



Repeat Performance

by Stuart Carruthers

He usually arrives around quarter past two every day, takes his seat at the end of the bar and proceeds to bore the pants of the few customers that I have in around that time.

Bang-em-in Bill, they certainly broke the mould when they created him, god-bless his parents. Twenty years he's been coming in here, Monday to Friday for three hours and then he's away home.

"The music's too bloody loud at weekends!" was the answer he gave me when I once asked why we don't see him on Saturdays or Sundays.

I didn't bother replying, but seeing as we don't do music at the weekends, I saw no reason to pursue the conversation any further.

If you said you'd been to the moon Bill was there the previous Thursday with his mate Bernard, whom no-one has ever met. Apparently he's also married and has four boys, again no-one has ever seen them or his wife, Gloria. If there is such a woman she deserves a medal for putting up with him.

But we love Bill. It's the stories that keep us amused, the endless stories of his adventurous early life.

The scrapes he got into when escaping from the Germans, he was only born in 1944, (we didn't realise the Germans were invading the crèche of Northern France as well as the major cities of Europe), but good old-Bill was in the thick of the action with his nappy and toy gun.

Did you know he was once Head Gardner at Kew-gardens? Before skippering a merchant ship laden with a top-secret cargo bound for some god-forsaken island in South America? That's when he met his first wife. They lived on an Island for years before he returned home, never did say why, funny that don't you think?

Anyway Detective McCall, what did you say he was wanted for,,murder?