

Detective

by Jorj Kowszun

People say it's not what happens in your life that matters, it's what you think happened. I used to think that was one of those postmodern sayings, you know, about how there's no truth, only interpretations. Well, let me tell you, sometimes interpretations are just plain wrong, as I discovered when I got *that* close to destroying my marriage.

My wife is a consultant in business security and she will often have drinks or meals with clients to discuss their specific issues. This was never a problem until the day I walked past a restaurant and saw her sitting at a table having coffee with a man I did not recognise and who I assumed was a client. They had just come to the end of their conversation and both of them stood up. I hung back intending to wait until she was alone so I could join her. However, as the two of them stood saying their goodbyes I saw she had taken his hand in hers, they embraced and kissed each other – admittedly just on the cheek – nevertheless it was far too intimate for a client encounter.

From that day forward I started to spy on her. We have those apps on our phones that show where we are. We set them up in case we needed to find each other. I used mine to keep track of her movements. A week later I saw her meeting with the same man again. An intimate greeting, a long conversation and an equally intimate goodbye.

'So, erm. How's business going? You haven't mentioned any new clients recently.'

'Still working with the same company. It will be quite a long contract so I'm not searching for new clients just yet.'

'I thought I saw you having coffee with someone the other day. I didn't like to interrupt you.'

'Oh, that must have been one of the team. I've been working my way through discussing the issues as they see them with each of them.'

She changed the subject to something completely unrelated. Too quickly perhaps? Who was this man? Next time I managed to take a picture and put it through a reverse image search on my work computer. There were far too many results to be any use. I decided that next time I would follow him.

Another week and they met again. There was a clear pattern to their meetings and always in the same area of town. I thought that as a security consultant she would have been more careful, more discrete. There again, I guess it never occurred to her that I might have spotted them.

I hid across the road behind a parked van and waited until they left. He crossed the road in my direction, turned to wave at her and walked right past me. I pretended to be tying my shoelace, allowing him some distance, then followed him.

He didn't go far. A few streets only and then he walked into the police station. A large building with several police cars in designated parking bays outside. I ran in behind him to see him disappearing through a door marked *Private*.

'Can I help you Sir?' said the woman at the reception desk.

'Oh, I'm so sorry. Could you tell me who that person was that just walked in.'

'And why would you want me to tell you that Sir?'

I racked my brains for something plausible, but nothing came to me. All I managed was a lame, 'I just want to know if he's a policeman, that's all.'

'Yes he is a policeman, a senior detective. That's already more than I should have told you.'

'Thank you. Sorry to have bothered you.'

With that I left.

A senior detective? What's he got that I haven't got? That was it. I decided to confront them at their next meeting.

A week later they were in the same café as the week before. I had used the tracker to follow my wife and waited until they had greeted each other and sat down. I marched in and strode up to their table.

'Who are you and why are you having these secret meetings with my wife?'

Instead of getting defensive or angry he just smiled.

'You know your wife was taken into care as a baby? Well so was I. The documents were lost and no-one could tell me anything. After many months of investigating I found who my birth parents were and that I had a sister. Pleased to meet you. I am your brother-in-law.'