

Hacks

A scrip by Ash Edwards for
CAMF5012

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Assignment Two

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Process journal:

Hours 1-3

I sit transfixed attempting to decipher the task in the handbook, can I write a script? Maybe an essay? Or both? I decided to work on a concept for my tasks while I await a reply. Script... Script, what sort of script should I do? Another ten-minute one shot? Yeah maybe, what about that Hacks idea I had a while ago? Would that work? Nah too pretentious, two blokes living in a flat spitting stupid lines to each other using words only normally found in a thesaurus. Wouldn't work. Stupid. Follow up to Lanelee? Maybe. Will have to see if I'd even be able to use it. I'm getting nowhere, I'll just watch something to take my mind off it.

Hours 3-7

I got side tracked and watched most of the episodes of The Thick of It again. Hmmm I could re do Hacks as an office-based politico sitcom. I'll jot that down and start a rough treatment. But what about the essay? I guess the point of what I'm doing is to decide what I'm doing for my major project next year. Script or dissertation. I did regret not doing Shakespeare in the adaptation module.

Hours 7-10

Rough treatment done. Some basic character profiles and a tag line done. Still mulling over the essay, got enough time to worry about it. Not sure I'm too keen on this script treatment, too single character focused, too similar to my other stuff. Going to watch Thick of It again. May help.

Hours 10-15

Watched all the episodes again, got on a small writing buzz while watching it. Have revamped some elements of the script, added more characters and changed the existing ones. It's completely different now.

Hours 15-17

Decided to scrap the essay and focus on the script. Makes sense as I think a full-size script will be more useful for my development. Work out a now longer plot beat.

Hours 17-20

Story beats worked out and a revamped treatment started. Also started typing up the first scene of the script.

Hours 20 – 30

Got deep into writing the script and hit out around 3k words. It's mostly rubbish by this point but I'm not concerned as the edit comes later. Huw is already the star of the show.

Hours 30 – 32

Ended my writing marathon at 3.5k words on the script, my fingers hurt. Went back to the treatment and character bios and altered a few things that had evolved in the process of writing. People change I suppose.

Hours 32 -40

Several more hours into writing the script it's shaping up nicely. I'm getting close to the point of hating my own work. 6k words done. Also, I notice by this point that I'm only making rough handwritten notes and that may not fly for a journal. This will have to do I guess, and the 12k words worth of work I'll eventually turn in.

Hours 40 – 45

Hit 8k words. 38 odd pages of script. It's too long, I think it's finished but it doesn't seem to really end in anyway. Fizzles. It's also a bit unbelievable. 25 hours to write a pilot length draft. I'm not happy. Back to the drawing board.

Hours 45-49

I sketched out a rough second draft of the later half of the script. It was more fitting with an ending that only happened because I forgot about a character. Back to the script.

Hours 49-62

Spent an enormous amount of time over a few days re doing the script. Still not happy. Erased about 20 odd pages worth of script to force myself into re thinking the beats. Made a loose start on the reflective

Hours 62 -70

More writing, feel like I'm guessing there, think this journal is mostly going to be me saying I spent unhealthy amount of time writing.

Hours 70 – 81

Script is nearly done. Got a nice shiny treatment, also watched all of the IT crowd and In the Loop for inspiration.

Hours 81- 90

Disaster forgot to ask for professional feedback. It's too late all is lost. Script is as good as done. Replaced the character bios with little character vignettes.

Hours 90-95

Script is done. I'm not in a rush to write one of that length again. Too late for feedback. But it's done. Continue on reflective.

Hours 95-101

Started the reflective again as I wanted a more honest 'spill my guts on a page' sort of vibe. Hit out about a thousand words before needing a break. Did a quick concept of a character bio for a break.

Hours 101-109

Finished, Script done. Treatment done. Character profiles done. Reflective done. It's Sunday night and I am officially done.

Hacks

Characters:

Protagonist: Male, early to mid-thirties, aspiring screenwriter/writer, works shitty day job, pessimistic, narcissistic, poor stress management, works at local newspaper – sports? Knows nothing about sports. Hates it. Alister Davies DAVEES

Friend: Male, early to mid thirties, also an aspiring writer, menial job – Pizza/retail? optimist, takes life in his stride. Raj Patel

Friend 2: Female, early to mid-thirties, journalist/online bigger outlet, semi successful, high stress, chain smokes, Jane Perkins

Boss: protagonist's employer, editor, fifties to sixties, owns small business as well as working at paper, treats protagonist fairly he doesn't agree, addicted to gambling, crooked. Huw Phillips

Co-worker: male, mid-twenties, idiot, childish, terrible writer, spelling etc Chis Humphries

Agent: Protagonist's agent after break, male, late forties early fifties, extremely angry, every other word is profanity, crooked, Machiavellian, agency is a fraud. Vivian Powell

Receptionist: Receptionist for both boss and the agent, is somehow able to work both, female early twenties, narcissistic, vain, aloof Tia Davies Vees

Dad: t Protagonist's dad, mid-fifties, posh, technically incompetent, asks son for IT support for the simplest thing, pretentious Mark Pendleton

Luke Parry

Keith Jones

Alex Murphy (Female)

Protagonist is a sports writer at a failing local newspaper, he knows nothing of sports and hates every second of working there. Protagonist aims to be a screenwriter or at least write something

that isn't about local rugby, he meets a man that claims to be an agent with all the contacts at a council charity event (Same universe as Lanelee), protagonist signs up and immediately regrets it. When he's not working or writing he's with friends lamenting or on the phone to his dad explaining the difference between left click and right click.

Beat:

Act

Opens in office, protagonist is working. Bothered by co-worker, ask co worker about local match as he doesn't know. Goes for lunch meets friend, complains, Rhys is there (also friend) tells of event, back to work, receptionist tells boss wants to see, boss is on his case but fair, tells of reduction in hours, P tells B of event and is asked to go – real journalism. Back to desk, talk to Work experience/ other – end work

Now with friends (1,2,3) talk about work, dreams, event. Local chat – home – dad phones on the way (or in office, undecided)

Hacks

Hacks takes place in a small-town Welsh newspaper office where the journos and admins are ruled over by a draconian iron fisted editor in chief. With business hanging by a thread and a former daily run reduced to a weekly run read by less and less people every week time is almost up for the staff at the Abercwm cabbage Express. The one man holding The Express together is its Editor in Chief Huw Griffiths. The El Capitan and Bollockor in Chief of the paper, running a tight ship to keep his subordinates in line and the paper in the black.

A new body is fed to the grinder when a work experience boy joins, with an attitude problem how will the rest of the staff react to another new guy.

Hacks is an office-based sitcom focusing on the daily operation of a local newspaper. Drier than a three-day hangover in the Sahar, and more swearier than Malcom Tucker with a stubbed toe.

Character bios

Raj Adhikari

Descended of Benghali origin, recently moved to Abercwmcabbage from Birmingham. 23 years old, single and conventionally handsome. Photographer for the paper, avid Instagramer. Used to be a glamour photographer before moving from Birmingham.

Chris Jenkins

White, 17 years old on work experience from nearby school. Has two girlfriends and is a journeyman womaniser. Runs a successful meme page and far more intelligent than he lets off. Very aloof. Wants to work in PR after the success of his page, comes across as 'over it'.

Huw Griffiths

White, 58 but looks 68, originally from Cardiff. Life time journo apart from a brief stint in local politics. Lactose intolerant and can go 0-100 in a single sentence. Editor and office manager. Foul mouthed and short tempered. His leadership style would be 'Bollock them better'. Divorced three times.

Julie Chapman

White, 45 slightly overweight. Born and bred in Abercwmcabbage. Former PA of Huw, now Social Media manager. Maiden name is Thomas, husband owns a local café. One of Huw's favourite beat sticks.

Luke Nowak

Parents are polish, full name is Wawrzyniec Lukasz Nowak. Goes by Luke for convenience sake. Mid-twenties looks after his appearance. Quite a hot head. Crime reporter for the paper. From Llanelli. Single and ready to mingle, but oblivious to Tia's advances.

Rhys Williams

Mid-thirties, white. Local boy, extremely lazy. Doesn't take his job as assistant editor seriously. Is dyslexic but doesn't let on, not sure how he got the responsibility of proofreading, also general reporter for the paper when needed. Is in an open relationship with Pornhub

Dafydd Powell

Early thirties white, slightly overweight. Entertainment reporter at the express. Originally from Llanelli, used to work at the Star. History of reporting Huw to HR in the London head office. Married to his childhood sweetheart.

Alistair Davies

Mid twenties, somewhere between handsome and interesting looking, very tall and thin. Tried to be a journo in Bristol but came running home after a few years. Hates his job, hanging in by a thread. All time champion of Huw's shit list. Recently separated from long term girlfriend.

Emma Llewelyn

Mid-twenties, good looking, try hard and constantly trying to win Huw's approval. Manages adverts in the paper. From a small nearby village, has an on and off again relationship with her boyfriend. Also writes for The Star as a freelancer under a different name. Aspires to work at a national paper.

Tia Harries

Early twenties, very good looking. Huw's PA. Entertains Huw's shenanigans as she often takes his instructions literally. Very popular on Instagram, from Llanelli. Single, has an NVQ in management.

Concept for character profile

DEPARTMENT OF [REDACTED]

NAME: Huw Griffiths

ALIASES: The Boss, The Barron, The Big Bad Wolf

STATUS: Active and ready to Bollock

DATE OF BIRTH: 14/04/1961 **SCARS & MARKS:** CCFC Tattoo on arm

PLACE OF BIRTH: Cardiff **HAIR COLOR:** Brown/ Grey

HEIGHT: Six Two [REDACTED]

WEIGHT: 200.9 **EYE COLOR:** Blue/ grey

BUILD: Average, tall **SEX:** Male

OCCUPATION: Editor in Chief [REDACTED]

REMARKS: Extremely short-tempered, relic of a bygone Time in journalism. Editor in Chief of The Abbercwmcabbage Express, all-round expert in The art of the bollocking. Do not cross as he Suffers no fool. Is lactose intolerant much to His annoyance. CCFC supporter.

FORM NO. 000000-A

template by j-harper.deviantart

Hacks

a pilot

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1. MORNING, INTERIOR - CWMCABBAGE EXPRESS PRESS OFFICE

Early morning in the paper offices, ALISTAIR is sitting at his desk looking at the ringing phone in front of him. HUW is in the doorway of his office behind ALISTAIR, the phone continues to rings. HUW walks closer to ALISTAIR until he is right behind him. HUW places his hands on ALISTAIR's shoulders as he speaks. ALISTAIR is visibly startled

HUW

How many braincells are you using
there Uri? Maybe use your hands
instead of your mind to answer it you
useless lanky streak of piss!

ALISTAIR bolts upright and answers the phone, HUW moves back towards his office keeping his eye on ALISTAIR. ALISTAIR is uncomfortable with the eye contact and turns away as he answers.

ALISTAIR

Alistair Davies, sports.

There is a pause as ALISTAIR listens intently to the call, HUW has yet to take his eye off him.

ALISTAIR

Right... okay...
(beat)
Right...

TIA walks into the office with a tray of take away coffees and begins to place them on peoples desks. HUW is making a hurry up motion. He accepts a coffee off TIA and frowns as a thanks. ALISTAIR motions to TIA for a coffee but is ignored.

ALISTAIR

Yeah.. okay... right...
(Beat)
Okay... I see...

HUW

Oh for fucks sakes!

HUW springs forward nearly spilling his coffee and snatches the phone from ALISTAIR's hand. ALISTAIR looks horrified

HUW

Get to the fucking point, or fuck off
you time-wasting twat!
(Beat)

HUW listens, then hangs up.

HUW

Time-wasting twat it is, you shouldn't have given them a quarter of the time you soft shit.

ALISTAIR

Sorry boss I should...

HUW

Don't care, you're as useful as a third bollock and twice as soft.

HUW goes back into his office and slams the door.

ALISTAIR leans forward with his hands over his face, LUKE sits down opposite ALISTAIR with a thud. He picks up the coffee placed on his desk by TIA.

LUKE

Oh Vanilla this time. Alight mate? What's the Big Bad Wolf done to you this time?

ALISTAIR

Well it's quarter past nine and I've been compared to both piss and shit, as well as a bollock. Oh and I was the only one again to not get a fucking coffee.

LUKE drinks his coffee and looks behind ALISTAIR at HUW's office and sees HUW staring daggers back at him.

LUKE

Well I suppose that's just what you accept when you take a job in a high pressure media environment like this.

LUKE gestures around him

LUKE

Oh lookie lookie we've company.

TIA walks over to stand between the two desks, HUW stands and moves to his office door.

TIA

How's the coffee Luke?

LUKE
Lovely, cheers. Vanillish.

HUW is suddenly next to TIA.

HUW
Be social on your own time please
charm school, meeting room now.

Everyone remains in place as HUW looks from person to person.
HUW loudly and repeatedly claps his hands.

HUW
That wasn't a fucking invitation! I'm
not expecting an RSVP back. Get in the
fucking meeting room now you wasters!

Everyone suddenly and awkwardly begins to make their way past
HUW to the meeting room.

HUW
MOVE! NOW!

2 - MORNING , INTERIOR - CWMCABBAGE EXPRESS MEETING ROOM A

All staff members are sat on plastic chairs with fold out
tables drinking take away coffees, Alistair is the only one
not drinking a coffee, his fold out desk is also broken. Huw
is at the front of the room, a small fold out whiteboard is
next to him. Notes from the previous meeting are still on the
whiteboard. Huw begins scrubbing the board but the notes
don't come off. His back is turned to the room

HUW
Come on you fucker, Dafydd if this
doesn't come off I'll nail your
ballsack to the board and write on
that instead.

LUKE
Try some hand sanitiser boss.

HUW turns to look at the room

HUW
Tia, how am I doing on the 'fuck'
quota today?

TIA

I count 12 but I did go out for
coffee. So maybe 15?

HUW

A modest 10 fucks per hour, I must

either be going soft or senile. Right
best make up for it.

HUW puts down the whiteboard eraser, and makes his way slowly
over to LUKE.

HUW

If you dare give me unsolicited advice
again, the next advice you'll be
seeking is the toxicity risks from
hand sanitiser used as a fucking
suppository.

ALISTAIR snorts, HUW snaps his attention towards ALISTAIR. He
grins showing some teeth.

HUW

You can hardly fucking comment, you
giggling Nancy. You've already got a
bollocking on lay away, don't fucking
test me.

DAFYDD raises his hand.

HUW

Jesus the hand is overkill, this isn't
school. What?

DAFYDD

Sorry boss but that was a bit
offensive.

LUKE

Daf don't.

Luke leans and puts a hand on DAFYDD'S shoulder.

HUW

Dafydd, you're in your bollockdraft
already mate.

HUW has moved back to the front of the room. There is an
uncomfortable silence in the room. HUW stares at Dafydd.
ALISTAIR'S phone ringing breaks the silence.

ALISTAIR
Sorry, sorry, sorry.

ALISTAIR fumbles to remove his phone from his pocket and attempts to mute it.

HUW
Jesus Christ you lot.

HUW pinches the bridge of his nose and lowers his head.

ALISTAIR
I'll turn it off boss, sorry.

HUW
Turn it off? Turn it off?! Don't turn it off you fucking imbecile. You're a journalist for fuck sake. Apparently anyway! It should be glued to the side of your fucking head! I want it so close to your head you've got tumours bigger than your brain!

(Beat)
Put it on silent, do the same for your cock holster. That goes for the lot of you.

HUW turns his attention to Dafydd

HUW
I'll deal with you later HR.

HUW without giving DAFYDD a chance to respond he continues to address the entire room.

HUW
Now I've had my fill of your intellectual athleticism for the day, let's be professional journalists for a change and get this weekly out the way. I've got a migraine scheduled in an hour.

HUW turns to pick up a pile of papers on a small table next to the whiteboard. Then turns back to the room.

HUW
Luke, how goes the crime in our neck of the woods? Are the unwashed masses

restless?

LUKE

Not much I'm afraid boss, torched Nova
by the Social, graffiti on the war
memorial, loitering youth in the
underpass. Pretty standard.

HUW moves towards TIA and passes her the papers, he gestures
for her to pass them out. He returns to his whiteboard with
his hands in his pocket. TIA gets up and begins to pass out
the papers.

HUW

No murder or nonces this week then?
Could have used a good nonce lead to
push numbers up. Go with the Nova
until we hear any better.

(beat)

Dafydd? What can our ever declining
reader-base do this week to drown out
the mundanity of their lives?

TIA is nearly done handing out the papers, she releases
ALISTAIR's before he grips it and it flutters to the floor,
TIA returns to her seat as ALISTAIR awkwardly picks up his
papers. HUW scowls in ALISTAIR's direction.

DAFYDD

Well the hall has the line-dancing on
again from next Saturday, though
they're a bit anxious after the last
time. What with the incident.

LUKE

Is Maggie alright after that?

DAFYDD

Aye, aye. She'll be able to see again
out of her right eye, and only looking
at three years if all goes well.

LUKE

Glad to hear mate, send her my best
will you?

DAFYDD nods to LUKE

HUW

'The Achy Breaky Bloodbath' if only we
could get those every week. I may

even like a few of you if we did.
Anything else?

DAFYDD

Well there's a new local group playing
the Lemon this weekend, supposed to be
alright. Few other gigs bit wider
afield, but pretty quiet otherwise.

HUW

Make sure to mention the Bloodbath in
your write up, and push the band a bit
more. See if the Lemon will give us
something.

DAFYDD

Will do

HUW

Alistair.
(beat)
Sports?

HUW looks extremely annoyed even before ALISTAIR has spoken.
ALISTAIR fumbles for his note book.

ALISTAIR

Ummm yeah.... hold on.

ALISTAIR flicks through the pages of his notebook. The
attention of the entire room is on him.

ALISTAIR

Right, okay. We're playing Tumble next
week, and Ammanford the week after.

HUW

In what? Football? Bowling?
Interpretive dance? Being a useless
twat? If so you'd be disqualified for
being a professional twat.

ALISTAIR

Ummm no rugby, I think.

HUW erupts with rage

HUW

You fucking think?!

ALISTAIR is visibly red now, HUW turns from the room and

places his face in his hands attempting to calm down.

ALISTAIR

It is, sorry boss.

HUW turns back and begins pacing at the front of the room.

HUW

Ladies and gentlemen it is journalism like this.

HUW stops and points at ALISTAIR

HUW

(continued)

That will kill print media, not the internet, not globalisation, but utter fuckups like that. Turn to the third page of your handouts.

Everyone turns the page. HUW waits at the front of the room with his hands behind his back.

HUW

(continued)

What you see before you is a page from last weeks issue. Courtesy of one Alistair 'Fuckup' Davies. Now not only was most of the information wrong, it contains several sentences that have now overtaken "Full time yummy mummy" as my least favourite sentences in the long history of the written word.

(beat)

Read on as I think if i utter a word of it I'll have another stroke.

Everyone is silent for a moment as they read. The occasional tut or air being sucked through teeth breaks the silence. Several look over at ALISTAIR with a mix of pity and disappointment.

LUKE

Alistair mate, this is pretty grim.

ALISTAIR opens his mouth in an attempt to speak but fails. Everyone begins to murmur to each other. HUW raises his hands in a plea for silence

HUW

Alright, alright. I do it out of love.

There's a reason we still have an office and a paper once a week. You lot don't want to end up like those poor fuckers at The Star, online only, everyone a freelancer. Sitting at home in their pants surrounded by Pot Noodles and White Lighting.

Some continue to read and others put the handout down.

HUW

Rhys, your bollocks are in the vice next. How'd this slip past you?

RHYS who was smiling now looks worried.

RHYS

I don't know boss, I must not have seen this page.

HUW

You must not have seen the entire fucking issue! There were errors on almost every page. Look I know what this lot write is drivel but I pay you to proofread it so that I don't have to put myself through it. Not that I want to deny the mouth-breathers that write in to tell us of the errors, but I do wish for us to appear a little bit professional.

RHYS

Understood boss. I'll triple check this week.

HUW

Make sure you do as I'll be checking after you. Which makes you fucking redundant doesn't it?

RHYS

Yes boss. Won't happen again.

HUW

You and Alistair are top of my shit list this week, think that makes three weeks in a row? Tia?

TIA picks up her notebook and flicks through.

TIA

No, it was Alistair and Daf two weeks ago.

HUW

Ah, congratulations Alistair, a solo hat-trick, maybe next week team fuckup hat-trick.

HUW turns to pick up his own notes then turns back to the room. He checks his watch, remembering it has stopped he looks toward the clock above the door. It too has stopped. He frowns in annoyance.

HUW

You know when they sent me down here they told me it's like time has stopped. Guess it's true as even the clocks in this place have fucking killed themselves. Anyway, onward and upwards. Emma, how's the ads.

EMMA has her notes ready and sits bolt upright just before answering.

EMMA

Most of the usuals have gone for repeats this week, we lost Glyn's Taxis after that story from the other week...

HUW cuts her off.

HUW

He's a prick anyway, has the look of a knicker sniffer about him so it was only a matter of time.

EMMA waits for HUW to finish then continues

EMMA

Yes well, we've lost his half page and I'm in talks with Dai's taxis to replace it. May have to offer him a bit off to get it for print.

HUW

No more than 30%. He'll follow suit in a week or two so don't get cosy with that ad.

EMMA

Gotcha, so we've also got a quarter page for the hall and the line-dancing, so I'll wait for Daf's cover before doing that. I'll keep distance from his Bloodbath comment too. Otherwise business as usual.

EMMA puts her notebook down and smiles. HUW returns the smile.

HUW

Good girl Emma.

HUW points to RAJ who's sitting in the corner.

HUW

You, new guy. Photos. No complaints from last week, other than the twat from the council said you took his bad side.

RAJ

Bad side?

RAJ looks confused. HUW smirks.

HUW

Apparently he looks like Brad Pitt from the other.

This gets a small laugh from the room.

HUW

Go with Luke to see this Nova, make it look as crime ridden as you can. Alright?

Raj nods and smiles

RAJ

Sure thing boss.

HUW

Two weeks in and you've yet to get bollocked, I'm proud. But I'm afraid to say that my bollock-senses are tingling so watch yourself.

RAJ's smile fades and he nervously sips his coffee. HUW turns his attention to Julie.

HUW

Last and most certainly least, Julie.
I would ask you how our social media
goes but I honestly don't care. You'll
have company at lunch, work experience
boy. Wants to get into PR or
something, so he'll stick to you like
a wet fart for the rest of the week.

Julie attempts to speak but is cut off by HUW

HUW

Meeting dismissed. Back to work you
freeloaders.

Everyone begins to rise and leave the room.

3. AFTERNOON, INTERIOR - CWMCABBAGE EXPRESS PRESS OFFICE

ALISTAIR is sitting at his desk watching the curser blink on
a blank word document displayed on his screen. LUKE is typing
away at his desk, TIA is in with HUW in his office, EMMA is
on the phone in her corner desk, DAFYDD and RAJ are near the
entrance to the staff kitchen. JULIE walks up to ALISTAIR's
desk.

JULIE

Hi Ally, you okay?

Snapping out of his daydream ALISTAIR turns to face her.

ALISTAIR

Hi, hey yeah I'm okay. Still sore from
that meeting this morning.

JULIE places her hand on ALISTAIR's shoulder

JULIE

Well you may be top of his S word list
this week but I'll always be the least
important.

ALISTAIR

Sorry Jule I shouldn't complain
knowing what you've had to go through
with him. Why is he such a bastard?

hearing this LUKE perks up and interjects.

LUKE

Well I've heard they kicked him out of

The Standard in Cardiff for some for
naughty things.

ALISTAIR and JULIE'S attention is now on LUKE. He has stopped
typing.

ALISTAIR
Like what?

LUKE looks towards HUW's office. HUW is distracted by a pile
of paperwork TIA has handed him.

LUKE
Well keep this between the three of us
but my matey in Cardiff tells me it
was of a sexual nature.

JULIE
Get away
(whispered)
Sexual?

LUKE pulls a face to say ' I'm as surprised as you' ALISTAIR
doesn't look convinced.

ALISTAIR
Are you sure? It hurts to think of Huw
in any sort of sexual way.

JULIE
I know but it makes sense doesn't it?

ALISTAIR
Sorry? But how on earth does that make
any sense?

JULIE
Well think about it...

JULIE looks over her shoulder into HUW's office, he's still
preoccupied with the paperwork TIA has presented him. He
looks angry.

JULIE
All that tension...

DAFYDD
I heard he was sacked for causing his
assistant to have a mental breakdown.

DAFYDD and RAJ after eavesdropping have decided to join the

conversation.

ALISTAIR

That I find a lot more believable

LUKE

Nah mate that's his bread and butter.

RAJ

I know I haven't been here long but I think Luke is right.

DAFYDD

Honest, Dai from The Post told me.

LUKE

Dai Farmer?

DAFYDD shakes his head.

DAFYDD

No man, Dai Lip

LUKE laughs, folds his arms and leans back in his seat.

LUKE

Don't listen to him! Everyone knows he talks shit!

RAJ

Even I know that

4 AFTERNOON, INTERIOR - CWMCABBAGE EXPRESS - HUW'S OFFICE

HUW is sitting in his office chair, a pile of paperwork is in front of him, TIA is in his office holding more paperwork. HUW occasionally glances from the papers to the gathering at ALISTAIR and LUKE's desk.

TIA

And this is Luke's expenses...

HUW snatches the paper and quickly scans it

TIA

(cont')

so if you could just sign it off

HUW

£22 on coffee in a week? Fuck off!

He balls the paper up and throws it to the other side of the room

TIA
Alistair's.

HUW snatches the paper and balls it up without looking at it.

TIA
And finally Emma.

HUW again snatches the paper, he is distracted by the group outside his office window.

HUW
Tia, have I scheduled a group bollock this afternoon?

TIA picks HUW's diary up from the desk and flicks through. HUW signs the expense form without looking at it. He then stands.

TIA
Nothing in the diary.

HUW
Pencil one in

TIA picks up a pen from the table and begins writing in the diary, HUW begins to move quickly to his office door. He bursts through the door. Everyone gathered turns to face him, they panic RAJ attempts to leave quickly, ALISTAIR is frozen in place, DAFYDD is also frozen in place he looks side to side trying to formulate an escape, JULIE moves away slowly and LUKE looks back at his monitor and begins typing again.

HUW
Stay the fuck where you are!

Those attempting to leave are frozen in place.

ALISTAIR
I'm j...

HUW cuts him off and points at him.

HUW
Shut it Nancy!
(beat)
Oh ho ho I know my bollocking senses were right, I could feel it my water.

He chuckles to himself. Everyone looks terrified.

HUW

Oh what a treat, Raj my boy prepare to
have your bollocking cherry popped.
soon you'll be as bollocked as
Alistair here.

RAJ is static and avoiding eye contact. HUW is smiling menacingly.

HUW

Once you pop, you know the rest.

RAJ

I'm really sorry we were just talking
about...

HUW

I don't give a shit what you and the
Nancy Drew Mystery Club were talking
about! Whatever it fucking was I doubt
I need to have MENSA on stand by do I?
Oh I bet they'll be clawing at the
fucking doors if they get a taste!

There is a pause, nobody dares to speak. HUW scans the room before him.

HUW

Unless this was a work related? I
don't recall booking anything. Tia?

TIA moves from HUW'S office holding his diary open.

TIA

Nothing for this afternoon

HUW

Alistair, maybe you scheduled this
little conclave? Trying to corrupt
young Raj?

ALISTAIR fidgets as he answers.

ALISTAIR

No I was just talking...

HUW moves aggressively over to him, he snatches ALISTAIR'S

diary from the desk. ALISTAIR flinches.

HUW

I don't pay you to gossip with this
gaggle of fucking reprobates! I pay
you to report the fucking news!

HUW aggressively starts flicking through ALISTAIR's diary.

HUW

Let's have a looksie what you've been
up to shall we?

He continues to flick, pausing to scowl at ALISTAIR on
occasion.

HUW

What the fuck is this?

ALISTAIR

It's uhh my diary

HUW turns the diary to face ALISTAIR, the pages are blank

HUW

Oh really?! There was me thinking it
was Stevie fucking Wonder's!

HUW tears out several pages and throws them in ALISTAIR's
direction, then drops the diary to the floor.

HUW

Do your fucking job or stop wasting
the oxygen in my office and get out,
preferably head first through a
fucking window. I'll be nice and let
you choose which one.

HUW winks at RAJ.

HUW

I haven't forgotten you sunshine.

In the pause that follows a knock can be heard on TIA's desk
at the front of the office, the attention of the room is
drawn to it. A young man in an ill fitting suit is standing
near the desk, he is looking at his phone apparently
oblivious to the situation. HUW snarls.

HUW

You better have a good fucking reason

for blue balling me! I was at the
vinegar strokes there.

CHRIS

Yeah, hi. I'm supposed to do work
experience or summa.

CHRIS has yet to look from his phone. HUW is furious. He
breaths deeply attempting to calm himself.

HUW

Speak to the waste of mass in pink.
I'm busy.

HUW limply point to JULIE then turns his attention back to
RAJ. CHRIS has yet to look up.

CHRIS

Miss says you've gotta sign this and
we need to do some safety stuff.

CHRIS produces a scrunched up sheet of paper from his pocket
and holds it aloft. HUW snaps his attention back to CHRIS. He
marches over and snatches the paper from his hand. CHRIS
doesn't react other than putting his now free hand into his
pocket. HUW marches back to the group and forces the paper at
JULIE, she awkwardly accepts it.

CHRIS

Signal is shit in here innit, whats
the WIFI password?

HUW throws his hands up in frustration and turns to make his
way back to his office.

HUW

Thatchers cold dead tits, I'll have to
clone myself to keep the bollockings
up at this rate. One of you deal with
this, I'm off to mainline some Valium.

HUW storms into his office and slams the door behind him, he
then lowers the blinds with a snap. JULIE makes her way to
CHRIS. The rest of the group disperse.

JULIE

Hyia love, you from the school yeah?
Come and have a seat with me and we'll
get this sorted.

CHRIS grunts an acknowledgement and begins to follow her when

she leads him to her desk. He looks around the room as he follows.

CHRIS
Why's it look all shit in here?

5 LATE AFTERNOON, INTERIOR - CWMCABBAGE EXPRESS PRESS OFFICE

There is a quiet hum of activity in the office, CHRIS is sitting on a chair borrowed from the meeting room next to JULIE at her desk. ALISTAIR and LUKE are typing at their desk, RAJ is at his desk looking at some photos from earlier in the day, DAFYDD is standing near EMMA's desk while she shows something to him on screen. HUW is still in his office with the blinds drawn, TIA is at her front desk doing a personality quiz on her phone. RHYS walks through the door.

ALISTAIR
Time do you call this?

RHYS checks his watch

RHYS
About two or so. Watch gave out on me last week so I'm guessing if I'm honest I am.

LUKE
You're lucky he wore himself out and he's back in his crypt.

RHYS laughs as he makes his way back to his desk. He sits with a thud and turns his monitor on. He notices CHRIS

RHYS
Who's that with Julie?

RHYS points, without looking from his monitor LUKE answers.

LUKE
Work experience, The Baron has given him to Julie to babysit. Don't you remember from this morning?

RHYS
To be honest it was a bit of a blur after Ally's paper was brought up.

ALISTAIR
Please don't talk about it, I think if I win a Pulitzer and resurrect all his

sporting idols he may go from
despising me to just hating me.

LUKE stands and moves around the desk to ALISTAIR'S side, he
leans in to see what ALISTAIR is working on.

LUKE
Whatcha got cooking now then?

On ALISTAIR'S screen LUKE can see 'I fucking hate it here'
written out several times. ALISTAIR turns to him and shrugs.
LUKE sucks air through his teeth and shakes his head.

LUKE
Well, all the best there mate.

RHYS winces, ALISTAIR drops his head to the table. LUKE moves
away from ALISTAIR and moves in the direction of the staff
kitchen. He mimes a cup motion to RHYS who gives a thumbs up
as a response.

LUKE
I'll do you a coffee mate, that'll
cheer you up.

ALISTAIR'S face is still on the desk, he gives out a muffled
response.

ALISTAIR
Cheers.

RHYS leans closer across the gap between his and ALISTAIR'S
desk

RHYS
Don't worry Ally, nobody really buys
the paper for the sports. They just
want to see their kids and whatnot.

ALISTAIR turns his head to face RHYS

ALISTAIR
That's probably the most reassuring
insult I've ever received.

TIA approaches RHYS' desk holding a blue plastic bag.

TIA
Huw sent me out to get this for you.
Had to go all the way to town for it,
and it was busy.

She dumps the bag unceremoniously onto RHYS' desk. TIA then walks away in the direction of her desk RHYS and ALISTAIR watch her leave, she sits and returns to the quiz on her phone. RHYS begins to open the bag and pulls out a small pile of thin soft-back books.

RHYS

Fuck sakes

ALISTAIR sits up now interested in the contents of the bag RHYS is cycling through the books

ALISTAIR

What is it?

RHYS turns the books so ALISTAIR can see.

RHYS

Early reader series books, "learn spelling and punctuation with Snappy the Croc"

ALISTAIR gives a faint laugh. RHYS drops the books to his desk.

RHYS

Prick.

RHYS notices the corner of a lime green Post-it note protruding from the corner of one of the books. He pulls it out and reads it aloud.

RHYS

"Listen to Snappy or I'll snap off your cock"

RHYS drops the post-it onto the pile. LUKE returns holding three coffees.

LUKE

He'll pay for that yet won't cover our expenses.

RHYS offers a faint smile of agreement while accepting the coffee. After handing out the coffee LUKE returns to his seat.

DAFYDD

Oi, where's ours?

DAFYDD and EMMA are looking over expectantly.

LUKE

Coffee is for real journalists only
sorry.

DAFYDD flicks a V at LUKE who blows a kiss in return.

CHRIS and JULIE are seated at her desk, she has the paper's Facebook page open on her screen, CHRIS is looking at his phone.

JULIE

So Chris, this is the Facebook page.
We've got 98 likes at the moment and
my job..

CHRIS interrupts her with a snort.

CHRIS

That's well shit, my page has got
loads more. Where do I smoke?

JULIE sighs

JULIE

You shouldn't be smoking at your age,
it's bad for you cariad.

CHRIS laughs and removes a pouch of tobacco from his inner pocket, he then begins to roll a cigarette.

CHRIS

Yeah right cheers. So you gonna tell
me then?

JULIE sighs, and gives CHRIS a disappointed look, CHRIS is still rolling his cigarette and has not looked at her.

JULIE

Through the kitchen then out the back.
Daf, Rhys, Luke and Tia smoke if you
need company.

CHRIS has finished rolling his cigarette, he places it behind his ear and stands to make his way to the kitchen without saying anything.

DAFYDD

Two coffees one with milk one without
both with two sugars if you're going
through Chris please.

CHRIS walks past DAFYDD

CHRIS
Make it yourself fatty

CHRIS makes it to the kitchen and is gone from the press room. DAFYDD turns to JULIE.

DAFYDD
Well he's charming isn't he?

JULIE, still looking defeated offers a faint smile.

JULIE
Sorry Daf, I'll make a round in a bit.

DAFYDD
Don't be daft, I'll do it
(beat)
How long is Mr Happy here then?

DAFYDD points his thumb in the direction of the kitchen.

JULIE
A week and then the summer if he likes it.

DAFYDD sighs deeply

DAFYDD
Oh dear, it's going to be a long week then.

EMMA
I'm sure he'll come out of his shell eventually, we'll all get on by the end of the week I bet.

DAFYDD laughs

DAFYDD
That's painfully optimistic even for you.

HUW's office door bursts open without warning, HUW strides menacingly out of his door, he notices the office has fallen silent and all eyes are on him

HUW
Jesus I'm going for a piss. I do more than just bollock you. Christ alive.

HUW continues to walk in the direction of the unisex toilets.

HUW

If you're all so keen I'll see if I
can muster one after I drain the
lizard. No promises though.

HUW vanishes into the toilets. The room rests a little. CHRIS appears from the kitchen. He is drinking from a plastic milk bottle.

LUKE

Oi, whatcha think you're doing mate?

CHRIS

Thirsty

CHRIS walks back to his borrowed seat without looking at anyone.

JULIE

Duw that was quick!

CHRIS shrugs and takes another drink from the milk bottle.

CHRIS

Lighter's fucked

LUKE

Oi, are you listening to me?

LUKE is standing at his desk now, the attention of almost everyone is on the stand off. Apart from RAJ who has put headphones on and is busy editing photos at his desk. CHRIS ignores LUKE.

LUKE

Put the milk in a glass if you want to
drink it, we all have to use that.

CHRIS is still ignoring LUKE, LUKE goes to move around his desk in the direction of CHRIS but ALISTAIR holds an arm out to block him.

ALISTAIR

Don't bother, I'll go out and get
more.

LUKE

Nah mate, it's the principle.

LUKE pushes past ALISTAIR's hand and moves closer to CHRIS, DAFYDD and EMMA are pretending it's not happening to not get involved but are watching out the corner of their eyes. ALISTAIR has turned his seat round. LUKE is nearing CHRIS and JULIE.

JULIE

We all chip in a few quid a week to get tea and coffee for the office see Chris bach. So we're not aloud to drink the milk like that see. I did put a note up on the fridge, you must not have seen it I suppose.

LUKE

Don't be so soft with him he saw the note.

CHRIS puts the milk onto JULIE's desk spilling some. JULIE tuts and fishes for a napkin in her bag. CHRIS is still yet to reply to LUKE

JULIE

I'll get that.

LUKE

Seriously mate, it's not on. All I want is an apology.

CHRIS turns to LUKE and looks him up and down.

CHRIS

You got a lighter?

LUKE is stunned, CHRIS turns back around apparently done with the conversation.

LUKE

You've got a serious attitude problem mate

CHRIS snorts as a response

EMMA stands from her desk and brushes past DAFYDD to make her way towards CHRIS and LUKE.

EMMA

That's enough now boys. Luke he's a kid you probably had an attitude like that at his age. And Chris, Luke just wanted you to understand that you

can't drink milk from the bottle like that.

LUKE becomes less tense after EMMA has spoken, CHRIS doesn't react and is now back on his phone.

EMMA

Shake hands and make up?

LUKE sighs, CHRIS turns and looks EMMA up and down and mimes a wolf whistle. He then looks at LUKE and stands.

CHRIS

Sorry bruv

CHRIS offers his hand, LUKE accepts it and they shake. EMMA smiles pleased with herself.

HUW

Masterful mediation skills, like a young Thatcher.

HUW is leaning at the entrance to his office

HUW

(cont')

Luke, back to your seat you puffed up ponce before I make you a crime stat. Workie, if you touch my soy milk I'll skin you alive and nail you to the fridge as a warning to others.

Everyone is silent, their attention on HUW. HUW claps loudly and looks around the room.

HUW

Back to fucking work then, if I wanted you to stand around gormlessly I'd replace you all with mannequins.

Everyone either returns to their desk or begins working again. HUW goes into his office and slams the door after him.

CHRIS

What's with him? Is this like normal en?

JULIE chuckles to her self.

JULIE

Wouldn't know where to start cariad,
believe it or not you've caught him on
a good day.

6 EVENING, INTERIOR - ABBERCWMCABBAGE EXPRESS - PRESS OFFICE

Most staff are at their desks working quietly, TIA has pop music playing at a low volume from her computer. HUW is peering through his blinds at the office. DAFYDD is seated next to RAJ looking through some shots taken earlier in the day.

DAFYDD

These are pretty good, fair play. I
didn't think a burnt out Nova could
look so good.

RAJ

Thanks, wish I'd taken my wide lens.
Could have gotten some really arty
shots for Insta.

DAFYDD laughs and places his hand on RAJ's shoulder.

DAFYDD

I wouldn't worry buddy, don't think
Huw would appreciate 'arty'.

They both look at the images in silence as RAJ clicks through them.

DAFYDD

You free next Saturday to come take
some snaps of the line-dancing with
me?

RAJ

Sure send me a text on the day to
remind me.

(beat)

Is it going to be as interesting as
last time? What happened by the way?

DAFYDD exaggerates a sigh, leans back in his chair and slaps his hands on his legs.

DAFYDD

How long you got?

RAJ chuckles

RAJ
That bad?

DAFYDD
Worse

DAFYDD leans in and looks from side to side. Paying particular attention towards HUW's office.

DAFYDD
I'm guessing you didn't read Luke's write up then?

RAJ
No, no I only moved here a month ago. First I heard was this morning.

DAFYDD leans back in his chair and rubs his hands together.

DAFYDD
Oh boy, it's a local legend. My mam used to run it see? And what happened is...

RAJ
Maggie?

DAFYDD
Yeah, my mam. So anyway...

TIA approaches the two of them with paperwork in her hand. She interrupts them and hands some of the paperwork to DAFYDD.

TIA
From Huw, Daf he's asked you to check your mileage again as he said...

She removes a post it from the top of the pile and begins to read it aloud.

TIA
Tell that bloated fucker that I'm not paying for him to drive two minutes down the road, he can walk. I'm sure he'll manage it without a cardiac arrest.

She puts the note back on the pile and looks at DAFYDD.

TIA
Do it again and give it to him
tomorrow.

She hands DAFYDD a blank expenses form. Then turns to RAJ and hands him a blank one too. She looks at his screen.

TIA
Nice photos new guy. You haven't put
your form in yet. Huw's given you
until tomorrow to get it in.

RAJ
Thanks

DAFYDD studies his rejected expenses form

DAFYDD
It's millage to sites not down the
road! Everyone else get miles paid.

TIA dismisses him with a flick of her wrist and turns to leave.

TIA
Knock on his door if you want to take
issue with it.

She leaves to walk to ALISTAIR's desk and drops a balled up piece of paper in front of him.

DAFYDD
This is bollocks, every week. He was
rejecting lunch costs until I spoke to
Terri in head office.

ALISTAIR
I haven't had any expenses paid in the
last three years. I've given up
complaining.

DAFYDD turns his chair to face ALISTAIR

DAFYDD
Why'd you bother giving it in every
week then?

ALISTAIR turns his chair towards DAFYDD and shrugs

ALISTAIR
Figured I'd get bollocked if I didn't.

DAFYDD pulls a 'fair enough' sort of expression and turns back to RAJ and his photos.

DAFYDD
Claim while you're still in his good
books if I were you.

RAJ
Fair enough, I'll fill it tonight.

DAFYDD sighs.

DAFYDD
Your photos are really good, what were
you snapping before coming here?

RAJ is still leafing through his empty expenses form.

RAJ
Glamour

DAFYDD is stunned and does a double take on RAJ. RAJ has reached the last page of the form.

DAFYDD
Glamour?! Like naked women?

RAJ
They weren't always naked.

RAJ folds the form and places it in his bag. He turns to DAFYDD who is still gobsmacked.

DAFYDD
Naked?

RAJ
Sometimes yeah

HUW erupts from his office

HUW
Five o'clock workerbees, time to fuck
off and leave me in peace!

Everyone begins to pack up and log out of their systems. DAFYDD is still sitting next to RAJ, watching him as he packs his bag.

DAFYDD
We'll finish this tomorrow.

RAJ turns to him and smiles. He puts his coat on and picks up his camera bag.

RAJ

Sure thing. See you then.

DAFYDD gets up and makes his way back to his desk, EMMA is just about to leave. HUW is still standing in his office doorway, he has starts clapping in time with the pauses in his words.

HUW

Get
 (beat)
 a
 (beat)
 Fucking
 (beat)
 move
 (beat)
 on!

DAFYDD gets to his desk and stops EMMA as she is passing his desk.

DAFYDD

(whispered)

Did you know Raj used to make skin flicks?

EMMA is visibly shocked, she places her hand over her mouth. DAFYDD grabs his jacket and puts it on.

HUW

Hurry the fuck up or I'll lock you both in.

HUW has now moved to the front door and is swinging keys around his finger. EMMA and DAFYDD are the only two left in the office.

EMMA

Tell me tomorrow Daf

HUW

You'll have all fucking night to stay up and braid eachothers hair chatting if you don't get out this bastard door.

DAFYDD switches his monitor off and follows EMMA out the

door, HUW goes out after them.

EMMA

Night Huw

HUW

Yeah yeah.

HUW is fiddling with his keys trying to find the correct one for the door.

DAFYDD

See you boss

HUW

See you tomorrow, unless I finally get my wish and the bus catches you.

HUW locks the door and shutters can be heard unrolling. The room is dark with only some evening light coming through the windows, it is silent for a moment. CHRIS emerges from the kitchen. He looks around the room.

CHRIS

Hello?

END

Self-Reflection

Ash Edwards

I approached this module with a sense of both trepidation and confusion. A module in which I should develop my professional skill or take a placement. I figured from my previous experience with work placements, and a decade working in an office the experience from another would probably be moot. As wrong as I may possibly be, though fittingly negative and in character for myself; I feel a placement would probably involve me making tea and doing odd jobs at a production house. Probably wrong, but I made my bed. So, I guess I want to write, so I should probably write for this module. My initial concept was to do a short script and a short essay, the reason being I couldn't decide on my final year project, a script or a dissertation. So, I figured this module could be a useful way of helping with the decision.

However, in the end after much procrastination I decided on just doing a script. But not any script, a full-sized pilot script. Thirty-five pages of script. Part of my reasoning here was because I felt that:

- A. I didn't want to split my focus on two different writing styles as I find it pretty difficult switching gears in styles. I think if I did it would affect the quality of my writing and that of the overall project.
- B. I've already written several essays and short scripts this year and have been doing quite well with them. I feel if I did it again it wouldn't really be too beneficial as far as development goes.
- C. Research time would be highly reduced as I would only have around a month to complete the essay, script and reflect on it. The 80 hours required for the module wouldn't be adequate for this.
- D. I feel it would be extremely beneficial to my development as a writer, rather than repeating what I can already do, I'm going to try something I've never attempted.
- E. After meeting Keiron Self in a guest lecture, I got to see the scale and scope of a professional script. So this reinforced my feelings that a full-length script would be good for my development.

I'd set myself quite an intimidating challenge, a pilot length script in a month. But I wasn't done there, I decided to add a more extended treatment and character profile for the script. I wanted to have a script and accompanying portfolio that I could easily turn in to a studio. In all honesty I didn't think I could do it, but I suppose that what makes it a challenge, it's no fun if you know you're going to win.

I've spoken about the script without actually talking about it, as I've not previously written a script of this size before I had to be very careful with the content and setting. My previous scripts were very much short self-contained stories or short vignettes of a larger story, a completely different discipline to the long form episodic style of writing I'll be attempting. I set to work researching the formula of the 30-minute episode. I cover my research in more detail in my journal that accompanies this reflective, but my main inspiration/research was *The Thick of It* (Iannucci, 2005-2012) as the format of the show was so different to many other sitcoms, it's almost not a sitcom and that is what I aspired to write. And watching every episode twice lead me to Hacks. Having spent most of my adult life working in an office I felt that an office-based sitcom as dry as a hangover tongue featuring a character akin to Malcom Tucker (Peter Capaldi) would be the best sort of theme. I tried to make it as realistic to an office setting but still

exaggerated enough to be entertaining, similar to the style and humour of *The Thick of It*, though part of the comedy is that it's apparently quite accurate to life in politics. I was once told that comedy is the crossroad of specificity and exaggeration, so it seemed fitting, don't ask me where I heard it and thank goodness I don't have to cite them. Anyway, concept loosely fleshed out I worked on a treatment, a plot for this pilot episode. My initial idea was for it to revolve around one character with everyone else interacting but that character being the protagonist, an aspiring writer, job he hates (had to restrain myself swearing there) gets sold a lemon and taken advantage of by a Tuckeresq character. But it didn't work, it seemed messy or almost in places a self-insert where the focus was on potentially the least interesting character. I figured it was just my usual negativity and ploughed on with some character profiles and struggled. I was like swimming in custard, I forced myself through and wrote a handful of character profiles, some loose gags that I could slot in at some point, but it wasn't working.

I had to go back to the drawing board, this single focus character piece wasn't going to cut it. I tried again but without there being a single character of focus. Just a group of people in an office interacting, what would a fly on the wall see if all of these people were forced to spend eight hours a day see? My original concept was a bit like looking through a dirty window, you can sort of make out what's the other side but it's mostly imagination and convincing yourself it's there, but when you admit your window is dirty and start over by cleaning it you get to see the bigger picture. That was terrible, I don't often get to write analogies so there's another for the skills gap audit.

So, my final concept was *Hacks*, a sitcom based in a local news office run by a tyrannical editor. This led me to yet another challenge to set myself, have more than two or three characters in a script and give them all something to do and not be forgotten after a few lines. I settled on ten characters in total and decided to make the pacing of the script almost act as a roll call for the characters through a meeting for exposition and attempting to give all characters some time in the spotlight. I found this to be one of the most challenging aspects of the entire process, which came as a surprise considering I added this factor in as a last-minute thought. The constant need to track the whereabouts of so many characters when I'm used to dealing with only a handful at a time. Both a curse and a blessing also associated with this additional challenge I'd set myself was the fact that I would have to make all of the characters individuals and have distinct personalities, I enjoyed this to an extent as it allowed me to really flex my creative muscles in regards to character writing and playing with archetypes. At times it felt like herding cats, remember everyone's tics, who hates who and why, where everyone would be at any given time and how each of them would react in any given situation. I ended up writing some quick character bios to get a feel of how all the characters are at a glance, then fleshed them out over time. I would do exercises in my mind thinking of how two characters would act when locked in a room together for several hours and using this to develop my characters. It was through this I came to the conclusion that Huw would hate Alistair, Rhys and Julie the most because of their character faults; in fact, Huw would probably murder Alistair if he was stuck in a room long enough with him. As far as the characters go each of them are based on a person or archetype with sprinklings of several people on top here's a rough breakdown of each of them:

Huw – Pure Malcom Tucker wannabe, I adore the character and wanted to have the chance to try and write a character where you could point at him and say 'he reminds me of that guy off *Thick of It*'. By far the hardest to write for but the most enjoyable, he's the glue that keeps the office and the narrative together.

Alistair – Pretty much a self-insert, I've worked in offices and at a local paper and I hated almost every second of it. The guy that can put up with the job no matter how much he hated it. A beat stick for both Huw and Tia, Alistair has given up years ago and is here in body only, much like me at my job.

Luke – A friend I had in childhood that was always the person that I looked up to, had his life together, knew what he wanted and did pretty well. The temper part was mostly as he needed a flaw to make him human, as with Alistair's character being mostly flawed, I needed the counter point for the dynamic.

Raj – A mix of a few characters in my own life and fiction, but mostly archetype. I needed the new guy (other than the workie) who was also seeing a lot of this for the first time and not quite as settled as everyone else was. His ethnicity was party down to the fact some may see him as an outsider in a predominantly white area, but also as I thought it would be an interesting means of playing against racial and religious stereotypes.

Rhys – Another childhood friend that I didn't quite look up to but admired for his honesty in embracing unshakeably what made him happy regardless of what others thought of him. Coasting through life but happier than a lot of people will ever be. A person who no matter how bad they did would always come up smelling of roses, almost a parallel to Alistair in his approach to life.

Dafydd – A former co-worker, trying to do what's best and maybe realising a little late in the game that they hate their job but won't let on. The person he was based on also had a tendency to be very PC and claim he was a feminist when women were in the room yet would be the first to make a lewd comment or ogle a woman when they weren't looking.

Emma- Mix of a former manager and archetype of brown nose/jobsworth. I had a manager at a job where the job was clearly the reason for getting up in the morning, who always sucked up to upper management. But was a damn good employee, and if encouraged enough could be quite likeable one they removed the stick

Chris – All the youths that loiter in the underpass near my house amalgamated into one character. I wanted him to be disliked but at times likeable, I also needed him to be a counterpoint to Huw; being the only person in the office not scared of him and seeing it as more of a theatre act rather than threatening. Would over time become likeable and part of the team as a junior reporter/ PR or even as a darker path a Huw in the making.

Tia – Many of the girls from previous jobs, with some more modern additions such as being an 'influencer'. Shows tendency to be vapid and potentially a bully, but mostly to play a straight man to Huw and add contrast to Julie and Emma. What would normally be expected to be a love interest but instead a bully. Considers herself above her station.

Julie- Some relatives and former co-workers, the mother hen of the office and softer counter point to Huw's venom. Plus I needed another punching bag for Huw and a means of demonstrating his dislike for anything online. Her being responsible for the paper's social media kind of fitted this role.

By this point I had my characters set I now needed to work out the plot and the overall plot of the script, again a completely new discipline to me as I was used to getting everything out in less than ten pages. Because of this I could add more narrative elements and be a bit freer with my dialogue that didn't necessarily serve any purpose other than me trying to be funny. After some

deliberation I decided that the plot should be an idea mentioned earlier, just an introduction. A typical day in the office of sorts, with the addition of a work experience boy arriving as the only thing out of the ordinary.

My initial draft of the script was around thirty-seven pages long, I was not only surprised that I had passed my target of thirty-five pages but had surpassed it. The draft was done over the course of about two weeks and I had kept it completely insular. Mostly due to the fact that when writing a script, I have all spell-check software switched off as I find it makes me edit as I write which in turn distracts me and breaks my flow. The next step for me was to edit, which was very difficult as I had to open up my script to others for opinion. Part of my skills gap audit turned up the fact that I need to develop both networking skills and thicker skin from critique. So I set to work, My initial trim cut the script down to around fifteen pages and was almost entirely from the last few scenes as it felt like there was a lot of nothing then over the top exaggeration, I felt that in parts I was trying too hard to make it funny for the sake of it being funny. I was frustrated as I felt I had lost so much work, over half of what I had written was gone. Without being too defeatist about it I decided to regroup and take another stab at it, trying to retain the tone of the first half without going too far over into fantastical territory as I realised that more than anything, I wanted the Cwmcabbage Express to be believable. Almost like you could walk into a local paper office in any small town in Wales and find a Huw screaming at an Alistair. Over the course of the next week or so I built the script back up and corrected spelling and grammar when I was on a creative break. I sent out copies of drafts in various stages to friends and other trusted persons for feedback and suggestions and made notes of what was said. The final version hit a modest thirty-two pages, not quite my target but any more would have been padding and filler. I believe that almost every line in Hacks serves a purpose without just being exposition dumps.

Overall, I'm pleased with how the final script turned out, in all honesty I could see it as something BBC or Channel 4 put out at midnight on a Thursday. However, panic arose as during the last week I discovered that I'd missed a key element that was required for my module. Professional feedback! With less than a week to go this was slim chanced to work, I had already sent some old scripts to Keiron Self several weeks ago but had yet to hear back from him, my other contact Helen had said she would need over a week for her to assess a script, let alone four. My very last shot was Kelvin, a peer from my class. Though not necessarily a writer like Helen or Keiron, Kelvin had run a film festival for several years so if anyone knew if a script was dodgy or not it'd be him after having to wade through thousands of films each year. But there was a final issue, I forgot to send him the script until the very last day, which is when I'm currently writing this. I'm at the end of the road for this module and I do honestly feel like I've progressed, had I the opportunity to do it again I'd say no thank you and close the door.

In all seriousness I'm for once relatively proud of myself, in just over a month I have written and edited a pilot length script as well as my normal life. I may have missed some elements like the professional feedback but in all honesty I don't really care. I'm happy that I accomplished what I set out to do and as I sit here typing this at almost the zero hour, I can say that if anything I'm proud of me, which is a lot more than I would normally say about myself.