

Piggy Bank

I could see the obvious irony as I emerged from Bank tube station into the murky morning gloom that greeted me just after 6am.

I'd been summoned from my warm and comfortable bed just before 5 o'clock and had to leave the equally warm and comfortable lady that I'd met just the night before at a very boring party ..at least it had been boring until she whispered something quite naughty to me in the kitchen.

But then just an hour ago I'd been informed by my DCS that a Swiss National bank had been, to use the underworld vernacular - blagged – in a well -orchestrated overnight raid.

At that ungodly hour I was still hungover and not wishing to risk a D and D, I had reluctantly travelled by train and tube.

I was just thinking that William Gilbet had been spot on when he wrote 'A Policeman's lot is not a happy one' as I strode unsteadily down Lombard Street to the scene of the crime.

Jill, my very capable Detective Sargeant came over to me saying "Morning Guv...rough night?" as she handed me a much- needed Costa double espresso coffee...blimey, I thought that's a bit worryingshe knows me so well

She then outlined what was known about the robbery - no guns, no violence and just the right amount of Gelamex, an explosive that was far more stable than dynamite or nitro.

Feeling marginally improved by the injection of caffeine I looked around the limited damage in the vault and asked Jill about security at the bank.

She grinned as she informed me that the less than efficient and rather porky security guard had commented that it seemed a very professional job and the gang had been unexpectedly polite.

I know it's not exactly pc these days to fat shame, but his shirt buttons were so stretched that it looked like he might burst and we'd be in danger of being showered in pork scratchings...so obviously I didn't say anything...but I did move a couple of yards further away.

Apparently he'd said the gang were a bit like Butch and Sundance and that they'd even made sure that his wrists and ankles weren't tied too tightly.

I watched him being interviewed by another DS who I didn't recognise and suggested to Jill that he didn't look like he could protect a bar of Swiss chocolate, much less a Zurich bank.

Jill smiled and commented that he'd be more likely to eat it!

So much for pc's being pc.

Jill ran over what we knew and said it sounds like Gentleman Jack, known for both his clever thieving, his efficiency and his polite manner.

"And we know he's a fan of Gelamex" she added.

"He's still in Parkhurst" I protested, but Jill told me he'd been out a couple of months – no doubt for good behaviour and charm.

It didn't surprise me.

We decided to give Jack a tug and Jill swiftly tried to arrange a search warrant from her mobile.

It was gone 10.30 before a judge was persuaded to sign the warrant and then the pair of us headed over to west London accompanied by a couple of uniform PCs.

Fortunately more espresso and a pain au raisin had cleared my head somewhat.

Despite the 'Gentleman' soubriquet, Jack was a broad east end cockney who lived with his wife Cheryl and 3 young daughters in a modest semi in Ealing.

He didn't broadcast just how successful his career in crime had been and looked a bit like Fletch from Porridge – sounded like him too.

I didn't know what he did with all his well gotten gains but I suspected there was a nice villa somewhere warmer than here.

The door was opened by Maisie one of his girls,.

The cheeky 5 year old took one look and ran back down the hall squealing "It's the pigs... you'll never take me alive copper"

I shook my head – the 'Sweeney' and 'Life on Mars' had much to answer for!

But I grinned along with the other three who were here to search for a missing 50 grand.

"Morning Mr Adams" said Jack smiling "How can I help"

Neither Jill or I were shocked by the polite greeting, although the Constables patently were...maybe they were also fans of the 'Sweeney' I thought to myself.

Jack nodded when I produced the warrant and Cheryl poked her head out from the kitchen "Jack" she said "Don't keep DCI Adams and the lovely Sargeant Stokes waiting...let them in"

I smiled as she proceeded to offer us coffee and bacon rolls.

We refused politely albeit reluctantly on my part and I sent the others to start the search for the missing cash.

The three girls peered out from behind Cheryl, alternately giggling and poking their tongues out.

Cheryl shooed them off to play in the front room.

It took just over an hour for the fruitless search, with nothing remotely suspicious turning up., not a huge surprise bearing in mind how long Jack had been at this game.

We finally got to the front room where the girls were rowdily playing a board game.

I was apologising to Jack and Cheryl for the intrusion when Maisie shouted I passed go.. £200 quid please...come on Saffron...you're the bank"

Saffy duly tugged on the curly tail of a huge plastic piggy bank which made a loud squeal as the rear end came away.

This delighted the girls who all giggled madly as Saffy leading to her repeating the tug on and off several times before dropping it on the carpet to reveal the insides of the pink porker

She tugged out a thick bundle and peeled off 4 x £50 pound notes slowly counting out the required reward for Maisie.

Inside the rear end of Miss Piggy a large number of similar looking wrapped bundles were clearly visible.

“You just had to play bloody Monopoly didn’t you?” sighed Jack
I almost felt sorry for him....although only almost!

Love Me Tinder

I’d been divorced 3 years when my daughter suggested that I should try Tinder

“You mean those little chocolate eggs?” I replied, only to be greeted by hoots of laugh and being informed the eggs were called Kinder.

However, a couple of days later, following this humiliation, I took her subsequent advice and Googled dating sites for over 50’s.

Fortified by half a bottle of Jack Daniels I signed up and filled in a profile...what I wrote was relatively true, except maybe suggesting I look like George Clooney ... which is certainly debatable.

Next day I was surprised to get a hit from Lesley and following email exchanges we agreed to meet.

Lesley suggested meeting outside the Angel Tube....and I took that venue as a good omen.

I was several minutes early with the FT tucked under my arm... Lesley had suggested that this way to spot each other would be an improvement on the cliched red rose!

I watched as I saw someone waving a copy of the pink paper crossing the road....tall, a bit chubby but, of more concern sporting a thick black beard.

I hurriedly dived down the escalator towards the platforms stuffing my FT into the nearest bin.

Travelling home I went back to my profile and noticed that in one box I had put a n X instead of a tick....the box was labelled with the question sexual orientation ... and I'd put my x in the box marked 'Straight'!