

BRICK, JR.

A Drama in Four Scenes

By Greg Phillips

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Brick Jr.'s fraternal twin cousins Trixie (Marlene) and Dixie, who are five years older than Brick, are now in the bedroom with Brick and Margaret. They are seated together on a love seat in the sitting area of the room. Trixie is dressed in a conservative pantsuit while Dixie, her younger sister, is very pregnant and dressed in a colorful maternity outfit. Brick, who is now wearing a bathrobe, is sitting in his chair across from them.

As the lights come up Margaret is serving iced tea to everyone.

DIXIE

So did you see Elizabeth Taylor or any other famous people while you were out at the Betty Ford Center? This tea is delicious.

MARGARET

Mint and honey are my secret ingredients.

DIXIE

Oh, I just put lots of sugar in mine.

MARGARET

Of course you do.

BRICK JR.

I'm afraid there were only common people like me while I was out there.

DIXIE

I'll have you know there's nothing common about you, Brick Jr.

BRICK JR.

Thank you, my dear cousin.

Sookey enters with a plate of sandwiches.

SOOKEY

Alright your royal highness, lunch is served in your bedroom even though bedrooms aren't meant to be dining rooms.

BRICK JR.

You know I love you Mama Sook.

SOOKEY

Um hum.

BRICK JR.

Now, if you'll please put that plate down here on this table, I'll have one in just a little bit.

SOOKEY

I can't believe I just carried this big, old tray of homemade pimento cheese sandwiches, deviled eggs, and pineapple congealed salad all the way up the stairs just so you can sit there and tell me you're not going to eat anything.

MARGARET

Brick, will you please eat something?

Brick picks up a sandwich and takes a nibble.

MARGARET

Thank you, dear Sookey, for all that you do for us. I don't know what in the world we would do without you. You've always been so loyal to both me and Brick.

SOOKEY

Well, I just hate to see good food go to waste.

BRICK JR.

Would anybody else like a sandwich?

TRIXIE

Thank you, but I'm absolutely stuffed. Everything was scrumptious as always, Mama Sook.

SOOKEY

(To Brick.)

I still like to cook as long as I have people who enjoy eating it.

BRICK JR.

(Taking another small bite.)

Look. I'm eating.

DIXIE

Well, if you're not going to eat all of them, I wouldn't mind having one or two. I just love Mama Sook's homemade pimento cheese, and you know I am eating for three now.

BRICK JR.

Three? I thought you were eating for five or six. I think we're going to have to start calling you Big Mama, Jr.

TRIXIE

That's what all of us are already calling her. She looks and acts more and more like Big Mama each and every day.

BRICK JR.

Big Mama, Jr. That is officially your new name.

DIXIE

(Laughing and pleased by all the attention.)

Oh, Brick Jr., you always were a tease. Can you believe I'm having twins this time?

TRIXIE

You know twins run on Mama's side of the family.

DIXIE

I hope they turn out to be just like me and you. I'm so excited because that'll make six kids just like Mama and Daddy had. A perfect size family.

SOOKEY

Oh, lord have mercy on you. Better you than me.

DIXIE

Well, at your age, yes.

SOOKEY

At any age.

MARGARET

How is your dear mother?

TRIXIE

I hate to say it, but not so good. She really doesn't remember any of us anymore.

MARGARET

There's nothing worse than when a person loses their mind.

DIXIE

Well now, when I take the kids over to visit her, her eyes just light up like a Christmas tree. I think that down deep she still knows who we are.

SOOKEY

I say a little prayer for her every night before I go to bed.

TRIXIE

We appreciate that.

DIXIE

Prayer is so important.

SOOKEY

It is indeed.

Pause.

MARGARET

Speaking of prayer, I suppose we should start thinking about heading on over to the cemetery. I'm sure y'all want to get back on the road as soon as possible.

TRIXIE

That would be nice because I do have to work tomorrow.

MARGARET

Yes, Brick and I have a busy day tomorrow as well. So, shall we?

DIXIE

Oh, my goodness. It's hard to believe it's been five years since Daddy passed on. First Big Daddy, then Big Mama, Uncle Brick. I hate to say it, but Mama will probably be next, so it looks like you'll be the last one standing Aunt Maggie. What about that?

MARGARET

Yes. Well, we never quite know how life will play out, do we?

SOOKEY

Only the good Lord knows that.

DIXIE

Amen!

Brick starts to laugh, but turns it into a coughing fit.

BRICK JR.

Oh, my. I'm sorry. Something must have gone down the wrong way.

Again, Brick tires not to laugh, so he coughs more.

MARGARET

Here, let me get you some water.

TRIXIE

Are you alright?

DIXIE

You're not getting sick, are you?

BRICK JR.

I'm just fine.

DIXIE

I do hope you're not contagious what with me being pregnant and all.

BRICK JR.

I promise there's nothing for you to worry about.

MARGARET

Well, if you picked anything up while you were out there in California, you'll be better in no time at all now that you're back home in our loving arms.

SOOKEY

Do you want me to mix you up a little honey and lemon with some whiskey in it? That'll knock it right out.

BRICK JR.

I just got back from rehab.

SOOKEY

And what does that have to do with my cough remedy?

BRICK JR.

Nothing. Absolutely nothing. Go ahead and mix me up some of your concoction, but there's really nothing wrong with me. Okay?

SOOKEY

Okay. You're the picture of health. I'll say no more.

Pause.

DIXIE

Well, tell me this. Did you at least get to meet Betty Ford while you were at her place?

BRICK JR.

I hate to keep disappointing you, but no famous people or first ladies or any of the Ford family were there for that matter.

TRIXIE

I do have to admit I have great respect for Ms. Ford and all she's done to help people.

DIXIE

I agree, but I can't say that the Fords are exactly my favorites, but I do so love Ronald Reagan. I think he's the greatest president since Abraham Lincoln.

Everybody looks at Dixie.

DIXIE

Maybe even greater than Lincoln.

SOOKEY

I don't know about that.

TRIXIE

As you can see, my dear sister has become a Republican.

BRICK JR.

Uncle Gooper must be rolling over in his grave considering how big he was in the Democratic party.

DIXIE

Oh, I think Daddy would have switched to the Republican party if he was still alive today.

BRICK JR.

No way.

MARGARET

And Trixie, I'm sorry... I mean Marlene, have you also changed your party affiliation?

TRIXIE

Oh, no ma'am. I was born a Democrat and will die a Democrat.

DIXIE

But I'm going to keep on working on her until she does. I tell you, the Democrats are just not what they used to be.

BRICK JR.

In what way?

TRIXIE

Please, don't egg her on.

BRICK JR.

I'm just curious.

DIXIE

Well, there's not many people like us in the party anymore.

SOOKEY

I'm a Democrat.

DIXIE

I wasn't talking about you, but you all know what I mean.

SOOKEY

I don't.

BRICK JR.

I'm not sure I do either.

TRIXIE

Brick.

DIXIE

The democrats are now filled with a bunch of liberals... and woman libbers... Homosexuals... Mexicans. And you can't even mention Jesus' name without somebody getting all upset. The Republicans believe in bringing family values and Jesus back to America.

TRIXIE

My sister is also no longer an Episcopalian.

DIXIE

I have been born again just like our president. I have finally experienced the love of Jesus Christ, our Lord and savior, in my heart.

Hallelujah!
SOOKEY

Praise the Lord!
DIXIE

Holy shit.
BRICK JR.

DIXIE
Cousin, the only way to get through the gates of heaven and not burn in the eternal pits of hell is to accept Jesus Christ who died on the cross to save us from our sins. Accept Jesus today and have eternal life with me.

BRICK JR.
I appreciate the offer, but you're painting a rather terrifying picture of Jesus.

DIXIE
I know. I thought he was only this sweet, little baby we talked about at Christmas. I had no idea.

MARGARET
My goodness. I suppose I stay in my own little corner most of the time, and didn't realize the world was changing so much.

SOOKEY
My world never changes.

DIXIE
And Aunt Maggie, I bet you just love Nancy Reagan even more than I do.

MARGARET
Well, I do have great respect and admiration for her, but I can't really say I love her.

DIXIE
But you two seem to have so much in common, and you dress just like her.

MARGARET
How interesting. Actually, I've always looked to the Bouvier sisters for advice on such matters as style.

DIXIE
Who?

BRICK JR.

Jackie Kennedy and her sister, Lee Radziwill.

DIXIE

Oh.

MARGARET

In fact, I looked through some old magazine with pictures of the Kennedy White House to get some inspiration for the lovely flower arrangements I made to put on the graves today.

DIXIE

You shouldn't have gone to all that trouble. I picked up some perfectly fine artificial arrangements at the dime store that look just like the real thing, and they'll last until Christmas when I'll bring some artificial poinsettias. Nobody will be able to tell the difference between my artificial ones and your real ones.

MARGARET

I can always tell the difference.

DIXIE

Mama always said you had champagne taste on a ...

TRIXIE

(Taking the plate of sandwiches off the table.)

Dixie, another sandwich?