

MICHELLE *downs the wine all in one. The other girls watch her with an odd mixture of wonderment and disgust.*

PHYLIS Thirsty?

MICHELLE You didn't just spend nearly three hours with a seven year old screaming at the top of his lungs .

ETHEL Three hours?

MICHELLE I thought we were heading to Raquel's actual house, so we walked it. Nobody home. Typical me, didn't read the email, realised that we were coming to the back end of beyond. So got a taxi here. Except, country lanes and the stupid driver's satnav went all wonky. We went round the village square three times before he realised he didn't have a signal. So there we are.

ETHEL That must have cost you a bit.

MICHELLE Na, child support has just come through, so should be alright.

PHYLIS Yes, I saw little Ryan was here.

PHYLIS waves over to MICHELLE's kid.

MICHELLE For God's sake, don't wave at him. He'll only come over.

PHYLIS But he's your son. Your precious boy. The fruit of your womb.

MICHELLE Yeah like his Dad, a bruised peach.

PHYLIS You don't mean that. My leader is always saying, 'to be angry at the young is to be angry with the child in yourself'

MICHELLE Well the child in myself can do one an' all.

PHYLIS *(A little shocked)* Aubrey and I brought my niece along. Her mum and dad are going through a tough time. They're having counselling.

MICHELLE Waste of time, should skip straight to the divorce.

ETHEL I wish I'd got a divorce.

AUBREY You wanted a divorce?

PHYLIS That doesn't sound like you.

MICHELLE You do know that divorce is when a married couple splits up?

ETHEL Oh. Oh no, that's not what I meant.

AUBREY What did you mean ETHEL?

ETHEL What's the little ones called then?

PHYLIS Little what love?

ETHEL The little ones, the small ones. They've got small legs.

MICHELLE Ethel, have you forgotten to take your medication?

PHYLIS This is why I swear by spiritual healing

ETHEL And their tails go wiggly when they're excited.

AUBREY That's a dachshund you daft bat.

ETHEL *(Happily)* That's it. Lovely little things. Marian had one.

PHYLIS Who's Marian?

ETHEL You remember Marian.

All the women look like ETHEL has turned over two pages at once. RAQUEL brings out another bottle of wine.

ETHEL Raquel, you must remember her. - Marian. She played Maria when I played Anita in West Side Story.

RAQUEL Ethel, that was in 1975.

PHYLIS I don't think any of us were members back then.

RAQUEL Why Marian?

ETHEL Well she had a Divorce. I mean a Dachshund.

RAQUEL looks to the others for context, they all try to subtly shake their heads. 'It's not worth it'.

RAQUEL Ethel, that was...well I don't know how to put it nicely...pointless.

ETHEL Except she had to have it put down.

MICHELLE *(Muttering under her breath)* It's not the only thing that needs putting down. - I'm
dying for cig Raquel.

RAQUEL No use I'm afraid. We've quit.

MICHELLE Why would you wanna do that?

RAQUEL Health kick. New year, new me.

MICHELLE It's July.

