

DIVIDED TOGETHER

Written by

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FADE IN:

INT. CABINET MEETING - DAY

Opening shot of the PROGRESS PARTY'S political LOGO, which is a symbol of vector light rays. The rays are cut from stainless steel and mounted on the wall THE CAMERA is facing. SOUND OF PALMS BANGING THE TABLE.

TITLE: Divided Together

THE LEADER (aged 40) wearing a perfectly fitting suit and tie walks into the frame. He is both handsome and well groomed.

THE LEADER
Hello and Welcome friends.

CAMERA, PULL BACK as THE LEADER speaks, he is standing at the head of a long, wide and reflective TABLE. Surrounded by THE CABINET which consists of 20 people sitting round, FACING and listening to him with THEIR BACK TO THE CAMERA. CLOSED CURTAINS COVER ONE SIDE OF THE ROOM; we are literally behind the scenes. The atmosphere is hypnotic.

THE LEADER (CONT'D)
Before we begin I want to remind you all why we are here. It is our duty to ensure the continued prosperity of this nation and the continued esteem of this party. We stand with the charge of leading the population to better times. Undoubtedly, the country has never been in better hands. It is for this reason that we must consolidate our position in or to take this opportunity to secure the future we all desire.

THE LEADER puts his hands on the table as he leans over.

ANGLE, behind THE LEADER. THE CABINET show their FACES for the first time. THE CABINET is a mix of men and woman. They are all wearing suits, some with badges, looking attentively at THE LEADER.

THE LEADER (CONT'D)
To start off, to ensure the smooth development of our most recent foreign engagement I will be making a televised public address.
(MORE)

THE LEADER (CONT'D)

This message will seek to assuage any remaining concerns regarding the legitimacy of our presence in the region.

ANGLE, CLOSE-UP of THE LEADER'S face. He proudly LOOKS round the room.

THE LEADER (CONT'D)

Following that, this morning we have a meet and greet with our grass roots party members. I'd like as many of you to be there as possible. May I remind you that they have been looking forward to meeting us, I expect enthusiasm and engagement.

ANGLE, WIDE. POV OF THE LEADER. CAMERA FACING DOWN THE TABLE. THE CABINET STARE INTO THE CAMERA.

THE LEADER (CONT'D)

And As we all know this afternoon, we will rehearse the launch of The New Way. First I'd like you all to give yourselves a pat on the back, well done, everything we have worked towards is coming to fruition. This does not however mean we can rest easy. We have laid the foundations, now the task remains to execute the particulars.

THE CABINET'S EYES follow THE LEADER as he walks over to the closed curtains.

ANGLE, MEDIUM. THE LEADER stands in front of THE CURTAINS.

THE LEADER (CONT'D)

As we all know there are certain elements of our program which will come under great scrutiny and resistance, it is our job now to assure the public of their integrity and importance. We all have our part to play.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

INT. NEWS STUDIO. DAY.

ANGLE, WIDE.

THE NEW STUDIO HAS MULTIPLE CAMERAS POSITIONED IN THE DIRECTION OF THE LEADER who is SITTING DOWN in front of a BACKDROP looking sad, preoccupied and ambivalent. The backdrop is a BLANK GREEN SCREEN.

ANGLE, ZOOM.

THE LEADER is handed a takeaway coffee cup, NODS in thanks. MAKE-UP ARTIST starts to apply make up to THE LEADER. Only her HANDS are in the frame.

MAKE-UP ARTIST

I watched your interview last night.

THE LEADER

(Perks Up)

Oh, you saw that?

MAKE-UP ARTIST

Yeah. I didn't realise you came into politics so young.

THE LEADER

You could say I didn't find politics, politics found me.

Beat

THE LEADER (CONT'D)

So... how long have you been a make up artist?

MAKE-UP ARTIST

I got into it quite young as well.

THE LEADER

Well I guess we're the same in that way.

Beat

THE LEADER (CONT'D)

Now be honest with me, will the camera really add ten pounds?
(Joking)

MAKE-UP ARTIST

No, but with the high definition T.V.

(MORE)

MAKE-UP ARTIST (CONT'D)
 resolution, these days you really
 need to be meticulous applying make-
 up. When you consider the stage
 lighting and everything as a whole,
 any blemishes or imperfections can
 really show up. So you cant just
 pile it on, Its all about careful
 blending. We're constantly adapting
 to new technology all the time.

MAKE-UP ARTIST finishes the APPLICATION OF MAKE-UP and
 LEAVES. THE LEADER suddenly stares into the camera. He waits
 in anticipation. There is a 15 SECOND COUNTDOWN. Suddenly as
 if reading off an auto promoter THE LEADER SPEAKS. As THE
 LEADER speaks SUBTITLES appear below what he says, in
 Sabaeen. The green screen backdrop changes to a generic
 gradient background.

THE LEADER

We wake up today in a freer, safer
 world. As a long era ends, so a new
 era begins. Soon, the future of
 your country will belong to you. We
 wish to assure you that along with
 our new package of reforms we will
 respect your rich traditions and
 way of life. Our shared enemy is
 gone, you are no longer captives.
 Our reluctant duty is nearing
 completion. Over the course of our
 continued involvement we will
 continue to act as a compassionate
 mediator. Our priority is to ensure
 the minimum collateral damage in
 the mean time as this process is
 completed. Once we have laid the
 foundations for our future mutual
 prosperity, we will not remain a
 day longer than is necessary.
 Remember that we are your
 liberators, not your conquerors.
 For those of you that doubted us,
 you have undoubtedly been proven
 wrong. We will not let history
 repeat itself. The past was theirs,
 the present is ours but the future
 is yours.

THE LEADER STARES TENSELY into the CAMERA. Then stops and
 relaxes. THE LEADER SIGHS. The transmission is clearly over.
 He STANDS UP, and walks out of the frame. THE LIGHTS
 POSITIONED ON HIM ARE SWITCHED OFF.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

INT. CORRIDOR - DAY

CAMERA, DOLLY SHOT moving down a long corridor from THE LEADERS POV. SOUNDS OF FOOTSTEPS. The corridor is adorned with FRAMED PHOTOGRAPHIC PORTRAITS of past leaders.

ADVISOR

You look a little tired.

THE LEADER

Admittedly I'm a bit worn out.

ADVISOR

Are you ready? Want to grab a coffee? These people will wait.

THE LEADER

No, I'll just soldier through this. Anyway, it's easy when they do so much talking.

ADVISOR

Shouldn't have to take more than an hour. You do well in these situations.

THE LEADER

Yes yes, I know the drill.

At the end of the corridor are two large doors. They are OPENED from behind.

INT. HALL - CONTINUOUS

Through the doors we come to a large hall with 30 GRASS ROOTS ACTIVISTS of varying ages. Some are wearing T-shirts and badges of diverse designs saying Progress, and other slogans. Some are wearing suits with badges. At the front A BOY (aged around 10) wears a 2 dimensional MASK OF THE LEADER'S FACE. They all STARE into THE CAMERA. They start CLAPPING and CHEERING.

HOLD.

ANGLE, GRASS ROOTS ACTIVISTS POV. THE LEADER and TWO ADVISORS stand, smiling, having just walked through the doors.

THE LEADER

Thank you all for being here today.
I just have something brief to say.

(MORE)

THE LEADER (CONT'D)

Your hard work has not gone unappreciated! While we are the architects, we consider you the foundations, without which this party would fall. I can't wait to meet you all.

(Overtly enthusiastic)

CUT TO:

LATER

The hall is large, well lit and of contemporary design. There are no windows, or any form of natural light. There is a corner wall mounted flat screen TELEVISION, switched on and displaying static. There are chairs and bunches of BALLOONS at the side of one of the wall. In the middle attached to another wall is a NEON SIGN that reads PROGRESS. Another wall has POSTERS fixed with Sellotape saying generic slogans such as "TOGETHER WE PROGRESS". The atmosphere is both optimistic and welcoming.

CAMERA DOLLY'S THROUGH THE HALL BRIEFLY INTERSECTING PEOPLES CONVERSATIONS AND EXPLORING THE ROOM. SO MANY PEOPLE ARE SPEAKING THAT DIALOGUE IS MOSTLY INAUDIBLE.

THE GRASS ROOTS ACTIVISTS, THE LEADER and members of THE CABINET are in different SPREAD OUT GROUPS having conversations. THE CAMERA moves around them over a long take.

CUT TO:

ANGLE, WIDE. A Blank white wall in THE HALL, almost like a photo studio, with PLANTS symmetrically placed on either side of the frame. THE LEADER walks into the frame. He stands, stares and HOLDS A POSE. CAMERAS FLASH from out of the frame. HOLD.

Following this, various members of the GRASS ROOTS ACTIVISTS take turns being photographed with THE LEADER. Some take SELFIES on their PHONES with THE LEADER. Cameras continue to FLASH and CLICK from different angles. This takes place over a protracted period of time. The atmosphere is both awkward and absurd. We see THE LEADER posing for numerous photographs with different people. Some pose for HAND SHAKES. AN OLD WOMAN (aged 80) wearing a slogan T-shirt walks into the shot.

OLD WOMAN

I didn't realise you'd be so tall
in real life!

THE LEADER

My mother fed me well!
(Warmly)

THE LEADER smiles the same way for each of the photographs, with the same facial expression. MAGAZINES with THE LEADER on the cover are held up. Some are SIGNED.

YOUNG MAN

Can I just say, It's a real privilege to wear the party colours.

(Looking at THE LEADER)

THE LEADER

Yes, we depend on each another.

(Without looking)

CUT TO:

The Hall. Time has passed, and the room is EMPTY. ANGLE, WIDE. CAMERA is placed directly in the middle of the room and pans 360 degrees, everyone has left the hall, apart from THE LEADER. Camera movement Stops and fixes on the wall with the NEON SIGN that says 'Progress', it is in the left side of the frame. Some BALLOONS have FLOATED TO THE CEILING. On the right side of the frame, on the floor, is THE MASK of THE LEADERS face, that THE BOY previously was wearing. It is faced down with the blank side up.

THE LEADER WALKS OVER AND STEPS OVER IT. HE KNEELS DOWN AND PICKS IT UP, PUTS IT ON AND STARES INTO THE CAMERA.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN

INT. CONFERENCE HALL. DAY.

ANGLE, WIDE.

A Large empty, grand, contemporary concert hall capable of sitting Hundreds. THE SOUND OF A VACUUM CLEANER. THE CLEANER (aged 40) appears wearing a boiler suit. He is just finishing VACUUMING CONFETTI from the floor. HE FINISHES AND LEAVES THE STAGE. THE LEADER and six of THE CABINET walk onto the stage. THE LEADER is wearing a HEADSET MICROPHONE. THE CABINET SIT DOWN ON CHAIRS IN THE BACKGROUND. A LARGE SCREEN in the background reads THE NEW WAY.

THE LEADER

Thank You. Good morning. I trust you are all refreshed for this new day. A new day, and with it, as we all know, a new way. The New Way. Our New Way.

(MORE)

THE LEADER (CONT'D)
(Moves hands as he speaks)

Our New Way will ensure that the creative energy of our best and brightest is unlocked to its fullest potential.

(Addresses the camera)

With Our New Way we will strive so that every hard working person gets their fair share and that everybody who wants to work hard has the opportunity to do so.

Our New Way will allow us to maintain stability between nations and mutual co-operation between peaceful cultures.

CAMERA DOLLYS ALONG THE CABINET MOST OF WHO ARE LOOKING AMBIVALENT TO THE SPEECH.

Some are READING NEWS ON THEIR PHONES.

THE LEADER (CONT'D)

Ultimately, Our New Way will value the sovereignty of the individual, while instilling in that individual a respect for the sovereignty of society.

ANGLE, WIDE, behind THE LEADER.

THE LEADER (CONT'D)

In this New Way, we remember that we do not run before time in order to escape the past and the good work this party and the people of this country have done. Rather we step up and stride boldly into the future to embrace new challenges.

ANGLE, CLOSE-UP of a TELEPROMPTER with text slowly moving down it.

THE LEADER (CONT'D)

With Our New Way we will preserve and protect all of those values we have grown up with, those values that have made this country what it is today, a country which allows the enterprising to prosper and the unfortunate to overcome their circumstance.

ANGLE, WIDE shot with THE LEADER and the stage. Background THE CABINET are SITTING behind, STARING in different directions. Some are still on their phones.

THE LEADER (CONT'D)

A society in which all beliefs are respected and acknowledged but a society in which those ideologies which are opposed fundamentally to these values of tolerance and freedom are not allowed to gain a foothold and thrive.

ANGLE, CLOSE-UP of THE LEADER'S HAND GESTURES.

THE LEADER (CONT'D)

An esteemed gentleman once said, 'the flower of freedom must have its thorns' Our New Way is that carefully cultivated stem, strong and resolute, standing opposed to those enemies of the state, who stand against unity and diversity, who commit violence on our streets, on the people of our communities, who sow the seed of discord everywhere they appear, it is those tyrants which, solemnly, but firmly, considering the magnitude of the acts we undertake, we must stand against in total solidarity.

ANGLE, WIDE. CAMERA IS AT THE BACK OF THE EMPTY HALL.

THE LEADER (CONT'D)

We must show the same strength and the same fortitude abroad as we do at home.

(MORE)

THE LEADER (CONT'D)

We must contend with these barbaric beliefs every where they take root. For the stem to stand strong, the soil in which it sits must be rich and fertile and it must stand tall above the others so that it may have its place in the sun.

BEAT

THE LEADER (CONT'D)

What the people of this country want is a party who can deliver on the promises they make, who they can trust and support, rally behind. The people must have a party who consciously interprets their will, who carefully considers the opinions they hold and with strong leadership turns that shared dream into a shared reality.

ANGLE, CLOSE-UP OF THE SCREEN WHICH READS THE NEW WAY. SO CLOSE-UP THAT THE PIXELS ARE VISIBLE.

THE LEADER (CONT'D)

Our New Way is that vision and I intend to work every day from dawn till dusk and beyond in order to bring this country towards it.

ANGLE, CLOSE-UP OF THE SIDE OF THE LEADERS BODY.

THE LEADER (CONT'D)

The people of this country know from experience that we are the party to stick by its guns. The people of this country know that we are the party to innovate and create effective policy and it is my sincere hope and cautious prediction that the people of this country will applaud Our New Way and welcome our new direction based on those core principles we all share that have been the foundation of our shared prosperity.

ANGLE, WIDE FROM THE RIGHT HAND SIDE OF THE AUDIENCE SEATING.

THE LEADER (CONT'D)

Our new set of policies will seek to entrench and restore these values, we will not fix what is not broken, but we will improve upon that which has proven successful. Lets us not be in any doubt, the success of our vision is reflected back at us everywhere we look. Our way of life is something to cherish and we will never be ashamed of our rich and proud heritage.

ANGLE, CLOSE-UP. THE CAMERA tracks 360 degrees round the leader who is illuminated by the stage lights.

THE LEADER (CONT'D)

That is not to say that, there are not obstacles we must overcome. For our values, strong as they are, face challenges at every turn, not simply from those preachers of hate and violence we fight with military force, but the other leftovers from the time before, the bad old days we all remember and wish to avoid.

ANGLE, WIDE FROM THE LEFT HAND SIDE OF THE AUDIENCE SEATING.

THE LEADER (CONT'D)

While we have made improvements, Law and Order remains our number one priority, we understand that the police alone do not fight this battle, we understand that Law and Order rests on Employment and Education, so our new way will focus on creating opportunities for our youth. Opportunities for our youth, can only come from opportunities in our industry.

BEAT.

THE LEADER (CONT'D)

So Our New Way is the way of
Opportunity, it is the way of
Order, it is the way of Industry.
Our New Way is the way of hard
work, of fair reward, of coming
together so that each of us may
rise, of safety, of security, of
stability and of individual
liberty, those innate qualities
which we have always held in our
hearts to be the foundations of
justice and prosperity. We must
seize the day to build on these
foundations.

ANGLE, Close-up of THE LEADER, he stares into the camera.

THE LEADER (CONT'D)

The Kaleidoscope has been shaken.
The pieces are in flux. Soon they
will settle With the new way and we
will have a new world, built around
us.

CAMERA, Slowly Pulls back from THE LEADER. ANGLE, WIDE.

THE CABINET STAND UP and begin CLAPPING STANDING AROUND THE
LEADER. THE LEADER RAISES HIS HANDS IN THE AIR. HOLD. THE
CAMERA PANS from them to the CEILING LIGHTS. CLAPPING
SUBSIDES as the Credits roll. CAMERA HOLD on the LIGHTS.