

EASTENDERS

EPISODE ONE THOUSAND AND TWENTY
NINE

By

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SCENE 1029/1. FOWLER'S. INT.
DAY LIGHT. 18.20.

STAGE 1

[A BIRTHDAY CAKE - "HAPPY
85TH BIRTHDAY ETHEL"
ETCHED IN ICING ACROSS THE
TOP]

DOT: What do you think?

[DOT, PAULINE AND MARK
PEERING AT THE CAKE]

PAULINE: [WEAK] Very nice.

DOT: "Nice". I've spent all
afternoon on this.

MARK: It's a masterpiece Dot.

DOT: Look, there's no need
for sarcasm. If you don't like
it, just say and I'll chuck it
in the bin.

PAULINE: Oh it's fine. Now

(Scene 1029/1 Continued)

stop fussing will you. Get changed. It's nearly half past.

DOT: Oh lord! 'Ere Mark, get yourself over to the Vic. Check on Ian, make sure everything's running smoothly ...

[MARK SNAPS A SALUTE,
EXITS]

I'll check on Ethel.

[JIM ENTERS FROM LOUNGE,
BEARING A HANDFUL OF
CANDLES]

JIM: 'Ere are look, I found 'em.

DOT: Where are the rest?

JIM: Well that's all there is.

DOT: But she's eighty five, not fifteen. What am I gonna do about the others?

JIM: Don't ask me. I'm just the hired help.

[DOT CAN'T BARE THE STRESS ANYMORE AND LIGHTS UP A CIGARETTE.

PAULINE PILES A SOME PARTY

(Scene 1029/1 Continued)

HATS INTO JIM'S ARMS.

SHE FOLLOWS DOT INTO THE
LOUNGE]

PAULINE: Dot...?

CUT TO:

SCENE 1029/2. MARTIN'S BEDROOM.
INT. DAY LIGHT. 18.22/T.C.

STAGE 1

[PICK UP DOT AND PAULINE
ENTERING HALL. THEY HEAD
TOWARDS MARTIN'S DOOR]

DOT: All I wanted was for her
to have a special day and I'm
being thwarted at every turn.

PAULINE: Perhaps you've just
been a bit over ambitious.

DOT: She wanted a party, she's
getting a party.

PAULINE: Right. Well let's
just hope she's up to it then,
shall we?

DOT: [COVERS] Well of course
she's up to it. She's fine.

[DOT OPENS DOOR TO
MARTIN'S ROOM, ENTERS
ALONE.

ETHEL'S PERCHED ON BED,
BREATHING HEAVILY - A
SMALL BLACK RING BOX IN
HER HAND.
HER TIN BOX HAS FALLEN TO
THE FLOOR]

Ethel what are you doing?!

ETHEL: Well, I was looking

(Scene 1029/2 Continued)

for something for Sonia ...
then I had a funny turn.

DOT: Lie back down. Hold on.
there we are.

[ETHEL GRASPS DOT'S ARM.
DOT LOWERS HER GENTLY
BACK DOWN TO THE BED]

ETHEL: [FRUSTRATED] You
think you can manage, you try
... and you find you're
absolutely useless.

DOT: That's what I'm here
for, to look after you.

[ETHEL LIES ON THE BED,
BREATHING HEAVILY]

ETHEL: And you're doing a
good job, Dot. A very good
job.

DOT: Yes, well calm down eh,
breathe slowly. In - out. In...

ETHEL: I can trust you.
You'll never let me down.
You'll never leave me ...

DOT: [GUILTY] Of course I
won't.

ETHEL: Promise.

[DOT LOOKS AT ETHEL - A
BEAT]

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(Scene 1029/2 Continued)

DOT: I promise.

[OUT ON ETHEL]

CUT TO:

SCENE 1029/3. VIC DOWNSTAIRS.
INT. DAY LIGHT. 18.26.

STAGE 1

[SONIA AND ROBBIE UP
STEPLADDERS FIXING A
BANNER ABOVE THE BAR -
"HAPPY 85TH BIRTHDAY
ETHEL".

IAN SUPERVISING, CLING
FILMED TRAYS OF FOOD IN
HAND.

THE VIC IS BEGINNING TO
FILL WITH GUESTS]

IAN: Left, no, I said
left...sorry...

[THEY MOVE IT RIGHT]

No. Left a bit! [GIVES UP] Oh,
stick it anywhere.

[MARK APPROACHES. IAN
PROCEEDS TO HURRIEDLY LAY
OUT FOOD]

MARK: How's it going?

IAN: Great. I've got two
idiots helping me with the
decorations, my catering
assistant disappeared and on
top of that, look, I've ripped
my shirt on that ladder.

MARK: In other words you
ain't finished.

(Scene 1029/3 Continued)

IAN: No.

MARK: Look. It might have escaped your notice but people are beginning to arrive.

IAN: Oh thank you very much for pointing that out. Any chance of lending me a hand.

MARK: You gotta be joking me ain't ya? I gotta check on the music. Dot's particularly concerned that everything's just right. [TURNING TO GO] Oh and send us a bill for the shirt will ya. [TUGS IAN'S TORN SLEEVE] Wouldn't want to see you out of pocket.

[MARK HEADS OFF TO CHECK TAPES.

PICK UP JANINE APPROACHING IAN - SHE'S SLIGHTLY TIPSY]

IAN: Oh, where have you been?

JANINE: Oh, I got a question for you see. Well actually it's not so much my question, it's more Mel's but she don't want to speak to you, so it's me ... [HOLDS UP PIECE OF PAPER] Um... listen. Is this the right recipe for the punch?

(Scene 1029/3 Continued)

IAN: Have you been drinking?

JANINE: Well I've been sampling. Look, is that a yes or a no, Ian?

[IAN SNATCHES RECIPE,
BARELY GLANCES AT IT]

IAN: Dot specifically requested it was made to those exact ingredients.

JANINE: Are you positive?

IAN: Yes! Now stop mucking about and get out here.

[IAN SLAMS TRAY OF FOOD
DOWN ON TO TABLE.]

GO TO MELANIE HANDING
BILLY GLASS OF PUNCH]

MELANIE: That's two ten.

BILLY: [TENTATIVE] D'you er...
want one yourself?

MELANIE: [ICY] No thanks.

STEVE: [OOV] Is anyone serving round here then?

[BILLY AND MELANIE GLANCE
UP BAR. STEVE'S STANDING
THERE, WAITING FOR

(Scene 1029/3 Continued)

SERVICE.

TAKE MELANIE'S REACTION,
CHILLY.

GO TO MARK BY EXIT, HE
GLANCES BACK AT IAN, CALLS
OVER]

MARK: Ian ... ten minutes.

[MARK EXITS TO BRIDGE
STREET]

CUT TO:

SCENE 1029/4. BRIDGE STREET.
EXT. DAY LIGHT. 18.30/T.C.

LOT

[GO TO BARRY AND NATALIE ROUNDING CORNER FROM SQUARE. NATALIE IS CARRYING A PRESENT AND CARD. THEY HEAD TOWARDS VIC]

NATALIE: Imagine living here all your life. Eighty-five years. Waking up every morning, seeing the same street, same faces. Drive you crazy.

[NATALIE GLANCES AT BARRY WHO IS CLENCHING HIS BUTTOCKS, TENSING HIS MUSCLES, WALKING ON TIP TOE. HE'S NOT LISTENING]

Barry! What are you doing?

BARRY: [COVERS] Nothing.

NATALIE: Don't give me that, you've been acting weird ever since I got in. One minute you're alright, the next you're walking like a chicken.

BARRY: [LIES] It's just these new boxer shorts. That's all, they're a tad too tight. It just requires some skilful manoeuvring down below, that's all.

(Scene 1029/4 Continued)

NATALIE: Would you mind doing it in private? It's embarrassing.

[FRANK EMERGES FROM ALLEY, CARRYING BIN BAGS FULL OF RUBBISH]

BARRY: Frank, hello mate? How's it going mate, alright? How was the old er... Costa?

[FRANK'S TENSE, FEIGNS A CHEERY FAÇADE]

FRANK: It was great ... very relaxing. Very relaxing.

NATALIE: Oh you got a lovely tan.

FRANK: Er, lobster pink. It's my speciality. Er, what about Pat and Roy? Are they peeling yet?

BARRY: Ain't you seen 'em yet? I thought Dad would've been round to bore you with his holiday snaps.

FRANK: No, no not yet, no.

BARRY: Well take my advice. When you see him coming, run. There's only so many shots of Pat in a bikini you can take in one lifetime. You know what I mean?

(Scene 1029/4 Continued)

NATALIE: Oi. I thought she looked lovely.

BARRY: Alright.

FRANK: [ANXIOUS] I suppose they'll be along later will they?

BARRY: Yeah, guess so. Well, see you in there alright?

FRANK: Yeah, yeah. 'Bye.

[BARRY AND NATALIE ENTER VIC.]

OUT ON FRANK, WORRIED]

CUT TO:

SCENE 1029/5. MARTIN'S BEDROOM.
INT. DAY LIGHT. 18.45.

STAGE 1

[ANITA REMOVES A BLOOD PRESSURE MONITOR FROM ETHEL'S ARM. ETHEL'S LYING ON THE BED, HER MAKE UP DONE, WEARING A PARTY DRESS SEVERAL SIZES TO BIG FOR HER. DOT STANDS ATTENTIVELY BESIDE THE BED. PAULINE AND MARK NEAR DOOR.

ETHEL'S MAKING AN EFFORT TO MAINTAIN A CHEERY FRONT]

ETHEL: I've had this dress twenty five years. And it fits like a glove.

ANITA: It's very pretty. Now are you sure you're not in any discomfort?

ETHEL: Oh, I'm fine.

[ANITA CHECKS SWITCH MECHANISM ON MORPHINE DISPENSER - CLICKS COVER BACK INTO PLACE]

ANITA: Nausea, breathlessness?

ETHEL: You know, it's my birthday. I'm eighty five years old.

(Scene 1029/5 Continued)

ANITA: Well very good you look on it too.

ETHEL: Thank you. I've always been a bit of a looker you know. Unlike plain Jane here. I mean, we can't all be Miss World types, can we? Ain't that right Lou?

PAULINE: Pauline.

ETHEL: Is she here?

ANITA: I better go. I've given you enough morphine until tomorrow. If there's anything else you need just ask Mrs. Cotton and she'll call me.

[ANITA HEADS FOR DOOR]

ETHEL: 'Ere, we're having a party you know. We're going to play Jack Payne.

DOT: Well, it's only a small do. Nothing fancy.

[DOT SHUFFLES ANITA INTO HALL]

ETHEL: 'Bye.

[PAULINE FOLLOWS, A LITTLE

(Scene 1029/5 Continued)

PUZZLED BY DOT'S
BEHAVIOUR. THEY HEAD TO
FRONT DOOR]

PAULINE: [TO ANITA] Right. So how is she? I can't help thinking she's got a lot worse in the last couple of days.

[DOT IS EAGER FOR ANITA TO LEAVE, EDGES HER TOWARDS THE DOOR]

DOT: Oh no, she's just a bit tired, that's all.

ANITA: She seems to be weaker.

PAULINE: I'd say a lot weaker.

DOT: Well she didn't sleep very well last night, you know. She was mumbling a lot and then she was dropping off and starting up.

ANITA: You look a bit tired yourself.

DOT: [COVERS] Oh, I only need a couple of hours.

ANITA: You sure about that now?

DOT: No we're fine. I promise you.

(Scene 1029/5 Continued)

ANITA: Right. Well er, try and encourage her to get some rest during the day. If she deteriorates in any way, give us a call.

DOT: Yeah. Thank you, Anita.

ANITA: Okay.

DOT: Thank you very much for coming round.

[OUT ON DOT]

CUT TO:

SCENE 1029/6. VIC DOWNSTAIRS.
INT. DAY LIGHT. 19.00.

STAGE 1

[JIM SHOVES A PARTY HAT ON
TO IAN'S HEAD. THE PUB
IS NOW BRIMMING WITH
GUESTS]

JIM: 'Ere are, look. You'll be
the life and soul of the party.
Everyone'll be after you.

IAN: [SOUR] Yeah, thank you.

[IAN SPOTS LAURA
APPROACHING, PERKS UP]

Hiya.

LAURA: What's going on Ian?
A babysitter's just turned up
and told me I've got the night
off.

IAN: Yeah, that's right.
Look, I thought you might want
to come to the party. And join
in the fun.

LAURA: Oh right. And so you
just thought you'd book a
babysitter without asking me?

IAN: I thought it'd be a
surprise.

[A BEAT]

(Scene 1029/6 Continued)

If you don't wanna come you
don't have to. I just
...thought it'd be nice...

LAURA: No. I, I ... I'd
like to come.

[A MOMENT BETWEEN THEM]

I better get changed.

[LAURA HEADS FOR DOOR. IAN
WATCHES HER GO,
STRAIGHTENS HIS HAT. HE
SUDDENLY SPOTS JANINE BY
PUNCH BOWL. HIS FACE,
DARKENS.

PICK UP BARRY, BILLY,
ROBBIE DRINKING. BARRY
EYES FOOD]

BARRY: What we gotta do to
get some nosh round here, Ian?

BILLY: You gotta wait for
the birthday girl to turn up
ain't you?

[MELANIE FINDS STEVE
LOOKING AT HER]

MELANIE: Gonna order
something? Or are you gonna
stand there staring all night?

[STEVE HOLDS OUT GLASS]

(Scene 1029/6 Continued)

STEVE: Fill her up.

[A MOMENT BETWEEN THEM.
MELANIE TAKES GLASS]

CUT TO:

SCENE 1029/7. FOWLER'S BACK
YARD. EXT. DAY LIGHT. 19.08.

LOT

[MARK, PAULINE AND DOT ARE
EDGING ETHEL, IN
WHEELCHAIR THROUGH THE
BACK DOOR.

EVERY MINOR JOLT CAUSES
ETHEL DISCOMFORT. SHE
DOESN'T LET ON]

MARK: Here you come.

ETHEL: I say. Will there be
dancing?

DOT: Oh, dancing music,
whatever you want.

ETHEL: Will there be any
eligible bachelors?

DOT: Oh, oodles of 'em.
You'll have your pick of the
bunch. Won't she Pauline?

PAULINE: Yeah.

[SUDDENLY THE FRONT WHEEL
OF THE WHEEL CHAIR,
CATCHES AND JAMS. THE
WHEELCHAIR JERKS FORWARD]

DOT: Ooh er, what's
happened?!

(Scene 1029/7 Continued)

ETHEL: Well...

DOT: Oh Lord!

ETHEL: It's that wobbly wheel. I've told you about it before, Dot.

[MARK CROUCHES DOWN, EXAMINES WHEEL. JIM ENTERS THROUGH BACK GATE]

DOT: How's it going?

MARK: It's jammed.

PAULINE: Well she can't walk. Just you sit tight. We'll have you there in a minute.

[ETHEL TRIES TO STAND. MARK TRIES TO HELP, HOLDS HER GENTLY. ETHEL'S CLEARLY IN PAIN. SHE JUST CAN'T DO IT]

Ethel, don't!

ETHEL: Stop fussing will you. I mean, course I can cross that road. I've been doing it for eighty years.

DOT: Now, sit still. We'll get it sorted out.

(Scene 1029/7 Continued)

[ETHEL SLUMPS BACK DOWN,
FRUSTRATED]

ETHEL: Oh dear. I do want to
go to my party.

JIM: What, you having a bit
of trouble? What you need's a
bit of oil.

DOT: Oh, oil won't be no use,
you stupid old fool. It's
bust.

MARK: Grab hold Jim. We'll
carry her.

ETHEL: Oh yeah.

JIM: What with my back, you
must be joking.

DOT: Oh come on.

MARK: She only weighs about
five and a half stone.

[JIM SPOTS WINSTON AND
JAMIE, PASSING GATE,
HEADING FOR VIC]

JIM: Oi Jamie, Winston, 'ere
give us a hand will ya?

[WINSTON AND JAMIE ENTER
BACK YARD, LEND A HAND]

(Scene 1029/7 Continued)

PAULINE: Right you fellas,
just be careful with 'er.

MARK: Righty, come on lads,
on the count of three. One ...
two ... three.

[MARK, WINSTON AND JAMIE
HITCH THE WHEELCHAIR UP.]

THEY HEAD OUT INTO BRIDGE
STREET, HOLDING ETHEL
ALOFT]

JAMIE: Watch your step
Winston.

ETHEL: Ooh, isn't this
exciting. I feel like the
queen of Sheba.

[A CHEERING CROWD HAS
GATHERED AS ETHEL HEADS
TOWARDS THE VIC.]

[DOT SCURRIES TO VIC.,
ENTERS]

CUT TO:

SCENE 1029/8. VIC DOWNSTAIRS.
INT. DAY LIGHT. 19.10/T.C.

STAGE 1

[PICK UP DOT ENTERING, THE VIC'S PACKED.

TAKE DOT'S REACTION, TAKEN ABACK BY THE NOISE, SMOKE, CHATTER - THIS ISN'T WHAT SHE EXPECTED]

DOT: [SHE BANGS AN ASHTRAY ON THE BAR] Excuse me, excuse me. Can I have a bit of hush please. Now Ethel's coming, I...I want you to give her a really big welcome ...

[A PARTY POPPER GOES OFF AND EVERYBODY CHEERS]

DOT: [EXASPERATED AT THE ROWDY CROWD] ... remember she's eighty five ...

[DOOR OPENS.

JAMIE, WINSTON AND MARK ENTER, CARRYING ETHEL IN WHEELCHAIR. PAULINE AND JIM FOLLOW.

EVERYONE CHEERS.

TAKE ETHEL'S REACTION, DELIGHTED]

ETHEL: Well how lovely.

[EVERYONE SINGS 'HAPPY BIRTHDAY'. PICK UP REACTIONS, PEOPLE SINGING, ENDING WITH IAN FUSSING

(Scene 1029/8 Continued)

WITH FOOD - HE GIVES UP,
REALISES HE'S THE ONLY ONE
NOT SINGING, JOINS IN
SLIGHTLY MISSING THE
RHYTHM.

DOT LOOKS AT ETHEL, MAKING
SURE SHE'S ENJOYING
HERSELF]

ETHEL: Oh how loveley.

DOT: You alright Ethel?

[OUT ON ETHEL, TOUCHED]

CUT TO:

SCENE 1029/9. SQUARE. EXT. DAY
LIGHT. 19.30.

LOT

[LAURA PASSES, HURRYING
OVER TO VIC. SHE'S
WEARING HER NEW PARTY
DRESS FROM EP. 1027.

A MINI CAB ROUNDS THE
SQUARE AND DRAWS UP
OUTSIDE THE FOWLER'S'.

DR. LEGG EXITS CAB,
HOLDING A BIG BUNCH OF
FLOWERS]

DR LEGG: Keep the
change...okay.

[OUT ON DR. LEGG, PAYING
THE CABBY]

CUT TO:

SCENE 1029/10. VIC DOWNSTAIRS.
INT. DAY LIGHT. 19.31/T.C.

STAGE 1

[ETHEL IN WHEELCHAIR
HOLDING COURT.

BARRY, NATALIE, MARK,
ROBBIE, BEPPE CROWD AROUND
WEARING PARTY HATS,
HOLDING PRESENTS.

BARRY HANDS PRESENT TO
ETHEL]

BARRY: It's a set of erotic
sketches. It's me sitting
around the house in me
leiderhosen, that kind of thing
...

[NATALIE WHACKS BARRY]

NATALIE: Barry shut up.
Take any notice of him.

ETHEL: Oh don't you worry
dear. He's not my type. Bald
head, thick belly. I prefer
George Clooney.

NATALIE: Who wouldn't?

[TAKE BARRY'S REACTION
HURT.

GO TO DOT ROUNDING UP
SUPPORT FROM BILLY, JIM,
JANINE]

(Scene 1029/10 Continued)

DOT: Could you just pop over and tell Ethel that she looks nice.

JANINE: You mean lie?

DOT: She's an elderly woman. If you've got half the spark she's got when you're her age you'll be a very lucky girl.

[JANINE AND JIM SLOPE OFF.
BILLY REMAINS, WATCHING
MELANIE CLEARING TABLES]

And remember, you ain't here to have a good time. You're here for Ethel.

[MARK APPROACHES, BEARING
GLASSES OF PUNCH]

MARK: There you go Dot.
One glass of punch.

[DOT TAKES GLASS]

DOT: Ta.

[DOT TAKES A SLUG OF
PUNCH. SHE RECOILS - IT'S
VILE.]

DOT: Urgh, it's vile

MARK: You alright?

(Scene 1029/10 Continued)

DOT: What's in it?

[PICK UP LAURA APPROACHING IAN WHO IS HUNCHED OVER TRESTLE TABLE, STRUGGLING TO SORT OUT FOOD]

LAURA: Hello.

[IAN TURNS, SEES LAURA IN NEW DRESS]

IAN: Hi. You look nice.

LAURA: Thanks.

IAN: Er...kids okay?

LAURA: Fine. [MAKING AN EFFORT] Thanks for inviting me Ian.

[A MOMENT BETWEEN THEM]

BARRY: [CALLS OVER] Ian, we got to fight our way through this cling film or what?

[BARRY INDICATES CELLOPHANE COVERED TRAYS OF FOOD ETC.]

[IAN TURNS TO LAURA]

IAN: Look I really hate to ask this, is there any chance you can give me a hand?

(Scene 1029/10 Continued)

[TAKE LAURA'S REACTION,
PERTURBED.

GO TO MELANIE, PHIL AND
LISA. MELANIE SCOOPS UP
TOWER OF GLASSES, GESTURES
AT PACKED BAR]

MELANIE: This lot's gonna
drive me mad.

PHIL: Where's Mum and Frank?

MELANIE: Peggy's sick.
Frank's all over the place.
It's like working with a couple
of zombies.

PHIL: [TEASING] And what
about Steve, you sorted him out
yet?

MELANIE: Done and dusted.
From now on, I'm a man free
zone.

[OUT ON BILLY, WATCHING
MELANIE]

CUT TO:

SCENE 1029/11. VIC DOWNSTAIRS.
INT. DAY LIGHT. 19.33/T.C.

STAGE 1

[FRANK AND PEGGY IN BACK AREA]

FRANK: ...I'll pop down and change the barrel and I'll get straight back out there.

[PEGGY SIGHS, SHE'S LETTING EVERYONE DOWN.]

ROY ENTERS FROM BAR, GLASS OF PUNCH IN HAND, PARTY HAT ON]

PEGGY: Hello Roy. What you doing back here?

[TAKE FRANK'S REACTION, DISCONCERTED BY ROY'S PRESENCE]

ROY: Well Tracy told me you weren't feeling too good. So, eh, I thought I'd pop in and show you these.

[HOLDS UP PACK OF PHOTOGRAPHS]

PEGGY: What that then?

ROY: Well, they're the holiday snaps. Came this morning.

[FRANK LOOKS WORRIED.]

(Scene 1029/11 Continued)

ROY HANDS THE PHOTOS TO
PEGGY]

PEGGY: [TAKES THE PHOTOS FROM
ROY, EXCITED] Oh.

ROY: [TO PEGGY] There's a
cracker of you and Pat in
there.

PEGGY: Yeah?

FRANK: [TAKING THE PHOTOS
AWAY FROM PEGGY AND HANDS THEM
BACK TO ROY] With all due
respects Roy, we've got our
hands full with the party on
out there, know what I mean?

ROY: Oh yeah, sure, sure.
I just thought you'd be
interested that's all. You
know, re-live those special
moments.

PEGGY: Yeah well I think I'm
re-living 'em now. I must've
caught some tummy bug out
there.

ROY: Oh you and Pat both.

PEGGY: Yeah?

FRANK: Ain't she er... not
with you then?

(Scene 1029/11 Continued)

ROY: No, no she's back at
the house.

[ROY KNOCKS BACK HIS
PUNCH.
OUT ON FRANK,
DISAPPOINTED]

CUT TO:

SCENE 1029/12. FOWLER'S BACK
YARD. EXT. DAY LIGHT. 19.34.

LOT

[DR. LEGG KNOCKING AT
FOWLER'S BACK DOOR. NO
ANSWER. HE PEERS THROUGH
WINDOW TO EMPTY SITTING
ROOM.

HE EXITS THROUGH BACK GATE
TO BRIDGE STREET, PAUSES,
A LITTLE MYSTIFIED.

HE LOOKS AT VIC, AND SEES
THE PARTY REVELLERS
OUTSIDE AND REALISES]

CUT TO:

SCENE 1029/13. VIC DOWNSTAIRS.
INT. DAY LIGHT. 19.35/T.C.

STAGE 1

[DOT SHOWING HER GLASS OF
PUNCH TO IAN. HE'S
WATCHING LAURA]

DOT: 'Ere, Ian this stuff
ain't even drinkable.

[LAURA DOWNS GLASS OF
PUNCH. PICKS UP TRAYS OF
FOOD]

IAN: Well everyone else seems
to be enjoying it.

DOT: Look, I told you to
follow Ethel's instructions to
the letter.

[LAURA SQUEEZES PAST
CARRYING FOOD, SHOOTS AN
IRRITATED LOOK AT IAN]

This is the way her William
made it and that's the way she
wanted it today.

IAN: [HALF INTERESTED, STILL
LOOKING AT LAURA] Well who
wrote it down?

DOT: Ethel.

IAN: [TAKES RECIPE OUT OF HIS
POCKET] It's two thirds rum!

(Scene 1029/13 Continued)

You have more than one of those
you'll be under the table.

DOT: Oh ... my Lor' !

[THEY LOOK ACROSS BAR - A
ROOM FULL OF PUNTERS
GETTING GLEEFULLY PISSED.

GO TO DR. LEGG, ENTERING.
HE SURVEYS WITH HORROR,
THE CHAOTIC, DRUNKEN SCENE
- MUSIC BLASTING OUT,
PEOPLE PARTYING.

HE PEERS THROUGH CROWD,
SPOTS ETHEL.

GO TO ETHEL IN WHEELCHAIR.
MARK AND JIM BESIDE HER.
A PILE OF UNOPENED
PRESENTS BEHIND THEM]

ETHEL: ... these four walls
have seen a party or two in
it's day, oh my goodness. On
V.E. day we had a bit of a do.
My William took me outside,
having hoisted me up on his
shoulders, yes, and we
scratched our initials on the
wall.
They're still they're today if
you want to know.

JIM: I think they've been
painted over Ethel.

ETHEL: I could show you the
exact spot if you want.

[MARK AND JIM EXCHANGE
LOOKS. DR. LEGG EMERGES
FROM CROWD]

(Scene 1029/13 Continued)

DR LEGG: Hello Ethel
...here...

[HE HANDS OVER HER
FLOWERS]

ETHEL: Well, oh, look at
this... Dr Legg!

DR LEGG: Happy Birthday. [HE
KISSES HER]

ETHEL: Oh thank you.

DR LEGG: How you feeling?

ETHEL: [COVERS] I 've been
fine, Dot's been wonderful to
me.

[DOT APPROACHES, GLASS OF
ORANGE JUICE IN HAND.
SHE SEES DR. LEGG, STOPS
IN HER TRACKS]

DOT: [COVERS] Dr. Legg. I
didn't know you was coming.

DR LEGG: I wouldn't miss it
for the world Dot. What was
it? "Just a few friends round
for a cup of tea and a slice of
cake".

[EVERYONE LAUGHS]

(Scene 1029/13 Continued)

DOT: [UNEASY, SHE KNOWS HE DISAPPROVES] Yes, well we changed our minds. [TO ETHEL] Didn't we Ethel?

ETHEL: Yes we did.

DR LEGG: [TO DOT - HUSHED]
Can I have a word?

DOT: [TO ETHEL] I won't be long.

[DR. LEGG GUIDES DOT TO EXIT. PHIL APPROACHES]

MARK: I'll put these in water Ethel. [HE TAKES THE FLOWERS]

ETHEL: Oh that's kind of you.

[PHIL KNEELS TO EXAMINE WHEELCHAIR]

ETHEL: 'Ere what do you think you're doing down there?

PHIL: Just getting you roadworthy. Quick service, we'll have you skidding round the square in no time.

CUT TO:

SCENE 1029/14. BRIDGE STREET.
EXT. DAY LIGHT. 19.39/T.C.

LOT

[PICK UP DOT AND DR. LEGG
EXITING VIC]

DR LEGG: What do you think
you're playing at?

DOT: I don't know what you
mean?

DR LEGG: She's eighty five
years old. She's got cancer of
the lung and you're dragging
her out to some drunken party.

DOT: I ain't dragging her
nowhere.

DR LEGG: It's irresponsible.
You said it would be a quiet do
at home.

DOT: Yes well it wasn't what
she wanted. She wanted to have
a good time.

DR LEGG: She's dying.

DOT: Well she ain't dead yet
and until she is, I'm gonna
make sure that she has
everything she wants.

DR LEGG: Even if it's bad
for her?

(Scene 1029/14 Continued)

DOT: What d'ya mean, bad for her? What's gonna 'appen?

DR LEGG: She needs rest, she needs to be looked after.

DOT: Don't tell me what she needs Dr Legg. I'm the one what's up with her all night and every night. I'm the one that lies awake at night listening to her coughing, turns her, begs her to have a morsel of food. [SHE STOPS VERY UPSET]

DR LEGG: And you can't cope. Look at the state of you.

DOT: Oh what am I supposed to do? Palm her off on an 'ospice.

DR LEGG: It's not like that and you know it.

DOT: Isn't it? I promised her that she should stay with me.

DR LEGG: She can, you need a few days to recover. She can go in for respite care, and be out again on Tuesday.

DOT: Yeah, and what if she isn't? What if she never comes out?

(Scene 1029/14 Continued)

DR LEGG: That's a risk we have to take.

DOT: "We", what about her?

[A BEAT]

DR LEGG: Have you, at least, discussed it? Does she know about the hospice?

DOT: I haven't had time.

DR LEGG: You promised me you would discuss...

DOT: [ANGRY] Well I ain't.

DR LEGG: Fine, then I will.

[DR. LEGG TURNS TO GO BACK INTO VIC]

DOT: [PLEADING] Oh no Dr Legg, no don't ruin her day, let her have her party. Let her enjoy it.

DR LEGG: Dot this has to be sorted out tonight.

DOT: Yeah well after the party. I'll tell her then. I promise.

(Scene 1029/14 Continued)

[A BEAT]

DR LEGG: [RELUCTANT] Alright.

I'll come round in the morning. If she consents we'll talk to the nurse and she can arrange for an ambulance to call in the afternoon.

DOT: Tomorrow?!

DR LEGG: That's right.

[PAULINE EXITS VIC., LOOKS AT DOT. SHE'S CLEARLY UPSET]

PAULINE: Right, what's going on out here?

DOT: Nothing. Everything's fine. You go back inside.

PAULINE: Don't give me that
...

DOT: [SHOUTING AT PAULINE]
Pauline, just for once will you mind your own business.

[DOT HEADS BACK INTO VIC.
PAULINE TURNS TO DR. LEGG]

PAULINE: Right, Dr Legg are you going to tell me what's going on or do I have to go back in there and drag it out

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(Scene 1029/14 Continued)

of her?

[OUT ON DR. LEGG]

CUT TO:

SCENE 1029/15. VIC DOWNSTAIRS.
INT. DAY LIGHT. 19.42/T.C.

STAGE 1

[PICK UP DOT PUSHING
THROUGH CROWD - SHE'S IN A
STATE. SHE PAUSES, SPOTS
ETHEL, TALKING TO JAMIE
AND SONIA.

DOT CAN'T BEAR IT, HEADS
OFF TO TOILETS, PASSING
MARK.

GO TO MELANIE CLEARING
GLASSES. SHE WATCHES
STEVE HEADING FOR EXIT.

HE GLANCES OVER. A
MOMENT. HE EXITS. TAKE
MELANIE'S REACTION, A
LITTLE DISAPPOINTED.

JAMIE AND SONIA ARE
SITTING WITH ETHEL. JAMIE
GIVES ETHEL A PRESENT]

ETHEL: Is this for me?

JAMIE: Happy Birthday Ethel.

ETHEL: Isn't it heavy, I'll
open it later if you don't
mind.

JAMIE: Okay. [HE TAKES THE
PRESENT AWAY]

ETHEL: He's a good boy that
one. Hold on to him.

(Scene 1029/15 Continued)

SONIA: Yeah, I'll do my best.

ETHEL: I've got a funny feeling about you two you know, you're going to go the distance.

SONIA: [CHUFFED] Do you think so?

ETHEL: Oh yes, I can tell. I've got the gift you know.

[GO TO PAULINE PUSHING THROUGH CROWD - SHE'S UPSET. SHE GLANCES AROUND, SEES MARK]

PAULINE: Mark ... do you know where Dot is?

MARK: Oh, I don't know, she was here a minute ago.

[GO TO ETHEL, SONIA AND JAMIE. SONIA GETS UP TO GO]

ETHEL: [PULLING SONIA BACK DOWN] Before you go. I've got something to give you ...

[ETHEL EXTRACTS SMALL BOX [SEEN IN SC. 1], HANDS IT TO SONIA]

Now look here, my William gave me this, and I want you to have it.

(Scene 1029/15 Continued)

[SONIA STARTS TO OPEN IT]

SONIA: But...

ETHEL: Now, don't open it now.

SONIA: Are you sure about this Ethel?

ETHEL: Yes, you see I've never had any children and I've got nobody else to give it to and like you to have it.

[SONIA GIVES ETHEL A PECK]

SONIA: Ooh thank you Ethel. That's lovely...listen shall I come round tomorrow and see you?

ETHEL: Yes.

SONIA: Yeah?

ETHEL: That would be very nice.

SONIA: Happy Birthday.

JAMIE: Happy Birthday Ethel.
[He gives her a peck]

ETHEL: Thank you dear, thank you.

(Scene 1029/15 Continued)

SONIA: Bye.

ETHEL: Bye.

[SONIA AND JAMIE HEAD OFF.

ETHEL SITS BACK, WATCHES
THE FRENETIC ACTIVITIES OF
THE PUB.

ETHEL'S POV: PEOPLE
DRINKING, CHATTING,
FLIRTING.

SHE SITS ALONE, BREATHING
HEAVILY. SUDDENLY A LOOK
OF CONFUSION COMES OVER
HER FACE, SHE LOOKS DOWN
AT HER HANDS, FEELS FOR
HER RING, GLANCES AROUND,
LOST.

DR. LEGG APPEARS THROUGH
THE CROWD. SHE DOESN'T
REGISTER HIM]

DR LEGG: Ethel ...Ethel?

[SHE LOOKS UP.

OUT ON ETHEL - SHE HAS NO
IDEA WHO HE IS]

CUT TO:

SCENE 1029/16. VIC LADIES
TOILETS. INT. NIGHT.
19.44/T.C.

STAGE 1

[DOT STANDING BY SINKS
DABBING HER EYES.
PAULINE ENTERS.

A MOMENT, DOT TURNS]

DOT: He's told you then.

PAULINE: [NODS - UPSET]
That's she's probably not got
more than a week to live, she
could go tomorrow that the
cancer has spread to her brain.

[A BEAT]

Why didn't you say something?

DOT: She don't want no-one
feeling sorry for her.

PAULINE: Dot, she's living
in my house. She's dying in
my house and you didn't have
the decency to tell me.

DOT: I promised Ethel I
wouldn't tell no one. And I
want you to do the same.

PAULINE: Do you not realise
how foolish you've been,
struggling to cope with a dying
woman on your own, taking her
out and about, E20, in 'ere...

(Scene 1029/16 Continued)

DOT: She's happy Pauline.

PAULINE: Do you not think a little bit of peace and quiet would've been more suitable?

DOT: She don't want to go in no 'ospice. She wants to be at home with her friends and her family.

PAULINE: She has no family Dot and this hasn't been her home for years.

DOT: Well that ain't what she feels she wants to be here and she wants me to look after her.

PAULINE: And what about you?

DOT: Don't matter about me.

PAULINE: Yes it does. She should be in a hospice, at least for a few days.

DOT: Oh, is that what he said?

PAULINE: Dr Legg has looked after Ethel for a long time. I think he knows what's best for her.

DOT: Oh he knows, you know,

(Scene 1029/16 Continued)

what about Ethel? What about
Ethel, what she wants? In the
end, ain't it up to her?

[DOT WALKS OUT OF THE
LADIES.

OUT ON PAULINE]

CUT TO:

SCENE 1029/17. VIC DOWNSTAIRS.
INT. NIGHT. 19.46.

STAGE 1

[DR. LEGG CROUCHING BY
ETHEL, HOLDING GLASS OF
WATER. MARK STANDING
BEHIND THEM]

DR LEGG: [HANDING HER A DRINK]
There you are Ethel.

ETHEL: I'm not feeling quite
myself today.

DR LEGG: Would you like to go
home?

ETHEL: Where's Dot?

DR LEGG: [UNEASY] I don't
know.

[GO TO DOT AND PAULINE,
EMERGING FROM TOILETS.

IAN PASSES, HEADING FOR
FOOD TABLE]

IAN: Oh, oh look, sorry I
ain't been over to see Ethel
yet Dot. I just been rushed
off my feet with the food.

PAULINE: Yeah any excuse.

IAN: No Auntie Pauline, I've
done this almost single

(Scene 1029/17 Continued)

handedly.

[LAURA, HARRASSED, PASSES
WITH LAST TRAY OF FOOD,
OVERHEARS]

DOT: I'll tell her you'll be
over later to see her Ian.

[DOT AND PAULINE HEAD OFF,
EAGER TO GET BACK TO
ETHEL. IAN CALLS AFTER]

IAN: I'll bring her a nice
plate of food yeah?

[IAN TURNS, SPOTS LAURA]

LAURA: Right, that's it, I've
finished.

[SHE PUSHES A PLATE OF
FOOD INTO HIS HANDS, AND
DOWNS HER DRINK]

IAN: Oh right, thanks, look I
don't think I couldn't have
managed without you Laura.

LAURA: [CURT] Don't mention
it.

[LAURA DOWNS DRINK, HEADS
OFF .

TAKE IAN'S REACTION,
UNSETTLED.

PICK UP DOT AND PAULINE

(Scene 1029/17 Continued)

APPROACHING ETHEL]

DR LEGG: Here she is.

[DOT CROUCHES NEXT TO
ETHEL]

DOT: How you feeling?

ETHEL: [WHISPERS] Not so good.
I had a funny turn.

DOT: Let's go home, shall we?

[ETHEL NODS, GLANCES AT
PAULINE WHO IS STARING AT
ETHEL]

ETHEL: What are you looking
like that for old sourpuss.
[TO DOT] Looks like a wet
weekend.

PAULINE: [COVERS] Sorry, I'm
just a bit tired.

ETHEL: [TO DOT] You know her
trouble. She wants a new man
in between her sheets.

[TAKE PAULINE'S REACTION,
EMBARRASSED .

DOT: Come on.

MARK: I'll bring the presents

(Scene 1029/17 Continued)

over.

[PAULINE, DR. LEGG AND
MARK COLLECT PILES OF
PRESENTS

DOT TAKES CONTROL OF THE
WHEELCHAIR, GUIDES IT
TOWARDS THE EXIT]

DOT: Mind out...

PAULINE: I'll get her shawl
and...

[A RIPPLE OF GOOD-BYES AND
HAPPY BIRTHDAY'S SPREADS
ACROSS THE ROOM, UNTIL
EVERYONE IS GIVING ETHEL A
SEND OFF.

ETHEL: Goodbye everybody.

ETHEL GIVES A WAVE. DOT
PUSHES HER OUT OF THE VIC.
INTO THE SQUARE]

CUT TO:

SCENE 1029/18. BRIDGE
STREET/SQUARE. EXT. NIGHT.
19.48/T.C.

LOT

[PICK UP DOT AND ETHEL
EXITING VIC]

DOT: [SHE MANOUEVERS THE
WHEELCHAIR DOWN THE STEP] Hold
on...there we go, whoops.

[DOT STARTS TO HEAD
HOME]

ETHEL: I say Dot.

DOT: Yeah?

ETHEL: Wait a sec. 'Ere.

DOT: What?

ETHEL: Listen.

DOT: Hmm.

ETHEL: I want you to go along
and look at that wall and then
tell me what you can see.

ETHEL: [IMPATIENT] Go on.

DOT: Well we'll have to have
the brakes on. Won't we.
Don't wanna roll away.

(Scene 1029/18 Continued)

[DOT GOES TO WALL, LOOKS]

ETHEL: More to the right...that's it? And now above that sign.

DOT: What am I looking for?

ETHEL: A little heart with two names inside. E.S. and W.S.

[DOT STARES AT WALL OF VIC - NOT A MARK ON IT]

Is it there?

[DOT LOOKS AT ETHEL - A BEAT]

DOT: [LIES] Yes.

ETHEL: [DELIGHTED] I knew it.

CUT TO:

SCENE 1029/20. VIC DOWNSTAIRS.
INT. NIGHT. 19.50/T.C.

STAGE 1

[SONIA AND JAMIE. SONIA'S
LOOKING AT ETHEL'S RING
BOX]

SONIA: I wanna be like her
when I'm eighty five.

JAMIE: Not me. I want to
live fast and die young.

SONIA: Oh yeah, Walford's
answer to James Dean are ya?

JAMIE: [SMILES] Something
like that.

[SONIA OPENS BOX, PAUSES,
SHOCKED]

What is it? Sonia?

[SONIA TAKES OUT ETHEL'S
WEDDING RING]

SONIA: It's her ring.
[TOUCHED] Jamie she's given me
her wedding ring.

[GO TO IAN WITH A PLATE OF
FOOD, LOOKING FOR ETHEL]

IAN: Where's Ethel?

(Scene 1029/20 Continued)

JIM: Well she's gone mate.

IAN: What?

[OUT ON IAN STANDING ALONE
WITH A PLATE OF FOOD]

CUT TO:

SCENE 1029/23. VIC DOWNSTAIRS.
INT. NIGHT. 20.13.

STAGE 1

[BACK AREA. FRANK BY
BACK DOOR. JANINE
STANDING BESIDE HIM - SHE
LOOKS TERRIBLE]

JANINE: You don't care. I
could be dying and you'd still
walk out that door.

FRANK: You're sixteen years
old and you've been drinking,
what do you expect. Now get up
them stairs. I'll be five
minutes.

JANINE: I hate you.

FRANK: Oh, what's new, what's
new?

[JANINE STAGGERS UPSTAIRS.
FRANK OPENS DOOR TO
ALLEY.]

PEGGY APPEARS AT TOP OF
STAIRS]

PEGGY: Er Frank.

FRANK: [CAUGHT] Oh, yes
sweetheart.

PEGGY: Where are you going?

(Scene 1029/23 Continued)

FRANK: [GUILTY] Oh I just thought I'd just pop out for a minute.

[PEGGY DESCENDS STAIRS]

PEGGY: But we're packed to the gills in there.

FRANK: [COVERS] Oh I know that, I know but I just thought I'd just go round see Terry you know. I feel sorry for the old boy, stuck there on his own, missing the party. Thought I'd cheer him up a bit you know.

PEGGY: Frank Butcher, you're a very sweet man.

[PEGGY GIVES HIM A PECK]

Tell you what. I'll come with you.

FRANK: [THINKING FAST] No, no, no. No need for that darling you stay here. Erm...you know...this one's better just man to man.

PEGGY: A woman's touch is sometimes all that's needed.

FRANK: Yeah, yeah, but not with Terry. Trust me.

(Scene 1029/23 Continued)

[SOUND OF JANINE BEING
SICK UPSTAIRS]

Er...besides I think your
bedside manner is required
elsewhere. [GIVES HER A PECK] I
won't be long.

[FRANK EXITS .

PEGGY LOOKS UPSTAIRS ,
MIFFED]

CUT TO:

SCENE 1029/24. VIC DOWNSTAIRS.
INT. NIGHT. 20.14/T.C.

STAGE 1

[A DRUNKEN LAURA LEANS
ACROSS BAR, HOLDING UP
EMPTY GLASS]

LAURA: Got any more of that
punch?

MELANIE: No, sorry.

[IAN APPROACHES]

IAN: Don't you think you
should take it easy?

LAURA: [DRUNK AND
CONFRONTATIONAL] You telling
me what to drink now?

IAN: No not at all.

LAURA: Only it is my night
off. Or do you want me to help
clear up as well.

IAN: [HUSHED] Laura, look
I've said I'm sorry. Now can
we put a stop to this.

[IAN DRAWS LAURA AWAY FROM
THE BAR]

LAURA: Stop what?

(Scene 1029/24 Continued)

IAN: This, you and me.

LAURA: I thought we already had.

IAN: Oh I get it. I don't invite you to a dance so now you're gonna blank me.

LAURA: I can hardly blank you, you're my boss.

IAN: Well you're doing a pretty good job of it.

LAURA: What do you want Ian? Do you want me just to lie back and be grateful everytime you coming knocking at my door?

IAN: No.

LAURA: Sure about that? Sure you don't want to pop back for a quick one right now?

[IAN LOOKS AROUND, UNCOMFORTABLE. PEOPLE GLANCING OVER, MARK AND PAULINE AMONG THEM]

IAN: [TRYING TO KEEP HER QUIET] Look let's talk about this later alright?

LAURA: [LOUDLY] No let's talk about it now. Or are you

(Scene 1029/24 Continued)

ashamed to admit that you've
been sleeping with me.

[PEOPLE LOOKING. TITTERS
FROM CROWD. IAN TRIES TO
GRAB LAURA]

Get off me.

[IAN FOLLOWS LAURA OUTSIDE
TO THE SQUARE]

CUT TO:

SCENE 1029/25. SQUARE. EXT.
NIGHT. 20.17/T.C.

LOT

[PICK UP IAN AND LAURA OUT
OF VIC]

IAN: What do you think you're
doing?

LAURA: I'm not taking it any
more. Do you understand?

IAN: Look I've said I'm sorry
what more do you want?

LAURA: That's not good
enough.

IAN: Then what?

LAURA: What do you want?

IAN: I just want things to
carry on the way they are.

LAURA: Oh just to keep me on
the side for a quick fumble?

IAN: No!

LAURA: Then what? Do you
want to go out with me? Do
you want to ask me out on a
date? [NO RESPONSE] I didn't
think so.

(Scene 1029/25 Continued)

[LAURA TURNS TO GO]

IAN: Look Laura wait...

LAURA: If you could just be honest. If you could just for once say how you felt.

IAN: I like you.

LAURA: [SCOFFING] You like me?

IAN: Well isn't that enough?

LAURA: Goodnight Ian.

[SHE TURNS TO GO]

IAN: Hold on Laura ...
Please?

LAURA: You're a sad, scared little man and I don't want nothing to do with ya.

[LAURA HEADS OFF ACROSS THE SQUARE.

OUT ON IAN, WATCHING HER GO]

CUT TO:

SCENE 1029/26. PAT & ROY'S.
INT. NIGHT. 20.19.

STAGE 1

[CLOSE ON PAT, SAT IN THE
DARKENED SITTING ROOM,
WATCHING TELLY IN HER
DRESSING GOWN.

SOUND OF BACK DOOR
SHUTTING]

PAT: Roy? [A BEAT] There's
some dinner in the oven if you
fancy it? [TO HERSELF]
Probably ruined by now.

[SHE TURNS: FRANK'S
STANDING IN THE DOORWAY]

FRANK: Hello Babe.

[OUT ON PAT, SUPRISED]

CUT TO:

SCENE 1029/27. MARTIN'S
BEDROOM. INT. NIGHT. 20.21.

STAGE 1

[ETHEL IN BED, DOT LEANING
OVER HER]

DOT: How'd you fancy a nice
cup of cocoa? I'll put a drop
of brandy in it.

[DOT TUCKS ETHEL IN]

ETHEL: My mother used to
make me hot chocolate.

DOT: Ooh.

ETHEL: Yes. She used to tuck
me in and then she'd bring me
this hot chocolate. Oh, until
the war of course ... then I
had to make do ...

DOT: Ah well we all did I
never even saw my mother.

ETHEL: Oh I saw mine and my
father. They stuck to me like
lychees...

[DOT'S ABOUT TO CORRECT
HER, DOESN'T]

DOT: Ne' mind.

(Scene 1029/27 Continued)

ETHEL: At night ... down the shelters, they wouldn't let a man come near me. They kept an eye out alright. Then one day ... I come home from work. And that house was flat as flat as a pancake. They were gone. Still got a bit of that shrapnel what did it ...

DOT: I know.

[ETHEL INDICATES TIN BOX
BESIDE BED]

ETHEL: 'Ere, pass me that box.

[DOT PASSES BOX, ETHEL
RUMMAGES, INDICATES
SHRAPNEL]

There ... ugly looking thing. That's sixty years old. I picked it out the rubble when I was a girl, look at me now. I've outlived them all. Mum, and my...Dad ... my brother.

DOT: Ethel...I got something to tell ya.

ETHEL: [NOT LISTENING] You're the only one left.

ETHEL: You're the only one

(Scene 1029/27 Continued)

left.

DOT: I was talking to Dr. Legg tonight. [BLURTNG IT OUT] He thinks you should go into an 'ospice.

[ETHEL'S BROUGHT UP SHORT]

ETHEL: An 'ospice?

DOT: Just for a few days. I been there, it's ever so nice
...

ETHEL: Yes but... I'm happy here.

DOT: Yes I'm happy to have you, but... [ASHAMED] ... I can't cope.

ETHEL: But you told me I could stay.

DOT: Well its just for a few days.

ETHEL: Supposing I haven't got a few days left.

DOT: Oh don't talk like that.

ETHEL: It's true. Come Sunday, I'll be as daft as a cabbage. [BEAT] Or dead.

(Scene 1029/27 Continued)

DOT: Oh Ethel, you're very ill. I'd do anything to help you but I can't. Not on me own.

ETHEL: You can.

DOT: How?

ETHEL: Them pills.

[TAKE DOT'S REACTION]

DOT: No.

ETHEL: Oh...

[DOT MAKES HER SELF BUSY AND PUTS ETHEL'S TIN AWAY]

DOT: No. No, if that's how you feel I'll keep you here. We could manage somehow.

[ETHEL SITS UP]

ETHEL: But don't you understand Dot. I don't want to manage ...

[ETHEL PAUSES, SHE HOLDS HER CHEST IN PAIN FINDING IT DIFFICULT TO BREATHE]

... I'm ready now Dot.

(Scene 1029/27 Continued)

DOT: Now you're to stop talking like this. It's wrong.

ETHEL: Wrong? To keep someone in a bed like this. Getting weaker every day.

DOT: It ain't like that.

ETHEL: What happens when I don't recognise you? What happens when you come through that door and Ethel Skinner isn't here. Just some lump in a chair.

DOT: I can't listen to this.

ETHEL: But it happened earlier Dot. One minute I was talking to Sonia, and the next ... [FRIGHTENED] ... I didn't even know my name.

[A BEAT]

You can help me Dot.

DOT: Look you're tired, you don't know what you're saying. Why don't you have a little rest. I'll bring you that cup of cocoa and a nice slice of cake.

[ETHEL JUST LOOKS AT HER.
DOT STANDS, HEADS TO DOOR]

(Scene 1029/27 Continued)

I won't be a minute.

[DOT EXITS. SHE HEADS
DOWN HALL, FUMBLES WITH A
CIGARETTE, LIGHTS IT.

SHE LOOKS BACK AT ETHEL'S
DOOR, NOT KNOWING WHAT TO
DO.

OUT ON DOT, VERGE OF
TEARS]

CUT TO:

SCENE 1029/28. PAT & ROY'S.
INT. NIGHT. 20.24.

STAGE 1

[PAT EXITS LOUNGE TO HALL.
FRANK FOLLOWS. SHE GOES
TO FRONT DOOR]

PAT: Are you stark raving
mad? Roy could be back any
second!

FRANK: Pat, why have you
been avoiding me?

PAT: What makes you think
I'm avoiding you? I'm ill.

FRANK: Well you don't look
ill. As a matter of fact you
look downright gorgeous.

PAT: Don't be ridiculous.

FRANK: I...I mean it.

PAT: Oh yes, of course you
do. I'm a right old glamour
queen ain't I?

[FRANK MOVES TOWARDS HER]

FRANK: You are to me. You
always have been.

PAT: Frank, nothing can
happen. I'm a married woman.

(Scene 1029/28 Continued)

FRANK: Then why are you skulking round here? I mean, why have you been hiding all week?

PAT: Seeing you is just gonna make matters worse.

FRANK: For crying out loud baby, I...I live twenty yards away from you.

PAT: With Peggy. You live with Peggy.

FRANK: Didn't stop you last week did it?

[PAT SLAPS HIM]

I'm sorry Pat.

PAT: Get out.

FRANK: I'm sorry Pat. I'm, so sorry...

PAT: You never change do you. I must have been mad, to have got carried away like that.

FRANK: Yes, yes but you did, you did, you see that...that

(Scene 1029/28 Continued)

means there's...there's something missing for both of us.

PAT: No, it means we were drunk.

FRANK: Pat, please I love you. I've always loved you.

PAT: What about Peggy?

FRANK: I love you.

PAT: [WITH DIFFICULTY] Frank nothing's gonna happen. Now please, if you care about me at all, you'll just go.

[FRANK TAKES PAT'S HAND]

FRANK: Darling, look at me please.

[HE TENDERLY PUTS HIS HAND ON HER FACE]

I've loved you for forty years.
This is our last chance here
you know. Don't blow it.

[A MOMENT BETWEEN THEM -
PAT PULLS AWAYS AND PULLS
OPEN DOOR]

PAT: Please Frank ...
Please.

(Scene 1029/28 Continued)

[A MOMENT, THEN FRANK
TURNS AND EXITS.

PAT SHUTS THE DOOR AND
CATCHES HER BREATH]

CUT TO:

SCENE 1029/30. MARTIN'S
BEDROOM. INT. NIGHT.
20.30/T.C.

STAGE 1

[PICK UP DOT ENTERING HALL, CARRYING CAKE WITH LIGHTED CANDLES. SHE APPROACHES ETHEL'S DOOR, HESITATES, ENTERS.

PICK UP DOT ENTERING WITH CAKE.

ETHEL'S LYING IN BED.
DOT TURNS OFF THE LIGHT,
CROSSES THE DARKENED ROOM]

DOT: I was gonna put 85 candles on your cake but I got in a bit a tizz and I lost 'em so, you'll have to make do with fifteen.

ETHEL: I'm not 85 you know Dot?

DOT: No?

ETHEL: No, I'm, 86.

DOT: Oh.

ETHEL: You see, I...I lied about my age. I always have done. I lied about my birthday as well.

DOT: Yes well that don't matter now. Come on, up you get. [SHE HELPS ETHEL TO SIT UP]

(Scene 1029/30 Continued)

Right, now, blow your candles out.

[ETHEL STRUGGLES]

Go on blow.

[ETHEL STRUGGLES TO BLOW THEM OUT. SHE CAN'T.]

DOT BLOWS - HALF THE CANDLES GO OUT.

SHE'S CLEARLY EXHAUSTED]

ETHEL: How long have I known you Dot, eh? Seventy odd years ... and we been friends all that time.

DOT: Well that ain't true. When I was a girl you wouldn't even talk to me. You thought I was a fool. You still do.

ETHEL: We've had some times though ... you, me. And I've never said it but, I'm very fond of you.

DOT: Yeah, I am of you.

ETHEL: I've had such a lovely life ... and a perfect day ... Why spoil it? I don't want to wait ... I'm ready now.

DOT: Ethel, it's wrong.

(Scene 1029/30 Continued)

ETHEL: How can it be wrong
to help a friend?

DOT: It ain't up to you to
decide when or how.

ETHEL: Who's it up to then?

DOT: Oh we don't choose how
we come into this life and we
can't choose how we leave.
That's how it's meant to be.

ETHEL: Is it? What if I
don't believe that?

DOT: Ethel I've spent my
whole life, living a certain
way, I can't change now.

ETHEL: Well I know Dot... I
don't want you to ... but this
isn't your life, it's my life.

[A BEAT]

And I want to choose ...

[NO RESPONSE - ETHEL
STRAINS TO LEAN FORWARD]

In a few days, a week ... I
won't be able to move. I
won't be able to speak. This
could be my last chance.

(Scene 1029/30 Continued)

DOT: How am I gonna live with myself?

ETHEL: You'd be doing the right thing ... I mean...I don't want to ask you. I never have, but, help me Dot.

[A BEAT]

Help me Dot before it's too late.

DOT: Is this... is this really what you want?

ETHEL: [WITH ABSOLUTE CONVICTION] Yes.

[A MOMENT, THEN DOT STANDS, WALKS ACROSS THE CANDLELIT ROOM TO THE CHEST OF DRAWERS.

SHE OPENS A DRAWER, REACHES UNDER CLOTHING, PULLS OUT BAG OF PILLS.

SHE LOOKS AT PILLS, WALKS BACK TO BED.

DOT MOVES GLASS OF WATER NEARER TO ETHEL AND TIPS THE BAG OF PILLS OUT ONTO THE TABLE.

DOT HELPS ETHEL SIT UP AND PULLS HER CLOSE]

DOT: I only want you to be happy.

(Scene 1029/30 Continued)

ETHEL: I am. [SHE HUGS DOT]
Don't cry, ooh that's silly.
Never mind.

[DOT'S CONVULSED IN SILENT TEARS]

'Ere.

[DOT LOOKS AT HER, ETHEL STILL WITH HER ARM AROUND HER]

You know who you are? You're the best friend I ever had.

[A MOMENT BETWEEN THEM.

THEY HOLD EACH OTHER.

OUT ON DOT AND ETHEL - TWO FIGURES, CLUTCHED TOGETHER IN THE CANDLELIT ROOM]

FADE OUT