

EASTENDERS

EPISODE NINE HUNDRED AND SIXTY TWO

By

RICHARD DAVIDSON

SCENE 962/1. VIC UPSTAIRS. INT. DAY
LIGHT. 17.00.

STAGE 1

[PEGGY'S IMMACULATE HAIR IS AS
FLAWLESS AS HER MAKE-UP AND NAILS.
EARLY FOR HER DINNER DATE, BAG AT THE
READY, SHE PICKS UP HER SMARTEST HIGH
HEELS AND MAKES HER WAY OVER TO THE
WINDOW WHICH OVERLOOKS THE SQUARE...

...AS SHE RAISES A STOCKINGED FOOT TO
SLIP THEM ON, PEGGY'S WORLD OF
PERFECTION IS SHATTERED BY JACK'S car
- THAT SCABBY OLD HEAP IS STILL
CLUTTERING UP HER SQUARE..]

CUT TO:

SCENE 962/2. SQUARE. EXT. DAY LIGHT.
17.00T/C.

LOT

[...AND JACK IS CLIMBING OUT WEARING
JEANS AND A LEATHER JACKET. HE LOOKS
UP, SEES PEGGY, SMILES AND WAVES..]

CUT TO:

SCENE 962/3. VIC UPSTAIRS. INT. DAY
LIGHT. 17.00/T.C.

STAGE 1

[PEGGY DUCKS BACK BEHIND THE
CURTAINS, EAGER NOT TO LET JACK KNOW
SHE'S LOOKING]

CUT TO:

SCENE 962/4. PAT'S HOUSE. INT. DAY LIGHT.
17.25.

STUDIO B

[SITTING ROOM. IN THE CHAOTIC SQUAT THAT IS PAT'S FRONT ROOM, HONEY STRAIGHTENS BILLY'S TIE. HE'S LOOKING REALLY SMART IN A CRISPLY PRESSED SHIRT AND JACKET. LIKEWISE, HONEY'S REALLY MADE AN EFFORT]

HONEY: My horoscope this morning, it said 'Avoid confrontation at all cost.'

BILLY: So?

HONEY: Are we sure this meal's a good idea?

BILLY: Your Dad and Peggy, they're both reasonable people... underneath it all. Look, why we even worrying? It's just a curry.

HONEY: You're right. Just they're going to be family, and I really want them to like each other, that's all.

BILLY: And they will.

[billy gives honey a kiss as CARLY BARGES IN WITH A PLATE OF PASTA]

CARLY: Your Dad's in the hall.

[CARLY SITS ON THE SOFA, TURNS ON THE TV]

BILLY: I'll nip over, check Peggy's ready. Meet us at the Vic.

HONEY: Deep breaths...

BILLY: Don't worry, everything's going to be fine.

[AND BILLY LEAVES]

CUT TO:

SCENE 962/5. BRIDGE STREET. EXT. DAY
LIGHT. 17.28.

LOT

[WITH NIGHT DRAWING IN, STACEY'S PACKING UP HER STALL looking really down AS LITTLE MO WANDERS OVER FROM THE VIC. SHE LOOKS ROUGH, FEELS WORSE]

STACEY: Finished early, ain't ya?

LITTLE MO: Felt like the longest shift of my life. Peggy told me to go home.

STACEY: What is it with you today?

LITTLE MO: Went out with Jane last night.

STACEY: Yeah, I heard you come in. We all did.

LITTLE MO: Sorry about that.

STACEY: Good night was it?

LITTLE MO: From what I can remember. I ain't doing it again though.

STACEY: Gettin' to be a right little pair, you two.

LITTLE MO: I dunno about that. She's a good laugh.

STACEY: [BITTER] Well, enjoy it while it lasts.

[A BEAT. LITTLE MO CAN SEE STACEY'S UPSET]

LITTLE MO: Must be hard for you, I know, with Ruby gone. If you're feeling a bit lonely, maybe we could -

STACEY: [LAUGHS] Lonely? What makes you think I'm lonely?

LITTLE MO: Spend all your time with someone... when they go, leaves a big gap.

STACEY: We were mates for a bit. But truth is, she was a snooty cow from the off. Mates? I'd rather be on my own, thanks.

[A VOICE FROM BEHIND LITTLE MO..]

OLIVER: [OOV; BREEZILY] Hello!

[LITTLE MO TURNS TO SEE OLIVER STRIDING OVER FROM THE SURGERY, BRIEFCASE IN HAND, PLEASED TO SEE HER. LITTLE MO'S WORRIED, FEARING HE MAY HAVE HEARD ABOUT HER ESCAPADES..]

LITTLE MO: Don't say I been drinkin'. If he asks, I'm ill.

[LITTLE MO TURNS, WORRIED, TO FIND OLIVER BEHIND HER]

OLIVER: How are you?

[WHEN LITTLE MO SPEAKS SHE DIRECTS
HER VOICE TO ONE SIDE TO PREVENT HER
ODIOUS BREATH REACHING THE DOCTOR]

LITTLE MO: Fine. [SLIGHT BEAT] How are
you?

OLIVER: Fine. Six o'clock and I'm all
done for the day. Makes a nice change.

LITTLE MO: Great... [EMBARRASSED] Well
then, lovely talkin' to you, I'd best get
off.

[AND OLIVER WATCHES, BEMUSED, AS
LITTLE MO SCUTTLES BACK TOWARD HOME.
OLIVER TURNS TO STACEY]

STACEY: She don't feel too good...

CUT TO:

SCENE 962/6. PAT'S HOUSE. INT. DAY LIGHT.
17.29.

STUDIO B

[HALLWAY. KEVIN ENTERS PAT'S WITH AN AIR OF WEARIED RESIGNATION. THE TELLY BLASTS FROM THE SITTING ROOM. HE POPS HIS HEAD ROUND THE DOOR. CARLY'S SAT ON THE SOFA WITH A BOWL OF PASTA. SHE TURNS]

CARLY: Hiya, Dad, can we have a word about money?

KEVIN: You can have two. And you can probably guess what they are.

[KEVIN DUCKS BACK OUT OF THE SITTING ROOM..]

CARLY: [OOV] But, Dad -

[PULLS THE DOOR SHUT. IS THERE ANY CHANCE OF PEACE IN THIS HOUSE? LOOKS UP, SEES JACK, IN HIS FACE. HE CARRIES A BUNCH OF FLOWERS]

KEVIN: ...Alright?

JACK: Fine.

KEVIN: Can I help you?

JACK: Just waiting for Honey.

KEVIN: Right. [INDICATING HIS PREFERRED ROUTE TO THE KITCHEN, WHICH JACK IS BLOCKING] May I?

[AND JACK STANDS ASIDE, LETS HIM THROUGH. KEVIN WANDERS THROUGH TO THE KITCHEN. WE FOLLOW HIM IN. HE OPENS THE FRIDGE DOOR. LETS OUT A GRUNT OF ANNOYANCE]

JACK: Problem?

KEVIN: There used to be a bar of chocolate in here.

JACK: You must have mice.

KEVIN: Look, Jack, no offence, but I've spent all day talking to gormless punters, and -

JACK: [IN] You want to be left alone.

KEVIN: Yeah.

[BUT JACK DOESN'T GO. A BEAT. KEVIN LOOKS UP]

JACK: Keep a clear head, an' a tank full of diesel...

KEVIN: [CONFUSED] I'm sorry?

JACK: That's my advice.

KEVIN: [NON-PLUSSED] That's your advice for living, is it?... Always keep a tank full of diesel.

JACK: Go where you want. See who you want. Spend time on your own when you feel like it. No rules. No worries... Look, I've never done this before, but to be honest, mate, you look like you need some help.

KEVIN: Really...

JACK: My car. Little oasis in the scorching desert we call life. Yours for the night if you want it.

KEVIN: [HUMOURING HIM] Well, thanks for that, Jack. Much appreciated.

[HONEY BREEZES IN, READY FOR THE OFF]

HONEY: Are you ready then?

JACK: 'Course I am, love. Lead on.

[HONEY EXITS..]

Spare keys live up the exhaust pipe...

[AND JACK EXITS. OUT ON KEVIN,
SHAKING HIS HEAD, WEIRDO]

CUT TO:

SCENE 962/7. CAFE. INT. NIGHT. 17.35.

STAGE 1

[JANE'S BUSILY WASHING UP BEHIND THE COUNTER, AND DR. OLIVER'S EATING A MEAL IN THE BACKGROUND AS WE COME IN ON STACEY, NURSING A CUP OF TEA, PHONE IN HAND]

STACEY: [INTO MOBILE] Mum? It's Stacey. [A BEAT] ...Stacey. No, everything's fine, I just thought I'd ring for a chat... [A BEAT] No, it wasn't for anything important, just wanted to see how you're getting on in your new flat... OK, it doesn't matter if you're busy...

[ON STACEY, SUDDENLY FIGHTING DOWN HER DISAPPOINTMENT]

[INTO MOBILE] Some time when you're not then, eh?

[STACEY SNAPS HER PHONE SHUT AS BRADLEY ENTERS, FRESH FROM WORK. APPROACHES HER. SHE LOOKS UP. SAYS NOTHING. A BEAT]

BRADLEY: You got something to say to me?

STACEY: Not that I can think of.

[A BEAT. BRADLEY DECIDES TO STAY. SITS]

BRADLEY: If you were going to blow me out, couldn't you have done it to my face? Embarrassing standing there with your Uncle Charlie lyin' his head off, sayin' you was ill.

STACEY: How d'you know he was lyin'?

BRADLEY: Pat saw you with Ruby earlier on. [BEAT] How was she?

STACEY: Fine.

BRADLEY: If you wanted to spend the evening with her, I'd've understood.

STACEY: Didn't spend the evening with Ruby.

BRADLEY: So why didn't you want to see me?

STACEY: Just didn't.

BRADLEY: Have I done something wrong?

STACEY: Yeah, you have.

BRADLEY: What?

STACEY: You chose the wrong girl. So why don't you just clear off an' try again?

BRADLEY: [FRUSTRATED] What is it with you? How can you be one thing one day, completely different the next?

STACEY: 'Cause that's how people are, Bradley. You think you know them, you'd trust 'em with your life, and then they go and change on you.

BRADLEY: You're not making any sense -

STACEY: Spell it out for you, shall I?
Yesterday I was one person, today I'm
different. Yesterday we was going out,
today I couldn't care less if I never saw
you again.

[AND STACEY GETS UP AND STORMS OUT...
ON BRADLEY, CONFUSED AND UPSET]

CUT TO:

SCENE 962/8. VIC UPSTAIRS. INT. NIGHT.
17.40.

STAGE 1

[SITTING ROOM. PEGGY'S PUTTING ON A NECKLACE AS BILLY WAITS]

PEGGY: You sure curry was a good idea?

BILLY: What's wrong with curry?

PEGGY: Just lookin' at a poppadom gives you the runs.

BILLY: [AFFRONTED] It doesn't.

PEGGY: Nothing to be ashamed of. Some people just ain't designed for it.

BILLY: I love curry.

PEGGY: Just don't go ordering anything too hot just to impress that man. You want a korma, you ask for a korma.

[AND PEGGY EXITS]

CUT TO:

SCENE 962/9. VIC DOWNSTAIRS. INT. NIGHT.
17.41.

STAGE 1

[STRAIGHT IN ON JACK AS HE ENTERS WITH HONEY, it's moderatley busy early doors, and tracey & dawn are working the bar]

JACK: Not surprised she fancied a curry, be a pleasant cooling sensation after a day's fire breathing -

HONEY: [CHASTISING] Cut it out, Dad.

[JACK sees honey's worried, PUTS AN ARM AROUND Her..]

JACK: Don't worry, it'll be a wonderful night.

HONEY: So, you'll really try?

JACK: Have I ever let you down? [HONEY SHAKES HER HEAD] Come coffee and mints, she'll be eating out of my hand. [cont]

[JACK LOOKS UP, SEES PEGGY AND BILLY ENTER BEHIND THE BAR, billy punter side. JACK BEAMS OVER AND WAVES, PEGGY FORCES A SMILE AS BILLY WAVES BACK]

JACK: [cont] There she is. Little ray of sunshine...

[CUT TO PEGGY AS SHE TURNS AWAY TO THE OPTICS, AND THE SMILE FALLS FROM

HER FACE. SHE STARTS POURING HERSELF
A QUICK GIN AS BILLY LEANS IN,
CONCERNED]

BILLY: What's up?

PEGGY: He's doing it already.

BILLY: Doing what?

PEGGY: Mind games. Smiling an' noddin'
like Lord of the flamin' Manor. He is so
full of himself.

BILLY: [EXASPERATED] He's just being
friendly.

PEGGY: Yeah? Think I haven't met men like
him before?

BILLY: Peggy, we just want you to enjoy
yourself tonight. Clean slate. Honey an'
me, we just want one big happy family.

PEGGY: Well, that's absolutely fine by
me, Billy. No problem.
[cont]

[PEGGY KNOCKS BACK HER GIN]

PEGGY: [cont] I mean, I'll do my level
best with him 'cause I appreciate what
you're doing, darlin'. Only it ain't me
that causes all the trouble.

[AND PEGGY AND BILLY TURN TO SEE JACK
AND HONEY STOOD ON THE OTHER SIDE OF

THE BAR WITHIN EARSHOT. JACK THROWS
THE 'CHARM' SWITCH TO 'MAX']

JACK: Peggy, you look lovely.

[... PEGGY CLOCKS JACK'S JEANS AND
LEATHER JACKET]

PEGGY: And you look... comfortable.

JACK: Bought you these. Peace offering.

[JACK HANDS THE FLOWERS OVER. PEGGY
SEEMS PLEASED]

PEGGY: Ta very much.

JACK: Be an honour if you'd allow me to
escort you.

[A BEAT. COULD GO EITHER WAY]

PEGGY: Don't mind if you do.

[AND PEGGY HEADS OUT OF THE BAR.
BILLY LEANS OVER THE BAR TOWARD
HONEY]

BILLY: [PLEASED] D'you know what? I think
this might just work out...

[AND HONEY SMILES, EXCITED.]

[* next section to be filmed
separatley]

PICK UP ON KEITH, TURNING THINGS OVER
IN HIS MIND, DARTBOARD END OF THE
BAR.

DRAINS HIS PINT, CALLS OVER TO DAWN
WHO'S JUST HANDED CHANGE TO AN NSE
PUNTER]

KEITH: Another one in there please, Dawn.

[DAWN COMES OVER, UNSMILING]

[TENTATIVE] How's your mother?

DAWN: [SNAPS] Top of the world, what
d'you expect?

[AND DAWN TAKES KEITH'S GLASS, MOVES
TO FILL IT UP.
DOOR OPENS, KEITH LOOKS OVER TO SEE
MIKE ENTER, A SHADOW OF A MAN,
CRUSHED. HE CARRIES HIS TRAVEL BAG.
SEEING DAWN AT THE BAR HE GATHERS HIS
COURAGE AND HEADS OVER]

MIKE: [GENTLY] Dawn...

[DAWN IGNORES HIM, CARRIES ON FILLING
KEITH'S PINT. CATCH KEITH'S INTEREST
AS HE LOOKS OVER. BACK WITH MIKE AND
DAWN]

I'll be off soon. Can we talk?

DAWN: [COLD] Tried to talk yesterday. Now
I'm working.

MIKE: Look, I know I let you down -

DAWN: Whatever gave you that idea?

MIKE: I was stupid, selfish, I know, but your Gran dying, it's made me see what's really important.

DAWN: And what's that?

MIKE: You. Mickey.

DAWN: So we're both part of the next big plan, are we?

MIKE: I don't have any plans. Not now.

DAWN: Well, you better think of one, Dad, 'cause I ain't plannin' on forgiving you.

[AND DAWN LEAVES TO DELIVER KEITH'S PINT. WE SEE KEITH AND MIKE LOCK EYES]

CUT TO:

SCENE 962/10. CAFE. INT. NIGHT. 17.45.

STAGE 1

[JANE COMES TO COLLECT OLIVER'S PLATE. SHE SEEMS RATHER SLUGGISH]

JANE: How was that?

OLIVER: Delicious.

[JANE TURNS TO GO, BUT..]

Jane.

JANE: Yeah?

OLIVER: [AIMING FOR CASUAL] I was wondering if you knew what was wrong with Maureen. Stacey said she was ill.

JANE: I'd imagine she's got the same thing as me.

OLIVER: And what's that?

JANE: Banging headache. Chronic nausea. Overwhelming tiredness. Inexplicable feelings of despair... Basically, we got totally wrecked last night.

OLIVER: [SURPRISED] Oh, I see...

JANE: It's not big and it's not clever, I know, but I reckon we both needed to let our hair down.

[AND JANE LEAVES. OLIVER SMILES,
PLEASED THAT MO'S EARLIER BEHAVIOUR
NOW MAKES SENSE.]

DEANO POPS HIS HEAD ROUND THE DOOR,
LOOKING FOR BRADLEY. HE'S STILL SAT
REFLECTING ON STACEY'S OUTBURST.
DEANO BREEZES OVER]

DEANO: Been looking for you. What you
doing sat in here?

BRADLEY: Thinking.

DEANO: You don't want to do too much of
that.

BRADLEY: Stacey just dumped me.

DEANO: Yeah?

BRADLEY: Come out with all this weird
stuff about people changing day to day,
and how she'd changed or something.

DEANO: Standard dumping tactic. She ain't
got the heart to spell it out, so she
confuses you.

BRADLEY: Spell what out?

DEANO: She don't like you. [CATCH
BRADLEY'S INDIGNATION] Come on, Brad,
probably for the best.

BRADLEY: What?

DEANO: Nice enough girl, I s'pose, if you
like 'em a bit ragged round the edges, but
you can do better. I mean, spruce yourself

up, and you could pull someone half decent. Come on, buy you a drink.

[AND DEANO LEAVES. BRADLEY GETS UP AND SHUFFLES AFTER HIM, CROSSING WITH LITTLE MO AS SHE ENTERS WITH FREDDIE]

LITTLE MO: Oh, hello, Bradley. You alright?

BRADLEY: [MOROSE] Yeah, terrific.

[CONFUSED BY BRADLEY'S GREETING, LITTLE MO APPROACHES JANE AT THE COUNTER]

LITTLE MO: How you feeling?

JANE: Like an extra in a zombie film.

LITTLE MO: Me too. Look, you didn't pick up a purple scarf last night, did you?

JANE: That yours? Woke up with it wrapped round my head.

[JANE GIVES A LITTLE FLASH WITH HER EYES, LITTLE MO TURNS TO SEE SMILING OLIVER STANDING BEHIND]

LITTLE MO: [EMBARRASSED] Oh, hello Doctor.

OLIVER: Still feeling rough?

LITTLE MO: Yeah, just a bit under the weather.

OLIVER: Not still under the influence then?

[LITTLE MO FLASHES A LOOK TO JANE,
WHO GIVES IT 'WHO ME?]

[GRINS] I'll see you later.

[AND OLIVER LEAVES. LITTLE MO PUSHES
LAUGHING JANE, ANNOYED THAT SHE'S
BEEN RUMBLED IN FRONT OF THE GOOD
DOCTOR]

CUT TO:

SCENE 962/11. ARGEE BARGEE. INT. NIGHT.
18.02.

LOT

[THE RESTAURANT'S BUSY WITH AN EARLY EVENING CROWD. BILLY, HONEY, JACK AND PEGGY HAVE SETTLED AT A TABLE AND ARE READING THROUGH THE MENUS. A WAITRESS HOVERS NEARBY. jack turns to her]

JACK: Chicken vindaloo for me.

PEGGY: [HE'S SO PREDICTABLE] Chicken vindaloo...

[BILLY LEANS OUT TO THE WAITRESS]

BILLY: I'll have one of them an'all.

[PEGGY SHOOTS HIM A LOOK]

BILLY: What? I like hot curry.

HONEY: [TO WAITRESS] Vegetable biryani, please.

JACK: [ALL INNOCENCE] 'Course it's well known that the female anatomy ain't geared up for the likes of your vindaloo -

PEGGY: [BRISTLING] Is that right?

JACK: Women have more sensitive taste buds.

PEGGY: You're quite the man of science, ain't ya?

JACK: [THROWAWAY] Or maybe you just got a lower pain threshold.

PEGGY: You what? I'd like to see you try child-birth, mate.

HONEY: [KEEN TO DEFUSE BREWING ARGUMENT] Shall we get a bottle of wine?

JACK: I'm just saying, most women seem to prefer mild curries.

PEGGY: Well I ain't most women.

JACK: [MUTTERS FROM BEHIND MENU] You got that right...

[PEGGY TURNS TO THE WAITRESS]

PEGGY: Lamb vindaloo, please, darlin'.

JACK: You sure you want to do that?

PEGGY: [POINTEDLY TO WAITRESS] And make mine hotter than his.

[BILLY AND HONEY LOOK AT EACH OTHER, CONCERNED. PEGGY LOOKS BACK TO HER MENU. AS FOR JACK, HE GLANCES AT PEGGY - LOVING IT]

CUT TO:

SCENE 962/12. PAT'S HOUSE. INT. NIGHT.
18.05.

STUDIO B

[IN ON KEVIN, AS HE SITS IN THE KITCHEN, THE PICTURE OF SERENITY, EYES CLOSED, EARPHONES ON. HE'S HALF ASLEEP, MENTALLY A CASTAWAY ON SOME FAR-FLUNG ISLAND - NO KIDS, NO JOB, NO WORRIES... SUDDENLY HE SITS BOLT UPRIGHT. OPENS HIS EYES TO FIND CARLY STANDING BEFORE HIM, THE UNPLUGGED HEADPHONE CORD IN HER HAND]

CARLY: Dad, can I have a word?

KEVIN: [PATIENTLY] Yes, Carly.

CARLY: It's about money.

KEVIN: Thought it might be.

CARLY: Just need a bit of cash to tide me over 'til I get a job.

KEVIN: 'Course you do.

[A BEAT]

CARLY: So?

KEVIN: Oh, I see. You want it from me.

[PAT BUSTLES IN, GRIN ON HER FACE]

PAT: How's my star salesman?

KEVIN: Tired.

CARLY: [FRUSTRATED SHE'S BEEN EDGED OUT]
Dad...

KEVIN: Can't listen to two things at once, Carly.

[SO CARLY LEAVES IN A STROP]

PAT: There's a car auction in Basildon next Tuesday, smaller one in Tottenham, Thursday.

KEVIN: Great.

PAT: Tonight, and over the weekend, we should come up with a plan.

KEVIN: A plan, right.

PAT: We should be targeting stock to match the punters we're getting through the door.

KEVIN: [BORED] That sounds like a plan.

PAT: And we got to do our price research an'all. Half the time we're just marking up twenty per cent, without thinking about it-

KEVIN: [IN] Look, mind if I just get changed, before we start?

PAT: 'Course not.

[KEVIN GETS UP, AND WE FOLLOW HIM OUT INTO THE HALL. CARLY POPS HER HEAD OUT OF THE SITTING ROOM DOOR AS HE PASSES]

CARLY: Don't need much, Dad -

[KEVIN SILENCES HER WITH A HAND, GRABS HIS COAT AND WALKS STRAIGHT OUT OF THE DOOR. PAT COMES INTO THE HALL, SWAPS A LOOK WITH CARLY - WHERE'S HE GOING?]

CUT TO:

SCENE 962/13. ARGEE BARGEE. INT. NIGHT.
18.12.

LOT

[WINE'S BEEN BROUGHT TO THE TABLE,
AND JACK'S EYES STRAY TO A SHAPELY
PAIR OF LEGS AS A CUSTOMER WALKS PAST
THE TABLE IN A SHORT SKIRT, BUT
PEGGY'S WATCHING AND JACK KNOWS HE'S
BEEN RUMBLED]

JACK: Beginning of March, and these young
women, they got their pins out already.

PEGGY: Expect you're worried she might
catch a cold.

JACK: [SMILES] Exactly right.

PEGGY: After all, you're old enough to be
her father.

[CATCH A CONCERNED LOOK BETWEEN BILLY
AND HONEY... BILLY STEPS IN]

BILLY: Bet it was cold in that car last
night, eh?

JACK: With the heater turned up full,
it's lovely. Everyone should have a bolt-
hole, somewhere they can go to...
[POINTEDLY TO PEGGY, BUT WITH A SMILE]
Relax. 'Cause you'd be amazed how many
people have trouble unwinding. [cont]

JACK: [cont] Walk about all day like
tightly coiled springs, for years
sometimes, and if they don't do something
about it, they snap.

[AND PEGGY KNOWS EXACTLY WHAT JACK'S DOING... CATCH ANOTHER CONCERNED LOOK BETWEEN BILLY AND HONEY]

PEGGY: I never needed somewhere to run away to.

JACK: No?

PEGGY: [CONFRONTATIONAL] Always liked to meet the world head on.

JACK: [WITH A SMILE] And beat it into submission, I'll bet.

[PEGGY'S JUST ABOUT TO RETORT WHEN THE FOOD ARRIVES. HONEY AND BILLY ARE SO RELIEVED..]

HONEY: [QUICKLY IN] Mmmm. Smells good, doesn't it?

BILLY: Yeah, terrific.

[THE WAITRESS LAYS HONEY'S BIRYIANI DOWN IN FRONT OF HER]

HONEY: So nice to come out for a meal... to be honest, just getting out of Pat's house is a relief.

[THE WAITRESS PLACES PEGGY'S VINDALOO BEFORE HER. SHE'S CONCERNED, BUT WOULD RATHER EAT HER OWN HAND THAN SHOW IT]

JACK: Must be like living in a flamin' circus.

[BILLY GLANCES NERVOUSLY AT HIS CURRY
AS IT'S PLACED BEFORE HIM]

BILLY: It ain't easy, that's for sure.

JACK: If you need your own space, I've got a little bit of money put aside. Ain't much, but it's enough for a deposit on a flat.

[SEE BILLY AND HONEY'S AMAZEMENT...
AND PEGGY'S IRRITATION]

HONEY: Are you serious?

JACK: Totally.

[THE WAITRESS PLACES JACK'S MEAL
BEFORE HIM]

PEGGY: I've got a better idea.

JACK: [MUTTERS] Thought you might...

PEGGY: Come and live at the Vic.

BILLY: What?

PEGGY: I'm rattling round above the Vic like a pea in a drum. Be nice to have a bit of female company... and you too, Billy, of course.

JACK: I'm offering them a place of their own. A refuge.

PEGGY: They don't need a refuge, they just need some space. And they can have that without shelling out five hundred quid a month if they live with me.

JACK: Maybe, just maybe, they'd rather have a place of their own.

PEGGY: You saying I'm the problem?

BILLY: [IN] He's not saying that, Peggy -

JACK: No, course not, 'cause I'm sure they'd love to jump out of the frying pan -

PEGGY: [IN] Live with me, they can save up, take their time findin' the right place.

BILLY: If you'll excuse me a sec-

[LOOK BETWEEN BILLY AND HONEY. BILLY NODS for her to follow. JACK AND PEGGY see them go, but are so ENGROSSED IN THEIR ARGUMENT THAT THEY DON'T EVEN break stride]

JACK: They can have the right place, right now.

PEGGY: And what's the right place in your eyes? Layby off the A1?

JACK: You are some piece of work!

[JACK NOTICES BILLY AND HONEY slipping out the door. A LOOK TO PEGGY- what's going on?

THEY TURN TO SEE THE COUPLE
DISAPPEARING OUT THE DOOR..]

CUT TO:

SCENE 962/14. GEORGE STREET. EXT. NIGHT.
18.15/T.C.

LOT

[BILLY AND HONEY ARE WALKING BRISKLY
DOWN GEORGE STREET]

HONEY: Where we going?

BILLY: Vic. I need a drink.

HONEY: But we can't just leave them
there.

BILLY: If we're not there, they'll be
forced to talk. It's worked me and your
dad, it'll work with them.

[AND BILLY AND HONEY TURN THE CORNER
INTO TURPIN ROAD, HEADING BACK TO THE
SQUARE]

CUT TO:

SCENE 962/15. VIC DOWNSTAIRS. INT. NIGHT.
18.17.

STAGE 1

[THE VIC'S BUSY NOW AS KEVIN COMES IN, MAKES FOR THE BAR, FINALLY AN ANONYMOUS HAVEN AT THE END OF A LONG DAY. tracey asks what he'd like]

KEVIN: Peace, quiet and a pint of lager, darlin'.

[tracey pours his pint into his tankard.
GO TO BRADLEY AND DEANO, SAT NEAR THE JUKEBOX. BRADLEY'S SUDDENLY WOKEN FROM HIS INERTIA AS STACEY COMES IN, WALKS TO THE PIANO END OF THE BAR. DEANO CLOCKS STACEY, SEES BRADLEY'S REACTION]

DEANO: Don't even think about it...

BRADLEY: Back in a minute.

[AND BRADLEY MOVES TO JOIN STACEY AT THE BAR.]

MEANWHILE PICK UP ON KEVIN AS HE STANDS AT THE BAR, TURNS TO SEE DEANO'S GRINNING FACE. AAARGH - IS NOWHERE SACRED?]

DEANO: I'll have a pint an' all Dad, if you're buying.

[GO TO BRADLEY AS HE STANDS BESIDE STACEY AT THE PIANO END OF THE BAR]

BRADLEY: You going to talk to me, or what?

STACEY: Think I already did.

BRADLEY: I mean, properly talk - as in, make a bit of sense.

STACEY: You can't understand what I'm saying, that ain't my problem. You're soft.

BRADLEY: I ain't soft.

STACEY: Yeah, you are. Don't get me wrong... for most girls, that'd be a good thing. You ain't gonna forget their birthday, you ain't gonna shout 'em down in the street, you ain't gonna cheat... you'll treat 'em right.

BRADLEY: Yeah, that's true. But I ain't soft.

STACEY: Yeah, you are. And so was I. Been too soft, too long.

BRADLEY: I like you.

STACEY: Like me? You don't even know me. Told you, I've changed. You knew me, you'd run a million miles.

BRADLEY: I don't believe you.

[JAKE ENTERS AND GOES TO THE BAR]

STACEY: [STEELY EYEING JAKE] I'm better off with my own kind, so run off back to your little mate, Bradley. I ain't interested no more.

[A BEAT. BRADLEY FINALLY SLOPES OFF.
OUT ON STACEY, DETERMINED TO BE PURE
STEEL.]

[*NEXT SECTION TO BE FILMED
SEPARATELY]

PICK UP ON KEITH AS HE APPROACHES
DOWNCAST MIKE. MIKE LOOKS UP, SAYS
NOTHING. KEITH SITS BESIDE HIM. A
LONG BEAT]

KEITH: I ain't proud of what I said to
you yesterday.

[MIKE DOESN'T RESPOND]

I don't like you but I am sorry about your
mum.... Buy you a drink?

[AND WITHOUT A LOOK TO KEITH, MIKE
SLIDES HIS EMPTY BEER GLASS ACROSS
THE TABLE. KEITH PICKS IT UP AND
LEAVES FOR THE BAR]

CUT TO:

SCENE 962/16. ARGEE BARGEE. INT. NIGHT.
18.19.

LOT

[THE ARGUMENT HAS BEEN PUT ON ICE AS JACK AND PEGGY SIT IN AWKWARD SILENCE A BEAT]

JACK: They ain't coming back.

PEGGY: No thanks to you.

[A BEAT]

JACK: Shame to waste a vindaloo. Unless you think maybe you made the wrong choice?

PEGGY: It's not the food I got a problem with.

[JACK TAKES A MOUTHFUL OF HIS CURRY. LOVELY. WATCHES AS PEGGY GUIDES A FORKFUL TOWARD HER MOUTH. AWARE OF HIS EYES ON HER, PEGGY EATS. CHEWS SLOWLY. ABSOLUTELY DETERMINED THAT NOT A SINGLE TRACE OF PAIN WILL SHOW ON HER FACE]

[FORCING A SMILE] ...Delicious.

[AND JACK SMILES, ENJOYING THE BATTLE OF WILLS]

CUT TO:

SCENE 962/17. VIC DOWNSTAIRS. INT. NIGHT.
18.20.

STAGE 1

[ON STACEY AT THE BAR WITH AN ORANGE JUICE. dawn's changing an optic, the fresh bottle waiting on the bar, cap off. stacey quickly takes the bottle and fills her glass. JAKE STANDS BY THE BAR SOME FEET AWAY. STACEY STARES at him. AWARE HE'S BEING WATCHED, JAKE LOOKS TO STACEY]

STACEY: Alright?

JAKE: Not bad.

[AND JAKE TURNS BACK TO THE BAR. STACEY SIDLES UP CLOSER TO HIM.

GO TO BRADLEY, JEALOUS EYES ON STACEY'S MOVEMENTS AS DEANO TALKS TO KEVIN, WHO'S GLAZING OVER]

DEANO: Thing is, if you an' Carly are going to stay at Pat's, we got to make sure things are fair.

KEVIN: [ON AUTOPILOT] I agree.

DEANO: 'Cos a boy my age can't be expected to kip on a sofa.

KEVIN: You're quite right.

DEANO: I'm still growing. Couple of weeks on that sofa, and I could end up like one of them hunchbacks.

KEVIN: You don't want that.

DEANO: So I reckon Carly should give up the bed for a while. I mean, your job's going well at the car lot, Carly ain't got nowhere else to go... We could be living like this for months.

[AND THE HORROR OF THAT SCENARIO HITS KEVIN FULL IN THE FACE. HE DRAINS HIS PINT AND MAKES TO LEAVE]

Where you going?

KEVIN: To find an oasis in life's scorching desert...

[AND KEVIN EXITS, LEAVING DEANO BEMUSED. HE TURNS TO BRADLEY, EYES LOCKED ON STACEY]

DEANO: [FRUSTRATED] What is it with everybody tonight?

[*next section to be filmed separatley]

[GO TO KEITH AND MIKE]

KEITH: So where you gonna go?

MIKE: Are you really that interested?

KEITH: 'Course. May not like you, but I care about them two kids of yours. Even Dawn. They're gonna want to know where their Dad is.

MIKE: [WITH A GLANCE TO DAWN] Wouldn't be so sure about that.

KEITH: She's mad about you, that one. Think she'd give you the cold shoulder if she wasn't?

MIKE: You keep on slappin' the people that love you, sooner or later they're gonna slap you back. [TURNS TO KEITH] Never wanted to steal your family, Keith. That was never my plan.

KEITH: Yeah, well, looks like it's no more my family now than it was yours.

MIKE: Wouldn't be so sure about that.

KEITH: [HOPEFUL] No?

MIKE: You've marked your cards with Rosie, good and proper, but she ain't the type to hold a grudge forever. I mean, she welcomed me back, didn't she?

KEITH: Yeah, I s'pose she did. [WITH A NOD TO MIKE'S BAG] Wherever you end up, take care, eh?

MIKE: Yeah. I will.

[AND KEITH GETS UP AND EXITS, LEAVING MIKE TO REFLECT ON HIS TROUBLES.]

PICK UP ON BILLY AND HONEY AS THEY ENTER AND MAKE FOR THE BAR, BUOYED BY THEIR DISCUSSION ON THE WAY HOME]

BILLY: ...Any bad feeling, they'll have got it out their system by now.

HONEY: Dad said he'd have her eating out of his hand come coffee and mints.

BILLY: There you go then. I'm sure everything's absolutely fine...

CUT TO:

SCENE 962/18. GEORGE STREET. EXT. NIGHT.
18.22.

LOT

[... AN IRATE PEGGY AS SHE STORMS OUT OF THE RESTAURANT, FOLLOWED BY JACK, PULLING ON HIS COAT AS HE FOLLOWS HER]

JACK: Oh, come on Peggy, no need to take it like that -

[AND PEGGY CARRIES ON WALKING. JACK FOLLOWS HER, A WICKED SMILE ON HIS FACE - HE'S enjoyING THE TUSSLE]

CUT TO:

SCENE 962/19. VIC DOWNSTAIRS. INT. NIGHT.
18.23.

STAGE 1

[BRADLEY'S LOOKING OVER, BURNING.
STACEY GLANCES BACK, SEES IT.
STACEY'S STILL CLOSE TO JAKE]

STACEY: Buy me a drink?

JAKE: I'm sorry?

STACEY: A drink.

JAKE: You're underage.

STACEY: Not for everything, I'm not.

[AND JAKE JUST SMILES IN DISBELIEF.
WALKS AWAY FROM THE BAR.]

GO TO BILLY AND HONEY, EYES ON THE
DOOR, FEAR CREEPING IN]

HONEY: What d'you think they're doing
now?

BILLY: Chatting, most likely.

HONEY: Only Peggy's got a temper, and my
Dad, he won't put up with any nonsense.

BILLY: [DESPERATE TO BELIEVE IT] They're
adults. They'll be getting to know each
other. Like you said, coffee and mints...

[A LONG BEAT AS HONEY AND BILLY THINK ABOUT THE POSSIBILITIES. THEN AS ONE, THEY DOWN THEIR DRINKS AND HEAD FOR THE DOOR..]

CUT TO:

SCENE 962/20. TURPIN ROAD. EXT. NIGHT.
18.24.

LOT

[PEGGY'S WALKING DOWN TURPIN ROAD, JACK BESIDE HER, AN UNWELCOME COMPANION. THEY'RE APPROACHING THE TURNING INTO BRIDGE STREET..]

JACK: I reckon we could be mates, you and me.

PEGGY: Yeah?

JACK: Yeah.

PEGGY: [COOL] And what makes you think that?

JACK: You got spirit.

PEGGY: Listen, I wouldn't be your mate if you was the last man on earth.

[AND PEGGY TURNS TO SET OFF AGAIN, BUT STUMBLES. JACK DARTS FORWARD TO CATCH HER]

JACK: You alright?

PEGGY: Bloomin' heels!

[PEGGY BENDS DOWN, PICKS UP THE HEEL THAT'S SNAPPED OFF HER SHOE]

JACK: It's a sign.

PEGGY: It's a sign alright. Sign I should have stayed back home.

JACK: Or maybe it's a sign that our evening ain't meant to be over.

[JACK NODS TOWARD THE SIGN FOR SCARLET'S, GLOWING IN THE DARKNESS]

PEGGY: You gotta be jokin'.

JACK: Fancy some absinthe myself. You ever tried absinthe?

PEGGY: Run a pub, don't I? An' I don't much like it.

JACK: Nah, but strong for a dainty little thing like you.

PEGGY: [BRISTLING] Right. Get yourself inside. I'll drink you under the table, then carry you home over my shoulder.

[AND PEGGY STRIDES TOWARD SCARLET, LOPSIDED WITH HER MISSING HEEL. JACK WATCHES HER GO..]

JACK: And I'll bet you just could, darlin', I'll bet you just could...

[AND JACK FOLLOWS PEGGY TOWARD SCARLET, LOVING IT]

CUT TO:

SCENE 962/21. VIC DOWNSTAIRS. INT. NIGHT.
18.26.

STAGE 1

[IN ON STACEY AT THE BAR AS DAWN LEAVES TWO NSES THEIR WHISKIES ON THE BAR AND GO TO GREET A FRIEND AS HE ENTERS. STACEY SWIPES THE WHISKIES, DOWNS THEM AND MOVES OFF TOWARD JAKE. BUT AS SHE'S ABOUT TO SIT, BRADLEY CATCHES HER ARM]

BRADLEY: Why are you doing this?

STACEY: I'm not messing about with little boys no more.

[STACEY SHAKES HERSELF FREE OF HIS GRIP AND HEADS TOWARD JAKE.

[*NEXT SECTION TO BE FILMED SEPARATELY]

GO TO ROSIE WHO'S FOUND MIKE]

ROSIE: You can't go.

MIKE: Can't stay neither. [NOD TO DAWN]
She don't want me around.

ROSIE: Dawn's upset.

MIKE: And she's right to be. I'm no good, Rosie. Wasn't there for you, for the kids, for my Mum... couldn't even see her into the ground...

[MIKE'S HEAD FALLS INTO HIS HANDS.
ROSIE LAYS A COMFORTING HAND ON HIS
SHOULDER]

ROSIE: Come back to ours. You've got a
bed for as long as you need it.

[OUT ON MIKE WEIGHING UP HIS OPTIONS.]

PAT ENTERS, FINDS DAWN COLLECTING
GLASSES BY THE DOOR]

PAT: Dawn, you seen Kevin in here
tonight?

DAWN: Yeah, one drink and he left.

PAT: [CONCERNED] I dunno what's got into
him. I've made dinner...

[AND PAT LEAVES..]

CUT TO:

SCENE 962/22. JACK'S VAN. INT. NIGHT.
18.27.

LOT

[AND WE SEE KEVIN, CHEERFULLY
OBLIVIOUS, TUCKED UP WITH A BAG OF
CHIPS AND A CAN OF BEER. PAPER IN
HAND, CALMING MUSIC PLAYING GENTLY IN
THE BACKGROUND, HE COULDN'T BE
HAPPIER..]

CUT TO:

SCENE 962/23. SCARLET. INT. NIGHT.
18.31.

STUDIO A

[AT THE BAR, JACK'S FLIRTING WITH THE
NISE BARMAID AS SHE POURS OUT TWO
MEASURES OF ABSINTHE. BUT THEIR
FLIRT IS CURTAILED AS PEGGY REJOINS
THEM, AND LOCKS EYES WITH THE
BARMAID]

PEGGY: [FIRM] Thank you.

[AND THE BARMAID GETS THE MESSAGE AND
MOVES OFF]

JACK: No need to be rude to the girl.

PEGGY: I wasn't rude.

JACK: [WINDING HER UP] I mean I can
understand it, of course.

PEGGY: What d'you mean?

JACK: Girl was showing an interest in me

-

PEGGY: You what?

JACK: Jealousy's a very powerful emotion,
Peggy. [cont]

[AND PEGGY THUMPS HIM ON THE ARM.
JACK WINCES]

JACK: [cont] That hurt.

[AND JACK PEERS BACK OVER THE BAR,
GAWKING AT THE BARMAID]

PEGGY: [HIDING HER AMUSEMENT] Don't!
Acting like a dirty old man.

[BUT JACK TAKES ANOTHER PEEK. TURNS
BACK, SEES PEGGY'S SMILING DESPITE
HERSELF]

JACK: So you can do it then?

PEGGY: What?

JACK: Smile.

[AND PEGGY'S SMILE DISAPPEARS]

PEGGY: I smile when I got something to
smile about. That one was a mistake...

[BUT AS PEGGY TURNS TO THE BAR, SHE
BEAMS. NO MISTAKING THAT - SHE'S
STARTING TO ENJOY HERSELF]

CUT TO:

SCENE 962/24. GEORGE STREET. EXT. NIGHT.
18.39.

LOT

[BILLY EMERGES FROM THE ARJEE BHAJEE
TO FIND HONEY WAITING NERVOUSLY FOR
NEWS..]

HONEY: Well?

BILLY: Left half an hour ago. Apparently,
there was a lot of shouting then Peggy
chucked her wine in his vindaloo an'
stormed out.

[OUT ON BILLY AND HONEY'S FEARS
GROWING..]

CUT TO:

SCENE 962/25. SCARLET. INT. NIGHT.
18.41.

STUDIO A

[THE MUSIC'S BEEN CRANKED UP A NOTCH, AND A COUPLE OF BRAVE SOULS HAVE STARTED DANCING. JACK AND PEGGY LOOK TO EACH OTHER AND, AS IF SYNCHRONISED, PICK UP THEIR SHOTS OF ABSINTHE AND KNOCK THEM BACK. LOOK TO EACH OTHER AGAIN. HINT OF A SMILE. ANYONE BACKING DOWN? NO. JACK NODS TO the nse barmaid, STANDING NEARBY, AND SHE POURS THEM BOTH ANOTHER SHOT. THEY'RE A WEE BIT PISHED.]

A NEW TRACK BLASTS OUT - 'YOU REALLY GOT ME' BY THE KINKS. JACK'S EARS PRICK UP]

JACK: [SUDDENLY SERIOUS] D'you want to dance with me?

PEGGY: Are you pulling my leg?

[THEY BOTH KNOCK BACK ANOTHER ABSINTHE]

JACK: You're uptight -

PEGGY: I'm what?

JACK: Uptight.

PEGGY: Up-tight!?! [A LOOK, OUTRAGED] Up-tight!?!

JACK: You're too bothered 'bout what other people think.

PEGGY: I'll show you who's uptight!

[PEGGY KICKS OFF HER HEELS, GRABS
JACK BY THE ARM]

Come 'ere you!

[OUT ON GRINNING JACK AS PEGGY YANKS
HIM TOWARD THE DANCE-FLOOR. AND WE
GO OUT ON PEGGY AND JACK, SHAKING IT
UP ON THE DANCE FLOOR]

CUT TO:

SCENE 962/26. VIC DOWNSTAIRS. INT. NIGHT.
18.43.

STAGE 1

[GO TO STACEY AS SHE SITS BESIDE JAKE, GLANCES COOLLY OVER TO BRADLEY. THEIR EYES MEET, AND SHE SHUFFLES TOWARD JAKE WHO'S STUDIOUSLY TRYING TO IGNORE HER]

STACEY: You look lonely.

JAKE: [IRRITATED] You what?

STACEY: Are you?

JAKE: Sorry?

STACEY: 'Cause maybe I am too.

JAKE: Look, Stacey, I've had my share of psycho women and I'm not Dennis. I don't care if you're lonely, don't care if your mum didn't love you, or you got picked on at school...I-just-don't-care.

STACEY: [FACE A BLANK NOW] That's alright. Neither do I...But I know you're lonely an'all. All I'm sayin' is... maybe you don't have to be.

JAKE: You're just a stupid little girl.

[GO TO BRADLEY, BURNING WITH RAGE, AS STACEY THROWS AN ARM ROUND AN EMBARRASSED JAKE, WHO FLINGS IT OFF]

DEANO: I don't know how that bloke does it.

[DEANO TURNS TO SEE BRADLEY'S IN A STATE]

Just look away, mate.

[BUT BRADLEY CARRIES ON STARING AS, ALERTED BY THE FRACAS, DAWN COMES OVER TO JAKE AND STACEY]

DAWN: Get her out of here, would you? Peggy comes back and finds her like this, I'll get it in the neck.

[JAKE GIVES DAWN A LOOK. DOES HE HAVE TO? REALISES HE DOES. TURNS, GRABS STACEY BY THE ARM AND GUIDES HER SWIFTLY AND FIRMLY TOWARD THE DOOR.

BACK WITH BRADLEY AND DEANO. BRADLEY STANDS, PULLS ON HIS COAT, BURNING WITH RAGE]

DEANO: You have got to be kidding...

BRADLEY: Can't let this happen.

DEANO: He'll kill you.

BRADLEY: So?

DEANO: She's a slapper, Brad, a tart.

BRADLEY: [TURNING ON HIM, STEELY] No, Deano, she ain't!

[AND BRADLEY STRIDES TOWARD THE DOOR.
DEANO MAKES TO FOLLOW..]

CUT TO:

SCENE 962/27. SQUARE. EXT. NIGHT.
18.45/T.C.

LOT

[PICK UP ON ANGRY BRADLEY, AS HE EMERGES FROM THE VIC TO SEE JAKE TRYING TO FROG-MARCH STACEY TOWARD THE SLATERS]

JAKE: Just walk straight, will you?

[BUT STACEY CAN'T. JAKE SCOOPS ONE ARM OF STACEY'S ROUND HIS SHOULDERS]

STACEY: [ANNOYED] Will you leave me?

JAKE: Yeah, right, that'll work. I'm taking you home.

[JAKE LIFTS STACEY ALMOST OFF THE GROUND. AND THAT'S ENOUGH FOR BRADLEY. HE PACES TOWARD THEM AS DEANO EMERGES FROM THE VIC]

STACEY: [TO JAKE] Think I'm gonna be sick.

[JAKE DUMPS STACEY ON THE GROUND. she lurches foward and pukes all over his shoes]

JAKE: I don't believe this! [cont]

[JAKE'S ABOUT TO CROUCH DOWN, CLEAN HIS SHOES WHEN A ROAR FROM BEHIND ALERTS HIM, AND HE TURNS TO SEE BRADLEY RUNNING TOWARD HIM. BRADLEY CHARGES HIM AND HE AND JAKE END UP ON THE GROUND]

JAKE: [cont] What on earth?

[BRADLEY STANDS]

BRADLEY: Keep your filthy hands off her!

[JAKE CAN'T HELP BUT LAUGH AT THE LUNACY]

JAKE: You seriously thought I was interested? I've got a jacket older than her.

BRADLEY: [IN] Just leave her alone!

[JAKE LOOKS FROM RAGING BRADLEY TO DRUNKEN STACEY, THEN BACK TO BRADLEY. THIS IS ALL TOO WEIRD..]

JAKE: I get molested by a teeny-bopper, and charged down by the ginger-ninja! The world's gone flamin' mad!

[A LOOK THEN, UTTERLY CONFUSED, JAKE PULLS HIMSELF UP AND storms away, holding his trouser legs clear of his puke stained shoes.

BRADLEY LOOKS TO STACEY, TAKES HER BY THE ARM. she shakes it off, but he persists.

GO TO DEANO, STANDING BY THE VIC DOOR AS JAKE BRUSHES PAST HIM AND RE-ENTERS THE VIC. AND FROM DEANO'S PERSPECTIVE, WE WATCH AS, SUPPORTED BY BRADLEY, STACEY SLOWLY APPROACHES THE brannings']

CUT TO:

SCENE 962/28. MILLERS' HOUSE. INT. NIGHT.
18.47.

STUDIO C

[HALLWAY. KEITH FOLLOWS ROSIE INTO THE HALL, CARRYING SOME CHILDRENS' BOOKS]

ROSIE: [COOL] Twins are out. Cinema.

KEITH: [AWKWARD] Yeah? Had to come anyway. Aleesha's books. Forgot to bring them back... Look, Rosie, can we talk?

[A SHOUT FROM THE SITTING ROOM]

MIKE: [OOV] Rosie! Your programmes starting!

[KEITH'S FACE FALLS. ROSIE LOOKS AWKWARD]

ROSIE: He's staying here 'til he gets sorted -

[KEITH MOVES QUICKLY THROUGH TO THE SITTING ROOM. MIKE'S SAT IN FRONT OF THE TELLY ON KEITH'S FAVOURITE CHAIR. MIKE'S FACE DROPS AS HE SEES IRATE KEITH. TURNS THE TV OFF. ROSIE ENTERS BEHIND]

KEITH: [BITTER] Made yourself comfy.

ROSIE: I don't want no more arguments, Keith.

MIKE: [STANDING] It's alright, Rosie.
Leave us to talk, eh?

[AND RELUCTANTLY ROSIE LEAVES,
CLOSING THE DOOR BEHIND HER]

KEITH: All worked out really well for
You, hasn't it?

MIKE: My mum died... Yeah, it's been a
top week.

KEITH: Said I'm sorry 'bout your mum but
that don't give you the right to ruin our
lives. You said you were going.

MIKE: Rosie offered me a place to stay.

KEITH: Yeah, well we all know you got
Rosie eatin' out your hand.

MIKE: I didn't mess up your relationship,
Keith.

KEITH: You took her away from me!

MIKE: You really think she'd have come if
you'd been looking after her?

KEITH: I want you out tonight... Her
offering you a place to kip, she's doing
that 'cause she feels sorry for you. Only
I know how your mind works. Door opens a
crack, you boot it wide open. But just you
remember this: Rosie may have left with
you, but she came back to me. She chose
me. And you'd better remember that.

MIKE: That what you really think? She chose you? She chose the kids, Keith. The kids.

KEITH: You're lying...

[ROSIE BARGES IN. OBVIOUSLY BEEN LISTENING AT THE DOOR]

ROSIE: I said no more arguments!

MIKE: Ask her. Go on, ask her.

[KEITH TURNS TO ROSIE. SHE CAN HARDLY BEAR TO MEET HIS EYES. KEITH DOESN'T NEED TO ASK HER ANYTHING - IT'S WRIT ALL OVER HER FACE. HE BURSTS FROM THE ROOM. FOLLOW HIM OUT AS HE STUMBLES WILDLY TOWARD THE FRONT DOOR]

CUT TO:

SCENE 962/29. VIC DOWNSTAIRS. INT. NIGHT.
19.05.

STAGE 1

[HONEY AND BILLY STAND WITH DAWN AT THE BAR, THEIR FEARS THREATENING TO SPILL OVER..]

BILLY: And they definitely haven't come back?

DAWN: No.

BILLY: [TURNS TO HONEY] Well your idea of leaving them at the restaurant certainly did the trick!

HONEY: [OUTRAGED] My idea?

[BILLY TAKES OUT HIS MOBILE]

What're you doing?

BILLY: Calling the police, then A & E.
[cont]

[...BUT, ACROSS BILLY'S SHOULDER, HONEY'S SEEN SOMETHING. BILLY'S DIALLED TWO OUT OF THREE NINES WHEN HONEY GRABS THE PHONE. BILLY LOOKS UP. STANDING IN THE DOORWAY NO SHOES, RUINED TIGHTS AND HAIR LIKE A BIRD'S NEST, IT'S PEGGY. SHE'S BREATHING HEAVILY. BILLY RUSHES OVER]

BILLY: [cont] What happened?

PEGGY: I ain't talking to you, Billy.
Running off an' leaving me with a git like
that.

HONEY: Where is he?

PEGGY: Well, I said I'd beat him home,
and I bloomin' well did.

[AND JACK ENTERS, OUT OF PUFF]

Took your time, didn't you?

JACK: Gave you a ten second head-start.

PEGGY: Oh, what a gent you are. I been
standing here a minute.

[AND PEGGY STARTS MOVING TO TOWARD
THE BAR. JACK FOLLOWS HER, PASSING AN
AMAZED BILLY AND HONEY. HE KISSES HIS
DAUGHTER..]

JACK: [FLEETING TO HONEY] Hello,
darlin'...

[...BUT KEEPS ON MOVING]

PEGGY: [TO JACK] Fancy a night cap?

JACK: [WITH A GRIN] Think you've had
enough, don't you?

PEGGY: If I didn't know better, I'd say
you sounded a bit uptight.

JACK: And I'd say you were coming across
a bit full of yourself...

[AND PEGGY LEADS JACK OUT BACK,
BICKERING AGREEABLY ALL THE WAY. OUT
ON HONEY AND BILLY, DUMBSTRUCK]

CUT TO:

SCENE 962/30. BRANNINGS' HOUSE. INT.
NIGHT. 19.07.

STUDIO A

[STACEY SITS AT THE KITCHEN TABLE,
BLOTTO, WHILST BRADLEY MAKES HER A
HOT CHOCOLATE IN THE BACKGROUND]

STACEY: I've been a cow.

BRADLEY: Yeah, you have.

STACEY: You're angry.

BRADLEY: Yeah, I am.

[BRADLEY PLACES A HOT CHOCOLATE IN
FRONT OF STACEY]

Hot chocolate. My Mum used to make it for
me.

STACEY: Bet your mum'd tell you to steer
well clear of me.

BRADLEY: Yeah, she would. But then she
married my dad, so what she says don't
count for much.

[AND BRADLEY GIVES STACEY A SWEET
SMILE. SHE DRINKS]

CUT TO:

SCENE 962/31. VIC UPSTAIRS. INT. NIGHT.
19.10.

STAGE 1

[UPSTAIRS IN THE SITTING ROOM, THE ATMOSPHERE HAS CHANGED. THE LIGHTS ARE DIMMED AS PEGGY AND JACK SIT CLOSE ON THE SOFA, ENJOYING A FINAL DRINK]

JACK: Enjoy yourself?

PEGGY: Might have done. You?

JACK: Might have done. [HALF-BEAT] We might have to do this again sometime.

PEGGY: Thought you didn't make plans.

JACK: Don't as a rule.

PEGGY: Simple as that, eh? Jack the Lad. Keep on movin'. Nothing between you and the stars.

JACK: That's the general idea.

PEGGY: And you never get lonely? All those long starry nights?

JACK: Sometimes. But that's the price you pay. You can be lonely, you can be bored. Know which one I prefer.

PEGGY: And that was why you bought the car was it? Drivin' around, lookin' for adventures, excitement.

JACK: No, no, that was...[A BEAT. DIRECT, BUT NOT UNKIND] I didn't buy the car 'til after Jan died.

[A BEAT. PEGGY FEELS AWFUL]

PEGGY: Oh, Jack, I'm sorry.

JACK: Don't worry, you weren't to know. Jan died when Honey was a baby. Every now and again, I just needed to get out the house.

PEGGY: I'm sorry.

JACK: No need. Long time ago now.

PEGGY: Must've been hard, her dying that young. You must've missed her.

JACK: Yeah, I did. What about you, get lonely in this place, do you?

PEGGY: Sometimes.

JACK: Maybe Billy and Honey should come live here, if that's what you'd like.

PEGGY: Yeah, I would.

[JACK HANDS PEGGY HIS EMPTY GLASS. HE STANDS, PEGGY STANDS. JACK HOLDS OUT A HAND FOR PEGGY TO SHAKE..]

JACK: Well then, thank's for a wonderful evening.

PEGGY: Thank you.

[PEGGY LINGERS A LITTLE TOO LONG OVER LETTING GO OF JACK'S HAND. THEIR EYES MEET. JACK LEANS...AND KISSES HER. PEGGY RESPONDS, BRIEFLY...

...THEN BREAKS OFF. A LOOK, THEN JACK SMILES. HE MOVES IN AGAIN. THERE'S A DEEPER KISS... TOO DEEP! PEGGY GENTLY PUSHES HIM AWAY]

[NOT SHARP] I said a drink, not bed and breakfast.

[JACK GRINS, GOES TO THE DOOR, TURNS]

JACK: Said it before, I reckon you and me could be mates.

PEGGY: [SMILES] Not if you were the last man on earth...

[JACK EXITS WITH A GRIN. PEGGY LOOKS THOUGHTFUL - COULD HE BE MORE THAN A MATE?]

CUT TO:

SCENE 962/32. BRANNINGS' HOUSE. INT.
NIGHT. 19.12.

STAGE 1

[BRADLEY AND STACEY SIT AT THE TABLE]

BRADLEY: [TENTATIVE] Maybe we could try again.

STACEY: No.

BRADLEY: Booked a date with Jake?

STACEY: I don't like Jake.

BRADLEY: No?

STACEY: I like you.

BRADLEY: [PLEASED] So come out with me.

STACEY: If I like someone, it don't work.

BRADLEY: 'Cause people leave, people change, that it?

STACEY: That's right. And I ain't goin' to be soft no more.

BRADLEY: Can't live your life like that, Stace. Yeah, people are nice one minute, nasty the next, they up and leave without a goodbye...people change and people leave.

[BEAT. BRADLEY LOOKS INTO HER EYES]

But what if I promise , here and now, to
be the one thing in your life that don't..

[WHEN BRADLEY REACHES OUT, STACEY
DOESN'T HESITATE TO LET HIM HOLD HER.
THERE'S A KISS. STACEY LOOKS AT HIM]

I'm mad about you, Stace.

[AND LOOKING INTO HIS STRONG, KIND
FACE, STACEY'S SO MOVED, SHE PULLS
HIM CLOSE, CLINGS ON FOR DEAR LIFE..]

CUT TO:

SCENE 962/33. VIC UPSTAIRS. INT. NIGHT.
19.15.

STAGE 1

[PEGGY'S SITTING, THINKING ABOUT JACK, ABOUT THEIR EVENING TOGETHER. SHE GETS UP, EXCITED, A SCHOOL-GIRL AGAIN. APPROACHES THE WINDOW, EXACTLY THE PLACE WHERE SHE STARTED...

...AND PEGGY LOOKS DOWN ON THE SQUARE]

CUT TO:

SCENE 962/34. SQUARE. EXT. NIGHT.
19.15/T.C.

LOT

[...WHERE JACK IS CROSSING BACK TO
THE VAN, TURNS TO SEE PEGGY...AND
BLOWS HER A KISS]

CUT TO:

SCENE 962/35. VIC UPSTAIRS. INT. NIGHT.
19.15/T.C.

STAGE 1

[PEGGY SMILES, FINALLY CLOSES THE
CURTAINS...

...AND CAN'T RESIST HUGGING HERSELF,
WITH A SMILE]

FADE OUT