

"Cheeky fucker aren't you?" said Dave.
He looked up, icy and stern. Not a flicker of emotion on his face.

"Ahh come on Dave it's Christmas....surely there's a discount".
Reggie Thomas had drawn the short straw. Christmas was three days away. Parties were planned and drugs would be needed.

Dave was *The Man* on the Evergreen Estate where nothing was green and only misery seemed to last for ever. His flat on the third floor, was at the end of a roughly crescent shaped block of crumbling concrete and broken windows.

"It's very simple Reggie. If you want one it's fifty. If you want two it's a hundred. Do I need to go on?". Reggie looked down at his shoes, desperate not to catch the steely cold which blasted from Dave's eyes.

Reggie's heart had dropped to the bottom of his gut when his card had come out of the pack. Two of Diamonds. He would have to climb the stairs, skirting the broken glass and putrid rubbish bags. He would have to make the long walk along the corridor, serenaded by booming drum and bass from one flat or the angry sounds of a domestic from another. Dave would be standing there, as he always was. Waiting.

"Just don't look him in the eye Reggie" his mates said. "Ask for the stuff. See if he'll do a deal. Pay the man. Get out".

Problem was the
could supply like
encroach on his t
a beating which would not be forgotten. The Romanians, who for some time had ruled the roost had tried to take Dave out mob handed. They only tried once.

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and all – was

"So, Reggie. What's it to be?" asked Dave.

"Three please Dave" said Reggie, still looking down.

"Lovely. That'll be one fifty then and while you're here, where's Smithy? He's one of your bum chums am I right?"

"Yeah but Dave, Smithy's little boy is not good. They don't know what it is, but he can't walk properly and keeps throwing up. Smithy's trying to find work so he can move the boy to somewhere where the roof don't leak... you know what it's like Dave" said Reggie.

"Reggie. I don't give a flying fuck what sob story Smithy, you or any scrote-bag wants to throw my way. But Smithy is supposed to be doing errands for me and I'm noticing his attendance rate is rather poor. So maybe you could tell him to get his sorry arse round here otherwise it will be him who is struggling to walk properly"