

In His Sights

by Luka

"Who's the new boy?" Bodie leaned against the firing range window, watching the slight, curly-headed guy loading a handgun and fussing over its balance.

"Ray Doyle. Ex-Met."

"Christ, Cowley must be scraping the bottom of the barrel employing short-arsed plods."

"Shouldn't let our beloved leader hear you say that," observed Anson, lighting another cigar from the remains of the previous one. "And in any case, he's supposed to be shit-hot."

"At what? Looks like a poofy ballet dancer to me," muttered Tommy, fingers beating a ceaseless tattoo against the window.

"Ah well, thereby hangs a tale. Allegedly."

"Yeah?"

"Our DC Doyle was shunted rather swiftly out of the Met. The official story was that he'd upset one Freemason too many after a corruption case. The real story, so my mole says, was that he'd been sleeping with a colleague."

"So?"

"Said colleague was male."

"Little devil," said Bodie absently, watching Doyle taking aim and then wiping the floor with the recruits around him.

"Yes. And what makes it more interesting is that the other half is here as well."

"Which one?"

"Guy called Jax. Over there."

They swung round to stare at the tall, poised black man who was ostensibly checking his gun whilst waiting his turn on the firing range but who in reality couldn't keep his eyes off Doyle.

"Blimey, bet that went down like a lead balloon," said Tommy.

"How come?"

"A couple of queers and one of them a spade."

"Belt up, Tommy," said Anson sharply. "Cowley'll string you up by the short and curlies if he hears you spouting that sort of rubbish."

Tommy bared his teeth in a vague approximation of a smile. Anson seemed about to pursue the matter when the firing range door opened and the new recruits filed out.

"Bodie? Anson?" Jack Crane's voice boomed over the hubbub. "Mr Cowley wants you working with Doyle and Jax. I'll leave them to your tender mercies. And bring 'em back in one piece, eh?"

"I thought Anson and I were working solo."

"I'm not privy to Mr Cowley's innermost thoughts. You got a problem, Bodie, you take it up with him yourself."

Bodie humphed, none too quietly. Doyle was watching him, not bothering to hide his amusement, propped provocatively against Jax.

"What you grinning at?"

"Your macho posturing."

"And you'd know all about that?"

"Yeah."

"That's not what I heard."

"Oh yeah?" Quiet but with a definite undertone of menace. Jax touched his arm briefly, as if in warning.

"You two quite finished?" asked Anson acidly.

"I have if Butch here has."

"Ray, leave it out ..." Jax was quietly spoken. Doyle favoured him with a brief smile which was returned with interest.

Half an hour later, Bodie was starting to wonder whether winding up the little shit had been wise. Doyle might have been an inch or so shorter than him and a couple of stone lighter, but he knew every bloody dirty trick in the book. Bodie didn't even want to think about where he'd have bruises and footmarks the following day. He rubbed ruefully at the spot where one kick had landed. Half an inch to the right and it would have castrated him.

"Don't rub 'em, count 'em!"

"Ha ha," said Bodie, gearing up for another bout.

"Give it a rest, you two," said Anson wearily. "Let Jax and I have a go."

They sat several feet apart watching Anson and Jax sparring. Jax wasn't bad, but he lacked that killer instinct clearly possessed by Doyle. Bodie leaned back against the wall and divided his attention between Anson, whose effete manner belied his ability to get out of a sticky situation, giving Jax the runaround, and Doyle's expressive face. The guy was certainly a looker, no doubt about that. Not handsome, but striking – mismatched features, slightly too long curls and a wiry, compact body. Bodie would have bet a month's wages on Doyle being explosive in bed – and he definitely fancied a chance to prove himself right. In his experience sex was too good to be restricted to bedding one gender.

"So where d'you pick up all those tricks?" Bodie thought he'd better make a token effort at brandishing an olive branch.

"Boxing and self-defence classes. Useful if you've covered some of the beats I have."

"Ex-cop, aren't you?"

"Yep. And let me guess – you used to be a soldier?"

"Is it so obvious?" asked Bodie, faintly amused.

"Every bloody squaddie I've met is top of the league when it comes to macho posturing and willy waving. Oh, and you've got razor-sharp creases in your training gear."

Before Bodie could come up with a suitable riposte, Cowley appeared. "Ah, Bodie and Doyle. Glad to see you're making each other's acquaintance. You'll be paired from now on. I'll see you in my office 9am tomorrow for your first assignment." He nodded to Anson and Jax, who were taking a spontaneous breather, then was gone.

Doyle raised his eyebrows. "Bad luck, Butch. Looks like you're stuck with me."

"Bloody Cowley. I told him I work best solo."

"Can't hack it where you might be overshadowed by a partner, more like."

"Bollocks!" said Bodie explosively, then pulled a face when he saw Doyle was taking the piss. "Anyway, I can knock you into shape, easy as anything."

"Oh yeah?"

"Yeah. I'll soon have you where I want you!"

"I wouldn't bet on that!"

"You'll see."

"Listen Bodie, I'm not going to make it easy for you. If you give me crap, you'll get it back. Double."

Bodie grinned wolfishly and crossed his eyes. "Good job I like a challenge, then."

-- THE END --

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