

Glade Hall

Chapter 15 – The Munroe Effect

“He could hear her, they both could. The man turned his red eyes towards her, eyes that burned like hot coals. He showed her his teeth, baring them like some kind of animal.”

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~Now~

The current state of the construction industry was working in his favour, Nick Goodwood knew that. Most of the economy had improved since the banking crisis, but construction was still in the doldrums. Nick wasn't interested in politics, he just knew that it was harder to find contracts, but easier to find staff. It was the only reason for Henry still being hard at work on the stonework of Glade Hall. Declan too, was still coming in every day, despite his cousin being attacked there. One of the casuals had left, but they were easily replaced. Every advert in the local papers, brought an avalanche of hopeful CVs. There were applications from builders, desperate for any kind of work, even if it was at a house with a bad reputation. The other CVs worried Nick, the ones from people actually wanting to work somewhere haunted. A sign of the times ? Whatever the reason, Nick began to recognise a certain look in their eyes when he interviewed them.

“There are a lot of nutters out there.” He told Henry.

“It's this place, I'll be glad when we've finished with Glade Hall. Any experienced people applying ?”

“Bags of experience Henry, on modern crap housing. Nothing working on listed buildings.”

Henry was grinning at him. Declan was spooked by Sean's death, always looking over his shoulder and taking twice as long to do everything. Henry though, he was like a rock in a fast river, letting the events at Glade Hall wash round him. The cook was the same, Mrs Hargreaves. Tea and toast with her, could usually restore his sanity.

“You're saying that if I want help, I have to train them up.” Said Henry.

“It does seem the best way to get the work done how you want it done.”

“Fine ! But it means I get less done. I can train or I can work, I can't do both.”

Henry liked to feel aggrieved about things, Nick knew that. He also knew that Henry would put in the hours to make sure the work was completed on time.

“And I have to say it.” Added Henry. “It doesn't help if you sack the best of the bunch.”

“The Cadogan kid you mean ?”

“Yes, he was shaping up to be a good stonemason.”

“But he was heard talking down the pub Henry ! Shouting his mouth off about the things he'd seen at Glade Hall.”

Henry was giving him his long suffering look. The look of a man who'd spent a lot of time training up the guy he'd just sacked.

“We've all seen things.” Said Henry. “All of us Nick, including you. I know you have. There are other ways of handling these things.”

“Do you want him back ?”

“Yes, he's a good one, trust me.”

“Call him then, but don't tell him I changed my mind, or he'll think he can do as he likes.”

“I'll tell him I asked you as a personal favour and that he's on a final warning. Any more crap and he's gone.”

Henry was smiling now, a rarer sight than it had once been.

“And you’re right.” Said Nick. “I have seen a few shadows where none should be and heard the odd quiet whisper from nowhere. At first I thought it was trouble from the old days returning, but now I think there is something unpleasant about Glade Hall.”

“I keep forgetting your army days and the PTSD.”

“PTSD ! That’s the new name for it. In my day they called it malingering, which just drove it in deeper. The army was a bad career choice, I know that now, but all my family were in the military.” Henry was watching him and he realised it was the only time he’d mentioned his twenty years in the army to anyone who worked for him. They knew of course, there was even a picture of him in uniform on his office wall. Major Nicholas Goodwood, complete with the six medals he’d won. Two of them had been just for turning up every day. Desperation medals he called them, the sort worn by Royals on Armistice Day. The other four he didn’t like to talk about, which didn’t mean he wasn’t proud of them.

“Does it help you deal with things ? Your time in the army I mean.” Asked Henry. “I’m having trouble dealing with it, especially the way Oliver died.”

Nick hadn’t intended to talk to Henry for long, he had a mountain of paperwork back at the office. There was always too much paperwork though, it was almost an unwritten rule of running your own business. He sat on the floor near Henry, leaning against a newly cleaned stone wall.

“It does in a way.” He replied. “Most people have an idea about how death will be, especially their own. The public seem to think that death will be peaceful and come with old age. They’ll be at home in bed, surrounded by an adoring family. Maybe even with their guardian angel weeping in a corner of the room.”

“I take it, you don’t view it that way ?”

Nick rested his head back against the wall and laughed. A good honest laugh, not the nervous laugh he’d left the army with.

“Oh no, I don’t ! You see the men arrive, full of excitement. The firefight virgins are the worst, thinking it’s all some sort of game. They hear about a guy in another unit being killed and it’s still exciting, still a game. Then they have to put someone they know into the back of the APC. They see just how much blood can come out of one human being. Then it isn’t a game. There’s no dignity in that kind of death, no adoring family standing around and definitely no weeping angels.”

“Dan from the Copper Kettle, described seeing Oliver after he’d died. I do get odd dreams about that Nick. Not nightmares, no waking up screaming. Just odd !”

“No one deserves to die like that Henry, no one. Anyway, I have a few calls to make and the usual mountain of paperwork to deal with.”

Nick brushed the dust off his trousers as he stood up.

“No one is expendable Henry.” He said. “It’s just a building we’re fixing up, not a matter of life and death. Make sure all your people are offsite before dark.”

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Emma loved the smell that seemed to almost ooze from the oil delivery tanker. It looked oily and the men’s uniforms looked oily and the delicious smell of fuel oil hung over everything.

“I don’t notice it anymore, though my wife complains that I come home stinking of oil. Now, if I can have your signature here ?”

She signed the paperwork on his clipboard and the hoses were fixed in place, to add the oil to that already in the Glade Hall tanks. There were two tankers, one queued behind the other. Emma had even received a slight discount, for ordering so much at one go.

“Makes sense to fill those tanks before we get busy in the autumn.”

The woman who took her order had told her. It was all automatically paid for in some way she wasn't aware of, but she was given an eye watering total cost at the end of the call. Thousands of pounds, a truly staggering amount of money.

“Really that much ?” She'd asked.

“That is three entire tanker loads miss. I can get one to you tomorrow and another two the day after, if that's ok ?”

“Oh yes, we want the tanks full before winter.”

Dean was with her, watching the delivery man check various dials on his tanker. Even three tankers wouldn't quite fill the heating oil tanks, but it would be enough. Seeing it being delivered had convinced her of that, there was more than enough to burn her home to the ground. She'd bought a pump and piping from a different company and all that was due to arrive later. The building work was good cover, no one would notice another few crates stacked up at the rear of the house.

“Nick Goodwood will notice.” Dean had said. “He'll know they aren't his.”

“I'll tell him it's filters and pipes for the pool,” she'd replied, “if he asks.”

Dean was busy too, learning how to use an expensive bow he'd bought in Oxford. It was different to the bow the hunter had given them, but they were saving the antique bow and its arrows. Dean was never going to win any competitions, but he was hitting the target all the time. The smell of fuel oil was increasing, as the pump on the tanker picked up speed. Mrs Hargreaves had moaned the previous day when just a single tanker had delivered its load.

“Awful smell dear, gets into everything !”

Emma could handle a few moans, her plan was actually working. As long as Alex managed to buy some kind of weapon from Bo, they were ready. Which was just as well, as she only had one more week before going back to college.

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Mrs Hargreaves wrinkled her nose and closed all the kitchen windows. It was no good, the smell of oil seemed to penetrate everywhere. A cook needed her nose, it was as important as her eyes, maybe more important.

“How can I cook if everything stinks of oil ?” She muttered.

Her moaning was only half hearted, she was rather fond of Emma Hooper. Hilda Hargreaves had decided on which assistants to hire, a young girl who lived in Enstone and an older woman from Oxford. All the applicants seemed competent, she'd just liked the feel of the two she was going to hire.

“They have to fit in.”

It was someone to go to the basement, every time she needed a tin or box from the shelves. There was a particular dish that really did taste better if it was made with condensed milk. Another trip to the basement though and her arthritic knees were already painful. Her doctor had told her that losing weight would help.

“What does he know ?”

There was no one in her kitchen. If any of the builders needed tea, they'd have to wait until after she'd found a large tin of condensed milk. Hilda descended into the basement and scanned the shelves. She was beginning to understand Dean's logic, it would be in the section with dessert relate items. It was there, between the icing sugar and the edible cake decorations.

“Good lad, pity he's going back to college.”

Hilda picked up a large tin and began to persuade her knees to make the return journey. She was at the stairs when she heard a noise behind her. That Branca ! Mrs Hargreaves was in the right mood to give her a piece of her mind. It wasn't the Mediterranean looking woman in the tight dress, it was a different apparition.

"I won't have you things in my kitchen !" She yelled. "I'm not putting up with it !"

A man this time, in old fashioned clothing and he's ignoring her and talking to a woman. What was happening at Glade Hall ? It seemed to be getting worse ! One of the builders had been sacked for talking about the things he'd seen. They'd all seen things ! Hilda wanted to keep her job though, so she'd keep quiet about it.

"Go away ! You're not welcome here !"

They ignored her, which just increased her anger. As both the apparitions went down the stairs to the lower basement, Hilda picked up a heavy old broom. Painful knees forgotten, she was determined to remove the spirits from her kitchen and the basements were part of her kitchen.

"No ! I am not putting up with this !"

They were just a few feet from the stairs, looking to be arguing. Hilda had no idea what they were saying, she could hear nothing. Their lips were moving though, the man seemed especially animated about something. Hilda wasn't brave, she just believed that no ghost had the power to hurt her. She raised the broom.

"You will leave here, now !"

He could hear her, they both could. The man turned his red eyes towards her, eyes that burned like hot coals. He showed her his teeth, baring them like some kind of animal.

"Get out !"

The broom didn't connect with anything, she hadn't really expected it too. It came right round, pulling her off balance and causing her hip and knee to hurt on that side. By the time Hilda looked again, the apparitions had gone through the door leading to the cellar. The man glared at her one last time and vanished through the door.

"It can't be open."

Jerome Hooper had arranged for several extra bolts and two locks to be fitted to the door, she'd even made bacon and eggs for the locksmith. It was strange about the heavy bolts, only of use to keep something locked in, not out. She'd seen the door was locked the previous day, yet now it was ajar. A good three inches of darkness, between the open door and its frame. She held the broom in her left hand, extending her right hand towards the door. Hilda wasn't brave, she was angry.

"No ! They'll kill you."

A hand pulling on her shoulder, pulling her back from the door. No, two hands and a face in front of her, that Branca girl in her ridiculous dress. Another face now and hands pushing her further back. The face of a young girl, younger than Emma Hooper, dressed in an old fashioned party dress.

"They can hurt you ! You silly old woman."

This one can talk, silly old woman indeed ! Hilda's right knee gives up on trying to walk backwards and she falls. Her rear is fairly well padded, but landing on it is still painful. A jagged searing pain begins at her hip and carries on across her lower back.

"You've hurt me now ! Awful girls ! Leave me alone !"

A different voice now, one Hilda knows. Emma Hooper, touching her arm and sounding worried.

"Mrs Hargreaves ! I came to apologise about the smell of oil and heard you shouting. Are you alright ?"

Hilda has her broom, but the tin she came for has rolled out of her reach. They've gone though, the awful girls who'd hurt her.

"Damn harpies !"

"Do you want me to get help Mrs Hargreaves ?"

"Hilda dear, call me Hilda. Give me your arm and I can get on my feet. They were pulling me back from the door, probably meant well by it."

Broom on one side, strong young girl on the other, she was quickly on her feet again. Her hip still hurt, needed a new joint really, but she'd been putting it off.

"Who hurt you Mrs Hargreaves ?"

"Call me Hilda or I'll be annoyed. You know who, we all see them but never talk about it. Don't worry I won't tell anyone else. I was looking at the open cellar door and they pulled me away from it. None too gentle about the pulling."

"The door is closed , locked and bolted. Only my father has the keys."

Hilda looked and the door was closed, all the bolts rammed home.

"Well it was open ! I nearly went down there. If they hadn't stopped me....."

"I believe you Mrs..... Hilda. They're right, it is dangerous down there. Let me help you back to the kitchen."

"Pick up the tin of condensed milk Emma. Then I'll make fudge, you'll love my homemade fudge and that little brother of yours."

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Alex and Leonard had driven down to Hampshire to see Bo. They'd expected to find an American gun nut, living in seclusion and moaning about warm beer and the weather. Instead they found an idyllic cottage near Ringwood, right on the edge of the New Forest. Bo was obviously an anglophile; he even had two Victorian pot dogs on his mantelpiece.

"I came over here to live with a British woman I met in New York and stayed here after she told me to piss off."

Everything was tidy and well kept, from the dahlias in the front garden to the antiques in the china cabinet. It wasn't just nice; it was the kind of home they would have loved living in.

"Surprised Huh ? Most people expect to find a man cave with a Remington rifle over the fireplace."

"It's wonderful." Said Alex and he meant it.

"Tea ? Or I'm sure I can find something stronger ?"

"Tea is fine." Answered Alex.

"It's a long drive back." Added Leonard.

Tea came with a plate of biscuits and Bo went through the obligatory small talk, before getting down to business. He was the opposite of Clem, almost an anti-clem, a gun nut with good manners.

Eventually the tea things went back into the kitchen and Bo pulled on his professional persona.

"You can talk freely." He said. "I sweep the place for bugs every week. Call it paranoia, call it being cautious, old habits die hard."

"It was difficult over the phone." Said Alex. "As best I could, I tried to give you the gist of our needs."

"Yes you did." Said Bo. "A solid stone structure and no time to drill and plant explosives in the traditional way. Clem also gave me a few details. I'm assuming you need something safe to lug around and light enough to carry ?"

"We were thinking of some kind of weapon." Said Alex.

"An anti-tank gun, that sort of thing." Said Leonard.

Bo was smiling at them in a quite infuriating way. It was the sort of smile that Alex's doctor gave him, when he tried to diagnose his own ailments.

"Tell me about what you want to blow up?" Asked Bo. "Details please? Size, type of stone, how it's shaped? It all matters."

Alex looked at Leonard, who just shrugged and looked nervous. The truth sounded crazy, the sort of thing to get them thrown out of Bo's perfect little piece of nineteen fifties Britain.

"You can tell me anything guys." Said Bo. "Clem said you're ok, so you're ok. Like a priest or a doctor, I don't judge and I keep it to myself. Start by describing it?"

Alex had a picture in his pocket, even though he'd never intended to show it to Bo. It had been there to look at while Leonard drove the car. Alex knew the dimensions by heart. The picture had been taken by Mel, before things had gone crazy. He handed the picture to Bo.

"It's an altar." He said. "The dimensions are on the back. Deep down, an archaeologist said it had been carved out of the natural bed rock, but others have said it was put there. It shows signs of weather erosion at some point, so the stone can't be impervious to damage."

Bo was studying the picture, muttering to himself about the dimensions.

"Nothing is impervious." He said.

"You haven't seen the things we've seen." Said Leonard.

"One of the things I love about you Brits is your eccentricities." Said Bo. "I've seen the papers and done a little research. I take it that blowing up this altar will kill the bogeyman causing trouble at Glade Hall?"

"We didn't come here to be laughed at." Said Alex.

He was angry now, wondering why he'd trusted Bo enough to be honest with him. They both stood up, intending to leave and drive home.

"No! You've got me all wrong." Said Bo. "I don't care why you want to blow it up. As I said, Clem said you're alright, so you're alright! I can provide you with the means to destroy this altar and it's not a weapon."

"What is it then?" Asked Leonard.

"Shaped explosives. They're reasonably light and safe to handle by a novice, with a few instructions. Look it up on Google, the Munroe effect it's called. You'll find videos on YouTube of people cutting holes in armour plate with small amounts of explosives."

Alex felt his anger falling away. Bo was never going to be a believer, but he didn't need to be.

"You can acquire these explosives for us?" He asked.

"I can and quite quickly. Come downstairs and let me show you my workroom."

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The bow was superb, all gadgets, release aids and made of compound, whatever that was. Dean was becoming good with it, hitting the bullseye four shots out of every five. It had cost a lot of money and had gone on Emma's credit card. With luck no one would be too concerned about a few credit card bills, with a burned down house to worry about.

"Wow fearless Dean Jenkins! You're getting good with that." Said Emma.

He was and getting better all the time. Dean fired another expensive arrow from the state of the art bow and hit the bullseye, dead centre. Emma was making appreciative whooping noises, but he wasn't feeling like celebrating.

"Let's be honest." He said. "Jerry junior could beat Robin Hood with this bow."

"But that's good isn't it? You're increasing your bow skill, toxophily, or whatever they call it."

"Not with the right bow Emma. I need to practise with the hunters bow."

It was there, the hunters bow, leant up against a tree in a part of the estate that was rarely used. Between the farm and the Oxford road, no one had any reason to cross through the small wooded area.

“But we agreed to save the old bow for when we need it. In case it breaks from being used for practice.”

“Better it breaks now than when I’m trying to defend you with it.”

The targets were printed on cardboard and bought at the same time as the bow. He’d played about with wood and bales of hay, until he’d come up with something that looked fairly reasonable. He move one of his hay bale targets a bit further back and picked up the hunters bow and one of its arrows.

“No Dean !” Said Emma. “There are only a few of his arrows. Use the new ones.”

“We have to know if we have a powerful weapon against James and his minions, or a piece of junk.”

He replied. “I’ll go back to using the new arrows, but just this once I want to see what one of the Hunter’s arrows will do. We need to know Emma.”

Dean had never even strung the bow, though he’d a pretty good idea of how to do it. He fixed the string to one end and put all his weight into bending the bow. It was hard, much tougher to bend it back than he’d expected.

“If I have to help, it’ll ruin the moment.” Said Emma.

He smiled at her and leant into the curve of the bow, fixing the other end of the string in place.

There were no sights, no gadgets, just a lovingly crafted piece of wood, created by a highly skilled artisan.

“It feels right in my hands.” He said. “Far better than the new bow.”

The metal tipped arrow felt right too, perfectly balanced as it lay on his finger. Pulling the bow was hard work, but not beyond his strength. Dean kept the bow up, concentrating on keeping the arrow pointed at the target. He released the string and felt the bow buck slightly in his hand.

“Jeez Dean !” Said Emma. “I hope it works as well against James Maynard.”

It required a little faith, but Dean had no doubt in his mind, that they’d been given something that could hurt the evil that troubled Glade Hall. The new arrows buried themselves in the hay, leaving a neat round hole in the target. The hunter’s arrow had torn the target apart, gone through the hay, broken the wooden backboard apart and embedded itself into the ground. The target looked like an explosive projectile had been used on it.

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Bo took them through a door at the back of his immaculately clean kitchen and down some stairs into a small basement. Two chest freezers hummed gently against one wall and there was a large double wardrobe against another. Alex looked around and saw nothing worth coming to see, just a small basement, lit by a single bulb hanging from the ceiling. Bo was grinning at them.

“You’ll have to excuse a bit of theatricality.” He said. “I rarely get first timers down here and I do like to show off.”

He banged the wall next to the wardrobe with the palm of his hand. It looked the same as all the other walls, made from bricks and painted a pleasant tone of beige.

“Solid, built the wall myself, three months after buying the place.” Said Bo. “I know what you’re thinking; entrance to the workshop is through the wardrobe.”

Alex just shrugged, but he was beginning to enjoy Bo’s obvious attempts to impress them. Bo opened both wardrobe doors wide, showing it to be full of old coats on hangers.

“No door to Narnia here and it’s got a solid back.”

He pushed the hangers to one side and thumped the back of the wardrobe. It did indeed, sound solid.

"But if you know just the right spot to find the release."

He reached up at the front of the wardrobe and there was a barely audible click. The wardrobe had to be pushed then, but Bo didn't seem to need to put much effort into it. It moved to the right, on some sort of rollers or rails, to reveal a large entrance to another part of the basement.

"Back home in Michigan, most of my collection would be legal, but you Brits don't seem to like private citizens owning guns."

Bo went through the entrance and turned on the lights. Row upon row of fluorescent lighting, which showed a massive basement that had to extend well beyond the house above.

"Gentlemen; welcome to my workroom."

"That is a lot of guns." Said Leonard.

Alex was just spellbound for a while, his mind taking a while to accept what he was seeing. Every wall was covered in weapons of one kind or another, mainly long barrelled weapons. A few were in cases, but most simply hung on chains fixed to the wall.

"There is a certain beauty about them." He said.

"Glad you like them." Said Bo. "Some can be bought from any gun store in America, for just a few hundred dollars. Others are rare and quite valuable, but they're not hung any different to the others. I collect guns the way other people collect stamps or paper weights."

"The pretty ones hung in the best places." Said Leonard.

"Exactly !" Said Bo. "Guns have always fascinated me. Mankind has always wanted to affect things beyond his reach. First we threw rocks and sticks and then spears. Eventually we wanted to hit something even further away and invented bows and arrows."

"And gunpowder gave us guns." Said Alex.

"Exactly, they extend our range, allowing us to affect events well beyond the reach of the strongest warrior with sword and shield. A few of these guns can hit a target accurately, over half a mile away."

"It's all about killing people." Said Leonard.

"War is the natural human condition, it's how we widen our territory." Said Bo. "Don't worry though, I'm not going to tell you guns don't kill people. That crap makes me cringe. Come on the timer and cables are over here."

He took them to a long bench at the far end of his workshop. It reminded Alex of the hardwood benches in his old school's chemistry lab. There was an old fashioned clockwork timer, connected to several long black cables.

"I need to buy in a few items and more cable." Said Bo. "If you like the idea, I can deliver it to you in less than forty eight hours."

Alex was beginning to like Bo and his mischievous grin. He was certainly different to the often taciturn Clem and his Aryan Nation tendencies. Bo picked up what looked like a hexagonal plastic box, about six inches across.

"Still classified and definitely not for use by the public." Said Bo. "Then again, most of the really good stuff is still classified. Here, hold it."

Alex guessed he was holding the military version of shaped explosive. It was lighter than he'd expected, almost capable of being bounced about in his hands, if he'd dared to.

"Not very heavy." Said Alex. "Is it full of explosives?"

“Yes, ready to go. Safe to handle and hard to detonate by accident. The usual method is an electrical charge from a timer of some kind. If you want to break up the altar, I recommend ten charges. If you want to turn it to stone chippings, I’d say twenty.”

“Twenty !” Said Leonard. “We aren’t going to get a second go at this. Make it twenty.”

“Twenty it is then.” Said Alex.

Bo did what he’d been too scared to do. He picked up one of the hexagonal boxes from the bench and bounced it about in his hands.

“Twenty will be heavy, you’ll need two large bags and a third for the cabling and timer. I can give you detailed instructions on how to set the charges. Nothing too elaborate, two pages of hand written A4 should do it.”

They’d talked about the idea in the car on the way down, since hearing that their budget wasn’t quite as limited as they’d first thought.

“We don’t have a fortune.” Said Alex. “We do have enough to pay you a fee. Perhaps you’d like to come with us and set the charges for us ?”

“Me ? Come with you ?”

“We could do with your expertise.” Added Leonard.

Bo was smiling and looking at the heap of cables on the bench. Alex knew their new friend was weighing up the risk against his own natural desire for action.

“No ! Thank you for asking, but I intend to die in bed, hopefully in my nineties. I’ve had enough daring-do and the smoke of battle to last several lifetimes. And anyway, what you want might be more expensive than you think.”

Since Emma had told them the fifty thousand in the kitty had grown to a quarter of a million, they had been behaving as if money was no object. Now Alex began to wonder if it was enough.

“How much will it all cost ?” Asked Alex.

Bo picked up one of the charges, slowly rotating it as he spoke.

“These are classified, which means that they aren’t cheap and I have to make a margin on them. Not everything classified is good, I’ve seen army procurement pay top dollar for crap ! These are the real deal though and worth every cent.”

He put down the explosive charge and picked up a roll of cable.

“Again, military grade cables. Fire proof, just in case the worst happens. The connectors are expensive too, don’t want them breaking if someone steps on them in their size nines.”

Bo picked up the clockwork timer, which had been fastened to top of a battery box.

“No elegant, but I tested it and it works.” Said Bo. “I heard there were a few electrical gremlins where you want to use the explosives. A good old fashioned clockwork timer, cleaned and tested. Set it for one minute right up to an hour and press the arming switch. When the clock reaches zero, two large batteries send their juice to the charges. It’ll get the job done for you.”

“Sounds perfect.” Said Leonard.

“If we can afford it. How much ?” Asked Alex.

Bo let out a huge sigh and scratched the side of his head. Probably all part of his sales technique, but it looked genuine.

“I’ll deliver it myself, drive to Broadstairs with the three bags. Not the sort of thing to send via Parcelforce.”

They all chuckled.

“I don’t want to rob you, friends with Clem and everything..... How does twelve thousand sound ?”

Alex tried to hide his relief ! Twelve measly thousand after all that sales patter. He'd have gladly paid fifty thousand, maybe a hundred. It was insane ! They were naïve children, trying to survive in a world they knew nothing about.

"That sounds fine." He said. "Are you sure you won't come with us ?"

"No, getting too old for it."

"Aren't we all !" Said Leonard.

Alex had five thousand in his pocket, all in fifty pound notes. It had been meant as a small deposit, but would pay nearly half of what was owed.

"Five thousand now, the balance on delivery." He said, offering the bundle of notes.

Bo took the money, riffling the large pinkish coloured notes.

"There was no need." He said. "Clem said you're good for it. But as you brought it....."

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