

CONKLIN/CASEY

KEN. Mrs Cummings is my client. I would like to consult with her before any further questioning. It's within my rights. Or would you like to call your superior?

CONKLIN. No, sir. He's lucky enough to be having his gall bladder out tonight... One minute. That's all you get.

(**CONKLIN motions to CASEY and they both leave.**)

KEN. All right. We don't have much time. One of us has to be Leonard.

CLAIRE. Don't look at me.

ERNEST. Why does someone have to be Leonard?

KEN. The officer doesn't even know about the gunshots. He just wants to ask Leonard about the accident. But Leonard can't be Leonard because we need Leonard to be Charley in case Conklin wants to ask Charley about his new stolen Porsche but we can't let him see Charley because Charley has a bullet hole in his ear.

COOKIE. (To **CHRIS.**) Do you understand him in real life?

CHRIS. We don't actually talk that much.

KEN. All right. Glenn! Ernest! We have to choose again.

ERNEST. I will *not* stick out my fingers like an imbecile once more.

CLAIRE. Oh, fine. He waits till *my* imbecile loses, then he quits.

CHRIS. Never mind. The girls will do it. Come on, girls. The odd woman's husband is Leonard.

CLAIRE. This odd woman's husband is *already* Leonard.

CHRIS. No. Leonard is Charley. I'll play for Glenn and Cookie plays for Ernest. Just put out your fingers. Odd finger loses. Ready...? One - two - three!

(**CHRIS and CLAIRE put out fingers. COOKIE puts out a closed fist.**)

No, no, no. Your fingers, Cookie. Open your hand.

COOKIE. I don't want to lose my earrings again.

KEN. Will you hurry? Our minute is up.

CHRIS. Here we go. Ready? One - two - three!

(*They put out fingers.*)

Aha! It's me. Fuck! Sorry, Ken.

KEN. It's all right. You tried. All right, I'm Leonard.

(*The doorbell rings.*)

Open the door, Glenn.

(**GLENN opens the door.**)

(**CONKLIN comes in, looking very impatient CASEY follows.**)

CONKLIN. I'm relieved to see you're not dancing again... Now then, where is Mr Leonard Cummings?

KEN. He's right here in this room. I am Leonard Cummings.

CONKLIN. (*Looking at him sideways.*) You are?

KEN. Yes.

CONKLIN. May I ask why it took you a minute ten seconds to think of your name?

KEN. I like to weigh my answers carefully.

CONKLIN. Didn't realize your name weighed quite that much, sir.

(**CHRIS involuntarily puts her arm through KEN's, in a wifely manner.**)

(*Seeing this.*) And who are you, ma'am?

CHRIS. I'm his wife. His wife's best friend. (*She points to CLAIRE.*) Her. Mrs Cummings. (*She takes her arm away.*)

CONKLIN. Are you here alone, ma'am?

CHRIS. No. I'm with my husband. Mr Bevans.

CONKLIN. Which one is he, ma'am?

CHRIS. (*Looking around the room.*) He must have gone home early.

CONKLIN. So the host is sleeping, the hostess is gone, one of the guests left at ten fifteen and another one won't get out of the BMW. Not much of a party, is it?

CHRIS. It's had its ups and downs.

CONKLIN. (*To KEN.*) All right, Mr Cummings. Tell us about the accident. In full and complete detail.

KEN. Do you think you could step outside just one more time, Officer?

CONKLIN. I ain't going no place, no where, no time! Not till I get some answers. I've wasted half the evening getting just four names, three of which ain't even here.

(*We hear the two-way radio on CASEY's belt. It is an indecipherable sound, which only she can understand.*)

What's that?

CASEY. Headquarters. (*Into the radio.*) 1047, WPC Casey. Over.

(*The radio squawks some nonsense.*)

Check.

(*More squawks.*)

Right.

(*More squawks.*)

Hold on. (*To CONKLIN.*) Red 1997 Porsche convertible located just outside of Tewkesbury. Suspect apprehended. Admitted crash with BMW. Sergeant says call it a night.

CONKLIN. (*Nodding.*) Well, that's that then. No harm done. We'll be on our way.

(*The others talk at the same time, cheerfully: "Isn't that wonderful...?" "Splendid...!" "What a relief...!"*)

CONKLIN. There might be some more questioning for you, Mr. Cummings, at your convenience. No need to take up any more party time. I'll make my report in the morning, what little there is of it. Thank you and goodnight, ladies and gents.

(*All together again: "It was our pleasure...," "So nice to meet you...," "Say hallo to the wife."*)

GLENN crosses to CONKLIN and shakes his hand.)

(*Holding GLENN's hand.*) Can't help thinkin' I've seen your face before, sir. What's your name again?

GLENN. Cooper. Mr Glenn Cooper.

CONKLIN. Have I seen you in the newspapers, sir? Or on the telly?

GLENN. Well, yes, possibly. I'm standing for MP in the south.

CONKLIN. Right. There you go. I never forget a face... May I ask why you were so reluctant to give me your name, sir?

GLENN. Well, you know. When you're in politics these days, you don't want to get yourself involved even with the most trivial notoriety.

CONKLIN. Yes, but you weren't involved with this. Unless you witnessed the accident. Did you?

GLENN. Oh, good heavens, no. My wife and I arrived late. We didn't even hear the gunshots.

(A moment of frozen silence. The others look at the floor, ceiling and walls.)

CONKLIN. What gunshots?

GLENN. *(Innocently.)* Hmmm?

CONKLIN. I said, "what gunshots"?

GLENN. I suppose the gunshots that were fired when they chased the stolen car.

CONKLIN. That happened thirty kilometres away, sir. Super-perfect hearing, have you?

(CASEY'S radio goes on again.)

CASEY. *(Into the radio.)* 1047, Casey. Over.

(Radio squawks.)

Right.

(Radio squawks.)

Check.

(Radio squawks.)

Will do. *(She clicks it off. To CONKLIN.)* Neighbours reported two gunshots were fired about eight twenty p.m. from inside 127 North Hampshire Road. Investigate.

CONKLIN. North Hampshire Road. How convenient we're already there... Well, we've got ourselves two alleged

crimes for the same price... Anyone care to tell us about the gunshots?

(All speaking together: "No." "Not really..."; "We didn't hear any gunshots..."; "The music was so loud.")

No-one heard them, I suppose. *(To GLENN.)* Who's the woman sitting outside in the BMW?

GLENN. She's my wife, Cassie.

CONKLIN. I'd like to have a little chat with Mrs Cooper. *(To CASEY.)* Clara, get her in here.

COOKIE. Clara! Another C.

(CASEY exits.)

CONKLIN. *(Looking at the dinner plates.)* Looks to me like you've all had quite a dinner. I'd like to speak to the help, please.

KEN. There is no help.

CONKLIN. Then who did the cooking?

COOKIE. I did.

CONKLIN. And your name is?

COOKIE. Cookie.

CONKLIN. *(Doubting it.)* I mean your real name.

COOKIE. It is my real name. I have two sisters named Candy and Taffy. God's truth. *(She crosses her heart.)*

CONKLIN. *(Looking at KEN.)* Is that blood on your shirt I see?

KEN. Blood? Oh. Yes. I cut myself with a fork during dinner.

CONKLIN. *(Looking at GLENN.)* Is that blood on your shirt I see?