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## Last blast on the bypass

by Nick Barrett

Billy paused in the doorway of the tennis club bar until he spotted Derek at their usual table.

Billy was a former county standard tennis player who still played regularly. He liked to stay in shape, particularly for the ladies. Today however, his normal suave, handsome exterior was showing signs of extreme stress.

“It’s Linda!” he blurted out as he sat down opposite Derek, “she’s found out.”

“Found out what?” asked Derek.

“It’s nothing,” said Billy, shaking his head, “just a minor indiscretion with a woman you happen to know. And maybe some others. I won’t name them.”

Derek immediately thought, ‘that’s a relief, we could be here all afternoon if a full list of Billy’s bits on the side was to be recited’.

“It all blew up over my appointment to the new Untoward Incident Review Committee at the rugby club. She refused to believe there could be any such committee with such a stupid name.

“So she had a private detective follow me around. He discovered that some of my committee memberships are fake and I rarely go to most of the rest. And she knows who most of my lady friends are, and that I meet them instead of going to committees.”

“How many committees are you supposed to be on then,” asked Derek, already enjoying himself hugely at Billy’s growing discomfort.

“I try and keep it below 15, otherwise it becomes unmanageable, and no more than five ladies at one time. I might be a sex addict it seems,” he said unconcernedly. “I’ve promised to get treatment, or counselling or something.”

“Don’t know about the sex addiction but you have an addiction to a few things if you ask me mate. You’re on so many bleedin’ committees I wouldn’t be surprised if that was an addiction in itself.

“And that Lotus, it costs you a fortune, it’s an obsession, an addiction if you ask me. And you drive it too fast, addicted to speed probably. Fast cars and fast women, fatal combination.”

“I’m not giving up the Lotus,” Billy said indignantly. “That’ll be my last so-called ‘addiction’ to go.”

“What do you want me to do mate? Talk to Linda?”

“No, no. Lost cause. I’m just not sure how this is going to pan out and I might be at a bit of a loose end soon, lady wise, if I have to give up my current roster while a divorce goes through.

“So keep your eyes open and think about anybody suitable you could introduce me to.

“Listen mate, I never thought I’d leave you sitting alone in a bar,” said Billy, jumping to his feet, “but I have to dash, I’ve got an assignation,” he winked. “I’ll call you later.”

Ten minutes later Derek still sat in the bar, stunned at Billy’s chutzpah, when Archie Head came in, white as a sheet. “Derek!” he spluttered. “Billy’s Lotus is wrapped around a tree on the bypass. Sorry mate, traffic copper said he had no chance.”

Fast cars and fast women, I did warn him, thought Derek. Wonder where his contacts book is?