

RUN FOR YOUR WIFE

13

TROUGHTON. (*Off.*) He'll be all right, Madam.

MARY. (*As THEY enter.*) I knew he'd had an accident.

TROUGHTON. Steady as we go.

(TROUGHTON, in plain clothes, and MARY enter supporting a bedraggled John who is casually dressed in slacks and loose fitting zip-jacket. JOHN's head is swathed in a bandage and although he's a bit groggy, he is trying to be bright. During the following dialogue MARY leads JOHN to the settee and generally "fusses" over him, although in her relief she treats him like an errant schoolboy. MARY sits R of settee, JOHN sits C of settee and TROUGHTON stands DLC.)

MARY. Poor darling!

JOHN. I'm fine.

TROUGHTON. On the settee.

JOHN. I'm O.K. Honest.

MARY. Look at the state of him. Sweetheart!

(BARBARA has exited into kitchen by now.)

TROUGHTON. (*To Mary.*) Detective Sergeant Troughton—Wimbledon Police.

MARY. I've just been on the phone to your Police Station.

TROUGHTON. I wouldn't know about that, Mrs. Smith. I've been with your husband at Wimbledon Hospital for the last three hours.

MARY. (*Tersely.*) Oh, John! I got the shock of my life when I woke up this morning and you weren't there. (*To Troughton.*) He's never not been there. What on earth happened, Sergeant?

(MARY surveys John's bandaged head.)

TROUGHTON. Well, it seems your husband got involved with a couple of young villains, *(To John.)* didn't you?

JOHN. *(Nodding brightly.)* Yes.

MARY. *(Tersely.)* Oh, John! You'd better have a cup of coffee, sweetheart.

JOHN. *(Nods.)* Coffee.

(BARBARA returns from kitchen and closes door.)

MARY. All right to give him a cup of coffee, Sergeant?

TROUGHTON. Yes, he's a bit groggy, that's all.

MARY. *(Tersely.)* Oh, John!

BARBARA. *(Looking at watch, tersely.)* Oh, John!
(BARBARA, having said the above remark, whilst passing Troughton [who, of course does not react] hurries into the bedroom, closing the door.)

MARY. Coffee for you, Sergeant?

TROUGHTON. No thanks, Mrs. Smith. Oh, the hospital said your husband had to take these tablets.

(TROUGHTON takes bottle of pills from his pocket and hands them across John to Mary. JOHN tries to "focus" on the pills and continues to smile rather blankly.)

TROUGHTON. Just to ease the headache, I think. One tablet, twice a day.

MARY. *(To John.)* Poor darling.

JOHN. *(Nods.)* Yes.

MARY. Have you had any breakfast?

JOHN. *(Shakes his head.)* No.

MARY. Do you want a nice little egg?

JOHN. *(Shakes his head.)* No thank you.

(MARY crosses in front of Troughton to kitchen door.)

MARY. *(To Troughton.)* I'll get his coffee then. It was really very good of you to drive him back home.

TROUGHTON. *(Grins.)* He's in no fit state, is he? I must admit I quite enjoyed sitting behind the wheel of his taxi. Lovely feeling of power, driving along with the light on, ignoring people trying to wave me down.

MARY. I'm most grateful.

TROUGHTON. Least we could do. Your husband's a hero, aren't you, Mr. Smith?

JOHN. *(Brightly nodding.)* Yes!

MARY. It's so unlike him to do anything spectacular.

TROUGHTON. He "had a go," Mrs. Smith. Didn't you?

JOHN. *(Smiling blankly.)* Yes!

MARY. He's a silly fool. *(Exits into kitchen.)*

TROUGHTON. *(Takes out his notebook.)* I won't stay long, sir. I'd just like to clarify a couple of points.

JOHN. Right!

(During the ensuing speech JOHN looks 'round the room trying to take it all in, whilst TROUGHTON walks around the back of the settee and DRC.)

TROUGHTON. Now then. *(Refers to notebook.)* Last night—approximately 23:00 hours—*(Smiles at John.)* that's 11:00 p.m.—you were driving your taxi. It is your taxi, sir. You're the proprietor as it were? The owner-driver?

JOHN. Excuse me, what time is it?

(TROUGHTON stops by chair DR.)

RUN FOR YOUR WIFE

TROUGHTON. (*Surprised.*) Quarter to nine, sir.

JOHN. (*Trying to work it out.*) Quarter to nine.

TROUGHTON. (*Moves to settee and sits on R. arm.*)
So back to 11 p.m. last night, sir. When you got involved
with this mugging incident.

JOHN. Mugging. Yes.

TROUGHTON. (*Refers to notes.*) You were driving
home to Wimbledon with an empty cab.

JOHN. (*Worried but still hazy.*) Quarter to nine in the
morning?

TROUGHTON. That's right. (*Refers to notes.*) And as
you were passing Wimbledon Underground Station, you
saw an old lady struggling with two youths.

JOHN. Wednesday morning?

TROUGHTON. Yes.

JOHN. What happened to Tuesday night?

TROUGHTON. Well, half of it you spent at
Wimbledon Police Station and half at Wimbledon
Hospital.

JOHN. (*Thinking.*) Schedule.

TROUGHTON. Beg pardon?

JOHN. (*Trying to pull himself together.*) I think I'm
out on my schedule.

TROUGHTON. I'm not surprised.

JOHN. (*Looking around.*) This is Wimbledon.

TROUGHTON. (*Bemused.*) That's right.

JOHN. (*Looks towards kitchen.*) That was Mary.

TROUGHTON. Yes, she's just making some coffee.

(*JOHN quickly takes his diary from inside pocket of his
jacket and flicks through the pages to check on his
"schedule."*)

TROUGHTON. (*Referring to notes.*) Wimbledon Underground Station. Two youths attempting to relieve an old lady of her handbag.

JOHN. (*Reads from diary.*) Barbara. 7:30 a.m.

TROUGHTON. No. Doreen Spinks, 23:00 hours.

(*MARY comes in from kitchen with mug of coffee. JOHN puts diary away and immediately gives Mary a huge smile and opens his arms to her. Mary has left John's bottle of pills in the kitchen.*)

TROUGHTON. Mrs. Spinks is struggling with two youths. You stop your taxi and rush to her assistance.

MARY. Oh, John, you might have got yourself killed.

JOHN. Hang on a second. I'm trying to work something out.

(*MARY crosses to the L of settee, puts John's coffee on table and removes his jacket.*)

MARY. You're going to bed, that's what you're doing. (*To Troughton.*) He's really in no fit state to be answering questions. How come you didn't sort all this out last night?

(*During the ensuing speech MARY puts John's jacket on back of settee and gives him his coffee.*)

TROUGHTON. (*Rising.*) Because Mr. Smith wasn't very co-operative last night. To start with he wouldn't tell us who he was. And then he wouldn't tell us where he lived. And what with this hysterical old girl and Mr. Smith fainting every five minutes.

MARY. Oh, John!

TROUGHTON. It was quite a "to-do." *(To John.)* Just a couple of questions, sir, then I'll be off.

(TROUGHTON sits on the R arm of settee.)

JOHN. Right! My taxi's outside, isn't it?

TROUGHTON. Yes, sir.

JOHN. Good.

TROUGHTON. Now, you intervened in the struggle—

JOHN. Yes.

MARY. Silly fool!

TROUGHTON. Mrs. Smith.

MARY. Well, he went and got himself attacked by these two brutes.

JOHN. No, I didn't. The old lady hit me with her handbag.

MARY. What? Silly cow!

TROUGHTON. Mrs. Smith!

JOHN. She thought I was with the two blokes, you see.

TROUGHTON. We know that, Mr. Smith. Now, the two youths ran off?

JOHN. Yes. Down Wimbledon High Street.

TROUGHTON. O.K. Now can you give us a description?

JOHN. *(Thinking hard.)* It's a main road with shops on both sides—

TROUGHTON. Of the two youths!

JOHN. It was so quick. What with the old woman belting me about the head and me trying to explain I was just a passing taxi driver—

MARY. You should mind your own business!

(There is the sound of Mary's front DOORBELL.)