

The Constable
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The constable, standing in the shadows, watched the lady on the bridge. She seemed to be struggling to climb on the parapet. He walked across, taking his notebook from his top pocket.

"Now then Madam, what are you trying to do?" She dropped to the pavement, surprised.

"Oh! constable," she chuckled, " I'm wondering if I could heave my husband over here, but I think I'll need some help."

"Hm, and when were you thinking of doing that madam?"

"Tomorrow night constable."

"At about what time madam?"

The lady looked at her watch. Expensive the constable noticed. "Nut case," he thought.

"About this time constable. That's what he said."

The constable's eyelids shot up to his eyebrows and his chin dropped to his chest. "What who said madam?"

"My husband, constable."

"Oh, Er, yes madam. And where is your husband now madam?"

" At home constable, at home."

"Quite comfortable, is he madam?"

“Oh yes constable he’s quite comfortable. I always make sure he’s comfortable. I mean that’s a wife’s job don’t you think?”

“Yes madam, I think that is very caring of you. Will you be here tomorrow?”

“Yes constable, about the same time - 8pm; there’s not so much traffic then.”

“You’re quite right madam.”

“Are you on duty tomorrow constable?”

“Yes madam, I’ll be on this beat tomorrow,” with half a dozen others he thought.

“Oh, that’s brilliant constable, that’s excellent.”

“Why is that madam?”

“Because you can help me, constable.”

The constable pauses, looking at the lady from underneath his bushy eyebrows, his pencil hovering over his notebook. “Help you with what madam?”

“To heave him over the parapet of course.”

The constable is just taking a deep breath when a large Daimler car pulls up at the curb and the driver leans over and pushes open the door. “Dilys,” he shouts. “Get in we are running very late.”

The constable bobs his head in the door. “And who are you sir?”

“Her husband,” he calls impatiently. The lady sidles into the seat and says, “Good night, constable. See you tomorrow.”

And the car pulls impatiently away.

The constable, his sergeant, and a posse of policemen are hidden in the shadows at the end of the bridge. The bridge is dark. Three dimly lighted lamps light the whole length. Three shallow light pools, banked by stretches of intense blackness in the black clouded night.

“She was just outside the light of that first lamp sarg,” whispered the constable.

“Hm, she’s a quarter of an hour late constable”

The posse stirred uneasily. “Shush,” said the sergeant.

“She’s duped you constable; she’s not coming.” The constable fidgeted.

“Sarg,” posed one of the posse, “ There’s a lady coming through that first lamp.”

“That can’t be her,” his voice hushed. “She’s only carrying a shopping bag.”

“It is Sergeant,” hissed the constable. “She tried to climb on the parapet just beyond the light of this first lamp.”

They dropped silent. Watching. The only sound was the clip of the ladies high heels on the hard pavement. The lady stopped. She sat on the step in front of the parapet wall. She slipped off her shoes, reached into the bag and retrieved a pair of trainers. The constable, the sergeant, and the posse of policemen watched. The lady faced the wall and began her scramble on to the parapet.

“Right boys, let’s get her.” The sergeant yelled. The constable dashed determinedly in front.

“Dylis, stop this now!”

The lady turned round. "Oh constable you have come. Good. And there's a whole bunch of you. Quite a posse." The posse stopped dead.

"Now constable, you give me a hitch up, and you sergeant pass me that thing in the shopping bag." The sergeant passed up a box. The lady, sitting with her legs dangling over the river said, "You see constable, my first husband had a boat on here, and he always said he wanted his ashes spreading in the river."

The lady emptied the contents slowly which the light breeze whisked away over the water. A Daimler pulled into the curb. A door opened. "Dylis. Get in this car at once, and stop being silly," a man's voice said sharply.

The Constable, rubbing the sleep out of his eyes and eating a bacon sandwich, strolled into the police station for the early shift.

"Anything happening Sarg?" he asked the desk sergeant.

"A murder, early this morning. We've brought a lady in for questioning."

"Who's that then?"

"A Mrs. Dylis Cooper."

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