

The Golden Murders
A Wedding To Die For
Teaser

FADE IN:

EXT. THE CITY OF MIRA DEL MONTE - DAY

Establishing the rolling hills and the ocean view. Only thirty minutes from Santa Barbara, this upscale area still has a small town feel.

INT. JUDITH ZINDEL'S KITCHEN - MORNING

JUDITH ZINDEL (late 30s) is dressed in Prada heels and a short Sax Fifth Avenue pantsuit, looking as if she is off to an exclusive club rather than a PTA meeting. She's chopping celery.

The light reflects off her perfect hot pink nails as she mixes the ingredients for tuna salad. Her son, SAMMY (10) sits at the kitchen table playing with his breakfast.

In the background, the TV banters about the latest Hollywood gossip. Her nail accidentally catches on something. She curses and sticks it in her mouth.

Sammy, sitting at the table, turns to look at his mother.

SAMMY

You ought to get those fake nails like
Frankie's mom.

Judith grimaces.

JUDITH

You, I don't want to hear from. Stop
playing with your food.

MARVIN ZINDEL (early 40s) a bookish accountant, comes in, switches the channel to CNN and turns up the volume.

MARVIN

Listen, they've starting trials for a
new dementia drug.

JUDITH

(whines)
Marvin...

MARVIN

I'm watching real news.
(MORE)

MARVIN (CONT'D)

(motions to TV screen)

What do you think? Maybe we should ask Nathan.

JUDITH

That crazy alta cocker should be taking them.

SAMMY

Alta Cocker?

MARVIN

Old man.

Sammy is about to make a response. His mother gives him a look as SUSAN ZINDEL (17) a pretty girl clad in skinny jeans and a hoodie, runs in and reaches for a bagel.

Her mother pushes it aside and hands her a low fat yogurt. Susan sighs and brushes her long dark hair out of her face.

SUSAN

Mother...

JUDITH

(to Sammy)

Sammy, finish eating!

(to Marvin)

Why ask Nathan anything? He thinks he's the 007 of Mossad.

SUSAN

What makes you think he isn't? He saved Bubbe's and my butt in Israel.

Judith shakes her head. She's heard this story too many times. She turns to her husband.

JUDITH

What about your mom and Leisure Village? They won't hold a place for her forever.

MARVIN

Judith! Not now. I've got to get to work.

JUDITH

It's never now. It's not that I don't like her but... we could rent the back house. I thought we decided she needed a retirement community.

She sees Marvin shaking his head and pouts.

The sound of a MOTORCYCLE ENGINE is heard.

Marvin motions toward the door.

FANNY ZINDEL (a slightly zoftig attractive spry mid-late 50s) enters the kitchen. She wears black leather pants and a leather jacket over a red turtleneck. Around Fanny's neck is a zindel medallion - the Tree of life with a birthstone for each of her children and five grandkids. Taking off her helmet, she shakes out her auburn, obviously dyed, hair.

JUDITH (CONT'D)

Mother Zindel! Don't you ever knock?

FANNY

What? I'm a stranger now? If you didn't want me to walk in, you should lock your doors. Just be glad I'm not some *gonif*.

JUDITH

I should be so lucky.

She angrily stuffs an apple into one of the lunch bags as Susan runs to her grandmother and hugs her.

SUSAN

Bubbe! Don't listen to her. You're always welcome.

JUDITH

I better not find that bike of yours on my lawn again.

FANNY

So it's your lawn now? Can I help it if the battery on my wheelchair is charging.

SAMMY

I think the bike's cool.

MARVIN

Mom, you know that bike gives me spilkes.

Fanny gives a laugh. She takes the bagel that Susan had reached for and going to the fridge takes out the cream cheese.

SUSAN

Everything makes you nervous, Dad.
(to Fanny)
My friend, Ben, is into Harleys.

MARVIN

And he really makes me nervous.

FANNY

So it's Ben now? Is it serious?

Fanny liberally spreads the cheese onto the bagel.

SUSAN

Gram..ma!

FANNY

Just remember, if you want to sell the cow, don't give the milk away.

Susan blushes.

SUSAN

We'll talk later when **they're** not around. Is Aunt Ethel really making us wear those awful pink dresses?

FANNY

I'm not sure...

MARVIN

Oh? Something the matter?

FANNY

(shrugs)

This Raymond fellow...I don't like him so much. There's something I can't put my finger on.

JUDITH

Why do you have to put your finger on everything? It's not your wedding.

Judith takes the tub of cream cheese away from her, puts it into the fridge and slams the door.

Fanny goes to the fridge, takes the tub of cream cheese out and puts it down on the table.

Judith glares and is about to speak.

MARVIN

Ladies..please...

FANNY

(to Susan)

All the bridesmaids are wearing the same pink gowns, Sweetheart. But you can shorten it and wear to your prom.

Susan makes a face.

SUSAN

Right.

FANNY

(to Marvin)

Come. Give your mother a kiss.

Marvin walks over and gives her a peck on the cheek.

Fanny looks over as Judith starts putting the kid's lunches into paper bags.

FANNY (CONT'D)

You call that a lunch? You're starving my grandchildren.

JUDITH

Mar...vin...!

MARVIN

Mo..ther!

FANNY

All right. So my grandchildren go hungry. Anita wouldn't have let...

Marvin puts a cautionary hand on her shoulder. He talks to Judith while looking at Fanny.

MARVIN

I bet Raymond knows something about that drug company. Could be a good investment.

FANNY

What company?

JUDITH

It's not important.

FANNY

(to Judith)

Did you get the message about the sale on smoked tongue?

JUDITH

(gritting her teeth)

Yes, Mother, I got it.

FANNY

So you bought some for Marvin. Yes?

JUDITH

Ye..no. No, I didn't.

Marvin looks over from the news.

MARVIN

Why not?

JUDITH

Because. The very thought of it disgusts me.

SUSAN

But I like tongue, too.

SAMMY

So does Ben.

Susan blushes and gives his chair a hard hit.

JUDITH

(to Fanny)

And you're here, because...?

FANNY

Because you're such a pleasure to be around.

JUDITH

Marvin! Talk to your mother.

Marvin rolls his eyes.

FANNY

Talk to me about what?

Susan takes her mother by the elbow.

SUSAN

Come on. We'll be late to school.

FANNY

Susa -le...

The women pause at the kitchen door. Sammy trails behind.

Fanny takes the dirty dishes to the sink.

JUDITH

You don't have to...

FANNY

A little elf will do it, maybe?

(to Susan)

You'll come to Ethel's after school. We need help with the table place cards and decorations.

SUSAN

Sure.

As the Judith and the kids leave the room, Fanny turns to her son.

FANNY

(sighs)

You should have married Anita Fine.

MARVIN

Mom, enough. You've got to cut Judith some slack.

FANNY

So? What are you suppose to talk to me about?

On Marvin's reaction --

FADE OUT:

Act One

FADE IN:

INT. FANNY ZINDEL'S BACK HOUSE - A FEW HOURS LATER

Fanny paces as her friend NATHAN WEISS (mid 60s), a short bullet shaped, fiery man sits in front of the television, drinking coffee, absorbing the news on CNN.

The kitchen/ dining area is compact, but cute. A single bedroom can be seen in the back.

FANNY

Blind and deaf, I'm not. They think I don't know about their Leisure Village plan. Me, with old people. Feh!

NATHAN

It's not him. It's her.

FANNY

He's a dog on a leash. When she says sit, he sits. And she gets him to roll over.

NATHAN

Your son ..

FANNY

He's a nebish when it comes to her.

NATHAN

And since when does he stand up to you?

He pats her butt as she walks by.

NATHAN (CONT'D)

Come. Sit.

FANNY

I don't like this Raymond.
 (she picks up the
 invitation)
 Ethel's making a big mistake. She hardly
 knows...

His CELL PHONE RINGS.

He turns so that Fanny can't hear.

NATHAN

I understand. B'sedar.

He hangs up and turns to look at her.

FANNY

I know. I know. Back to Israel.

Nathan shrugs.

NATHAN

I'll be on time for the wedding.

FANNY

And there'll be world peace.
 (sighs)
 I'll make you a nosh for the plane, just
 in case you get hungry.

NATHAN

(grins)
 Just in case.

INT. ETHEL MENDELSON'S HOME - LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

Chairs are set up around a folding table as Fanny's younger sister, ETHEL MENDELSON (55) loosely directs the others in the writing of the place cards. Petite and sweet, Ethel, a former model, is a fashion statement. What she doesn't have in brains, she makes up in looks. She wears long flowing skirts, and perfect make up; she looks younger than her years.

From outside, there is the periodic distant sound of a dog BARKING.

Susan sits next to Fanny who sits next to BEVERLY GOLD (35), the groom's daughter. Beverly is spoiled and self absorbed. She's thin, almost anorexic in appearance.

BEVERLY

(whines)
 No. I want a real chopped liver swan.

ETHEL

I hate chopped liver. No.
 (MORE)

ETHEL (CONT'D)

Besides you keep complaining about the money we're spending.

BEVERLY

And why shouldn't I? It's my Daddy's money and you're spending it.

Fanny glances at Ethel, who blushes.

The phone RINGS. Ethel picks it up.

ETHEL

Yes, I know Dr. Woo, he's a dog. He barks.

(sighs)

All right. I'll bring him inside. Have a nice nap.

FANNY

Again?

ETHEL

Thank goodness I'm moving to Raymond's.

FANNY

Just be glad you're not being shipped out to Leisure Village.

Susan shoots her a look.

The door opens and in walks DR. RAYMOND GOLD, 60, the groom to be. He's still wearing hospital scrubs.

The doggy door swings open. MACINTOSH, a Jack Russell Terrier, bounces in, BARKING at Raymond.

ETHEL

Mackie!

The dog goes straight to Ethel and jumps up on her lap. She pets him.

Raymond takes a look around and senses the tension in the air. He goes over to Ethel and bending down, kisses the back of her neck. He kisses his daughter, too.

RAYMOND

You girls having fun?

BEVERLY

Daddy, I want...

RAYMOND

It's Ethel's wedding.

BEVERLY
It's yours, too.

RAYMOND
Honey, groom's are only along for the ride.

Beverly glares.

BEVERLY
But Daddy...

Raymond takes Ethel's hand and kisses it.

BEVERLY (CONT'D)
I see how it is. I'm just chopped liver.
Fine. Don't count on me for the rehearsal dinner.

She stands and storms out of the room as the dog BARKS at her, following her out the room.

FANNY
Even he knows.

Raymond takes a seat at the table next to Ethel.

ETHEL
This is Fanny's granddaughter, Susan.

Susan takes his extended hand and stares at him a moment.

SUSAN
Have we met?

Raymond raises her hand and kisses it.

RAYMOND
I don't believe so.

SUSAN
You've been on the news.

RAYMOND
I'm just a humble gas passer. You must be thinking of my brother, Charlie.

FANNY
(frowns)
You have a brother? His name's not on the list for the head table.

ETHEL
They've had their differences.

FANNY

I see.

RAYMOND

We should make one anyway, just in case.

Beverly rushes back into the room as the dog continues snapping at her heels.

RAYMOND (CONT'D)

Something wrong, Sweetie?

BEVERLY

I forgot...

(irritated)

Get that perverted animal off me!

Everyone turns to see MacIntosh, his front paws gripping Beverly's leg, humping her. Beverly tries kicking him away.

FANNY

Here, Mac. Here, boy.

The dog turns and runs to Fanny as she takes a treat out from her large "everything" bag.

Beverly grabs her purse and storms out.

ETHEL

Fanny...

FANNY

What? I always have them. You never know when they might come in handy.

SUSAN

(laughs)

If Batman had your everything bag, he wouldn't need his utility belt.

Everyone laughs.

CUT TO:

INT. FANNY ZINDEL'S HOUSE - KITCHEN -- AFTERNOON

A plate of Fanny's almond mandelbroit cookies lies in the center of the table. Susan reaches for one and stops. The newspaper is open. A major article refers to new drug. Photos of protesters surrounding the research labs at HRI.

FANNY

Every day a new wonder drug that's supposed to be God's answer to

(MORE)

FANNY (CONT'D)
 Alzheimer's. Two weeks later, it's
 forgotten.

SUSAN
 I bet my Mom could use it. Sometimes I
 think she's older than you.

FANNY
 Give her a break, she tries.

SUSAN
 I know. She's very trying.

FANNY
 (pushes the plate to
 Susan)
 Go on. You eat like a bird.

SUSAN
 Mom says I'm getting fat.

Fanny pushes the plate closer and Susan hesitates before
 pushing it away. She points to the article.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
 You really think HRI is testing drugs on
 animals?

FANNY
 That's why they're protesting. No one's
 been allowed into their labs. There's a
 lot of unsubstantiated accusations
 floating around.
 (She points to the
 article.)
 Oy! HRI's CEO is a Gold. I wonder...

SUSAN
 If they're right, HRI is hurting
 animals...let's go talk to the marchers.

CUT TO:

EXT. HUMANETICS RESEARCH, INC. (HRI) - AFTERNOON

A number of chanting protesters hold signs depicting animal
 abuse and picket the gated driveway of HRI. Cars HONK in
 support as they go by. Observing the group are Fanny and
 Susan.

The gate slowly opens. The CHANTING increases.

The darkened Mercedes pulls out slowly.

A young African American woman, CECILA ROGERS, 25, runs up to the line.

She throws red paint onto the luxury car.

CECILA
That's for taking my dog, you bastards.

Four LAPD OFFICERS come to stand between the surging demonstrators and the car.

The driver of the Mercedes rolls the window down. It's CHARLES GOLD. He's Raymond's twin.

From their vantage point on the picket line, Fanny and Susan can only stare.

CHARLES
Get them the F out of my way!

SUSAN
It's Raymond!

FANNY
Can't be. He's at the hospital.

Charles continues to rant.

Cecila rushes forward again, this time with a rock in her hand, and is detained by two of the officers.

CECILA
I want my dog back, Mister, or I'll turn you into dog food.

CHARLES
(to officers)
Thank you. Now arrest her.

CECILA
I swear if you've taken him, you're dead meat.

SUSAN
(shouts)
Are you using animals? Did you take that woman's dog?

CHARLES
No comment.

The police continue to restrain the protesters.

CECILA
You have my dog! We'll get you just like you got my dog.

Charles starts to put the window up. Fanny hurries over to the police line near the car.

FANNY

(shouts)

You're Raymond's brother?

He lowers the window.

CHARLES

You know my brother?

Their eyes meet for a long moment.

FANNY

(ironic laugh)