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## The Alibi

by Rosalyn Hurst

Charles eventually looked at messages that had been building up on his phone over the last two hours. The continual pinging had disturbed his sexual rapture, though oddly Felicity enjoyed the sound from start to finish, during what can only be described as a frisson, not an affair, for it was just a high-speed speed event in her flat, a most dangerous location.

“Hide in plain sight,” she laughed, but Charles had his doubts.

“Don’t worry,” she murmured, stroking him, arousing him so deftly,

“Bruce in the House this morning, some committee meeting.”

‘Alright for her,’ Charles thought, reading his messages as he hurried back to the office when he saw, screaming at him from the screen on his mobile...

*Where the hell are you - lunch was booked at the Ivy - minister furious.*

Charles could feel the sweat running down his back, his shirt was already soaked. How could he have forgotten? Allegra, the ever ambitious and wealthy current wife had spent weeks organising the lunch so his business plans could be advanced. Oh god, the excuse must be water tight, an alibi needed to rescue him from the gallows of ignominy and an explosive, expensive divorce.

And then, just on the other side of the street he saw Casper: went to school with Casper; shared a dorm; same house; Casper now the big fish in the Foreign Office.

Charles waved, he was ignored, he shouted and was reluctantly met. As both were not victims, but survivors of the minor public school system, greetings were brief, negotiations were opened and to Charles’ surprise, Casper immediately agreed to confirm, should he be

asked, that they had met for an emergency working lunch in one of those back street cafes in Knightsbridge.

What Charles did not know, was that Casper was also in urgent need of an alibi. Casper had been shocked when Julie had seen him in a cafe deep in conversation with a Russian diplomat who was on the suspect list. He saw Julie looking surprised when she saw him, but Casper hoped she did not recognise Ivan.

What Casper did not know, was that Julie had just run out of Harrods having lifted two silk scarves and a Gucci handbag, knowing she had been spotted, but not stopped. So when Casper caught up with her as she was going into the lift in the Foreign Office, and suggested that she would confirm that she had been invited to lunch with him and Charles, she willingly agreed.

But what Julie did not know was that she had been seen in Harrods, not by security but by Allegra, wife of Charles, as her lover was buying her diamond ring, hugely expensive, a secret joke between them, placing bets to see how long it would be before Charles noticed the ring when they all met later for lunch in the Ivy. Allegra was amused, the woman had been so skillful at lifting the scarves. However, did not want to draw attention to the theft, not while she was distracted by the groping hand, which would have to be tolerated until the deal was done over lunch.

But the minister, Bruce, did not know when he glimpsed Julie - who was a cousin of his wife Felicity, that he would face many sleepless nights worrying that the excursion to Harrods with the voluptuous Allegra would be revealed.

And that left Bruce considering how he could deny his absence from the House in the morning should Felicity ever find out, and wondering why Charles missed the lunch in the Ivy.

The title of your homework will be: The Alibi.

Alibi agency....