



## **BREXIT - Part Two**

### **99 Days**

#### **Chapter One**

##### **The Book of GATT Clause 5(b)**

Alexander Boris de Pfeffel Johnson was self-evidently a man of the people. The millionaire Eton and Balliol-educated, former Bullingdon Drinking Club classicist of aristocratic ancestry had reinvented himself as a Eurosceptic Populist. It was a hugely successful reincarnation as the people, in the form of the 0.2% of the UK population who were Conservative & Unionist Party members, had overwhelmingly elected him to be their new party leader and by dint of an existing but shambolic minority Tory government, he gained the distinct bonus of becoming Prime Minister. If he was to believe his own PR puffery Boris had evolved into a legitimate card-carrying member of the proletariat by proclaiming his devotion to delivering 'the will of the people.'

Now the meter was running, it was all hands to the pumps and countless other action-based clichés as Boris was a man on a mission. That mission was to liberate his beloved Blighty from the cruel, rapacious and stifling entanglement of the evil empire known as the European Union. It was time to 'take back control.' Since assuming office, a mere ninety-nine days remained until the fateful date of All Hallows' Eve, the deadline by which the UK would achieve the Holy Grail of Brexit by any means necessary, be it hard or flaccid. In contrast, his woeful predecessor Theresa Dismay had squandered almost three and a half years drawing red lines, making her position 'absolutely clear' by means of labyrinthine circumlocutions, insisting that 'nothing had changed' while executing policy U-turns, dancing robotically and failing to gain even her own Cabinet's support for her Withdrawal Agreement until the 1922 Committee, curiously founded in 1923 and reliably behind the times ever since, despatched a man in a grey suit to inform her that she, not the nation, should be the one to withdraw.

This was Boris' moment. Cometh the hour cometh the political chameleon. As a young boy his ambition had been to become World King, as a more wizened fifty-something he'd decided to compromise and settle for being British Prime Minister. His first two days in

office had been a whirlwind of applause and adoration as he basked in his favourite habitat, the media spotlight. Today the work was due to begin, having selected his ministerial appointments, he was going to chair his first Cabinet meeting. It was time to set the tone of his Premiership, to galvanise his troops, to put fire in their bellies, to invoke the Dunkirk spirit to celebrate the previous British withdrawal from Europe while warning them never to try and upstage him and mentoring them on how to lie convincingly while radiating positive vibes.

Together they'd restore the time-honoured British Cabinet traditions of leaking like sieves to political correspondents, stabbing respected colleagues squarely between the shoulder blades while fighting tooth-and-nail to protect their departmental budgets all conducted in the noble cause of the national interest. Boris' appointments had been bold and incisive. Jacob Creased-Moggy, the archetypal Eurosceptic had been given the newly created post of Minister for the Preservation of Victorian Values and Etiquette as a sop to his influence in the small but influential European Rejection Group (ERG). Boris also extended Jacob's mandate to include the more traditional role of Leader of the House of Commons. David David, widely regarded as the laziest politician in Parliamentary history made a surprising return to the Cabinet, given the utter Horlicks he'd made of the initial Brexit negotiations, as Minister of Sloth and Leisure. Boris' carefully selected opponent in the Tory leadership contest Jeremy Cunt, a man for whom the term \*\*\*\* by name \*\*\*\* by nature had seemingly been created, lost his position as Foreign Secretary to Dominic Rabbi. Rabbi had previously served as Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union for a whole four months and promised to make a success of his task by bringing energy and enthusiasm to the negotiations. Curiously these were the same attributes that his new Boss proclaimed as the key to success. Rabbi's strategy failed and he'd resigned in protest against the very agreement he'd helped to negotiate.

As a former banker, and therefore guaranteed to be innumerate, Said Livid was a shoo-in for Chancellor. To make his female and ethnicity quotas Boris reached out to the formerly disgraced Pretty Petal as Home Secretary. PP, as she was known, did not suffer any known incontinence problem or she'd surely have been poached by the Trump administration but she had been caught with her pants down while exceeding her brief as Secretary of State for International Development by conducting a series of unauthorised meetings with Israeli politicians and had been obliged to resign. Boris further bolstered his Cabinet's female quotas by Andrea Leadweight becoming Business Secretary, Liz Surgical-Truss tackling International Development and Theresa Villains grasping the Environment. Other than Pretty Petal, others accomplished similar spectacular resurrections from the Zombie land of political banishment. Just eighty-four days after being sacked for leaking State Secrets Gavin

Huaweison had apparently learned his lesson and was reincarnated as Education Minister. The celebrated political escapist, Matt Hancock managed to extricate himself from competing with Boris in the leadership contest before firmly nailing his colours to the Johnson mast thereby retaining his position as Health Secretary. In order to maintain the family tradition of nepotism, Johnson appointed his brother Jo as a minister of state at both the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and the Department for Education along with special permission to attend Cabinet.

The two archdemons haunting Boris's world, Philip Hammond-Organ and Jeremy Cunt were duly banished into the political wilderness, Dante's ninth circle of hell, otherwise known as the backbenches. Curiously, Boris's greatest denizen, the treacherous Michael Cove was installed as Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster which in translation means Minister without Portfolio ... or purpose. A clear case of keeping one's friends close and one's enemies even closer. Boris's biggest coup was coaxing the former Civil Servant and architect of Article 50, Lord Barrington Babbling-Brooke, or B3 as he was known to his intimates, out of a bucolic South Devon retirement into accepting the consulting post of Brexit Supremo. Boris reckoned that B3's re-emergence on the international political stage would shake the EU to its foundations, hopefully resulting in structural subsidence akin to the walls of Jericho. Under the hapless Theresa May's regime B3 had saved her bacon by disclosing the existence of Article 50's sub-clause 666, which he had deviously penned many years earlier, and stated the following:

'In the event that any European Union (EU) Member State files for Article 50 seeking Secession from the EU the entity known as the EU shall legally cease to exist from the exact time that application is received by the European Council (EC). For the avoidance of doubt, the acknowledgement of receipt of an application for Secession by any EU member state automatically triggers the immediate and irrevocable dissolution of the EU. From that moment forward the authority of the EU is rendered null and void'.

The EU had been devastated to understand the impact of this cunningly contrived British inspired escape clause but had countered, in typically duplicitous Eurocratic style by unanimously passing retroactive legislation annulling Article 50's sub-clause 666, thereby preserving its own existence and perpetuating the never-ending Brexit crisis that had finally granted Boris the opportunity to fulfil his revised political ambition. Boris was gambling that B3's unexpected re-emergence on the international political stage would spook the EU into re-opening negotiations on the Withdrawal Agreement.

As his acolytes gathered in the Cabinet Room, all fresh-faced and eager to cling onto their leader's every word Boris knew that he held centre stage, even though his right-wing was somewhat creaky. Ever the comedic showman he had prepared a dramatic opening gambit for the new Cabinet's entertainment. It wasn't something that drab old Mrs Dismay would have thought of in a million years and it would clearly set the tone of a new era, it would mark the beginning of the reign of Boris the Terrible.

Once coffee cups had been filled, water bottles opened and poured, briefing papers and notepads disgorged from official HMG briefcases or Gucci bags Boris called the meeting to order. Having greeted what he called 'The B Team', not because they were second class, he explained but because they were the team that would finally deliver Brexit. The team roared their approval just as Boris retrieved a single-use plastic bag from under the table and extracted a hefty document. Brandishing the tome aloft he stentoriously declared 'This is our enemy. This is the accursed existing Withdrawal Agreement, and this is what we think of it.' At this point, Boris stood, placed the despised paperwork on the table, removed his capacious jacket, uncuffed his shirt sleeves and rolled them above his elbows to demonstrate his machismo. He grasped the offensive document and attempted to rip it in half. Despite being a beefy, some might claim obese, man it had been nearly forty years since he'd last sought to emulate Charles Atlas at a Bullingdon Club booze up and even then the phone book that he'd shredded had been the rather flimsy internal Balliol College phone directory. Unfortunately, the Withdrawal Agreement weighed in at an impressive 599 pages and, despite his best endeavours, remained stubbornly intact. Even the frontispiece was unblemished. Beads of sweat broke out on the furrowed Prime Ministerial brow as he redoubled his futile efforts. Unwilling to allow his physical shortcomings to defeat his theatrical stunt Boris reached into one of the many inner pockets of his jacket and grasped a disposable plastic lighter. Instead of ripping the accursed Agreement in half he lit the corner of the cover sheet and joyously fed the flames to the rest of the paper pile. 'Ashes to ashes, dust to dust' he intoned until a deafening alarm interrupted his delivery and the ceiling-mounted sprinkler system activated drenching the astounded 'B Team' and their mercurial leader.

Two hours passed before the London Fire Brigade declared Number Ten safe and fit for re-occupation. The fire had been extinguished, the alarm reset and the threat to life negated. Meanwhile, the sodden B Team had stood dripping wet outside the Prime Minister's residence in the full glare of the mass media's cameras like participants in a bizarre political wet T-shirt contest.

During the enforced interregnum, Boris ogled Pretty Petal's nipples approvingly as they protruded from her soggy lightweight summer top. They were so prominent that the myopic Creased-Moggy attempted to hang his top hat on one before receiving a searing slap around the chops. 'Damn fine appointment as Home Secretary, if I say so myself. I'd feel right at home sucking on those milk dispensers' Boris mused although his train of prurient thought was also derailed by Liz Surgical-Truss, his newly appointed International Trade Secretary whose impressive areolae boded well for future trade deals. Perhaps with subtle manipulation, but certainly no accusations of sexual harassment in the Sunday papers, he mused the 'B Team' might also stand for the Bonking Team? It was an appealingly concupiscent thought as it had been weeks since Johnson had been allowed to deploy his Johnson for pleasure. It had only been a month since that fateful and well-reported late-night blazing row with his girlfriend Kerry Symonds-Yat. Since then all rights to visit her well-pruned lady garden had been withdrawn and Boris wasn't a man accustomed to keeping his dick in his pants for prolonged periods as his innumerable children, ex-wives, mistresses and lovers would readily testify.

Once back inside Number Ten the B Team learned that the Cabinet Room was waterlogged and out of commission, so they were ushered into the State Dining Room, where several members were disappointed to note that lunch had not been served. Calling the bedraggled B's back to order Boris barely skipped a beat.

"As you've all just borne witness, the EU remains a highly inflammatory issue. It is imperative that Great Britain leaves by October 31st this year or we'll all be out of a job and Nigel bloody Farrago will be enjoying a pint and a fag in here. We shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills, on the sunbeds and on the Eurostar." Having invoked a Churchillian backs-to-the wall spirit he continued by promising to "put the Great Back into Britain Again" evoking a somewhat less respected and less literate politician from the land of his birth.

He drew deeper on the well of former politicians and turned positively Palmerstonian when he threatened to demonstrate to the EU that we were in earnest by sending a gunboat to blockade their headquarters in Brussels. Nobody in the room had the temerity to point out that the Belgian capital was over one hundred kilometres from the North Sea coast. Significantly, at that moment an aide burst into the room and being unsure of the new Cabinet appointments enquired: "Pardon me but who's the

Foreign Minister here?" Once Dominic Rabbi had raised his hand the minion scurried to his side whispering "Excuse me Sir but we've received an urgent dispatch from our Embassy in Teheran" before handing over a sheet of paper. As he read the message Rabbi's face whitened. Biggeration he thought only hours into the new job and already I'm faced with my first international crisis, anyone might suspect that the two events were linked! Where was Jeremy Cunt just when you needed him?

"Come on man, spit it out what's going on? Have the Rooskies pressed the button?" Has the EU caught wind of my gunboat diplomacy and already waved the white flag?"

"Neither one Sir. I'm afraid it's the mad mullahs again. The Iranian Revolutionary Guard has seized a second British registered oil tanker. They're claiming that the score is Iran 2 England 1 like it's some sort of football game."

Ben Wallace, a man named in honour of an obscure Scottish mountain, the new Defense Minister buried his head in his hands disconsolately. He arose with a quivering lip to declare: "That's it, Prime Minister, as long as this brazen piracy continues, I'm going to have to send a second Royal Navy ship to the Strait of Hormuz to protect British maritime assets. We have no more vessels to deploy. There can be no Brussels blockade."

"What!" Johnson blustered "What happened to our mighty Hearts of Oak, our heroic Arctic convoy protection force, our Dreadnoughts?"

Wallace baulked at the thought of being asked to explain over a century of naval history to a man clearly fixated by childhood thoughts of Horatio Nelson or the sinking of the Bismarck. "Austerity happened Sir, which resulted in Defense cuts then the Admiralty Chiefs decided to blow their wad on building two gargantuan aircraft carriers that currently lack any aircraft. One of them is undergoing repairs after leaking like a sieve on sea trials the other is still under construction. Most of our seaworthy craft are currently deployed in the Channel or Med intercepting illegal immigrants and we have HMS Clyde on permanent deployment in the South Atlantic to guard the Falkland Islands & Antarctic Dependencies. As for the surface fleet that's about it. I could let you have a Royal Fleet Auxiliary vessel, but I hardly think that an ageing oil tanker moored off the Port of Antwerp is going to put the fear of God up the EU."

“Build some more bloody ships man! This is insane, in the post-Brexit utopia Britain will be a mercantile nation once again. We will be a trading nation without equal. We need the Royal Navy to protect our seaways. Out of here this instant get back to your office and start making the Navy Great Again.”

As Wallace scuttled out the door making strange motions mimicking the actions of a riveter the same flunky who had carried the first piece of grim news materialised to take his place, he was brandishing another potentially threatening piece of paper. “Do we have a Home Secretary in the house” he enquired gingerly? After a moment's hesitation when she actually forgot her position and looked around the room to see who would respond, Pretty Petal raised a still moist arm and was rewarded with her message. “OMG,” she intoned “All our major airports are closed due to drone sightings. It appears to be an orchestrated attack. GCHQ report intense ‘chatter’ on radical Islamic social media sites about drones and UK airport defences. They fear that some, if not all, of the unmanned aircraft, may have been weaponised. Who is the Transport Minister,” she asked? Grant Snapps, the well-known ‘multi- million-dollar web marketeer’ and former Tory Party Chairman identified himself. “Quickly,” instructed Pretty “we need to set up a Command and Control Centre to avert a tragedy. Apparently, a British Airways 747 with 382 people on board is attempting to land on a short grass field at the West London Aero Club at White Waltham Airfield after running short of fuel in a holding pattern over Heathrow. “Look snappy Snapps” she demanded “we’ve got birds in the air flying on fumes” in her best attempt to channel Die Hard 2. With that two more members of Boris’s new Cabinet departed their inaugural meeting.

Johnson immediately took back control and addressed the intrusive omnipresent lackey: “That’s it man, no more bloody interruptions. I don’t give a flying fuck if the Martians land on Westminster Green and offer to mediate in the dispute over the Irish backstop. Got it? No more urgent messages. We have a nation to save.”

Boris consulted his Patek Philippe Timepiece and was aghast to observe that he was due to make his first Parliamentary speech as Prime Minister in three-quarters of an hour. Tempus fugit! “Right” he commanded “we’ve got fifteen minutes to wrap up so fasten your seatbelts. Here’s our strategy, pin your ears back and listen. We need to batten down the hatches and be absolutely watertight in readiness for a no-deal Brexit. Cove, as Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, that’s your bag. WTO rules, border conflicts, delivery delays,

aviation agreements god alone knows what else but get it all sorted in the next ninety-nine days. Sir Barrington will go back to Brussels and, using his unparalleled arcane knowledge of their voluminous legislation he will engineer a way to re-open negotiations so that we can force them to eradicate the evil Irish backstop. Jacob Creased-Moggy nodded his agreement to this strategy.

We will also force them to adopt Paragraph 5(b) of Article 24 of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, or maybe Paragraph 5(c) whichever it is. That bastard Andrew Kneel has totally confused me on the detail, that unctuous little toady. Either way, we'll get them. OK, everybody on the same hymn sheet? Good. Now let's get down to the Commons so I can give my first Prime Ministerial speech and restore a vision of positivism to our righteous crusade and you buggers better applaud and cheer to the rafters every time I ridicule that total Socialist tosser Jezza Cor-Bin. Come on team, let's go, it's showtime."

Johnson's inaugural Prime Ministerial statement was predictably motivational, loquacious and served with a rich helping of puns and quips mostly directed at the Opposition benches. Tories waved their Order Papers in the air as though celebrating a notable military victory. They were merely rejoicing that they were no longer being led by a robot.

Beyond the Commons chamber reaction to Boris's jingoistic, uplifting depiction of a post-Brexit land of milk and honey was more muted as Johnson learned once he'd savoured the Tory acclaim and resumed his seat in the middle of the Government front bench. A liveried member of the Commons staff approached and delivered yet another message, only this time it was for his eyes only. He read the note and then re-read it with a growing sense of incredulity. He was barely able to suppress the sense that every muscle and organ in his body was constricting and that life itself was oozing away. The message stated that Mark Corny, the Governor of the Bank of England, had listened to his peroration and calculated that the risks of a Hard Brexit, about which he had already issued many dire financial impact assessments, had increased exponentially and that to avoid exposure to those risks he'd decided to move the Bank to Frankfurt. The Old Lady of Threadneedle Street was about to become Die Alte Dame von Neue Mainzer Straße. Reaction on the Foreign Exchanges to this bombshell had been predictably negative and the British Pound was trading at a deficit to the US Dollar. It was unthinkable.



The prohibition 'for your eyes only' had been breached by a curious Said Livid. The new Chancellor was seated alongside his Boss and managed to read the devastating news over his shoulder. Livid took immediate and decisive action. He retrieved a pocket calculator from his jacket and began to tap away feverishly. Damn it, the collapse of the Pound meant that he could no longer afford to take Laura and their four children on the promised two-week annual family vacation to Florida. Dear God, he lamented, as a summer break in Rochdale, not Boca Raton, beckoned yet again.

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