

Black British

by Douglas Fresh

Geraldine had planned it all for months: dinner at Tribe, where she knew Rich would propose. How could it have come to this?

The SO19 officer's gun was in the boot of the car, and Geraldine was on her knees—numb, flushed with adrenaline, fighting not to shake. She tried to steady her mind. Tried to concentrate. Rich, lay on the ground, blood pouring from his head. His eyes were vacant, as though he had already left his body. She felt the same.

They had left his glasses at a dinner party the previous night and had gone back to collect them. Geraldine had consumed a few drinks, and the officers had appeared from nowhere and breathalysed her.

An armed response unit carrying a breathalyser? Fuckers.

Geraldine and Rich sat in enforced silence as the squad car travelled along a deserted lane, thick bushes pressing in on either side. It finally stopped at an observation point.

Rich had tried to tell her something.

What was it?

They had struck him across the head for attempting to communicate with her. Then one of them had leaned close to her beloved husband.

"You're going to prison, you Paki bastard, and if you try anything else, you're going in the fucking ground. No one will believe you. Don't ask why. We do what we want. You came here uninvited."

"I'm not a Paki bastard, I'm third generation Windrush!" shouted Rich, more to himself than anything.

Geraldine heard the other officer's zip being lowered. He towered over her, exposing himself.

Rich stirred and looked at her. As he regained consciousness, Geraldine searched his eyes.

What had he been trying to tell her?

She stared straight ahead.

The officer forced himself towards her while his colleague laughed. Tears streamed from Rich's eyes. Geraldine reached out with trembling hands, seized the zip and yanked it upwards with all her strength. Officer Burton made an inhuman sound. At last, Geraldine understood Rich's plan.

Officer Price's eyes widened. Sweat gathered on his face as he glared murderously at Rich. His finger brushed the trigger guard, then moved towards the trigger.

"How are you going to explain this?" Rich said, struggling to his feet. His clothes were torn, his face bloody, but he rose as though from the dead.

The officer eased his finger away and lowered the semi-automatic weapon.

"Think," Rich warned him. "Give us back our phones!" he demanded through bloodied lips.

Officer Burton was cursing, his voice growing weaker, but Geraldine and Rich were focused on Price.

He approached them with the gun still aimed in their direction. Rich took their phones from Price, held his gaze and dialled 999.

"Take us back to our car," he said through swollen lips.

"What is your emergency?" the operator asked over the speaker.

Price looked towards his commanding officer, who lay in the road clutching his groin. Rich spoke into the harsh night air.

"Well, if there's nothing I can do to change your mind, I'll have that pizza now."

Price stared at him, startled, then hurriedly dragged his howling commanding officer to the side of the road.

"Get in the car. Now," he hissed.

Geraldine and Rich complied.

When they reached their car, Rich climbed out, turned back and looked Officer Price directly in the eyes.

"That's Black British Cunt to you."