ANDREW MARR:
Now Nigel Farage has had, by his own admission, a literally painful campaign. He’s in poor physical shape and he’s fighting for his political life. If he doesn’t win a seat at Westminster, he says it’s curtains for him. So there’s a lot at stake for the Leader of UKIP and Mr Farage joins me now. Good morning to you.

NIGEL FARAGE:
Good morning.

ANDREW MARR:
How are you feeling because I read your book …

NIGEL FARAGE:
Yeah.

ANDREW MARR:
… and I have never come across a politician who’s had so many scrapes and near death experiences as you?
NIGEL FARAGE:
I have had a few, but then you’ve been through a bit of trauma yourself and you’re back here doing the programme.

ANDREW MARR:
Certainly am.

NIGEL FARAGE:
And I did at the early part of the campaign have a bit of a bad back. Men are not always very good at looking after their health …

ANDREW MARR:
(over) That is true.

NIGEL FARAGE:
… and I wasn’t going for physio and treatment, and now I am and I’m fine.

ANDREW MARR:
Physio, absolutely essential. Now David Cameron has made it clear several times recently that he doesn’t think you’re going to get any seats at all.

NIGEL FARAGE:
I know. It’s Desperate Dave, isn’t it? Desperate Dave saying to these voters that have left him over the course of the last five years “please come home” I think is the phrase he uses. They’re not going back to a guy that’s covered the country in windmills, that has slashed our armed forces, raised the level of the foreign aid budget, presided over massive immigration, and only at the last minute been persuaded to sort of half-heartedly offer a referendum. Those voters aren’t going back. And it’s actually a misreading from him and the press. Most UKIP voters have not come to us from the Conservatives. They’re coming from Labour, a few from Lib-Dems, and a huge chunk of our vote is coming from people who are completely outside the political process but see UKIP as offering hope.

ANDREW MARR:
Okay. Now I started off talking about the numbers with Yvette Cooper.

**NIGEL FARAGE:**
Yeah.

**ANDREW MARR:**
I’ll do the same thing here. Your raw polling numbers haven’t moved much in the last 6 months or last year or so. They’re about the same …

**NIGEL FARAGE:**
*(over)* Well there’s been a very close…

**ANDREW MARR:**
*(over)* … around 13 per cent thereabouts.

**NIGEL FARAGE:**
There’s been a very desperate attempt to talk UKIP down over the last month - every commentator, every pollster - and one or two of the pollsters using voodoo science to try and produce quite low numbers, but not even prompting UKIP. The fact is not only are people who say they’re going to vote UKIP more likely to go to the polling station next Thursday than the other parties; we’re actually going up in the polls. And I have to say, I think with four days to go, if only we could debate the big issues rather than who’s going to get into bed with whom next Friday morning … *(laughs)*

**ANDREW MARR:**
There is a lot of bed-hopping going on at the moment.

**NIGEL FARAGE:**
There is, yeah.

**ANDREW MARR:**
But if you look at the raw numbers, I was going to say then the pollsters extrapolate and they don’t give you very many seats. Do you reflect that this is possibly the last … this is the general election which breaks our current voting system?
NIGEL FARAGE:
I do and you know my message to people – and obviously we’ve got our key target seats where we think we’re going to win or we’re very, very close to winning – but I would say to all UKIP voters that a vote for UKIP is a vote for change not just in terms of the policy and direction of the country, but for a change in our voting system. First-Past-the-Post is now bankrupt.

ANDREW MARR:
Okay. Looking at the Conservative message, however, you’ve said a lot about the danger of the SNP, of the Scottish Nationalists, holding the whip hand in Westminster and so forth. Isn’t David Cameron absolutely right when he says in Labour, Tory marginals, you’d be bonkers to vote UKIP if you want to keep Nicola Sturgeon out of Westminster? You have to vote Conservative to ensure David Cameron back in and, therefore, no SNP/Ed Miliband stitch-up?

NIGEL FARAGE:
Well I’m not sure what the Labour Party’s position with the SNP is. I mean that seems to change every day. But it’s a bit ironic for the Conservative Prime Minister to say he’s the great defender and they’ve put up billboards showing Alex Salmond taking money out of the back …

ANDREW MARR:
(over) They certainly have, yeah.

NIGEL FARAGE:
... out of an English back pocket. This from Mr Cameron who joined the pledge with Miliband and Clegg to guarantee in perpetuity the Barnett formula and the English continuing to shovel money over Hadrian’s Wall. If you want some MPs in Westminster to fight the SNP, you’ll need some UKIP ones.

ANDREW MARR:
Now you’ve been described by Vernon Bogdanor, a constitutional expert, your party as a “nascent English Nationalist Party”. Is there some truth in that?
NIGEL FARAGE:
We are the only party represented in all four you know electory … represented in all four corners of the United Kingdom. Some of our polling stats in Wales are better than our polling stats in England. So no, in England and Wales we’re strong. In Northern Ireland, we have a presence in Stormont. In Scotland, you know we won an MEP seat there last year. And I think what’s really also been completely misread is the extent to which UKIP has grown in the Midlands and the North in Labour held seats and the commentators just aren’t seeing it.

ANDREW MARR:
Let’s talk about policies a bit. You told John Humphrys, I noticed the other day, that the BBC was an anachronism or a dinosaur – I can’t remember what the …

NIGEL FARAGE:
(over) Yeah.

ANDREW MARR:
… Obsolete I think was the word.

NIGEL FARAGE:
All three would do.

ANDREW MARR:
All three would do. What would you like to see actually happen to the BBC?

NIGEL FARAGE:
Well I …

ANDREW MARR:
Would you like to see it go completely?

NIGEL FARAGE:
No, I think the BBC as a public service broadcaster has a role. I think the BBC as a global brand for this country is very, very important, but I think the BBC is far too big
and has far too much influence …

**ANDREW MARR:**
What kind of things would you like to see the BBC stop doing?

**NIGEL FARAGE:**
Well I don’t think it needs to do entertainment, for example. You know …

**ANDREW MARR:**
So Doctor Who and all that kind of stuff could go?

**NIGEL FARAGE:**
Well but the point is we now have …

**ANDREW MARR:**
Vote UKIP and exterminate the doctor?

**NIGEL FARAGE:**
… we now have you know lots of commercial channels out there. We have cable television. The BBC does not need to be doing all of these things. And I think there is a real …

**ANDREW MARR:**
So Strictly Come Dancing, all of that kind of stuff should go?

**NIGEL FARAGE:**
… I think there is a real question about the BBC website and about local news because … And I say this because if we believe in a free press, then if the BBC local websites are as strong and as heavily funded as they are, how can local newspapers or local websites even compete? And so there is a problem that actually out in the regions, the BBC is beginning to obliterate …

**ANDREW MARR:**
Yeah.
NIGEL FARAGE:
… other voices in the media.

ANDREW MARR:
So you’d like to see the end of BBC Entertainment and the website. How would you like to see this process taken forward? I mean you’ve got views, the DUP have views, many Conservative MPs have views. What should happen?

NIGEL FARAGE:
The whole debate, the whole debate about the BBC licence fee and its role you know is coming up over the next two to three years and I want UKIP to have some input into that. I mean the other problem is that you know UKIP was judged by Ofcom to be one of the four major parties in British politics and, frankly, the BBC have not treated us like that during this General Election campaign.

ANDREW MARR:
Okay. Let’s move onto another area of policy because you had almost a second manifesto, which was the Christian manifesto which you put your name to earlier on, which came out with lots of policies and so forth. Can I ask you, first of all, are you yourself a Christian?

NIGEL FARAGE:
Yes …

ANDREW MARR:
You are.

NIGEL FARAGE:
… I’m a confirmed member of the Church of England. I haven’t always approved of its recent leadership, I’m a little bit lapsed, but I am a member of the Church of England, yes.

ANDREW MARR:
In that manifesto there’s a very interesting bit about gay marriage and you say, there’s
a phrase you would use “reasonable accommodation” to help people who are against gay marriage. And I don’t know … I just want to know what that actually means.

NIGEL FARAGE:
Let’s just be clear. You know we have now an active and growing LGBT group within UKIP, lots of gay candidates standing for us in these elections. There is no … There’s been a sort of … another establishment attempt to paint UKIP out to be anti-gay. That is rubbish. But what we say …

ANDREW MARR:
(over) I’m just asking you what it means.

NIGEL FARAGE:
… but what we say is that all minorities deserve respect and that actually yes gay people deserve their rights, but also Christians – and Muslims for that matter – should be allowed to hold a reasonable position that says they don’t approve of some lifestyles. And that is … that is an accommodation.

ANDREW MARR
(over) So just to be absolutely … I understand, but just to be absolutely clear. I’m running a B&B. I don’t approve of gay people. Under “reasonable accommodation”, would I be able to say to them, “I’m terribly sorry, don’t come in”?

NIGEL FARAGE:
Well you know that would be open prejudice. But, Andrew, our national …

ANDREW MARR:
(over) So just give me an example of what would change in this.

NIGEL FARAGE:
No, no, no, no, no I’m not going to and I tell you why. Our national debt has doubled in the last five years. Six hundred and twenty-four thousand migrants settled in Britain last year. All you and anybody else wants to talk about is some tiddly piece of our man…
ANDREW MARR:
(over) Well it’s in your manifesto.

NIGEL FARAGE:
(over) No I’m sorry, I’m sorry, some tiddly piece of our manifesto – the only manifesto …

ANDREW MARR:
(over) Alright well let’s talk …

NIGEL FARAGE:
(over) … the only fully costed manifesto that has been put to the British public at this election.

ANDREW MARR:
Well let’s talk about the big costing parts of your manifesto then.

NIGEL FARAGE:
Please.

ANDREW MARR:
The House of Commons library says that if we left the EU and we were on the same basis as Norway, we would be able to cut our contributions by 17 per cent. Worth having, but nothing like the huge amounts of money that you want.

NIGEL FARAGE:
Who is suggesting that the model we would have with the European Union would be the same as Norway’s? Yes Norway has …

ANDREW MARR:
(over) Well they’re able to trade. That’s the point.

NIGEL FARAGE:
Well there are 60 countries around the world that have free trade deals with the
European Union.

ANDREW MARR:
So you're saying we wouldn't be in the European trading pact or EEA?

NIGEL FARAGE:
We are now the Eurozone’s biggest export market in the world. They sell us about a million motor cars a year more than we sell them. They need us in terms of trade more than we need them. We will have our own free trade deal with the European Union and it’ll look a bit like the thing my parents thought they were voting for 40 years ago in the referendum: friendship, free trade, cooperation, but the ability to make our own global trade deals with the emerging economies of the world – many of which, incidentally, are in the Commonwealth.

ANDREW MARR:
Now I’m going to be talking to Nick Clegg in just a moment and I’m sure we’ll come onto the subject of an EU referendum. How optimistic are you that a Conservative dominated government will deliver a referendum that’s a fair one?

NIGEL FARAGE:
I’m not confident at all. I mean Mr Cameron once before promised a referendum. Then he broke the promise. Then he spent two years saying it wasn’t in the national interest. Then he saw UKIP spreading like a purple rash across the country and decided he’d offer a referendum. If he held that referendum on his own without UKIP holding his feet to the fire, I am not confident it would be a full, free and fair referendum.

ANDREW MARR:
So a lot of talk about red lines in this election. If there’s a bunch of UKIP MPs in the House of Commons able to influence what happens, then presumably your first red line will be the terms and conditions of that referendum?

NIGEL FARAGE:
Yeah it’s got to be full, free and fair. And I’ve seen some really twisted referendums
held all over Europe. It has to be both sides have to have the same spending limits. There needs to be an ombudsman to make sure that organisations like the BBC give both sides of the argument fair play.

**ANDREW MARR:**

*(over)* Fair … okay.

**NIGEL FARAGE:**

And we also need to define who votes. I mean …

**ANDREW MARR:**

*(over)* I find it slightly hard in these circumstances to see how we could have an arrangement with David Cameron, Nigel Farage and Nick Clegg in any kind of arrangement.

**NIGEL FARAGE:**

Ah, ah!

**ANDREW MARR:**

Impossible?

**NIGEL FARAGE:**

Well if Nick Clegg … I mean look I don’t want to go into coalition with anybody. You know I don’t want a ministerial car …

**ANDREW MARR:**

*(over)* No darkened rooms.

**NIGEL FARAGE:**

… but I would like to help drive the agenda. And I’m quite certain that if Nick Clegg wants to be Deputy Prime Minister next time round that he will change his mind and support a referendum.

**ANDREW MARR:**
Well we’ll see very shortly.

**NIGEL FARAGE:**
We will.

**ANDREW MARR:**
For now, Nigel Farage, thank you very much indeed.

**INTERVIEW ENDS**