

Quiz

Written by [James Graham](#)

Cast

The ensemble occupy the contestant seats around the circumference of the set and rotate the following roles:

- WARM-UP *warm-up comedian*
- JUDGE RIVLIN *presiding over the case*
- NICHOLAS HILLIARD QC *barrister for the Crown*
- SONIA WOODLEY QC *barrister for the Ingrams*
- CHARLES INGRAM *thirty-eight year-old, army major*
- DIANA INGRAM *thirty-six year-old quiz fanatic, his wife*
- TECWEN WHITTOCK *forties, accused co-conspirator with the Ingrams*
- MAJOR GENERAL ROBERTS *army officer, MOD*
- PAUL SMITH *CEO of Celador*
- ADRIAN POLLOCK *Diana's brother*
- QUIZMASTER *a pub quiz host*
- PADDY SPOONER *frequent contestant on the show*
- DES O'CONNOR *game show host*
- JIM BOWEN *game show host*
- LESLIE CROWTHER *game show host*
- JOHN DE MOL *TV producer*
- MARK BURNETT *TV producer*
- DAVID LIDDIMENT *director of programmes at ITV*
- CLAUDIA ROSENCRANTZ *commissioner at ITV*
- DAVID BRIGGS *TV and radio producer*
- RACHEL DA COSTA *second contestant on the show*
- PRODUCTION MANAGER *on the show*
- DS WILLIAMSON *lead investigator on the case*
- RUTH SETTLE *head of press for the show*
- ADRIAN WOOLFE *head of marketing for the show*
- HILDA OGDEN *Coronation Street character*
- ELSIE TANNER *Coronation Street character*
- ALYN MORICE *Professor of Respiratory Medicine*
- **Various Journalists**
- ARMY OFFICERS
- STUDIO TECHNICIANS
- PUNTERS

Citizens and other minor characters

with

- CHRIS TARRANT *TV and radio personality, the host of the quiz show and finally*
- AUDIENCE *played by the audience, who become part of the show*

Prologue

During the pre-set, Studio Technicians are readying the stage – cables, testing the graphics on screen, sound checks. Roaming cameras might occasionally pick out audience members on screen.

An 'Off Air' light.

A Warm-Up presenter is going through his notes and having some make-up done.

At about 7.28 p.m., as the Audience are nearly seated, the Warm-Up speaks into a mic.

Warm-Up OK, hello, hello! How's that?(*Listens to his ear piece.*)OK, one more – HELLO! Can you hear me?

Audience presumably cheer.

Hooray, good evening, and welcome to tonight's show! High fives all round, come on!

He hops down the steps to the auditorium and runs along the front row high fiving the Audience.

Ye-es! Very good, very good. Ah the Noël Coward. Should be called the Noël Brave with what we're going to be trying tonight.(*To audience members still arriving during clearance.*)Don't worry, that's it, keep coming in, don't panic, this isn't the good bit. Rest of it's not brilliant, but it's better than this. Yes, I'm afraid that I am your Warm-Up Act; that much fabled staple of the light entertainment format. The show's nearly ready to begin, I'm just here to get you started. I am your play fluffer. Your theatrical lube. Because we're here to have a good time, are we not?! I said we're here to have a good time, ARE WE NOT?!Yeah the phrasing doesn't quite work there, does it. 'Yes, we're not!' 'No, we are!' Erm – anyway. Hello, you down there, in what we used to call the 'pit'? Where the 'groundlings' stood, the paupers. The commoners. Or what we now refer to as – the premium seats. How's that for inflation? On the count of three, give us a cheer, the entire stalls; one, two, three – YEAH!

The stalls, presumably, cheer.

(*Sighs.*)Ah OK, one of those crowds. 'Audience interaction?' 'Me?' 'Good heavens'. Clutching pearls. Monocle flopping out into the Prosecco. What about in the royal circle, happy and well?! One, two, three –?!

The royal circle, presumably, cheer.

Yes! What used to be called the 'dress circle' of course, everyone in that tier expected to dress up. And as we can see, turn the lights up, let's have a look, oh yes, that tradition has ... has well and truly died tonight, OK. And then grand circle give us a cheer!

The grand circle, presumably, cheer.

And the balcony – one, two, three!

The balcony, presumably, cheer.

And finally you lot behind me on stage!

Those in on-stage seats, presumably, cheer.

Yes! Excellent, you're the best audience we've had tonight, I mean that. Now. Members of the audience. In theatre you're all a community, and communities work together, so I'd like you to get to know your neighbours. Let's bridge the social divides. When I say go, I want you to shake hands with the person to your left, and then high five the person in front of you. When I say! Now of course, as you're high fiving the person in front of you, the person behind you is going to be trying to high five you so I want no hitting anyone in the back of the head. Everyone just take your time. And stay safe. OK? Go! Shake the person's hand to your left – and you'll now be working out that also means shaking hands with the person on your right. And then high fives in front. Now turning around. Oh the sheer terror of British people having to high five. Wonderful. So once our cameras start rolling and we go live on air, beamed into millions of homes across the land, we don't want you starting at a level seven, or a level eight, we need you starting at a ten, and staying there, OK? So every time you see this applause sign, guess what I'd like you to do? I'd like you to applaud – that's correct! OK, one, two, three!

'Applause' either on a light-up box, or projected onto screen.

And then every time you see this sign when there's an exciting prize to be won, can we have an 'ooh' – one, two, three.

'Ooohs' on screen.

Good, and then laughter when you hear something utterly hilarious, this is the sign – one, two, three!

'Laughter' on screen.

Applause! (*Waits.*) Laughter. (*Waits.*) Ooohs! (*Waits.*) Applause! Aren't you brilliant. (*Listens to his ear piece.*) We're ready to go I think, time to count us down – all together!

Warm-Up exits –

*The transmission clock arrives on screen, counting down from 10 to 1, houselights darken, as – The company enter to music, including **Judge Rivlin, Nicholas Hilliard QC and Sonia Woodley QC.***

Judge Rivlin Order, order, this court is now in session.

*Through the haze and the lights of the TV studio appears **Chris Tarrant** as host.*

Chris Tarrant Hello, and welcome to tonight's show!

*And **Charles Ingram, Diana Ingram and Tecwen Whittock** in the hot seat/dock.*

Chris Tarrant Diana Ingram, from Upavon in Wiltshire.

Judge Rivlin On the charge of dishonestly procuring Christopher Tarrant to sign a cheque by deception on 10 September 2001. How do you plead?

Diana Ingram Not guilty.

Chris Tarrant Tecwen Whittock, from Cardiff in South Wales.

Judge Rivlin On the same charge. How do you plead?

Tecwen Whittock Not guilty.

Chris Tarrant Major Charles Ingram, also from Upavon in Wiltshire.

Judge Rivlin On the same charge. How do you plead?

Charles Ingram... Not guilty.

Hilliard QC Members – of the *jury*. We're going to need you to take an oath. Please raise your right hand and say after me ...

*The **Audience** rise and raise their right hand. The oath can be projected onto the screens.*

'I solemnly, sincerely and truly declare and affirm that I will faithfully try the defendant and give a true verdict according to the evidence.'

Woodley QC Your role, as a jury, is probably apparent to you, probably from what you've seen in courtroom dramas on the telly. But think about the origins of that word, 'jury'. Anglo-Norman. It means – 'sworn'. You are the sworn.

Hilliard QC The first juries date back to ancient Germanic tribes. Gathered around the fire. But the modern juror has its roots here, in *English* common law. And it's that word – common. That's you lot, respectfully. Commoners.

Woodley QC Selected to pass judgment on another citizen's actions. Based on what? Based on the *values* that we all share.

Hilliard QC You are here to decide. It's a 50–50.

The options are displayed on screen.

Guilty. Or not guilty.

Woodley QC The prize is not a million pounds. It's more valuable than that. The prize is freedom. And the decision is yours.

Chris Tarrant OK. Let's play.

Act 1

THE CASE FOR THE PROSECUTION

Charles Ingram is now facing **Major General Roberts**, *saluting*.

Major General(*with his file*) Major Ingram. How's the new post at RAF Upavon, settling in?

Charles Ingram Very much, yes, thank you, Major General.

Major General Lovely part of the world, Wiltshire, the Salisbury Plain. (*Looking through his file.*) Did your officer training at Sandhurst, I see. And you were in Bosnia. Hmm. And now, 'weapons procurement'. Updating the shopping list for the British army, bit of a gear shift I imagine, 'desk work'.

Charles Ingram Well. Important to keep our boys well equipped. And truth be told – it's a little more settled, less nomadic. For the family, you know, so –

Major General How many kids?

Charles Ingram Three. All girls.

Major General Hah. Two. All boys.

Charles Ingram Really, well. Each to their – as it were.

Major General What's the up-to-date wish-list, then, for Santa?

Charles Ingram (*with his own notes*) We suggest prioritising vision systems this quarter. The TAM-14, 'small', as the standard British army thermal imaging system. And then upgrading our head-mounted night vision systems.

Major General 'Vision'. Good. *Looking*. Yes? To the future. (*At his file again.*) You're from a forces family, if I'm not mistaken.

Charles Ingram Yes, father was in the RAF. Brother in the Navy. Mother, on the other hand, something altogether different, she designed sets for plays.

Major General Ah the theatre! Theatre blood in you, Charles!

Charles Ingram Oh hardly, good God no, haha. No the military life is a much better fit.

Major General And why do you say that? What is it about this life that suits *you*, Major Ingram?

Charles Ingram... I suppose it ... well it's because it is wholly *away* from the limelight, isn't it. The uniform, it ... anonymises you, entirely. As part of a group. And puts you completely in the service of something else. Something – greater.

A moment, as if he's vaguely embarrassed about this 'personal moment'.

Major General Having said that, nothing wrong with a bit of the old razzamatazz. (*Tentatively ...*) 'I am the very model of a modern Major-General.' Hmm?

Charles Ingram Haha, well yes, of course.

Major General Wife always teases me with that one.

Charles Ingram 'I've information, vegetable, / animal and mineral'.

Major General 'Animal and mineral', oh you know it?!

Charles Ingram Gilbert and Sullivan, yes. Mother taught me to – on her piano –

Major General Piano, Charles! Hidden talents!

Charles Ingram Fastest fingers in the west. Well, not really but.

Major General '... I know the kings of England, and I quote the fights historical'.

Then both together – at increasing speed.

Charles Ingram / Major General 'From Marathon to Waterloo, in order categorical;

I'm very well acquainted, too, with matters mathematical,

I understand equations, both the simple and quadratical,

About binomial theorem I'm teeming with a lot o' news,

With many cheerful facts about the square of the hypotenuse.'

Then continuing –

Charles Ingram (*overlapping*) 'I'm very good integral and differential calculus –'

Major General (*overlapping*) 'I know our mythic history, King Arthur –', oh, what's gone wrong?

Charles Ingram Oh, I see, sorry, you went straight to that / verse, not –

Major General Well that is the next verse, / isn't it? –

Charles Ingram I don't think – I'm not – but it doesn't matter, we can pick up from your verse if you –

Major General No, no, the moment's gone now. Anyway, so, (*from his notes*) 'TAM-14 small thermal imaging system', right, got it. That'll be all.

Charles Ingram (*standing*) Sir.

They salute, as Major General Roberts, is replaced by Paul Smith, holding his hand up to testify, in a mirror image of Charles Ingram's salute.

They face each other briefly, staring at one another – enemies – as Paul Smith slowly turns into

–

The court.

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Paul Smith Paul Smith, I'm the chief executive and co-founder of Celador, an entertainment production company.

Hilliard QC How many countries have their own version of your format now?

Paul Smith It's um, gosh, it's about 160 different countries, there or thereabouts.

Jumping forward in time (unreferenced from now on), Woodley QC for the defence ...

Woodley QC And profitable? Earning your company hundreds of millions?

Paul Smith The suggestion being, 'Why fight so hard to deny a contestant one of those millions?', presumably.

Woodley QC No I'm just pointing out that the show has been personally rewarding for its creators.

Paul Smith It has. And even though it might look a no-brainer now, it was in fact – the biggest gamble of my life. If it had failed or, more bluntly, if the contestants began winning huge sums of money greater than we were receiving from the phone-call charges, I and my family were liable, I'd have lost everything. It was a gamble not unlike the ones the contestants make on the show every night. So in many ways ... I can empathise with what it's like.

He turns back, to be faced square on with Charles Ingram.

Paul Smith And that's why, when someone tried to cheat me, to come in to my house and not play in the spirit of the game, I was in no doubt of the severity of the action I had to take. The action that led us to where we are today.

Snap into –

The pair of them, in isolated spaces, on the phone to one another.

Charles Ingram Paul?

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Paul Smith Charles. (*Reading from a prepared transcript.*) I have to tell you ... I have to tell you that we have suspicions from viewing the recording of last Monday's programme and subsequently studying the tapes carefully that there were irregularities during the taping of the show in which you participated.

Charles Ingram Oh good Lord no.

Paul Smith Because of that I have to tell you that these suspicions have been referred to the police.

Charles Ingram Right.

Hilliard QC Pause there. 'Right'. That reaction? Is it the outraged reaction of an innocent man being wrongly denied a million pounds? Ask yourself, members of the jury, if that is the reaction *you* would have had. One more time –

Paul Smith I have to tell you that these suspicions have been referred to the police.

Charles Ingram Right.

Paul Smith And thus we will not for the moment be airing the programme or indeed authorising payment of the cheque.

Charles Ingram Right. Yeah. Well I mean, you know, I completely refute that obviously. Good Lord. OK, well.

Phones down. Paul Smith turns to face the court again.

Hilliard QC That people would risk everything to cheat. To win. What do you attribute this obsession that grew around your show? What was the reason behind its success?

Paul Smith Simple. We took it back to the basics of quizzing.

We're fading back up on –

The scene we just left. Charles Ingram saluting Major General Roberts.

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Charles Ingram *steps out of the MOD. He dials on an old Nokia-style mobile, to ...*

Paul Smith People love a simple quiz. Or at least – the British do. The pub quiz is a uniquely British invention, combining our two great loves .Drinking, and being right.

... the Red Lion pub, in Daventry.

Diana Ingram *is at a pub table with Adrian Pollock, her brother.*

Diana Ingram Hello?

Adrian Pollock Don't answer – oh!

Charles Ingram Sweetheart, it's me.

Adrian Pollock Can't he call back, the quiz is starting, no phones!

Charles Ingram Is that your brother? What's he saying?

Diana Ingram Adrian and I are just at the Red Lion, that's all; the pub quiz?

Charles Ingram Pub quiz? And the girls –?!

Diana Ingram At Donna's, it's alright. They prefer her cooking to mine!

Quizmaster *seats himself on a stool, speaking through a microphone. He's the opposite of the Warm-Up act – somewhat grumpy, less desperate to please.*

Quizmaster Alright, here we go.

Adrian Pollock Hang up, they'll think we're cheating.

Charles Ingram I'm just calling to say I'll be late back from London, so don't wait up. Unless you want to. I'll just cobble some supper or something from the fridge. Unless there's something I can heat up, but –

Diana Ingram Yep, OK, got to go.

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She hangs up, as –

Quizmaster Alright, everyone ready?

Lights up in the whole auditorium. General pub noise.

Sheets out. Make sure you've given yourself a team name. Top left-hand corner. You can confer remember, between you.

He sips a pint as he goes.

OK. Round One, General Knowledge .Question 1. His father is Edinburgh, his brothers are Wessex and York. Who is he? *Who is he?* Father – Edinburgh. Brothers – Wessex and York. Question 2. The 'living-room war' was the nickname given to which conflict, perceived to be the first truly 'televised' war of the twentieth-century. The 'living-room war'? Question 3. The Mediterranean Sea flows into me. The Red Sea flows out of me. What am I? ...Oh, uh, notice from the management. Karaoke following the quiz, and every Friday, Saturday. If that's your sort of thing ...

Elsewhere in the pub – possibly not the same literal pub – we focus down on another table.

A man sits alone. Shifting. Nervous. This is Tecwen Whittock. He is joined surreptitiously by another man, looking around, sipping his pint. This is Paddy Spooner.

Paddy Spooner You from round here?

Tecwen Whittock *looks nervous.*

Paddy Spooner Can you tell me where I might find the Carpenter's Arms?

Tecwen Whittock... 'On – ... on the end of his shoulders.'

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That's the code. Paddy Spooner leans in. Tecwen Whittock is sweating.

Paddy Spooner It's alright, you're OK, calm. Smile. Just two friends, that's all, having a pint in a pub. The very definition of normal.

Tecwen Whittock I wouldn't norm – I've never – anything, like this before.

Paddy Spooner You weren't followed, you came alone?

Tecwen Whittock Alone?

Paddy Spooner Yes.

Tecwen Whittock No.

Paddy Spooner What?

Tecwen Whittock No, I didn't come alone. My kids –

Paddy Spooner Kids?

Tecwen Whittock I've got my kids outside.

Paddy Spooner You brought your bloody kids?

Tecwen Whittock They're outside, having a dandelion and burdock.

Paddy Spooner (*sighs*) Got the money?

Tecwen Whittock I wanna see it first. Test it.

Paddy Spooner You know who I am? My reputation?

Tecwen Whittock I've been burnt before.

Paddy Spooner *removes a folded newspaper and places it on the table, sliding it over.*

Tecwen Whittock *looks in the fold and removes a manila envelope. Looks around, opens it.*

Pulls out some sheets of paper. He takes out his mobile phone. Dials. Waits.

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Tecwen Whittock Darling, it's me. I've got it ... I want to authenticate, you ready?

Finds something on the page.

'How long, to the nearest metre, is the Humber Bridge?'

Text me back.

Hangs up.

Paddy Spooner It's right, you know –

Tecwen Whittock We'll see.

Paddy Spooner It's all there. In one priceless document. Alphabetised, categorised and cross-referenced. The height of mountains, population of cities, duration of monarchs' reign. Capital cities and Olympic golds. All there. Waiting. For when that call comes. The golden ticket.

Tecwen Whittock *'s phone beeps with a text. He looks – and checks the document. Beat.*

Paddy Spooner Told yer.

Tecwen Whittock (*sliding an envelope to Paddy Spooner*) Pleasure doing business.

Paddy Spooner Mr Whittock? It'll only get you so far, you know. The answers. Challenge is to know how to get them to call you in the first place.

Tecwen Whittock You can't control that, it's random.

Paddy Spooner 'Random'. Random is the excuse losers give to reconcile their bad luck. My organisation, we make our own luck.

Tecwen Whittock Organisation?

Paddy Spooner Let's just call it a kind of ... 'syndicate'.

A moment.

Tecwen Whittock It exists? The syndicate is real?

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Paddy Spooner Ssh, quiet.

Tecwen Whittock What can you do?

Paddy Spooner ... a multitude of things. The callbacks to potential contestants? There are flaws in the system. They can be – controlled. (*Gesturing the document he gave to Tecwen Whittock.*) The man who has the answers might believe himself to be king, but the man who controls the *questions* is God.

Tecwen Whittock ... It can't work.

Paddy Spooner Do you know how many people I've got into that chair.

Tecwen Whittock ... I want in.

Paddy Spooner Entry is hard, very hard, we only accept the very best –

Tecwen Whittock I'm good, Jill and I – the wife, we're good. We always get six pies on Trivial Pursuit –

Paddy Spooner (*downs his drink*) We don't take couples. Distraction. Sorry.

Tecwen Whittock Just me then.

Paddy Spooner Really?

Tecwen Whittock *beat. Looks down, ashamed. He nods.*

Paddy Spooner *(smiles, stands)* We'll be in touch.

Tecwen Whittock *steps into the stand.*

Tecwen Whittock Tecwen Whittock. I'm a lecturer in business in Pontypridd, South Wales.

Woodley QC And you love quizzes. You became – 'obsessed', by this quiz show.

Tecwen Whittock I wouldn't say obsessed, I would say passionate. It inspired passion in a lot of people.

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Woodley QC So, not so much a shadowy syndicate of quiz fanatics, but rather a small network of geeks determined to get onto the most popular game show on TV, with the largest prize in history?

Tecwen Whittock People, with shared interests, that's all, trying to bone up, learn about the show, nothing sinister. If anything it was – egalitarian. A community helping one another.

Hilliard QC Noble. But of course this alleged crime didn't come from within a deprived community, people in poverty looking for help, did it?

The creeping sounds of 'Jerusalem' arrive.

It was a conspiracy, a plot, born in the sleepy villages of middle England. Little cottages, picket fences and winding lanes ...

Lights are coming up on Upavon, as the music swells and Charles Ingram steps with his lawnmower, a portable radio dangling from its side. He smiles up at the sun, content, and mows the lawn. Diana Ingram exits the house, Charles turns the music – now coming from the radio – off.

Charles Ingram Alright, where's the fire?

Diana Ingram I'm late, the girls are doing their homework, I'll be –

Charles Ingram Well hold on, where are you off to?

Diana Ingram It's Tuesday. Tuesday is the Royal Oak, Adrian's already there.

Charles Ingram Another quiz? Heavens to Betsy, Diana, it's –

Diana Ingram What?

Charles Ingram You're – there's – I mean, I don't mean to ... but you know, it's getting to be every night, now, it's starting to feel a little bit like I'm being cheated on. Only with, with bloody questions.

²¹

Diana Ingram It's just this one is meant to be one of the best in Worcester. Adrian and I came second last week, won £50.

Charles Ingram I don't care if – £50?

Diana Ingram And ... *(Beat. A moment.)* I don't know, since Mum and Dad ... it's just what we all used to do together, as a family.

Charles Ingram... I know. I suppose it just leaves *me* feeling ... oh don't make me say it, so childish ...

Diana Ingram... a little left out. *(Smiles. Kisses him on the cheek.)* I'm sorry. I'll cut down. *(Going.)* Hester might need help with her homework – English history.

Charles Ingram *(calling after her)* Well that's her bad luck. You're the smart one!

They part, her one way, him the other, as through them returns –

Paul Smith *back in court.*

Hilliard QC And how do you take the humble pub quiz and turn it into an international phenomenon?

Paul Smith I decided to revive the classic elements of light entertainment. In a way, it's a return to what ITV was founded for. Commercial television. Whose only responsibility was to give people – what they *wanted*. 'Popular entertainment'.

A newsreel of the very first night of ITV programming. Fanfare! – white words on black card – 'VARIETY' – 'DRAMA' – 'FEATURES' – 'PAGEANTRY' – 'PERSONALITIES'.

The Take Your Pick theme music.

Announcer 'And now it's time to meet the man with the cash and the keys. It's Des O'Connor.'

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Des O'Connor *has arrived amongst our Audience with a roaming mic.*

Des O'Connor Hello and welcome to *Take Your Pick!* I'm Des O'Connor. Tonight, you're in with a chance to win ... a brand new Ford Cortina! ... A record player ... a weekend in Paris ... or our booby prize – a tin of baked beans! (*Referencing the Audience.*) As usual we'll be picking our contestants from this mad lot gathered here, isn't that right my love! And we do that with the 'Yes/No' game. You know the rules by now: the contestants must try to answer my questions for as long as possible without saying the words 'yes' or 'no'; harder than it sounds, isn't that right my sweetheart?

Des O'Connor *plays the 'Yes/No' game with two members seated in our real Audience.*

For example:

Des O'Connor You excited to be here, where've you come from?

Contestant From Canterbury.

Des O'Connor Canterbury?

Contestant... Y – ... that's correct.

Des O'Connor Nice there isn't it, Canterbury?

Contestant We like it.

Des O'Connor Nice church. Cathedral.

Contestant Uh – there is, a cathedral, correct.

Des O'Connor You're not going to say yes or no, are you my lovely?

Contestant... I am not.

Des O'Connor No?

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Contestant... I'm not.

Des O'Connor And this is your son, is it?

Contestant No, this is my – oh!

The bong goes.

Alternatively, if the contestant does gets to thirty seconds –

The Attractive Assistant who has been timing hits a gong.

Des O'Connor Oh congratulations! My word you're good, that hardly ever happens. I suppose we better give you a prize? What do we give them? A car, a patio set ...?... oh, it's a free ice cream! (*Handing them a voucher.*) Give him/her a round of applause!

Paul Smith As time went on, the importance of questions and answers, is something true, or is it false, began to wane. People wanted – an 'alternative', to facts.

The Bullseye theme, as the players are guided back to their seats.

Announcer And here's your host, Jim Bowen!

The 'Applause' light flashing. Jim Bowen appears at the same dart board.

Jim Bowen Oh, what a welcome, thank you, and welcome to you, viewers at home as you start your Saturday evenings, on ITV. Let's meet our couple tonight!

A preselected Couple are guided up on to the stage. As –

Jim Bowen Welcome, welcome. So. (*To one Contestant.*) You get the darts. Three darts, points mean pounds. Let's see how much we'll be playing for today.

The Announcer announces the points of the first dart.

Then the points of the second dart.

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On the third dart, no matter what, we show obviously faked footage of them getting 180.

Jim Bowen 180! So, that's a total of ... (*Counts the total.*) (*Name of the second Contestant.*) Now, you have to get this question right to win. OK. 'The Magna Carta is the basis for modern English law. But in what year was it written? The Magna Carta?'

He waits for the answer – the year 1215.

Assuming it's wrong –

Jim Bowen The answer is – 1215! Or just before lunch, as we call it at my house. Awh, you don't even get your bus fare home.

In the unlikely event it's right –

Well done! What do we have for them? A caravan, a speedboat? Oh ... it's a drink at the bar!
Here you go ...

Either way –

Our attractive assistant will take you back to your seats! Round of applause, audience!

Paul Smith There came a time when people, unapologetically, began to want more 'stuff'.
Knowledge wasn't the prize anymore. Prizes were.

The Price is Right *theme music. A flashing 'Applause' sign, getting the Audience to clap.*

Announcer (off)I-i-i-t's Saturday night! Come on down! *The Price is Right!* And here's your
host – Leslie Crowther!

Leslie Crowther *appears, between two Attractive Assistants.*

Leslie Crowther Hello! Look at you, you lovely, lovely people, all assembled, gathered here
today, for what purpose – why, to win prizes of course! Get ready ...

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Paul Smith How you select your contestants is key. Obviously you want to draw from as large a
pool of people as possible, and make it open to everyone. In that way it's ... well, it's democracy,
isn't it? Or at least ... the 'illusion' of democracy.

Leslie Crowther *reads real Audience Members' names off his card.*

For example:

Leslie Crowther Harry Tobins! Come on down!

The Audience Member comes on down, followed by the others.

Leslie Crowther Celia Hill! Denise Wokoma! And Jessica Woo! You're all here to play – *The
Price is Right!*

*The Audience Members are guided to their positions around the stage by the Attractive
Assistants.*

Paul Smith(*to Hillard QC*)The 'closest-to' concept is a classic way to narrow your contestants
down to the number you need. Ask an almost impossible question to get exactly right, but then
pick – in our case on the *Millionaire* phone lines – the ten people who come closest-to.

An Assistant demonstrates a Hoover.

Leslie Crowther Time to guess the price of this particular item, the person closest-to gets it, and
will go on to play for big prizes!(*To the Assistant.*)Look at the lovely Gloria here, modelling a
fabulous new vacuum cleaner from British Home Stores. How much do you reckon that is?

Leslie Crowther *always repeats the answer given by the
Contestant, before moving on to the next.*

For example:

Leslie Crowther Celia? What's your guess?£48. Denise? You next ...

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Once the Audience Members have given their guesses.

Leslie Crowther OK, I can reveal that the price of the item is ... £38Well done (*name of
contestant*), you were closest, let's give them a big hand! What do we have for them? A holiday
abroad? A new conservatory?(*Listens in his ear.*)Oh, it's a drink at the bar! (*Hands over a
voucher.*)Everyone, our attractive assistants here will take you back to their seats. A round of
applause for our contestants!

Paul Smith *Wheel of Fortune, Family Fortunes.* All British hits. All *American* formats. When it
came to game shows, the UK and Europe up until the turn of the millennium were a net *importer*,
not an exporter. Then, by fate or design, *three* of us TV producers on this side of the pond came
to the fore at the same time...

Stepping forward from the shadows, two other producers ...

John De Mol John de Mol, I invented the concept of – 'emotainment'. Emotional entertainment;
taking what game shows had done for years, real people on television, but pushing it – a little
further. We started to call it – 'reality' television.

Mark Burnett Mark Burnett. Former SAS paratrooper in the British army –
He salutes, mirroring, behind him –

Charles Ingram *salutes Major General Roberts, as they conduct a meeting over documents behind all this, in silence.*

Mark Burnett— now, ‘television producer’. Or trying to be.

We’ve moved into ITV now, a foyer, all three of them, holding their proposals.

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Mark Burnett What are you pitching?

John De Mol It’s a sort of lab experiment show, with people. We put them in a house, hundreds of cameras. And we just – watch them. Watch them be real. We’re calling it ‘Project X’ for now, still working on a title.

Paul Smith But they know they’re being filmed. So they’ll be – ‘performing’.

John De Mol It will be – ‘constructed reality’. Blurring the lines, drama and documentary, fact, fiction. One day we will film and record and share everything, everywhere. I know, yes I know, the British are more reserved about all that; your parliament was one of the very last in the world to let television cameras inside.

Paul Smith Some may say politics is now just performance as a result.

John De Mol There *will* be real voting in the show. Members of the public get to say who stays, and who goes.

Mark Burnett Voting? That’s interesting. (*Scribbles.*)

John De Mol ‘Democracy’ is one of the most successful ‘formats’ ever sold across the world. Some might say your mother of parliamentary systems was your *last* great export.

Mark Burnett Until now. (*With his folder.*) I want to plonk normal people into the wilderness somewhere, an island maybe. Thought it up in the army. Survival training, putting people under pressure, seeing how they crack.

John De Mol Pressure? Yes (*scribbling*), pressure is good.

Mark Burnett Paul?

Paul Smith... it’s a quiz show.

John De Mol / Mark Burnett(*chuckling*)A quiz show?

Paul Smith Yeah. ‘Cash mountain’. The most high-pressured quiz show of all time.

28

John De Mol Well. You to yours and me to mine. Good luck everyone.

They split, Woodley QC stopping Paul Smith –

Woodley QC So you were competing, then. Competing to make ‘competitive television programmes’. And you hate losing? And the most popular game show of all time was born?

Paul Smith No they all turned it down. Every channel. Every single one. Until, years later, a new controller arrives at ITV.

David Liddiment *arrives with his associate Claudia Rosencrantz.*

David Liddiment (*greeting Paul Smith*)David Liddiment, come in.

Paul Smith Thank you. This is David Briggs, one of our co-creators.

David Briggs Hello.

David Liddiment Now Claudia gave me the basics, and I’d love you to unpack it a bit for me but I’ve got to say upfront, I’m not sure it’s what we’re looking for. An old-fashioned game show –

Paul Smith It’s a *quiz*. A quiz show. People love quizzes.

David Liddiment They – we-ell, they play them, on dusty old board games, at Christmas, because they’re forced to, by their nan or ... you know, ‘questions’ and ‘answers’, that’s just, that’s *Mastermind*, isn’t it. And that’s not very ITV.

Paul Smith David thought he might play it, with you. Walk you through it.

David Liddiment Sure, happy to do that; love a game.

David Briggs So the contestant is in the hot seat.

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David Liddiment How many contestants?

David Briggs There’s just one.

David Liddiment There’s just one? One contestant? Who are they playing against?

David Briggs Well, I – in ... in a way, they're kind of playing against themselves. Their own strengths and weakness, doubts, self-belief.

David Liddiment Uh-huh, and –

David Briggs And Chris –

Paul Smith Chris Tarrant.

David Liddiment And Chris is on, is he? Claudia, we've –?

Claudia Rosencrantz Yeah his people said –

Paul Smith Yeah he's on, Chris is definitely on, if it all –

David Briggs And he starts asking you questions, but the different thing is –

Paul Smith Ah, this is key –

David Briggs With our show, it's multiple choice. Four answers. And that has never been done on British television before.

David Liddiment Multiple choice?

Paul Smith Yeah.

David Liddiment So it's easier?

Paul Smith / David Briggs No –

David Liddiment You get to *see* the answers.

David Briggs Yes but no you get to see the question and the four possible answers first, *before* you decide whether or not to play.

[30]

David Liddiment Wait, so you get to see it all laid out in front of you first – why?

David Briggs... Drama. The human drama of it. We're watching people making – potentially making life-changing decisions in front of us. The show dangles the carrot as close to them as possible and –

David Liddiment How long do they get to decide?

Paul Smith As long as they want.

David Liddiment There's no timer? No clock?

Paul Smith We just ... we just sit there. And watch them. Going through it all. The whole gamut of emotions. Waiting ...

David Liddiment... 'Drama', you say?

David Briggs(*removes envelopes*)Here, we've got four envelopes, this is your potential cash prize. £250, £500, £1000, £2000. So –

Paul SmithTo make it real, we thought you might use your own money. As a stake.

David Liddiment Oh you did?

Paul Smith Would that be alright? (*Offering the empty envelope.*)£250?

David Liddiment You think I just carry £250 around with – (*looking*), oh actually, I'm close, (*counting*), uh £230. Claudia, you don't ...?

Claudia Rosencrantz What, *my* money?

David Liddiment£20. Jesu – ... I've just put in two hundred and –

Claudia Rosencrantz(*paying*)Alright.

David Briggs Alright – question one. Dabadabababababader.

[31]

David Liddiment What was that?

David Briggs That was the lights going down. Question One. 'What would an Aborigine do with his wurley? Would he –?' A: Eat it; B: Hunt with it; C: Play it; D: Live in it.

David Liddiment (*pause*)Well I don't know, so –

David Briggs Now, you have three 'helping hands', or, something, we're working on the – you can phone a friend, any friend you like. You can go 'halves', which will take away two of the wrong answers, so you've got a 50–50 chance. Or you can ask the audience.

David Liddiment Alright, I'll 'call a mate'.

David Briggs Phone a friend.

David Liddiment Phone a friend.

Paul Smith Claudia, would you mind?

David Liddiment (*with his phone in his hand*) Oh, I was going to actually call a – I have a mate who I think would know this.

Paul Smith Just for now, Claudia? To simulate it?

Claudia Rosencrantz Yeah alright.

Paul Smith Great, so, eat it, hunt with it, play it, live in it.

David Liddiment (*to Claudia*) Right, which is it?

Claudia Rosencrantz I don't know.

David Liddiment Fuck's sake, Claudia.

David Briggs You've got your other helping hands.

David Liddiment The 50–50 one.

David Briggs It's either C: play it, or D: live in it.

David Liddiment Fine, fuck it, D: live in it.

[32]

Pause.

David Brigg's That's the right answer.

David Liddiment Do you know, I thought it was that from the beginning, I just –

David Briggs Question 2, to double your money, or lose it all, remember you don't have to play.

In feet, what is the length of the *Titanic*? 663, 773, 883, 993?

David Liddiment I'll use my last – what is it, lifeboat.

David Briggs Helping hand – (*to Paul*). Although 'lifeboat' actually, that's quite a good –

Paul Smith Ask the audience. They'd all be given a pad and vote for which one they think is right and the percentages will come up.

David Briggs Why don't you just ask your office if you like, out there.

David Liddiment *opens his office door and shouts out to his staff.*

David Liddiment Everyone, listen up please, a second. Duncan, Katie, can you ... ? Quick question, how long is the *Titanic* in feet? Is it ... oh shit, what was it?

David Briggs 663.

David Liddiment 663?!

David Briggs 773 –

David Liddiment 773?! – I've got it now – 883, or 993?!

Listens.

Come on, the great and the good, have a guess. That wasn't even an option, Tara, go away. [33] You've seen the film haven't you, don't they mention it in ... ? Ah, you're useless, the lot of you. You're all fired. (*Coming back in.*) They don't know. I'm going to stick. I'll keep my money.

David Briggs Very well. (*Handing him the envelope.*) There you go.

David Liddiment (*takes it. Beat*) Interesting. 'Cash Mountain', you say.

Paul Smith Yeah. Or something.

David Liddiment Yeah. Yeah, it's – interesting ...

Woodley QC *cross-examines Paul Smith, back in the stand/hot seat.*

Woodley QC Of course, when you say 'drama', you mean by putting ordinary people under great psychological stress.

Paul Smith That was, whether you like it or not, the key to the show's success. When the creator of *Mastermind* was designing the format for his show, he called upon his memories of being interrogated. By the Gestapo.

Lights on – the hot seat, arranged into place.

Surrounding him in darkness. A single light, shining on him. We didn't quite want that, but – close. The music, too. A pulse all the way through the game.

Woodley QC The contestant can hear that? That's not just edited onto the show in post-production?

Paul Smith The contestant can hear it, *and* feel it. We put little speakers in the chair, so the sound is constantly vibrating through them. Gung-gung, gung-gung ... [34] The audience layout as

well. Other game shows, the audience is 'end on', so there's a fourth wall. We wanted to wrap them around, a bit, like Greek, Roman style.

Woodley QC The Colosseum, almost. The baying crowds ...

Paul Smith Well – the Senate. Citizens, who are – 'complicit', as in a democracy. Or at least, the 'illusion' of it. And the lights, too. You won't notice but up until the £2000 question, they're a lovely light blue. From then on, they begin to darken, until by the time you get to £64,000, it's totally black.

We descend into darkness.

Upavon. Charles Ingram, Diana Ingram and Adrian Pollock gather around the TV to watch. Brother and sister eating popcorn, visibly more excited than Charles, who perhaps is reading something else.

Diana Ingram It's starting!

In the TV studio, and the gallery. Paul Smith refers some of this back to the court, as –

Paul Smith Transmission Day. 4 September 1998. Here we go –

Chris Tarrant arrives in the studio. *The sign for the Audience to 'Applaud' and go wild.*

Chris Tarrant It's time ... to make television history.

Charles Ingram Oh what *is* this nonsense?

Diana Ingram Ssh! It's all anyone's talking about, where do you live, Charles, the moon?

Charles Ingram The moon has more atmosphere than this rubbish does.

Paul Smith *(up in the gallery, with David Briggs)* The first contestant was ... fine, not exactly the knife-cutting tension ⁵⁵we'd been hoping for. But it was our second contestant ... when the potential we'd all dreamed of ... began to come true.

Chris Tarrant Rachel da Costa, from Middlesex!

Rachel sits in the seat. The cameras trained on her. She's smiley, but nervous. Vulnerable.

Chris Tarrant So, Rachel. What would you do if you won a million pounds?

Rachell would ... clear all my, and my fiancé's, debts. Sort out our business, buy a house. And get married.

Sign flashing up for the Audience. 'Aah'.

Diana Ingram *(grabs her heart)* Oh bless, look at her ...

Rachel Business isn't in a situation where we can get married at the moment ...

Chris Tarrant Well, if Rachel just answers fifteen questions correctly, she goes home with a million pounds.

Paul Smith *(to court)* Up she went, getting more nervous, the more she won. One thousand, two thousand, four, then –

On screen, her face filling it now, clutching the water with both hands shaking ...

Chris Tarrant For £16,000. 'Which English county has a border with only one other? A: Devon; B: Norfolk; C: Cornwall; D: Kent.'

Rachel Oh God.

Chris Tarrant It's alright, have a sip of water.

She does, hand shaking ...

Paul Smith Move in closer. *Closer ...*

Charles Ingram Oh, look at her, this doesn't seem fair, it, it's manipulative –

Rachel ... I'll phone my dad. Jack.

Audience: 'Aah'.

Diana Ingram *(tearfully)* Oh, 'asking Dad'. Remember?

Charles Ingram *(leaning forward himself now)* Crikey, hell of a responsibility! Poor bloke.

The phone rings. Rachel's father Jack answers.

Jack *(off)* Hello?

Chris Tarrant Jack, it's Chris Tarrant here. Your daughter is live on the show, she has £8000, we're getting closer to that wedding, but we're not quite there yet. On the strength of your answer, sixteen might just about do it. So no pressure! The next voice you hear will be Rachel. *(Warmly, softly.)* Rachel. Talk to your father.

Paul Smith Nice, Chris, nice, even tighter on her face.

Rachel Dad, which English county has a border with only one other? A: Devon; B: Norfolk; C: Cornwall; D: Kent.

Jack... I have no idea.

Audience: 'Gasp'. Rachel thrusts her hand to her face. Clock counting down –

Jack I'm sorry, Rachel, I can't help you. Give them again.

Rachel A: Devon; B: Norfolk; C: Cornwall; D: Kent.

Paul Smith And that's when she said it. And we knew.

Rachel (*voice quivering*) Dad, help me ...

Paul Smith And I cried ... I just started to cry.

Jack Take the £8000. I'm sorry.

Rachel I'll take the £8000.

Chris Tarrant... OK, give her a hand.

³⁷

Audience 'Applause'. The music lifts, lights shifting. Chris Tarrant looking both mischievously at us ... but also really feeling the moment too.

Chris Tarrant Just before you go ... suppose you had answered, what would your answer have been?

Rachel Cornwall.

'Gasp'. Chris Tarrant surprises himself with how hard he finds to say the following ...

Chris Tarrant Y – ... you would have won £16,000, I'm sorry.

She puts her head in her hands, bursting into tears ...

Paul Smith *steps out from all this.*

Paul Smith The day after transmission, the very next day, breaking all accepted television protocols, different international networks began bidding for the rights. Not just on the phone – they turned up, in our reception. And refused to leave. Even – the *Americans*. ABC.

David Briggs ABC was *fourth* in the American network ratings war, behind NBC, CBS and Fox. The joke in the 1960s was that if Nixon really wanted to end the Vietnam War he should televise it on ABC. It'd be cancelled within the week.

Paul Smith And yet after the US *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?*, up the network soared in the ratings. Third, into second, and then *first*. The CEO of Disney who owned ABC later said, 'Who knew that the Walt Disney corporation would have been saved ... by a little British game show'.

Paul Smith and David Briggs *pop a bottle of champagne, and then –*
A pub quiz in Daventry.

³⁸

Quizmaster (*to the Audience*) Alright, Round Two, come on, sheets out. Music round.

Adrian Pollock and Diana Ingram *are at a table, joining in with this pub quiz, when Charles Ingram joins them.*

Charles Ingram Diana? –

Diana Ingram Ssh!

Quizmaster Music round. We're gonna play some classic television theme tunes. Your job is to name that show. Ready? Track one ...

Theme tunes are played – ideally all ITV.

For example: 1: Emmerdale; 2: Inspector Morse; 3: You Bet; 4: The Sweeney.

Charles Ingram (*entering*) Diana, this phone bill?!

Quizmaster And finally, our 'closest-to' question. Our 'How many sweets in the jar?' bit. You don't have to get it exactly right, it's those teams closest-to that get the points. Ready? So. 'Tony Blair was re-elected as prime minister for a second time this summer, with the lowest turnout since 1918.' But *what was* the percentage turnout, for this 2001 election? The turnout as a percentage. 'Go on, confer. Have a guess. Closest-to gets it. Plopsomething, anything down.OK, that's it. Keep your sheets safe, we're marking 'em later.

Charles Ingram £600 phoning this, this hotline thing, we don't have enough for that, Christ we're living in army accommodation as it is! And yet this 'game' –

Diana Ingram It's not just a game.

Adrian Pollock No, look, listen to your husband.

Diana Ingram Adrian, you spend more than I do!

Adrian Pollock No I mean this *is* a waste, we've been doing it wrong.

Charles Ingram Look I don't mean to be a, a, a – but this has to stop, I think, really. I hate putting my thing, down, but ...

Adrian Pollock I've been introduced to some people. A – 'community'. Fans of the show. People like us.

Removing an envelope – the same kind Paddy Spooner gave to Tecwen Whittock.

Adrian Pollock The producers use the same list of closest-too questions when they call back potential contestants. So we can prepare! Answering that is the easy part. The trick is knowing 'when' to call the hotline. The call volumes. They're on the website. *(Laughing.)* I'm serious. The fact is, by the time they're advertising the number at the end of the show it's already too bloody late. You have to call at the *beginning*. And in blocks. Not just random calls – careful blocks. I made a table. *(Showing the table.)*

Charles Ingram Adrian, no offence, but don't you think if you've figured this out then other people will have as well? *(With the bill.)* And it makes no difference to –

Adrian Pollock It did. It did make a difference.

Back in time to –

Adrian *at home. Watching the TV. A stopwatch in one hand, the phone in the other, referencing his chart, as the music on the show builds ... and builds ... and builds ...*

He dials.

Adrian Pollock Adrian Pollock. Salisbury, Wiltshire. 01722 395950.

He puts the phone down. Takes a breath. Paces.

⁴⁰

The phone rings back. Adrian looks. Surely not ...

Adrian Pollock *(answering)*... Hello?

Voice *(off)* Mr Pollock? Adrian Pollock? I'm calling from *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?*

Adrian Pollock... Hello.

Voice *(off)* You've been randomly selected as one of our potential contestants on the show. We just need to ask you a question, which we ask to all respondents, and the ten people who get closest to the right answer are invited to the studio to appear on the show. Are you ready for the question?

Adrian Pollock Sure.

Voice *(off)* What is the length, to the nearest metre, of the Humber Bridge?

Adrian Pollock *is back on at the pub table with Charles and Diana ...*

Adrian Pollock I'm going on. I'm going on the show!

Diana Ingram Adrian?! *(Leans in for a hug.)*

The court. Adrian Pollock takes the hot seat/stand in court.

Woodley QC Three times you got onto the show as a fastest finger first contestant. Three times you failed to get into the chair. How did you finally do it?

Adrian Pollock It wasn't cheating. I built something ...

Back in Upavon.

Diana Ingram What the hell is this? You made it?

Charles Ingram Heavens, more money.

Adrian Pollock It only cost me £6, actually. It's to practise on. What's the point in beating the system to get onto the show, if we keep failing to get into the chair? ⁴¹ Try it. This is A, this is B, this is C, this is D.

(Takes a card out of his pocket, and a stopwatch.)

Put these cities in Britain in alphabetical order. A: Manchester; B: Birmingham; C: Leeds; D: Newcastle. Go.

Diana *presses the buttons.*

Diana Ingram There.

Adrian Pollock Five and a half seconds. Not good enough. *Again.*

The television studio.

Excited Contestants arrive, including Adrian.

Production Manager *greet*s them with a clipboard.

Production Manager Alright, everyone, listen up. Listen Up. LISTEN UP! You're our fastest finger first contestants for today. Rehearsal is now until 4.30 p.m., there's a buffet dinner in the canteen from 6 p.m., then it's make-up and back here in the studio for 7. Any questions?

Contestant When do we get to meet Chris?

Production Manager I'm 'Chris' for this afternoon's rehearsal, I know, your sense of disappointment is palpable and in no way does it affect my sense of self-worth. Everyone'll get a couple of practice goes in the chair, but we'll start with the fastest finger in the warm-up – everyone get to your chairs. OK. Put these Disney films in order of their release.

A: *Little Mermaid*; B: *Snow White*; C: *Aladdin*; D: *Dumbo*.

Pretty straightforward. Let's take a look.

The results are displayed on screen.

And the fastest person was ... Adrian Pollock. On on 3.04 seconds. My God, that was fast. That was ... (*Taking a look in the direction of the gallery.*) That's probably the fastest we've ever had ... OK, er, let's have a few more goes. Sharon, can you take over?

Elsewhere, Production Manager joins David Briggs in the gallery.

Production Manager He's been here before, one of the researchers recognised him.

David Briggs Well, there's no rule against that.

Production Manager This is his fourth time.

David Briggs *Fourth?! How is he doing it? Is it just – luck?*

Production Manager He's gonna get into the seat. His times are incredible. Do we ... should Chris even mention it? Four times? Would it be weird *not* to?

David Briggs (*beat*) Yeah sod it, why not. Viewers at home think he can get on that many times, they might call even more.

Adrian Pollock *arrives in the hot seat for the evening show.*

Chris Tarrant This is Adrian Pollock, a computer consultant originally from the Vale of Glamorgan. Now ... you might recognise Adrian. I don't know what the odds are on this, they must actually be astronomical, but this is his fourth time on the show! But the first time he's managed to get in the hot seat.

Adrian Pollock Haha, yes. I can't quite believe it at last.

Chris Tarrant No. No, neither can I. You've been on the show more than I have. You're a desperate man, aren't you Adrian? Haha.

⁴³

Adrian Pollock Well you know, some people want to, to jump off bridges with a bungee rope, some jump out of planes, this is just ... this is what I want to do.

Chris Tarrant No, I'm delighted actually. Because, frankly, I'm sick of the sight of you, haha.

Adrian Pollock Hah.

Chris Tarrant Ye-ep. (*Small beat.*) OK. Adrian. Let's play *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?*
Lights.

Fifteen questions to a million. Question one. 'Which of these is a detective created by Colin Dexter? A: Constable Semaphore; B: Superintendent Braille; C: Inspector Morse; D: Sergeant Sign Language?'

Adrian Pollock Hah, I think I'll go with Inspector Morse, Chris.

Chris Tarrant You've got a hundred pounds, Adrian Pollock – hooray!

Watching, in the gallery are Paul Smith and David Briggs.

Paul Smith He's annoyed – Chris. I can tell. Not just this guy, it's ... (*Sighs.*) *Look* at them. All of them, in the contestant seats. They're all ... they're all so – white. White, middle class. White, middle class, men. Why? How are – why are they the ones getting through?

David Briggs Coincidence. Production coordinator say she overhears them. In the canteen. They – they ‘talk’, to one another. The contestants, they – ‘recognise’ each other. It’s like a club. They exchange tips. Theories. Some were even taking notes.

Paul Smith Notes? What’s to take notes on? You call up, get randomly selected, sit in the chair, either you know the answers or you don’t. What notes are there to take?

⁴⁴

David Briggs I don’t know. Some of ’em exchange phone numbers. To stay in touch. Lucy said.

Paul Smith (*beat*) What have they worked out? What are we missing? Keep an eye-out.

The TV studio – theme tune – Diana Ingram now in the chair with Chris Tarrant.

Chris Tarrant Diana Ingram, from Upavon in Wiltshire, here with ... and I recognise your guest here tonight, sat up there, I do believe (*through gritted teeth*) it’s your brother – Adrian – Pollock.

Lights on Adrian Pollock smiling dimly in the audience.

Chris Tarrant Haha. I thought we’d gotten rid of you, but here you are. Back. In the studio. For a *fifth* time ... Husband Charles, *Major* Charles Ingram, couldn’t make it as he had to work.

Charles and Diana, eh? Why does that sound familiar.

Diana Ingram Yes, we, get that a lot.

Chris Tarrant Well. This is *your* time, your one and only time in the chair, Diana. Let’s play ...

The lights drop down, and ...

Diana *steps out of this, back into –*

The living room in Upavon. Diana holding a cheque.

Charles Ingram Thirty-two grand, *again!* That’s incredible. (*Grabbing Diana for a hug.*) I can’t believe it, what a clever thing you are. I ... I’m speechless, dear. This –

Diana Ingram I’m lending Adrian some of it.

Charles Ingram ... lending –? What happened to his thirty-two grand?!

⁴⁵

Diana Ingram Times are tough, he says, the markets, it’s just a top-up, and anyway he’s probably a little annoyed that I equalled him, he’d have wanted to *beat* me. I should know, I wanted to beat *him!* I could have done, I should have known that answer, English literature for heaven’s sake!

Chris Tarrant Question 11 for £64,000. ‘Who wrote the nonsense poem *The Hunting of the Snark?*’

Diana Ingram Lewis Carroll! Why did I say Edward Lear, it’s Lewis – Carroll!

Charles Ingram Snark, what is a Snark?

Diana Ingram It’s a nothing, he made it up.

Charles Ingram But do they catch one? In the end?

Diana Ingram No, it doesn’t exist, that’s the point. They were looking for something they couldn’t find. It’s nonsense. I’ve read the bloody thing, I just couldn’t access that part of my brain, my memory, why?

Charles Ingram (*with the cheque*) Still, nothing to turn your nose up at –

Diana Ingram You must go on.

Charles Ingram Yes, we all must. Time to *move* on, to –

Diana Ingram No, go on the show. It’s your turn.

Charles Ingram Me?!

Diana Ingram Charles –

Charles Ingram Diana –

Tecwen Whittock Adrian?

We snap to –

A pub table. Tecwen Whittock nervously shaking Adrian Pollock’s hand.

⁴⁶

Tecwen Whittock Adrian Pollock? Tecwen Whittock. Thank you for meeting me, really, I –

Adrian Pollock I wasn’t sure. It’s ... I don’t mean to be ... but it’s a bit creepy. You turning up at my door like that. How did you even – my address?

Tecwen Whittock Electoral register, simple enough.

Adrian Pollock See, again, that – that’s kind of creepy.

Tecwen Whittock I *have* to get on. I don’t know why. I don’t know where it came from. But it’s in me. It’s taken over me, it ... When I saw you, on the show. *Four* times! I thought. That’s not luck. That’s not a coincidence. No. Na-ah, no way, that’s –

Adrian Pollock My sister and I –

Tecwen Whittock Diana Ingram, episode 139.

Adrian Pollock Again, a bit creepy. Me and her, we’re writing a book, got a publisher interested. Tips and advice and things, and –

Tecwen Whittock I also heard a rumour. From inside the ‘community’. That you ... built a machine?

Adrian Pollock... is that right? You can’t have it, I’m afraid, my brother-in-law, he’s about to go on the show.

Tecwen Whittock Your BROTHER-IN-LAW?!

Adrian Pollock Ssh.

Tecwen Whittock A *third* family member?! I’ll do anything. *Anything*, please, can I have that machine? Or another one, build another one. I would pay you, people would pay you.

Adrian Pollock... Huh.

The music – the lights – as

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Charles Ingram *enters with Chris Tarrant into the seat.*

Chris Tarrant Welcome back, We’re here with Charles Ingram, *major* in the Royal Engineers. Up there in the audience is wife Diana – now, if you recognise her, that’s because she won £32,000. And her brother Adrian Pollock, he won £32,000 as well. Are you trying to get to a million between you?

Charles Ingram Hah, yeah well to be honest, I’ll be happy to take away anything, I’m probably going to crash and burn.

Chris Tarrant OK. Well, let’s play *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?*

DS Williamson *is being sworn in.*

Ds Williamson Detective Sergeant Ian Williamson. I was the lead police investigator on the case. One of the things we noticed when looking at the lead-up to the appearance ... was Diana Ingram constantly phoning the same four numbers. Again, and again, and again.

Hilliard QC The same four numbers?

Chris Tarrant (*in the chair*) As ever, *four* possible answers ...

Ds Williamson Turns out they were pagers.

Hilliard QC Pagers? And where were they, on that first night in question. Were they ‘on’ Mr Ingram’s person, while he was in the chair?

Ds Williamson We don’t know, he wasn’t searched after that first night.

Hilliard QC But Mrs Ingram couldn’t be phoning those pagers herself. She was in the audience, with a camera on her.

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Ds Williamson No. She couldn’t. But there was someone else, there, at the studio, who didn’t have a camera on them.

Hilliard QC... Someone else? Who? ...

... **Adrian Pollock** *appears. He’s smoking, outside, and dialling numbers on his phone.*

Production Manager *is sworn in ...*

Production Manager I was production manager working both of the nights Charles Ingram was on the show. Diana requested an extra ticket for her brother, Adrian. We seated him in the VIP area.

Hilliard QC What’s special about that area?

Production Manager There’s no cameras facing those seats, for a start. I saw Adrian before the show trying to get a signal on his mobile. Phone’s aren’t allowed in the studio, for obvious reasons, and so we demanded he turn it off and keep it off.

Hilliard QC So – a potential spanner in the works, then? Of any plan? If there was a plan to, perhaps, ‘buzz’ certain pagers, about a certain person’s person. Four different pagers, indicating four different possible answers?

Production Manager Well either way, he couldn’t do it. And Mr Pollock was annoyed by that.

Hilliard QC And that was the night, the first half of Charles Ingram’s appearance, where he didn’t do very well, wasn’t it?

Chris Tarrant (*to Charles Ingram in the seat*) You’ve got up to a thousand pounds, let’s see if you can match your brother-in-law and your wife. Family honour!

Charles Ingram Oh no, OK.

Chris Tarrant Number six is worth £2,000. Let’s take a look ... at the next question ... selected entirely at random ...^[49]... *Coronation Street!* I bet you’ll know this one, haha. When was the last time you saw this, Charles?

Charles Ingram No, I’ve never really watched it.

Chris Tarrant It’s been on for forty years! A popular ITV staple.

Charles Ingram I know, I know.

Chris Tarrant ‘*In Coronation Street*, who is Audrey’s daughter? A: Janice; B: Gail; C: Linda; or D: Sally?’

Charles Ingram... Oh my, I haven’t a Scooby. I’m going to have to ask the audience.

Chris Tarrant Alright audience, time to help out the major, push your buttons now ...

The Audience votes again. The result is shown on the screen. There we are, 89 per cent majority in favour of Gail. **Charles Ingram** *Oh crikey, well then. B – Gail.*

Production Manager He only got up to £4,000 before the klaxon sounded that night, after using *two* of his lifelines.

Hilliard QC (*at the ‘jury’/ Audience*) To reiterate. He failed to get a single question right in rehearsal. Then struggled badly as the final contestant in the chair that Sunday night. And yet, he came back, the following day, and sailed his way to a million pounds. What on earth must have happened that night to suddenly turn Major Charles Ingram into a genius?

Production Manager I don’t know. That night, after the show, in the dressing room, there was – a change. Some tension.

Hilliard QC Tension?

Production Manager My memory, and it’s only my memory of it, but that it was ... that Charles was quite ‘rude’.

Dressing room.

Production Manager *arrives.*

Production Manager Knock, knock, hello. Here’s the information for your hotel tonight. And the other fastest finger firsts are in the bar if you want to join us? It’s sort of a ritual we have here –

Charles Ingram No, I’m, I’m sorry, I’m afraid I can’t. We have to drive back home, I have work in the morning.

Production Manager But – you’re our rollover contestant.

Charles Ingram Yes and we didn’t expect to ‘roll over’, necessarily, of course. I can be back tomorrow evening, no problem, I promise, it’s just I can’t miss work.

Production Manager You can’t call in sick?

Charles Ingram It’s the British Army. No, you can’t call in sick.

Production Manager Why there’s no war on, is there? I mean I’m joking, but not really; we’ve never had anyone ask to leave and come back before.

Hilliard QC So why did you let him go?

Production Manager (*turning to Hilliard QC*) We had no reason not to. Given the nature of his work – we thought it only fair.

Ds Williamson That night. Looking at the phone records. Diana had stopped calling the pagers. And had started calling ... someone else.

In the dressing room. Diana Ingram alone now.

She dials the phone, checking she's alone.

Diana Ingram Hello? Tecwen? It's Diana, Adrian's sister.^[51] Hi. I just heard that ... that I'm going to be seeing you. Charles is here. He's in the chair. And, they mentioned your name as a fastest finger first contestant tomorrow. So, I just thought I would call you. To ... have a little chat.

The quiz show theme returns.

Charles Ingram enters the studio with **Chris Tarrant**.

Tecwen Whittock finds his seat in the outer ring.

Diana Ingram finds her seat in the audience.

Chris Tarrant We're welcoming back Major Charles Ingram into the chair! Do you have a strategy, Major?

Charles Ingram Well, I do have a strategy actually. I was a bit defensive on the last show, talking myself out of answers that frankly I should have known, and *did* know. So this time I'm going on the counter-attack and show a bit more self-commitment.

Chris Tarrant Well, let's put this strategy to the test. For £8,000. 'Who was the second husband of Jacqueline Kennedy? A: Adnan Khashoggi; B: Ronald Reagan; C: Aristotle Onassis; D: Rupert Murdoch.'

Charles Ingram Right, OK, I'm not certain. I'm not certain. I would have thought ... that it was Aristotle Onassis.

Tecwen Whittock coughs from the seats.

Charles Ingram One of my sub-strategies is to take my time actually. List all of the options. Adnan Khashoggi ... Ronald Reagan ... Aristotle Onassis ...

Tecwen Whittock coughs again.

Charles Ingram ... and Rupert Murdoch. (*Waits*.) I'm pretty sure it's Aristotle Onassis, I'll go for that. Final answer.

^[52]

Chris Tarrant Even though you weren't sure. You didn't have to play? Well – this new self-committed Charles is a wild and crazy man. It's the correct answer!

Hilliard QC And on the all-important £32,000 question?

Chris Tarrant 'Who had a hit UK album with *Born to Do It*, released in 2000. A: Coldplay; B: Toploader; C: A1; D: Craig David.'

Charles Ingram ... OK. (*Thinks*.)

Hilliard QC For those of you at home, the answer is Craig David.

Charles Ingram I think it's A1. It could be Toploader. Which is also a barrel on a gun. I've never heard of Craig David. I might have to use my last lifeline, 50:50.

Chris Tarrant Computer, take away two wrong answers, leaving the right answer and one remaining wrong answer.

On screen we are left with 'Craig David' and 'A1'.

Charles Ingram Hmm. OK. That hasn't helped me at all, actually. I think I'll go A1.

Chris Tarrant It's up to you. I can't influence your judgement at all.

Charles Ingram I'll go A1.

Chris Tarrant Final answer?

Charles Ingram No. (*Laughs. Thinks*.) 'Craig – David' ...

And this time Diana Ingram coughs.

Charles Ingram ... or A1. (*Waits*.)^[53] Do you know, when I guess, practising at home, I'm wrong 80 per cent of the time, so I think I'll go for Craig David.

Hilliard QC (*to the Production Manager*) Have you ever seen anyone play like that? To be so convinced of one answer, then switch to another?

Production Manager No. Never. It was – weird.

Chris Tarrant You'd never heard of him a moment ago?!

Charles Ingram Final answer, Craig David.

The screen locks in the answer.

Chris Tarrant You had £16,000, you didn't have to play. You went for D – Craig David. That is the RIGHT ANSWER!

Charles Ingram YEAH!

Music, lights, cheering, the usual –

Hilliard QC (*reading from a transcript*) 'You'd never heard of him a moment ago.' And then the Baron Haussmann question. For half a million. 'Baron Haussman is best known for his planning of which city? Rome, Paris, Berlin, or Athens?' Ingram: 'I think it's Berlin.' Chris Tarrant: 'Take as long as you need.'

In the chair. Charles Ingram suspiciously rotating through the questions again ...

Charles Ingram Rome, Paris –

Hilliard QC (*with the transcript*) Cough.

Tecwen Whittock coughs in the studio.

Charles Ingram Berlin, Athens. I think it's Berlin.

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Hilliard QC It should be pointed out that Berlin is the wrong answer – and Ingram seems not to be following the code. So – what happens next.

Charles Ingram I'm sure it's Berlin.

Hilliard QC Another cough, and then the word 'no' –

We hear an audio recording of the question – and an alleged, slightly comical, 'no' from somewhere in the audience.

Woodley QC Objection.

Judge Rivlin Sustained

Woodley QC We once again assert that the isolated audio presented here does *not* represent the same conditions in which my client is expected to have heard them.

Hilliard QC Just from the transcript, then, which speak greater volumes. Ingram: 'I have to rethink. I don't think it's Athens, and I'm sure it's not Rome. I would have thought it's Berlin, *but ...* there's a chance it's Paris.'

Tecwen Whittock coughs.

Hilliard QC Another cough. Ingram: 'It *could* be Paris.' And then reverting to mic number 9 – Diana Ingram's mic, which she possibly forgot about.

Diana Ingram (*picked up on a mic*) Oh God, no ...

Diana Ingram *in a light, in the audience.* **Hilliard QC** *approaching ...*

Hilliard QC 'Oh God, no ...' she said. Was that because the plan had been to stop earlier? To avoid the attention that comes the larger the prize? Was it all getting out of control?

Woodley QC Objection, this is all conjecture, might we stick to the facts?

Charles Ingram Gosh!

Hilliard QC Laughter from the audience. 'Gosh!'

Chris Tarrant I know it's tempting – you don't have to play. You stand to lose £218,000.

Charles Ingram I think it's Paris. Yeah I think I'm going to play.

Chris Tarrant Now, wait, where are we?

Hilliard QC (*reading the transcript*) More audience laughter.

Chris Tarrant Well I don't know about you at home, but I'm on the edge of my seat. You do realise this is real money, Major Ingram?

Charles Ingram I think it's Paris. Final answer.

It locks in on the screen.

Chris Tarrant You thought it was Berlin. Berlin, Berlin, Berlin. You changed your answer to Paris. This has bought you FIVE HUNDRED THOUSAND POUNDS!

Charles Ingram OH MY GOODNESS!

From the gallery.

David Briggs *is on the phone.*

David Briggs Paul – it’s David. I think it’s happening. Something’s happening. The rollover contestant from last night. We think he’s cheating.

Paul Smith What? How?

David Briggs We don’t know, but. We should stop the show.

Paul Smith You can’t just accuse someone of cheating, David, you have to give ’em the benefit of the doubt until you have proof.

David Briggs Look, normal people don’t behave this way.

Paul Smith (*sighs*) Alright, I’ll come down –

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Back in the studio.

Chris Tarrant So – and it’s not very often I’ve been able to say this – but for one – million – pounds!

Momentum and music building now. Hilliard QC pacing around Charles Ingram the hot seat, with the transcript.

Hilliard QC (*with the transcript*) ‘The number one followed by a hundred zeros is known by what name?’

Chris Tarrant A: Googol; B: Megatron; C: Gigabit; D: Nanomole.

Hilliard QC The answer is googol. Twenty seconds of silence. Then Ingram: ‘Let’s see. Giga ...

Nano ... Diana – from the audience, whispered: ‘Oh God, don’t start.’ Ingram: ‘I’m not sure.

However.’ Tarrant: ‘You haven’t been sure since question two!’ Audience – laughter. Ingram:

‘God I think it’s a megatron. I have to say ... I don’t think I’ve heard of googol. Tecwen

Whittock, in seat three, to the contestant in seat two, whispers: ‘Do you know the answer?’

Contestant two whispers back, on his mic: ‘Yes, it’s googol.’ Whittock whispers to contestant

two: ‘Yes, that’s what I thought.’ And then, Ingram ...

Charles Ingram (*in the chair*) Googol, googol, googol.

Tecwen Whittock *coughs.*

Charles Ingram I mean ... by process of elimination, I actually think it *is* a googol! But I don’t

know what a googol is. 57 It’s not a gigabit, a nanomole or a megatron and there’s only four of

them so it must be googol, mustn’t it? I mean it’s the only chance I’ll ever have of winning a

million but it’s a hell of a chance. I don’t mind taking the odd risk now and again ... My strategy

has worked so far. Chris, I’m going to play.

Hilliard QC The audience – gasps . Diana, to the person next to her: ‘Catch me when I fall on the

floor’. Ingram: ‘I’m going to play. Googol.’ Tarrant: ‘Final answer?’

Chris Tarrant Final answer?

Hilliard QC Ingram: ‘Final answer ...’

Charles Ingram Final answer.

In the studio ...

Chris Tarrant You’ve just won ONE MILLION POUNDS!

An explosion of light and sound. Charles Ingram on his feet.

Chris Tarrant You are the most amazing contestant we have ever had! Diana, come down. One million pounds, can you believe it?!

Diana Ingram *leaves the audience and heads to the stage. They hold one another ...*

Hilliard QC (*from transcript*) Tarrant: ‘What a man. Quite – an amazing – man ...’ (*Turns to the Audience.*) Ignore the lights, ignore the sound, ignore the glitter. This is robbery. Plain and simple. It is theft. And you must find them guilty. Thank you, your honour. The prosecution rests its case.

Judge Rivlin Members of the jury. It is up to you. Using the keypads in front of you, please vote now. Press A for guilty, or B for not guilty. The decision really is yours. Please vote now. It’s 50–50 remember – the *right* answer, and the one remaining *wrong* answer!

Woodley QC Your honour!

The Audience vote. The score comes in.

Judge Rivlin *announces the result.*

Woodley QC *replaces Hilliard QC on the floor.*

Woodley QC (*standing*)Objection, your honour. It is still custom in English common law that any member of our society is innocent until proven guilty.

The 'end of show' klaxon goes.

Chris Tarrant (*pulling his standard face*)Oh no ...! That's all we have time for on *this* show. But join us again, very shortly ...

Others in attendance in the courtroom have begun to cough – the prosecution team, members of the press, and other witnesses. Only gently at first, but it grows ... and grows ...

Woodley QC We in this country do not yet have trial by media, or by mob. Our defendants ... the defendants' case must be heard.

Chris Tarrant That's all we have time for, it's time to roll over!

Judge Rivlin Order ... (*Coughs.*)... I said ... I said order ...

The coughing is becoming violent, people reaching for glasses of water or doubling over. It has even begun to affect **Judge Rivlin**.

Woodley QC The defendants' case will be HEARD!

The coughing reaches a cacophony.

Blackout.

Act 2

A minute or so before the curtain is due to rise, the **Warm-Up** *returns.*

Warm-Up Hello! Welcome back! That's it, get seated, now that you've all been satisfactorily sated. It's time, that's right, to mark the pub quiz! Now we're going to let you mark your own answers, why, because we trust you. *Trust.* That you will not cheat. Not British is it. Honour, decency, fair play. Alright, round one, question one ... The answers are given for Round One, and Round Two. And then ... Finally our closest-to question. What was the turnout as a percentage in the June 2001 election? Anyone get it exactly right? No, course not. Well, closest-to, if you got within one percentage point of the right answer, you can add *three points* to your score. If you got within two percentage points of the answer, a bit less on two points. Within three percentage points, give yourself one point. There, wasn't that fun! Wonderful! Fabulous. Will find the winner in a second, just one moment, back in a tick!

He steps out of this, into –

Snap. The **Warm-Up** *is somewhere alone, backstage, private. Quiet.*

He is motionless, staring sadly into space.

He slips off his wig. Stares out. Beat ...

He takes some pills from his pocket and knocks them back with a hip flask. Closes his eyes.

Breathes.

And then steps back, into –

Lights, music! He addresses the audience with energy, as an **Assistant** *hands him a clipboard.*

Warm-Up And we're back! Yey! So, did anyone get fifteen out of fifteen, highest marks possible? No. Fourteen? (*We keep going down until someone declares their mark.*) Yey! Well done. What was your team name, nice and loud? Fabulous, and a little weird. Great, you've won ... a selfie with the company! On stage, after the show. I know; no expense spared. Just stay seated where you are and we'll collect you when this ... this whole thing is ... finally over.

He smiles; it's not clear whether he's joking or not.

Music, piano, soft, as we fade into –

The courtroom. The stand. Paddy Spooner swearing in.

Paddy Spooner Paddy Spooner, *alleged* leader of the *hypothetical* so-called syndicate. 'I do solemnly, sincerely, and truly declare, and affirm, that the evidence I shall give shall be the truth, the whole truth, and –' ... well now hold on, but this isn't 'the whole truth', is it, I didn't say these exact words.

Hilliard QC The events we're depicting are true, it's just not 'word for word' true, in the most literal sense ...

Paddy Spooner But she's tap tapping away like this is recorded transcript.

Hilliard QC It's just a prop – Lizzie?

The Court Transcriber holds up the paper – blank.

Hilliard QC See, nothing on it. None of this is real. This is a stage. I am wearing a costume. We are a 'representation' of the truth.

Paddy Spooner In other words a lie.

Hilliard QC It's art.

Paddy Spooner Alright, an expensive lie.

Hilliard QC In the words of Pablo Picasso: 'We know that Art is not truth. Art is a lie that makes us realise truth.'

Paddy Spooner (*beat*) That is an *excellent* quote. 'The whole truth and nothing but the truth', there.

Woodley QC Mr Spooner. Something of a legend, am I right? A contestant on *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?* three times. How, when the rules state you may only occupy that hot seat the once?

Paddy Spooner It was three different hot seats. Three different countries. The Australian version, Irish, and UK.

Hilliard QC Ah, so you found a loophole. Leading us to believe, perhaps, that there might be other ways to rig the show.

Paddy Spooner You say rig, I say exploit a weakness, legitimately. Re-tip the balance.

Hilliard QC And what gives you the right to do that?

Paddy Spooner Because *life* is rigged. That's why ... We are, in fact, operating within very narrow parameters of what has been decided for us, already, our factory settings. By being born in this part of England, rather than that part, *that's* rigged. Parents who send their kids to this school, as opposed to that one; people who have friends in the know or are 'the right sort of character', as opposed to the 'wrong colour skin' – *life* is rigged. OK? And the only people who pretend it isn't are the people at the top. Convinced they got there on merit. Well they didn't. So why should I? When I find a way to re-tip the balance.

Hilliard QC So you consider yourself to be a kind of quiz show Robin Hood?

Paddy Spooner I'd never thought of it like that. But that's awesome, so I'll say yes.

Woodley QC As a 'professional' then, what do you and your syndicate think of the alleged conspiracy my clients are charged with? Do you give it much credence?

Paddy Spooner Coughing your way to the right answers, in a studio with microphones and cameras trained directly on you, millions of people watching? No. Sounds too much like you'd get caught to me.

Woodley QC But the prosecution would argue, 'exactly, they did get caught'.

Paddy Spooner It's a game, Anyway the producers swindle the public all the time. Taking millions every day, every week, who's checking up on them, how are they accountable, in the way that they fix the game so that it pays out more to them than us, how is that not stealing? Whether you're a TV show, or an investment bank, or the taxman, or an estate agent, or an *anything*. If this lot *did* do it ... I say fair – fucking – play to them. But they didn't. I'm sure of it. At least ... not like that.

As we move to –

Charles and Diana Ingram wait on a train platform.

Announcer Platform 1 for the 7.45 to London Bridge ...

The Commuters nearby notice them, and together give some unsubtle coughs in their direction.

The Ingrams try to ignore it, as ...

On the Tube.

Announcer Mind the gap, please.

Some **School Kids** notice them, laughing, and together give an almighty series of coughs.
The **Ingrams** try to ignore.

A Starbucks.

Barista Here's your cough-ie!

The **Ingrams** pay for their coffee and exit, to **Customers** laughing and coughing.

On the way to the courtroom, arriving as the press cough them in, teasingly.

Various **Journalists**, of different nationalities, ready to do pieces to camera.

American Journalist(to camera)Welcome back, to this riveting English trial concerning the most successful game show of all time. Here in the UK, courtrooms are one of the few places where cameras are still not allowed – for now – but they do provide cute little drawings of the proceedings. So ... that's nice ...

Australian Journalist As usual, courtroom number 4 is packed, with not enough space to fit all the national *and* international press inside. Far be it for me to imply that there is a pecking order of which nationalities get priority, however it does give me great pleasure, Cindy, to be speaking to you once again from *outside* the courtroom ...

French Journalist *Les avocats de la défense sont venus présenter leur plaidoirie aux douze jurés. Charles Ingram, Diana Ingram et leur complice presume Tecwen Whittock, sont accusé d'avoir tenté de tricher au jeu télévisé Qui veut gagner des millions?*

Mexican Journalist *El enfoque de hoy sera 'Cough number 12' (Demonstrates the cough.), a raíz de la pregunta de 'Baron Haussman', y 'Cough number 10' (demonstrates), la respuesta acerca del (quotation marks)'pop star' Craig David.*

Scottish Journalist As ever, this has to be one of the most entertaining trials in recent memory, where not a day goes by without a bit of knockabout, slapstick fun. Forget the West End. No wonder courtroom number 4 is currently trading as the hottest ticket in town.

Sun Journalist *passes through, on the phone to presumably her newsroom.*

Sun Journalist Look, they're called Charles and Diana, for Christ's sake! Remember how that swept the nation?! That outpouring of grief afterwards? It was like a collective madness, even I bloody cried. This is a good story. It's news, *and* it's entertainment.

English Journalist with Another Citizen.

English Journalist (to camera) England is agog! It seems like everyone has a theory about the cheating. Helen Carrington, you're the manager of Mrs Miggins Spy Shop in north London; and you wrote to the producers with your own theory?

Citizen 1 Yes indeedy-do, yes, these investigators, they're thinking far too analogue. The surveillance equipment in my shop, behind me, state of the art. I've got an invisible ear piece, right; it could have been used by the major's missus, or the Welsh fella. You'd need two people. One to transmit the show to someone outside, who could then search the answer on the World Wide Web, and then transmit back to the person in the audience.

Welsh Journalist *is with Citizen 2, interviewing them on camera.*

Citizen 2 I reckon I've cracked it.

Welsh Journalist Go on.

Citizen 2 Everyone's focused on the guy with the mucus sat behind him. No one's looking at who was in front of him. What about silent signals? Blinking.

Welsh Journalist Blinking, so what, someone in front of the major, behind Chris Tarrant, who would –

Citizen 2 Yeah, easy peasy, innit, someone with a pretend twitch, no one's going to say, 'Oy you, you've got a twitch, that's not right'. Let's try it. (*Blinking and twitching.*) So this kind of blink is for A, this one for B, something like this for yes, one like this for no –

Welsh Journalist I'm not going to remember this.

Citizen 2 But you get my point.

Welsh Journalist I do.

Citizen 3 *is being interviewed by an American Journalist.*

American Journalist Sir, explain to the viewers at home, what is your philosophy on how the Ingrams cheated their way to a million pounds?

Citizen 3 Well, I've been following the trial, intimately, and I heard about that theory of the abandoned pagers. I know Exactly what they were up to, and they should have stuck with it. The coughing was too obvious. But strapping four vibrating pagers to the body is undetectable. To prove this, I currently have four pagers tucked away in various parts of my body right now, and I invite you to find them.

Welsh Journalist *(to camera)* An usual incident yesterday, when a bout of serious not to mention semi-ironic coughing broke out in the courtroom and became infectious to the point where, remarkably, the judge had to suspend the session and send the jury home! Robert Price, from the *Daily Mail*, you were one of the very first to be afflicted by this spluttering spree, correct?

Daily Mail Journalist *(lighting up a cigarette, taking a huge puff)* Yeah, I don't know what to tell you, feel fine now, but – you know. I felt a tickle, and I went with it. It's like a yawn, innit, someone yawns, you wanna yawn. Or like when someone coughs, in a theatre, during a quiet and important bit. Makes everyone else want to cough. Doesn't it?

Welsh Journalist Nevertheless, despite being momentarily seized by this real and debilitating affliction, I'm guessing you still managed to file your exclusive story on time.

Daily Mail Journalist I did, yeah I did. Que sera, sera, innit. *(Beat. Coughs.)*

Inside the court –

Judge Rivlin *(in court)* Order, order. Might I suggest everyone gathered today just get the coughing out of the way now, perhaps? So we can get it over with, alright? A nice big community cough from everyone, OK? One – two – three.

We get the entire Audience to cough.

Judge Rivlin Excellent.

Production Manager *in the stand.*

Hilliard QC So you were the person who frisked the major, when he left the studio?

Production Manager Correct, yes.

Hilliard QC Did you frisk the major's 'privates'.

Some more laughter from those assembled.

Chris Tarrant *raises his hand to be sworn in.*

Woodley QC Would you mind stating your name and occupation?

Hilliard QC I think we know who Mr Tarrant is and what he does.

Everyone *laughs.* **Chris Tarrant** *sits – the courtroom in awe of him.*

Woodley QC Mr Tarrant, just for the record, did *you* hear any coughing from Mr Whittock's seat behind Mr Ingram. Did you notice anything suspicious?

Chris Tarrant ... No, I didn't.

Woodley QC Thank you, Mr Tarrant.

Hilliard QC How would you rate Mr Ingram's performance on that first night, before the klaxon? Has anyone done worse? Has anyone ever, say, got the first question wrong?

Chris Tarrant Not here, no. I think someone did once in America.

Everyone *laughs, again.*

Judge Rivlin *(to those laughing)* Alright, settle down.

Hilliard QC But you would rate those opening few rounds as being ... wobbly?

Chris Tarrant Uh, if pushed, sure.

Judge Rivlin *(getting in on the fun)* Is that your final answer?

Everyone *(laughter)* Whey!

The laughter grows and grows ...

... until the lights focus in on the three people in the dock, not laughing – Charles Ingram in particular, who tries very hard not to cry ...

THE CASE FOR THE DEFENCE

Upavon. A panicked Adrian Pollock with Diana and Charles Ingram.

Adrian Pollock I have to run away, go away, for a bit. I'm sorry.

Diana Ingram What?

Adrian Pollock Please, please don't ask too many questions, I'm sorry, the business, it, it's a total bloody ...

Diana Ingram Adrian?!

Adrian Pollock Stupid, I know, after the 32k, but I – I'm in so much debt, I've lost everything. This dot com bubble nonsense, the online site, it's – no one, no one's clicking, why won't they bloody fucking CLICK, why won't they BUY –!

He's shaking now, as Charles takes hold of him.

Charles Ingram Hey. Hey, steady on there, old chap. Ssh, come on ... you're alright. It's ... alright ...

Adrian Pollock (*deep breath*) There are people, after me. They'll, they'll break my bloody arms, seriously, or, or worse, I don't know. (*Trying to laugh, tragically.*) Utterly ridiculous, isn't it, a respectable middle-class – like some cheap bloody gangster film, but, here we are ...

Diana Ingram You bloody fool.

Charles Ingram Oh, darling, read the room.

Diana Ingram Your £32,000? And the fourteen I lent you?

Charles Ingram Oh, that's gone as well?!

Adrian Ingram ... Made such a mess of things, haven't I?

Diana Ingram What do you mean 'leave', where?

Adrian Pollock Just while I try to think of something, couple of months maybe.

Charles Ingram No, what about Valerie? Adrian, your children –

Adrian Pollock She doesn't know, none of them do. It's for their safety. I'll call her from – wherever I end up. I just need – time, more seconds on the clock, to, to...

Diana launches herself at Adrian. Charles tries to break them up.

Charles Ingram Alright, come on, now, this won't solve anything!

Diana Ingram What about our book, I can't finish it on my own, the publishers –

Adrian Pollock You can. You can, Diana, you're brilliant. (*Handing Diana a notebook.*) The others. The people I've been helping, with the machines, and the tips. They're yours now. There's not many of them, a woman from Chelmsford, some Welsh guy, I can't ... they know to call you. Just as a resource –

Diana Ingram Call me? No, I can't, I ... my head's spinning –

Adrian Pollock You can still contact me, I'll take a pager, OK? I'll take four, we can rotate them so it's harder to track me. One will always be on. I'll post you the numbers when I have them, you call them.

Diana runs to hug him. He extracts himself –

Adrian Pollock Ta-ta for now.

He exits.

Charles Ingram How long has this been going on? Did you know, how long? ... HOW LONG?

Diana bursts into tears. Charles holds her, calling after Adrian ...

Charles Ingram Adrian! Adrian, come back here, this ... this really is bad form.

The phone rings.

Charles Ingram Let the machine get it.

Diana Ingram God, my messed-up family. I'm sorry, Charles! God, what did you marry into! Oh God ...

Under Diana's tears, the answer machine beeps ...

Voice (*off*) Hello, this is Susie calling from *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?* with a message for Charles Ingram. You've been randomly selected to answer our closest-to question in order to win a chance to appear ...

Charles Ingram and Diana look at one another.

In court, mixed with the Langham Hotel.

Ruth Settle Ruth Settle, head of press for the show.

Woodley QC Jumping forward, to the day after the show, when you and –

Adrian Woolfe Adrian Woolfe, head of marketing.

Woodley QC You went to meet the Ingrams at the Langham Hotel, under the guise of the normal morning-after questions. But really you were there to trap them.

Ruth Settle I wouldn't call it a trap, I'd call it 'following up' after suspicions had been raised among the team the previous night. (*At the Langham.*) Just some quotes for the papers, you know. First off ... how did you get into the chair, do you think, fastest finger?

Charles Ingram We practised a lot at home. Adrian, Diana's brother, had a home-made sort of kit he built, which was good to use. That's alright, isn't it? Not –

Woodley QC But you did record the conversation?

Adrian Woolfe Your performance on the first show wasn't, wasn't flawless but then you came back a different man – essentially, what happened?

Charles Ingram Well the 'easier' questions, about popular culture, are harder for me. But the harder questions, exactly like the other two millionaires, Judith and David ... I actually found easier. I don't mean to brag but I'm, I'm actually a member of Mensa. So ...

Hilliard QC And his explanation for changing his mind so much?

Charles Ingram Actually, that was just to explain my thinking to the audience, so I wasn't just sat there like a muppet. Makes it more entertaining, right? To watch.

Ruth Settle It's more interesting for the viewer, if they can hear your process. (*Beat. At Adrian Woolfe.*) It could be this – don't you think?

Woodley QC (*in court, with the transcript*) 'It could be this – don't you think?' That's what you said?

Charles Ingram (*to Diana*) Diana exposes all these tips in her book.

Ruth Settle You're writing a book?

Diana Ingram Oh, just like a silly little stocking-filler thing. Tips and advice on how to beat the show – ... how to get onto the show. And how to play the game well. Nothing to worry anyone.

Adrian Woolfe We'll relay this back to the team and be in touch.

Diana Ingram There's no problem, is there?

Adrian Woolfe No, all just horses for ...

Woodley QC Why the long pause, there?

Adrian Woolfe ... I noticed the television screen, in the corner. Playing the news.

Ruth Settle What, what is it?

Adrian Woolfe Look. That looks like ... New York. Something's happened. That's one of the Twin Towers –

Woodley QC The day after the show. 11 September 2001.

Diana Ingram (*watching, shocked*) Oh my goodness ...

Adrian Woolfe ... This might – this might, bump you down the news a bit.

Hilliard QC (*in court*) You honour, is this *really* the defence's case? That the major's strange behaviour was a conscious attempt at 'entertainment'. How can that be? Having never been on TV before, hardly watched television, that this army major knew exactly what 'good entertainment' was?

Woodley QC We're not suggesting he did at all, your honour. We're suggesting that *she* did. *Away, in Upavon, Diana Ingram is preparing ...*

Woodley QC The quiz obsessive. The person who had already been in the chair. An expert like no other ...

Charles Ingram *enters for 'training'.*

Diana Ingram You have to trust me, OK, focus.

Charles Ingram Alright, yes ma'am, dib-dib, dob-dob.

Diana Ingram The book needs to be a success. For Adrian. *You* need to be a success.

Charles Ingram Gotcha.

Diana Ingram Alright then. We've been noticing a change. In the show. In the questions. They're becoming more – more 'populist'.

Charles Ingram Right.

Diana Ingram Which is bad for us, bad for you.

Charles Ingram Yeah, I don't know anything about popular culture.

Diana Ingram It's a form of censorship, Adrian says, he has a theory.

Charles Ingram What's the theory?

Diana Ingram That they're trying to wheedle out people like us.

Snapping to – the Celador boardroom.

David Liddiment Look, it's bad television. These, these well-spoken but, sorry, *boring* people with money, who know the answer to things, answering things to get more money. We want – we need 'characters'.

David Briggs When you say characters, David, are you referring to (*with an affected accent*) the 'working classes'.

David Liddiment I mean I want the type of people who watch the show to be on the show. I mean, yes, working class. *Normal* people. ITV people.

Paul Smith We'll increase the number of closest-to questions in the callbacks, harder for these 'people' to share them amongst their community. We could try bringing the question setters in house. They're still sending them in on bloody floppy disks, it's –

David Liddiment Look, what if you start asking questions that – forgive me, that – OK, that, OK ... (*Beat*)... that the 'English middle classes' don't know the answers to. You know? ITV-type questions. Soaps, sports ... 'pop', popular stuff, 'pop *music*'. Enough with all this kings and queens bollocks, gives a shit.

Paul Smith Once the contestant sits in the chair, the computer generates a random stack of 15 questions that gets locked, no matter who they are.

David Briggs And we – I'm not sure what the gaming authority rules are on tailoring questions to specific people –

David Liddiment Oh I'm not saying that, obviously. No, keep it random. Just ... random in a more organised way. Perhaps. In how we select the contestants, at least, on the phone lines. I don't know, you'll work it out. But work – it – out. (*Beat, makes to leave, stops*) You remember, when we were over at ABC? Los Angeles. To sell them the format. Your format. (*At Paul Smith, gesturing to David Briggs*) Did you tell him what they did, when we walked into their office – not an office like this, a *Hollywood* office, full of Hollywood stuff. Brits, trying to sell a game show, to them, the Americans! I thought they would laugh at us. But they didn't. They kneeled ... They were joking, of course. But still. They got on their hands and knees and they kneeled. If there's a flaw. If someone is trying to fuck us up, somewhere, somehow, we have to fuck back and hard. OK?

Back in Upavon –

Charles Ingram So what are we meant to do?

Diana Ingram Study. Let's get to work. Pop music.

Karaoke at the Old Red Lion appears simultaneously around them –

Punter sings 'One for Sorrow' by Steps.

Diana Ingram 'presses stop' on this.

Charles Ingram Uh, Spice Girls? Sugababes? Some other condiment?

Diana Ingram No, remember, the line-dancing group.

Charles Ingram Oh, Riverdance.

Diana Ingram No, next. Soaps.

A snatch of the Coronation Street theme tune, and the flicker of light like an old movie reel –

Hilda Ogden I've got something to say to you, Elsie Tanner; what were you doing all night with my Stan?

Elsie Tanner Haha! You'd better ask him that.

Hilda Ogden You've never been able to keep a fella all to yourself, have you, so you get your own back by trying to pinch everyone else's. Well, I'll tell you this, madam, you're not having mine!

Elsie Tanner You repeat that again!

Hilda Ogden I don't boil my cabbages twice, not unless you're going deaf in your old age.

Elsie Tanner I might be old, Mrs Ogden, but I'm not that old I have to scrape the bottom of the barrel, chasing after great lumps of lard like your husband.

Hilda Ogden What's wrong with my husband?!

Elsie Tanner You've got eyes, haven't yer?!

Hilda Ogden If he's good enough for me, he's good enough for you!

Diana *'turns it off'*.

Charles Ingram Minnie Caldwell?

Diana Ingram No –

Charles Ingram Deirdre Barlow.

Diana Ingram No! Wrong decade, and they bloody said it – Hilda Ogden!

Charles Ingram Ugh! How do you remember it all!

Diana Ingram The memory is like a muscle! Just exercise.

Charles Ingram You know, I read that apparently *all* memories are actually a lie. When you remember something, you're not remembering the original event, you're remembering the *last* time that you remembered it. So we're constantly wiping the past and making a new, edited one. Fascinating stuff, eh?

Diana Ingram Do you think it will be a question on the show?

Charles Ingram Probably not.

Diana Ingram Then it isn't fascinating. Next –

More Punters at the karaoke machine.

Punters *singing/dancing* – 'Everytime' by A1.

Charles Ingram A1?

Diana Ingram That's it!

They high five. The Emmerdale theme tune. Diana has flash cards.

Diana Ingram When did *Emmerdale Farm* lose the *Farm* in the title?

Charles Ingram '88, no, '89.

Diana Ingram Correct. How did the following characters die? Alex Oakwell.

Charles Ingram Fell off a roof.

Diana Ingram Butch Dingle.

Charles Ingram Hit by a bus.

Diana Ingram Rachel Hughes.

Charles Ingram Pushed off a cliff.

Diana Ingram Elizabeth Pollard.

Charles Ingram A plane landed on top of her.

Diana Ingram CORRECT!

A Punter begins singing 'Seven Days' by Craig David as they continue –

Diana Ingram In the song 'Seven Days', what did Craig David do on Tuesday?

Charles Ingram Uh, he took her for a drink.

Diana Ingram And on Wednesday?

Charles Ingram I believe they were making love by then. And continued to do so throughout Thursday and Friday as well.

Diana Ingram Right, and then on Sunday?

Charles Ingram Uh, they just chilled.

Diana Ingram Yes.

They hug ...

At the karaoke machine, 'Endless Love' begins to play ...

Punters And now, for all the romantics out there.

Sings 'Endless Love'.

Charles and Diana *begin to turn slowly in their embrace, swaying.*

Charles Ingram I have a question for you ... I know we're young, still, and you're still at college, and I'm about to go off on tour, but that's why I have to ask. The question is ... will you

marry me. Now – I want you to think very carefully, because I have to accept your first answer, and ... and there's a lot at stake here. Multiple choice. Is your answer: A: No, because my family aren't sure about you one bit, Charles Ingram; B: No, because *I'm* not sure about you; C: Yes ... because I don't care what my family think; D: Yes, because I know that he loves me, very deeply, and will look after me for ever.

Diana Ingram It's too easy. D – final answer.

Charles Ingram... OK. Bonus question for extra prizes. Where would you like to get married?

A: Castle; B: Church; C: Garden; D: Beach.

Diana Ingram B: Church. What shall our first dance be? A: The Beatles; B: Diana Ross; C: Lionel Ritchie; D: Diana Ross *and* Lionel Ritchie.

Charles Ingram D – but only because it's what you want.

'Endless Love' continues to play. Lights. They dance ...

Charles Ingram As an army man constantly on the move, never in one place, unable to give you the stability and the nice things you deserve, you think what? A: Really, oh bugger, the wedding's off; B: Looks like I'll be having affairs then; C: Who wants to stay still? There's too much to see and do in this world; D –

Diana Ingram C.

Charles Ingram Is that your final answer?

Diana Ingram... Final answer.

They kiss.

Punter finishes *'Endless Love'*.

The music and lights of the TV studio.

Woodley QC And yet despite all that training ... that first show, a disaster. Why?

The klaxon at the end of night one sounds –

– we're back in the dressing room.

Diana Ingram Bugger!

Charles Ingram I'm sorry, love. Bloody *Coronation Street*.

Diana Ingram And phoning a friend on the 'River Foyle'?

Charles Ingram Tsk. Yes dammit. Served all over the bloody world, must be the only soldier *not* to be sent to Northern Ireland; typical of my rotten luck. Four thousand, God it's nothing, compared to –

Diana Ingram Charles, you know I love you. But ... we need to talk about your 'character'.

Charles Ingram My ... ?

Diana Ingram You know, your – performance. We'll need to change tactics if you're to survive; they'll want you gone. Unless you can – 'entertain' them.

Charles Ingram What, like Russell Crowe in the bloody Colosseum? *Gladiator*, Ridley Scott, 2001.

Diana Ingram2000.

Charles Ingram Oh – I can only 'perform' as 'me', Diana.

Diana Ingram What, a, a bumbling, terribly nice, army major who thinks hard about the questions before he answers? Remember Adrian's theory. They want – 'drama'. If you're an entertaining contestant, Charles –

Charles Ingram Diana. (*Taking her hands.*) I'm not going to be able to be anyone other than myself.

Diana Ingram (*beat. Smiles*)... Well then make a virtue of that. Of the eccentric major. Military language. 'Going over the top, chaps', that sort of thing.

Charles Ingram Yes. Yes, OK, good. Counter-attack, on the offensive, best foot forward, that sort of thing.

Diana Ingram Yes. And talk through your thinking, that's key. They don't like contestants sitting there quietly, thinking, it's boring. Talk aloud all the answers.

Charles Ingram Well ... well wait a minute. In the spirit of changing manoeuvres, switching tactics, like the most entertaining war movies, a big twist, I could *pretend* I'm about to pick the wrong answer. You know, walking into enemy territory, and then –

Diana Ingram Yes, yes, that's good, exactly. Why was this last election the lowest turnout ever. Because everyone knew Blair was going to win. Viewing figures require a bit of –

Charles Ingram Suspense!

Diana Ingram Exactly. We need to prep – we need to practise.

Charles Ingram Yes. Except – I have work tomorrow.

Diana Ingram Work? Charles –

Charles Ingram Diana we go over this and over this, it's my duty.

Diana Ingram You can't! This is too important! –

Charles Ingram Diana, listen to me!

Production Manager Knock, knock, hello. Here's the information for your hotel tonight. And the other fastest finger firsts are in the bar if you want to join us? It's sort of a ritual we have here –

We see the same conversation from Part One – though now Charles seems less rude, more determined, desperate to get home for his position ...

Charles Ingram No, no, I'm, I'm sorry, but ... I'm afraid I can't, we have to drive back home, tonight, I have work in the morning.

Production Manager But – you're our rollover contestant.

Charles Ingram Yes and we didn't expect to 'roll over', necessarily, of course. I can be back tomorrow evening, no problem, I promise, it's just I can't miss work.

Production Manager You can't call in sick?

Charles Ingram It's the British Army. No, you can't call in sick.

Production Manager Why there's no war on, is there? I mean I'm joking, but not really; we've never had anyone ask to leave and come back before.

Charles Ingram My job is everything to me. Please. I'll make it back.

Production Manager ... (Sighs.) Alright. So long as you do.

The studio. Charles Ingram back in the hot seat. Chris Tarrant questioning ...

We've seen this before – in Act One – but now from the perspective not of an indecisive, bumbling major ... but a man executing a rather brilliant plan, playing to the crowds.

Chris Tarrant Incredible, £16,000! Honestly, I don't know where this Charles Ingram has come from but, wow, you're one of the most entertaining contestants I think we've had for a long time. Here's that cheque. But we don't want to give you that! This ... for £32,000. 'Who had a hit UK album with *Born to Do It*, released in 2000. A: Coldplay; B: Toploader; C: A1; D: Craig David.'

Charles Ingram ... OK. (Thinks.) I think it's A1. It could be Toploader. Which is also a barrel on a gun. I've never heard of Craig David. I might have to use my last lifeline, 50–50.

Woodley QC (in court) And stop. Pause here ... People look at that question, the Craig David question, the first example of a 'different' kind of playing, and they don't get it. What were you doing?

Charles Ingram I genuinely didn't know the answer. Couldn't remember any of Mr David's songs, but we had our plan. The back and forths, the suspense.

Woodley QC And then of course – there was the gasp.

Charles Ingram (back to Chris Tarrant) I think I'll go for A1.

The Audience gasp.

Woodley QC As can be clearly heard on the tape.

Chris Tarrant A1? Final answer?

Charles Ingram No. (Laughs. Thinks.) 'Craig – David' ...

Diana Ingram coughs, perfectly naturally, worried.

Charles Ingram ... or A1. (Waits.) Do you know, when I guess, practising at home, I'm wrong 80 percent of the time, so I think I'll go for Craig David.

Chris Tarrant You'd never heard of him a moment ago?!

Charles Ingram Final answer, Craig David.

The screen locks in the answer.

Chris Tarrant That is the RIGHT ANSWER!

Charles Ingram YEAH!

Snap to a spotlight – Charles with his arms out to the audience.

‘ARE YOU NOT ENTERTAINED?!’

Woodley QC Something else is going on by this point, isn’t it. Behind the scenes. Something neither the cameras nor the audio tapes are picking up. Something *hidden* ...

Around the studio, in the shadows, different members of the production emerge, to the sound of static, their voices picked up on mics. They’re talking to one another into headsets ...

Voices I told you – see, that was weird / Something’s going on / This doesn’t feel right / What is he up to? / How is he doing this?

Woodley QC The ‘talk-back’. The production team around the studio. Talking to one another on cans. Gossiping, conjecturing, convinced something wasn’t right from the off, the conspiracy theories beginning before Major Charles Ingram was even out of the chair. Like a Chinese whisper, growing and growing, taking on a life of its own ...

The static feedback from the ‘talk-back’ grows, and grows, jumping onto –

The MOD. Charles Ingram with Major General Roberts.

Major General A million pounds, Charles! Congratulations, good heavens!

Charles Ingram Thank you, Major General. Feels awful though, given what’s happening in the world.

Major General Ye-es, a heavy dose of reality, I’m afraid. Straight back to work. Procurement for possible new operations. ‘Desert kit’. The Challenger 2 tank, as we know from Oman does not do well in the sand, but the bean counters don’t have the money to upgrade. They’re diverting resources into ... different kinds of weapons, now. ‘Psyops’.

Charles Ingram ‘Psyops’?

Major General *Psychological* warfare. ‘Hearts and minds’, they’re calling it. (*Reading from his brief.*) Apparently we are now in the field of ‘weaponising narratives’.

Charles Ingram And how do you turn narratives into weapons, sir?

Major General Bog standard propaganda. It’s the classic model, Major, just with very modern means. (*With a pile of CVs.*) We’re not recruiting soldiers or pilots. But advertisers. Copywriters. They’ve got us sending television producers into the desert. Don’t ask me. A TV singing contest, for example, to teach Afghans the value of voting. Democracy, Charles. Or at least, the ‘illusion’ of ... (*Slams the file shut.*) We’re not to refer to them as our enemy anymore; they are now our ‘target audience’. Changing people’s perceptions. Of themselves, their country. Still, nothing wrong with a bit of the old razzamatazz, eh? You know that now, more than anyone, Charles.

An Officer runs in.

Army Officers Major General, an urgent phone call.

In court –

Hilliard QC The defence says the Ingrams were caught completely off guard by the mounting suspicions; on the talkback, in the studio, the marketing and press. But that still doesn’t explain the phone call to the Major *alerting* him that the money would not be handed over, and the Major’s ‘unsurprised’, monosyllabic, understated response.

Woodley QC Oh yeah, the phone call. If looks can be deceiving, then sounds most certainly can. What you can’t see in that recording – is the *context*.

A snap back to the MOD, from Act One.

Charles Ingram and Paul Smith *phone call from Act One – facing one another in a pool of light.*

Paul Smith I have to tell you that these suspicions have been referred – to the police.

Charles Ingram... Right.

The lights flicker, and we ‘wind’ back, the characters reversing to the noise of a tape being rewound.

The pool of light around Charles Ingram irises out to show that he is in the barracks. Major General Roberts and a couple of other Officers are excitedly preparing a bottle of champagne, clapping and looking excited.

Army Officers This is his number, he said to call him back.

Charles Ingram OK, calm down, it's probably nothing. (*Dialling.*)

Major General 'Nothing', more like confirmation of a million stinking knicker hitting your current account.

Paul Smith *answers the phone in his pool of light.*

Paul Smith Hello?

Charles Ingram Paul?

Paul Smith Charles. Hi. I ... (*Reading from a prepared transcript.*) I have to tell you ... I have to tell you that we have suspicions from viewing the recording of last Monday's programme and subsequently studying the tapes carefully that there were irregularities during the taping of the show in which you participated.

Charles *stares with an embarrassed face at the excited people gathered around him, beaming.*

Charles Ingram Oh good Lord no.

Paul Smith Because of that I have to tell you that these suspicions have been referred to the police.

Charles Ingram Right.

Paul Smith And thus we will not for the moment be airing the programme or indeed authorising payment of the cheque.

Charles Ingram Right. Yeah. Well I mean, you know, I completely refute that obviously. Good Lord. OK, well.

Paul Smith I'm sorry. Goodbye.

He puts the phone down. The gathered Officers can tell something's wrong. Someone accidentally lets off a party popper.

A bang, bang, bang.

Upavon. There's knocking on a front door.

Charles Ingram *in his living room, leading the Police inside.*

Ds Williamson Mr Ingram?

Charles Ingram Goodness me, what is it?

Ds Williamson Detective Sergeant Ian Williamson from the Metropolitan Police. We have a warrant to enter your property.

Charles Ingram You ... but ... why?

Diana Ingram (*entering*) Our girls are asleep upstairs, what is this?

Ds Williamson I should tell you that we're placing you both under arrest under the charge of attempting to defraud the show *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?* You do not have to say anything, but anything you do say may be given in evidence against you. Do you understand?

Charles Ingram... Yes.

Ds Williamson First things first. Where is your fastest finger first machine.

Diana Ingram... You're not serious.

Charles Ingram Um. It's in the garage.

Ds Williamson We will also be needing a copy of your book, Mrs Ingram.

Diana Ingram It isn't finished yet, I haven't even spell-checked it.

More commotion outside.

What's that?

Ds Williamson... it sounds like the press.

Reporter *appears outside, with a Photographer. Flashbulbs popping.*

Woodley QC (*joining them*) How did you get to the Ingrams' house in time to catch them leaving in police custody? Who leaked it so quickly?

Reporter Well, I don't wanna be thrown out of the magic circle or anything, but ... there's sort of an understanding, with certain police officers, when it comes to this kind of thing ...

The police station.

An interview room. DS Williamson and a Police Constable one side of the table, with Charles, Diana and Woodley QC opposite.

Ds Williamson We have a transcript of the show provided by the producers, Celador. It shows, quite clearly, the moments where a cough can be heard, and Mr Ingram changing his answer as a result.

Charles Ingram What are you talking about I didn't hear coughing.

Woodley QC This is all you have? Audience members coughing, that's enough to detain my clients? Wafer thin at best.

Ds Williamson You should know that we have located your bother, Adrian Pollock, and taken him in for questioning. And Tecwen Whittock too.

Charles Ingram Who's Tecwen Whittock?

Police Constable Tecwen Whittock is the contestant coughing at moments which seem to fall into something of a pattern.

Ds Williamson You're denying that you know him?

Charles Ingram We don't know him.

Diana Ingram Charles –

Ds Williamson You'd never spoken to him before?

Charles Ingram No, never.

Ds Williamson You'd never met him before?

Charles Ingram No.

Ds Williamson You have no idea that your wife has spoken to him on the phone on several occasions, the night before and the morning of, your second appearance on *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire*?

Charles Ingram... (*He looks to his wife.*)... No.

Woodley QC Can you give us a minute?

Ds Williamson Mrs Ingram, do you mind if I ask you, how long you have been engaged in ... any form of relationship with Mr Whittock?

Diana Ingram Relationship? Are you ...? Are you implying ...?

Woodley QC Please can my clients have a moment?

Both Charles and Diana step out, into – A cell. The door is locked shut with a slam. Silence ...

Diana Ingram Say something.

Charles Ingram You lied to me.

Diana Ingram I didn't lie, I just didn't tell you, I didn't think it was –

Charles Ingram You didn't tell me the *truth*, that's the same as lying!

Diana Ingram I didn't know it was going to be important. It isn't important. It was just one of Adrian's contacts, we've never met him. I heard he was going to appear on your rollover show the next day, that's all, such a, a random thing, that –

Charles Ingram Please! Nothing can be that random. I can ... oh God, I can feel the ground opening up in front of me ... They were ... That policeman, he was ... he was *implying* you ... (*Struggling.*) Right in front of me, smiling, do you have any idea what that felt ... Well?

Diana Ingram... Well what?

Charles Ingram You know.

Diana Ingram... Are you *asking* me? If ... Because I warn you, Charles. There are some things ... that you should just know the answer to. (*Crying, now.*) Because if you have to ask me ... then it's already ...

They stand in silence, for a moment ...

Woodley QC (*to the courtroom, and to Tecwen Whittock*) When was the first time you all actually met one another, Mr Whittock? And where?

Tecwen Whittock Uh, in that dock, just there, a few weeks ago. When we were accused of conspiracy.

Woodley QC A fact, incidentally, that the prosecution does not dispute?

Hilliard QC We don't dispute *that*, no, your honour.

Tecwen Whittock It was just the most – incredible coincidence that I got called in, on Major Ingram's second show. I'd been trying for so long. Just luck, I suppose. Which turns out to be the most rotten luck, actually. In hindsight.

Woodley QC The call records between yourself and Mrs Ingram amount to eight minutes and forty-three seconds in total. The prosecution is asking the jury to believe that within those minutes, you concocted a plan to cheat the show out of a million pounds in front of a live studio audience. Did you concoct such a plan, in those eight minutes and forty-three seconds on the telephone, agreeing to help commit fraud, with someone you had never met?

Tecwen Whittock No. Of course not. That would be – silly.

Alyn Morice (*being sworn in*) Dr Alyn Morice, the University of Hull.

Woodley QC You've examined Mr Whittock, is that right?

Alyn Morice Yes. Mr Whittock suffers from three conditions which caused chronic coughing. He tested positive for cough variant asthma.

Woodley QC How might one try to control those symptoms?

Alyn Morice Very difficult, in a hot and dry studio.

Woodley QC So Mr Whittock was unable, necessarily, to control his cough.

Alyn Morice Correct.

Woodley QC A suitable candidate would you say to implement an intricate code whereby coughing at the precise time in the precise place is key to committing a crime?

Alyn Morice I wouldn't have thought so.

The MOD. A meeting with Major General Roberts again. His TV: the screen is playing several different rolling news channels, the war in Iraq now.

Major General Awful business. I see it all the time. They go after military men – it's good sport.

Charles Ingram I'm sorry, Major General.

Major General (*at the images*) Can you believe this chap. The information minister of Iraq. They're calling him 'Comical Ali'. Popping up on TV making all sorts of outrageous assertions about there being no allied tanks outside Baghdad at all.

Charles Ingram How does someone get away with saying things so objectively untrue.

Major General I don't know. Say something long enough with enough commitment, maybe it becomes de facto true. 'Americans fleeing in fear'.

Charles Ingram 'Weapons of mass destruction, buried in the desert.'

Major General... Alright, Charles, that'll do.

Charles Ingram Sir.

Major General Got enough on with our own Doctor Kelly here, poor chap.

Charles Ingram Kelly? – oh, yes –

Major General Weapons inspector, hauled before the select committee, a government scapegoat in front of the cameras, questioning that very same claim. The *show* they put on – it's like the bringing back of the stocks! (*Studying him.*) Maybe take some time off. Try to keep your head down. Stiff upper lip. Yes?

Charles Ingram Yes, of ... haha, of course ... I ... that's good ...

And suddenly, Charles starts to cry. He can't help himself.

Charles Ingram... (*Weeping.*)... that's very good advice, sir ...

Major General Roberts *doesn't know what to do.*

Charles Ingram I'm so – ... sorry, sir, I don't know what –

Major General No, no, no it's ... you're ...

Suddenly Charles tries a verse of –

Charles Ingram 'I am the ve – ... I am the very model ... I am the – very ...'

He stops ... Silence.

Paul Smith *arrives back in court – the defence's case now building real pace and momentum ...*

Woodley QC Mr Smith. 'Welcome back', to speak the language of your own show. We really are playing for 'big money' now, aren't we ...? This quiz show was your child. And you began to

suspect it was under attack. You were on the lookout, everyone on high alert. Right at the very moment the next million pounds was won.

Paul Smith That's all you think it is?

Woodley QC I think you love the thing that you made. And because of that, I think you genuinely believe the major may have cheated. But with evidence that is only circumstantial at best.

Paul Smith Circumstantial – ... it's all there on the tape. Listen!

Woodley QC Ah yes, the tape, let's talk about the tape. (*Holding up a digibeta tape.*) Edited together from five separate mic tracks, is that how it works? Track one – the major's mic. Track two – Chris Tarrant's. Track three – the *ten* fastest finger first contestants. Track four – Diana Ingram. Track five – the studio audience. (*Holding it up.*) One – digibeta – tape. Edited by you for this trial. The jury is looking where you want them to look, hearing what you want *them* to hear –

Paul Smith That's how you make a show, you –

Woodley QC This isn't a show, Mr Smith, and the fact is this is by definition, in television parlance, a 'clone', your 'clone', the original edits and tapes wiped and wiped again, until there is no longer any one, single, objective reality. There is only the one presented here, by you, not even an audit trail of the changes you made to this now unquestionable 'version' of events. The volumes adjusted on the coughs –

Paul Smith To more accurately reflect what it was like for the Major, sat there in the studio, ears trained on Mr Whittock behind him.

Woodley QC You've isolated on here only nineteen coughs, out of 192 picked up in the recording from all over the place, sometimes on right answers, sometimes on wrong answers – why didn't you isolate those?

Paul Smith Because those weren't relevant –

Woodley QC You mean they weren't relevant to your version of events. Now our *only* version –

Hilliard QC Objection –

Woodley QC Nineteen that coincide with *some* of the right answers on a *couple* of the questions. And of course, we have the infamous 'no' on the Baron Haussmann question, a cough, 'no' so loud on *this* tape it made the jury howl with laughter for how seemingly obvious the fraud / committed was –

Hilliard QC Objection!

Judge Rivlin Sustained. / Will the defence take care –

Woodley QC And yet not obvious enough to you or your sound engineers to have heard it – for *eighteen months*. It didn't appear in the transcript presented to my client in his police interview, it didn't appear even in the original tape submitted as evidence before the trial! You only just found it for *this* version, submitted a matter of weeks ago. Not to mention that this whispered 'no' could have come from any one of the contestants, any one of the mics. Someone hearing the major hovering over a wrong answer and muttering to themselves, quite naturally, 'no'.

Paul Smith Well he obviously heard something because he changed his answer, so –

Woodley QC He heard it? (*In our reality, Woodley QC is now pacing through the TV studio set.*) The man sat here. How many yards away from the location you claim the 'no' came from: Mr Whittock's chair? One ... two ... three ... four ...

She stamps out the feet and then sits in Tecwen Whittock's chair, a long way from Charles Ingram.

Woodley QC Here. Even though these people sat either side of Mr Whittock, they didn't hear it. These people behind him in the audience, they didn't hear it. (*Striding back to the hot seat.*) The person sat opposite the major – Chris Tarrant – *he* didn't hear it. The entire audience surrounding them didn't hear it. The production staff! Straining on their headsets, convinced the major was behaving strangely, searching for *any* sign of cheating – *they* didn't hear it. But this person over here ... under the stress of the game, the lights, the music pumping through his chair, 'gagung, gagung', he did hear it. (*Holding up the tape.*) This is the rock solid evidence, is it? Evidence that,

bizarrely – for the first *time* I've encountered in my career – was never seized by the police for it to be independently verified, and kept safe.

Hilliard QC Your honour, objection!

Judge Rivlin Miss Woodley has been / warned about this line of questioning –

Woodley QC Would the police leave a murder weapon with those making the accusation of murder? / The car with the other driver it collided with?

Hilliard QC Objection, your honour, in the strongest possible terms.

Judge Rivlin Sustained –

Hilliard QC What the defence is fancifully implying – is 'conspiracy'. By whom?

Woodley QC Not conspiracy.

The Production Manager appears elsewhere in the court, Woodley QC spinning to her.

Woodley QC Ever heard of a little thing called 'confirmation bias'? Whereby once an assumption sinks into your brain, and you become fixated that a certain story, a certain answer, *must* be valid, then all 'evidence' and 'facts' are suddenly organised and arranged to support that assumption? You'd been told to be on the lookout, hadn't you, from the beginning. Is that why, from the very beginning, you interpreted the major's deliberate tactic of evasiveness as strange? His behaviour in the dressing room rude –

Production Manager No –

Woodley QC All of the production team together on a loop –

Flash – the Production Manager and others all on their headsets, to the sound of ear-splitting static and radio traffic, gossiping –

Woodley QC Might that not have created a shared fiction which everyone in the studio then, unconsciously, had to distort reality to match? Isn't it strange that the only person on the production *not* hooked up to the talk-back is the only person who didn't notice or suspect anything suspicious whatsoever?!

She's pointing now at the man who has also arrived, into his chair – Chris Tarrant.

We can only hope this has been made clear, in this apparent 'documentary', which you have contributed to (*and then to the others gathered*), and you, and you, and you, all filmed and ready to go before the verdict is even in, to get the highest ratings possible –

Hilliard QC / Paul Smith Objection!

Woodley QC Withdrawn! My final question then is how do you all explain the *eighteen whole minutes* between the Craig David question and the Baron Haussmann question ... where there were *no* coughs at all.

Paul Smith Easy. Whittock didn't need to cough when Ingram was listing those answers.

Woodley QC Why not?

Paul Smith Because Ingram *knew* those answers.

Woodley QC Ah, I see .My final, final question then, just a tiny little thing ... is – How did Tecwen Whittock know that Charles Ingram, a man he had never met, had never communicated with, could not communicate with on the night itself ... how did he *know* that Charles Ingram knew *those* answers and so didn't need to cough?

Paul Smith... (*Can't think of an answer.*) We – don't know. But obviously he did. He *has* to have done. Because it's the only thing that makes *sense*...

A moment, as Paul Smith is replaced by ...

Woodley QC Mrs Ingram? Diana why do *you* love quizzes so much? What is it about them ...? Try ...

Diana Ingram... I like finding out the answers to things. In a world where everything is ... can be so confusing. I like knowing that, maybe, there is a right. And there is a wrong. The certainty, that things can be 'known'.

Woodley QC There are people in this courtroom who are certain you are guilty, and you are certain you're not. How can we be certain of anything? Is nothing 'real'? Is it all a pageant, a show? What do you know, for definite, in your life, Mrs Ingram, with any 'certainty'?

Diana Ingram Two things. That I didn't cheat. And that I love my husband ...

... we move into.

Their hall in Upavon.

Charles Ingram is sat on the floor, surrounded by some blood, nursing his arms. **Diana** watches

...

Charles Ingram It isn't mine. The blood. Don't worry. I'm not that stupid. Not yet.

He shows her what he's holding.

Diana Ingram Buffy ...?

Charles Ingram Someone shot her. An air rifle. I found her lying outside. Our poor little cat ...

Diana Ingram Will she – be alright.

Charles Ingram Her heart's slowing.

Diana *sits next to him, watching.*

Charles Ingram Ssh. Ssh. None of this is your fault. It's OK. Just go to sleep. Go to sleep ... Ssh.

It'll be over soon. Go to sleep ...

He lays her gently down.

He and Diana embrace.

And then he takes the stand.

Woodley QC Major Charles Ingram. You've received death threats? Your daughters have been attacked at school, you've had to *move* schools.

Charles Ingram... (*Nods.*)

Woodley QC Someone kicked your dog to death. Shot your cat. Slashed your tyres, attacked your house, spat in your mouth when you were jogging, cough, cough, everywhere you go. Your face being decommissioned from the army, and certain bankruptcy. All – for a 'game'.

Charles Ingram... Except I didn't do it.

Woodley QC How did you do it then?

Charles Ingram I just answered the questions correctly. Like I was supposed to. I tried to be entertaining. And I tried to get them right ...

Pause. Woodley QC turns to the Audience.

Woodley QC No one likes a cheat, do they? 'Unfairness' sparks something visceral inside of us, since childhood. 'It isn't *fair* ...' Fairness, fair play being one of those shared values we spoke about for the jury to draw upon. A distinguishing part of our national character. There is another part of our national character – rather less appealing – our hobby of building people up, only to bring them down again. We quite like to watch people fall. This very trial, I regret to say, with all its knockabout fun, is an example of that. You're being asked to believe that rather than being smart, rather than simply knowing the answers as a clever but, yes, eccentric, man might, you are being asked to believe that something else happened, something so fanciful, that if you step back a bit, it simply becomes unbelievable. I suggest to you – that you *don't* believe it. And find them innocent.

Beat. She steps –

Outside the courtroom. Charles Ingram is waiting.

Woodley QC Charles, they're back.

Charles Ingram Diana's just in the loo. That was quick, is that a good sign?

Woodley QC I don't know.

Charles Ingram... What will you do, after this? How do you get over it all?

Woodley QC Well, it's tradition the prosecution and defence teams go for dinner with the judge after a trial, actually. Once the 'competition' is over. Probably not what you want to hear ...

Charles Ingram (*beat. Nods*)... Did you mean that? There's no way of ever really knowing anything, not fully?

Woodley QC... No. No, I can't mean it; I work in the law. And I have to believe in – 'rationalism'. In finding quantifiable truths based in evidence. I have to believe in the institutions we trust to be fair, and functional. Whether that be the judiciary, the police, the media ... That they should all be able to resist the temptations of a more entertaining lie, over a less extraordinary truth.

She heads back in, and Charles and Diana follow.

A Juror stands.

Judge Rivlin How do you find the defendant Tecwen Whittock?

Juror Guilty.

Judge Rivlin On the same charge, how do you find the defendant Charles Ingram?

Juror Guilty.

Charles Ingram *is steadied by his wife.*

Judge Rivlin On the same charge, how do you find the defendant Diana Ingram?

Juror... We have been unable to agree on a verdict, your honour.

A gasp from everyone. Charles holds Diana.

Charles Ingram Yes God, yes, please, please ...

Judge Rivlin Order. Order. The nature of this crime is that if you don't believe one of them as part of the conspiracy, the conspiracy does not exist. You must find all the defendants one, or the other.

Charles Ingram Oh my goodness, that means... *(Hopeful.)* So does that mean ...?

The Juror confers and stands again.

Juror In that case, we also find Diana Ingram ... *Guilty*, as charged.

Charles and Diana *are gobsmacked. Judge gets order.*

Judge Rivlin A jury of your peers have found the three of you guilty of the crimes of which you are accused. A crime of this nature carries a maximum penalty of ten years in prison ... But we don't want to give you that! Look there's no way I'm going to be depriving your children of their parents. I sentence you to eighteen months in prison, suspended for two years.

The gavel goes down, and the court disperses. Different parties looking at one another

– **Woodley QC and Production Manager, Tecwen Whittock and Diana, Charles ... and Paul Smith.**

Outside the court, Paul Smith crosses John De Mol and Mark Burnett.

John De Mol Congratulations, Paul, you won. A victory for all of us.

Paul Smith It wasn't about winning, John, not everything is a competition. It was about justice.

Mark Burnet tA victory for all of us.

John De Mol Got to run, lots to do. Forty formats sold across the globe.

Paul Smith Ha! A hundred and sixty, mine. Mark?

Mark Burnett Yeah, alright. I'm developing a new one. Guaranteed hit. You mixed fact and fiction; you democracy and entertainment. What about business, and entertainment, and democracy. I've found the ultimate reality star. Don't worry about me.

John De Mol Well me to mine and you to yours.

Paul Smith And yours.

Mark Burnett And yours ...

Music arriving, as Paul Smith and John De Mol exit their respective ways, as we follow Mark Burnett into an elevator. Above him ...

... the Trump Tower insignia appears. Mark Burnett presses the button, as the lights of the elevator door close, and he stares up as he begins to rise. The music swelling ...

As, outside of the courtroom, Charles, Diana and Woodley QC.

Charles Ingram I don't understand. If we did it, why aren't we in jail? People with children go to jail all the time.

Woodley QC... I imagine the judge is more sensible than we thought, and he sees this for what it is. Justice only has to be 'seen' to be done. More than it actually has to be ...

Charles Ingram... Well, perhaps, thank him from me, at your dinner.

Woodley QC Actually ... I'm not going. None of the defence team are. Not this time. Another career 'first' ...

She goes. The pair are alone.

Charles Ingram I'll have to resign my commission.

Diana Ingram It doesn't mean anything, it doesn't matter.

Charles Ingram It matters to me, it's who I am ...

Diana Ingram Ssh. *(She takes hold of his face. They're close now.)*... What was it, he said. Tarrant. At the end of the show. 'What a man. Quite, an amazing man ...'

She kisses him, and they hold one another. She whispers in his ear ...

... Ask them. Ask your audience what they think.

Charles Ingram We did.

Diana Ingram Ask them again.

Charles Ingram... *(Turning.)*Well? 50:50.

The Audience vote. Again.

The results come in. Diana and Charles stand looking at one another as they do, holding hands.

Beat ... Hilliard QC and Woodley QC smile at one another, shaking hands and taking their wigs off. A bell rings to signal filming over. We go 'Off Air', the lights snapping up, as Studio Technicians enter. 'Show' over. People hand Charles and Diana water, now just our actors.

This all continues for a moment, until ...

Blackout.