

The Christmas Party

Safe and lost in his own obscurity, Dillon Smallman had led a blissfully quiet, solitary time at work until '*she*' joined the office.

'*She*' had a name, Lena. Dillon had learned this whilst finalising Johnson and Sons end of year accounts. Lena had entered several invoices into the bought ledger system and placed her first name against each entry.

This irked Dillon. She should have just used her initials. That was the convention. First names had never been used before, and it made him uncomfortable. But there was no time to make corrections, so Dillon pushed this indiscretion to the back of his mind and dutifully filed the Johnson accounts. Dillon always felt a small warm glow when Companies House acknowledged safe receipt of the work he had completed.

Dillon had been employed at Mitchell, Pearce, and Donahue Chartered Accountants for the past six years. He mainly liked working there, with one exception: the staff Christmas party. Every year, he tried to make up an excuse not to attend, and each time, he was railroaded by the senior management and basically instructed to show up.

This year's party was no different. Dillon stood at the corner of the bar, hoping not to be noticed and preparing himself to clandestinely slip away.

The party was in full swing. Dillon placed his empty glass on the counter, ready to make his move, when suddenly he felt a pull on his jacket sleeve. Dillon turned to face the puller, and he was astonished to see the smiling face of his 'first-name' nemesis, Lena. He froze as she passed her arm through his.

Dillon heard her say, "Can I buy you a drink?"

Dillon immediately shook his head. He replied, "You don't have to pay; the drinks are all free, courtesy of the management."

End