

DCI David Woodlass watched as the brass plaque naming D C I Lewis was unscrewed from the door. Lewis had been a permanent fixture there ever since Woodlass had joined the force as a graduate recruit some ten years previously. Technically, since his promotion, it should now have his name on the door, but the new regime dictated that there were to be no private spaces. He could use the room to work and store his files but so could others if they wished. They called it flatter management but actually it was a consequence of renting out part of the building to cut costs. He was not worried about not inheriting the office and he was mightily glad to be rid of Lewis who had always resented his graduate status. Every time there was some disagreement he was derided as a "Johnny-come-lately" or the "clever idiot" who hadn't pounded the beat for long enough to know what real policework was all about. The fact that he had already done ten years on cyber security counted for nothing. He had had enough of screens and offices and the more active role of policeman had seemed attractive. Of course his new role would mean more office and screen time but he was determined to be out and about as much as possible.

The plaque was removed and he thought he'd try out the room for size. He carried in some current files and logged on to the computer. He settled down to the routine work of reading reports, entering data and reviewing current investigations. He stopped on one. This was the big one, he knew, and they were getting nowhere. He went to the door of the office. DS "Dicky" Richards was at his desk also working on something on screen.

"Dicky" he said, "Can I have a word?"

There was a moments hesitation, not long enough to be significant and Dicky punched a key on his computer and stood up. "Yes sir" he said. Again, not insubordination but a bit of an edge. Woodlass ignored it.

"It's the Carlton Casino case."

"We don't know that."

"I know but it's the closest we've got. Run me through what we've got so far."

"We, sir, I don't think there is anything new. We got young kids dealing. We've got the next layer of suppliers but we don't know where the stuff's coming from. The nearest we've got is one of the known suppliers leaving the Carlton Casino when we had a tail on him. That supplier hasn't been seen again. We put Tommy on the inside but he reckoned he was spotted almost straight away. Every time we seem to get near they're one step ahead of us.

Woodlass checked that the drawers of the desk. They were empty except in one there was a whisky bottle still containing a finger of whisky. Lewis was known as a drinker. The surprise was that he had not emptied the bottle.

"Getr me a notepad." Woodlass said.

"What?"

"Just get me a notepad."

Dicky returned iwht a pad. Woodlass clicked his biro and wrote.

"We're leaking. Someone is listening in."

Dicky put a question mark.

"The security upgrade. Someone's tapped into it."

"Are you sure."

"The only explanation. They know what we doing before we do."

“What do we do?”

“No information over mobiles. Talk face to face and not in the office.”

Dicky still looked sceptical.

Woodlass wrote. “It’s worth a try.”

Dicky shrugged.

“Meet me at Coffee Cup tomorrow 8-30. We’ll talk there.

Out loud Woodlass said. “I think that will do for tonight. See you tomorrow

Dicky.”

“Night sir.” Dicky said and left.

Woodlass’s private mobile buzzed. A text from Johnny. “Hi Mum, Dad, just checking in. All going well here, really exciting. Face time at the weekend!” Woodlass looked at the screen and wondered how to reply. He really wanted more information. In the end he just typed. “Great.. look forward to it.” Johnny was somewhere in Tunisia. He had completed his degree in Photography and design, part of which had been a placement at the Fitzwilliam Museum and this seemed to have triggered an interest in archaeology. It wasn’t that he hadn’t informed them of his plans it was that it all happened with unseemly haste. There was an end of course party in the student house and the next day he arrived home to collect some gear and then he was gone.

His wife, Aisling, had been upset but she was not one to hang on to the past. Johnny kept in touch and seemed happy, so she was happy, and she always had some project on the go. The latest was the new plans for the students house. It had been a surprise inheritance from an uncle who had spent his life roaming the world and then returning with his loot to the old house. Unlike the traditional image of the Irish family Aisling had few relatives and she had been the closest to this uncle. It was a happy accident that Johnny had gone to a local university and the house had made ideal student accommodation. He had been determined to move from home but was canny enough to recognise that cheap accommodation would pay off later. Aisling had filled the house with other students, medics. They also got a good deal, generous accommodation and a low rent. Woodlass smiled as he thought of her, her enthusiasms, her concern for others. The fact that it was medics that she chose to house was no accident. “To be sure they have enough on their plate with all the work they do and it’ll be us relying on them in our old age, will it not?” Two young women and Three young men had moved in. They had been in the house for the three years of their medical degrees as Johnny completed his three-year media and photography course. They all seemed to get on well and the spacious accommodation in the house meant that it was something of a party venue. “Ah, to be sure don’t they need to let their hair down.” Aisling had kept an eye on the place but Woodlass had stayed away. The last thing Johnny needed was a policeman dad showing his face.

When Johnny left, so did the rest of them also with what seemed like unseemly haste. Woodlass’s first thought was that they had scarpered without paying the final instalments of the rent but the bank account had shown that they were up to date, the last transfers being made on the day they left. Aisling, Woodlass suspected, had been rather hurt by the suddenness of their departure but she would not admit it. However, she had had enough of students and her new

venture was to provide affordable accommodation for both singles and young families in danger of being left on the street. She was in the process of commissioning alternations for that purpose.

His phone buzzed. It was Aisling. "Meet me at the house. I have something to show you."

"What?" he texted.

"You'll have to come and see."

Aisling liked a mystery. He sometimes thought the Police would have suited her better than him.

He left the office.

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He parked in the drive of the house behind Aisling's Fiat. The front door was ajar. You could never predict what sound would greet you, from the silence of deep sleepers at midday to wild Music and laughter. Today it was that eerie emptiness, an absence. He sniffed, yes definitely a student house. There was the sound of someone moving in the kitchen. "Ash?" he called, "You there?"

Aisling came to the door of the kitchen. "And who else could it have been? Come in. I have the kettle on."

Woodlass followed her into the kitchen. She had made a start on some of the clearing up and there were black bags of rubbish in one corner. A work service had had some attention and Aisling laid out the tea there with a plate of biscuits. Woodlass sat on a bar stool. "So," he said, "What's the mystery?"

"Ah, drink your tea first. You're going to need it so you will." He knew Aisling was enjoying this because that's when her Irish accent came to the fore. Woodlass knew he would have to wait.

"I got a text from Johnny." He said. "He's going to face time at the weekend."

Aisling stiffened slightly. "He didn't think to contact me then?"

"Has he ever been a great communicator. It was addressed to both of us and I'm the one who can always find his mobile phone."

"Well, it will be good to see him. Is he alright?"

"He says he's fine. Exciting, he says."

"Great."

"Well come on. You've had your fun. What's the mystery?"

"Come with me."

Aisling led the way upstairs to the top floor and then to the bottom of a ladder leading into the loft.

"Up you go." Said Aisling.

Woodlass knew Aisling had plans to develop what she assumed was the spacious loft space into an extra apartment. There was a dim light in the loft and Woodlass climbed. It took a while for his eyes to adjust but then he recoiled. "Oh my god!" he gasped. "There's a body."

"Look closer." Aisling called from below.

Woodlass crept towards the prone figure. Well, it was a body but as far as he could see it was a very cold case indeed. It was an Egyptian mummy. The bandages round the face had been partially removed and the grisly skull grinned upwards.

Aisling had climbed the ladder and was now head and shoulders above the hatch. "What do you think of that then Mister Detective Chief Inspector?"

What he thought about was the headline in the local paper. "DCI's first case: A Mummy in the Loft." He dared not think about the reaction back at the station. He stared at the mummy whilst his mind raced round a variety of possibilities. The only connection with mummies he could think of was Johnny and his time at the museum. Was this a crime scene? Well it was at least likely to be theft, perhaps some student prank. Should he seal off the loft? He'd have to contact the museum.

He looked round the loft. There were perhaps twenty or thirty boxes, packing cases. One of them was open and the contents had been tipped out. They were unmistakably Ancient Egyptian, pots and tablets covered in hieroglyphs. To Woodlass they looked genuine. He remembered, though, that when Aisling had taken over the house every room had contained artefacts and images from around the world representing, they assumed, the various travels of Uncle Sean. They had wondered about their value but the auctioneers they consulted dismissed them all as tourist trophies though they did take and sell some of them. But the Mummy was certainly not a tourist trophy.

He descended the ladder and as he reached the bottom his mobile rang. He looked at the screen and answered it. "Hi Dicky, what Can I do for you."

He listened, his face falling.

"What? Male or female?"

He listened some more.

"You get down there. I'm on my way." He rang off.

Aisling looked at him quizzically.

"That was Dicky Richards. The museum has been on. They've found a body. Well they think it's a body."

"You'd think the museum would know a body when they see it."

"Apparently it's wrapped up."

"Another mummy you mean?"

"Wrapped in black plastic. I've got to get down there and Johnny has got some questions to answer."

"You, can't think Johnny's involved!"

"It won't be what I think. The case will be out of my hands anyway. I'd better get down there. Let's just hope this is an unfortunate coincidence."

Woodlass began to go down stairs towards the street door then he hesitated. He took out his mobile again and searched for the number he needed. He waited as he was connected.

"Can I speak to Superintendent Jackson please. It's DCI Woodlass and it is urgent.... I understand but as I said, it is urgent." There was another pause then. "Sir, this is DCI Woodlass. Yes, yes my first day. No I'm afraid it is not going too well. I have a situation here that you should know about."

Woodlass outlined briefly what he knew so far including that the house belonged to his wife and that until recently his son had been a resident along with other students. He did not quite spell out the connection between Johnny and the Museum. That would come out later but he wanted to see for himself before he was moved off the case. He listened to instructions.

"Yes sir, yes sir I'll get on to it straight away."

He sighed then searched for and found another number. It was some time before the phone was answered.

"Charlie? Woodlass here. Yes, yes my first day, thanks. Listen Charlie, I'm sorry to do this at the start of the weekend but I need you to look into a situation that has arisen. I know, I know but this is an instruction from Superintendent Jackson. You'll gather why when you get the whole story. Right now I need you to get to 23 Lombard Crescent. The house belongs to my wife and she will be there to meet you. It will be easier if I let her explain. Bring a couple of uniforms with you and I want a thorough search of all the rooms. See what you can find and if I tell you it was student accommodation until recently, you'll know what I mean. I've got another situation to deal with at the museum. I'll contact you OK?"

He rang off.

"I'm sorry Ash." he said, "This is going to be messy. DS Charlie Tamworth is on his way. Until he arrives stay in the kitchen."

Aisling looked hard at Woodlass. "And do I tell him about Johnny?"

"You have to. I've already told Jackson and I want his room searched as well as the rest. Have you been in there yet?"

"Only to look. It's quite tidy. He's left a lot of his photography stuff. The walls are covered in it."

"OK. Do nothing to it."

Woodlass hurried out leaving the front door slightly ajar.

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Woodlass mounted the steps to the neo classical façade of the museum. He nodded at the PC at the door. "Hi Tom. What's the news?"

Tom Blakely had been a PC since before Woodlass joined the force. He was regarded as being solid and dependable but he had no ambition. He was happy standing guard on a crime scene rather than being more directly involved. "It's down in the Egyptian section, in the basement." he said. Woodlass's heart sank. He had been hoping that there wouldn't be quite such a direct link. He entered the building past the statue of Albert Arbuthnot Fitzwilliam which dominated the entrance hall. He reached the Egyptian section and was directed by another PC further down into the vaults below. Dicky Richards was standing by the door to what looked like a large store room. There was crime scene tape across the door. He turned as Woodlass approached. "Well." He said. "This is a new one."

"So what's going on?" Woodlass peered through the door of the storeroom. On one side was a row of sarcophagi, four or five, as far as he could see. The top of the third one along had been removed and forensics were working on something inside.

"Looks like a body." Dicky said, "They're unwrapping it now."

Woodlass thought for a moment then he said, "Listen Dicky, I'm not going to be in charge of this investigation. Another DCI will be co-opted in."

Dicky looked at him, surprised.

“For the time being you are in charge.” Woodlass said. “look, before we go any further just tell me what has happened here.”

Dicky clearly wanted further explanation, but he held back. “As far as I can gather there was a routine security inspection and it was noticed that the top of a sarcophagus had shifted. They opened it one and found what they assumed was a body wrapped in black plastic. That’s as much as I know. The mummy itself is missing.”

“Well, I can solve that one.” Woodlass sighed. “That mummy has turned up in the attic of the student digs owned by my wife and where until a short time ago my son was resident.”

“A mummy in the attic? How?” Dicky was incredulous.

“I have no idea but you can see that it rules me out of the investigation.”

They both stared into the storeroom for a while then Woodlass made up his mind. “I’m getting out of the way.” He said. “I don’t want any suggestion that I have interfered. But, Dicky, I would like to be kept up to date, you understand? I don’t want you to be in a difficult position but if there is anything you can tell me without jeopardising your career, I’d be very grateful.”

Dicky hesitated then he said, “I’ll do what I can. Have you any idea who might be brought in?”

“My guess is DCI Tomkinson. He’s the closest.”

Dicky’s face fell. “Please God not Tomkinson.”

Woodlass said nothing but turned and climbed back up the stairs.

The Mummy Episode 2

Dicky watched him go. This was a real turn up for the books. He knew he had resented Woodlass’s promotion. It wasn’t that he was in line himself and he wasn’t sure he wanted the responsibility anyway. It was just that Woodlass seemed to have the devil’s own luck both when it came to solving crimes and getting promoted. Well it looked like his luck had run out on this one and Dicky was left holding the baby. He thought he’d better get on with it. He climbed the stairs up from the basement and entered the main Egyptian display gallery. The museum staff were there including a man Dicky had not seen before. There was a buzz of conversation which ceased as he entered. The man came forward.

“I am Charles Fitzwilliam and no I am not related to the founder. That is pure coincidence. I am the director of the Museum. I got here as soon as I heard. “

Dicky flicked open his notebook. “Could you just give me an account of how the discovery was made?”

“Yes, well. You see we do have a routine of inspections for security purposes but, you understand, staffing is an issue and, well, to be honest, we don’t expect much trouble from our clients in the Mummy store.” He smiled weakly. Dicky stared back blankly.

“So how was the discovery actually made?”

“Well, as far as I can gather, it was alertness on the part of our security personnel. The routine is that once a month the less accessible areas of the

museum are patrolled. This time our man noticed that the cover of one of the mummy cases was slightly out of alignment. He lifted it to replace it correctly and noticed that inside was not a Mummy as we know it. Even our security people know that Egyptian Mummies weren't buried wrapped in black plastic bags." He smiled his weak smile again and coughed.

Dicky did not respond. "So, who might have access to the, eh.. Mummy store?"

The director looked slightly embarrassed. "I suppose any member of staff really. It isn't regarded as an area needing heavy security, not like the places where we keep valuable artefacts."

"And what about people who are not members of staff?"

"Well, I don't think we'd ever considered that. I suppose almost anyone could have got down there."

"Carrying what we assume is a body in black plastic bags?"

"That does seem unlikely. Although there is a service entrance which is normally locked."

"Normally?"

"Oh dear. This not going to look good in the reports. We do have some smokers on the staff. They use the service entrance to get outside and I'm afraid they don't always lock the door when they come back in. I do ask for it to be checked regularly but again it's a matter of staffing."

"So, it could be anyone who knew the layout behind the scenes."

"Yes."

"And apart from the staff is there anyone else in the recent past who might have found their way around?"

"Let me think. Ah yes there is the young student, a photographer. Let me think, John, Johnny I think they called him. I've got it. Johnny Woodlass. He was preparing for his final exhibition and he was focusing on ancient Egypt. He got on very well with our Egyptian curator. In fact, he was invited out to Egypt to join our latest dig."

"And when was that?"

"I would say around six weeks ago now."

"And could the 'body' have been in the Mummy case for that length of time?"

“Well, yes, I suppose so. Maybe even longer. I can’t guarantee that the displaced lid was noticed on earlier security rounds. Oh, and I’ve just remembered. We did have a group of students rounds, medics. They were particularly interested in embalming techniques as I remember. That and the extraction of DNA from embalmed bodies. I’m not sure why.”

Dicky flipped his notebook closed. “Thank you,” he said. “That will be enough to be going on with. I will need to speak to the security guard.”

“Yes, of Course.”

Dicky left the director and descended again to the Mummy store. Forensics were still working but as he approached the tape Doc Simpson came over to speak to him. “It is a body.” He said, ‘Male about forty, I would say. Can’t say when he died. I’ll be able to tell you more when we have him back at the ranch.’ He glanced towards the body. The black plastic had been partially folded back. “I can tell you he was probably run over. There are tyre marks. But that isn’t what killed him. He was stabbed.”

The Mummy 3.

The van careered wildly down the street. Jason was driving and he shouldn’t have been. Dave in the passenger seat and Simon rolling on the cushions in the back were in no better state. It was raining and dark. They felt the bump before they saw anything. Jason swerved the van and bumped over the kerb and came to a halt.

“What the hell was that?”

Simon scrambled round in the back and peered out of the rear window.

“Oh, my god, oh my god,” he said, and he began to open the rear doors.

“What the hell..” Jason said.

Simon was out of the van and he yelled back. “You’ve hit someone.”

Dave flopped out of the van he had been woken up and seemed in a worse state than anyone.

“What?” he slurred. “What’s happened?”

Simon was crouching over a body in the road. He looked up as Jason approached.

“He’s dead.”

Jason stopped and stared. “I didn’t see him I didn’t. He wasn’t there. I just felt the bump.”

Simon stood up. “We’d better get the police.”

“The police. Are you crazy? The state we’re in. It would be the end of us.”

Dave stumbled over. He was fishing out his mobile phone.

Jason almost screamed. “Put that away.”

Dave was coming round rapidly. “I just want a look.” He switched the mobile light on and shone it on the face of the figure on the ground. They all stared in silence for a moment.

“It’s him.” Simon said.

“Yes.” Said Jason. “We’re dead.”

Dave switched off the phone. “What’ll we do?”

Jason was beginning to tremble. "We could just drive off and leave him. He can't be helped."

"CCTV." Simon search the buildings on either side of the road. "I can't see any."

"Yes, but there will have been on the way here."

"Get him in the van." Dave was becoming the most decisive. "Get him back to the house and then we can decide what to do."

The Mummy 4.

David Woodlass and Aisling sat by the kitchen table facing the iPad. They rang Johnny's number. It connected and Johnny's face swam into view. Even given the circumstances David was amazed by the technology. Johnny arranged himself for a moment.

"Hi Mum, Dad. How are things?"

"Hello love" Aisling spoke. "We're OK how about you?"

"I'm fine. Its great out here. Hot, but you'd expect that."

"Where are you?"

"I'm in the hostel." He swung the iPad round so they could see a sort of communal room with one or two others lounging and reading." He brought it round so he faced the screen.

"It's not your usual time for a FaceTime. Is everything all right?"

David coughed. "Well, we are well son but a bit of a situation has arisen and it does affect you."

"To be sure it'll turn out to be nothing I know but we have to check."

"OK OK what's the mystery?"

"Look, Johnny. I'm going to ask you outright and I shouldn't be doing this because, well because... Do you know anything about the mummy we found in the loft of your house.?"

Johnny gave a bark of laughter. "A mummy in the loft. What the hell was that doing there?"

"That's what I'm asking."

"I don't know anything about any mummy. I've never been in the loft."

Aisling broke in. "Of course he knows nothing about it. I told you."

David sighed. "I agree but the questions have to be asked. Actually, I shouldn't be asking. It's a police matter."

"But Dad. You are the police."

"Not in this case I'm not. Not with a family connection and it's a murder enquiry."

"Murder. You can't murder a mummy."

"No but the dead body where the mummy should have been was definitely murdered."

"Dad, I've no idea what you are talking about."

"I'm sorry Johnny. I've said more than I should but I wanted you warn you that they may well want you back home for questioning."

Johnny slumped back in his chair. "No no. I can't do that. I'm settled in here. I'm part of the team. I'm getting great photographs... Mum... Are you crying?"

"Oh, it's nothing, nothing. Just seeing you my lovely lad. I'm sure all this will blow over." She slipped a tissue from her sleeve and wiped her eyes.

"Dad. Tell me I don't have to come home."

"I can't guarantee that."

"What if I said no."

"Then I would be told in no uncertain terms to persuade you."

"Oh god dad, are you in trouble?"

"Not so far."

"I thought you'd just been promoted. How's that going?"

"I would think it's on hold until this mess is sorted."

There was a silence as each stared at their screens. Eventually Johnny said. "Look I've got to go." He sounded deflated. "Of course, if I must, I'll be back."

"Thanks Johnny."

"Right. Bye then."

"Bye."

"Bye my lovely boy."

Their images disappeared.

Episode 5.

Jason Bradly slumped in the chair in the interview room staring at the table. His solicitor sat next to him with papers and a notepad. He looked up sharply as the door opened. Two policemen entered, one in uniform. The uniform, a woman, switched on a tape recorder. The other spoke. DS Richards and Constable Seaton interviewing Jason Bradly. Mr Jones, solicitor, present.

Dicky arranged his papers on the table and opened a folder and read for a few moments. He looked up. "Now Jason. Just for the record you are originally from Mitcham but until recently you were a lodger at Number 15 Grafton Road." He looked at Jason. "You need to answer me."

"Yes."

"You are currently a medical student at St. Mary's Hospital."

"Was."

"What do you mean 'was'?"

Jason looked up wearily. "After this mess I don't expect they'll want me back."

"Well, that's not what we're here for. I want you to take me through the sequence of events that led to a dead body ending up in the museum and a Mummy in the loft of 15 Grafton Road."

"I admitted it haven't I? It was my fault, OK."

"I just need you to take me through it again."

"We were in the van coming home from a gig."

"A gig?"

Jason sighed, "From the Carlton Casino. It was dark and it was raining. We felt a bump and found we had run over someone. We were scared and stupid. We could see he was dead. We couldn't call the police because I was over the limit. We couldn't leave him there because of CCTV so we put him in the van and took him back to Grafton Street. He was a bit bloody so we wrapped him in black plastic bags and put him in Johnny's room."

"Johnny's room"

"Johnny Woodlass, he's in Egypt. His room was empty."

"You're sure about this. Johnny wasn't there?"

"We're not going to put a body in his room if he was, are we." The solicitor put a hand on Jason's arm to calm him. Jason slumped back.

Dicky flicked through notes in the folder.

He looked up at Jason. "And this man you packed in the plastic bags. You've never seen him before."

"It was dark. We didn't want to look at him."

Dicky drew a photograph out of the folder and placed in front of Jason. "Do you recognise this man?" Jason's eyes narrowed. He hesitated and glanced towards his solicitor who looked down at his notebook.

"I might have seen him. At the Carlton. I think he might have been on the door."

Dicky carefully replaced the photo in the folder.

"Did you see him on the night of the incident?"

"I don't know. You don't look at bouncers, do you?"

"You see, the coincidence is that this 'bouncer' as you call him is the man you ran over."

"Well I didn't know that. We thought he was just some paralytic drunk who had collapsed in the road."

"Mm. Well, Jason. We'll leave it there for the time being. We'll get to how the body ended up in the museum later, but I have to tell you I don't think you are telling me the truth. Interview ends at fourteen forty-three."

Dicky and Constable Seaton rose and left the room. Outside DCI Tomkinson was standing by the one-way glass overlooking the interview room. "You're right" he said to Dicky. "He's lying. Next time I'll have a go. See what he's like under pressure."

Episode 6

Tom Tomkinson strode purposefully through the doors of the Carlton Casino. He flicked his warrant card at the doorman but did not pause. He marched through the main room, silent at this time of day and through a further door. Dicky, following behind, realised that Tomkinson knew the place, whether as a punter or a policeman he didn't know. Beyond the main room a short corridor led to a door marked 'office'. Tomkinson knocked opened the door and walked in without waiting for a reply. A thick set broad shouldered man behind a desk looked up sharply.

"What the.. Oh It's you Tom."

"Official business Shamus, Be careful."

"Who's the puppy."

Dicky stepped forward. "DS Richards to you." He flicked open his warrant card. Shamus Donovan's eyes narrowed then he gave a barking laugh. "Right," He said "let's have your official business."

As he spoke a door behind the desk open and a short stocky black haired man entered. The hair was long and toed back in a pony tail.

Donovan glanced round. "Ah Raven. You know DCI Tom Tomkinson and that one is DS Richards. Be careful with him I don't think he has a sense of humour."

Raven stared at Dicky but said nothing.

Tomkinson slid a photograph out of a document case and placed on the desk facing Donovan. "I assume you know who this is."

Donovan looked at the photo but didn't speak immediately. Raven glanced at it then looked away.

"Well?"

"I would say that is Mac, Brian McMaster. If you want his full name. He doesn't look well."

"No, that could be because he is dead."

"Well that could explain why he's not been turning up for work."

"So, he did work for you?"

"On and off."

"And what sort of work would that be. Well he was a big lad, useful on the door."

"Is that it?"

"Odd jobs."

"Odd jobs?" Tomkinson slide another photo out of the case and placed it on the desk. "and this fellow?"

Raven again glanced at the photo and looked away.

Donovan spent a little more time on it then tapped the photo. "I'd say that is one of our punters. Overplayed his hand."

"He got into debt."

"He did. He owes quite a few thou."

"Young lad like that you let him run up that sort of debt."

"I reckoned he was good for it. Him or his parents. First time round he paid up, after a bit of persuading."

"And would it be Mac that did the persuading?"

"Might have been. No violence you understand. Just a quiet word."

"I can imagine."

"The fact is I sent Mac out to have another word and he hasn't been seen since. The lad has scarpered as well. Run back to mummy I imagine. I've got feelers out. We'll catch up with him."

"Sorry Shamus. We got there first."

"What?"

"Yes, he's helping police with our enquiries as they say."

Donovan picked up a ball point pen and began tapped it on the desk. Dicky looked round the office. There was no computer. That was unusual. This was not a work space. It was a place for meeting people when you didn't want them to see too much. He looked at Raven. What was he doing here? It all felt lightly edgy adding to the fact there was something going on between Tomkinson and Donovan. He couldn't exactly say why he knew that apart from the use of a first name that is.

Donovan eventually spoke. "So, DCI Tomkinson. What else can a do for you?"

"How much did the boy owe?"

"Three and a half grand."

"Not much in your line of business."

"Enough for us to want it paid."

"And do I take that Mac was sent to collect."

Donovan glanced round at Raven who nodded.

"He was."

Tomkinson turned abruptly and made to leave. He paused by the door. "That will do for the time being." and he left. Dicky followed after.

Tomkinson stopped on the steps to the Casino and fished out a packet of cigarettes and lit one, sucking in a quantity of smoke and exhaling will obvious satisfaction. "Well," he said, "that should do it."

Dicky was surprised. "What do you mean."

“Motive – debt – opportunity - late night meet – weapon - they’re medical students, loads of sharp instruments available. That’ll do to begin with.”
“But sir,” Dicky said, “That doesn’t add up to evidence does it?”
“Oh, but it will.” Tomkinson strode back to the car zapping the door open as he went.

The Mummy Episode 7

Woodlass approached the student house carefully. He was pleased to see that it was no longer marked as a crime scene. Life in the office was awkward to say the least. He had not let go of the drug running investigation but with Dicky on the Mummy case there was not much he could do. The presence of DCI Tomkinson dampened normal relationships. Tomkinson was civil but Woodlass sensed an edge of a sneer whenever they exchanged pleasantries. He knew better than to ask directly how the investigation was going but he could but be aware of comings and goings, including three of the students from the house. He managed not to be seen by them or it could have been particularly awkward. So when Dicky had written a note on his pad suggesting they meet he instantly agreed and it was Dicky who suggested the student house.

He let himself in. The house had the expected empty feel. He looked around and decided to take one other look at Johnnie’s room. At that moment Dicky arrived, calling from the open front door. He continued into Johnnie’s room and called back.

“I’m in here.”

Dicky appeared at the door. He hesitated.

“Look Dicky. I know you’re in serious trouble if you are caught talking to me...”

Dicky cut him off. “It’s OK. Things have moved on.”

“What do you mean?”

Instead of answering Dicky walked over to the wall covered in Johnnie’s photographs all captioned and with notes attached to some and lines linking others. At the head was a title. “Behind the Scenes at the Museum” and then a note ‘I know -not original- it will have to change.’

Dicky scanned the photos carefully and Woodlass followed. He had not really looked at them carefully before. They were all, as the title suggested, backstage at the museum photos, corridors, rubbish bins, stores of objects not on display, the mummy store, a door to the outside, a close up of fingers holding a cigarette.

“That’s it” Dicky said.

“What is?”

“The students have been singing their hearts out and by the way your Johnnie is in the clear at this stage. They put the body in plastic bags in this room over night, but they still had the job of disposing of it. Then they said, they saw these photographs and they came up with the idea of hiding it in a mummy case thinking it might be years before it was found.”

“Typical bloody students. They can turn anything into a prank. So why the mummy in the loft?”

“Well they found there wasn’t room for their body and the original so they brought the original back here and stuck it in the loft. I think they were all traumatised by this time. They thought somehow because there was already oriental stuff in the loft the odd mummy might not seem unusual.”

Woodlass was silent for some time. "So," he said eventually. "That's it is it?" "Not quite." Dicky looked suddenly nervous and looked round as if they might be observed. "I don't really know what to do about this but, you are my superior officer not Tomkinson so I'm reporting my suspicions to you."

"Go on."

"Well, I don't know how much you've gathered."

"I've tried not to know too much."

"The body wasn't killed by being run over. It was stabbed to death."

"I had picked that up."

"And the body was McMaster From the Grafton Casino?"

"McMaster, That I didn't know. This gets more interesting."

"Tomkinson is building a case to say I was a conspiracy by the students to avoid paying a gambling debt and they stabbed him with some surgical instrument."

"It's possible."

"There are two problems. Forensics say it wasn't a surgical wound. The knife had a distinctive serrated edge."

"Still not proof that it wasn't them."

"No but I swear, when it was put to them it was the first they had heard of the body being stabbed. All three of them, separately, the same reaction. You get a feel for these things."

"You do."

"So." Dicky hesitated, "Why is Tomkinson so keen on saying they are lying? Why is he desperate to fit them up for a murder?" Again, Dicky hesitated. "Look, There's one last thing. Donovan at the Casino and Tomkinson know each other, and I'd say know each other well." There was a long silence. Eventually Dicky spoke again. "Look, I know I've been a bit sniffy about your promotion but one thing I am sure about is that you're an honest man and I don't think Tomkinson is. I've said it. Its off my chest. You got the job, You've got to decide what to do about it."

Woodlass was deep in thought for some time. Eventually he spoke. "How many of the lads would you say that bout, about being honest I mean. How many of the firearms officers."

Dick, "I'd say most of them, all the firearms blokes and the ones I know well. I'd trust with my life."

"That will do. I want two firearms and three other of you trusties. That should do. And remember say nothing out loud in the office."

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Woodlass sat in the darkened car and waited. His work mobile was off. His private mobile was on. He watched it and waited. He ran over in his mind the arrangements for the raid. He knew it could, not only be the end of his police career but the end of his freedom. If he was wrong, he would be charged. He might even be charged if he was right. He had gone over scenarios with Dicky during further private meetings. The most obvious was that Mac had been helping himself to proceeds at least from the debt collection and he had been eliminated. Somehow, he had stayed alive long enough to stagger away from his murderer and collapse in the road. Further careful observation added to the suspicion that the Casino was the centre of the drug distribution network as had

been suspected but still not absolutely proved. If Tomkinson was bent that also explained the difficulty of catching any of the gang off guard. Hence the high stakes of this raid.

His phone blinked into life. The text simply said, 'He's in'. He texted back, "Go." His heart was thumping as he started his engine and roared round corners screeching to a halt by the front of the casino at the same time official police cars with lights flashing joined him. He hoped the others were already in place by the back door. He marched up the steps to the main doors waving his warrant card at the bouncer who was already on his walkie talkie but did nothing to impede him. He marched through the casino floor with punters looking startled and attempting to hide. He crossed to the far door and burst through first in to the anteroom where he assumed Tomkinson and Dicky had met Donovan and then through a further door into a large office. Donovan rose up behind a desk Tomkinson was stuffing something into an inside pocket and he turned, furious. "Woodlass. What the Hell." At that moment Raven burst in brandishing a knife he charged at Woodlass. Behind him two fire arms officers appeared. "Drop it." Ordered one and his gun clicked. Raven hesitated then dropped the knife. Woodlass noted it had a serrated edge. It all happened in seconds then Tomkinson again roared. "Woodlass. What the hell do you think you are up to." Woodlass actually thought this was a good question. Then Dicky appeared with a PC in uniform. He carried two plastic bags and dumped them on the desk. "Well," Woodlass said. "I think this is what I am up to. Now my question. What are you up to?"

"I'm.. I'm.. I'm in the middle of an investigation. This man he indicated Donovan is under suspicion of drug running."

"Tom.." Donovan shouted.

"Shut up!" Donovan snarled then he reached inside his jacket. Woodlass saw with horror that he had a gun. Fortunately, so did the firearms officers. They immediately turned their attention to Tomkinson.

It was all Woodlass could do to stop laughing.

"Right" he said. "Charge them. Start with drugs and murder and we will work from there."

Much later the team were celebrating in the pub. Dicky sat down next to Woodlass. "Good result." He said.

"Lucky."

"Well more than luck. You stuck your neck out and you were right."

"Yes."

"Just one thing. When Tomkinson tried to pull his gun and then dropped his arms. You almost laughed. What was so funny?"

"Well the gun was such a stupid mistake. He he'd kept his cool he might just have got away with it. That's how lucky we were."

They both stared at their pints and sighed.

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