

SILLY SHORTS

## DETECTIVA NON GRATA

*A futile fantasy.*



*City of Croxton; Republic of Kasika.*

Defeated and humiliated, Detective Sergeant Ray Calvert sat slumped in a seat in the corridor outside the police commissioner's office. His palm was fixed to his face. Right now, he was glummiest man in the whole of Croxton Police Station. Even those in the cells who were destined to end up serving lengthy prison sentences couldn't match his despair. After a long and distinguished career, he'd made a serious mistake, which he was in no doubt was going to cost him dear. Right now, his captain was in with the commissioner, arguing his case for him. He didn't rate his chances. Well aware that his life was about to change dramatically, he released a frustrated groan then shook his head.

CALVERT: Shit. Shit, shit, shit.

(Just then, another police officer took a seat at his side and offered him a bottle of water.)

LEWIS: Thirsty, Detective Sergeant?

(Calvert glanced up at him uneasily then slowly eased the bottle from his grasp.)

CALVERT: Do I know you?

LEWIS: Not yet, you don't; no. But you will. I'm your union representative.

(He then showed Calvert his credentials.)

LEWIS: Sergeant Joe Lewis at your service.

CALVERT: Oh. Fair enough.

(He forced a smile.)

CALVERT: Thanks for the water, by the way.

LEWIS: You're welcome.

(He smiled.)

LEWIS: So, that was an interesting start to my shift. I walked in the door, took my coat off then got sent here to see you. Apparently, you're in need of representation. I've no idea why though.

(He bit his lip.)

LEWIS: Bad, is it?

(Calvert grimaced.)

CALVERT: I wouldn't be sitting outside our new commissioner's office looking like I'm about to be raped by woolly mammoth if it wasn't!

LEWIS: I see.

(He shrugged.)

LEWIS: Well, don't worry. *Whatever* you did, you'll still get my full support.

(Calvert grimaced uneasily.)

CALVERT: Yeah? We'll see.

LEWIS: What do you mean?

CALVERT: I mean wait until you find out what happened, *then* decide if you'll give me your full support or not.

LEWIS: Oh, come on. I mean, how bad can it be?

CALVERT: Put it this way, if you tried to measure it on a scale from one to ten, the fucking scale would melt!

LEWIS: Why? What happened?

(Calvert sighed.)

CALVERT: Well, tonight, on my shift, I found the car I'd been looking for!

LEWIS: What car?

CALVERT: I'm coming to that!

(He rolled his eyes.)

CALVERT: It belongs to a pervert who's been renting out underage prostitutes! I'd been looking for it for weeks. Trouble is, it's got fake plates and an annoying habit of evading cameras.

LEWIS: I see...

CALVERT: Still, I kept searching and tonight I found it parked outside a house on Cavendish Road.

LEWIS: Ah! Excellent!

CALVERT: Yeah...

(He sighed.)

CALVERT: That's what I thought.

LEWIS: So what happened?

CALVERT: Well, I parked just down the road from it and waited. And yes, before you ask, I went through all the proper channels. I even asked a member of the special family unit to come down and join me, just in case he came out with an underage girl.

(He shook his head.)

CALVERT: It was all set up. I just had to wait for the dirty bastard to return to his car.

LEWIS: And did he?

CALVERT: Yeah.

(He took a sip of his water then furrowed his brow.)

CALVERT: He started to drive off, so I slowly pulled out. You know, to follow him and find out where he lives. I've got no doubt whatsoever that all the evidence needed to put that cunt in jail forever is in his house somewhere.

LEWIS: Chances are, right?

CALVERT: Exactly. Anyway, just as I pulled away, some drunk twat stepped in front of the car. So I slammed the brakes on, didn't I? He called me a cunt; you know, like they do then staggered off and fell in a bush.

LEWIS: And you're here because of that, are you? A hit and run?

CALVERT: I fucking wish! No.

LEWIS: Then what?

CALVERT: Well, I ignored the drunk twat and drove after the suspect.

(He grimaced.)

CALVERT: I followed that car for three miles until it eventually pulled into the driveway of this nice house. Got the bugger now, I thought, and leapt out of the car. I didn't even hesitate. I charged down the street and into his driveway, just in time to see him opening the backdoor to let a schoolgirl out.

LEWIS: Filthy bloody...

CALVERT: Yeah, that's what I thought. Saw red, didn't I? Beat the crap out of him.

LEWIS: So *that's* why the commissioner's called you in!

CALVERT: Partly! That's not even *half* the story though.

LEWIS: Oh?

CALVERT: After giving him a thrashing, I dragged him away from the screaming girl then threw him into the back of my car. Barely conscious, he was. Then I drove him back to the station. The woman from the family unit stayed with the girl.

(He grimaced.)

CALVERT: It was the perfect arrest. Got the bastard at last. So I turned my phone off.

(He shook his head.)

CALVERT: You know how sometimes you're in the middle of making an arrest when a superior calls you and asks you to run an errand?

LEWIS: Yes. It's fucking annoying.

CALVERT: It's beyond annoying. It's soul destroying! Well, I wasn't gonna let *that* happen; not this time! No fucking chance. I'd been after this cunt for ages, so my phone stayed well and truly off, mate. And I drove back to the police station as quickly as I could.

(He shook his head.)

CALVERT: The suspect came round halfway back, didn't he? So I put the frighteners up him. You know, like you do! He's a paedo; we give them cunts hell, don't we?

LEWIS: Damned right we do!

CALVERT: See? You get it! I went through the entire routine, mate. I told him I was going to beat him in the cells and allsorts. I used all the *usual* threats and even invented a few new ones. Whatever I could come up with to scare the bugger to death. I promised him I'd deny him justice every step of the way. I literally pulled out every cruel taunt in the book, like we *always* do when we've caught a paedo.

LEWIS: Right. I understand.

(He smiled.)

LEWIS: Registered a complaint, did he? Well, I wouldn't worry about it too much, my friend. They always bloody do. It's not a problem though. Just deny everything. It'll become his word against yours and the charges will simply go away.

(He nodded sternly.)

LEWIS: I'll make this case vanish in no time.

(Calvert stared at him through empty eyes.)

CALVERT: You won't, mate.

LEWIS: Oh no? You watch me!

CALVERT: Mate, the only thing I'll watch is *you* running away after you change your mind about defending me. See, I hadn't finished. You jumped the gun a bit there.

LEWIS: I did?

CALVERT: Yes! You haven't even *heard* the bad part yet!

(He winced then all the colour drained from his face.)

CALVERT: And when I say bad, I mean catastrophic! I got back to the police station and threw the cunt in the cell. Head first! Then I kicked him in the nuts and promised him I'd be back to beat him again later.

LEWIS: Like you do with a paedophile. I'm still not seeing the problem.

CALVERT: Because I haven't *told* you the problem yet!

(He sucked his teeth.)

CALVERT: I shouldn't have turned my phone off, mate. That woman from the family unit had been trying to ring me and warn me.

LEWIS: About what?

CALVERT: The girl in his car wasn't an underage prostitute. It was his daughter.

LEWIS: Oh...

CALVERT: As it turns out, while I was distracted by the drunk who stepped in front of my car, another identical car had pulled out in between me and the suspect. I'd followed the wrong bloke home.

LEWIS: Fuck!

(He grimaced.)

LEWIS: You beat up an innocent man and threatened to deny him justice?

CALVERT: Yeah.

LEWIS: Well that complicates things! Greatly!

(He bit his lip.)

LEWIS: His daughter was a witness to the arrest, you see? A violent arrest! I can see this ending in a suspension at least!

(He nodded sternly.)

LEWIS: But don't worry. I'll stick by you and defend you to the very end like I promised I would!

CALVERT: Will you now?

LEWIS: Absolutely! As your union representative, it's my duty! And I take my duties extremely seriously.

CALVERT: Right...

(He cringed.)

CALVERT: You say that now, but... that bloke I beat up wasn't just *any* innocent man!

(He winced then pointed to the door opposite.)

CALVERT: It was him in there!

LEWIS: Who?

CALVERT: The new commissioner!

(Lewis's jaw dropped.)

LEWIS: Fuck off! No way!

CALVERT: Straight up! He's in there now with my captain. Then it's gonna be my turn.

LEWIS: Shit.

CALVERT: I'll say it is! That was definitely not the best way to introduce myself our new commander-in-chief!

LEWIS: No...

(He grimaced.)

LEWIS: Right. Anyway... it was nice knowing you, Detective.

CALVERT: What?

LEWIS: What do you mean "what"? If you think I'm defending *that*, you must be insane. I'm going to pretend I'm sick and go home.

(He then upped and raced down the corridor. Left behind, Calvert watched him go then gave a resigned sigh.)

CALVERT: Yeah... that's probably wise, to be fair.

(He then slumped in his seat; defeated.)

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Inside the commissioner's office at this time, Calvert's boss, Captain Bill Merry was having a torrid time. He desperately wanted to defend his subordinate, but the commissioner was not in a forgiving mood.

COMMISSIONER: Exuberance? You want me to put it down to bloody exuberance???

MERRY: Well... yeah! I mean...

(He shrugged.)

MERRY: He thought you were a paedo!

COMMISSIONER: And that's supposed to make me feel better, is it?

MERRY: Kind of. I mean, looking at it from the perspective of...

COMMISSIONER: I'm going to stop you right there, Captain! The only perspective I need to look at things from is my own!

(He snarled.)

COMMISSIONER: I had a lovely round of golf with the minister for justice this afternoon then I drove into the city centre to pick up my beloved daughter from her violin lesson. It had been a really good day. As soon as I got home, however, some thug launched himself at me then beat me into the middle of next week, right in front of my screaming child! He then threw me in his car where he threatened all kinds of violence against my person before throwing me in a cell and kicking me in the bollocks.

(He snarled.)

COMMISSIONER: And you're seriously sitting there, telling me it's fine because the Neanderthal responsible thought I was someone else???

(The captain grimaced.)

CAPTAIN: You know, it sounds really bad when you phrase it like that.

COMMISSIONER: Phrase it like what? Accurately???

CAPTAIN: Well... yeah... accurate from *your* perspective.

COMMISSIONER: What other perspective is there? Whether he thought I was a filthy paedo or not, beating a suspect senseless is not how we do things!!!

CAPTAIN: Isn't it?

COMMISSIONER: Not when that paedo is me, no!!!

(He snarled.)

COMMISSIONER: Pick me up on that and I'll throw you out that fucking window!

CAPTAIN: Understood.

(The commissioner ruffled his neck.)

COMMISSIONER: Good! Now here's how it's going to be. Detective Sergeant Calvert is well and truly fucking fired!

(The captain sucked his teeth.)

CAPTAIN: He's not though, is he?

COMMISSIONER: Excuse me?

CAPTAIN: He's got tenure!

(The commissioner growled at him.)

COMMISSIONER: Tenure??? Police officers don't *have* tenure!!!

CAPTAIN: Actually, some do. Including DS Calvert.

(The commissioner blinked at him nonchalantly.)

COMMISSIONER: What?

CAPTAIN: He's our best detective, sir. By far! He's solved more serious cases in this city than the rest of our detectives combined.

(He shrugged.)

CAPTAIN: So, the last commissioner gave him tenure. A job for life with guaranteed pay rises above inflation until he chooses to retire.

COMMISSIONER: That's ridiculous!

CAPTAIN: Well, you say that. But at the time, a private security firm was doing the rounds, stealing all our best men. So your predecessor offered a dozen or so of the force's best officers lucrative contracts for life. Including DS Calvert.

(The commissioner sat back and sighed.)

COMMISSIONER: I see... that's... disappointing. I want the bastard to suffer.

(He bit his lip.)

COMMISSIONER: Tenure...

CAPTAIN: That's right.

COMMISSIONER: That's insane. I mean what makes him so good that the force would want to retain his services forever even though he's a cunt?

(The captain puffed out.)

CAPTAIN: What makes him so good? His love for the job, I guess.

COMMISSIONER: Oh?

CAPTAIN: I mean, he thrives on it. Building rock solid cases from the smallest of clues. Gathering evidence. The thrill of the manhunt. The moment of arrest. He lives for it! Proper detective work, you know? Give him a big case to solve and he comes alive.

COMMISSIONER: Is that so?

CAPTAIN: Yeah. I mean, he really is the best, sir. He loves the job and the job loves him. And the bigger the case, the better.

COMMISSIONER: Interesting!

(He smirked.)

COMMISSIONER: Loves big cases, does he? Thrives on them? In that case, I'll just have to transfer him somewhere where there *are* no big cases!

(The captain furrowed his brow.)

CAPTAIN: Seriously? Wouldn't it be easier just to kick him in the bollocks?

COMMISSIONER: What???

CAPTAIN: You know... payback! Then you'll be even and you can both move on with your lives. Sorted.

COMMISSIONER: Right. Interesting, but no.

(He bit his lip.)

COMMISSIONER: He has to go! That's not even in doubt. And if I can't fire him, I'll just have to have the bastard transferred.

(The captain sighed.)

CAPTAIN: Really? *Have to?*

COMMISSIONER: Yes! I have to work from this fucking station and I don't want to run into that cunt every day. No, no; he can fuck off to *another* station.

CAPTAIN: Right. Shit.

(He shook his head.)

CAPTAIN: Well *that* sucks. I'll be bloody sorry to see him go.

COMMISSIONER: Oh, boo-bloody-hoo.

(He ruffled his neck indignantly.)

COMMISSIONER: He's leaving, so get used to it. All *we* have to do now is decide where to send him.

CAPTAIN: Well, if you want my opinion, sir, you'll send him somewhere busy. Somewhere with a lot of crime. A lot of open cases that he can sink his teeth into. Somewhere he can make a difference. A big city like Leathrock or Ashrin, maybe. (He shrugged.)

CAPTAIN: He'd be wasted anywhere else. And miserable because of it.

COMMISSIONER: Miserable?

CAPTAIN: Yeah. He'd be bored rigid. Without crimes to solve, he'd wither and die, but that's not the point. It's in the best interests of the police force to send him to a place where his skills can be used to benefit the fight against crime.

COMMISSIONER: Fuck the fight against crime. I want him to suffer!

CAPTAIN: Sir...

COMMISSIONER: Shut up, you!

(His face lit up.)

COMMISSIONER: Without crimes to solve, he'd wither and die, you said!

CAPTAIN: I did, but...

COMMISSIONER: Being somewhere with very little crime and nothing to do would destroy him!

CAPTAIN: Well, yeah...

COMMISSIONER: Then I know *exactly* where to send the bastard!

(He then sat back and chuckled menacingly. Watching him do so, the captain shook his head rigorously.)

CAPTAIN: Commissioner, I beg you! For the sake of the police force, just don't do it! We need all our best men where they'll be useful.

(The commissioner, however, just smirked at him.)

COMMISSIONER: You may leave, Captain. My decision is made.

CAPTAIN: But...

COMMISSIONER: Dismiss! That's an order!

(The captain could only hang his head.)

CAPTAIN: Fuck.

(He then upped and trudged out of the door. Having emerged in the corridor, he then glanced down at where Calvert was grimacing back at him from his seat.)

CALVERT: Well? How did it go?

CAPTAIN: Um... put it this way...

(He cringed.)

CAPTAIN: You might need to pack a suitcase.

CALVERT: Fuck!

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*Six days later...*

Ashen-faced and thoroughly demoralised, Detective Sergeant Calvert was standing on the deck of the Tifasea Island ferry, staring out to sea through empty eyes. At the end of this four hour ocean crossing, a new life awaited him. A new life he didn't want. When the

commissioner had said he wanted him to suffer, he hadn't been messing around. For a detective who thrives on solving crimes, Tifasea Island was the worst place in the world to be transferred to. The last recorded crime there was a handbag theft thirty years earlier. Naturally, he was crestfallen.

Dreading to think what the future had in store for him, he stared out at the crystal blue ocean and sighed repeatedly. He couldn't have felt emptier inside. This, however, was in stark contrast to his nine-year old daughter, Layla. Thrilled at the idea of living by the seaside, she stood by his side, bouncing excitedly as she watched the waves.

LAYLA: When we get there, can I go swimming, dad?

(Calvert just sighed.)

LAYLA: Well? Can I? Dad? Dad? Dad, dad, dad, dad, dad...

(Her father glanced down at her and forced a smile.)

CALVERT: Let's wait and see what this shit day brings, shall we?

(He winced.)

CALVERT: I mean, let's just see what today brings.

(He grimaced.)

CALVERT: This shit, shit day.

LAYLA: You're grumpy!

CALVERT: Yeah...

LAYLA: Is that why mum stayed at home? Because you're such a grump?

(Calvert gave her a miffed glance.)

CALVERT: Mum had to stay and finish working her notice. I already told you that.

She'll sail out and join us tomorrow.

LAYLA: Right...

(She grimaced.)

LAYLA: Then why didn't *we* sail out tomorrow too?

CALVERT: Because I start my new job tomorrow! If you can *call* it a job.

LAYLA: Right...

(She mused to herself.)

LAYLA: But if she's travelling tomorrow and you're going to be at work, who's gonna look after *me*?

(Calvert turned to face her and smiled.)

CALVERT: Like your mum said, love, that's a conundrum for *me* to solve.

LAYLA: She did?

CALVERT: Yup. Right in between cursing me for ruining her life and throwing that frying pan at me.

(Layla sighed.)

LAYLA: Mum's grumpy too, isn't she?

CALVERT: And then some.

LAYLA: Why?

CALVERT: What?

LAYLA: Why is she grumpy? She's not *normally* grumpy. So why is she grumpy now? Did you do something to upset her?

(Calvert forced an unconvincing smile.)

CALVERT: It's fine, love. Mum's just upset because she didn't want to leave Croxton.



LAYLA: That's silly. There's no beach in Croxton.

CALVERT: No, but there *are* things there that she's going to miss.

LAYLA: Like what?

CALVERT: Well... her friends. And her family. The job she loves. Not to mention the house she poured her heart and soul into making perfect for us.

(He pondered his own words for a moment then grimaced uncomfortably.)

CALVERT: Fuck. I really *did* ruin her life!

LAYLA: You did? Why? That's mean!

CALVERT: Well, I didn't do it on purpose, did I?

LAYLA: Right...

(She beamed.)

LAYLA: That's okay. She can make *new* friends. And *we're* her family, so she's not even missing out *there*. And she can get a *new* job. And make the *new* house perfect, just like the old one. She's just being silly.

(Calvert gave a stifled laugh.)

CALVERT: You make it all sound so simple.

LAYLA: It *is* simple. And besides, I've met her friends. They're no loss.

CALVERT: Well, I can't argue with that, love.

(Layla smiled then leant into her father.)

LAYLA: Cheer up, dad. You know what we should do?

CALVERT: Enlighten me.

LAYLA: When we get off this boat, we should drive straight to the new house, get changed into our swimsuits then go in the sea! That'll cheer you up. The sea is awesome.

(Calvert shook his head.)

CALVERT: We won't be driving anywhere, sweetheart.

LAYLA: What? Why not?

CALVERT: Cars are forbidden on Tifasea Island.

(Layla stared at him blankly.)

LAYLA: Forbidden? Why did we bring one then? And a removal van?

(She gasped.)

LAYLA: Are we gonna get arrested??? We drove onto the ferry!

(She shrieked.)

LAYLA: So did the removal team! They won't confiscate our furniture, will they???

Why did we bring vehicles if they're banned??? Eek, we're in so much trouble!

CALVERT: No, we're not. The car will be kept in a special designated car park at the port, so we can take it with us when we leave the island. And the furniture from the van will be transferred to cages, towed by an ATV.

LAYLA: Right... I have no idea what any of that means.

(Calvert groaned.)

CALVERT: It means the tiny island we're moving to is so remote and backward, the government couldn't even be bothered to build proper roads on it.

(Layla bit her lip.)

LAYLA: But... how are we going to get where we need to go without a car?

CALVERT: Using the same ATV's that are going to tow our furniture.

LAYLA: I see. And what's an ATV?

CALVERT: A four-wheeled motorbike.

LAYLA: We haven't got a four-wheeled motorbike.

CALVERT: We'll get one.

LAYLA: Right.

(She grimaced.)

LAYLA: But aren't those things ridiculously loud?

CALVERT: Apparently not. The ones on the island are silenced and don't go over ten miles per hour.

(His shoulders then slumped.)

CALVERT: I'm getting depressed just thinking about it.

LAYLA: You'll be fine, dad. A swim will perk you right up!

CALVERT: Right. Swimming...

LAYLA: Yeah! I really, really *want* to go swimming. So can we? Dad? Dad? Dad?

(Calvert offered her a kind smile.)

CALVERT: I tell you what, if we have time once everything's sorted out then yes.

LAYLA: Boo!

CALVERT: What do you mean, boo?

LAYLA: You said if! If means no!

CALVERT: Well...

LAYLA: And besides, what needs sorting out?

CALVERT: The furniture for one!

LAYLA: Oh!

(She mused to herself.)

LAYLA: That's a good point. We need to put all our stuff in the new house, don't we?

CALVERT: Well it would make sense. Leaving it in the garden, probably wouldn't be wise.

LAYLA: Yeah...

(She bit her lip.)

LAYLA: So what's the new house like? Is it big? How many bedrooms are there? Is it near the beach?

CALVERT: I don't know, love.

(Layla stared through him.)

LAYLA: You don't know? How can you not know? You chose it!

CALVERT: No, the *police* allocated it to us for a month.

LAYLA: Only a month?

(She gasped.)

LAYLA: Are we moving back to Croxton after that? Croxton's rubbish! There's no sea!

CALVERT: No, no, no. We're not moving anywhere!

(He gave an exasperated sigh.)

CALVERT: You're exhausting!

LAYLA: But I don't get it!

CALVERT: The police allocated the house to me for a month. If we like it, we can buy it. If we don't, we can look for a better one.

LAYLA: Nearer the sea?

CALVERT: Will you shut up about the sea?

LAYLA: Nope!

CALVERT: Right...

(He allowed himself a stifled laugh.)

CALVERT: They allocated me a house, okay? The one nearest to the police station. If we like it, we can stay. If not, we can move.

LAYLA: Cool. House-hunting is fun. My friend Sally's mum was house-hunting last year. She visited like a hundred houses before finding one she liked. I got to look at some with her. Sometimes they give you free food.

CALVERT: Yes, well, with any luck the house we've been allocated will be fine.

LAYLA: Are you insane? If it's rubbish we can look at hundreds of others and get loads of free food!

CALVERT: There won't be hundreds of others, love.

(He grimaced.)

CALVERT: There are only eight vacant properties on the entire fucking island!

LAYLA: Eight?

CALVERT: Yeah. You can't buy a property there unless you were either born on the island or subject to a long-term government contract like I am. So they just don't build that many.

LAYLA: So like... even my friend Sally's mum couldn't house-hunt there? She hunted everywhere!

CALVERT: That's right.

(He shrugged.)

CALVERT: It's all part of preserving the island's rustic charm, apparently. To stop outsiders from moving there and ruining it.

LAYLA: Ruining it?

CALVERT: Yeah. Making it overcrowded and expensive. Pushing up the price of everything. That's what happens when too many tourists fall in love with a place and decide to move there. Demand for housing goes up and so does the price. Before you know it, the price of everything has gone through the roof. They're just guarding against that.

(He shrugged.)

CALVERT: Tourists are allowed to stay in one of the only two hotels on the island and once their stay is over, they have to leave. Rustic charm preserved.

(He whimpered sorrowfully.)

CALVERT: So it'll remain a dead end backwater until the end of time.

LAYLA: I see...

(Her face then lit up.)

LAYLA: But a dead end backwater with a beach!!!

(She then glanced out so sea again and beamed with delight. Her father, on the other hand, resumed staring at the waves with a crestfallen expression on his face.)

CALVERT: Stupid commissioner. Why didn't he just shoot me?

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Upon arriving at Tifasea Island port, DS Calvert returned to his car with Layla, then made the short and depressing drive to the adjacent port authority car park. The car would now sit there and gather dust until he needed to return to the mainland. It felt like another nail in the coffin of his happy life. He loved his car and the thought of leaving it

sitting there while he travelled everywhere on a ridiculously slow ATV was heart-breaking. Not about to cry about it in front of Layla, however, he feigned a smile then led her back towards the portside.

CALVERT: Come on, love.

(Layla hurried to his side then glanced up at him with a concerned expression on her face.)

LAYLA: Are we really going to leave the car there, dad? What if someone steals it?

CALVERT: If someone steals it, I'll fill in a crime report telling my subordinates to be on the lookout for an idiot.

LAYLA: An idiot?

CALVERT: Yeah! Why would anybody steal it? They can't go anywhere in it. Cars are banned here, remember?

LAYLA: But what if they drive it onto the ferry?

(She gasped.)

LAYLA: Or into the sea!

CALVERT: Why would they drive it into the sea?

(Layla blushed.)

LAYLA: I don't know. Fun? Teenagers do weird things.

CALVERT: Relax, love. We're insured.

LAYLA: Against the car being driven into the sea?

CALVERT: Yes!

LAYLA: But what if they drive it onto the ferry?

CALVERT: Then the bloke running the port will have some serious explaining to do. He's responsible for it.

(He sighed.)

CALVERT: Speaking of which, as soon as we reach the portside, I need to give him my car keys.

LAYLA: Why?

CALVERT: Because that's the rule.

LAYLA: Why?

CALVERT: Because the island government decided as much; now stop asking.

LAYLA: But...

(She shrugged.)

LAYLA: Surely the keys would be safer with you. You are a policeman, after all.

CALVERT: Layla...

(He took a deep breath.)

CALVERT: It doesn't make any difference, okay? We can only use the car when we're getting on the ferry anyway, so if they want to hang onto the keys, that's fine.

LAYLA: Right...

CALVERT: Thank you.

(He smiled then led her through the car park exit and back onto the portside.)

CALVERT: Right. Let's find the fella from the port authority, shall we?

(Just then, a chirpy voice rose up from his right.)

PETE: Detective Sergeant?

(Calvert glanced to one side to where a middle-aged man in a blue, port authority uniform was approaching.)

CALVERT: Ah. Here he is.

LAYLA: Who?

CALVERT: The chap we were going to look for.

(He then offered the man a stifled wave and raised his voice.)

CALVERT: That's me!

PETE: Excellent!

(He strutted up to them and held out his hand.)

PETE: Nice to meet you, sir. I'm Peter Honeywell from the port authority. Known locally as Port Authority Pete.

(Calvert shook his hand then smirked.)

CALVERT: Port Authority Pete? It has a certain ring to it, I suppose.

(Pete sighed.)

PETE: So they tell me, yes. I transferred to this island ten years ago and within a day *that* became my moniker. Port Authority Pete! Even my wife starting saying it. I'd kill to have a friend in town who simply calls me by my name; I really would.

CALVERT: Then maybe it's your lucky day, Pete.

(Pete smiled.)

PETE: Thank you. That was nice to hear.

(He nodded.)

PETE: So, you're the new police chief then?

CALVERT: Unfortunately.

PETE: Sorry?

CALVERT: I mean, yes.

PETE: Welcome to Tifasea Island.

CALVERT: Where dreams go to die.

PETE: What?

CALVERT: Nothing.

(He then passed him his car keys.)

CALVERT: I was allocated bay thirty-six.

PETE: Indeed you were, sir.

(He took the keys then nodded.)

PETE: So, first time on the island, is it?

CALVERT: Yeah.

PETE: I see.

(He offered him a pitying glance.)

PETE: It can be a bit bewildering a first, but you'll get used to it. When I first arrived from Ashrin, it felt like I'd been posted to the arse end of nowhere.

CALVERT: But now?

PETE: It still feels like I was posted to the arse end of nowhere, but I've come to terms with it.

CALVERT: Right...

PETE: So...

(He smiled down at Layla.)

PETE: Who's this little sweetie?

LAYLA: Ew! Stranger danger!

CALVERT: Layla!!!

LAYLA: What? That was really creepy.

(Pete grimaced.)

PETE: It was the “sweetie” bit that did it, wasn’t it?

LAYLA: Yes!

CALVERT: Call her Layla, mate!

PETE: Righto. Nice to meet you, Layla.

LAYLA: Yeah, that’s much better. Nice to meet you too, Port Authority Pete.

PETE: Just Pete.

LAYLA: We’ll see.

PETE: Right...

(He sighed in defeat then glanced across the portside to where the removal van was parked. The removal crew were hurrying to transfer the contents of the van to a series of cages, lined up nearby.)

PETE: It’s a proper race against time for those guys, you know? They have to empty the van then get it back on the ferry within half an hour or they’ll be stuck here all night.

There’s only one ferry a day, you see?

CALVERT: What? Half an hour? If that’s true, they won’t even time to drive the cages to my house!

PETE: Well, no. You’ll have to drive there yourself.

CALVERT: Fuck!

PETE: Didn’t they tell you that when you arranged the move with them?

CALVERT: Croxton Police arranged the move.

PETE: I see.

(He smiled.)

PETE: Oh, well. Just remember to bring the cages back when you’re done. And the ATV they’re attached to. They’re port authority property, you see?

CALVERT: Yeah, yeah...

(He shook his head disdainfully.)

CALVERT: That’s ridiculous.

PETE: Isn’t it though? If the ferry waited a few hours before going back to the mainland, it wouldn’t be an issue. But as it is, they simply don’t have time to stop and do their jobs. So the poor bugger moving here has to do it. Namely you.

(He grimaced.)

PETE: I just hope you’re physically fit.

CALVERT: I’ll be fine.

(He ruffled Layla’s hair.)

CALVERT: It’s not just me. I’ve got my little helper here.

(Layla furrowed her brow at him.)

LAYLA: Yeah, because nine year-old girls are great at lugging sofas around, aren’t they?

CALVERT: When they’re anxious about getting everything done so they can go to the beach they are, yes.

LAYLA: Right... I feel blackmailed!

CALVERT: I prefer to call it incentivised.

(Pete furrowed his brow.)

PETE: I hate that word.

CALVERT: What word?

PETE: Incentivised.

(He grimaced.)

PETE: It reminds me of how I ended up on this miserable island.

(Calvert gave him a sideways glance.)

CALVERT: What?

PETE: There was an incident. An incident involving myself, my boss's wife and a bed. I don't want to go into detail in front of a child, but...

LAYLA: You shagged your boss's missus.

CALVERT: Layla!!!

PETE: No, she's right. I did.

CALVERT: Even so.

(He glowered at Layla.)

CALVERT: How do *you* know what shagging is?

LAYLA: Blame mum. She watches way too many romantic dramas, that woman. So, I was bound to learn a thing or two.

(Calvert stared through her in dismay.)

CALVERT: Layla...

LAYLA: You should have a word with her really, dad. Those shows are disgusting. I don't want to see that. I'm nine, for pity's sake.

CALVERT: Right... well... I'm glad you feel that way.

LAYLA: I do! Shagging's disgusting!

CALVERT: Layla...

LAYLA: I mean, who does that? People putting their lips together like that is gross!

CALVERT: You...

(He gave her an enquiring glance.)

CALVERT: Lips?

LAYLA: Yeah! Shagging is weird kissing, right? With tongues.

(Calvert gave a relieved sigh.)

CALVERT: Absolutely it is, yes.

PETE: At least it *starts off* like that. They're not *actually* shagging until the man sticks his penis in the woman's...

CALVERT: Peter!!!

(Pete flinched.)

PETE: What?

CALVERT: Enough!

PETE: Oh. Why?

(Layla grimaced.)

LAYLA: Penis?

CALVERT: *That's* why!

(He growled.)

CALVERT: This discussion ends now.

PETE: Right. I see.

LAYLA: Penis is another word for willy, right?

(Calvert glowered at Pete.)

CALVERT: Mate, I'm gonna slap you!

(Pete stepped back defensively.)

PETE: Why? You asked why I hate the word “incentivised” and I answered, that’s all.

CALVERT: Yeah. Then attempted to explain shagging to my nine year old daughter!

PETE: Oh. Then I apologise.

(He sighed.)

PETE: Though I think I proved my point. Even *discussing* that word ends up with me getting into trouble. It’s cursed, I tell you.

CALVERT: No, explaining shagging to a child got you into trouble.

PETE: Yes, but it all stemmed from that damned word. Incentivised! When my boss found out about my infidelity with his good lady, he told me he was going to *incentivise* me to stay well away from his wife in future.

CALVERT: And did he?

PETE: Yes! He transferred me here; to the back of beyond. A thousand miles *away* from his wife!

(He shook his head.)

PETE: Wanker! I was the best damned supervisor Ashrin Port had ever had. I was destined for great things. I’d have ended up *running* that port! The big cheese with a luxury office and a six figure salary! Then I made one mistake and bang; it was all over. I ended up here on the whim of my vengeful boss. Career in tatters!

CALVERT: Well that sucks!

PETE: And then some!

(Calvert sighed.)

CALVERT: Yeah. But if it helps, you’re not the only one that’s happened to. One mistake sending your career down the toilet like that is something I’m all too familiar with.

(He puffed out sorrowfully.)

CALVERT: I *thought* I’d arrested and manhandled a miscreant who was overly fond of youthful young ladies, but I’d actually arrested my new commissioner by mistake. Because of that one slip-up, *I’ve* been dumped in this shit hole too.

(Pete gave a stifled laugh.)

PETE: Tragic, isn’t it?

CALVERT: Soul-destroying, mate.

PETE: Indeed. But, you’re in good company!

(He smiled.)

PETE: And I don’t just mean myself. The chap you’re replacing, Sergeant Willows was sent here twenty years ago as a punishment for *his* one mistake too. It’s a common theme with folk sent here to take government positions, actually. This island is basically a dumping ground for erring civil servants with vengeful bosses.

(He sighed ruefully.)

PETE: Gavin from the weather station, a meteorologist destined for great things; dumped here because of one mistake. Sandra the school teacher, once a lecturer at a major university; dumped here for making one mistake. Doctor Morris, once a leading physician at Croxton Memorial Hospital; dumped here because of one mistake.

CALVERT: Not a serious medical error, I hope!

PETE: That’s what all the islanders said. I mean, nobody wants a dangerous quack for a GP, do they? But no; we checked. He was ousted for boning a patient.



CALVERT: Consensually, I hope.

PETE: Well... he *thought* so; that's what really matters.

CALVERT: What???

PETE: She was actually a mental patient. He didn't know that, of course.

CALVERT: Why not? He was her fucking doctor!

PETE: Yes, but he was treating her for a sprained elbow; not her lunacy! She was in an ordinary ward at the time.

CALVERT: Oh. Fair enough.

PETE: Point being, there's a lot of us here, Detective. Dumped at the arse end of the country, separated from the rest of civilisation by a hundred miles of treacherous seas. (His face then lit up.)

PETE: But still, the summers are lovely and you rarely need to wear a coat, even in the middle of winter. So it's not *all* bad.

CALVERT: Clutching at straws?

PETE: You have to or you'll never survive.

CALVERT: Right...

PETE: A nice climate and cheap beer. They might not be the greatest luxuries in life, but if you don't learn to appreciate what few good things there are, you'll slowly go insane.

CALVERT: Right... well... that's actually good advice.

PETE: It is. Savour every small grace you get.

(Layla's face lit up.)

LAYLA: Like the beach! I plan to savour *that* every day!

PETE: That's the spirit. We have lovely beaches here, so why not make the most of them?

LAYLA: I plan to. As soon as possible.

(She then glanced up at her father.)

LAYLA: Can we go now? The sooner we've moved the furniture, the better.

CALVERT: We'll go when they've finished unloading the van, love.

LAYLA: Right...

(She then glanced at the removal men and jumped up and down with a bitter furrow on her brow.)

LAYLA: Hurry up!

CALVERT: They're going as quickly as they can, Layla. Now stop leaping about.

Conserve your energy, girl; you're gonna need it for when we unload.

(Pete gave him a sideways glance.)

PETE: You're not seriously expecting a small child to shift all that furniture about, are you?

CALVERT: Well, no. Obviously not. She'll do her bit though. And someone from the local police unit is supposed to meet me at the house with the keys. I'm kinda hoping they'll stay and help out.

PETE: Oh, right.

CALVERT: If they don't...

(He shuddered.)

CALVERT: Shifting all that by myself will be a nightmare.

PETE: Of epic proportions.

CALVERT: Yeah. Which pretty much sums up my life right now.

PETE: Yeah...

(He then raised an enquiring eyebrow.)

PETE: Say, where is the new house anyway?

CALVERT: Number five, Sandy View Road.

PETE: Oh. Well, at least it's not far.

CALVERT: No?

PETE: Not at all. Turn right once you leave the port here, follow the road inland for a bit then take the next right, back towards the seafront. That's Sandy View Road.

(He smiled.)

PETE: Lovely road, that. It leads straight down to the seafront then bends around and runs parallel to the beach. All the houses down there are right there on the sea front.

(Layla's eyes lit up.)

LAYLA: Really?

PETE: Really.

LAYLA: Yay! The beach! That'll give me something to do while you unload our furniture, dad.

CALVERT: You've already *got* something to do while I unload the furniture. It's called *helping me* unload the furniture.

LAYLA: But, dad, I'll only get in the way.

CALVERT: Don't argue, madam. I'm not having you wandering about on the beach on your own where I can't see you.

LAYLA: Aw.

(She pouted.)

LAYLA: Spoilsport! I miss mum.

(She then proceeded to sulk with a bitter pout on her lips. Watching her, Calvert could only shake his head.)

CALVERT: Pete?

PETE: Yeah?

CALVERT: Don't have kids, mate.

PETE: Too late. I already have three.

CALVERT: You poor bastard!

PETE: Yes...

(He hung his head and sighed.)

PETE: I know.

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*A short while later.* Having watched the removal team drive back onto the ferry to return to Croxton, Calvert's heart sunk. How he wished he was going with them. They'd be back in the city by nightfall, enjoying all the conveniences of city life. He'd never been so envious of anyone in all his life. He'd barely had time to dwell on it, however, before his attention was drawn away by Layla. Not about to wait around the port any longer, she'd mounted the port's ATV and was tooting the horn; ordering him to hurry up. Stung into action, he hurried over to her and gave her a stern telling off. Satisfied, he'd said his piece, he then ordered her to sit in the ATV's backseat. She dutifully obliged, albeit with a sour look on her face. She felt the telling off was harsh. She very soon perked up, however, when she realised that her plan to hurry her father along had worked like a

charm. She'd made him snap out of his despairing trance and hurry over to the ATV. All he had to do now was mount it then set it in motion. It was something he went on to do with very little in the way of enthusiasm. Having started the engine, he offered Pete a slow-motion, almost apologetic wave then turned the throttle. At last, the short trip to their new home was underway.

Keeping Pete's simple directions in mind, Calvert turned right upon leaving the port then sighed to himself emptily. He couldn't help but feel that, with the way his luck had been lately, the house would have a leaky roof, rotten floorboards and mould in all the rooms. He could picture it in his mind and it made him shudder. He wouldn't find out if he was right or not, however, for quite some time. Normally, a powerful ATV could easily tow ten cages behind it. Having already had its engine greatly reduced, however, *this* ATV was struggling. It was barely mustering two miles per hour. To say it made for a frustrating drive would be quite the understatement. It took a full half an hour to reach the second right turn, a mere one mile away. Needless to say, Calvert found it extremely irritating. Staring at the thin, uneven road ahead, he swore under his breath constantly.

CALVERT: This fucking place... everything about it is shit. Fucking annoying. Why couldn't I have accidentally *killed* the bloody commissioner instead? I could have covered it up and got on with my life then. But, no. I've ended up in this cunt of a place. (He then performed a baffled double take to his right.)

CALVERT: Layla???

(Walking along next to the ATV, Layla waved back at him.)

LAYLA: Hiya!

CALVERT: What are you doing?

LAYLA: Walking!

CALVERT: I can see that! Why???

LAYLA: I got bored of sitting back there, dad. So I thought I'd go for a walk.

CALVERT: Layla...

(He sighed in defeat.)

CALVERT: Just stay close, okay?

LAYLA: I will.

(She then walked on ahead with a happy smile on her face. She could see the beach up ahead and it brought joy to her heart. Watching her go, Calvert could only groan despairingly. Being overtaken by a nine year-old girl on foot was humiliating.)

CALVERT: This piece of shit contraption. It's fucking useless. Useless!

(Frustrated to the core, he continued to air his feelings aggressively with barely a pause for breath for a good minute or so more. He could well have gone on longer, in fact, had his angry ranting not been brought to an abrupt halt by Layla. Beaming with joy, she was bouncing up and down excitedly at the side of the road ahead of him.)

LAYLA: We're here, dad!!! We're at the beach!!!

(Sure enough, she'd reached the bend in the road where the asphalt met the sand.)

LAYLA: Can I, dad? Can I? Please? Please???

CALVERT: Fine. Just don't stray too far!

LAYLA: I won't!

CALVERT: And stay out the sea or you'll be getting liver pâté sandwiches for dinner!

(Layla shuddered from head to toe.)

LAYLA: Too mean.

(She then skipped on ahead, beaming with delight. Watching her go, Calvert couldn't help but force a smile.)

CALVERT: She's annoying, she's exhausting and she drives me bonkers, but I wouldn't swap her for the world.

(His brow then furrowed over and he proceeded to guide his ATV around the bend.)

CALVERT: Because the world is full of shit places like this island!

(And so, the slow-motion voyage continued. For another twenty minutes, the ATV struggled forth, dragging the rattling cages behind it. Calvert spent the entire time swearing and growling. Now and again, he'd glance up to watch Layla kicking at sand and dancing in circles beneath the palms trees. It brought a smile to his face every time. That smile very quickly evaporated when he focussed on the road again, however. This short drive was like a slow and painful torture. It felt like it would never end. Trees a short distance ahead, that he'd normally walk past in no time, took an eternity to reach and it was slowly driving him insane. The end, however, finally came in sight. There was a row of eight detached dwellings a mere two hundred metres away. Delighted to see them, he couldn't help but draw a sigh of relief. A full five minutes later, however, having only just reached the first house, his nostrils started to twitch. If anything, the ATV was now going even slower; almost as if it was taunting him. Needless to say, he commented on it with much in the way of profanity.

Mercifully, after a painful drive that had brought him about as much joy as being boiled in a vat of oil, Calvert pulled up outside Number five. It was a single-storey, detached abode surrounded by a high wall. What struck him first, however, was the fact that it was set back from the road by a good ten feet. This brought him much in the way of relief. Layla wouldn't have to walk out of the gate and straight into traffic on her way to school.

CALVERT: That's alright then. She won't get hit by a passing ATV, at least.

(He snarled.)

CALVERT: If this ATV is anything to go by, it couldn't take the hit.

(With a shake of his head, he then climbed off of the ATV and allowed himself a stretch. Leaning over the handlebars, pushing the throttle with all his might had taken a lot out of him and he ached all over.)

CALVERT: Pain in this arse. I hate this fucking place already.

(A man's voice then rose up from aside the front gate.)

WILLOWS: Ah; a man after my own heart.

(Calvert glanced up to see a portly man in his early fifties approaching.)

CALVERT: And you are?

WILLOWS: Sergeant Derek Willows; Tifasea Police force. I used the word "force" lightly, of course.

CALVERT: Oh. I'm...

WILLOWS: My saviour. I know. Nice to meet you, DS Calvert.

CALVERT: Right...

(The two of them shook hands.)

CALVERT: Saviour?

WILLOWS: Yes. You're...

(Just then, Layla arrived at her father's side and cut him off mid-sentence.)

LAYLA: Is this our house, dad?

CALVERT: Layla...

LAYLA: Is it?

(She grimaced.)

LAYLA: Where's the top half? All I can see is a roof and a wall. The roof is where the upstairs is meant to be! What's going on?

CALVERT: We'll find out when we go through the gate, won't we?

LAYLA: Good thinking. Let's do that then!

(Calvert chuckled.)

CALVERT: This excitable little thing is my daughter, Layla.

WILLOWS: Layla? I see. I'm Derek Willows. Nice to meet you, young lady.

LAYLA: Hello!

(She glanced to her father.)

LAYLA: See how easy that was? It's so easy not to be creepy. What was Port Authority Pete thinking?

CALVERT: Yes, well, never mind that. I believe you have the keys...

LAYLA: No, I don't.

CALVERT: I was talking to Sergeant Willows.

LAYLA: Right...

WILLOWS: I do indeed have the keys. I also brought your uniform; you'll need that tomorrow. Oh, and some milk.

CALVERT: Milk? I needed milk actually.

WILLOWS: I figured you might.

(He then glanced towards the ten cages that Calvert had dragged from the port.)

WILLOWS: I also brought a spare set of hands if you need them. That's a lot of stuff you're hauling.

CALVERT: Yeah...

LAYLA: At least three of them are my mum's clothes and shoes. She could open her own boutique, that woman.

CALVERT: Do you mind? The adults are talking.

(He rolled his eyes.)

CALVERT: If you *could* give us a hand, that'd be amazing.

LAYLA: It would. It'd leave me free to keep playing on the beach.

CALVERT: You're not playing out here unsupervised! I already told you that!

(Willows chuckled.)

WILLOWS: She's fun. She must drive you bonkers.

CALVERT: You have no idea.

WILLOWS: Oh, I do. My little girl was just like her at that age.

(He nodded.)

WILLOWS: Thankfully, she's not that age anymore. But I digress. Shall we?

(He gestured towards the house.)

CALVERT: Lead the way.

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As it transpired, Sergeant Willows' help was a godsend. Within ten minutes, they'd managed to move all the living room furniture inside the house and were now making a start on shifting the beds. Layla in the meantime, had done nothing useful whatsoever. Since walking through the gate and into the front courtyard, she stood there with a perplexed expression on her face. The house was L-shaped. It was perplexing enough that it didn't have an upper level, but this was a different kind of silliness that she couldn't quite wrap her head around. She'd walked through the gate expecting to see a house in front of her. The fact that the house was both in front of her and to her right was mind-blowing. And so, she just stood there with her jaw on the floor while her father and his fellow police officer did all the work.

Layla's inactivity wasn't something her father was sad about. As long as she was just standing there looking bewildered, she wasn't in the way. Nor was she in any danger. This was parenting heaven. It wasn't going to last, however. As he assisted Sergeant Willows in hauling Layla's bed into the courtyard, Calvert realised he'd have to engage with her and break her peaceful catatonia. It was something he did with a heavy heart.

CALVERT: Oh, well, it was nice while it lasted!

(Willows glanced at him from the other end of the bed.)

WILLOWS: What was?

CALVERT: The peace.

(He sighed then glanced towards Layla.)

CALVERT: Layla, you need to decide where you want us to put this bed of yours.

(Layla glanced towards him emptily.)

LAYLA: Huh?

CALVERT: Where do you want this bed?

LAYLA: In my room.

CALVERT: Right...

(He furrowed his brow.)

CALVERT: I'll decide then, shall I?

LAYLA: What?

(She gasped in horror.)

LAYLA: I want to do it!!!

(She then charged towards the house and raced inside the door.)

WILLOWS: Priceless.

CALVERT: Right?

(Willows smirked.)

WILLOWS: And we all know what's coming next, don't we? Any moment now.

CALVERT: Sorry, what?

WILLOWS: You'll see.

(Just then Layla popped her head out of the door.)

LAYLA: Dad?

WILLOWS: Here it comes.

LAYLA: Which one is *my* room?

WILLOWS: And there it is.

(Calvert chuckled then nodded towards the part of the house on the right of the courtyard.)

CALVERT: Your room is at the end of that sticky out bit you were staring at. Furthest door down.

LAYLA: Oh.

(She then charged off out of sight.)

WILLOWS: So this bed is going in the farthest room, is it?

CALVERT: Yeah.

WILLOW: Righto.

CALVERT: I know there are *two* equal-sized rooms down there, but I'll be much happier if she's in the furthest one.

WILLOW: And why's that?

CALVERT: Because, if she wants to sneak out of her room at night to raid the fridge, she'll have to get past the other room without waking us up. And her mum's a light sleeper.

WILLOWS: I see.

(He nodded knowingly.)

WILLOWS: A wily move, Detective. Kudos.

(They then continued on into the house and headed for Layla's room. Having placed the bed against the middle of the far wall, as per Layla's instructions, they then headed back out of the room again. Just as they reached the living room, however, Layla barged through them then charged outside again.)

LAYLA: I'll start bringing my clothes in!!!

(Calvert stopped in the doorway and allowed himself a smirk.)

CALVERT: She's livened up.

WILLOW: Excited about having a new room.

CALVERT: Yeah.

(He puffed out.)

CALVERT: It's a nice room. Bigger than her old one and she has her own bathroom. I definitely can't knock the bedroom space in this house.

(He then glanced around the living room.)

CALVERT: This living room though... talk about pokey. And I haven't even seen the bloody kitchen yet. If *that's* tiny, my wife's going to chuck the frying pan at my face again.

(Willows gave him a sideways glance.)

WILLOWS: Pokey? I'd hardly call...

(He then looked enlightened.)

WILLOWS: Sorry, I forgot the divider had been pulled across.

(With that, he stepped to the corner of the living room then yanked a room divider across the entire length of the floor. At once, Calvert's jaw dropped. The living room was now three times the size.)

CALVERT: Holy fuck! This place is huge!!!

WILLOWS: Isn't it though? Why do you think I chose it for you?

CALVERT: That was you, was it?

WILLOWS: It was, yes. I figured that any fellow officer being sent here, the place where fun goes to die, could do with something good in his life, so I picked the best house.

CALVERT: So the fact it happens to be the nearest to the police station was purely a coincidence, was it?

WILLOWS: No, that was a lie. The request from your commissioner asked me to find you the smallest and *dingiest* house on the island.

(He shrugged.)

WILLOWS: I told them him they were equally dingy, so I'd picked the nearest one. There's actually *two* empty houses closer to the police station; neither as good as this one.

CALVERT: Really?

WILLOWS: Absolutely.

(Willows nodded sternly.)

WILLOWS: It had to be done. I've *been* you, you see? Sent away to this dump to a chorus of sneering disdain from the higher-ups; bidding you nothing but misery. I've lived it. I wasn't going to be party to that; no way.

CALVERT: I see...

(He smiled.)

CALVERT: You're a great bloke, Sergeant. A fucking legend, in fact.

WILLOWS: I know.

(Calvert smiled then headed to the far end of the room.)

CALVERT: What have we got then?

(He glanced to his right.)

CALVERT: Kitchen over there... bigger than our old one. Nice.

(Willows pointed to the left.)

WILLOWS: Third bedroom over there and a potential forth; possibly a study. And the main bathroom.

CALVERT: Fantastic.

(He then stepped up to a set of patio doors at the very back of the room.)

CALVERT: Sergeant?

WILLOWS: Yeah?

CALVERT: Is that a swimming pool out there?

WILLOWS: It is, yes.

CALVERT: A swimming pool. In what can only be described as a gargantuan back garden.

WILLOWS: Yeah.

CALVERT: Right...

(He then paced back towards Willows.)

CALVERT: I'll stay away from there for now. If Layla sees that pool, she'll want to get *in* the bloody thing.

WILLOWS: Naturally.

(Calvert puffed out then looked to Willows in bewilderment.)

CALVERT: Seriously? A house the size of a palace with its own swimming pool?

WILLOWS: I chose well, did I not?

CALVERT: Well... no!

(He grimaced,.)

CALVERT: There's no point in Layla putting all her stuff away, we're gonna have to move again in a month. I can't afford this place.

WILLOWS: Nonsense. Of course, you can.

CALVERT: How? By robbing a bank?



WILLOWS: Don't be ridiculous. I'm sure you can muster up thirty grand one way or another.

CALVERT: Well, yeah, but there's more to buying a house than securing the deposit.

WILLOWS: Deposit?

(He smirked.)

WILLOWS: You've been living in Croxton for *far* too long.

CALVERT: What?

WILLOWS: The deposit is *two* thousand. It'll cost thirty grand to buy it outright.

(Calvert stared straight through him. His jaw was almost on the floor.)

CALVERT: What?

WILLOWS: You heard me. This property is on the market for thirty thousand.

CALVERT: Thirty thousand what? Where's the catch?

(Willows chuckled.)

WILLOWS: Thirty Thousand Kasika Pounds.

CALVERT: Really?

(He scoffed.)

CALVERT: Nah. This is a windup, surely.

WILLOWS: Nope.

CALVERT: Thirty grand?

WILLOWS: Yes!

(He rolled his eyes.)

WILLOWS: There isn't a housing market here, Detective Sergeant; not as *you* know it, anyway. There's no pressure on the house prices whatsoever. There never has been.

(Calvert bit his lip.)

CALVERT: Because they don't let outsiders move here and push up the price of everything?

WILLOWS: *And* because those who live here feel no inclination to move. They already *have* nice houses.

CALVERT: I see.

(He mused to himself.)

CALVERT: Thirty grand, yeah?

WILLOWS: Thirty grand.

CALVERT: Our place in Croxton is on the market for twenty *times* that. Six hundred grand! I could pay off our remaining mortgage, buy this place and still have four hundred grand left!

(He chuckled.)

CALVERT: That's Layla's university tuition sorted.

WILLOWS: Right?

(He grimaced.)

WILLOWS: Be careful though. Make sure you save. You *might* decide to move back to the city one day, you see? You won't be able to afford it without savings. Not on Tifasea wages.

CALVERT: I won't be getting Tifasea wages. My current contract contains a tenure clause. A contract for life with five percent above inflation pay rises every year.

WILLOWS: I see.

(He chuckled.)

WILLOWS: Then you, my friend, are gonna live like a king while you're here!

*Everything's cheaper here. By some margin. I mean...*

(Just then, Layla hurried through the front door with a cardboard box in her arms.)

LAYLA: Look lively, ladies! This stuff isn't going to move itself!!!

(She then dashed off towards the bedrooms, leaving Calvert and Willows grimacing at one another.)

WILLOWS: We just got told off.

CALVERT: Told to get back to work!

WILLOWS: We'd better do as we're told then.

CALVERT: Definitely. This time it was just a warning. Next time she's catches us slacking she'll give us a wallop.

WILLOWS: Kids, eh?

CALVERT: Yeah. Wankers.

(They shared a grin then headed outside to resume their graft. The next heavy item on the agenda was Layla's wardrobe. Having slid it carefully out of its cage, they positioned themselves either side of it then lifted it from the ground. They then proceeded to head towards the house with it.)

CALVERT: This is a lot lighter than I remember it being.

WILLOWS: Was it full last time you moved it?

(Calvert cringed.)

CALVERT: Right. Yeah. That'd be why then.

(Willows smirked.)

WILLOWS: I'm going to give you the benefit of believing that was an one-off senior moment. I refuse to accept that you're that dim in general.

CALVERT: It's appreciated, believe me.

WILLOWS: Though if you *were* that dim, you'd fit in perfectly around here.

CALVERT: What?

WILLOWS: The people of this island are... how do I put this kindly... brain dead fuckwits of the highest order!

CALVERT: That's putting it kindly, is it?

WILLOWS: Yes! Wait until you meet them. You'll soon see what I mean. This island has a population of about a thousand people and there isn't a brain cell between them.

CALVERT: Really?

WILLOWS: Country bumpkins, Detective! They use words like hah, bah and fah.

CALVERT: Hah, bah and fah?

WILLOWS: Yeah. Hah is hello. Unless you're a neighbour, in which case they say bah!

CALVERT: As in... neigh bah?

WILLOWS: That's it. Bah is short for neighbour. And if they agree with you, rather than saying "fair enough", "that's fair" or "fair comment", they just say fah.

CALVERT: Right... any particular reason for that, is there?

WILLOWS: Yes. They're fucking thick. The school can only do so much, you see? They have two teachers supervising ninety pupils between the age of five and sixteen. All bundled in together. So if you want my advice, make sure you tutor the little one at home or she'll never learn any bloody thing.

(He sighed.)

WILLOWS: I'll never forget the day my son came home, said "hah" then walked into the door, having forgotten to open it. Fuckwittery is contagious, so be on your guard.

CALVERT: Right...

WILLOWS: But don't worry. The little one won't get bullied, at least. Quite the opposite, in fact. My little girl never learned anything because the older girls thought she was cute. They'd dress her up and get her to do cute things all day. She loved it, of course, but it really didn't help her when it came to writing complicated mathematical formulae on her college applications!

(Calvert cringed.)

CALVERT: Noted. The islanders are dim.

WILLOWS: Dimmer than a concrete shed with no windows.

(He sighed.)

WILLOWS: If a local heard me say that, he'd point out that *he* has a concrete shed with no windows and it's bright yellow. I'd then have to explain that I was referring to the *inside* being dim. To which he'd reply, the inside is also yellow when the light's on.

*That* dim!

CALVERT: Crikey.

WILLOWS: I know.

CALVERT: So what else? What else do I need to know?

WILLOWS: About their stupidity? How long have you got?

CALVERT: About this island in general!

WILLOWS: Oh. Again. How long have you got?

CALVERT: Right... I see.

---

Having endured much in the way of toil and backache, it wasn't long before Calvert and Willows entered the house with their final burden. The kitchen table. The cages were finally empty. Delighted by that fact, they placed the table down then nodded to one another in recognition of a job well done. Before Calvert could express his gratitude, however, Layla called out to him from the door.

LAYLA: Can we go now?

(Dressed in her swimming costume, with a towel folded under her arm, she could barely contain her excitement.)

LAYLA: You said we could go in the sea once we've finished moving the furniture!

CALVERT: No, I said we could go once everything's sort out!

LAYLA: It *is* sorted out!

CALVERT: Is it?

(He pointed to where their two armchairs were stacked on top of each other on the corner.)

CALVERT: Just gonna leave them like that, are we?

LAYLA: Sure! Why not?

CALVERT: Yeah, right. You're mum would love that.

(Layla threw him a dismissive wrist.)

LAYLA: Meh, she'll be fine.

CALVERT: She bloody won't! She'll be livid! And I'm already in her bad books. We need to get this stuff arranged; and arranged properly. I've ducked enough low flying saucepans for one lifetime.

(Layla furrowed her brow.)

LAYLA: Oh, fine. Just hurry up!

(She then stomped out in the courtyard to sulk. Far from sad to see her go, Calvert nodded.)

CALVERT: Right then... what's the best way to arrange all this?

WILLOWS: Badly!

CALVERT: Badly?

WILLOWS: Absolutely.

CALVERT: Badly is the *best* way, is it?

WILLOWS: For you it is, yes.

(Calvert blinked at him emptily.)

CALVERT: What?

WILLOWS: You're missus is angry at you, you said.

CALVERT: And?

WILLOWS: And therefore, no matter how you arrange it, it's going to be wrong.

CALVERT: Well...

WILLOWS: My wife was the same. When we first moved here, she sulked for weeks. Accused me of ruining her life. During that time, *everything I did* was wrong. And if I know women, which I do, *your* wife will be the same.

CALVERT: Yeah...

(He sighed.)

CALVERT: Since the transfer here was confirmed I haven't been able to do any bloody thing right.

WILLOWS: See?

(He nodded.)

WILLOWS: So put everything in the wrong place. She'll tell you that you suck then make you do it again. Then you can put everything where it's meant to go.

CALVERT: Really?

WILLOWS: Trust me, my friend. She'll make you move it again, wherever you put it, just to hammer the point that you're useless. So whatever you do, don't set it up correctly. She'll make you move it, that's a given. You'll then have to live with the furniture in entirely the wrong setting *forever*.

CALVERT: Forever?

WILLOWS: Or until she's willing to admit you did it right, yes.

CALVERT: Forever then.

(He smirked.)

CALVERT: You're a genius, Sergeant. Having you here is going to make living here a hell of lot easier, I reckon.

WILLOWS: I doubt it. I'm leaving here tomorrow and never coming back. You're my replacement, remember?

CALVERT: Oh, yeah. Shit.

(He then offered him a rueful smile.)

CALVERT: In that case, what can I say? Knowing you will be brief, but a true pleasure. Thanks for all your help, mate.

WILLOWS: Oh, it's the least I could do. You are my saviour, after all.

CALVERT: Saviour? You mentioned that earlier. Why am *I* your saviour?

WILLOWS: Isn't it obvious? You replacing me!

CALVERT: Yeah, but I didn't *save* you. Reaching retirement age saved you.

WILLOWS: Fuck off!

(He ruffled his neck.)

WILLOWS: I'm nowhere near retirement age!

CALVERT: Oh. Sorry.

WILLOWS: I should hope so. Retirement indeed.

(He rolled his eyes.)

WILLOWS: I'm not retiring. I'm being transferred to the Ashrin constabulary and one of their chaps in moving to Croxton to replace you. Like a three way switch.

(He exhaled.)

WILLOWS: I'm finally free. I've been here for twenty long years. Waiting. Waiting and praying every single day for someone to make a bigger fuck up than I did. A fuck up so horrendous, they'd pass my punishment onto someone else. And here you are. My miracle. My saviour.

(Calvert furrowed his brow.)

CALVERT: I'm glad I could be of service.

WILLOWS: I couldn't believe it when I heard the news. I'd waited so long for a transfer out of this dump, I feared it'd *never* happen. Then that glorious, blessed e-mail arrived. I've printed it off and had it framed.

CALVERT: I'm happy for you.

WILLOWS: Seriously, I was in shock. I mean, it all seemed too good to be true, you know? I honestly thought there must have been some kind of mistake and I'd end up receiving *another* e-mail telling me I'm staying.

(He smiled.)

WILLOWS: So I did some digging. I wanted to know just how *anyone* could screw up so badly that their mistake would supersede mine, thus freeing me from this life of misery. So I read your file.

(His face lit up.)

WILLOWS: That's when I knew. I mean, my mistake was pretty horrendous, but nowhere near as terrible as kicking a commissioner in the bollocks. All I did was punch a chief inspector then throw his briefcase in the river.

(Calvert glanced at him in astonishment.)

CALVERT: You punched a chief inspector?

WILLOWS: Damned right I did! Right in the kisser! And down he went. Pussy!

CALVERT: And did you *know* he was a chief inspector?

WILLOWS: Of course, I did. He was my father.

CALVERT: Your father???

WILLOWS: Yes. And he still bears a grudge. Wanker.

(He ruffled his neck.)

WILLOWS: It would have been kinder to fire me, but no. He wanted me to suffer. So he sent me here instead!

(He forced a rueful smile.)

WILLOWS: I would have resigned, but the wife was having none of it. Stay in the force; the pension's excellent, she said. When we retire we can live really well, she said. So I stayed. Like an idiot! Forever waiting. Praying for a saviour. And here you are.

(He then rubbed his hands together gleefully.)

WILLOWS: Anyway, let's get putting this furniture in the wrong place, then you can take young Layla down to the sea.

CALVERT: I need to take that ATV back first.

WILLOWS: That won't take long.

CALVERT: Bloody will. That thing's really slow.

WILLOWS: Yes, but it won't be so bad now you've taken the furniture out. You'll be there in no time.

(He shrugged.)

WILLOWS: I'm guessing the islands shops got a delivery today. If they hadn't, you could have used one of the port's *yellow* ATVs.

CALVERT: Yellow?

WILLOWS: Yeah. They're faster and a lot more powerful. The shops use them to hurry frozen food from the delivery vans to their freezers. If they *hadn't* had a delivery today, you wouldn't have had to *use* that slow one.

CALVERT: Right.

(He sighed.)

CALVERT: I can't catch a break lately, can I?

WILLOWS: Apparently not.

CALVERT: And I'm gonna get scowled at all night, I can see it now. We'll take the ATV back, get some dinner then it'll be dark. Layla won't get her swim and I'll be the worst dad in the world again.

WILLOWS: You'll be fine. If that happens, let her go in the swimming pool.

CALVERT: Really? Is it clean?

WILLOWS: It was cleaned today. A chap comes to clean it once a week, in fact.

CALVERT: Oh, okay.

WILLOWS: Whether you like or not.

CALVERT: What?

WILLOWS: And he'll charge you whether you like or not.

CALVERT: Will he now?

WILLOWS: Yes, and you'll have to pay him whether you like it not.

CALVERT: Is that so?

WILLOWS: Yes, that *is* so. Your family have to live on this island, Detective.

CALVERT: Meaning?

WILLOWS: Well... the community here is, shall we say, close knit.

CALVERT: You mean... inbred?

WILLOWS: I have my suspicions, but I refuse to confirm that one way or the other. They are, however, very much united. If you don't pay the pool cleaner, he'll tell the chap in the local shop not to serve you. He'll then ring the other two shops and tell them not to serve you either.

(He shook his head.)

WILLOWS: There are three towns on this island with one shop in each. Long Sand, where we are; Saffron Bay, about three miles up the road here; and Ridgeton, which is five miles in either direction. The island is *that* small. Just three shops. And if those three shops decide not to sell to you, you're screwed. You won't even be able to go to the mainland to buy anything because the locals will pressure Port Authority Pete not to let you sail. He has family here too, so he'll do as they tell him.

(He sucked his teeth.)

WILLOWS: And that sums up this island in a nutshell. You might be the law, my friend, but those straw-chewing troglodytes run the show. Tread carefully for your family's sake because they can make life very difficult for you. It's their island and they know it.

(He then smiled warmly.)

WILLOWS: Anyway, let's get badly arranging this furniture, shall we?

(Calvert just stared through him. Willows' words of warning had set him on edge. What this tiny, backward island had in store for him, he shuddered to think.)

CALVERT: Yeah...

(His shoulders then slumped.)

CALVERT: Why me?

---

*Seventy minutes later.* Having badly arranged his furniture then returned the ATV to the port, DS Calvert found himself walking back down Sandy View Road with Layla at his side. It was the first moment of peace he'd had since he'd bid farewell to Sergeant Willows at the house. She'd complained all the way to the port about the fact she hadn't been able to go in the sea yet. Apparently, it wasn't fair. On the walk back, however, they'd stumbled upon a chip shop. Suddenly, Layla was happy again. Walking side by side with her father, digging into a bag of chips, she didn't have a care in the world.

LAYLA: These chips are yummy.

(Calvert looked down at his own portion of chips then shrugged.)

CALVERT: They'll do.

LAYLA: They're the best. I love proper chips. They're so much better than them skinny things you bring back from McDaniel's sometimes.

(Calvert nodded.)

CALVERT: They're not chips.

LAYLA: Good point. They're fries.

CALVERT: Exactly. Fries are shit.

LAYLA: Like mum always says, fries are a low-expectation substitute for chips, cooked up by stingy chefs who are too tight-fisted to part with more than one potato.

(Calvert chuckled.)

CALVERT: She's got a way with words, your mum.

LAYLA: Yup. Like when she referred to your DIY skills as what happens when an unstoppable force meets an immovable idiot.

CALVERT: Yeah... I'm not sure I deserved that.

LAYLA: And I don't even know what it means, but it still made me giggle.

CALVERT: The unstoppable force was my determination to do the job myself. The immovable idiot was her description of me refusing to give up, long past the point it'd all gone horribly wrong.

(Layla started to chuckle.)

LAYLA: Right. It makes sense now. That's actually really funny.

CALVERT: Yes, well... I don't think so at the time. I was up to my neck in plaster and debris, desperately trying to salvage the situation. The last thing I need was her standing there, rolling her eyes and ridiculing me.

(He smiled.)

CALVERT: But, yeah. It *was* a pretty good put down. If she'd said it about someone else, I'd have given her a high five.

LAYLA: Like I did!

CALVERT: Yeah.

(He grinned.)

CALVERT: Traitor.

LAYLA: Am not. I just like it when mum uses big sentences to say funny things.

CALVERT: Fair enough. It's just a shame her artful wordsmithery is usually aimed at me.

(He furrowed his brow.)

CALVERT: Bloody cheek. If I *had* been the alpha male during caveman times, my tribe would *not* have died out. I don't care *what* she says.

(He shook his head.)

CALVERT: It's been a long week. And it's not gonna get any easier for a while.

LAYLA: Why?

CALVERT: Well... it's gonna take a while before you mum calms down, love.

LAYLA: Because she didn't want to leave Croxton?

CALVERT: Yeah.

LAYLA: She'll forgive you eventually though, right?

CALVERT: Honestly?

(He bit his lip.)

CALVERT: If this place is as shit as all the evidence suggests, I'm not so sure. She likes being able to go shopping with her friends for the day. To go to the cinema and stuff. To go to the gym. She's a city girl through and through. Living here is not going to suit her at all.

LAYLA: Ah, but you're forgetting something.

CALVERT: And what's that?

(Layla then thrust her hand out majestically before her; gesturing towards the beach.)

LAYLA: She also likes going to the beach.

CALVERT: Well, yeah. On holiday she does, yeah. But when it's the *only* thing to do; possibly for years...

LAYLA: Dad?

CALVERT: What?

LAYLA: I've almost finished my chips now.

CALVERT: Okay...

LAYLA: And like... there's a beach there.

(She fluttered her eyelashes at him in a bid to look as cute as possible.)

LAYLA: And I'm wearing my swimming costume under my dress, so maybe...

(Calvert chuckled.)



CALVERT: You know what? Fucking go for it, girl. You've earned it. And besides, I did *say* you could, didn't I?

LAYLA: Yup!

CALVERT: Go on then. Go nuts.

LAYLA: Yay!!!

(With that, she tore off her dress, threw it at him then charged off towards the sea; depositing her chips in a litter bin along the way. Watching her go, Calvert couldn't help but chuckle.)

CALVERT: Even if they did cost a third of what they cost in Croxton, that's a shameful waste of moderately good chips.

(He then strode onwards, across the sand to catch up with Layla. Flailing her arms about frantically, she was sprinting towards the sea with as much speed as she could muster.)

CALVERT: She won't even pause.

(Sure enough, a few moments later, she whizzed into the sea then proceeded to charge around in circles, kicking water into the air. She did so with a joyous expression her face. Delighted to see it, Calvert walk onwards until he was twenty metres from the shoreline then sat himself down in the sand.)

CALVERT: That'll do.

(He then heard Layla calling out to him from the shallows.)

LAYLA: This is awesome, dad!!!

(Calvert chuckled then yelled back.)

CALVERT: Do a cartwheel!

LAYLA: Okay!!!

(She then performed the perfect cartwheel and threw up her arms victoriously.)

LAYLA: Yay!

CALVERT: Holy crap! I had no idea you could do that. I was only joking.

LAYLA: Gymnastics club! I can also do the splits! Look!

(She then performed then splits, causing her father to shudder.)

CALVERT: Don't! That looks painful!

LAYLA: It's not though!

(She then jumped up again and resumed kicking at the water. Watching on, Calvert smiled. It had been a horrible week. Being ousted from the job he loved; the stress of moving; his wife's venomous wrath; he'd endured a lot in that time. This precise moment, however, was one to savour. Layla's happiness was the most important thing in the world to him and right now she was loving life. In this briefest of moments all his worries melted away. He'd put a smile on his child's face like a good father should. It was a feeling he revelled in. Having spent the week being told what a lousy husband he was, to at least know he was doing something right as father was a great consolation. As the moments passed, however, his contentment started to waver. Yes, his little girl was happy right now, but what would tomorrow bring? There was more to being a good father than taking her to the beach and allowing her to have fun. A good father needed to think about her future. And what sort of future would this island provide? If Willows' warning about the school was anything to go by, he was right to worry. She was a bright, intelligent girl and he'd never forgive himself if she went backwards.)

CALVERT: I'd better look up online classes.

(He winced.)

CALVERT: Aw, crap. They do *have* the internet here, don't they? They'd better do.  
(He bit his lip.)  
CALVERT: Wait. Of course they do. Willows said he got his transfer by e-mail.  
(He then winced again.)  
CALVERT: But then again, there's internet and there's internet. You could send e-mails via dial-up. I need broadband; proper internet!  
(He shook his head.)  
CALVERT: If the missus can't spend face-time with her friends or stream her cheesy dramas, my marriage is as good as dead.  
(He sighed despairingly then glanced to where Layla was laying on her back in the water, kicking her legs up and down and giggling. It instantly returned the smile to his face.)  
CALVERT: Yeah... that's what life's all about. I'll make this move work somehow.  
(He nodded sternly.)  
CALVERT: For her sake.

---

Having returned from the beach that evening, exhausted from a mixture of excitement, over-activity and simply being herself, Layla sat quietly with her father for half an hour then took herself off to bed. She fell asleep almost instantly. The same could not be said of her father, however. With Layla out of the way, he'd taken it upon himself to get some important chores done. He started by trying on his uniform. It was a moment that crushed his soul even further. The uniform consisted of a Tifasea Police shirt, a sky blue tie and humiliatingly, sky blue shorts. Staring at himself in the mirror, he couldn't help whimpering repeatedly. After a decade of wearing his own suits to work, it was bad enough that his new role required him to even *wear* a uniform. The fact he had to wear long shorts like a schoolboy from his grandfather's era was mortifying.

Having removed his uniform, he then set about the next task. Finding out how the boiler worked so they could have a shower in the morning. Sergeant Willows, however, had got there first. Everything was already up and running. It troubled him somewhat. Sergeant Willows had been under no obligation to help him whatsoever, and yet he'd been a godsend. He couldn't help but feel that this could only mean one thing. Sergeant Willows knew he was in for a hellish time and had taken pity on him. It was possible, of course, that the sergeant was actually just a very nice person, but he couldn't help suspecting that pity played at least a small part in his kindness. He worried.

With nothing left to do other than unpack some boxes, Calvert ended up making a start on putting away the kitchen utensils. Before long, however, his tiredness got the better of him and he ended up falling into bed. Suffice to say, he'd didn't get the best nights' sleep he'd ever had. It was, however, just enough.

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When dawn broke, Calvert staggered out of bed, donned his bathrobe then headed into the kitchen. His first task was to make coffee. He did so while slaloming around Layla as she made herself a bowl of cereal. It was a task she performed with the maximum of fuss. She had to have her favourite bowl *and* her favourite type and spoon; a task that

seemed to require her to precariously restack all the crockery and jumble up all the cutlery. She then spilled milk all over the table, as always. More than used to her ham-handed routine by now, however, Calvert just let her get on with it. Rearranging the kitchen cupboards and drawers had been a daily post-breakfast routine since the day she'd first endeavoured to make her own breakfast.

Once coffee and breakfast were taken care off, Calvert and Layla headed off to their respective bedrooms to take a shower and get dressed. Layla emerged from *her* room wearing her swimsuit. Calvert emerged with a face as red as a beetroot to the soundtrack of Layla rolling on the floor laughing. She found his uniform every bit as ridiculous as he did. He soon had the last laugh, however, when he sent her back to her room to change into something sensible. He was about to take her to work with him. There was no way in hell he was going to let her wear a bikini. She re-emerged some five minutes later in a summer dress. At this point, Calvert declared they were finally ready to leave. Alas, they were not. Very much her mother's daughter, Layla wanted to do her hair first. She also sneaked some subtle makeup on in the hope her father wouldn't notice. It worked. He was so miffed about being kept waiting, as soon as she left her room, he shovelled her out of the door and the walk to work got underway.

As he headed off up the road with Willows' directions fresh in his mind, Calvert allowed himself a sigh. Normally he'd arrive at work, re-familiarise himself with his current case then follow up on any clues and suspicions he might have had. Day by day, the case would progress and the closer he got to solving it, the more exhilarating it felt. What this new job had in store for him, however, he had no idea. He just knew the thrill of hunting down a criminal that had made him feel so alive in the past wouldn't be a factor.

CALVERT: Fucking twat goblins.

(Layla gave him a sideways glance.)

LAYLA: What goblins?

CALVERT: Doesn't matter.

LAYLA: Right...

(She beamed.)

LAYLA: What are we going to do today then, dad? Who are we going to arrest? Ooh, can I carry a gun? I won't shoot anyone good, I swear.

CALVERT: No, you bloody can't carry a gun!

(He furrowed his brow.)

CALVERT: Even *I* don't carry a gun unless I'm going somewhere where there's an imminent threat to life.

LAYLA: Oh.

(She smiled.)

LAYLA: You can make me a deputy though, right? This is Deputy Layla Calvert; stop or I'll shoot!

CALVERT: You won't bloody shoot...

(He gave an exasperated sigh.)

CALVERT: You're getting that from your mum's dramas, aren't you?

LAYLA: The ones with all the shagging? Yeah.

CALVERT: Layla...

(He rolled his eyes.)

CALVERT: Look, I need you to be on your best behaviour today, okay? I'm meeting the people I'm going to have to work with and I want to make a good first impression.

Just... don't annoy them!

LAYLA: Of course not! Why would I?

CALVERT: Because you're likely to get bored and when you're bored, you can be very annoying!

LAYLA: Says who?

CALVERT: All the people you've annoyed!

(Layla furrowed her brow.)

LAYLA: You're mean! Mum never says mean things like that.

(Calvert grinned.)

CALVERT: No, she's far worse.

LAYLA: Is not!

CALVERT: Layla, the day before we left she compared trying to watch TV with *you* in the room to eating a jam sandwich in a field full of wasps. Then she did *this*.

(He wafted his hand across himself as if repeatedly swatting flies.)

CALVERT: Move! Shift! Get out of they way!

(Layla blushed.)

LAYLA: That was the day I kept accidentally walking in front of the TV.

CALVERT: Probably. The point is, don't be annoying *today*.

LAYLA: I won't!

(She furrowed her brow.)

LAYLA: It's not like I do it on purpose anyway. I'm just an active person. Uncle Graham says it's healthy.

CALVERT: Your Uncle Graham is a twat.

(Layla gasped.)

LAYLA: You can't say that!

CALVERT: Bloody can. The other day, when you're mum was busy moaning at me, he popped round and joined in! It was none of his business!

(He shook his head.)

CALVERT: I know he's just gonna miss your mum, an' all; they are siblings, after all. But that was *not* his place to speak up. I swear, if I wasn't already in the doghouse, I'd have chinned him.

(Layla grimaced at him.)

LAYLA: Dad?

CALVERT: What?

LAYLA: That's one of those things I shouldn't tell mum about, is it?

CALVERT: Me wanting to punch her brother? Very much so.

LAYLA: Right. Your secret is safe with me!

CALVERT: It's appreciated.

LAYLA: Anything for you, dad.

(Calvert nodded.)

CALVERT: Thank you, but the only thing I want right now is for you to promise me you'll behave today. Be a little angel, okay?

LAYLA: Okay. I'll try.

CALVERT: Good girl.

(Layla then offered him a pitying smile.)

LAYLA: So... that uniform...

CALVERT: What about it?

(Layla started to giggle.)

LAYLA: You look like a postman!

CALVERT: Really? That's you behaving today, is it?

LAYLA: But it's funny.

(She glanced away innocently.)

LAYLA: Because it's true.

(Calvert glowered at her.)

CALVERT: I know it is!

LAYLA: Calm down.

CALVERT: Right. Yeah. Sorry. I didn't mean to go all postal on you.

(They shared an amused grin.)

LAYLA: Don't worry, dad. I'll be as nice as pie.

CALVERT: You don't like pies.

LAYLA: I'll be as nice as ice cream then. Point is, I'll be good. I'll even pretend I *like* everybody; like I do at family gatherings.

CALVERT: That's my girl.

(He flinched.)

CALVERT: Wait. What?

LAYLA: Just saying... my cousins are rubbish. And so are their parents.

(Calvert glared at her for a moment then shrugged it off.)

CALVERT: Actually, that's a fair comment. I don't like family gatherings either.

LAYLA: Why do we have to go to them then?

CALVERT: To keep your mum happy.

LAYLA: Why?

CALVERT: Because my life is a thousand times harder when she's *not* happy. Now stop asking silly questions and behave.

LAYLA: But we're not at the police station yet.

CALVERT: Behave anyway! Good behaviour isn't *just* for when we're at the police station, Layla!

LAYLA: Right...

(She grimaced.)

LAYLA: Fair point, but in my defence, at no point was I *mis*behaving. I'm not sure why you felt the need to tell me that.

CALVERT: Layla...

(He then started to chuckle.)

CALVERT: You're a proper smartarse, you are. Do you know that?

LAYLA: I do, yes.

CALVERT: Right...

LAYLA: So, what are we going to do today if we're not gonna be shooting people?

CALVERT: I don't know, love. I'll find out when I get there.

(He bit his lip.)

CALVERT: One thing I definitely need to do is get the internet installed before your mum arrives on the ferry this afternoon. Without that...

(He shuddered.)

CALVERT: I'd be wise to lock the kitchen cupboards.

LAYLA: Hmm...

CALVERT: What?

LAYLA: Getting your internet connection set up doesn't sound very much like police work to me. Are you planning to skive off and do it? What if you get fired?

CALVERT: I won't get fired, love.

LAYLA: But how can you be so sure?

CALVERT: Because I'm the boss. If I need to leave the station to get something done, I can.

LAYLA: Oh. Really? You can leave any time?

CALVERT: Well, yeah. If I need to.

LAYLA: Because you're the boss?

CALVERT: Yeah.

LAYLA: Cool.

(She beamed.)

LAYLA: That's sounds awesome. When I grow up, *I'm* gonna be a boss. Then I won't have to go to work at all!

CALVERT: That's not how it works!

LAYLA: But you said...

CALVERT: I said if I *need* to do something I can take the time out to do it, that's all.

LAYLA: Yeah, need. Like if you *need* a nap you can just go home.

CALVERT: No, I mean if there's something I *have* to do, I can. I'm trusted to be responsible, you see? So I can allow myself time out to get things done. I can't just refrain from going to work altogether. If I did that, the higher ups *would* fire me.

LAYLA: Oh. Okay. I think I know what you mean.

(She sighed.)

LAYLA: That's disappointing. I thought for a minute I'd found the perfect job.

CALVERT: You hadn't. And if not doing anything all day is your perfect job, you never will.

LAYLA: Damn. Being an adult sounds like hard work.

CALVERT: It is. So enjoy your childhood while you can.

LAYLA: Good idea. I will!

CALVERT: But also behave!

LAYLA: Make your mind up.

CALVERT: Layla...

(The two of them then shared a crafty giggle.)

CALVERT: It's a bloody good thing you're cute, sweetheart; it really is.

---

A short while later, having completed the short walk to the police station, DS Calvert and Layla stopped in their tracks and gave the building the once over with their eyes. They then shared an unimpressed glance. The police station in Croxton was an imposing concrete building with eight floors that ran one from end of a long street to the other.

Almost a thousand officers were based there. It also featured a yard where their vast fleet of vehicles was based. Tifasea police station, on the other hand, was made of three portable cabins that had been welded together. A lean-to had also been tacked onto the side where four police ATV's were stored. It was not an impressive sight. Hardly able to believe what she was seeing, Layla gave her father a sideways glance.

LAYLA: Are you sure this is a promotion, dad?

(Calvert sighed.)

CALVERT: I never said it was, love.

(He then strode towards the door. Layla watched him go for a moment then shrugged, before charging after him. Moments later, they paced in through the front door then came to an abrupt halt. There were two empty cells on the left side of the station, and on right there were two desks. Against the far wall was another bigger desk; the boss's workspace. Immediately to their right, there was a kitchen area where two young police officers, one male and one female, were chuckling together boisterously, having failed to even notice them come in. Other than these few features and a bench just inside the door, the room was bare. At once, a chill ran down Calvert's spine. It was every bit as bad as he'd feared. This was very much the kind of backwater, rural police station he'd heard about from colleagues. A place where the police were only there as a precaution and the worst thing they might have to deal with is the odd stray dog worrying people's chickens. It was all his nightmares come true. Pondering that thought, he sighed despairingly then glanced to the two officers he'd be in charge of. Still oblivious to his presence, they were chuckling heartily. Clearly enjoying his morning, the male officer of the two then gestured towards his desk and spoke up in a country bumpkin accent.)

SINGLETON: We should go and sit down before the new tyrant arrives.

(The female officer nodded then replied with the same local accent.)

HORNBLOWER: With his whip.

SINGLETON: And jump leads for our nipples.

(The female officer gave him a playful slap on the arm.)

HORNBLOWER: You animal.

(Calvert glanced at Layla then furrowed his brow at the two officers.)

CALVERT: I don't think my nine year old really wanted to hear that!

(At once, the two officers gasped in horror then spun to face him. Having gaped at him silently for a moment the male officer then paced over to him and saluted.)

SINGLETON: I apologise, sir! Constable Joe Singleton at your service, sir!

(The female officer then hurried to his side and offered up a nervous curtsy.)

HORNBLOWER: Nice to meet you, sir. I'm Alicia Hornblower, sir. Junior Constable. Um... sir.

CALVERT: Nice to meet you both. I'm Detective Sergeant Calvert.

LAYLA: And I'm Deputy Layla Calvert. Junior detective.

(Calvert glowered at her.)

CALVERT: And her speciality is being a good girl.

LAYLA: I...

CALVERT: And a quiet one.

LAYLA: Right...

(Calvert then nodded to his two subordinates.)

CALVERT: Right then. First thing on the agenda. Stand at ease; you look terrified.

SINGLETON: We're nervous, sir.

HORNBLOWER: We're not used to strangers around here.

SINGLETON: But we'll do our best not to upset you in any way, sir. Please don't hurt us.

HORNBLOWER: Please.

CALVERT: Hurt you? Why on earth *would* I?

(Singleton gulped.)

SINGLETON: Sergeant Willows said you kick your fellow officers where it hurts the most when you're not happy with them.

(Calvert rolled his eyes.)

CALVERT: That's bollocks.

SINGLETON: Yeah, there.

CALVERT: No, I mean that's not true.

(He smiled.)

CALVERT: Don't worry, Simpleton. I won't be kicking anybody.

SINGLETON: My name's Singleton, sir.

CALVERT: I know.

(He then glanced across them both.)

CALVERT: So... this *uniform* sucks. Us blokes look like postmen and you...

Hornblower, was it?

HORNBLOWER: Yes, sir.

CALVERT: You look like you're late for school.

(She glanced down at her sky blue, pleated skirt and sighed.)

HORNBLOWER: I get that a lot.

CALVERT: Well, chin up. We *all* look like morons, so at least we have that in common.

(He smiled.)

CALVERT: So, who wants to make me a cup of coffee?

LAYLA: Me!

CALVERT: Not you!

LAYLA: Aw...

HORNBLOWER: I'll do it, sir. How do you like it?

CALVERT: White, one sugar.

HORNBLOWER: Okay.

(She then headed back to the kitchen area. Wearing a quizzical expression, Layla paced after her. Failing to notice her slip away, Calvert looked to Singleton then bit his lip.)

CALVERT: Right, I need some information from you.

SINGLETON: Oh?

CALVERT: What open cases are there?

SINGLETON: That depends. What's a case?

CALVERT: Something to investigate. A crime that needs to be solved.

SINGLETON: Oh. We don't have those here, sir.

(Calvert sighed.)

CALVERT: I feared you'd say that.

(He glanced across the room.)

CALVERT: Is there nothing in that filing cabinet that needs attending to?



SINGLETON: There's just our personal files in there. And a toaster. We had to hide it in there because the people from the ATV repair shop stole the last one.

CALVERT: Right. I see. Well, that's great. A police force so attentive, people can just walk in and steal their toaster. A properly professional set up.

(He rolled his eyes.)

CALVERT: I trust you arrested them.

SINGLETON: We daren't, sir. If we did that, they'd refuse to service our ATV's.

CALVERT: What?

(He furrowed his brow.)

CALVERT: They committed a crime!

SINGLETON: Yeah, but arresting them would have cost us dear. Not arresting them only cost us a toaster. You don't mess with those ATV guys. We'd never get a vehicle fixed ever again if we did that. Arrest one ATV mechanic and they'll *all* blacklist you, sir. Every single one on the island.

(Calvert couldn't help but grimace. Singleton had given him a prime example of what Sergeant Willows had warned him about the day before. Arresting people here would result in a denial of service, detrimental his officer's lives; and those of their families.)

CALVERT: So the crime went unpunished.

SINGLETON: Yeah. But *we* had the last laugh, sir.

CALVERT: Oh. How?

SINGLETON: We bought a new one.

(He then stood there beaming with delight. Very much aware that he wasn't in the company of a genius, Calvert could only sigh to himself.)

CALVERT: Right...

(Over in the kitchen area at this time, rather than making Calvert his coffee, Hornblower was deep in conversation with Layla. Layla had spotted her shiny, manicured fingernails and had been desperate to learn more. Always delighted to share her fashion and beauty tips, Hornblower was only too happy to engage her.)

HORNBLOWER: That's what a pumice is for, you see. It makes them all smooth.

That's when I get busy with the nail polish. This is shade sixteen. Metallic moonlight.

LAYLA: Ooh. Shiny. I like shiny things.

HORNBLOWER: You do? Oh, me too. You and I are going to work really well together. I'm so glad we've got another girl in the office. We'll have to get another desk though. I'll order one in a minute.

(Layla grimaced at her.)

LAYLA: What? Why? I'm only here for one day.

HORNBLOWER: You are?

LAYLA: Yes! I'm nine. I'm a child. I don't *work* here.

HORNBLOWER: Aw. Disappointing.

(She beamed.)

HORNBLOWER: Still. You're lovely. We'll definitely get on. Even if it *is* for only one day.

LAYLA: I agree.

(She beamed.)

LAYLA: Anyway, about those nails...

HORNBLOWER: Oh yeah...

(She mused to herself.)

HORNBLOWER: I tell you what; I'll show you.

LAYLA: Cool!

HORNBLOWER: Come.

(The two of them headed off to her desk. It was safe to say, Hornblower had completely forgotten about making Calvert a coffee. Her love for all things cosmetic had entirely consumed her less than adequate brain. Luckily for her, however, Calvert didn't even notice. Fully focussed on gaining a vital nugget of information about the island, he was deep in discussion with Singleton.)

CALVERT: And it's reliable, is it?

SINGLETON: Absolutely.

CALVERT: Steady and ever present. No buffering?

SINGLETON: Buffering? Was that?

CALVERT: Oh. Well, that's good to hear.

SINGLETON: No, seriously. What is it?

(Calvert sighed.)

CALVERT: It's when videos slow down or stop. That little circle appears in the middle of the screen. I'm sure you've seen it.

SINGLETON: Sure. When I was a kid. That sort of thing doesn't happen anymore though.

CALVERT: Good to know.

SINGLETON: We have broadband now, sir. Proper, like, fast broadband. I hate to brag but I get speeds of like twenty megabytes at home.

CALVERT: Twenty?

SINGLETON: That's right. I've got the deluxe, high-speed service, you see?

CALVERT: Twenty Mbps?

SINGLETON: Yeah. That.

(Calvert winced.)

CALVERT: We had six hundred back in Croxton.

SINGLETON: Six hundred? What's the point in that? I play games on my console at home while my mother watches TV shows. Twenty is plenty.

(His face lit up.)

SINGLETON: That rhymes!

CALVERT: Yes, well, never mind that. If twenty is as fast as I can get, so be it. I'll just have to take it. Now who do I need to speak to?

SINGLETON: Alicia.

CALVERT: Who?

(Singleton nodded towards Constable Hornblower.)

SINGLETON: Her. You need to speak to her.

CALVERT: And she can get my broadband installed, can she?

SINGLETON: What? No.

CALVERT: Then why do I need to speak to her?

(Singleton looks into his eyes blankly.)

SINGLETON: Because... she works here too.

(Calvert sighed.)

CALVERT: I wasn't asking who I need to speak to in order to get to know them better as my subordinates. I want to know who I need to speak to about getting broadband!

SINGLETON: Oh, right.

CALVERT: Well?

SINGLETON: What?

CALVERT: Who do I need to speak to about getting the internet installed???

SINGLETON: Oh! Gotcha. You need to speak to Kevin.

CALVERT: And where can I find him?

SINGLETON: In his workshop.

(Calvert stared through him for a moment then clenched his fists.)

CALVERT: I know I said I wouldn't, but I've changed my mind. I really am going to kick you in the bollocks in a minute.

(Singleton reeled back.)

SINGLETON: But... what did I do?

CALVERT: Just tell me where to find this Kevin bloke. Our one and only job today is to get my internet installed before this afternoon's ferry arrives.

SINGLETON: I *told* you where to find him.

CALVERT: In his workshop?

SINGLETON: That's right.

CALVERT: And where is it???

(He took a deep breath to calm himself.)

CALVERT: No wonder Willows was so happy about leaving.

SINGLETON: Well... I can't really describe how to get there, sir. I can show you if you like.

CALVERT: I *do* like. We'll go now.

(He nodded.)

CALVERT: Those ATV's around the side are for general police use, are they?

SINGLETON: Yes, sir.

CALVERT: Fetch the keys then. We need to get going.

SINGLETON: Sir!

(He then scuttled off towards the hooks on the wall where the keys were hung. Having watched him go, Calvert nodded then glanced down to his side.)

CALVERT: Layla...

(His brow instantly furrowed over.)

CALVERT: Where the hell did *she* bugger off to?

(He then glanced up and spotted Hornblower and Layla sitting face to face behind a desk.)

CALVERT: Layla. We're heading out, love.

LAYLA: Bye!

CALVERT: No, you're coming with me.

LAYLA: No, thanks. I'm fine where I am.

CALVERT: Layla!

(He furrowed his brow.)

CALVERT: Singleton and I are heading out and I'm not leaving you here on your own.

HORNBLOWER: She won't be on her own, sir. I'm here.

CALVERT: For now, yes. But what happens if someone reports a crime and you have to rush out?

(Much to his bewilderment, as if he'd made the world's funniest joke, Singleton and Hornblower instantly roared with laughter.)

HORNBLOWER: A crime?

SINGLETON: Good one, sir!

HORNBLOWER: A crime? Here?

SINGLETON: There's more chance of the roof caving in.

HORNBLOWER: Or a ferry sailing down the high street.

SINGLETON: Right? Never gonna happen.

HORNBLOWER: Nothing *ever* happens here.

SINGLETON: Not a blooming thing.

(As they continued to laugh, Calvert raised an enquiring eyebrow.)

CALVERT: Nothing? Then what the hell do you two do all day?

HORNBLOWER: Not much. I read magazines mostly.

SINGLETON: I play games on my computer.

HORNBLOWER: Sometimes we play cards.

SINGLETON: We didn't do it often though. Sergeant Willows used to win all our money, you see? He was really good at cards.

HORNBLOWER: He was. We barely ever won a hand.

CALVERT: So that's it, is it? You just doss around all day doing nothing.

HORNBLOWER: Yeah!

(Layla beamed.)

LAYLA: I think I know what I want to be when I'm older now, dad!

CALVERT: No. Enough. Be quiet.

(He shook his head.)

CALVERT: I'll go insane if I sit on my arse all day doing nothing. I'll have to *find* something to do.

SINGLETON: I can recommend some games if you like.

CALVERT: I meant something to do in my capacity as a police officer. Even if it's only *community* policing.

(Hornblower grimaced.)

HORNBLOWER: Community policing? What's that?

CALVERT: It's when you engage with the public in a bid to know and understand them better.

SINGLETON: Really? Sounds like a waste of time to me. Everyone on this island already knows each other.

CALVERT: Excuse me? Did I ask your opinion?

SINGLETON: No, sir.

CALVERT: Then be quiet.

(Singleton hung his head.)

SINGLETON: Fah.

CALVERT: Have you got those keys?

SINGLETON: Keys?

(He looked enlightened.)

SINGLETON: Oh, yeah. I have, yes.

(He held up a single key.)

SINGLETON: Follow me!

CALVERT: Wait!

(He furrowed his brow.)

CALVERT: One key?

SINGLETON: Yeah.

CALVERT: You want us to share an ATV?

SINGLETON: Well... they do have a backseat, sir.

CALVERT: Get two lots of keys. I'll follow you on a different one.

SINGLETON: Oh. Okay. That's weird.

CALVERT: How? How is it?

SINGLETON: Sergeant Willows liked to be chauffeured around.

CALVERT: No. *That's* weird. Just get another key!

(He rolled his eyes then looked to Hornblower.)

CALVERT: Hornblower!

(He seemed to lose the will to live at this point.)

CALVERT: What a terrible name.

(Hornblower pouted.)

HORNBLOWER: You don't need to tell me that, sir! The crude jokes never stop coming!

CALVERT: I can imagine. I feel like a pervert even *saying* it to you.

HORNBLOWER: Then call me Alicia; for both our sakes.

CALVERT: Yeah... I think that'd be for the best.

(He then stood tall.)

CALVERT: Alicia, while I'm out, make damned sure to keep Layla safe!

HORNBLOWER: Of course, sir!

SINGLETON: She'll be fine, sir. Alicia's great with kids.

CALVERT: Good. Take really good care of her, Alicia. If anything happens to her... well... you don't have bollocks to kick, but... I think you know where I'm going with that.

LAYLA: I'll be fine, dad.

HORNBLOWER: Wait. I'm scared now.

LAYLA: Don't worry. I'll take care of you.

HORNBLOWER: What?

LAYLA: We'll be fine.

HORNBLOWER: Well... okay.

CALVERT: Right. Let's get going, Singleton. I'll get that internet connection of mine all sorted out then come back here and see what I can do about implementing something that closely resembles a working day.

(He then paced out of the door.)

CALVERT: Best behaviour, Layla!!!

LAYLA: Okay!!!

(Singleton stared at the door in bewilderment then glanced towards Hornblower.)

SINGLETON: He went without me.

(A voice then bellowed out from outside.)

CALVERT: Singleton!!!

(Singleton flinched.)

SINGLETON: Oh, right...

(He then sprinted out of the door. Left behind, Layla and Hornblower shared an amused glance.)

LAYLA: Men!

HORNBLOWER: Right?

(They shared a brief chuckle.)

HORNBLOWER: Anyway, let's get those nails done then see if we can do something about your face.

LAYLA: What's *wrong* with my face?

HORNBLOWER: Nothing. I just want to see how you look with smoky eyes.

LAYLA: Ooh, yes please.

HORNBLOWER: Then we'll see about sprucing up that outfit.

LAYLA: Awesome. I like you Alicia; you're the best. Even if you did forget to make my dad a coffee.

HORNBLOWER: I did? Oh, yeah!

LAYLA: Whoops.

HORNBLOWER: I'm completely forgot.

(They then sat there and giggled together.)

---

A short while later, DC Calvert found himself driving his ATV through Long Sand's main thoroughfare, keeping a consistent twenty foot gap between himself and the lead vehicle; driven by Constable Singleton. A stickler for the laws of the road, he didn't deviate from what the law considered to be a safe distance, even for a second. It proved to be an enlightening vantage point. He learned several interesting things along the way. Firstly, the town's one and only shop was bigger than he'd expected. Secondly, Long Sand had a tennis court with stands around it in the style of a football stadium. And thirdly, the most important thing he learned was that his subordinate was a terrible driver. Far from impressed, he was tempted to pull him over and read him the riot act. Mercifully, before he could subject the young police officer to such a humiliation, they reached their destination; Kevin Communications Ltd. It was a grandiose name for what was essentially a shed in the business owner's garden.

Having pulled up outside the property, Singleton climbed from his ATV then stood there looking pleased with himself. He'd achieved his first task under his new boss's command; leading him to the man who could set up his internet. He was hoping for much in the way of kudos. He was to be disappointed. A few seconds later, DS Calvert pulled up alongside him, dismounted then removed his crash helmet and stepped up to him angrily.

CALVERT: Singleton, you drive like a tit!

(Singleton was most taken aback.)

SINGLETON: What?

CALVERT: You heard me!

(He furrowed his brow.)

CALVERT: You're supposed to indicate before you go around a corner! You're...

SINGLETON: Indicate?

(He grimaced.)

SINGLETON: What's that?

CALVERT: It's...

(He then froze in bewilderment.)

CALVERT: You don't know what indicate means?

SINGLETON: Um...

CALVERT: Oh, good god.

(He shook his head.)

CALVERT: That amber light on the back of your ATV is the indicator. Before you go around a corner, you're meant to turn it on. You know, to indicate that you intend to turn!

SINGLETON: Oh. Right. That thing.

(He gave Calvert a sympathetic glance.)

SINGLETON: You're really are new to his island, aren't you?

CALVERT: Excuse me?

SINGLETON: We don't do that here!

CALVERT: What?

SINGLETON: You didn't know?

(He bit his lip.)

SINGLETON: Well, that's no good. If you're going to be the chief of police around here, you should at least learn this island's laws.

CALVERT: I *know* this island's laws, Simpleton! This island is subject to the same laws as the rest of the bloody country.

SINGLETON: It's Singleton, sir.

CALVERT: Again; I know.

(He shook his head.)

CALVERT: You have to indicate here just as you would anywhere else. And you should know that. There's no way you'd have got a licence if you didn't.

SINGLETON: A licence?

CALVERT: Yes, a...

(His sighed inwardly.)

CALVERT: You don't *have* a licence, do you?

SINGLETON: No. Why? Should I have?

CALVERT: Yes! You need one to be able to drive!

SINGLETON: Me? Why? Why single *me* out? Nobody else has got one.

CALVERT: What do you mean, *nobody else has got one*?

SINGLETON: They're not a thing. As soon as you're tall enough, you can drive. Everyone knows that! I've been driving since I was ten.

CALVERT: That's illegal!

SINGLETON: No, it isn't.

CALVERT: You...

(He then watched on in open-mouthed dismay as an ATV rode past them, driven by a girl, roughly twelve years old, in her school uniform.)

SINGLETON: See? All perfectly legitimate and above board.

CALVERT: No, it's not!

(He gritted his teeth.)

CALVERT: You need a licence by *law*. And you have to be sixteen to get one! *And* in order to get one, you need to pass a test!

SINGLETON: Ouch. I'm not good at those!

CALVERT: Relax, it's not an IQ test.

SINGLETON: Good., I haven't got one of those!

CALVERT: Yes, you have!

(He sneered.)

CALVERT: No much of one, but...

(He shook his fist.)

CALVERT: Stop interrupting! Point is, you need to pass a test to acquire a licence. It's illegal to drive without one! And while we're at it, sunshine, it's also illegal to ride without wearing a crash helmet!

SINGLETON: Since when?

CALVERT: Since I'm going to punch you in the face!

SINGLETON: Steady on!

CALVERT: Sorry. I lost it there for a moment. That's been the law for over thirty years!

SINGLETON: On the mainland, maybe...

CALVERT: Everywhere in the country!!!

(He snarled.)

CALVERT: As decreed by the Kasika government!

SINGLETON: What have they got to do with anything?

CALVERT: Excuse me? They're the bloody government, that's what!

SINGLETON: No, they're not! We've got our *own* government. Democratically elected by the people of Tifasea.

(He ruffled his neck.)

SINGLETON: We call them Bob and Cheryl. Never once have they told me to get a licence and wear a crash helmet.

CALVERT: *They're* not the government, you tit. They're your locally elected councillors!

SINGLETON: You know about them?

CALVERT: Of course I do. I read up about this island before I left. It said Cheryl took over from her husband after he was injured in a freak car-washing accident.

SINGLETON: That's right. There he was, washing the windscreen when, from out of nowhere, he got struck by lightning.

(Calvert blinked at him nonchalantly.)

CALVERT: How is that a freak car-washing accident?

SINGLETON: Well... you don't expect *that* to happen, do you?

CALVERT: Yes, but the fact he was washing his car was neither her nor there. It was lightning strike, not a freak car-washing accident.

SINGLETON: Hey! The local paper said it was a freak car-washing accident and that's good enough for me.

CALVERT: The local paper?

SINGLETON: Yeah. It's a good read. We all read it from cover to cover here. Both pages.

CALVERT: So it's a newsletter.



SINGLETON: It's a *newspaper*.

CALVERT: Right...

(He sighed.)

CALVERT: I'm not going to argue with you. I am, however, going to insist that you wear a helmet in future. And fucking indicate.

(Singleton sighed bitterly.)

SINGLETON: Sir.

CALVERT: Thank you. Now where's this Kevin bloke?

SINGLETON: Right. Yeah. Follow me.

(He then headed up the driveway of the house they'd parked outside. They'd barely made it halfway, however, when an angry middle-aged man emerged from the front door with a shotgun.)

KEVIN: State your business!

(Calvert threw his hands in the air.)

CALVERT: Easy! Let's not be hasty, now. Let's discuss this like...

KEVIN: Oh, it's you, Joe.

(He then lowered the weapon and nodded.)

KEVIN: Hah!

SINGLETON: Hah!

KEVIN: Who's your friend?

SINGLETON: This is Detective Sergeant Calvert; my new boss.

KEVIN: I see.

(He nodded towards Calvert.)

KEVIN: Hah!

CALVERT: Yes... hello.

(He raised a suspicious eyebrow.)

CALVERT: Do you have a licence for that shotgun?

(Kevin looked to Singleton.)

KEVIN: A licence? Has he been smoking the funny stuff?

SINGLETON: No, he just has a weird obsession with licences.

CALVERT: Because you need a licence to own a shotgun!

KEVIN: If you say so, mate.

(He smiled.)

KEVIN: Now what can I do for you, Joe?

SINGLETON: The boss here needs his internet installed.

CALVERT: As soon as possible.

KEVIN: I see.

(He chuckled.)

KEVIN: Do I need to licence to do that as well?

CALVERT: No. You need to be certified by the Kasika Board of Electricians.

KEVIN: Right...

(He grimaced at Singleton.)

KEVIN: He's making stuff up now.

SINGLETON: So, I see. Still, can you install his internet for him? And if so, when?

KEVIN: Well, that depends.

(Calvert furrowed his brow.)

CALVERT: On what?

KEVIN: On you, Detective. If you were *joking* about me needing a licence for my shotgun and a certificate from that other place, I can come now. As long as you promise never to mention those things ever again, of course. On the other hand, if you insist that I have to *get* them, I might just be busy forever.

(He shrugged.)

KEVIN: So you'll have to get someone else to do it.

SINGLETON: Nobody else on this island *can* do it.

KEVIN: Oh, dear. How awfully tragic. I *am* sad.

(He then smirked at Calvert.)

KEVIN: Well, Detective?

(Calvert looked at him emptily for a moment then sighed in defeat. His life wouldn't be worth living if he didn't get the internet installed. His wife was angry at him enough already. Deprived of her favourite entertainment, that anger would multiply. She'd have to substitute the dramas she loved so much for creating her *own* dramas and she was more than adept at doing so. And he'd be the victim in every single episode. Just the thought of it sent a chill down his spine.)

CALVERT: She'd make my life a misery. Even more than it already is.

(He then nodded at Kevin firmly.)

CALVERT: I didn't see a shotgun and I'm happy to assume you already have a certificate.

KEVIN: And I'm happy to let you do that.

CALVERT: Can you come now?

KEVIN: I just need to fetch my tools.

(He nodded sternly.)

KEVIN: Which despite what it says on the box, are *not* the property of Ashrin Telecommunications.

(He then about turned and headed for his shed. Having watched him go, Calvert could only sigh despairingly.)

CALVERT: Is everyone on this island a crook?

SINGLETON: I'm not.

CALVERT: You've been driving illegally since you were ten!

SINGLETON: Right. Yeah.

(He offered him a cheesy grin.)

SINGLETON: Did I mention that we do things differently around here?

CALVERT: Yeah...

(He sighed.)

CALVERT: So I'm finding out.

---

Back at the station, a short while later, Layla was sitting a chair, staring hard into a mirror on the desk. Behind her, Hornblower was focussing hard on styling her hair for her. Armed with hairspray, gel, temporary dye and a host of hair ornaments, she was determined to create a masterpiece that her young friend would adore. Loving what she could see of it so far, Layla beamed.

LAYLA: Wow. That blue spray looks awesome.

HORNBLOWER: You wait until I add the glitter then.

LAYLA: Ooh, super shiny. Just how I like things.

(She then glanced down at her fingernails.)

LAYLA: Shiny. Just like my sparkly silver fingernails. You did an awesome job, Alicia.

HORNBLOWER: Aw, thanks, babes.

(She sighed.)

HORNBLOWER: My mum never compliments me like that. She says I go way over the top. She accused me of making my little sister look like a tiny prostitute once.

LAYLA: Ouch. She sounds mean.

HORNBLOWER: She can be, yeah.

LAYLA: Yeah...

(She sighed.)

LAYLA: *My* mum is the same. Not to me though. She's only mean to my dad.

HORNBLOWER: Really?

LAYLA: Yeah. Not always though. I mean, I never saw her do anything mean until last week. But ever since then...

HORNBLOWER: Is she angry with him about something then?

LAYLA: Angry? No. She absolutely livid. I tell you, a nine year old does not need to hear *that* kind of profanity!

HORNBLOWER: Oh, wow. Why is she angry then? What did he do?

LAYLA: He...

(Just then, two balaclava-wearing young men burst into the office, brandishing handguns. Snarling menacing they wafted their weapon at Hornblower then swiftly barked their demands in their yokel accents.)

DALE: Don't move!!!

GAVIN: Put your hands in the air!!!

(At once, Layla screeched then dived under the table.)

DALE: I said don't move!!!

HORNBLOWER: Yeah, but also told us to put our hands in the air. Which one is it? I mean, what's a girl supposed to do?

GAVIN: Well you can start by telling your mate to come out from under that table!

(Hornblower shrugged.)

HORNBLOWER: Oh. Okay. Come out from under the table, Layla.

(Layla whimpered from beneath the table.)

LAYLA: I'm not under the table!

HORNBLOWER: She said she's...

GAVIN: I heard!

DALE: Tell her again! Forcefully!

HORNBLOWER: Oh, leave her alone, she's only nine.

(Dale looked at her then shrugged.)

DALE: Fine. We don't need her help anyway; we just need you.

(He then nodded towards a safe at the side of the room.)

DALE: Open it!

HORNBLOWER: Open what? The safe?

DALE: Yes!

HORNBLOWER: Why?

GAVIN: Just do it!!!  
(Hornblower grimaced.)  
HORNBLOWER: Fine. If you insist.  
(She then paced over to the safe and yanked it open. It wasn't even locked.)  
HORNBLOWER: There you go.  
(At once, Gavin hurried over to the safe then peered inside.)  
GAVIN: Um...  
DALE: What?  
GAVIN: It's empty.  
DALE: What???  
(He hurried to Gavin's side then grimaced.)  
DALE: Mate...  
GAVIN: Yeah?  
DALE: It's empty.  
GAVIN: I know. *I* just told *you* that.  
DALE: Right...  
(He grimaced at Hornblower.)  
DALE: Why is it empty?  
HORNBLOWER: It's *always* been empty.  
DALE: Shit.  
(Gavin sighed.)  
GAVIN: Now what?  
DALE: Now we might as well go home.  
GAVIN: Yeah?  
DALE: Yeah. I mean, there's no point in staying, is there? It's not in there.  
GAVIN: Good point. A swing and a miss for us then.  
DALE: Yeah. Anyway...  
(They then started to back away towards the door.)  
DALE: Don't even think of chasing us!  
HORNBLOWER: Seriously? Why would I chase *you*, Dale?  
(Dale was horrified.)  
DALE: What??? Dale? I'm not Dale!  
(Hornblower chuckled.)  
HORNBLOWER: Right. And that's not Gavin, I suppose.  
GAVIN: What? Gavin who?  
HORNBLOWER: Seriously? You two are so silly.  
DALE: We're not Gavin and Dale!  
GAVIN: And nor am I!  
DALE: Mate...  
GAVIN: Just let it slide, will you?  
(He furrowed his brow at Hornblower.)  
GAVIN: Point is, we're not Gavin and Dale.  
DALE: Yeah. We're Reggie and Craig.  
HORNBLOWER: The two fat, ginger-haired boys from Ridgeton?  
GAVIN: Yeah!  
HORNBLOWER: Then how come you're both skinny and have blonde hair.

DALE: We dyed it!

GAVIN: And went on a diet!

HORNBLOWER: A *fast-working* diet. You were both fat yesterday when you drove past.

DALE: Alicia...

HORNBLOWER: Just stop. I went out with you for two years, Dale. How did you think I wouldn't recognise you! And you, Gavin. I went out with *you* for two years as well. At the same time.

DALE: Yeah...

(He grimaced.)

DALE: That wasn't your finest hour really, was it?

HORNBLOWER: Oh, I dunno. I had a great time until you found out.

DALE: Yeah. I was fucking furious.

(He then shrieked.)

DALE: I mean, I was furious when Gavin and Dale told me all about it. Top lads they are! Poor form, Alicia. How could play two decent fellas like that. Two decent fellas who aren't us two. We're two other people entirely.

GAVIN: Nice save.

DALE: Thanks.

GAVIN: You're welcome.

(He shook his head.)

GAVIN: On that note, we'd better go, Dale!

DALE: Gavin!!!

GAVIN: Shit!

DALE: You tit!!!

(They then sprinted out of the door and shot off up the road, leaving Alicia chuckling gleefully to herself.)

HORNBLOWER: Those boys...

(At this point, Layla emerged from under the table and pouted at her.)

LAYLA: They had guns! We should call my dad.

HORNBLOWER: What for?

LAYLA: They tried to rob us at gunpoint.

(Hornblower giggled.)

HORNBLOWER: Yeah. Those ATV repair boys will try anything to get their hands on our new toaster.

LAYLA: What?

(She grimaced.)

LAYLA: Toaster?

HORNBLOWER: Yeah. Since they heard we'd replaced the one they stole, they've been trying to steal the new one as well.

(She smiled.)

HORNBLOWER: They do love a prank, those lads.

LAYLA: It was a prank? So... the guns weren't loaded.

HORNBLOWER: I'm not sure. All I know is, they must have thought it was in the safe and tried their luck.

(She giggled.)

HORNBLOWER: Last time they attempted to find it by sending in a drone. Sergeant Willows batted it down with a mop. It's all just a bit of harmless fun.

LAYLA: With guns?

HORNBLOWER: Sure. They just wanted to make it look realistic.

LAYLA: It worked. I was terrified!

HORNBLOWER: Aw...

(Hornblower paced to her side and placed a friendly arm around her.)

HORNBLOWER: You'll get used to them, love. Oh, wait. No you won't. You're only here for one day, aren't you?

LAYLA: Damned right, I am. Guns, woman!

HORNBLOWER: Right?

(She exhaled.)

HORNBLOWER: Fun!

(She then looked to Layla and smiled.)

HORNBLOWER: Anyway, let's finish making you look awesome.

LAYLA: But...

HORNBLOWER: After we've done your hair, we can make a start on that make-up.

(Layla looked to her nervously for a moment.)

LAYLA: They won't come back, will they?

HORNBLOWER: Today? God no. They'll be way too embarrassed after that debacle. No, no. They'll go back to their workshop now and devise a new plan for another day.

LAYLA: Well... If you're sure.

HORNBLOWER: I am.

(Layla nodded then strutted back to her seat.)

LAYLA: What are we waiting for then? Alicia?

HORNBLOWER: Yes?

LAYLA: Make me gorgeous.

(Hornblower beamed.)

HORNBLOWER: Now that I can do!

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A short while later, at 5 Sandy View Road, DS Calvert was standing in the living room beside Constable Singleton, watching Kevin the internet engineer pace up and down. He'd hit upon a snag and he was trying to think of the best way to resolve it. Hoping he'd be quick about it, DS Calvert tapped his foot impatiently then shook his head. He needed the job to be completed as soon as possible and the delay was beyond annoying. Mercifully, before the temptation to yell at the man to do something could overwhelm him, Kevin stood tall then turned to face him.)

KEVIN: Okay. There's only one way to solve this issue.

CALVERT: Is it to get started?

KEVIN: No. Well...

(He grimaced.)

KEVIN: Yeah... but it won't be cheap. It's a lot of work.

CALVERT: Is that so?

KEVIN: Yeah, the previous owner had the internet point in the bedroom. Which you say is now your daughter's room.

CALVERT: That's right.

KEVIN: But you want it out here in the living room.

CALVERT: Yeah. Somewhere my daughter won't be able to accidentally unplug it or spill stuff on it.

KEVIN: Right.

(He sucked his teeth.)

KEVIN: And that's the problem. I was just going to check the internet point still worked then install your router. But now, I'm gonna have to *remove* the old internet point and install a *new* one here; in the living room. They means running a new wire all the way over here.

CALVERT: I know.

KEVIN: And I'd assume you'd rather I ran the wire outside.

CALVERT: Of course.

(Kevin sighed.)

KEVIN: That's a lot of work, mate. And I like I said, it won't be cheap.

CALVERT: I don't care. Just get it done. I mean, you *can* do it, right?

KEVIN: Sure, I can. It'll take a few hours, but yeah, I'll get it done. The question is, are you sure you can afford to pay me?

CALVERT: Of course, I can! In fact, I can't afford *not* to!

KEVIN: Are you sure? I mean, what with labour, parts and my lunch, it'll cost...

CALVERT: Your lunch?

KEVIN: That's non-negotiable.

CALVERT: Right...

KEVIN: It's gonna cost you about two hundred pounds, mate.

(Calvert looked through him for a moment then bit down on his lip. He didn't want to let on that he was actually trying not to laugh. It was obvious from the minute Kevin started to speak that he'd been exaggerating the workload in order to get a higher fee. Little did Kevin know, however, such a job would cost double that on the mainland. It'd be one of those rare situations where both parties felt like they'd robbed one another. Not about to share that snippet of information with Kevin, however, he sighed outwardly in a bid to look disappointed.)

CALVERT: Fine. Two hundred it is.

KEVIN: Score!

CALVERT: What?

KEVIN: Nothing!

(He then bent down and picked up his toolbox.)

KEVIN: I'll get cracking, shall I?

CALVERT: Please do.

KEVIN: Right.

(He nodded.)

KEVIN: You've already rung Ralph, I assume.

CALVERT: Ralph? Who the fuck is Ralph?

KEVIN: From Tifasea Telecom.

(Calvert stared straight through him.)

CALVERT: Who?

KEVIN: Wow.

(He rolled his eyes.)

KEVIN: You explain it to him, Joe. I'm gonna get started.

SINGLETON: Okay.

(Kevin then headed off towards Layla's bedroom. As he did so, Singleton turned to Calvert and smiled.)

SINGLETON: Ralph works for Tifasea Telecom.

CALVERT: Well, yeah; Kevin *literally* just said as much. Why do I need to ring him?

SINGLETON: To agree a broadband package.

(Calvert looked enlightened.)

CALVERT: Right; yeah. Shit. I didn't even think of that.

(He bit his lip.)

CALVERT: Where can I find his number?

SINGLETON: I've got it on my phone. Here...

(He then flicked through his phone before pausing on a number.)

SINGLETON: It's 06691...

CALVERT: Wait.

(He then yanked out his phone and typed the numbers into his keypad.)

CALVERT: And the rest?

SINGLETON: Here.

(He then held his phone out and allowed Calvert to copy the rest.)

CALVERT: Nice one. Cheers.

SINGLETON: No, no. Don't thank me. It's all part of my duty as a police officer.

CALVERT: Actually, no, it isn't.

(He then pressed the button to call the number he'd just typed in, before pacing outside with his phone to his ear. Left behind, Singleton shrugged then sat down on the sofa.)

SINGLETON: Ooh. Real leather. Nice.

(Outside in the meantime, Calvert paced up to the front gate with his phone held firmly to his ear. He then swung it open and leant against it while he waited for his call to be answered. He didn't have to wait long.)

RALPH: Tifasea Telecom, for all your telecommunication and ten-pin bowling needs; this is Ralph speaking. How may I be of assistance?

CALVERT: Hi. I'm...

(He grimaced.)

CALVERT: Hang on. Did you say telecommunications and ten-pin bowling?

RALPH: I did, sir; yes. From balls to shoes, gloves to shirts; we've got all your ten-pin bowling needs covered.

CALVERT: Oh. Okay. I didn't *realise* there was a bowling alley on the island.

RALPH: There isn't.

(Calvert blinked nonchalantly.)

CALVERT: Then why...

(He then shook his head to clear his thoughts.)

CALVERT: Never mind. I'm looking for a broadband package and apparently, you're the man I need to speak to.

RALPH: I am indeed, sir. And you're that new chief of police, right?

(Calvert flinched.)

CALVERT: How did you know that?



RALPH: Everyone else on the island knows me. *And* they already have a broadband package, sir. It could *only* be you. I mean, I doubt a *tourist* would ring me up asking for a broadband package.

CALVERT: Right. Well, yes, that's me. I live at 5, Sandy View Road.

RALPH: Gotcha.

(He nodded.)

RALPH: And what sort of package are you looking for?

CALVERT: Your best one.

(Ralph sucked his teeth.)

RALPH: Are you sure you can afford it, sir?

CALVERT: Don't you start.

RALPH: It's a serious question, sir.

CALVERT: Of course I can afford it.

(He then raised a suspicious eyebrow.)

CALVERT: Wait! Why? How much is it?

RALPH: Oh, it won't be cheap, sir. We have to charge extra for packages on *that* road. It's all the repairs, you see? What with your house being on the seafront the cables tend to erode quicker and that requires a lot of maintenance. Kevin the engineer goes out there a lot.

CALVERT: What do you mean by a lot? How often do you send him out here?

RALPH: Oh, *I* don't send him, sir. *You'll* have to arrange any repairs yourself.

Maintaining the network has nothing to do us, you see?

CALVERT: Then why would you charge me for it?

(Ralph was silent for a moment then spoke up in a miffed voice.)

RALPH: Shit. You're a smart one.

CALVERT: Well...

RALPH: You saw right through that, didn't you?

CALVERT: It wasn't hard to be fair.

RALPH: Bugger. Alright, I'll level with you then. We *used* to do the complete package; broadband connection plus network maintenance. Then Kevin went freelance. Well, he's the only bloke on the island who *can* service the network. So now we just sell the broadband packages and if the network goes down, you'll have to arrange to get it fixed yourself.

(He sighed.)

RALPH: He murdered a bloody good cash cow there. We used to charge five quid a month for network maintenance; he just asks for a retainer of forty quid a year.

CALVERT: Oh, okay. Cool. That's good to know. But more importantly, these packages of yours...

RALPH: Right.

CALVERT: How much *are* they?

(Ralph immediately sucked his teeth. It was a clear sign that he was going to try to negotiate the highest possible sum he could get away with.)

RALPH: Well, the fastest unlimited package we do is fifty Mbps.

CALVERT: I thought it was twenty. At least my subordinate seems to think...

RALPH: Joe Singleton?

CALVERT: Yeah.

RALPH: Yeah, I had to let him think that because he can't afford the fifty on *his* salary.  
(His sucked his teeth again forcing an eye roll from Calvert.)  
RALPH: It's a lot of money, sir. This is a remote island, you see?  
CALVERT: How much?  
RALPH: A lot, sir.  
(He puffed out.)  
RALPH: So much money.  
CALVERT: Exactly *how* much money?  
RALPH: Well...  
(He then closed his eyes, crossed his fingers and hoped for the best.)  
RALPH: Fifteen quid a month all told!  
(Calvert smirked. Back in Croxton, you couldn't even get *on* the internet for fifteen pounds; never mind getting unlimited data. Eager to play along, however, he faked a despairing sigh.)  
CALVERT: Blimey. That much, eh?  
RALPH: Yes, sir. Best we can do, I'm afraid.  
CALVERT: Well... okay. I guess I've got no choice then. Fifteen it is.  
RALPH: Result!  
CALVERT: What?  
RALPH: I said good choice, sir.  
CALVERT: Right...  
RALPH: Of course, you need to pay two months in advance.  
CALVERT: Shit.  
RALPH: What?  
CALVERT: Can I pay cash?  
RALPH: Of course.  
CALVERT: Can I pay it now?  
RALPH: Absolutely.  
CALVERT: And Singleton knows where you're based, right?  
RALPH: He does.  
CALVERT: You'll have the money in ten minutes.  
RALPH: Cool.  
CALVERT: Yeah. Anyway, speak to you soon.  
RALPH: Righto.  
CALVERT: Bye.  
(He then ended the call and marched into the house, removing his wallet from his pocket as he did so.)  
CALVERT: Singleton?  
SINGLETON: Sir?  
(Calvert ripped three ten pound notes from his wallet then handed them to him.)  
CALVERT: Take this money to Ralph.  
SINGLETON: Now?  
CALVERT: Yes. And get a receipt.  
SINGLETON: Okay.  
CALVERT: If you don't get a receipt, I'll punch you in the face.  
SINGLETON: Steady on.

CALVERT: If you lose the receipt, I'll punch you in the face twice.  
SINGLETON: I won't lose the receipt.  
CALVERT: Good man.  
(He then handed him another ten pound note.)  
CALVERT: And get Kevin some lunch while you're out.  
SINGLETON: What does he want?  
CALVERT: Ask him.  
SINGLETON: Right.  
CALVERT: When you're done, bring the receipt and Kevin's lunch back here then get back to the police station.  
SINGLETON: Sweet. There's this new game I want to try.  
CALVERT: On second thoughts, don't go back to the police station. Go for a drive around the island. Even back roads. Speak to people. Find out if they need our help with anything. Make yourself useful.  
(Singleton stared right through him.)  
SINGLETON: You want me to wander about randomly?  
CALVERT: It's called patrolling!  
SINGLETON: What's that?  
CALVERT: The most basic role a police officer is supposed to perform, that's what.  
SINGLETON: Then how come I've never heard of it?  
CALVERT: Because you're a...  
(He then sighed with frustration.)  
CALVERT: Just go. Pay Ralph, get Kevin's lunch, come back here with the receipt then do a patrol.  
SINGLETON: Right...  
CALVERT: But first, give Alicia a call. Let her know I'm gonna be a while. The least she deserves is a heads up.  
(He grimaced.)  
CALVERT: Babysitting Layla can be exhausting.

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Back at the police station, shortly after midday, an ATV pulled up directly outside the door. The rider then yelled "delivery" through the doorway. He then sat there tapping his fingers on the handlebars impatiently. Not about to keep him waiting, Constable Hornblower instantly rushed outside and handed him some money. The man then handed her a white paper bag before driving away again as quickly as he could. Watching him go, Constable Hornblower exhaled with delight. This delivery was the signal that her favourite time of the day had arrived. Lunchtime. Looking forward to filling her face, she beamed with joy then yelled through the doorway.

HORNBLOWER: Layla! Lunch is here! Come outside!

(A thunder of hooves then rose up from inside the police station. Moments later, Layla emerged with an excited grin on her face; not to mention a ton of makeup.)

LAYLA: Food! Yay!

HORNBLOWER: Yup.

(She then pointed her towards a bench that was resting against the wall.)

HORNBLOWER: Let's eat it over there!

(She then marched over to the bench and sat down, encouraging Layla to follow suit. She very quickly obliged. Once seated, Hornblower then delved into the bag and pulled out two baguettes, one for herself and one for Layla.)

HORNBLOWER: Tuna for me; cheese, cucumber and salad cream for you.

LAYLA: Yay. My favourite.

HORNBLOWER: And only yours, probably. Salad cream? Come on.

LAYLA: What? You don't like salad cream?

HORNBLOWER: Nobody likes salad cream.

LAYLA: Cool people do.

HORNBLOWER: Then consider me uncool to the extreme.

(Layla chuckled.)

LAYLA: I already do.

HORNBLOWER: Ouch.

LAYLA: I'm only kidding. You're great fun.

HORNBLOWER: Aw. Thanks, cutie.

(She mused to herself.)

HORNBLOWER: Or should I say hotty? Cutie doesn't sound right anymore. Not now you've got all that makeup on. It makes you look *at least* five years older, you see?

LAYLA: Really? Cool!

HORNBLOWER: Yup! And I haven't even finished yet! This afternoon, we'll set about making your dress sexier. Then you'll look even *older*!

LAYLA: Wow! You're the best, Alicia! I'm going to look all grown up like you!

HORNBLOWER: Yup.

(She beamed.)

HORNBLOWER: But first, we eat!

(She then took a bite of her baguette.)

HORNBLOWER: So good. I love lunchtimes.

LAYLA: Because they're a welcome break from doing nothing?

HORNBLOWER: A welcome break with food!

LAYLA: Right. Fair play.

(She grimaced.)

LAYLA: Are you allowed to sit outside like this though? It means nobody's in the police station.

HORNBLOWER: What difference does that make? Nothing gets done when we're in the police station anyway.

LAYLA: Good point. You've got your phone on you though, right?

HORNBLOWER: I never go anywhere without it. Except the shower.

(She gave Layla an enquiring glance.)

HORNBLOWER: Why?

LAYLA: Because Singleton might call with an update on my dad again.

(Hornblower held up her phone.)

HORNBLOWER: I've got your covered. Now enjoy your lunch.

LAYLA: I already am.

(She took a bite of her baguette then beamed.)

LAYLA: Yummy.

HORNBLOWER: Yeah... doesn't look it.

LAYLA: Looks can be deceiving.

HORNBLOWER: Right...

LAYLA: So where's that weird fella gone?

HORNBLOWER: Who?

LAYLA: The drip. The other policeman.

HORNBLOWER: Joe?

LAYLA: Yeah, him. Simpleton, was it?

HORNBLOWER: Singleton.

(She furrowed her brow.)

HORNBLOWER: Why did you call him a drip? He's dreamy.

(Layla gave her a sideways glance.)

LAYLA: Really? Do you think so?

(Hornblower exhaled.)

HORNBLOWER: I do.

LAYLA: Maybe you need glasses.

HORNBLOWER: And maybe you need taste buds. Salad cream, indeed.

(They shared an amused grin then Layla shrugged.)

LAYLA: So? Where is he?

HORNBLOWER: Joe? Well according to the text he sent me, your dad sent him off around the island. A random tour of the streets on his own for no apparent reason.

LAYLA: A patrol?

HORNBLOWER: A what?

LAYLA: A patrol. Like the police are *supposed* to do.

HORNBLOWER: That's news to me. But then I don't know anything about policing. I'm only here because Sergeant Willows thought I had a pretty face and they needed a third person to make up the numbers. For legal requirements or something. I've never done any training. Not like Joe. He had to spend a whole morning watching an instructional video.

LAYLA: That was his training?

HORNBLOWER: Yeah. He didn't understand a word of it. But still, he endured the four hours and got his certificate.

(She grimaced.)

HORNBLOWER: Sergeant Willows just *gave* me mine when I turned up on the first day. Then he made he sit where he could see my legs. *That* was weird.

LAYLA: Right...

(She beamed.)

LAYLA: My dad had to do six months worth of training, apparently. With assault courses and stuff. He had to learn all these codes too. And he learned to fire a gun. He says it was a really intense six months of non-stop activities and studying. Really gruelling.

HORNBLOWER: Right...

(She started to chuckle.)

HORNBLOWER: Well that was a waste of time, wasn't it?

LAYLA: What?

HORNBLOWER: All that just to come here and sit on his arse for the rest of his life.

LAYLA: He didn't do it to come here. We used to live in Croxton. There's load of crime there and the police are always busy. He used to come home late, like, all the time. He was out catching all the crooks, you see?

HORNBLOWER: All of them?

LAYLA: All of them! He was that good!

(She beamed with pride.)

LAYLA: I have it on good authority that he was the best detective in the whole wide world.

HORNBLOWER: He was?

LAYLA: Yup. He said so himself. And he why would he lie to *me*?

HORNBLOWER: Well...

LAYLA: He's the best. But now he's really sad. He *likes* solving crimes, but now he's been sent here, he won't have anything to do.

HORNBLOWER: I see...

LAYLA: Will he be much longer, do you think?

HORNBLOWER: Who?

LAYLA: My dad!

HORNBLOWER: Oh! Yeah. Probably. When he called, he said the installation would take a while and he probably won't be back until this afternoon. So, he told me to buy you lunch out of petty cash. Well, I don't know what that is, so I used the money we keep around the office for minor expenses.

LAYLA: That's petty cash.

HORNBLOWER: What?

(Layla rolled her eyes.)

LAYLA: Doesn't matter.

HORNBLOWER: Oh, okay.

(She smiled.)

HORNBLOWER: He also apologised for making me look after you all day. Can you believe that? I'd spend the day with you for free! You're adorable.

LAYLA: Yeah.

(She beamed.)

LAYLA: I get that a lot.

HORNBLOWER: I bet you do.

LAYLA: I'm also a bit full.

(She then laid her half-eaten sandwich down on the bench.)

LAYLA: Too filling. I'll finish it later.

HORNBLOWER: Fair enough.

(She then delved into the paper bag again and pulled out two cups.)

HORNBLOWER: I wasn't sure how you liked your coffee, so I got you a milky one.

(Layla grimaced.)

LAYLA: Coffee?

HORNBLOWER: Yeah.

LAYLA: But I'm not allowed coffee. My mum let me have half a cup once, and I was up all night making a racket.

HORNBLOWER: Really?

LAYLA: Yeah.

HORNBLOWER: How long ago was that though?

LAYLA: About six months.

HORNBLOWER: Meh. You were much younger then. You'll be fine.

(She then passed her a cup.)

LAYLA: But...

HORNBLOWER: But what?

LAYLA: Well...

(She then took the cup and stared at it nervously.)

LAYLA: If I'm up all night making a racket again, my dad will throttle you.

HORNBLOWER: Relax, Layla. You'll be fine. Like I said, you were much younger back then. And it might not even have been the coffee that kept you up all night.

LAYLA: Really?

HORNBLOWER: Yeah. It could have been anything.

LAYLA: Well... okay. I guess you'd know best. You are an adult, after all.

(She then took a nervous sip of her coffee before glancing upwards.)

LAYLA: Ooh! That's tasty.

HORNBLOWER: Right?

(She then pulled out a packet of cigarettes and offered one in Layla's direction.)

HORNBLOWER: Here.

(Layla's jaw fell open.)

LAYLA: Um... Alicia...

HORNBLOWER: What?

(Layla was staring back at her in astonishment.)

LAYLA: Are you seriously offering me a cigarette?

HORNBLOWER: Yeah.

LAYLA: Why would you offer me that?

HORNBLOWER: Because it'd be rude not to.

LAYLA: Rude?

HORNBLOWER: Yeah. On this island, when you eat lunch with someone, you share everything. Including your cigarettes.

LAYLA: But...

(She looked into her eyes in utterly bewilderment.)

LAYLA: I'm nine!

HORNBLOWER: And? What's that got to do with anything?

LAYLA: It's illegal.

HORNBLOWER: No, it's not.

LAYLA: Yes, it is!

HORNBLOWER: Rubbish. I've been smoking since I was seven and I've never been arrested once.

LAYLA: Seven??? Did your mum know?

HORNBLOWER: Who do you think bought them for me?

(Layla blinked in bewilderment.)

LAYLA: But... it's not allowed. And besides, they're really bad for you.

HORNBLOWER: Rubbish. That's a lie put about by... put about by...

(She nodded.)

HORNBLOWER: Somebody silly. My dad knows who. He knows everything. But the point is, they're not bad for you at all.

LAYLA: Are you sure?

HORNBLOWER: Yes! Like I say, I've been smoking since I was seven and *I'm* not even slightly dead. That's thirteen years! Two times longer than you've been alive!

LAYLA: Two times nine is thirteen now, is it?

HORNBLOWER: Give or take.

LAYLA: Right...

HORNBLOWER: Bad for you indeed.

LAYLA: And illegal! You have to be sixteen!

HORNBLOWER: Nonsense. If that's true, why did we have cigarette breaks at school?

LAYLA: For the staff?

HORNBLOWER: Well, yeah, they had them too, but they had *their own* smoking room. (Layla grimaced.)

LAYLA: Alicia...

HORNBLOWER: Do you want one or not? Holding out this packet is giving me an arm ache.

LAYLA: I...

(She blushed.)

LAYLA: No, thanks.

HORNBLOWER: Suit yourself.

(She smiled.)

HORNBLOWER: You're missing out. There's nothing more satisfying than a good, relaxing smoke. Especially with a coffee.

LAYLA: Yeah, well...

HORNBLOWER: I know they say coffee makes you lively...

LAYLA: And keeps you up all night!

HORNBLOWER: That too. But a coffee with a cigarette has the opposite effect. So soothing. Calming even. You can't beat it.

(She smiled.)

HORNBLOWER: But I won't force you to have one. If you don't want one, that's fine.

(She nodded.)

HORNBLOWER: If you think you're too young, so be it.

(She then grimaced in bewilderment.)

HORNBLOWER: It's a bit odd though.

LAYLA: What is?

HORNBLOWER: You wanted a makeover because you wanted to look older.

LAYLA: And?

HORNBLOWER: And yet, you don't want a cigarette because you think smoking is something older people *do*.

LAYLA: It is!

HORNBLOWER: Then surely by your logic, having a cigarette will make you look older too.

(Layla bit her lip.)

LAYLA: Well...

HORNBLOWER: At least *sixteen*, according to *your* theory.



(Layla whimpered. Hornblower's point was difficult to refute. Like most girls her age, she did indeed want to look older and smoking was indeed something older people do. Her young mind couldn't come up with a logical counter argument and after a momentary pause, she sighed in defeat.)

LAYLA: Fine.

HORNBLOWER: Fine?

LAYLA: I'll have one.

HORNBLOWER: Oh. Okay.

(She then passed her a cigarette. Layla stared at it nervously for a moment then glanced at Hornblower.)

LAYLA: And it's legal, is it?

HORNBLOWER: On this island it is, yes. According to Joe, we have different laws to the mainland.

LAYLA: So I won't get in trouble?

HORNBLOWER: Of course not. Don't be ridiculous.

LAYLA: Well... okay.

(She then put the cigarette in her mouth and allowed Hornblower to light it for her.)

HORNBLOWER: There you go.

(Layla took one draw on the cigarette then sat back.)

LAYLA: Ooh. Head rush.

(She then strained her eyes.)

LAYLA: Wow. That *is* satisfying.

HORNBLOWER: See?

LAYLA: I do see.

(She exhaled.)

LAYLA: Cigarettes, where have you been all my life?

(She then took another puff. As she did so, Hornblower upped then headed back into the police station.)

HORNBLOWER: Just a minute, sweetie.

(She then came back out thirty seconds later and handed Layla a pack of cigarettes and a lighter.)

LAYLA: What? For me?

HORNBLOWER: Yeah. Consider them a present. Your own starter kit.

LAYLA: Oh, wow. Cool. Thanks, Alicia; you're awesome.

(She then sat back and took a sip of her coffee before enjoying a long drag on her cigarette. Seconds later, she blew out some smoke then beamed with delight.)

LAYLA: I'm having a super fun day, Alicia. My dad's gonna be so glad he let you look after me all day.

HORNBLOWER: Right? And the fun isn't even over yet.

(She nodded.)

HORNBLOWER: Once we've smoked these we'll go back inside and make that dress of yours mega sexy.

LAYLA: Yay!

(She exhaled.)

LAYLA: I mean it. My dad's gonna be so happy so when he hears what a great time I've had. Thanks, Alicia. You're the best babysitter ever.

HORNBLOWER: Aw.  
(They then shared a warm smile.)

---

*A few hours later.* Back at Sandy View Road, DS Calvert was starting to grow impatient. His internet installation was taking much longer than he'd anticipated. Frustrated with the delay, he was pacing up and down his living room with a miffed expression on his face. Crouched in the corner, affixing some cables to a box, the engineer, Kevin, couldn't help but smirk. He found Calvert's pacing amusing to say the least.

KEVIN: You're gonna wear a hole in the floorboards in a minute.

(DS Calvert stopped pacing and glowered at him.)

CALVERT: Never mind what I'm doing; get on with it.

KEVIN: I am!

CALVERT: Good. I need to get back to my daughter.

KEVIN: Don't worry. I won't much be longer. I just need to test it now.

CALVERT: Right. Well... be quick about it.

KEVIN: Righto.

(He then stood up, grabbed the remote control for the TV and switched it on.)

KEVIN: With any luck, it'll pop up right away. Ralph would have switched everything on from his end the minute he got paid. Give him his dues; he doesn't fanny about, that fella.

CALVERT: Right. So you'll be *how* long?

KEVIN: However long the router takes to establish a connection. I just have to test the signal and the wireless connection then I'm done. Five minutes, tops.

(Calvert nodded.)

CALVERT: Good. Layla was looking forward to working with me today. Instead she's been sitting around the police station on her own while *I'm* buggering about here.

KEVIN: She's not her own; Alicia's with her.

CALVERT: Yes, but the point is, I'm *not* with her!

KEVIN: Oh, relax. She's probably having a great time. Alicia's great with kids, mate. She'd have had a blast, I reckon.

CALVERT: Well... I hope so.

KEVIN: I know so. She used to babysit my kids when she was a teenager. And my kids enjoyed her company so much, they used to beg the wife and I to go out, just so they could spend time with her. Trust me; your Layla's not going to mind your absence one bit.

(Calvert nodded.)

CALVERT: Right. Well... that's reassuring. Thanks.

KEVIN: You're welcome.

CALVERT: Anyway, I'm going to get some air. Give me a shout when you're done.

(He then stepped through the front door, crossed the courtyard and leant up against the gate to gaze at the ocean. As he did so, he mused to himself out loud.)

CALVERT: Okay, so we've got an amazing house and this view is fucking stunning. And once the internet's up and running, I'll have *three* things in my favour. Three things the missus won't be able to use as a rod to beat me with.

(He nodded firmly.)

CALVERT: It's going okay. The front gate leads straight out onto the beach... and that view... wow. She's gonna love walking out of the gate and seeing *that* every morning.

(He cast an eye over the palm tree strewn beach and allowed himself a smile.)

CALVERT: With any luck she'll fall in love with the place and my poor old lugholes might get some respite.

(He then glanced further along the coastline. Having done so, however, he froze like a statue and an air of foreboding washed over him. His heart started to sink and the colour drained from his skin. A ship was heading into the port.)

CALVERT: Um...

(He then about turned and fled back indoors.)

CALVERT: The ferry's coming!!!

(Kevin glanced at him nonchalantly.)

KEVIN: Probably. It's about that time of day, after all.

CALVERT: It was *meant* to arrive over an hour from now.

KEVIN: No, it wasn't. It *always* comes at this time.

(He then shrugged.)

KEVIN: That said, it was over an hour late yesterday.

CALVERT: Fuck! My wife's on-board!

(He clenched his fists.)

CALVERT: How much longer do you need?

KEVIN: A couple of minutes.

CALVERT: Get it done in one and I'll give you twenty quid extra.

KEVIN: Score!!!

(Calvert then raced back outside again and yanked his phone from his pocket. His face then went entirely blank. He wanted to call PC Hornblower but didn't have her phone number.)

CALVERT: Fuck!

(He then yelled into the house.)

CALVERT: Kevin!!! What's the police's phone number???

(Kevin's voice yelled back out of the door.)

KEVIN: You of all people ought to *know* that!

CALVERT: Kevin...

KEVIN: It's nine, nine, nine.

CALVERT: That's for emergencies!

KEVIN: Yeah, and around here that's who you get put through to for emergencies.

Tifasea Police Station.

CALVERT: That... makes sense actually.

(He then dialled the number and held the phone to his ear.)

CALVERT: Pick up, pick up, pick up...

(Much to his bewilderment, his call was then answered by a child.)

LAYLA: Tifasea Police Station; Special Agent Layla Calvert speaking. How may I help you?

CALVERT: Layla??? Why are you answering the phone???

LAYLA: Dad?

CALVERT: Yes! Why are you answering the emergency line???

LAYLA: Alicia *asked* me to. She's having a poo.

CALVERT: You...

LAYLA: And before you moan, she *said* I can be a special agent for the day if I want to.

CALVERT: Nobody cares about that. Look, once she's finished having a shit, tell her to bring you to the port immediately!

LAYLA: Why?

CALVERT: The ferry's coming in!!!

LAYLA: Why?

CALVERT: What do you mean *why*? That's what ferries do!

(He shook his head.)

CALVERT: Look, just tell her, okay? I'll meet you down there. And make sure you give your mum a hug when you see her. Whatever you can do to cheer her up!

LAYLA: Okay.

CALVERT: Good girl. I'll see you soon, okay?

LAYLA: Okay. Bye, Detective.

CALVERT: Detective?

(The call then ended.)

CALVERT: Detective??? It's dad to you!!! Hello?

(He then flinched before charging back into the house.)

CALVERT: Kevin???

(Kevin glanced up at him.)

KEVIN: Almost done.

(He then pulled out his phone and clicked a few of the keys.)

CALVERT: How much longer?

KEVIN: Seconds, mate. Seconds.

(He stared at his phone screen then nodded with satisfaction.)

KEVIN: There you go.

(He pointed the phone at Calvert.)

CALVERT: What's that?

KEVIN: Speed test. You're getting the full 50 Mbps.

(He then glanced at the screen again.)

KEVIN: Wait, wait... okay. It peaked at 51. Upload speed is... yup, you're good to go.

CALVERT: Meaning *you* can go.

KEVIN: I certainly can. I just need my extra twenty quid. And if you want to make sure it doesn't cost a fortune to fix if it ever conks out, you can take me up on my forty quid a year maintenance plan.

CALVERT: Fine. Agreed.

KEVIN: I'll leave the form on the table here then. Drop it in tomorrow with the first payment.

CALVERT: Whatever. Just leave. I need to head to the port.

(He then slapped twenty pounds in Kevin's palm.)

KEVIN: Thank you, sir.

(He then deposited a form on the coffee table and picked up his tools.)

KEVIN: It was nice to meet you, Detective. And thanks for the sandwich.

CALVERT: You're welcome.

(They shook hands then Calvert pointed to the door.)

CALVERT: Now go; get on a move on!!! I'm in the doghouse with the wife as it is. If she turns up at the port and I'm not there waiting for her, there's gonna be hell to pay.

KEVIN: Don't worry; I'm going!!!

(He then hurried out of the door. Calvert was hot on his heels. Having locked the front door, he charged through the front gate, slammed it behind him then leapt onto his ATV. Without delay, he then set it in motion and zoomed off towards the port, leaving a somewhat baffled Kevin in his wake.)

KEVIN: I always thought the mainland police were fearless, but *that* bloke's terrified of his own wife!

(He then shrugged it off and set his bike in motion.)

---

A minute or so later, looking extremely flustered, DS Calvert rode his ATV into the port car park then skidded to a halt. Without a moment's hesitation, he leapt off it then charged towards where the ferry was preparing for disembarkation. He swiftly allowed himself a sigh of relief. He'd made it just in time.

CALVERT: Well, thank fuck for that.

(He then came to a halt by the port barrier and folded his arms to wait for the passengers to exit the ship. As he did so, he glanced over his shoulder and grimaced.)

CALVERT: Alicia must be having a troublesome shit or something.

(He bit his lip.)

CALVERT: I need Layla here to give her a hug and calm her down. If I'm here by myself when she gets off the boat, there's nothing to stop the fire-breathing dragon within from rising up and frying me to a crisp again.

(He then started to chuckle.)

CALVERT: I love her really.

(His face then dropped.)

CALVERT: She, on the other hand, thinks *I'm* a cunt.

(He sighed inwardly then glanced up. As he did so, he saw the door to the ferry open up and his wife hurry out, being pursued by a scruffily-dressed gentleman; quite obviously an inhabitant of this island. He was clearly making her feel extremely uncomfortable. All the way down the gangplank, he was desperately trying to engage her in conversation.)

CHAS: Are you sure? I mean, this is your last chance, love.

(Calvert's wife, Hayley glanced over her shoulder at him bitterly.)

HAYLEY: Go away!

CHAS: Don't be like that. Like I said, you won't get another chance like this. My weed is much cheaper than the stuff in the shops. Twenty quid a bag!

HAYLEY: I don't *want* any weed!

CHAS: Rubbish. Tourists always want weed!

HAYLEY: I'm not a tourist!

CHAS: Yes, you are! I can tell from your accent! You're from Croxton. And I know for a fact that you can't get weed in Croxton anymore because there's a shit hot detective there who keeps taking down the drug rings.

HAYLEY: Not anymore there isn't!

CHAS: What?

HAYLEY: He got kicked out of Croxton. Now he's the new police chief on *this* island.

CHAS: Really?

HAYLEY: Yes! I should know, because he's my husband!

CHAS: Is that so! I had no idea.

(He nodded.)

CHAS: So you're the new police chief's wife?

HAYLEY: I am, yes. So trying to sell *me* drugs is not a good idea!

CHAS: Not for that price, no. I tell you what, you can have local rates. Ten quid for a bag. A big bag! What do you say?

HAYLEY: I say bugger off! Still!

CHAS: Fine. But like I said, you won't find it cheaper in the shops.

HAYLEY: Shops don't sell weed! It's illegal!

CHAS: Blimey, you're really *are* new.

HAYLEY: What?

CHAS: Look, love; last chance.

HAYLEY: Just leave me alone.

(Chas furrowed his brow.)

CHAS: Oh, suit yourself. It'll just smoke it myself then.

(He then scuttled away, leaving Hayley shaking her head.)

HAYLEY: Tosser. Harassing me all the way here. Like I wasn't having a shit enough day already!

(She then made her way past the port barrier and furrowed her brow. Her husband was grimacing back at her uncomfortably from ten feet away.)

HAYLEY: And there he is. The *reason* I'm having such a shit day.

(Calvert scratched his head.)

CALVERT: You alright, love?

HAYLEY: Am I alright? I just spent four hours on a car ferry being pestered and harangued by an unwashed drunk trying to sell me weed! Four hours!

CALVERT: He tried to sell you weed??? I'll have that little...

HAYLEY: Leave it!

(She furrowed her brow.)

HAYLEY: I just want to go home and have a cup of tea!

CALVERT: Right...

HAYLEY: And when I say *home*, I mean wherever our furniture is. We just had an offer on our *actual* home. You know, the place I worked so hard to make perfect, just so you could shit in my shoes and ruin my life!

CALVERT: Shit in your shoes?

HAYLEY: Metaphorically!

(She shook her head.)

HAYLEY: Where's Layla anyway? And why are you dressed like a fucking postman!

CALVERT: Because this is the local uniform!

HAYLEY: You look ridiculous!

CALVERT: I'm well aware of that, love.

(He ruffled his neck.)

CALVERT: But in answer to your other question, Layla's on her way. Another officer is going to bring her.

HAYLEY: Why didn't *you* bring her?

CALVERT: She was having fun with a female officer, so I let her stay for a bit while I sorted stuff out.

(Hayley furrowed her brow.)

HAYLEY: You mean you palmed her off on a stranger for the day!

CALVERT: No. I let her spend time with a fellow officer because she asked me if she could.

HAYLEY: You...

(Just then, Pete from the Port Authority stepped up to them, smiling warmly.)

PETE: Hello there. You must be...

HAYLEY: Bugger off!

PETE: Right...

(He then scuttled away again.)

CALVERT: Nice. Way to make friends with the local population, Hayley!

HAYLEY: Ray, you're...

(She sighed with frustration.)

HAYLEY: Fine.

(She then called over to Pete.)

HAYLEY: Sorry! That was uncalled for!

(Pete shyly paced back over to them.)

PETE: There's no need to apologise.

HAYLEY: There is. That was poor form. It's not you I'm angry at.

(She gestured to her husband.)

HAYLEY: It's this cunt.

CALVERT: Nice.

HAYLEY: I'm Hayley Calvert. His wife, unfortunately.

PETE: I see.

(He nodded.)

PETE: Well, well. He wasn't lying when he said you were a good-looking woman.

You're properly tasty, you are. Miaow! I definitely would!

HAYLEY: Excuse me???

PETE: Right... that was too much... I see that now.

HAYLEY: Yeah...

(She nodded.)

HAYLEY: On second thoughts, I retract my apology, you really *can* bugger off.

PETE: I'd like that. Thank you.

(He then scuttled away, burning with embarrassment.)

HAYLEY: Great. Like today wasn't miserable enough. I said goodbye to the home I loved only to get harassed by a smelly idiot for four hours then drooled at by a bell-end. What's this island got in store for me next, I wonder.

CALVERT: Well...

(Just then, the sound of an ATV rose up from behind them. At once, they both glanced over and saw a policewoman pulling into the parking area with a child on the back of her vehicle.)

CALVERT: Ah, there they are.

(In that moment, Hayley's question was answered. What this island had in store for her next was a sight so horrifying, she almost had a heart attack. It was a sight that didn't do her husband any favours either. As soon as the ATV stopped, Layla leapt off the back of it then charged towards her parents excitedly. Her father's horrified jaw, instantly hit the floor. Her mother very nearly fainted. Layla's hair featured a mixture of multi-coloured dyes, and was adorned with over a dozen ornaments. Worse still, her dress had been cut short, pulled tight and sprayed over with silver glitter. There was even a full length slit on one side. Most horrifyingly of all, however, her face was caked in makeup, including harlot-red lipstick and extra dark eyeshadow; splashed over a china-white foundation with pink blusher. It made her look somewhat reminiscent of a porcelain doll.)

HAYLEY: What the hell have you done to my child???

CALVERT: Alicia!!!

(Layla then raced up to her mum and threw her arms around her.)

LAYLA: Yay!!! You're here!

(At the same time, Alicia hurriedly reversed out of the car park then took off back to the police station. Something about Layla's parent's reaction had told her it wouldn't be wise to stick around. She was right.)

CALVERT: You wait until I get hold of her!!!

LAYLA: Mum! Mum! Look at *me*, mum!!!

HAYLEY: I *am* looking at you!

(Layla beamed.)

LAYLA: Look properly! How sexy am *I*???

HAYLEY: Sexy???

(She glowered at her trembling husband.)

HAYLEY: What the hell, Ray!!!

CALVERT: Babe...

HAYLEY: She was in your keep for twenty four hours! Twenty four lousy hours! And in that short time you've somehow turned her into this!!!

LAYLA: It's awesome, right?

HAYLEY: No!!!

(Layla gasped.)

LAYLA: But I look super-duper sexy!

HAYLEY: Layla...

(She took a deep breath to calm herself.)

HAYLEY: Raymond?

CALVERT: Yes, dear?

HAYLEY: Let's go back to the house so we can clean her up; right now.

(Calvert pointed across the port.)

CALVERT: Actually, there's some toilets over there. You can...

HAYLEY: No! Let's go to the house.

(She smiled.)

HAYLEY: I can shout at you there without making a scene.

CALVERT: Right...

(His shoulders slumped.)

CALVERT: Perfect.



(He then sauntered away to where he'd parked the ATV. Hayley followed on with a deeply furrowed brow. Glancing up at her, Layla grimaced uncomfortably.)

LAYLA: Is dad in trouble again?

HAYLEY: Not *again*, love. Still. Only more so.

LAYLA: Aw...

(She shook her head.)

LAYLA: That's gonna ruin my awesome day.

HAYLEY: Yes, well... look on the bright side. At least your day isn't as bad as your dad's is about to get.

---

A short while later, following the brief ride from the port to his house, Calvert dismounted his ATV then watched as Layla and Hayley slid off the back seat. Initially, Calvert had hoped that his wife would calm down a little bit on the way. Alas, it was not to be. Half way back, they'd passed a small group of tourists. Upon spotting them, Layla had waved enthusiastically then declared, "Look at me; I'm really sexy". Her mum's growl had almost drowned out the engine. That was the moment when he knew he'd be receiving no mercy from his embittered spouse. Defeated, he put his head down then headed through the front gate, before crossing the courtyard then unlocking the front door. Grimacing, he then headed inside. Hayley followed on, glowering at the back of his head. Made to feel more than a little anxious by the atmosphere, Layla stopped in the doorway then skulked back into the courtyard. Her father would now receive Hayley's scorned-demoness-like wrath without a sympathetic audience.)

CALVERT: Go on then, crucify me! I won't try to launch any kind of defence, because it'd only fall on deaf ears anyway. Just say what you've got to say.

HAYLEY: First things first, numb nuts.

(She glanced around the living room.)

HAYLEY: What the hell happened here? Did you lob the furniture in through the door then leave it where it just happened to land?

CALVERT: What?

HAYLEY: It's all in the wrong place!

(Calvert glanced away innocently.)

CALVERT: Is it?

HAYLEY: Yes! The sofa should be against the *other* wall. And that unit should be where you put the armchairs! Any fool can see that!

CALVERT: Right.

(He nodded.)

CALVERT: I'll move it all then.

(He then proceeded to shift the sofa across the room. He did so wearing a hidden smirk. He was now going to put it in the exact location he'd planned to put it before Willows had issued his warning.)

CALVERT: This won't take long.

HAYLEY: Just don't fuck it up.

CALVERT: Babe...

HAYLEY: Don't fucking 'babe' *me*!

(She shook her head angrily.)

HAYLEY: I've had to give up everything. My home, my job, my friends... all gone. The only bright thing left in my life was Layla.

CALVERT: None taken.

HAYLEY: Yes, well; I'll share my feelings about *you* in a minute.

CALVERT: Oh, goody.

HAYLEY: I've had to leave everything behind. Except Layla; my sweet and innocent little girl. And you couldn't even let me have that, could you? How could you let her turn into that???

CALVERT: I didn't let her turn into *anything*! She...

(He then raised a baffled eyebrow and proceeded to sniff the air.)

HAYLEY: What are you doing?

CALVERT: Can you smell that?

(Hayley sniffed the air then grimaced.)

HAYLEY: Cigarette smoke.

CALVERT: Yeah, but where the hell's it coming from?

(They shared a baffled glance then stepped up to the front door. At once, they both shrieked in horror. Layla was sitting crossed legged on the ground, puffing away merrily on a cigarette.)

CALVERT: What the fuck are you doing???

HAYLEY: Layla!!!

(She then hurried over to her, yanked the cigarette from her and stamped it into the ground.)

LAYLA: Hey!!! I was smoking that!!!

CALVERT: What the fuck???

HAYLEY: You're nine!!!

LAYLA: So?

HAYLEY: You're not allowed to smoke!!!

CALVERT: Why on earth would you do such a thing?

(Layla pouted at them.)

LAYLA: Why are you yelling at me?

CALVERT: You were smoking!!!

HAYLEY: What the hell were you thinking??? Why would you do that, Layla???

(Layla shrugged.)

LAYLA: It's relaxes me.

CALVERT: What?

LAYLA: It relaxes me. And you too arguing was stressing me out, so I thought I'd spark up.

HAYLEY: Spark up???

CALVERT: She even knows the terms!

HAYLEY: How long have you been doing that?

LAYLA: Smoking?

(Hayley glowered at her sarcastically.)

HAYLEY: No, water skiing in a balaclava and clogs.

LAYLA: I've never done *that*, mum.

HAYLEY: Don't get smart with me, you little bugger. How long have you been smoking???

LAYLA: Since today. And I like it.

(She nodded defiantly.)

LAYLA: So there.

CALVERT: What??? You like it???

LAYLA: Yes! It's better with a nice cup of coffee though.

HAYLEY: Coffee??? You can't drink coffee; it keeps you up all night.

LAYLA: Hence the cigarettes. I have it on good authority that cigarettes counteract the caffeine.

(She smiled.)

LAYLA: So, relax. You're worried about nothing. As long as I can have a nice smoke before bed, I'll be out like a light.

(Calvert raised his fist.)

CALVERT: Oh, you'll be out like a light alright. Any minute now, in fact.

HAYLEY: Don't make stupid, empty threats!

CALVERT: Right...

(Hayley gave an exasperated sigh.)

HAYLEY: Layla, smoking is wrong and you mustn't do it!

LAYLA: But I enjoy it!

HAYLEY: So? *I'd* rather enjoy axe-murdering your father right now, but that doesn't mean I should.

CALVERT: Steady on!

(Hayley glowered at him.)

HAYLEY: Steady on? Steady on??? You had her for one day, Ray! One fucking day! Yesterday morning, I kissed goodbye by a sweet little thing with an angelic smile and a face that glowed with child-like innocence. One day later, I'm greeted by a chain-smoking monster, dressed like she's about to start her shift at a brothel!!!

LAYLA: Chain-smoking? You mean *cigarette* smoking, mum.

(Calvert grimaced nervously.)

CALVERT: See? It's not all bad news. How child-like and innocent was that?

HAYLEY: Not very! She was describing her smoking habits!!!

CALVERT: Right...

HAYLEY: Seriously! One day! What would have happened if I'd been away for a week? I might have found her dealing drugs and dishing out hand-jobs for twenty quid a throw behind the bike sheds!

(Layla's face lit up.)

LAYLA: Really? Twenty quid for one job? Interesting. What would I have to do?

CALVERT: Right now, Layla, you just need to stop talking! This hole is deep enough as it is!

LAYLA: But I need money. Cigarettes don't grow on trees, you know?

HAYLEY: You don't need cigarettes! You're not gonna smoke again, do you hear me???

(Layla whimpered.)

LAYLA: But that's not fair.

HAYLEY: You're too young!

LAYLA: Am not. Alicia was seven when she started, so there.

HAYLEY: Is she the one who gave you that cigarette?

LAYLA: And a lighter.

HAYLEY: Oh, for fucks sake. I'm gonna kill you, Ray!

CALVERT: Me??? I didn't do it! It was Alicia!

HAYLEY: And who let this Alicia person look after her?

(Calvert gaped.)

CALVERT: Well... it was... you know... me, I suppose.

HAYLEY: Exactly.

(She then snatched Layla's bag and withdrew her cigarettes and lighter.)

LAYLA: Hey!!!

HAYLEY: Behave, missy!

LAYLA: But they're mine!!!

HAYLEY: Not anymore. I just told you; you're never going to smoke again!

LAYLA: Mean!

(She pouted.)

LAYLA: Why are you being mean and stressing me out. You just make me want to smoke more.

HAYLEY: Stressing you out???

LAYLA: Yes!

(She ruffled her neck.)

LAYLA: Like I wasn't stressed out enough when them two men came into the police station and tried to rob me at gunpoint earlier.

CALVERT: What???

HAYLEY: Gunpoint???

LAYLA: It was a joke, apparently. I didn't know that though.

(She pouted.)

LAYLA: Alicia gave me a cigarette and it calmed my nerves nicely. Alicia's nice like that. She *relieves* my stress. You two cause it!

CALVERT: Wait a minute, Layla. Someone tried to rob you at gunpoint?

LAYLA: They wanted to steal the toaster. It's a running joke, apparently.

CALVERT: Oh, good god. This fucking island...

(Layla smiled at him sympathetically.)

LAYLA: Stressful, isn't it? You should join me for a cigarette.

HAYLEY: Nope. That's enough out of you for one day, missy. Your gob is bigger than your brain.

(She then grabbed her hand.)

HAYLEY: Let's get inside and wash that gunk off your face then we can think of a punishment.

LAYLA: Gunk? What gunk?

(She gasped.)

LAYLA: My awesome makeover???

HAYLEY: Yes! You look like a tramp. And we're throwing away that dress!

(She then proceeded to drag Layla indoors. She protested all the way.)

LAYLA: Mean! You're really mean!

HAYLEY: Stop resisting!

LAYLA: Stop spoiling my fun!!!

HAYLEY: Layla!!!

LAYLA: You're horrible, mum. It was much more fun when only dad was here! He let me do what I liked!

(Calvert flinched in horror.)

CALVERT: No, I fucking didn't!!!

(Alas, it was too late. They'd already gone inside. They did so with Hayley glowering at him as if she wished him the grimmest of deaths. It was a look that screamed, "I'll deal with you later.")

CALVERT: Right...

(His entire body slumped and he groaned in defeat.)

CALVERT: So much for her falling in love with the place.

---

At shortly after nine o'clock that night, Calvert exited Layla's bedroom then returned to the living room where his loving wife was sneering at the television. Hoping he could make conversation, he pointed to the open wine bottle on the table, then offered her a nervous smile.)

CALVERT: Do you want me to pour you another glass?

(Without even looking up, Hayley sat forwards then poured herself a glass of wine before sitting back and sneering at the television again.)

CALVERT: Right. Got it covered, have you?

(He then headed for the armchair and sat down.)

CALVERT: Layla's gone straight to sleep, by the way.

(Hayley glanced at him briefly then immediately returned her eyes to the television.)

CALVERT: Yeah... that's where I just went. To check on her.

(He scratched his head.)

CALVERT: She only went to bed ten minutes ago.

(Still receiving no change from his wife, he sighed to himself then tried again.)

CALVERT: She must have had that coffee at lunchtime or something. You know, so long ago, the caffeine's passed through her system already.

(Hayley simply sighed and continued to watch the TV.)

CALVERT: She'd be bouncing up and down on the bed otherwise. Like last time.

(Hoping she'd finally acknowledge him, he tapped his fingers together then glanced towards her nervously.)

CALVERT: Remember that? Do you?

(Hayley slowly craned her neck in his direction. Rather than speaking, however, she simply stared at him with ice cold eyes. It was a look so chilling it made him shudder.)

CALVERT: Um... I'll shut up now, shall I?

HAYLEY: Would you?

CALVERT: Absolutely.

(He then took a sheepish glance at the TV.)

CALVERT: So... what are you watching?

HAYLEY: Television.

CALVERT: Right...

(He groaned in defeat.)

CALVERT: So this is what the rest of our lives are gonna be like, is it?

HAYLEY: Shite? Yes! And whose fault's that? We had a great life until you ruined it.

(Calvert furrowed his brow sarcastically.)

CALVERT: I ruined it? Oh, yeah; that's right. I'd forgotten about that. It's a bloody good thing you keep reminding me every five seconds, love. It'd slip my mind otherwise.

(Hayley scoffed.)

HAYLEY: Sarcasm? Really?

CALVERT: Yeah. I figured I'd give it a go.

(Hayley shook her head.)

HAYLEY: Well don't. I'm not in the mood for your shit. Not tonight.

CALVERT: My shit? All I did was offer to pour you some wine then tell you our daughter's asleep.

HAYLEY: And now you've done it, you can shut the fuck up.

CALVERT: Right...

(He rolled his eyes.)

CALVERT: I try to be civil and what do I get?

HAYLEY: And he still won't shut up.

CALVERT: Wow.

(He shook his head.)

CALVERT: Fuck this. Just watch your program.

HAYLEY: Ooh, can I?

CALVERT: Yes!

(He then climbed to his feet and headed for a door at the side of the room.)

CALVERT: I left a box of oddments in this cupboard to sort out at a later date. I might as well do it now.

(He then yanked open the door and stood there agape.)

CALVERT: What the fuck?

(He then glanced over his shoulder at another door across the room.)

CALVERT: I must have stuck that box in there. This isn't a cupboard.

(He grimaced.)

CALVERT: There's a flight of stairs here.

(Hayley glanced up.)

HAYLEY: What? But this is a bungalow.

CALVERT: That's what I thought.

(He then shrugged and proceeded to head up the stairs. As he did so, Hayley slowly upped then headed after him.)

CALVERT: I had no idea this was here.

HAYLEY: Evidently.

(She bit her lip.)

HAYLEY: Where do you think it leads?

CALVERT: Now, how would I know *that*?

HAYLEY: Yeah, alright; I was only asking.

CALVERT: Yeah...

(He smirked.)

CALVERT: Bloody stupid question though, wasn't it?

HAYLEY: Don't start with me, shit head.

CALVERT: Right.

(He then continued on to the top of the stairs until he arrived on a landing with a second door to his right.)

CALVERT: There's another door here.

(Standing just behind him, Hayley rolled her eyes.)

HAYLEY: Really? Is that what those things are called? I did wonder.

CALVERT: Seriously? And *you* dug *me* out for sarcasm?

HAYLEY: That's different.

CALVERT: How?

HAYLEY: I'm *good* at sarcasm.

CALVERT: Right...

(He then pushed open the door and stepped out and a large roof terrace. At once, his jaw dropped. It was a reaction matched by Hayley.)

HAYLEY: Holy crap!

(The terrace stretched all along the rooftop, offering a breathtaking view of the sun sinking over the sea. It was truly stunning sight to behold. Better still, there was a large table and four chairs up there; offering the perfect place to sit out of an evening.)

HAYLEY: It's beautiful.

CALVERT: Yeah...

(They stared at the view silently for a few moments then Hayley gasped.)

HAYLEY: I should fetch my wine.

CALVERT: What?

(Without even a hint of a reply, Hayley then hurried back downstairs, before returning with her wine bottle and two glasses.)

CALVERT: Two glasses?

HAYLEY: You don't have to have any if you don't want to.

CALVERT: No, no. I'll join you.

(They then headed for the table and sat down; staring at the ocean.)

HAYLEY: Beautiful.

CALVERT: Yeah.

(Hayley sighed.)

HAYLEY: I'd rather be back in Croxton through.

CALVERT: Well... yeah.

(Hayley then shook her head despairingly.)

HAYLEY: Why did you do it, Ray? Why did you destroy everything we had?

(Calvert looked to her with uncertainly for a moment then sighed despondently.)

CALVERT: I ask myself that every fucking day, Hayley.

(He shook his head.)

CALVERT: I play the incident over and over again in my mind. Trying to fathom how it all went so spectacularly wrong. Until that night I'd *never* accidentally tailed the wrong person before; not once. That was the first time. And there's a million people in Croxton. A million! And yet, out of that million, the one person I followed by mistake just happened to be the one person who could ruin my life. That sodding commissioner. It was just shitty, rotten luck.

HAYLEY: Was it? I mean, did you really need to beat him up, threaten to deny him justice then kick him in the bollocks?

CALVERT: Why? What would *you* do if you thought you were in the company of a paedophile?

HAYLEY: Right now? File for divorce.

CALVERT: No, not now! What if you went in the shop tomorrow and a guy walked in that you happened to believe was a paedo?

(Hayley ruffled her neck indignantly.)

HAYLEY: I'd call the police.

CALVERT: Then?

HAYLEY: Kick him in the bollocks.

CALVERT: See?

(Hayley sighed.)

HAYLEY: Okay, so *to a point* I can understand why you did it. To a point. Paedos need battering. It's still bloody infuriating though.

CALVERT: You don't need to sell me on that.

HAYLEY: What *really* bugs me is your attitude since. I feel like my world has fallen apart. Like my soul has been crushed. But you seem happy just to shrug it off and act like it doesn't matter.

(She shook her head.)

HAYLEY: I can't tell you how much that pisses me off. You should be devastated!

CALVERT: I am!

(He shook his head.)

CALVERT: I've been on the verge of exploding all week!

HAYLEY: Didn't look like it.

CALVERT: I was hiding it, that's why!

HAYLEY: Why would you do that?

CALVERT: Because you were angry enough for both of us. I was just trying to *act* calm in the hope *you'd* calm down.

HAYLEY: Well that was dim. Your calmness just made me angrier.

CALVERT: Right...

(He glanced towards her uneasily.)

CALVERT: Fine. I'll tell you how I *really* feel then. I feel like my world's been trampled on by a herd of elephants. I used to love our routine. We'd start the day by having breakfast together; the three of us. I loved that. Proper family time. Then you'd head out to work or go to the gym or wherever, Layla would go to school and I'd go to work. And I loved that fucking job.

(He smiled.)

CALVERT: Every day, chipping away at a case. Piece by piece. Examining every possible avenue of enquiry until I picked up a clue or two. Those clues would then open up even *more* avenues to investigate. Promising ones! And I'd look into *every* single one until I'd narrowed it down to a single possible culprit. Then I'd catch the bastard.

(He exhaled.)

CALVERT: The process might take weeks; months even. But you know what, the thrill of narrowing down the suspect pool, little by little, knowing it'd eventually lead me to the culprit was something I thrived on. I lived for that shit.

(He smiled.)



CALVERT: Then I'd come home every night and have dinner with my family. More cherished family time. And in the evening, we'd snuggle while watching those crap dramas of yours.

(Hayley glowered at him.)

CALVERT: Not that they were *all* crap.

HAYLEY: You...

CALVERT: Point is, love; I was blissfully happy. Every day was a perfect day to me.

(His shoulders slumped.)

CALVERT: Then I made my mistake. And that was that! No more happy family moments for *me*; just abuse and flying kitchenware. And no more detective work. From now on, I'll just be sitting about all day in a stupid uniform; twiddling my fingers.

HAYLEY: Like a lazy postman.

CALVERT: Yeah.

(He sighed.)

CALVERT: Those perfect days have gone and I'm right fucked off, Hayley. If it wasn't for Layla I'd get up and walk into the fucking sea right now. I'm bleeding mortified. It's all gone to shit and I fucking hate it.

(Hayley looked to him emptily for a moment then released a sigh of her own.)

HAYLEY: Well... if it helps... now I know you're as devastated as I am, I don't mind cutting you some slack. It doesn't mean you're off the hook though.

CALVERT: No, I don't suppose I am.

HAYLEY: It does mean a lot that you're not all calm and blasé about things though.

Thinking you didn't care was pissing me off more than I could say.

CALVERT: Yes, well, like I said, that was all an act. You were furious and I thought... I dunno... if I showed you my fury, I'd just ended up antagonising you further.

HAYLEY: Fair enough.

(She nodded.)

HAYLEY: Now I know you're hurting too, I'll try to ease off a bit.

CALVERT: Thank you.

(He then gave her a sideways glance.)

CALVERT: But you know, love, *I'm* pissed at off *you* as well.

HAYLEY: Excuse me?

CALVERT: You let me down, babe.

HAYLEY: What??? When???

CALVERT: From the minute you heard I was being transferred! *My* life was going to pieces too, Hayley. In that situation a bloke should be able to count on the love and support of his wife. All I got was insults and low-flying pots and pans.

(He ruffled his neck.)

CALVERT: It didn't help.

(Hayley glanced away.)

HAYLEY: Fine. I admit I *could* have been nicer, but I was angry. And with good reason! You literally ruined over lives! Ruined them!

(Calvert sighed.)

CALVERT: Yeah, you might have mentioned that once or twice.

HAYLEY: And speaking of feeling let down, when you read your vows, you told me you'd make me happy for the rest of my life. Not give me happiness for a few years then

flush it down the toilet in one moment of dim-witted tomfoolery. So, of course I was angry at you. We built an amazing life then you destroyed it. I didn't make *me* feel very loved and supported either.

CALVERT: Then we're equally to blame.

HAYLEY: No, we're not. Whichever you look at it, it was *your* fuck up that caused this.

CALVERT: Hayley...

HAYLEY: But fine. I'll try to be nice. Supportive. And hopefully, in time, I'll learn to forgive you.

CALVERT: Fair enough.

(Hayley sighed then glanced towards what remained of the sinking sun.)

HAYLEY: And who knows? Despite the terrible start, we may even end up being happy here.

(Calvert grimaced.)

CALVERT: Sounds unlikely to me, love.

HAYLEY: But it's not impossible, is it? I mean... moving here does have its perks.

(She gestured towards the sinking sun.)

HAYLEY: To have that view from our own roof terrace is pretty special.

CALVERT: Yeah...

(He sighed.)

CALVERT: The view is stunning. It is. And the house is lovely. I can't fault the house. It's everything else.

(Hayley gave him a dagger glance.)

HAYLEY: You're gonna tell me we can't afford it now, aren't you? That we have to move to a much smaller place, next to a pig farm; with panoramic views of a brick wall.

CALVERT: I'm not gonna tell you anything of the sort!

HAYLEY: So we *can* afford this place?

CALVERT: Easily. It's only thirty grand!

HAYLEY: And how much are the monthly mortgage payments?

(Calvert chuckled.)

CALVERT: I thought the same thing, love. Thirty grand is the total price to own it; not the deposit.

HAYLEY: What?

(She grimaced.)

HAYLEY: But this a palace! I mean... this would cost seven figures back in Croxton! Thirty grand wouldn't even get you a bedsit with a shared, outdoor toilet! It'd barely get you a garden shed.

CALVERT: I know. It sounds like a mistake, doesn't it? It's not though. Thirty grand is the asking price.

HAYLEY: Holy crap! We got an offer of six hundred and ten grand on the old house yesterday.

CALVERT: Blimey that was quick.

HAYLEY: I know, but more to the point, if we sell it and buy this place, we'll be several hundred grand in the black!

CALVERT: Yeah, and we should hang onto it! I get the feeling we'll be moving back to the mainland before long, love.

HAYLEY: What? Why?

CALVERT: Because this place is fucking horrible. Everybody's weird. We're not gonna be able to hack it here, love; I can feel it.

HAYLEY: But we can't just up and move away; you're contractually obliged to go where the police force send you!

CALVERT: I'll fucking quit then.

HAYLEY: The hell you will! You earn silly money and have a pension to die for. You'll lose it all if you quit!

(She growled.)

HAYLEY: Don't you dare fucking quit!

CALVERT: Babe...

HAYLEY: Read my frown, fuckwit! If you quit your job, I'll fucking shoot you.

CALVERT: Just hear me out!

HAYLEY: Fine.

CALVERT: I just feel like this island is going to drive us bonkers. I mean, clinically insane. To the point where we just want to get the hell out of here. At that point, you'll be begging me to quit. I can see it coming.

HAYLEY: What makes you say that?

(Calvert shrugged.)

CALVERT: Since I got here yesterday, every local I've met has been a salivating halfwit. A brain-dead lip-wobbler of the highest order.

HAYLEY: That doesn't mean *everybody's* an idiot.

CALVERT: Not on its own, no. But I met my predecessor yesterday. And he warned me. This place had been driving him insane for twenty years. He called me his saviour! By taking his post, I was saving him from a life of hell here.

HAYLEY: Oh?

CALVERT: This island is full of morons, love. Morons disrespectful of the law! The police aren't even in charge! My predecessor warned me that if you arrest someone popular in the community, you get ostracised to the point where the shop won't even sell you food! I thought he was exaggerating at first, but now I'm not so sure.

(He shook his head.)

CALVERT: There's one guy on this island that can install the internet. And he knows it. Well, he owns an unlicensed gun, doesn't he? So I told him he needs to get a licence by law. So much for that. I had to turn a blind eye in the end. The bastard would have refused to install our internet if I hadn't.

(Hayley gasped.)

HAYLEY: Bastard! I can't live without my dramas!!!

CALVERT: Yeah, I know. So, like I said, I had to turn a blind-eye. I had to ignore the law in order for us to be treated fairly; like ordinary citizens.

(He sighed.)

CALVERT: And that's just an example of what we can expect living here. If I make an arrest they don't like, I've got a feeling they'll all close ranks and make our lives a misery.

HAYLEY: I see...

(She nodded.)

HAYLEY: Don't make an arrest they don't like then.

CALVERT: Well, yeah; I've already figured that out, love. It won't be easy though. I'm a policeman. Turning a blind eye to offences goes against my nature.

HAYLEY: Then get a new nature.

(She smiled.)

HAYLEY: We need to at least *try* to make this work.

CALVERT: And we will. It just won't be easy. Layla said that woman who gave her those cigarettes has been smoking since she was seven. So I'm guessing children smoking is just accepted here. We don't want that for *our* little one.

HAYLEY: Well, no.

CALVERT: And from what I hear, the school is so shit, Layla might come out dumber than she went in. We're going have to give her extra classes at home.

HAYLEY: Really?

CALVERT: Really!

HAYLEY: Hmm...

(She nodded.)

HAYLEY: I'll have time. My boss let me stay on part-time; working from home. I'll get half the pay I used to get, but if we buy this place, we won't have a mortgage to pay. So that works out. I'll only be doing two days a week rather than the four I did before. So I can tutor Layla from home and still enjoy my trips to the gym and the coffee shop et cetera.

CALVERT: Providing there *is* a gym.

(Hayley gasped.)

HAYLEY: What???

CALVERT: There might be. I just haven't seen one.

HAYLEY: Oh.

(She puffed out.)

HAYLEY: There'd better be.

(She winced.)

HAYLEY: Tell me there's coffee shops.

CALVERT: There's bound to be. Tourists love that kind of thing.

HAYLEY: Good point.

(She nodded.)

HAYLEY: There you go then; it's not *all* bad. I can still buy wine and we had eastern food for dinner, so it's not *entirely* backward.

CALVERT: It would be if the two holiday resorts weren't here. They're the only places who do foreign food.

HAYLEY: Yes, but they *are* here. So that's fine.

(She smiled.)

HAYLEY: We can do this, Ray. We'll be okay. I'll educate Layla and stop her smoking; you leave her to me. And we can avoid talking to local idiots by spending our free time at the tourist traps. It'll be fine. We can make it here; we can.

(She furrowed her brow.)

HAYLEY: We just need you to change the habit of a lifetime by *not* making a stupid arrest that ruins our lives!

(She then sat there giggling into her hand. Watching her do so, Calvert shook his head disdainfully.)

CALVERT: I married a wrong'un.

---

The following morning, DS Calvert drove his ATV up to the police station, removed his crash helmet then sighed to himself. He had an unpleasant task to perform that he wasn't looking forward to one bit. Eager to get it over and done with, however, rather than taking a moment, he strode into the police station then glanced at Constable Hornblower's desk.

CALVERT: Constable...

(He then grimaced in bewilderment. She was slowly sinking in her seat; desperately trying to hide behind her computer monitor.)

CALVERT: I can see you, you know?

(Hornblower just whimpered and continued to sink lower and lower.)

CALVERT: Okay, now you're being ridiculous.

(He then paced over to her desk and stared straight down at.)

CALVERT: Seriously?

(Hornblower glanced up at him sheepishly then forced an unconvincing smile.)

HORNBLOWER: Um... I was just...

CALVERT: Hiding?

HORNBLOWER: Well...

(She sighed.)

HORNBLOWER: Yeah.

(She then sat up and pouted at him.)

HORNBLOWER: It's just... you looked really angry at the port yesterday. And I get the feeling it might have had something to do with the makeover I gave Layla.

(Calvert nodded.)

CALVERT: And you'd be right. The fact you tarted up my nine year daughter to look like a bargain basement streetwalker pissed me off no end.

HORNBLOWER: I see.

(She blushed then sunk into herself.)

HORNBLOWER: Sorry. I just thought...

CALVERT: Thought what? That she could make good money at the docks?

HORNBLOWER: Um... no. Girls like playing dress up, so... I thought it'd be fun.

CALVERT: And it was. She loved it.

HORNBLOWER: Oh.

CALVERT: Her mother and I, on the other hand, did not! We'd rather our child looks like a child! We're funny like that!

HORNBLOWER: Point taken. I really am sorry.

(Calvert nodded.)

CALVERT: Oh, don't worry. You see, that turned out to be the least of our worries.

HORNBLOWER: Right? You totally overreacted.

CALVERT: That's not what I meant!

(He gave an exasperated sigh then headed towards his desk.)

CALVERT: Follow me, Hornblower.

HORNBLOWER: What?

(Calvert gestured to the seat in front of his desk.)

CALVERT: Sit!

HORNBLOWER: Oh. Okay.

(She then hurried to the seat and sat down. As she did so, Calvert plonked himself down in his chair then leant forwards upon his desk.)

CALVERT: The reason that makeover was the least of our worries was because we later found out that someone had given her cigarettes!

HORNBLOWER: That was me!

CALVERT: I know.

HORNBLOWER: You're welcome.

CALVERT: I...

(He performed a double take in her direction.)

CALVERT: I'm welcome???

HORNBLOWER: Yes.

(They then stared silently into each other's eyes. Calvert was genuinely bewildered. She seemed to think giving his daughter cigarettes was a kind act. At the same time, Hornblower was waiting for him to say thank you. For several moments, not a word passed between them until Calvert shook away his bewilderment and returned to the point.)

CALVERT: You gave her cigarettes! And coffee! And worst of all, apparently two men came in brandishing guns and you thought it was a hilarious prank.

HORNBLOWER: I never said it was hilarious.

CALVERT: Good! It isn't! I don't *want* men waving guns around in front of my nine year-old! For obvious reasons!

HORNBLOWER: Oh. Okay. I'll tell them.

(She smiled.)

HORNBLOWER: As for the coffee and cigarettes, don't worry about paying me back; they were a gift.

CALVERT: Paying you back???

HORNBLOWER: No, no. I insist. They're on me.

(She nodded.)

HORNBLOWER: It's the least I can do. I had fun yesterday, thanks to Layla. She's lovely. Noted though; in future, I won't give her a makeover.

(She then started to stand.)

HORNBLOWER: Can I go now?

CALVERT: No!

(Hornblower dropped back into her seat again.)

HORNBLOWER: Right. Um... sir? You seem angry.

CALVERT: I...

(He took a deep breath to calm himself.)

CALVERT: Look, Hornblower...

HORNBLOWER: Alicia.

CALVERT: Alicia... this isn't going to work out.

HORNBLOWER: What isn't?

CALVERT: This. You being a police constable.

(Hornblower's face lit up.)

HORNBLOWER: You're promoting me? Already!

CALVERT: Of course not. Quite the opposite in fact?

HORNBLOWER: Demoting me? But I'm already on the bottom rung.

CALVERT: You...

(He grimaced.)

CALVERT: You're not the smartest tool in the shed, are you?

HORNBLOWER: In what sense?

CALVERT: I rest my case.

(He sighed.)

CALVERT: Look, I'll be frank and to the point. You won't understand me otherwise. I'm letting you go.

HORNBLOWER: You are?

CALVERT: I am, yes.

(He smiled.)

CALVERT: But don't look at it as being fired. Look at it as being moved on. Moved on to something you're more suited to.

HORNBLOWER: Which is?

CALVERT: Not working here.

HORNBLOWER: I see.

(She stared ahead of herself in silent contemplation for a moment then scratched her head.)

HORNBLOWER: I don't get it. Not working *here*? What do you mean?

(She leant forward enquiringly.)

HORNBLOWER: Are we moving my desk?

(Just then, Constable Singleton paced into the station with a joyous spring in his step.)

SINGLETON: Hah!

HORNBLOWER: Hah!

CALVERT: Simpleton!

SINGLETON: My name's Singleton, sir.

CALVERT: I know.

(He nodded.)

CALVERT: Now...

HORNBLOWER: We're moving my desk, Joe!

CALVERT: Where are you getting that from??? I *said* I'm letting you go!

HORNBLOWER: Yeah. To find somewhere nice to put my desk, you said.

CALVERT: No, I...

(He sighed with frustration.)

CALVERT: Listen, Alicia. Listen carefully.

(Just then, Singleton called out to him from just inside the door.)

SINGLETON: Detective Sergeant! There's an urgent matter we need to discuss, without delay!

CALVERT: What? Can't you see I'm busy with Alicia here?

SINGLETON: It's far more urgent than that, sir! You need to hear me out. Like, now.

CALVERT: Fine. What is it?

SINGLETON: I'll tell you outside, sir.

CALVERT: Outside???

SINGLETON: Quickly!

(He then darted out of the door. Having watched him go, Calvert rolled his eyes then climbed to his feet.)

CALVERT: Stay where you are; I'll be back in a second.

HORNBLOWER: Okay. Do you want me to make you a coffee in the meantime?

CALVERT: No. I want you to stay there. I literally just said...

(He shook his head.)

CALVERT: Never mind.

(He then marched outside to where Singleton was pacing up and down anxiously.)

CALVERT: What is it, Constable? What's so urgent?

(Singleton looked to him and sucked his teeth.)

SINGLETON: You said you were gonna let Alicia go!

CALVERT: That's right.

SINGLETON: Meaning you were gonna fire her, right?

CALVERT: You catch on fast!

SINGLETON: So I'm told.

CALVERT: By who???

SINGLETON: You. Just now.

(He shook his head.)

SINGLETON: Never mind that. You can't fire her, sir!

CALVERT: Bloody can! She gave me my child cigarettes and coffee then didn't even bother to tell me she'd had guns waved in her face.

SINGLETON: And that's bad, is it?

CALVERT: Yes!

SINGLETON: Right... if you say so.

(He flinched.)

SINGLETON: You really can't fire her though, sir

CALVERT: And pray tell, why not?

SINGLETON: Well... her aunt's really proud of her for becoming a policewoman.

CALVERT: So?

SINGLETON: If you fire her, her aunt will be cross.

(Calvert gave a stifled laugh.)

CALVERT: Singleton... mate... I'm not going to retain a useless officer just because she's got an elderly relative who's fond of her. Her aunt will just have to accept it.

SINGLETON: And she will, sir. After she's made you pay.

CALVERT: Pay?

SINGLETON: Pay! Dearly! Her aunt runs the shop in Ridgeton.

CALVERT: And that matters because?

SINGLETON: She'll refuse to serve you and get all the other shops to do the same.

You'll starve, sir. And so will that little girl of yours.

(Calvert glanced at him emptily for a moment then furrowed his brow. This was exactly the scenario Willows had warned him about.)

CALVERT: Shit.

SINGLETON: Right? Just let her off this time, sir.

CALVERT: She gave my kid cigarettes!

SINGLETON: Shouldn't she have?

CALVERT: No!



SINGLETON: Tell her that then! Just don't fire her! The island's old fire chief, a mainlander like yourself, fired her brother once. Poor bastard didn't eat for a week. Nor did his wife. He ended up quitting.

(Calvert sighed in defeat.)

CALVERT: Right. Well... thanks for the tip.

SINGLETON: You're welcome, sir. It was horrible to see and I'd hate the same thing to happen to you. Or anybody else, come to that.

CALVERT: Fair enough.

(He sighed.)

CALVERT: She's a god awful police officer though. What she did was illegal.

SINGLETON: Not under Tifasea law.

CALVERT: That's not a thing!!!

(He shook his head.)

CALVERT: Fine. She can stay. But she's not to go anywhere near Layla.

SINGLETON: Fah!

CALVERT: What?

SINGLETON: Fah.

(Calvert gave him a sideways glance.)

CALVERT: That means... fair, right?

SINGLETON: That's what I said.

CALVERT: Right.

(He shook his head.)

CALVERT: Honestly. How did she even *get* the job?

SINGLETON: Thirty-eight double D's and legs that won't quit, sir.

CALVERT: What?

SINGLETON: Willows wanted eye candy to stare at and she's the tastiest one who applied.

(Calvert stared through him.)

CALVERT: That's a joke, right?

SINGLETON: No, sir. When the last bloke quit, Willows decided to get a female officer in to brighten up the place. He was actually a bit of a perve.

CALVERT: I see.

(He sighed with frustration then turned to march inside.)

CALVERT: Follow me.

SINGLETON: Why? Where are you going?

(Calvert paused in the police station doorway and raised a condescending eyebrow.)

CALVERT: Where does it look like I'm going?

SINGLETON: In the police station?

CALVERT: Excellent deduction, Singleton. We'll make a detective out of you yet.

(He then headed inside. Singleton followed him with a joyous smile on his face. He'd taken Calvert's sarcastic retort as quite the compliment.)

SINGLETON: I always knew I had it in me.

(Upon stepping inside the police station, Calvert glanced towards his desk then furrowed his brow. Hornblower was no longer sitting where he'd told her to sit.)

CALVERT: Alicia?

(Hornblower replied from the kitchen area at the side of the room.)

HORNBLOWER: Sir?

CALVERT: What part of “stay there” didn’t you get?

HORNBLOWER: What?

(She grimaced.)

HORNBLOWER: You want me to stay here? In the kitchen?

CALVERT: What???

(He groaned in defeat.)

CALVERT: Forget it.

(He then nodded sternly.)

CALVERT: Listen, you two, these are your orders. I’m going to go out and about today to familiarise myself with the island. While I’m out, you two are going to take it in turns to patrol the island.

SINGLETON: But I did that yesterday.

CALVERT: So?

SINGLETON: Everything was fine. Why bother doing it again?

CALVERT: Because it’s what police officers do! Every day!

(He rolled his eyes.)

CALVERT: Just drive around the island and see if everything is okay. When one of you gets back then the other one can go. Make sure one of you stays here.

HORNBLOWER: But if we’re both out doing patrols, how can one of us stay here?

CALVERT: I literally just said, you can take it in turns. One of you does a patrol; the other one stays here!

HORNBLOWER: In the kitchen?

CALVERT: In the station!!!

(He sighed sorrowfully.)

CALVERT: You’re literally just boobs and legs, aren’t you? There’s not even the merest hint of a brain in there.

HORNBLOWER: You sound like my mother.

CALVERT: And that’s why they say mother knows best.

(He nodded.)

CALVERT: Okay. Let’s start our day. Singleton, you can patrol first then Alicia can take over. I’m off out to familiarise myself with the island. Oh, and Alicia...

HORNBLOWER: Yes!

CALVERT: Stay away from Layla in future.

HORNBLOWER: Why?

CALVERT: Because her parents don’t like you.

HORNBLOWER: Oh.

(She furrowed her brow.)

HORNBLOWER: Someone must have told them bad things about me. That’s *too* mean. I’m a nice person, damn it.

(She nodded.)

HORNBLOWER: Maybe you can have a word with them for me, sir.

(Calvert stared through her in astonishment for a moment then turned and headed for the door.)

CALVERT: I’m leaving now... while I still have a shred of sanity left.

(He then headed out of the door. Having watched him go, Hornblower shrugged then glanced towards Singleton.)

HORNBLOWER: He's a nice fella, our new boss. It's a shame his daughter's parents don't like me.

SINGLETON: Um... Alicia...

(He shook his head.)

SINGLETON: Never mind. He *is* a nice fella; you're right. He wants to make me a detective.

HORNBLOWER: Really? Cool!

SINGLETON: Right?

(He exhaled.)

SINGLETON: He's much better than Willows. *He* just thought we were idiots!

---

In the kitchen of DS Calvert's home, a short while later, Hayley was putting away some shopping, ably hindered by her well-meaning daughter. They just returned from the local shop with a week's worth of food. She'd only gone out to buy that night's dinner, but everything in Tifasea was so much cheaper than it was in Croxton, she'd ended up getting carried away. As a result, they had ten shopping bags to empty out. Making a start on the third, Hayley glanced at Layla then furrowed her brow.)

HAYLEY: That's where the bread *goes*, is it? On the floor?

LAYLA: I dropped it.

HAYLEY: And are you gonna pick it up?

LAYLA: All in good time, mum.

(She beamed then delved into another bag.)

LAYLA: First, I want to find those biscuits you bought.

HAYLEY: And what makes you think you *deserve* a biscuit, Smokey?

(Layla pouted.)

LAYLA: Don't call me names. I don't deserve that. I've been good today. Really helpful. And besides, the cigarette incident wasn't even my fault.

HAYLEY: And why's that? Because you don't know right from wrong?

(Layla looked at her nervously.)

LAYLA: Um...

HAYLEY: Well?

LAYLA: I *do* know, but...

HAYLEY: Then you know you did wrong.

(Layla pouted.)

LAYLA: I got confused.

HAYLEY: Then let me clarify things for you. Girls who smoke cigarettes don't get treats.

LAYLA: Aw.

HAYLEY: Now pick up the bread.

(Layla furrowed her brow.)

LAYLA: Fine.

(She then bent down, picked up the bread and slammed down it on the table.)

LAYLA: Happy now?

HAYLEY: Ecstatic.

LAYLA: You're a mean woman!

HAYLEY: That's right.

(Layla ruffled her neck indignantly.)

LAYLA: I don't help mean people. You can put *your own* shopping away.

(Hayley smirked.)

HAYLEY: How ever will I cope?

LAYLA: That's for you to figure out.

(Hayley allowed herself an inward chuckle then nodded towards the door.)

HAYLEY: Go and play, will you? The kitchen is no place for grumpy children.

LAYLA: I agree. It's for mean mothers.

(She then stomped out of the door. Two seconds later, however, she came back in smiling sheepishly.)

LAYLA: Um... mum?

HAYLEY: Yes?

LAYLA: Can I play on the beach for a bit? Just near the house. I won't go far. Promise.

(Hayley bit her lip.)

HAYLEY: Well... okay. But don't go in the sea!

LAYLA: I won't!

(She then turned to go, only to be thwarted by her mother.)

HAYLEY: Wait!

LAYLA: Wait? Why?

HAYLEY: Because before you go out there on your own, I need to make sure you remember the safety code.

LAYLA: What safety code?

HAYLEY: *This* one!

(She nodded.)

HAYLEY: What do you yell if a stranger comes up to you?

LAYLA: Stranger danger!!!

HAYLEY: Then what do you do?

LAYLA: Run back to the house!

HAYLEY: Correct. Good girl.

(Layla beamed.)

LAYLA: I am? Yay! Good girls get biscuits!

HAYLEY: Don't push your luck.

(Layla clicked her fingers in frustration.)

LAYLA: Damn it.

(She sighed.)

LAYLA: Oh, well. Can I go now?

HAYLEY: Yes; yes, you can.

LAYLA: Yay!

(She then charged away. As she did so, her mum yelled after her.)

HAYLEY: Make sure you stay nearby, okay? And don't go in the sea!!!

LAYLA: I won't!

(She then vanished out of the front door. Delighted to have some peace and quiet finally, Hayley exhaled.)

HAYLEY: That's better. I can finally hear myself think.

(Having charged out of the house, Layla stopped at the road to check that it was clear then raced onto the beach. Once there, she kicked sand all over the place then threw herself on her back to make a sand-angel. She did so while giggling gleefully. Simply being on the beach brought joy to her heart.)

LAYLA: Fun!

(Satisfied with her sand-angel, she then leapt to her feet and charged further down the beach. She didn't get very far, however, before she spotted a girl her own age, making a sandcastle beneath a nearby palm tree. At once, she came to a halt then proceeded to observe her.)

LAYLA: Hmm... that looks fun too.

(She then charged over to the girl with a happy grin on her face.)

LAYLA: Hiya!

(The little girl glanced up at her then smiled.)

FIONA: Hah!

LAYLA: What?

FIONA: Hah.

LAYLA: Right...

(She beamed.)

LAYLA: That looks fun.

FIONA: What does? Making sandcastles?

LAYLA: Yeah.

(Fiona smiled.)

FIONA: Do you want to help?

(Layla's face lit up.)

LAYLA: Can I???

FIONA: Of course.

LAYLA: Yay!

(She then sunk to her knees excitedly.)

LAYLA: We should make a giant fort or something.

(She then grimaced uneasily.)

LAYLA: But there's only one bucket and spade.

FIONA: That's okay. We can take it in turns.

(She beamed.)

FIONA: And yes, we should definitely make a giant fortress.

LAYLA: Right? You start.

FIONA: Okay.

(Fiona then proceeded to fill the bucket with sand. Watching her do so, Layla smiled happily.)

LAYLA: I'm Layla, by the way.

FIONA: I'm Fifi.

(Layla bit her lip.)

LAYLA: Fifi?

FIONA: I know; it makes me sound like a poodle.

LAYLA: Well... yeah.

FIONA: But it's better than being called Fiona. That's my real name. Fi for short. But I prefer Fifi.

LAYLA: Why?

FIONA: Because Fiona is an old granny's name. And Fi sounds like wee.

LAYLA: Right... but surely Fifi sounds like wee-wee.

FIONA: What?

(She then froze in horror.)

FIONA: Oh my god! It does. So *that's* why the boys at school call me...

(She turned bright red then hung her head.)

LAYLA: Call you what?

(Fiona whimpered.)

FIONA: Old yellow knickers.

LAYLA: That's mean!

FIONA: Right? It *is* mean!

LAYLA: Boy's are rubbish. The boys at my old school gave me a nickname too. Layla the failure.

FIONA: Well that's not very nice.

LAYLA: I know.

FIONA: Boy's suck.

LAYLA: Yeah! They suck like... um... you know... um...

FIONA: Really sucky suckers.

LAYLA: Yes!

(She nodded.)

LAYLA: Mum's are rubbish too.

FIONA: Mine's not. Mine's nice.

LAYLA: Mine isn't. She wouldn't let me have any biscuits! And last night she stole my cigarettes!

FIONA: She did?

LAYLA: Yes!

FIONA: Why would she do that?

LAYLA: Because she's mean.

FIONA: That's so unfair. You should ring the police. Alicia takes child abuse really seriously.

(Layla blushed.)

LAYLA: The police already know.

FIONA: They do?

LAYLA: Yes! They helped her do it.

FIONA: What?

LAYLA: My dad is the new chief of police. He stood there nodding with approval while my mum snatched my packet. And my lighter. Mean.

FIONA: Wow. That's cruel.

LAYLA: That's what I told them.

(She grimaced.)

LAYLA: I got sent to my room.

FIONA: Aw. You poor thing.

(She then offered her a smile.)

FIONA: Here...

(She then delved into a little bag and pulled out a cigarette packet and lighter.)

FIONA: Have one of mine.

(She then held the packet towards Layla.)

LAYLA: Really? You're the best!

(She then yanked a cigarette from the packet before glancing nervously at her house.)

LAYLA: Um... what if my mum sees me? She told me I'm not allowed to smoke anymore.

(Fiona glanced around.)

FIONA: There's nobody here but us two.

LAYLA: But my mum could come out of the house at any minute.

FIONA: *Your* house?

(Layla pointed to her front gate.)

LAYLA: Yeah. That one.

FIONA: Oh. You moved in there?

LAYLA: Yeah.

FIONA: Then we're neighbours.

(She pointed down the road slightly.)

FIONA: I live there.

(She nodded to her warmly.)

FIONA: Bah.

LAYLA: Bah?

FIONA: That's it.

(She smiled.)

FIONA: How old are you, Layla?

LAYLA: Nine. You?

FIONA: Same.

(She exhaled.)

FIONA: We're gonna be awesome friends, I think.

LAYLA: Me too.

FIONA: Cool.

(She then held out her lighter.)

FIONA: Let me light that for you.

LAYLA: Wait! If my mums sees me smoking, I'll get in trouble again.

FIONA: Oh.

(She then glanced upwards and mused to herself.)

FIONA: In that case we should go to the park. She won't see you from there.

LAYLA: There's a park?

FIONA: In Saffron Bay.

LAYLA: Where's that?

FIONA: In the next town.

LAYLA: Oh. My mum won't like that. I said I wouldn't go far.

FIONA: It's *not* far.

LAYLA: Really?

FIONA: Really.

LAYLA: In that case, lead the way.

FIONA: Okay!

(With that, she scooped up her bucket and spade and the two of them strutted towards Fiona's house.)

FIONA: You'll really like the park, Layla. It has swings.

LAYLA: Cool. What else?

FIONA: Just swings. The climbing frame fell down two weeks ago.

LAYLA: Oh.

FIONA: It's still awesome though.

LAYLA: Good, good.

(A few moments later, they arrived outside Fiona's house where three ATV's were parked. At which point, Fiona smiled to Layla then headed for the gate.)

FIONA: Wait here.

LAYLA: Okay.

(Fiona then vanished through the gate. As she did so, Layla exhaled joyfully and performed a happy dance.)

LAYLA: I've made a friend.

(She then stared at the gate in eager anticipation of her friend returning. Unfortunately, it took longer than she expected. She thought that Fiona was only dropping off her bucket and spade, so when she didn't return straight away, she started to fear that she wasn't going to come back at all. Mercifully, after a couple of minutes her fears were allayed. Fiona's gate opened up and her new friends strode out carrying a holdall. She then proceeded to deposit it in the storage hatch on the back of an ATV.)

LAYLA: What are you doing?

FIONA: What does it look like?

LAYLA: You're loading the boot of that motorbike.

FIONA: That's right.

LAYLA: But why?

FIONA: I put some food and stuff in there. We can have a picnic at the park.

LAYLA: Right...

(She grimaced.)

LAYLA: But why would you put it in there? Is your mum taking us?

FIONA: What? No.

(She then pointed to the ATV next the one she'd loaded.)

FIONA: You can drive that one.

LAYLA: What???

FIONA: I said you can drive that one.

LAYLA: Drive? I'm nine!

FIONA: So am I. What's age got to do with anything?

(Layla stared at her in astonishment.)

LAYLA: Fiona...

FIONA: What?

(She looked enlightened.)

FIONA: Wait. I get it. You're nervous because you've never driven before, aren't you?

LAYLA: Of course I haven't.



FIONA: It's easy. You just press the start button to start it. Then you push the end of the handlebar forwards to move. It's called a throttle. The brakes are like on a bike. Easy peasy.

LAYLA: Yeah, but... I don't think my mum and dad would *like* me riding one of these.

FIONA: Really?

(She gasped.)

FIONA: Do they let you do *anything*? They sound really mean.

LAYLA: Well...

(Fiona shook her head.)

FIONA: You're not allowed to have *any* fun, are you? Poor thing.

LAYLA: Um...

FIONA: They even took away your cigarettes.

(She sighed.)

FIONA: I don't know how you stand it.

LAYLA: Yes, well... they're okay, really. It's just... I don't know. Can't we just go around the corner or something. I just want to go where she won't see me.

FIONA: Where she won't see you?

(She then offered Layla a knowing wink.)

FIONA: She won't *see* you if you drive to that park with me. She's inside your house.

LAYLA: What?

FIONA: I'm saying, she's not going to know. You can have all the fun you like and she won't have the first idea.

(Layla bit her lip.)

LAYLA: Well... that's technically true, I guess. But I'd still be doing something they don't approve of.

FIONA: So? Look, Layla, what your parents don't know, won't hurt them.

(Layla trembled for a moment then sighed.)

LAYLA: Okay. You're right, I guess.

FIONA: Of course, I am.

(She then climbed onto her ATV before nodding to the one next to it.)

FIONA: Hop on.

LAYLA: Right...

(She then clambered nervously onto the ATV and grimaced at Fiona.)

FIONA: Ready?

LAYLA: Um...

FIONA: Press the start button.

LAYLA: What?

(She then glanced at the dashboard.)

LAYLA: Oh.

(With that, she started her engine then puffed out anxiously.)

LAYLA: Now what?

FIONA: Twist the throttle bit to go forwards and...

LAYLA: Throttle?

FIONA: The bit you're holding.

LAYLA: Oh.

FIONA: And steer like a bicycle.

LAYLA: Oh, so I...

(She then watched as Fiona started to pull off.)

LAYLA: Oh, boy.

(With that, she twisted the throttle then gently inched forwards, steering the ATV onto the road behind Fiona.)

FIONA: That's it. Now go!

(She then drove away, glancing back over her shoulder.)

FIONA: To the park.

(Layla gulped then pushed the throttle harder. Almost immediately, the ATV cruised away and a gush of fresh wind whooshed through her hair. In that moment, all her nerves evaporated.)

LAYLA: Wow! This is awesome!!!

FIONA: Yeah...

(She beamed.)

FIONA: And it never gets dull!

LAYLA: Yay!

(They two of them zoomed onwards, beaming with childish delight.)

LAYLA: Best morning ever!!!

(Back inside her house, in the meantime, her mother finished packing the shopping away then exhaled.)

HAYLEY: That's that done. Now for some coffee.

(She paused for thought.)

HAYLEY: I wonder if Layla would like some tea.

(She then shook away her thoughts.)

HAYLEY: Nah. She can come back in if she wants something. I'll just let her play on the beach for now.

(She bit her lip.)

HAYLEY: Still, I'd better check on her, I suppose; make sure she's behaving herself.

(She then scoffed at her own words.)

HAYLEY: Yeah, right. After that telling off we gave her last night, she wouldn't *dare* get into any *further* mischief; not today. That's for certain.

(She then put the kettle on; whistling a happy tune as she did so.)

---

In the centre of Long Sand, at this time, DS Calvert was pacing down the path, having left his ATV in a nearby vehicle park. There were several small businesses in this part of the town and he was keen to learn what they had to offer. It was all part of his plan to familiarise himself with the island. As far as he was concerned, if he was going to be effective as the head of policing, he needed to know everything about this island *and* its people. Knowing where they shopped, socialised and worked was a vital part of that. And so, with a view to getting the ball rolling as soon as possible, he headed through the gates of Tifasea Garden Centre; a small open-air plot adorned with greenhouses. Within moments of doing so, however, a familiar smell hit his nostrils and he instantly furrowed his brow.

CALVERT: Wow. Really?

(Just then, a gangly gentleman in a set of dungarees strode towards him, pushing an empty wheelbarrow. Upon spotting DS Calvert, he came to a standstill then offered him a friendly wave.)

WESLEY: Hah!

(Calvert forced a smile then paced towards him.)

CALVERT: Hello.

WESLEY: What can I do for you, sir?

CALVERT: That depends. Are you the proprietor?

WESLEY: What's that?

CALVERT: The owner.

WESLEY: Of what, sir?

CALVERT: This place. Tifasea Garden Centre.

WESLEY: I certainly am, officer. Why's that?

(He grinned.)

WESLEY: Are you hoping for a discount?

CALVERT: No. I just wanted to introduce myself.

(He stood firm.)

CALVERT: But now I'm here, I'm going to question you instead.

WESLEY: I wouldn't bother, sir. I'm terrible at quizzes.

CALVERT: Don't worry. I'm sure you know the answer to everything I'm about to ask.

WESLEY: Ambitious, but okay. Fire away.

CALVERT: Okay. Question one. Why does this place stink of Marijuana?

WESLEY: That'll be the marijuana, sir.

(His face then lit up.)

WESLEY: Ooh, you were right. I'm not bad at this. Ask me another.

CALVERT: Okay. Is the marijuana yours?

WESLEY: Absolutely.

(He exhaled.)

WESLEY: Two out of two.

CALVERT: Okay. And finally, were you aware that cultivating marijuana is illegal, sir?

(Wesley wagged a finger at him.)

WESLEY: Nice try. I'm not falling for that though.

CALVERT: Falling for what?

WESLEY: Trick questions.

(He smiled.)

WESLEY: I didn't *know* it was illegal because it isn't. Nice try though.

CALVERT: Yes, it is! It's highly illegal.

WESLEY: Not on this island, it isn't!

CALVERT: Yes; also on this island.

(Wesley chuckled.)

WESLEY: I like you. You've got a great sense of humour.

CALVERT: No, I haven't!

(He then flexed his shoulders.)

CALVERT: Well, I have, but this time I'm not joking. Cultivating marijuana *is* illegal!

WESLEY: Yeah, right. If that's true, how come that other copper, Willows, never arrested me? Explain that one.

CALVERT: I can't explain that one, other than to say he *should* have arrested you!

WESLEY: Right...

(He grimaced.)

WESLEY: I'm starting to feel uncomfortable now. Something about your demeanour is making me think you're not joking at all, are you?

CALVERT: Correct. I'm not!

WESLEY: Just lying.

CALVERT: Lying???

WESLEY: Yeah! If my produce is illegal, how come they sell it in the shops?

CALVERT: What???

WESLEY: You heard. Who do you think *I* sell it to?

(Calvert stared at him agape.)

CALVERT: Are you saying you sell weed to the shops and they sell it to the public?

WESLEY: That's right. It's called farming, sir.

CALVERT: No, it's called the illegal sale of narcotics!

WESLEY: Nonsense.

(Calvert shook his head.)

CALVERT: I'm going to have to arrest you now, you know that, don't you?

WESLEY: Arrest me??? What for???

CALVERT: Cultivating and selling an illegal product!

WESLEY: I see.

(He sucked his teeth.)

WESLEY: That could be problematic for you, sir.

(Calvert rolled his eyes.)

CALVERT: Oh, here we go.

WESLEY: You see, not only is my product perfectly legal under Tifasea law...

CALVERT: Tifasea law isn't even a thing, but carry on.

WESLEY: Okay. But if you do arrest me, the people around here aren't going to like you very much.

CALVERT: Is that so?

WESLEY: Yes! Without me, they'd have no marijuana!

CALVERT: They're not *supposed* to have marijuana!!!

WESLEY: So you claim.

CALVERT: So Kasika *law* claims.

WESLEY: That's Kasika's laws. Nobody cares about that..

CALVERT: Well *you* should, because you've just broken several of them.

WESLEY: You'd better arrest me then.

(He sighed.)

WESLEY: I just hope you're well stocked up on food, because when the islanders hear about this...

(He sucked his teeth.)

WESLEY: They're not gonna like it one bit. Especially...

CALVERT: Let me guess! Especially the shop owners?

WESLEY: Exactly. You'll be blacklisted. Your house might get bricked too. People round here enjoy a puff or two, you see? And when they find out you've deprived them of that... well... it's your family I'll feel sorry for.

(He shook his head.)

WESLEY: Being ostracised by the entire population sounds unpleasant.

(He shrugged.)

WESLEY: Still, you're a professional copper, so I'm sure you'll find a way to keep everyone safe and fed.

(He nodded then turned his back and reached his hands out behind him.)

WESLEY: Oh, well. You'd better sling the old handcuffs on then, seeing as I'm being arrested.

(DS Calvert stared at him bitterly for a moment then sighed in defeat. Wesley words made sense. Depriving stoners of marijuana had all too often resulted in violence back in Croxton and he couldn't afford a repeat of that here. Everyone knew each other and his family could indeed become targets. It was yet further evidence of the situation Willows had warned him about. He had no power. With this in mind, he shook his head then glanced away despairingly)

CALVERT: Oh, forget it. You're fine.

WESLEY: What? You're not going to arrest me?

(Calvert furrowed his brow.)

CALVERT: No!

WESLEY: Excellent.

(He turned around again and beamed.)

WESLEY: I knew you wouldn't. Unlucky, officer. You can't kid a kidder, my friend. Illegal indeed. Well, I soon called your bluff, didn't I?

CALVERT: It wasn't a bluff. Marijuana *is* illegal! It's just...

WESLEY: Just what, sir?

CALVERT: Doesn't matter.

WESLEY: Right.

(He smiled.)

WESLEY: Word to the wise though, sir. I didn't mind, because I have a sense of humour, but others on the island aren't as happy-go-lucky as I am. If you want to make up bogus laws and pretend you're going to arrest people while you're here, you need to be careful. Someone might take it the wrong way, you see? They might not see the funny side. And they really *might* get your family ostracised.

(Calvert gritted his teeth.)

CALVERT: I don't make up bogus laws...

(He then took a deep breath to calm himself.)

CALVERT: Just forget it. I came to introduce yourself and I have, so now I'll be on my way.

WESLEY: Right.

(He grimaced.)

WESLEY: Just one thing though, sir. You *didn't* introduce yourself.

CALVERT: What?

WESLEY: It's obvious from your uniform that you're a copper, but I have no idea what your name is.

CALVERT: Oh. Yeah. Detective Sergeant Calvert.

WESLEY: And I'm Wesley.

CALVERT: Yeah...

(He nodded.)

CALVERT: Job done then.

(He then about turned and headed out of the garden centre. Having watched him go, Wesley smiled then reached for his wheelbarrow again.)

WESLEY: What a lovely fella.

---

Having exited the garden centre, DS Calvert rolled his eyes then headed off along the path; swearing like a trooper. Policing this island felt like a waste of time. In the two days he'd been here, he'd stumbled across an unlicensed gun, a tradesmen operating without the legally required clearance and a marijuana farm, and yet he'd been powerless to do anything about them. It was beyond frustrating. If he even *attempted* to do anything about them, he could well end up putting his family in danger. It was something he wasn't about to risk. His family's health wasn't something he'd even consider putting in jeopardy. And so, all he could do was stomp his way up the road, turning the air blue as he aired his frustrations to himself liberally. A couple of minutes into his walk, however, his attention was grabbed by a pavement sign outside a small shop up ahead. Pacing forth, he read the sign out loud then mused to himself.

CALVERT: Casino Coffee and Cakes. What's Casino coffee?

(He bit his lip.)

CALVERT: Maybe Casino is the owner's name; that'd make more sense.

(He then allowed himself a chuckle.)

CALVERT: Unless it's a casino that also sells coffee and cakes and they forgot to add a comma.

(He chuckled some more then all of a sudden, his heart sunk. He'd just had a horrible thought. Gambling was illegal in Kasika, but the people of this island seemed to have absolutely zero knowledge of, or respect for, the law. From what he'd seen so far, therefore, there might well be a casino inside. Hoping he was wrong, he picked up the pace then hurried to the door. With barely a pause, he then stepped inside. Almost at once, his fears were confirmed. At the front of the establishment was a quiet coffee shop. At the rear, however, was a set of poker tables, a roulette wheel and a black jack table.

CALVERT: I might have fucking known.

(He stood there shaking his head disdainfully. As he did so, however, a thirty year-old woman paced up to him wearing a warm smile.)

LOUISE: Hello there. Judging by that uniform, you must be the new chief of police.

(Calvert sighed then offered her a respectful nod.)

CALVERT: That's me. DS Calvert.

LOUISE: I'm Louise Hamper. Welcome to my establishment.

CALVERT: Thank you.

LOUISE: So... DS, huh?

CALVERT: It stands for...

LOUISE: Wait! Don't tell me. Allow me use to my powers. I come from a long line of psychics, you see? *I'm* a psychic, my *mother* was a psychic, *her* mother was a psychic and *her* mother before that was a plumber.

CALVERT: Right...

LOUISE: So let me see. Hmm...

(She focused hard.)

LOUISE: DS... now what can I divine? I'm getting... David Sebastian. David Sebastian Calvert.

(She beamed.)

LOUISE: How did I do?

(Calvert stared through her emptily.)

CALVERT: It stands for Detective Sergeant.

LOUISE: Oh.

(She started to chuckle.)

LOUISE: Now you know why I don't do it for living.

(Calvert raised a distrusting eyebrow.)

CALVERT: Instead you run a casino.

LOUISE: Now, now, officer. I know what you're thinking. A psychic owning a casino isn't right. I could read people's poker hands with my mind and cheat like there's no tomorrow. Don't worry though, I just make the coffee and serve the cakes. I don't have anything to do with the casino games.

(She smiled.)

LOUISE: My mother runs that part.

CALVERT: Didn't you say *she* was psychic as well?

(Louise stared at him nervously then gestured to the nearest table.)

LOUISE: Um... don't you worry about that, Detective. Here, take a seat.

CALVERT: All in good time, Louise.

(He stood firm.)

CALVERT: Let's take care of business first.

LOUISE: Business?

CALVERT: Yes. You do realise that gambling is illegal, don't you?

LOUISE: What?

CALVERT: You heard. When you said you knew what I was thinking, you couldn't have been more wrong. I wasn't thinking about how wrong it is for a psychic to run a casino; I was thinking how wrong it is to break the law.

LOUISE: Oh.

CALVERT: Another swing and a miss for your psychic powers. You didn't have a clue what I was thinking.

LOUISE: Well... like I said... there's a reason I don't make a living at it.

CALVERT: Yes, well, let's focus on the issue at hand, shall we? You're running an illegal gambling den.

LOUISE: Is that so?

CALVERT: Yes! That *is* so. But let me guess, you had no idea gambling was illegal In Tifasea.

LOUISE: Actually, I *had* heard.

CALVERT: You had?

LOUISE: Yeah. I mean there was a rumour. It turned out to only be illegal in Kasika though. It's fine under Tifasea law.

(Calvert spammed his forehead.)

CALVERT: Really? This again?

LOUISE: What?

CALVERT: There's no such thing as...

(He then paused for a moment and raised a suspicious eyebrow.)

CALVERT: Wait. Before I continue, what would happen if the police decided to have this place shut down?

(Louise sucked her teeth.)

LOUISE: That wouldn't be very good at all, sir. The shop owner's mother loves this place. She'd be furious. Which wouldn't end very well for you lot at the police station.

(Calvert groaned inwardly.)

CALVERT: I had a feeling you'd say that.

(He sighed.)

CALVERT: Forget it then. I'll just add you to ever-growing list of criminals I can't do a bloody thing about.

LOUISE: Criminals?

CALVERT: Yes.

(He rolled his eyes.)

CALVERT: Look... never mind. Just know this. Gambling *is* illegal, so be careful about letting tourists in. And if any do come in, never let them take photos. If word gets out that there's a gambling den here and I did nothing about it, I could get in deep shit with my superiors.

LOUISE: Oh, don't worry about that, David. We never let tourists in anyway. Tourists are noisy. Rude an' all. They treat us locals like we're idiots.

CALVERT: I wonder why.

LOUISE: Poor upbringing, I reckon. The places on the seafront can take that hit.

CALVERT: Fair enough.

(He nodded.)

CALVERT: But don't call me David.

LOUISE: Why not?

CALVERT: My name's Ray. Detective Sergeant Ray Calvert.

LOUISE: Right...

(She smiled.)

LOUISE: Anyway, would you like a cup of coffee?

CALVERT: That depends. Are your coffee-making skills on a par with your psychic skills?

LOUISE: Absolutely. I suck at both. But I do make nice cakes.

CALVERT: I'll have a muffin and a can of cola then.

LOUISE: Coming right up, sir.

(She then headed away. As she did so, Calvert sat down and allowed his head to drop onto the table.)

CALVERT: This island is nothing but a bloody crime ring.

(He groaned.)

CALVERT: With a mafia-style code of brotherhood. Upset one and they'll all come after you. It's a waste of time me being here.

(He then sat there with a defeated expression on his face, groaning constantly until Louise returned a minute later.)



LOUISE: Here you go. A can of cola and a chocolate muffin. On the house, sir. As my way of welcoming you to the island. And not because I accidentally stuck my thumb in your muffin.

CALVERT: Oh.

(He sat up and allowed himself an amused grin.)

CALVERT: How professional.

(He then offered Louise a smile.)

CALVERT: But I'm grateful for the sentiment.

(Louise glanced back at him uneasily for a moment then availed herself of the seat opposite.)

LOUISE: Are you okay, Mr DS? You seem a bit down, if you don't mind me saying.

CALVERT: What makes you say that?

LOUISE: While I was away getting your muffin, you were head-butting the table.

CALVERT: Oh. Was I?

LOUISE: Yes.

CALVERT: Sorry. I didn't realise.

(Louise smiled.)

LOUISE: It's fine. I'm guessing you're homesick. It can't be easy to move somewhere like this; miles away from home.

CALVERT: Well... yeah. But I'm not so much homesick as I am bewildered, appalled and mortified.

LOUISE: Oh? Why's that?

(Calvert looked her in the eyes for a moment then sighed to himself. She seemed like a decent enough person at heart, so he decided it'd be okay to confide in her.)

CALVERT: I'm a policeman, Louise. My sole task as such is to uphold the law. The laws of Kasika. Laws which are also applicable here. But I can't. If I even *try* to stop someone breaking the law, my family and I are going to end up being ostracised and deprived off food, aren't we?

LOUISE: No. That'd only happen if you upset someone with close links to the community.

(She then glanced at the ceiling.)

LOUISE: Which pretty much applies to everyone, come to think of it. So, yes.

CALVERT: See?

LOUISE: I do see. We're a close-knit community here, Captain Cuthbert.

CALVERT: It's Dave!

LOUISE: What?

CALVERT: I mean, Ray! Detective Sergeant Ray Cuthbert. Calvert!

(He hung his head.)

CALVERT: Oh, for fuck sake. I'm so frustrated I can barely even think straight.

LOUISE: Aw...

(She smiled sympathetically.)

LOUISE: Don't let it get to you, Ray. Just focus on stopping the criminals you *can* interfere with.

CALVERT: Like who?

LOUISE: Tourists! Those rude bastards. Nobody going to mind you putting *them* buggers in their place.

CALVERT: Tourists, huh?

LOUISE: Yeah. You know, holidaymakers.

CALVERT: I know what they are!

LOUISE: There you go then. Keep them buggers in line and everyone here will love you. And your family!

(She sighed.)

LOUISE: I don't know how Suzie puts up with them, I really don't.

CALVERT: What? Suzie? Who's Suzie?

LOUISE: Oh...

(She smiled.)

LOUISE: Suzie owns the café on the beachfront. The beachfront further along the coast, between the two hotels. She's gets a lot of tourists in there. And somehow, she keeps them in line. They actually behave. And they keep coming back for more.

(She shrugged.)

LOUISE: Probably because she serves a lovely cup of coffee.

CALVERT: And let me guess, she doesn't serve muffins with thumbprints on them?

LOUISE: Absolutely not. The service is second to none. In here, the service is irrelevant. People only come for the casino. At Suzie's place, it's all *about* the service. And the excellent coffee and muffins, of course. I go there on my breaks sometimes.

CALVERT: Why? You have coffee and muffins *here*.

LOUISE: Yeah, but I have standards. I'm not going to eat the rubbish, *I* make. No, no. Suzie's it is.

CALVERT: I see. But you expect *me* to eat it?

LOUISE: Yes, but I didn't expect you to pay for it.

CALVERT: Good point.

(He nodded.)

CALVERT: I'll check it out sometime.

LOUISE: You should. You really should. She runs the place with her daughter, Katie. Lovely girl. It's always busy and *everyone* always walks away happy; resident and tourist alike. I don't know how she does it. There aren't many places that can cater for both locals and tourists alike, yet somehow *she* manages it. And there's never any trouble in there.

CALVERT: Really?

(He raised a suspicious eyebrow.)

CALVERT: This is where you tell me she's *also* running a secret bootlegging operation on the side, isn't it?

LOUISE: What? No. Why would you think that?

CALVERT: Because so far, almost *every* local I've met seems to be involved in *something* criminal.

(Louise threw out a dismissive wrist.)

LOUISE: Suzie's not involved in anything like that. You're thinking of Jake over in Saffron Bay. He's the one who sells bootleg whisky.

(Calvert's shoulder's slumped.)

CALVERT: Oh, for Pete's sake.

LOUISE: What's wrong? You're not going to say bootlegging is illegal too, are you?

CALVERT: I could, but I fear I'd be wasting my breath.

LOUISE: Probably.

(She then smiled kindly.)

LOUISE: Look, just relax. There's nothing untoward there, I can assure you. There's not even anything *you* might consider untoward and you seem to think everything's illegal! She moved to the mainland when she was five and came back in here early twenties, you see? So *she's* got the same weird, mainland sense of what's illegal and what isn't that *you* have. I reckon you'd get along, actually.

CALVERT: Interesting.

(He nodded.)

CALVERT: I might pop over there this evening with the wife then. I'm sure she'll be relieved to know there's *somewhere* on this island that we might fit in. Somewhere that's not a criminal enterprise, at least.

LOUISE: This evening? Oh, that's no good. They close at five o'clock.

CALVERT: Shit.

LOUISE: Yeah, it's not ideal but what can they do?

(She shrugged.)

LOUISE: The brothel down the road opens at five and steals all their customers.

(Calvert performed a double take in her direction.)

CALVERT: Brothel? There's a brothel???

(He then held up his palms.)

CALVERT: Why am I even asking? Of course there is.

LOUISE: Why? What's wrong with that?

(She scoffed.)

LOUISE: Not gonna tell me brothels are illegal too, are you?

(Calvert glanced straight through her then stood up.)

CALVERT: I'm leaving now.

LOUISE: So soon?

CALVERT: Yes, well, you know how it is. The canal isn't going to jump into its self.

LOUISE: What canal? There's no canal.

CALVERT: I... never mind.

(He nodded.)

CALVERT: Thanks for the drink.

LOUISE: And the muffin.

CALVERT: No, no. *You* can have that. Consider it an introduction present.

LOUISE: Ooh; how kind.

CALVERT: Yeah... I'm good like that.

(He then skulked out of the door, sighing despairingly. Left behind, Louise smiled warmly then glanced down at the muffin.)

LOUISE: What a nice bloke. And what a thoughtful gift.

(She then climbed to her feet, dumped the muffin in the bin and went about her business again.)

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After exiting the casino, DS Calvert stomped further up the road, away from his ATV, mumbling to himself bitterly. He was the very picture of frustration. He'd never felt so impotent in all his life. He was supposed to be the grand protector and enforcer of the

law on the island; a force to be reckoned with. Right now, however, he felt more like a school prefect; patrolling the halls for ne'er-do-wells who'd more than likely beat him up if he dared to report them. A weak kid put in a place of power, who'd have his head flushed down the toilet if he dared to use it. The power invested in him meant nothing.

CALVERT: There's not a lot of fucking point in me being here really. Arresting a criminal is supposed to be a punishment for the arrested party, not me.

(He shook his head.)

CALVERT: How the fuck did it ever come to this? How can they *all* have such a blatant disregard for the law of the land? All of them! How did *that* happen? Did they all wake up one morning and decide that the law sucks and decide to opt out or something? What? What happened? Surely *someone* here has to know right from fucking wrong? I mean they can't all be fucking criminals, can they?

(His shoulders then slumped.)

CALVERT: Who am I kidding? Of course, they can. They call the shots around here and there's fuck all I can do about it. I might as well stay at home all day watching TV and leave the them to it.

(He sighed with frustration then glanced across the road emptily. Having done so, however, he suddenly stopped dead in his tracks. There was a large tin building opposite with a sign outside which read "Tifasea ATV Repairs". At once his fists clenched, a snarl appeared on his face and feeling of rage rose up from inside him. A brief moment ago, he'd been feeling utterly deflated; almost to the point of giving up and letting the islanders do what ever they wanted. He'd been about to stop trying. Upon spotting the ATV repair sign, however, his perspective changed. Yesterday, the ATV repairmen had entered the police station, brandishing firearms and had scared his precious daughter in the process. There was absolutely no way on earth that he was going to let *that* slide; regardless of how the locals might decide to punish him. He was going to nip such antics in the bud right away. As far as he was concerned, they could have their marijuana farm, their casino *and* their brothel, but *nobody* was going to wave guns around in front of his little girl. With this in mind, he stormed across the road then bounded into their premises with a face like thunder.)

CALVERT: Where are you???

(Just then, two heads popped up from the other side of an ATV in the centre of the building.)

GAVIN: Hah!

DALE: Hah!

GAVIN: How can you help you, officer?

CALVERT: I'll tell you how you can help me, you cunts!

(He then stormed up to them, grabbed them both by the throat and frogmarched them into the wall. Having done so, he then snarled into their faces.)

CALVERT: You can fucking listen, that's what you can do for me!

(Dale and Gavin stared at him through terrified eyes.)

GAVIN: What's going on?

DALE: Have we done something to upset you?

CALVERT: No, you did something to piss me off completely!

DALE: Oh. That's far worse!

GAVIN: But what did we do?

CALVERT: Just fucking listen!

(He snarled.)

CALVERT: If you two fuckers ever, and I mean ever, come near the police station waving guns around again, I'll rip your fucking bollocks off!

DALE: I...

CALVERT: Shut it!!! My nine year-old daughter was in there! Hiding under the table in terror!

GAVIN: Um...

CALVERT: You can speak when I tell you that you can!

DALE: Right...

CALVERT: Shut up!

(He growled.)

CALVERT: If you'd charged into a police station with guns *anywhere else* in the world, you'd have been shot! And if I'd been there yesterday when you charged into mine, the same thing would have happened to you then! In fact, thinking about how scared my daughter must have been makes me want to shoot you anyway!

(Dale whimpered.)

DALE: You wouldn't!

CALVERT: I fucking would!

(He then ruffled his neck.)

CALVERT: If I'd brought a gun with me.

(He snarled.)

CALVERT: Luckily for you, I didn't! So, I'll just have to settle for arresting you for attempted aggravated armed robbery!

(He then released their necks and scowled at them.)

CALVERT: Now what have you got to say for yourselves?

DALE: Um...

GAVIN: Well...

CALVERT: Let me guess. If I arrest you, you'll tell some relative of yours. They'll get angry and tell the shopkeeper what I did and consequently, I won't be able to buy food. Is that what you're about to say?

DALE: Um... no.

CALVERT: Something of that ilk though, right?

DALE: Far from it.

(Gavin then sunk to his knees.)

GAVIN: We're really sorry, Mr Policeman, sir.

CALVERT: What?

(Dale then sunk his knees as well.)

DALE: Forgive us! We knew not what we were doing.

GAVIN: Yes, we did.

DALE: Good point. We regret it now though. Honest.

GAVIN: We really do.

(Calvert stared at them in astonishment.)

CALVERT: What? What's going on? No thinly veiled threats to ostracise my family? No attempt to pretend the law isn't the law? What's happening here exactly?

(Dale pouted up at him.)

DALE: Please don't arrest us for that, sir.

GAVIN: If our parents find out we tried to rob the police station at gunpoint, *we'll* be the ones who end up getting ostracised! By the entire town!

DALE: Yeah, even though it was meant to be a joke, they're not gonna see the funny side.

CALVERT: Nor do I!

GAVIN: Evidently.

(He hung his head.)

GAVIN: It was the wrong thing to do. Especially when a child was in there. We see that now.

DALE: We do.

(Calvert blinked at them in astonishment then scratched his head.)

CALVERT: This is a wind-up, right?

GAVIN: What do you mean?

CALVERT: Are you *really* accepting wrongdoing or are you about to yell "Psych" then tell me something else?

DALE: No, sir. We know it was wrong. The island elders, especially the leader have no sense of humour when it comes to guns. You can keep one for protection, but that's it.

GAVIN: What we did was so far off the acceptable list, we'd probably be sent away to the mainland. Forever!

DALE: Please don't tell them, sir?

GAVIN: We'll even return the toaster we stole.

DALE: And the kettle!

GAVIN: That too.

(Calvert rubbed his chin.)

CALVERT: Interesting. So this island *does* has a limit. It's not a complete and utter criminal free-for-all like I feared.

DALE: Far from it, sir. Gun crime is a no-no. Even if it's just a prank.

GAVIN: A prank we took too far.

DALE: Way too far.

GAVIN: We're sorry.

(He sighed.)

GAVIN: I'll level with you, sir. We knew Willows had left, but we didn't know the new bloke had taken over yet, you see? So we thought Alicia and Joe were alone. Then we saw Joe drive past yesterday.

CALVERT: With me. On my way to see Kevin!

GAVIN: Yeah, but we didn't see you.

(He grimaced.)

GAVIN: So we thought Alicia was there alone. And she's a bit dim, you see? So we figured that if we went in disguise, she'd never know it was us.

DALE: So much for that.

GAVIN: Right?

(He sighed.)

GAVIN: We thought the toaster was in the safe and that she'd hand it over and we could be on our way.

CALVERT: Okay, but why the fuck do you even want our toaster?

GAVIN: Well... we don't really.

DALE: It's just a running joke, you see?

CALVERT: What is?

DALE: Stealing the toaster from the police station.

CALVERT: Why?

DALE: I have no idea. It's a tradition older than me, sir.

GAVIN: It's just the done thing. If you're there and you get the chance, pinch the toaster.

DALE: We also pinched the kettle once.

GAVIN: Yeah, we were in a hurry and accidentally grabbed the wrong appliance.

(Calvert stared down at them then nodded.)

CALVERT: Stand up.

(They instantly obliged.)

CALVERT: You two are idiots. Complete and utter fuckwits!

DALE: Fah.

GAVIN: Fah.

CALVERT: But I'm not going arrest you.

(Dale and Gavin were instantly awash with relief.)

DALE: Thank you. Thank you, sir.

GAVIN: God bless you, officer.

CALVERT: Stop grovelling.

(He rolled his eyes.)

CALVERT: But know this. This is a warning. Do anything like this again and this offence *will* be taken into account. Got it?

DALE: Absolutely, sir!

GAVIN: And don't worry. It won't happen again.

CALVERT: Good.

(He nodded.)

CALVERT: I'm being lenient because you two are the first people on this island to show any respect for my authority as a police officer whatsoever. It's eased my mood a little.

DALE: Right... well... don't get too excited, sir. Nobody has *any* respect for the police or their authority around here; we're just scared of what our parents might do if they find out we tried to rob someone at gunpoint.

GAVIN: Don't tell him that!!!

CALVERT: Too late!

GAVIN: You cock!

DALE: Sorry.

(Calvert shook his head.)

CALVERT: I see. What you're saying is *I'm* not the one in authority...

GAVIN: The elders are.

DALE: Yeah. *You're* just some random bloke. Some random bloke the Kasika government sent here to live among us. Nobody cares about you're so-called authority.

GAVIN: Except us two, obviously. To us, you could use that authority to arrest us and drop us right in the shit.

DALE: Mercifully, you've chosen not to.

(He smiled.)

DALE: So in that sense you've earned our respect. Not as a policeman, but as a fellow islander.

GAVIN: Right? And in return, you can have free tune ups for your personal ATV if you've got one. Not police ones though. We make all our money from fixing police ATV's. We bill the mainland for those.

DALE: They keep us in business, actually.

CALVERT: I don't want to know.

(He then turned and headed for the door.)

CALVERT: Anyway... behave in future. And stay away from the police station.

DALE: We will.

GAVIN: Wait. Before you go, do you want that toaster?

CALVERT: No. No, I do not.

(He then headed away, leaving Dale and Gavin clutching their chests.)

DALE: That was close.

GAVIN: Right? Still, I'm glad it's over now. I was up all night worrying that the elders might find out what we did, but it looks like we're in the clear.

DALE: Phew.

(He smirked knowingly.)

DALE: We're gonna keep trying to pinch their toaster though, right?

GAVIN: Why, it'd be wrong not to.

(They then shared a crafty chuckle before peering out of the door to double check that Calvert had left. Much to their relief, he had indeed left the premises and was now heading back to where he'd parked his ATV. He did so with a perplexed expression on his face.)

CALVERT: This place... I mean... they robbed a police station with no fear of the police whatsoever. Then regretted it later because they *do* fear their parents!

(He furrowed his brow.)

CALVERT: So that's the only weapon in my armoury is it? If I catch a criminal, I can tell his mother! If I try to enforce the law, *I* ended up ostracised. So all I've got is grassing them up to mummy? And even then I run the risk of that mother looking at me like I'm a lunatic and claiming their offence was perfectly legal. And if I say it's not, *I'm* the one who ends up in the shit.

(He then pouted sorrowfully.)

CALVERT: I hate this fucking place. I should go back to Croxton and kick that commissioner in the bollocks again for sending me here. This punishment is *too* cruel.

---

On the other side of the island at this time, Layla and her new friend, Fiona, were pulling their ATV's into a vehicle park, next to a small stretch of parkland. Fiona did so with an almost nonchalant expression on her face. Layla, on the other hand, was beaming with delight. Riding an ATV was the most fun she'd ever had. Even though it only had a top speed of ten miles per hour, she'd felt like she was flying. She'd enjoyed it so much, she could barely contain her excitement. As such, when Fiona finally brought her vehicle to a standstill in a parking spot, Layla pulled up next to her then bounced for joy in her seat.

LAYLA: That was super-duper mega awesome! Best morning out ever!

(She exhaled.)



LAYLA: Accidentally getting us sent to this island was the best thing my dad ever did!

(Fiona turned off her vehicle then climbed down, chuckling as she did so.)

FIONA: You're so excited. I was like that the first time I rode one.

(She then glanced down at where Layla had parked across two spaces.)

FIONA: I didn't park that badly though.

LAYLA: What?

FIONA: You're meant to park *between* the lines; not *on* them!

LAYLA: Oh. You never said.

FIONA: Don't worry. Just reverse back then try again.

LAYLA: Reverse?

FIONA: Yeah, pull back on the throttle.

LAYLA: Back?

(She then did exactly that. At once, the ATV rolled backwards, causing her to shriek.)

FIONA: Calm down!

LAYLA: Sorry.

FIONA: And you're supposed to look before you reverse!

LAYLA: Sorry.

FIONA: It's fine. Now pull into the space.

LAYLA: Right.

(With a focused glint in her eyes she then pushed the throttle forwards and eased her ATV in the spot, albeit with the rear tyres on the line.)

LAYLA: Like that?

FIONA: It'll do! Now press the stop/start button and climb off.

LAYLA: Right.

(Layla quickly pressed the button to stop the engine then eased herself off the ATV.)

LAYLA: Done.

FIONA: There you go.

(With that, Fiona headed for the storage hatch on her ATV. Watching her, Layla puffed out then leant up against her vehicle.)

LAYLA: Now my legs feel funny.

FIONA: It'll pass.

LAYLA: Right.

(Her face then lit up.)

LAYLA: So it will.

FIONA: See?

(With that, Fiona yanked her holdall from the storage then slammed it shut again.)

FIONA: Okay. To the park!

LAYLA: Yay!

(They then head off across the grass towards a set of wooden benches.)

LAYLA: I can't believe I wasn't allowed to drive in Croxton.

FIONA: Or did your parents just *tell* you that you weren't?

LAYLA: Right...

(She sighed.)

LAYLA: I'm not so sure now.

(She bit her lip.)

LAYLA: That said. Everyone there has cars and they look a lot more complicated to drive than that bike.

FIONA: In what way?

LAYLA: There's this weird stick. Whoever's driving keeps pulling it back and forth every time we stop. And when we get going again. And for some reason they keep looking in the mirrors.

FIONA: Probably checking their hair.

LAYLA: Could be. That's definitely the case with my mum. She's very vain. She never goes anywhere without makeup on.

(She gasped with annoyance.)

LAYLA: But yesterday she *told me off* for wearing it!

FIONA: Really? Honestly, Layla; she sounds awful!

LAYLA: Well... I never *used* to think so, but...

(She sighed.)

LAYLA: After yesterday...

(She shook her head.)

LAYLA: She even told me off because my dress was too short! Please! She wears dresses that short all the time in the summer! And skirts! Every day! I've never seen her in anything else! Except gym clothes. Okay, her skirts are *usually* knee or ankle length, but she's worn them really short loads of times. I tell you, that mean woman has double standards!

FIONA: Yeah...

(She sucked her teeth.)

FIONA: I'm worried, Layla. Maybe we *should* call the police, like I suggested.

LAYLA: Well...

FIONA: Seriously. Your mum sounds like a monster. She stole your cigarettes, for pity's sake! As for not letting you wear makeup and short skirts... that's abuse!

LAYLA: She wouldn't let me have a biscuit either!

FIONA: Right, yeah... you said.

(She shrugged.)

FIONA: But having given it some thought, that one's actually understandable. Biscuits are bad for you.

LAYLA: They are???

FIONA: Sure. If you eat too many.

LAYLA: But I only wanted one.

FIONA: Oh. In that case, we should add it to the list.

LAYLA: Definitely.

FIONA: So that's how many things now? She stole your cigarettes, deprived you of makeup, made you change your dress, didn't let you drive and wouldn't let you have a biscuit. That's five things!

(Layla pouted.)

LAYLA: Six! She also told me off for drinking coffee and forbid me from doing it ever again!

FIONA: You're kidding!

LAYLA: I'm not.

FIONA: Wow!

(She shook her head.)

FIONA: She's a ogre! The absolute worst!

LAYLA: Agreed.

FIONA: Still, you're out with me now, so you can forget all about her for a while.

LAYLA: I will!

FIONA: See? That's the spirit. Now let's sit on that bench and have a cigarette like children are supposed to.

LAYLA: Yay!

(She smiled warmly.)

LAYLA: You're the best, Fifi.

(With that, they headed for a bench which faced out towards the sea and placed themselves down on it.)

LAYLA: Ooh. What a lovely view.

FIONA: Where?

LAYLA: In front of us. The beach and the sea.

FIONA: How is that any different from any other view?

(Layla looked to her blankly.)

LAYLA: Um... very.

FIONA: What?

LAYLA: In Croxton, where I come from, you can't even see the sea.

FIONA: Why not?

(She gasped.)

FIONA: Did your house have no windows?

LAYLA: No. The sea was too far away. And there too many buildings. It's really noisy and sometimes it smells funny.

FIONA: Sounds like my dad.

LAYLA: What?

FIONA: Don't worry.

LAYLA: Oh. Okay.

(She forced a smile.)

LAYLA: There was loads to do in Croxton, but it was full of people. And cars. I prefer it here.

FIONA: Yeah. This Croxton of yours sounds rubbish.

LAYLA: Well... it was alright.

FIONA: Doesn't sound it.

(She then delved into her holdall and yanked out a packet of cigarettes and a lighter.)

FIONA: Help yourself.

LAYLA: Yay! Don't mind if I do.

(She then availed herself of a cigarette and hurriedly lit up. A few seconds later, she took a long puff then exhaled with delight.)

LAYLA: That's better. I was gagging for a smoke.

FIONA: I'll bet.

(She then produced a small flask and two cups from her holdall.)

FIONA: Drink?

LAYLA: Yes, please.

(Fiona nodded then proceeded to pour from the flask.)

LAYLA: Ooh. Is that apple juice?

FIONA: No. White wine.

(Layla stared at her agape.)

LAYLA: What?

FIONA: White wine. It's like red wine, but white.

LAYLA: Right...

(She grimaced.)

LAYLA: Fifi?

FIONA: Yeah?

LAYLA: We're nine.

FIONA: So?

(She then furrowed her brow.)

FIONA: You're kidding! Did your parents forbid you from drinking as well?

LAYLA: Well... yeah. I mean... alcohol.

FIONA: And?

LAYLA: It's... we're not allowed.

FIONA: Yes, we are!

LAYLA: We are?

FIONA: Yes! My mum wouldn't have made this flask up for me if we weren't.

LAYLA: Oh.

(Fiona then filled the cups before screwing the lid back on the flask.)

FIONA: Drink up.

LAYLA: But...

(Her lips quivered.)

LAYLA: I could get in trouble.

FIONA: How? Your parents aren't here, Layla. They're never gonna know.

LAYLA: But the police...

FIONA: What about them?

LAYLA: Drinking is illegal. For kids, I mean.

FIONA: Rubbish. My mum and I drink wine together all the time.

LAYLA: Really?

FIONA: Yeah. Now stop worrying and get it down your neck.

LAYLA: Well... okay.

(She then picked up her cup and took a tentative sip. A look of delight then washed across her face.)

LAYLA: That tastes really weird!

FIONA: And yet?

LAYLA: Me likely!

(She then took a larger swing and exhaled.)

LAYLA: Yum.

(She beamed.)

LAYLA: It goes really well with a cigarette too.

FIONA: Right?

LAYLA: Not as good as coffee, but still. Yum.

(Fiona chuckled.)

FIONA: See? This is the good life. Nothing beats a glass of wine and a cigarette after a long motorbike ride.

(Layla giggled.)

LAYLA: That sounds so weird to me. Drinking wine, smoking cigarettes and riding motorbikes are three things kids just don't do back in Croxton!

FIONA: Or at least *you* never did.

(She shook her head.)

FIONA: Your parents need to wake up and realise you're not six anymore!

LAYLA: Damned right!

(She nodded sternly.)

LAYLA: I'm nine!

FIONA: And don't you forget it!

(They tapped their wine cups together and exhaled.)

FIONA: To fun!

LAYLA: Fun!

(They then stared out to sea, grinning all over their cherubic little faces.)

---

Back in Long Sand, just over an hour later, Hayley was in the final throes of unpacking the only remaining box of her family's belongings. It had been a miserable chore. It was a box *filled* with awkward oddments; things they didn't want to throw away but might never end up using. Items that had been stuffed in a draw and forgotten about. A triangle key, various cables, empty mobile phone boxes and other bric-a-brac. Finding a home for each individual item had been mind-numbing. At last, however, she was down to the final item. Grimacing, she lifted it from the box then held it before her face.

HAYLEY: Why the hell would you pack that, Ray? A library card that expired six years ago?

(She rolled her eyes then placed it in the bin.)

HAYLEY: There. Thank god that's finished.

(She then dismantled the box and slotted it in a cupboard with the others.)

HAYLEY: Hmm... do we really need a cupboard full of empty boxes?

(Remembering her husband's warning about how living there might just drive them both insane, she then grimaced uncomfortably.)

HAYLEY: Actually, I might be an idea to keep them for now.

(With that, she closed the cupboard then glanced towards the front door.)

HAYLEY: Right. I'll just check on Layla then I'd better check my e-mail.

(She then strutted out of the door, crossed the courtyard and paced out of the gate.

Holding her hand above her brow to shield her eyes from the sun, she then glanced up and down the beach. Much to her dismay, Layla was nowhere to be seen.)

HAYLEY: What the hell?

(At once, a panicked sensation shot through her entire body and she raced forth onto the sand. Hoping against hope that her daughter suddenly appear in her line of sight, she whimpered frantically. Alas, Layla failed to come into view. Fearing the worst, she then charged up to the water's edge.)

HAYLEY: Layla!!!

(She thrust frustrated hands to her head then cried out again.)

HAYLEY: Layla!!!

(Stressed and close to tears, she then sprinted back to the house.)

HAYLEY: Where is she? Where the hell is she?

(Panicking profusely, she charged into the house, grabbed her mobile phone and proceeded to call her husband.)

HAYLEY: Pick up, pick up, pick up... I said, pick up, you cunt!

(Back at the police station, having aborted his mission to meet the locals, on the grounds that he hated them all, Calvert answered her call in a sighing tone.)

CALVERT: Hello, love.

HAYLEY: Ray! Layla's missing!!!

CALVERT: What???

HAYLEY: She went to play out the front, but she's gone.

CALVERT: Gone where?

HAYLEY: I don't fucking know, do I? I told her to stay close to the house, but she's nowhere to be seen!!!

CALVERT: Fuck!

(He gritted his teeth.)

CALVERT: How long's she been missing?

HAYLEY: I don't know. She went out well over an hour ago, and I just went to check on her, but she's not there.

CALVERT: Shit! I'll come straight home!

HAYLEY: What the fuck for? *I'm* at home! You need to go and look for her!

CALVERT: Right. Good point.

(He nodded sternly.)

CALVERT: Try to stay calm, if you can, I'm heading out right now.

(With that, he thrust his phone in his pocket.)

CALVERT: Alicia!!!

HORNBLOWER: Sir?

CALVERT: Call Singleton. Tell him to get his arse back to Long Sand to look for my daughter! Tell him, if he finds her, make sure she gets home alright.

HORNBLOWER: Oh. Okay. Why?

CALVERT: Because I fucking said so.

HORNBLOWER: Right...

CALVERT: And when you've done that, you can lock up the police station and look for her as well.

HORNBLOWER: Sir! But what will *I* do if I find her?

CALVERT: Tell her to go home.

HORNBLOWER: How? You said I'm not allowed to go anywhere near her!

CALVERT: Stop being a brain-dead fuckwit! If you find her take her home. Okay?

HORNBLOWER: But I don't know where you live!

CALVERT: Then call *me* if you find her!

HORNBLOWER: Okay! I'll go now and call Joe from the road!

CALVERT: Fine! Let's go. You take the beach road and I'll search inland. If we split up, we'll cover more ground.

HORNBLOWER: Okay!

(With that, Hornblower yanked out her phone and charged towards the door. Calvert then rocketed out of the door after her, leapt on his ATV and pulled away to begin the search for his daughter. Having completely forgotten all about locking the door, Hornblower was right behind him.)

CALVERT: If one of these backward, inbred dipshits has hurt one hair on my little girl's head, I'll machine gun the fucking lot of them!

---

Over in Saffron Bay at this time, the somewhat inebriated duo of Layla and Fiona were attempting to mount their ATV's for the journey home. They'd had a fun time together, but now it was time to head back to Long Sand. Getting back on their vehicles, however, was proving something of a struggle. Fiona's mum had given her daughter strict instructions to only drink one cup of wine. They'd been having so much fun, however, the pair of them had polished off the entire flask. As a result, every time one of them attempted to lift their leg onto their bike, they'd stagger sideways and fall over. They both thought it was hilarious.

FIONA: I don't normally have this trouble. Layla. I think my bike's drunk.

(Layla replied in a slurred voice.)

LAYLA: Schtanding on one leg is hard, Fee-foo.

FIONA: Fee-foo?

(They fell about laughing.)

LAYLA: I meant Fifi.

FIONA: Fee-foo is fine! As long as you don't call me Fiona, I don't care.

(She then managed to pull herself onto her ATV.)

FIONA: I did it!

LAYLA: Schweet. Now help me get on mine!

FIONA: Okay!

(With that, Fiona climbed back off her ATV then helped Layla struggle onto hers.)

LAYLA: Perfect! Now we're both on.

FIONA: Yup!

(She hiccupped.)

FIONA: Wait! How did I get over here? I was on my ATV a second ago.

LAYLA: You probably fell off.

FIONA: Yeah.

(She puffed out then glanced through glazed eyes at her bike, some three feet away.)

FIONA: Blimey. I rolled really far.

LAYLA: Then roll back. I need to hurry home before my mum realises I'm mishing.

FIONA: Okay.

(She then staggered to her ATV and scrambled onto the driving seat.)

FIONA: I'm on!

LAYLA: Yay! Try not to fall off this time.

FIONA: Good idea.

LAYLA: Right? Now how do I schtart this thing again?

FIONA: Press start!

LAYLA: I remember. I have to press schtart.

(She then offered Fiona a drunken glance.)

LAYLA: Did you remember your holdall?

FIONA: Yup.

LAYLA: Then what's that on the floor?

FIONA: That's my holdall.

(She then climbed back off her bike and snatched at her holdall, managing to pick it up at the fourth attempt.)

FIONA: Got it!

(She grimaced.)

FIONA: Wait! If that's here, what the hell did I put in the storage hatch?

LAYLA: Me?

FIONA: No, you're over there.

LAYLA: Oh, yeah.

(Fiona then staggered to her storage hatch and yanked open the lid. As soon as she did so, however, a cat leapt out and sprinted away across the park.)

FIONA: It was a cat!

LAYLA: Was it *your* cat?

FIONA: I don't even *have* a cat.

(She then thrust her holdall in the storage hatch before slamming it shut again.)

FIONA: Now we can get going.

LAYLA: We can't. You're not on your bike yet.

FIONA: What? How the hell that happen?

LAYLA: I know, right? You've fallen off twice now.

FIONA: Yeah. I need to be more careful.

(She then scrambled back into her seat and carefully patted the seat either side of her.)

FIONA: I'm roughly in the middle this time. I shouldn't fall off from here.

LAYLA: Good, good.

(Fiona then offered Layla a thumbs up.)

FIONA: Okay, we're good to go.

LAYLA: Yup.

(She grimaced.)

LAYLA: Wait! How do I schtart this thing again?

FIONA: Press start.

LAYLA: That's it.

(She then pressed the start button and grinned at Fiona.)

LAYLA: Ready?

FIONA: Yup! Go!

(With that, Fiona reversed back into a lamppost then pulled forwards and headed towards the car park exit. Layla on the other hand, drove forwards across the edge of the park and turned round that way.)

LAYLA: Was I *meant* to go on the grass?

FIONA: No.

LAYLA: I did though.

FIONA: Oh, well.

(She then pointed down the road.)

FIONA: To Long Sand!

LAYLA: To Long Schand!



(They then drove away, giggling like idiots.)

---

Back in Long Sand, at this time, DS Calvert was heading forth on his ATV with his eyes wide open for Layla. He was determined to search every nook and cranny until he'd found her. He wasn't searching alone, however. Alicia was about ten feet behind him on him her own ATV. In the process of carrying out the order to contact Constable Singleton, she had her phone pressed firmly to her ear.

HORNBLOWER: Answer it! Answer it!

(Her eyes then lit up.)

HORNBLOWER: Joe?

(She blushed.)

HORNBLOWER: Don't answer the phone like that, it makes me blush. It also makes me a little horny. And we don't want a repeat of four weeks ago.

(She sighed.)

HORNBLOWER: Willows really didn't enjoy catching us doing *that* on his desk!

(She listened for a moment then flinched.)

HORNBLOWER: Right, yeah, I'm glad you asked me that. I'm calling because the boss wants you to come to back to Long Sand!

(She bit her lip as she listened to his response.)

HORNBLOWER: Why? Well... um... I forget. No, wait. I remember! Sorry. You threw me when you said, "What can I do for you, gorgeous".

(She listen for a moment then nodded.)

HORNBLOWER: Good thinking. I *will* get to the point. He said you have to come back and look for Layla. She's lost, you see? I think. It was all very confusing. He said, if you find her, make sure she gets home safely.

(She furrowed her brow as she listened to his response.)

HORNBLOWER: Don't swear at *me*. They're not *my* orders.

(She allowed him to reply then smiled warmly.)

HORNBLOWER: That's okay. You're forgiven.

(She listened to him speak again then nodded.)

HORNBLOWER: Okay. I'll see you soon then.

(She blushed.)

HORNBLOWER: Bye, Joe. I love you.

(She pouted.)

HORNBLOWER: He hung up.

(She shook her head.)

HORNBLOWER: He never says he loves me back. Never. Even though we have sex every night after the boss has gone home, he never shares his feelings with me. He's so closed off.

(She sighed.)

HORNBLOWER: I don't know how his fiancé puts up with it.

(She then slapped her phone in the bag next to her seat and refocussed on where she was going.)

HORNBLOWER: Don't worry, boss; I've got your back.

(Much to her bewilderment, however, just up ahead, Calvert was pointing to the side of the road. He then started to pull over in a layby. Grimacing with bewilderment, Hornblower promptly followed suit. A few moments later, her ATV came to a standstill then she glanced up to see Calvert pacing towards her, having just alighted his vehicle.)

HORNBLOWER: Is there a problem, officer? I mean, sir.

CALVERT: No, no. I just want to ask you something.

HORNBLOWER: Oh? What's that?

CALVERT: Well, I was just wondering, really... what part of splitting up confused you? (Hornblower's expression went entirely blank.)

HORNBLOWER: Is... is that a TV show?

CALVERT: What?

HORNBLOWER: Splitting up.

(Calvert blinked at her in astonishment.)

CALVERT: You didn't seriously just say...

(He sighed with exasperation.)

CALVERT: Splitting up means that we split up! Go different ways! (Hornblower gasped.)

HORNBLOWER: You're firing me???

CALVERT: Unfortunately not, no. When I said we should split up, I meant you should search a different part of the town!

HORNBLOWER: Oh. Um... like where?

CALVERT: See, I'm glad you asked me that, Alicia. I am. Because I even *told* you where to search! I told you to search along the beach road, remember?

HORNBLOWER: Then why did you lead us this way? The beach road was back there, sir.

(Calvert swiftly palmed his forehead.)

CALVERT: Good god, woman.

HORNBLOWER: What?

CALVERT: How the fuck did Willows put up with you???

HORNBLOWER: That's not very nice.

CALVERT: But you're a moron. A complete idiot! A buffoon of epic proportions! You give idiots worldwide a bad name!

(Hornblower pouted.)

HORNBLOWER: That's what *he* used to say.

(She ruffled her neck.)

HORNBLOWER: But he was also nice enough to say that my sexy, long legs and thin blouse that becomes see-through in sunlight more than made up for it. You're not even kind enough to do that. I was wrong about you. You're a mean person!

(Calvert looked to her then sighed.)

CALVERT: Look, I'm just frustrated, that's all. I need to find my daughter. And so do you.

HORNBLOWER: Well...

CALVERT: But for what it's worth, you *do* have nice legs and the thin blouse *is* a joy to see. And I'm sure you mean well.

HORNBLOWER: Right... well... thank you for saying that.

CALVERT: You're welcome. Now *I'd* like to thank *you* for turning your ATV around and going back to the beach road.

HORNBLOWER: But I haven't done it yet.

CALVERT: I'm thanking you in advance because I'm nice.

(Hornblower smiled.)

HORNBLOWER: I was wrong about you. You're lovely.

CALVERT: Thank you. Now go. Go and find my little girl. Go like the wind, Alicia. Find her for me and show me what an excellent policewoman you are.

HORNBLOWER: But I'm a useless policewoman.

CALVERT: And yet, if you find my daughter for me, you'll be the best policewoman ever, as far as I'm concerned.

HORNBLOWER: Really?

CALVERT: Really!

HORNBLOWER: On it!

(She then started her ATV and proceeded to reverse.)

HORNBLOWER: Leave it to me, Captain Boss!

CALVERT: Right...

(She then about turned and sped off down the road.)

HORNBLOWER: I'll find her in no time!!!

CALVERT: Yeah...

(He rolled his eyes.)

CALVERT: What an absolute fuckwit.

(Buoyed by the thought of becoming the best policewoman ever, Hornblower sped to the turning for the beach road then swung the ATV around it with a determined expression on her face. Her chance to shine had arrived and she was going to grab it with both hands.)

HORNBLOWER: Where are you, Layla?

(She bit her lip as she stared ahead of herself.)

HORNBLOWER: Is that her on the bend up there? Nope. That's an old couple.

(Just then, a miracle happened. For the first time in her entire life, she'd had an idea.)

HORNBLOWER: Alicia Felicia Hornblower, you're a genius.

(She then sped onwards until she reached the bend in the road; at which point, she pulled up behind a bench where an old couple were sitting and watching the ocean.)

HORNBLOWER: Excuse me, old people?

(The elderly gent glanced at his wife then twisted to peer over his shoulder. He then spoke up in a rather well-to-do mainland accent.)

GODFREY: How can I help you, dear?

HORNBLOWER: I'm looking for a girl.

GODFREY: Oh? A school chum?

HORNBLOWER: What? No. I don't go to school. I'm a policewoman; possibly the best policewoman ever.

GODFREY: But you're wearing a school uniform.

HORNBLOWER: This is a *police* uniform. See? Logo!

(She pointed to her right breast. Unfortunately, the police logo was on the other side.)

GODFREY: No, all I see is an enormous boob.

(The woman's husband rolled her eyes then turned to face Alicia.)

THELMA: Ignore him, dear; he's really quite the insatiable pervert.

GODFREY: Actually, I'm very satiable; you just stopped trying to sate me.

THELMA: We're not having this conversation now, dear.

GODFREY: Fine!

(He then turned to stare at the sea with a sour expression on his face. Paying him no heed, Thelma glanced at the police crest on Alicia's blouse then smiled.)

THELMA: So, you're looking for a girl are you, officer?

HORNBLOWER: I am, yes.

THELMA: And how can we help?

HORNBLOWER: Well... can I ask you a few questions?

THELMA: Please do?

HORNBLOWER: Okay. What does sate mean?

THELMA: Satisfy, but why...

HORNBLOWER: And why did you stop sating him?

(Thelma gave her a condescending glance.)

THELMA: Aren't you meant to be asking about a girl?

HORNBLOWER: What?

(She flinched.)

HORNBLOWER: Oh, yeah.

(She nodded.)

HORNBLOWER: Have you seen her?

THELMA: Who? We've seen several girls today, dear, so you need to be specific.

HORNBLOWER: Right... her name's Layla!

THELMA: Okay. And what does Layla look like?

HORNBLOWER: Ooh, good question.

(She then mused to herself.)

HORNBLOWER: Let me see... she has blue, red and pink hair. With silver glitter in it! And loads of ribbons. And bows, come to think of it. All different colours. Plus some ornaments like a star and a seahorse.

THELMA: Oh?

HORNBLOWER: Yeah. And she wears smoky eye-makeup and harlot-red lipstick!

(She bit her lip.)

HORNBLOWER: What else is there? That's it! She likes to wear sexy, split-leg mini-dresses. And she smokes like a chimney!

THELMA: Right...

(She grimaced.)

THELMA: So when you say girl, you mean someone in their late teens?

(Her husband cringed.)

GODFREY: A juvenile delinquent in her late teens.

THELMA: That too.

HORNBLOWER: Late teens? No, she's nine!

THELMA: Nine??? And she dresses like that and smokes like a chimney???

HORNBLOWER: Yeah. You know, typical nine year-old.

(Thelma stared right through her, blinking nonchalantly.)

THELMA: Right... so... that would be a no. If I'd seen a child like that, I'd most definitely have remembered her.

GODFREY: Remembered her? You'd have read her the holy book and vowed to pray for her soul.

THELMA: That too.

(She sighed.)

THELMA: Sorry, dear. I can't help.

HORNBLOWER: Bugger.

(She smiled.)

HORNBLOWER: Oh, well. Thanks for your help. Bye.

THELMA: Goodbye, dear.

(With that, Hornblower set her ATV in motion then headed off up the road.)

HORNBLOWER: Think, Alicia. Where did *you* used to hang out when *you* were nine?

(An enlightened expression crossed her brow.)

HORNBLOWER: That's right. The pub!

(She then put her head down and nodded to herself.)

HORNBLOWER: I'll head there next.

---

*Twenty five minutes later.* Constable Singleton was not a happy man. His career had previously consisted of lounging at a desk, playing computer games and drinking coffee. A lazy work-life that he'd cherished dearly. Getting paid to do nothing all day was a joy. Being made to go out and earn his crust by doing patrols, therefore, had been an extremely unwelcome change. This had irritated him enough. The last thing he'd needed was to be called back halfway through his patrol to search for Layla. He was miffed to say the least.

As he headed back into Long Sand on his ATV, having been on the other side of the island when he'd got the call, his face bore a fixed frown. He felt wronged. Never one to suffer in silence, he therefore proceeded to air his grievance to himself all the way down the road.

SINGLETON: I didn't sign up for this bollocks. I've got better things to do with my time. Like hunting for the golden sphere on Angel Quest Six. I was hoping to complete that quest today. That's not gonna happen now though, is it? Not with that new chief wasting my time, sending me around the island to poke my nose into other people's affairs. What a cunt. Nice bloke though. But what a cunt. Even Willows didn't send me out on pointless errands. It aint right!

(He shook his head.)

SINGLETON: He's taking the piss. Making me drive around the bloody island for nothing. What's that all about? Then he makes me come back before I've even bloody finished! He's having a laugh. Well if he thinks I'm starting over, he can forget it. Wanker!

(He sighed.)

SINGLETON: Lovely bloke though. But still a wanker.

(He bit his lip.)

SINGLETON: Or *is* he a wanker? Maybe this is a test. I wonder...

(He nodded to himself.)

SINGLETON: I bet this is all part of my detective training. Seeing how well I follow orders or something. Could be that. He did say he was going to promote me, after all. (He exhaled.)

SINGLETON: Legend. He's the best boss ever. I'll do whatever he asks without complaint from now on. I get it now. These patrols are all part of getting Alicia and I ready to take the detective's exam.

(He grimaced.)

SINGLETON: Though he's wasting his time with Alicia. Sweet girl, but she'd have trouble detecting her own feet.

(He rolled his eyes then glanced ahead. Having done so, a miffed expression crossed his brow. A short way ahead of him Fiona and Layla were Zigzagging in their ATV's, giggling at one another as they did so.)

SINGLETON: No, no, no. I can't have that.

(He then pushed the throttle forward and sped towards them. With police ATV's tuned to move slightly faster than domestic ones, he'd be sure to catch up in no time. Oblivious to the fact that a police officer was closing in on them, however, Fiona and Layla continued to swerve from side to side, chuckling heartily.)

LAYLA: You were right. This is way more fun than driving in a straight line!

FIONA: See? Told you.

LAYLA: And you're *sure* your mum won't mind that I drove into that signpost earlier?

FIONA: Why would she? It's not *her* signpost.

LAYLA: True.

(She grimaced.)

LAYLA: But the dent...

FIONA: She'll understand. It's your first time. You're bound to be a terrible driver.

(Layla pouted.)

LAYLA: I'm not a terrible driver! That accident wasn't even my fault! The steering's out of focus!

FIONA: So is mine. And so is the road, but you didn't see *me* clattering into anything.

LAYLA: Beginner's luck!

FIONA: What? You're the beginner!

LAYLA: Oh, yeah.

(Just then, Singleton pulled alongside them, frowning angrily.)

SINGLETON: Pull over, ladies!!!

(Fiona and Layla looked to him through glazed eyes.)

FIONA: Joe???

LAYLA: Hey, I know you. You're that Simpleton!

SINGLETON: My name's Singleton!

LAYLA: I know.

(She hiccupped then proceeded to giggle. Starting to get somewhat annoyed, Singleton then raised his voice.)

SINGLETON: I said pull over!!!

(Fiona and Layla both whimpered then slowly pulled to the side of the road.)

FIONA: Uh-oh.

LAYLA: What?

FIONA: We're gonna get told off.

LAYLA: Aw.

(Sure enough, Singleton pulled up behind them then slowly paced to their side, placing his hands on his hips as he did so.)

SINGLETON: I can't believe what I just saw! What the hell were you two doing, zigzagging like that?

(Layla whimpered.)

LAYLA: We were only playing.

FIONA: Yeah... um... sorry.

(Singleton sniffed the air in front of him then shook his head.)

SINGLETON: Are you two drunk?

FIONA: Define *too* drunk.

SINGLETON: I meant, are the two of you drunk?

LAYLA: Um... a little bit.

FIONA: Quite a big bit actually.

SINGLETON: I see.

(He shook his head with disappointment.)

SINGLETON: Oh, Fiona... little Fifi... you *know* the law in regard to driving whilst drunk, don't you?

FIONA: Um... I do, yes.

SINGLETON: And what is it?

FIONA: Be careful!

SINGLETON: That's right! And *were* you being careful?

FIONA: Um... no.

LAYLA: Sorry.

SINGLETON: Don't be sorry, be better.

(He shook his head.)

SINGLETON: Anyway, I'm glad I've found you, Layla.

LAYLA: What?

SINGLETON: I'm under orders to find you and see to it that you get home safely.

LAYLA: You are?

SINGLETON: Yes. So I'm going to take the lead and you two are going to follow me. Okay? No zigzagging. Drive carefully like a *responsible* drunk!

FIONA: Yes, Joe.

LAYLA: Sorry, Joe.

FIONA: Three bags...

SINGLETON: Enough of that, young lady!

FIONA: Sorry!

SINGLETON: Now follow me.

(He then started to head back towards his ATV. As he did so, Layla and Fiona dismounted then staggered after him.)

SINGLETON: Follow me on your ATV's!!!

FIONA: Oh...

LAYLA: I thought he meant...

FIONA: So did I...

SINGLETON: Just get back on your bikes!!!

(He then rolled his eyes and returned to his vehicle.)

A short while later, having forced the two inebriated youngsters to follow his lead, Singleton pulled onto Sandy View Road then started to head for the Calvert household. Driving extra slowly to make up for the fact that the girls were drunk, his face bore a look of extreme concentration. Layla and Fiona, on the other hand, looked bored rigid.)

FIONA: Bugger this. I'm having a smoke.

LAYLA: Good idea.

SINGLETON: Focus, girls!

FIONA: We can smoke and focus at the same time!

LAYLA: Yeah!

SINGLETON: Make sure you do!

(He rolled his eyes then glanced ahead. As he did so, however, he spotted Hayley emerging from DS Calvert's front gate; a hundred metres ahead. Satisfied that this stranger must be Layla's mother, Singleton swiftly pulled to the side of the road then pointed ahead.)

SINGLETON: Keep going, girls. Go home to your mums.

(He then nodded to himself; satisfied with a job well done.)

SINGLETON: That's my first mission completed. Now I have a patrol to finish.

(He then about turned and drove off down the road. Not even bothering to offer him a farewell, Fiona and Layla continued onwards.)

---

Having made her way through her front gate to check for any sign of Layla, Hayley anxiously glanced to her right with desperation in her eyes. Seeing nothing but an empty beach, she sighed with frustration then swiftly turned her head to the left. Having done so, her eyes bulged and her jaw hit the floor. The sight before her was so distressing, a part of her died inside. She'd seen some horrifying sights during her lifetime. Back in Croxton, she'd witnessed a stabbing, a fatal car crash and an accidental drowning, all in the same week. As a child, she'd also been unfortunate enough to witness a man getting hit by a speeding train. He'd evaporated into a pink mist before her very eyes. It had traumatised her greatly. Nothing, however, could have prepared her what was unfolding before her very eyes right now. Her beloved nine year-old, driving an ATV towards her, grinning all over her chops with a cigarette entrenched in the corner of her mouth.

HAYLEY: What the... you... I...

(She whimpered in dismay.)

HAYLEY: Layla?

(She then watched on through horrified eyes as Fiona drove past with her cheerful grin her face.)

FIONA: Bye, Layla!

LAYLA: Bye!

(Layla then pulled up before her mum and beamed with delight.)

LAYLA: Hah!

HAYLEY: You...

LAYLA: I'm back, mum.

(She then slid off her ATV, staggered sideways and fell over.)

LAYLA: Aw, crap. I broke my shigarette.



(She then attempted to climb to her feet, only to fall back down again. Mortified by what she was seeing, Hayley whimpered in dismay. A split second later, however, a dark cloud formed over her head and she growled furiously.)

HAYLEY: You're drunk!!!

LAYLA: Me too!

HAYLEY: Layla!!!

(Layla whimpered at her from the ground. The angry timbre of her mother's voice had left her in very little doubt that was in a world of trouble.)

LAYLA: Um... yesh, mummy?

HAYLEY: You're drunk!

(Layla offered her mother her most innocent grin.)

LAYLA: Only a little bit.

HAYLEY: Why? I mean, what the hell, Layla?

LAYLA: It was an accident!

HAYLEY: An accident?

LAYLA: Um... yes?

(Hayley ran distressed fingers through her hair.)

HAYLEY: How has this happened?

LAYLA: Oh, that's easy. We drank an entire flask of wine.

HAYLEY: Why, you little...

(She gave an exasperated sigh then yanked Layla to her feet.)

LAYLA: Ouch!

HAYLEY: Don't *ouch* me, Layla! You don't know the *meaning* of ouch yet, missy. You wait until your father gets home!

(Layla stared at her in bewilderment.)

LAYLA: Why? What's *he* gonna do? Dad's a big softie.

HAYLEY: Layla!

LAYLA: You're *way* scarier than he is.

(Hayley snarled.)

HAYLEY: Get your arse indoors! Now!!!

LAYLA: Okay!

(She then whizzed through the front gate. With a growl, her mother followed suit.)

HAYLEY: Drinking, smoking, driving... what the hell, Layla.

(She then stomped in the house where Layla was sheepishly staring at her from the sofa.)

LAYLA: Mum?

HAYLEY: What?

LAYLA: This would be a really bad time to ask for a biscuit, wouldn't it?

HAYLEY: Oh, Layla, at this rate, you're never going to see the biscuit tin ever again!

LAYLA: Aw.

HAYLEY: Wine, Layla! Wine! Where the hell did you even get it from???

LAYLA: Fifi.

HAYLEY: And Fifi's that girl you were with just now, is it?

LAYLA: Yeah. She lives just down the road at number three. I met her on the beach.

HAYLEY: Okay. And where the hell did you get that cigarette from?

(Layla glanced away innocently.)

LAYLA: What cigarette? I don't remember a cigarette.

HAYLEY: The one you were smoking when you pulled up outside!  
LAYLA: Oh. Right. That.  
(She hung her head.)  
LAYLA: I hoped you hadn't noticed.  
HAYLEY: It was in your mouth when you said hello to me. Or hah, rather.  
LAYLA: Oops.  
HAYLEY: So? Where did you get it from?  
LAYLA: Fifi.  
HAYLEY: And the ATV?  
LAYLA: Um... Fifi. We drove to the park in Saffron Bay.  
HAYLEY: Where's that?  
LAYLA: On the other side of the island.  
HAYLEY: What???  
(She shook her head.)  
HAYLEY: I just don't know what to do with you, Layla. You *know* you shouldn't be smoking, driving and drinking at your age!  
LAYLA: I didn't do them all at the same time.  
HAYLEY: Layla...  
LAYLA: Um... yes, mummy?  
HAYLEY: Go to your room! And stay there! I'll call you back out when I've decided what I'm going to do with you.  
LAYLA: But, mum...  
HAYLEY: Go!!!  
(Layla flinched then sprinted towards her bedroom. Left behind, Hayley sighed despairingly then grabbed her phone from the table.)  
HAYLEY: This fucking island!  
(She then made a call and placed the phone to her ear, shaking her head as she did so. Moments later, her call was answered.)  
CALVERT: Hayley?  
HAYLEY: Ray, get your arse back here, please. Right now.  
CALVERT: I'm looking for Layla, love.  
HAYLEY: Layla's fine. Just... come home. There's something you need to see.  
CALVERT: Oh. Okay. Layla's alright then, is she?  
HAYLEY: Yeah. Just... hurry.  
(She then ended the call and glanced to the ceiling.)  
HAYLEY: This just can't be happening.

---

A couple of minutes later, Calvert pulled up outside his house then dismounted his ATV. Having given Layla's ATV a sideways glance, he then swept the gate open, dashed across the courtyard and hurried into his house. Having done so, he was confronted by his scowling wife.  
CALVERT: Right... should I be on the look out for flying saucepans again?  
HAYLEY: No, but *somebody's* gonna get walloped with one!  
CALVERT: Oh. Why? What happened?  
HAYLEY: I'll tell *you* what happened.

(She clenched her fist.)

HAYLEY: That bloody daughter of yours...

CALVERT: Of mine?

HAYLEY: Yes!

(Calvert sucked his teeth.)

CALVERT: Well that can't be good. *Our* daughter only becomes *my* daughter when she's done something terrible.

HAYLEY: Do you want to hear this or not?

CALVERT: Right. Yeah. What's she done?

HAYLEY: I tell you what, rather than telling you, I'll let you find out for yourself. Go in her room and smell her.

CALVERT: Smell her? That's a bit weird, don't you think?

HAYLEY: Humour me.

CALVERT: Oh. Okay...

(He then headed away towards the bedrooms. He then returned a few moments later with a miffed expression on his face.)

CALVERT: She stinks of booze!

HAYLEY: Yup!

(She nodded.)

HAYLEY: We need to have serious words with her.

CALVERT: And we will!

(He ruffled his neck.)

CALVERT: Just as soon as she wakes up.

HAYLEY: She's asleep?

CALVERT: Yeah.

HAYLEY: Passed out drunk.

(She shook her head.)

HAYLEY: Passed out drunk, Ray. She's nine!

CALVERT: Yeah... that's not great, is it?

HAYLEY: Not great? Not great??? Until a few days ago, she was a little sweetheart. As pure and innocent as they come. After a few days here, however, she's turned into a chain-smoking pisshead.

CALVERT: Well...

HAYLEY: And that's not even the worst part. The reason I couldn't find her was because she was off driving around the island on an ATV. Whilst drunk! Drink driving!

CALVERT: What???

(He growled.)

CALVERT: Where the hell did she get an ATV from?

HAYLEY: Her new friend Fifi from number three.

CALVERT: I see.

HAYLEY: Her new friend who also plied her with booze and cigarettes.

CALVERT: What? Cigarettes again? I thought we'd got through to her!

HAYLEY: Apparently not!

(She sighed despairingly.)

HAYLEY: You should have seen her, Ray. It was mortifying. She drove up to me on that bloody contraption with a cigarette in the corner of her mouth; grinning at me through glazed eyes. She then said *hah*, before getting off the bike and falling over.

CALVERT: Holy crap!

(He raised a miffed eyebrow.)

CALVERT: She said *hah*?

HAYLEY: Yeah. Like an idiot local.

(She whimpered.)

HAYLEY: This place is rubbing off on her already, Ray. If we're not careful, we're going to end up raising a criminal; not to mention a dipshit.

(She sighed despairingly.)

HAYLEY: She's nine and she's already on the piss and smoking herself to death. What's she gonna be doing when she's eleven? Turning tricks at the brothel and sniffing glue; that's what! By thirteen, she'll be robbing banks and smuggling drugs! Is that what you want?

(Calvert blinked at her nonchalantly.)

CALVERT: I think we both know that's *not* what I want, Hayley.

HAYLEY: Then do something about it! You can start by going to number three and punching that Fifi's dad!

CALVERT: Hayley, calm down!

HAYLEY: I don't want to calm down. We have to nip this nonsense in the bud. And seeing as that Fifi gave her booze, cigarettes and an ATV, her parents will be a good place to start. Go on. Punch him! Punch him in the face!

CALVERT: I won't be doing that, love!

(He then furrowed his brow.)

CALVERT: But I *will* be having a stern word.

HAYLEY: Fine. You do that!

CALVERT: I will! Right now, in fact.

(He then about turned and marched back out of the door.)

---

Wearing a seriously miffed expression, Calvert marched through his front gate grumbling under his breath as he did so. He was absolutely furious. Finding out that his precious little girl had been drinking, driving and smoking had been infuriating. He also hated seeing his wife enraged. Seeing it had put his back up even further. And he hadn't been in the best of moods to begin with. His attempts to meet the locals had resulted in him being greeted by a series of smug islanders, merrily committing crimes. Crimes that he couldn't do anything about for fear of his family's safety. With all these factors piled on his shoulders at once, he was getting dangerously close to breaking point. Consequently, as he marched toward Fiona's house, he couldn't help but curse like a seasoned frontiersman.

CALVERT: Willows didn't do these fuckers justice. They're more than just salivating fuckwits, they're a bunch of wankers. Cunts, the lot of them!

(He snarled.)

CALVERT: Offering me warm and friendly greetings and grinning in my face while they gleefully tell me about their crimes and why I can't do anything about them. Fuckers.

(He ruffled his neck.)

CALVERT: Taunting me with a smile; that's what it is. Welcome to Tifasea, I have a marijuana farm. Good luck doing anything about it though. Tossers.

(He shook his head.)

CALVERT: They might as well make antlers with their fingers and blow raspberries at me! At least that'd be honest. Cunts. They're fucking mocking me. They are! And I bet she stuck her finger in that muffin on purpose.

(He then sighed bitterly.)

CALVERT: That's fuck all in the great scheme of things though. I can handle them rubbing my lack of power in my face. Infuriating as it is, I can deal with that. Trying to turn my daughter into a delinquent though...

(He seethed.)

CALVERT: No. That's too much. They've gone too far by doing that. If they want to make a cunt out of *me*, fine. Going for my little girl though... nope. I'm not having that! Bad move, Tifasea cunts.

(He then stamped forwards growling to himself. With his fists clenched, he passed number four then sped up, looking forward to airing his rage to Fiona's father. He didn't know the man and there was no suggestion that he was even to blame, but right now he didn't care. Everyone he'd met since arriving on the island had wound him up in some way and somebody had to pay. Fiona's father would have to do. With this in mind, he hurried onwards to the front gate of number three then punched the door bell with his fist.)

CALVERT: Ding dong, wankers!!!

(He then stood there seething as he waited for someone to answer the door.)

CALVERT: Hurry up, you inbred shit badger!

(Just then, the gate swung open and a thirty eight year old woman appeared before him.)

NINA: Hah!

(She flinched.)

NINA: Wait. Who are you?

CALVERT: Who am I? I'll tell you who I am! I'm Layla's father!

NINA: Right... who's Layla?

CALVERT: My daughter!

(Nina gave him a condescending glance.)

NINA: And that helps me how?

CALVERT: She went out with your daughter today.

NINA: Which one?

CALVERT: Fifi!

(Nina looked enlightened.)

NINA: Oh, Fifi's new friend.

CALVERT: Yes!

NINA: Welcome to the neighbourhood. What can I do for you?

(Calvert nodded.)

CALVERT: You can start by sending your husband out here.

NINA: Oh? What for?

CALVERT: So I can shout at him!

(Nina gave him a suspicious glance.)

NINA: You're angry about something, aren't you?

CALVERT: Yes!

NINA: Why?

CALVERT: Why? Your daughter gave my Layla alcohol and cigarettes! And let her drive a bloody ATV.

NINA: And?

CALVERT: And???

NINA: Yes! I raised her to be kind and share her things with her friends.

CALVERT: Including wine and cigarettes???

NINA: *Epecially* wine and cigarettes!

(Calvert gaped at her.)

CALVERT: She's nine!

NINA: So?

CALVERT: You have be eighteen to smoke and drink! And you need to be sixteen and own a licence to drive!

(Nina scoffed.)

NINA: Says who?

CALVERT: What do you mean, says who? That's the law!!!

NINA: Not in Tifasea!

(Calvert groaned under his breath.)

CALVERT: Not this again!

NINA: Not what again?

CALVERT: The law in Tifasea is the same as it is anywhere else in...

(He then stopped talking and growled. In that moment, a wave of anger had raged right through him. He'd explained that Tifasea law wasn't a thing so many times he was starting to sound like a broken record and he'd had enough of it.)

CALVERT: Nope! That's done it! No more mister nice guy! Just send her father out here, so I can punch him in the face!

NINA: Excuse me?

CALVERT: Sorry, but my wife was right. If quoting the law at you won't work, I'll resolve the issues by giving your husband a damned good thrashing!

(Unsurprisingly, Nina was most offended.)

NINA: Are you threatening my family with violence???

CALVERT: No. I'm *way* past making threats! I'm promising your husband a beating.

NINA: Oh, are you now?

CALVERT: Yes. So send him out here!

NINA: I can't!

CALVERT: Coward!

NINA: I can't because he isn't here! It's his day off, so he's at The Sea Maid's Tavern.

CALVERT: Where's that?

NINA: Up my arse!

(Calvert grimaced at her uncomfortably.)

CALVERT: What?

NINA: Sorry. I got swept away in the moment.

CALVERT: It's fine!

NINA: It's the big pub on the high street!

CALVERT: Thank you. One beating coming up.

NINA: Yeah. For you!

CALVERT: What?

NINA: You'll see!

(She then slammed the gate in his face.)

CALVERT: Right...

(His brow then furrowed over and he stomped back towards his ATV.)

CALVERT: These Tifasea cunts can commit all the crimes they like from now on. I'll happily turn a blind eye. When it all comes down to it, their pathetic crimes don't even matter. Turning my little angel into a demon, however, that does! That's where I draw the line.

(He growled.)

CALVERT: They can tell the shop to stop selling to me if they want. I don't care. The sooner they learn that giving my daughter cigarettes and alcohol will result in a savage beating, the better!

(He then jumped on his ATV and sped away.)

---

Remaining in quite the rage, DS Calvert powered his ATV forth along the high street with an embittered snarl on his face. He was gnashing his teeth and growling repeatedly. Resolved to giving Fiona's father a sound thrashing, he was doing whatever he could to prevent himself from calming down. As far as he was concerned, he had to brutalise this man in order to make the islanders understand that Layla was off limits for their unlawful shenanigans. By beating him to within an inch of his life, the word would soon spread to all and sundry. Whatever you do, do not give Layla Calvert illegal substances!

Psyched and ready to come out with both fists blazing, he snarled and growled all the way down the high street until he eventually reached his destination; The Sea Maid's Tavern.

CALVERT: Finally!

(He then swung his ATV into the vehicle park and stopped right in the middle of it; not even bothering to look for a parking space. He then leapt off aggressively and stormed into the bar with his fists clenched.)

CALVERT: Right, you cunts, which one of you is...

(His attention was then drawn by the sight of two townsmen standing face to face, just to his left. One of them had tensed up, clearly bracing himself for imminent pain. The other was pounding his fist in readiness to hit him. In that moment, Calvert's instincts as a policeman kicked in and he stepped in between them.)

CALVERT: What's going on here?

(The man who'd been pounding his fist, glowered at him.)

STEWART: None of your business, copper.

CALVERT: Isn't it? Only it looks you're about to hit him. That's very much my business!

STEWART: Well, of course I'm gonna hit him! He groped my wife's arse!

(The other man nodded solemnly.)

GREGOR: Guilty as charged, I'm afraid. I *did* do that, yes.

STEWART: See? Now stand back, copper.

CALVERT: No, no, no. Now hold on a minute. You can't just go hitting people.

STEWART: Since when?

CALVERT: Since the very first public order act was passed, hundreds of years ago!

STEWART: What the hell are you on about?

CALVERT: The law! You can't just hit a man!

(Gregor grimaced at him.)

GREGOR: Um... maybe, you misheard, officer. I groped his wife's arse.

STEWART: Meaning I get a free swing!

GREGOR: Yeah. It's the Tifasea way.

(He nodded.)

GREGOR: Whenever you're ready, Stewart.

STEWART: Righto.

CALVERT: Wait. If you...

(Just then, a well-to-do, middle aged man stepped up to his side and offered him a friendly smile. He then spoke up in a cultured upper class accent.)

EDWARD: Officer? Mind if I have a word?

CALVERT: I'm busy at the moment, mate.

EDWARD: I can see that, but believe me, it's in your best interests to hear me out before you take this intervention of yours any further.

CALVERT: Is it now?

EDWARD: It is, yes! You see, I'm the leader of this island, and there's something you need to know!

CALVERT: And we can discuss it as soon as I've defused this situation.

EDWARD: Detective Sergeant, I really do recommend that you hear me out first. It's in everyone's best interests, trust me.

(Calvert gave him a sideways glance.)

CALVERT: *Everyone's* best interests?

EDWARD: Absolutely.

(Calvert sighed.)

CALVERT: Fine.

EDWARD: Let's talk outside.

CALVERT: Okay...

(He then glowered at Stewart and Gregor.)

CALVERT: We'll resolve this in a minute. In the meantime, just lay off each other.

STEWART: Fah.

GREGOR: Okay.

CALVERT: Good.

(He then paced to the door with Edward hot on his heels. A few seconds later, having stepped outside in the sunshine, Calvert turned to face him then held out his palms.)

CALVERT: So? What's so important you had to drag me away from important police work?

EDWARD: Well, like I told you in there, I'm the leader of this island. I know everyone on this island; how they think and how they behave. And let me tell you, you're about to make a massive mistake.

CALVERT: By preventing violence?



EDWARD: By interfering. It's not the Tifasea way.

CALVERT: The Tifasea way is ridiculous.

EDWARD: That might well be true, but nonetheless, until you learn what the Tifasea way is, you're in danger of making a grave mistake that might well impact your family.

CALVERT: Seriously? Another threat to my family?

EDWARD: Hey! *I'm* not threatening anyone. I just want to have a conversation with you. To explain a few things that might help you understand what you're up against.

CALVERT: Go on then. But make it quick.

EDWARD: Not here, old chap. Why don't you come to my villa and we can discuss it there.

CALVERT: When?

EDWARD: Now, if you like.

(Calvert gave him an uncertain glance for a moment then nodded.)

CALVERT: Fine. I'll just nip this fight in the bud then come with you.

EDWARD: Right...

(With that, Calvert paced into the pub then stopped dead in his tracks. Gregor was slumped over a table, holding a bloody handkerchief to his nose and Stewart was standing up at the bar with his knuckles in an ice bucket.)

CALVERT: Seriously?

(One of the patrons smiled at him warmly.)

JAY: What's wrong, officer?

CALVERT: Really? I mean, fucking really? Did you think I wouldn't notice?

JAY: Notice what?

CALVERT: I'm one of the top investigators in the whole of Kasika. A highly decorated detective, commended by the mayor of Croxton himself for investigative excellence.

And you think I'm not going to notice that groping boy is barely conscious and bleeding from the nose, while the aggrieved party is icing his knuckles?

JAY: Gregor there fell over and Stewart hurt his hand while helping him up.

(Everyone else in the bar nodded along in full agreement.)

CALVERT: And that's the story you're all going to stick with, is it?

(A resounding yes then echoed across the pub.)

CALVERT: Unbelievable.

(Just then, the biggest man he'd ever seen, raised his hand. He was six feet, eight inches tall and built like a steamroller.)

GERRY: Officer?

CALVERT: Holy shit. How many of you *are* you?

GERRY: Thanks. I get that a lot.

(He smiled.)

GERRY: My wife just texted me. Apparently you've come to see *me*. I'm Fiona's dad!

(Calvert looked to him through horrified eyes then shrugged innocently.)

CALVERT: Yeah... I just wanted to meet the neighbours, that's all. Um... that'll have to wait though... you know... duty calls and all that.

(He then hurried out of the pub to where Edward was waiting.)

EDWARD: Ready?

CALVERT: Lead the way.

EDWARD: Now that I can do.

---

A short while later, Calvert found himself sitting on the patio of Edward's spacious villa. Situated half way up a hill just outside Long Sand, this magnificent dwelling offered a spectacular view of the ocean. It was the perfect place to just sit and relax in the sunshine. Relaxing, however, was the last thing on Calvert's mind. He'd gone out to send a message to the townspeople. To ensure they never involved his daughter in their criminal ways ever again. He'd failed to achieve that goal and he was furious at himself. As such, he sat there sighing repeatedly to himself; entirely unable to hide his frustration.

Sitting at Calvert's side, Edward was staring at the ocean with a wide smile on his face. Despite living in this villa all his life, he'd never grown tired of the magnificent view.

EDWARD: Stunning, isn't it?

(Calvert shook his head.)

CALVERT: Mortifying.

EDWARD: The view?

CALVERT: Being here! On this island.

EDWARD: Oh...

(Just then, a young woman came out and placed two bottles of beer on the table.)

SALLY: Enjoy!

EDWARD: Thank you, Sally.

(The woman smiled then headed indoors again.)

EDWARD: That's my wife. She likes to pretend she's a maid when I have visitors though, because it makes me look classy apparently.

(He grimaced.)

EDWARD: She's an odd one.

(He smiled.)

EDWARD: Anyway... beer?

CALVERT: I'm driving.

EDWARD: Indeed. Beer?

(Calvert looked to him then sighed.)

CALVERT: Fine.

(He then grabbed a beer and sat forwards.)

CALVERT: Well, Mr Leader of this Island? What did you need to talk to me about?

Bearing in mind that I'm a stone's throw away from losing my shit and going on a shooting spree.

EDWARD: Oh my.

CALVERT: Yeah. So don't feed me the same old shit about Kasika's laws somehow being invalid here and threatening to starve my family if I don't agree. I mean it; my trigger finger is extremely itchy right now.

(Edward chuckled.)

EDWARD: Relax, I'm not going to do that. I just want to explain a few things about this island that you might find helpful.

(Edward sighed.)

EDWARD: I tried to help Sergeant Willows too, but he didn't listen. As a result, he ended up being miserable here for twenty long years. I'd like to help you avoid repeating his mistake, if that's okay.

CALVERT: Fine. Go then. Say what you want to say.

(He sighed.)

CALVERT: I'm just gonna sit here and drink this beer.

EDWARD: Very well.

(He nodded.)

EDWARD: I'll start by explaining who *I* am. That way you'll know I'm not full of shit and there's depth to what I'm saying.

CALVERT: Okay.

EDWARD: The name's Edward James Carlton; long time leader of Tifasea Island.

(He nodded.)

EDWARD: My forefathers were among the first to settle here over five hundred years ago, and my family have been in charge of the island ever since. Like a dynasty, really. I inherited leadership from my father, he inherited it from his and so on down the line.

CALVERT: Okay...

EDWARD: It's *not* a successive dictatorship though, I can assure you. The people *choose* to keep my family in charge because we're educated. At Croxton university, no less. The most prestigious university in Kasika.

(He beamed with pride.)

EDWARD: I represent the twelfth generation of the Carlton family to go there.

(He glanced at Calvert and smiled.)

EDWARD: And that makes my family the *obvious* choice to lead. Education and the fact we've lived inside Kasika. By studying there for five years, we've lived among the enemy. And knowing your enemy is the most important factor when selecting a leader.

(Calvert stared at him in bewilderment.)

CALVERT: Enemy? What are you on about? Kasika's not your enemy! This island is *part* of Kasika!

(Edward stared at him emptily for a moment then bit his lip.)

EDWARD: Willows didn't tell you, did he?

CALVERT: Tell me what?

EDWARD: About the political climate here. I bet he just told you everyone's an idiot and left it at that.

CALVERT: Not really. He also said you were a conniving bunch of...

EDWARD: Well, he shouldn't have!

(He sighed.)

EDWARD: Look, I've explained who I am now, so what say I move on and tell you what you need to know?

CALVERT: If you would.

EDWARD: Okay then. I'll start with the one basic truth that Willows refused to accept.

(He looked Calvert dead in the eyes.)

EDWARD: This island is only part of Kasika because the Kasika government *say* it is! We never agreed to that! And we certainly didn't sign up to it! Tifasea is Tifasea! We didn't ask for Kasika, we don't want Kasika and we don't care what Kasika thinks.

CALVERT: Evidently.

EDWARD: Well, why would we? All they do is tax people! That's it. That's their sole contribution to this island. Robbing us blind!

CALVERT: Codswallop. They built roads for one!

EDWARD: No, *we* did that! Now we pay them tax in order to maintain our roads but end up doing it ourselves because they tell us it'll take six months to get round to doing the job.

CALVERT: Really?

EDWARD: Yes!

(He sighed.)

EDWARD: Let me lay it out for you. We get one ferry a day. It comes in then it goes again. If we want to go to Kasika for the day, we can't. There's no ferry back until the morning. That's the extent of our transport links. That lousy ferry and roads they don't even maintain.

CALVERT: Yeah, but there has to be other services they provide, aside from transport.

EDWARD: Oh, there are. They also pay for three police officers, but even then they don't trust us to choose our own chief. Hence, you. They also fund three medical personnel and three fire officers. Again, the heads of those departments come from the mainland, like you. Well, our taxes pay for far more than we're getting. And they only provide that because they're legally obliged to.

(He shook his head.)

EDWARD: Tifasea doesn't even have parliamentary representation! Our MP is whoever the people of Ashrin elect. We come under their constituency. And not one of them has visited the island for over forty years.

CALVERT: You still get to vote though, right?

EDWARD: No! The only election *we're* allowed to take part in is the local *council* election. We vote for Bob and Cheryl every four years and that's it. We have no say in who runs Kasika!

CALVERT: No... this is a windup, surely!

EDWARD: I can assure you it isn't. Apparently democracy isn't cost effective!

CALVERT: What?

EDWARD: Seriously. That's a direct quote! There's only a thousand people on this island, and only eight hundred are old enough to vote, so seeing as we're unlikely to sway the result of an election, they decided to not let us take part anymore.

CALVERT: That's... scandalous!

EDWARD: I know!!!

(He shook his head.)

EDWARD: And yet it's not surprising. Being poorly treated by the mainland is a common theme here. Kasika laid cables for the internet about twenty years ago then abandoned the project without even connecting the cables to a service hub. There's not enough houses here to make an internet service financially viable they said. Luckily Kevin and a few others knew what they were doing and set up *their own* service. We'd still be using fax machines if they hadn't.

(He sighed.)

EDWARD: We don't matter to Kasika, Detective. They keep us as an alleged dependency because there's an oilrig five miles off our coast. It makes that oil theirs. No other reason.

(Calvert bit his lip.)

CALVERT: I didn't know that.

EDWARD: Well now you do. To us, Kasika is just an foreign land that taxes us but gives us fuck all in return. They're basically an occupying nation. A leech. Nobody here wants Kasika in their lives. Nobody.

CALVERT: Then why not revolt? Rather than making a cunt of the police chief from the mainland in order to force his compliance, why not be men about it and stand up to Kasika instead. Raise your own flag and declare yourselves independent whether they like it or not.

EDWARD: Because open revolt would be self-defeating! If we *were* openly defiant towards Kasika, they'd send the army in to force their will on us with an iron fist. And that's the last thing we want! It'd change this island forever. All our freedoms; gone. No, no. In order to maintain our way of life, we need to *pretend* to be compliant. It's the only way they'll leave us alone.

(He sighed.)

EDWARD: Fucking Kasika. We want out. It's never gonna happen though. We did apply for independence once, you know? Didn't even get a reply. So I petitioned the Kasika government and asked for decentralisation. You know, self-governance. *That* got a reply. Apparently I'm a dreadful little man and the prime minister is not amused. That's as far as it went.

(He shook his head.)

EDWARD: Kasika just imposes itself on us and we despise it with every fibre of our beings. Like I said, they're just an occupying nation. The enemy. You need to understand that, detective. I mean, you really need to take it on board and accept what I'm saying, because trying to enforce Kasika's laws here makes you part of the problem. The enemy. Willows tried it and ended up miserable for twenty years. Don't let history repeat itself.

CALVERT: Yeah...

EDWARD: Willows gave up trying in the end, you know? But not before becoming a pariah. I mean, he got served in the shop, but he never got accepted. He'd just go to work, stare at young Alicia's legs for a while then go and drink beer on the beach. On his own. His wife accepted Tifasea's ways, on the other hand, and she was well-liked. That just made him grumpier. I hope you don't go down that road, old chap. It was sad to see.

(Calvert nodded solemnly.)

CALVERT: Actually... I hear what you're saying. If that's how people here feel about Kasika, me coming here and trying to make them comply with Kasika's laws is asking for trouble.

EDWARD: Exactly.

(Calvert then sat up and growled at him.)

CALVERT: But that's no excuse for messing with my family! My sweet and innocent nine year-old girl has turned in a bloody juvenile delinquent since arriving here! And we only arrived the day before yesterday! In that limited time, she's been dressed up like a colour-blind prostitute, plied with coffee, cigarettes and alcohol and taken up driving! Driving whilst intoxicated, no less! If you think I'm gonna sit idly by and let *that* shit continue...

EDWARD: Wait, wait, wait...

CALVERT: What?

EDWARD: I'm familiar with the problem, my friend.

CALVERT: Oh, are you now? That's good then. Now be aware of this. If it continues, I *will* be loading my gun and I *will* be shooting people!

EDWARD: Calm down, old boy. There's no need for that.

CALVERT: Oh, there is.

EDWARD: Actually there isn't. You see, respecting a parent's wishes is of the utmost importance to the people of Tifasea. Just leave it with me and I'll make it known that your little one is *forbidden* from smoking and drinking.

CALVERT: And driving!

EDWARD: That too.

CALVERT: And being given makeovers. And coffee!

EDWARD: Right... maybe it'd be easier to give me a list of things she *is* allowed to do.

CALVERT: Excuse me?

EDWARD: I jest. It shall be done.

CALVERT: Will it now?

EDWARD: Absolutely! Young Fiona isn't allowed chewing gum and everyone knows it. This is a small island and everyone knows each other, you see? So when a parent expresses a wish to forbid their child from partaking in something, everyone obliges. (Calvert gave him a suspicious glance.)

CALVERT: Everyone?

EDWARD: Without fail. If a parent expresses a desire to not allow their child cigarettes for example, anyone who dares give that child a cigarette invokes the wrath of the entire island. And you don't want that.

(He exhaled.)

EDWARD: You see, it all stems from the belief that parents should be free to raise their child as they see fit. Not how the Kasika government see fit. If the parents allow something, it's their right to do so. If a parent forbids something, on the other hand, it's everyone's duty to respect that. It's a system that works of *us*.

(Calvert stared through him blankly.)

CALVERT: That *doesn't* work though, surely.

EDWARD: It does actually. Parents get to decide how their children are raised and everyone respects that.

(He nodded.)

EDWARD: So be warned. Don't tell other parents that their kids can't drink, drive or smoke. They'll consider it government interference. That won't end well for you. I mean, I don't have to tell *you* how annoying it is when someone messes with your child, do I? It's the reason you're here. You're so angry you're threatening to shoot people if it doesn't stop. They'll feel the same if you interfere with their child.

CALVERT: So I have to turn a blind eyes to kids smoking and drinking.

EDWARD: No, you simply have to respect their parents wishes.

CALVERT: Right...

(He shook his head.)

CALVERT: Sorry, mate, this is doing my head in. How can such a thing be allowed?

EDWARD: Oh, well, that's obvious, isn't it? Age restriction laws are Kasika laws.

CALVERT: Yeah, but...

EDWARD: We pay no heed to *Kasika* laws. When they set the age limit on booze and cigarettes, Tifasea folk willingly ignored it! Not because it was a bad law, but because we don't recognise their authority. Seriously, old chap, if the Kasika government told people here to jump, we'd all crouch.

(He nodded.)

EDWARD: If they passed a law banning eating pancakes, we'd eat the buggers every morning. If they banned bows and arrows, archery would become our national sport. If Kasika says we can't do something, we immediately go out and do it. A big fuck you to them.

CALVERT: I see.

(He grimaced.)

CALVERT: So the average mental age here is twelve. That explains a lot.

EDWARD: Hey! No. It's not about being childish and pedantic. It's about civil liberty and freedom. Civil disobedience *is* freedom, my friend. Freedom matters.

(He ruffled his neck.)

EDWARD: If you want to get by on this island, it's important that you understand that. It's important that you understand *us*.

(He nodded firmly.)

EDWARD: It's actually *imperative* that you understand us.

CALVERT: I'm beginning to.

EDWARD: Well I hope so, old chap, because like I said before, clinging onto what you knew back in Croxton, and thinking that's how things *should* be, will make you miserable. Like Willows.

(He shook his head.)

EDWARD: He never did grasp it. He didn't even try, to be honest.

(He then looked Calvert in the eye and nodded.)

EDWARD: Just let this sink in, Detective. If there's one thing you truly need to understand it's this. We support each other here. Support each to live happier lives. And by happier I mean less stressful, simple lives. We're not like the money-grabbing morons on the mainland. We've never slipped into the foolish mindset that big wages equal self-betterment. Self-betterment here means living a happy life. In order to help each other do that, we respect each other's decisions. We help others achieve their goals. And they do the same for us.

(He nodded.)

EDWARD: Bottom line... you can't tell people how to raise their children. And they won't tell you how to raise yours. You say you want your little one not to smoke? Well, so be it. It's your choice and we'll support it. But in return, you need to start embracing what living on this island means. Immerse yourself in our culture and accept the way we do things. Learn to become one of us. Because if you're *not* one of us...

(He sucked his teeth.)

EDWARD: You're one of *them*. The enemy. And like I said before, that will not end well for you, my friend. So I guess you have to choice to make. Are you with us or are you against us?

(Calvert looked to him uneasily for a moment then sat back.)

CALVERT: Wow. That's a lot to take in.

EDWARD: Yes, I suppose it is.

(He smiled.)

EDWARD: If it helps, we'd love it if you were to accept our ways. It'd make a nice refreshing change to have a police chief who wants to work *with* us rather than against. Not that Willows did either of those things. He abstained for the sake of his kids and spent his entire time sulking.

CALVERT: Yes, well, I won't be doing *that*.

(He sighed.)

CALVERT: Look, I need to speak my wife about all this. We had no idea that Kasika was seen as an occupying nation. We just thought you were ignorant. And a bit dim.

EDWARD: Thank you.

CALVERT: You're welcome. You earned it.

EDWARD: Right...

CALVERT: Thing is, if we're to make a go of things here, it's going to mean adopting the same mind set as people here. Viewing Kasika as the enemy, isn't it?

EDWARD: I'd say so, yes.

CALVERT: Well, I can't speak for my wife on that, can I? She might be appalled by the very idea of it. If so, we'll be on the next ferry out of here before you can say "thank fuck we haven't sold our old house yet". On the other hand, if she's happy to *adopt* your ways then...

(He grimaced.)

CALVERT: I'll have to do the same.

(He shuddered.)

CALVERT: Thank fuck we haven't sold our old house yet!

EDWARD: I see. And that's your decision is it?

CALVERT: What? No. I don't know.

(He shook his head.)

CALVERT: Like I said, it's a lot to take in. I'll have to do some thinking, mate.

(He nodded.)

CALVERT: I'll let you know what I decide in due course.

EDWARD: Fair play. Or fah, as the locals says. In the meantime, I'll put a message on the local social media group telling everyone that the police chief's daughter, Emily...

CALVERT: Layla!

EDWARD: Layla? Then where did I get Emily from?

CALVERT: I have no idea. *I* didn't say it. I didn't even mention my daughter's name until just now.

EDWARD: Right...

(He scratched behind his head.)

EDWARD: Poor guesswork on *my* part then. Point is, I'll message the group and tell them little Layla Calvert is not to be given cigarettes, alcohol or coffee by order of her parents.

CALVERT: No giving her makeovers or letting her drive either.

EDWARD: Of course.

CALVERT: And that'll work will it?

EDWARD: Yup. Once the message is sent, she won't be able to get any of those things. Guaranteed!

CALVERT: Yes... well... forgive me for being sceptical.



EDWARD: Gladly.

CALVERT: Right...

(He then climbed to his feet.)

CALVERT: Anyway, I need to get back to my wife. We got a decision to make.

EDWARD: Indeed you have.

CALVERT: Yeah... so... thanks for the beer, mate. I'll be on my way.

(He then started to head away. As he did so, Edward allowed himself a smile then called out to him.)

EDWARD: Farewell, Detective.

(He then adopted a deeply serious tone.)

EDWARD: Choose wisely.

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At seven o'clock that evening, DS Calvert and Hayley were seated at the table on their rooftop terrace, supervising Layla's punishment. They'd sat her at the end of the table where she couldn't see the ocean and ordered her to read a series of short stories they knew she wouldn't like. It wasn't the most draconian of punishments, but judging by the tortured expression on her face it was having the desired effect.

Having occupied their daughter with a penance to endure, Calvert and Hayley were now free to discuss the important matter of their future on the island. Calvert had told her everything he'd learned from Edward Carlton and now they had a decision to make.

HAYLEY: An occupying force seems a bit strong.

CALVERT: What can I tell you, love? He used that phrase a lot. It's definitely how Kasika is viewed here.

HAYLEY: But it's silly. I read up on the history of this island before we came here. It was first settled five hundred years ago by people from Kasika and it's been a Kasikan dependency ever since. It's not like Kasika *invaded* or anything. Everyone here is either Kasikan or of Kasikan descent.

CALVERT: Oh, I know. It's just that Kasika's neglected this place to the point where people here feel detached. Like second class citizens. So they want out. They want independence, but Kasika isn't having it.

HAYLEY: I get that.

(She shrugged.)

HAYLEY: The phrasing just sounds overly dramatic to me.

CALVERT: Well, yeah, he did labour the point a bit.

HAYLEY: Evidently.

(She sighed.)

HAYLEY: I don't know. In some ways I like it here. I mean look at that view of the ocean.

(She then scowled at Layla.)

HAYLEY: Not you, madam! Keep reading!

(Layla looked to her and whimpered.)

LAYLA: But, mum, do I have to? This punishment is too mean. These stories are rubbish!

HAYLEY: Is that so?

LAYLA: Yes. The main character is an idiot!

HAYLEY: No, she's socially inept; there's a difference.

LAYLA: Same thing, she a very silly person and I don't like her. You know I don't like stories about silly people doing outrageously silly things.

HAYLEY: I do, yes. You must be hating every second of it.

LAYLA: I am. It's cruel. I mean, what did I do that so was wrong I deserve *this* kind of punishment.

HAYLEY: Smoking!

CALVERT: Drinking!

HAYLEY: Driving!

CALVERT: Whilst drunk!

LAYLA: Yeah, but still. Too mean!

(Hayley furrowed her brow.)

HAYLEY: Shut up and keep reading, missy!

LAYLA: But, mum...

HAYLEY: Keep on and I'll make you read Futile Combat as well!!!

LAYLA: No!!! Too silly!!!

HAYLEY: Then read!

(Layla gulped then returned to reading her story. As she did so, Hayley rolled her eyes then glanced at her husband.)

HAYLEY: So yeah, I like it here in some ways. This house is lovely and the people seem nice enough, even if they are a bit dim.

CALVERT: But?

HAYLEY: Embracing this island's ways isn't going to do our main project any good.

(She gestured towards Layla.)

HAYLEY: We were only blessed with one child and I rather she *didn't* grow up to be a gun-running, drug snorting prostitute with bright orange hair.

CALVERT: Yeah, well, that Edward fella said he was going to stop people from giving her things she shouldn't have, but...

(Just then, Hayley's phone started to buzz.)

HAYLEY: Hold that thought.

(She then glanced at the screen.)

HAYLEY: A new message on the island group page.

CALVERT: What? I think that's the thing Edward mentioned.

(He grimaced.)

CALVERT: How did *you* get a notification about it?

HAYLEY: The woman in the shop insisted that I join it.

(She shrugged.)

HAYLEY: I couldn't really say no, could I?

(She then perused the new message with her eyes. At once, her jaw dropped.)

HAYLEY: Oh my god. Listen to this.

(She then proceeded to read the message out loud.)

HAYLEY: Citizens of the island. Parental accountability update. From this point forth, Layla Calvert, the new police chief's daughter is no longer allowed access to cigarettes, alcohol or coffee. She is also forbidden from driving and getting makeovers by order of her parents. Thank you for your understanding in this matter.

CALVERT: That'll be the message Edward said he was going to send.

HAYLEY: Nice deduction, Detective.

CALVERT: Hayley...

(He was then cut off by the sound his daughter's frustrated whimper.)

LAYLA: I'm not even allowed makeovers?

HAYLEY: Read, you!

LAYLA: Aw.

(Layla then returned to reading.)

HAYLEY: Thank you.

(She nodded.)

HAYLEY: It's a nice sentiment, I just wonder if anyone will take notice.

(She flinched.)

HAYLEY: Wait. There's a hundred and fifty comments already.

(She then proceeded to read them out.)

HAYLEY: Okay. Roger. Fah. Righto. Understood.

CALVERT: Really?

HAYLEY: Yeah. Everyone's accepting it. Okay. Got it. Noted. Message received.

Poor kid can't do anything, but okay. Gotcha. Several more saying okay and understood. And this one says, "Clearly the kid met Alicia. That's how every parent feels after *she* gives their kid a makeover."

CALVERT: Wow.

HAYLEY: Alicia Hornblower says that's not fair. And spelt every single word wrong.

(She grimaced.)

HAYLEY: She also says... if anyone sees Layla let her know straight away; she's been looking for her since lunchtime.

(Calvert grimaced.)

CALVERT: Fuck. I forgot to tell her she'd been found.

(He then yanked out his phone and made a call, leaving his wife free to peruse the reply section.)

CALVERT: Answer it, you silly woman.

(He then flinched.)

CALVERT: Alicia?

(He grimaced.)

CALVERT: You sound exhausted.

(He listened to her response then raised an impressed eyebrow.)

CALVERT: Forty thousand? Blimey. That's a lot of steps.

(He listened again then furrowed his brow.)

CALVERT: That's what *happens* if you don't petrol in them.

(He rolled his eyes.)

CALVERT: Look, never mind that. Layla's been found. You can stop searching and go home now.

(He listened to her reply then sighed.)

CALVERT: Fine. Okay. You're the best policewoman ever. Happy?

(He then pulled his phone away from his ear, allowing her cry of "yay" to end before placing it back to his ear.)

CALVERT: Anyway... go home. Thanks for all your hard work.

(He smiled.)

CALVERT: Yup. Okay. Stop talking now. Right. Yes. Bye.

(He then ended the call.)

CALVERT: She talks too much.

LAYLA: Yeah, she's great fun.

CALVERT: Read!!!

LAYLA: But, dad...

CALVERT: Layla!

LAYLA: Fine.

(She then resumed flicking through her story.)

LAYLA: Stupid story. Aria's too dim to be true.

HAYLEY: Serves you right. I hope every word brings misery to your soul, you bloody booze hound.

(She then glanced towards her husband.)

HAYLEY: Every reply was positive.

CALVERT: Yeah?

HAYLEY: The question is, will they remember? Will simply *telling* people not to let her have forbidden things actually work?

CALVERT: Edward seemed to think so.

HAYLEY: Hmm...

(She bit her lip.)

HAYLEY: That changes things a bit.

CALVERT: Oh?

HAYLEY: Well, it's a nice place, isn't it? I mean, it's not terrible. I can still do a lot of things I enjoy and I can do them in a nicer setting. My only worry was people giving Layla things they shouldn't. If *that* stops happening...

LAYLA: You don't need to worry about that. I had a horrible headache because of that wine.

HAYLEY: And the smoking!

CALVERT: What? Smoking doesn't...

(Hayley glowered at him, defying him to disagree with her.)

HAYLEY: And the smoking! *Both* give people hangovers!

CALVERT: Oh. Yeah. That too.

LAYLA: Well there you go then. I don't want a headache like that again. No more wine and cigarettes for me. And I certainly don't want to have read this rubbish again! Nope. Never again!

HAYLEY: Glad to hear it.

(She then looked to her husband.)

HAYLEY: That changes everything then. I'm happy to try it, love. Embracing the ways of the island, I mean. I'm willing to take the plunge.

CALVERT: Yeah?

HAYLEY: My only concern is you.

CALVERT: Me?

HAYLEY: Yeah. You *love* being a detective and you can't really do that here, can you? In fact, you can barely be considered a policeman. Not if you're going to willingly turn a blind eye to all the crime. Because that's what you'll have to do if we embrace this

island's ways. The marijuana farm, the casino, the brothel; you're going have to accept their existence and walk away. And I'm not sure you can. Enforcing the law is your life. (She shrugged.)

HAYLEY: And that's fine. Enforce the law if you need to. It's up to you, love. I'm happy either way, really. So I guess the ball's in your court.

CALVERT: Bullshit.

HAYLEY: Excuse me?

CALVERT: You're *not* happy either way. You *want* me to embrace island life. Of course you do. Nothing else makes sense.

(He shrugged.)

CALVERT: I mean, let's look at our options, shall we? Option one: I stay loyal to Kasika and arrest all the law breakers. I become a hate figure and we end up being miserable here for the rest of our lives.

HAYLEY: Yeah, I'm not a fan of that idea.

CALVERT: Then how about option two? Again, I stay loyal to Kasika and arrest all the law breakers. I become a hate figure, but rather than being miserable *here* for the rest of our lives, I quit the force and lose my pension.

(Hayley whimpered.)

HAYLEY: I like that idea even less.

CALVERT: Exactly. And that pretty much leaves option three. I embrace Tifasea's laws and turn a blind eye to the crime. We become well-liked and go on to live trouble free lives.

HAYLEY: Yeah, I much prefer *that* one.

CALVERT: Right? It's a simple decision, Hayley. I have a choice between accepting this island and embracing its ways *or* remaining true to Kasika law. The latter would bring us nothing but grief. Well there's no way in hell I'm going to enforce Kasika law knowing that, am I?

(He ruffled his neck.)

CALVERT: Nope. My mind's made up. We'll embrace the Tifasea way. Fuck Kasika. I don't owe that place anything anyway. Especially the police force. They're the cunts who sent me here and ruined my career in law enforcement the first place. Bollocks to them. I'll just sit on my arse all day and collect my wages like Willows did.

(He nodded sternly then sighed in defeat.)

CALVERT: I'm going to be so bored.

(Hayley blushed.)

HAYLEY: Yes, but on the bright side, I plan to wear a bikini every day!

CALVERT: And suddenly boredom feels like a price worth paying.

HAYLEY: I thought it might.

(She winked.)

HAYLEY: I'm gonna hop online and shop for miniskirts later too.

CALVERT: Ooh.

LAYLA: The cheek! You told me off for wearing...

HAYLEY: I'll buy some for you too; for pity's sake, girl. It's hot here. You're going need to a new wardrobe.

LAYLA: Really? Can't we just put my new clothes in the old one?

(Calvert and Hayley gave her a sideways glance then started to chuckle.)

CALVERT: Our little girl is still in there, love.

HAYLEY: Yup. And she's as dumb as a bog brush.

LAYLA: Mean!

HAYLEY: But ridiculously cute.

LAYLA: Aw.

HAYLEY: Now read!

LAYLA: I am!!!

(She then scowled at her story and continued to read.)

HAYLEY: So... we're really doing this, are we?

CALVERT: We are. Having weighed up the options, not embracing island life would make no sense. It was a choice between being happy and accepted while getting paid for the privilege or becoming pariahs and losing everything. Island life it is.

HAYLEY: Agreed.

CALVERT: I'm glad I met that Edward fella now. I was on the verge of losing my shit, but talking to him has given me an entirely new perspective.

HAYLEY: That trying to enforce Kasika law here would be fucking stupid.

CALVERT: Exactly.

(They then shared a loving smile. That smile very quickly became a knowing glance then they slowly moved closer to one another to go in for the kiss. Before their lips could meet, however, Calvert's phone started to ring.)

CALVERT: Cunt flaps and goose fuckers.

HAYLEY: Raymond!

CALVERT: Right. Yeah. Sorry.

(He then yanked out his phone and placed it to his ear.)

CALVERT: Hello?

(An excited voice then rose up from the speaker.)

WILLOWS: Calvert?

CALVERT: Speaking.

WILLOWS: It's me. Willows!

CALVERT: Oh. Hello, mate. How was the trip home?

WILLOWS: Peachy. Look, never mind that, I have wonderful news.

CALVERT: Oh?

WILLOWS: I've got the buggers!

(Calvert grimaced uncomfortably.)

CALVERT: What buggers?

WILLOWS: Those bloody crooks on the island!

(He laughed excitedly.)

WILLOWS: They treated me like shit for twenty years, but guess who's about to have the last laugh?

(Calvert raised his eyebrow sarcastically.)

CALVERT: Is it you, by any chance?

WILLOWS: It is indeed. Nice work, Detective. You see, they didn't know about the dossier!

CALVERT: Dossier?

WILLOWS: Dossier.

(He exhaled.)

WILLOWS: They mocked me; laughed at me; run roughshod over my authority for twenty long years, but little did they know, I was taking notes. Compiling evidence. Every single wrongdoing went straight in my notebook. The brothel, the unregulated brewery, the marijuana farm, the casino, the unlicensed workmen, the cash-in-hand transactions, claiming government grants for civic events that never took place, the absolute and utter disregard for age restrictions, you name it. I compiled it all into one big dossier and now those bastards are going to pay.

(Calvert grimaced.)

CALVERT: Pay? What do you mean?

WILLOWS: First thing I did at work today was turn my dossier in to my commissioner.

CALVERT: You started the new job *today*? You only sailed home yesterday.

WILLOWS: Yes, but I've had this dossier burning a hole in my pocket for a bloody long time and I didn't want to wait a second longer to use it.

CALVERT: I see.

WILLOWS: Oh, trust me, you don't see; not yet. I haven't even got to the good part yet.

(He allowed himself a fiendish chuckle.)

WILLOWS: The commissioner was horrified. Apoplectic even. His toupee almost hit the ceiling.

(He winced.)

WILLOWS: Then he told me off for not reporting it sooner.

(He nodded.)

WILLOWS: It was fine though. I just explained how they used threats against my family to make me turn a blind eye and he seemed to calm down. Then he said the words I'd been longing to hear.

(He whimpered with unrestrained joy.)

WILLOWS: We're going to raid the island at nine o'clock tomorrow morning.

(Calvert's eyes bulged.)

CALVERT: What???

WILLOWS: Exciting, isn't it?

CALVERT: Mate...

WILLOWS: And that's why I'm ringing you. Meet us at the port at nine sharp. In your capacity as the chief of Tifasea Police, you're obliged to take part in the raids.

CALVERT: Right...

(He sucked his teeth.)

CALVERT: When you say meet *us*...

WILLOWS: Myself, the commissioner and a two dozen members of the serious crime squad. First job: detain Port Authority Pete. He'll only tip everyone off if we don't.

CALVERT: Right. Well... that's...

WILLOWS: Brilliant, isn't it?

CALVERT: It's...

WILLOWS: Anyway, I've got to go. My dinner's ready. See you at nine sharp. Don't be late.

(He then ended the call, chuckling maniacally as he did so. Stunned by what he'd heard, Calvert gulped then lowered his phone.)

CALVERT: Um... Hayley?

HAYLEY: What? What's wrong?

CALVERT: Things just got *very* complicated, love.

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The following day at 8.54 am, DS Calvert found himself standing outside the port with an anxious grimace on his face. A mid-sized transporter ship had just landed at the dockside. He hadn't been able to see any of its passengers yet, but he could clearly see that the ship's captain was wearing an Ashrin police uniform. The raid was imminent. They were not a welcome sight. Should this incoming taskforce find any wrongdoing, they might start taking an interest in the island and compel him to enforce Kasika law there. If that were to happen, his life would become a misery. He'd rapidly become an enemy of the people; a pariah to one and all. His only hope was that the task force wouldn't find anything. With Sergeant Willows among their number, however, that outcome seemed unlikely. He knew exactly where to look. He worried.

Shaking his head, he watched as the large doors at the front of the boat started to crank open then sighed ruefully.

CALVERT: This isn't going to end well for me.

(He winced.)

CALVERT: I literally just decided to work *with* the islanders, for fuck sake. If the mainland police compel me to do otherwise, I'll be seen as an agent of the enemy *and* a liar!

(He then bit his lip.)

CALVERT: That said, there *are* extenuating circumstances. I'll only be following orders. I'm sure they'll understand that.

(He sighed.)

CALVERT: Who am I kidding? Like that's going to make any difference. That's the excuse agents of barbaric regimes have been making for centuries. I'm only following orders, son. If anything, saying that will only make them hate me more.

(He shook his head then glanced at his feet.)

CALVERT: I need a miracle, don't I? A fucking miracle. To get out of this mess, I'll require snookers.

(He groaned despairingly then slowly raised his head. He then watched on through empty eyes as the ship's door hit the dockside and a procession of four black vans drove out of it.)

CALVERT: Okay... it begins. I can do this. I just need to act surprised when they find criminal activity. And more importantly, pray that they don't.

(He then groaned in defeat.)

CALVERT: I'm screwed.

(He shook his head despairingly then watched as the van at the front of the convoy pulled up at this side. The side door then slid open to reveal Willows and several police operatives staring back at him.)

WILLOWS: Calvert! How are you doing, mate?

(Calvert nodded sternly, determined to do his utmost to convince these men that he was behind them one hundred percent.)

CALVERT: Not bad at all, mate. Looking forward to crushing these crooks you mentioned.



WILLOWS: Good man. First things first though. We need to detain Port Authority Pete.

CALVERT: Already done, mate. I handcuffed him to his filing cabinet.

WILLOWS: What? You didn't stick him in a cell?

CALVERT: Of course not. If I did that, Singleton and Hornblower would want to know why he's in there. He'd sing like a canary and news of this raid would spread like wildfire.

WILLOWS: Right, yes. Good thinking.

CALVERT: Just using my instincts as a copper.

WILLOWS: Sweet.

(He then slid sideways and patted the seat he'd just moved from.)

WILLOWS: Hop in then. Let's get this show on the road.

CALVERT: Very well.

(He then climbed inside the van and slid the door shut. Having take a seat, he then glanced to Willows.)

CALVERT: So...

WILLOWS: Just a minute.

(He glanced towards the driver.)

WILLOWS: Take us to destination A.

DRIVER: Roger.

(He then set the car in motion.)

WILLOWS: Great, isn't it? Cars are illegal here normally, but seeing as we're officially on a raid, the MP for Ashrin secured us permission to use them.

(In that moment, Calvert felt a sense of anger rippling through his body. Willows had just highlighted one of the local people's greatest grievances. The MP for Ashrin, a man who'd never shown the islanders anything but contempt, had taken it upon himself to trample all over the one rule that Tifasea folk swore by. No cars. Ever! Rather than letting his anger show, however, he raised an eyebrow and pretended to be impressed.)

CALVERT: Blimey.

WILLOWS: I know. I can't wait to see their angry little faces.

CALVERT: Yeah...

(He bit his lip.)

CALVERT: So these crimes you mentioned on the phone...

WILLOWS: Which ones?

CALVERT: All of them really. How long have these things being going on?

WILLOWS: Since long before *I* was sent here to die. Long before.

CALVERT: Oh.

WILLOWS: You didn't know?

CALVERT: Well... you hinted at the local people being a bunch of wankers who love to blackmail people with threats of starvation, but I haven't *seen* anything criminal yet.

WILLOWS: Really?

(He smiled.)

WILLOWS: Well, you've only been here a few days, haven't you? Trust me though, within a fortnight, you'd have started spotting things. And believe me, you'd have been horrified.

CALVERT: I see.

(He sucked his teeth.)

CALVERT: Thank god you kept that dossier then.

WILLOWS: Right?

CALVERT: Yeah. Now I can help nip that bullshit in the bud. Crime on my island?

Not on your fucking nelly, mate.

WILLOWS: That's the spirit.

(He beamed.)

WILLOWS: I like you, Calvert. You're like me.

CALVERT: A policeman?

WILLOWS: A stalwart bastion of the law. And an all round good egg.

CALVERT: Right...

(Willows exhaled.)

WILLOWS: This is going to be glorious.

(He then stared out of the front window, positively beaming with excitement and delight. Calvert on the other hand, sat there frowning. He was far from happy about being part of this motorcade. If anyone asked, however, he'd tell them he was frowning after hearing about crime being committed on his island.)

Following a brief drive from the port to Long Sand High Street, the lead van very soon came in sight of the garden centre. At once, Willows bounced in his seat then raised his voice to the driver.)

WILLOWS: Pull over here!!!

DRIVER: Right. Okay.

WILLOWS: Excellent.

(He smirked at Calvert knowingly.)

WILLOWS: It's show time!

CALVERT: Yeah...

WILLOWS: Seeing as you're nearest, get ready to open that door as soon as the van stops, Calvert. We're going to hit him fast and we're gonna hit him hard.

CALVERT: Who?

WILLOWS: Wesley, the marijuana farmer. Oh, and Louise from the casino. She might see us in the garden centre and hide all the gambling equipment before we can get to her, you see? So we need to hit them at the same time.

CALVERT: Oh. So...

(Just then, the van came to a halt and everyone bundled towards the door. Having been about to say something, however, Calvert hadn't even reached for the door handle yet. As a result, they all bundled into him like locusts swarming onto an ear of corn.)

CALVERT: Easy!!!

(He then yanked open the door and tumbled out, followed by three other officers. At once, they all jumped to their feet, dusted themselves down then glanced at where Willows was climbing from the van.)

WILLOWS: Excellent. Nice work, lads. First time sitting in a van, is it?

CALVERT: We...

(Just then, an officer in a commissioner's uniform paced up to them from the second vehicle.)

JONES: Gentlemen?

(Willows and Calvert instantly saluted him.)

WILLOWS: Sir!

CALVERT: Sir!

JONES: Is this destination A?

WILLOWS: Yes, sir!

JONES: Then what are you waiting for?

WILLOWS: Good question, sir.

(He then nodded to the officers who'd assembled around them.)

WILLOWS: The six of you from the vehicle at the rear, head into that coffee shop up there. The owner's running an illegal casino. The rest of you, follow me!

(With that, he matched towards the gates of Tifasea Garden Centre with something of a spring in his step. He'd dreamt of taking down the criminals on this island for a very long time, but it had always felt like a pipe dream. A wild flight of fantasy. Now, however, it was so real he could taste it. As a result, his heart was singing for joy.

Taking a far more professional attitude towards proceedings, however, the rest of the men in the taskforce paced forth on tiptoe, trying to keep their footsteps as silent as possible to aid the element of surprise. Calvert simply ambled along near the back; fearing the worst.

A few moments later, having completed the short walk from where they'd parked, Willows strode into the garden centre compound then raised his voice.)

WILLOWS: Wesley! Get your arse out here, you ne'er-do-well!!!

(Just then, Wesley appeared from between two greenhouses, pushing an empty wheelbarrow.)

WESLEY: Hah?

(He then groaned in despair.)

WESLEY: Not you again!

WILLOWS: Incorrect! It *is* me again!

WESLEY: But you retired!

WILLOWS: Incorrect *again*. I did nothing of the sort!

(He then turned to face the men in his taskforce.)

WILLOWS: Search the place, boys.

(At once, the officers under his command raced across the compound, pushing their way into Wesley's greenhouses and rifling through his outbuildings. Unsurprisingly, Wesley was not amused.)

WESLEY: What the hell are you doing?

(He then rolled his eyes.)

WESLEY: Wait. I get it. What weird and wonderful crime are you accusing me of today? Skiing uphill?

(Willows scoffed.)

WILLOWS: You know damn well what crime you're guilty of!

WESLEY: No, I don't! How could I possibly? You've accused me a least fifty different crimes since I opened this place. Bear baiting; terrorism; public urination; log rolling without a licence; you name it.

WILLOWS: I've done nothing or the sort!

WESLEY: You have!

(He then glowered at the commissioner.)

WESLEY: You there. With all the medals and stripes! You're in charge, right?

JONES: What of it?

WESLEY: I'll tell you what of it! Learn to control your officers! This bloke's a nutter! Coming in here all the time, accusing me of god knows what.

(Willows scowled.)

WILLOWS: Hey! I've only ever accused you of *one* thing! One *serious* thing anyway. Running a marijuana farm!

(Wesley gasped in dismay.)

WESLEY: Marijuana? Marijuana???

(He then grimaced uncomfortably.)

WESLEY: That comes from cannabis plants.

WILLOWS: I know! And it's no surprise that *you* know it too.

WESLEY: Well of course, I do. I'm a bloody gardener by trade. I'm familiar with most plants! And cannabis is one plant I wouldn't even *think* of cultivating.

(He nodded defiantly then folded his arms.)

WESLEY: That'd be illegal.

(Confident that any moment now, one of the officers would return with a barrow *full* of cannabis plants, Calvert rolled his eyes. Wesley's exhibition of innocence had been impressive, but he couldn't help feel that he was going to look quite the fool once the officers found his stash. Not about to let on, however, he glanced away innocently and allowed the others to get on with it.)

WILLOWS: Do you really think that innocent act is going to fool anyone?

WESLEY: It's not an act! I'm innocent! I've never grown cannabis and I never will!

WILLOWS: Liar! That's *all* you grow!

WESLEY: Really? Then where is it?

(Willows scoffed.)

WILLOWS: In every greenhouse!

(He then paced up to the door of a nearby greenhouse that hadn't been checked yet and thrust open the door. He then turned to face Wesley; smirking knowingly.)

WILLOWS: Like this one! If they're not cannabis plants, what are they?

(Wesley stared through him in bewilderment.)

WESLEY: They're tomato plants.

WILLOWS: Don't be bloody ridiculous!

(He then turned and glanced into the greenhouse. Having done so, however, he jumped back and shrieked.)

WILLOWS: What the hell are they?

WESLEY: I just bloody told you that! They're tomatoes.

(The commissioner nodded.)

JONES: Kasika Crimson Tomatoes, unless I'm very much mistaken.

WESLEY: That's right, sir. Colour me impressed. Clearly you're a man who knows his fruit.

WILLOWS: Vegetables!

WESLEY: Tomatoes are a fruit!

WILLOWS: I know that. I was referring to you and *the rest* of the people on this god forsaken island!

(He growled.)

WILLOWS: Where have you hidden the marijuana?

WESLEY: What fucking marijuana?

WILLOWS: The marijuana you've been growing since you *started* this business.

(Wesley rolled his eyes.)

WESLEY: Seriously, copper? Is there any crime you *won't* accuse me of?

WILLOWS: Silence, you. That greenhouse was full of Marijuana when I left the island two days ago. Now, where is it?

(The commissioner flinched.)

JONES: Wait, wait, wait. Two days ago?

WILLOWS: Yes!

JONES: But there's tomatoes in there.

WILLOWS: Well, I can see that, sir.

(Jones furrowed his brow.)

JONES: You are aware that cultivating tomatoes takes *at least* a couple of months, right?

And judging by their ripeness, I'd say those ones have been there closer to *three* months.

WESLEY: You have an excellent eye, sir.

JONES: So clearly there couldn't have been marijuana in there two days ago!

WILLOWS: He must have moved those tomatoes in there last night!

(He grimaced.)

WILLOWS: Either that or I was looking at different greenhouse. Not that it matters.

Any minute now our officers will return with a huge haul of the stuff; you mark my words.

(Wesley rolled his eyes.)

WESLEY: And what are you going to do when they don't? Arrest me for growing cucumbers with the intent to supply?

WILLOWS: Listen, you cheeky twat...

(Just then, one of the officers approached from where he's been searching an outhouse.)

SMITH: We've got something here, sir!

(Fearing the worst, Calvert winced and Wesley gulped. Willows on the other hand, bounced with excitement.)

WILLOWS: A-ha!!!

JONES: What is it, Smith?

SMITH: It's one of them rare gnomes your wife likes.

JONES: Oh, fantastic.

WILLOWS: Idiot! I thought you'd found narcotics!

SMITH: No. Just this gnome.

(Jones raised an enquiring eyebrow.)

JONES: And *is* there any sign of marijuana?

SMITH: Nothing yet, sir.

(He then placed the gnome down at the commissioner's feet and headed away again.)

WESLEY: You know you can't just *take* that gnome, right?

JONES: Don't worry, I'll give you a fair price.

WESLEY: It's not for sale.

JONES: Bugger.

(Just then, another officer raced over to the commissioner and offered him a salute.)

GRAINGER: Status update, sir. There are no narcotics in the greenhouses.

WILLOWS: What???

GRAINGER: Just tomatoes, peppers and cucumbers.

(Wesley smirked.)

WESLEY: Quick! Sling me in jail before I can do any *more* damage!

WILLOWS: Why you...

(Another officer then emerged from Wesley's house.)

BRYANT: Nothing in the house, sir.

WILLOWS: That's impossible!

(Smith then called out from an outhouse doorway.)

SMITH: There's nothing remotely marijuana related in any of the outhouses either.

(Jones shook his head.)

JONES: It seems you were mistaken, Willows.

WILLOWS: The hell I was. He must have hidden it all!

JONES: And grown an entire vegetable crop in two days to cover it up?

WESLEY: Fruit crop. Peppers, Tomatoes and Cucumbers are all...

JONES: Fruit! I know that! I'm something of an expert gardener *myself*.

WESLEY: And it shows, sir.

JONES: Why, thank you.

(He then shook his head.)

JONES: This is a bust, Willows. There's nothing awry here.

WILLOWS: But...

(He sighed in defeat before suddenly becoming enthused again.)

WILLOWS: The casino! I'm sure the boys *over there* found something. That place makes a fortune from roulette and black jack.

(He nodded sternly.)

WILLOWS: Let's head over there.

(He then started to head for the gate, only to spot the six men he'd sent to the casino, heading back through the gate, being pursued by an angry café owner.)

WILLOWS: A-ha! What did you find?

(The leader of the raiding party scowled at him.)

ELLIS: Old people!

WILLOWS: Gambling?

ELLIS: Drinking tea and dancing.

JONES: At the same time? That's a guaranteed way to stain your clothes.

ELLIS: No, not at the same time, sir. They were holding a tea dance. It has a café at the front and a dance floor at the back. No sign of gambling anywhere. In fact, the owner is horrified by the accusation.

JONES: Is he now?

(Just then, Louise stepped up to him angrily.)

LOUISE: She! And yes she *is* angry!

(She shook her fist at him.)

LOUISE: Bursting into my place of business while I'm hosting a tea dance for the elderly; whatever next? You scared my customers half to death. And to accuse me of running a casino???

(Willows glowered at her.)

WILLOWS: You *do* run a casino! The name is quite literally Casino, Coffee and Cakes!

LOUISE: Because my *name* is Casino! Louise Casino!

(She flinched.)

LOUISE: Willows???

WILLOWS: That's right!

LOUISE: I might it have known *you* were behind it!

(She looked to the commissioner.)

LOUISE: Do something about him, will you? In the last ten years, he's accused innocent, hardworking islanders like myself of *all sorts* of crimes despite having no evidence whatsoever. Kidnapping; assault; mining without a permit; arson; hijacking planes; you name it! It'd be easier to list the things he *hasn't* accused people of!

WESLEY: He just accused *me* of running a cannabis farm!

LOUISE: Seriously?

(She growled.)

LOUISE: You're a disgrace to the uniform, you are! Just because you didn't *like* living here, you've decided to make everyone else's life miserable as well. By spreading lies! I'm glad you were fired!

(She then stormed off, back towards her café. As she did so, Willows stood tall and bellowed at the back of her head.)

WILLOWS: I transferred out! Nobody fired me!

JONES: Yet!

(Willows flinched then turned to face him.)

WILLOWS: Yet?

JONES: Task forces aren't cheap, Willows. And so far you've had two misfires! You'd better not have a third.

WILLOWS: Um...

JONES: Where to next? Bearing in mind that if *that's* a waste a time too, you *will* be filing for retirement when we return.

(Willows promptly started to sweat.)

WILLOWS: Right... where next... how can I catch someone red-handed? Um...

(He then whimpered nervously.)

WILLOWS: The brothel?

JONES: Okay then. Lead the way.

(He growled.)

JONES: But I swear to god, if this is another false report, Willows...

WILLOWS: It isn't! And nor were these two. I... well... I can't explain it.

(Calvert could only nod in full agreement, albeit stealthily. He couldn't explain it either. How Wesley and Louise had got away with it, he could have no idea. He was just glad they had. All he needed now was for the brothel to perform the same miracle and his troubles would be over.)

CALVERT: We can only hope.

WILLOWS: Hope what?

CALVERT: What? I said that out loud?

JONES: You did, yes.

CALVERT: Oh.

(He shrugged.)

CALVERT: I hope this brothel proves fruitful.

WILLOWS: Yes...  
(He winced.)  
WILLOWS: So do I.

---

Half an hour later, Calvert found himself standing outside the port with Willows at his side. The rest of the officers were seated across the port, tucking into coffee and sandwiches before their return trip to the mainland. Watching them, Willows could only pout sorrowfully.

WILLOWS: How did they do it, Calvert? How did they hide a Marijuana farm, a casino and a fucking brothel? In such a short time! We found a vegetable garden, a simple café and an ordinary family home. I just don't get it. That brothel had pink painted walls when I last rode past it. And yet it was wallpapered when we went in just now!!! Is this a secret parallel island or something? How did this happen?

(Calvert grimaced at him.)

CALVERT: Maybe Louise had a point, mate. You hated the islanders so much, you *wanted* them to be criminals. So you imagined all those things.

WILLOWS: Fuck off! I know what I saw. How can you say...

(He then gasped in horror.)

WILLOWS: You're in on it!!!

CALVERT: No, I'm not! How *could* I be? I haven't been here long enough to be in cahoots with *anybody*!

(He ruffled his neck.)

CALVERT: The only people I've met are Kevin, Alicia and Singleton.

WILLOWS: Right. Yes. Sorry. I'm just feeling a little paranoid, that's all. *Someone* must have tipped them off that we were coming. But even then. How did they change everything so quickly? It makes no sense.

CALVERT: Yes, well...

WILLOWS: Wait! You know Kevin? Then he must have fitted your internet.

CALVERT: Well, yeah.

WILLOWS: He's unlicensed! You should tell the commissioner that. That's evidence of a crime, backed up by a fellow officer. You! That should get me back in the game.

CALVERT: Actually, mate...

WILLOWS: Don't! I know. That's a low category misdemeanour at best. Nothing the serious crimes unit are likely to be interested in.

(He sighed.)

WILLOWS: It's time to face facts. I'm screwed.

CALVERT: Yeah...

(He smiled.)

CALVERT: But look on the bright side. You've done over twenty years worth of service, mate. Retirement is going to be healthy for you, financially.

WILLOWS: Fuck retiring. I'll get a security job. A night-watchman position. That'll leave me free to figure out just how the islanders pulled it off.

(He looked Calvert in the eye.)



WILLOWS: There *was* marijuana in that greenhouse, Calvert. Not tomatoes. How they managed to switch everything and leave no trace, I have no idea. But I will figure it out. Eventually.

CALVERT: Fair enough. Just don't get paranoid and start blaming me again.

WILLOWS: Of course, I won't. You're an exemplary officer. I've seen your record. The idea of *you* being in cahoots with all those ridiculous islanders is absolutely ludicrous.

CALVERT: It is, yes.

(Willows nodded then glanced across the port to where the rest of the officers were.)

WILLOWS: I have to travel back with that lot, you know? And they hate me. They think I'm a paranoid lunatic! That I made everything up. I didn't though, I swear. The islanders are every bit as crooked as I suggested! And more!

(He sighed.)

WILLOWS: But I can live with their scorn and sideways glances. I was treated with disdain for twenty years while living on this island. It's nothing new. I can deal with that easily. What I can't handle is something far more humiliating.

(He then hung in his in abject dismay.)

WILLOWS: Those inbred fuckwits outsmarted me!

(He then burst into tears.)

CALVERT: Yeah... I won't lie, mate. That's embarrassing.

---

A short while later, Calvert found himself standing on the dockside with Port Authority Pete, watching as the Ashrin Police Transporter Ship headed off across the ocean.

Delighted to see the back of it, Calvert exhaled then smiled at Pete.

CALVERT: Hopefully that'll be the last we see of *them*.

PETE: Yeah.

(He nodded.)

PETE: You know, I don't like it here and I be *delighted* if this place was more like the mainland. And them sending in the mainland police to crack down on the illegal activities here might have helped to achieve that. But at what cost to you and I?

(He grimaced.)

PETE: You'd *have* to enforce Kasika law and become hated by one and all. You'd get starved by shops refusing to sell you food. So you'd try to go to the mainland. But the locals would order *me* not to let you cross and threaten to starve me if I obliged. And of course, if the mainland were suddenly taking an interest in the island, *you'd* be able to call them and report me. *I'd* get arrested and *you'd* get malnutrition. No, no. I'm glad that raid failed.

CALVERT: So am I.

(He grimaced.)

CALVERT: How it failed, however, I have no idea. That *is* a marijuana farm, it *is* a casino and that *is* a brothel! How the hell did they hide that fact?

PETE: Your guess is as good as mine. Someone must have tipped them off.

CALVERT: Yeah. Me! After Willows rang me last night, the wife and I decided to warn the locals. You're either with them or against them after all, right?

PETE: Absolutely. And being against them is foolhardy.

CALVERT: Exactly. So the missus left a message on the social media group warning them about the raid. That only gave them thirteen hours to react though. So how did Wesley hide the marijuana farm and turn it into a market garden so quickly?

PETE: I have no fucking idea.

CALVERT: Hmm... clearly these people aren't as dumb as they make out.

PETE: They're absolutely *not* as dumb as they make out.

(They both stood there nodding for a moment then Pete chuckled.)

PETE: I can't believe you actually handcuffed me to the filing cabinet.

CALVERT: Had to make it look real, didn't I?

PETE: Yeah... they didn't even check. I ended up handcuffed there for an hour for nothing.

CALVERT: What? I left you a key.

PETE: What? You did? Where...

(He then groaned in frustration.)

PETE: You did, didn't you? What a twat! I was gagging for a coffee, but couldn't reach the machine.

CALVERT: You tit.

(He then started to chuckle.)

CALVERT: The *islanders* aren't as dumb as they make out, but you...

PETE: Oh, shut up.

(They then stood there giggling at the portside together.)

---

A short while later, DS Calvert drove back to his house then headed inside. Shocked to see him back so soon, Hayley poked her head around the kitchen door then grimaced uneasily.

HAYLEY: You're back early.

(She whimpered.)

HAYLEY: You're back *really* early! Have you been fired?

(She gasped.)

HAYLEY: They found out we tipped the locals off about the raid, didn't they?

(Calvert chuckled.)

CALVERT: Relax, love. Everything's fine. I'm back early because the raiding party didn't stay long.

HAYLEY: Oh?

CALVERT: They didn't find anything.

HAYLEY: They couldn't have *looked* very hard then. When I went to the shop yesterday, I spotted at least three crimes being committed and *I* don't know the first *thing* about the law. There were kids drinking beer, nobody was wearing a crash helmet and the shop was selling products that I know for a fact are illegal.

CALVERT: Oh? You never said anything.

HAYLEY: Yeah, well...

(She ruffled her neck.)

HAYLEY: Those products might be illegal, but good moisturiser is hard to find.

(Calvert gave her an unimpressed glance.)

CALVERT: You bought some, didn't you?

HAYLEY: I did, yes, but don't change the subject. How come they didn't find anything? This island does *not* hide crime well.

CALVERT: Actually, love. You'd be surprised. They managed to hide the marijuana farm and disguise it as a vegetable garden overnight!

HAYLEY: How?

CALVERT: I have no fucking idea. I could barely believe what I saw seeing. They also managed to hide the casino and disguise the brothel as an ordinary house. Willows led us to all three properties expecting to find criminal wrongdoing, but there wasn't a single trace of illegality anywhere.

(He grimaced.)

CALVERT: I felt a bit guilty about it all, actually.

HAYLEY: Why?

CALVERT: Because the property owners also made a point of complaining to the officer in charge. They told him Willows had been maliciously accusing them of random crimes for years. Made him look like a paranoid lunatic. To the point where even *I* was starting to wonder if he hadn't imagined all those illegalities; and I've *seen* them with my own two eyes. I know for a *fact* he was telling the truth. The islanders were really convincing though.

(He puffed out.)

CALVERT: Now the commissioner thinks Willows is a nutcase who made it all up because he hates the islanders. He's been ordered to take retirement.

HAYLEY: Ouch. Poor guy.

(She smiled.)

HAYLEY: Sorry about your friend, love.

CALVERT: Yeah, well... he wasn't exactly my friend; I hadn't known him that long. I do feel sorry for him though. Mostly because I understand him. I could have ended up just like him. The people's blatant disregard for the law was driving *me* to distraction too. Luckily when Edward Carlton *explained* their disregard for the law to me, I listened. Willows didn't.

HAYLEY: And what a mistake that turned out to be.

CALVERT: Well, yeah. A *huge* mistake! I mean, he had the same choice that I did, didn't he? Be *with* the islanders or against them. The difference is, he chose badly.

HAYLEY: And ended being hated for two decades then forced into retirement because of it.

(She exhaled.)

HAYLEY: Yeah, we definitely made the right choice.

CALVERT: You're not kidding. It turns out that these islanders are formidable opponents. They're nowhere near as daft as they look. Poor old Willows; he didn't stand a chance.

(They stood there and nodded along to his sentiments for a moment then Hayley smiled.)

HAYLEY: So what happens now?

CALVERT: We start living like islanders, I guess.

HAYLEY: Fah.

(Calvert shuddered.)

CALVERT: Say that again, and I *will* divorce you.

HAYLEY: And I'll gladly sign the papers, give you custody of Layla then jump off a cliff. I felt dirty saying that.

CALVERT: Then let's make an agreement. We'll integrate and try to *think* like islanders, but the day we start talking like them, we'll fuck off back to Croxton.

HAYLEY: Deal.

(She grimaced.)

HAYLEY: But you know, Layla's gonna grow up speaking the local dialect.

CALVERT: Not if we educate her properly.

(Hayley nodded sternly.)

HAYLEY: Educate her properly *and* bribe her with biscuits. Every hah, fah or bah means no biscuits before bed.

(Calvert gasped.)

CALVERT: But she *loves* having biscuits before bed.

HAYLEY: Yup. And that makes it's the perfect rod to beat her with.

CALVERT: Horrifyingly put, but yes. Biscuits can be her reward for talking properly.

HAYLEY: Exactly.

(They shared a warm smile.)

CALVERT: Wait. Isn't that how you train dogs?

HAYLEY: Yes, but it also works with children. *Our* child anyway. Let's just say Layla's different and leave it at that.

CALVERT: Right...

(Just then, the sound of the doorbell echoed across the living room. Upon hearing it, Hayley instantly took a step towards the door. Before she could take a second one, however, Layla zoomed past and shot into the yard.)

LAYLA: I'll get it!!!

HAYLEY: I'll go with her; she's only going to bark at the door anyway.

(Calvert chuckled then stood in the doorway and watched as Layla yanked open the gate. Much to his astonishment, however, as soon as the gate cranked open, a loud cheer rose up from outside. At once, Layla shrieked then ran and hid behind her mum. Perplexed by it all, Hayley glanced out of the gate then grimaced.)

HAYLEY: Um... hello, mob.

(She then rubbed her eyes to check they weren't deceiving her. A seventy strong gathering of townsfolk had assembled outside the gate. Edward Carlton was standing proudly at the front.)

EDWARD: You must be Hayley.

HAYLEY: Um... yeah. You must be a weird mob.

(She shrieked.)

HAYLEY: Religious cult!!!

EDWARD: What? No!

(He chuckled.)

EDWARD: We're...

(He then spotted Calvert pacing up behind his wife.)

EDWARD: Your husband there will tell you. I'm Edward Carlton; island leader. And these fine folk are from right here in Long Sand. We've come to thank you for tipping us off about the raid.

HAYLEY: I see. Well, that's a relief.

(Calvert stepped up to the gateway then nodded.)

CALVERT: Eddie.

EDWARD: Eddie? Eddie? Who the fuck is Eddie? It's Edward!

CALVERT: Oh. Right. Sorry.

EDWARD: No harm done.

(He smiled.)

EDWARD: Like I said, we've come to thank you for the tip off. And when I say thank you, I mean thank you. Not with a "cheers, mate" and a grateful nod. Here in Tifasea, when someone does us a huge favour, we thank them properly.

(He nodded.)

EDWARD: With a barbeque and beer.

(He then gestured behind him to where the locals were setting up a barbeque and assembling awnings for shade.)

EDWARD: It's party time. In your honour. I hope you're not too busy.

CALVERT: Actually, I'm supposed to be at work.

EDWARD: I wouldn't worry about that. Singleton has redirected the emergency number to his mobile. Now he's helping Alicia set up an awning.

CALVERT: They're skiving off???

EDWARD: No, they're helping me welcome you and your family to the island.

CALVERT: Yeah, but it's during working hours. We can't just...

HAYLEY: You can and you will!

CALVERT: What?

HAYLEY: Take a bloody day off, detective.

LAYLA: Yeah, dad. Let's have fun.

(She beamed.)

LAYLA: I like barbeques.

(Calvert chuckled.)

CALVERT: Fine. It's not as if the police do anything here anyway. Why not?

(He then shovelled Layla outside.)

CALVERT: Come on, you; let's mingle.

LAYLA: Yay!

(Hayley smiled then followed them out.)

---

A short while later, Calvert found himself sitting on a deck chair in the sun, in between Edward Carlton and Wesley from the Marijuana farm. All three of them had a bottle of beer in their hand. Having just taken a first sip of his, Calvert allowed it roll down his throat then exhaled.)

CALVERT: Holy crap. That's the best beer I've ever tasted.

EDWARD: Yup. Tifasea's own Saffron Bay Pilsner. They also do a real ale if you'd like to try it.

CALVERT: No. No, I would not.

WESLEY: I don't blame you. It tastes like arse.

EDWARD: Uncultured heathen.

WESLEY: I just don't like warm beer.

EDWARD: It's not warm; it's cellar temperature!

WESLEY: And tastes like arse!

EDWARD: Oh, you're so...

CALVERT: Guys! No!

EDWARD: What?

CALVERT: Let's not argue about the merits of a decent pilsner against the insult to taste buds that you call real ale, let's discuss this morning.

EDWARD: Insult to taste buds???

CALVERT: I said we're *not* discussing that!

EDWARD: You...

CALVERT: Wesley?

WESLEY: Yeah?

CALVERT: How the fuck did you pull it off?

WESLEY: The bottle top?

CALVERT: No, you cock. How did you hide all that marijuana?

(Before Wesley could reply, Edward chuckled out loud.)

EDWARD: He called you a cock.

WESLEY: Shut up, you.

CALVERT: Well?

WESLEY: What?

CALVERT: How did you hide the marijuana farm?

(Wesley chuckled.)

WESLEY: In some considerable style.

EDWARD: And with much in the way of planning.

WESLEY: Right?

(He smiled.)

WESLEY: Edward aint daft, you know? He might have terrible taste in beer, but he's not an idiot.

EDWARD: Unlike *someone* around here.

WESLEY: Hey! No. That's no way to talk about our new police chief!

EDWARD: I wasn't!

CALVERT: He really wasn't.

WESLEY: Oh?

(An enlightened expression then crossed his brow.)

WESLEY: Oh! You horrible bastard!

CALVERT: Can someone just tell me the story, please?

WESLEY: What? Oh... fine.

(He pouted.)

WESLEY: You start, Edward; I'm gonna sulk for a bit.

EDWARD: Fine.

(He looked to Calvert.)

EDWARD: It all stems from when I had my little chat with Willows. The same chat that I had with you. I knew then he was never going to be on our side. He was always going to be an outsider. An outsider, observing and taking notes. Well, that made him a threat. It was obvious that, given half a chance, he'd tip the mainland off about how we live our lives here. How our culture clashes with what Kasika finds acceptable.

(He shook his head.)

EDWARD: I'm willing to bet he'd been tipping them off the entire time he was living here. They just didn't listen. They probably binned all his notes and ignored his calls. Kasika doesn't care about Tifasea, after all. We weren't to *know* they'd ignore him though, so we made plans to thwart him if he ever got the mainland police to come. And it's a good thing too, because given the chance to talk to other officers face-to-face, he finally got their attention. Hence this morning's raid.

WESLEY: But by then, we'd had a plan in place for quite some time.

CALVERT: A-ha, yes. Here we go. The interesting bit.

EDWARD: Hey!

CALVERT: What?

EDWARD: Are you saying my part was dull?

CALVERT: Not at all. I'm just dying to know how you hid everything so fast, that's all.

EDWARD: Right... well... fine. I'll let you off.

WESLEY: Great. Now shut up. It's my turn.

(He beamed.)

WESLEY: I have a bunker. Underground. The marijuana's all in there. This time, yesterday, on the other hand, that bunker was full of tomatoes, cucumbers and peppers.

CALVERT: What? But they don't grow underground!

WESLEY: They don't grow at all!

(He chuckled.)

WESLEY: They're plastic!

CALVERT: Plastic???

WESLEY: That's right.

EDWARD: My idea!

WESLEY: That is was. And it was inspired!

(He exhaled.)

WESLEY: Those plastic plants have been down there for years, just waiting for their moment. And last night, when you tipped us off about the raid, their time to shine finally arrived. All I had to do was spend a couple of hours switching trays of marijuana for trays of plastic fruit.

CALVERT: So it was that simple, was it? You filled the bunker with marijuana and put the plastic fruit in the greenhouses instead.

WESLEY: That's right? Then I closed the bunker doors and shifted my manure storage on top of them.

EDWARD: Knowing that if the police brought dogs, they wouldn't pick up the scent.

CALVERT: That's brilliant.

(He then raised a suspicious eyebrow.)

CALVERT: Wait a minute. If they were plastic, how come the commissioner didn't notice. He was a keen gardener, you said. You said, he knew his stuff.

(Wesley started to laugh.)

WESLEY: Yeah, I really enjoyed that bit. He wouldn't know a shovel from a rake.

Keen gardener, my arse. I'm willing to bet, he successfully grew something shit like cress as a child and somehow managed to convince himself he's an expert on all things botanical. There's a lot of folk like that. Like Rex from Ridgeton.

(He rolled his eyes.)

WESLEY: Wanker. But let's not talk about him. I don't want to spoil the good mood.

(He then chuckled some more.)

WESLEY: I really enjoyed patronising that commissioner. “You’re a man who knows his fruit”, I said. Priceless. If he *had* been a bloke who knows his fruit, I’d have been screwed, but he couldn’t tell a tomato from a red slab of plastic. Okay, he knew tomatoes take three months to grow properly, but I bet *that* was a guess. Oh, and don’t even get me started on his pompous comment about *Kasikan Crimson* Tomatoes.

(He burst out laughing.)

WESLEY: There’s no such thing. *Kasikan Crimson* is a type of apple. Bloody brilliant.  
(He wiped tears of laughter from his eyes then stood up.)

WESLEY: Great. Now I need a piss.

(He then headed away. Calvert and Edward watched him go then shrugged at one another.)

CALVERT: Weak bladder?

EDWARD: Weak mind.

CALVERT: Right?

(He nodded.)

CALVERT: Anyway, that’s the marijuana explained. How did they hide the casino and the brothel?

EDWARD: Those weren’t even a challenge. Louise just erected a stage and hid the casino games underneath. She then set up a DJ station on the stage for the tea dance. The elderly locals in attendance were just helping her out. As for the brothel, they just sent the girls home. Except the one who stayed behind pretending to be the daughter, of course.

CALVERT: But Willows said they changed the walls.

EDWARD: Nope. They just pulled wallpapered slides across.

CALVERT: Right. And these were *also* plans made well in advance in case of a raid, I suppose.

EDWARD: Yup. And once again, it was all my idea.

CALVERT: I see. Well... kudos, Edward. It worked like a charm.

EDWARD: Thank you.

CALVERT: You’re welcome.

(He then looked to Edward and bit his lip.)

CALVERT: Hey, seeing as I’ve got you alone, there’s actually something I need to talk to you about.

EDWARD: Oh?

CALVERT: Passive aggression.

EDWARD: What passive aggression?

CALVERT: When people here told me I couldn’t arrest them, they didn’t threaten me in any way, shape or form. Not directly, anyway. They didn’t shake their fists at me and promise to see to it that I starve. They just sucked their teeth and *sympathised* with me. Pitied me like I was setting myself up for a fall.

EDWARD: Indeed. They were being polite. Non-confrontational. They won’t threaten you directly, because like I said before, open revolt against a *Kasika* representative would be self-defeating. It’d result in *Kasika* taking an interest and eventually destroying our way of life. So it makes more sense to act dumb, pretend to be compliant and sympathise that *others* might not like you if you arrest them.



CALVERT: Right...

(He furrowed.)

CALVERT: Well, for future reference, don't do that. Passive aggressive threats come over as cowardly and they're really annoying. It just made me hate you all more.

EDWARD: Oh. Really? Bugger. Better work on that then.

CALVERT: Yup. You definitely should.

(They then tapped their bottle tops together and shared an understanding nod.)

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A few feet further along the beach at this time, Hayley was engaged in conversation with a group of mums, roughly her own age. Being new to the island, she was very much the centre of attention. As a result, their conversation very quickly turned into an interrogation.

LOUISE: I bet it's a bit of a culture shock, moving here, isn't it?

NINA: Where do you prefer, here or there?

JOY: Is it true there's like a hundred shops in big mainland cities?

SALLY: What are trains like?

NINA: And why does your fella want to punch my husband in the face?

(Hayley flinched.)

HAYLEY: Steady on. One question at a time.

LOUISE: We *did* ask one question at a time.

SALLY: We just didn't give you time to answer any of them.

(Hayley chuckled then offered them a smile.)

HAYLEY: Yes, it was a culture shock. It's much slower and quieter here. Things are very different actually. Especially the do's and don'ts. As to whether I prefer it here or there... I haven't been here long enough to make a judgment.

JOY: But is it true? There's a hundred shops?

SALLY: And what *are* trains like?

HAYLEY: A hundred shops? There are literally thousands.

(All the women in her company gasped.)

HAYLEY: And trains are fine. I'm not sure how I meant to answer that really.

SALLY: Doesn't matter. I'm not interested anymore. Thousands of shops?

HAYLEY: Yeah. Clothes shops, shoes shops, food shops, furniture shops, coffee shops, phone shops. All sorts. And there are hundreds of each kind. Especially clothes and food shops.

JOY: Jealous!

NINA: So why *does* your bloke want to hit my Gerry?

(Hayley grimaced.)

HAYLEY: Um... it was a misunderstanding.

NINA: Oh. Right. Fah.

LOUISE: So, these shops... have you been in all of them?

HAYLEY: Not all of them, no. Visiting all of them would take forever.

LOUISE: So there's *too* many then?

HAYLEY: Not really, no. There are a million people in Croxton; you *need* a lot of shops.

JOY: A million people? That's too many.

SALLY: Right? It must be seriously overcrowded there.

HAYLEY: It's getting that way, yeah.

NINA: Sounds shit.

SALLY: Having a thousand shops doesn't sound shit though.

NINA: You make a compelling argument there, Sal.

(Hayley smiled.)

HAYLEY: There are three shops here, right? I mean *other* than coffee shops.

LOUISE: Yup.

HAYLEY: Which one sells clothes?

NINA: None of them. You have to go to the mainland or order them online. Like furniture.

(Sally exhaled.)

SALLY: Online shopping is a godsend. Before that became a thing, we used to have to go to the mainland for clothes, shoes and furniture and stay overnight. And stuff on the mainland is bloody expensive. It was a miserable chore that butchered your bank account.

HAYLEY: I'll stick with shopping online then.

LOUISE: A wise move.

SALLY: You're going to miss having a thousand shops to choose from though, aren't you?

HAYLEY: Bloody right, I am. I loved clothes shopping.

NINA: It shows.

LOUISE: Yeah, you're way too smartly dressed for this island, love.

(Hayley chuckled.)

HAYLEY: I'll take that as a compliment.

LOUISE: Sure. If you like.

HAYLEY: What?

LOUISE: Nothing. So what else will you miss?

(Hayley sighed.)

HAYLEY: The gym. I used to love my trips to the gym. And the odd trip to the cinema.

(She shrugged.)

HAYLEY: I also love coffee shops, but I'm assured that you have loads of them.

SALLY: Yup. The best of the bunch being Suzie's place further down the seafront.

LOUISE: Best coffee by far.

HAYLEY: Good to know. At least one of my passions isn't dead yet then.

(She sighed.)

HAYLEY: Visiting the gym and going to the cinema, however...

SALLY: Why? What's wrong with the gym here?

(Hayley glanced at her with hope in her eyes.)

HAYLEY: There's a gym?

SALLY: Yeah. Both hotels have them. Local folk get membership half price. They make up the shortfall by ripping off tourists.

LOUISE: Like *most* businesses here.

HAYLEY: But are these gyms any good?

NINA: Any good? How do you think my husband got so huge?

(She gestured to her husband, Gerry; a mountain of a man.)

NINA: He loves it there. Apparently it's state of the art.

HAYLEY: Perfect. I'll join one this afternoon then.

SALLY: There you go. Another of your passions secured.

JOY: Make it three. One of the hotels has a movie night once a week too. It's got its own cinema.

HAYLEY: Ooh.

(She beamed.)

HAYLEY: So I can still visit coffee shops, the gym and watch the odd film?

NINA: Of course.

LOUISE: Clothes shopping, however... we can't help you with that.

HAYLEY: Oh, well. I still have the internet for that.

(She exhaled.)

HAYLEY: I also used to enjoy going to watch football with Ray sometimes. We actually met in the queue for a half-time hamburger at Croxton City. Someone pushed in front of me and stood on my foot, so he threw them out of the queue for me.

(She smiled.)

HAYLEY: We got chatting and realised we had a lot in common. We both hate arseholes. And Croxton Rovers, of course. Good times. We go every year on our anniversary. Or we did.

LOUISE: We can't help you with that either.

SALLY: Nope. You'll have to make do with the Tifasea Football League.

(At this point, Calvert stepped up next to his wife and gasped in anticipation.)

CALVERT: There's a football league?

SALLY: Yeah.

HAYLEY: A new anniversary tradition perhaps, Ray?

CALVERT: Sounds good to me.

(He grimaced.)

CALVERT: I bet the quality isn't up to much, but who cares? Football is football.

NINA: Well, if you want to know if the quality is any good, why don't you ask our star player?

CALVERT: Who?

(Nina then called over to a group of young men.)

NINA: Get your arse over here, Joe!

CALVERT: Simpleton? He's the star player?

SALLY: His name's Singleton.

CALVERT: Right. I actually got it wrong by accident that time.

(Just then, Singleton stepped up them grimacing nervously.)

SINGLETON: What's wrong? Who have I upset now?

NINA: Nobody. Your boss here was just asking about the football league.

SINGLETON: Oh?

CALVERT: Any good?

(Singleton looked through him.)

SINGLETON: Compared to the Kasika league? No.

(He shrugged.)

SINGLETON: We've only got two teams. And it's only six-a-side.

HAYLEY: Six?

SINGLETON: Yeah. We wanted to play eleven a side, but all we could muster was eight verses nine.

SALLY: It's fun though. A few hundred islanders assemble at the football ground every Sunday afternoon to drink beer and eat burgers while we watch the game.

HAYLEY: That might be fun actually.

CALVERT: Yeah...

SINGLETON: You should come along and watch me in action, boss. I'm our best player.

CALVERT: That's a bit conceited.

SALLY: He's right though.

SINGLETON: See?

HAYLEY: So it's every Sunday is it?

SINGLETON: Without fail. We play fifty-one league games and then have a cup final in the last week of the calendar year.

(He beamed with pride.)

SINGLETON: Long Sand Academicals won the double last season.

CALVERT: Academicals?

SINGLETON: Yeah.

CALVERT: What are you called that?

SINGLETON: Because the Carlton family live in Long Sand and *they've* been to university.

HAYLEY: And what are the other lot called?

SINGLETON: Saffron Bay Athletic.

(He sighed.)

SINGLETON: Bastards are top of the league at the moment. Ten wins to our seven.

CALVERT: You go by wins not points?

SINGLETON: We use points, but we never look at them. There's two teams in the league, so the one with the most game wins will win the league. It's mathematically impossible not to.

(Calvert mused to himself for a moment.)

CALVERT: That's true actually.

SINGLETON: See?

(He sighed.)

SINGLETON: It's just frustrating that we're so far behind. I've been on great form.

SALLY: He scored eight goals last week. A record.

SINGLETON: But what good did it do? We lost ten-eight.

HAYLEY: Wow. Crazy scores.

SINGLETON: Six-a-side. Amateur players. The defending is terrible.

HAYLEY: Sounds great fun. We'll come along next time. Where's the ground?

SINGLETON: Just up the high street. Tourists think it's a tennis court.

(Calvert looked enlightened.)

CALVERT: The tennis court with stands around it!

SINGLETON: It's not a tennis court! But yes.

(Hayley smiled.)

HAYLEY: So I'll be able to go to the gym, pop into coffee shops, visit the cinema *and* watch football matches. That's great news. We're going to be alright here, Ray. Or at least *I* am.

(She looked into his eyes uneasily.)

HAYLEY: How do *you* feel about it all?

CALVERT: Living here, you mean?

HAYLEY: Yeah.

CALVERT: Well, I've committed to it now, so we'll *have* to make it work.

(He shrugged.)

CALVERT: I'll miss doing detective work, but after kicking my commissioner in the nuts *that* carer was over anyway. I'll just have to find a way to fill my days doing community policing instead. I'll be fine.

(He then nodded down the beach to where Layla was playing with a group of children.)

CALVERT: It all depends on the little one there. If she's happy and stays out of trouble, I'm more than happy love. This move could actually turn out to be the best thing we've ever done.

HAYLEY: You wouldn't have said *that* yesterday, would you?

CALVERT: Nope. And I may even take it back. It all depends on Layla.

(They then glanced to Layla and smiled. Blissfully unaware that her parent were watching her, she was making a sandcastle whilst turning her head away from Fiona's cigarette smoke. She then coughed and batted away the smoke.)

LAYLA: Ew. I don't even like the *smell* of cigarettes anymore.

FIONA: Crazy person.

LAYLA: Am not.

(One of the boys in the group grimaced at her.)

BILLY: I can't believe the massive long list of things you're not allowed to do.

LAYLA: What? It's not *that* long.

FIONA: It is!

(Another girl then chimed in.)

HELENA: No smoking, no alcohol, no makeovers, no coffee and no driving.

LAYLA: Well... yeah. But that's normal where I come from.

BILLY: That's just weird. Apart from drinking fizzy drinks, I can do whatever I want.

FIONA: Same.

(She grimaced.)

FIONA: Actually, I can't have chewing gum either.

HELENA: I can. No fizzy drinks though. They're really bad for you.

(She took a drag on her cigarette then shook her head.)

HELENA: That's why only grown ups are allowed them.

FIONA: Yup.

(Layla looked at them blankly.)

LAYLA: You're not allowed fizzy drinks?

FIONA: Nope.

BILLY: They're really unhealthy.

(Layla blinked in bewilderment for a moment then beamed with delight.)

LAYLA: I'll be right back.

(With that, she charged up to her parents and bounced excitedly.)

LAYLA: Hiya!

HAYLEY: Hi, L...

LAYLA: Can I have a can of lemonade, please?

HAYLEY: Of course.

(She nodded to a cooler nearby.)

HAYLEY: Just grab one from there.

LAYLA: Yay! Thanks, mum!

(She then scampered over to the cooler and grabbed a can of lemonade. Having done so, she swaggered back to her friends, wearing the world's smuggest grin. Right now, she felt ten feet tall. She was allowed to do something her friends were not. Revelling in that fact, as soon as she reached them, she opened the can and beamed with self-adoration.

She then adopting a cocky stance and pointed to the can arrogantly.)

LAYLA: Fizzy drink.

(She then took a victory sip and exhaled with joy.)

LAYLA: I'm the best.

(Accepting the jealous looks she was receiving with much in the way of satisfaction, she then offered her parents a thumbs up before kneeling down to play with her friends again. Watching on, Calvert and Hayley couldn't help chuckling.)

CALVERT: That was priceless. Proper *next level* smugness.

HAYLEY: Right? I should be embarrassed really, but that was brilliant.

CALVERT: It was perfect.

(He exhaled.)

CALVERT: It's made her day. Now she can do something her friends can't, she won't feel left out anymore.

HAYLEY: Yeah.

(They placed their arms around one another.)

CALVERT: She's gonna be happy here, I can feel it.

HAYLEY: Yeah. Same.

(They shared a warm smile then slowly leant their heads forwards as if to kiss. Long before their lips could meet, however, Constable Hornblower spoke up from Hayley's side and interrupted them.)

HORNBLOWER: You know it's illegal to give children fizzy drinks, right?

HAYLEY: No, it's...

(She then became acutely aware of the fact that everyone was staring at her in abject horror.)

HAYLEY: What? What's going on?

SALLY: You let your child have fizzy drinks???

EDWARD: Are you insane? We outlawed that ten years ago!

(Calvert furrowed his brow.)

CALVERT: You outlawed kids having fizzy drinks??? Seriously? And yet you let children smoke!

EDWARD: Absolutely! I mean, we had to draw the line *somewhere*!

HAYLEY: And you drew it *there*? Just how wobbly *is* this line???

EDWARD: It isn't wobbly at all! Fizzy drinks are extremely unhealthy!

HAYLEY: So is tobacco!

EDWARD: Yes, but not as deadly as lemonade and such!

HAYLEY: Tobacco's infinitely worse!!!

(Calvert furrowed his brow at Edward.)

CALVERT: And besides, you told me parents on this island get to *choose* how they raise their own children! To decide for themselves what they can and can't have! What happened to that?

EDWARD: Um...

CALVERT: Outlawing fizzy drinks makes a mockery of that entire concept, doesn't it?

(Edward glanced into his eyes uneasily then sighed.)

EDWARD: Shit. You've got me there!

(He shook his head then raised his voice.)

EDWARD: Fine! The fizzy drink rule is repealed!

FIONA: Yay!

NINA: You're still not having one!

FIONA: Boo!

LAYLA: Oh, well. We all have our problems.

(She took another sip from her can then exhaled.)

LAYLA: I love being me.

(She nodded.)

LAYLA: You can shove your cigarettes!

(Delighted to hear it, Calvert and Hayley shared a smile then tried to kiss again. Once again, however, Constable Hornblower was right there to spoil the moment.)

HORNBLOWER: Um... boss? I'm confused! Do I have to arrest you or not? Giving kids fizzy drinks was still illegal when you gave it to her.

CALVERT: No! And if you try it, I'll arrest you back for making a false arrest.

HORNBLOWER: Right...

(She gave a defeated sigh.)

HORNBLOWER: Now I'm even *more* confused.

CALVERT: Yes, well, chin up, Alicia. You're still the best policewoman in all of Tifasea.

(Hornblower's face lit up.)

HORNBLOWER: Cool!

(She then paced away, feeling pleased with herself. Watching her go, Calvert and Hayley chuckled.)

HAYLEY: This place is weird.

CALVERT: Yup. But we'd better get used to it, babe.

(He grimaced.)

CALVERT: Because this weird place is our home now.

HAYLEY: Yeah...

(They then stared out across the ocean together and shuddered in perfect harmony.)

THE END

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