

# A Policeman's Lot

(full version)

A comedy by Patrick Mackeown

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### Sketch One.

**“Crime, what crime? There’s no crime here, mate.”**

DC Percival Howard: “Morning, Solly, where have you been? It’s almost eleven o’clock. Superintendent Mulligan’s after you again. The crime figures were due in today. Remember them?”

DC Sole Steplightly: “I got sidetracked, mate. I should have been here earlier. I know that. But I had plumbing to do. And you know what that’s like; it has to be done there and then.”

DC Howard: “But, Sol, you’ve only just moved into a brand new house. I can’t believe your plumbing’s broken already. Surely not!”

DC Steplightly: “There’s nothing wrong with my waterworks. Whatever makes you think that?”

He takes his jacket off and pegs it up behind the office door. And then, flicking a cigarette neatly into his mouth, he lights it, using a Donald Duck-shaped novelty lighter.

DC Steplightly: “I got wieghlaid by Chesty Sue from number twenty two. She wanted me to sort her tubes out this morning. I caught her sun bathing yesterday afternoon.”

Solly cups his hands in front of his chest in a vulgar gesture.

DC Steplightly: “Twenty minutes later I had her rusty pipes spread out on the kitchen table.”

PC Howard’s jaw drops.

DC Howard: “But, Sol, I thought you and Dawn were giving your marriage one last chance.”

DC Steplightly: “We were. Well, I mean, that is, until Chesty Sue called me over.”

DC Howard: “Oh, Christ, here comes Mulligan. You’d better have the first two sheets of my crime statistics to give him. Pretend that they’re yours. And don’t tell him about the plumbing for Christ’s sake. Make something up, and quickly.”

Superintendent Mulligan: “There you are, DC Steplightly. I’ve been looking for you all morning. Where the hell have you been? You know it’s Home Office crime reporting day, don’t you? Where are your monthly crime statistics?”

Solly holds out a neatly package folder.

DC Steplightly: “Sir, they’re here.”

Superintendent Mulligan ignores the folder.

Superintendent Mulligan: “I’ve told you before to have your figures prepared on time. One last chance I said. One last chance, Steplightly, or out you go. Well, this is it, Steplightly. Steplightly, this is it. I want to know where your figures are. Where are they, Steplightly?”

DC Steplightly: “Sir, they’re here.”

Superintendent Mulligan gives a curious high-pitched laugh and brushes Solly’s folder to one side.

Superintendent Mulligan: “Don’t think I’ll give an empty folder to the Crime Management Review Board. I’m not stupid, you know.”

Solly opens the folder and removes several neatly typed sheets of paper. Superintendent Mulligan takes the notes gingerly and emits his laugh again as he does so.

Superintendent Mulligan: “CPS advisory notices, crime reports, times, places, follow-ups, criminal intelligence reports and computer data, all in the correct order. I don’t understand. How can this have happened?”

DC Steplightly puffs his chest out.

DC Steplightly: “Well, sir. First an alert comes in. Then I attend the scene of the crime. I fill out my notebook with a pencil.”

Superintendent Mulligan’s face begins to redden.

Superintendent Mulligan: “I know how to attend to the scene of a crime, you blithering idiot! I was a sergeant when you were still wearing short trousers! How did you get these reports filled in? That’s what I want to know?”

Solly looks helplessly at DC Howard. DC Howard’s head has disappeared below the level of his desk. DC Howard’s phone begins to ring. But, because the detective won’t sit up straight, Solly has to answer it.

DC Steplightly: “Enhanced protection? Who needs enhanced protection? That’s specialist firearms operations you’ll be needing. What are you calling CID for? You want who protected? Mulligan? Hang on a minute. Look, I know that Mulligan’s a bit of a prick sometimes, but surely that’s not a good reason to shoot him.”

Superintendent Mulligan’s eyes widen and his mouth drops open. DC Howard reappears above the level of his desk.

Superintendent Mulligan: “Give me that telephone! George? What’s all this nonsense about having me shot? Is this some sort of practical joke? The Connoleys? Mick Connoleys? Out of Wormwood Scrubs? When? This morning? Ten thousand pounds? On me? Blimey! Are you sure?”

Superintendent Mulligan sits down and lets the telephone receiver drop onto the floor.

Superintendent Mulligan: “The Connoleys, the biggest, baddest crime family in the whole of Nottingham has put out a contract on my head for ten thousand pounds.”

Solly and Howard exchange sympathetic glances.

DC Howard: “My God! Sir, that’s terrible. Ten thousand pounds to have you killed.”

DC Steplightly: “Yes, sir, terrible. I’d have thought you’d have been worth a lot more than that.”

## Sketch Two

DC Percival Howard: “The close protection team members have arrived. They’re carrying Heckler-Koche machine pistols, tear gas canisters and pepper spray.”

DC Sole Steplightly: “That’s not a close protection unit. That’s a riot squad! Look, I know that Nottingham’s been relatively difficult to police, these last few years, but it’s still not part of a third world country. At least not yet.”

Close Protection Team Member 1: “Where’s the target? Get down on your hands and knees! Don’t move unless I say so!”

Percival Howard and Sole Steplightly exchange glances. Steplightly points towards the floor.

DC Sole Steplightly: “I know you’re trying to save the planet and the rainforest with all your helicopters, bazookas and absailing gear. And I don’t want you to think that your Tarzan act goes unappreciated. But the thing is,”

Steplightly pauses.

DC Sole Steplightly: “The thing is: You’re standing on my sandwiches.”

Close Protection Team Member 1. (A heavily armed man,) looks down at the floor.

Close Protection Team Member 1: “Oh, sorry.”

Close Protection Team Member 1 puts his machine gun on a nearby desk and stoops to retrieve a squashed morsel of food from the bottom of his military issue boot. He holds it out towards Steplightly.

DC Sole Steplightly: “I don’t want to make it sound as though you and your friends aren’t welcome; You’ve all got rocket launchers, and I’m unarmed. But I couldn’t help wondering as I watched you marking out sniper positions on the roof of our building, is there any reason for you to be here?”

Close Protection Team Member 1: “Mick Connoley, from Wormwood Scrubs has got a contract out on your head of operations. We’ve got the guns. We’ve got the bombs. We’ve come all this way to offer your boss enhanced protection.”

Steplightly rubs his chin in an aggravated manner.

DC Sole Steplightly: “Am I missing something here?”

Close Protection Team Member 1: “I don’t know. Like what?”

DC Sole Steplightly: “Do you know for sure that Mick Connoley, from Wormwood Scrubs has got a contract out on your head of operations?”

Close Protection Team Member 1: “Of course we do! What’s wrong with you? We wouldn’t be here if we didn’t!”

Several members of the close protection squad start to laugh. Steplightly rubs his chin again.

DC Sole Steplightly: “Well, I don’t want to appear to be telling you how to do your jobs, or anything, but isn’t putting contracts out on people, especially senior policemen, illegal? And I don’t want to make radical suggestions or anything, but if Mick Connoley’s been breaking the law, why don’t you arrest him?”

Close Protection Team Member 1 picks his machine gun up, scratches his helmet, puts his machine gun down, takes his helmet off, scratches his head.

Close Protection Team Member 1: “Hang on a minute, I didn’t think of that.”

Close Protection Team Member 1 turns to Close Protection Team Member 2.

Close Protection Team Member 1: “Why don’t we arrest Mick Connoley?”

Close Protection Team Member 2: “Orders.”

Close Protection Team Member 1: “Orders, right, orders, yeah, thanks.”

Close Protection Team Member 1 scratches his head again, picks his machine gun up, and puts his helmet on. He then picks up his portable anti-ballistic shield. Then, discovering that he no longer has a free hand to tuck his chinstrap in with, he says to DC Sole Steplightly,

Close Protection Team Member 1: “You couldn’t tuck my chinstrap in for me, could you?”

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