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The Alibi Maker

by Vera Gajic

“Thank you for coming guys, it’s been far too long since we were all together,” said George surveying his six old school friends, they had been through a lot together but had drifted apart.

They were sitting in George’s large tastefully decorated lounge in his holiday home, having just finished a Thai delivery.

“Great food George good of you to organise this, I honestly can’t remember when we were last together, not sure I’ve seen you all in one room since school?” said Jeff – the outsider of the group, he was surprised to get the invitation to spend the weekend with the “gang”.

But what could this successful financier want from someone like him, he was the only one still living in Wolverhampton where they’d all grown up, running his own garage. He’d married straight from school and was still married unlike most of his friends. His kids were grown up, he had nothing to complain about.

“So come on George what have you really brought us all together for?” said Peter, the joker of the group, always game for a laugh he wanted to get under George’s skin.

“I just wanted to spend some time with my old pals,” said George, “You know what it’s like bogged down with wife and kids, never anytime for ourselves. Thought we could have some fun, reminisce, take some drugs, I’ve got some great coke, pretend we’re young again.”

“You haven’t organised any hookers have you, you dirty bastard?” asked Steve, suddenly realising that was something that George would do, there was no way he was going to get away with that with his wife.

“No guys, strictly a boys night. I have laid on some entertainment though. Thought you might like to meet one of those mind readers. Have you heard of Derren Brown? Yeah well I haven’t got him but one of his apprentices, he’s going to play some games with us, bit better then playing cluedo eh?” George beamed reassuringly at the boys.

“Wow I love Derren Brown,” said Joe, the runt of the group, he made up for his lack of height by being the loudest, “bring it on mate, don’t care why you invited us to your amazing pad, just good to have some fun!”

“More drinks, some single malt?” said George pouring out generous measures.

“Sounds fun but I’ve got to leave early tomorrow so I’m not getting hammered, important meeting, you know how it is?” Adam liked to think he was as successful as George but looking around realised he couldn’t compete.

“OK guys, let’s begin, this is Jamal, the mind bender.” Jamal came striding into the room, young confident, suave, he looked more like an entrepreneur than an entertainer. He was good, very good, got them at their ease in no time, a few simple tricks to loosen them up and then onto the more serious stuff. Once he had them eating out of his hand he suggested hypnosis. “So guys, relax and as I count to 5 you are going to fall into a deep sleep” They all responded well. Sometimes one or two wouldn’t go under and he’d ask them to leave the room.

“Do any of you remember what you were doing on 25th June 1989, hands up if you do?”

George and Jeff put their hands up.

“OK Jeff, you are going to get up slowly and follow me out of the room.”

Jeff complied and followed Jamal into the bedroom and fell asleep on the bed. Jamal then went back to work creating a great night out for the lads back in 1989.

The next morning they were all feeling a bit rough apart from Jeff.

“Couldn’t take the pace eh Jeff, lost your stamina?” joked Joe who was peering out of bloodshot eyes, “great night George, loved the reminiscing,”

“Yeah great George,” said Steve, “shame we didn’t say bye to Adam.”

“Adam told me he was going early,” said George, “we’ll get together again soon, being with you guys makes me feel young again.”

“Funny I had forgotten all about that great night in the Star and Garter and then back to George’s place with those girls, must have been the drugs, but once we started talking about it, it all came back to me,” said Steve

“What did I miss guys, I just zonked out, must have been more tired then I thought?” said Jeff.

“Just a bit of reminiscing, nothing special,” said George concentrating on frying the eggs and bacon, “can you get the kettle on?”

“Yeah, Jeff you weren’t there anyway – we were remembering one of our wild nights way back – 1989, you probably went home early before the party started – eh Jeff, done that before haven’t you mate,” said Joe poking Jeff in the ribs.

“Doubt it mate, when was it then?” asked Jeff

“Funnily enough we remembered the exact date last night, 25th June, don’t know how we worked that out,” said Joe

“25th June 1989, no way, you weren’t all together, Joe and Steve, you were with me,” said Jeff.

“What do you mean we were with you?” said Joe, “sorry mate but we were at the pub, then back to George’s I remember it like it was yesterday.”

“Yeah you two were with me at my wedding, Steve you were my best man, I should know when my anniversary is, I have to celebrate it every year,” said Jeff.

“Well what the fuck, that’s pretty bloody weird” said Steve

They all turned to George who kept his face down concentrating on the eggs, like his life depended on it.