

“Just this once, then, Shirley Temple.” (If there was one thing that Jackson genuinely loathed about Evans it was his long, wavy hair.) “And get shaving!”

At 8.45 the same morning the Reverend Stuart McLeery left his bachelor flat in Broad Street and stepped out briskly towards Carfax. The weatherman reported temperatures considerably below the normal for early June, and a long black overcoat and a shallow-crowned clerical hat provided welcome protection from the steady drizzle which had set in half an hour earlier and which now spattered the thick lenses of his spectacles. In his right hand he was carrying a small brown suitcase, which contained all that he would need for his morning duties, including a sealed question paper envelope, a yellow invigilation form, a special “authentication” card from the Examinations Board, a paper knife, a Bible (he was to speak to the Women’s Guild that afternoon on the Book of Ruth), and a current copy of The Church Times.

Shirley temple: An actress famous for her wavy hair

Loathe: hate

Reverend: a member of the church

Drizzle: light shower of rain

Spattered: splash, spray

Authentication: verify

paper knife: blunt knife for cutting paper

Guild: association

Jackson allowed him to wear the hat just once, he also teased him by calling him Shirley Temple. Shirley Temple was an actress, who had long wavy hair. Jackson hated Evans’s long and wavy hair. He then asked him to shave.

At 8.45 AM, Stuart Mc Lee who was a member of the church, left his Bachelor flat (flat made for a single person) in Broad street. He started walking fast towards Carfax. The weather reports claimed that the temperature would be below normal in early June. Mc Lee was wearing a black overcoat and a clerical hat (hat used by church clergy) to protect himself from rainfall that started within half an hour. It had also splashed water on his spectacles. He was carrying a small brown coloured suitcase in his right hand. It had all the things required for his morning duties, such as a sealed question paper envelope, a yellow supervisor form, a special permission card that verified him as a supervisor, a blunt knife to cut the seal of the paper, a Bible as he had to speak for a women’s association on the Book of Ruth and the latest copy of the Church times.

The two-hour examination was scheduled to start at 9.15 a.m.

Evans was lathering his face vigorously when Stephens brought in two small square tables, and set them opposite each other in the narrow space between the bunk on the one side and on the other a distempered stone wall. Next, Stephens brought in two hard chairs, the slightly less battered of which he placed in front of the table which stood nearer the cell door.

Jackson put in a brief final appearance. "Behave yourself, laddy!"

Evans turned and nodded.

scheduled: planned or fixed

Lathering: to form foam with soap

Vigorously: strongly

distempered: painted with distemper

Battered: worn out

The two hour exam was planned to begin at 9.15 am.

Evans was foaming his face strongly when Stephens brought in two small square tables. He put them opposite each other in the small space between the bed and the painted wall. He then brought in two chairs, the less worn out chair was placed in front of the table which was near the cell door. Jackson made a small final appearance and asked Evans to behave properly. Evans turned and showed his acceptance.

"And these" — (Jackson pointed to the pin-ups) — "off!"

Evans turned and nodded again. "I was goin' to take 'em down anyway. A minister, isn't 'e? The chap comin' to sit in, I mean."

"And how did you know that?" asked Jackson quietly.

"Well, I 'ad to sign some forms, didn't I? And I couldn't

'elp — "

Evans drew the razor carefully down his left cheek, and left a neat swath in the white lather. "Can I ask you something, Mr. Jackson? Why did they 'ave to bug me in this cell?" He nodded his head vaguely to a point above the door.

Pin ups: Posters

Swath: a broad strip or area of something

bug: a small microphone

vaguely: roughly

Jackson ordered Evans to remove the posters which Evans had pinned up on the cell wall. Evans agreed to this and said that he was about to remove them as he knew that it was some churchman who was going to come for the exam. Jackson queried as to how he knew that. Evans said that he had noticed it when he had signed the examination forms. Evans continued with his shaving and sought Jackson's permission to ask him something. He then asked him why the officers had put a microphone in his cell and he turned his head towards the space above the door.

"Not a very neat job," conceded Jackson.

"They're not — they don't honestly think I'm goin' to try to — "

"They're taking no chances, Evans. Nobody in his senses would take any chance with you."

"Who's goin' to listen in?"

"I'll tell you who's going to listen in, laddy. It's the Governor himself, see? He don't trust you a bloody inch — and nor do I. I'll be watching you like a hawk, Evans, so keep your nose clean. Clear?" He walked towards the door.

Evans nodded. He'd already thought of that, and Number Two Handkerchief was lying ready on the bunk — a neatly folded square of off-white linen

"Just one more thing, Einstein."

"Ya? Wha's 'at?"

"Good luck, old son."

Conceded: admit

laddy: referred to boy

hawk: a bird of prey with broad rounded wings and long tail

Jackson admitted that the microphone was not put perfectly as Evans easily spotted it. Evans questions him why they think that he would run. Jackson replies that any one with a sense would not trust him. Evans then questions him as to who was going to listen to him. Jackson replied that the Governor would listen as he did not trust him. Jackson told him that even he didn't trust him. So, he would watch him like a hawk , a bird that keeps its eye on its prey. He finally asks him to keep his nose clean and Evans agreed. He knew this already and so, had kept a neat hanky on the bed. Jackson wished him good luck before leaving.

In the little lodge just inside the prison's main gates, the Reverend S. McLeery signed his name neatly in the visitors' book, and thence walked side by side with a silent prison officer across the exercise yard to D Wing, where he was greeted by Jackson. The Wing's heavy outer door was unlocked, and locked behind them, the heavy inner door the same, and McLeery was handed into Stephens's keeping.

"Get the razor?" murmured Jackson.

Stephens nodded.

"Well, keep your eyes skinned. Clear?"

Stephens nodded again; and McLeery, his feet clanging up the iron stairs, followed his new guide, and finally stood before a cell door, where Stephens opened the peep-hole and looked through.

"That's him, sir."

Lodge: gate house, cottage

Murmur: whisper

keep one's eyes skinned: be on the alert; watch carefully or vigilantly for something

Clanging: make a sound

Peep hole: keyhole, opening

The priest, Mc Leery signed his name in the visitor's book at the gate house. He then followed the prison officer through the exercise yard to D wing. There he was greeted by Jackson . The heavy outer door of the D wing was opened and then shut behind them. The same happened when they entered through the inner door. Mc Leery joined Stephens. Jackson ordered Stephens to remove the razor from the cell. Stephen agreed, he also told him to keep a close watch. Mc Leery made a vibrating sound while climbing up the stairs, following his new guide. When they reached the entrance of the cell, Stephens opened the peep hole and informed Mc Leery that he was the person who had to take the exam.

Evans, facing the door, sat quietly at the farther of the two tables, his whole attention riveted to a textbook of elementary German grammar. Stephens took the key from its ring, and the cell lock sprang back with a thudded, metallic twang.

It was 9.10 a.m. when the Governor switched on the receiver. He had instructed Jackson to tell Evans of the temporary little precaution — that was only fair. (As if Evans wouldn't spot it!) But wasn't it all a bit theatrical? Schoolboyish, almost? How on earth was Evans going to try anything on today? If he was so anxious to make another break, why in heaven's name hadn't he tried it from the Recreational Block? Much easier. But he hadn't. And there he was now — sitting in a locked cell, all the prison officers on the alert, two more locked doors between his cell and the yard, and a yard with a wall as high as a haystack. Yes, Evans was as safe as houses...

Rivet: here, fixed

Sprang: past of spring

thudded: strike something with a heavy sound

twang: a strong ringing sound

Haystack: a packed pile of hay (dried grass)

Evans was sitting quietly, facing the door, slightly away from the two tables. He was concentrating on the elementary German Grammar. Stephens took one of the keys from the ring and opened the lock. The lock of the cell made a ringing sound after it sprung up. At 9.10 am, the Governor switched on the receiver of the microphone. He ordered Jackson to tell Evans to be careful as they had installed a microphone in his cell. He thought that it would be good to forewarn him. He said it in a way as though Evans would never be able to spot it. A thought came to the Governor's mind that all this seemed like a theatrical drama

and all their preparations were like those done by school boys. He thought that how could Evans think of escaping that day. He could have tried it when he was at the Recreational block because it was easier to escape from there but today he was locked in his cell. All the officers were closely watching him. There were two doors between his cell and the yard. There were walls as high as piles of dry grass. Yes, Evans was totally safe now.

Anyway, it wouldn't be any trouble at all to have the receiver turned on for the next couple of hours or so. It wasn't as if there was going to be anything to listen to, was it? Amongst other things, an invigilator's duty was to ensure that the strictest silence was observed. But... but still that little nagging doubt! Might Evans try to take advantage of McLeery? Get him to smuggle in a chisel or two, or a rope ladder, or —

The Governor sat up sharply. It was all very well getting rid of any potential weapon that Evans could have used; but what about McLeery? What if, quite unwittingly, the innocent McLeery had brought in something himself? A jack-knife, perhaps? And what if Evans held him hostage with such a weapon?

Smuggle: to take someone or something illegally

Chisel: a long bladed hand tool

Potential: possible

Unwittingly: unknowingly

Jack-knife: a large knife with a folding blade

Hostage: captive

The Governor thought that there would be no problem if he kept the receiver switched on. Although he knew that there was nothing to listen to because it is the duty of the supervisor to maintain silence. But he was still in doubt. He was worried about Evans taking undue advantage of Mc Leery. He could have smuggled him to take a long bladed hand tool or a rope ladder. The Governor at once got alert. He thought that they had taken away all the possible weapons from Evans. But there were chances that Mc Leery could have brought some weapon unknowingly with him. Such as a jack-knife which is a large knife with a folding blade. Even Evans could hold him captive for forcing the prison officers to release him.

The Governor reached for the phone. It was 9.12 a.m. The examinee and the invigilator had already been introduced by Stephens when Jackson came back and shouted to McLeery through the cell door. "Can you come outside for a minute, sir? You too, Stephens."

Jackson quickly explained the Governor's worries, and McLeery patiently held out his arms at shoulder level whilst Jackson lightly frisked his clothes. "Something hard here, sir." "Ma reading glasses," replied McLeery, looking down at the spectacle case.

The Governor called up someone at 9.12 am. Stephens had already introduced the supervisor and Evans who had to appear for the exam. Just at that moment Jackson came and asked Mcleery to come outside for a minute. He explained about the Governor's reasons for being worried. Mc Leery cooperated with him in the checking process by holding out his arms so that he could be checked. Jackson started checking him very fast. He then found something hard. Which Mc Leery said was his reading glasses.