

Dead Mans Hand.

PC 1093 turned over his notebook. This was turning out to be a long shift, collecting witness statements after the tube-train crash in the bowls of the underground.

“Right, you definitely, one-hundred percent saw the driver and he was sat bolt upright driving the train as if normal.”

“That’s correct officer... only it was as if he wasn’t aware of the end of the line. As I said I looked straight at his face, right through the windscreen. Looked like he just been dealt aces and eights.”

“Where were you standing?”

“Here, at the end of the platform.”

“So, you got a decent gander?”

“Of course. He had one hand on the throttle and the other on the dead-man’s handle. Ain’t that a misnomer if ever I heard one. How bad is it?”

“Trumpton are cutting out the last of the casualties now. It’s hard work, the temperature soaring over one-hundred-and -twenty degrees down there.”

“Blimey there’s still people alive?”

“More body recovery now. What were you doing here?”

The witness looked down at his London Underground uniform and shrugged.

“Alright I know you work here, but doing what exactly?”

“Been Station Manager here for nigh on twenty years.” He fished out a pocket watch then put it away quickly. “Sorry, just checking for the eight-fourteen. But, well, there’s not much point with no trains running cos of...”

“Did you know him?”

“Of course, I had tea with him in the canteen before shift. Borrowed some of his milk as some daft-apeth left my bottle out of the fridge to turn. Nice guy...” the Station Manager couldn’t bring himself to utter the drivers name.

“He was in a good mood?”

“Top fettle, conscientious as they come that one... Don’t go there, he wasn’t that type.”

“Well I think I’ve got everything. If you remember anything else,” PC 1093 turned and walked up the platform to interview his next witness.

The Station Manager patted his pocket, where the pack of cards and two-grand in cash nestled. Just as for the copper it had been a long shift. Time for a pint.