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1 □NSD1 INT. DAY. DIRECTORS CLUB. LONDON. 1

WAITER#2 carries a mobile phone through the club on a silver serving tray.

FRANCESSCA R. BADEN reads a financial paper.

WAITER#2
Miss BADEN, a call from your office.

FRANCESSCA
Thank you.

WAITER#2 allows FRANCESSCA to take the phone and immediately moves away.

FRANCESSCA
William. Right. Right. The full 450?
You've registered the engagement and success fees? Excellent. Welcome to the big league. Give my regards to Lucinda and your daughters. Oh there is one other thing. The medical insurance report for CLAUDIO BERGATTI. Have you got his blood type? ...Great. You've just secured little Julia's first year at Vidermanette.

FRANCESSCA terminates the call and flags WAITER#2. She then departs her chair.

2 NSD1 INT. DAY. DIRECTORS CLUB. TOILET. LONDON. 2

FRANCESSCA is seated in a toilet cubicle. She stares blankly. Her face is suddenly contorted by grief and emotion. Tears moisten her eyes.

From inside her bag FRANCESSCA retrieves a handwritten envelope addressed to her.

The camera sees a handwritten letter. The contents provide some comfort to FRANCESSCA.

3 SD1. INT. DAY. RECORD SHOP. 3

Act 1 of Il Trovatore can be heard as a spins on the turntable.

EDDIE PRIOR BANKS, (Owner of PrimeTime Records, an Indie record shop) listens to an original 78rpm record brought in by SYLVESTER (Rare vinyl Supplier). Other shop customers pay no attention and continue browsing through the racks of CDs.

EDDIE

This is really nice, but I don't get much demand for black vinyl.

SLYVESTER

Edward, come on. I thought you were the last of the connoisseurs.

EDDIE

Who has a bottom line to balance.

SLYVESTER

What's that women that comes in here? Prime market.

EDDIE

BETH. She's more compact disk, besides she hasn't bought vinyl off me in ages and you know it.

EDDIE flicks through the records in Sylvester's carry case.

SLYVESTER

Original post war Deutsche Grammophon.

EDDIE pulls one record out. He studies the label. The record comes from a long defunct Italian producer.

EDDIE

Who are these people? BERGATTI Recordi?

SLYVESTER

I'll throw it in.

EDDIE flicks through the other Deutsche Grammophon records.

EDDIE

Who's conducting?

SLYVESTER

Furtwängler. Its his first season. I'm giving these away. You can't get original Berlin Philharmonic under Furtwängler anywhere.

EDDIE

Okay, okay. I'm not going over fifteen quid a piece.

Judging by the look EDDIE gives him, SYLVESTER sees bargaining will not work.

SLYVESTER

You've got me Edward. I'm going to come back here and see these marked up to thirty, forty quid.

EDDIE

You might think that, I couldn't possibly comment.

KAREN (a beggar/drug addict) enters the shop. She pesters a customer.

KAREN

Spare some change?

CUSTOMER#1

Sorry.

EDDIE is halfway through handing over cash to SYLVESTER before he notices KAREN.

EDDIE

You. Out. Now.

KAREN

I just want some change.

EDDIE

I'm not interested. This is a shop. If you haven't come to buy, you can frig off.

KAREN knows her actions are indefensible. She leaves the shop.

KAREN

Wanker.

EDDIE

Yeah, whatever.

4 NESD1/ESD1. INT. EVENING. EDDIE'S LIVING ROOM.

4

EDDIE relaxes at the end of a long day. He sips from a bottle of Michelob. Used dinner plates sit on the table.

EDDIE reads through bank statements and other assorted business correspondence. He uses a remote control to activate his CD mulitplayer. EDDIE flicks through albums. The Associates. B52s. Led Zeppelin.

5 NESD1/ESD1. INT. EVENING. ROSETTA'S ROOM. 5

The camera rests low down showing a woman's feet (ROSETTA SUSANNAH DI CURCI). She taps her feet in time to EDDIE's eclectic choice of music.

6 NESD1/ESD1. INT. EVENING. EDDIE'S LIVING ROOM. 6

EDDIE

[An invoice] Not again. Why didn't they reply? Bloody idiots.

EDDIE flicks albums to a Mambo track but his concentration is distracted by the catchy melody. He flicks to the next CD - it is a classical music sampler. EDDIE flicks tracks until an operatic aria plays.

EDDIE

This is what the people want.

7 NESD1/ESD1. INT. EVENING. ROSETTA'S ROOM. 7

The swirling notes pitched by the skilled soprano waft through to where ROSETTA is seated. She has stopped tapping her feet. They now fidget with nervous displeasure.

More of the exquisite aria passes before ROSETTA bangs on the floor with her walking stick. She bangs again.

8 ESD1. INT. EVENING. EDDIE'S LIVING ROOM. 8

At first EDDIE does not hear the banging. Then the dull thuds become apparent. He pauses the CD and listens.

EDDIE

Sorry. I'm turning it down. I forgot you don't like opera. ...You old fusspot!

EDDIE lowers the volume on his hi-fi.

9 NSD2/SD3. INT. DAY. MARVEL'S HOUSE. 9

MARVEL MONTGOMERY (EDDIE's best friend) swaps out a computer hard drive. MARVEL's pal RAWLINS sits close by, his attention soaked up by the Financial Times.

MARVEL

EDDIE said he might call.

RAWLINS

Say "hi" from me.

MARVEL
You're not coming over?

RAWLINS
No, I've got an early start tomorrow.

MARVEL
That's the Civil Service for you. They keeping you on a tight leash?

RAWLINS
I'm in there boy.

MARVEL
Respect that, but I couldn't do nine to five.

RAWLINS
Says him, the "next Bill Gates". How many people do you have working for you now?

MARVEL
Just remember your tax man is lining his pockets with enough of my cash.

RAWLINS
Stick to it. There's plenty of people out there looking up to you.

MARVEL
"Winners never quit, quitters never win".

RAWLINS
Exactly.

MARVEL's phone rings. RAWLINS takes this as a cue to fix himself a single - double - triple spirit.

MARVEL
Hold on. (To EDDIE) How you doing? Cool. Your amp again! I'll bring my tools round. Yes, but not too spicy. No I didn't forget. RAWLINS is here murdering my spirits. Alright. See you tonight.

10 NSD2/SD3. INT. DAY. EDDIE'S HOUSE. MORNING

10

EDDIE
Okay. I'll see you when you come.

EDDIE sifts through his post. He holds up a letter from Clerzcutss Solicitors and opens the envelope. It looks formal.

EDDIE
Jesus. That's all I need.

EDDIE departs for work leaving the letter next to his phone. The letter reads in close up: -this matter requires your immediate attention or you will be subject to legal action and fines not less than £20,000 pounds....

11 NSD2/SD102. INT. DAY. RECORD SHOP. AM 11

DAVID FRANHOOK (Business account manager) enters the record shop. AUDREY STANNARD (shop owner) is visiting.

EDDIE
David. Thanks for coming on short notice. You know AUDREY.

FRANHOOK
Hello again.

EDDIE
She's just downloaded this mass of death to me.

AUDREY shows the letters.

AUDREY
I got notification from my bank and solicitor this morning.

FRANHOOK
Have you made arrangements to stay with the new leaseholders?

AUDREY
Not yet. Its a bit overwhelming right now.

ADRIAN
Rewind. What's this about?

FRANHOOK
Morgan Tilley have been declared bankrupt.

ADRIAN
Who's Morgan Tilley?

EDDIE
The lease holders for this shop.

FRANHOOK

Former lease holders. And its not just this shop. The whole arcade.

EDDIE

So they've gone bust. When did it happen?

FRANHOOK

Three, four weeks ago. They've been hanging on. As you didn't respond to any of my letters, I assumed you had made new arrangements.

EDDIE

Christ. My mail went up the spout.

FRANHOOK

That many letters don't go missing.

EDDIE

Believe me, mine did.

FRANHOOK

Sorry old mate but Morgan Tilley have a list of creditors as long as my arm.

EDDIE

Don't tell me. We're somewhere near the bottom of the pile.

ADRIAN

But you've being paying rent and business rates.

AUDREY

Makes no difference.

EDDIE

If they've gone bust we're knackered.

FRANHOOK

I'm afraid the banks and creditors are going to have a bun-fight to cover our corporate posteriors.

EDDIE

If you cancel my overdraft, that's going to wipe me out.

AUDREY

Me too. My life savings are in that boutique.

ADRIAN

Shit.

EDDIE

Great. Can anything else possibly go wrong today?

12 NESD2/ESD3. INT. EVENING. EDDIE'S LIVING ROOM.

12

MARVEL fiddles with a printed circuit board from EDDIE'S partially disassembled hi-fi amplifier. EDDIE brings drinks and food through.

EDDIE

You don't have to do that.

MARVEL

I can fix this in my sleep.

EDDIE

Let me give you something.

MARVEL

Don't worry yourself. The shop is going to charge you an arm and a leg and the repair won't be done half as good as I can do it.

EDDIE

Cheers MARVEL.

MARVEL

Don't mention it fella.

EDDIE passes the plate to MARVEL.

EDDIE

Food.

Knock, knock.

MARVEL

EDDIE has a visitor! Are they lost?

EDDIE

You should be on stage.

MARVEL

Miracles never cease.

EDDIE heads to the door.

EDDIE
You're too powerful.

EDDIE opens the door to find ROSETTA.

EDDIE
Ms DI CURCI.

ROSETTA
You make me sound like an institution.
Call me ROSETTA.

EDDIE is unsure how to proceed for an instant.

EDDIE
ROSETTA. Come in.

ROSETTA
If you insist. I was waiting on a
guest. But. Well they let me down.

EDDIE
You're here now. ROSETTA this is
MARVEL.

ROSETTA
Sorry I don't mean to intrude.

MARVEL
No. No problem. You're the lady that
lives upstairs. Its nice to meet you.
Take a seat.

EDDIE
This is a nice surprise. Frankly I
wasn't expecting to see you so soon.

ROSETTA
You did say come by, but I can see
you're eating.

EDDIE
Stay there. You can sample some of my
cooking.

ROSETTA
I don't want to put you to any
trouble.

EDDIE
No trouble. You eat meat?

EDDIE is already heading into the Kitchen.

13 NESD2/ESD3. INT. EVENING. EDDIE'S HOUSE. KITCHEN.

13

He dishes up a small plate of food for ROSETTA.

ROSETTA
My appetite isn't very big these days.

EDDIE
You'll enjoy this. Help yourself to wine or would you prefer beer?

MARVEL
I doubt if ROSETTA drinks beer.

ROSETTA
Coffee. Black with one sugar please.

MARVEL has partially cleared away his tools and work area.

ROSETTA
So MARVEL, you are an engineer?

EDDIE interrupts MARVEL's reply.

EDDIE
He's called MARVEL of one good reason - he man is a miracle worker with anything electrical or mechanical.

MARVEL
I'm setting up a computer company.

ROSETTA
Really.

MARVEL
I build systems, do firewalls, intranets. Supermans got me fixing his amplifier now.

ROSETTA
Save himself some money.

MARVEL
That's just what I was saying to him. How about you?

ROSETTA
School teacher.

MARVEL
What do you teach?

ROSETTA
Language. But I'm retired now.

EDDIE (OS)
Italian?

ROSETTA
Si!

EDDIE enters the living room with ROSETTA's plate and coffee.

EDDIE
Come sta.

ROSETTA
Molto bene.

EDDIE
Er, Nessun Dorma? You've just exhausted the sum knowledge of my Italian.

ROSETTA
But you know the Turandot?

EDDIE picks up the Classical CD sampler and points out the Turandot track to ROSETTA.

EDDIE
Who doesn't? World cup '98.

ROSETTA
You should have stuck to Led Zeppelin.

EDDIE
So it was you banging. Funny, I thought you would have preferred the opera.

ROSETTA
A symphony perhaps. But not the singing.

MARVEL
The foods getting cold. Eat up.

14 NESD2/ESD3. INT. EVENING. EDDIE'S LIVING ROOM.

14

ROSETTA, EDDIE and MARVEL are relaxing. The dinner plates have been discarded to one side.

EDDIE
The whole thing is going down hill.

MARVEL

You're up against HMV and Virgin. You can't have the same margins as them.

EDDIE

I know. And every time they have a sale part of my market gets cannibalised. That's why I need my niche.

ROSETTA

But cycles like this always happen in business. Boom and bust or whatever they call it.

EDDIE

That's why I have to keep a tight reign on things. Its begining to piss me off. Sorry.

ROSETTA

I'll tell you what I am going to do. I shall pay you a visit tomorrow. Your shop has me intrigued.

EDDIE

If you're looking for a job I am absolutely the last person you should be speaking to.

ROSETTA

I said I'd come for a visit. I'm not looking for a job.

MARVEL

If you're going to be in town tomorrow let me buy you a coffee.

ROSETTA

How can I resist?

15 NESD2/ESD3. INT. EVENING. EDDIE'S HOUSE. KITCHEN.

15

EDDIE washes up. He looks at MARVEL.

EDDIE

What's that mind of yours thinking?

MARVEL

She's a character. I could fix her up with my dad.

EDDIE
She's a lady. I know you're dad
remember.

MARVEL
You saying my pop isn't good enough.

EDDIE
ROSETTA has class. Not that you would
know it, but she's 'Enchanting'.

MARVEL
Yes "Higgins". What are you on about!
'Enchanting'. Do you fancy her?

EDDIE
Get a grip. I just know class when I
see it.

MARVEL
We'll see. Put on a film. You can wash
up later.

EDDIE literally throws in the towel.

EDDIE
Much later.

They exit the kitchen.

16 NSD3/SD6. INT. DAY. RECORD SHOP. AFTERNOON. 16

ROSETTA is talking to SYLVESTER.

SYLVESTER
The modern classics are your popular
music performers. Your Elton Johns,
George Michaels. People like Prince,
Havens, Mitchell. The writing teams
behind solo artists.

ROSETTA
These people sing about loaves of
bread and rubbish. They don't sing
about love.

SYLVESTER
Really! You can't just write them
off.

ROSETTA
I'm not. I listen to contemporary
music.

(MORE)

ROSETTA (cont'd)

But when I hear Puccini's La Boheme. Che gelida Ma Nina. Your tiny hand is frozen. Every time it makes my skin prickle. Like this. He was writing about love, his life and everything which brings him to this moment. Its not just a hollow sentiment, something to be in the hit parade for two weeks then disappear. Why do think these works are classics?

SLYVESTER

I can see I can't talk you round. Look, I've got to shoot. Perhaps we can pick this up another time?

A young couple DEAN and CLAIRE KENWOOD have eavesdropped the conversation. DEAN eyes up a general love ballad CD. CLAIRE retrieves La Boheme from the shelf.

CLAIRE

I want to give this a try.

DEAN

Some fat bird warbling, then pops her clogs through grief. I think not
CLAIRE.

CLAIRE

That lady was right. If this has been around so long it might be worth trying.

DEAN

You can't understand a take away menu. You're not going to understand Spanish.

CLAIRE

Its Italian smart-arse. And its got a book with a translation inside. Get your cash out.

ROSETTA approaches the couple.

ROSETTA

Scusa. I heard you talking. Of course you are right my dear.

CLAIRE

So this is a good one to get?

ROSETTA

You are the best critic for yourself.
If you like it, then it makes no
difference what anybody else says.

CLAIRE

I'll take it then.

ROSETTA

I am a good friend of the manager.
Please accept this as a gift.

CLAIRE

I can't do that.

ROSETTA

Yes you can. Now go before I change my
mind.

CLAIRE

I'll let you know how I get on. Bye.

CLAIRE waves goodbye to ADRIAN. The CD held openly in her hands.

ADRIAN

She did pay for that?

17 NSD3/SD104. INT. DAY. OFFICES OF SYME AVERY CHENNING. 17

EDDIE wears his business suit. He waits with AUDREY in the
reception area. RECEPTIONIST approaches.

RECEPTION

Would you like to come through. Mrs
RYDALL will be with you in a minute.

EDDIE

Sorry I thought we were seeing Mr
DONAUGHUE?

RECEPTION

MR DONAUGHUE is busy elsewhere.

EDDIE can barely contain the contempt in his voice.

EDDIE

He is, is he?

AUDREY is the voice of reason.

AUDREY

We'll listen to what she says.

18 NSD3/SD104. INT. DAY. SYME AVERY CHENNING. MEETING ROOM. 18

EDDIE and AUDREY wait. And Wait.

EDDIE

What the hell are they playing at?

AUDREY

I don't like being kept waiting anymore than you do. If you go in there angry, she'll have you just where she wants you.

EDDIE

I'm angry because I've been down this road before. Its called the shitty end of the stick.

AUDREY

What are you saying?

EDDIE

Morgan Tilley go bust. Their main creditor is Syme Avery Chenning. Has it crossed your mind who's building the most city centre apartments?

AUDREY

Syme Avery Chenning. The fabled one million pound flat.

EDDIE

Two and two makes four. They're going to stall and push us into selling out or bankruptcy.

AUDREY

I wouldn't have a leg to stand on.

EDDIE

See, perfect. They'll move in, build the apartments and collect higher rents.

AUDREY

We're wasting our time meeting this RYDALL character.

EDDIE

She's probably going to fob us off. Come on.

They exit the room in time to meet RYDALL entering.

RYDALL
Mr BANKS. Mrs STANNARD. Apologies for
keeping you waiting.

EDDIE
Save it. Actually you can help us with
something.

RYDALL
Why don't we sit down and discuss
this?

EDDIE
Let's not. We're going to petition
your rights to our lease.

RYDALL
I think you'll find you can't do that.
I doubt if you have the resources to
out bid our current offer.

AUDREY
Watch this space.

19 NESD3 INT. NIGHT. FRANCESCA'S LONDON BEDROOM.

19

FRANCESCA's sleep is pervaded by a recurring dream. She wakes
up to find her mother {Young ROSETTA} seated at the bottom of
her bed holding a baby (baby FRANCESCA). A tall, suited man is
also present. Young ROSETTA passes the baby to the man, then
passes a sealed envelope. FRANCESCA is aghast. She cries out.

FRANCESCA
No.

FRANCESCA wakes from her nightmare. She gasps for breath and is
visibly shaken.

FRANCESCA pulls the bed clothes up around herself.

20 MSD4/SD105. INT. NIGHT. AUDREY'S BEDROOM. 2AM

20

Its 2:00AM in the morning. AUDREY fidgets then wakes up. She
tries to relax.

PHILIP
I'll not be able to sleep if you keep
fidgeting.

AUDREY
Oh that's a pity.

PHILIP
What is it love?

AUDREY
Something on my mind.

PHILIP
I'll get you a glass of warm milk.

AUDREY
Then I'll be on the toilet all night.

PHILIP
We own the toilet. At least they can't
kick you out of that.

AUDREY
Umh.

A thought occurs to AUDREY.

AUDREY
What did you just say?

PHILIP
This is no time for playing games.

AUDREY
"At least we own the toilet". The
Buggers. They don't own the lease.

AUDREY butts PHILIP.

PHILIP
Ouch. Give over.

AUDREY
Pass me the phone love.

PHILIP passes the phone.

PHILIP
Who are you ringing at this time of
night?

21 MSD4/SD105. INT. NIGHT. EDDIE'S HOUSE. BEDROOM. 2AM 21

EDDIE's phone rings. EDDIE wakes, taking a few moments to work
out where the sound comes from. He flicks on a bedside lamp.

EDDIE
Hello. AUDREY!? Yeah. Yes. You little
beauty.

22 NSD4/SD105. INT. DAY. EDDIE'S LIVING ROOM.

22

ROSETTA and EDDIE warm themselves from the outside cold.

EDDIE (VO)

So anyway...{to next dialogue block}

EDDIE

We met the new lease holders, but it turns out they don't actually own the land rights.

ROSETTA

So who does?

EDDIE

A company in Brighton. Its on a ninety-nine year lease.

ROSETTA

So if the company charging you rent doesn't actually own the land rights, wouldn't those rights be open for sale?

EDDIE nods.

EDDIE

Our landlords are putting in their own bid for land they supposedly own. In the mean time they charge rent and nobody notices.

ROSETTA takes note of what EDDIE tells her.

ROSETTA

So you could out bid them, if you had the money.

EDDIE

In theory I suppose. But I don't have that kind of money. None of us do.

EDDIE takes one of ROSETTA's biscuits.

ROSETTA

It would be a pity to see your shop close. You're ruining my ratio!

EDDIE

Listen to you. That shop closes, then I'm finished.

ROSETTA
I wish I could help, but I have
nothing.

EDDIE
You've helped me enough by just being
a sounding board.

23 NSD5/SD3. INT. DAY. RECORD SHOP.

23

ADRIAN, (EDDIE's assistant) serves BLOSSOM (bag lady). MORTIMER enters the shop. He gives a casual wave to the otherwise preoccupied EDDIE and ADRIAN.

BLOSSOM
Yes Tolcat and Fudgey.

ADRIAN
Tolcat and Fudgey by Batch? Sorry
love.

EDDIE
I've not heard of it.

ADRIAN
Its definitely not on the system.

BLOSSOM
Its ever such a well known piece. Next
you'll be telling me you've never
heard of Batch.

An idea occurs to EDDIE. He is prompted to search through a CD rack. He pulls out a CD and shows it to BLOSSOM then ADRIAN for his edification.

BLOSSOM
See you have got it. You're ever so
good.

ADRIAN
Oh right! Bach's Toccata & Fugue. How
stupid of me.

BLOSSOM shows ADRIAN her ID - its clearly not her photograph.

BLOSSOM
I've got this.

ADRIAN
That's doesn't really look like you
BLOSSOM.

BLOSSOM
But I need it for my discount.

ADRIAN
Lets not argue. As its you BLOSSOM,
I'll do it for seven ninety nine.

The CD actually costs...seven pounds ninety nine. BLOSSOM delves for her purse amongst an entourage of plastic carrier bags permanently welded to her.

BLOSSOM
You're ever such a nice man. I bet all
the girls chase you.

EDDIE
Easy when you know how.

BLOSSOM
All I need is a gramophone to play it
on. Thank you loves.

BLOSSOM departs.

ADRIAN
She comes in here every week, buys a
CD then says she needs a gramophone.

EDDIE
Mad as a wooden biscuit. Bless her.

ADRIAN
Its your mate "Scruffy Duffy"
(MORTIMER) old fruit.

EDDIE
I'm warning you. Don't crack up this
time.

ADRIAN
Yes old fruit. Has he ever actually
bought anything?

EDDIE
He brings me the occasional
Montecristo.

ADRIAN
I can't tell you your business but
you've got to stop taking vinyl. Its
taking up floor space.

EDDIE
AD(RIAN) Five boxes man.

MORTIMER lets out an unmanly shriek.

EDDIE
Are you alright over there Morty?

MORTIMER
I will be in a minute old fruit.

IVOR WILSON enters the shop.

MORTIMER approaches the sales counter.

EDDIE
You're taking these two?

MORTIMER
I must HAVE them. How much?

EDDIE
Thirty each. They're a bit expen....

MORTIMER
Spare me two bags. Can't be too sure.

ADRIAN
Found something rare?

MORTIMER
Perhaps.

From his tatty wallet, MORTIMER places six tightly folded ten-pound notes on the counter.

EDDIE and ADRIAN exchange glances at MORTIMER'S almost clinical manner in handling the notes.

EDDIE
Sixty pounds, thank you.

MORTIMER
I shall require a receipt. Must have a clear receipt.

EDDIE
I'll write you one.

MORTIMER
Has your bells and whistle's thingy
(till) deserted you?

EDDIE
Something like that. Here you are.

MORTIMER pulls out two tubed Punch Corona cigars and hands one each to EDDIE and ADRIAN.

MORTIMER
Now then. These are for you. We'll
have no fighting. You've earned them.

EDDIE
Cheers. I'll smoke it later.

MORTIMER
If you'll excuse me from making polite
chitter-chat. Gentlemen.

MORTIMER exists the shop clutching the two records. ADRIAN waves
goodbye.

ADRIAN
Cheers fruity. That has to be his
quickest visit.

EDDIE
What were you saying about black
vinyl?

ADRIAN
Okay you made a little profit. Big
deal. Wait another five years and
he'll buy the rest

EDDIE
We'll see.

ADRIAN
What's his story anyway?

EDDIE
He used to be some big noise magazine
editor in London. Something like that.

ADRIAN
Takes all sorts!

EDDIE
Its a thin line boy. You're here one
day than down the next.

24 NSD5 INT. DAY. FRANCESCA'S LONDON OFFICE.

24

FRANCESCA works at her computer. Something distracts her full attention from the task at hand. She uses the desk intercom.

FRANCESCA
Francine block all my calls for the
next ten minutes.

FRANCINE (VO)
Yes Miss BADEN.

FRANCESCA types commands on her PC keyboard. A map from London to "The North" is displayed.

25 NSD6 SD5. INT. DAY. RECORD SHOP.

25

BETH THORNABY is on her lunch break. She looks through the "Newly Arrived" shelf. ROSETTA is close by looking through a different part of the same selection. She plucks a recording of Le Nozze DI Figaro from the shelf.

BETH
That's an excellent recording.

ROSETTA
What about Riccardo Muti's version?

BETH
That's what I had first, then my
husband bought me the George Solti and
I saw the light.

ROSETTA
{So what would be}...a good Il
Trovatore?

BETH
Now you're asking. Placido Domingo's
version under Giulini.

ROSETTA
Leonora was Rosalind Plowright.

BETH
And Azucena was sung by...

ROSETTA
...Brigitte Fassbaender. Its so nice
to meet someone who can appreciate
something different.

BETH

I'm not really an opera buff. I'm a bit unwashed.

ROSETTA

You are unwashed?

BETH

Its what the opera snobs call the general public. Most people in this shop are 'supremely unwashed', but it would be a dull place if we all liked the same thing.

ROSETTA

True. Are you looking for anything in particular?

BETH

Zinka Milanov.

ROSETTA

Pah. She sings like castrati.

BETH

That's a bit harsh!

ROSETTA

But true.

BETH

Who'd you chose?

ROSETTA

Indulge me. I have a particular interest in coloratura Sopranos.

BETH

Callas has to be in every bodies top ten, though she's outclassed by Sutherland and Organasova. Then there's Lily Pons and Tetrzzini, they both rank very highly. But if want true prima donna material I would pick, blast, I can't remember her name.

ROSETTA

Who!?

BETH

ROSETTA. ROSETTA something or other.

ROSETTA
You've heard this ROSETTA sing?

BETH
Oh yes. I'm no aficionado but she was the voice. Brilliant. Chrikey that must be nearly ten years ago. Somebody offered me one of her records which are like hens teeth now. Anyway sods law kicks in - she stops recording and disappears in a puff of smoke.

ROSETTA is stunned.

BETH
Are you okay?

ROSETTA
I just remembered I have an urgent appointment. Thank you..my dear.

BETH
Pleasure?!

ROSETTA grabs her coat and bag and hastily exits the shop without speaking to EDDIE or ADRIAN.

EDDIE
Rosetta?

BETH
Did I say something?

BETH registers what EDDIE just said. She is not sure if he heard correctly.

BETH
What did you call her?

A customer#2 approaches the counter to make a purchase.

EDDIE
(To ADRIAN)
You're going to have to deal with this.

EDDIE rushes after ROSETTA.

26 NSD6/SD5. EXT. DAY.CITY CENTRE. NEAR RECORD SHOP. 26

EDDIE searches for ROSETTA. His mobile phone rings.

EDDIE
Hello. You found her.

ADRIAN (VO)
She's back in the shop.

EDDIE
{Phew} Good. I'm coming straight back.
Its freezing out here.

27 NESD6/ESD1. EXT. EVENING. CITY CENTRE.

27

KAREN scores from FLY her pusher. FLY's scrawny frame and shabby clothes give him a particularly unsavoury appearance.

FLY
You're still fit KAREN. You could earn
your money in other ways.

KAREN
Giving blowjobs to your nasty mates.
Forget it. I doubt if any of them know
how to run a bath.

FLY
Your loss. We could come to an
arrangement. Me and you. Is that what
you used to say in the bank "an
arrangement"?

KAREN
What would you know FLY? I'd have to
be desperate. Here's your money. Give
me what I need.

FLY's machismo is stung.

FLY
You'll be back and you'll want to get
higher. Then you'll be gagging for it.
Fucking whore.

FLY laughs. KAREN walks away without turning back.

28 NSD7/SD4. INT. DAY. RECORD SHOP.

28

EDDIE
Eventually I'm going to get around to
typing all the titles into a computer,
then its easier to keep track of them.

ROSETTA
Is there some kind of inventory
software you can use?

ADRIAN
I would have never taken you as a
computer geek.

EDDIE
It takes all sorts.

ROSETTA
(To ADRIAN) You judge a book by its
cover.

ADRIAN
I suppose this is a change of scenery
from bingo.

ROSETTA
Bingo! Pah. Come back to me when your
mother puts you in long trousers.

IVAN WILSON (Aging but still dashing Douglas Fairbanks Jr look-
alike) has sprung himself on ROSETTA by surprise.

WILSON
(Laughs) What a gal. Teaching the
youngsters a thing or two. Allow me to
introduce myself. IVAN WILSON.

WILSON passes his music choice to EDDIE.

ROSETTA
Rosetta.

EDDIE
One of my most regular customers.

WILSON
(To ROSSETA) Delighted to make your
acquaintance. I believe I keep this
shop afloat from my own pocket.

ADRIAN
A slight overstatement on your part
but we like your custom.

WILSON
Does ROSETTA have a second name?

ROSETTA
No ROSETTA does not.

WILSON

I stood over there and thought to myself, IVAN old boy, you can't let a woman like that slip by without saying hello. After all, you are quite beautiful.

ROSETTA beckons for WILSON to lean closer to her.

ROSETTA

IVAN. I think it is time to change your brand of toothpaste.

WILSON is stunned by the 'in-your-face' rebuke. He breathes into the palm of his hand. Now acutely aware of his strong smelling breath, WILSON hastily finishes up his business.

WILSON

Thank you EDDIE.

WILSON departs.

ROSETTA

Goodbye IVAN.

WILSON stops at the door but is too embarrassed to turn back and acknowledge ROSETTA.

EDDIE

That was mean.

ROSETTA

Do you want him to kiss you?

ADRIAN feigns a whipping motion over EDDIE's back.

29

NSD7/SD3. INT. DAY. RECORD SHOP.

29

BETH THORNABY pops in.

BETH

Eddie.

EDDIE

How do BETH. Your CDs have arrived.

BETH

Excellent.

EDDIE

You're in the book, I would have called you.

EDDIE
 Very efficient, I like that. I was in town anyway. Thought I would pop by for a quick browse. Any excuse really.

EDDIE reaches behind the counter and retrieves BETH's package.

EDDIE
 Be my guest. They came on Tuesday.

BETH
 Marvellous. Plastic?

BETH hands EDDIE his credit card.

EDDIE
 Aye.

BETH
 Anything else I should be looking at?

EDDIE
 We've got some new classical on black vinyl. SYLVESTER reckons its quite rare.

BETH
 Oh yeah.

EDDIE
 He came in a few days ago.

BETH
 I bought Rigoletto off him. No. I'll pass. I should really be getting rid of the stuff I've already got.

EDDIE
 No worries.

BETH
 Back to the grind.

30 NSD7 EXT. DAY. CITY CENTRE. CAR PARK.

30

EDDIE is heading towards his car. His mobile phone rings. SYLVESTER approaches.

EDDIE
 Your ears must be burning.

SYLVESTER
 Extolling my virtues were you?

EDDIE
Yes actually.

SLYVESTER
I got your text. I popped by but
ADRIAN said you'd just left, I could
catch you out here.

EDDIE
So you and MARZELLE can do dinner next
Tuesday?

SLYVESTER
Oh let me see.

EDDIE
I've even got your number one fan
ROSETTA coming.

SLYVESTER
Well I'm sold then. Eight o'clock?

EDDIE
Bring a bottle.

SLYVESTER checks his watch and is already turning away.

SLYVESTER
Okay. I'm rushing now, I'll catch you
then. Cheers EDDIE.

EDDIE
Now, no fighting you two.

SLYVESTER
Yeah right.

31 NESD7/ESD11. INT. EVENING. EDDIE'S LIVING ROOM.

31

EDDIE sifts through his paperwork. ROSETTA comes through from
the bedroom.

EDDIE
You didn't have to do that.

ROSETTA
She's asleep. I could eat her up. You
must be very proud.

EDDIE
PEARL is the one treasure in my life.
The rest of it is red tape and
bullshit.

ROSETTA

So what's new. You're no exception.
Let your dreams keep you alive. They
did for me.

EDDIE

When I was a student in London, my
course was really hard. I had no real
social life. Sometimes I'd shoot off
to Tower records and spend all evening
browsing the shelves for a CD. This
was when "yuppies" were all the rage.
They'd be there with their platinum
credit cards and stack of CDs. I could
only afford one CD so I spent all
evening choosing. Don't know how I'm
going to do it, but I want my own
Tower records.

ROSETTA

This is how you spent your grant
cheque, on music? No doubt you always
made the right choice.

EDDIE

Always.

ROSETTA

Its good that you have a dream.

EDDIE

What's your dream?

ROSETTA

Mine. I'm too tired for dreams.

EDDIE

That's a cop out.

ROSETTA

Sometimes I wish I had my time again.
But that's impossible. My dream. Its
to die happy and to know that I made a
difference somewhere.

MORTIMER leafs through a holiday brochure. His shabby
surroundings belie his ability to afford such an expensive
holiday.

MORTIMER

(sung)

Ooh, what they do in Peru. Yes my
beauties a bit of sun for Uncle Morty.

MORTIMER leaves his chair to search under a pile of books on his table. He locates an old address book.

He then takes time out to look admiringly at the 78 rpm BERGATTI RECORDI record bought from EDDIE's shop.

MORTIMER's attention returns to leafing through his address book.

MORTIMER

Johnson, Kendrick, Kenyon, Leyland.
Ah, LE GRAF. STEPHEN.

A London phone number is written next to the entry for STEPHEN LE GRAF. MORTIMER heads in to his kitchen.

MORTIMER

Yes indeed. Who they do in Peru.

33 NSD8/SD103. INT. DAY. MARVEL'S HOUSE. KITCHEN. 33

EDDIE scours MARVEL'S cupboards.

MARVEL

What day?

EDDIE looks in a cupboard.

EDDIE

Tuesday. Do you have any food in the house?

MARVEL

Nothing in there? Sorry mate I can't do Tuesday, I'm seeing Jill.

EDDIE shakes a packet of cereal and pulls out a sachet of Costa Rican coffee but no cereal.

EDDIE

I don't believe this guy. (To MARVEL)
You've got coffee in the cereal.

MARVEL has coasters marked with with motifs for Espresso, Cappuccino and Mocha.

MARVEL

I don't drink anything else.

EDDIE

Your blood pressure is going to skyrocket. Too much caffeine young man.

MARVEL

You worry too much.

EDDIE

Yeah. I've got a lot to worry about. I just got a demand from the lease holders solicitors for seventy five grand.

MARVEL

What! I said you can't afford to take your eye off the ball. Something will turn around and bite your backside.

EDDIE

I've done everything right. My mail goes missing, people aren't buying. I can't control that.

MARVEL

Nothing is beyond your control.

EDDIE

I'm not going to worry. It'll work itself out.

MARVEL

Now you're giving up. Your business doesn't run by itself. You've got to take responsibility.

EDDIE

Well sir. I can tell you now, it won't beat me.

MARVEL

What are you going to do mastermind?

EDDIE

I don't have the first bloody clue.

MARVEL

I can help you with a little money.

EDDIE

No. I built this. Its going to stand the way I want it to.

MARVEL

Pride before a fall. Its not just
yourself you have to consider.

34 NESD8/ESD4. INT. EVENING. LE GRAF'S FLAT.

34

The flat is empty. LE GRAF's phone rings. His OGM on the answer
phone engages.

LE GRAF (VO)

The gods have seen fit that you have
this prized number. Leave a clear
message. No mumbling. Thank you.

MORTIMER (VO)

STEPHEN. Its CECIL MORTIMER. Look I've
got something that could be very,
very, very worth your while. You have
my number.

35 NSD9/SD7. INT. DAY. LIBRARY. 3RD FLOOR. MID MORN.

35

EDDIE waits for PEARL (EDDIE'S 9 year old daughter) to catch up.
PEARL carries her five chosen books.

EDDIE

You are so like your mum. Five books
and you'll read one of them.

PEARL

Mummy doesn't take me to the library.

EDDIE

She's busy.

PEARL

You're busy but you make time.

EDDIE

Brownie points for me.

PEARL

You know what I mean.

EDDIE

Come on. We both love you the same.

PEARL

I saw another picture of ROSETTA in a
book.

EDDIE

Oh boy more trouble.

PEARL
Someone else is bound to find out.

EDDIE
Yes, but remember what she asked us to do?

PEARL
Keep it secret.

EDDIE
Exactly. And Why?

PEARL
Because she hates fuss and wants to be private.

EDDIE
Right. So scthum.

PEARL
I'll keep it secret for the trainers.

EDDIE
Hey. That's not nice. And you can't have those training shoes.

PEARL
But its my half term treat.

EDDIE
Don't whine it doesn't become you. Finish your homework, then you can watch some television at JANINE's.

PEARL salutes her dad.

EDDIE
Come on cheeky chops. I've got to get something nice for dinner.

PEARL
Okay.

SYLVESTER, his girlfriend MARZELLE, ADRIAN, ROSETTA and EDDIE are seated around the table. The piled plates and remnants of food show they ate well. Hungarian folk music fills any background lulls in conversation.

ADRIAN
(To ROSETTA)
Insult of the week goes to
you. (Imitating ROSETTA)
Your breath reeks of garlic.
Devil get behind thee.

MARZELLE
You didn't say that to a customer did
you?

ROSETTA
So what! I hang my head in shame
perhaps.

ADRIAN
She's right. He always stinks of
garlic and 'dapper Dan'. Tell it like
it is - straight down the line. Bosh.

MARZELLE
And you agree with this EDDIE?

SLYVESTER
Why do you have to flirt so much?

MARZELLE
Are you jealous?

SLYVESTER
No but I'm annoyed.

MARZELLE
You've done nothing but snipe at me
all night. You don't control me.

SLYVESTER
You're a right bitch sometimes.

ROSETTA
Eh, eh.

MARZELLE
That's odd. I thought you were the
only bitch in this relationship.

EDDIE
And moving swiftly along. More tea
vicar?

ROSETTA

MARZELLE is a beautiful woman. It is her given right to flirt and tease the men.

EDDIE

You'd be the last person I would expect to say that.

ROSETTA

I've had my moments. In my heyday, perhaps another time.

ADRIAN

Oh yeah.

MARZELLE

Thank you {ROSETTA}. Perhaps I should get a man who can appreciate me.

SLYVESTER

ROSETTA stay out of this please.

ROSETTA

Didn't anybody ever tell you, you should respect your elders?

SLYVESTER

Yes they did but I wasn't listening. (To MARZELLE) We'll speak later.

MARZELLE

Save it. Are we going to watch this DVD or not?

ROSETTA yawns.

ADRIAN

Keeping you up?

ROSETTA

Excuse me. Its late. I have too many late nights. Its not good for me.

EDDIE

You know where everything is. I'll make some coffee.

The group moves through to the lounge.

EDDIE

Peace.

ROSETTA

And quiet.

37 NSD10/INT. DAY. EDDIE'S KITCHEN. MORNING. 37

EDDIE makes himself a coffee. PEARL reads a book.

EDDIE

Brainwave. Why don't we have a birthday party for ROSETTA?

PEARL

But you don't know how old she is.

EDDIE

We'll make it a surprise birthday party then.

PEARL

I don't think she likes parties.

EDDIE

No problem. We'll set a trap.

38 NSD10/SD7. INT. DAY. CASA MIA RESTAURANT. 38

MORTIMER and the Opera Critic for Bel Canto magazine STEPHEN LE GRAF have lunch. A waiter approaches.

WAITER

May I take your order sir?

LE GRAF

Yes. The Linguine Con Aragosta with the gatto of vegetables. I think the the Ca' del Bosco. '93?

WAITER

The '90, '93 and '96 are all excellent years sir.

LE GRAF

Just the one glass. Driving. MORTIMER?

MORTIMER

Who's paying?

LE GRAF

The magazine is. You're always good value for a meal.

MORTIMER

Fair enough. Bring me the Roast duck with parma ham. And the Trout with tomatoes and Basil.

WAITER

Does sir want the Trote as a starter?

MORTIMER

No. Just put it on a big plate. All together.

WAITER

Sir.

As WAITER moves away LE GRAF cups his arm.

LE GRAF

The Lobster, where was it caught?

WAITER

One of the Juan Fernandez Islands sir. Ma s a Tierra. The fisherman was Alejandro Alvarez.

LE GRAF

And the sugar used to caramelize the vegetables?

WAITER

From Pina del Rio sir. A privately owned plantation. The beet crop is grown organically with nutrient enriched water to give the vegetables a more precise flavour.

LE GRAF

Herbs?

WAITER

They are from Umberto Collini's farm in Casa DiVento outside Messina. They arrived yesterday on Concorde, couriered by Senior Collini's son Alfredo.

WAITER thinks he has got away. MORTIMER pulls him back.

MORTIMER

What about old Alvarez's daughter Marguerite. Do you have her phone number?

WAITER

Very amusing sir. I trust your meals
will be to your satisfaction.

39 NSD10 INT. NIGHT. FRANCESCA'S LONDON FLAT. 39

FRANCESCA sits at her desk staring at a blank sheet of writing
paper. She picks up her pen and starts to write.

FRANCESCA

Dear ROSETTA. {crosses out} Dear
Mother.

FRANCESCA scrunches the paper and throws it away in a fit of
pique.

FRANCESCA moves to her wardrobe, pulls out a suitcase and
starts to pack.

40 NSD10 EXT. DAY. FRANCESCA'S LONDON HOUSE. DRIVEWAY. 40

FRANCESCA drives down the driveway in her executive class car.

41 NSD10 EXT. DAY. MOTORWAY. 41

FRANCESCA exhales deeply but allows herself a small smile.

42 NSD10 SD7. INT. DAY. CASA MIA RESTAURANT. 1PM 42

MORTIMER and LE GRAF relax with after lunch coffee and cheese.

MORTIMER

You remain the most frightful snob
STEPHEN.

LE GRAF

And you are a disheveled instrument.
So what has just cost the magazine a
three-hundred pound lunch?

MORTIMER

Remember BERGATTI Recordi?

LE GRAF

Yes. Its not a very interesting
history lesson so far.

MORTIMER

Remember ROSETTA DI CURCI?

LE GRAF scrutinizes MORTIMER.

LE GRAF
What about her?

MORTIMER
I have, in my possession one of her original black vinyl recordings from BERGATTI Recordi dated 1951. Its mint.

LE GRAF leans closer so as not to be overheard. He is focused solely on MORTIMER.

LE GRAF
If you are fucking lying to me I'm going to take an inordinate amount of pleasure cutting you in half with this absurd little knife.

MORTIMER
Never an untrue word would pass my lips STEPHEN. Shall we discuss terms?

LE GRAF
Two.

MORTIMER shakes his head at every unsuccessful bid.

LE GRAF
Three, four. Four and a half?

MORTIMER
That's your trouble STEPHEN you could never imagine the grander stage. Imagine being the man who rediscovered "The Legend". Besides I'm going to need at least two pairs of shorts for my trip to Peru.

LE GRAF
Seven. Eight. Oh come on MORTIMER.

MORTIMER
Come on nothing. You know what this is worth.

LE GRAF
Nine. Nine and a half you piece of shit. Ten.

MORTIMER
Eleven five and its yours.

LE GRAF
That's too much.

MORTIMER

I feel peckish again. Did you know
Heathtwist Tully from American Opera
magazine is in town? I really should
confirm that dinner date he set up.

LE GRAF

You wouldn't?

MORTIMER

You know I would. His cheque book
never has a problem opening on a blank
page.

LE GRAF has no defense. He retrieves his cheque book.

LE GRAF

You could extract blood from marble.
When can I pick it up?

MORTIMER

No time like the present old fruit.

LE GRAF writes MORTIMER a cheque for £11,500 pounds.

43 NSD10/SD7. EXT. DAY. MORTIMER'S HOUSE. 3PM 43

LE GRAF's 'S' class Mercedes pulls up outside MORTIMER's house.

44 NSD10/SD7. INT. DAY. MERCEDES. 3PM 44

LE GRAF

I won't quite believe you until I have
the record in my hands.

MORTIMER

Relax.

LE GRAF

Can you imagine the irony? Fated to
become Violetta or Lakme. Your career
on the absolute knife-edge of super
stardom but its cut short.

MORTIMER

What did happen to her?

LE GRAF contemplates what might have occurred.

45 D0/D0. INT. OPERA HOUSE STAGE. 45

Le Graf's Vision.

YOUNG ROSETTA performs La Traviata Act 3 - Teneste la promessa on stage. Blood trickles from her mouth. ROSETTA clasps her throat.

LE GRAF (VO)

A polyp on her vocal chords.
Cancerous. The doctors gave her a
choice. Have the polyp removed and
never sing again or die. Simple
really.

46 NSD10/INT. DAY. MERCEDES. 3PM

46

MORTIMER

Not much of a choice. Life eh. There's
too much of it about. Just like the
weather.

LE GRAF

ROSETTA DI CURCI revitalised the
coloratura school of singing. She
should have been bigger than Maria
Callas.

MORTIMER

But she disappears off the face of the
planet. I remember all the hoo-ha in
the press.

LE GRAF

Look if you come across anymore of her
recordings...

MORTIMER

...you'll be the first to know. Its an
expensive hobby you have.

47 FBD20/FBD20. EXT. DAY. CONVALESCENCE GROUNDS.

47

LE GRAF (VO)

I know. DI CURCI was contracted to
CLAUDIO BERGATTI the first producer to
use polymer backed tape. Very high-
tech back then. The sound quality
surpassed what the other studios were
churning out, but then she loses her
voice...

Young ROSETTA convalesces. Young CLAUDIO and his new female
companion/STARLET approach Young ROSETTA. CLAUDIO's face is
stern. He (symbolically) rips up their lucrative recording
contract. STARLET turns her nose up at Young ROSETTA.

48 NSD10/INT. DAY. MERCEDES. 3PM

48

MORTIMER
...The other woman?

LE GRAF
A light contralto named Tessi Ferrnado, his new starlet. She quickly fell out of favour. BERGATTI wasn't one to hang about in the female companion department.

MORTIMER
I seem to remember BERGATTI RECORDI ending up bankrupt.

LE GRAF
He gambled a fortune on the new tape equipment. What he didn't figure on was the studio dropping him, once they found out Rosetta's career was finished.

MORTIMER
Poor old CLAUDIO. Ah, Of course, she was their headline star who brought all the cash in.

LE GRAF
And by then our little Miss Di CURCI had enough clout to own her master tapes. They went missing when she did.

MORTIMER
Very shrewd.

LE GRAF
Anyway. Are we going inside your hovel?

49 NESD10/ESD110. INT. EVENING. ROSETTA'S HALLWAY.

49

PEARL lays down sheets of paper leading to ROSETTA's door.

She then knocks on ROSETTA's door and runs off.

Knock, knock

A trail of big blocky arrows leads from ROSETTA's door, across the landing and downstairs.

50 NESD10/ESD8. INT. EVENING. LE GRAF'S FLAT. 7PM 50

LE GRAF listens to the 78 rpm BERGATTI RECORDI record as it plays on a audiophile turntable. He savours every note sung by Young ROSETTA.

51 NESD10/ESD110. INT. EVENING. EDDIE'S LIVING ROOM. 51

Knock, knock

EDDIE opens the door to be greeted by ROSETTA staring back at him.

EDDIE

Hello. This is a pleasant surprise.

ROSETTA hands over the collected paper arrows.

ROSETTA

Are you playing games with me?

EDDIE

Tsch. Its probably PEARL and JANINE playing tricks.

ROSETTA

Be sure to tell them off for me.

EDDIE

Well now that you're here why don't you come in. Go on.

ROSETTA is kind-of-coerced into EDDIE's flat.

ROSETTA

Perhaps one coffee then.

52 NESD10/ESD110. INT. EVENING. EDDIE'S LIVING ROOM. 52

EDDIE and ROSETTA take seats round the table.

ROSETTA

What are you up to Edward Banks?

EDDIE

A little bird told me that we have a superstar in our midst. Now, I reckon this person wishes to remain anonymous to the outside world, but I thought it was only fitting...

PEARL positively bursts through the kitchen door.

PEARL
...Surprise!

ROSETTA
Oh my dear god.

MARVEL, MARZELLE, JANINE, SYLVESTER and ADRIAN quickly follow on. They surround ROSETTA. Each of them bearing gifts.

EDDIE
Happy birthday Mrs.

ROSETTA
I will get you. How did you know?

EDDIE
I said, a little bird told me.

MARILYN BAKER emerges from the kitchen carrying a birthday cake.

ROSETTA clasps her hands. She is touched.

53 NESD10/ESD110. INT. EVENING. EDDIE'S LIVING ROOM. LATER. 53

The party has quietened down. ROSETTA relaxes with a coffee. EDDIE approaches.

ROSETTA
This is a very kind gesture.

EDDIE
Its nothing. You're worth it.

EDDIE hands her one final present. Its the size of a tennis ball and heavy.

ROSETTA
It feels like Christmas again.

ROSETTA unwraps the present. It is an expensive snowstorm.

EDDIE
PEARL told me about the one your brother threw out the window then tried to catch by running downstairs.

ROSETTA
We were children. It was the only thing I loved apart from singing. I will treasure this.

MARZELLE and ADRIAN flirt openly. SYLVESTER looks on with a scowl. He makes eye contact with MARVEL.

MARVEL

Leave it.

Amongst the assorted gifts, the snowstorm has pride of palce on the table.

54 NSD11 INT. DAY. EDDIE'S FRONT DOOR. MORNING. 54

Mail waits by the front door. EDDIE sifts through it.

EDDIE

That's yours, that's yours
{ROSETTA's}. One for me, hooray!

EDDIE exits his flat.

55 NSD11 INT. DAY. OUTSIDE ROSETTA'S FLAT. 55

EDDIE knocks on ROSETTA's door.

EDDIE

ROSETTA. I've got your mail. ROSETTA.

There is no response. EDDIE is more concerned.

EDDIE

ROSETTA. ROSETTA! ROSETTA.

EDDIE's voice echoes around the landing.

56 NSD11/SD111. INT. DAY. OUTSIDE ROSETTA'S ROOM. 56

Doctor GRISSOM exits ROSETTA's flat.

EDDIE

I had no idea she was so ill. She kept everything well hidden.

GRISSOM

She was a very private lady Mr BANKS.

EDDIE

We threw a party for her last night...

GRISSOM

Don't worry. I think she died peacefully. A party was probably a tonic for her. Go out on a high note - no pun intended.

EDDIE

You knew about her singing?

GRISSOM
She told me.

 EDDIE
Are there any next of kin?

 GRISSOM
I can't really discuss that, but no,
none that I'm aware of.

GRISSOM momentarily places a comforting arm on EDDIE's shoulder.

 GRISSOM
I need to get some forms from my car.
She often talked about you and your
daughter. You made her happy. You made
her last year a good one.

EDDIE acknowledges the comment. GRISSOM heads down the stairs.

57 NESD11/ESD102. INT. EVE. EDDIE'S LIVING ROOM. 10PM 57

EDDIE sits with his head in his hand. His world has just
bottomed out. Is it possible to feel any lower?

58 NSD20/SD6. INT. DAY. EDDIE'S LIVING ROOM. 58

PEARL collects her things for school. EDDIE emerges from the
bathroom.

 EDDIE
Have you finished your breakfast?

 PEARL
Yes dad. And just as a special offer
this week I'll even wash up.

 EDDIE
You wash up! Those pigs are flying
low. What are you after? Cancel that,
I'm still not buying you those
trainers.

 PEARL
Just think of the hardship I'll face
at school.

 EDDIE
I'm sure you'll survive. But your kind
offer to wash up has been accepted.
Are you ready?

EDDIE looks for a business letter.

EDDIE
Have you seen that VAT form?

PEARL
We're going to be late. What colour is this one?

EDDIE
Green with boxes. You've seen them before.

PEARL
I'll help you look - for the trainers.

EDDIE
You're getting real close to being swapped for a new amplifier.

PEARL
I'll wait by the car.

59 NSD20/INT. DAY. EDDIE'S FRONT DOOR. MORNING.

59

EDDIE and PEARL are leaving his apartment.

EDDIE
Do you miss ROSETTA?

PEARL
Yeah. But she said she was going to a better place. We shouldn't be sad.

KAMINSKY is entering with his shopping.

KAMINSKY
(To PEARL) "High-five" or whatever it is.

EDDIE
Morning Mr KAMINSKY.

KAMINSKY
What terrible news EDWARD.

EDDIE
I still can't believe she's gone.

KAMINSKY
But not forgotten. What day is the funeral?

EDDIE
Wednesday week.

KAMINSKY heads off.

KAMINSKY

Very, very sad. ORSON has been subdued
all week.

60 NSD30/SD9. INT. DAY. MARILYN BAKER'S RESIDENCE. 60

(DAME) MARILYN is being interviewed by STEPHEN LE GRAF (Bel
Canto).

LE GRAF

What are your recollections of ROSETTA
DI CURCI?

MARILYN

A formidable lyric coloratura soprano.
Many of the modern greats were
influenced by DI CURCI's early work.
She had incredible power with
unparalleled technique and breath
control. You can see her appeal to the
purists.

LE GRAF

You knew her didn't you?

There is a tinge of sadness before MARILYN continues.

MARILYN

We became quite good friends. You see
it was DI CURCI that arranged my first
recording with CLAUDIO BERGATTI's new
studio in Turin. I can put hand on
heart and say it was this selfless act
which gave me the introduction I
needed.

LE GRAF

Why was it selfless?

MARILYN

You know she had her career tragically
curtailed when they operated on her
throat. I am sure a 'lesser' person
might of harboured some bitterness and
simply shunned all those to follow.
Not ROSETTA.

LE GRAF

When did you last see her?

The sadness returns to MARILYN's thoughts.

MARILYN

It feels like yesterday. Sorry, she attended my debut at La Scala Milan in 1968. I never saw her after that.

LE GRAF

No contact at all?

MARILYN

STEPHEN. Can you possibly imagine what it must have been like to see a new-blood take your place at the centre of opera's universe? ROSETTA DI CURCI set the standard for others to follow. Many of us enjoyed unimaginable success while she simply faded into obscurity.

61 NESD30/ESD102. INT. NIGHT. KAREN'S ROOM. 9PM 61

KAREN tries to resist the craving for her next fix. She throws the drugs against the wall.

Hours have passed.

KAREN has injected herself and the drugs are starting to take hold.

KAREN has terrifying hallucinations.

The drug trip is subsiding. Stomach cramp and viscous diarrhea kick in.

KAREN holds a pendant {stolen from ROSETTA}.

The pain and drug side-effects become so intense KAREN goes into cardiac arrest.

KAREN's life passes before her eyes.

62 LATER 62

63 NESD130/ESD104. INT. EVENING. LIBRARY. YORK'RE ROOM. 63

GAYLE FARNELL (Newspaper reporter) searches through old archives. A copy of Bel Canto is amongst her things. She's engaged in a conversation on her mobile. A NO MOBILES notice is overhead.

GAYLE

(Hushed)

C-U-R-C-I. CURCI. Yeah ROSETTA DI CURCI.

(MORE)

GAYLE (cont'd)
 It was a tip-off from an old contact.
 Yes I know this is illegal. But I
 won't tell anybody. Brilliant.

GAYLE scribbles down an address.

GAYLE
 You're a hero. We're square now.
 Alright. Cheers.

64 NSD131/SD111. INT. DAY. BOOKSHOP.

64

BETH THORNABY browses along the magazine shelf. From BETH's POV
 He spots the current issue of Bel Canto magazine and pulls it
 off the shelf.

The front cover is dominated by a striking high contrast B&W
 portrait photograph of young ROSETTA {circa 1951}. The headline
 reads: Rebirth of the Legend. ROSETTA DI CURCI: Prima Donna
 Assoluta. Opera's greatest enigma. An in-depth review of her
 life, career, her disappearance and recordings by STEPHEN LE
 GRAF.

BETH
 Bloody hell. You sly old bugger.

65 NSD132/SD6. INT. DAY. ROSETTA'S HALLWAY.

65

Mozart's The Magic Flute emanates from the top of the stairs.

The music attracts PEARL as it appears to come from ROSETTA's
 old room. PEARL reaches the top of the stairs to find a
 supermarket shopping bag outside ROSETTA's room. The door is
 partially open. PEARL picks up the shopping and enters the room.

PEARL peeps around the corner of the door. At first FRANCESCA
 is absorbed by a letter and does not notice PEARL approach over
 the music's volume.

FRANCESCA
 I didn't see you standing there. Come
 in.

PEARL
 I didn't mean to spy.

FRANCESCA
 Don't worry about that. Thanks, that's
 very kind of you {the shopping}. I'm
 FRANCESCA.

PEARL
 Hi-ya I'm PEARL. Have you moved into
 ROSETTA's room?

FRANCESSCA
Yes. The builders and decorators have just finished. Did you know ROSETTA?

PEARL
She was really nice. She let me adopt her as my new grandma.

FRANCESSCA
Really. Do you live here?

PEARL
In 4A with my dad. He's called EDDIE.

FRANCESSCA
Perhaps we can all have dinner sometime.

PEARL
ROSETTA always came to dinner downstairs.

FRANCESSCA
Always!

PEARL
Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. And Sundays for tea.

FRANCESSCA
Sounds like you really got on with her.

PEARL
I think so. You would have liked her.

FRANCESSCA
I hope so...

PEARL
Do a swap?

FRANCESSCA
Excuse me?

PEARL
Some of your opera. Dad plays it sometimes, but ROSETTA hated it. I think she was jealous.

FRANCESSCA
Of what?

PEARL realises she might have said too much. She shrugs.

FRANCESSCA

Not telling eh! You're a forward little girl. But I like your spirit. Kind of remind me of myself when I was your age. {picking up CD} I bet you recognise half of these already.

FRANCESSCA passes PEARL a double CD of classical opera highlights.

PEARL

Okay you can try this.

PEARL passes FRANCESSCA a Destiny Child's CD. FRANCESSCA examines it. EDDIE calls from downstairs.

EDDIE (OS)

PEARL. We're going to hit rush hour.

FRANCESSCA

Sounds like your dad.

EDDIE comes up the stairs and reaches ROSETTA's room. PEARL and FRANCESSCA leave her room to greet him.

EDDIE

Hi. EDDIE BANKS. I'm in 4A.

FRANCESSCA

FRANCESSCA BADEN. Nice to meet you.

EDDIE

Moved in okay?

FRANCESSCA

Yes thanks.

EDDIE

Sorry to rush, but we've got to run otherwise madam here will be late for school. Coffee sometime?

FRANCESSCA

Sounds good.

PEARL

Bye FRANCESSCA.

FRANCESSCA

I'll listen to this {CD} and we'll speak later.

PEARL waves goodbye.

66 NESD132 INT. NIGHT. ROSETTA'S ROOM. 66

FRANCESSCA is on the phone. Her laptop is nearby.

FRANCESSCA

The VC money will come through if we get the gearing right. That's it; we're under their radar. Frankly, if its only 67 million, I wouldn't bother bringing in the Houmouri Brothers on such a small deal...

FRANCESSCA's call is interrupted by someone knocking on her door.

FRANCESSCA

...Look I've got a visitor. {Laughs} Call it an extended sabbatical. Thanks Roger. Bye. Yeah Bye.

67 NESD132 INT. NIGHT. NEAR ROSETTA'S DOOR. 67

The loud knocks come again. FRANCESSCA approaches the door.

FRANCESSCA

Hang on.

FRANCESSCA opens the door to find a bloodied and disheveled looking KAREN slumped against the door frame.

FRANCESSCA

What do you want?

KAREN

Where's the old lady!?

FRANCESSCA

She's gone. She passed away.

KAREN's legs give way. She collapses half way inside FRANCESSCA's new flat.

FRANCESSCA

What the hell! I'll call the police.

It takes a moment for FRANCESSCA to realise KAREN has passed out.

FRANCESSCA is very uncomfortable. She ponders for a moment. FRANCESSCA relents and starts dragging KAREN into her flat.

68 NESD132/ESD3. INT. EVENING. FRANCESCA'S ROOM. 8PM 68

KAREN is asleep in FRANCESCA's bed. FRANCESCA is perched on the bedside looking down at her. FRANCESCA reaches out to stroke KAREN's hair. KAREN wakes.

FRANCESCA
Are you feeling a little better?

KAREN
Yeah.

FRANCESCA
Do you live rough?

KAREN
No I normally go Five Star - are you some kind of samaritan? Don't start preaching to me.

FRANCESCA
You're hair is starting to split. At the ends. I was always told "a woman's beauty is in her hair".

KAREN
What do you want?

FRANCESCA
Want? Do you think I want something from you?

KAREN
Nobody does anything for nothing.

ROSETTA
You're the one who turned up at my door. Why are you looking for the old lady?

KAREN struggles to get out of bed. She is visibly weak.

KAREN
I'll go if you want me to. Just don't go on.

FRANCESCA
You're in no state to move.

KAREN
Whatever you say Mrs.

FRANCESSCA

Mrs! Well not any more I'm not. I'm still waiting for a reply.

KAREN

The old lady...she used to help me.

FRANCESSCA

Buy drugs!

KAREN

You've got it all wrong. What would you know about anything?

FRANCESSCA

Tell me.

KAREN

She'd let me come around when I had no where to sleep.

FRANCESSCA becomes angry.

FRANCESSCA

Why would she do that for you? Look at you. You're nothing! Did you steal from her?

KAREN

No.

FRANCESSCA

Did you steal from her? You little bitch. What gives you the right to come in here and try and to take my place...

FRANCESSCA suddenly catches herself.

FRANCESSCA

...Oh my god. I'm so, so sorry. I don't believe I said that. I'm so sorry.

KAREN is shocked/traumatized. KAREN has already turned away from FRANCESSCA. Tears roll across the bridge of her nose.

KAREN

He called me a whore. And a bitch just like you said.

FRANCESSCA

I'm so sorry.

FRANCESSCA fights off the desire to sleep as she lays tucked-up in the warm, clean bed.

KAREN

I slept with him for drugs then he beat me. I let him touch me for some drugs. That makes me a whore. You can't clean that off. The old lady said "Sometimes you have to visit the bottom to find which way is up".

FRANCESSCA

You're safe now. Its not the end of the world. Get some rest.

FRANCESSCA moves to embrace KAREN, to comfort her, but finds herself unable to follow through.

69 NESD132 INT. NIGHT. ROSETTA'S KITCHEN. 69

FRANCESSCA searches her cupboards. She cannot find what she is looking for.

FRANCESSCA

Tsch. Typical.

FRANCESSCA puts her wallet in her pocket, puts on a some shoes and exits the flat.

70 NESD132/ESD3. INT. EVENING. EDDIE'S HOUSE. CORRIDOR. 70

EDDIE comes in from work. FRANCESSCA is coming down the stairs.

EDDIE

Hi. I didn't think I was going to see you again so soon.

FRANCESSCA

I only live upstairs. Oh I found a bag of mail for you?

EDDIE

Mail?

FRANCESSCA

I'll drop it down later. I'm in a bit of a rush. Wouldn't have any fresh soup would you?

EDDIE

No soup, but I have beans.

ROSETTA
Typical bachelor. How's work?

EDDIE
Slow. Things are in downturn and I'm
losing my margins.

FRANCESSCA
Don't cut your prices so heavily it
might be sending out the wrong signal
to your customers.

EDDIE
When I need your business advice I'll
ask for it.

FRANCESSCA
Sorry, just thought I could shed some
light.

EDDIE
Apologies. You might be right. There
is so much going on right now.

FRANCESSCA
No big deal.

EDDIE
Let me apologies.

FRANCESSCA
If you mean it.

EDDIE raises his voice slightly.

EDDIE
Yes I do!

FRANCESSCA
I'll leave it in your capable hands
then.

EDDIE lets FRANCESSCA pass him on the stairs.

FRANCESSCA
Excuse me.

EDDIE regrets his outburst.

EDDIE
I'm under a lot of pressure, which
does not give me the right to speak to
you like that.

(MORE)

EDDIE (cont'd)
Some of my friends are coming over for
dinner. Will you join us? I'll
introduce you to everybody

FRANCESSCA
I'm tempted.

EDDIE
I'll spoil you. Lots of cholesterol.
My way of saying hello and sorry all
at the same time.

FRANCESSCA remembers KAREN.

FRANCESSCA
No, I've got something on. Rain check?

EDDIE
Sure.

FRANCESSCA is already moving away.

71 NESD132/ESD3. INT. EVENING. EDDIE'S HOUSE. CORRIDOR. 71

The corridor is empty. KAREN peeks out from behind a gap in
FRANCESSCA's door. She is dressed. She exits the room carrying a
shopping bag full of items stolen from FRANCESSCA.

Muted music emanates from behind EDDIE's closed door. KAREN tip-
toes out of the building.

72 NESD132/ESD3. INT. EVENING. ROSETTA'S ROOM. 72

The camera moves around the room alighting on items that have
been disturbed or moved by KAREN's act of theft. FRANCESSCA's
laptop is missing as evidenced by the discarded power cable,
mouse and case.

FRANCESSCA has just returned from the corner shop. She still
holds a pot of fresh soup and ciabatta. FRANCESSCA surveys the
empty room.

FRANCESSCA
What did you expect?

73 NSD133/SD100. INT. DAY. RECORD SHOP. 73

The day's post waits on the shop counter. Amongst the normal
correspondence are several subscription magazines and a postcard
from MORTIMER in Peru.

ADRIAN
"Scruffy Duffy" you lucky bugger.

ADRIAN looks through the magazine titles but is distracted by EDDIE calling. He puts the magazines down. The last magazine in the pile is only visible by its title: Bel Canto.

ADRIAN

Yup.

EDDIE

Have we got that Renaissance album?

ADRIAN

What's on it?

EDDIE

Northern Lights.

ADRIAN

That's "A song for all seasons".
Weren't you meant to bring it in?

EDDIE

Bugger. I forgot again. Its at home.

ADRIAN

Too much red wine as a child. The
subscription magazines are here.

EDDIE heads for the exit.

EDDIE

That's another expense we can afford
to lose. If you want anything keep it,
otherwise bin the rest and cancel the
subscriptions.

I'm going to pick up that CD.

ADRIAN

Later.

74 NSD133 INT. DAY. LCC. SHOP.

74

FRANCESSCA is out shopping. Her mobile phone rings.

FRANCESSCA

Mr BERGATTI. Thank you for returning
my call. We can meet on the 13th?
Excellent. I have all the relevant
documents. Yes. Look forward to
meeting you.

FRANCESSCA replaces her phone in her bag.

75 NSD133 EXT. DAY. TRUMAN HOUSE.

75

FRANCESSCA returns home after her shopping spree. She has her key in the door as GAYLE FARNELL approaches.

GAYLE

I'm looking for somebody who's willing to talk about ROSETTA DI CURCI.

FRANCESSCA

And you are?

GAYLE

GAYLE FARNELL Evening Post.

FRANCESSCA

Sorry. I don't read your type of paper.

GAYLE

You might want to start. ROSETTA DI CURCI is generating a lot of media interest right now.

FRANCESSCA's body language is blocking/un-welcoming.

FRANCESSCA

I really have no idea what you are talking about.

GAYLE

Di CURCI was an opera singer. The critics have rediscovered one of her last recordings. I think she lived here. I'm willing to pay for an exclusive interview if you knew her.

FRANCESSCA

I didn't know her. Its of no interest to me.

GAYLE

Are you sure? When the nationals get hold of this, and they will, their offers won't be nearly as generous. I think you're making a big mistake.

FRANCESSCA

I'll take my chances. Goodbye Miss FARNELL.

GAYLE pushes a copy of Bel Canto into FRANCESSCA's open bag.

GAYLE
 Its a good read. You might learn something.

GAYLE moves away.

GAYLE
 My card's on the inside. I can come back.

76 NESD133/ESD102. INT. EVENING. ROSETTA'S HALLWAY. 76

EDDIE knocks on FRANCESCA's door.

EDDIE
 I know, its late.

The door opens.

FRANCESCA
 Eddie?

EDDIE
 I know its late, but I thought I should pick up that mail you said was here.

FRANCESCA
 Whoops it went right out of my head. Come in. I thought this might be a social visit?

77 NESD133 INT. NIGHT. ROSETTA'S LIVING ROOM. 77

FRANCESCA roots through a cupboard.

EDDIE
 Relax. Its half ROSETTA's fault, she didn't pass on my mail.

FRANCESCA hands EDDIE a bulging bag of mail constituting his business correspondence, bills and personal mail.

FRANCESCA
 Here you are.

EDDIE
 Jesus! This stuff is months old. No wonder I'm getting so much hassle.

FRANCESCA
 Misdirected?

EDDIE

Postie obviously can't tell the difference between 4A and 4B.

FRANCESSCA

You can't blame the old lady.

EDDIE

It wouldn't have taken much effort to bring it downstairs.

FRANCESSCA

Life doesn't revolve around you.

EDDIE

You taking sides? This is lot has caused half my problems.

FRANCESSCA

You can't make excuses in business.

It will work out.

EDDIE

You know, I'm too far gone to care anymore. I don't have anything to lose, but that's alright I'll leave it to the lady upstairs because she says "it'll work out".

EDDIE relents.

EDDIE

Sorry. I had no right to say that. I always seem to be apologising to you. Wish I could convert my apologies into cash.

FRANCESSCA

Go. You're tired and I can do without your stress.

EDDIE

Friends?

EDDIE departs.

FRANCESSCA

Friends. Night.

78 NSD134/SD100. INT. DAY. CARL WARD MOTORS GARAGE. 78

BETH THORNABY is working on a motorbike. DAMIEN (a motor mechanic apprentice) works with her.

DAMIEN
Colour-rarsha?

BETH
For the fifteenth time. Coloratura.

DAMIEN
Rat-tura. That's what that fat bloke
Pavarotti sings?

BETH
Yes. To a degree. But the term usually
referees to sopranos.

DAMIEN
What?

BETH
Female singers.

DAMIEN
Birds.

BETH
Could you try saying "women" instead
of birds?

DAMIEN
Nah I prefer birds.

BETH
God help us.

DAMIEN
So this coloratura is a style of
singing is it. Sounds like a load of
old toss. (Sung)OOO, ahhh. Amazing.

BETH
There a bit more to it than that.
{Pass the} Torque wrench.

DAMIEN
I can just about remember that Hovis
ad on telly.

BETH

That's not opera. There's not even any singing in it.

DAMIEN

Anyhow only posh gits listen to opera.

BETH

And do you think I'm a posh git?

DAMIEN

No man. Though you do act like dizzy cow sometimes.

BETH

DAMIEN, you never cease to astound me.

DAMIEN

That's what Shazza said to me in bed last night as I shagged her for {the} third time.

79 NESD134/ESD104. INT. NIGHT. ROSETTA'S BEDROOM. 10PM 79

FRANCESSCA retrieves a 78rpm original record of ROSETTA's, along with a recent letter from her mother {ROSETTA}. She cues the record and listens to the music.

A sudden fit of rage, frustration and anger overwhelms FRANCESSCA. She smashes the record against the bureau.

FRANCESSCA looks over to a pile of PEARL's CD's. She retrieves them and exits the room.

80 NESD134/ESD11. INT. EVENING. HOUSE. CORRIDOR. 80

FRANCESSCA passes KAMINSKY's along the corridor. He's on his knees holding a slice of bread covered in peanut butter.

KAMINSKY

Good evening.

FRANCESSCA

Good evening.

KAMINSKY

Off for a walk?

FRANCESSCA

Considering its near Arctic temperatures outside and I'm not wearing a coat, wouldn't that be a tad foolish?

KAMINSKY

If you do go out later, please make sure the front door stays closed.

FRANCESSCA

Aren't there regulations against bringing pets into the building?

KAMINSKY

ORSON's not a pet! He's my companion. Put yourself in his position. Cat's. Dog's. He's at their mercy if he gets out of the building.

FRANCESSCA

You're looking for a hamster, Guinea Pig?

KAMINSKY

No, dear girl. ORSON's a mouse.

FRANCESSCA shakes her head and moves away.

FRANCESSCA

Twenty pounds says the exterminators get him first.

KAMINSKY

I heard that.

81 NESD134/ESD11. INT. EVENING. PEARL'S BEDROOM.

81

PEARL is tucked up in bed. EDDIE and ROSETTA talk as they walk into her bedroom. He is amazed at the pop CDs FRANCESSCA has been listening to.

EDDIE

You don't seem like the type to appreciate these.

FRANCESSCA

That is called inverted snobbery. I thought you were more liberal.

EDDIE

I am, as a rule. Its spooky hearing a nine year old humming Mahler's 5th symphony.

FRANCESSCA

Its just the same for me 'gurl-fren'. Is my body too 'bootylicious' for you?

EDDIE
Not you as well.

EDDIE knocks on PEARL's door.

EDDIE
Are you decent?

PEARL
Yeah.

EDDIE and FRANCESCA enter. PEARL listens to Tchaikovsky's Dance of the Sugar Plum fairy on her hi-fi.

FRANCESCA
I brought your CDs back.

PEARL
I like this one.

FRANCESCA
Keep it as long as you like.

EDDIE
Night pod person.

PEARL
Can FRANCESCA stay?

EDDIE
You're not the only one who needs her sleep.

PEARL
Oh.

FRANCESCA
(To EDDIE) We have important women's things to discuss.

EDDIE
Are you planning to take over the world again?

PEARL
You wouldn't understand.

EDDIE
Yes sweetheart. (To FRANCESCA).
There's chloroform in the kitchen if she won't pipe down.

EDDIE exits the room. FRANCESCA finds her spot on the bed.

FRANCESSCA
Doesn't your mummy live her?

PEARL
She's separated from dad but I see her
at weekends. Where does you mummy
live?

FRANCESSCA half recoils.

FRANCESSCA
She died just recently.

PEARL
What was she like?

FRANCESSCA
I didn't really know her.

PEARL
How come?

FRANCESSCA
She had me at very mixed up time in
her life, when she wasn't well. She
felt she couldn't cope. I was given to
a family who raised me.

PEARL
You were adopted. Its okay.

FRANCESSCA
We got in contact with each other
recently and arranged to meet. But
then she died.

PEARL
Are you still sad?

FRANCESSCA
I get very sad. I feel empty inside
sometimes.

PEARL
I think you qualify for a hug.

PEARL sits up and hugs a mildly astonished and at first hesitant
FRANCESSCA.

PEARL
ROSETTA told me to be patient. Life is
wonderful, but you have to make it
through the night first.

PEARL is already beginning to yawn and doze.

FRANCESSCA
What do remember most about her?

PEARL
Sometimes she was sad, like something
was missing.

FRANCESSCA reaches her moment of rapture. A tear beads her eye.
She rocks PEARL to sleep.

82 NSD135/SD102. INT. DAY. RESTAURANT#2 82

FRANCESSCA and CLAUDIO BERGATTI dine.

CLAUDIO
Your business reputation proceeds you
Miss BADEN.

FRANCESSCA
Call me FRANCESSCA. You might as well
get used to it.

A look of caution flashes across CLAUDIO's features.

CLAUDIO
So you're expanding into music
publication. My first company was
declared insolvent when must have been
in nappies.

FRANCESSCA
Owning the name BERGATTI RECORDI is of
special interest to me.

CLAUDIO
Really.

FRANCESSCA
You handled some fine artists.

CLAUDIO
Maria Gaudi, Tessi Ferrnado, Giuseppe
Coszena many big names.

FRANCESSCA
What about ROSETTA DI CURCI?

CLAUDIO
I handled her as well. She was a good.
Too bad she stopped performing.

FRANCESSCA
You didn't take long to replace her.

CLAUDIO
Am I missing something? I didn't own her last master tapes. They would make the new owner very rich.

FRANCESSCA finds it awkward/hard to say the words she does.

FRANCESSCA
You had an affair with her. You were lovers.

CLAUDIO
That is none of your business.

FRANCESSCA
You're mistaken, it is my business.

CLAUDIO counters.

CLAUDIO
What? Is this a paternity case? You think I am your father? This happen to me many times. Prove it.

FRANCESSCA
Here.

FRANCESSCA hands over a slim document marked: - "Medical report for Chief Executives BERGATTI Industries. Strictly Confidential".

CLAUDIO
No young Lady. I do not accept this.

CLAUDIO flicks through the document. His eyes widen as they scan the document.

CLAUDIO
You can't come in here and tell me this. What do you want from me?

FRANCESSCA
Nothing. There is nothing you could give me. I can't blame you for not knowing about me. She wrote to me. She knew she was dying. She said you tore up her contract after she became ill. It was like dancing on her grave.

(MORE)

FRANCESSCA (cont'd)
 The one thing I can't understand is,
 how you could just leave her like
 that.

CLAUDIO
 And I didn't make a sacrifice?

FRANCESSCA prepares to depart.

FRANCESSCA
 I made my peace with you a long time
 ago. I prayer my mother did the same.
 Consider our deal cancelled.

FRANCESSCA exits.

83 NESD135 INT. NIGHT. ROSETTA'S ROOM. 83

FRANCESSCA flips through the Bel Canto issue dedicated to
 ROSETTA. A glass of wine is nearby. An aria plays in the
 distance.

84 NSD136/SD101. EXT. DAY. ROAD FROM EDDIE'S HOUSE. AM 84

PEARL and JANINE (her best friend) head along the road.

JANINE
 I listened to that opera stuff. Uh-
 boring.

PEARL
 You've got no style.

JANINE
 At least I don't listen to old biddy
 music.

PEARL
 Whatever.

85 NSD136 INT. DAY. EDDIE'S LIVING ROOM. 85

EDDIE walks from his bedroom carrying FRANCESSCA's Bel Canto
 magazine.

EDDIE
 You're becoming obsessed.

FRANCESSCA
 Don't be silly. Its just a healthy
 curiosity. Was the article accurate?

He passes the magazine back to FRANCESSCA.

EDDIE

I suppose so. I knew the woman, not "the diva". Thanks for lending it to me.

FRANCESSCA

Fancy a coffee?

EDDIE

I've got to suss out these papers. Its crazy. All I want to do is run my shop. I remember saying that to ROSETTA. Its just the music.

FRANCESSCA

You don't want an empire one day?

EDDIE

Money doesn't interest me that way.

FRANCESSCA

Wouldn't ROSETTA have had money being a famous diva?

EDDIE

Probably! I hope her trustees or whatever are happy with it. I find it just creates problems.

This gives FRANCESSCA pause for thought.

86 NESD136/ESD105. INT. EVENING. ROSETTA'S ROOM. 10PM 86

FRANCESSCA lifts the handset to make a phone call.

87 NESD136/ESD105. INT. EVENING. CLAUDIO'S HOTEL ROOM. 10PM 87

CLAUDIO is woken by the telephone ringing.

CLAUDIO

Hello. FRANCESSCA. Wait.

CLAUDIO scours the bedside table looking for a pad and pen. He writes down FRANCESSCA's instructions.

CLAUDIO

Yes. If this makes you happy I will do it.

FRANCESSCA replaces the receiver. CLAUDIO is left clutching the paper he jotted on.

88 NSD137/SD111. INT. DAY. RECORD SHOP. LATE AM.

88

The phone rings. ADRIAN picks it up.

ADRIAN

PrimeTime records. Yes. Who can I say is calling? A moment please. ED-O. Its some geezer called DONAUGHUE from Syme Avery Chenning.

EDDIE takes the phone.

EDDIE

EDWARD BANKS speaking.

89 NSD137/SD111 INT. DAY. SYME AVERY CHENNING OFFICE.

89

DONAUGHUE

Very well played Mr BANKS. Can we reasonable about this?

EDDIE

You tell me.

DONAUGHUE

Allow me to cut straight to the chase. Will you renegotiate your bid? After all you have wealthy friends who'll need compensating.

EDDIE flashes a look of complete bemusement to ADRIAN.

DONAUGHUE

Are you still there?

EDDIE

I'm listening.

DONAUGHUE

We'll go to one point five and that's my only offer. Are you prepared to take it?

EDDIE

One point five what?

DONAUGHUE

You think one point five million pounds is too low! Be reasonable. [silence]. Call off your legal team and I'll go to two million.

EDDIE maintains the silence - effectively calling DONAUGHUE's bluff.

DONAUGHUE

You're going to ruin me.

EDDIE

You were prepared to sacrifice us a few days ago. How does it feel when someone else is sticking the boot in? Let me come back to you.

DONAUGHUE

No. No. Don't put the phone down. Wait. Damn it.

EDDIE passes the phone back to ADRIAN.

90 NSD139/SD111. INT. DAY. SOLICITORS OFFICE. 90

FRANCESSCA, CLAUDIO and Mr DEAN (FRANCESSCA's proxy solicitor) are in conference. They shake hands.

MR DEAN

There weren't any problems putting this through. Mr BERGATTI's offer was very generous. I'll just have your documents amended for signing.

MR DEAN moves away leaving FRANCESSCA alone with CLAUDIO.

FRANCESSCA

Thank you for coming.

CLAUDIO

This is the least I could do. We've wasted a lifetime FRANCESSCA.

FRANCESSCA

After today I will never see you again.

FRANCESSCA walks away from CLAUDIO.

91 NESD139 INT. NIGHT. ROSETTA'S ROOM. 91

FRANCESSCA wakes from her sleep. She is alone. There are no waking dreams to haunt her.

FRANCESSCA locates a dictaphone machine and presses the play button. ROSETTA's voice is heard transcribing her notes. FRANCESSCA follows along.

ROSETTA (VO)

Insert for Chapter fourteen. I remember my first audition. My nerves were so bad I went to the toilet four times in twenty minutes. And what for huh? Tito Merola the buffoon deputy impresario at Teatro La Fenice, Venice will be the one who shall live infamy. I sung for him and afterward he tells me "ROSETTA. You are young and inexperienced. Go and make your career in the American opera houses". I took up my things and left him on the stage, but not before I said, "Thank you, but once I have made my career in the American opera houses I will not need you. It was Merola's failure that made me work harder to Perseverance counts every bit as much as talent.

FRANCESSCA falls asleep.

92 NSD140 EXT. DAY. TREE LINED AVENUE. 92

EDDIE and FRANCESSCA talk.

FRANCESSCA

You know when you get that feeling you've done something you might regret?

EDDIE

You're far too hard on yourself.

FRANCESSCA

I had to confront a ghost from my past. I think I've made a mistake.

EDDIE

Its not a mistake if you've confronted something.

FRANCESSCA

How long have you been studying Descartes?

EDDIE

Give yourself a chance. You're a lot nicer than you let on.

FRANCESSCA

I don't want to be hurt again.

EDDIE

You come across as "bulletproof" to me.

FRANCESSCA

Don't let appearances deceive you. Underneath this hard exterior is a state of the art bitch.

EDDIE

Joking aside, I don't believe you.

FRANCESSCA

Its easier to run away from problems.

EDDIE

Now who's getting philosophical? ROSETTA made me listen to her Russian opera.

FRANCESSCA

Oh yeah.

EDDIE hears Act 3 Scene 1 of Eugene Onegin

EDDIE

Listen. Onegin dismissed the love of Tatiana. Six years later when she is married to another man, Onegin realises his mistake. Now he is in love with the one woman...

FRANCESSCA

...And the moral is?

EDDIE

Don't be afraid to live a little.

FRANCESSCA

Yes babooshka.

EDDIE

Race ya.

93 NSD141/SD5. INT. DAY. STREET. CITY CENTRE. ROOTS& FRUITS 93

FRANCESSCA has lunch with (Dame) MARILYN AGNES BAKER (Opera singer).

FRANCESSCA

I saw you at the New York Met in '87 and again in '98 with Domingo.

MARILYN
Did you enjoy it?

FRANCESSCA
You were magnificent.

MARILYN
Thank you.

FRANCESSCA
I have two of your CDs. When are you
back in the studio?

MARILYN
You don't want to hear about me wet
nursing the concertgebouw.

There is an awkward silence.

MARILYN
Your mother always loved this time of
day.

FRANCESSCA
She was very fond of you. Your name
pops up several times in the letters
we exchanged.

MARILYN
You poor dear. Such a terrible loss.

FRANCESSCA
I'm annoyed with myself for waiting so
long before contacting her.

MARILYN
ROSETTA talked about you a few times.
It was hard for her. She was a very
private person.

FRANCESSCA
You don't know what that means to me.

MARILYN
She loved you. I know that. ROSETTA
gave up her chance to sing for you.

FRANCESSCA
I don't understand.

MARILYN
She was pregnant with you when her
polyp was diagnosed.

(MORE)

MARILYN (cont'd)

Radio therapy wouldn't have damaged her throat but she would have probably lost you. A surgeon's knife offered relatively few risks, but the cancer still spread.

FRANCESSCA

All I have is a few records, some letters and a magazine article to remember her by.

MARILYN

Any time you want to speak to me, call. Any time.

FRANCESSCA

I'm 42 years old and I don't know who I am.

MARILYN

That's a terrible thing to say.

FRANCESSCA

But it's the truth MARILYN. I stopped feeling pity for myself a long time ago. Yes, her money bought me a privileged life. I have made something of myself but it feels as if I'm in living in her shadow. She's always my conscience.

94 NSD142 EXT. DAY. GRAVEYARD. 94

FRANCESSCA puts flowers on ROSETTA's grave. She stands in silent contemplation. FRANCESSCA can now move on in life.

95 NSD143 EXT. DAY. HOUSE GARDEN. 95

EDDIE chats with KEITH (the housing association gardener). FRANCESSCA approaches.

FRANCESSCA

(To EDDIE) I thought I might find you out here. Hello KEITH.

KEITH

Hi FRAN.

EDDIE

Blimey we are blessed. Come to join the workers?

FRANCESSCA

I'm a townie. I don't do soil.

KEITH
He's nowhere near as cack-handed as he looks.

EDDIE
(To KEITH) You might be out of a job soon!

FRANCESSCA
Can I have a word EDDIE?

EDDIE clambers to his feet.

96 NSD143 EXT. DAY. TREE LINED AVENUE#2 96

FRANCESSCA retrieves a DL10 sized envelope from her jacket.

EDDIE
What's this?

FRANCESSCA
I should have given you that a long time ago.

EDDIE opens the envelope. His eyes scan over the document.

EDDIE
You're ROSETTA's daughter!

FRANCESSCA
I never knew her EDDIE.

EDDIE
Why didn't you say something?

FRANCESSCA
I never knew my mother.

EDDIE
This is her will. I don't get you.

FRANCESSCA
Meeting you and PEARL and everybody else was the one chance I had of finding out who she was. Finding out who I am.

EDDIE
You could have been honest about it. Wait, that's why there were so many questions.

FRANCESSCA

I couldn't take the chance telling you, if you thought I had money.

EDDIE

You are way out of order. Don't judge everybody by your own twisted standards.

FRANCESSCA

I know that now. You've made me take a long hard look at myself.

EDDIE

Was it worth it?

FRANCESSCA

I've got something I didn't have before.

EDDIE comes to a sudden conclusion.

EDDIE

You outbid DONAUGHUE.

FRANCESSCA

I just set the wheels in motion. The playing field is even now. ROSETTA left money for you.

EDDIE

I don't know what to say.

FRANCESSCA

Say nothing. Unlike you, I have an empire to build.

97 NSD145/SD115. INT. DAY. SOLICITORS OFFICE.

97

Mr DEAN (FRANCESSCA's solicitor) is in discussion with EDDIE.

He passes EDDIE a Certificate of Valuation for ROSETTA's master tapes (which can be seen to contractually belong to her). The valuation figure for the master tapes reads £3.76 million pounds. Written on a separate contract are the sole beneficiary's details - the name clearly identified is EDWARD PRIOR BANKS. The document also specifies the lease hold ownership has been assigned to EDDIE via CLAUDIO BERGATTI.

98 NSD146/SD116. EXT. DAY. GRAVEYARD.

98

EDDIE visits ROSETTA's grave. He places a small bouquet of roses on her grave.

EDDIE

Thanks ROSETTA. Thanks for everything. I miss you. You made a difference to me. That couple came back. They asked for you. Her name is CLAIRE. She's now into Verdi big time. You'd be proud of FRANCESCA.

EDDIE walks away from the grave. A young woman is following him.

The woman calls for EDDIE's attention. It is KAREN. She still looks a little underweight but appears generally healthy.

KAREN

Are you the record shop guy?

EDDIE

Yes. I know you. What do you want?

EDDIE turns away.

KAREN

I'm not after money.

EDDIE

Oh yeah. Banker now are you?

KAREN resists launching into her fractured career path.

KAREN

I've come to pay my respects to the old lady.

EDDIE

How do you know her?

KAREN

That doesn't matter. She helped me. Its because of her that I'm not dead.

This grabs EDDIE's attention. KAREN extends her arm to reveal something hidden in her fist.

KAREN

She gave this to me.

KAREN reveals ROSETTA's pendant.

99

NSD146/SD116. INT. DAY. COFFEE SHOP.

99

A discarded local newspaper headline reads: City Estate agents investigated in major Fraud Probe. Four company directors face prison sentences. EDDIE and KAREN have coffee.

KAREN

You don't think much of me do you?

EDDIE

I don't know anything about you.

KAREN

I didn't know anything about me. I used drugs, I still do, but I'm sorting myself out.

EDDIE

That's good. You're getting your life back.

KAREN

You don't get it. I liked taking drugs. I didn't want to give up. I can't blame a broken home. My parents didn't abuse me. I had a brilliant job.

EDDIE

But you wasted it.

KAREN

Because I wanted something new and it nearly killed me. That's what I thought you did if you wanted to live.

EDDIE

We don't all want to live on the edge.

KAREN

The woman living in the old lady's flat...

EDDIE

FRANCESSCA?

KAREN

Yeah. Its taken me this long to realise, I've been given two chances. How many people get that? She could have turfed me out. But they both took me in. That's what made the difference.

EDDIE

You'd be surprised how much they have in common. Are you still on drugs?

KAREN

No. Not since I nearly died on a
pissed-stained mattress in some
derelict shit house.

100 NSD146/SD116. EXT. DAY. STREET. CITY CENTRE. PARK SQUARE.100

EDDIE and KAREN are seated on ROSETTA's favourite bench.

KAREN

I don't want to go there again.

EDDIE

I think I can understand what you're
saying.

KAREN

If you see her, say thanks from me.
You know.

EDDIE

I'm glad you found me. Would you like
another drink?

KAREN

You buying?

They depart.

101 NSD146/SD116. EXT. DAY. GRAVEYARD.

101

FRANCESSCA writes something on a card for a bouquet of roses.
She places the bouquet on ROSETTA's grave, takes a moment, then
moves away.

The frame pans over the flowers to reveal FRANCESSCA's message.

"Your loving daughter. FRANCESSCA Rosetta".

102 END CREDITS

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