



KEMP. I know you are. You killed my old boss. I know it was you.

SLOANE. Your vision is faulty. You couldn't identify nobody now. So long after. You said so yourself.

KEMP. I got to go. (*Pause.*) I'm expecting delivery of a damson tree.

SLOANE. Sit still! (*Silence.*) How were you going to identify me?

KEMP. I don't have to. They got fingerprints.

SLOANE. Really?

KEMP. All over the shop.

SLOANE. It was an accident, Pop. I'm innocent. You don't know the circumstances . . .

KEMP. Oh . . . I know . . .

SLOANE. But you don't.

KEMP. You murdered him.

SLOANE. Accidental death.

*Pause.*

KEMP. No, sonnie . . . no.

SLOANE. You're pre-judging my case.

KEMP. You're bad.

SLOANE. I'm an orphan.

KEMP. Get away from me. Let me alone.

SLOANE (*puts the stick into KEMP's hand*). I trust you, Pop. Listen. Keep quiet.

*Silence.*

It's like this see. One day I leave the Home. Stroll along. Sky blue. Fresh air. They'd found me a likeable permanent situation. Canteen facilities. Fortnight's paid holiday. Overtime? Time and a half after midnight. A staff dance each year. What more could one wish to devote one's life to? I certainly loved that place. The air round Twickenham was like wine. Then one day I take a trip to the old man's grave. Hic Jacets in profusion. Ashes to Ashes. Alas the fleeting. The sun was declining. A few press-ups on a tomb belonging to a family name of Cavaneagh,

and I left the graveyard. I thumbs a lift from a geyser who promises me a bed. Gives me a bath. And a meal. Very friendly. All you could wish he was, a photographer. He shows me one or two experimental studies. An experience for the retina and no mistake. He wanted to photo me. For certain interesting features I had that he wanted the exclusive right of preserving. You know how it is. I didn't like to refuse. No harm in it I suppose. But then I got to thinking . . . I knew a kid once called MacBride that happened to. Oh, yes . . . so when I gets to think of this I decide I got to do something about it. And I gets up in the middle of the night looking for the film see. He has a lot of expensive equipment about in his studio see. Well it appears that he gets the wrong idea. Runs in. Gives a shout. And the long and the short of it is I loses my head which is a thing I never ought to a done with the worry of them photos an all. And I hits him. I hits him.

*Pause.*

He must have had a weak heart. Something like that I should imagine. Definitely should have seen his doctor before that. I wasn't to know was I? I'm not to blame.

*Silence.*

KEMP. He was healthy. Sound as a bell.

SLOANE. How do you know?

KEMP. He won cups for it. Looked after himself.

SLOANE. A weak heart.

KEMP. Weak heart, my arse. You murdered him.

SLOANE. He fell.

KEMP. He was hit from behind.

SLOANE. I had no motive.

KEMP. The equipment.

SLOANE. I never touched it.

KEMP. You meant to.

SLOANE. Not me, Pop. (*Laughs.*) Oh, no.

KEMP. Liar . . . lying little bugger. I knew what you was from the start.

*Pause.*

SLOANE. What are you going to do? Are you going to tell Ed? (*KEMP makes no reply.*) He won't believe you. (*KEMP makes no reply.*) He'll think you're raving.

KEMP. No . . . you're finished. (*Attempts to rise. SLOANE pushes him back. KEMP raises his stick, SLOANE takes it from him.*)

SLOANE. You can't be trusted I see. I've lost faith in you. (*Throws the stick out of reach.*) Irresponsible. Can't give you offensive weapons.

KEMP. Ed will be back soon. (*Rises to go.*)

SLOANE. He will.

KEMP. I'm seeing him then.

SLOANE. Are you threatening me? Do you feel confident? Is that it? (*Stops. Clicks his tongue. Pause. Leans over and straightens KEMP's tie.*) Ed and me are going away. Let's have your word you'll forget it. (*KEMP does not reply.*) Pretend you never knew. Who was he? No relation. Hardly a friend. An employer. You won't bring him back by hanging me. (*KEMP does not reply.*) Where's your logic? Can I have a promise you'll keep your mouth shut?

KEMP. No.

SLOANE *twists KEMP's ear.*

KEMP. Ugh! aaah . . .

SLOANE. You make me desperate. I've nothing to lose, you see. One more chance, Pop. Are you going to give me away?

KEMP. I'll see the police.

SLOANE. You don't know what's good for you. (*He knocks KEMP behind the settee. Kicks him.*) You bring this on yourself. (*He kicks him again.*) All this could've been avoided. (*KEMP half-rises, collapses again. Pause. SLOANE kicks him gently with the*

*toe of his boot.*) Eh, then. Wake up. (*Pause.*) Wakey, wakey. (*Silence. He goes to the door and calls.*) Ed! (*Pause.*) Ed!

*KATH comes to the door. He pushes her back.*

KATH (*off*). What's happened?

SLOANE. Where's Ed. Not you! I want Ed!

CURTAIN