

## **Security Novels Short Story S01 New Scotland Yard**

### ***Prologue:***

*At the end of 2016, the Metropolitan Police moved out of their iconic Headquarters building in Broadway after fifty years, relocating to new premises on the north embankment of the River Thames a short distance away.*

*The famous three sided revolving sign that stood guard outside the building since it opened and has become a tourist attraction in its own right as well as featuring in many a film, television show and in novels including this series, has been given a overhaul before taking up its new position outside the new New Scotland Yard.*

*In this series of novels the National Police & Security Service will remain based in Broadway building for the next few novels, however I wanted to write a quick short story where our favourite characters pack up and depart the iconic building for the last time...*

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"All right mate" the works foreman called to the crane driver "ease her up gently mate" he instructed.

The engine of the mobile crane roared into life as the heavy steel cable hanging down from its jib began to tighten as the winching operation commenced and drew the slack out before taking the weight of its important load suspended from further steel cables attached to the hook.

Passers by and some members of the press alongside a number of Security Service officers watched on as slowly the famous three sided sign, its faces protected from damage by tarpaulin coverings was hoisted into the air from its resting place where it had rotated almost continuously since it was first installed in 1967.

There were a few anxious moments as it was carefully guided through the air on the end of the winch until it was finally lowered onto the back of a waiting specially prepared flat bed truck and secured, ready to commence its journey to its new home.

Up above this historic scene, on the top floor of the now largely empty New Scotland Yard building, The Commander was busy packing the last few things left in his office into a cardboard box as a couple of removal men carried his desk out of the door, leaving just his chair and a few bits on the walls remaining.

Once the removal men with the desk were clear, Tracy was able to come in and join her husband who was just taking the old Lewisham railway station platform sign down off the wall.

"So many memories in this place" the Commander remarked "I'm going to miss it" he admitted.

"I know what you mean" Tracy agreed as she embraced.

"Who's left?" the Commander then asked.

"Us, the duty Control Room crew and a couple of engineers from the London Electricity Board who are waiting to turn off the power as soon as we are done" Tracy confirmed with a notably sad tone "Even the sign has gone now."

"Sorry to interrupt Guv'nor" one of the removal men called as he came back into the office "Anything else to go?" he asked.

"Just this box and my chair" the Commander confirmed.

"Right you are" the Removal Man responded whereupon he placed the loaded box on the chair seat before wheeling it out of the office door.

"It's odd" the Commander remarked as he looked around at the now empty room "without all the furniture in it, it looks bigger than I thought."

"I was just thinking about how many people have walked through here just in our time" Tracy commented "The good, the bad and the half dozen or so Home Secretary's we have dealt with in one way or another over the years."

"If walls could talk, this place would have a lot to say" the Commander admitted.

"Oh, I almost forgot" Tracy suddenly remembered something "I bumped into Commander Henderson earlier as he and his Antiques & Art Squad were finishing clearing out of the sixth floor, he found this" she produced something wrapped in cloth from her pocket and passed it across "He said it was yours apparently" she explained.

"Ah" the Commander recalled as he unwrapped the cloth to reveal a large clear diamond like object "It's my very glass and not diamond souvenir from the Lewisham Diamond Heist" he confirmed "I was wondering what had happened to it" he admitted.

"I'll say one thing for our new office though" Tracy then remarked as she and the Commander went over to the window and took one last look out of it "the view is better" she admitted.

"There is that" the Commander readily agreed as they looked out across the neighbouring rooftops where the sun was starting to set and dusk descend on the city.

"Time to go" Tracy then prompted.

"Yes..." the Commander agreed with a little reluctance before, arm in arm they strode out of the office for the very last time.

Proceeding down the eerily deserted corridor, they soon arrived at the main Control Room which was now the only remaining occupied location in the entire building where there a trio of dispatch staff sat at their terminals whilst the large screens at the front of the room continued to display live updates from across the City.

"Okay ladies and gentlemen" Tracy announced as she and the Commander stood by the main control terminal at the top of the room "Status report please" she then requested.

"Gold Two Command is fully manned and online, ready to transfer at your command" one of the dispatch officers confirmed, a tinge of sadness noticeable in his voice.

"Would you like the honour my love?" Tracy then asked her husband.

"Thank you" the Commander responded before pausing, taking a look around and then reaching for the telephone headset on the desk in front of him.

Everyone in the room turned and watched the Commander as he prepared to make the last communication from the building after fifty years of service to the City.

"Broadway Command to Gold Two Command" the Commander formally called "Come in please."

"Gold Two Command receiving, over" came the response from the Control Room Supervisor in the new headquarters, the 'new' New Scotland Yard located on the north embankment of the River Thames a short distance away.

"Prepare to receive transfer of operations" the Commander then called.

"Ready Sir" the response came back.

"Switching over Control & Command in five, four, three, two, one..." the Commander called whereupon he and Tracy together pressed the button on the touch screen in front of them that transferred over all live communications and system feeds to the new control room.

At that point all the screens in the room went blank, the telephones stopped ringing and the normally ever present background hum of the computers began to wind down to silence.

"This is Gold Two Command, communications and control received and online" came the confirmation.

"This is Number Eight Broadway, signing off" the Commander then confirmed whereupon the last communication line was disconnected and the radio fell silent.

"That's it then" Tracy remarked as she looked around the dark and silent control room as the dispatch officers left ahead of them.

"That's it" the Commander confirmed "Time to go" he then declared.

Arm in arm, the couple turned and headed out of the door, back out into the deserted corridor and then proceeded to the lifts where the doors were open and a car waiting to take them.

"I'll let you have the honour" the Commander called.

"Why thank you my love" Tracy responded as she reached to her side and pressed the button for the ground floor whereupon the doors closed and the lift began its decent.

Moments later they had arrived on the ground floor and exited out into the reception area where the ever present receptionist was still on duty behind her desk.

"Evening Janice" Tracy called as they approached the desk.

"Good evening Sir, Ma'am" Janice responded with a smile "You will still need to sign out" she indicated the large book on the desk in front of her.

"Somehow I got the feeling that you would still be here" Tracy wryly remarked as she and the Commander proceeded to sign out for the last time.

"I know it is technically against protocol but now you have signed out, I will let you two have the honour of being the last through the door" Janice declared as, with the formalities complete she closed the signing in and out book and put it under her arm "It seems only right" she confirmed before she too came out from behind the desk that had been effectively her second home for many years and then departed, leaving the two senior officers alone.

"Shall we?" the Commander prompted, holding his arm in a loop for Tracy to take.

"Indeed my love" Tracy agreed as they duly linked arms and walked towards the door.

The automated sliding glass doors glided open as they reached them and passed through before closing silently again behind them for the last time.

Outside there was a gathering of guests including representatives and friends from various sections of the Security Service and other law enforcement and secret service agencies, lined up either side of the walkway that led from the front door to the street.

They watched along with onlookers on the opposite pavement on Broadway as Tracy and the Commander walked out of the building for the last time and came to a stand on the pavement before they both turned and looked up at the tall office building, its style and appearance very much of the late 1960's when it was originally built half a century earlier.

"So that's it then?" Jack, the couple's adopted son asked as he joined them, wearing his formal dress version of his National Police & Security Service Transport Division uniform which seemed appropriate for such an occasion.

"Yes indeed" the Commander confirmed "Farwell New, New Scotland Yard."

"Huh?" Jack responded with a look of some understandable confusion.

"This is the third Scotland Yard" Tracy explained "The original Scotland Yard was in Whitehall on Great Scotland Yard, hence the name."

"Okay..." Jack agreed although he was still not really any the wiser.

"The second Scotland Yard was in the building on the Thames embankment next door to our new place and that became known as New Scotland Yard" the Commander then went on to explain.

"So this one is the third and therefore technically is or rather, was New - New Scotland Yard?" Jack then asked.

"Exactly" the Commander confirmed.

"So the new place is New - New - New Scotland Yard?" Jack then asked.

"I suppose it must be" Tracy remarked.

"Not enough space on the sign for all those New's though" the Commander admitted "well unless we had one New on each side I suppose."

"It would look like the sign writer had a stutter though" Tracy remarked with a wry smile at the thought.

At that moment Simon Fuller approached them with a very formal stance.

"They are ready Sir" he confirmed as he handed the Commander a radio.

"All right" the Commander called into the radio after a brief pause to take one last look up at the still brightly lit building towering above them "Shut it down."

"Roger" came the response over the radio from a gang of engineers from the London

Electricity Board who then proceeded to enter the electrical substation situated around the back of the premises and with the simultaneous pulling of two huge lever switches, cut off the mains power to the building.

Above Tracy, Jack, the Commander and the gathered onlookers on Broadway as well as many also gathered on the other side of the building in Victoria Street, the lights throughout the whole building that were shining through the windows brightly in the dusk of early evening went out and the whole site fell dark and silent.

"It's done" Tracy remarked as the gathered onlookers, having taken their last look began to disperse.

"Eight to Ten Broadway really doesn't have the same ring to it does it?" the Commander commented as they too proceeded to leave, walking slowly up Broadway towards Victoria Street, crossing to the south side as they did so.

"I don't suppose it really matters now" Tracy confirmed "They start stripping the place out on Monday morning ready for the wrecking ball."

"Yep, no place for such 1960's architecture in this town anymore" the Commander responded with a tinge of sadness as he for one had hoped the building would have been saved and converted to a new use but alas it was not to be."

"Let me guess" Jack asked "some sort of ghastly glass monstrosity with loads of overpriced poncy apartments no one can afford with a bit of retail shoved in the ground floor?"

"Isn't everything being built in the city like that nowadays?" Tracy responded.

"They can't demolish the memories" the Commander commented as he paused briefly and looked down at the pavement not far from the junction where Broadway meets Victoria Street, the location where he as a twelve year old had fallen when shot and left for dead so many years earlier "Some better than others" he then added before the family moved on.

"Time to go home" Tracy declared.

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**Security Novels Series - Short Story S01**

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