

## Motives and Morals

by Sho Botham

Ted had long since forgotten that he'd lied on his CV all those years ago. His mind dismissed it as not important once he'd proved his ability to do the job well. Very well in fact.

Sammy, Ted's wife had accompanied her husband and their two children, Luke and Ruth to far flung places around the world to share stories of the bible in his missionary work. Once the children were past the very young stage, Sammy joined Ted in spreading the word. Life was good for the close-knit family although they had to put up with certain discomforts in living quarters when visiting some of the more remote destinations.

Sammy would never forget the armed guards who came running to her aid, guns at the ready, when she let out an ear-piercing scream and ran out of her tent shouting about the huge beast trying to get her. The guards were expecting to use their guns to protect her from an animal the size of a tiger. They couldn't believe their eyes when they saw the creature that all the fuss was about. A small harmless eight-legged spider.

The children grew up under the cloak of a missionary life. Bibles were a staple part of their existence and they were very familiar with the stories their parents shared with children and adults in all the places they visited. The missionary work was not too bad a provider for Ted and his family. It enabled him to transport the old family car everywhere they went even when it would have been much cheaper to travel around by other methods of transport. Ted liked to take the old banger with him and as he wasn't paying the bills for it, there was nothing to worry about.

Luke and Ruth needed a good education and luckily the missionary work afforded the family the means to send both of their children to boarding school and for them to join Ted and Sammy in the holidays wherever in the world they and the old banger were located.

Spending so much of their life travelling and spreading their gospel meant that the family, saw little of them. That changed into one branch of the family never seeing them again after a visit when Ted was accused of being nothing more than a salesman who sold bibles. This arm of the family didn't see Ted and Sammy as missionaries. They saw them as bible sellers and not very ethical ones at that. They saw something distinctly un-Christian about their missionary travels and that didn't impress these relatives. Ted argued against the accusations of his selling bibles to people who couldn't afford them. He brought his bible speak into being, talking about honesty and integrity in their missionary work. It was clear that Ted didn't like his motives and morals being questioned.

The children, Luke and Ruth, grew up becoming expert at asking everyone they knew or became the tiniest bit acquainted with, for money. I remember getting a letter from them when they were at boarding school and thinking how nice it was of them to get in touch. In replying, I was in the middle before I knew that I had begun. I was being expertly soft-soaped by post to make it more difficult for me to refuse to financially support their current cause. The demanding tone of their request angered me and gave me the courage I need to not give in to their high-pressure selling techniques.

The missionary work continued and Ted carried on seeing himself and his wife as good honest people doing a good honest job. And to the outside world that would be the view of most. That is until Ted received a demand to leave their current missionary work to return home for an extremely important meeting.

The meeting was indeed an extremely important one. Ted got the sack. All the years of preaching the good word were forgotten when it came to light, he'd lied on his CV. His employer pointed out the relevant clause in his contract saying he could be dismissed if it was discovered that he'd lied in his CV. The organisation didn't employ people who were not truthful in their CV. After thirty something years of telling people about being good and honest, Ted found out for himself that honesty, really is the best policy.