

Can The Soaps Get Any Sillier?

By **Alexander Baron** - Oct 23, 2015



How many resurrections are there in the *New Testament*? Lazarus and the Great JC himself. To date there have been three in *EastEnders*: the landlord of the local watering hole; one of Albert Square's villains; and most recently the mother of one of its small businessmen. The first two have since been killed off permanently, but if that isn't silly enough, now we have a man framed for murder after a young woman with whom he'd had a fling was killed albeit accidentally by her ten year old brother, and best not to mention the transvestite undertaker whose grandson was nearly caught having queer sex with one of the local wide boys in the embalming room.

EastEnders is based largely on a square and market; another leading soap, *Coronation Street* – the longest running such series in the UK – is based largely on that one street. How many murders can there be in or around one street? One woman who murdered her lover some time ago then walked free after her conviction was quashed on a technicality, started a fire that led to the deaths of two people. Although she has admitted to this, she

has walked free again. A transient character – a drug dealer and dedicated thug – is whacked over the head with a metal implement and has now been buried under the bedroom of the perpetrator's house. This would very likely have been ruled manslaughter, but what happens afterwards counts as much as what happens on the spur of the moment, and three people including the killer are now involved in the cover-up.

What else does *Coronation Street* have in common with *EastEnders*, how about a Moslem woman pregnant outside of wedlock? Okay, this one is not orthodox like the one in Albert Square, but it is truly amazing how otherwise nice Moslem girls suddenly become sluts whenever there is a scriptwriter about. Is it a conspiracy, or does this just happen?

This brings us to *Emmerdale*, which has a church, a shop, a boarding house and a public house. And? Precisely! For a sleepy hamlet in the Yorkshire Dales, Emmerdale has a surprisingly high crime rate. One of the local nasties having been shot, his homosexual lover has been arrested and is awaiting trial. Having been found trying to dispose of the gun, and having already been tried for (and acquitted of) murdering his previous male lover, this man is in serious trouble, but now we have seen an alternative suspect, one who would not ordinarily have been a suspect in spite of his appalling antecedents because he has no obvious connection with the victim. It seems he offered to carry out the killing for someone who wants the bad man dead if this person returns the favour. If that plot sounds familiar, it could be because you've seen a film called *Strangers On A Train*. That thriller (so-called) ended badly for one of the protagonists, and it is clear that something very bad is going to happen in one if not all three of these leading soaps in the run-up to Christmas as the BBC and ITV clamour for the top ratings.