!"

There had been "suggestions" from various quarters, according to Sir Malcolm, through whom they had come to Lynda, that for the duration of the visit the couple should revert to a more 'professional' relationship, to avoid offending the Polish premier and his wife. Lynda had tried to find out who these suggestions had come from, and had been obfuscated by the Civil Service. Which, in her opinion, just pointed the finger!

But the Prime Minister was adamant that the two of them would appear as a couple or not at all, and as the latter option would be a major breach of etiquette, the naysayers had been silenced. She looked over the schedule and nodded, adding her signature where needed.

"Um... yes, actually, you are, but it's the sort of distraction I can live with." Lynda giggled. "I wonder what would happen if you sat on my lap in the House? Hee hee!" She blushed and shook her head. "Not a good idea. Someone would object on the grounds that you don't hold a cabinet post, and thus were not entitled to sit on the front bench... I could create a cabinet post for you? Minister for Lesbian Sex?" She laughed and leaned back in the chair, her head resting comfortably between Biba's breasts. Tipping her face up, she smiled warmly. "Kiss me?"

A few minutes later, she turned her attention back to the papers scattered on her desk. "Yes, right... Um... Speeches. I'm on the third draft of the keynote speech. Opening address is with the Central Office for approval of the final draft. Although why they have to give approval is

beyond me. I'm the Prime Minister!" She laughed. It was democracy in action, of course. It would be very bad if, for example, the party leader stood up at the start of the conference and announced a total u-turn on every major policy that the party held dear...

"I take it the change of venue didn't cause too many hiccups? I know you were in the middle of handling that when..." She shrugged. "More delegates, bigger venue. And we'll have more press, more speakers, more side events... More donations, more money coming in! I'm really looking forward to the conference!" She grinned.

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President Duda did not make himself popular with the British electorate. The gutter press labelled him Andy Doodah, which caused a flurry of communications between the Foreign Office and Polish Embassy, the net result of which was an official statement by the Home Office that the British Press was not under government control, that freedom of the press was enshrined in the foundation stones of British Democracy, and the Polish Embassy should take the matter up with the newspapers in question!

The fact that Duda made several blatant references to the bible's teaching on the sanctity of marriage and the holy estate of matrimony between a man and a woman in his speech both at the war memorial and the embassy dinner (to which Lynda was not invited) was not lost on the press, nor on the [Lambda Warszawa Association](#) who had published an open letter to Lynda asking for her support.

A peaceful protest by LGBT rights activists outside the Polish embassy was attacked by right wing thugs, and things quickly got out of hand. Lynda watched the news coverage with horror the following morning as the BBC seemed to be trying to put the blame on the protestors. She picked up the phone, and dialled a number. "Hello, is that Mr Hall's office? May I speak with him please? It's a matter of some urgency. This is Lynda McFearson. Yes, *the* Lynda McFearson. Thank you." She waited a few moments. "Ah Tony, hello, it's Lynda. ... I'm very well thanks, you? ... Glad to hear it. Look, I know about the BBC not bowing to political pressure and all that, but I'm watching the news report about the Polish Embassy protest. Don't you think it was just a *little* bit biased? I mean your reporter did report the facts, but, from what I can see on my screen almost every bit of violence shown involves someone with rainbow colours putting the boot into some poor soul with a cross on. In fact, it's the same two people just from different angles. ITN's coverage clearly shows that as an isolated incident with a lot more violence perpetrated by guys with swastika tattoos! Now, I'm not wanting to interfere with the freedom of the press, but seriously, don't you think you should be just a *little* even handed?" She waited while Tony Hall, Director General of the BBC gave her the usual platitudes about editorial freedom and then drew an analogy of him being like an admiral in command of a fleet but having no direct command over the ships in the fleet.

"You know, Tony, that's a great analogy. You see, if the captain of a warship in Her Majesty's navy took it into his head to sail up the Thames and open fire on the Houses of Parliament, what do you think would happen to him? ... Exactly. If he survived, he would certainly spend the rest of his life in prison! And what do you think would happen to the admiral who put such an unstable lunatic in command of a warship? So what do you think should happen to a news editor who effectively does the same thing with pictures? And what do you think should happen to the person who has ultimate responsibility for that editor? ... I knew you would understand. Thank you Tony. Good talking to you as ever!"

She hung up and looked at her fiancée. "Slimy bastard!" She shrugged and turned the TV off. "I'm not looking forward to this. But I do think we should make a statement. Do you have a rainbow hijab?"

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"Of course you can say what you are thinking with me darling, I will not go blabbing to the Press"

"You're right about him and his Party, but I was thinking that it would be better if I don't go to St Paul's, as the story would be about us rather than Battle of Britain heroes. I have been invited to the Memorial at [Capel le Ferne](#), so we could cover both functions at the same time, and with a decent driver and following wind I will be back in plenty of time for the luncheon".

As Lynda leaned back, her head came to rest squarely between her breasts, soft blonde hair against the dark green of her blouse. "I don't think Mister Speaker would be too happy, and the red tops would go ballistic, with Paul Dacre and the Mail disappearing up their own collective backside, but it sure would be fun".

Biba laughed as Lynda suggested a Cabinet post for her. "Secretary of State for Sapphic Affairs, an interesting promotion Prime Minister and how big would my Department's budget be?" Lynda tipped her head back and asked Biba to kiss her, which Labibah was more than willing to do, starting with soft kisses and then getting more heated as it carried on.

"You're right about him being a bigot, and we should not pander to bigotry, and I am always proud to be at your side, but we also have to develop working relationships with people like him, that is Realpolitik my love".

Moving on to the subject of the Conference, while continuing to intimately touch her lover. "Yes, the Head Office team told me that the Tories were only too willing to swap locations and dates after the election, as there was no way they could have filled it. As for your speech, I am certain they are not trying to censor you, indeed I would imagine that the opposite is true, ensuring that no-one else goes off message, at least from the Front Bench. Conference is the ultimate seat of power in the Party, as you know from the way your Leadership started at the Glasgow Conference last October" Biba said as she bent down and kissed Lynda passionately again.

As a party of Government it was essential that all of the Parliamentarians speaking were 'singing off the same hymn sheet'. But of course Liberals being Liberals, curve balls a plenty could come from rank and file membership during seemingly unremarkable debates, but then there was no way for even the most expert Conference watcher to predict the unpredictable.

AAAAAAAAAAAA

The visit started to go wrong at the opening of the Memorial Garden, when President Duda with his arm around his wife, somehow managed to include inappropriate comments about the sanctity of marriage between a man and a woman. With the instant response that social media gives, a protest was organised for outside the Polish Embassy in time for the evening function by a variety of LGBT rights organisations. What was intended as a peaceful protest, was turned into a near riot by a counter protest by the far Right.

When they rose in the morning Lynda and Labibah watched the news as usual and saw the various coverage. While ITN and even Sky News put the blame for the violence at the door of the clearly fascist hooligans, but the BBC showed an LGBT demonstrator kicking a fallen skinhead, and not just that but showing it from different angles to make it look it more than an isolated event, but failing to show right wing violence against entirely peaceful protesters.

The irony of neo-nazi thugs supporting the President of Poland, against a background of anti-immigrant sentiment, especially from Poland was not lost on Biba, nor was the knowledge that these violent bigots would never even understand that irony.

Normally whenever Lynda complained about the BBC's report, Labibah would roll her eyes, but on this occasion she was in full agreement. While listening to her partner making very clear her displeasure to the Director General, Biba was also hitting the phone.

Her first call was to Adam Swan, Nick Harvey's PPS, to see if he could stand in for her at Capel le Ferne, as she was now attending St Pauls with the Prime Minister. Adam agreed, and so she rang her contact for the ceremony at the Memorial. The former Air Commodore accepted her apology for her late cancellation and thanked her for finding another suitable politician to stand in for her. The next call was to Nick, who was again assigned to her for the trip to the coast, informing the former paratrooper of his new principal for the day, and where to pick him up. Technically Adam would not have been entitled to a driver/bodyguard but he was doing her a favour, so it was only fair that he should inherit her protection and travel arrangements.

"Right, I am now coming to St Pauls with you, and I will just make a call to see if I can get a rainbow hijab. We should send a message of support to [Lambda Warszawa Association](#) and to the innocent victims of the right wing bullies from last night, but it should not distract from the purpose of the Thanksgiving Service." Biba said as she pulled Lynda into a hug "As for the BBC, Tony Hall is really going to get a grip, because this is not just the usual issue of politicians' complaining that they are not being dealt with fairly, and with the Charter expiring at the end of

next year, that should focus their minds. Which I have no doubt you will be making perfectly clear to John and his team at DCMS ahead of the next discussions about the renewing of the Charter..”

AAAAAAAAA

The short notice order for a rainbow hijab failed to arrive on time, so Labibah wore the Air Force Blue one that she had originally planned to wear at Capel le Ferne. But she did pin it in place with multi-colour pins, and attached a rainbow ribbon to her lapel underneath the shiny wings brooch that the Air Commodore had given her.

“Ready when you are, Lynda” Biba called as she made her way back into their living room. “I think the Dudas’ will expect me to shrivel up like a slug covered in salt as I walk into the Cathedral” she continued, a light tone in her voice as made the joke.

But Biba’s real fear was that the whole issue would upstage the purpose of the service, and detract from the gratitude that should be shown to all those who risked and sacrificed so much for the freedom of the Nation, from Britain, its then Empire and from European and other countries.

As they left Number 10, there were shouted questions from the press lobby about meeting President Duda and the recent unrest. But Biba did not respond, simply moving to the driver’s side of the car and getting in the back seat..

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The convoy swept through London, Lynda’s arrival timed to be just before the foreign dignitaries, so that she could greet the guests in increasing order of precedence and finally welcome the Queen’s representative

Lynda and Labibah were greeted by the clergy at the head of the stairs . They took their place and greeted the High Commissioners of Australia, Barbados, Canada, Jamaica, New Zealand, South Africa and Zambia. They also greeted the Ambassadors of Belgium, Czech Republic, France, Ireland, Slovak Republic and the United States. Then because of his senior position the President of Poland and his wife arrived, and the warmth they had received from the American Ambassador turned into a frosty and grudging meeting with the Poles. Both sides not wishing to embarrass their nations or the veterans of the Battle of Britain, but clearly not relishing meeting the other party. Then, Prince Edward and the Countess of Wessex attended as the representatives of the Queen, and having greeted the Royals, Lynda and Labibah took their own seats, and the service began. The archbishop focused his sermon on duty and sacrifice in the name of a civilised and tolerant society, and the thanks that are due to those that serve without making demands.

When the service ended, the programme for the Presidential visit called for Lynda to welcome the Dudas to luncheon in Downing Street, which was to be a working lunch to discuss mutual

interests, notable the reforms that both wished to see in the EU, the refugee crisis, the situation of Poles living in the UK and the growing threat to the West of a resurgent Russia. Given the issues that the Polish couple had with the lifestyle of Britain's second couple, this was going to test the political and diplomatic skills as well as the tact of the translators

In true Yes Prime Minister style the final press communique had already been agreed even before the Polish Air Force plane had left Warsaw for RAF Northolt, The media however wished to concentrate on the issue of homophobia and gay rights, both leaders fielded the questions and skillfully returned the focus to the matters mentioned in the press release, not because either for one moment had changed their attitude or that they had become best friends but for the bigger picture of the best interests of their nations.

Nothing was going to bring their respective positions on gay rights or refugees noticeably closer, the discussions regarding military cooperation was able to be announced with a joint exercise early in 2016 to be held in Eastern Poland, and the reassurance that Poles working in the UK and entitled to child benefit could continue to send it home to Poland. The Tories had bowed to the right wing press' agenda and announced that it would stop. Ignoring that it was entirely a false economy as Polish families would be more likely to bring the children to Britain, leading to a requirement for additional education, health and welfare budgets.

There was no disguising the chilly personal atmosphere between the two leaders, which was echoed by their partners. But Lynda managed a professional handshake as she escorted the President and his wife out of Number 10, and off to the Polish Embassy before they became Nick Harvey's problem for the evening reception at Lancaster House for Polish veterans and serving members of the British Armed Forces of Polish origin.

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With the Polish President out of the country there was no repeat of the unrest of the previous night, largely because the protest outside the Polish embassy broke up as the Presidential party left. That gave the haters no target, but it was clear from the previous night's violence against a peaceful protest and the attack on Labibah that there was a significant amount of right wing extremism and homophobia in the country. The clear division in society stoked by the right wing media over the recent years of austerity and more recently by social media. The nature of their algorithms reinforces views by guiding the user to other like minded people, thus validating even the most misguided of views.

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