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A Settled Score

by Penny Humphrey

He kicked the inert body and then jumped backwards as it opened its eyes and expelled air through the mouth but there was no life there. That was obvious.

He walked slowly backwards like a respectful courtier and the eyes seemed to follow him out of the room.

He dropped his keys on the flagstone floor in his hurry to leave and the sound was magnified by the night. He felt around for them in the dark, picked them up and listened for any sound: there was nothing, the old house quiet, it's inhabitants asleep 'or dead,' he thought wryly.

Henry had been his best mate and when they were both expelled from school they set up their first illicit business, swiftly followed by several more. Nothing too innocuous, selling faulty cars and cheap tat from abroad but they both had a talent for the smell of money, it just seemed to fall into their hands and they lived rich lives.

But their greed got the better of them. They got involved in the drugs scene and rubbed shoulders with drugs barons. They were ahead of the game when it came to smuggling white powder into the country.

The barons pushed for more and more and he wanted out but Henry talked him into carrying on and that's when he got caught. They had closed in on Henry after someone shopped him in return for a lenient sentence, but Henry had cleverly turned it on his friend and he ended up in prison for seven long years. Meanwhile Henry took over the 'business' and then took over his wife.

He spent his time in prison as a model prisoner and was released early for good behaviour. He was just waiting for the moment when he could settle the score and now the time had come.

He knew Henry would not have changed his habits. Henry was a nocturnal man, so it was just a question of obtaining the gun and the silencer and visiting his friend who would as always be directing operations from his office in the small hours of the morning.

It was all so easy, he had tried his key in the lock and found to his surprise that it still worked. He could see the light under the office door and moved swiftly over to it. As he opened the door Henry turned, there was no time for talking and Henry knew it was game over.

Now the score was settled he could leave the country and seek a life elsewhere. Just one more score to settle first, with his wife.