

Delic

by Sho Botham

Delic strode across the floor, his long legs looking even longer in faded black skinny jeans topped with an expensive burnt orange jacket flecked with every other bright colour imaginable. Opening his arms, he smiled and asked in his strong, confident voice, “da’ling, how the devil are you?”

Laughing as she extracted herself from his tight embrace, Celia looked at him playfully and said “so much better for seeing you, you old fashion disaster. How the fuck are you? It’s gotta be at least a year since I saw you last.”

She’d lost Delic’s attention before she mentioned, fashion disaster. His focus straying around the room to small cliques of fellow writers catching up with colleagues only seen once or twice a year.

A loud booming voice attached to a small bumbling man in an oversized rugby shirt made Delic turn around. The bumbling man’s booming voice continued, “Psych, good to see you man. Too long, it’s been too long.” Grinning he grabbed an orange sleeve and steered it towards the drinks table. “Grab us a couple of cold ones and meet me on the terrace. I’ve got something important to tell you.”

Two cold cans of golden lager sat in Delic’s bony left hand. He didn’t notice just how cold they were. He was distracted by two gents standing almost next to him discussing the plot of a new book written by one of them. He didn’t know them but the plot sounded interesting. Something about how it takes two to make an accident. Melting ice on the cans began to drip from Delic’s hand bringing his attention back to his friend waiting on the terrace. Although only a few steps away it took Delic nearly 10 minutes to reach Dasterdly waiting and wondering if he was going to get his cold drink.

These writers’ mini conventions were of mixed blessings. Delic loved touching base with other creatives but he wasn’t so keen on not being centre of attention in the way he is when he’s the only writer in the room.

Dasterdly stood patiently on the terrace watching and listening to his friend dipping in and out of the many conversations happening all around him. It was too easy to spot the orange jacket fluttering between groups like a brightly coloured butterfly. By the time his cold lager arrived the can was dripping water onto the pristine lime stone of the terrace floor.

Delic began giving his small bumbling friend detailed regurgitations of all the conversations he'd listened in on. Dasterdly looked at him realising that his important news would have to wait. Delic was on a role sharing everyone's news as if it were his own. He was where he liked to be, centre of attention, even if just with his friend. He didn't notice the light dimming in Dasterdly's eyes. His own eyes, lit up like Christmas trees as the tone of his voice raised and lowered in accordance with each story he told. When he paused to take a breath, Dasterdly took the opportunity to say that he felt tired and was going home. Delic smiled and patted his friend robustly on the back and said something about hearing about his important news next time. He didn't notice Dasterdly flinch from the pat on his back and he saw no point in telling his friend Delic that it was unlikely there would be a next time.