



A PAIN
by Paul Smith

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CHARACTERS

MARY – mid 80s

DEREK – early 60s

A bench in a park overlooking a town. Secluded.

MARY, a lady in mid 80s struggles to get to the bench. She is carrying a heavy bag of shopping. She sits down and takes a half bottle of brandy from her bag, opens it and swigs. She does this intermittently throughout the following.

After a while DEREK enters. He is in full, flamboyant drag including a very unkempt colourful wig and a very short dress and various other items, similarly gaudy, including high heel shoes which he cannot walk in properly. A handbag over his shoulder. He carries a large number of supermarket carrier bags filled with clothes. He is huffing and puffing and drops his bags by the bench and sits down.

Very briefly MARY glances in his direction and then slightly turns away from him. Throughout the two do not acknowledge each other and DEREK speaks to the world in general. MARY ignores him as if he is not there.

DEREK Jeez.

Jeez.

DEREK hunts through the bags a brings out a blouse in very, very bright colours.

I mean I don't mind, but....

All I went in there for was a Sally Ann.

Sally Ann Howes. Blouse.

And they came up with this piece of Brad.

Brad Pitt. Shit.

It's not even my colour. I mean is it? I don't think so.

They just don't get it do they?

No sense of style.

I might not be Grace Kelly, but I'm no Munchkin.

Still, when you go for charity what can you expect.

I said, "I wanna stand out in the crowd. I wanna be colourful. I wanna be seen!" It's not much to ask is it? They probably thought I was a bit of a pain in the Gregory. Gregory Peck. Neck.

I mean, *do* I stand out in the crowd? No. I don't. And this colour isn't going to help. So that was the Oxfam for you. So, I popped into the Help For Hearts shop. Well, you do get a slightly better class in there and not everything is put on display with a strong Judi. Judi Dench. Stench. They actually clean their stock.

Some nice bits and bobs, but nothing shouted at me.

What's wrong with all the fashion designers out there? I mean what? I look around and see trinkets and trifles – nothing more substantial – I am so Harrison by it all. Harrison Ford. Bored.

Maybe I missed my vocation. Maybe I am meant to be Vivienne Westwood. I mean I have her hair after all. Maybe it's a sign. I mean it's something to Henry isn't it? Henry Fonda. Ponder.

Look at all this stuff. Bags of bags and more bags. Bags, that's what my life has come to. No longer the toast of Madame Jojo's, relegated to bag lady. Bags in my hands and under my eyes; look at them, they're not bags, they're ruddy suitcases!

Awww this Mae is really riding up. Mae West. Vest. I can feel my straps all digging in. Why is a bra so bloody uncomfortable? I mean there's more

scaffolding holding me up than on Gaudi's flaming Cathedral. I mean is a softer support too much to ask for. That woman in the Pet Rescue Shop looked at me as if I was asking the impossible. Maybe I am, but it's a real Michael. Michael Caine. Pain.

I should have popped into Starbucks. I need a caffeine fix. How did I get right up here without coffee? I mean why don't they have a wagon up here. Or a defibrillator – they don't think about those traipsing up the hill in heels do they? Look, these ankles are swollen. Swollen to the point of bursting. Look at them. I mean just look. That's bruising that is. Meryl. Meryl Streep. Deep. Deep to the core of my body. It's that bruised.

They don't care, the doctors don't. I went to see that Dr Grant the other day about my various veins. He had a go at me about my footwear. Jimmy Choos? I should be so lucky – you don't pick up them in the Help the Elderly Shop do you? I've scoured this town for decent heels, but no can do. I might just as well put these in the ruddy Errol. Errol Flynn. Bin.

Look at it down there. Miserable little backwater of a town. I should never have moved here. Couldn't wait to get out of Notting Hill and now I can't wait to get back there. Only problem is, no Russell. Russell Crowe. Dough. Stupid me. And look at the charity shops there? Chock a block with Alexander McQueen and Gucci; nearest you get to that down here are the dried berries you get in Waitrose. Can't stand them myself.

No one in the town down there gives a toss. About anything. Certainly not about me. I don't cry out for attention. Never have done. Not like Brian, back in the day. He was always braying like a donkey to get people to turn round and take a look. Mind you at 6ft 6 in 8 inch heels he didn't need to do anything. And that beehive he sported took him to nearly 8ft. He would get really Maggie if he was ignored. Maggie Smithed. Miffed.

Outrageous as he was. Brian. I miss him. Made me laugh. No one does that anymore. I do my best to make friends, to connect..... connect; what the hell does that mean? I just think I must be out of Johnny with most other people. Johnny Depp. Step.

Just a lonely old queen trolling around for something to bring a smile to my sagging jowls. I need to use a bit more tape around the back of me ears to tighten things up. Like Barbara Cartland. Oh yes she did. I'm telling you. She knew all the beauty tricks and pink is my colour too. Always has been. It's a strong colour. Says a lot about your personality. Not John, like yellow or beige. John Wayne. Lame.

DEREK takes a mirror from his handbag and looks into it.

Good God. What a state. It's Bette Davis to a tee – Baby Jane eat your heart out. Touch up the lippy.

DEREK takes out a very bright red lipstick and applies it – he blots it with a tissue.

Mmmmmm that's better. A smudge of Elizabeth Arden Legendary Red and I'm ready for action.

If only the action was something more than preparing a meal of flash fry steak and some oven chips. That and sitting in front of the TV – a diet of DIY and holiday programmes. My life is dull and boring and unglamorous.

64 and on the discard heap.

Nothing but aches and pains.

Broken heels and knickers riding up my arse.

It's no life is it?

What have I got to show for the day?

Rags.

Tat.

This and that.

I need some Tom.

Tom Cruise. Booze.

But I don't drink so that won't help my mood.

I need to Bruce.

Bruce Lee. Pee.

But I can't be bothered.

Have to wait till I get home.

Life.

You get no Tom for anything. Tom Hanks. Thanks.

It's just crap isn't it?

Life.

I mean, what's it all about?

MARY puts her bottle away and gets up as DEREK stares into the distance. She still doesn't look at DEREK.

MARY Will you just shut the Donald up? Donald Duck. Fuck.

MARY picks up her shopping and walks off. DEREK rises with his bags and looks towards where MARY has gone and starts to follow her.

DEREK Sorry Mum. Was I boring you? Steak and chips tonight.....

LIGHTS DOWN