

The Trial Of Michael Stone For The Chillenden Murders Under Sharia Law A Play In One Act

“Why was it that, within six months of returning to a ‘civilised’ country, I was threatened at a local bus stop by a gang of youths? Why is it that, as a law abiding citizen, I would fear for my life walking around the back streets of London? Why was it that, when I lived in an ‘uncivilised’ country for six years, there was not one single occasion when I was remotely threatened by anyone? Why was I able to walk around the back streets of Riyadh without a worry in the world?”

Graham Tomlin, Northwich, Cheshire, *Daily Telegraph*, September 25, 1997

Background: The following takes place in a Britain where contemporary history has taken a slightly different course. After the Chillenden Murders of July 9, 1996, Stone was still arrested as in the real world, although DCI Stevens was taken off the inquiry due to illness, and replaced by DCI Nathan Brooks, a detective who had masterminded a massive drug bust which had resulted in twelve men receiving lengthy prison sentences, all of which were subsequently quashed when it was revealed that the entire operation had been incited by a supergrass, who turned out to be an undercover police officer.

In November 1997, the Queen abdicated in favour of Prince Charles hoping to lift him out of his depression following the death of Diana, Princess of Wales in Paris on August 31, 1997. Stone was arrested for robbery on July 16, 1997 and subsequently charged with the Chillenden Murders. He was convicted at Maidstone Crown Court on October 23, 1998 on the evidence of three disputed prison confessions, after which Barry Thompson went to the national press and admitted that he had invented the confession the accused had allegedly made to him. Stone’s lawyers launched an immediate appeal. In the meantime, King Charles announced that he had converted to Islam.

At a snap election in January 2001 - caused by a financial scandal in Whitehall – Charles, ignoring protocol, threw his weight behind the revitalised Islamic Party of Britain. The Party swept into power, and David Musa Pidcock became Prime Minister, at once instituting a hybrid form of Sharia Law. Usury was abolished, and although alcohol was not banned, it could only be sold, and consumed, on licenced premises. People who wanted to drink alcohol at home had to brew it themselves. Homosexual acts and behaviour were totally banned except in private homes.

So-called investment banking was abolished, and debts became unenforceable in law. The Stock Exchange was also abolished along with speculating in commodities by licenced brokers. People who wanted to buy stocks and shares or invest in companies had to trade via the government-run Shares And Commodities Exchange. The government would match buyers and sellers, and charge a tiny commission for the transaction, a process which took fourteen days to eliminate arbitrage, speculation and rip offs.

All laws against incitement and scores of trivial offences were repealed; the Christian blasphemy law was replaced by a law forbidding the denigration of the Prophet Muhammad, but most laws concerning serious crimes remained unchanged, although the sentencing régime was altered radically.

Both corporal punishment and capital punishment were reintroduced, and the sentences carried out in public. The death penalty was mandatory for murder – with an automatic right of appeal - and for crimes of extreme depravity such as serial rape and multiple woundings with guns or knives. By the end of the year the murder rate had dropped by seventy percent, reported rapes by 95%, and, following the public whipping of a gang of shoplifters in Manchester the following June, burglary and credit card fraud all but disappeared from the crime statistics. Seven thousand police officers and two thousand government lawyers and administrative staff were subsequently made redundant.

The new government's anti-crime drive was as much carrot as stick. Recognising the major cause of poverty and crime as the inability of many unskilled people to earn a living wage in a highly advanced technological society, the Cabinet (which included the Monarch) took a bold step and instituted the Social Credit proposals of Major Douglas. Every citizen over the age of eighteen received, as a right, a non-means tested basic income which was payable regardless of wealth, salary or any other considerations. This was funded by the savings made from interest payments on the National Debt (which was abolished by Act of Parliament) and from subsidies to the European Union after Britain withdrew.

On January 18, 2001, Stone was granted leave to appeal his conviction; the retrial which was to be at Nottingham Crown Court because of the deluge of publicity was delayed until January 2002, when it was switched to the Supreme Court of Sharia in the Strand, London – formerly the High Court.

Scene: Court 1 - there is to be a jury of six imams; the trial is to be presided over by three judges. The court is very large, the bench is raised considerably, law books line the side walls, and there are a number of chairs, two desks and some tables at the side near the front. The jury's bench and the press box are adjacent to one another. The press box seats about twenty, and the public gallery – which is not raised – consists of about two hundred chairs in orderly rows. The lawyers' desks are at the front – the prosecution on the right facing the court, and the defence on the left. The layout is more typical of an American courtroom.

The doors open, and the security personnel enter followed by the lawyers for both the Crown and the Defence. The senior police officers who investigated the case, DCI Brooks and two of his subordinates, sit with the three Crown Prosecutors, as does Dr Sheridan, the chief forensic scientist.

The public gallery fills up rapidly as does the press box. The doors are closed, and the Usher stands in front of the bench.

Usher: ALL RISE.

Everybody in the Court stands, and there is a knock at the door behind the bench. It opens, and the three judges enter. They are two middle-aged men of Arab appearance,

and a tall elderly white man – the senior judge - Lord Williams-Ali, who had converted to Islam forty years previously. The black robed judges bow to the court and sit.

Usher: BE SEATED.

(Everyone else sits).

Senior Judge: IS EVERYBODY READY?

Chief Prosecutor and Chief Defence Lawyer rising to their feet: YES, MY LORD.

Senior Judge: THEN IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE BENIFICENT, THE MOST MERCIFUL, THE SUPREME COURT OF SHARIA OF THE UNITED KINGDOM AND NORTHERN IRELAND IS NOW IN SESSION.

(The judge to his left stands as the two lawyers sit down).

Judge: GOD SAVE THE KING.

Everyone in the Court: GOD SAVE THE KING.

(The Usher flicks a switch, and a brass band is heard to play one verse of *God Save The King*. After this, the judge sits down, and the senior judge takes over).

Judge Williams-Ali: (Shuffling his papers) MR WALTERS, I HAD INTENDED TO DEAL WITH THIS IN THE ABSENCE OF THE JURY, BUT HAVING GONE THROUGH THE PAPERS NO LESS THAN FOUR TIMES, I HAVE TO SAY THAT I FEEL IT IS IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST THAT IT BE DEALT WITH BOTH IN OPEN COURT AND IN THE PRESENCE OF THE ACCUSED.

Chief Prosecutor (Rising to his feet): IN OPEN COURT, MY LORD?

Williams-Ali: YES, JUSTICE MUST BE DONE AND BE SEEN TO BE DONE, AND IN THIS CASE I FEEL IT MUST ALSO BE EXPLAINED. UNLESS YOU HAVE ANY OBJECTION?

Chief Prosecutor (Hesitating): WELL, ERM...

The Judge to the right, Imam Begun, speaks: WE HAVE A CONSENSUS.

Chief Prosecutor: WELL, IN THAT CASE, I HAVE NO OBJECTION. (He sits down).

Williams-Ali: MR SMITH?

The Chief Defence Lawyer stands: NO OBJECTION, MY LORD. (He sits down).

Williams-Ali: WELL, IN THAT CASE I SUGGEST WE GET THIS SHOW UNDERWAY. USHER, PLEASE BRING FORTH THE ACCUSED.

(The Usher bows silently, and turns and leaves the courtroom closing the door behind him. There is an uneasy silence. The three judges confer in whispers, but no one can make out what they are saying. The door opens outward, and the Usher walks in. Behind him are two tall, powerfully built prison guards. In the middle is the accused, he is wearing a traditional comic book prison uniform, grey with black arrows and a peaked cap. The back of his jacket contains a big yellow patch on which is emblazoned the words MURDER SUSPECT. He is both handcuffed and manacled, and walks with some difficulty as the guards hold an arm apiece. The Usher stands before the bench and bows. The accused and his escort draw up behind him).

Williams-Ali: ARE YOU MICHAEL JOHN STONE?

Stone: YES, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: AND YOU HAVE BEEN IN PRISON UNCONVICTED, CONVICTED, AND NOW UNCONVICTED AGAIN SINCE JULY 1997?

Stone: YES, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: (To the Usher) REMOVE HIS SHACKLES.

(The Usher and the guards unlock Stone's handcuffs and manacles; Stone removes his hat; the Usher takes away the restraints and deposits them on a table at the side of the Court).

Williams-Ali: HAVE YOU BEEN IN THE CELLS ALL MORNING, MR STONE?

Stone: YES, MY LORD, SINCE EIGHT O'CLOCK.

Williams-Ali: (Looking at his watch) AND HAVE YOU HAD ANY REFRESHMENT THIS MORNING?

Stone: MY LORD?

Williams-Ali: DID THEY FEED YOU?

Stone: WE DIDN'T HAVE TIME, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: OH DEAR, DIDN'T THEY GIVE YOU ANY PORRIDGE?

Stone: MY LORD?

Williams-Ali: DID YOU EAT YOUR PORRIDGE THIS MORNING?

Stone: NO, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: DEAR OH DEAR, THAT WILL NEVER DO. YOU KNOW WHAT THEY SAY, DON'T YOU?

Stone: (Looking confused, as is everyone else in the court apart from the other two judges, who are sitting grim-faced). **NO, MY LORD.**

Imam Begun: (Leaning forward and grinning) **IF YOU DON'T EAT YOUR PORRIDGE WHEN YOU LEAVE, YOU WILL COME BACK TO FINISH IT.**

Williams-Ali: **AND WE CAN'T HAVE THAT, CAN WE?**

Stone: **NO, MY LORD.**

Williams-Ali: (To the Usher): **USHER, PLEASE GO TO THE CAFETERIA AND FETCH MR STONE A BOWL OF PORRIDGE.**

Usher: (With disbelief): **MY LORD?**

Williams-Ali: (Ignoring him) **DO YOU LIKE YOUR PORRIDGE WITH SUGAR, SALT OR PLAIN?**

Stone: **ER, I'M NOT PARTICULAR MY LORD.**

Williams-Ali: **VERY WELL, MAKE THAT WITH HONEY, USHER. AND A CUP OF TEA FOR HIM, TOO.**

Usher: (Standing and staring blank faced) **MY LORD?**

Williams-Ali: (Leaning forward) **CHOP CHOP!**

Usher: **YES, MY LORD.** (He turns and scampers from the Court).

Williams-Ali: **THIS COURT WILL ADJOURN UNTIL THE ACCUSED HAS FINISHED HIS BREAKFAST. ALL RISE.** (He stands up, and so does everyone else in the room. The three judges bow to the Court, turn and leave through the back door).

(As they leave, a low murmur goes around the courtroom. One of Stone's guards picks up a chair from the side of the room, brings it over and beckons to him to sit down. Everybody else sits down and waits in silence for a good ten minutes until the Usher returns with a tray containing a bowl of hot porridge and a mug of tea. As he walks towards Stone the doors behind the bench open and another Usher walks in).

2nd Usher: **ALL RISE.**

(Everyone rises, the first Usher stops in his tracks, and the three judges enter. They stand in front of their chairs, bow to the court, and sit. Everyone else sits except Stone's guards and the 1st Usher, who moves towards Stone. The 2nd Usher leaves by the back door. The Usher sets down the tray on a small table which one of Stone's guards brings over from the far wall, and Stone sits looking nervously at his impromptu meal).

Williams-Ali: **THANK YOU, USHER.** (He holds out his hand).

Usher: **MY LORD?**

Williams-Ali: YOUR RECEIPT.

(Confused, the Usher fiddles in his pocket, pulls out a small piece of paper, and approaches the bench. Williams-Ali reaches down and takes it).

Williams-Ali: THANK YOU. (He sits back down, removes a small blue book from his pocket, and producing a goose quill pen and an old-fashioned bottle of ink, writes out a memo. Then, holding up the paper and blowing it dry, he hands it back to the Usher) TAKE THAT TO THE FEES REMISSIONS OFFICE AFTER FOUR O’CLOCK.

Usher: (Taking it) THANK YOU, MY LORD.

(There is a dignified silence until Stone finishes his porridge and tea).

Williams-Ali: NOW, MR STONE, HAVE YOU FINISHED?

Stone: YES, MY LORD. THANK YOU.

Williams-Ali: RIGHT. GOOD.

Judge Begun: IS EVERYBODY SITTING COMFORTABLY?

(No one replies).

Williams-Ali: THEN WE WILL BEGIN.

(The Usher discreetly removes Stone’s bowl and mug, and Williams-Ali turns to the Crown lawyer).

Williams-Ali: MR WALTERS, YOU WISH TO PROCEED WITH THIS PROSECUTION, I TAKE IT?

Walters: (Rising) WE ARE READY NOW, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: THAT WAS NOT THE QUESTION. YOU WISH TO PROCEED WITH THIS PROSECUTION?

Walters: (Confused) YES, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: AND THAT IS MR BROOKS SITTING NEXT TO YOU?

Brooks: (Rising) YES, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: YOU’VE PUT ON WEIGHT, MR BROOKS.

Brooks: MY LORD?

Williams-Ali: YOU’VE PUT ON WEIGHT SINCE THE LAST TIME WE MET.

Brooks: I’M AFRAID I DON’T REMEMBER, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: I DO. IT WAS AT THE COURT OF APPEAL SIX YEARS AGO.

Brooks: YES, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: DO YOU REMEMBER THE CASE?

Brooks: NOT IMMEDIATELY, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: SOMETHING YOU WOULD RATHER FORGET?

Brooks: (Nervously) MY LORD?

Williams-Ali: (Ignoring him and turning to the Chief Prosecutor) MR WALTERS... AND EVERYONE, THE ACCUSED, MICHAEL JOHN STONE, WAS CONVICTED OF THE MURDERS OF DR LIN RUSSELL AND HER DAUGHTER MEGAN RUSSELL, AND OF THE ATTEMPTED MURDER OF HER ELDEST DAUGHTER JOSIE RUSSELL. THIS CONVICTION WAS BASED ENTIRELY ON THE EVIDENCE OF THREE PRISON CONFESSIONS. IS THAT NOT CORRECT?

Walters: (Standing and remaining standing) YES, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: AND YOU ARE AWARE, ARE YOU NOT, THAT THE SUPREME COURT OF SHARIA REQUIRES FOUR WITNESSES, PARTICULARLY FOR A CRIME OF THIS GRAVITY?

(There follows a pregnant silence, and a ripple of mutters goes round the courtroom. Stone, who is still sitting at the table, looks across to the Crown Prosecutor).

Williams-Ali: MR WALTERS?

Walters: THERE WERE A LOT MORE THAN THREE WITNESSES, MY LORD (pause) WITH RESPECT.

Williams-Ali: THE SHARIA COURT IS NOT INFLEXIBLE, JUSTICE MUST BE DONE AND BE SEEN TO BE DONE, THAT MEANS JUSTICE FOR THE INNOCENT AS WELL AS FOR THE GUILTY.

Walters: MY LORD?

Williams-Ali: WHY DID LORD JUSTICE KENNEDY SAY THE APPEAL *MUST* BE ALLOWED?

Walters: BECAUSE IT WAS UNSAFE.

Williams-Ali: AND IT WAS UNSAFE BECAUSE?

Walters: BECAUSE A WITNESS RETRACTED.

Williams-Ali: BECAUSE BARRY THOMPSON, ONE OF THESE SO-CALLED PRISON WITNESSES, WENT TO THE PRESS AND ADMITTED HE'D TOLD A PACK OF LIES IN COURT. IS THAT NOT CORRECT?

Walters: ER, YES MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: AND AT THE RETRIAL, THERE WAS ONLY ONE WITNESS AGAINST THE ACCUSED. IS THAT NOT CORRECT?

Walters: NO, MY LORD, THAT IS NOT CORRECT. THERE WERE A LOT OF WITNESSES?

Williams-Ali: YES, THERE WERE WITNESSES TO THE EFFECT THAT THE VICTIMS HAD BEEN MURDERED, AND SO ON, BUT THERE WAS ONLY ONE WITNESS WHO ALLEGED HE CONFESSED. IS THAT NOT CORRECT?

Walters: DAMIEN DALEY, YES, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: A RELIABLE WITNESS OF IMPECCABLE CHARACTER I TAKE IT?

Walters: RELIABLE, YES MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: AND HONEST?

Walters: WE BELIEVE HE TOLD THE TRUTH, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: AND THAT WAS THE ONLY EVIDENCE OF AN ALLEGED ADMISSION BY STONE TO THESE HEINOUS CRIMES?

Walters: YES MY LORD, BUT WE BELIEVE HE TOLD THE TRUTH.

Williams-Ali: (Shuffling his papers) MR BROOKS, DAMIEN DALEY IS YOUR RELIABLE WITNESS, IS HE NOT?

DCI Brooks: (Standing) YES, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: AS RELIABLE AS SORENSEN IN FACT?

DCI Brooks: S-SORENSEN?

Williams-Ali: YES, THE UNDERCOVER POLICE OFFICER AND *AGENT PROVOCATEUR* IN THE CASE YOU APPEAR TO HAVE FORGOTTEN.

DCI Brooks: WITH RESPECT, MY LORD, THIS IS NOT THE SAME.

Williams-Ali: NO MR BROOKS, IT IS NOT THE SAME. THIS IS A CAPITAL CASE, YOU ARE SUBMITTING TO THIS COURT THAT A MAN SHOULD BE CONVICTED OF A DOUBLE MURDER AND EXECUTED ON THE BASIS OF A CONFESSION HE IS ALLEGED TO HAVE SHOUTED THROUGH A PRISON

WALL TO A SELF-ADMITTED HABITUAL LIAR WHO ALSO HAPPENS TO BE A REGISTERED POLICE INFORMANT AS WELL AS A HEROIN ADDICT.

DCI Brooks: I CAN ONLY SAY WE BELIEVE DALEY TO BE A RELIABLE WITNESS, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: AND YOU INTEND TO PRODUCE THIS RELIABLE WITNESS AT THIS TRIAL?

DCI Brooks: YES, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: AND HE IS SO RELIABLE THAT HE WILL TURN UP ON TIME?

DCI Brooks: YES, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: IN FACT, YOU COULD PRODUCE HIM NOW, COULD YOU NOT?

DCI Brooks: YES, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: AND HE IS WHERE, EXACTLY?

DCI Brooks: IN THIS BUILDING, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: WHERE IN THIS BUILDING?

DCI Brooks: (Looking nervous and uncomfortable) DOWNSTAIRS, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: DOWNSTAIRS?

DCI Brooks: YES, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: COME, MR BROOKS, DON'T BE SO COY. DOWNSTAIRS WHERE?

DCI Brooks: (Mumbling) IN THE CELLS, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: SPEAK UP, MR BROOKS, THE GENTLEMEN OF THE PRESS CAN'T HEAR.

DCI Brooks: IN THE CELLS, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: IN THE CELLS. AND WHY IS HE IN THE CELLS?

DCI Brooks: BECAUSE HE'S SERVING A PRISON SENTENCE, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: I SEE. A PRISON SENTENCE FOR WHAT?

DCI Brooks: BURGLARY, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: I SEE, SO HE IS RELIABLE. HE CAN BE RELIED ON TO GO STRAIGHT BACK TO CRIME AS SOON AS HE IS RELEASED?

DCI Brooks: YES, MY LORD. NO, I MEAN...

Williams-Ali: (Leaning forward) MR DALEY IS OBVIOUSLY A MAN OF HABIT, BUT HE WILL CHANGE HIS HABITS WHEN HE IS RELEASED, BECAUSE IF HE COMES BEFORE THIS COURT FOR BURGLARY AND IS CONVICTED ON UNIMPEACHABLE EVIDENCE, HE WILL LIVE TO REGRET IT.

DCI Brooks: YES, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: DOES MR DALEY HAVE ACCESS TO A TELEPHONE IN THE CELLS, MR BROOKS?

DCI Brooks: NO, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: THEN HE WON'T BE ABLE TO PHONE HIS MOTHER, WILL HE?

DCI Brooks: ER, I BELIEVE HIS MOTHER IS DEAD, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: THAT DIDN'T STOP HIM LAST TIME, DID IT?

DCI Brooks: MY LORD?

Williams-Ali: WHEN YOUR FORCE ARRESTED HIM THE TIME BEFORE LAST, HE TRIED TO PHONE HIS DEAD MOTHER, DID HE NOT?

DCI Brooks: I BELIEVE HE WAS CONFUSED, MY LORD. HE'D BEEN TAKING DRUGS.

Williams-Ali: AND TAKING DRUGS MAKES HIM THINK HE CAN COMMUNICATE WITH THE DEAD?

DCI Brooks: I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: DO YOU THINK HE HEARS VOICES?

DCI Brooks: I DON'T KNOW, MY LORD.

Judge Begun: (Leaning forward) PERHAPS THEY SPEAK TO HIM THROUGH PRISON WALLS?

DCI Brooks: I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: PERHAPS THEY CONFESS TO MURDER THROUGH PRISON WALLS?

DCI Brooks: I, I...

Williams-Ali: MR WALTERS, ARE YOU OF THE OPINION THAT DAMIEN DALEY IS A RELIABLE WITNESS?

Walters: (Standing) WITH RESPECT MY LORD, JUST BECAUSE HE IS AN HABITUAL LIAR DOESN'T MEAN HE CAN'T BE TELLING THE TRUTH.

Williams-Ali: YES, AND THE DEVIL CAN TELL THE TRUTH WHEN IT SUITS HIM, THE SAME WAY HE CAN QUOTE SCRIPTURE, BUT ARE YOU PREPARED TO PUT A MAN'S LIFE ON THE LINE ON THE WORD OF A MAN LIKE DALEY?

Walters: YES, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: WITHOUT ANY CORROBORATION AT ALL?

Walters: THAT WOULD BE FOR THE JURY TO DECIDE, MY LORD.

Judge Begun: IT WOULD IF IT WENT TO THE JURY.

Williams-Ali: LET US LEAVE DALEY FOR A MOMENT. THERE IS THE LIVING WITNESS, IS THERE NOT?

Walters: YOU MEAN JOSIE RUSSELL, MY LORD?

Williams-Ali: YES. WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO SAY ABOUT HER, MR BROOKS?

DCI Brooks: SHE SAID STONE LOOKED FAMILIAR, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: AND SHE ALSO SAID, DID SHE NOT, THAT THE MAN WHO KILLED HER MOTHER AND SISTER WAS A BIG MAN – LIKE MY DAD. WEREN'T THOSE HER ACTUAL WORDS?

DCI Brooks: YES, MY LORD, I BELIEVE SO.

Williams-Ali: AND IS STONE A BIG MAN?

DCI Brooks: BIG TO A CHILD, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: BUT IS HE AS BIG AS HER FATHER?

DCI Brooks: NEARLY.

Williams-Ali: NEARLY NOTHING.

DCI Brooks: NO, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: THE COURT HAS REVIEWED THE EVIDENCE OF THIS POOR GIRL, BUT EVEN ALLOWING FOR HER TRAUMA, DON'T YOU THINK SHE WOULD HAVE POINTED TO STONE AND SAID "THAT'S THE MAN" IF HE WERE INDEED THE MAN?

DCI Brooks: NO MY LORD, PROBABLY NOT.

Williams-Ali: AND DO YOU BELIEVE A MAN OF STONE'S BUILD ACTING ALONE COULD HAVE CONTROLLED AN EDUCATED, INTELLIGENT WOMAN LIKE DR RUSSELL, AND HER TWO DAUGHTERS AND THE FAMILY DOG AS WELL?

DCI Brooks: YES, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: AND HAVE COMMITTED THESE MURDERS AND WALKED AWAY WITHOUT LEAVING SO MUCH AS A HAIR AT THE CRIME SCENE?

DCI Brooks: HE WAS FORENSICALLY AWARE, MY LORD. HE WOULDN'T HAVE LEFT ANY EVIDENCE.

Judge Begun: THIS COURT *REQUIRES* EVIDENCE, MR BROOKS.

DCI Brooks: WE HAVE THE CONFESSION, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: NO, YOU DON'T.

DCI Brooks: YES, WE DO.

Judge Begun: THE COURT SAYS YOU DON'T.

Williams-Ali: WE ARE NOT TALKING ABOUT *PACE* HERE, NOR ABOUT THE *JUDGES' RULES*. NOR ABOUT POLICE VERBAL IN THE BACK OF AN AREA CAR – IT'S A FAIR COP, GUV, AND ALL THAT POLLAVER. THIS COURT DEMANDS EVIDENCE. WHERE IS IT?

DCI Brooks: WE HAVE DALEY, MY LORD.

Judge Begun: NO, YOU DO NOT.

Williams-Ali: MR WALTERS?

Walters: WITHOUT DALEY, MY LORD, THE CROWN HAS NO CASE.

Williams-Ali: AND WITH DALEY, IT IS A LAUGHING STOCK. THIS MAN HAS BEEN IN PRISON FOR FOUR AND A HALF YEARS, MUCH OF THAT TIME UNCONVICTED, AND YOU HAVE NO EVIDENCE.

DCI Brooks: WE HAD THE CONFESSIONS, MY LORD, BUT AFTER THE FIRST TRIAL...

Williams-Ali: AFTER THE FIRST TRIAL, THE CPS SAW SENSE.

DCI Brooks: STONE DIDN'T TAKE THE STAND, MY LORD. HE NEVER EXPLAINED WHERE HE WAS ON THE DAY OF THE MURDER.

Williams-Ali: SINCE WHEN DID A DEFENDANT IN A BRITISH COURT EVER HAVE TO PROVE THAT HE WASN'T AT THE CRIME SCENE?

DCI Brooks: I MEAN, MY LORD...

Williams-Ali: (Interrupting) AND A YEAR AFTER THE EVENT. CAN YOU REMEMBER WHERE YOU WERE ON A PARTICULAR DAY IN JANUARY LAST YEAR?

DCI Brooks: AND HE HAD PREVIOUS, MY LORD, FOR A HAMMER ATTACK.

Williams-Ali: I SEE, HE ATTACKED A WOMAN WITH A HAMMER WHEN, PRECISELY?

DCI Brooks: HE ATTACKED A MAN, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: RIGHT, A MAN WHO HAD BEEN ACCUSED, AND WAS LATER CONVICTED OF, INDECENTLY ASSAULTING A YOUNG BOY. IN OTHER WORDS, IT WAS A VIGILANTE ATTACK.

DCI Brooks: IT SHOWS MY LORD THAT HE IS THE SORT OF MAN WHO COULD ATTACK A WOMAN WITH A HAMMER.

Williams-Ali: THAT MAY BE WHAT IT SHOWS YOU, TO ME IT INDICATES THAT HE IS A MAN WHO IN SPITE OF HIS APPALLING ANTECEDENTS IS REVOLTED BY SEXUAL ASSAULTS ON WOMEN AND CHILDREN, AND THAT HE WOULD BE MOST UNLIKELY TO CARRY OUT A CRIME SUCH AS THE CHILLENDEEN MURDERS, ASSUMING HE WAS ABLE SINGLE-HANDEDLY TO OVERPOWER DR RUSSELL, HER TWO DAUGHTERS AND THE FAMILY DOG.

OF COURSE, YOU WOULD HAVE LIKED TO PUT HIM IN THE WITNESS BOX WHERE A STATE PROSECUTOR AS DUPLICITOUS AS MR WALTERS COULD HAVE CROSS-EXAMINED HIM ON HIS PREVIOUS CONVICTIONS AND RAISED ALL MANNER OF INNUENDO, BUT THAT IS NOT THE WAY THINGS WORK UNDER SHARIA. YOU CAN'T JUST GO AND NICK THE LOCAL VILLAIN EVERY TIME THERE'S A BURGLARY. IT IS ONE THING TO KEEP AN EYE ON THE USUAL SUSPECTS, IT IS QUITE ANOTHER TO FIT UP AN UNDESIRABLE JUST TO TAKE HIM OFF THE STREETS.

DCI Brooks: HE...

Williams-Ali: (Interrupting) DO YOU UNDERSTAND, MR BROOKS?

DCI Brooks: YES, MY LORD.

(The judges confer).

Williams-Ali: DR SHERIDAN?

(The man sitting to the right of the Chief Prosecutor stands up).

Man: YES, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: DR SHERIDAN, YOU HAVE RECENTLY DONE ENHANCED FORENSIC TESTING ON THE LACE THAT WAS FOUND AT THE CRIME SCENE?

Dr Sheridan: YES, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: AND ON THE TOWELS?

Dr Sheridan: YES, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: AND YOU FOUND NOTHING LINKING STONE TO THE CRIME SCENE?

Dr Sheridan: NO, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: AND THAT INDICATES WHAT, EXACTLY?

Dr Sheridan: THAT STONE IS FORENSICALLY AWARE, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: DOES IT?

Dr Sheridan: YES, MY LORD.

Judge Begun: THE MAN IS SO EVIL, SO DEVIOUS, SO CUNNING, THAT HE DESTROYED THE EVIDENCE. YES?

Dr Sheridan: (Failing to recognise the sarcastic tone in the Judge's voice, and smiling) YES.

Williams-Ali: THAT'S THE ONLY POSSIBLE EXPLANATION, ISN'T IT?

Dr Sheridan: YES. THE ONLY ONE.

Williams-Ali: APART FROM OCCAM'S RAZOR, DR SHERIDAN?

Dr Sheridan: (Confused) MY LORD?

Williams-Ali: A SCIENTIFIC PRINCIPLE WITH WHICH YOU ARE NO DOUBT FAMILIAR.

Dr Sheridan: YES, OF COURSE.

Williams-Ali: WHICH SAYS WHAT?

Dr Sheridan: THE SIMPLEST EXPLANATION IS THE LIKELIEST.

Williams-Ali: SO IF STONE'S DNA IS NOT AT THE CRIME SCENE, THE SIMPLEST EXPLANATION IS WHAT?

Dr Sheridan: THAT HE IS FORENSICALLY AWARE.

Williams-Ali: RIGHT, VERY GOOD.

Dr Sheridan: THANK YOU, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: HE WORE GLOVES.

Dr Sheridan: YES.

Williams-Ali: AND A FACE MASK?

Dr Sheridan: YES?

Williams-Ali: AND A FORENSIC SUIT?

Dr Sheridan: (Looking confused) MY LORD?

Williams-Ali: THE SIMPLEST EXPLANATION PROFERRED BY OCCAM'S RAZOR IS THAT HE WAS NEVER AT THE CRIME SCENE IN THE FIRST PLACE. ISN'T IT, DR SHERIDAN?

Dr Sheridan: NO, MY LORD?

Williams-Ali: IT ISN'T?

Dr Sheridan: NO, MY LORD, WE KNOW HE WAS AT THE CRIME SCENE.

Williams-Ali: REALLY, AND HOW DO WE KNOW THAT?

Dr Sheridan: HE CONFESSED TO DALEY, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: THROUGH THE PRISON WALL?

Dr Sheridan: YES, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: AND THAT ALLEGED CONFESSION IS TO BE TRUSTED?

Dr Sheridan: YES, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: WHY?

Dr Sheridan: (Thinking) BECAUSE DALEY HAD NO MOTIVE TO LIE.

Williams-Ali: I SEE, ADMITTED LIAR, REGISTERED POLICE INFORMANT AND INVETERATE BURGLAR DAMIEN DALEY, WHO IS SITTING IN THE CELLS BENEATH THIS COURT AT THIS VERY MOMENT HAD NO MOTIVE TO LIE?

Dr Sheridan: NO, MY LORD. NOT ON THIS OCCASION.

Williams-Ali: WHILE STONE IS AN INVERATE LIAR WHO IS NEVER TO BE TRUSTED?

Dr Sheridan: NO MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: YOU CAN'T BELIEVE A WORD HE SAYS?

Dr Sheridan: NO, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: (Raising his voice) SO WHEN HE SHOUTS A CONFESSION TO A DOUBLE MURDER THROUGH THE WALL OF THE SEGREGATION UNIT IN CANTERBURY PRISON, YOU CAN'T BELIEVE THAT EITHER?

Dr Sheridan: NO, MY LORD, I MEAN, YES.

Williams-Ali: (Yawning) REALLY. AND WHY SHOULD WE BELIEVE HE TOLD THE TRUTH ON THIS OCCASION?

Dr Sheridan: WE HAVE CONFIRMATION, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: FROM SELF-CONFESSED LIAR DAMIEN DALEY?

Dr Sheridan: YES, MY LORD, AND FROM THE CRIME SCENE.

Williams-Ali: FROM THE CRIME SCENE?

Dr Sheridan: YES, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: BUT YOU'VE ALREADY TOLD US THERE WERE NO FORENSICS LINKING STONE TO THE CRIME SCENE.

Dr Sheridan: YES, MY LORD, BUT YOU SAID YOURSELF THAT WAS BECAUSE HE WAS SO DASTARDLY CLEVER THAT HE DIDN'T LEAVE ANY.

Williams-Ali: SO WE HAVE THE BEST EVIDENCE OF ALL?

Dr Sheridan: YES, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: THE FACT THAT THERE IS NO EVIDENCE IS CERTAIN PROOF OF HIS GUILT?

Dr Sheridan: (Smiling) YES, MY LORD. YOU UNDERSTAND NOW.

Williams-Ali: (Shaking his head) I SEE, WELL I HAVE A CONFESSION TO MAKE. STONE IS INNOCENT, AND DO YOU KNOW WHY?

Dr Sheridan: NO, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: BECAUSE I COMMITTED THE CHILLENDEEN MURDERS, THAT'S WHY. AND THE PROOF OF THAT IS THAT I DIDN'T LEAVE ANY FORENSICS.

Dr Sheridan: (Laughing) I SEE, YOU'RE JOKING.

Williams-Ali: (Raising his voice) THIS IS THE SUPREME COURT OF SHARIA OF THE UNITED KINGDOM AND NORTHERN IRELAND, DR SHERIDAN, NOT AMATEUR NIGHT IN YOUR LOCAL COMEDY CLUB. WHY DO YOU PRESUME I WOULD JOKE ABOUT SUCH A MATTER?

Dr Sheridan: (Confused) WELL, YOU COULDN'T HAVE DONE THE MURDERS.

Williams-Ali: REALLY, WHY NOT?

Dr Sheridan: BECAUSE...YOU'RE A JUDGE.

Williams-Ali: AND YOU, DR SHERIDAN, ARE A FOOL.

Dr Sheridan: MY LORD...

Williams-Ali: SIT DOWN, FOOL.

Dr Sheridan: YES, MY LORD. (He sits down).

Williams-Ali: (Turns to Judge Begun and whispers).

Judge Begun: IS THERE ANYONE ELSE IN THIS COURTROOM WHO HAS NOT LEFT EVIDENCE AT THE MURDER SCENE?

(There is a low murmur and some muted laughter).

Williams-Ali: THIS IS THE SUPREME COURT OF SHARIA OF THE UNITED KINGDOM AND NORTHERN IRELAND. WHAT YOU HAVE WITNESSED IS MOCKING OF THIS COURT BY A SENIOR PROSECUTOR, A SENIOR POLICE OFFICER, AND A FORENSIC SCIENTIST. THEY HAVE BETWEEN THEM EFFECTED AND SUPPORTED A PROSECUTION FOR THE SUPREME CRIME, THAT OF TAKING THE LIFE OF ANOTHER HUMAN BEING WITH MALICE AFORETHOUGHT AND MURDEROUS INTENT. THEY HAVE SUPPORTED THIS PROSECUTION WITH NOT ONE SCRAP OF EVIDENCE, AND THEY HAVE KEPT THIS MAN IN CUSTODY AND NOW FACING A DEATH SENTENCE ON THE MEREST OF INNUENDOES.

IT IS TRUE THAT MICHAEL STONE WAS, ON THE FACE OF IT, A GOOD SUSPECT. HE APPEARED TO FIT THE PROFILE OF THE KILLER, INITIALLY AT ANY RATE, BUT IT WAS, OR SHOULD, HAVE BEEN PATENTLY OBVIOUS THAT HE WAS NOT THE MAN THE POLICE SOUGHT. THOUGH INSTEAD OF DROPPING THE CHARGES - WHICH SHOULD NEVER PROPERLY HAVE BEEN BROUGHT IN THE FIRST PLACE - THEY SOUGHT TO MAKE THEM STICK BY THE MOST IGNOBLE OF MEANS. IN DOING SO THEY HAVE NOT ONLY PUT AN INNOCENT MAN THROUGH HELL, BUT HAVE SQUANDERED HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS IF NOT MILLIONS OF POUNDS OF PUBLIC MONEY, AND, EVEN WORSE, HAVE ENSURED THAT THE REAL KILLER - OR KILLERS - OF DR RUSSELL AND HER DAUGHTER, WILL PROBABLY NEVER BE BROUGHT TO JUSTICE.

I SAY KILLERS, BECAUSE HAVING SEEN THE CRIME SCENE PHOTOGRAPHS AND THE EXTENT OF THE BRUTALITY METED OUT TO THIS UNFORTUNATE WOMAN AND HER TWO DAUGHTERS, ONE OF WHOM, BY THE GRACE OF ALLAH, SURVIVED, WE ARE BY NO MEANS CONVINCED THAT THE CHILLENDEEN MURDERS WAS THE WORK OF ONE MAN. LEAST OF ALL OF AN OVERWEIGHT, FIVE FOOT NOTHING DRUG ADDICT WHOSE MAIN PREOCCUPATION WAS STEALING PROPERTY TO SELL IN ORDER TO FUEL HIS DRUG ADDICTION.

THERE IS THOUGH, AN ISSUE HERE WHICH TRANSCENDS THIS ONE CASE, DREADFUL THOUGH IT IS. THERE HAS, IN THE PAST, BEEN A WILLINGNESS OF THE BRITISH POLICE, AND IF THE TRUTH BE TOLD, OF POLICE OFFICERS THROUGHOUT THE WESTERN WORLD, TO MANUFACTURE EVIDENCE OF GUILT AGAINST PEOPLE THEY REGARD AS UNDESIRABLES IN ORDER TO TAKE THEM OFF THE STREETS, AND DOUBTLESS TO EARN COMMENDATIONS ETC FOR THEMSELVES. THE EASIEST WAY TO MANUFACTURE EVIDENCE OF AN ACCUSED'S GUILT IS BY FAKING A CONFESSION, WHICH SOMETIMES INCLUDES BROW BEATING, INTIMIDATING OR DUPING A VULNERABLE SUSPECT INTO MAKING ONE. IF THE COURTS HAVEN'T ALWAYS BEEN WILLING TO ACKNOWLEDGE THIS, AND HAVE ONLY ON VERY RARE OCCASIONS CONDEMNED IT, PARLIAMENT DID AT LEAST RECOGNISE THE PROBLEM VERY BELATEDLY WITH THE *POLICE AND CRIMINAL EVIDENCE ACT OF 1984.*

THIS COURT CANNOT OF COURSE RECTIFY PAST ERRORS ANY MORE THAN IT CAN EXTEND ITS JURISDICTION OVER THE ENTIRE WORLD, BUT IT CAN ENSURE THAT WHEN SUCH SHODDY PRACTICES REAR THEIR UGLY HEADS WITHIN ITS OWN BAILIWICK, THEY ARE NOT ONLY NOT TOLERATED, BUT PUNISHED. MR BROOKS, WILL YOU STAND, PLEASE?

Brooks: (Looking confused) MY LORD?

(Judge Begun whispers to Williams-Ali, and all three confer).

Williams-Ali: NOT YET, MR BROOKS. (He waves at him, and Brooks sits down. Turning to Stone) THE ACCUSED WILL STAND.

(Stone stands).

Williams-Ali: MR STONE, THIS COURT HAS EXAMINED THE EVIDENCE AGAINST YOU FOR THE CHILLENDEEN MURDERS, SUCH AS IT IS, AND FINDS THE CASE UNPROVED. NOT ONLY THAT, WE FIND THERE HAS BEEN A CONSPIRACY TO FRAME YOU FOR THESE HEINOUS CRIMES, AND WE SO FIND FOR THE FOLLOWING REASONS.

MICHAEL JOHN STONE WAS ARRESTED FOR AN UNRELATED OFFENCE A YEAR AFTER THE CHILLENDEEN MURDERS. THAT CHARGE WAS EVENTUALLY DROPPED, BUT WHILE ON REMAND, A NUMBER OF INMATES

CLAIMED HE HAD CONFESSED TO THE CRIME, THOUGH IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN WHY HE SHOULD HAVE DONE THIS, HAVING REPEATEDLY DENIED ANY INVOLVEMENT WHEN QUESTIONED BY THE POLICE.

THE ACCUSED WAS SO CONCERNED ABOUT THESE ALLEGATIONS THAT HE ASKED TO BE SEGREGATED FROM OTHER PRISONERS. THEN, WE ARE TOLD, HE CONVENIENTLY CONFESSES BY SHOUTING THROUGH THE CELL WALL, TO AN INMATE HE DOES NOT KNOW AND HAS NEVER EVEN SEEN. WE HAVE ONLY THE WORD OF THIS INMATE THAT THIS CONFESSION ACTUALLY HAPPENED, BUT THE OTHERWISE SO SKEPTICAL POLICE AND CROWN PROSECUTORS ARE SO IMPRESSED BY THE QUALITY OF THIS ALLEGED CONFESSION THAT THEY BASE THEIR ENTIRE CASE ON IT THE SECOND TIME AROUND.

THE EVIDENCE AGAINST THE ACCUSED, SUCH AS IT IS, IS THAT HE IS THE SORT OF MAN WHO IS LIKELY TO HAVE DONE IT. ALTHOUGH HE HAS NO CONVICTIONS FOR VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN, HE DOES CARRY A HAMMER FOR PROTECTION AGAINST FELLOW DRUG DEALERS. THIS HAMMER WAS ELIMINATED FROM THE INQUIRY, AS WERE ALL THE OTHER FORENSICS RELATING TO HIM AND HIS CHATTELS.

WHAT IS MOST INTERESTING ABOUT THIS CASE IS NOT WHAT THE CROWN SAYS BUT WHAT IT DOESN'T SAY. THERE IS FORENSIC EVIDENCE FROM FIBRES AT THE CRIME SCENE, AND ONE PARTIAL FINGERPRINT, WHICH DOES NOT BELONG EITHER TO THE ACCUSED OR TO THE VICTIMS. THE EVIDENCE OF THE SURVIVING VICTIM JOSIE RUSSELL, WHICH WE HAVE NOT DISCUSSED AT ANY LENGTH HERE, AND THE EVIDENCE OF THE OTHER EYEWITNESSES – WHICH WE HAVE NOT DISCUSSED AT ALL – RELATING TO PERSONS SEEN IN THE AREA AT THE TIME, DOES NOTHING TO IMPLICATE THE ACCUSED.

IT WAS DECIDED AT A MEETING OF THE SUPREME SHARIA COUNCIL OF GREAT BRITAIN SHORTLY AFTER THE ELECTION OF THE ISLAMIC PARTY AND BY THE GRACE OF HIS MAJESTY – GOD SAVE THE KING...

The other two judges: GOD SAVE THE KING.

Williams-Ali: IT WAS DECIDED THAT THE DEATH PENALTY WOULD BE REINSTATED FOR THE CRIME OF MURDER, AND ESPECIALLY MURDER MOST FOUL, AS CLEARLY THIS WAS. SOMEWHAT SURPRISINGLY AND PERHAPS AGAINST NATURAL JUSTICE, IT WAS DECIDED TO BACKDATE THIS LEGISLATION. IT IS NOT FOR THIS COURT TO COMMENT ON THE WISDOM OF RETROSPECTIVE LEGISLATION, SUFFICE IT TO SAY THAT WHERE THE ISLAMIC STATE EXACTS THE SUPREME PENALTY, THE THRESHOLD OF PROOF MUST BE CORRESPONDINGLY HIGH.

THAT CLEARLY IS NOT THE CASE IN THE MATTER OF REX V MICHAEL JOHN STONE, SO THIS CASE IS DISMISSED FORTHWITH.

THERE REMAINS THOUGH ANOTHER MATTER TO BE DEALT WITH. UNLIKE THE OLD RÈGIME, WHICH CONFERRED BLANKET IMMUNITY ON ANY CIVIL SERVANT WHO WAS ONLY DOING HIS JOB – AS THEY SAID AT NUREMBERG – THE ISLAMIC STATE WILL NOT TOLERATE ANY SORT OF MENDACITY OR EXCUSES OF VICARIOUS LIABILITY. THIS MAN HAS BEEN DETAINED FOR SOME CONSIDERABLE TIME UNDER FALSE PRETENCES, SO A FORFEIT MUST BE PAID

AS LONG AGO AS 1862, IN THE CASE OF LIMPUS V LONDON GENERAL OMNIBUS COMPANY, IT WAS HELD THAT “A MASTER IS LIABLE FOR THE TORTS OF HIS SERVANT ACTING WITHIN THE SCOPE OF HIS AUTHORITY EVEN WHEN HE HAS EXPRESSLY FORBIDDEN THE SERVANT TO DO THE THING COMPLAINED OF.”

WHAT THIS HAS MEANT IN PRACTICE, AS FAR AS CIVIL SERVANTS AND MOST ESPECIALLY POLICE OFFICERS ARE CONCERNED, IS THAT THEY CAN DO WHAT THE HELL THEY PLEASE, AND AT THE END OF THE DAY, IF A PERSON IS GRAVELY WRONGED BY THEM ACTING IN EVEN THE MOST PERFDIOUS OF MANNERS, THAT INDIVIDUAL HAS NO REDRESS EXCEPT PERHAPS TO BRING A CASE IN THE CIVIL COURTS – FOR WHICH HE MAY NOT BE GRANTED LEGAL AID - AND WHICH THE EXPENSIVE, CLEVER, AND OFTEN DUPLICITOUS, POLICE LAWYERS WILL FIGHT ALL THE WAY AND SETTLE AT THE COURT DOOR WITH NO ADMISSION OF LIABILITY. AND OF COURSE THE TAXPAYER PICKS UP THE TAB FOR THIS UNWARRANTED LITIGATION. THAT SHODDY PRACTICE ENDS HERE AND NOW.

(The Judge picks up his goose quill pen and writes for a full minute on a sheet of A4 paper).

Williams-Ali: (Handing it to the Usher) USHER, TAKE THIS TO THE CLERKS’ OFFICE AND HAVE THEM DRAW UP THE FORMAL ACQUITTAL AND RELEASE PAPERS.

Usher: (Taking the paper, bowing and leaving the Court) YES, MY LORD.

(They sit in silence for a minute or two until the Usher returns, whispers to the judges, then resumes his place at the side of the bench).

Williams-Ali: YOU ARE NOW A FREE MAN, MR STONE. IT WILL TAKE A LITTLE WHILE TO DRAW UP THE ORDER BUT IN THE MEANTIME WE HAVE ANOTHER MATTER TO DEAL WITH, WHICH I HAVE NO DOUBT YOU WILL FIND MOST INTERESTING. THIS IS THE QUESTION OF COMPENSATION

AS I SAID PREVIOUSLY, POLICE OFFICERS AND OTHER CIVIL SERVANTS WHO OVERSTEP THE MARK WITH MALICIOUS INTENT WILL NOT BE TOLERATED, AND WILL BE PUNISHED BY THE SUPREME COURT OF SHARIA. TODAY, THIS PUNISHMENT WILL BE COUPLED WITH COMPENSATION FOR THE VICTIM OF THIS MALICIOUS AND UNWARRANTED PROSECUTION

Judge Begun: MR STONE, I READ IN AN INTERVIEW SOME TIME AGO THAT YOU HOPED TO START A GARAGE IF YOU WON YOUR APPEAL. IS THAT CORRECT?

Stone: YES, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: YOU LIKE CARS, MR STONE?

Stone: YES, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: (Turning to DCI Brooks) WHAT SORT OF CAR DO YOU DRIVE, MR BROOKS.

DCI Brooks: PARDON?

Williams-Ali: WHAT CAR DO YOU DRIVE, MR BROOKS?

DCI Brooks: A JAG, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: OF COURSE. DID YOU DRIVE HERE TODAY?

Brooks: YES, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: YOUR KEYS, PLEASE.

DCI Brooks: MY LORD?

Williams-Ali: YOUR CAR KEYS.

DCI Brooks: WHAT ABOUT THEM?

Williams-Ali: GIVE THEM TO ME.

DCI Brooks: (Looking dumbfounded) I...

Williams-Ali: (Forcefully) NOW!

(The police officer fishes in his pocket and pulls out his keys. The Judge nods to the Usher, who collects them and hands them up to the bench).

Williams-Ali: HAND THEM TO MR STONE, PLEASE.

(The Usher does so. Stone takes them, open-mouthed).

Williams-Ali: MR STONE, WHEN YOU ARE FINISHED IN HERE, THE USHER WILL SHOW YOU THE CAR AND ARRANGE FOR YOU TO INSPECT IT. IT WILL BE STORED FOR YOU FREE OF CHARGE UNTIL YOU ARE READY TO COLLECT IT WITH THE CORRECT DOCUMENTATION, YOUR UP TO DATE DRIVING LICENCE AND INSURANCE. MUSTN'T DRIVE WITHOUT INSURANCE, MUST WE?

Stone: ER, NO MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: DO YOU KNOW WHAT HAPPENS TO PEOPLE WHO DRIVE WITHOUT PROPER INSURANCE?

Stone: NO, MY LORD.

Judge Begun: (Leaning forward and grinning) FORTY LASHES.

Williams-Ali: FOR A FIRST OFFENCE.

(Stone gulps but says nothing).

Williams-Ali: (Turning to DCI Brooks) MR BROOKS, I BELIEVE YOU ARE THE TREASURER OF THE KENT POLICE WELFARE FUND.

Brooks: (Standing up) ER, YES MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: THAT REALLY IS A DIVINE BLESSING. DO YOU HAVE YOUR CHEQUE BOOK?

Brooks: ER, YES MY LORD (sounding and looking confused).

Williams-Ali: WE HAVE REVIEWED MR STONE'S CRIMINAL RECORD AT SOME LENGTH, AND THERE ARE TWO SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT AS TO THE QUANTUM OF COMPENSATION. THE FIRST IS THAT IT A MAN OF GOOD CHARACTER SHOULD RECEIVE MORE COMPENSATION THAN A MAN OF PROVEN BAD CHARACTER. THE OTHER IS THAT IT IS A GREATER SIN TO FIT UP A MAN OF POOR CHARACTER BECAUSE HE IS FAR LESS LIKELY TO BE ACQUITTED, AND BECAUSE THE SENTENCE HE RECEIVES WILL GENERALLY BE CORRESPONDINGLY GREATER.

THE GOOD NEWS FOR KENT POLICE, MR BROOKS, IS THAT WE DECIDED UNANIMOUSLY THAT IN SPITE OF THE GRAVITY OF THIS CASE AND THE DEATH SENTENCE HANGING OVER MR STONE, THAT HE SHOULD RECEIVE LESS COMPENSATION. WE CAME TO THIS CONCLUSION LARGELY BECAUSE OF THE TABLOID INTEREST IN THIS CASE.

(Turning to the public gallery and especially the press box).

I HAVE NO DOUBT THAT MR STONE WILL IMMEDIATELY ON LEAVING HIS BUILDING SELL HIS STORY TO A DOWNMARKET TABLOID FOR A TIDY SUM. IN FACT I CAN SEE SOME OF THEM LICKING THEIR LIPS ALREADY.

(A ring of laughter goes round the Court).

WE HAVE DECIDED THEREFORE THAT KENT POLICE SHOULD PAY MR STONE A MERE THIRTY THOUSAND POUNDS IN COMPENSATION.

DCI Brooks: MY LORD?

Williams-Ali: YOU DID SAY YOU HAVE YOUR CHEQUE BOOK?

DCI Brooks: YOU'RE SAYING THE POLICE FUND SHOULD PAY THIS MAN COMPENSATION, MY LORD?

Judge Begun: (Leaning forward and grinning) YOU WOULD PREFER THE TAXPAYER OR PERHAPS KENT RATEPAYERS TO PAY INSTEAD?

DCI Brooks: USUALLY COMPENSATION IS PAID BY THE GOVERNMENT, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: MR BROOKS, THIS IS NOT THE MICKEY MOUSE JUSTICE THAT WAS DISHED OUT IN THE NAME OF HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN. THIS IS THE JUSTICE OF THE SHARIA COURT. JUSTICE DICTATES THAT THE GUILTY PAY FOR THEIR SINS, NOT THE TAXPAYER.

DCI Brooks: THE OFFICERS WHO CONTRIBUTE TO THIS FUND AREN'T GUILTY, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: THIS IS NOT A DEBATING CHAMBER, MR BROOKS. TAKE OUT YOUR FUND CHEQUE BOOK, WRITE MR STONE A CHEQUE FOR THIRTY GRAND, AND LATER YOU CAN TELL YOUR BROTHER OFFICERS WHAT FINE, UPSTANDING MEN AND WOMEN THEY ARE. AND IF THAT IS INDEED THE CASE, THEY WON'T BE PAYING OUT COMPENSATION FOR WRONGFUL ARREST, MALICIOUS PROSECUTION AND FALSE IMPRISONMENT IN FUTURE.

DCI Brooks: MY LORD, I.

Williams-Ali: THIS IS *NOT* A DEBATING CHAMBER, MR BROOKS. IN VIEW OF THE GRAVITY OF THIS CASE YOU SHOULD CONSIDER YOURSELF LUCKY THAT THE COURT IS DISPOSED ONLY TO IMPOSE A FINANCIAL PENALTY RATHER THAN ORDER A FULL INVESTIGATION BY THE SUPREME COUCIL, AND AN INEVITABLE CRIMINAL PROSECUTION. DO YOU UNDERSTAND, MR BROOKS?

DCI Brooks: YES, MY LORD. (He writes out the cheque and hands it to the Usher who passes it up to the bench. Williams-Ali approves it and gives it back to the Usher, who hands it to Stone).

Williams-Ali: I DON'T THINK WE NEED DETAIN YOU ANY LONGER, MR BROOKS.

DCI Brooks: MY LORD?

Williams-Ali: NOR YOU, DR SHERIDAN?

Dr Sheridan: (Standing up) MY LORD?

Williams-Ali: GOOD DAY, GENTLEMEN.

(Confused, the two men pick up their papers, bow to the Court and leave).

Williams-Ali: (Turning to Stone) NOW, MR STONE, DO YOU FEEL JUSTICE HAS BEEN DONE?

Stone: YES, MY LORD. THANK YOU, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: AND DO REMOVE THAT JACKET, THERE'S A GOOD FELLOW. YOU ARE NOW NO LONGER A MURDER SUSPECT.

Stone: (Removing the jacket) YES, MY LORD. THANK YOU, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: NOW IT MAY BE MR STONE THAT WHEN YOU LEAVE THIS COURT YOU WILL, AFTER SELLING YOUR STORY TO THE PRESS, YOU WILL DECIDE TO START UP THAT GARAGE YOU SPOKE OF BEFORE. IT MAY BE THAT YOU DECIDE ON ANOTHER COURSE OF ACTION. WHATEVER YOU DO, I DON'T MUCH CARE, BUT I WILL TELL YOU THIS.

THE SHARIA COURT DELIVERS JUSTICE TO THE INNOCENT, AND RETRIBUTION TO THE GUILTY. HAVING SEEN YOUR CRIMINAL RECORD, IT IS CLEAR WHY THE POLICE SHOWED AN INTEREST IN YOUR ACTIVITIES. AND IT IS UNDERSTANDABLE THOUGH NOT OF COURSE FORGIVEABLE THAT SOME OF THEM DECIDED YOU SHOULD BE TAKEN OFF THE STREET BY FAIR MEANS OR FOUL.

IF YOU COME BEFORE THIS COURT AGAIN, MR STONE, FOR ANY OFFENCE, AND IF UNLIKE THIS TRAVESTY OF A PROSECUTION THERE IS SUFFICIENT EVIDENCE TO CONVICT, YOU WILL SEE THE RETRIBUTIVE SIDE OF SHARIA AS WELL. DO YOU UNDERSTAND, MR STONE?

Stone: YES, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: IF YOU GO BACK TO CRIME AND STEAL FROM YOUR FELLOW CITIZENS THERE WILL BE NO PRISON FOR YOU AND CERTAINLY NO PROBATION. YOUR TARIFF BEGINS WITH ONE HUNDRED LASHES.

Stone: YES, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: AND IF YOU USE GROSS VIOLENCE AGAINST ANOTHER PERSON DURING THE COURSE OF A ROBBERY OR ANY OTHER CRIME, OR FOR THE SAKE OF IT, YOU WILL FORFEIT YOUR RIGHT HAND.

Stone: YES, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: AND IF YOU TAKE A KNIFE TO A MAN AS YOU DID YOUR FORMER FRIEND ADRIAN...

Judge Begun: (Leaning forward and grinning) YOU WILL FORFEIT YOUR HEAD.

Stone: (Swaying slightly) YES, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: RIGHT, I THINK THAT JUST ABOUT COVERS EVERYTHING. THE USHER WILL ESCORT YOU TO THE CELLS WHERE YOU CAN PICK UP YOUR PROPERTY, THEN TO THE ADMINISTRATION BLOCK, TO DO THE PAPERWORK. YOU WILL ALSO NEED TO SIGN THE GOOD CITIZENS CHARTER, THAT IS ASSUMING YOU WISH TO RECEIVE YOUR BASIC INCOME?

Stone: YES, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: I THOUGHT SO, IT WILL OF COURSE BE BACKDATED.

Stone: THANK YOU, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: AND I HAVE NO DOUBT YOU WILL BE MET AT THE FRONT OF THE COURT BY THE GENTLEMEN OF THE PRESS.

Stone: YES, MY LORD, THANK YOU MY LORD.

.Williams-Ali: REMEMBER WHAT I SAID, MR STONE.

Stone: YES, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: NOW THAT YOU HAVE RECEIVED COMPENSATION AND WILL ALSO RECEIVE A NON-MEANS TESTED BASIC INCOME IN ADDITION TO ANY PAYMENTS YOU RECEIVE FROM THE PRESS, YOU HAVE NO EXCUSE TO BREAK THE LAW EVER AGAIN.

Stone: NO, MY LORD.

Williams-Ali: OR MITIGATION.

Stone: NO, MY LORD.

Judge Begun: (Sitting forward and grinning) ESPECIALLY NOW YOU HAVE FINISHED YOUR PORRIDGE.

Stone: NO, MY LORD.

(Williams-Ali nods to the Usher).

Usher: ALL RISE.

(Everyone stands).

Usher: IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE BENIFICENT, THE MOST MERCIFUL, THE SUPREME COURT OF SHARIAH OF THE UNITED KINGDOM AND NORTHERN IRELAND IS NOW ADJOURNED. GOD SAVE THE KING!

Everyone in the Court: GOD SAVE THE KING!

(The Judges stand, bow to the Court, and exit by the back door. The press and public file out. Stone shares a joke with his former guards and shakes their hands as the Usher approaches him. The scene fades out).