

### Tekst 3

*De volgende tekst is het begin van The Final Cut, een politieke roman van Michael Dobbs.*

The door of the stage manager's box opened a fraction for Harry Grime to peer into the auditorium.

'Hasn't arrived, then,' he growled.

Harry, a leading dresser at the Royal Shakespeare Company, didn't like Francis Urquhart. Fact was, he loathed the man. Harry was blunt, Yorkshire, a raging queen going to seed who divided the universe into them that were for him and them that weren't. And Urquhart, in Harry's uncomplicated and unhumble opinion, weren't.

'Be buggered if that bastard'll get back,' Harry had vouchsafed to the entire company last election night. Yet Urquhart had, and Harry was.

Three years on, Harry had changed his hair colour from vivid chestnut to a premature orange and shed his wardrobe of tight leather in preference for something that let him breathe and allowed his stomach to fall more naturally, but he had moved none of his political opinions. Now he awaited the arrival of the Prime Minister with the sensibilities of a Russian digging in before Stalingrad. Urquhart was coming, already he felt violated.

'Sod off, Harry, get out from under my feet,' the stage manager snapped from his position alongside the cobweb of wires that connected the monitors and microphones with which he was supposed to control the production. 'Go check that everyone's got the right size codpiece or something.'

Harry bristled, about to retaliate, then thought better of it. The Half had been called, all hands were now at their posts backstage and last-minute warfare over missing props and loose buttons was about to be waged. No one needed unnecessary aggravation, not tonight. He slunk away to recheck the wigs in the quick-change box at the back of the stage.

It was to be a performance of *Julius Caesar* and the auditorium of the Swan Theatre was already beginning to fill, although more slowly than usual. The Swan, a galleried and pine-clad playhouse that stands to the side of the RSC's main theatre in Stratford-upon-Avon, is constructed in semi-circular homage to the Elizabethan style and has an intimate and informal atmosphere, 432 seats max. Delightful for the performance but a nightmare for Prime Ministerial security. What if some casual theatre-goer who loved Shakespeare much yet reviled Francis Urquhart more, more even than did Harry Grime, took the opportunity to ... To what? No one could be sure. The Stratford bard's audiences were not renowned for travelling out with assorted weaponry tucked away in pocket or purse – Ibsen fans, maybe, Chekhov's too, but surely not for Shakespeare? Yet no one was willing to take responsibility, not in the presence of most of the Cabinet, a handful of lesser Ministers, assorted editors and wives and other selected powers in the realm who had been gathered together to assist with celebrations for the thirty-second wedding anniversary of Francis and Elizabeth Urquhart.

Geoffrey Booza-Pitt was the gatherer. The youngest member of Francis Urquhart's Cabinet, he was Secretary of State for Transport and a man with an

uncanny eye for opportunity. And for distractions, of all forms. And what better distraction from the shortcomings of Ministerial routine than to block-book a hundred seats in honour of the Master's anniversary and invite the most powerful men in the land to pay public homage? Two thousand pounds' worth of tickets returned a hundred-fold of personal publicity and left favours scattered throughout Westminster, including Downing Street. That's precisely what Geoffrey had told Matasuyo, car giant to the world and corporate sponsor to the RSC, who had quietly agreed to pay for the lot. It hadn't cost him a penny. Not that Geoffrey would tell.

They arrived late, their coming almost regal. If nothing else, after the eleven years they had lived in Downing Street, they knew how to make an entrance. Elizabeth, always carefully presented, appeared transported onto a higher plane in an evening dress of black velvet with a high wing collar and a necklace of pendant diamonds and emeralds that caught the theatre's lighting and reflected it back to dazzle all other women around her. The wooden floors and galleries of the playhouse complained as people craned forward to catch a glimpse and a ripple of applause broke out amongst a small contingent of American tourists which took hold, the infection making steady if reluctant progress through the auditorium to the evident embarrassment of many.

*'Le roi est arrivé.'*

## Tekst 3 De volgende tekst...

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- 4p 3 Geef van elk van de volgende beweringen aan of deze met betrekking tot de passage wel of niet juist is.
- 1 Harry neemt, al verkleed voor zijn rol, een kijkje in de zaal.
  - 2 Harry had verwacht dat Francis Urquhart de verkiezingen zou verliezen.
  - 3 Door de spanning vlak voor de opvoering ontstaat er ruzie tussen de toneelmeester en Harry.
  - 4 De veiligheid van de hoge gasten is te weinig een punt van discussie geweest.
  - 5 *Julius Caesar* wordt exclusief voor Francis en Elizabeth Urquhart en hun gasten opgevoerd.
  - 6 Geoffrey Booza-Pitt heeft eigen belangen bij de organisatie van de feestelijke gelegenheid.
  - 7 Het bedrijf dat de kaartjes heeft gefinancierd wordt daar in publicitair opzicht niets wijzer van.
  - 8 Het applaus bij binnenkomst van Francis en Elizabeth komt moeizaam op gang.
- Noteer het nummer van elke bewering, gevolgd door “wel” of “niet”.