

"I tried to find you last night but someone had moved your house".

"Please do something with yourself. It's 8 o'clock and you've that Christening at ten. God knows what the families will think if they find you in that state", pleaded Miss Mary Givens.

"Do you really think they'll care? They're only coming to fill up the family photo album and they'll only be back when they want to include some wedding photos. I'm only an extra in their video shots. They don't believe in all this", cried Alwright as he waved an encompassing arm, "And to tell the truth I don't know if I believe any more either".

"Oh, come on Alwright, things have just not been good for you lately. You'll come through it. Just say to yourself that today is the start of a new dawn. Come on, you can scrub up at mine. I think the house is where I left it", she said with the same smile that had captivated Alwright many months ago.

At nine-thirty Alwright was back in the church refreshed and filled with the encouraging words of Miss Givens. He flicked through the pages of his Bible trying to find an appropriate verse that would give substance to his optimism but his mind was distracted by the lingering smells of Miss Givens and he couldn't get passed, 'In the beginning...'. Fifteen minutes later Alwright was greeting the families, some of whom he was sure he had seen last night. This was confirmed by a nudge in the ribs from the child's father who said, "Feeling all right now, Vic?" Alwright recalled the Australian accent and tried hard to remember the details of their meeting but had to give up and said only, with a slight smile, "Yes. Thank you". The ceremony was going as well as these ceremonies go when Alwright said, "And what do you name this child?"

"Darwin", replied the Australian.

"Darwin?" replied Alwright.

"Yes. Darwin", replied the Australian.

"Darwin?" replied Alwright.

"Yes. Yes. Darwin", interjected the young mother, "Why, is there a problem?"

"Problem? No. Just an unusual name that's all. Are you sure you

want to call the child Darwin? After all, the child will have to bear this name for the rest of its life. You do know who Darwin was I assume?" enquired a rather perplexed Alwright.

"Was?" said the increasingly irritated Australian, "It's where my family are from and we think it's a good name!"

"Don't you have any family from...?", Alwright paused,

"Victoria?"

"Victoria!" exclaimed the Australian, "It's a bloody boy!"

"Okay", said Alwright calmly,

"Then what about naming him after the place he was conceived? Where was that? It's very popular with celebrities you know".



Coyly the mother replied, "Singapore. On holiday. The place where we first met".

"Ah, Singapore", said Alwright wistfully attempting to conjure up a picture of a place he'd never seen.

"Yes. At Raffles!" bawled the annoyed Australian

"That was lucky", smirked Alwright.

The Australian lunged at Alwright who, moving at the speed of a planning law, was knocked to the floor. Within seconds the whole assembly was embroiled in argument, the young mother's family accusing the Australian in-laws of being uncouth barbarians and the Australians retorting with, 'Your sportsmen are crap!' Some argued that that the child should indeed be called Raffles, some wanted to know who this fellow Darwin was and a transvestite, who no-

body claimed, insisted that Victoria was a beautiful name for a boy.

With the Christening forgotten the fracas gradually moved outside leaving Alwright alone and looking up at the roof. He arose unsteadily and dusted himself down. Nervously peering out of the door he spotted the hubbub exiting through the church gate and breathed a sigh of relief. 'Weddings, funerals, christenings, always a cause for celebration', he muttered to himself. This was it; this must be revelation Saturday he concluded as he carefully folded up his vestments. Standing before the altar he looked up as he examined his feelings. He felt nothing – no awe, no fear and no authority. Hat pulled tightly down Alwright crept out of the side door and onto the road leading to Miss Givens. He stopped at a post box and reaching into the inside pocket of his jacket pulled out a rather scruffy envelope.

The contents contained his resignation letter written some months previous but never sent. Producing a second-class stamp from his wallet he attached it to the letter and dropped it into the box. Alwright stood in silence for a few moments and with a shrug of the shoulders continued his journey; his ordeal over he was filled with both trepidation and excitement. Laughing loudly he thought to himself, 'Raffles? Now that is an excellent idea!' □

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