

MR LOVERMAN

EPISODE 4

by
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Based on the novel by Bernardine Evaristo

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F A B L E
P I C T U R E S



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Sometimes moving backwards is moving forwards.

-Mehmet Murat Ildan

OVER BLACK.

Groans. Low but intense. And only growing more so as we:

1 **INT. REUBEN'S FLAT - NIGHT - 1993**

1

REVEAL A WOMAN'S BARE BACK. Black. 40s. Glistening with sweat as she rocks back and forth, building up a steady rhythm. Commanding total control. Over whom, we don't see.

Close on her face as she builds up momentum. It may take us a second or two to realise who she is... **CARMEL**. Only unlike we've ever seen her before. **SENSUAL**. **ENLIVENED**. Her eyes closing, within touching distance now of the promised land.

And as her groans become louder and deeper, we focus on a bead of sweat that rolls slowly down her face and falls in majestic SLO-MO towards the bed sheets:

SPLASH!

An almighty, contorted groan of ecstasy erupts from Carmel.

SUPER TITLE: **MR LOVERMAN**

1A **INT. QUEEN ELEANOR PUB - LONDON - DAY - 1993**

1A

Carmel alone at the bar sobbing - tears and mucous streaming. Her work colleague **JOAN** joins Carmel in silent camaraderie. She rolls puts an arm around her.

2 **INT. QUEEN ELEANOR PUB - LONDON - DAY - 1993**

2

Carmel comforted by Joan and two more tipsy work colleagues come friends, **THERESA** and **MUMTAZ** - naughty, quirky and nice.

N.B. In all of the following, CARMEL'S internal voice is indicated in ITALICS, thoughts spoken aloud in REGULAR type.

JOAN

Carm, did you think we didn't know?

THERESA

We've been waiting and waiting for you to open up.

MUMTAZ

Your so-called husband don't deserve you, Carm. He really don't.

JOAN

Staying out at night to screw them
trampy slags when he has someone
like you at home! What a cu-

CARMEL

Come on. Look at me. I'm a frump.
*Um-hm. Most sensible thing you've
said all afternoon.*

MUMTAZ

Girl, hush. You're a very
attractive woman!

JOAN

You know you can get it.

THERESA

Who could have her pick of men!

CARMEL (V.O.)

*Pay her no mind, that's the fourth
glass of Chardonnay talkin'. Yeah?*

Ad-libbed reassurances - "Without doubt" & "Absolutely" as Carmel accepts a tissue from Joan, who is poured into a black sheath dress designed for career women with style.

THERESA

One that treats you like the queen
you are.

JOAN

But, listen, you must stop wearing
clothes two sizes too big and put
on some lippy, love. Okay?!

MUMTAZ

You know we love you.

THERESA

(making a claw gesture)
Sharon Stone eat your heart out.

Theresa spreads her legs a la 'Basic Instinct'. Carmel laughs, despite herself. She copies, spreading her legs too.

Joan lifts her finger in the air and makes a sizzle sound as if she's touching something hot.

3

INT. HACKNEY COUNCIL - HOUSING DEPARTMENT - DAY - 1993

3

Carmel, at her desk, looking like a completely new woman, wearing make-up, hair no longer scraped back in a bun but relaxed and coiffed, donning an outfit Oprah would be proud of. She sits upright, shoulders back, checking a report. In the adjacent office, JOAN, MUMTAZ and THERESA are working at their respective desks. Carmel squirms slightly, adjusting her unusually tight skirt as **REUBEN DEMPSEY**, 36, divorced, hairy bear of a man, saddles up.

REUBEN

Fancy a sticky finger?

CARMEL

Excuse me?

REUBEN

Sticky finger? They're home-made.
And pretty good too, even if I do
say so myself.

Carmel looks down at the box of sticky goodness he wafts
under her nose, tempting her greatly.

REUBEN (CONT'D)
Go on. Treat yourself.

She reluctantly picks one out, bites into it. It is good.

REUBEN (CONT'D)
What did I tell you?!

CARMEL
(with a mouthful)
They all as cocksure as you over in
Town Planning, Mr Reuben Dempsey?

He smiles and shrugs.

REUBEN
Another?

CARMEL
(resisting the urge)
Better not. A moment on the lips...

He stares at her, still tempting her with his treats.

REUBEN
I can think of worse places to
spend a lifetime.

She stares at him. A moment passing between them.

CARMEL (V.O.)
*Girl, is this leftie loudmouth
really trying to flirt with you?*

Carmel nods gently...

CARMEL
Yeah... Why not?!

...And delves back into the box.

4

INT. QUEEN ELEANOR PUB - LONDON - NIGHT - 1993

4

Carmel, a new stylish hairstyle and even more stylish suit, is in the middle of a heated debate with Reuben, hair scruffy, as Joan, Mumtaz and Theresa watch on.

REUBEN
(incredulous)
Admire her?

CARMEL
Um-hm. I do, in a funny way.

REUBEN
Thatcher the Milk Snatcher?

CARMEL

Not her policies. But, you know, as a woman in power who gave those public school toffs in Cabinet what for sorta-type-thing.

REUBEN

I guarantee you, Thatcher is anything but a champion of women's rights.

CARMEL

Still a role model, isn't she?! Showing how a woman can have it all.

JOAN

Carm could have it all I bet, couldn't she Reuben, eh? If she wanted it badly enough.

Carmel glares at Joan, Theresa, and Mumtaz all struggling not to piss themselves laughing as they gesture suggestively behind Reuben's back. His eyes locked solely on Carmel.

REUBEN

Definitely, she could.

Carmel watches him wipe the white froth of his beer from his beard. Tries to hide the tingle it sends down her back.

THERESA

She's certainly given you a run for your money tonight, mister.

MUMTAZ

Um-hm. If I was you I'd ask for a refund on that politics degree.

The three women laugh. Carmel joins them.

CARMEL

And lose that hair of yours too while you're at it, cos a professor you most certainly ain't!

The women toast the victorious Carmel, as Reuben softly smiles and strokes his beard, locking eyes with Carmel.

5

INT. HACKNEY COUNCIL - CARMEL'S OFFICE - DAY - 1993

5

A small, single occupancy Manager's Office, sporting Carmel's name on the door. She sits behind a desk, tapping away at a TYPEWRITER when a knocking sounds. She looks up to find Reuben at the door holding a MONEY TREE and a box of goodies. His scruffy hair given way to a more cultivated look.

REUBEN

Hey.

CARMEL

Hey.

REUBEN

Just dropped by to give you-

CARMEL (V.O.)

Your pink penis?

REUBEN

This.

He sets down the plant.

REUBEN (CONT'D)

Oh, and these.

He opens up the box to reveal an array of sugarific treats.

CARMEL

Thank you. What happened there?

She gestures at his face. He shrugs as he takes a seat.

REUBEN

Just thought the time's right to
try something new, you know?

They share an intense look before Carmel nervously stands and walks over to the area where she keeps a kettle and biscuit tin, subconsciously trying to put space between them.

CARMEL

Can I make you a cuppa?

REUBEN

Sure.

Carmel flicks the kettle switch. Reuben perches on Carmel's desk, next to her diary and files, and watches her.

CARMEL (V.O.)

Look at him, eyeing yuh big black diary, two pages spread, just waiting for his pen's ink to - woman, stop! God never sleeps, remember!

CARMEL

Biscuit? I have custard creams.

REUBEN

Delicious.

CARMEL

Or fig rolls?

REUBEN

I love fig rolls.

Carmel opens her biscuit tin and lays out an array on a plate. She starts fiddling with the GOLD JESUS ON THE CROSS CHAIN just above her cleavage. His eyes automatically peering there. A hunger in them now. One to rival Carmel's.

CARMEL (V.O.)

Carmel! Jesus didn't die for you to do this!

He smiles, fixing a steady, knowing gaze at her.

Carmel goes to speak, but before she can utter a word, Reuben is at the door, locking it and shutting the blinds. Carmel doesn't protest, just stares at him, struggling to control her racing heart.

REUBEN

It looks like everyone has gone for lunch.

Carmel crosses to Reuben, plate of biscuits in hand.

CARMEL

There are garibaldis too.

REUBEN

Garibaldis are my favourite.

He takes the plate from her and places it down on the desk, taking her face softly in his big bear-like hand. He smiles reassuringly and she caves, leaning in suddenly to kiss him, deep and passionate.

He explores her body with his paws and mouth, working his way downward until he's dropped out of sight below the desk.

CARMEL (V.O.)

Hell is this white boy goin'?

Carmel's eyes widen and roll with ecstasy.

CARMEL (V.O.)
Ohhhhhhhhhhh!

The kettle starts to boil and steam. Carmel's eyes widen and roll with ecstasy.

START MONTAGE:

6

INT. REUBEN'S FLAT - VARIOUS - DAY/NIGHT - 1993

6

Carmel in the throes of passion with Reuben in varied locations in his tiny, basement flat - steadily growing into it, becoming more confident, adventurous, commanding until we MEET THE WOMAN FROM THE START - introducing silk scarves, cuffs, and even a paddle into the mix.

Interspersed with this, Carmel slowly makes the archetypal bachelor pad more homely by introducing dried flowers in vases, potpourri in bowls, purple floral throws and cushion covers, a swirly pink-an-purple shag-pile rug, a whole new set of cutlery, floral crockery, and a toaster!

Reuben can only watch on bemused - unable to keep his hands off of her for long.

7

INT. THE WALKER RESIDENCE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - 1993

7

Even at home, Carmel's world continues to spin. We find her reading the Bible in her armchair with a delirious smile.

Barry, watching TV with Young Donna, looks over - notices.

BARRY

Really is the 'Good Book', eh?

Only we reveal now what she's really reading inside: A JACKIE COLLINS NOVEL. Carmel, uneasy, shielding the inside nods.

8

INT. REUBEN'S FLAT - VARIOUS - NIGHT - 1993

8

By candlelight, Carmel stands modelling a brand new gift of SEXY RED LINGERIE she's just unwrapped from its box - the same lingerie as Maxine and Donna discovered in Episode 1.

Carmel regards Reuben - a little self-conscious at first until he begins to kiss the rolls of fat on her stomach and his eyes transmit how much he simply adores her.

END MONTAGE.

9

INT. THE WALKER RESIDENCE - HALLWAY - NIGHT - 1993

9

Carmel, wrapped in her dressing gown, is on the phone. A look of sheer and utter disbelief on her face (***N.B. This is the same scene as Scene 29 in Episode 3, but from Carmel's perspective***).

REUBEN (O.S.)

I love you, Carm.

CARMEL

You serious?

REUBEN (O.S)

As I've ever been in my whole life.

CARMEL

No! I don't believe you!

The door starts to open...

CARMEL (CONT'D)
I gotta go. He's back!

REUBEN (O.S.)
Tell me you at least feel the same!

...to reveal **BARRY**, Guinness in hand, frozen in the doorway.

CARMEL
No. I gotta go.

She hangs up the phone and turns to face her husband. They both look at one another a moment, a tense guilty air between them, almost as if waiting for the other to speak. Finally:

CARMEL (CONT'D)
(a little accusatory)
You're back early!

Barry nods, steps inside tentatively and closes the door. He clears his throat. Nearly daren't ask the following:

BARRY
(re: the telephone)
Who... who was that?

Carmel hesitates.

CARMEL
No one.

Barry is beset with confusion to add to his dread.

BARRY
No one?

CARMEL
Just... Merty. You want a drink?

Carmel turns and escapes in the direction of the kitchen affording her the chance to breathe a huge sigh of relief.

9A **EXT. PARK - DAY - 1993**

9A

Carmel sits alone on a bench in the park across the road.

CARMEL
Barry, what I'm about to say isn't easy, and please don't feel I've reached this decision lightly, because Lord knows I haven't. But in the end, I truly, truly think it is what's best for all-a us in the long run - you, me, and the girls!

10

INT. THE WALKER RESIDENCE - HALLWAY/KITCHEN - NIGHT - 1993 10

Having just returned home, Carmel edges slowly along the hall, a little tipsy, a little nervous, silently rehearsing her speech to herself, building up courage. She enters the kitchen and suddenly stops with surprise.

CARMEL

What's all this?

On the table, neatly set for four, is an array of entrées and dishes that, although they aren't anywhere close to Carmel's standard, are still pretty impressive. Bordering on OTT.

At the stove, Barry puts the finishing touches to a stew.

BARRY

What? You don't deserve a break upon occasion? Come sit. Take the weight off. The girls have something to show you.

Barry takes Carmel's hand and twirls her down into the chair he's pulled out for her. He smiles, squeezes her shoulder.

BARRY (CONT'D)

Oh. Word of caution. The dip. Maxi did make.

Carmel regards the dip. It does indeed look somewhat perilous. Still, it stirs something within her. As does the sight of her husband, sporting her apron, signalling to the sniggering girls hiding from off. GUILT. She starts to tear up as Young Donna and Maxine enter and begin to put on a dance show. Barry, smiling, helping the girls remember their steps before they finish with a bow.

Carmel wipes her face. Claps. Hugs both blushing girls before they run off to change. Carmel watches after them a moment, takes a breath, finds her resolve, then faces her husband.

CARMEL

Barry, what I'm about to say isn't easy, and please don't feel I've reached this decision lightly, because Lord knows I haven't. But-

Barry cuts her off, kneels before her, imploring.

BARRY

Hol' up. Before you say anything further just know, I can and will be better from now on. Mi swear.

Off Carmel, conflicted.

11 **INT. REUBEN'S FLAT - NIGHT - 1996**

11

The place is now a warm home, full of Carmel's touches as she sits forlornly on the sofa with a beseeching Reuben.

REUBEN

Please, Carm... don't do this.

CARMEL

I have to. We both know that. To carry on would be unfair. On you.

He reaches for her hand.

REUBEN

Please. I love you.

CARMEL

Look. Take the job at Lambeth. Move south and forget about me.

REUBEN

No. I can't. I won't. Not without you.

CARMEL

Well you're gonna have to. I'm a married woman, Reuben. And marriage - it's a gift from God - who I made a sacred vow in front of. I can't break that. I won't. I've sacrificed too much.

He looks at her, desolate.

REUBEN

I don't understand. Don't you deserve to be happy?

Carmel absorbs this. Stands. Stoic.

CARMEL

Take the job, Reuben.

She kisses him deeply one last time.

REUBEN

You do this and that's it, there's no going back!

CARMEL

And take care.

And with that, she's gone. Barely keeping it together.

12 **INT. HACKNEY COUNCIL - CARMEL'S OFFICE - DAY - 1996** 12

Carmel sits alone in her office. Sad. Unable to concentrate on her work. Her attention instead on Reuben's money tree gift, now starting to wither. In the adjacent office, Reuben packs up his desk.

13 **INT. THE WALKER RESIDENCE - KITCHEN - AFTERNOON - 1997** 13

Carmel sits at the table in her Sunday best (though no longer her stylish, well-fitted clothes), drinking rosehip tea from a big brown mug, humming a hymn, tapping the table as she reads the Bible (the actual Bible) and dunks chocolate digestives into her drink. A chopping board and knife, leftover from preparing vegetables, are on the table in front of her. **(N.B. this is the same scene as Scene 11 in Episode 1, only from Carmel's perspective, with some action remembered differently).**

It's been several months since her break with Reuben, and she's trying her best to put a brave face on things.

BARRY (O.S.)

Carm...

She looks up at Barry, opposite, watching her intently with a palpable air of agitation.

BARRY (CONT'D)

There's, uh, no easy way of saying this - but it - it's been something weighing heavily on me for a while now and... well mi think it-a be best for the both of us if we went - well if we went ahead and started thinking about getting a divorce.

We hold on Carmel and her darkening expression. Scarcely able to believe what she's just heard.

BARRY (CONT'D)

Carm? Did you hear what I said?

After a slight pause, she suddenly seizes the knife in front of her and wields it at Barry.

CARMEL

I'd sooner kill us both than allow that, you selfish son-of-a-bitch! Understand?! For better or for worse - we are in this for life!

14 **INT. WALKER RESIDENCE - BEDROOM - MORNING** 14

Carmel stands before Barry, part way through packing her suitcase. Her shoulders sagging with the weight of her woes.

(N.B. this is the same scene as Scene 28 in Episode 1, only from Carmel's perspective, remembered differently).

CARMEL

What happened to us, Barry?

BARRY

(hesitates, shrugs)

Life happened, Carmel.

She stares at him intently.

CARMEL

Don't you do it, Carmel. Don't you utter even a single, damn wor- What if I asked nicely? If I really needed you to be there with me? For me. What then? Would you come?

She takes in Barry, drowning inside. His silence speaking volumes. Obliterating what little self-respect she had left.

CARMEL (V.O.)

Mi try tell yuh!

Close on Carmel's eyes. Distraught.

CARMEL (V.O.)

You're a fool, Carmel. You've always been a damn fool!

15	OMITTED	15
16	OMITTED	16
17	OMITTED	17
18	OMITTED	18
19	OMITTED	19
20	OMITTED	20
21	OMITTED	21

22 **EXT./INT. TAXI - DAY**

22

A SERIES OF SHOTS establishing the serene island as the taxi makes its way along bumpy, pothole-riddled roads.

Though inside the AC is on, Carmel sweats up a storm as she sits quietly looking out at the passing landscape with the eyes very much of a stranger.

23 **EXT. MILLERS RESIDENCE - DAY**

23

The sun is high as Carmel exits the taxi and stands before her CHILDHOOD HOME - a secluded, two-story villa with expansive land surrounding - taking in the once fine abode's gradual decay.

She pays the taxi driver and starts to make her way down the steep path towards the house.

A shriek draws her attention to her cousin **AUGUSTA** (60s) - a woman sporting the most fantastic wig - practically charging up the path to embrace her.

Carmel is surprised, unused to such contact.

AUGUSTA

So good to see you, cousin. It-a been too long.

Carmel nods uneasily as the two women separate.

AUGUSTA (CONT'D)

Must feel good to be home, nah? To get away from Engeland - get some sun. Yuh lookin' pale, woman. Come!

And with that she takes Carmel's bags, heads for the house, leaving Carmel trailing behind but appreciative of the help.

24 **INT. MILLERS RESIDENCE - VARIOUS - DAY**

24

A SERIES OF QUICK CUTS:

-A grandfather clock in the hallway - one hand missing, no longer ticking.

-A parade of family photographs (the Millers, Gordons) - darkened under a patina of dust.

-A mahogany tallboy at the end of the corridor - one draw hanging off.

Reveal now Carmel, silently taking it all in.

CARMEL (V.O.)

*Look at this place. Everything
stale and silent, mouldy and
moulting, smelly and musty, cobwebs
and dust, ashes to ashes, just like
Papi, barely holding on.*

SUDDENLY: THE SOUND OF A WOMAN CRYING AS SHE'S BEATEN...

Carmel, anxious, reaches a hand for a door knob, turning it to open the door of THE STUDY where a HANDSOME BLACK MAN (**PAPI**, 40s) stands menacingly, balled fist, over a whimpering Mrs Miller on the floor. They both look over at Carmel.

MRS MILLER

Close the door.

Carmel, scared, immediately shuts the door, shutting the memory away. She turns to find Augusta waiting for her.

AUGUSTA

What's the matter? Yuh see a spider
or someting? Motherland turn yuh
soft, hm. Come, he in his room.

Augusta starts down the corridor. Carmel hesitates, a growing sense of dread.

Carmel follows... suddenly she freezes. Her heart racing, as up ahead she spots the figure of a MAID, **LOREENE** - 20s and beautiful and half-dressed - sneaking from the room of her father at the far end. **PAPI** standing topless in the doorway.

Carmel pins herself up against the wall as Loreene rushes silently past, off out of sight.

AUGUSTA (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Carm?

Carmel looks back in the direction of her father's room where Papi no longer stands but Augusta, waiting outside the closed door, motioning for her to join her.

25

INT. MILLERS RESIDENCE - PAPI'S ROOM - DAY

25

Carmel's **ANCIENT PAPI** lies in a large bed, tucked up in white sheets all shrivelled and innocent looking. A NURSE is sat close by, quietly reading.

Carmel stands at the threshold of the door, unable to bring herself to enter. Behind her, Augusta waits patiently.

AUGUSTA
(gently prompting)
Doctor say he nuh have much time
lef, at'all.

Still, Carmel hesitates. Her eyes rooted on the old man. She shakes her head, forlornly.

CARMEL
I... I don't think I can.

Augusta takes her hand.

AUGUSTA
Chile, a yuh papi. A good man.

Carmel releases her hand from Augusta's.

CARMEL
He wah many things. But good...?

Carmel shakes her head. And with that she turns and brushes past a shocked Augusta.

AUGUSTA
Listen. You will feel different
after a likkle rest and some food.
Me go fix yuh someting.

26 OMITTED

26

27 OMITTED

27

28 OMITTED 28

29 **INT. MILLERS RESIDENCE - KITCHEN - DAY** 29

Carmel and Augusta are silently but busily preparing dinner.

Augusta, something on her mind, looks over at Carmel,
kneading dumplings.

AUGUSTA

So... haffu say, mi kinda surprise
not to see Barry with you!

Carmel continues with the task in hand...

CARMEL (V.O.)

*Um-hm. Go ahead, Carm, tell her how
you begged him to come, too!
And you had the audacity to look
down your nose at Mami. 'Specially
when she refused to leave Papi to
come England with you and Barry
like you so pleaded.*

Carmel slams her hand into the dough.

CARMEL

It's called loyalty!

Augusta looks over at Carmel, confused by her outburst.

CARMEL (CONT'D)

(covering)

He... he had a client he couldn't
let down.

Augusta nods. Breaking into a smile as a memory hits.

AUGUSTA

He was always industrious like
that. As industrious as he was
handsome.

Augusta raises her eyebrows salaciously at Carmel.

AUGUSTA (CONT'D)

Who had de pick of the whole
island. Yet a my own cousin that go
and win the jackpot!

Carmel remains silent - feeling anything but a winner.

AUGUSTA (CONT'D)

What a beauty yuh did look on your
wedding day.

29B **INT. MILLERS RESIDENCE - CARMELITA'S ROOM - NIGHT - 1971** 29B

Carmelita stands at the window looking out. Still dressed in her WEDDING DRESS, frilly and flirty that shows off her newly married woman's cleavage. Clutched in her hand is an ANTIGUAN PASSPORT. Crisp, new, vestal.

She holds it to her chest rather dramatically as she spins euphorically to take in the young man fast asleep in the small, brass bed. Young Barry. Drunk, topless and half dressed in his wedding attire. His long legs dangling over the end. *

Carmelita tiptoes across the wooden floor to the bed and kneels beside it, watching her husband, closely. Lustfully.

She cups her breasts in her hands - appreciating how high and heavy they are, like two buoyant bags of water. Whispers: *

CARMELITA *

When yuh a go stop being all
gentlemanly and finally touch them?
We married now. They want touching. *

His mouth is open. She goes to close it. Thinks better of it. Motions to run her hand along his cheek, but hesitates.

CARMELITA (CONT'D) *

I can't believe we soon goin'
Inglan. We'll see Her Majesty.
(tongue in cheek) *
Might even invite us to have tea at *
The Palace. To welcome us. *

His left eye twitches.

CARMELITA (CONT'D) *

See? He dreamin 'bout you, lady. We
got a whole lifetime ahead of us,
plenty time for him fuh spread *
guava jelly pan yuh cracker. *

Her loins on fire, she slides up into the bed beside Young Barry - as close as she can get without actually touching him. She closes her eyes, still gripping her passport. *

29C **EXT. APPLE ORCHARD - CARMELITA'S FANTASY - DAY**

29C

The camera travels out into the Carmelita childish fantasy of her would-be perfect life in England.

In the middle of the orchard a beautiful table is set with the finest Wedgewood china, a pristine tower of sandwiches and scones. Carmelita, beaming, dressed in an almost childlike version of what one would wear to Afternoon Tea while playing dress up, pours a hot drink for her husband:

Young Barry, wearing a shirt, tie and braces, smoking a PIPE and doing the TIMES CROSSWORD beside their sweet YOUNG SON. Young Barry bites into a delectable scone, shares a warm smile with Carmelita and plants her with a loving kiss.

30

EXT. MILLERS RESIDENCE - VERANDA - DUSK

30

The sky is canvas of oranges, pinks and purples as the sun sinks slowly in the horizon.

Carmel stands alone, fiddling with the crucifix on her necklace.

She takes in the garden, once prized, overgrown now beyond recognition: wild bush and bramble, soggy date-palm leaves heaped on the ground, weeds pushing through the paved pathway already cracked by tree roots intent on returning the island to forest.

As Augusta approaches behind her Carmel senses her presence.

Augusta regards her softly.

AUGUSTA

Yuh daddy change, Carmel. Ole age
soften him like he flesh.

Carmel, skeptical, doesn't respond.

AUGUSTA (CONT'D)

You was always in his prayers.
Remember, chile. To err is human.
But to forgive...

Off Carmel, and her crucifix, feeling very far from divine.

31	OMITTED	31
32	OMITTED	32

32A **EXT. MILLERS RESIDENCE - ANTIGUA - DAY**

32A

A new day. Carmel, busying herself, wrangling the wild foliage from outside the house. Her head still clouded and troubled by unwelcome thoughts. Of her Papi. And his past transgressions.

CARMEL
Like Papi's mind. All gnarled and
tangled up.

Carmel yanks hard on a vine, pricking her hand. She maybe curses when:

HUBERT (O.S.)
Carmelita Miller.

Carmel turns to find a handsome man, **HUBERT (70)**.

HUBERT (CONT'D)
It is, isn't it?!

It takes her a moment to place him.

CARMEL
Hu-Hubert?

Hubert smiles - his eyes twinkling at her.

33 **EXT. MILLERS NEIGHBOURHOOD - ANTIGUA - MINUTES LATER**

33

Carmel and Hubert stroll along in awkward silence. They are in a lively residential street: kids playing, a fruit stall set up next to a variety shop, hatch open, selling refreshing drinks to locals.

HUBERT

I'm sorry about your Daddy.

CARMEL

It-a part of life.

HUBERT

Doesn't make it any easier. My
wife, Everine, she passed just over
a year and a half ago now.

CARMEL

I'm sorry.

HUBERT

Thank you.

*

Small beat.

*

HUBERT (CONT'D)

*

It's why I came back, I guess.

*

(off her look)

*

Home.

*

She registers his contentment. An abandoned freedom.

*

CARMEL

*

I heard you was States side.

HUBERT

D.C. I was a university Professor.

Carmel is quietly impressed.

CARMEL

You always were a bit of-a swot.

He smiles a mischievous smile.

HUBERT

And the Empire? How did that treat you? Was it everything you had hoped for?

Carmel mirrors his smile - touché.

HUBERT (CONT'D)

My sister, Beryl - you remember Beryl?

CARMEL (V.O.)

Um-hm. A mouthy bitch Beryl was.

HUBERT

(off Carmel's nod)

She was so shocked the day you announced you were leaving before final exams. She always said Carmelita could-a achieve anything she put her mind to.

She's surprisingly taken by his laid-back, open demeanour.

CARMEL

Yeah... well... I did. Eventually. My degree in Business Administration led to a career in Housing Management. I was responsible for well over two thousand properties.

Hubert's turn to be impressed.

HUBERT

Whoa. Big Boss Lady.

She nods proudly - as proud as we've ever seen her to date.

CARMEL

I tell yuh... Them were some of the happiest days of my life.

Tears start to well in her eyes. Her voice trembling.

CARMEL (CONT'D)

When I felt most wanted. Needed.
Loved.

She struggles now to stop the tears from falling. Hubert passes her some tissues, his hand gently touches hers.

HUBERT

Is it hard coming home?

*

She nods and dabs.

HUBERT (CONT'D)

My daddy would always say; "bwoy,
never go backward. Only forward."
But sometimes I think you need to
go back in order to move forward.

They share a smile. Walk on in a more contented silence for a beat until: Carmel stops outside a house.

*

CARMEL

This house... It was your Nana's?

*

HUBERT

Now my aunty's. Who's just as
strong. Just as stubborn.

*

*

*

Carmel laughs.

*

CARMEL

It's exactly how I remembered it.

*

*

He regards her a moment.

*

HUBERT

Do you remember what happened here?

*

*

Carmel is unsure.

*

HUBERT (CONT'D)

Just there. The spot you told me
you were choosin' Barry instead.

*

Carmel nods.

*

CARMEL

I remember.

*

*

HUBERT

Insisted we had one final
"tongueing". You know, as a way of
softening the blow.

*

*

*

*

CARMEL
(smiling)
I don't remember that.

*
*
*

HUBERT
You said Jack Lemmon types were
cute and all that but what you were
really after was a Rock Hudson.

He shrugs.

HUBERT (CONT'D)
Barry always was the luckiest so-
and-so on all the island.

It's not a come-on, but genuine and heartfelt. Carmel feels
it too. And that's perhaps why she does what she does next -
forgetting herself, she takes Hubert's hands in his.

*
*

Ever the gentleman, Hubert politely pulls away. Carmel is
mortified.

*
*

HUBERT (CONT'D)
Carm, I-

*

CARMEL
I better get back.

*
*
*

She turns and leaves, her face a picture of embarrassment and shame.

*

HUBERT

*

Carm, please - please don't go.

34 OMITTED

34

35 OMITTED

35

36 OMITTED

36

37 OMITTED 37

37A **EXT. PATH - ANTIGUA - DAY** 37A

Carmel, spiralling, silently berating herself as she comes across a TREE WITH BIBLE VERSES SCRAWLED ONTO PLAQUES.

She stops cold at one in particular: **REVELATION 21:8.**

She closes her eyes and bows her head in gentle prayer.

CARMEL

Lord, please grant me the power of forgiveness so that the sinners-

INSERT FLASH IMAGE: CARMEL IN HER RED LINGERIE, MODELLING FOR REUBEN.

CARMEL (CONT'D)

-the fornicators-

INSERT FLASH IMAGE: CARMEL, ABOUT TO CLIMAX WITH REUBEN'S HEAD BURIED BETWEEN HER LEGS.

CARMEL (CONT'D)

-the abusers-

INSERT FLASH IMAGE: CARMEL SLAPPING BARRY IN THEIR BEDROOM AFTER HE RETURNED HOME LATE FROM EPISODE 1 SCENE 6.

CARMEL (CONT'D)

They may be... they may be...

She stops, shaking her head, irked by her inability to escape her inner torment.

CARMEL (V.O.)

*Girl you ain't fooling nobody.
Least of all him.*

37B **EXT. BEACH BY SIBONEY - ANTIGUA - SUNSET** 37B

Carmel stands on a rocky outcrop, watching the setting sun.

38 **EXT. SIBONEY HOTEL - ANTIGUA - LATER** 38

Close on Carmel as she approaches the welcoming lights of a hotel bar. Lost in her relentless inner turmoil when:

She bumps into someone, forcing her to stagger back slightly.

VOICE

My God. Carmel? Is that you?

Carmel looks like she's just seen a ghost.

CARMEL

Odette?

39

EXT. SIBONEY HOTEL - BEACHSIDE BAR - ANTIGUA - NIGHT

39

A small joint. Soft lighting and gentle music wafting in the air as Carmel sits across from **ODETTE**, 70, an elegant black woman in an orange kaftan, sporting big white hooped earrings, and an immaculately bald head (*N.B. Odette is Morris' ex-wife, a younger version of whom we met in Episodes 2 & 3*). The atmosphere is tense. Fraught with words unspoken. Odette sips on a small drink to steady her nerves.

ODETTE

Some reunion, that. Mi nah see yuh in over 30 years only to nearly knock yuh flat on yuh back like a pancake.

CARMEL

Pity yuh never knock me out. Or worse.

ODETTE

Woman, now why yuh-a go say sup'm like that?

Carmel shrugs, dejectedly.

ODETTE (CONT'D)

Well, you know me never did like pancakes and all that other renk English cuisine there. Mi only ever did make it to keep Morris happy.

Carmel doesn't respond. Odette's eyes probe her carefully.

ODETTE (CONT'D)

Carm... what's the matter? Has... has sup'm happened?

Carmel nods gently.

ODETTE (CONT'D)

What? What's happened?

Carmel doesn't respond. Just stares blankly. Odette's demeanour changes. She fears the worst.

ODETTE (CONT'D)

Carm, believe me, I wanted to tell you, but I-

CARMEL

(not listening)

My Papi's dying.

Odette stops. Surprised. And a little relieved.

ODETTE

Oh. I heard. I'm sorry.

CARMEL

I'm not.

Carmel takes a moment to reflect. Odette reaches a hand across the table for Carmel's.

*

*

40 OMITTED 40

41 **INT. MILLERS RESIDENCE - HALLWAY / PAPI'S ROOM - NIGHT** 41

Carmel stands outside the door to Papi's room, takes a deep breath and enters, only:

The bed lies empty, as Augusta sits teary-eyed in a chair beside it. Confusion sweeps across Carmel's face.

AUGUSTA

Where yuh been? Mi been tryna reach
yuh all night. He passed.

Close on Carmel, as the realisation dawns. She turns and walks along the hallway to her old, childhood room.

41A OMITTED 41A

41B OMITTED 41B

41C OMITTED 41C

42 **INT. MILLERS RESIDENCE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT** 42

Numb, Carmel sits in the gloom of the decrepit room, with a phone to her ear. It rings for a long moment until:

BARRY (O.S.)
Hu-
(clears throat)
Hullo?

Carmel's voice is barely a whisper.

CARMEL
He's dead Barry. Papi... he's gone!

BARRY (O.S.)
I sorry, Carmel.

CARMEL
Mi feel like an orphan, Barry.
(then more hopeful)
When... when you coming for the
funeral?

Barry doesn't respond.

CARMEL (CONT'D)
Barry?

43 OMITTED

43

44 **INT. MILLERS RESIDENCE - CARMELITA'S ROOM - DAY - 1971** 44

Bright morning sunlight floods onto the face of Carmelita as she wakes up in her wedding dress on her first morning as Mrs Carmel Walker. Her passport still in her hand. She smiles as she reaches over to feel Barry...

CARMELITA
Morning husband.

*

...only to find the bed empty. Perplexed, she looks around for him, but he's nowhere to be found.

Sudden muffled voices and laughter from downstairs.

And then it dawns on Carmelita what's happened - he has gone down to breakfast without her.

Carmel watches Carmelita. Her look of abandonment the exact same now as:

45 **INT. MILLERS RESIDENCE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

45

Carmel waits for his answer. But it doesn't come.

Carmel lowers the phone. Click.

She stares straight ahead. Silent and bereft.

CARMEL

You're a fool, Carmel.

Carmel turns to find Carmelita now sitting beside her quietly in her wedding dress.

CARMELITA

*

You've always been a damn fool.

They stare at one another. Two versions of the same woman, unified in their regret, both seeking one another's forgiveness... Only, both unable to find the words.

END OF EPISODE.