

**SPIDERIFFIC**

by

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## SPIDERIFFIC

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## SPIDERIFFIC

### CAST

BELLA..... Miners widow from the Welsh valleys; A joker who enjoys winding up Sophia.

SOPHIA.....Retired actress; Fragrant and flowery.

DORA.....A woman with a spider obsession who's lost all grip on reality.

JULIA.....Unmarried and desperate; Attractive but tries too hard.

BERTIE.....Ex-Army; Stiff upper lip, stiff upper everything.

SALLY..... Julia's assistant, charming and efficient but in reality a cold-blooded killer.

SGT DODDE.....Staggeringly incompetent malapropism strewn detective, who takes himself very seriously.

MISS ENDERBY..... Choir mistress who was educated at Cheltenham Ladies College.

CELIA..... The world's oldest new age hippy.

DAN..... Stone deaf old dodderer.

ELEANOR.....In awe of Celia.

Set: The lounge of a retirement home. Sofa, easy chair, cupboard and card table with three chairs minimum

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ACT ONE

(Scene opens. Three women... Dora Bella and Sophia are seated at the table, playing cards. Dan, Eleanor and Celia are seated on sofa/chairs. Dan is asleep)

Bella: Your turn to open, Sophia.

Sophia: Alright I'm thinking... Dora... Is Mr. Bun the baker at home?

Dora: No dear.

Sophia: Oh bother

Bella: Just a minute...I haven't got Mr. Bun, and unless you're deliberately trying to throw the game, you haven't got him....So that means....Dora?

Sophia: Oh really Dora. You must learn to play without cheating.

Dora: I wasn't cheating. Our baker's name is Dawson, not Bun.

Bella: No Dora, love...We talked about this. It's a game, remember? Make believe?

Dora: What do you mean? Our baker isn't really called Dawson?

Bella: Yes...But not in the game...In the game he's called... It doesn't matter.

Sophia: (Standing up) Oh, I'm too excited to play cards, anyway. Just think, Her Majesty the Queen is coming to visit here, at Greenbriar... I haven't been this excited since that opening night with Olivier at the Adelphi.

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Bella: Isn't that the night you ran out of Raspberry Ripple?

Sophia: Ha, ha, ha... You must be careful with that tongue of yours, Bella. You might cut yourself. Anyway, I'm not reacting to your poisonous barbs. The Queen is coming to visit, and I will be presenting the bouquet.

Bella: (Standing up) Just a minute. Who said that you would be presenting it?

Sophia: Oh, come along dear, it's obvious. It has to be me.

Dora: Is Miss Stitch the tailor's daughter at home?

Bella: You listen to me, Sophia Rawnsley, I'm sick of you lording it over us. You are not presenting the bouquet, I am.

Sophia: You? Please.... How can it possibly be you?

Bella: Why not me?

Sophia: Well, for a start, Her Majesty is so cosmopolitan. She's been to so many countries. You are just a citizen of Pontgwyngerlais.... Whereas I am a citizen of the world.

Dora: Is Mr. Bone the Butcher at home?

Sophia: It must be me.

Dora: Are you Mr. Bone the Butcher dear?

Sophia: Oh shut up Dora.

Bella: (To Sophia) I can just imagine you... Crawling... Your Majesty. I've appeared on the stage with Olivier, you know. (Yawns) And I was also in Tenko, on the telly... Big deal.

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Sophia: How dare you. That part in Tenko was central to the whole thing.

Bella: Tenko Tenko Tenko, that's all we get from you. I'm sick of bloody Tenko. And you only played a malaria victim. One line you had... You went Aaargh and died.

Dora: Is Mrs. Double-Cream the Milkman's wife at home?

Bella/Sophia: (In Unison) Shut up Dora.

Sophia: Listen to me, you poisonous harpy, you don't realise the emotion that went into that Aargh... That Aargh spoke volumes. It portrayed all the suffering and despair of those women in the camps.

Bella: Just sounded like someone going Aargh to me.

Sophia: (To Celia) Celia, tell her. I should be the one who presents the bouquet.

Bella: Tell her me Celia.

Celia: Oh, I can't be bothered with your petty squabbles. You know my feelings on royalty, a bunch of useless layabouts. Get rid of them

Sophia: You... Republican

Celia: (Standing. To Eleanor) Come along Eleanor, I feel like the spirits are around about. We might be able to contact Lucifer again.

Eleanor: Oh good. I so enjoyed my last little chat with him...  
(Calling) Lucifer... Lucifer

(Celia and Eleanor exit right)

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Bella: Poor old Eleanor she still misses Lucifer, and Celia's as potty as she is, contacting the spirit world so she can talk to her old cat.

Sophia: Well she did love old Lucifer. We all did.

Bella: Remember when Celia reckoned she could look into the future and I asked her when she first realised she could do it and she said, next week

Sophia: Oh never mind about them (To Dan) Dan, tell her, I should be the one who presents the bouquet to Her Majesty...  
Dan, wake up.

Dan: (Wakes with a start) What, what was that.

Sophia: Dan, tell her it should be me who presents the bouquet to Her Majesty.

Dan: What?

Sophia: (Shouting) It should be me who presents the bouquet...  
You know... To the Queen?

Dan: (Looking at watch) Half past ten.

Bella : No Dan, the bouquet, you know, the Queen... Never mind.

Dan: (Starts biting on orange then holds it up) I can't start my orange

Bella: Here let me. (Starts to peel) There

(Dan gets up unsteadily takes orange and exits right)

Bella: Look at him go. You wouldn't believe he's the same age as Cliff Richard, would you?

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Sophia: I hope he doesn't start spitting the pips again. Last time he nearly had poor Eleanor's eye out

Dora: (Stands) Well, if we're not playing anymore, I'm going upstairs. It's time for Norman's breakfast.

(Dora exits left)

Sophia: Every time she mentions Norman, it makes my skin crawl. I don't know how she can stand having him in the bedroom with her, all big and hairy with those staring eyes.

Bella: I know. And the way he eats, slurping on his food. Reminds me of the way my Wilf used to eat his potatoes and meat.

Sophia: Oh please, no... On top of everything else, don't make me picture your Wilf and his potatoes and meat.

Bella: He had spaghetti bolognaise once. We had to redecorate the kitchen.

Sophia: Well there we are then... That's another reason why it should be me who presents the bouquet. I'm more used to that class of people than you. I can communicate with them

Bella: So can I.

Sophia: Oh Bella. Why only last week Daphne Saggars asked you for your opinion on the West Lothian question and you said you didn't think it would be as good as Countdown

Bella: Well I'm only giving her a bunch of flowers. I'll just tell her, her frock looks nice and that'll be it

Sophia: You have to engage her, charm her. Only I can do that

Bella: You couldn't charm a rat up a drainpipe

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Sophia: Well at least I don't think it's charming to chew with my mouth open

Bella: I am presenting that bouquet.

Sophia: No me.

Bella: I can do it better than you.

Sophia: No you can't.

Bella: Yes I can.

(Julia {Ms White} enters left)

Julia: What is all this noise?

Bella: It's her Miss White.

Julia: How many times must I tell you, it's Ms White, not Miss.

Sophia: Ms White. I've just been telling Bella. How it should be me who presents the bouquet to Her Majesty.

Bella: Me

Sophia: No me.

Julia: Quiet... I haven't decided who will present it yet. I might decide to do it myself. Now I must get back to my office. I have a visitor, the Queen's equerry. Now you two behave, or else.

(Julia exits)

Bella: The Queen's equerry? The poor bugger. She'll be all over him like a rash.

Sophia: Really Bella

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Bella: Don't you believe it. Beneath all that polyester is a love machine. She just needs someone to crank her up

Sophia: You do employ the most charming turn of phrase

(Miss Enderby enters right)

Miss Enderby: Oh excuse me. Is this Greenbriar Retirement Home.

Bella : No it's Greenbriar Youth Club

Miss Enderby: Oh I see.

Sophia : Of course it is. My name's Sophia Rawnsley. I acted on stage with Olivier, you know. Perhaps you've heard of me

Miss Enderby : No I'm afraid I haven't.

Bella: My name's Bella, and what the hell are you doing here.

Miss Enderby: I've brought my choir here to sing for the Queen.

Bella: What are you going to sing?

Miss Enderby: Oh, something uplifting and regal.

Bella: Not 'Agadoo' then

Miss Enderby: No