

Bernie's story: Late onset



- ◆ Bernie is 67 and has been in and out of prisons almost his entire life. Originally from Newcastle, he currently resides in Frankland prison in County Durham, where he is serving his fifth year of a ten year sentence for burglary. Bernie is a repeat offender and no amount of prison time seems to straighten him out, and it is suspected he will remain in prison for a long time.
- ◆ Bernie is highly regarded by staff and inmates alike for his bright, bubbly personality. He leads a widely attended book club once a week, which many prisoners consider to be the highlight of their week. He has helped many illiterate inmates learn to read and write and he receives tens of letters a week from ex inmates who's lives he has helped to improve.
- ◆ Recently however, Bernie has become withdrawn. He has cancelled his book club every week for the last two months. When challenged by a bored inmate, Bernie reacted aggressively and ended up in solitary confinement for engaging in a physical fight.
- ◆ Gabriella, one of Bernie's case workers, visited Bernie in solitary and was shocked at how withdrawn he had become in such a short space of time. Bernie was also refusing to read, normally his favourite past time, and appeared confused about how he has ended up in solitary. One of Bernie's regular penfriends also contacted Gabriella to say he was worried about Bernie's latest letter, which he described as 'a series of confused ramblings.'
- ◆ Gabriella, suspecting Dementia, has referred Bernie to a GP who he is reluctantly visiting tomorrow.