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Partners in Crime

by Sue Haffenden

Bunty Emerson and Joanna (Pinky) Pinkerton were almost sisters. They had met the first term of boarding school and become firm friends. When Bunty's father went to prison for fraud Pinky's dad had stepped in and paid the school fees for both the girls. Pinky's dad had owned a chain of pawn brokers which he had left to his daughter and they now lived in a very smart flat in a discreet corner to Bayswater over one of these shops. Bunty had little to do with her mother these days as she had never come to terms with her daughter's friendship with the lower class girl. The fact that her father had saved them all was of no importance to her.

Bunty and Pinky would often travel away for weekends and always stayed at the smartest of hotels. They would check in as Colonel and Mrs. Pinkney, Pinky in tweeds and a deerstalker and Bunty in a fat suit wheezing as his wife. Shortly after entering their room, always ground floor because of Bunty's inability to climb stairs due to her great size, they would make their way to the lounge for drinks prior to dinner.

Pinky struck up conversations with any who would listen, always emphasising his service in the army. Bunty took root in a comfortable armchair and snacked incessantly on cakes and pastries while her knitting and wool were encased in a voluminous bag always by her side. They did little on their weekends, spending all their time in the hotels and grounds. Several times they could be seen chatting to all and sundry, Pinky entralling them with tales of his youth.

Coincidentally there was usually a robbery of some sort in the neighborhood where they stayed and although the police often apprehended the culprit no evidence could ever be found.

Bright and early on the Monday morning the Colonel and his lady would check out of the hotel, him still chatting while settling the account and her wheezing quietly beside him. They were well known to the staff where they stayed as both were very good tippers.

As soon as they left the hotels they would head for the nearest motorway services where they would disrobe and stow their respective disguises. Pinky always changed into jeans and a hoody as it was not easy to exit the gents toilets dressed as a woman without attracting attention. They would return to the flat and Pinky would begin to check on the businesses and Bunty would start negotiating to sell the stolen jewelry. They always paid the robbers up front as sometimes it took several months to shift a particular piece.

Most people who knew the couple assumed that they were lesbians but this was not the case. Both enjoyed the company of the opposite sex but neither had met anyone they wished a long term relationship with. For the time being they were happy with their present arrangement; partners complicated things but partners in crime was just sooo rewarding.