

PARK LIFE

Episode 1: George

by

Peter Dickenson

33 Cambridge Street
Barry
CF62 6PJ

(M) 0798 1073 479

pete029is@gmail.com

SCENE 1.

FX: The Dawn Chorus.

ALEXA

Good Morning, Edna! It's seven
a.m. on Friday the 5th of November
The weather today will be cold and
blustery, have a...

EDNA

(female around 70,
interrupting)
Alexa, shut up
(pause)
and another thing, if you tell
anyone at the W.I. that I can
actually use technology, you'll be
on Amazon Warehouse quicker than
you can say "unlimited free trial".

FX: Footsteps, followed by a slamming door.

ALEXA

I'm sorry, I'm having trouble
understanding right now.

SCENE 2.

FX: The sound of traffic.

FX: An alarm clock beeps, echoing slightly as if in a metal
box.

FX: Crawling.

FX: Empty bottles being kicked over.

CHARLIE

(male, around 40)
Bugger! At least they were all
empty.
(he yawns)
Good morning world! Another
beautiful day on skid-row.
Time for a proper breakfast, I
think.

FX: The sound of footsteps on concrete.

FX: The noise of traffic gets louder.

FX: A shop door opens accompanied by a buzz.

SCENE 3.

FX: Typing on a laptop keyboard

FX: The typing stops as the laptop closes.

GINGER
(female, around 30. In a
strong Geordie accent)
And she's ready to rock!
(pause)
Well maybe I'll give me downstairs
a quick wipe over first.

FX: A mobility scooter in motion

SCENE 4.

EDNA
No Susan, I do understand.
(pause)
Yes, it is just another day.
However, it is the one day your
father chose to die on though.
(pause)
No, of course I'm not trying to
make you feel guilty and I know
you've had to wait weeks to get
your eyebrows threaded.
(pause)
Yes, I'll see you next week then.
Make sure they don't snare any of
your vital organs with the cotton,
it would be tricky if you needed
another one of my kidneys.

FX: The sound of a dated landline being hung up.

FX: A firework whizzes and explodes in the distance.

EDNA (CONT'D)
(sighing)
Oh George, of all the days to die.

FX: Footsteps on laminate flooring.

FX: A front door being slammed.

SCENE 5.

FX: A squeaky door shuts.

FX: The buzzing stops

FX: Charlie's footsteps

CHARLIE
Morning Adi!

ADI
(An Indian male around 50)
Hello Charlie. You're late today?

CHARLIE
I thought I'd have a lie in, it is
almost the weekend after all!

FX: Two glass bottles being placed on a counter.

ADI
Wine?! No cider today?

CHARLIE
(jokingly)
Fish for dinner tonight!

ADI
(laughing)
Ten pounds eighty, please Charlie.

FX: a large amount of small change being emptied on to a counter.

ADI (CONT'D)
(sighs)

CHARLIE
Sorry, my friend. The Gold Card is
in my other suit. You're lucky I
didn't bring back the empties, I'd
bankrupt you!
(pause)
Do you mind counting it, my hands
are a bit cold?

ADI
You don't have to sleep in an old
skip.

(MORE)

ADI (CONT'D)
I've told you before, you can sleep
in the back room if you want. I
know you'll keep it...

CHARLIE
(interrupting)
No Adi! Thank you, but no. I keep
telling the girls the same thing:
it's my mess and it's down to me to
sort it out.

FX: Coins being brushed off the counter.

FX: A till closing.

ADI
When though Charlie?

CHARLIE
(huffing)
See you tomorrow Adi.

FX: Charlie's footsteps.

FX: A shop door buzzing.

SCENE 6.

FX: The sound of a mobility scooter on pavement, stopping
after a few seconds

GINGER
Just park over the drop-curve, you
selfish little shite!
(pause)
Let's put a little willy on your
precious BMW. You can call it a
self-portrait!

FX: After a brief pause, a nail file scratching a car bonnet.

GINGER (CONT'D)
(she giggles and starts
humming "Don't Worry, Be
Happy".)

FX: a scooter thuds onto a road and a few seconds later,
mounts the pavement again.

GINGER (CONT'D)
Ooh. Actually, a girl could get
used that!

SCENE 7.

FX: A bus approaches and then stops.

FX: EDNA climbs on board

FX: The various passengers mutter in the background.

FX: EDNA rustles in her handbag for her bus pass.

FRANK

(male, late fifties)

Thank you Edna, but I already know
you've got a bus pass. You use it
enough!

(nervously)

Er, fancy seeing the new Bond one
day this week?

EDNA

I know you mean well Frank, but I'm
old enough to be your...

FRANK

(interrupts)

Big sister? You're a fine woman
Edna. You don't have to be alone
forever you know.

EDNA

If it was good enough for Greta
Garbo...

FX: EDNA walks up the bus's aisle and sits down.

SCENE 8.

FX: An internal door opens.

FX: The sound of male banter and showers can be heard from
inside.

FX: CHARLIE steps through the door and closes it behind him.

DENNIS

(early fifties)

It's a Leisure Centre, don't you
know? Not a washroom for the likes
of you!

CHARLIE

I am sorry Dennis. I hope you've remembered your shuttlecock this week?

(pause)

Oh, I forgot, your wife cut it off when you married her, didn't she?

DENNIS

Bloody vagrant.

CHARLIE

The politically correct term these days is "temporarily unsheltered".

SCENE 8.

FX: A park: birdsong, dogs barking, etc.

FX: CHARLIE walks to a bench and sits down.

EDNA

You're late today?

CHARLIE

I didn't realise the park had such a strict timetable.

(pause)

I had to get some shopping in. You know, essential dietary supplies!

FX: CHARLIE put a bag down and the bottles clack together.

EDNA

I hope you've bought something nutritious too?

CHARLIE

What, when I've got my very own Florence Nightingale, dispensing free deli-standard sandwiches?

EDNA

At least I remembered to bring them today.

CHARLIE

How is the memory?

EDNA

Not good. This morning I went upstairs for something and forgot what it was.

CHARLIE
Surely, that's not too uncommon?

EDNA
(wryly)
It is when you live in a bungalow!

CHARLIE
(chuckling)
Nice one Edna!

EDNA
I think I might just have to accept
I'm getting older and there's going
to be some wear and tear on a few
of the cogs.

CHARLIE
Tell me about it, At least your
cogs don't have to learn how to
swim.

EDNA
We could all help you with the
drink issue Charles and somewhere
to live, whatever you need. You
just have to say the word.

FX: Nearby, the sound of a skateboard.

CHARLIE
(defensively)
I know, I know, I've just got to
pick my moment. I think another
fail would just be too hard to cope
with. Anyway, I thought we were
talking about you, Miss Betty Ford!
Are you sure you shouldn't see the
Doc again?

EDNA
No, I think he's seen quite enough
of this neurotic widow recently.
Unless he can distract me with a
marriage proposal, I don't think
there's much to be done.

CHARLIE
Oh! Is he fit then Edna?

EDNA
I wouldn't mind having a joint
pension book with him.

(MORE)

EDNA (CONT'D)

Though, he's far too young for me
and I've got a sneaky suspicion,
he'd be more your type.

CHARLIE

How exciting! What tipped you off?
Abnormally interested in musical
theatre or just a thinly veiled
penchant for buggery!

EDNA

Not really. He's just got really
well kempt nails.

CHARLIE

Completely damning! Just as well
it's legal these days or he'd
definitely swing!

EDNA

(thoughtfully)

Was it tough for you Charles,
growing up like that?

CHARLIE

"like that" You don't have a PC
bone in your body, do you Edna?

EDNA

Sorry! I am an old dog, you know.

CHARLIE

Not in any sense of the word.

(pause)

It wasn't the easiest thing,
growing up knowing you were
apparently out of step with
everybody you knew. I am a Golden
Gay after all.

EDNA

Is that anything like a Golden
Girl?

CHARLIE

(laughing)

In some ways!

(pause)

No, it means I've only ever touched
a solitary...

(pause)

vulva.

EDNA

Charles!

(pause)

You mean one was enough to put you
off for life?

CHARLIE

Not quite. The one in question was
my mother's.

EDNA

(laughing)

Really. Why am I laughing! I hope
you know you're finally starting to
bring me down to your level?

CHARLIE

Mission accomplished!
To answer your original question
though.

FX: CHARLIE stands up and stretches.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

It was a pretty challenging path,
especially with the horror of AIDS
at every turn.

EDNA

I can't imagine.

CHARLIE

Just as well you're not John Lennon
isn't it?

It could have been worse. One of
my fellow sodomites was a sixties
child. Imagine growing up in an
age where your only role models
were John Inman, Larry Grayson and
Danny La Rue! His childhood
ambition was to be Quentin Crisp!

EDNA

Well, he could have done worse.
Not many great role models for your
average woman then either!

CHARLIE

Touché!

SCENE 9.

FX: A seagull squawks.

FX: THREE BOYS, teenagers, are chuckling to themselves and passing around a cigarette.

FX: GINGER approaches in her mobility scooter

GINGER
Holy shite! What have you lot done
to my cripple crapper?
(pause)
Shouldn't you be seeing your
Probation Officers or something,
anyway?

GINGER (CONT'D)

FX: GINGER puts the Scooter into maximum speed and heads for
3 BOYS, who hurry off through some nearby trees.

BOY 1
(shouting)
Piss off wheels!

GINGER
Come back, you bloody vandals!
(hissing to herself)
Bugger, I really wish I hadn't had
that second cup of tea now!

SCENE 10.

CHARLIE
That little lad is on his
skateboard again. He's pretty
determined, isn't he?

EDNA
Indeed! He can't be much more than
eight and he's even built a ramp
out of some old board and a few
bricks. He doesn't look the
athletic type either.

CHARLIE
I think the word you're reaching
for is "fat" honey.

EDNA
Don't be mean.

CHARLIE
I'm just being honest. I suppose a
skate board is better than a junior
mobility scooter.

EDNA
He's not that overweight.

CHARLIE
Isn't he? I'm surprised he didn't
get his stomach caught in the
turnstiles at the entrance to the
park.
I bet his mum buys him Pepsi heavy!

FX: In the distance the CHUBBY BOY stops playing on the
skateboard and spits vehemently on to the path.

CHUBBY BOY
(under his breath)
Bunch of bloody weirdos!

FX: EDNA takes a plastic bottle out of her bag.

EDNA
Would you like some water?

CHARLIE
Holy or tap?

EDNA
Neither, it's Evian actually.

CHARLIE
Not unless you're going to call in
a few favours from your Lord and
turn it into something more
suitable for Holy Communion.

EDNA
I think he reserves his miracles
for good purposes.

CHARLIE
Or for when Smokey Robinson needs
some back up vocalists!
Don't worry, I've restocked
remember?

FX: CHARLIE takes a wine bottle out of his backpack,
unscrews the top and takes a swig.

EDNA
I wish you wouldn't do that
Charles.

CHARLIE

Sorry Edna, but as a career alcoholic, it's quite central to the job description.

EDNA

Well, you could at least use a glass!

CHARLIE

Unfortunately, all my Crystal is in the dishwasher!

EDNA

A plastic cup would do.

CHARLIE

What would Greta Thunberg say! Anyway, are you going to offer me a sandwich or not?

EDNA

Don't I always?

CHARLIE

What's the filling du jour?

EDNA

It's Friday. Corned beef and tomato.

CHARLIE

How very nouveau cuisine.

EDNA

Do you want one or not Charles?

CHARLIE

Yes, please and why won't you call me Charlie? You sound like my mother.

EDNA

You wish! Here you are.

FX: The sound of tinfoil and crockery clinking against each other.

CHARLIE

Thank you, I always love your attention to detail. I don't think I've ever met anybody that eats off vintage china in a public park!

(MORE)

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

It reminds me of office lunches at
the Ivy!

EDNA

You must miss that life?

CHARLIE

I miss the money.

(pause)

Anything to wash it down with? We
could share my bottle if you want?

FX: More clinking.

EDNA

No thank you. I don't drink white
with red meat.

SCENE 11.

FX: Swings moving slowly, interspersed with feet pushing on
the ground

BOY 1

What did we leg it for? It's not
like ginger minge can do much in
her spaz-carrier, is it.

BOY 2

I wouldn't be so sure. She's
bloody scary! We should be safe
here though, I don't think she'd be
much cop on the swings!

BOY 3

Aw, you gonna run home and tell
Carol, pussy boy?

BOY 2

Keep me mam out of this, just 'cos
you haven't got one.

FX: Loud clanking of swings hitting each other.

BOY 1

(shouting)

Oww! Leave it out, you pair of
tossers!

(quieter)

Anyway, I think wheels is hot.

(MORE)

BOY 1 (CONT'D)

My big brother saw her on the TV
once when she was still doing the
gymnastics stuff. He said she was
well fit!

BOY 2

Yuck! She must be 30 at least.
I reckon you're one them granny
grabbers!

BOY 1

I like older women, don't I.
They've got more experience like.

BOY 3

My goldfish has got more experience
than you.

BOY 1

Hey, I've had lots of girls, buddy!

BOY 3

Name one?

BOY 1

Beverley Harris.

BOY 2

Beverley Harris! My mum says she's
Lebanese.

BOY 3

You mean a lesbian. Think she is
too though.

BOY 1

Well, I got to second base with
her, ask Tommy Mac.

BOY 2

You're welcome to her. She's got a
face like a camel eating a lemon.

BOY 1

Bit like your mum then.

BOY 2

Oy!

SCENE 12.

CHARLIE

You seem a little uptight this morning. Even more than usual, I mean?

EDNA

Thank you Charles.

CHARLIE

I know what day it is today. So, you are allowed, you know. Have you found his watch yet?

EDNA

No, I've looked everywhere too. I've never been one for remembering death days and I'd give anything to be able to forget this one. It was typical of George. Why couldn't he die on a date that nobody remembers, like World Kindness Day.

CHARLIE

I'm sure he didn't deliberately have a heart attack on November the 5th!

EDNA

Maybe not, but he deliberately smoked for 30 years to ensure an early death.

CHARLIE

Bonfire Night is quite apt in a way then?

EDNA

I do my best to ignore it, but it's hard when the children are fighting over who's going to be first to put a firework in your letter box.

CHARLIE

At least you still get a bang once a year.

EDNA

Charles, really!

SCENE 13.

FX. A shop door opens and a buzzer sounds.

FX: The sound of heels on a hard floor.

JEAN
(female in her sixties,
cross)
I think you know what I'm here
about!

ADI
I'm not sure I do Mrs. Jones.

JEAN
You sold my grandson Anthony
fireworks again! You know he's
underage.

ADI
I most certainly did not. It was
one of the boys he was with. Tall,
lad, he had ID.

JEAN
Tall was he? Acne like a pepperoni
pizza and moustache as lame as a
false eyelash?

ADI
Err, that sounds like him.

JEAN
(Slowly and forcefully)
They're in the same bloody class at
St. Margaret's. He's fifteen. You
need to up your game Adi!

FX: ADI steps back.

ADI
(his voice is shaky with
fear)
I'm sorry, it looked genuine, there
was nothing I could do.

JEAN
Tell that to Brenda in the flat
next to mine. Her cat came through
the flap with a lit Catherine wheel
tied to its tail, last night. Poor
thing won't even leave its basket
for a crap now!

SCENE 14.

CHARLIE

Did you ever think of trying to
find someone else?

EDNA

I did. Once the dust had settled.
But, older men seem to be even more
preoccupied with sex than the
younger ones.

CHARLIE

Maybe they want to get it out of
the way before the Viagra wears
off.

EDNA

They don't seem to look after
themselves that well after 50
either. The last man I dated
looked like one of the walnuts he
chewed on, all the way through the
film we saw on our date.

CHARLIE

Good movie?

EDNA

Titanic. It seemed appropriate.
No jokes about going down please!

CHUBBY BOY

(yelps in pain)

FX: A loud bang as a skateboard knocks CHARLIE'S backpack
over.

CHARLIE

(gasps)

FX: CHARLIE opens the zipper on his back-pack and bottles
clink together.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

(sighing with relief)

Blimey, I thought the skateboard
had broken my lunch for a minute
then.

EDNA

Can't say that would be a bad
thing.

CHARLIE
I've told you before, I'm not
really a lush. I only drink twice a
year.
(pause)
When it's my birthday and when it's
not!

FX: There is silence between the two for a few seconds and
then CHARLIE stands up and grabs the skateboard.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
(To the CHUBBY BOY)
You alright sunshine?

FX: CHARLIE walks to the boy and puts the skateboard down.

CHUBBY BOY
(grunts)

CHARLIE
(huffing)
Don't mention it, my pleasure!

FX: CHARLIE walks back to the bench and sits down.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
Anyway, at least your date took you
out. The last time I had one, it
was a DVD and a microwave pizza.

EDNA
Your box or his?

CHARLIE
(chuckling))
Very funny. I was still at the
hostel then. Now there's a good
film for a new romance...

EDNA
I don't do gratuitous violence, I'm
afraid.
(pause)
You know I've always got that spare
room Charles, don't you?

CHARLIE
I do and I appreciate the offer. I
just want to do this on my own.

EDNA
At least think about it. I'd enjoy
the company

CHARLIE

I will. You never know though; the walnut might pop round for a second chance and you'll want some privacy!

EDNA

God forbid. I'm done with that sort of thing now. I just like my simple pleasures, like my mother did. She could make an evening out of popping a roll of bubble wrap.

CHARLIE

Bubble wrap! She sounds like she was pretty low maintenance.

EDNA

She was, we even buried a sheet with her when she died. The grandkids thought it was hysterical.

CHARLIE

I bet it made a hell of a noise when they lowered the coffin into the ground.

EDNA

I would like something a little more animated for company though. Maybe it's time for a cat.

CHARLIE

Oh God, no! Anything but that cliché. Give the dating another go, have you thought of trying a younger man? There's plenty of OAPAedophiles out there. Just find one who doesn't smoke!

SCENE 15.

FX: The 3 BOYS are passing around another cigarette.

BOY 2

(coughing)

That cat didn't half shift last night, didn't it?

FX: They all laugh, heartily.

BOY 3
Yeah, I don't think he'll be
shitting in those flowerbeds again!
(he inhales for a couple
of seconds)

BOY 1
What are we going to do with the
rest of them tonight?

BOY 3
(he exhales for a few
seconds)
Well, we gotta start by putting one
through the letter box of that old
bag who hangs out with the tramp
and the crip. It's a tradition
like.

BOY 2
Sounds like a plan.

BOY 1
Yeah, it's the only way you're ever
gonna get a woman to scream.

FX: BOY 1 flicks BOY 2's year.

BOY 2
Get off, you toss-pot!

SCENE 16.

EDNA
Here comes Veronica. Please don't
mention George. I don't think she
would remember anyway.

CHARLIE
OK Edna.
(adopts a Geordie accent)
Hey up! Here she comes. Hello
Ginger!

FX: The sound of GINGER's mobility scooter, getting louder
as she approaches, until she manoeuvres it to be next to the
bench.

EDNA
Hello Veronica.

GINGER

(annoyed)

Hiya gang! I don't believe it;
those bloody kids have vandalised
the disabled bog!

EDNA

Do you have to use that word?

GINGER

Oh sorry, your majesty. Shitter it
is! Charlie, will you hold me
steady, while I have a pee behind
that tree?

EDNA

Please don't!

GINGER

It's not like I can cross me legs,
is it Eddie? Anyway, I'm getting
quite good at the lady's assisted
piddle. I'm hoping they'll make it
a demonstration event at the next
Paralympics.

CHARLIE

Just let me finish eating.

FX: The sounds of chewing.

GINGER

Thanks pet. What's in the sarnies?

EDNA

Corned beef and tomato.

CHARLIE

I've got jello shots in mine!

GINGER

I'll have some of that.

FX: GINGER takes a bite out of CHARLIE's sandwich.

CHARLIE

Ginger! Hands off my sandwich!
I don't know where you've been.

GINGER

Oh, come on. I thought you street
folk liked to share things.

CHARLIE

Some things, but not herpes.

GINGER

I told you, that was just a blister. You're just jealous that I have a better sex life than you.

CHARLIE

It's tough to be romantic in an old skip.

EDNA

We'll have to nominate you for Changing Rooms, dear.

CHARLIE

I did used to have an interior design business, remember! I haven't always been a wino.

GINGER

No, it used to be rough cider, didn't it?

CHARLIE

The rougher the better.

EDNA

I thought you were an accountant?

CHARLIE

Excuse me for having a varied career.

GINGER

Come on Charlie boy. I'm bloody bursting!

FX: GINGER's mobility scooter hums.

CHARLIE

Right behind you, Lady Di.

FX: CHARLIE's footsteps follow the humming.

EDNA

Christ George. How did it come to this!

SCENE 17.

GINGER

Bloody hell son, keep me steady,
unless you want to get splashed
with Ginger pop!

CHARLIE

(teeth clenched with
effort)

I'm trying sweetie, but you're not
as light as you were when you could
still do a double salto with a half-
twist!

GINGER

You cheeky bugger! I haven't
gained an ounce, I checked last
week.

CHARLIE

Where did you weigh yourself? The
moon?

GINGER

Just keep me steady, I could do
without any friction burns off of
these tree roots.

CHARLIE

Come on then, I thought you were
bursting?

GINGER

I'm trying. I'm not used to having
an audience.

CHARLIE

You are according to the graffiti
on the side of your flat.

GINGER

Smartarse!

(pause)

How come Edna hasn't said anything
yet? Didn't she like it?

CHARLIE

I don't think she's noticed yet.
I'm sure she'll realise soon,
though.

GINGER

I hope we've done the right thing.
I haven't seen anyone with such a
stiff upper lip, since Katie Price
had her last round of dermal
fillers.

CHARLIE

I'm surprised you didn't go
straight from the parallel bars to
the diplomatic service.

GINGER

Parallel bars would be your idea of
heaven wouldn't they Charlie?

CHARLIE

Touchette Ginge!

FX: GINGER passes water.

GINGER

Ooh, there we go. Nothing like a
good laff to get the juices
flowing.

CHARLIE

(embarrassed)
Thank god!

SCENE 18.

FX: The 3 BOYS are now sat on a roundabout, as it turns
slowly around. BOY 1 is using a WALKING STICK to propel
them.

BOY 1

(laughing)
OMG! I think the tramp is doing
the crippled girl behind a tree!

BOY 3

No way!

BOY 1

He bloody is. Look!

BOY 2

Well, they're not making babies,
he's on his knees.

BOY 3
I think he's having an early lunch.
Do you get me?

BOY 2
Eww, that's sick. In broad
daylight too!

BOY 3
Don't like girls do you, sunshine?

BOY 2
Yeah, I just think it's a bit wrong
with a handicapped, that's all.

BOY 1
I think it's phat!

FX: BOY 3 stops the roundabout with his foot and his mobile
phone bleeps.

PHONE A.I.
Starting video mode

BOY 2
(laughing)
You're filming it!? Is that going
on your Insta, perv?

BOY 3
No, it's just for me.

BOY 2
What's appenin' now? Homeless
Harry is turning his head away.

BOY 3
Maybe he's changed his mind and
he's really as gay as you are.

BOY 2
Shut it!

BOY 1
Oh shit. That's what they're
doing, she's having a bleeding
slash!

BOY 3
(he puts his phone down)
Yuck, that's too pervy for me man.

BOY 2

No, I mean, I think that's all she was ever doing.

BOY 3

I thought those wheel chair freaks all pissed in a bag!

BOY 1

Did you get dropped on your head much when you was a kid, bro?

SCENE 19.

MARY (O.S.)

(her voice is tinny)

..and because I'd won three games in a row, she calls me the Jerry-hat-trick! Will you come this week?

EDNA

(sniggering)

No thank you Mary, I'd rather not. I know it'll be company, but I do find bingo rather
(pause)
unsophisticated.

MARY

OK, Miss La-Dee-Da. Too good for bingo are you?

EDNA

Sorry. It's not that I think I'm too good for bingo, Mary. It's more that bingo isn't good enough for me.

MARY

So what does that say about the rest of us, Edna?

EDNA

Well, you're still welcome to come to the bridge club, just don't yell "snap" into Muriel's hearing aid next time.

MARY

I think I'll give it a miss. I don't like handling those cards. They're a germ factory

EDNA

But you don't mind handling someone else's balls, at skittles?

(realising what she just said)

Ah, um, I'll see you at the charity shop on Wednesday instead. Byee.

FX: EDNA puts her phone back in her hand bag.

FX: GINGER & CHARLIE approach

EDNA (CONT'D)

You two took your time.

GINGER

You try balancing on a tree stump, when you can't feel anything lower than your minge.

EDNA

I hate that word.

CHARLIE

Don't go telling her that! It'll only make her say something worse!

GINGER

Well, all us girls have got one Edna, even you. It's only a c...

CHARLIE

(interrupting)

So, what have we missed Edna? Seen any flashers, maybe the phantom dog fowler of old Cardiff town?

GINGER

I don't think they have flashers anymore. It's all webcams and online now.

CHARLIE

It is a bit too convenient these days. Taken all the thrill out of it.

GINGER

Bloody right, it's very convenient. I was thinking of starting me own web-channel.

(MORE)

GINGER (CONT'D)
Apparently, there's guys kinky for
lasses like me! They call it
"devotism."

EDNA
Charlie, pass the girl a sandwich
to shut her up, for God's sake.

FX: EDNA takes a sandwich and a flask out of her bag,
unscrewing the lid.

GINGER
Cheers Eddie!

FX: the sound of chewing.

EDNA
Those boys are a bit old for the
roundabout, aren't they?

CHARLIE
Yes. They look like they'd be more
suited to a zip wire.

GINGER
Hold on, I saw those lads hanging
around by the toilets earlier. I
think one's got a crowbar.

EDNA
The little swines!

GINGER
(shouting)
Hey! You lot, come over here, I've
got a few things to say to you.

CHARLIE
Fat chance of that.

GINGER
Come on gang. Chair: Charles
Xavier mode!

FX: CHARLIE and EDNA stand up and stride purposefully towards
the playground. GINGER follows on her scooter.

SCENE 20.

BOY 2
Shit, The Z-Team are coming, let's
leg it?

FX: The 3 BOYS get up from the roundabout and run towards some nearby bushes. After a few moments, CHARLIE, EDNA and GINGER arrive.

GINGER
Where did they go?

CHARLIE
Bugger! We must have lost them
when Edna dropped her flask.

EDNA
That's right. Blame the pensioner.
If you'd dropped your wine bottle,
we'd still be back there waiting
for you to mop it all up.

CHARLIE
Edna darling, vitriol does not
become you.

GINGER
(laughing)
I love it when you talk posh,
Charlie.

EDNA
I hope that's not a fetish, as
well.

GINGER
Oh, I hadn't thought.
(to CHARLIE)
Fancy doing some market research
pet?

CHARLIE
I'd rather catch the toilet
wreckers, at the moment.

EDNA
(pause)
There's somebody smoking behind
those bushes.

GINGER
That'll be them!

SCENE 21.

FX: The 3 BOYS are laughing as they pass another cigarette between them. There is a hum of traffic.

BOY 1
That was like being chased by cast
of The Muppets.

BOY 3
(alarmed)
Look! The freakazoids are on our
case again!

BOY 2
Shit! I left the walking stick
there. My nan'll kill me if I
don't take it round the home for
grandad, like I promised.
She knows the old bat too, if she
clocks me, she'll be telling her
I've been smoking too!

BOY 1
Let's go down the Bay for a bit
then, it's shit here anyway. You
can get the stick when the three
wackos get hauled back to the crazy
house.

BOY 3
Yeah, we'll find some stray dogs
and tie rockets to their tails,
like we did last year.

BOY 2
Cool!

FX: The 3 BOYS break into a run and head off into the
distance.

FX: GINGER arrives on her scooter followed by CHARLIE and
EDNA. CHARLIE is trying to catch his breath.

GINGER
Well, you two weren't much help, I
could have moved faster than either
of you, even without the bloody
scooter!

CHARLIE
(still panting)
Sorry, Dame Tanni. We just thought
they might be a bit more
cooperative if we didn't look like
we were going to gore them with our
horns and toss them into the crowd.

EDNA
(shouting)
Go on, run away, you little
cowards!

GINGER
Are you alright Charlie?

CHARLIE
(out of breath)
Yes. Don't do much running these
days.

EDNA
Except for last orders, maybe?

CHARLIE
Edna, I'm deeply hurt.

GINGER
Well, we won't catch them now.

CHARLIE
Let's go back to the playground and
see if they left any evidence. You
said they had a crowbar didn't you
Ginger? Well, they haven't taken
it with them, from what I saw?

EDNA
Ooh, this is almost as exciting as
double pension day!

SCENE 22.

FX: A swing squeaks slowly.

GINGER
Well, it did look like a crowbar
from a distance. Maybe they
swapped it?

CHARLIE
Yes, I remember that being one of
Noel Edmunds most requested swaps.
A crowbar for a walking stick.

GINGER
Well, you can still do a lot of
damage with a walking stick!

CHARLIE

Of course, Charlie Chaplin was an infamous vandal, if I remember correctly.

EDNA

Stop it you two, you'll...
(her voice tails off)

GINGER

You OK Eddie?

EDNA

(stifling a sob)
I just, I just remembered the last time I was sat on these swings, that's all.

CHARLIE

Go on.

EDNA

March 12th 1975, it was a Sunday.

GINGER

Blimey, no wonder other old people get dementia: you've had everyone else's share of brain cells!

CHARLIE

What happened Edna?

EDNA

We'd taken George's little niece Christine to the park for the afternoon. The little bugger ran us ragged; we were just taking a break while she ate her ice cream. That's when...

GINGER

Go on pet.

EDNA

(choking back tears)
That's when he asked me to marry him.

GINGER

Oh flower. Did he have a diamond ring and everything?

EDNA

Did he hell as like. I'll swear he only asked me because there was a plastic one in Chrissy's Lucky Bag, but I said yes and he was stuck with me for 40 years.

FX: GINGER drives her scooter to EDNA's side.

GINGER

That's lovely Edna. The park must have been a special place for you.

EDNA

For me perhaps, not for George. He wasn't a very sociable man. Combine that with a loathing for open spaces and he considered himself to be in purgatory.

CHARLIE

(triumphant)

I told you he wasn't a fan Ginge!

EDNA

His idea of fresh air was having a smoke out of the living room window.

FX: CHARLIE walks behind EDNA and gently starts pushing her swing.

GINGER

Charlie!

EDNA

It's fine Veronica. Quite exhilarating actually.

SCENE 23 - LATER.

FX: EDNA is swinging back and forth on the squeaky swing. GINGER is on the roundabout, being pushed by CHARLIE.

GINGER

Weee! Push the roundabout faster Charlie! I haven't had so much fun since Ingrid Vatson caught the crotch of her leotard on the pommel horse and showed the whole Olympic judging panel her fandango.

EDNA
(laughing despite herself)
That would be a "nul point" from
me. I'm afraid.

CHARLIE
My turn!

FX: CHARLIE runs to the slide. Climbs the ladder and slides
down.

EDNA
Charlie, you'll break something
going head first down the slide!

GINGER
Yeah, like his hip flask!

CHARLIE
(in a Geordie accent)
Hadaway and shite Ginger!

GINGER
Do you have to try and reduce me to
a northern stereotype, Charlie boy?
I thought you Queer As Folk lot
were a bit more PC?

CHARLIE
Sorry Veronica.

GINGER
(exaggerating her accent)
Ecky thump! There's no need to
drop the "V" bomb!

SCENE 24.

FX: GINGER drives back to the side of the bench, CHARLIE and
EDNA follow and sit down. The bench creaks.

CHARLIE
That was fun!

GINGER
Aye it was. I still think those
lads smashed up the wobblys' rest-
room though. Guess we just goanna
have to keep an eye out for them.

EDNA

Maybe not. I think I recognised one of the boys. You wait until I see his grandmother, Jean!

GINGER

Result! We could just go straight to the Police?

CHARLIE

Let's just see shall we, we haven't got any real proof yet.

EDNA

I think Charles is right.

GINGER

What do Cagney and Lacey suggest then?

CHARLIE

Umm...

GINGER

I thought as much!

EDNA

I'm thinking dear.

GINGER

I wish I could still train, I used to get the best ideas then.

CHARLIE

Really?

GINGER

Yes, it's the buzz from the brain chemicals. You know, like the ideas you get when you drink. Just not complete shite, that's all!

CHARLIE

Thanks.

EDNA

You shouldn't make fun of his alcoholism. It's an illness.

CHARLIE

Excuse me, I've already told you, I'm not an alcoholic. Alcoholics need a drink.

(MORE)

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

(pause)

I've already got one!

FX: CHARLIE takes a swig from his bottle.

GINGER

Got it! Charlie, go and take a look at the scene of the crime and look for clues. We'll stay here and keep watch in case they come back.

CHARLIE

Right away Chief Superintendent Ginger. I'll call you on my walkie talkie if I need any back up.

FX: CHARLIE stands and walks off.

SCENE 25.

MUSIC CUE: "I Touch Myself" by The Divinyls

FX: WORKMEN ONE & TWO are noisily hammering and sawing, respectively. A THIRD is just opening a can of lager. CHARLIE walks towards them.

CHARLIE

(under his breath)

I do looove men in overalls!
Sex, drink and rock 'n' roll! This
day suddenly got a lot more
interesting.

FX: CHARLIE walks a bit closer to them.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Morning gents. How long is the refurb scheduled for?

(pause)

Great music choice by the way!

MAN 3

(in a strong Welsh valleys
accent)

A couple of days, I'm afraid butty.
There's a lot of work in these
little facilities. We haven't
stopped, like.

FX: MAN 3 takes a swig of his lager

MAN 3 (CONT'D)
They're dead fiddly see!

CHARLIE
Indeed. Shouldn't you have a sign
up or something, so people know?

MAN 3
We did, we did! Had a fag break
and some bugger ran off with it.
They'd nick the lead off a church
roof, round 'ere!

CHARLIE
I'm sure!
OK, thanks. I'd better get back to
my friends, it's almost my lunch
time.

SCENE 26.

GINGER
He's a good boy, isn't he?

EDNA
I know. Sad he can't find anything
better to do with his life.

GINGER
(defensively)
What? Like knitting tea cosies and
complaining to the council?

EDNA
I just wish there was something we
could do to help him.

GINGER
We could always buy him some
mixers?

EDNA
It's not just a big joke dear.
What if he gets liver damage or
something?

GINGER
Well, if they had to take it out,
he'd probably eat it with a fine
chianti.

EDNA

Let's hope we don't get to find out. I'd hate to lose him too.

GINGER

You're doing really well flower. I bet you find it lonely at home without him?

EDNA

It affects you in ways you hadn't considered. There's always something new to catch you out.

FX: EDNA gets a tissue out of her handbag.

EDNA (CONT'D)

(emotionally)

Growing older never bothered me when he was around. Life was a journey we were taking together, so it didn't matter so much that one day we'd get our tickets punched for the last time.

(pause)

I'm sorry, I shouldn't be complaining, not with everything you have to put up with.

GINGER

You're entitled Eddie. We all get dealt some shit sandwiches now and again. You just have to try and choose the spiciest mayo to cover up the taste, as best you can. Growing old terrifies me.

EDNA

Nice metaphor dear

(pause)

It's all those things we used to joke about, like George having more hair in his ears than on his head and me peeing a little if I laughed too much at The Royale Family. Now they're just reminders of all the worse things to come. Like how I won't have anyone to see the funny side, if I find a pubic hair in one of my meals-on-wheels.

GINGER

(laughing)

You don't have to wait until you're an old gripper for that sort of thing pet. Me brothers never got tired of waiting until I'd drunk me tea, to tell me one of them had nobbed it.

EDNA

Men can be dreadful creatures.

GINGER

Anyway, you're gonna have us to have a laugh with if you find a bit of the shepherd in his pie!

EDNA

God, I hope so. I really do

SCENE 27.

FX: The THREE boys are walking to the shop and giggling as they smoke another cigarette.

BOY 2

We'd better put that out, else Ritchie Sunak will get his Sari in a knot.

FX: The THREE boys giggle again as one of them stamps his foot on the cigarette.

FX: The shop door opens with a buzz and ADI steps on to the pavement.

BOY 1

What's up Andy? Run out of curry?

THREE BOYS

(sniggering)

ADI

It's Adi! Well, it's actually Mr. Patel to you and I don't want to see any of you white boys in my shop again.

BOY 3

Why's that?

BOY 2
You can't ban us anyway, that's
racialist!

ADI
Buying fireworks with false ID
carries a maximum fine of £5,000
and up to 10 years in prison.

BOY 1
(scared)
What?!

ADI
You've got worse things to worry
about, though. Your Nana Jean
knows what you did!

BOY 2.
(moans in concern)

BOY 1
Come on guys, there's plenty of
shitty little corner shops we can
use instead. Leg it!

FX: The THREE BOYS run off down the street

ADI
That's it run away! I hope those
fireworks blow your tiny little
brains out!

SCENE 28.

GINGER
You've still got your Susan though,
too. I know you said she's a
selfish cow, but today must be a
tough day for her too?

EDNA
I doubt it. Sometimes, I think I'm
the only one who misses George. I
couldn't bear it if he was just
forgotten. Susan doesn't seem to
be bothered at all anymore and he
doted on her.

GINGER
Come on you poor booger, me and
Charlie care!

(MORE)

GINGER (CONT'D)

Maybe she just finds it too hard to talk about it, if they were really close like?

EDNA

Maybe she's just a spoilt, rotten, little bitch! I told George she'd turn out like that. Spare the rod.

GINGER

Rod? I thought your boy's name was Adam?

EDNA

(chuckling, despite herself)

He's a good boy, but it's a long way to New Zealand.

GINGER

Has he still got the bee farm with a right whore?

EDNA

It's called an apiary and her name is Aroha.

GINGER

Oh, sorry. I thought it might have been a mail order bride sort of thing.

EDNA

(giggling)

No Manuka for you this Christmas!

GINGER

That's alright Eddie. I prefer Martmite, anyway.

EDNA

Just a minute.
There's Jean, under that tree! You wait until I tell her what her vandal of a grandson has been up to!

GINGER

Go for it, girlfriend! Want me to come with?

EDNA

No, you're fine, I'll take my handbag though

GINGER
Why, what's in it? A taser?

FX: EDNA picks her bag up from the bench and strides off.

GINGER (CONT'D)
(quietly to herself)
I think I'll have a tab; this is
turning into a bloody stressful
day.

FX: A lighter flicks and GINGER inhales deeply.

FX: CHARLIE softly walks up behind GINGER.

CHARLIE
(deliberately coughing the
words)
Lung cancer!

GINGER
(flinching)
Christ Charlie! I could have burnt
meself.

CHARLIE
I thought you'd given up tugging on
the coffin nails?

GINGER
Not quite, obvs!

CHARLIE
If you start chain smoking again,
you'll give yourself a stroke or
something.

GINGER
Oh right. Partial paralysis, not
much of an incentive to quit, is it
pet?

CHARLIE
And all the other stuff.

GINGER
The Surgeon General needs to
practice what he preaches!

CHARLIE
Fair enough, let's have a drag
then.
(he inhales)

SCENE 28.

JEAN

(into her mobile phone)
Don't worry, they'll be getting a
bloody mouthful from me too!

FX: EDNA arrives at the tree. JEAN closes her phone with a
snap and zips it into her purse.

EDNA

Hello Jean.

JEAN

(she looks up and huffs)
What is it today, Enda? Was I a
couple of bob short in my subs for
the whist drive again? Maybe the
tinned goods I donated, weren't
nutritious enough for the friggin'
food bank!

EDNA

There's no need for that. I never
see you volunteering to organise
anything at the Community Centre!

JEAN

Well, if I did it would be
something more interesting than
"pin the tail on the donkey"!

EDNA

I don't seem to remember you opting
out of that one.

JEAN

I just spiced it up a bit.

EDNA

You knew dammed well you weren't
supposed to pin it there, Jean!

JEAN

(chuckling)
What if I did?

EDNA steps closer to JEAN.

EDNA

There's more important things to
discuss than your phallic
fixations.

JEAN
Really! Like what?

EDNA
Your grandson for a start.

JEAN
(sighs)
What's Anthony been up to now? He's
already in trouble for not taking
his grandad his walking stick and
torturing my neighbours pussy.

EDNA
(embarrassed by the sexual
connotations)
Oh, yuck!

JEAN
Poor cat will never be the same
again.

EDNA
(accusingly)
That's the least of your worries.
Him and his loutish friends
vandalised the park's public
conveniences this morning!

JEAN
Now that's where you're wrong!
That boy may not be perfect, I'll
grant you, but he's not a vandal.

EDNA
He was spotted at the scene of the
crime earlier, looking very shifty.

JEAN
Well, I'm sorry to disappoint you
Madam Chairwoman, but I dropped him
and his mates off myself, on my way
to the precinct. Those loos were
already wrecked when we got there!

EDNA
(taken aback)
Oh, if you're sure about that, then
I apologise.

JEAN
I think the word is circumcision
evidence, Edna.

EDNA
Err, circumstantial, actually.

JEAN
Well actually, Hetty Wainthropp, you're a bloody snob. George was lucky he got out when he did. Imagine growing old with an old shrew like you!

EDNA
(close to tears)
I am sorry Jean, I shouldn't have jumped to conclusions.

JEAN
(feeling awkward)
Umm, er.
(she starts sniffing)

JEAN (CONT'D)
Christ! Can you smell piss Edna?

SCENE 29.

GINGER
How did it go at the crime scene?

CHARLIE
No crime actually, there was a bunch of workmen just back from their lunch break. They're gutting the handicrapper to upgrade it. Apparently, some former professional athlete has been banging on to the authorities about it not being up to code.

GINGER
No shit! They could have put a sign up or something.

CHARLIE
They did. Some scum-bag pinched it while they were taking their morning break. Not sure if that included a KitKat or not.

GINGER
Well, I hope it won't take too long, I'd rather leave peeing against a tree to Lassie and his mates.

CHARLIE

I know.

(pause)

I think we both forget how even simple things can be tough for you.

GINGER

Tell me about it! Sometimes, by the time I've got from the dunny seat, back onto me scooter and then off me scooter and onto me bed, it's time to pee again. It feels like me whole life is built around the bloody lavvy!

CHARLIE

Sounds like a seventy's gay cliché...

GINGER

Aye. Without the thrill of anonymous sex though.

SCENE 30.

FX: A busy precinct with sounds of traffic, cafes and bars.
BOY 1 lights a match. A dog growls.

BOY 3

Hold the bloody dog steady, you nob-head. You're not trying to knock one out!

BOY 2

I can't help it, he's really squirming.

BOY 1

You'd think he was a bloody Great Dane, the way you're carrying on.

FX: BOY 2 yelps and falls backwards and the DOG bites him hard. The DOG starts barking and runs off into the distance, knocking BOY 1 on his way past, who stumbles.

BOY 2

(screaming in pain)

Oh, my Christ, I think he's bitten my goolies off!

BOY 1
 Sod your goolies, bloody thing
 knocked the match out of me hand.
 It's in our bloody fireworks box!

BOY 3
 Oh, sh...
 (interrupted)

FX: A very loud fizz and a series of bangs.

SCENE 31.

CHARLIE
 Are you sure you don't want me to
 come with you to your appointment
 next week?

GINGER
 No pet, but thanks. If it's more
 bad news, I'd rather just absorb it
 on me own.

CHARLIE
 How do you cope?

GINGER
 Try not to look too far ahead. I
 try not to look behind either.
 Just makes it harder to think about
 what I used to be able to do and
 the places I saw when I was
 competing.

CHARLIE
 There's a lot to be said about
 living in the moment, you...

GINGER
 (Interrupting)
 If you start banging on about
 bloody mindfulness again, I'll be
 finishing off that bottle of vino
 cheapo for you! Let's lighten it
 up shall we, it's Eddie's day to be
 a miserable shite anyway.

CHARLIE
 Indeed! Where is Miss Marple?

GINGER
 Oh God, she's just gone to confront
 one of those lads' grandmothers.
 (MORE)

GINGER (CONT'D)
Meant business too, she took "the bag".

CHARLIE
Oh Jesus, do you think we should call the riot police, just in case?

GINGER
No need, here she comes! Quick, put the bloody tab out!

FX: CHARLIE stamps out the cigarette.

EDNA
(sniffing as she sits down)
Mmmm?
(she pauses, before moving on)
Well, I've never been so humiliated!

GINGER
What about when the W.I. suspended you for racketeering, after your dodgy take-over of the fete's lemonade concession?

EDNA
That was a misunderstanding. Mary was retiring from the stall anyway; my gift of hand-knitted, bed socks and homemade shortbread was completely unrelated.

CHARLIE
Tell that to Special Branch!

EDNA
Anyway, don't change the subject. Jean wiped the floor with me! Apparently, she'd only just dropped the boys off when Veronica saw them by the conveniences. She said she could hear her swearing a mile off. Apparently, they're terrified of her. That's why they ran off earlier.

GINGER
(shouting)
Scared of me! I'm a bloody pussycat!

CHARLIE

That you are: Shere Kahn!

GINGER

What? You really think I'm scary?

EDNA

Veronica, you have a certain
(pause)
presence, shall we say?

CHARLIE

Yeah, a bit like Michael Myers
presence.

EDNA

Or Pol Pot.

GINGER

Howay, man!

EDNA

Don't be a cliché dear.

GINGER

Racist!

SCENE 32.

FX: There is an explosion of sounds coming from the lane, as the fireworks all go off at once. Footsteps are approaching. BOY 2 is rolling on the floor and moaning in agony.

BOY 2

Oh, my bleedin' bollocks!

FX: The footsteps stop.

JEAN

Well, I was going to give you a
piece of my mind Anthony, but it
looks like somebody got there
first. Who have you upset this
time?

BOY 1

He didn't upset nobody, bloody dog
bit him in the knackers!

JEAN

Looks like you've got what you
deserved. I'm ashamed to be your
grandmother sometimes.

BOY 2

(still in a lot of pain)
I'm sorry nan. It hurts so bad
though! What if I can't have kids
now?

JEAN

I don't think we'll be that lucky
boy.
Don't you think that you two are
getting off scott free either. I
want that fake ID, then we'll be
taking a trip to your parents,
after you've apologised to my
neighbour!

SCENE 33.

EDNA

So, the question is, if Jean's
demon spawn didn't do it, who did?

CHARLIE

Three council workmen and a couple
of sledgehammers apparently.

EDNA

No! Are you sure they were
council?

CHARLIE

Absolutely! I'd recognise the
corduroy overalls and logo on the
lower back anywhere.
(thinking)
Strangely attractive. I must be
turning into even more of a pervert
in my middle age.

GINGER

(laughing)
Oh canny! You're priceless pet!

EDNA

Charlie, don't be uncalled for.
They should have used an "Out of
Order" sign!

CHARLIE

They did apparently. Swiped when
they were on their break.

GINGER

They'll pinch anything that isn't
nailed down around here.

CHARLIE

At least Jesus would be safe.

EDNA

Smut and sacrilege. You're on form
today Charles.

CHARLIE

It's the way I was dragged up!

EDNA

So, who schooled you to behave like
that? Your doctor father or
headmistress mother?

CHARLIE

Mainly, the dope smoking gardener.

GINGER

How wonderful to have staff!

(pause)

Oh yeah, I got you something Edna.

FX: GINGER reaches into her bum bag, followed by the sound of
rustling tissue paper.

EDNA

George's watch

(pause)

and it's working! How on earth did
you...

GINGER

I bumped into your sister Marj the
other week. Christ she's even more
up herself than you are! She said
you hadn't been able to find anyone
to fix it, being an antique like.
Anyway, me uncle runs that
specialist jewellers off the High
Street. There's' not much he can't
do with a pair of tweezers and a
magnifier.
That's when he isn't busy with a
hand mirror and a razorblade, that
is!

EDNA

It's all been cleaned too. That's
so kind of you

(MORE)

EDNA (CONT'D)
(pause)
Ginger.

GINGER
Don't mention it. Marj was surprisingly up for a little petty theft. If I was you, I'd check your knicker draw. That's where you keep the petty cash for the charity shop, isn't it?

CHARLIE
Edna's knicker draw. What a thought. If I wasn't already a homosexual, that would definitely have done the job for me.

GINGER
What did turn you, Charlie?

CHARLIE
I never had to be turned. My mother used to put me on top of the Christmas tree, before I was old enough to talk.

EDNA
Charles!

CHARLIE
It's true, she used to buy Fairy Liquid, just so I had to do all the washing up.

GINGER
(laughing)
Stop it! I'll be needing another pee at this rate.

SCENE 44.

FX: The 3 WORKMEN are packing up their tools.

MAN 2
Are you sure about this new sign boss?

MAN 3
Yeah, if the nagging, little, Geordie has-been kicks off, we'll just blame it on those three lads who were hanging around earlier.

FX: MAN 3 hangs the SIGN on to a door.

MAN 1
"Strictly No Gingers."
(laughing)
Classic!

SCENE 45.

EDNA
That dumpy little boy has left his
skateboard behind. Did you see
where he went?

CHARLIE
I think I heard an ice cream van a
while back. If it didn't stop, he
could have followed it to anywhere
in South Wales by now.

GINGER
I suppose it might not be his
fault. It could be like a thyroid
thing.

EDNA
Is that really a medical condition?
I'm sure it's just an urban myth,
like you're never more than six
feet away from a rat or the female
orgasm!

CHARLIE & GINGER gasp.

EDNA (CONT'D)
I'll go and see if he's left
anything to identify himself by.

GINGER
Go for it, Nancy Drew!

FX: EDNA stands and walks off to the skateboard.

CHARLIE
She's got a good heart really.

GINGER
I know. I just feel sorry for the
poor bastard she ripped it out of!

CHARLIE
Do you think she was less uptight
before her husband died?

GINGER

Well, she couldn't have been more uptight. She'd have made Margaret Thatcher look laid back.

CHARLIE

Now you know I don't like the "T" Word!

GINGER

Sorry Charlie. But how can you get wound up about Section 28, you must have been about five at the time?

CHARLIE

It's part of the race memory for all my people, Ginger. You know, like all you lot can trace your lineage back to Mary Queen of Scots
(pause)
or Bonnie Langford.

GINGER

I gotcha. Watchout! Legs together, Vera is coming back.

FX: EDNA walks back to the bench and sits down, putting the CHUBBY BOY'S Skateboard ramp, heavily on the bench next to her.

EDNA

(sitting down)
Charles, what did you say that workman told you at the toilet block?

GINGER

That he should stop cottaging and get back to his Happy Shopper plonk!

CHARLIE

Give it a rest Geordie Shore! He said they did put up an "Out of Order" sign, but it went missing while they were on one of their, not infrequent, fag breaks.

EDNA

Anything like this one?

EDNA picks up the boy's home-made skateboard ramp.

GINGER & CHARLIE
(read in unison)
"Out Of Order!"

GINGER
Wait 'til I get me hands on the
tubby, little sign stealer!

EDNA
Very irresponsible, I'd like to
have a word with his mother.

CHARLIE
All very well, but are we going to
stake out the park all night, in
the hope he comes back for his HGV
skateboard?

GINGER
Good point, I'm pretty bushed after
all the excitement and I do need
another pee now. I don't suppose
he left his business card?

EDNA
No, nothing and I have a Women's
Institute meeting in twenty
minutes.

CHARLIE
(shaking his now empty
wine bottle)
And I need a top up!

MUSIC CUE: A distant rendition of "Greensleeves" fades in.

GINGER
Wait. That noise! Isn't that
the...?

ALL
The Ice cream van!

EDNA & CHARLIE stand up excitedly.

CHARLIE
That tune will be like the Greek
Sirens, luring the portly little
sign-robber on to their sweet,
vanilla-flavoured rocks!

EDNA
You wait until I find out who his
parents are!

GINGER

It'll be a while before his thighs
can rub their way to the tuck shop
again!

CHARLIE

Have I got time to nip to the Off
Licence first?

They ALL hurry off.

SCENE 46 - LATER

They all return at a lower pace.

EDNA

We should have guessed the
Ice-Cream Van would be driven by
his Uncle.

GINGER

Bloody typical pet.

CHARLIE

I don't think I've ever been banned
from an ice-cream van before!

EDNA

(chuckling)

You don't say! Anyway, we'd better
be getting off, I've a

(stopping as she notices
something)

Just a minute, that plaque on the
bench is new! Let's have a read.

CHARLIE (V/O)

This plaque is in memory of George
Dancey. Loving husband to Edna,
doting father of Susan and Adam and
a friend to all who knew him. Much
missed and always remembered.

GINGER (V/O)

He hated this park and everything
in it...

GINGER (CONT'D)

Do you like it pet?

EDNA
(happy tears)
It's...perfect...Thank You!

SCENE 47.

GINGER
Home at last! Now I just need to
get on the bed.

FX: GINGER winces as she transfers herself from her scooter to her bed. She is listening to a YOUNG FEMALE voice on television, as she does so.

YOUNG FEMALE (V.O.)
People just don't realise the
effort you have to put in, to look
this good on a reality TV show. It
may seem all luxury and cocktails
in the sun, but it's literally the
hardest job in the world!

GINGER pants with effort.

GINGER
(annoyed)
I'll literally put me bloody fist
in your empty-headed face, if I
ever find myself on a beach with
you!
(pause)
Jesus, you'd make Karen Carpenter
look greedy.

SCENE 48.

FX: CHARLIE is preparing his sleeping bag, as the noise of fireworks go off above him.

CHARLIE
Just time for a night cap.

FX: CHARLIE unscrews a bottle and pours the contents into a mug and sips it thoughtfully.

SCENE 49.

FX: EDNA is on the phone.

EDNA

No Susan. I was fine, my friends did something really special for me, your dad would have loved it, like he loved you.

(pause)

Yes, I'm sure I'll see you soon. Don't put yourself out though.

(pause)

I know it's best not to leave David alone for too long. Only you know if you did the right thing giving him another chance.

(pause)

Yes, I'm sure it'll clear up, if you both finish the course of antibiotics.

SCENE 49.

GINGER

Right, where did I leave off.

FX: GINGER turns on an old-fashioned, cassette recorder.

GINGER (CONT'D)

Red Heads Have More Fun. Chapter Three. Gymnasts Do It Standing On Their Hands.

SCENE 50.

FX: The sound of the fireworks is closer.

CHARLIE

I hope nobody mistakes me for a guy and sets fire to me again this year!

SCENE 51.

EDNA

Alexa, lights out please.

FX: A click as the lights go off.

ALEXA

Goodnight, Edna. I hope you had a perfect day!

EDNA
(agitated)
Look here woman, it's not too late
to swap you for a Google Assistant!

THE END