

SENIOR MOMENTS

Episode three

“Brownie roulette”

SCENE 1

Curtains open to reveal the living room of a Victorian semi-detached bungalow. Stage right there is the front door and stage left there is an archway leading to the kitchen and bedrooms. There is a small two-seater settee stage right and two armchairs positioned either side of a coffee table centre stage. There is a fully working sash window on the back-centre stage wall with a view of the garden. Dotty is sat in her armchair dozing. Enter Bill suspiciously.

Bill *(Looking around the entrance SR)* Psst! *(Louder)* Psst!

Dotty stirs.

Bill Psst! *(Stage whispering)* Is Erica here?

Dotty *(Finally notices Bill)* No she's not. Did you get it?

Bill enters fully, carrying a large, full carrier bag.

Bill Yes, I got everything he had left. *(Opens the carrier bag to show her)*

Dotty That's rather a lot isn't it?

Bill Not really. It's like when you make your Senna laxative stuff. You only use the flowers. John said we need to dry them out first, so shall I stick it in the oven for a bit?

Dotty No, I'll do all that, you organise the rest for tonight.

Bill Oh, I'll give the guys a call.

Dotty Great. I'll start the brownies then.

Bill But what about the smell. Won't Erica notice the smell? Because this lot doesn't half pong. You should have seen the looks I got on the bus back.

Dotty No, I'll use loads of cocoa when I make them. Hopefully they will smell like normal brownies and she'll never know.

Bill And if she does notice the smell?

Dotty Well we're adults. We can do what we want in our own house. Don't worry I'll think of something.

Dotty takes the bag from Bill and exits SL. Enter Erica SR.

Erica Morning Dad. *(Kisses his cheek)* Have you had breakfast?

Bill *(Shouting)* Oh, hi ERICA. Nice to see you ERICA.

Erica Yes, nice to see you too. But why are you shouting?

Bill *(Shouting)* I'm not shouting, am I? Sorry ERICA.

Erica Yes you are and where is mum and have you had breakfast yet?

Bill *(Shouting)* Yes, we have had breakfast ERICA and mum is around somewhere.

Erica I'll go and see if she is in the kitchen, then shall I?

Bill grabs her arm to stop her.

Bill *(Still shouting and now panics)* No, she is in the bedroom ERICA.
Erica What are you two up to? I know something is going on.
Bill *(Shouting)* Nothing is going on ERICA.
Erica Then why do you keep shouting my name as loud as you can in the direction of the kitchen?

Enter Dotty SL.

Dotty It's OK Bill. *(To Erica)* I'm making my own laxatives that's all. I didn't think you would approve so I asked Bill to keep an eye out. Sorry Eric.
Erica But, mum you have been doing that for years. Remember, I helped you make it in the right dosage? I know all about it.
Dotty Oh, do you dear? I'm so forgetful these days.
Erica No, it's more than that. I know what you two are like.

Erica heads for the kitchen but is stopped by Dotty.

Dotty No, I wouldn't go in there yet love the smell may be all that you need to set you off. Give it an hour or so. You don't want it running down your leg on the school run, now do you?
Erica Oh, God no! I guess you're right. Well OK then, if you two have had your breakfast, I'll get my two sorted out for school then I'll pop back in an hour or two.
Bill *(Puts his arm around Erica)* Oh, no rush. I think we may have a nap or something before dinner. *(Fakes a yawn)* You go home and put your feet up.
Dotty Yes, you go and have some you time, you deserve it.
Bill *(Pushes her towards the door)* Bye, bye, see you later alligator.
Erica In a while dad.

Erica exits SR

Bill Phew! That was close. Do you think she suspects anything?
Dotty No it's all good. Did you phone the guys?
Bill No I was just about to when Eric turned up. I'll do it now.

Bill collects the phone from the coffee table.

Dotty I'll go and sort out these brownies then.

Dotty exits SL.

Bill Hello is that the golden years retirement home? Ah yes may I speak with Alan Palmer please? Thank you, yes, I'll wait. *(Pause)* Alan, you old sea dog. How's it going? Good, good. Now listen. Tell the crew that there's a wild party at ours tonight. Dotty is making some of her special brownies. Tell Brian to bring some of his home-made rum and get here for about nine o'clock. Oh! Are you all going to be OK sneaking out at that time? What about the security on the front desk? *(Pause)* You old rogue. OK Brilliant, see you all later then.

Bill hangs up the phone.

Bill *(Shouting to Dotty)* It's all sorted Dotty.
Dotty OS Why? What did that old pirate do now?
Bill What?

Enter Dotty SL

Dotty What did Alan do to get deported?
Bill No. Not deported. I said it's all sorted. Sorted.
Dotty Oh good. I like Alan. I have nearly finished the brownies. I need some more eggs.
Bill OK. I'll go and get some for you.
Dotty Thanks darling. Twelve eggs please.
Bill Right, I'm on it. Coming up.

Exit Bill SR. Enter Monica SR a few moments after Bill has exited.

Monica Good morning Mrs Bell. Do you need any help today with anything?
Dotty Not unless you can keep a secret from Erica. You know, patient doctor confidentiality.
Monica I'm not a doctor Mrs Bell. But of course I can keep secrets. I'm *your* home help not Erica's.
Dotty Great. Then you can help me make the sponge light and soft. I'm doing chocolate brownies and my electric blender hasn't worked since bill experimented with sorting out the loose change, we won at the pier last year.
Monica *(Looking puzzled)* Sure. What do you want me to do?
Dotty Hold your breath and whisk the mixture as much as you can until you need to breathe again.
Monica But why would I hold my breath?

Dotty points her thumb SL towards the kitchen.

Dotty You'll see.

A puzzled Monica exits SL. Enter Bill SR with the eggs.

Bill There you go my love, devilled eggs. *(Shows the packet to Dotty)*
Dotty I don't want them. I said twelve eggs. Not devilled eggs. Oh, never mind we can serve them as hors d'oeuvres. Go and get me twelve fresh eggs. And make sure they are free range this time.

Bill exits SR. Enter Monica SL with a spoon covered in cake mix.

Monica *(Exhales deeply)* Phewee! I see what you mean.

Enter Erica SR with a shopping bag.

Erica Hi mum. Oh Hello Monica. I didn't know it was your day today.
Monica It's not really. But as your mum and dad don't often need much help I tend to pop in more often.

Erica Well that is nice of you. Thank you. I see she has got you making cakes. What sort of cakes are they?

Erica tries to sample the cake mix from the spoon but Monica moves it away.

Monica You'll have to wait and see. It's going to be a surprise, isn't it Dot.

Dotty It'll surprise her alright.

Erica Well, I can't wait.

Enter Bill SR.

Bill Hi Eric. There you go Dotty. Twelve eggs. Free from gluten, lactose, wheat and barley but may still contain egg.

Erica Oh Dad you're nuts, do you know that?

Dotty He's as nutty as a fruit cake. Thank you, Bill. You may retire to your chair and read your paper.

Erica Oh yes. Your paper dad.

Erica removes the paper from her shopping bag and gives it to Bill.

Bill Thank you. *(Kisses her cheek)* Have I ever told you that you are my favourite daughter?

Erica Yes dad. But as I am your only daughter that's not really a compliment is it? Well I must be off now. Don't forget mum, I am not around this evening. I'm going to that spa night with the girls from work. So I won't be home till late tonight. Are you going to be alright?

Monica They will be fine. I'll look in on them at bedtime just to make sure for you.

Erica Thank you Monica. You know, I don't know what we ever did before you came into our lives.

Bill We got arrested for burglary, had our stomachs pumped.....

Erica ...yes dad. We remember it well. Now be good tonight and I'll pop across in the morning.

Erica kisses Bill and Dotty on their cheeks and exits SR. Bill sits in his armchair.

Bill See dotty, she doesn't suspect a thing.

Monica What's going on you two?

Bill Nothing Monica. Honest.

Monica What's going on Dot?

Dotty Oh alright. We've got a couple of friends popping round for a party, that's all.

Monica Oh that's OK. I suppose you'll all be in bed by ten. *(Laughs)*

Bill Yes, probably. *(Nudges Dotty)*

Bill and Dotty giggle.

Dotty Come on then Monica. Let's get these brownies done.

Monica OK. But why so many brownies, if you only have a couple of friends coming? Dot? Dot?

Dotty and Erica exit SL.

Blackout.

SCENE TWO

9 o'clock that evening. Bill opens the door. Enter Alan Palmer and his wife Karen carrying a plate of sandwiches. Brian with a demi john of home-made rum. Grahame and his wife Marjorie carrying two bottles of champagne.

Bill Come in. Come in. Nice of you all to come. Welcome to Bell End.
Dotty I thought we agreed to call the house, the end of the road.
Bill Bell end sounds better.
Dotty No it doesn't.
Bill We're at the end of the road and we are the Bells. Of course it should be Bell end. What do you think Alan?
Alan I agree with Dotty. You are the bell end. *(Laughs)*
Karen *(Holding up the plate of sandwiches)* Shall I put these in the kitchen Dot?
Dotty Yes please they look lovely.
Karen Come on Alan you can help me.

Karen and Alan exit stage left.

Brian What shall I do with this? *(Holding up the demijohn full of rum)*
Bill Pour us all a glass please. There are glasses over there on the table.

Brian moves to the table and carefully pours seven glasses of rum.

Grahame You know, you and Dotty should consider moving into the Golden years. We don't have to worry about anything. They do all the cooking and housework. Most days all I have to do is get up and read the papers. Isn't that right, Marjorie.
Marjorie Most days he can't even be bothered to do that.
Bill I'm sorry, but that would bore me to tears. Besides Dotty loves her independence.
Dotty I would go stir crazy in a place like that.
Bill And can you see the warden allowing us one of these shindigs?
Grahame But, we don't have a warden.
Bill Listen. You had to sneak past the guards, did you not? And if you were caught, you'd have been sent to the manager. Isn't that the same thing?
Grahame *(Laughs)* Bloody hell! I never thought of it like that. Marjorie we're prisoners in our own home.
Marjorie I told you that, when we sold our lovely house. But you wouldn't listen to me, would you?

Brian interrupts and brings four glasses of rum to Bill, Dotty, Grahame and Marjorie.

Brian Uhm, here you go people. Put your laughing gear around that.

Brian collects another two glasses as Karen and Alan enter from the kitchen.

Brian Here you go guys.

Brian collect the last glass for himself and raises a glass.

- Brian** To Bill and Dotty. Thanks for inviting us around and hosting another, what I'm sure will be a memorable evening.
- Bill** Well thank you Brian for bringing your famous, what do you call it? Tropically conditioned rum.
- Alan** It's not tropically conditioned. He makes it through the home's central heating system. He'll blow us all up one day.

They all laugh and clink glasses. They all react in different ways to the very strong liquor.

- Karen** Oh by the way Dotty, Alan knocked over the brownies. *(Quickly)* It's OK nothing touched the floor. But I did have to put them all on a bigger plate for safety.

Alan looks mortified for getting the blame.

- Dotty** Oh, that's alright, don't worry. I was going to bring all the snacks in. What do you think Karen?
- Karen** Oh, let me do it. It's the least I can do. Come on Alan.
- Alan** But, you're the one feeling guilty.
- Karen** ALAN!

Alan reluctantly follows Karen into the kitchen.

- Brian** Heel boy!

They all laugh.

- Bill** That's not very nice Brian.
- Brian** Then you shouldn't have laughed, should you?
- Bill** No I suppose not.

Bill and Brian clink glasses and drink.

- Bill** How strong did you say this stuff was?
- Brian** It's about 80% proof.
- Bill** Blimey! No wonder I'm starting to feel drunk.
- Dotty** You better have something to eat Bill.

Karen and Alan enter from the kitchen carrying a plate of sandwiches and a plate of brownies.

- Dotty** Just in time. Bill is feeling drunk already.
- Alan** You are such a lightweight Bill.
- Bill** I'm not a lightweight. I just haven't felt much like eating since we had our stomachs pumped yesterday.
- Karen** Here you go then, tuck in. Egg and cress, your favourite.

Karen seductively smiles at Bill. Dotty snatches the plate of sandwiches before Bill has a chance to take one.

- Dotty** Thank you, Karen. *(Offers one to Bill)* Here you go love, try not to choke on them.

Dotty places the sandwiches on the table and takes the brownies from Alan and places them on the table too.

Dotty Everybody, please help yourself to some nibbles. We have egg and cress sandwiches from her (*Pointing at Karen*) and there are some of my special chocolate brownies here too.

Marjorie How special Dot?

Dotty Oh, very special. I used the finest, freshly grown secret ingredients.

Marjorie Would they be from my friend John.

Bill The very same.

Karen What secret ingredient would that be then?

Bill We could tell you but then we would have to kill you. (*Flirting*)

Dotty Oh, please may I?

Alan Can I help?

Dotty and Alan laugh together and clink glasses. Stage lighting fade to black out.

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