

IN THE GLOAMING EPISODE 1 October 2009: Dead Skinny

By

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Cast of Characters

Melmoth Darkleigh: Nathaniel Tapley

Donna:

Andy:

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SCENE 1: MELMOTH'S LAIR

(WE ARE IN MELMOTH DARKLEIGH'S LAIR. THE WIND WHISTLES EERILY. PLATES ARE SCRAPED, THERE ARE CHOMPING NOISES, AND SOUNDS OF WET THINGS SLIDING AROUND.)

MELMOTH DARKLEIGH

(WIPING HIS MOUTH)

Well, hello. Do excuse the mess, but I have had guests for dinner. And they were delicious. Let no one tell you that the French make the best pate de fois gras. I find that the English do just as well, especially if you use plumpest, freshest children.

SOUND: A CHILD SOBS GENTLY

MELMOTH DARKLEIGH

Quiet, down there! It rubs the garlic butter on its skin, or else it gets the hose. Some people say that children are our greatest natural resource. And they are. Or will be when the bacon runs out.

SOUND: MELMOTH CLOSING A DOOR (LID?) AS CHILDREN MOAN.

SOUND: THE DOOR CLANGS SHUT. THERE IS SILENCE.

MELMOTH DARKLEIGH

Of course, gluttony is a sin, which is why I only eat the thin ones. Mummy wasn't thin, but then I made her last a whole winter. She always described herself as big-boned. Turned out she was quite ordinary-size-boned, didn't it, Mummy?

SOUND: TEETH CHATTERING

MELMOTH DARKLEIGH

People don't know what to make of you, do they, Mummy?

SOUND: TEETH CHATTERING

MELMOTH DARKLEIGH

I intend to make stock. This next story chilled even Mummy to the marrow. Or would have, had I not had her marrow on toast with a delicate caper chutney. This next story shows the perils that befall those who go too far the other way. This next story is called 'Dead Skinny'.

SOUND: MELMOTH CACKLING

MUSIC: IN THE GLOAMING THEME

DONNA

Is it engraved?

ANDY

Only with my name, date of birth, and the words
All-Time Champion of Everything.

DONNA

No. That says Champiob of Everything.

ANDY

What? Bugger.

DONNA

Champiob of everything except spelling. At which I
beat you. Suffer! How long were you on the sunbeds
today?

ANDY

The maximum: fourteen minutes.

DONNA

I disobeyed the maximum. 22 minutes, come on! You
lose!

SOUND: BEAT.

ANDY

God, you're sexy. And slightly crispy.

DONNA

Good, isn't it?

ANDY

You feel like my wallet. Sexy.

DONNA

You come equal first at being sexy.

ANDY

We share the sexy gold. High five!

SOUND: BEAT.

ANDY

But I win the men's event.

DONNA

Obviously, and the women's title is mine.

ANDY & DONNA

(TOGETHER)

Come on!

SCENE 3: DONNA & ANDY'S BATHROOM

(ECHOEY, BATHROOMY)

DONNA

It doesn't matter. It's only scales. Scales can be wrong. You can do this. Yes you can. You're a winner. A winner who has lost weight.

SOUND: DONNA GETTING ON THE SCALES

DONNA

Doesn't matter. You're still a winner.

SCENE 4: DONNA AND ANDY'S KITCHEN

(THE KITCHEN. WE HEAR MILK BEING POURED ONTO CEREAL, AND CRUNCHING, MAYBE THE RADIO IS ON.)

SOUND: ANDY COMES INTO THE KITCHEN.

ANDY

What are you reading?

SOUND: A CUPBOARD OPENING, ANDY GETS A BOWL OUT.

DONNA

Scorch! magazine.

SOUND: CEREAL AND MILK BEING POURED INTO A BOWL.

ANDY

What's it about?

SOUND: A SPOON IS PULLED FROM A DRAWER

DONNA

It's just pictures of celebrities with big red rings around their physical imperfections.

ANDY

Sounds good.

DONNA

It is.

SOUND: ANDY PULLS A CHAIR UP TO THE TABLE

DONNA

Did you know that Linda Bellingham has a row of eight nipples running up her back in a diagonal line?

ANDY

(MOUTH FULL)
No.

(CONTINUED)

DONNA

Well she does. What have you got there?

ANDY

Weetabix in water. You?

DONNA

Cubes of balsa wood. Got to keep to the diet. It's so simple. You can eat anything as long as it's a wood.

ANDY

How much did you lose yesterday?

DONNA

Half a pound.

ANDY

Ha! A pound and a half, not including faeces. My metabolism once again proves superior to yours. Enjoy your wood, I'll see you at work.

SOUND: ANDY RUNS OUT, SLAMMING THE DOOR BEHIND HIM.

DONNA

Thanks. I will.

SOUND: DONNA CRUNCHING THROUGH WOOD.

DONNA

Ow!

SCENE 5: AN OFFICE

(AN OFFICE. THERE IS TYPING AND PHOTOCOPYING GOING ON IN THE BACKGROUND.)

RHIANNON

Oh. My. God. Have you seen the new issue of Scorch magazine?

DONNA

Got it on the first day it was out.

RHIANNON

Of course you did. But the thing about Shane Ritchie's knees.

DONNA

You could tell, though. I remember the first time a saw him I thought: 'I bet he's got disgusting, wart-covered knees'. It ruined Eastenders for me.

RHIANNON

Are you coming for pizza at lunch?

(CONTINUED)

DONNA

No way. I've got to lose more weight than Andy.

RHIANNON

So what are you having.

SOUND: A DRAWER IS OPENED.

DONNA

This.

RHIANNON

A vacuum cleaner?

DONNA

Precisely. He thinks I'm on the wood diet, but, instead of even eating wood, for lunch, I'm just going to do this for an hour.

SOUND: A SQUELCH, AND THEN THE SOUND OF A VACUUM CLEANER, MUFFLED.

RHIANNON

Stop! Stop!

SOUND: WITH A POP! THE HOOVER BECOMES UNMUFFLED.

SOUND: THE HOOVER IS TURNED OFF.

DONNA

By just vacuuming my mouth for my entire lunch break, I can't take in any calories at all. In fact, I might even Hoover some out.

RHIANNON

You don't think you're perhaps taking this a little far.

DONNA

Not at all. Every day, every day he manages to lose more than me. I hate it.

RHIANNON

Well...

DONNA

What?

RHIANNON

I've got the name of this guy, a specialist, who helped my sister.

DONNA

I thought she was bulimic.

RHIANNON

Yeah, he helped her become bulimic. She was really fat up until 2006. But the treatment's a bit weird-

DONNA

What do you mean weird?

RHIANNON

Odd, strange. Eerie.

DONNA

I'm not sure...

BOSS

Guys, can I have everyone in the conference room, please, stat. Last month's sales figures are in.

RHIANNON

So, do you want his number?

DONNA

No, I think I'd rather do it through willpower. Willpower and wood.

RHIANNON

If you're sure...

DONNA

Yep. I'm sure. Let's go and hear Andy's miraculous sales figures.

SCENE 6: THE CONFERENCE ROOM

(THERE ARE MANY PEOPLE COUGHING, AND SHUFFLING ABOUT. THEY ARE OBVIOUSLY ALL PRESSED TOGETHER IN A ROOM THAT'S TOO SMALL.)

BOSS

OK, guys, settle down, I'm going to make this quick, hard and dirty. I like my sales meetings like I like my women, you know? Short... focussed... and, er, ideally Filipino. This month's results have been a disaster. Toilet paper's down, sanitary towels are down, we're really relying on incontinence underwear to keep us out of the shit. Remember! AIDA. Attention. Interest. Decision.... Absolutely have their attention. You've got to have their attention. Right. Down to brass monkey's balls. Once again, Andy and Donna are our two top sales people. I want everyone here to take a good look at them. That's right. Don't be shy. Lean on in, have a good old look. Touch them. Get to know what good sales people feel like. Smell them. Lick them. No, on second thoughts, you can't lick them any more. Health and safety. I personally think that we'd all be a lot healthier and more safe if we didn't have to wear trousers. Fewer zips. But the tribunal disagreed, and

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

BOSS (cont'd)
here I am. Harvey, you can stop touching them now. I know they feel good. Just imagine how they'd taste... Without further ado, Andy's total sales last month were £82,496, a new record for the month of September.

SOUND: POLITE, UNENTHUSIASTIC APPLAUSE

ANDY
Thank you, thank you, all. First, I'd like to say that I could never have done it without the help of you guys, the little people. It's your hard work that-

BOSS
Woah, Andy, I'm going to have to stop you there. Because Donna smashed that record with total sales of £101,204.

SOUND: MORE APPLAUSE, SLIGHTLY MORE ENTHUSED

ANDY
She did what?

BOSS
Donna got total sales of-

DONNA
£101,204. Unlike Andy, I'm not going to take up a huge amount of everyone's time making a huge speech. I'd just like to say: loser! Loser! Hello, my name's Andy, and I can't even sell shitbags properly.

BOSS
The term is 'intimate hygiene products', Donna.

DONNA
Instead of applauding me, I'd just like everyone to take a moment to point and laugh at Andy.

SOUND: LOTS OF PEOPLE LAUGHING AT ANDY, MOCKING HIM

ANDY
Stop it.

DONNA
Everyone laugh at the loser!

SOUND: THE LAUGHING GETS LOUDER AND MORE INTENSE.

ANDY
Stop it!

DONNA
The bottom has fallen out of his incontinence sales!

SOUND: DONNA SHRIEKS WITH LAUGHTER AND WORDS LIKE

'RIDICULOUS HERBERT', 'BUMSALE FAILURE', AND 'POO
RETAINER' CAN BE HEARD

ANDY

Shut up! All of you shut up!

BOSS

Sorry, Andy, was there something you wanted to say? I couldn't hear because I was too busy pointing and laughing at you.

ANDY

Her figures may be better than mine this month, but you know what isn't? Her actual figure! Yeah? Yeah?

SOUND: EMBARRASSED PAUSE.

ANDY

She can't even lose any weight. In the last week I've lost twice as much weight as her. She eats wood all day, but it doesn't stop her waddling around like a diabetic hippopotamus. Look at her! Look at the grotesque, hideous freak! Her BMI is significantly higher than mine!

SOUND: EVERYONE STARTS LAUGHING AT DONNA, SAYING THINGS
LIKE 'ENORMOUS FACE', 'DOUGHY', AND 'MASSIVE ANKLES'

DONNA

Rhiannon?

RHIANNON

Yes?

DONNA

What's the number of that specialist?

SCENE 7: THE STREET

(DONNA IS WALKING ALONG A STREET.)

DONNA

Number 18, Number 20, Number 22, ah! Here it is. Number 22a. How odd. I don't remember seeing this here before. Oh well.

SCENE 8: EZLEEB'S CLINIC

(THERE ARE WEIRD TINKLING NOISES, GENTLE BUT INSISTENT IN THE BACKGROUND. AN ANIMAL SQUAWKS OCCASIONALLY. THERE ARE RATTLINGS AND RUSTLINGS IN THE CORNER OF THE ROOM, SKITTERINGS THAT STOP WHEN YOU TURN YOUR EAR TOWARDS THEM.)

SOUND: A DOOR OPENING

(CONTINUED)

DONNA
Hello?

SOUND: PAUSE

DONNA
Hello? Dr Ezleeb? I have an appointment?

SOUND: THE DOOR SLAMS BEHIND HER, JANGLING ORNAMENTS THAT HANG FROM IT.

SOUND: SILENCE, EXCEPT FOR A SCUTTling FAR OFF.

DONNA
Hello? I'm meant to be here now!

EZLEEB
(VERY CLOSE TO HER)
I very much doubt that.

DONNA
Oh! You scared me. Dr Ezleeb?

EZLEEB
It's spelt 'ezleeb', it's pronounced... 'ezleeb'.
Actually, you got it right. 'Ezleeb'. Yes.

DONNA
Right-

EZLEEB
Actually, call me 'Robert'.

DONNA
All right. Robert-

EZLEEB
No don't do that. Call me 'Dr Ezleeb.' Why are you here?

DONNA
My friend gave me your number.

EZLEEB
Does your friend hate you?

DONNA
What?

EZLEEB
Nothing. Your friend is a fool. Your friend is weak.
Your friend may turn out not to have been your friend
after all. What do you want?

DONNA
I want to lose weight.

EZLEEB

Then go on a diet, and leave me in peace. You won't find anything to make you happy here.

DONNA

I don't want to be happy. I want to be thin.

SOUND: BEAT.

EZLEEB

How thin do you want to be?

DONNA

Just thinner than my boyfriend. That's all I want.

SOUND: SILENCE, FILLED WITH SKITTERING AND A CHUCKLE AT THE EDGE OF HEARING.

EZLEEB

I think we may be able to come to some sort of... arrangement. How much are you willing to sacrifice?

DONNA

Sacrifice?

EZLEEB

I mean: 'pay'.

DONNA

Whatever it costs.

EZLEEB

The price is very steep.

DONNA

What will it cost me?

EZLEEB

Your immortal soul.

SOUND: PAUSE

DONNA

What?

EZLEEB

It will cost you your immortal soul.

DONNA

Oh thank God! I thought you said eighty thousand pounds. My immortal soul? Done.

EZLEEB

You realise that once you die your soul will be my plaything for all eternity, to do with as I please? To keep in a box of poisonous centipedes if I so desire, centipedes that will prick it and claw at it

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

EZLEEB (cont'd)
with their legs, and bite chunks from it for millions
of years before eternity has even started?

SOUND: SCUTTling.

DONNA

I just want to lose more weight than Andy.

EZLEEB

Very well. In exchange for your immortal soul you
will, every morning, lose half a pound more than
'Andy'.

DONNA

Deal!

SOUND: A CLAP OF THUNDER, AND THE SOUND OF A THOUSAND
SOULS WAILING, AND LIMBS BEING RENT FROM SPECTRAL TORSOS.

SOUND: ELZEEB CACKLES.

EZLEEB

Sorry, that door keeps doing that.

SOUND: A DOOR BEING CLOSED.

DONNA

What was all of that?

EZLEEB

Mice.

DONNA

But they were wailing.

EZLEEB

Unhappy mice.

DONNA

Right, because it says 'soul store room'.

SOUND: BEAT.

EZLEEB

Do we have a deal or not?

DONNA

Well, I must say I thought you'd drive a harder
bargain, I was ready for it, I am in sales. Just my
immortal soul?

EZLEEB

You're in sales?

DONNA
Yes.

EZLEEB
Then I'm going to need five grand as well.

SCENE 9: DONNA & ANDY'S BEDROOM

(DONNA IS IN READING IN BED. WE HEAR THE PAGES
TURNING)

SOUND: ANDY COMES IN AND LEAPS INTO BED

ANDY
What are you reading?

DONNA
'War and Peace'.

ANDY
Oh, I read that ages ago. Not that bothered by it.

DONNA
What was your favourite bit?

ANDY
Generally the 'peace' bits I found best. Are you not
reading your diet book?

DONNA
Nope. I've decided not to worry about it any more.
I'm just going to eat sensibly and see what happens.

ANDY
Good for you!

DONNA
What?

ANDY
I think it's healthy that you realise you can't win,
and decide not to try at all. It's probably for the
best, you were never going to beat me anyway.

DONNA
Well-

ANDY
And I lost another half a pound today, I just
checked, so it's best that you've given up now. But
let me know if you're planning on getting really fat,
so that I can arrange a bigger bed.

DONNA
Oh, all right. I will.

(CONTINUED)

ANDY

See you tomorrow.

SOUND: KISS.

SOUND: LIGHT BEING TURNED OFF, AND ANDY SETTling IN BED.

ANDY

Donna?

DONNA

Yes, Andy?

ANDY

I quite like the fuller figure on a woman, anyway.

DONNA

Thank you for being so understanding.

ANDY

Any time, babe, any- zzzzzz.

DONNA

Sleep well, fatty...

SOUND: ANDY SNORING

SCENE 10: DONNA & ANDY'S BATHROOM

(AGAIN ECHOEY)

DONNA

Come on. You're a winner. You can do this.

SOUND: DONNA STEPPING ON TO THE SCALES

SOUND: DONNA GASPS.

SCENE 11: DONNA & ANDY'S KITCHEN.

MORNING

(THERE IS THE SNAP AND CRACKLE OF FRYING FOOD.
DONNA HUMS TO HERSELF, HAPPILY.)

ANDY

(ENTERING, SNIFFING)

What's that smell? I can smell a smell. Something smells.

DONNA

And good morning to you, too.

ANDY

Why can I smell a smell. This is breakfast. Breakfast doesn't smell.

(CONTINUED)

DONNA

It does when it's bacon.

ANDY

But you don't eat bacons. You're too fat to eat bacons. How much weight did you lose yesterday?

DONNA

Two pounds.

ANDY

Ha! I lost... You lost how much?

DONNA

Two pounds.

ANDY

But that's half a pound more than I lost!

DONNA

Is it? Want some bacon?

SOUND: BEAT.

ANDY

Do we have any of that wood left?

SCENE 12: A TUBE TRAIN

(THERE ARE THE SOUNDS OF A MOVING TUBE TRAIN)

DONNA

Are you going to keep this up all the way to work?
Not saying anything?

SOUND: HE SAYS NOTHING.

DONNA

You are absolutely the most childish man I've ever met.

SOUND: PAUSE.

ANDY

The most childish?

DONNA

Yes.

ANDY

I win again.

SCENE 13: THE OFFICE

(PEOPLE ARE TYPING. OFFICE NOISES.)

BOSS

Andy, hi. I was just wondering if, some time this afternoon, you could find a way of squeezing this in?

ANDY

I am not fat!

SCENE 14: DONNA & ANDY'S KITCHEN

(THE GENTLE CLINK OF CUTLERY ON CROCKERY.)

ANDY

Aha! I don't smell any bacon this morning! Didn't turn out so well for you yesterday, eh? Start piling the pounds back on, did you?

SOUND: MORE CUTLERY.

ANDY

What's that? What's that you're eating? What's that you're eating there?

DONNA

(THROUGH A FULL MOUTH)
Cake.

ANDY

What?

DONNA

Cake. I lost two pounds.

SOUND: BEAT.

ANDY

I hate you.

DONNA

Well, I love you.
(BEAT)
And I love cake.

ANDY

Aaaaaugh!

SCENE 15: BOSS' OFFICE

(MUTED TYPING, PHOTOCOPYING)

SOUND: A KNOCK ON A DOOR

(CONTINUED)

ANDY

Hello?

BOSS

Andy.

ANDY

Yeah. Sorry to bother you, I was just wondering if you'd come to a decision on the promotion yet?

BOSS

Come the tits in, Andy! Sit down, take a load off your feet.

ANDY

I don't weigh a load!

BOSS

How in Christ's name are you, Andy?

ANDY

I'm all right, I wasd just wondering if-

BOSS

It's good to chat, Andy, good to chat. You and me. Man to man. Hell, yeah.

SOUND: PAUSE.

BOSS

We must do this more often. OK. Good to see you. Off you pop.

ANDY

The promotion?

BOSS

The what?

ANDY

The promotion. You said you'd think about it.

BOSS

That I did, Andy. That I did. And I'm a man of my word. I have thought about it. And I'm not going to lie to you, Andy. You're a grown sales professional with massive balls. I'm going to put everything on the line.

ANDY

The balls?

BOSS

I've decided against giving you the promotion, Andy.

SOUND: PAUSE

(CONTINUED)

BOSS

Are you all right?

ANDY

I'm fine.

BOSS

Because you do seem to crying.

ANDY

I'm fine, really.

BOSS

Could you let go of my leg?

ANDY

What? Oh. Oh yeah. I wasn't really expecting it anyway, truth be told. And it's fine. It's really fine. As long as you haven't given it to Donna.

SOUND: ANDY LAUGHS WILDLY AT THIS RIDICULOUS IDEA.

ANDY

I said: 'As long as you haven't given it to D-

BOSS

I know.

SOUND: ANDY'S LAUGHTER DIES IN HIS THROAT.

ANDY

Right. That's fine. I'll be off.

BOSS

You sure you're OK?

ANDY

Fine.

BOSS

If that sweating hasn't stopped in twenty minutes call an ambulance, OK?

ANDY

'K.

SOUND: ANDY GETS UP AND LEAVES THE ROOM, SHUTTING THE DOOR CAREFULLY BEHIND HIM.

ANDY

(OFF)
Fuck! Fuck fuck fuck fuck fuck!

SOUND: SOMETHING NEXT DOOR IS BEING SMASHED.

BOSS

(TO HIMSELF)

Yes, sir, that was some pretty excellent managing you did there.

SOUND: SOMETHING ELSE SMASHES NEXT DOOR.SCENE 16: DONNA & ANDY'S BEDROOM

(THERE IS THE SOUND OF FRENZIED PACKING, CLOTHES ARE BEING FLUNG INTO A SUITCASE. DONNA ENTERS)

DONNA

Um, what are you doing?

ANDY

Um, packing my clothes and leaving you.

DONNA

This isn't because I'm so much thinner than you, is it?

ANDY

NO, it's not because- What are you eating now?

DONNA

Lardons.

ANDY

Lardons?

DONNA

Cubes of fat. I don't even really like them, but they're really moreish.

ANDY

Fine. Well I'm leaving you. Shouldn't those be cooked first?

DONNA

Shouldn't you be on your way? Loser. Except of weight.

ANDY

I'm just going travelling for a while, you know. To find myself.

DONNA

You hate travellers.

ANDY

Yes. Well. This way I can bring down the travelling community from the inside.

SOUND: PAUSE.

(CONTINUED)

ANDY
Right. Well. Bye then.

DONNA
Bye!

SOUND: ANDY MAKES FOR THE DOOR.

DONNA
Oh, and Andy?

ANDY
Yes?

DONNA
If, one day, you do find yourself?

ANDY
Yes?

DONNA
Tell yourself to piss off from me, won't you?

SOUND: PAUSE

ANDY
Yeah. Of course.

SOUND: ANDY GOES DOWN THE STAIRS, AND THE FRONT DOOR
SLAMS.

DONNA
I wonder if this means he'll stop dieting...

SCENE 17: DONNA'S BEDROOM

(EARLY MORNING SOUNDS)

SOUND: DONNA YAWNS

DONNA
Morning, you fat- oh. Good. I'm glad he's not here.
Fattening up my bed. Now to see if he's still losing
weight.

SCENE 18: DONNA'S BATHROOM

(THERE ARE EARLY MORNING SOUNDS, AND WE HEAR
SOMEONE GETTING ONTO A SET OF SCALES)

DONNA
Hm. Looks like he is, then. That's good. Not a
problem.

SCENE 19: DONNA'S NEW OFFICE

(OFFICE SOUNDS, BUT THEY ARE FARTHER AWAY,
MUTED)

RHIANNON

Well, I have to say, Donna, this is one of the most impressive offices I've ever seen.

DONNA

Not 'the most impressive'?

SOUND: THEY BOTH LAUGH

DONNA

But really. Not the most impressive?

RHIANNON

Eric from Accounting has nicer carpet in his. But you've got it all, now. A desk, an air vent, a bubblejet printer. You're living the dream. And you're a free woman. A free woman who's lost an enormous amount of weight.

SOUND: KNOCKING

DONNA

Come in.

BOSS

Knock knock!

SOUND: BEAT.

DONNA

Come in.

BOSS

Right. Donna. Welcome to the big time. Just thought I'd pop my head around the door, and shake the hand of our newest Regional Team Leader. Well done.

DONNA

Thanks.

BOSS

I do actually want to shake your hand.

DONNA

Oh, right.

SOUND: DONNA GETTING UP FROM HER CHAIR.

SOUND: A HANDSHAKE.

(CONTINUED)

BOSS

Congratulations! We'll be presenting you with an award at the company's annual dinner next week, so make sure you've got a nice frock on.

SOUND: A SMALL SNAPPING SOUND.

DONNA

Ow!

BOSS

What's the matter?

DONNA

It's nothing. Just one of the small bones in my hand. They've been snapping a lot recently.

BOSS

OK, I'll leave you to it.

DONNA

I'm in quite a lot of pain.

BOSS

Good. You're looking excellent by the way.

SOUND: BOSS LEAVES.

DONNA

Oooooow!

SOUND: THE DOOR OPENS AGAIN.

BOSS

Oh, and don't get too attached to the bubblejet. Eric from Accounting needs it.

SCENE 20: A CLOTHES SHOP

(SOME TASTEFUL MUSIC PLAYS GENTLY IN THE BACKGROUND)

DONNA

What do you think?

RHIANNON

It looks a bit baggy on you.

SHOP ASSISTANT

Can I help?

RHIANNON

She's trying to find a dress for a dinner. They're giving her an award.

SHOP ASSISTANT

Lovely. An exciting award?

DONNA

I'm the Most Successful South-East Sales Rep for Sanitary Products in Quarter Four.

SOUND: BEAT.

SHOP ASSISTANT

Well, that is good news. And you look divine in that one.

RHIANNON

You can see her ribs poking out.

SHOP ASSISTANT

I know! Marvellous, isn't it? Keira Knightley wears one just like it.

DONNA

Does she?

SHOP ASSISTANT

Well, no one's ever told me that she doesn't.

RHIANNON

You can count the nubbins in her spine.

DONNA

You can.

SHOP ASSISTANT

Spines are very on trend this season.

RHIANNON

And I don't mean to harp on about it but her ribs are clearly visible.

SHOP ASSISTANT

If you want, I've got the number of a man who can whip those right out. Believe me, you've never seen such a beautifully flat chest as one from which the ribcage has been removed. And it will be vital if you want to wear any of next year's collections.

RHIANNON

She looks like a concentration camp victim.

SHOP ASSISTANT

Yes, she does. An incredibly sexy concentration camp victim.

DONNA

I'll take it.

SCENE 21: DONNA'S BATHROOM

(ECHOEY)

SOUND: DONNA SIGHS.

SOUND: DONNA STEPPING ONTO THE SCALES.

DONNA

He's still losing weight? Must be pining for me.
Yeah. Pining. That's it.

SCENE 22: THE RED CARPET

(FLASH BULBS ARE POPPING, PAPPARAZZI ARE
SHOUTING FROM BEHIND THE ROPE-LINE)

BOSS

Donna, you're here! You look amazing!

DONNA

Hello, Donald.

BOSS

I'd like you to meet the real life celebrity who will
be presenting you with your award tonight, Michael
Greco!

DONNA

Who?

MICHAEL GRECO

Beppe off Eastenders.

DONNA

Oh wow! I thought you were really sexy about eight
years ago.

MICHAEL GRECO

I think you're really sexy now.

DONNA

Really?

MICHAEL GRECO

Yeah. You look incredible. Like a sexy concentration
camp victim.

DONNA

Thanks.

MICHAEL GRECO

Shall we go in?

SCENE 23: THE AWARDS CEREMONY

(MUSIC PLAYS IN THE BACKGROUND, THERE IS THE TINKLE OF GLASSWARE AND CUTLERY)

DONNA

Rhiannon, can I have your bread roll?

RHIANNON

No.

DONNA

Please.

RHIANNON

No, you've had my starter and my main course. All I'm going to get, at this rate, is my bread roll, and dessert.

SOUND: BEAT.

DONNA

You are going to want your dessert then?

RHIANNON

Sh. They're about to start the speeches.

BOSS

(DISTANT, AT A PODIUM#)

Gentiles and ladymen... That was a joke. Unaccustomed as I am to public speaking... That was another joke, I speak in public quite a lot.

SOUND: BOSS FADES DOWN, AND DONNA FADES UP.

DONNA

Is there anything left in that bottle?

RHIANNON

Shhhhh!

DONNA

Oh, piss off!

RHIANNON

How did you get so drunk so quickly?

DONNA

With booze.

RHIANNON

Now you don't have any body fat, you've become a real lightweight.

DONNA

Why, thank you.

(CONTINUED)

RHIANNON

It's not a good thing.

DONNA

Oh shut up!

RHIANNON

Sh!

DONNA

No, you sh! Just be quiet, all of you. Shhhhh!

SOUND: DONNA GIGGLES AS THE SPEECH GOES ON.

DONNA

Boring! Blah blah blah. Could we have another bottle of the red here, please?

RHIANNON

Will you be quiet?

DONNA

No, actually, I will not be quiet. I've got a lot to say about Andy, who didn't want to be with me any more. Because he's a tosser. He tosses. A lot. Toss, toss, toss he goes, sprinkling his watery seed across the soft furnishings, skipping about the house, undersized member in one hand, and a book of sales techniques in the other, spraying his musk as he goes. It's all about the penis with Andy: penis, penis, penis! Why is there a spotlight on me?

SOUND: UNCOMFORTABLE SILENCE. THE SPEECHES HAVE STOPPED. EVERYONE HAS BEEN LISTENING TO DONNA FOR A WHILE.

BOSS

There she is, everybody, Donna. Donna, come and get your award.

DONNA

Is it a penis award?

BOSS

That's Donna, she's got a great sense of humour.

MICHAEL GRECO

(INTO THE MICROPHONE)
And quite good tits.

DONNA

(WALKING UP TO COLLECT HER AWARD)
They used to be bigger, but they've shrunk. Hello! Who are you? Can you hold my glass? I'm just going up to get an award from Beppe. Oooops!
(SHE CACKLES)
Who put that extra stair there?

MICHAEL GRECO
Donna.

DONNA
Yes.

MICHAEL GRECO
It gives me great pleasure to present you with this
award for excellence in regional toiletry sales 2009.

DONNA
Thank you!

MICHAEL GRECO
There you go.

DONNA
Tha-

SOUND: CLUNKING NOISE

DONNA
It's really heavy, isn't it?

MICHAEL GRECO
Not really, no...

DONNA
Could you pick it up for me? I'm feeling quite weak.
I'd just like to thank the company for this
tremendous honour, and say "Wooooooo! In your face,
Andy!" I know Andy isn't here, but I'd still like to
put this in his face. Now, let's all get pissed!
Wooooooo!

BOSS
And now we have a tribute to Ben Wickes, one of our
administrative staff who died last month.

DONNA
Wooooooo!

BOSS
We're lucky enough to be joined by his widow, and
child, and our thoughts are with them at this
difficult time.

DONNA
Yes. Yes they are.

SCENE 24: THE DANCEFLOOR

(SLOW DANCE MUSIC)

MICHAEL GRECO
Donna.

(CONTINUED)

DONNA

Hmmm?

MICHAEL GRECO

Donna, there's something I want to... Are you asleep.

DONNA

Just a few more minutes.

MICHAEL GRECO

We're in the middle of dancing.

DONNA

Hm? Oh. It's Beppe. Hello Beppe. I'm going to have sex with you.

MICHAEL GRECO

Beppe shoots, Beppe scores.

DONNA

Sexy, sexy sex with sexy Michael Beppo.

MICHAEL GRECO

Yeah, I like the way you-

SOUND: DONNA RETCHING AND VOMITING.

MICHAEL GRECO

Not on my shoes! These are my good shoes! These are my Beppe shoes.

DONNA

Sorry.

BOSS

Donna, I'd like you to meet-

SOUND: DONNA VOMITING EVEN MORE, LIQUID SPLASHES.

SOUND: A WOMAN CRYING, SOFTLY, AND RUNNING OFF.

BOSS

Donna, you've turned her husband's death into a tragedy. Why don't you go home and get some rest?

DONNA

All right. Fine. Come on, Michael, let's go to my home and get some rest. By which I mean some sex.

MICHAEL GRECO

No, I'm going to have to go and explain to my mum what's happened to my shoes. She'll have to spend ages cleaning them.

DONNA

But- But-

SOUND: MICHAEL LEAVING.

(CONTINUED)

DONNA

Call me!

BOSS

Donna, will you leave?

DONNA

Fine, I will.

SOUND: A COUPLE OF STEPS, THE SOUND OF SOMEONE SLIPPING IN VOMIT AND LANDING IN A HEAP ON THE FLOOR.

DONNA

It's all right. I'm all right. I only slipped in vomit. I may have broken a thigh bone. But I am OK. All right. Could someone please call an ambulance.

BOSS

Donna, you're a disgrace to the anal cleanliness industry. Don't bother coming back to work. Now I'm going to have to go and by Michael Greco new shoes.

SOUND: BOSS STAMPING OFF.

DONNA

Rhiannon, could you help me up, please?

RHIANNON

Well, if you will drink so much...

DONNA

Rhiannon, I can't help it if I don't have pounds and pounds of fat on my arse to absorb alcohol.

SOUND: RHIANNON DROPPING HER AND WALKING OFF

DONNA

Rhiannon! Rhiannon! I didn't mean it! Well, I kind of meant it, but in a good way. Rhiannon! I'm sitting in my own puke!

(WEAKLY)

And it's getting really cold.

SCENE 25: DONNA'S BATHROOM

(ECHOEY)

DONNA

Come on, come on, come on.

SOUND: DONNA GETS ON THE SCALES.

DONNA

Why? Why won't you stop losing weight, you idiot?

SCENE 26: DONNA'S HALLWAY

(THE DOORBELL RINGS)

SOUND: DONNA IS HUFFING AND PANTING, HEAVING HERSELF ALONG.

SOUND: THE DOORBELL RINGS AGAIN.

DONNA
(WHEEZY)
I'm coming, I'm coming.

SOUND: THE DOORBELL RINGS AGAIN.

SOUND: THE DOOR OPENING.

RHIANNON
I'm not stopping, Donna, I just came to drop off your stuff from the- What's happened to you?

DONNA
Good, isn't it? I'm under four stone now.

RHIANNON
But you're covered in... fur.

DONNA
Lanugo. It's called lanugo. It's a soft, downy fuzz the body develops to keep itself warm if you don't have any body fat. It's fuzzy. Do you want to feel?

RHIANNON
No! God no!

DONNA
Do you want to come in for a tea?

RHIANNON
I've just brought your stuff from your desk.

DONNA
Please come in for a tea.

RHIANNON
Well... Just a quick one; I've got to be getting back.

DONNA
Thanks. And, Rhiannon?

RHIANNON
Yes?

DONNA
Would you mind giving me a piggy back?

SCENE 27: DONNA'S LIVING ROOM

(THERE IS THE GENTLE CLINK OF A TEAPOT AND CROCKERY)

RHIANNON

There you go.

SOUND: A TEACUP, PLATE AND SPOON SHAKING AS THEY ARE BEING CARRIED TO A TABLE, SHAKING VIOLENTLY.

RHIANNON

Are you all right?

SOUND: STILL SHAKING

DONNA

Yes, thanks.

RHIANNON

Do you need a hand with that?

DONNA

No, I'm fine. I can manage it.

SOUND: CUP SMASHING ON THE FLOOR.

DONNA

I like it like that. I prefer it off the floor.

RHIANNON

I'll just get a-

DONNA

Leave it!

RHIANNON

OK.

SOUND: RHIANNON SIPS HER TEA, AND THEN BEGINS TO CHOKE.

RHIANNON

Oh, God, what is this?

DONNA

Sorry, that's a clump of my hair. It's getting everywhere. But it's good. I always had very full hair. It needed to think out a little.

RHIANNON

So you're happy?

DONNA

Blissfully. I'm losing more weight than Andy, you know.

(CONTINUED)

RHIANNON

What?

DONNA

That's what your man said. Your diet man. He said that every morning I would lose more weight than Andy.

RHIANNON

Donna, I think you should see a doctor.

DONNA

I wouldn't expect you to understand.

RHIANNON

What's that meant to mean?

DONNA

You're so jealous.

RHIANNON

Jealous of what?

DONNA

Jealous that I'm the thin one. Jealous that everyone fancies me. Jealous that-

RHIANNON

Jealous that of your hair falling out?

DONNA

But I've got new hair, all over my body that you can only dream of.

RHIANNON

Right. I'm off.

DONNA

Fine, then, go!

SOUND: RHIANNON LEAVING

DONNA

Off you go with your strapping, muscular legs that can easily hold your body weight.

SOUND: FRONT DOOR SLAMMING

DONNA

Because they're fat.

SOUND: DONNA SIGHS.

SCENE 28: DONNA ON THE PHONE

(SILENCE. WE HEAR, THROUGH A TELEPHONE LINE, A PHONE RINGING. IT IS PICKED UP.)

ANDY

(RECORDED, DISTORTED)

Hi, this is Andy. Yeah, I know, it is exciting. Leave your words after my curds. And by 'curds', I mean 'beep'.

SOUND: BEEP.

DONNA

(WEAKLY)

Hi, Andy, it's Donna. I was just calling to find out how you were. I'm doing excellently. Really excellently. I haven't stopped losing weight since you left, and I got an award at work, and I've touched Michael Greco, so... I was just calling to see if you were planning on losing any more weight. I might stop for a while, it's gone so well. I've got to go, because there are some men who would like to have sex with me at the door, so... But do call back, I'll stop having sex with them if you ring. It would be good to talk to you. Bye. Fatty

SCENE 29: DONNA'S HALL

(WE CAN HEAR OUTSIDE SOUNDS, BUT THEY ARE DISTANT. WE ARE INSIDE, THEY ARE NOT)

SOUND: THERE IS A KNOCKING ON THE DOOR.

DELIVERY MAN

Hello? Hello? Is anyone there?

DONNA

(FAINTLY, FROM THE FRONT ROOM)

In here.

DELIVERY MAN

Hello?

SOUND: A DOOR CREAKING OPEN

SCENE 30: DONNA'S LIVING ROOM

(WE CAN HEAR FLIES BUZZING IN THE CORNERS OF THE ROOM)

DELIVERY MAN

Hello? I've got your groceries, your online-

SOUND: THE DELIVERY MAN GAGS AND COUGHS

(CONTINUED)

DELIVERY MAN

Do you mind if I open a window. Something smells terrible in here.

DONNA

Oh, that's just vomit. Vomit, and the smell of my stomach digesting itself. That's what happens when you get really thin and sexy, you know.

DELIVERY MAN

Right, well, I'll just open-

DONNA

No, don't! It gets so cold. I get so cold now.

DELIVERY MAN

I'll bring your groceries in, shall I?

DONNA

Just put them in here. Where I can reach them.

DELIVERY MAN

Not in the kitchen?

DONNA

The kitchen's so far away.

DELIVERY MAN

Right

SOUND: THE DELIVERY MAN GOES OUT.

DONNA

Bet he's never seen anyone this thin before. Probably got some dumpy wife and children at home. I'll bet he's wild with desire at the thought of my naked body.

SOUND: THE DELIVERY MAN COMES BACK IN, AND DROPS SOME BAGS.

DELIVERY MAN

Right. They were all out of tampons, so they've put it an replacement.

DONNA

What's the replacement?

DELIVERY MAN

Doritos.

DONNA

Doesn't matter. I've stopped menstruating anyway.

DELIVERY MAN

Oh. Can I get your signature here.

DONNA

Yep. I'm completely infertile. I can have consequence-free sex with whomever I choose.

DELIVERY MAN

Right.

DONNA

Why don't you sit down and have a snack?

DELIVERY MAN

I've really got to get a signature.

DONNA

I'll sign if you'll sit down.

DELIVERY MAN

Right.

SOUND: DELIVERY MAN SITS DOWN.

DELIVERY MAN

What are these? Little rice crackers?

DONNA

Those are fingernails. They've been coming out whole.

SOUND: DELIVERY MAN GETS UP AGAIN

DELIVERY MAN

I really need a signature.

DONNA

Oh, you don't have to go so soon, surely. You can sit and stroke my hair.

DELIVERY MAN

No, I-

DONNA

Stroke. Stroke. Ow! That was the last bit. It's just popped off. Do you want my last hairs?

DELIVERY MAN

It's fine, I'll sign for you.

DONNA

You can have them. I pulled them out for you. And some scalp, too. Look, you can have some sexy, sexy scalp! It hardly weighs anything.

SOUND: A CLATTER AS THE DELIVERY MAN RUNS FROM THE ROOM.

SOUND: THE FRONT DOOR SLAMS.

DONNA

Yeah. He wants me.

SCENE 31: DONNA'S BATHROOM

(ECHOEY)

DONNA

Come on, Donna, you can do it. You ate 14,000 calories yesterday, you can put a pound back on. Half a pound. Or you could stay the same...

SOUND: DONNA GETTING ONTO THE SCALES. IT DOESN'T TAKE THEM LONG TO SETTLE.

DONNA

Damn it!

SOUND: DONNA VOMITS AGAIN.

DONNA

Oh no, there's a tooth. I've lost a tooth. It burns
It's burning inside my thr-

SOUND: SHE VOMITS AGAIN.

SOUND: THE DOORBELL.

DONNA

I'm coming, I'm coming.

SOUND: DONNA GRUNTS AS SHE HEAVES HERSELF TO THE DOOR.

SCENE 32: THE FRONT HALL

(DONNA IS PANTING, EXHAUSTED.)

SOUND: THE DOOR OPENS.

DONNA

Oh, it's you.

ANDY

(WEAKLY)
Hello.

DONNA

Do you want to come in?

ANDY

Can we just lie down here for a while?

DONNA

OK.

SOUND: THEY BOTH SLUMP TO THE GROUND, PANTING.

(CONTINUED)

ANDY

You've lost some weight.

DONNA

You have too.

ANDY

Yeah, just a couple of pounds.

DONNA

How many pounds?

ANDY

Forty-six.

DONNA

Forty-seven. Loser.

ANDY

Shall we call it a day with the whole weight loss thing?

DONNA

You first.

ANDY

I think it would be better if you go first.

DONNA

No, you go first.

ANDY

I think-

DONNA

I can't go first, Andy, I got some help from a specialist.

ANDY

Me too.

ANDY & DONNA

Dr Robert Ezleeb!

SCENE 33: THE STREET OUTSIDE

EZLEEB'S

(EXTERNAL STREET SOUNDS)

SOUND: A CAR PULLS UP, AND THE DOOR OPENS.

SOUND: DONNA AND ANDY EASE THEIR WAY SLOWLY OUT OF THE CAR.

ANDY

Thank y-

SOUND: THE CAR SPEEDS OFF

(CONTINUED)

ANDY

Keep the change. Well, here we are.

DONNA

But- But- It's gone.

ANDY

It was right here.

DONNA

Between these two doors. It's completely disappeared.

ANDY

What number was it?

DONNA

22a. I remember thinking-

ANDY

No, there it is. This is 18.

DONNA

Oh yeah. That's it.

SCENE 34: EZLEEB'S SHOP

(TINKLING AND WEIRD MOANS AND MUFFLED SHRIEKS
AGAIN)

SOUND: DONNA AND ANDY COME INTO THE SHOP, JINGLING THE
BELL ABOVE THE DOOR.

EZLEEB

Ah! Back again, so soon? What can I do for you both
this time: new noses? Limitless wealth? Extra sex
organs?

DONNA

You sold us both the same treatment. I lose a pound
more than him every morning.

ANDY

And I lose a pound more than her each evening.

EZLEEB

Oh, I'm terribly sorry. Has it not been working?

ANDY

It's been working too well. My testes have shrivelled
to the size of lentils.

EZLEEB

Lentils don't weigh much at all.

DONNA

And all of my hair has fallen out.

(CONTINUED)

EZLEEB

Not all of it, you're got a lovely covering of lanugo...

ANDY

Make it stop now, please.

EZLEEB

I'm afraid that's quite out of the question.

DONNA

But why?

EZLEEB

Did you never stop to think about it before signing away your immortal souls-

DONNA

And five grand.

EZLEEB

And five grand. Did you not consider the consequences? Did you not look at my name? Robert Ezleeb. Do you know what that spells backwards?

ANDY

Hold on a second-

DONNA

Beelzetrebor.

EZLEEB

What? Oh no. Bob. Bob Elzeeb.

DONNA

That's still only Beelze... bob.

EZLEEB

Look, my name's not important.

ANDY

Bozlabubeb!

DONNA

We'd like to cancel out treatments, please.

ANDY

Is it Bozlabubeb?

EZLEEB

I'm afraid I can't allow that. The contract is very clear.

DONNA

So, we're going to keep on losing weight forever.

EZLEEB

Oh no.

DONNA

Thank goodness.

EZLEEB

Only until you die. Then you'll burn in a deep pit of hell forever.

DONNA

Right. That's not much better. Well, what should we do?

EZLEEB

If I were you, I should make a will.

SOUND: EZLEEB CACKLES WILDLY.

SOUND: A SMALL EXPLOSION

SOUND: DONNA COUGHING

DONNA

He's... he's disappeared.

ANDY

Is it not Bozlabubeb?

DONNA

Come on, Andy, let's go home.

SCENE 35: DONNA AND ANDY'S LIVING

ROOM

(THE BUZZING OF THE FLIES IS MORE INSISTENT,
NOW)

ANDY

I lost another pound this morning. I haven't been this light since I was four years old.

SOUND: A GRINDING, SQUEALING CRUNCH

ANDY

What's that sound?

DONNA

I think it's my ribs. They're squeezing inwards.

SOUND: A THUMP.

ANDY

Oh God!

(CONTINUED)

DONNA

What is it?

ANDY

My arm dropped off. My best arm just dropped off.
It's oozing some sort of yellow pus.

DONNA

I'd get the bandages, but I'm too weak to move.

SOUND: DONNA SPITTING REPEATEDLY.

ANDY

What's that?

DONNA

More teeth. Who'd have thought you could have so many
to lo- Aaaah!

SOUND: THE GRINDING AGAIN.

ANDY

My ribs are squeezing, too.

DONNA

I think this might be it, Andy.

ANDY

Hold my hand, Donna.

SOUND: DONNA GRUNTS.

DONNA

There you go.

ANDY

I meant the one that's still attached to my body.

DONNA

It's miles away, and- oh! It's getting really hard to
breathe.

ANDY

I'll just wave at you.

SOUND: A WET PLOP.

ANDY

That was an eyeball. My skull just squeezed an
eyeball out.

SOUND: A CRACKING NOISE, AND A SQUELCH.

SOUND: DONNA STARTS WHEEZING.

DONNA

That was my ribs. They're really crushing my lungs now.

SOUND: HER BREATHING GETS SHALLOWER AND SHALLOWER

DONNA

The room's getting really fuzzy now, I can't actually breathe in. This is it.

ANDY

Well, I've only got one eye, but you look fantastic.

DONNA

You too, Andy, you too.

SOUND: WET PLOP

ANDY

My other eye! And now it's constricting around my brain!

SOUND: SQUEEZING OF A MOIST SPONGE

ANDY

See you in eternity. Aaaaah!

SOUND: THE SQUEEZING GETS LOUDER, UNTIL SOMETHING BURSTS WITH A DAMP SPLASH.

DONNA

Andy? Andy?

SOUND: HER BREATHING IS LABOURED, WHISTLING, FAINT.

DONNA

He's gone. But it was what he would have wanted. Blood dribbling from his eye sockets, but very, very skinny. Dead skinny.

SOUND: DONNA'S LAST, WHEEZING, BREATH ESCAPES HER BODY, AND THEN THERE IS NO MORE.

SOUND: EZLEEB CHUCKLES TO HIMSELF.

SCENE 36: MELMOTH'S LAIR

(HAUNTING CHORDS)

MELMOTH DARKLEIGH

So, there you have it. Donna and Andy got exactly what they wished for. Unfortunately, they wished for the wrong things. Sleep well, and I'll see you all again next month. All except you. Sweet screams...

(CONTINUED)

ANNOUNCER

That was In The Gloaming. Dead Skinny was... Don't forget to catch Chest Pains, in two weeks' time, or next month's horrifying instalment of... In The Gloaming.