

## Not a Day Over 40

by MaryPat Campbell

“Stop nagging, it’ll be ok, in fact it will be just fine, you’ll see.”

- Of course it will Mick, I’m sure you’re right.

“Why don’t you sound like you believe me then?”

- I do, I do. It’s just that ... sighs.

“I hate when you sigh like that, takes all the good out of things.”

- It’s just that I don’t want to be disappointed again, that’s all.

“Disappointed? No one’s going to be disappointed. This cannot fail. Believe me, nothing can go wrong. Nothing.”

- What about last time then?

“What about last time? Anyone could’ve seen it wouldn’t work, it was that stupid friend of yours that ruined everything. Without him and his so-called mates, it would’ve been fine. *You* know that, *I* know that.”

- So what’s different this time?

“What’s different? You’re joking! Everything’s different this time. Last time there were too many of us involved, too many ways to divvy up the spoils, too many things to go wrong. This time it’s you and me Jim. That’s it.”

- And what if I don't want to tag along this time round?

"What? Not tag along? Why would you not want to tag along this time?"

- Because of what happened last time.

"You're such a bloody toerag aren't you. Never go along with anything unless it's guaranteed. What in this life is guaranteed? What? You have no guts anymore, no fight left."

- I'm like your conscience, that still small voice that people won't listen to.

"Now you're going all high and mighty on me, conscience bedamned! Whoever got anywhere listening to a conscience. I'm very disappointed in you Jim, we used to be a pair, you and me. Always together in things, 50 / 50."

- But you lied to me about last time Mick. You told me you had everything covered, no way we'd get done.

"Look, if you want out Jamesey boy, you'd better go now. I'll not have anyone calling me a liar. You've got to be creative in this godforsaken world Jim, otherwise you get left behind."

- I'm thinking of turning over a new leaf Mick.

"A new leaf! Don't make me laugh. What do you know about starting over with anything. I got you started over with me ten years ago when I got you into this business. You want to start over again, what's that going to look like then?"

- I don't know. I want to go straight, no more ripping people off anymore.

"You think what we do is ripping people off? All we do is make sure we get a fair deal, not pay the extortionate prices all those rich idiots pay. More money than sense that crowd."

- Naw, it's too stressful. I always end up with a belly ache, waiting to hear if we've been done or not. I'm too old for this lark Mick, you are too.

"if that's the way you want it then Jim. See if I care. Go on then, scarper. I'll not be called a liar to my face and told I'm too old to make a few bob on the side. Not a day over 40 me."