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THE HAUL

A Ten-Minute Play By

DAN WEATHERER

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THE HAUL

by Dan Weatherer

CHARACTERS

ALBERT: *Mid-forties: Scruffy in appearance. Impatient and agitated*

JIM: *Late teens/Early Twenties: Young and Naïve. Looks up to Albert.*

SETTING

A graveyard; night

SYNOPSIS

Two Highwaymen working by lantern light, dig to uncover the coffin of an associate.

The Haul

by Dan Weatherer

SETTING: *A graveyard. A Moonlit night.*

AT RISE: *JIM is waist deep in an open grave.*

ALBERT stands at the graves edge holding a lantern.

ALBERT

(Agitated) C'mon man, put your back into it!

JIM

I'm trying! Tis hard work this...and why can't you lend a hand anyway?

ALBERT

Told you before, someone's gotta keep lookout aint' they! We get caught digging up Ol' Casey here and questions is gonna follow.

JIM

But it's the middle of the night, ain't nobody gonna be about.

ALBERT

Sure there are...folk like us who are up to no good, folk who will start asking questions, folk who will need paying off...Do you wanna buy their silence cuz it sure as hell ain't comin' outta my half!

JIM

(Solemnly) No.

ALBERT

Thought as much...so shut yer bellyaching and get digging!

JIM digs in silence.

ALBERT

Soon be sun up dammit!

JIM

How far down d'ya reckon he'll be?

ALBERT

Six feet or so, but the fella that digs here, he's an idol sort. Don't reckon it will be much further than four.

JIM stabs his spade into the ground and takes a moment to rest.

Reckon I'm at that now.

JIM

ALBERT peers into the hole.

Reckon so.

ALBERT

JIM wipes his brow.

It was a good haul wasn't it?

JIM

Aye. Told you Bagshot Heath was a good spot.

ALBERT

An' the lock box is safe?

JIM

Course it is... we just gotta divy up and go our separate ways. Too much interest round 'ere, we need to get gone.

ALBERT

Sets us up for life more or less?

JIM

That it will.

ALBERT

JIM picks up the spade and resumes his work.

No more killing 'n that?

JIM

No.

ALBERT

JIM continues to dig in silence. ALBERT maintains his vigil looking out across the graveyard.

JIM stops digging and looks up at ALBERT who has his back towards him.

Why'd you have to kill her Al?

JIM

ALBERT remains still for a moment.

ALBERT

To make sure they knew we was serious.

JIM continues his digging.

JIM

I think they knew we was serious... they looked scared to me.

ALBERT

Scared is good. Brave people don't pay up.

JIM

You didn't need to kill that one.

ALBERT turns towards JIM.

ALBERT

(Angry) And how do you know that?

JIM stops digging.

JIM

We got everything didn't we?

ALBERT

Yes we did, but do you know for sure we'd have gotten the lot had I not stabbed that girl?

JIM

I think we would have.

ALBERT

Ah... you think so, but you don't know so.

JIM

No. I suppose not.

ALBERT

My way may not be pretty but I get the job done. No point robbing a coach if half the goods get away! I'm not risking my neck for half a haul, not never and God save me I won't start now!

JIM

(Reluctantly) I suppose.

ALBERT

Ain't no suppose about it now get on with yer diggin'

JIM continues his digging. ALBERT resumes his watch. JIM pauses again.

JIM

Why'd you make her tell you her name before you stuck her?

ALBERT

(Angry) Jim I swear to God if you don't stop with these bloody questions it's gonna get light and we will both be swinging before dusk!

JIM resumes his digging in silence.

After a short time his shovel strikes wood.

ALBERT turns his attention to the grave.

ALBERT

That's him! Clear the lid, c'mon hurry!

JIM scrapes the dirt clear allowing access to the coffin lid. Once clear, ALBERT and JIM regard the coffin.

JIM

Now what?

ALBERT

What d'ya mean now what? Get it open!

JIM

(Reluctant) How long has he been down here?

ALBERT

Since the morn, he'll not be rotted or anything yet...takes months or more.

JIM begins to feel for the edge of the lid.

JIM

How'd it happen again?

ALBERT

What? Casey ending up here you mean?

JIM

Aye.

ALBERT

Heard he got his throat slit...ear to ear whilst he slept.

JIM

Bloody 'ell! Who'd do such a thing to a man in his own bed?

ALBERT

Someone with good reason I reckon. He had his debts. Word must've got out that he didn't intend to pay up. Those types don't take kindly to non-payment.

JIM

Guess not. Jim pries open the coffin lid, places the shovel to one side and takes a step back from the sight before him.

JIM

Sure don't look like Casey.

ALBERT

Sure don't smell like him neither, that's what death'll do to a man, bloat him and make him food for the worms. C'mon then... get it off him.

JIM turns to ALBERT who is crouched on the edge of the grave.

This is Not the End of the Play
Ending Intentionally Omitted for Security Purposes