

CHARITY BEGINS

Series One, Episode One, "Derek"

SCENE 1**ATMOS: INT. THE BACK ROOM OF A CHARITY SHOP. MORNING.****F/X: RUSTLING BAGS, CLICK OF TAGGER. RADIO IN THE BACKGROUND.**

BEV I said to 'im, I said, Seamus, take off those antlers and put on a bobble 'at, you'll catch your death.

EVIE Do you want a brew, Bev?

BEV You've beat me to it, Evie, I was just going to ask you.

F/X: KETTLE BOILING, CHINK OF CUPS. KNOCK AT DOOR. HEAVY BREATHING**CUSTOMER ENTERS**

CUSTOMER Would you mind if I leave these donations with you? Only I've got to rush – me father-in-law's had a panic attack on a dual-carriageway.

BEV They can do that to OAPS – what's in the boxes?

F/X: BOXES DROPPED ON FLOOR. CUSTOMER SIGHS.

CUSTOMER All sorts – I've just bought a new house off a serial hoarder. He had National Geographics dating back ten years. Now I must go. Thank you.

EVIE And thank you for supporting The East Cheshire Relief Fund for the Bewildered Elderly. Sugar, Bev?

CUSTOMER That's a bit long-winded.

BEV Please. We used to be called Elderly Relief, but the area manager was trying for an MBE.

CUSTOMER I really better go. Bye!

F/X: A CUP OF TEA IS MADE AND PUT ON THE TABLE.

EVIE Here you are, Bev. So, what did Seamus do?

BEV He caught the ruddy flu, didn't he?

EVIE That's a shame.

BEV Not really – he slept for three days, I finally got me ironing done.

F/X: SELLOTAPE TORN OFF. BOX OPENED. EVIE COUGHS.

EVIE There's more dust in here than Tutankhamen's tomb. If my Dad were still around these would've been brilliant for him.

BEV He was a fan of *National Geographic*?

EVIE He wanted to travel the world – he only got as far as Jersey and he collapsed doing the Paso Doble in a Tesco Express. I'm glad that he went out dancing.

BEV Do you want to take them?

EVIE No, I opened one once by mistake, I was a girl, never got over the shock. I'll put them in the magazine box. That receptionist from the doctor's might come in – she buys stuff for the waiting room sometimes.

F/X: BEV SLURPS HER TEA. PUTS HER CUP DOWN. CLICK OF TAGGER.

BEV I've put one twenty five on these pyjamas. There's a bit of a stain on the knee. (Pause.) The shop's a bit quiet today.

EVIE You've said it now, Bev - they'll all be in after net curtains and *Fifty Shades of bleeding Grey*.

BEV Least it's not Gary Barlow. Have we got any digestives?

F/X: BISCUIT PACKET RUSTLING.

EVIE Two – I ate half a pack yesterday listening to the shipping forecast. What's wrong with Gary Barlow?

BEV S'no Tom Jones.

F/X: BISCUIT BEING CRUNCHED. BEV GROANS, DISGUSTED.

EVIE Oh, you and Welsh men. Anyway – Deborah's coming in today to discuss the Christmas do – you might want to make yourself scarce.

BEV Why?

F/X: TEA BLOWN ON AND SLURPED.

EVIE You know perfectly well why.

BEV It was one mince pie!

EVIE And a flamin' turkey leg!

BEV It's been a year, Evie, she'll have got over it by now.

EVIE That brandy was meant to be the top prize in the raffle, and what did you do? Flambé poultry.

F/X: CUP PUT DOWN ON TABLE.

BEV Had anyone bought any raffle tickets? I don't think so – there's not been a good raffle since 2005.

EVIE She asked me to get rid of you for the day.

BEV I never did like her.

EVIE Eat your biscuit.

BEV It's soggy.

EVIE Well, you never eat the one on top, do you?

BEV Maybe if *you* did, I wouldn't have to cope with a damp chocolate digestive.

EVIE You could always bring your own.

BEV I shouldn't have to – it's a basic human right.

EVIE Since when has stuffing your chops with chocolate digestives been a basic human right?

BEV Well I never!

EVIE And Carol-Ann Braithwaite brings her own.

F/X: BISCUIT PACKET SCREWED UP.

BEV She's diabetic! – and she only comes in for a brew. I work bleeding hard.

EVIE I would've bought some more, but Tom had my change off me this morning to buy his lunch.

BEV Probably buying a dirty magazine.

EVIE It's a biscuit! If you don't like it have the other one.

BEV (Snaps) I shouldn't have to.

EVIE Then don't – but we do need to get some flaming work done.

F/X: TEA SLURPED, CUPS SLAMMED ONTO TABLE. SILENCE (2-3 SECONDS.) OPENING OF DOOR, RUSTLING OF BAGS, HEAVY BREATHING.**MARTIN ENTERS**

MARTIN I'm back – I bought some custard creams – I heard Mavis had a problem with the utter lack of yellow confections.

F/X: BISCUIT PACKET PLACED ON TABLE.

BEV Oh, you do talk smart, Martin.

MARTIN Just stole the words from the horse's mouth.

BEV It's good of you to buy them for her, considering your student loan.

MARTIN It's okay – they're two for 80p from the corner shop.

BEV Still – that's 80p out of your pocket.

EVIE Leave him alone, Bev! You're too old to fawn over young lads!

BEV I was not fawning.

F/X: CUPBOARD DOOR OPENED.

MARTIN Can I get a brew?

EVIE You were, you were practically drooling.

F/X: CUPBOARD DOOR SLAMMED SHUT.

MARTIN It's really simple – just a tea bag and two sugars – dash of milk.

BEV That's very nice, Martin – I am not a cradle snatcher!

MARTIN Or black – black tea's good, too.

EVIE He's barely out of short trousers.

F/X: TAP RUNNING.

MARTIN Even water – that's refreshing. Short trousers? What do you mean short trousers?

F/X: TAP STOPS.

BEV Making yourself look old there, Evie.

MARTIN I've never worn short trousers – I'd get scabby knees.

F/X: KETTLE BOILED.

BEV You can get cream for that.

MARTIN Over the counter?

BEV I should think so.

F/X: ANOTHER CUP OF TEA IS MADE.

MARTIN I'll look it up. (Pause.) Where's Mavis? I thought she volunteered today.

EVIE It's the buses – they only come every hour, and she forgets her specs.

MARTIN What have her spectacles got to do with anything?

BEV She can't see what bus she's getting on. Once, she ended up in Cardiff with a gaggle of Methodists.

EVIE She had fun though.

BEV She got drunk, you mean.

F/X: THE THREE OF THEM START LAUGHING.

MARTIN There's a man outside, you know?

EVIE Did you ask him in?

MARTIN He had a beard – I'm not asking him anything.

EVIE Because of his beard?

MARTIN Of course it was his beard. This was like Santa before the ageing.

EVIE Martin, Santa is a good man.

MARTIN You've never been in his grotto.

BEV You're talking about Geoffrey Whitlock-Smythe, aren't you?

F/X: BLOWING ON TEA. SLURPING.

MARTIN Who else?

BEV He was a funny 'un.

MARTIN One year he handed out turnips – they had em cheap at the market, apparently.

BEV They replaced him with Mrs Claus.

MARTIN It wasn't the same, Bev.

EVIE Are we going to invite him in?

BEV Who?

EVIE The man on the door step.

BEV I'm not sure about that, Evie.

EVIE Honestly, I've never met two more cowardly beggars.

BEV He could be armed.

EVIE He could be harmless.

MARTIN Customers don't usually linger on the doorstep, do they?

EVIE It's a charity shop – not Harrods!

BEV I don't think they allow beards like that in Harrods.

EVIE How would you know? You're about as likely to go to Harrods as I am to be swept off my feet by James Bond.

BEV You mean Daniel Craig.

EVIE I am taking this bric-a-brac into the shop. I will welcome our friend –

BEV I wouldn't say friend.

MARTIN Were we even agreed on customer?

EVIE Don't you start, Martin. We've not even got anyone on the till.

MARTIN I was just having a brew – it's not even ten o'clock.

BEV Go on, Evie, welcome our bearded friend.

EVIE Sometimes, Bev, you are a right pain in the bosover.

F/X: EVIE HEAVES BREATH. BRIC-A-BRAC CLATTERING. FOOTSTEPS. SHE ENTERS SHOP – A LARGE ROOM –

**CUSTOMERS CHATTER. TINKLE OF BELL ABOVE DOOR.
FOOTSTEPS ON LAMINATE FLOORING. EVIE GASPS.
GLASS SHATTERS.**

EVIE Derek?

DEREK Evelyn?

EVIE What're you doing here?

CUT TO: - BACK ROOM OF SHOP. RADIO IN BACKGROUND.

MARTIN I'm guessing they know each other.

BEV Postman?

MARTIN Butcher?

BEV Former lover?

MARTIN No! Not Evie, surely?

BEV She's a hot-blooded female, like any other.

CUT TO:- FRONT OF SHOP. CUSTOMERS CHATTER.

EVIE But what about Deborah?

DEREK She broke a femur. (Pause) Slipped on an avocado at Best Buy.

EVIE But why you – you're not the next in line.

DEREK This isn't the throne, Evelyn – I was offered the cover.

CUT TO:- BACK OF SHOP. RADIO IN BACKGROUND.

MARTIN Do you think he wants a brew?

BEV He looks like he could be a coffee drinker. Do you remember Elaine? She drank the stuff. The shop smelt like a Turkish harem.

MARTIN Harem?

BEV Well it certainly wasn't Estee Lauder Youth Dew.

MARTIN All this over coffee?

BEV You wouldn't understand. Same as Seamus – men have a problem with anything continental.

CUT TO:- FRONT OF SHOP. CUSTOMERS CHATTER.

EVIE How long is she going to be away?

DEREK About two months; all being well.

EVIE I'll have to organise a whip-round and a get well card.

DEREK You always did make a fuss.

EVIE It's not a fuss – purely natural. Your boss is ill, you get them a card.

DEREK She's not ill.

EVIE Incapacitated then. Look – I'm not trying to be funny but if we're going to sort this out can we start now please?

DEREK Not many customers today.

EVIE It's only twenty to ten.

DEREK Still.

EVIE Derek!

CUT TO:- BACK OF SHOP. RADIO IN THE BACKGROUND.

MARTIN First name terms.

BEV Means nothing nowadays; I'm on first name terms with the vicar.

MARTIN You don't go to church.

BEV Just goes to show, he could be anybody.

F/X: FOOTSTEPS AS DEREK BROUGHT INTO BACK OF SHOP.

EVIE This is Bev, she's worked here for a while now – paid, of course.

BEV Hello.

EVIE And this is Martin, he's a Sociology student – also paid.

MARTIN Hi.

EVIE We usually have a volunteer – Mavis, but she could be indisposed.

MARTIN There's a chance she's gone to Wales to get drunk.

EVIE Yes, anyway this is Derek – our temporary area manager.
(Pause.) What was that?

BEV What?

EVIE That! That look – you –

F/X: MARTIN SNIGGERS

EVIE I expected more from you, Martin.

MARTIN Come on, Evie, you know it's funny.

EVIE It most certainly was not funny.

DEREK Look, Evelyn, maybe we should go into the office.

EVIE Yes, yes, that sounds like a good idea.

BEV I bet it does.

SCENE TWO**ATMOS. INT. OFFICE. MORNING.****F/X: COMPUTER HUMS.**

EVIE How's Ann-Marie?

F/X: PAPER RUSTLING.

DEREK Deborah kept a lot of notes.

EVIE She was very thorough. And the children?

DEREK How long have you worked here?

EVIE About seven years – I was a volunteer but the manager moved to Scunthorpe.

DEREK Scunthorpe?

EVIE She wanted to open a chip shop.

DEREK In Scunthorpe?

EVIE Her husband was an artist – he used to make sculptures out of pasta shapes and PVA glue.

DEREK So you took over where she left off?

EVIE I had to have an interview – watched that video about health and safety. You know the one, with that woman telling you how to properly lift a box?

DEREK So you did learn something from it.

EVIE Not really – take my first day for example. A customer left a box in the middle of the shop – a health hazard. That video told me to find a man showing the top half of his bottom to come and lift the thing. Do you know what that video doesn't teach? Initiative – my mother would be up in arms.

DEREK That's feminists for you.

EVIE That's independent women for you.

DEREK (Coughs) Are you paid well?

EVIE You should know.

DEREK I should?

EVIE You've seen Deborah's records.

DEREK Oh. Right. Oh yes. Yes I have. But do you think it's enough?

EVIE I live in a semi-detached house with a view of the park. I can't afford foie gras but I can manage linguini.

DEREK You enjoy it here?

EVIE If you can think back that far, Derek, you'd remember me telling you that I don't do anything I don't enjoy – you never liked my mother.

DEREK She poured sherry down my back at the dart's final. I lost one hundred and fifty quid because of her.

EVIE She thought you were a chauvinist.

DEREK She thought I was a threat.

EVIE *Po-tay-to. Po-tah-to.*

SCENE THREE**ATMOS: INT. BACK ROOM. MORNING.****F/X: KNOCKING ON THE DOOR. RADIO IN BACKGROUND.****MARIE ENTERS**

MARIE I wondered if you might be able to help me.

BEV Depends.

MARIE On what?

BEV What you want.

MARIE I need an authentic Ming dynasty vase, with almost a floral print to it – that would match the table settings from Laura Ashley. It mustn't have chips, must be affordable and absolutely must look like the one I saw on Antiques Roadshow.

BEV Have you tried British Heart Foundation?

MARIE No?

F/X: BEV HEAVES BOXES ABOUT, BREATHING HEAVILY.

BEV Because I could do you crystal sherry decanter with a daisy down the side.

MARIE No, that won't do.

BEV No, it won't – it's inscribed to Percy and Donna, with best wishes. (Snorts.) Best wishes, she'd have had less time if she'd

done him in. I wonder if me and Seamus'll make it to sixty years – maybe I should get him insured. What do you think?

MARIE I'm having a dinner party.

BEV Have you seen Come Dine With Me? When she did that thing with the whisk? I'm telling you, I couldn't stop laughing – it's a good job I had a Tena Lady in.

MARIE It most certainly is not like Come Dine With Me. Who do you think I am? Delia Smith? I do not cook for the common man. Friends come from far and wide to sample my prawn platter.

BEV The British Heart Foundation can help, I need a biscuit.

MARIE You're very rude.

BEV I'm married to an Irish man with Athlete's foot that bad he has to bathe his feet in lavender bath oils twice a day, and take tablets that give him terrible wind.

MARIE I don't see what that has got to do with anything.

BEV You don't have to sleep with him.

SCENE FOUR**ATMOS. INT. FRONT OF SHOP. MORNING****F/X: TILL DINGS AND IS SLAMMED SHUT. CUSTOMERS
CHATTER.**

MARTIN Thank you, bye!

F/X: BELL ABOVE THE DOOR RINGS AS IT'S OPENED.**ALF ENTERS****F/X: DOOR SHUTS.**

MARTIN Granddad?

ALF I need to lie low for a while, Martin.

MARTIN What've you done this time?

ALF It's a misunderstanding, honestly.

MARTIN What did you do?

ALF It's nothing.

MARTIN Granddad!

ALF I might've had a run in with the security at a certain supermarket chain.

MARTIN Again? What did you do this time?

ALF *Every little helps, my big toe!*

MARTIN I'll tell Nan.

ALF I only went in for a few cans.

MARTIN You're not meant to be drinking.

ALF Coca-Cola. I'm off the Guinness, more's the pity.

MARTIN It's your liver.

ALF Aye, so I should be able to do with it as I see fit.

MARTIN Your wife'd kill you.

ALF She would that. No – I was going to go to the Pavilion wi'the lads. Just wanted some ... Cola ... and a few pork pies.

MARTIN So you thought you'd nick them?

ALF I'm not a thief, Martin. They had enough – and they were reduced – and the pies were out of date!

MARTIN Did they call the police?

ALF Might've done. I ran before they could get my name, though.

MARTIN So yes?

ALF Only a few. Harmless, really – I hid with a group from the old folk's home. Drool enough and they'll let you pass.

MARTIN Grandad!

ALF So I'm not politically correct, I go to Communion.

MARTIN For the wine.

ALF Still, it's a start.

**F/X: FOOTSTEPS AS BEV AND MARIE APPROACH THE
COUNTER.**

BEV Ay up, Alf, how's life treating you?

ALF Ay up, Bev.

MARTIN He's on the run from the law.

BEV That's typical of the policeman in this town; chasing after a poor
defenceless war hero.

MARTIN He wasn't in the war.

ALF Have you met your grandmother?

MARIE Excuse me, but are you sure you don't have a genuine Ming
Dynasty vase? Have you checked in the back?

ALF Ming Dynasty? This is a charity shop, not Waitrose.

BEV I told her to go to British Heart Foundation.

ALF She shouldn't go there.

MARIE Why ever not?

ALF You want to support a charity that helps everyone.

MARIE Everyone has a heart.

ALF You've not met my wife.

MARTIN She's not that bad.

ALF She used to beat me.

BEV Oh Alf.

MARTIN She told me about that – it were the Radio Times, and why did she do it?

ALF I weed in her begonias.

BEV See, he's only looking after the garden.

MARTIN This wasn't outside, Bev, this was in the living room in front of the Ladies Group! Nan's not been able to look Mrs Witstanley in the eye since.

F/X: BEV AND ALF SNIGGER. BEV CLAPS HIM ON THE BACK.

MARIE Excuse me, but this hasn't solved my problem.

ALF Don't you already have a vase at home?

MARIE Well yes – but I had my heart set on this one.

ALF You should think yourself lucky. When I was young my mother used an old chamber pot for a vase.

MARIE Times were different.

ALF Oh no, she just liked to show off the fact she had a pot to –

MARTIN Grandad!

BEV You are mean to your grandad, Martin. After all he's done for you.

MARTIN He's cost me enough in legal fees.

ALF You didn't have to pay them.

MARTIN If I hadn't you'd have –

MARIE I think I'll try the British Heart Foundation. You're clearly not sophisticated enough to appreciate the splendour of fine dining in the company of an authentic Ming Dynasty vase.

F/X: BELL TINKLES ABOVE DOOR. DOOR SLAMS SHUT.

MARIE EXITS

ALF My Edith would say that girl was all fur coat and no knickers.

BEV Your Edith would've given her a piece of her mind.

ALF What's a minging vase anyway?

BEV You've lost me – she saw it on Antiques Roadshow apparently. I used to have a thing for Michael Aspel.

ALF There's a nice young piece on it now.

MARTIN Fiona Bruce?

ALF Aye, that's her. (Chuckles.) Martin's always had a thing for older women, Bev, I'd keep your eyes peeled.

BEV If he tries anything funny, I have an old Glade air freshener in my handbag. It won't blind him, but it sure is pungent.

MARTIN I don't know why I bother.

SCENE FIVE**ATMOS: INT. OFFICE. MORNING.**

EVIE She drank half a bottle of Famous Grouse.

DEREK And threw a turkey leg?

EVIE Deborah can be a difficult person to get on with.

DEREK Really?

EVIE She's been trying to get a nude calendar going for six years. I can tell when she wants to talk about it, she'll show up and offer me a cup of coffee – I wouldn't mind if I actually drank the stuff.

DEREK Did you tell her?

EVIE Every time she asked. Once she brought me left-over Christmas Cake to see if it would cover my unmentionables.

DEREK What month did she have you down as?

EVIE Miss March. She wanted to sweeten me up. She believes it is a splendid idea that, if executed properly, would look truly tasteful.

DEREK If you got the Christmas Cake what did Miss December entail?

EVIE Rum sauce, custard and Christmas Pudding.

DEREK Sounds sticky. (Pause.) Have you got any of her notes?

EVIE You said you'd read them.

DEREK I didn't see anything about a nude calendar – she must have got the inspiration from somewhere.

EVIE This isn't the Playboy Mansion, Derek, this is stretch marks and hysterectomy scars, not synthetic breasts and bleached blondes.

DEREK There's always airbrushing.

EVIE There are also body-socks, but it doesn't mean I'm going to strip off for the month of March.

DEREK Not the whole month, you'd get chilblains.

EVIE You're not convincing me. Would you like a brew?

DEREK I'm strictly a coffee drinker, Evelyn.

EVIE There's a café next door.

DEREK No, no, don't put yourself out. Not on my account.

EVIE It's no trouble.

DEREK No, you said you wanted to talk about something.

EVIE Deborah and I have been organising a Christmas Do.

DEREK It's months away – why are you starting now?

EVIE We left it till November last year, ended up at the office playing pass the parcel.

DEREK That could be fun.

EVIE The prize was a tube of Colgate. The volunteers weren't impressed.

DEREK I bet they weren't.

EVIE She wants it to be the best Christmas Do of the millennium.

DEREK It might be pedantic, but, it's 2012, isn't the millennium going to last for quite a while?

EVIE Yes, that's why I'm making time for hors d'oeuvres.

DEREK How long have you been planning this?

EVIE Since Bev threw that turkey leg.

DEREK How are you going to keep her away from the poultry this time?

EVIE I'm in the process of buying some tranquilisers off the internet.

DEREK Legal tranquilisers?

EVIE I'm not sure, but they seem to be from a reliable source. I asked Tom for the website.

DEREK (Jealous) Who's Tom?

EVIE Nephew – he's staying with me at the moment whilst my sister – you remember Joanne? – gets married.

DEREK She didn't want him there?

EVIE It's abroad – they're honeymooning as well. Tom's been with me for a fortnight now.

DEREK A fortnight?

EVIE Joanne's rather fond of Butlins.

SCENE SIX**ATMOS: INT. BACK ROOM. MORNING.****F/X: BISCUITS BEING CRUNCHED.**

BEV How did you get away?

ALF I dumped the pork pies and legged it.

BEV I'm not sure Edith would like the police on her doorstep again.

ALF She's had that path re-paved; she's just praying someone comes along to appreciate it.

BEV And that *has* to be the local constabulary?

ALF She doesn't understand me, Bev. She wants me to be something I'm not.

BEV How long've you been married?

ALF About forty years – we honeymooned in Blackpool.

BEV I'm sure she's given up trying to change you now, Alfie.

ALF You'd be surprised – last night she tried to feed me something foreign. What was it? Lasagne. I said to her, 'Edith, your cooking skills are on par with Rick Stein, but I refuse to eat anything that wasn't thought up on British shores.'

BEV What did she do?

ALF She said if I didn't eat it I could wear it.

- BEV And?
- ALF I ate it, didn't I? Bath night's not till Wednesday.
- BEV You are a filthy beggar, Alf. Did you like it?
- ALF What?
- BEV The lasagne?
- ALF It were all right, I'd prefer tripe.
- BEV My Seamus had a thing about tripe for a while, till I refused to buy it.
- ALF What happened?
- BEV He kept blowing off during Corrie. I'm not a prude – I understand flatulence, but when every shot of The Rovers Return elicits trumps so loud I can't hear Ken Barlow's philosophising, I have no choice but to say no.
- ALF You're robbing a man of his common right there, Beverley.
- BEV I let him have it every now and again: when I go to see my sister in Pontefract.

F/X: BAG RUSTLES. WHEELS ROLL ON CARPET.

- BEV Ah, look at this stroller, we had one of these back when our Phil was a baby – he liked to slam it into the cupboard doors, course that was only so he could get at the ginger nuts. He's always

had a thing about ginger nuts. I don't know why, I can't stand them.

ALF He might get it from your Seamus.

BEV No, Seamus doesn't eat that many biscuits. I blame his mother – he's in his fifties now and she still rings him every Wednesday to tell him to watch his weight. I wish that home would stop buying her the Daily Mail.

ALF It's what mothers do. When I first got with Edith, my mother tried to teach me to iron.

BEV This is a good stroller – some kid'll love it. Did Martin ever have one?

ALF A stroller? You'd have to ask Edith – if I were looking after him, I'd sit him in front of the telly and put on Thundercats.

BEV It's not like they weren't expensive back then. Our Phil's was second hand, we got it cheap down the car boot, cleaned it up wi' a Johnson's baby wipe, and popped him inside, he blooming loved it! I think I'll put eight pounds on it, it's not that much really.

F/X: PHONE RINGS.

BEV I'll just get that.

F/X: PHONE STOPS RINGING AS BEV ANSWERS IT.

BEV Hello? ... Oh, hello Deborah, I'm sorry to hear about your leg. ... Pardon? ... You broke a femur in Best Buy, I ... overheard Evie talking to Derek. ... Our new area manager. ... That's not right. ... Well, who is he? ... You know, this shouldn't happen – I

should be safe in my place of work, Deborah ... Yes, I understand. Well, I'll see you later then. Bye.

F/X: PHONE CLICKS OFF

ALF Bev? What's wrong?

BEV (Breathing heavily.) Derek.

ALF Who?

BEV In the back – he said he was ... he said he was the new area manager.

ALF And he isn't?

BEV Evie knew him – she looked a bit funny when she saw him, but I hoped someone would show up eventually; we thought she were a lesbian, I was about to set her up with Petra from the club.

ALF I'm sure it'll be fine, he won't do anything at the shop will he?

BEV I don't know anything about him – he could be a crazed ax-murderer with a fetish for patent leather stilettos and I wouldn't know until it were too late.

ALF I'm sure it won't come to that.

BEV I need a brandy – why we didn't get a drinks cabinet I'll never know.

ALF Well we don't want him to leave before we've had a chance to question him.

BEV Should I ring the police?

ALF No! No. They're already after me – I'm sure we can handle it together. You go and get Martin; I'll listen at the door.

SCENE SEVEN**ATMOS: INT. OFFICE. MORNING.**

DEREK How much do you make in a week?

EVIE (Questioning) I thought you'd read Deborah's notes.

DEREK I tried to get them but there were some young piece on reception.

EVIE Audrey? Young piece? Retired florist and grandmother of three?

DEREK Retired?

EVIE I'm more interested as to why you thought she was a young piece.

DEREK She had highlights.

EVIE Clairol does wonders nowadays – I never knew it was anti-aging as well.

DEREK She might have tried something new.

EVIE A paper bag? That's the only way you're hiding those wrinkles.

DEREK You're enjoying this aren't you?

EVIE More than you'll ever know.

SCENE EIGHT**ATMOS** **INT. SHOP. MORNING.****F/X:** **CUSTOMERS CHATTER.**

BEV Derek's not what he says he is.

MARTIN A man?

BEV An area manager.

MARTIN So there's every chance he could be an evil Santa Claus?

BEV In this weather?

MARTIN Who is he then?

BEV Well Evie knows him.

MARTIN So he can't be that bad?

BEV Because everyone from Evie's past causes her to drop a box of bric-a-brac – it's a proclamation of undying affection, I suppose?

MARTIN I cleaned it up, didn't I? And what do you mean: proclamation?

BEV Evie's in trouble, Martin, I've only come in because you're grandad –

MARTIN My grandad?

BEV He said he'd listen at the door.

MARTIN When I was fifteen he hid in my wardrobe.

BEV And?

MARTIN He thought I were getting up to some funny business. I wasn't.

BEV He hastens to add.

MARTIN Anyway – he jumped out and shot me wi' a water pistol –

F/X: SHATTERING GLASS. DEREK SCREAMS.

CUT TO:- INT. OFFICE. MORNING.

F/X: DEREK GROANING.

EVIE (Bewildered) Alf, what on earth do you think you're doing?

ALF He's lying to you, Evie.

F/X: TINKLING OF GLASS.

DEREK Percy and Donna?

EVIE What do you mean?

ALF That lady just rang – there were summat about an avocado.

EVIE Do you mean Deborah?

ALF Aye, that's her. She said he aint to be trusted.

DEREK Is he a regular?

MARTIN AND BEV ENTER.

MARTIN Granddad?

DEREK Oh, I see.

MARTIN What, what do you see?

ALF You'll be seeing stars in a minute if you don't start telling the truth.

DEREK Nepotism, that's what this is.

MARTIN Big words for a small brain.

EVIE Leave it, Martin. Now what do they mean you're not who you say you are?

DEREK Evie, please.

EVIE This isn't Eastenders, Derek, I'm not going to throw a pint in your face, I just want to know the truth.

DEREK I wanted to see you again – that's all. I'm not the area manager.

BEV I'm phoning the police.

ALF No! They're still after me.

EVIE What are they going to do anyway? Last time I looked it wasn't an offence to impersonate the area manager of a charity shop.

DEREK You're a good woman, Evie.

EVIE Please just leave.

FX: A DOOR IS OPENED AND CLOSED. EVIE EXHALES

MARTIN I'll get a dustpan and brush. Clear up this mess.

BEV No, you get back on the till – we'll sort this out.

ALF I'm sorry about this, Evie, I thought I were helping.

EVIE You did your best, Alf. Get Martin to lend you the phone and ring your Edith.

ALF She'll kill me!

EVIE Alf!

ALF All right.

FX: TINKLING OF BROKEN GLASS AS IT'S STEPPED ON.

BEV Who is he, Evie?

EVIE Who's who?

BEV Derek.

EVIE I thought you were going to get that dustpan and brush.

BEV Later. Now, you need to come and sit down and talk to me.

EVIE There's no time, Bev, we've got enough to do. I don't know where half our volunteers are – if Mavis has got the wrong bus, she could be halfway to Aberystwyth by now.

BEV I'll make us another brew – we could make them Irish? I think there's some whisky left over from the last do.

EVIE You hid it in a locker.

BEV Should something funny happen – and look at that, it has. Come on, Evie, let's sit down and have a brew.

SCENE NINE**ATMOS: INT. BACK ROOM. MORNING.****F/X: TEA SLURPED, CUPS SLAMMED ONTO TABLE. RADIO PLAYS IN BACKGROUND. SILENCE (2-3 SECONDS.)**

BEV Look, Evie, about earlier, I'm sorry – I didn't mean to shout.

EVIE It's all right. I shouldn't have accused you of stuffing your face. I know you're trying really hard at Bulge Busters.

BEV I've already lost four pounds.

EVIE And your wrists are looking slimmer.

BEV I've stopped using the remote and walk to the television.

EVIE You don't breathe so heavily when you're wrapping bric-a-brac.

BEV You do make a nice brew, Evie.

EVIE Thanks – I've stopped using UHT – there was something on Women's Hour.

BEV I didn't hear it.

EVIE I only heard a snippet – I was trying to price a chaise longue.

BEV We had a chaise longue in?

EVIE It were green – horrible thing. Deborah bought it.

BEV She would.

EVIE It had a dark stain on the cushion – I covered it up wi' a lace doily.

BEV Good on you.

EVIE I did think about using some Vanish but I didn't have the time.

BEV I'd have used some bicarb and a bit o' vinegar.

EVIE Deborah will have probably sold it by now – she does that you know, takes them to car boots.

BEV She doesn't? And she thinks I'm filth.

EVIE It's not that she thinks you're filth.

BEV What is it then?

EVIE She thinks you're common.

BEV Common? Common! I am not common – I eat avocado, for crying out loud – you tell me that's common.

EVIE What did she say on the phone?

BEV She's going to be late because she's got to go to Didsbury to pick up a rocking horse and some rags.

EVIE That's just what we need! A great bleeding rocking horse to clutter up the shop. If that lady complains to me about her arthritis one more time, I'll –

BEV You'll apologise like you always do – you're too good to folk, Evie, that's your problem.

EVIE That's not the only thing.

F/X: BEV SLURPS HER TEA.

BEV Evie, I know it's difficult – but who is Derek?

EVIE Did you find the whisky?

BEV Evie!

F/X: A KNOCK AT THE DOOR.

MARTIN There's a gentleman here wondering if he can buy the mirror out of the window and pick it up later.

BEV Why can't he take it now?

MARTIN He's got a glass eye and a prosthetic leg – his arm's in plaster because he fell down the stairs whilst putting up curtains and his wife's just left him for a dairy farmer in Rainow.

BEV Tell him he's got that much bad luck; he can afford to take it with him now.

MARTIN That's my problem.

EVIE What?

MARTIN Telling him.

EVIE Why?

MARTIN He's deaf.

BEV Hasn't he got a hearing aid?

MARTIN It's whistling – and I'm trying to watch the shop.

EVIE I'll go – you can stay in here and sort with Bev.

BEV You're avoiding the situation.

EVIE I know exactly what I'm doing. I'm going into the shop to ask the most unfortunate man since Frank Spencer whether he needs a mirror, or whether I'd be better ringing Samaritans. Then I'm going to clean up some bric-a-brac, and work the till. Because do you know what, Beverley?

BEV What Evie?

EVIE That is what I do – I sort things out, and I'm not about to let some man I haven't seen in eleven years ruin that.

MARTIN Good on you, Evie.

BEV You can't sort everything out, not when we only have one type of biscuit in the tin.

EVIE (Sighs) This is the way the world ends, not with a bang, but with a dodgy custard cream.

[END]