

# STOCKWELL

by Kieron Barry

*from Scene 12:*

**CRESSIDA DICK** I, Cressida Dick, swear by Almighty God that the evidence which I shall give shall be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

**SIR MICHAEL WRIGHT** Thank you. Would you sit down, please.

**CRESSIDA DICK** Sir, might I be allowed to stand? I think I would feel slightly more comfortable.

**SIR MICHAEL WRIGHT** Certainly.

**MR MANSFIELD** Good morning, my name is Mr Mansfield, I represent the family of Jean Charles de Menezes.

**CRESSIDA DICK** Could I possibly say, I was brought up always to answer towards the learned Coroner. I am finding it very difficult. I don't mean to be disrespectful.

**SIR MICHAEL WRIGHT** Please don't worry.

**CRESSIDA DICK** Is it all right if I answer in this direction?

**SIR MICHAEL WRIGHT** I shall not be the least offended.

*Cressida Dick turns to Mr Mansfield.*

**MR MANSFIELD** Commissioner, when you heard that there were nine shots to the head, what was your reaction to that?

**CRESSIDA DICK** I can't remember any particular reaction to that.

**MR MANSFIELD** Well, please think.

**CRESSIDA DICK** I don't think I had any reaction, sir. I was not surprised.

**MR MANSFIELD** You weren't?

**CRESSIDA DICK** No, I was not.

**MR MANSFIELD** Ideally it's suggested one shot to the brain stem will be enough to incapacitate completely. That's the idea, isn't it?

**CRESSIDA DICK** I think the idea is that incapacitation will follow quickly from such a shot.

**MR MANSFIELD** A shot – yes. You see, what happened on this day, under your authority, was a chain of events that spiralled out of your control such that, at the end of the day, nine shots were fired. Do you understand?

**CRESSIDA DICK** I understand, yes.

**MR MANSFIELD** The reason that it spiralled out of your control disastrously was that from the beginning, you were sprinting to catch up with something that had not been properly organised. Now, do you follow that?

**CRESSIDA DICK** I follow it, I don't accept it.

**MR MANSFIELD** And that is why you said to the handover officer, Mr Armand, 'the first hour was appalling.' Right? You did say that?

**CRESSIDA DICK** I did say that, I said, "The first hour was appalling, no structure".

**MR MANSFIELD** Yes, 'no structure'.

**CRESSIDA DICK** I am sorry, sir, yes, but every operation which is on a large scale, bringing together hundreds of people in a very short space of time, there is always a period of lacking structure.

**MR MANSFIELD** You wouldn't *need* to tell Mr Armand that if it *always* happened. You'd say: oh, well, the normal chaos at the beginning. The word was a particularly strong one, 'appalling'. Are you telling the British public that the average big operation starts with an appalling structure?

**CRESSIDA DICK** I am telling this court that when you set up operations like these there is always a period of needing to get the structures right.

**MR MANSFIELD** Did you have a map which would have demonstrated at a glance that you were dealing with a block, not a house?

**CRESSIDA DICK** No, sir, I didn't, but we did know that at a fairly early stage after I arrived.

**MR MANSFIELD** You only learned it by accident, didn't you?

**CRESSIDA DICK** I wouldn't call that an accident, sir.

**MR MANSFIELD** Well, you certainly hadn't bothered to find out. At 8.30 you ask for profiles of the premises, and you don't get anything back for three hours, do you? That's a bit of a breakdown too, isn't it? Or are you not going to accept that?

**CRESSIDA DICK** What I can say, sir, is there is an enormous amount going on.

**MR MANSFIELD** An enormous number of breakdowns, please understand, everybody's human, mistakes can be made. It's pleasant when people say 'I have made a mistake', but you are really not prepared to say that, are you?

**CRESSIDA DICK** No, what I am trying to portray, sir, is in any operation, some things that in an ideal world would happen don't happen.

**MR MANSFIELD** You had brought in your own intelligence unit, SCD.

**CRESSIDA DICK** Yes.

**MR MANSFIELD** What were they doing?

**CRESSIDA DICK** They most definitely were working on providing maximum information.

**MR MANSFIELD** So one of the maximum bits of information you would need to know was where is the nearest bus stop; correct?

**CRESSIDA DICK** I would regard that as one of thousands of bits of information that would be helpful to know.

**MR MANSFIELD** Sorry, this is a priority. Public transport has been attacked the day before, July 7th, a bus blown up with people killed, you are not telling this jury, are you, that you had not prioritised where is the nearest access to public transport?

**CRESSIDA DICK** This is an area of South London that I know relatively well, I know there will be a very large number of bus stops.

**MR MANSFIELD** You are not going to operate on that basis, are you? 'There are a large number of bus stops and we don't know where they are'?

**CRESSIDA DICK** What I am not going to do is ask as a high priority action for a map with all the bus stops plotted on it, I'm afraid I am not.

**MR MANSFIELD** When did you find out where the nearest bus stop was?

**CRESSIDA DICK** I did not find out precisely where it was until much, much later on in the day.

**MR MANSFIELD** Just give us a clue, just give the jury a clue, when you discovered where the nearest bus stop was?

**CRESSIDA DICK** Well, during the operation.

**MR MANSFIELD** When did you discover where the nearest bus stop was?

**CRESSIDA DICK** I cannot remember that, sir.

**MR MANSFIELD** Did you ever?

**CRESSIDA DICK** I know I asked. I cannot remember when I found out.

**MR MANSFIELD** When you asked CO19 to intercept Mr de Menezes, where did you think he was?

**CRESSIDA DICK** I thought he had just entered the tube station and was in the concourse area somewhere. I was very quickly told 'he's gone down the escalator', I very briefly thought shall I pull 19 off and I decided no I won't.

**MR MANSFIELD** You were misled, they were not in a position to deal with him.

**CRESSIDA DICK** No, sir, I don't accept that I was misled.

**MR MANSFIELD** Well, what's gone wrong here, then?

**CRESSIDA DICK** In what sense?

**MR MANSFIELD** Well, how is it you thought they were there when they weren't?

**CRESSIDA DICK** Well, I was told they were there –

**MR MANSFIELD** So what's gone wrong?

**CRESSIDA DICK** – and they did not intervene where I hoped they would be able to.

**MR MANSFIELD** What has gone wrong?

**CRESSIDA DICK** Mr Esposito and the team thought that they were in a position to deal, and he told me they are in a position to deal and I trust him and I take his word.

**MR MANSFIELD** And he is wrong?

**CRESSIDA DICK** They were a minute behind.

**MR MANSFIELD** That's a long time.

**CRESSIDA DICK** I think you could turn that on its head and say they did incredibly well to get there in that time.

**MR MANSFIELD** That's not the point. You had control and you decided to send in 19 on the wrong information.

**CRESSIDA DICK** I've explained the sequence of my decision-making. I still regard it as absolutely rational.

**MR MANSFIELD** You were fresh that day, you were feeling OK?

**CRESSIDA DICK** I was very fresh.

**MR MANSFIELD** Not too tired?

**CRESSIDA DICK** Certainly not.

**MR MANSFIELD** Not panic-stricken?

**CRESSIDA DICK** No, sir.

**MR MANSFIELD** The question really is, were you on the ball, were you really paying attention to what was going on?

**CRESSIDA DICK** I was very, very focused. I would say I was extremely on the ball.

**MR MANSFIELD** Because the point is, Commissioner, I want to suggest to you that if you had thought this through, Mr de Menezes might not have been shot in chaotic conditions on the tube train in Stockwell; do you understand?

**CRESSIDA DICK** I understand what you are saying, sir, I don't accept that there was such a possibility.

**MR MANSFIELD** What went wrong?

**CRESSIDA DICK** *(pause)* I think Mr de Menezes was extraordinarily unfortunate to live in the same block as Hussain Osman, he was desperately unfortunate to look very like Hussain Osman. Some of the things that Mr de Menezes did contributed to my assessment of him as a bomber from the day before, and someone who might be intent on causing an explosion today. Finally, he had the great misfortune of entering the same tube station that three of the bombers had entered the day before. I regret tremendously that Mr de Menezes died. But I don't look back and think I made irrational decisions, unreasonable decisions, and nor do I think anybody else did.

**MR MANSFIELD** The reasons you give for what went wrong have everything to do with Jean Charles de Menezes and absolutely nothing to do with the police. Do you really want that to be how it's left?

**CRESSIDA DICK** No. I don't accept that. These were extraordinary times, extraordinary circumstances, and there were a whole series of things that happened.

**MR MANSFIELD** Can I ask you this: is there a problem within the Metropolitan Police hierarchy about admitting things that go wrong?

**CRESSIDA DICK** No, I don't think there is at all, sir.

**MR MANSFIELD** All right. Is there within *you* any problem about admitting when things go wrong?

**CRESSIDA DICK** I'll be quick to say if I think I've done something wrong.

**MR MANSFIELD** You would? I want to give you an opportunity. Would you like to reconsider whether you think, even at this very late stage, there was one little thing that the police got wrong, even one thing that contributed to this?

**CRESSIDA DICK** Well, the question was asked of me, I did not want to go on and on, there are many things that I could describe as going wrong in the generality of course, but one thing I do accept is that he was misidentified. (*beat*) I didn't say that specifically, I think it was inherent in some sense in what I said.

**MR MANSFIELD** You had a dual function; protecting the public at large against the threat posed by terrorists, and also you had another obligation which was to protect individual members of the public from death at the hands of a police officer?

**CRESSIDA DICK** Absolutely, sir.

**MR MANSFIELD** I am going to make it clear to you that you dismally failed to minimise the risk vis-a-vis Jean Charles de Menezes. Do you follow that?

**CRESSIDA DICK** I follow it, sir; I don't accept it.

**MR MANSFIELD** No, I appreciate you won't.