

SCOTCH AT MIDNIGHT

A one act play

By

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Setting:

The play takes place in present day. The set is the bedroom of an apartment in the Sunny Acres Retirement Home.

Set Dressing:

It is a simple set. The bedroom is dominated by a double bed with pillows and a quilt. Matching night tables are on either side of the bed.

There are twin reading lamps on the night tables. A necktie is hanging on the lamp shade stage left. Also on the night table stage left is a framed photo. On the night table stage right is an empty bottle of Glenfiddich Scotch.

Characters:

There are two characters in the play, Alice and Paul.

Seniors Alice and Paul are residents of the Sunny Acres Retirement Home.

SCOTCH AT MIDNIGHT

Scene: A bedroom in darkness. A night light can be seen through the door stage right. Bed is centre stage with night tables on both sides with lamps on them. Two figures can be seen under a quilt. The figure (on the right, Paul, sits up, groans, and slowly goes out the door stage right. (Paul is wearing pale blue boxers, a white undershirt and knee high black sox.) The other figure, Alice, in the bed sighs and shifts. A door closes stage right, blocking out the light, silence, the sound of a toilet flushing, the toilet lid being put down. Sound of door opening, night light is seen, Paul returns to the bed and settles in. Suddenly Alice sits bolt upright. (Alice is wearing a bra, slip and panty hose.)

Alice: Is that you Alan?

Paul: No, it's Paul.

Alice: (turns on the light on her side of the bed...clutching quilt up under her chin and looking over at him): PAUL!

Paul: (sits up, turns on light on his side of the bed, clutching quilt under his chin and looking directly at her: ALICE!

Alice: I knew it couldn't be Alan. He never put the toilet seat down.

Paul: Gladys would have killed me if I didn't put the toilet seat down.

Alice: Paul, what are you doing in my apartment and in my bed?

Paul: Why ask me Alice? My memory isn't what it used to be.

(They sit in puzzled silence, not looking at each other)

Alice: Now let's think this through. All I remember is that as we

came out of the dining room a button came off your jacket.

Paul: And you offered to sew it on for me.

Alice: Yes, I did say that ...and I did sew on your button. But how did THIS happen?

They sit...quilt still held under their chins...perplexed.

Paul: Maybe it was the music.

Alice: Music? What music?

Paul: Remember, when you were sewing on the button I asked if you would like to hear some music on my iPad that my son sent me.

Alice: I vaguely remember.

Paul: We started with some really old stuff.....Miller of course... Tommy Dorsey...Swing and Sway with Sammy Kaye...

Alice: And the College of Musical knowledge...that's going way back!

Paul: Sing along with Mitch Miller. All the singers. Frankie Lane, Hank Williams, Bing Crosby...

Alice: Ah....Der Bingle....White Christmas...I recall.... we sang along with him.

Paul: (warming to the subject) Frank Sinatra, Tony Bennett, Dean Martin, Elvis, Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons...

Alice: (humming a bit) Big Girls Don't Cry.

Paul: Gladys's favourite.

Alice: But so nasal.

Paul: Yes, she was.

Alice: Oh, I didn't mean Gladys. I meant Frankie Valli.

Paul: Yes, he too.

Alice: And the women....Margaret Whiting....Jo Stafford....Peggy Lee, Patsy Cline, Rosemary Clooney...

Paul: And then we danced....

Alice: We danced!

Paul: Yes! Patti Page singing The Tennessee Waltz. You said it was your Dad's favourite.

Alice: It was. Mom and Dad danced to it at my wedding.

Paul: What a lovely memory.

Alice: No, not really.

Paul: Oh, I'm so sorry.

Alice: Let's just say that the little man on top of the top of the wedding cake would have made a better husband. Lucky I got it right the second time when I married Alan.

Paul: But he didn't put down the toilet seat?

Alice: That's true. He was a wonderful man but had a few faults.
However, he was a very good dancer.

Paul: Oh, Gladys and I loved to dance. That's how we met...
at the Starlight Ballroom.

Alice: Alan and I met at a wedding reception for mutual friends.
We waltzed, fox trotted and jived. We got so hot we had to go
outside to cool off.

Paul: I was a real cool dude if I do say so myself. I could swing Gladys
over my shoulder and twirl her around. Hot Stuff!

Alice: I never dance now.....although you say we did. Do you suppose
we got so hot dancing we had to take off some of our clothes to
cool down?

Paul: We were walzing. The Tennessee Waltz. Not too strenuous.

Alice: No, I guess not. And we wouldn't be under this quilt if we
were hot.

Paul: (sees the empty Scotch bottle)
Well, maybe it wasn't just the dancing.

Alice: If it wasn't the dancing what could it have been?

Paul: Maybe it was the Scotch.

Alice: The Scotch?!

Paul: The Scotch.

Alice: What do you mean The Scotch?

Paul: The Scotch we drank while we were dancing.

Alice: (incredulous) The Scotch we drank while we were dancing!!!!

Paul: (quietly) The Scotch we drank while we were dancing.

Alice: The Scotch...we drank....are you out of your mind? I don't drink. Never have. Well, a glass of Sherry at Christmas. It always made me sleepy. Do you suppose the Scotch we drank made us sleepy and we had to have a nap?

Paul: Well, I don't know about that. The bottle we drank.....

Alice: The bottle!

Paul: (shows her the bottle.)The bottle we drank was a Father's Day gift from my son. Glenfiddich. You said it was what Alan drank and he knew his Scotch.

Alice: Alan did like good Scotch. Never drank too much though.

Paul: (to himself) I like good Scotch. Never drink too much.

Alice: Oh, Paul, you are a real gentleman. One of the few here at the home. You open doors and pull out chairs for the ladies. You don't burp or belch or worse. (she sees the tie on the lamp, registers puzzlement but continues on) You always wear a tie

to dinner. You're good company. You have a sense of humour... rare for an accountant and you don't talk too much.

Paul: Gladys did most of the talking.

Alice: Why am I not surprised to hear that?

Paul: I've never been what you would call a hail fellow, well-met.

Alice: Why do you think I would offer to sew on your button?

I would never offer to do that for loudmouths Sandy and Malcolm. Their idea of being a gentleman is not to run you down with their walkers.

Paul: But would a gentleman have a lady sew on his button, then play racy music and ply her with liquor?

Alice: Well, I don't think anyone would consider anything Bing sang as racy and you didn't pour the Scotch down my throat. At least I don't remember that happening.

Paul: But how can we explain finding ourselves here, (peeps under the quilt) partially clothed, reeking of Scotch (looks at his watch) at midnight?

Alice: Well, I don't....what.... did you say midnight? Midnight!

Paul: (looks at his watch again) Yes. Midnight or one minute passed to be precise.

Alice: It can't be midnight. I've been going to bed at nine o'clock every night since I came to Sunny Acres. Midnight! No way!

Paul: What does your watch say?

Alice: Let's see. (moves to hold her wrist under the light) Two minutes past midnight.

Paul: What could we have been doing all this time.

(They sit, thoughtfully)

Alice: (clutches the quilt closer) You don't suppose we.....

Paul: (after some thought, realizes) No, no. Never!

Alice: How can you say that? And so emphatically. Am I so unattractive?

Paul: Oh, no, no. You are most attractive. Certainly the most attractive of all the women here. And kind...and funny.

Alice: Then why did you say No so emphatically?

Paul: Because...because....

Alice: Because, why?

Paul: Because...because...because I still have my sox on.

Alice: Because....you...still....have ...your ...sox ...on?

Paul: Yes, I still have my sox on. I would never ever have sex with my sox on.

Alice: May I be so bold as to ask what having your sox on or off has to do with having sex?

Paul: Like I said before. I am a gentleman. No gentleman would go to bed with the intention of having a connubial connection while wearing his sox.

Alice: Connubial connection?

Paul: Sex.

Alice: Oh. Yes. I see what you mean. (she puts her hands to her ears)
Oh you're right. I agree. Hanky panky is out of the question.

Paul: Because you find me so unattractive?

Alice: Oh, no. Because I'm still wearing my hearing aids.

Paul: (puts his hands to his ears) So am I. Yes, you're right, there was no hanky panky.

Alice: Hearing aids could get lost in the sheets and disappear in the laundry.

Paul: At four thousand dollars a pair, no one would take that chance.

Alice: No matter how attractive he or she was.

Paul: I don't think we will ever know for sure how we ended up here.
It's getting late. I should be going.

Alice: Yes, yes, well past midnight.

(Alice turns her head away as Paul finds his pants on the floor and starts putting them on while sitting on his side of the bed. Alice picks up a framed photo that's on the bedside table near her)

Alice: Paul, take off your pants!

Paul: (drops his pants on the floor, turns to Alice) WHAT?

Alice: (holding the framed photo for Paul to see) Whose photo is this?

Paul: Why it's Gladys, of course.

Alice: And since its Gladys, of course, then this is your apartment not mine.

Paul: Then you....

Alice: Are in your bed, not you in mine. I'm the one who should be leaving. Not you.

Paul: How did this happen? (Paul comes round to the end of the bed, and sits)

Alice: We know that I sewed on your button. I must have brought my sewing kit over here. But I don't see it. (Alice comes to the end of the bed and sits next to Paul)

Paul: Oh, no. You didn't have to get your sewing kit. I have one.

Alice: Ah, it makes sense. I used your kit....in your apartment.

Paul: Listened to my iPod.

Alice: Drank your Scotch. Slept in your bed. Now I must go. (Alice finds her dress on the floor, holds it and her shoes to cover her chest she comes to the foot of the bed where Alan stands in his underwear and sox.

Paul: Shouldn't you....get dressed.

Alice: Paul, this is a retirement home remember. Everything and everybody closes down at nine.

Paul: But your reputation.

Alice: That's very sweet of you Paul but reputation is built on expectation and supposition. You can imagine what expectation and supposition there was about me when I was a divorced single parent in the years before I married Alan.

Paul: And now you are a widowed grandmother.

Alice: A senior Cinderella sneaking home after midnight.

Paul: But what if you're seen?

Alice: Ah, think what a charge it would give this place! Gossip! Speculation! Jealousy! Give everyone a good jolt! Put a spring in every step!

Paul: But at least I could walk you home.

Alice: Paul, my apartment is right next door.

Paul: But a gentleman would.....

Alice: Take off his sox and crawl into bed.

Paul laughs. He takes her arm and they walk stage left.

Alice: (laughing turns to Paul) Just think, whenever things get too dreary here at Sunny Acres...whenever we have to listen to Malcolm slurp his soup or Jeanine's aches and pains....we can look at each other and say, "Scotch at Midnight" and we will smile.

Paul: Do you think it will ever happen again?

Alice: No, I don't think so. I sewed that button on real tight....and remember.... we drank all your Scotch!

Paul: Not even one dance?

Alice: Well, maybe just one.

Paul: Just one?

Alice: Yes. If they play "The Tennessee Waltz".

(Paul and Alice laugh together. Lights down. Curtain to the music of The Tennesse Waltz sung by Patti Page.

