

# THE PEANUT FREAK

Part one

It was a clear Wednesday night in December and bitterly cold. Christmas was only a week away and although there was slippery ice on the roads, there was no snow yet.

Lots of smaller children in the small country town of Barton-on-Humber in Lincolnshire were disappointed at the lack of snow but were persuaded by older brothers and sisters that it would eventually arrive, "Otherwise how was Father Christmas going to deliver the mountain of packages he had on his sled?" some argued.

One could not use this argument with some older children because they would immediately respond with, "Yea well 'e'd 'ev tu be a bluddy Speedy Gonzarlis tu keep nikkin' back an' forrad tu the chuffin' North pole an back app'n? snaw or no snaw!!!

In the little town of Barton most of the Pubs were doing a roaring trade. The Mucky Duck Pub, the Slope in and Drop Out, The Wheat Sheaf, The Volunteer Arms, The Coach and Knackered Gee Gees, The George Hotel, The Bluebell Inn, The Shaggy Dog Inn, and The Pregnant Ferret!

But by now most of the little shops had shut after a long hard day and their owners and their servants had gone to bed grateful for the company of a rubber hot water bottle to warm their tired feet on after the rigours of the cold hard floor all day.

Owd Fred the Baker, after a lifetime of kneeling by the bedside to offer thanks to his Maker for helping him get rid of all the bread he had baked that day crawled into his Morphias Chariot and sighed as he lowered his balding crust onto the pillow.

Owd Fred had a system going that had not yet failed him yet in that he could always flog what didn't sell today on the morrow to those who didn't mind if it were a day older but a penny cheaper app'n?

Some, like Lukewarm Lucy, the buxom young blonde barmaid had no need of a rubber hot water bottle since she was kept warm piling the furniture up against the door to keep Randy Ricardo the Landlord of the Mucky Duck Pub at bay since his Missus had gone for a visit to her Mam's place over Christmas.

Then the next morning the Landlord would chide the Barmaid for not looking her best.

Lucy would then reprimand Randy, "Yu'd lukk knackered if'n yo 'ed tu pile chuffin' fonichure aggin't friggin' door afore it's safe ti kip dahn, then put the rott'n' stuff back weer yu fun it next mornin' wen yer gits up" "If yer so bleed'n' 'ard up ivvery time yer Missus takes a hike, ah suggest yo buy a bluddy goat as don't naw 'ow tu stack fonichure aggin't chuffin' doors, naw wot ah meen?" warbled the irate blonde Barmaid who obviously had not achieved a, "Stickyfoot" (Certificate of Merit) at Oxford or Cambridge.

As the bedroom lights began blinking out all over town and the noise from the pubs began to subside as the patrons left one by one, some being held upright by others to the comedy of oration from two visitors from Glasgow, "Am gan tae see yuz hame Doanald, yer in nae fit state tae gan oan yer oan, d'ye no ken wit ahm sayin' ti ye?"

"Och am awrecht man, ah ken wit yer goan oan aboot, but ded yis no thenk tae bring a bawtel oot wi ye afore wa cam oot o' tha' Sassenach midd'n' "

"Had yer gob the noo, there's the Polis, yer gan tae git the twa o' us chained up fer the nicht man!" replied the other, staggering to hold up his friend who was even now inspecting the toe caps on his own shoes as he wavered to keep his balance.

"Ah say Donald!"

"Wit?"

"Es they mah shoes?" pointing down at his shoes.

"Aye"

" O.K.... well, wit sick bast't hez scunnert aw oower me best shoes, answer me thaat will ye?"

" Look, Jimmy, ah dinny think oor landlady is goan ter be tae chuffed ef the twa o' wa gan tae turn up tae the digs lookin' like hawf pissed Bill an' Ben the floo'er pot men, ye ken whit ah meen?" hic!"

The two staggered off into the darkening night.

Across town one light was still burning and it was near the old black mill, and the patrolling night Policeman took

no notice of it because he had seen it lit at all hours before.

But on this particularly cold night as he was passing, the yellow light in the window suddenly went out.

The Policeman saw the light go out, but to him it was just another light going out and having seen it many times before on his round it registered, but he ignored it.

"Finished early terneet app'n?" he half mused to himself, "Lucky sod"

The night was still as the moon peered intermittently from behind the racing clouds causing the shadows to race by the Policeman as he wandered on his silent lonely beat past the half lit windows of the shops and on down Market Lane towards Whitecross Street, where yellow lights of street lamps were illuminating the Policeman as he passed under them.

As the Policeman walked on his dark blue uniform would fade into the dark again until he got to the next light.

It was while walking and musing in the dark he was not aware of the shadowy figure that looked like a huge bat slide silently over the waist high wall between two buildings about ten paces behind him

The huge black shadow moved silently and swiftly up behind the Policeman.

There was a brief but silent scuffling noise in the gloom of the lane, then the huge shadowy figure slowly detached from the other that lay unmoving on the ground.

The dark figure stayed still a moment as if listening, then it loped away silently into the surrounding darkness to be glimpsed briefly as it sped by the next street light, then it was gone.

An eerie silence prevailed as the ground mist of cold night rolled over the still figure on the cold ground as if to hide it.

The next day the news was all over town, and people meeting in the street paused on meeting others they would normally have passed by with a polite nod of recognition and left it at that.

But what had happened in the murk of last night seemed to have broken a spell and everyone was now aware that some where in this small Town a murderer was lurking and who would be next.

The burly six foot tall Policeman had been discovered with a broken neck that morning by a lad delivering morning papers.

The news spread like wildfire.

"There's some rotten begger loose wi' a grudge an' very powerful 'ands" warbled the local Baker to Mrs Barker.

Mrs Barker ran the Corner Cafe at number eleven Market Place but since her husband Charlie was at home and probably half asleep on the kitchen couch in front of the fire, she presumed that that he would answer the shop bell should a customer decide to venture into the Corner café.

" Where was your hubby las' neet Mrs Barker? And I hope you are aware that you have got two Swiss rolls in your basket?" warbled the Baker.

" I am well aware there are two Swiss rolls in the one packet, that is why I bought them as one item"

"And if that wasn't my Hubby in my bed last night then I missed out on charging him for bed and breakfast, good day to you".

The Bakery shop door slammed and the Baker scratched his head then went into the back of his shop, muttering, " I do beg your pardon I'm sure, Missus B"

Thursday night was not as cold as Wednesday night had been and the guitar player was chugging home in his little van with the bass fiddle strapped onto the roof of his little van after playing a gig at the Ashby Institute near Scunthorpe.

It had been a night of modern and old time dancing and the three musicians arrived there from where they lived in different towns.

The pianist lived in Scunthorpe, the drummer in Brigg and the guitarist lived in Barton.

The small group were very popular because the Pianist owned a Hammond electric organ.

The Drummer as a drummer was exceptional, and the Guitarist could flit to a double bass fiddle or rhythm guitar and Hawaiian steel guitar.

Thus the people got the delights of a much bigger musical group for the price of just three musicians.

The guitar player was wide awake as he drove home as he had done many times before along the road that ran along side the bank of the river Humber on the South side of the river from Winterton and South Ferriby.

He could see the road clearly for about a hundred yards ahead.

The little strips of white line on the road were coming towards him and disappearing under his van then as he glanced in his rear view mirror he could see them speeding away behind him.

"That was a good crowd in there night tonight" he thought to himself.

As his gaze came back to the road in front of him he had to swerve suddenly to avoid hitting a huge man who was loping along the road just off it's centre, the man was wearing what looked like a black cape over a dark scruffy suit.

Looking into the rear view mirror he could now see the horrible contorted face of what looked like a foaming mad gorilla but in the dark it could be due to the shadows.

"Dopey bugger walking in the middle of the road like that" thought the guitar player.

Suddenly he realised he was driving too fast and eased his foot off the accelerator pedal and the van began to assume its normal speed when suddenly the probing van lights picked up a female figure in the road walking quite fast.

"This is not the place for some damsel in distress" thought the guitar player and slowed the van down then stopped just a little in front of the walker so she could either walk up to him or stop where she was until she verified his intentions.

"I think you should know there is someone following you not too far back up the road" cried the guitar player by way of a greeting.

"Oh yes I know," gushed the girl, now advancing, "I was praying someone would come along, can I get in and can we go? Please hurry"

The trembling girl then scurried forward and got into the van and the two were silent as the little van chugged on to South Ferriby.

The guitarist kept glancing into the rear view mirror but could only see the empty road moving away behind.

"What on earth are you doing out here alone, do you know it is near one o'clock in the morning and out here miles away from any houses on a dark night, you must be mad" said the guitar player

The girl began to cry as she now realised she was safe at last, "My friend and I went to a birthday party in Winterton" she sobbed,

"Then we met this young lad and we fell out over him and she said she was not going to give me a lift home because she was going to stay the night, I had promised my Mum I would be home before ten, but I missed the last bus and I set off to walk but then I thought someone was following me from the party and I hid in some bushes until he went by.

Then when I thought it was safe I began walking again, but soon I could hear him behind me again and I knew he must have hid until I had got by him again, he was making funny noises and I ran until I could not run anymore, that is when you came along in your van, I really am grateful for the lift, I was so afraid" and the tears fell anew.

"Don't worry" warbled the guitar player, "You will be home soon, where do you live?"

"Ramsden Avenue, third house on the left" sobbed the girl.

"No problem" muttered the guitar player.

Arriving at the address the girl was out of the van almost before it stopped, and with a hurried, "Thanks, I really am grateful" she ran up the short front path way and opened the front door and disappeared inside the house and the heavy front door slammed shut.

The light came on in a bedroom and then went out and the guitarist took off for his home down Fleetgate Hill.

The next day the girl's Mother knocked on the door of the guitar player and the man's wife answered the door. "I would just like to thank your hubby for bringing home my daughter safely last night" Then the two got to chatting about the murdered Policeman and finally with another, "Thanks to your hubby" the Mother left.

"What's this about you escorting young girls home at one o'clock in the morning in your van?" scolded the guitar player's wife.

"I only did what any half decent bloke would have done" protested the guitar player to his beloved.

"What if she had been a Nun?" offered the wife with a tight grin.

"Yea well, I don't think she would change her habits just for me" replied the guitar player.

The light in the window of the building near the old black mill was lit again. Someone was obviously burning the midnight oil once more.

The next morning news travelled fast from Winterton to Barton.

**"By the way did you know they have found a girl dead in Winterton, she has a broken neck like the Policeman had here in Barton."**

## **End Part One.**

### ***Part2***

The Bull and Lincoln Imp Times had a field day at the weekend.

The paper was full of the two murders that had by now reached Lands End and John o' Groats by print, radio, and word of mouth.

Detectives from Scotland Yard who were based at Barton Police station doing their investigations were sleeping rough as it were, at the George Hotel.

People waiting for the bus in the market place would spot one of the London Fuzz and nudge his or her friend with the remark, "Ayup, theer's wun o' them noo" as a rotund burping figure emerged through the front portals of the George Hotel Pub.

"Ah bet 'e's more interested in suppin' oor Guinness 'en catchin' buggerlugs as is choakin' life oot o' folk jus' fer the hell o' it" replied the lady with the red fox fur who's magnificent tail was draped over her ample bosom while the snarling head with teeth bared to the gums and beady eyes glared over her left shoulder.

Then the peace and quiet of this rural town on the East coast of England was shattered as every thing seemed to happen at once.

The double decked bus from Scunthorpe roared past the Wheatsheaf Pub and the George Hotel and entered the Market Place where it slowed down as it approached the island of people waiting to be transported to different destinations further a field.

The Black Swan Pub that was only a stones throw away from the bus stop and the door of the pub opened and a bloke about four foot ten who had presumably been waiting for the bus and on hearing it arrive, had gulped down his umpteenth short an' pint chaser, then made a quick staggering dash for the island to get into the queue.

A small car that was passing serenely through the market place suddenly had screeching tyres as the brakes were stomped on by the irate driver who opened a side window and screamed at the staggering figure, "Thee cin drag thi' ass on't pavement, but not on't chuffin' road, yu pilluck!"

People were patiently filing on to the bus, and the bus's engine was hot and a faint smell of diesel fumes permeated the rear of the bus.

The wee feller who had just stumbled across the road to catch the bus turned to the now stationary car and gave the irate driver a rude one finger salute and miss judged the concrete edge of the island and losing his balance lurched into the back of the large lady with the fox fur. The wee man's glazed eyes suddenly registered the snarling face of the fox, and focusing anew and took in the gleaming white fangs and the hatred filled eyes of the fox.

His pickled mind still had some cells that were not fully processed by the booze, and as his bloodshot eyes lamped the gaping apparition about half an inch away from his red going on purple bulbous nose laced wi' blue veins, the still half alert cells began frantically signalling, "Stuff the amber light, go immediately to red alert" and all the signals in his mind that had been at a serene green colour were suddenly at red and alarm bells were ringing all the way down his spine to the top of his boots that felt like someone had glued them to the pavement.

His sudden shriek of fear and the lack of body de-odorant was proof to all that we are indeed descended from animals that dump what animals dump when suddenly startled and in fear of their lives, and the result does not even come close to resembling a bunch of violets.

Then the plain clothes Fuzz who was just leaving the George Hotel paused as he saw what looked like a small man attacking a huge woman from behind at the bus stop. Then he heard the shriek.

"Gawd., wiv' gor 'im" he muttered and began to leg it like an overweight Keystone Cop in double time to the bus stop.

The wee man had by now discovered the animal was not for real but had long since snuffed it, and alas had also missed out on the thrill of being truly stuffed, and in fact was now quiet harmless, but while holding up one arm to defend himself from the overloaded handbag that was trying to reduce his scull to a head hunter's miniature, his other was trying to vainly stem the rush of what felt like very hot oil paint that had been thinned by too much turps and was even now running down one leg and into his left boot.

But having experience with turps, thinners and hot toddies, he knew it was none of these by the sudden odour that was now emanating from his left boot accompanied by sucking and gurgling noises as he walked.

Whilst trying to dodge the flailing handbag being wielded by the angry woman he just happened to glance round and saw a big bloke running towards the bus stop island, and thinking it could be the angry woman's hubby also intent on shoving a knuckle booty into his gob, he blew some more piccalilli bubbles and took off down Market lane franking every other paving slab on the pavement with a hoof print in light khaki shades gurgling like printers ink from his left boot.

"Bloody 'ell" muttered the Scotland Yard bloke, " We won't need no ferrits to find this bloke"

But on rounding the corner of White Cross street and Market lane the wee bloke was gone and the prints were no longer showing where he had gone.

White Cross Street was empty except for an old car parked outside the Blacksmith's place.

"I don't bluddy believe it" panted the corpulent Copper, " Weer did 'e go?" looking at the last footprints that ended near the loading trap door in the pavement just in front of the Volunteer Arms pub

The Fuzz from the Yard reported to the Barton Cop Shop and one local Copper said, "Na mate, don't bother chasin' 'im, liftin owt 'eavier than a pint is not 'is forte"

But the Police had to cover all possibilities, and Baysgarth Park at the end of Whitecross street was soon being fine tooth combed by a line of Police who looked up every tree and those who were climbing them.

They saw everything but found nothing unusual or of interest.

"Aye well, wen they gits the back stud they shud lock 'im up wi Owd Moody's prize bull fer a couple o' days" said a bloke who was passing Jim Jordan's hair cutting salon in King's street. Jim often used to stand outside his doorway to the shop to get a breath of fresh air, 'cos app'n Jim was a chain smoker.

No, Jim didn't actually smoke chains, but he did light another ciggy from the one that was almost finished in his gob and one could tell it was over-parked cos it was wet half way down.

"Har har har" cackled owd Jim "Oi never troid tu cut sum bugg'rs 'air wen they as a 'ump on their back"

" Aye well, a couple o' days locked up wi Owd Moody's bull and yu'd ev three 'umps on thi back, app'n" said owd Fred

Fred waiting on the wooden bench in Jim Jordan's shop moved over a bit as one of his mates came in.

" Nah then Ted, es thee cum fer 'aircut?" warbled Fred

**“ Naw! ave cum ere tae ‘ev me chuffin’ toe nails trimmed an’ varnished, if Jim’s in ‘t mood”**

But it all went over Jim’s head because Jim was in a world all on his own, Jim was an artist with a comb and a pair of hair cutting scissors but he never collected any B.A.’s and all he got from most was a bit of polite conversation mixed wi’ B.O.

The scissors and comb would be going clickerty clack and the bloke in the chair would be thinking he was getting close to being scalped when in fact there would be no hair falling at all. Jim had got into the habit of listening to his horse running on the radio and it was then that nothing else mattered until the fag in his mouth burnt his lip, then he would haul out another and light it before throwing the lit stub on the floor with his left hand and squashing it with his shoe sole while the scissors in his right hand were still snipping away at fresh air.

The only time Jim would stop snipping was when the nag Jim had bet on would be coming up to the post, and the race radio announcer’s voice would reach a crescendo, “ Will Blue Streak win this year’s Darby?”

“Will it f-k as like?” muttered old Jim, and continued snipping.

With ash on the cigarette sometimes two thirds long it would often fall off into someone’s lap. But the radio would drone on and on and the scissors would click clack against the comb and the blokes sitting on the bench waiting their turn would doze off and begin to lean over onto the next bloke who would suddenly move and the leaning bloke would begin to fall over, but just in time fling out an arm sideways to grab the bench to stop himself falling onto the floor in a heap with a dirty look to the mover, the tired bloke would yawn and mutter to cover any embarrassment, “Any news about that strangler bloke yit?”

Jim just shook his head, then was holding the foot square hand mirror behind the bald headed mans head, and the man nodded.

“ Nice one Jim, thanks” he then rose out of the barber’s chair and diving his hand into his trousers pocket while Jim the barber was dusting his suit off with a wee brush, handed Jim some coins and left.

**“ Naw”, said Jim, “Nowt new on t’ wireless, app’n he’s gorn an’ went, ...oo’s next?”**

“Ah reckon yu’ll be went wun o’ these days if yu don’t ease up on yer smokin” said Ted “Ivver thowt o’ gettin’ decoked Jim?” asked Fred.

“ Well ah did try tekkin’ some tablets at wun stage” said Jim, “But all ah got wuz a fall of soot wen ah went ’t dunny”

“But ah did invent a new medicine fer when thee gets bald patches on thi ‘ crust” warbled Jim

**“Oh an’ ‘ow does that work” asked Fred**

“ Well the bald patches are causes by microbes and this ointment kills ‘em all deerd” smirked Jim

“All thee does is rub a bit on the bald patches an’ a couple o’ days later there is a scab on the bald patch”

“Then when the scab drops off after a few days the new ‘air begins to grow ageern” preened Jim.

“ So if ah wuz completely bald thee cud rub me ‘ed wi’ ointment an’ me ‘air wud grow aggin” asked Fred.

“ Naw yu pillock” grinned Jim, “Thee is natu’lly bald, my ointment onny kills they germs wot causes t’ patches”

“Yea, but wot if the scab dun’t drop off an’ stays theer permanent like” persisted Fred.

Jim lit another fag and through the drifting smoke, coughed, “Look at the money tha wud save wi no more ‘aircuts an’ appn’ tha cud join a rugby team, cos tha’s awreddy growed a ‘leather ‘elmet”.

**An’ besides that thee wouldn’t need tu buy a crash ‘elmet if thee ‘ed a motey bike”**

The three men were so busy discussing the new ointment Jim was so proud of, that they were not aware the window light had dimmed slightly as a huge figure outside was trying to peer in

through the old fashioned tinged green wave rippled glass of the barber's shop, but then the shadow glided slowly sideways off the window and was gone.

Monday morning and the cold white frost was everywhere.

The sun began to climb almost half heartedly it seemed out of the mists on the far horizon and there seemed to be no warmth in the weak yellow rays that were creeping now over the cold white frosty landscape.

Then it washed onto the top of the taller buildings and slowly seemed to creep down, as if inspecting each layer of bricks one at a time before slowly creeping down to the next layer, then on coming to a window the sun revelled in its reflection in the glass of the window and suddenly the yellow light was reflected to the wall opposite and the creeping movement over the bricks began on that part of the wall that was in shadow.

Lying next to a rubbish bin was the body of a man.

The policeman who had chased him and lost him at the corner of Whitecross street identified him as the one who had been in the pub waiting for the bus. He was covered in white frost rime and had obviously been there all night.

Later it was issued in the paper his larynx had been crushed and he had died as a result. Rippemoff Tool and Hardware shop was now having a run on heavy bolts and door hinges. The old lady who owned the big house up Vinegar Hill sent a note via her Gardener, the trusty Sod Turner to Eazer Bentun the Undertaker and Joiner extraordinaire cum cabinet an' door maker etc.

"Dere Mister Bentun, tha dun't naw me but ah naws thee, an' seein' as how this monster is still on't loose yit, an' theer apeers tu be no end in site regarding the Fuzz cuttin' 'im off by 'is stockin' tops app'n, ah wud deem it a faver if yu wud cum an' fit me a new 'eavy frunt an bak door wi' aw the relevant 'injis. nobs an' 'enny extry bits as thee demes fit, an' don't fergit tu fit it wi' them 'evvy dooty bolts en at.

Ps, an' don't fergit tu fit a chain an' anker tu door so it ony oppens a bit so ah kin see oo's knokkin'on it'

Anuther P.s. An' ah wan it termorrer.

E. Bentun & co was there the next day and with the able assistance of his burly son the job was completed.

When the old dear got the bill she went into shock and snuffed it. So the Strangler had struck again through the Joiner who collected another hefty check from the old dear's estate for the bier and the beer at her wake.

The light in the big house near the old mill was out again.

It was about midnight and the young Copper who was walking along the street was musing about how every time he passed by this spot the light was shining but this time it was out.

They found his cold rime covered body the next morning.

He had been brutally strangled.

End part 2

### **Part 3**

Barton-On-Humber cop shop was a hive of activity after the discovery of the young Policeman's mutilated body.

JimYordan was outside his hairdresser's shop with a cigarette stuck in his mouth as usual with an inch of grey ash just waiting to drop off if Jim turned his head a bit sudden.

Now and again Jim would walk just across the road to get a better view of the Police Station that was situated just left of the end of the road on High street.

From the front of his shop Jim could see the line of cars belonging to Police from other towns that had come to assist the local Fuzz in their search for clues.

But Jim could not see who would be getting out of those cars and walking into the Cop shop.

If the Fuzz did get the bloke who was causing all the mischief round Barton Jim Yordan wanted to be the first to spread the news and drag more customers into his shop for a natter and a haircut.

The corner of Robinson's cake shop suddenly drew Jim gaze as the burly figure of Fred came cruising round its corner.

Jim was about to go into his shop but on spotting Fred he pulled out a flat packet that normally held five Woodbine cigarettes when bought.

Selecting one of the two weeds that were still in the creased packet, he pulled it from the packet then with years of practice he deftly removed the burning butt from his mouth with his third and little finger and put the new weed still held by his thumb and fore finger into his mouth, and still holding the burning butt in the same fingers he offered it to the end of the new ciggy, and after a couple of puffs he had a new fag with the smoke rising into his eyes and making them water.

The puffs disappeared and with a wave of his nicotine stained fingers Jim welcomed one of his favourite customers.

### ***“Mawnin’ Jim” growled Fred, “Ah see the’s bin anuther Copper topped las’ neet”***

“Aye” replied Jim, “An’ ah’ll tell thee wot Fred, if yon sod in’t caught soon ther’s goin’ tu be no bugger left in’t cop shop, app’n”

“Bugger the cops” said Fred, “They git’s paid fer lookin’ arter us, it’s young uns ah’m worried about”

“App’n ‘e ent kilt any young uns yit” said Jim,

“Wot about that lass in Winterton?” growled Fred.

“That cud ‘ave bin some bugger else app’n” said Jim.

“ Ah wus thinkin’ o’ movin’ anyway” said Fred

“Wot’s thee wan’ tu move fer?” asked Jim.

“ Well yu see Jim, ower ‘ouse is in a row of ‘owses, an’ ah wus thinkin’ o’ diggin’ a big ditch all round it an’ fillin it wi’ deep watter”

“ Silly sod” laughed Jim, “Ah thowt thee wus serious fer a minute”

“I am”

“ Tha’s not”

“Aye”

“ Geroff, tha’ll be tellin’ me next tha’s buyin a bluddy ‘umber ferry boat tu tek thee across tu ger inta frunt door”

“Nah mate, but app’n ah ed thowt o’ buildin’ a draw bridge, or buyin’ wun o’ they ‘eavy rubber diver’s suits wi’ a ‘evvy ‘elmet an’ lead boots, app’n” smirked Fred then as an after thought added, “But wi’ my luck app’n the back stud ‘ull be an expert swimmer,”

Fred walked off chuckling and Jim had a merry twinkle in his eye muttered, “Silly sod” as he turned and went back into his shop and shut the door.

Wishyud Geroff was born in London but his parents were of Russian stock. Well, Armenian actually.

He had been born and brought up in a small council house in Essex and had been a pleasant youth who had grown into a quietly confident man.

Having grown up and mixed with students, pavement artists, con men, and studied the teeming life of London’s underworld with its dip sticks and chocolate wallahs, pimps, prostitutes and cat burglars, and not forgetting the dickheads who fleece the public in broad daylight down Petty Coat lane, by setting up people with goods that have been thrown on the scrap heap because they are flawed and useless.

But by the time most people get them home and find they are useless it is too late, and the thieves are gone.

The Police post notices warning people, but the notices disappear as soon as the bill poster was gone.

It was not long before Wishyud was in the Army, where he did seven years, and came out to join the Metropolitan Police Force.

He rose to the rank of Detective Sergeant, and his grasp of the criminal mind was enhanced by the fact that he had a very inventive bent.

One officer upon reading his resume observed, “ ‘e needs to get a firm grip on wot’s bent, and straighten it.”

But it was this “Want to know how it works thirst” that spurred his bosses to send him to Barton-on-Humber in Lincolnshire to bolster up the flagging Police moral there.

Armed with a rail warrant and a packet of sandwiches he got on to the train that was going to take him to York where he could consult with an old friend then carry on to Hull where he had to get a taxi that took him to the dockside and the steam ferry terminal.

Once on the Tattersall Castle, one of three paddle steamers that plied between Hull and New Holland in Lincolnshire he went to the rail and looked down at the muddy water, noted where the life jackets were and observed the two life boats then glancing round at his fellow passengers just as the ship's hooter blared out like a bull in heat but there were no cows handy.

As the spray of steam and sprinkling drops of hot water gushed from the blaring steam hooter and fell onto those who were under it on the deck, Wishyud stepped over the wet deck and went down stairs into the warm saloon and sat on one of the polished wooden latted seats and relaxed, glancing at the now wet spots on his coat sleeves and lapels of his jacket.

It was warm and cosy and he was almost dozing when a sudden, "ding ding ding" rang in his ears and he jerked up to look through the window behind him to see the huge shiny cranks that drove the paddle wheels round were slowly turning like a huge dinosaur waking from a deep sleep.

Then as he watched the pointer of what looked like a big shiny brass clock, but with only one hand, and that hand was now dancing around the dial to the, "ding ding" noises then coming to rest near a word that was printed on the dial.

Another, "ding ding" and the pointer pointed at the words, "half ahead" huge cranks stopped and began to move in the opposite direction gathering speed then another, "ding" and the pointer went to the words "Full Ahead" and soon the boat was moving at a cracking pace through the muddy water of the Humber.

Wishyud went up on deck again and was in time to see Hull pier disappearing in the distance and noticed the long white curving wake left by the ship, then he looked the other way and saw in the distance another wooden pier, and as the boat got closer he could read "British Railways New Holland" in red letters on a huge white board on the pier.

The paddle steamer began to slow down as it approached the pier, then veered away and did a circling manoeuvre and began to approach the pier again.

Wishyud's curiosity was aroused and he approached one of the burly matelots who was standing by the mobile gang way waiting for the ship to dock so that he could slide open the heavy iron side door and with the assistance of his mate get the heavy gangway in place to let the passengers alight on to the dock.

### ***"Excuse me" said Wishyud***

The burley sailor who could have passed for a Japanese sumo wrestler moonlighting, looked sideways and slightly down on the London Detective.

"Wadderyerwant?" he growled.

"I was wondering why the boat----"

"This ain't no bleed'n' boat mate, it's a ship" growled the Matelot with huge folded arms that looked like two wild boars mating.

### ***"Well I was wondering why this ship did the circle before it docked?" asked Wishyud***

Preening because he knew something that someone else didn't the Matelot leaned a bit nearer and said in a low voice, "'Cap'n sum times hes tu tek another stab at dockin', sometimes app'n as many as three cos it depends if tide is runnin a bit strong, an if ther's a lot o' wind on't watter, it blows the ship side'uds app'm, cos it ony draws about six inchis o' watter"

"I don't understand" said Wishyud

"Why does footy flayers 'ev studs in their boots" asked the Matelot

"To get a better grip on the grass?" asked the Detective.

"Right," said the Matelot, "this ship 'es gor a flat bottom, so if there's a strong wind blowin' it could smash 'er into the Pier, so yu see the Cap'n 'es tu gauge run o' t' tide an' if it's goin' aht or cummin' in or just on change, and t' strength o' wind an' 'e es tu naw weer mud banks is at low tide, that's why he's got 't bleed'n' job an' I aint.

The boat docked and two hefty seamen in roller neck pullovers with the sleeves rolled up to their huge biceps trundled a gangway on wheels to the side of the boat.

Both sported tattoos on each forearm.

One tattoo caught the eye of the detective and his brain filed the snapshot under humour, since the artist had done one tattoo next to another, and to the casual viewer it looked like a comic strip follow on.

A huge red heart with an arrow through the centre, and below that was a script, and below the script was a picture of Buffalo Bill, the script read, "True Love"

The detective could well imagine Buffalo Bill now six foot under the sod, suddenly having nightmares.

As soon as the boat was tied up, the sliding door was slid out of the way and the landing ramp was put in place and all the passengers streamed off the boat.

Wishyud followed the crowd then asked a Porter which train he wanted for Barton.  
“Ower theer owd mate, an’ thee ‘ad better move it cos it about tu leeve any minit noo”  
Once seated in the Barton train on his own in the compartment, Wishyud was wondering what kind of a reception he would get on arrival at Barton cop shop.  
The train made a stop at Barrow Haven then went on to the end of the line at Barton where he got out and giving up his ticket at the barrier he got a taxi to the cop shop.  
On entering the Police Station he produced his warrant card and the Inspector waffled “ So you are the new help?”

### **“ Yes Sir, Wishyud Gerroff”**

I beg your pardon !” waffled the Inspector, “Oh I see, that is your name , I presume you are acquainted with this latest development?”

Wishyud just stood with a straight face and quietly said, “Of course, will that be all Sir”

The morning roll call was finished and the case of the strangler was on the menu for today’s discussion yet again.

Wishyud began to read all he could get his hands on but nothing seemed to fit.

The person who was doing these murders was very clever and very strong.

Or he was so clumsy and the Police were missing a lot of clues.

Wishyud thought the bloke was clever because no one ever saw him.

Wishyud was musing to himself, “ The musician who picked up the girl on the road to South Ferriby has said that he almost ran a big man down just before he picked up the girl.”

“Why?” pondered Wishyud, “Did the driver not stop and give him a lift, why did he drive past and stop to pick up the girl.”

There had been a murder in Winterton and there possibly could have been two had not the girl been picked up and taken home by the Good Samaritan.

And two Policemen murdered in Barton almost in the identical place.

Then the little man who had been trying to catch the bus.

But to what end? none of it fitted together!

The only thing that linked them all together was the neck injuries.

There was no evidence from railway workers there were also no leads from any transport companies. Farm workers and field workers were interviewed but no one had seen anyone fitting the Police description of anyone walking or cycling on roads or through fields.

The Police were completely stumped.

Wishyud put a map on the wall and marked off where people had been attacked.

One in Winterton, three in Barton, but who would be next?

Barton was in the grip of a horrible nightmare.

The big old house belonged to the local magistrate Old Mr Candy.

And as far as local Doctor Jim was concerned he was above reproach, he was too old in the tooth now anyway to be roaming round the countryside strangling folk.

The Right Hon Candy employed a gardener, known to most as, “Owd Ned”, a grey haired quiet old man who would buy a pint in the local and take all night to sup it while listening to all the latest gossip.

Also employed for many years as odd job man was an old bloke the town had nick named Giddyap Five Watts because he always was recounting the bygone days of the horse and buggy and was a bit dim.

But because there were no more horses in the stables he did odd jobs about the place and still wore the boots and leather leggings of the hostler and a handy man.

Folks who knew him referred to him as Five Watts because they thought he was suited to better employment than what he did but was too stubborn to move from his old ways, or as some said, “ He’ll nivver leave owd Candy,”

“Them as lives in that oose ‘es a common bond wi t’ boss, t’ony way they’s gonna leev yon ‘oose is in a wooden box app’n .”

Some suggested that he observed the old fashioned loyalty of “Tha’ nivver bites’t ‘and as feeds thee”

The handy man was a big fellow who was a very quiet chap and seemed a bit shy and tended to mind his own business.

But one day in the market place, a sports car that was cruising through the market place with one of the local brickyard owner’s son with his girl friend in it, suddenly shed a rear wheel, and the car veered onto the pavement and almost pinned a little girl with a doll in her arms to the wall.

The only thing that saved the little girl from harm was the brick bay window of the bakers shop. But the little girl could not get out and was hugging her doll and weeping with fright.

The hot radiator of the car now had steam hissing and rising and the tinkling of broken glass as one huge headlight was crushed against the brickwork and the thick glass as big as a dinner plate fell to the pavement to shatter into a thousand little dagger like shards.

People were trying to reach over to get the little girl.

Then suddenly the huge figure of a man pushed through the milling people and stepping over the bonnet of the car he reaching down and grasped the front bumper bar and heaved.

The front two wheels lifted clear of the ground as if winch up by a crane and the crowd gasped and scattered as he swung the front of the car that had been facing North into the baker's shop but now it landed to the ground again with a crash facing due East, and was now facing up Barrow road.

But with a missing rear wheel it was going nowhere.

The little girl ran out from the recess in the wall and into the arms of her mother who had been in the shop.

The Police arrived to find the hero had disappeared.

But a mechanic from the local garage turned up and on inspecting the car delivered his verdict.

"Tha's got knock on wheels mate, yu probably changed yer back wheel an' fergot tu tighten the wing nut"

"Yu shud 'ev a speshul 'ard leather 'ammer in yer tool kit"

### ***"I say old chap, can't you just fit it back on for me" asked the owner***

"Well ah cud, bur as soon as thee puts thee foot dahn it'll wind straight off ageern, unless o' coorse tha cin drive 'ome back'ards an' that'll keep the nut tight, app'n ti tha git's 'ome"

### ***"I could give you a fiver" weeded the toff***

"Tha cud gi' me five undred Quid owd mate, but thi car still 'es tu be taken in tu garage to hev a new aif (half)shaft an wheel fitted, not tu mention the radiator fixed an' the dints knocked out and the bonnet resprayed."

"Yer'll be battlin' ter git the parts in Barton, ah kin send away fer em today frum "ull but they won't put em on t' Ferry until all paper werk is done".

"Na mate, yer splines 'ave gone, if yu din't tighten yer wing nut the bluddy splines can't lock prop'ly an' as soon as yu give 'er the gun yer half shaft spins and the bluddy wheel dun't, so all yer splines in t' wheel and yer 'alf shaft is f--- then glancing at the bloke's girl friend hastily changed his mind and said, "Stuffed"

"So what do I do now?" wailed the driver of the now de-funked sports car. "Well ah cud fetch me crane an' tow it tu me garage, but it's goin' tu need a new aif shaft an' wheel" "But what is that going to cost me?" wailed the bloke.

"Well" said the mechanic scratching his head as he thought for a minute or three,

"Thick end o' six hundred quid"

"But that's outrageous"

"Nah mate" said the mechanic, "Six hundred quid is cheap fer a Lagonda sports moter, nah if it 'ed bin a Morris or a Ford ah might ave bin able tu 'elp yer, thee cud aif tha' amount an' ah ain't doin' it fer nowt"

"And yu cud 'ave 'ad yer car back termorrer, but a Lagonda " The mechanic sucked his teeth,

"It's off tu tek thick end o' a fotneet tu fix it, app'n"

"By the way mate" said the mechanic, obviously enjoying watching the rich boy squirm, "Tha's goin' ter 'ev tu add a new radiator and wun new 'eadlamp to yu bill, plus a few dents an respray job, plus labour if yu want ter ger it back lookin' like it wus, tek a tip owd mate an' next time it needs werk tek it to a garage, awrite!"

Then to add insult to injury a Copper walked up and spouted, "Oy you, yu can't park theer" The young bloke bridled and said, "Do you know who my father is?" The Cop said, "Naw mate, duz thee? Come on, ger it shifted."

Then the crane arrived and the issue was resolved.

The car was moved and the Market Place once again returned to its sleepy atmosphere.

And that evening the light near the black mill was out.

End part 3



As soon as he put the phone down, the now grey-faced Landlord had a sudden and horrible thought, and he almost sprinted into the kitchen and grabbed a long sharp meat knife from the kitchen block, and with his back to the wall began peering around while staying in the lighted area.

He became aware he was shivering with fear of the unknown.

How long would the Police take to get here?

Was the killer gone? Was he still in the pub hiding? And perhaps watching him even now waiting to catch him unawares, and was he to be the next victim?

Not if he could soddin' help it, he thought, gripping the long razor sharp knife for comfort. Then as he shuffled nearer the phone he reached under the counter and grabbed the heavy wooden spare keg mallet he kept handy for any trouble makers in his pub and put it where he could grab it quick at the end of the bar, then as an after thought he covered it with a bar towel.

Busy wiping up what was a fair imitation of the "Million Dollar" oil painting "Blue "Poles" unframed, spattered on the tiles behind the bar, the landlord held his breath as the stink began to rise and all the tiny hairs sitting in the holes at the end of his nose began frantically knitting together to form a filter as they detected the unpleasant odour rising like someone had just opened the window of a Mexican bordello on an extra hot day.

He could not remember imbibing any turps or paint thinners? He began pondering on what he had eaten that evening that could make such a smell like this, when, in the distance there came the sound of a speeding car that got ever closer.

With a screeching of brakes and a sudden hammering on the pub door the Landlord grabbed the wooden mallet off the bar and again and had another wee sprint while still holding the knife at the ready in one hand and the mallet in 't' other in case someone jumped out at him through a dim doorway.

On reaching the front door the Landlord tucked the mallet between his knees and unlocked the front door and the Police pushed in demanding, "Weer is he then"

Trapped suddenly against the wall and the pushed wide open door by the in pouring onslaught of the burly Lincolnshire Constabulary the Landlord bleated, "Yu don't 'ave tu smash the bloody door down, yer too bluddy late any road, app'n 'e's deeard "

Then almost delicately disengaging the heavy wooden mallet from his groin area where the door had driven it, the Landlord now with a limp led the local law enforcers to the table where the man still lolled and appeared to be sleeping.

Just then another car pulled up outside and the Landlord recognised Doctor Jim as he entered the front door of the pub.

Dr Jim was one of the four local doctors of the town.

The other medics were, Dr G.P. Neddy Clueless, Dr Mo Lassis who was better known as old sticky fingers, and Dr H.Jury.

Some agreed that with a name like that he should either be sunk or bluddy well hung.

Doctor Jim, dressed in a sandy coloured suit that suggested he had just come back from golfing all day, inspected the body and declared the mans head had been almost severed from the body by a savage full circular cut that did not sever the neck bone,

## **One young Copper blurted " oor ar, us cud see tha,' but wot killed 'im huh huh huh?"**

Dr Jim ignored the comment and glared silently at the young Cop until the Cop turned a bright red and began to fidget with his fingers and stared down at his own big feet.

## **Dr Jim turned to the others assembled and continued his observations**

"It was probably done with one movement which to me indicates the man had felt the blade, possibly an open razor, since the cut is so clean, and the man had turned to grapple with his attacker thus assisting in and almost severing his own head".

“However” continued the young Doctor, “Who ever did this will most certainly be plainly visible because he will have massive blood stains on his clothing” and he pointed to the wall where it looked like someone had flicked a loaded eight inch wide red paint brush many times against the wall.

Some of the marks were still slowly meandering down the wall like an army of tiny red ants to the floor where they were gathering in ever enlarging dark red pools. The tabletop was now dripping blood like thick red custard on to the floor.

Doctor Jim made an observation, “ He was probably killed about half an hour ago” The landlord’s grey face looking almost haggard, now blanched as a thought crossed his mind, the man had been killed as the, “Time gents Please” bell had been rung, and when everybody was leaving the pub, “Aw Gawd, ‘e cud still be ‘ere”

The Police searched every room and outhouse and the only thing they found were a few spots of blood leading to the cellar door and spots on the cellar steps that led down into the cellar. At the bottom of the steps the spots ceased, and one Cop observed “Either ‘e went through the cellar an’ aht o’ the trap door on’t pavement an is long gone, or he went aht frunt door wi t’others?”

The Landlord quavered “ ‘e can’t ‘ev gor out o’ trapdoors cos they’s gor a bloody great lock on ‘em.”  
“ So ah cud smash lock off an ger intu yu pub through cellar?” queried one Cop.  
“ Nah mate”, sniffed the Landlord looking a bit prim now, “Yu got tu come down inta celler fust, an’ yu see that flat iron bar wi a ‘andle on it

**“Yis”**

“ Well, while it’s in place yu can’t oppen doors frum aht side, so yu slide the iron bar frum the iron loop on tuther door then yu go up top and unlock the trap doors”  
“So” observed one Copper still poking round the cellar, ‘e came down ‘ere an’ then changed ‘is mind app’n, but ‘e wouldn’t tek off through front door wi’ tuthers cos tuthers wud ‘ave spotted the blood an’ nabbed im’ app’n”

“Ah don’t think us is off tu ger ‘im terneet” growled a voice. “ So cum mawnin ‘el be wesht an’ clean an be weerin summat els as isn’t bloodied”

“Aye, damn reet” agreed most.

To the Police this was a different modus operandi.

The questions that now began to surface was, were there two killers loose in Barton, or was this the strangler trying to confuse the issue”

This puzzled the Police, now he was getting bolder and they had nothing to show for any of their investigations.

Time went by, and the search for clues gradually dwindled as another day passed with no more news and the days grew into weeks.

People began to breathe easier but still locked and barred their house doors.

If someone called on a friend after dark it was like in olden days,

“ Knock knock”

“ Who’s theer”

“ It’s ony me yu pillock, ‘ave bin an’ fetched sum fish an’ chips, opp’n ruddy door will yer”

Spring turned to Summer followed by Autumn and Barton Fair arrived in the George Hotel paddock that was situated up Brigg road.

The Wheat Sheaf Pub’s back gardens adjoined the paddock and perhaps in days gone by the paddock had been the property of the Wheat Sheaf Pub.

Possibly it had been lost to the owner of the George Hotel in an all night card game long ago when Highwaymen were abroad robbing the rich then spending the next few months idly swinging in the breeze from the town gibbet.

Wishyud pulled up in the Market Place in Barton and strolled over to Robinson's paper and bookshop.

His car was a private car with no signs on it to inform the idle curios or baddies that he was a Policeman.

Standing on the pavement near Barklay's Bank at the corner of George Street and the Market Place was Constable Rite Burk the new young Copper who was in Barton on loan from Lincoln.

Cruising up to him and nodding as he came to a halt in his stride in front of him came the burly six foot three tall Copper from Gainsboro, Dicky Bird, know to all with affection at Barton cop shop as Big Dick.

The big Cop from Gainsboro glanced toward the Newsagents and out of the side of his mouth he addressed the young Cop.

"Ah see weev' bin' saddled wi't Rusky bluddy equivelant o' Dick bleed'n' Tracy?"

The young Copper smirked at the wit and replied, "Bit of a dark horse if you ask me"

"e doesn't give owt away but I've got a sneaky feeling he's a lot brighter than most we got here,----- present company excepted of course" he added hastily.

"O' course" parroted the big Copper with a sneaky look sideways at the younger Cop.

Wishyud came out of the newsagent's shop with the daily paper under his arm and went back to his car and unlocking the door threw in the newspaper onto the off side seat, then he got into the driver's seat and slammed the door.

He put in the ignition key, turned it, and the engine sprang into life, he put he gear lever in first gear and he was in the process of lifting his left foot to let out the clutch when he suddenly rammed his left foot down put the car out of gear and shut off the engine.

He was now scanning the few people who were browsing the shop windows and his apparently lazy gaze took in the tall towering black mill in Market Lane.

"This is where it all started" he mused, and he suddenly felt like the kid who had just opened his Christmas present and discovered a brand new wind up red fire engine complete wi' bell and ladder.

Just in case someone was watching he half closed his eyes and crouched down a bit and pretended to be having forty winks.

But in reality he had goose bumps from the roots of his hair down to the darned hole in his right hand sock.

His heart was suddenly racing as if he was on a promise, and his brain was in overdrive and his gaze was taking in the fact that the old black mill was by far the tallest building in Barton Market Place and anyone inside it at the top could not only see all who were in the Market Place but could also see for miles around and all the brick yards down on the Humber bank.

Not only that, someone with a half decent pair of binoculars could see the town of Hessle a good mile cross the river.

The top of black mill would be the ideal spot to check the comings and goings of anyone moving about and around Barton.

"Sapristi" ---the word he had heard his Dad spit out once when he had hit his thumb with a hammer whilst hanging a picture on the wall when Wishyud had been a little lad and Wishyud never forgot the word, and now it suddenly exploded from the Detectives mouth.

He never did find out what it meant but it sounded good, and it beat the English, "f---k it!" hands down as an expression of disgust and since no locals knew what it meant he could express himself verbally without causing anyone any embarrassment.

Wishyud suddenly became alive and starting the car drove toward the cop shop in the High street.

With so many possibilities that were now racing through his brain it was difficult to pick which one of his thoughts to concentrate on.

Arriving at the cop shop he glided to a halt and leapt out of the car and locked the door. Barging into the front door of the Cop shop he accosted the Sergeant at the desk and asked him if he could get him details of who owned the old black mill in Market Lane.  
“Tha’ll ‘ave tu wait me owd son, cos app’n all them records is kept at Glanford ‘ouse in Brigg”

**“Right, I’m going to Brigg now, anybody asks for me I’ll be back tomorrow”**

“Be it on yer own ‘ead, me owd china”, grinned the Sgt, and he paused his scribbling hand to watch the London Detective as he raced out of the front door and into his car and departed up the High street in a cloud of dust.

In the top of the old black mill a huge figure in a thick black over coat moved. In the dim dome of the mill the man was looking through a small brass telescope through the gap between the wooden tarred covered canvas that formed the roof and the top of the black painted brick work. He kept well back from the light to avoid any reflections being signalled to the ground below by the glass at the end of his telescope. Since the gap was all the way round the top of the brick work the only part of the roof that touched the bricks were the support beams built into the brick work at the top. So this man had an unhindered view in any direction. The sails of the mill had rotted and fallen off in days gone by and the mill was used only as a storage building for some firm who had rented it to store peanuts that were stacked in hessian sacks each weighing about two hundred and twenty pounds.

It was common knowledge that stored in the old mill there were about ten tons of peanuts. Since the windows in the mill had long ago been broken by children and louts the owners had boarded up all the windows, and a heavy padlock for years had secured the only entrance to the mill.

Wishyud arrived in Brigg market place and spotting a Policeman, mused, “If yu don’t know the time ask a Policeman”  
Wishyud parked his car and strolled over to the Policeman and produced his warrant card.  
“ A’fter noon” grinned the cop, “ An’ wot can ah do thee fer?”  
“Well I was rather hoping you could direct me to the Glanford Records Office”  
“ It’s ‘ere owd mate” grinned the Cop.  
“ Where exactly?” asked Wishyud  
“Well if it were any chuffin’ closer app’n it ud bite thee in the ass, thi’ car’s parked reet in front o’ it”,  
Wishyud looked at his car and the sign behind his car that was leering at him from over the huge double doorway informed him it was indeed the office of Births and Deaths etc etc

And another smaller sign informed him that parking of vehicles and or horse driven chariots was also forbidden and miscreants could and would be nicked and fined or imprisoned or both.  
“Ah wud move thee moter a bit sharpish if ah wus thee” said the Cop as he turned and walked away then stopped on the corner and did not look round as Wishyud nipped nimbly into his car and moved it to side lane where there were no notices.  
As he came back, the Cop on the corner caught his eye and winked, and Wishyud smiled his thanks.  
Then pushing open one big door Wishyud entered what at first glance looked like a huge museum with a polished carpeted staircase that appeared to ascend to the heavens.  
Wishyud thought he would move before God descended the staircase flanked by Gabriel with a view to visiting and kicking the crap out of old Nick who was probably sleeping it off in the cellars.

On seeing a door marked enquiries he knocked and a voice bad him enter.  
“Yes sir, what can we do for you.”  
Wishyud did a quick shufti round the room and saw there was only the two of them in the room so he pondered the “We”

Wishyud then produced his warrant card and stated the reason for his visit.  
The bloke scrutinised the warrant card and decided it was for real.

He then directed Wishyud to another room and informed the Detective he would find what he wanted in the books on the shelf or from the machine that looked like a giant movie film editor with two huge spools of film that was squatting like a huge unblinking owl in one corner of the room.

Wishyud eventually, and bleary eyed, found what he was looking for and with an aching back heaved a sigh of relief and switched off the machine, stretched and got up and chucking the chap in the enquiries office a, "Thanks for your help" he left the building and dragged his now weary body over to his car.

As Wishyud drove back to Barton that evening it was already getting dark and Wishyud felt weary.

Why was he so weary? Then it dawned on him that he had been hoisting the heavy old books up and down the shelves most of the afternoon and not being used to manual labour he was now knackered, but nothing a good night's sleep couldn't put right.

End part four

## **Part five**

Wishyud got back to Barton and pulled into the George Hotel back yard car park that was opposite the Wheat Sheaf Pub, at the corner of Brigg road and the Market Place.

He slowed down, then inched his car into an empty parking space near the trash bin and switched off the engine.

Wishyud sat there enjoying the moment.

Since his headlights were now showing up all the marks on the brickwork now in front of him, and the light was reflecting back into his face, it suddenly occurred to him what a good target he was sitting in a dark car park inside an illuminated vehicle.

He turned the light switch to off and the lights slowly died and all was dark and quiet.

There was no engine noise, in fact as he sat there and it seemed too quiet, until he heard a faint rustle then a slow ticking noise.

But he had heard the noise before and knew it was his hot engine now cooling down.

After a couple of minutes he thought how a beer and a sandwich would go down a treat, and also if he sat here much longer he would nod off and be asleep.

Double-checking his hand brake was applied he opened the door then got out and closing the door, locked it.

Then from habit he checked all the other doors and windows were locked then headed for the back entrance to the pub.

The George Hotel car park had a passage that led to George Street, and it was at this end of the passage-way next to the car park there happened to be a coal house, and the dull brown painted coal house door had a short piece of clothes line tied to its black painted iron handle with a sneck poking through the wood of the door to the latch behind it.

The other end of clothesline was fastened to the shelf bracket on the wall.

At first glance one assumed the door had been tied back because it would keep tapping or banging if someone forgot to close it properly.

The hotel's general floor mopper upper cum stick chopper and fire maker in general, who also indulged in a little moonlighting window cleaning and foot wear polishing should visitors so desire by leaving their tootsie gear outside of the door when they retired to their bed, was also held responsible for the outside yard being tidy.

But the footwear business suddenly evaporated one morning when an irate lady enquired where her elegant and very expensive crocodile shoes were.

The tired maid listened to the tirade of how M'Lady had been on a hunting trip into the hot croc infested swamps of darkest Africa and had bagged this magnificent twenty foot croc, after the local coolies had trapped it with a wire net and it was so knackered from struggling to get loose it just gave up and drowned.

So the lady put her foot on it and had it photographed and the skin made into matching purse, shoes, and handbag.

The Maid shrugged and shifting the wad of chewing gum over to her left cheek, ventured, "Oi dunno luv, they probby just went an' ate the chuff'n' cat an' ave gone walkabout sum weers tu sleep it off?"

Anyone could go into the coalhouse to get coal at anytime, but never after dark, so the door was always now left open.

**Wishyud** was passing this open door and the only sound he could hear were his own footsteps, but as he passed the coal house door he could hear the faint wheezing noise of someone who had been either running or moving fast and the faint smell of cognac reached his nose.

**Wishyud** dived both hands into his pockets and the one in sight of the coalhouse withdrew a large white handkerchief

but to any watching eyes in the coal house the handkerchief hid what the other hand was doing. The other hand had been withdrawn now and in it was a small, almost palm sized, Italian Beretta .22 automatic pistol.

The small pistol must have had one up the spout because all **Wishyud** did was to push off the safety and thumb back the hammer and he then walked on as if all was normal, but the hair on the back of his neck was sticking up like a brand new yard brush and he was ready to whip round and face whoever or whatever came up behind him.

With ears twisted back to front and twitching like twin radar scanners and with pulse racing **Wishyud** walked into the back parlour of the pub where Mrs Larkinson was, and it was only then the automatic was back into his pocket with the hammer lowered and the safety on.

“ Oh, have you had a nice day Mr Goodall?” gushed the landlady as she lamped the Detective “Well I suppose I should not grumble” said **Wishyud**, answering to the name he had registered in, “But you know what they say about Policemen”

“Oh, and what do they say about policemen Mr Goodall?” asked the landlady, with eyelashes going up and down like a hungry humming bird, and pursing thick red painted lips that suddenly reminded **Wishyud** of a half cut melon on top of a writing bureau who’s two top draws even when fully closed, appeared to be half open and stacked with the top half of a pink coloured mattress off an agitated water bed.

“ A Policeman’s lot is not a happy one, Maam, good night,” and hoping she didn’t trip over her bottom lip when she moved, he made his way to his bedroom.

As he got nearer to his bedroom he began to tip toe and once again the gun appeared in his hand and the hammer was back.

With his key he opened the door and put in his hand to switch on the light before opening the door fully.

Then checking he could see the wall through the slit in the hinge side of the door he was satisfied no one was behind the door so he entered and closed the door and locked it.

Next he checked under his bed then all the windows and the curtains and the wardrobe was last. He found nothing, but then he drew the curtains and making sure his shadow was on the curtains he undressed and got into the bed then switched off the bedside light that he had swapped for the main light.

Now with the room in gloom he got out of bed and gathered some clothing from the wardrobe and putting it into the bed and bent it to resemble a sleeping person.

Then he got into the wardrobe and sat on the cardboard box that held most of his sports gear and boots, and with the pistol on his lap he waited.

And he waited and waited, and waited some more, then at about two in the morning as he was nodding off he heard some shuffling noises but since the noise went by and then he heard a chain being pulled, and water running, then the shuffling going the other way, he relaxed again and tried hard not to fall asleep.

He knew for sure there had been someone in the coalhouse, but now he began to think possibly it was someone stealing a bit of coal perhaps.

Suddenly it occurred to him that the shuffling he had heard could have been anyone who was sneaking around and had pulled the chain as a ploy to placate the insecure, perhaps it was the shoe stealer again?

Or could it be the strangler?

As soon as the dawn light began to filter through the window drapes, **Wishyud** got up off the box and winced as the ache of sitting in an unfamiliar position for a long time grabbed his back.

The bed looked so tempting, but that would be a mistake.

He went down to the kitchen of the hotel and there were no lights lit and no one around so he made himself a cup of tea and some toast and marmalade, then he reported to the Cop shop and asked the Sgt at the desk to let him know if any big wigs were due to visit.

“Mawnin’ **Wishyud**, didjershitthebedorwot?” enquired the desk Sergeant with an amiable grin.

“Mornin’” replied **Wishyud** ignoring the wit and stretching then yawning, “Any big wigs expected today?”

“ Why mate? yer expecting the Perlice medal fer valour?” asked the Sgt with a sarcastic grin.

“ No, MATE, I just want to get my head down for a couple of hours at least” and he reeled off what had happened last night.

## ***“ Yea, o.k, go lie down in cell ten, no bugger’ll bother yu there” warbled the desk Sgt***

“ I want you to lock me in” said **Wishyud**, I have a horrible feeling that back stud is after me, and he seems to be able to enter and leave at will so I’m taking no chances, but I must sleep.”

“ No problem **Wishyud**, just give me a couple knocks on the wall wen yu wake an’ ah’ll come an’ let yus out” warbled the Sgt.

As **Wishyud** got comfortable he now felt the fatigue wash over him, and as he lay there with eyes knapping he kept seeing a rivet in the grill of the door, then as if he was being lowered down a deep silent well that had no bottom he was asleep.

He awoke to someone shaking him and there was a droning noise, he opened his eyes and the droning suddenly began to make sense, “ Bloody ‘ell owd mate, ah thowt tha wus deard, ah wish ah cud sleep like that”

“What time is it?” asked **Wishyud**, then realising he had his wrist watch on he glanced at it and almost fell off the bunk.

“Sapristi, I’ve just lost a day” he growled.

The Sergeant looked puzzled and asked, “Wot’s Sapristi mean?”

“Haven’t got a clue mate” grinned. **Wishyud** , “Me Dad always used it”

“ Aye ah suppose ‘e wud ger a bit pissed off ‘evvin’ tu run up an’ dahn them steps ivvery day”

## ***“ Wot steps?” enquired Wishyud***

“In bleed’n’ Russia” said the Sgt.

**Wishyud** wasn’t listening any more, but brightened up as he realised he felt so good now after his sleep.

As **Wishyud** was having a mug of tea with the desk Sgt, the desk Sgt reached into his top pocket and pulled out a small photograph and dropped it on the table.

“My kids” he pointed proudly.

“ Huh, nice looking kids” grinned **Wishyud** and then something clicked in his mind and suddenly he saw a rivet, a red telephone box, and a camera”

“ That’s it” he said jumping up.

The desk Sgt looked a bit puzzled, “Wassamarrer? yu got no sugar in yer tea” he asked.

## ***“Nah, but I’ve have just had a good idea”***

And leaving the Desk Sgt with a puzzled look on his face **Wishyud** raced out to his car and took off for the Chemist’s shop in George Street.

After a chat with the Chemist who was an ardent photographer he went back to the cop shop and phoned an address in Hull.

“ So you can supply all that’s on the list and it will be on the midday ferry on Friday, yes that’ll be fine, oh and by the way don’t advertise what the merchandise is, just put a label on it to give the impression it is a box of drinking glasses or dinner service or whatever and many thanks for your assistance, and by the way I will be picking it up from New Holland when it arrives on the ferry, and thanks again, cheers”

**Wishyud** put down the phone and was rubbing his hands with gleeful satisfaction.

**Then** he arranged for the local odd job man to pick up the packages from the Ferry at New Holland and deliver them to the Chemist’s warehouse.

Since the Chemist had said he often got odd bits and bobs this way from Hull the delivery of the packages for **Wishyud** would go unnoticed by any who were keeping tabs on local peoples movements.

It had occurred to **Wishyud** that the murderer was topping anyone whom he thought were getting too close and since the bodies of the two Policemen were found near the old black mill it would appear to the murderer that they perhaps had spotted him on the top with his telescope and were waiting for him to come out.

On signing for the packages on New Holland pier, the odd job man asked one of the local porters to put it onto a trolley and transport it to his waiting car.

The odd job man then set off for Barton.

The next day **Wishyud** got a phone call from the Chemist to inform him the goods had arrived safely.

**Wishyud** then organised the telephone technicians from a Brigg telephone Company to call and pick up the equipment because he knew that if he went to collect it he could be seen from the mill.

Since trucks were often seen delivering and collecting at the chemists warehouse it would not be out of place.

A couple of days later a notice was put near the red telephone box just outside the Constitution Club.

It stated the phone box was out of order.

That afternoon a huge van drew up and parked next to the phone box and the phone box could not be seen from the other side of the market place so anyone who was curious had to come over to this side of the Market Place to see what was going on.

At first a crowd of youngsters gathered but on seeing nothing to write home about, they dispersed and went into the Butchery to play.

The Butchery was a bitumen and flagstoned area that was about as big as a school playground and was surrounded by the back yards of the peoples houses that were facing into George Street, Priestgate and Tutill's grocery store.

It was ideal as a play area for kids, but sometimes when the kids got a bit excited, the local residents would soon be up in arms, " If'n yo kids can't play quiet, bugger off 'ome afore ah fetch a stick tu yus"

The kids would run off, but be back the next night.

They were playing hide and seek one night and two kids were hiding in the same dark corner.

There was silence in the butchery as the kid who had been covering his eyes while the others ran and hid, opened his eyes and yelled,

### ***"Coming ready or not"***

One of the favourite places to hide was in the dark at the back of the old bookies house in the butchery.

It was dark at the back because the single globe electric light put on the corner of the house by the council to enable folk to see their way through the Butchery.

Some people riding bicycles decided to go through the Butchery at night, and those that did so with no lights on their bikes some time ran bang into the wall of the old house that was in the dark

When one such person ended up in hospital the council decided that since the house was slap in the middle of the Butchery, and classed as a public right of way, the council could not close any part of it.

So they opted for the cheapest solution, and that was to fit a lamp to the front corner of the house to light up the thoroughfare

But at night the back of the house was in deep shadow.

It was to this shadow the young lad tippy toed, hoping to creep up behind someone hiding there and scare the crap out of him.

As the lad got to the corner and very cautiously peered round he found himself looking at a huge brass belt buckle.

The lad's gaze moved slowly up and took in the horrible face that was leering down at him, he caught his breath, but then the animal in him took over, and three things happened at once, the brown stuff that had suddenly run down his leg was left in mid air as the lad shrieked and left it dangling, and as it flopped to the floor because of no support the lads silhouette could be seen legging it, with the lad's shadow about fifty yards behind him trying vainly to keep up.

The lad's Dad rang the Cop shop, and the Butchery was soon suddenly alive with the boys in blue with powerful flashing torches, but the apparition if indeed there had been one was long gone and all they found was what the lad had jettisoned as he fled in terror.

Some Coppers were of the opinion it was one of the kids with a mask on the end of a broom nicked from one of the back yards close by had put a scare into the lad, but **Wishyud** latched onto the fact that the lad had insisted he had first seen a big brass buckle on a heavy leather belt. However after that incident the Butchery residents enjoyed such peace and quiet that was unequalled since they had moved in, and some had been born there.

The big van parked in front of the telephone kiosk in the Market Place had obviously repaired the faulty phone because one chap picked up the notice and threw it into the back of the truck. He then did a final check by lifting the receiver and spoke for a minute then put the phone down and climbed into the passenger side of the truck and it left the market place followed by a mist of pale blue vapour from the exhaust pipe.

**Wishyud** had been sitting in the Police Station and had received a phone call from the Market Place phone.

" O.K. mate it's all yours, it should be up an' runnin"

## ***Wishyud was pondering the boy in the butchery seeing the big man in the shadows?***

Had the man come down from the black mill to see what was going on in the telephone box because he could not see behind the big van from his high vantage point?

**Wishyud's** face took on a grim smile, he knew that whomever he was, he would be very clever indeed if he could spot the tiny radio camera hidden near the phone booth.

**Wishyud** switched on a radio receiver and pushed a lead from it into a metal box and another lead to a television screen.

After a bit of fiddling the picture on the screen was stable, and a clear view of the old black mill across from the telephone box in the Market Place could be clearly seen.

**Wishyud's** eyes were shining with excitement, "Now let's see if there is anybody using the top of the old mill as a lookout"

Opening another box Ivor dragged out a video tape recorder because he did not want to repeat the Brigg heavy book caper, in short he was not going to sit and watch this thing all night.

Then he had a thought, and ringing the people who had installed the miniature camera in the phone box asked them if they could fit another lens so he could get a closer look at the mill.

" Yes it's brilliant, but I can't see if anyone is on the top, ---yea, er, --no, --the picture is clear but I need to get a closer, ---Oh really, where?"

**Wishyud** looked at the black box and moved a knob a little and suddenly the picture on the screen leapt out at him.

" Bloody 'ell" spat **Wishyud**, " I can see the nails holding the canvas down , fantastic, thanks."

**Wishyud** put the phone down and adjusted the knob on the black box and marvelled how the picture varied from tiny, and taking in the whole Market Place to huge and picking up the sky through the gap between the bricks and the tarred canvas roof.

With the tape recorder now connected **Wishyud** left instructions for a new tape to be put in as soon as the one running in the machine was full.

Meanwhile he got busy learning as much about Barton as he could.

He gleaned information of where someone could hide out and no one would suspect they were there.

He got a list of all the local pits.

Jubb's chalk pit, Caister road pit, Horkstow pit, and Pebbly beach pit.

He made got a list of all the tide times and Ferry movements.

**Wishyud** also visited the local cemetery and checked all the monuments above ground where a big heavy granite lid could be moved and slid back if a strong man wanted to hide out of the wet and rain.

Since some of these dated back to the sixteen century and had cracks or gaps, **Wishyud** noticed he could see out to make sure no one was around if he wanted to get out without being seen.

On arriving back at the cop shop the Desk Sgt waved his arm and beckoned as **Wishyud** walked in through the front door.

**Wishyud** walked over to the Sgt's desk and queried, "What's up?"

Looking left, then right, as if he was about to part with some official secrets, the Sgt lowered his voice,

"Ah wus watchin' the monitor wot yuv' got hooked up tu that radio camera in the market place, an' guess wot?"

" Yu cin see somebody wi a telescope lookin' out the gap at the top, you wus right old mate, there is sum bugger up theer, but 'ow does 'e ger in tu the mill wi door locked an all t' winders all blocked up?"

"An' yu naw wot?" said the Sgt

" What?" asked **Wishyud**

"That bloody phone box in Market Place 'es bin vandalised, some bugger 'as painted all the winders wi' tar"

rasped the Sgt.

" I'm not concerned about the phone box", said **Wishyud**.

" So 'ow's yu still getting' good pitchers then?" queried the Sgt looking perplexed.

" Because the camera is not in the phone box, the van in front of the phone box was a ploy to make anyone watching think that a surveillance camera was there and I was hoping we would get some pics of him near the phone box, but he is crafty and smart".

**Wishyud** went into the room where the camera's radio receiver was, and watched what the recorder was taping now and he could see the gap at the top of the brickwork, but after a prolonged stare at the screen there was no movement obvious from within the mill. **Wishyud** then asked the desk Sgt to mark that particular tape when it was full and ejected. End part five

## **Part six**

**Wishyud** the Detective was sitting in the back room of Barton Police Station and rubbed his now tired eyes. He had been re-running the tape of the old black mill and making more notes.

He had also discovered that on delving back into the files that a man had been found dead under mysterious circumstances about two years ago near a village not far from Barton

On perusing this report **Wishyud** read that the man's neck had been broken and he had been discovered the next day when one local Farmer discovered the man and the horse had not returned to the farm for the night the previous day.

The horse was found still yoked to the plough, but it had got hungry and bored just standing there and had ploughed one single but crooked furrow to the nearest hedge, where it began to snack on the grass now near yellowing leaves of the hawthorn hedge.

The man's body was found next to a stand of trees on some slightly higher ground in the middle of the field that was only half ploughed.

The only footprints ever found in the soft earth were those of the horse and those of the dead man.

Some farm wise people suggested the man had stopped near the copse of trees to answer to the call of nature, but most jested," I have heard it said that one is breaking ones neck for a pee, but I have never heard it actually happening to someone"

Since there was no evidence of the man tripping on a tree root and no other marks on him the police were stumped.

The file had been put away and forgotten about since no further evidence was collected.

But the big mystery at the time was, " How did the man get his neck broken?"

**Wishyud** was fascinated by a picture that was beginning to form in his mind, he had so many bits of puzzle but no two bits would fit together and it seemed to him like he was doing a giant jigsaw puzzle, but it was like there were four different puzzles mixed up all in the one box.

What was puzzling the Detective was, why would someone kill a man having a leak in the middle of a field, but more to the point how did the killer get there and leave without leaving any tracks?

Why would a girl be killed in Winterton and a big man was seen heading for South Ferriby on the road which also leads to Barton.

Two policemen had been killed in Barton, a drunk killed in Barton, another man killed in the Blue Bell Inn in Barton.

Then there was the shadowy figure on top of the old mill in Barton.

And did the young boy in the Butchery see the killer in the Buchery? **Wishyud** was convinced he did because he mentioned seeing a big brass buckle on the man's belt.

Some seamen use heavy belts and **Wishyud's** mind flicked to the big bloke on the ferryboat that day.

He also remembered the bloke's thick powerful arms and the tattoos.

**Wishyud** grinned to himself as he thought of the tattoos, he remembered the red heart with the arrow through it

And the inscription "True love" and just below it the picture of Buffallo Bill.

**Wishyud** had at first suspected the young bloke in the market place who had lifted a car and thrown it to one side.

But on checking the murder of the man in The Blue Bell Inn he learned that the man in question was in Hull at the time, and since the last ferry boat sailed at nine P.M. and the man in the Blue Bell Inn had been murdered at ten P.M. so he was out of it.

Someone who knew the river would never cross in a rowboat because once caught in the run of the tide would finish up near Goole or swept out into the North Sea and lost forever.

Such a man crossing between tides would also be seen because there were too many barges sailing on the tides and too many people on the banks could spot him.

Father Jeckle was a Roman Catholic Priest, he stood six foot three in his socks and most bully boys in Barton and nearby villages doffed their caps and those who went by bareheaded touched a forelock in respect.

They not only showed respect for the Cloth but they respected the man.

Father Jeckle was also a star gazer.

Living on his own in a tiny cottage next to the Roman Catholic Church in White Cross Street he was just across the road from the huge mansion type house of the local Magistrate.

There was a high wall running the length of the Church property to keep out the sound of traffic and or other sounds such as brass bands parading up and down when it was holiday time and Barton fair week.

The high wall had been built because once the brass bands got going in White Cross Street the person who was whispering his confession through the wee grill had to raise his voice and so too did the Vicar.

On one occasion, and to the embarrassment of all, when suddenly the band stopped playing, the Vicar's voice now quiet loud and clear could be heard enquiring " And did you molest her?"

The Vicar had a passion for gardening, and since he had moved in and taken over as the minder of lost souls in Barton his green fingers had transformed the property of the Church here in White Cross Street.

White Cross Street was like two streets wide, because in the olden days it had been the only way in to the cattle markets and the carts being pulled by more than one horse needed the width of two streets to turn in.

In the old days it had been a muddy bog in winter or bad weather, but with the advent of tar and stones to improve roads in about the late eighteen hundreds Barton roads took on a new look.

A little later in the piece footpaths were being laid and the town soon began to grow.

The Vicar's other passion was gazing up into the heavens with a very powerful telescope and charting the various stars in the wild blue yonder.

To follow this passion the Vicar had got the local builder to build him an observation platform in the attic.

One night as the Vicar was trying to follow a swiftly moving shooting star, (and it wasn't John Wayne) when something fuzzy moved up into view.

The Vicar removed his eye from the scope and looked through the window direct that he had had built into the roof.

The telescope was now lined up with the top of the high wall so the Vicar looked again into the eyepiece and adjusted the focus until the slabs on top of the wall could be seen quite plainly.

Curious now, the Vicar moved the telescope sideways and the stones seemed to be racing by.

Then a huge black building out of focus came into view.

Again adjusting the eyepiece the Vicar found he had a clear view of the top half of old black Mill.

Moving further left he could now see the back of the Magistrates mansion house and the house was in total darkness.

Up in the old black Mill a big man was sitting on some sacks that contained peanuts.

Now and again he reached into the sack next to him and withdrew a handful of peanuts.

He sat there and chewed and read a newspaper by the hurricane lamp then dosed off to sleep.

A big rat was watching him from the shadows just below a window ledge.

About midnight the man roused himself and the watching rat scurried away into the darkness of the mill.

The man put out the light and made his way to the trap door that led to the next floor down and turning he descended the ladder.

Outside the mill all was silent and nothing moved, but in the Magistrates house a light suddenly flicked on in one of the back bedrooms.

The Vicar, still searching the heavens, decided enough was enough for one night and was about to switch every thing off when he spotted a light suddenly come on in the big house across the way.

Curious, and thinking only thieves, vagabonds, vandals and Gypsies were abroad at this time of night the Vicar turned his telescope and focused it on the lighted window, but all he could make out was the pattern on the drawn curtains.

End part six

## **Part Seven**

Doctor Jim is dead.

The word raced round Barton like wild fire.

Doctor Jim Sandy had always been there for people who needed him.

No matter what the weather, Doc Jim would be there at out of place farms and wheat fields or paddock when an accident occurred.

His little car would often be seen chugging along village lanes and at times accompanied by the local midwife they would pull up outside some cottage, and about half an hour later the wailing of a new baby would drift out over the moors.

Sometimes at two or three o' clock in the morning he would be pulling into his shed where he kept his car and the lights of the car would go out, then Jim would not even bother to close the door of the shed in case he got an urgent call out again.

Up in his bedroom he would be asleep before the car's engine had cooled off.

Jim Yordan was standing in front of his hairdressing shop with a cigarette in his mouth and his grey hair began to stand on end as he watched the stocking tops of the buxom wench on a bicycle go gliding by, "By eck, if ah wus twenty years younger ah'd show 'er wot's wot, but now a days ah wet me'sen cos ah cin nivver find it in time"

Then calling after the wench he cried, "Doan't peddle so 'ard lass, tha'll boil thi watter app'n" But the lass was up to the likes of owd Jim, and twisting her head sideways and with a cheeky grin, yelled back,

"Aye, well thee weern't be getting' thi nuts scalded ter day ...or any other chuffin' day fer that matter"

Jim sighed a very deep sigh, like he had put fifty Quid on the favourite at Doncaster races, and it had dropped dead after the first lap, and the Jockey was in hospital wi' a broken leg.

It just wasn't his day, but then he brightened up as he spotted Chalky.

Chalky White came shambling up the street, but on spotting the crumpet on wheels going by, paused, and his eyes began going round like Catherine wheels, as if Gentleman Jim had just smacked him in the gob wi' a big bunch o' green bananas, then as the wench disappeared in a flurry of very short skirts round the next corner, Chalky came back to earth and cruised to a stop near Jim.

"Gawd, Jim lad ---- imagine bein' stranded fer years on a desert island wi' that?" he grinned.

Jim grimaced and muttered, and the ash began to droop on the fag in his gob, "Chalky me owd mate --- tha'd be deead on't fust neet, app'n"

"Aye but wot a way tu go, ah'd think all me chuffin' bothdays ad come at wunce " grinned Chalky

Jim sniffed, and the inch and a half of ash on his ciggy finally gave up the struggle to stay attached and fell off, exploding on the toe of Jim's shiny black left shoe.

"Bugger" exploded Jim, "Ah've ony just bluddy finished cleanin' 'em" then with a heavy sigh he put the now grey powdered shoe toe behind his right calf and let his trousers remove the grey ash with a couple of rubs up and down.

“Es thee ‘eered?” queried Chalky, ignoring Jim’s discomfort, “Doc Jims deear, ‘is chuffin’ car blew up inti smithereens as soon as he switched t’ ignition key”

The Detective from London was still making notes in the Cop Shop when the phone rang and Wishyud picked up the receiver and a coarse whisper snarled, “Yo shud ‘ave confessed all yer sins yisterd’y Sherlock, now it’s way tu lait and yo is next, but ah ‘ev summat special like in mind for yo, all tothers got in’t way accidental like, but yo ‘ad to come all t’ way from Lundun to stick yo beak inta what dun’t not concern yo, but sin’ yo ‘ave chosen to hinterfere yo will have lots o’ time to reflect as yer dee reet slow like, naw wot ah meen ?, and ah duz meen slow like an’ painful”—then here was a click and a buzzing noise.

The hair on Wishyud neck was standing up and he felt a chill suddenly trickling right down to just above his boot tops when suddenly the door opened and he almost sprang out of the chair but his right hand had already dived down into his pocket and the hammer of the .22 Barretta automatic was cocked and the safety off.

The desk Sgt stared at Wishyud, “Hey, mate you alright?” then noticing Wishyud right hand in his trouser pocket, muttered, “Aw sorry mate, did I come in at a wrong moment?”

Wishyud grinned and replied, “No, but I was concentrating on a phone call just as you opened the door and from force of habit I grabbed this.” then slowly withdrawing his right hand with the Barretta in it from his pocket and with the hammer still cocked he grinned at the sudden look of surprise on the Sgt’s face. “Gawd, mate”, and noticing the hammer was back, the Sgt backed up a step and blurted, “Is that bloody thing loaded?”

“No point in carrying it if you are not prepared to use it” calmly replied Wishyud”

Then putting his left hand over the weapon and grasping it firmly, Wishyud put his right hand thumb on the hammer and held it fast as he pressed the trigger and held it pressed while gently letting the hammer down, then pushed the tiny slide on the side of the gun to “Safe” “You aught to keep that thing out of sight old mate, don’t worry, I haven’t seen it all right?” said the desk Sgt.

“Yea right, thanks” grinned Wishyud, now feeling a bit embarrassed.

Wishyud then told the desk Sgt of the phone conversation, and suddenly gasped, “Sapristi, not another one?”

“What d’yu mean, another one?” asked the desk Sgt,

“ The back stud is going after the Vicar, of course, I know now how he does it, Gawd, it is all so simple it is unbelievable, I should have woke up to it long before this”

“That bloody message was taped and played back on a timer device, the timer cut the end of the message off, that means he could be anywhere now”

Wishyud raced into the next room and pointed to the group that were discussing the charts on the wall.

“ Right you lot, grab transport and head for the Catholic Church in Whitecross Street

“Three of you into my car now”

“And if there isn’t enough transport get outside and run to Whitecross Street or pinch some bugger’s bike, just tell ‘em it’s urgent, tell ‘em there’s a man from Mars wi’ a fat hidin’ behind the bloody curtains in yer old ladies bedroom”

“ Move it, he yelled, as the group stood there looking at one another like stunned mullets

This was a side of Wishyud they had never seen before, and they suddenly came out of their trance like state and sprang into action.

The doorway of Barton Police Station was suddenly alive with blue uniformed bodies erupting from within the Cop Shop like rats leaving a hayloft when a ferret has suddenly decided this is going to be his favourite pad, well at least until there are no more rats to bite and suck dry.

Piling into three cars the Fuzz raced towards the Anglican Church then did a right turn into Whitecross Street with tires protesting the sharp cornering at speed.

Jim Yordan was outside his shop having a natter with Chalky White and said, ‘Ah was just thinkin’ o’ puttin’ kettle on, es thee got time fer a cuppa?’

## **Chalky White grinned and chortled, “Try me”**

Just then there was a roar of engines coming from the High Street.

## **“Ayup” burped Jim, “Summats is appenin’ app’n?”**

Then a line of cars shot across the end of the street and the engine noise seemed to be screaming to the Church.

“App’n sum poor bugger fergot ‘e wus gerrin’ wed terday” quaffed Chalky.

## **“ Naw” said Jim, “They is Cop cars”**

But then the engine noise and screeching of tyres told both men that the cars were even now on Whitecross Street and heading in the general direction of Baysgarth Park.

“Ayup” said Jim, hastily grabbing the Woodbine packet out the top pocket of his light brown haircutter’s smock and discovering there was only one left in it.

### **“Summats is ‘appnin’, ah cin feel it in me watter,”**

Then losing patience because his usual nimble nicotine nail nibbled knicker nudgers could not persuade the single tube of crap rolled up in rice paper to come out, he savagely tore the packet length ways and grabbed the now bent fag and stuffed it into his cake ‘ole.

The burning stub he had removed from his gob now ignited the new one he had replaced it with, and now he flung down the wet stub that still had a glow at one end and put his foot on it, then with a twist of the shoe sole he ground it into the concrete pavement slab.

Chalky suddenly said, “Ah’ll be back fer that cuppa and let yer naw wot’s app’nin’ “ “Aye well mind tha does, cos ah can’t leave me shop” wailed Jim.

Chalky began to run up King’s Street then disappeared left round the corner into Priestgate.

Jack Lempers the cleaver weaver who owned the Butchers shop just across road from the corner, spotted Chalky doing a fair imitation of Charlie Chaplin running round a corner at top speed on one leg, like a dog with it’s leg up trying to piss along the full length of a long wall whilst the other three legs are going like the crank rods on the London to Brighton Express.

Jack watched as Chalky chugged up the street and chuckled to himself, “ The ony time that bugger moves that fast is wen he’s on a promise” then raising the razor edged cleaver brought it down with a sickening thud and the skinned rabbit on the block was now two halves of skinned rabbit.

Jim the Barber stood there for a moment and mused on how Chalky could really move when he wanted to.

One Copper in the speeding car with Wishyud asked, “How do you know he will be there if we can never see him?”

“Don’t you worry, you’ll see him” snarled Wishyud, the back stud is attacking above ground now like at Winterton so we are on the same ground”

“The Vicar’s house and the Church are modern so they won’t have any tunnels so he will be above ground for a change and can be seen going or leaving if we are in time”

“What’s Winterton got to do with this, an’ wot tunnels?” asked the Constable with a puzzled look.

“The Blue Bell Inn is an old building, the house in The Butchery is an old building”.

“The Volunteer Arms in Whitecross Street is an old building, that’s where he was just surfacing when the drunk ran round the corner and fell down on top of the killer through the open pavement trapdoor of the pub’s cellar, but then he heard the copper running just round the corner and shut the trapdoors quick smart”.

“Then he put that blokes light out permanent as he lay there knocked out from his fall”.

“ The killer knew he would have to move the body because the smell would eventually attract unwanted attention to the cellar.”

“That’s why the body was found next morning well clear of the cellar and the Pub”.

“It’s no good looking in the cellar because all the old original pubs here have secret tunnels and they all link up in the cellars, but they are hidden but if we can find one it will show us where the others are.”

“In short it’s a bit like a maze, and one cannot get in or out of a maze if one has no idea where the entrance or exit is, but in this case even the entrances and exits are hidden”

“The bloke in the ploughed field probably was having a leak when he saw the trap door open under the all the dead leaves, and the bloke coming out was as much surprised as the bloke having a peaceful leak was, but he killed him just the same to keep his secret safe, he is sick and getting sicker”

“He gets in and out of the old mill the same way, and until we find a tunnel entrance we are at a disadvantage and he knows it”

“But he is in for a nasty shock shortly” added Wishyud, because I think the Volunteer Arms in Whitecross Street is the only pub with no lock on the outside.”

“Nobody can get in from the outside, but the killer can surface there anytime he wishes But if the cellar man bolts it on the inside when the killer has used it to surface, the killer can get back into the tunnel system via the his bedroom in the big house next to the old mill.”

“I think the Old Mill and the Volunteer Arms in Whitecross street are part of a huge tunnel system that stretch as far as Thornton Abbey, and include a lot of the very old pubs in the villages of Ulcby, Thornton Curtis, Wooton and any of the old publicans who joined the brotherhood of the Black Hood”.

“Whoa mate, wotcha bin drinkin?” asked the Constable.

“ I ‘m serious” said Wishyud, “In the seventeen hundreds, smugglers would sail up the Humber and on dark nights they would unload casks of brandy from France and it would be moved via the tunnels to all the brothers of the Black Hood who were running pubs in North Lincs”

“The Customs and Excise men of the day would not have a clue until it was too late and by the time they woke up all the grog would be safe, and any people who knew about it kept their mouths shut tight, shut ‘cos they knew that any one blabbing would have had their throat slit”

### ***“Anyway I have a job lined up for you tomorrow”, warbled Wishyud***

“What do you have in mind” asked the Constable, still trying to digest this latest fantasy tale.

“Tomorrow I want you to come with me to Scunthorpe to the Army and Navy Surplus stores, and we will pick up as many ex Army compasses as we can get hold of”

“ I want you to organise as many small maps of the Northern half of Lincolnshire.

“ What you can’t get you must have copies made, but I want everyone on this lark tomorrow to be equipped with dry rations for a couple of days, and each man must have a map and a compass and a water bottle, and add to the list a good flash light and some spare batteries.”

“I want them in pairs to search every pub cellar and anywhere else they may deem is hiding a cellar and I want them all armed”

“ And having found a tunnel they are to proceed until they reach a branching tunnel and find out where it leads” all tunnels found are to be logged and the compass bearing noted, then we will get the council to brick ‘em up with two brick walls three yards apart and the gap will be filled with concrete.”

### ***“Do you think you will get it passed by the council?” asked the constable***

“ No problem, because if the council won’t come to the party I am going to ask that the whole system is dug out and filled in and it will cost a hell of a lot more”

“And anyone caught with anything else but dry rations and water in the bottle will answer to me, just make sure you pass that on” rasped Wishyud

“ I don’t want any slip ups on this, this back stud has to be stopped now”.

“And weed out anybody who might be claustrophobic, I don’t want to hear any excuses if he gets away or if any of our people are caught off guard”

“ We have been groping around in the dark long enough, it’s time we shed some light underground”

”Why would anyone want to have a tunnel in the middle of a field, that’s bullshit?” argued the Constable

“No it’s not actually”, said Wishyud patiently, “During the reign of Cromwell and Henry the Eighth old houses that were young then had false walls called Priest holes, and tunnels to allow people who were being persecuted for their beliefs to hide and or escape.”

“One can escape into the middle of a field and from there to a friends house in a distant village, but if one wants to get back one must have a reference point, what better than a small wood in the centre of a field that has always been ploughed around and never ploughed up?”

“The girl in Winterton was killed because she was cycling home and saw him coming out of the Humber River at low tide, he knew no barges would be sailing with the tide so low, so he made sure he was seen in Hull, but all he had to do was hitch a ride from Hull on the Yorkshire side of the river to North Ferriby then cross the river at low tide.

It is a known fact that the Romans in olden times used to walk from South Ferriby in Lincolnshire to North Ferriby in Yorkshire when the tide was out and because the area is still wild he knew he would never be seen crossing there”.

“The distance across at that point is just under a mile but to walk along the bank until one gets to Goole then go over the river by the small bridge there and walk back on the opposite bank would take one the best part of a day.”

“ But he would have to know where the crossing was because if he wandered off it he could sink up to his waist in mud and with no one to help him out he would drown with the next incoming tide.”

Trying to grasp the issue the Constable asked “But even if he knew where the old Roman road was under the mud how would he know how to stay on it on a dark night?”

“Easy” replied Ivor, “ When a ploughman ploughs across the field he moves a sharpened stick as a reference point, all the Romans had to do was to pick a distant point on the opposite bank and make directly for it, in the dark they would use a star when the time was right”.

But according to history the Roman’s used the daylight and tide times and common sense”

“Aw yu meen the Romans said, “F—k you, why shud ah walk round yo friggin’ field wen ah kin walk straight through it an’ shorten the distance”, grinned the Constable

“Well that is one way of putting it” grinned Wishyud, but I would not have used the same terminology exactly”

“ But come to think of it” mused Wishyud, “ The word f—k does have a profound impact in the English language!”

“ How du yu meen” asked the Constable with a puzzled look.

“ Well” said Wishyud, “It is a very useful and descriptive word actually” grinning as he recalled listening to a recording once on his computer.

“F—k is a word that describes many things, in fact it is so versatile that it is also used in the German as “Fricken” and was borrowed back by the English who corrupted it to

## **“Friggin’ ”**

“Hence we have, wot the friggin ‘ell are yus up to, and weer the friggin ‘ell is yus goin?”

Even kids are getting into the act these days” added Wishyud

Laughing now the Constable asked “ How do you meen?”

“ Well, in the good old days they used to ask their friends to go play hide and go seek, but today it’s more a case of hide an’ go frig yu self or frig each other”

“The girl was unlucky”, continued Wishyud now serious again, “She saw him leaving the mud and never had a chance”

“That is why he seems so clever, but having thought it through he killed Doctor Jim, probably because the Doctor recognised some symptoms and the bloke knew it.”

“So he set a device under the Doc’s car, because he knew he couldn’t get the Doc in a pub”

“Now for some reason he is after the Vicar”

“Before Doctor Jim was killed all the victims were killed because he was afraid they had seen him and he bided his time to get them by using the tunnels”

“ But Doctor Jim knew he was sick and the back stud knew that the Doc knew, that’s why he killed him.

“Possibly at first he went to see Doctor Jim but then on finding out that nothing cured him he began to change and became very angry and hostile”

“Sometimes the illness, for some reason, would abate and he would get back to almost normal, bit like Dr Jeckle and Mr Hide”

“ By the way we have got a warrant to confiscate Doctor Jim’s records and I will have a browse through them tonight.”

The Police cars screeched to a halt near one end of the twenty foot high wall and the boys in blue spilled out and began moving through the bushes toward the house with batons drawn.

Nothing moved in the house and Wishyud had a horrible feeling they were too late.

“Over here” cried the voice of big Richard, the burly Gainsborough cop.

Wishyud ran over and almost puked as he gazed at the still body of Father Jeckle who was laid on his back and his throat looked as if it had been savagely ripped out by a wild bear.

The Police searched the small cottage then searched the church, but Wishyud knew they were wasting their time and the killer was long gone.

Back at the Cop Shop Wishyud was brooding on what had happened and was churning over what he had learnt on moving up here to Barton from London.

Going through the late Doctor Jim’s records he came across one item that immediately grabbed his attention and as he read on he could not believe what he was reading.

“This patient has a malady causing hair loss and teeth to fall out, certain muscles of the body will develop great strength and the whole body will change, the patient will at times be in great pain and like a rabid dog will slaver at the mouth. We need to do more tests to find what is causing this abnormality.

On questioning the patient as to his diet he agreed the only thing he ever ate that differed to any one else in the house were pea nuts that he stole from the old black mill.

Since the old black mill could accommodate twenty tons of peanuts the rat population there over the years has soared and the rats have been defecating on the peanuts

The patient confided in me that he had been stealing said peanuts and I have come to the conclusion that his malady is the result of handling and ingesting fouled peanuts over a long period of time with this end result, he will eventually succumb to madness, delirium, distress, and a very painful lingering death.

It is my strong belief that the man is suffering from ----“

Then a thought struck Ivor out of the blue.

Apart from a Doctor, Mid Wife, and Church in any town, where else would anyone go?

## ***The Dentist? and the Barber?***

### ***The Barber???***

Wishyud leaped out of his chair and almost collided with the door as it opened and the Desk Sgt appeared.

“Weer yu off in such a ‘urry” warbled the Sgt.

"Listen----, get some men, and go to the blue Bell Inn, and tell them to search the cellar again, examine the walls and casks or anywhere where a tunnel opening could be"  
"If we can find an opening into that bloody rabbit warren he's using we might just begin to make some progress".

## ***" Yea, right, catch yu later then, and watch yerself" warbled the Sgt***

Wishyud paused at the door and the Sgt looked up, "I always watch myself" Wishyud grinned. Then he was gone.

Walking up King Street Wishyud saw the red and white colours of the barber's pole of Jim Jordan's hairdressing salon, and as he drew nearer to it observed the door was open so he walked in and saw Jim had put a cushion on the chair to elevate the chubby little lad who's hair he was cutting.

The Lady who was sitting reading a magazine would be the little lad's Mum thought Wishyud Next to the lady was a grey haired old man who was just in the nodding of stage.

He would lean over, then lean a little more toward the wall, then with a little grunt would sit bolt upright and the eyes would snap open, then about half a minute later the eyes would be knapping again, and the whole sequence would be repeated over and over until the snipping of the scissors in Jim's hand stopped their clicking noise.

Then the old man became more alert and almost snapped at Wishyud as Wishyud sat down on the bench next to him.

" Ah'm next" and he glared at Wishyud though thick spectacles

"Keep your shirt on gramps, I'm not here for a haircut" smiled Wishyud.

The old man grunted "Good" then looked sideways, perhaps a bit disappointed because the stranger wasn't going to argue the issue.

Then having re-run the conversation with this total stranger in his mind, he asked abruptly and gruffly " Wot is thee in 'ere fer then if thee in't evvin thee 'air cut?"

"Well, I think that is between me and the Barber" said Wishyud looking towards the Barber and nodding.

Jim the Barber grinned as he dusted off the little lad and then lifted the little lad down and removed the cushion.

The old man watched as the Mother paid Jim for the lad's trim, then stood up as the Lady and son left the shop.

Jim motioned the old man to sit in the barber chair then and asked the old man how he would like his hair done.

"Short back an' sides, an' don't bother clickin' they bloody shears if'n yu not cuttin' owt off ah'm ony payin' fer wot thee teks off, an' bloody finger exercisin' ain't included" growled the old bloke.

Wishyud picked up the magazine the woman had been browsing through and noted the date on it.

He took in the décor of the barber's shop and his eyes began to water as the haze added by the cigarette now in the Barber's mouth thickened the atmosphere.

"Do you mind if I open the door?" asked Wishyud above the snip of the scissors.

The Barber stopped cutting and opened the door, "How's that?" he quipped with a grin.

## ***" Thanks" said Ivor***

" Nivver mind the bloody door, tha's supposed tu be cuttin' me 'air" jabbered the old bloke crouching in the Barber's chair.

" There yu go sir" said Jim finally brushing the man off then holding a foot square mirror behind the mans head so he could see it in the huge mirror to his front.

" Huh, ah suppose yu want payin' fer that bloody mess" snarled the old man.

But Jim just smiled and said, well Sir, since you are obviously one of our Senior Citizens

I could have cut your hair free of charge, but I have to charge you something for chair wear and tear, plus having my tools sharpened and sweeping up your unwanted hair clippings.

But the old bloke was not beaten and responded with, "Next time ah comes in ah'll bring me awn bloody chair an' plastic bag wi scissors, then wot will thee do?"

He then left not waiting for an answer.

And when the old man had gone Jim muttered, "Yea, an' ah'll use a bloody guillotine ti cut thee 'air off all wi' one snip, includin' yer lugs an' gob yu miserable owd pillock!"

" Turning to Wishyud Jim grinned and said, "Sorry about the wait, but some of them do take the biscuit at times"

### ***“That’s o.k. Mr Yordan” said Wishyud***

“Actually I wanted a word with you about your customers”

“Anyone in particular, and to what end” asked Jim.

Wishyud pulled out his warrant card and Jim grabbed the cigarette butt out of his mouth as the burning butt had got so close to his lip it was getting suddenly uncomfortable.

“Ah, yer one of them London Dic—Detectives up here helping to solve the murders”

“Yes” said Wishyud, I had heard that you claim to have invented a medication for hair loss”

“So?” queried Jim

“Is that true” asked Wishyud

“Ah suppose yo cud say that” preened Jim

“What made you begin research in that area” asked Wishyud

“Well” replied Jim, “I have the odd person in here with small bald patches and other skin problems and have tried to find out what is causing the problem and what will cure it.”

### ***“Do you know the big man who lives in the magistrates house” asked Wishyud***

“Aye, ah do as a matter o’ fact” said Jim, “‘e was the one who came to me first with it about four years ago, he was a nice lookin’ lad then but hasn’t been around here lately, it worked for some but it would not work for ‘im, an’ the last time I saw him was a couple of years ago an’ ‘e was completely bald an’ ‘is skin was in a mess”

There was a long pause as Wishyud watched Jim cleaning the comb and scissors and going to the door to shake the neck cloth where he had to pause until a passing woman walked by his shop doorway, then shaking the cloth Jim came back in and sat down in his barber’s chair and fished out another cigarette.

“Ah reckon that lad needed a course o’ lukkin’ at” murmured Jim almost to himself, putting the now folded cloth over the back of the chair.

The two men were silent for a minute, then Jim the Barber drawled, “Yu know since this is an emergency, couldn’t you apply to have all Doctor Jim’s records on the lad so you could see if you could find any answers?”

“Yes, well actually I did get a warrant and I have already had a quick read at some very interesting stuff that you wouldn’t believe.”

Actually I was a bit surprised the old Magistrate granted me a warrant.

### ***“After all they are like a tight family up there”***

“Well said Wishyud the only other way is to catch him in the act and we will nail him”

Then Wishyud leaned back and closed his eyes and emitted a gentle snore.

But his hand was in his pocket touching the 22 automatic.

End Part seven

### ***Part eight***

Wishyud was holding his breath and swimming for his life, and with arms pumping up and down like a tin toy wind up penguin made in Germany he suddenly reached the surface and gratefully gulped in the beautiful fresh air.

Then he woke up and realised it was an irate Constable who had hold of both of his arms and was mouthing “Come on damn it, Ah wish yud wake up Wishyud”

“Wassamatter?” gasped Wishyud looking round and then realising he had succumbed to fatigue and having sat down had immediately dozed off to sleep.

“Old Jim the barber’s place was broken into but Jim was at Chalky’s place playin’ cards.” The Constable informed Wishyud

“Where is Jim now?” asked Wishyud

## ***“He’s back in his shop cryin’ over the new door he’s got tu shell out fer”***

“Well don’t worry about Jim, the strangler won’t hurt Jim, yet, ‘cos he thinks Jim is the only one who can get his hair back for him with his secret formula”

“Secret formula my arse, wot chuffin’ secret formula? surely you don’ believe all this Cinderella crap, or do you? asked the Constable with a sudden puzzled look on his clock. “Wot wi’ bloody pirates an’ smugglers, an’ now the local friggin’ wig fitter has a secret formula, wha wha wha, do me a favour Lad”

“Go on” said Wishyud “Have a good laugh, there is some poor sad bugger out there slowly being eaten alive by bugs that we don’t understand all because he nikked a few peanuts”

“After reading all the junk stuff and fairy tales while growing up he suddenly discovered that since Barton was so old some of the smugglers stuff just might be true”

“He not only visited Thornton Abbey with friends with some electronic equipment to put to rest the story of ghosts that were supposed to have been seen in the Abbey, but he discovered the entrance to a tunnel there which he kept to himself, then years later and out of work he decided to explore the opening he had seen when ‘e were a lad”

“ After months of exploring he found that the tunnels had indeed actually been used by smugglers and others in Cromwell’s time.”

“Then he found the link tunnel to the black mill and he would spend hours up there just drinking in the beauty of the country side”

he even got hold of an old brass telescope and found he could even monitor the comings and goings of most folk in Barton”.

“ Then hey presto!, one day somebody bugger backed a truck up and filled the mill wi’ peanuts”

“Since peanuts are handy to have in your pocket while under ground he was practically living on them at times”

“And the history of the big house where he worked for the Magistrate only goes back to just before WW1 there were no tunnels in it, and when the owners of the mill visited one day and discovered someone was nikkin’ nuts, they decided to board all the windows up and put a big heavy padlock on the only entrance door.

So mi’laddo just dug another tunnel from the house to the old mill, and he began it under one of the floors of the livery stable where all the mushrooms were growing in the horse manure”

“ But rats also like peanuts but they are not toilet trained, and they left a few calling cards which unfortunately dried out and eventually turned to fine dust.”

“Unfortunately our mate did not know that, and as the droppings and urine dried and turned to a fine powder it began to permeate the sacking and on to the nut casings, the rest is obvious, and s-t fer brains kept dining on the nuts, cracking them open wi’ finger and thumb and picking out the nut from the shell then straight into his gob, nutmeg an’ all”

“The first inkling he got of something being wrong was when his hair began to fall out, that’s when he went to see Doc Jim for help” But Doc Jim spotted the skin rashes that were forming and took some flakes to test”.

“When he got the answer from the skin specialists both he, and they, were no wiser”

“ Doc Jim couldn’t help him because even he was completely in the dark, and it was already too late, but taking pity on the wretch he gave him some tablets to ease the terrible burning of the skin and rashes that were now bursting out all over his body and in his ears and mouth”

“Now in his deranged mind he thinks that since Jim’s wonder ointment can cure his hair loss it will kill the bugs as well”

“ But when he finds out that nothing can help him anymore then he might even turn on Jim”

The Constable now sat down on the nearby wooden bench and Wishyud could almost hear him thinking, until suddenly, the Constable blurted out, “I’ve been eating peanuts”

“Wishyud laughed, “Yea right, you an’ me both”

“ No I’m serious, I bought some this morning at the sweet shop in the corner of the Market Place”

“Look” and the Constable reached into his top pocket and pulled out a small plastic bag and offered Ivor a peanut already shelled.

“ **Silly sod**” laughed Wishyud, “They ain’t been in the black mill!” **but refused the offer.**

“ If you bought those they will already have been checked by the health authority so don’t worry about them, -----but to be on the safe side, I ‘d be inclined to give em a rest for a while”

Then the door opened and the desk Sgt shouted, “Wishyud, we just got a call from the pub at South Ferriby, some bloke who were fishing in the sluice is there now buying a pint and ‘am samwich, he told the bartender he had seen a big ugly lookin’ bloke doin’ the one minute mile across the bridge at Ferriby Sluice and is heading towards Winterton”

“ Right” said Wishyud to the desk Sgt, “He knows we are on to him and is doing a runner, but where-ever he runs someone else is going to die so we got to get him now”

Then in the distance they all could hear the fire engine roaring toward Market Lane.

The phone suddenly jangled and the Desk Sgt snatched up the receiver, "Yea Barton Pol---- yu wot? it's on fire, o.k. just keep everyone away from it and make sure no one takes any peanuts when the fire is put out, that is if any are left".

Then turning to the others he warbled, "Well that solves one problem, the bloody Black mill is on fire and is looks like mi-laddo set it to go off with a timer once he was well out of the way."

"Now all we have to do is catch him, and I don't care if he is having a crap or a quick fifty, chuck a bluddy net over the back stud and bring him in and in a cage if yus 'ave to"

Wishyud collected another car, and the two car loads of Fuzz were soon speeding towards South Ferriby.

"You know what he is going to do" quaffed Wishyud, "He's fired the old mill, that tells me he doesn't intend coming back"

"But now he has to get his timing right and wait for the tide to be out and before it turns he has to get across the old Roman Road to North Ferriby so I have rung the Police across there and they are going to wait for him getting out on the other side."

"But where is he going to hunker down out of sight until the tide goes out?"

"Ah here's the pub" no don't stop, keep going we might be able to catch him still running before he gets a chance to hide"

The two cars roared across the bridge and Wishyud asked the blokes to keep their eyes peeled for anyone crouching behind bushes or trees that were speeding by.

The two cars of Coppers arrived at Winterton and one of the locals showed Wishyud where there was an old bit of jetty sticking out into the mud.

But it was a wild spot and the ground was boggy and not too safe with mud holes everywhere.

"The tide is low" said the local bod but it is not as low as it can get sometimes."

"Ere, who's that, he don't want to go crabbin' theer, muds real deep theer an' he can get into bother"

Wishyud ooked in the direction the local was looking and about three hundred yards away a big man was walking almost up to his knees in the mud and he was heading for the middle of the river.

"We have to stop him if he gets across and the others miss him he'll kill again"

"Hang about mate yu can't go paddlin' in theer, tide'll be comin' in soon an' if'n yon bloke dun't shift hissel a bit smartish he's goin' ter be fish bait"

The big man was now struggling to get one leg out of the mud and the more he struggled the more the other leg sank deeper into the clinging grey smelly mud.

### ***"Get some long planks and see if we can reach him"***

"Nearest long planks are at South Ferriby brickyards an' by the time yus gits theer an back the tide will be in"

News had got round what was happening at this spot on the Humber bank and the reporter from The Scunthorpe Daily News was interviewing and taking pictures.

And the muddy water that had been listlessly lapping at the muddy bank, lifting and lowering the green blades of grass on the tufts of mud began to make the grass move side ways as the tide began to come back in, and soon the water was moving swifter and some of the mud was being washed away from the bank as the river eroded the bank as it had been doing for hundreds of years.

The big man now had got weary of struggling and it slowly dawned on him that he was not on the old Roman Road at all, and now as the tide washed away the mud some of the flat shapes of the flat muddy old road stones could be seen as the water retreated then came back with the next surge of the incoming tide.

The unfortunate wretch was in fact just one foot away from safety, but he was now up to his waist in mud and he watched fascinated as the muddy water began to creep slowly towards him.

"My God " spat Wishyud, there must be something we can do? Are we just going to stand here and watch him drown?"

The local bloke looked at Ivan a bit old fashioned and said, "Somehow ah don't think even God 'hes a long enough rope ti reach from heaven ti "umber mud bank"

A silence had descended on the crowd of people now having heard the news and their cars were blocking the road, but the people were craning their necks as they gawped at the wretch trapped in the mud.

The water of the relentless river was even now lapping at the man's heavy brass belt buckle and ever so slowly creeping up his chest.

Then the man began screaming at the watching people and the struggling began anew like a rabbit caught in a wire noose, and the more the rabbit struggled the tighter the noose became.

As the cold muddy water began to lap at the man's neck a barge was seen in the distance and every one suddenly cheered as they hoped that even now he could be dragged out.

But the barge was loaded and needed deeper water to float in and when it grounded it was still too far away to be of any use.

The crowd grew quiet once more as most realised that the barge needed more water to float in, but the same water needed would also cover the man's head before the barge could get him out with it's winch.

Nothing could stop the tide and the man in the water began begging and saying how sorry he was and it was not his fault, and some of the women were crying and one man was noticed muttering the Lords Prayer.

The minutes ticked by and slowly the water crept up the thick neck of the man in the water.

The man's head was now straining back and his eyes were pleading as the water began to enter his mouth and he clamped his mouth shut and was trying to breath through his nose whilst keeping his mouth tight shut but was now gulping and coughing as mud began to irritate his throat, but then a ripple of water came across the surface slowly and covered the nose and after a few violent shakes of the scarred bald head and the mouth opening to cough out muddy water and spittle it slowly relaxed and sank beneath the water and a sudden rush of bubbles broke the surface and were carried along and away by the rippling muddy water.

The now silent crowd stared at the ever rippling muddy pale brown water that had been going out and coming into this part of Lincolnshire for thousands of years, and nothing or anyone was going to alter it as some of the bubbles burst and some remained but got ever smaller as the tide snared them and carried them off and out of sight.

All eyes tried to catch a last glimpse of the wretch but the mass of muddy water made it impossible to pinpoint now where he had been last seen.

The next day the Police got some workmen from the brickyards to get a lorry and bring long planks to get the body out when the tide was out.

It was not a pretty sight laid out in the back of the lorry.

Crabs had taken most of the top half of the body but the brass buckle and heavy belt plus the heavy mud had stopped them getting at the bottom half.

In one top pocket was a small locket and it had two sides, one a picture of a pretty woman and the other held a small twist of hair.

The old Black Mill in Market Lane was burnt to the ground and the town dogs had a ball chasing and killing the rats that were almost too fat to run.

The tunnel from Thornton Abbey was blocked up at each end and some years later parts of it collapsed and contractors got a job trucking land fill and levelling the ground.

**Wishyud** made the landlady's day when he was leaving to go home to London.

He reached over and gave her a real smacker on the gob and grinned goodbye.

The landlady flushed very red and ran indoors in tears, sobbing "ee, wot a luvli fellah"

The End. **L**

**Tom Barker. Born 23 rd May 1921.**