

Did I tell my name?

by Miriam Silver

There’s something about being hauled off to a police station that makes you feel not only defiant but stupid, all at the same time, I suppose that’s because you should have had the sense not to be caught.

It was when Charlie, my ole’ mate said, “Come on, we won’t ever get this chance again,” I remembered being inside, which made me promise myself, “never again”. And for a long time, I have to admit, I’ve lived clean, running my own business all above board, bit hand to mouth, ignored the wife’s Spanish plans and VAT only sometimes, kept myself to myself, apart from a small lapse in the boozer, when I asked myself, “did I tell my name to anyone last night,” nah! Wouldn’t, I’m sure I didn’t, it was all over the papers, my name I mean.

“Safe deposit, there for the taking, ‘specially at a long weekend.”

I tried not to listen to him, let him ramble on while ignoring images of alarms, electronic tracking, all the stuff that could get us forcibly transported and incarcerated. Then Charlie’s voice, persuasive, positive, explained,

“Just one job and we’ll be able to live like lords, I know you lot, ready to try one more time then, well I know what I want. Here’s the plan. No one comes in or out of that place between Friday and Monday, and anyway over the Easter weekend, no one there from Thursday either,” Jim, always cautious, interrupted,

“What about alarms ‘an all that?”

“Nuffin to worry about there, got security wrapped up, knew ‘im in Pankhurst.”

“What? A screw?”

“Retired now, just does a bit of casual security, good for all sorts he is, phones, alarms and locks.”

Tiny, who was actually over 6ft didn’t look convinced,

“Anyway we’re too old, can’t cope with all that modern stuff, bet we’d have to cut through two to three feet of steel, noises and explosions, then there’s all those safes, locked inside railings. Nah! No good.”

“Once we’ve immobilised the alarms, what then, there’s twelve foot of steel to drill through,” I said pointing to the plans throwing caution to the wind, demonstrating interest.

Gerry was the one who swung it for me,

“Just what I need, haven’t any pension, love to retire, cant, hate rotten basic wage, got nuffin’ to lose.”

Exactly how I feel if I’m honest.

Then Charlie produced maps and plans and went straight to business, assigning jobs, separately to go to DIY shop, get the drills, the tools needed to blow up locks, we each had skills and knew how to use them. Worked together before. Won’t be caught this time, Charlie’s got it in the bag.

We did it, won’t tell you or anyone the details, only had few hiccups like Jerry our lookout falling asleep, got heat exhaustion, it was all too much at our age, should have trusted my instincts.

Never mind, we’ll be out soon, even us oldies doing fifteen years, probably only do nine, then the fourth they never caught, he’ll see us alright.