



Here are Bodie and Doyle in a London setting definitely underused in the TV series. Did I say 'underused'? Well, Doyle seems to be using Bodie, and then Bodie does it back to Doyle. The question is, does either one of them win?

he silver Escort sat parked in the night shadows of a slick, oily street. A steel bridge crossed overhead, the occasional train rattling above like the droning voice of God. One leg propped on the dash, Doyle exhaled a long sigh. "So, have you?" he asked his partner who sat, cramped and tired in the seat next to him. A lorry rumbled by, sending a spray of dirty water cascading up into the faint light of the night.

END OF THE LINE

TALLIS

"No, Doyle," Bodie stated adamantly. "For the millionth time, I haven't. And don't bother to go into that song and dance about Africa and mercs. They're a lot of wild stories and enormous lies." So he was lying, just a little. It hadn't been *Africa*, after all.

"Well, if you haven't *done* it, have you ever *thought* about it?" Doyle was bored. He'd been sitting too long in the cramped car with a grumpy Bodie, having had to cancel a night out with a very unforgiving Mandy and someone was going to have to pay for it. He felt fidgety, restless, like he wanted to run out and scream at the top of his lungs as the train rumbled overhead, pounding his fists against the stone embankment until they were bloody and sore. Since Bodie was the nearest punching bag then he was going to have to bear the brunt of Doyle's flaring temper.

Thought about it. A tentacle of unease slithered

through Bodie. Damn. How had Doyle got onto this topic again anyhow? Why couldn't they be discussing the Queen's Park Rangers or last night's episode of *Kojak*? He put on his blandest face and reached into his breast pocket. "Fancy a Polo?" Bodie asked, carefully peeling the paper back to reveal one gleaming white mint.

Doyle reached over to take one. "Ta much," he replied. His finger slid against the side of Bodie's hand, the touch sending an instant warning signal through Bodie, who scrunched back in his seat, uncomfortable and suddenly feeling claustrophobic.

"Yeh," Bodie muttered and found himself staring steadfastly out the windscreen as a couple crossed the road weaving and laughing shrilly.

Doyle shifted in his seat, turning slightly to face Bodie. He put one arm up on the top of the seat and drummed lightly on the edge of Bodie's headrest.

It felt unbearably stuffy in the car all at once. Bodie's left foot began to tingle as it started to numb from the cramped slouch he was in. A warm breath brushed his cheek, the minty smell of the Polo filling his nostrils. A shiver crept slowly down his spine, turning into a shudder as it reached his gut and groin. Ohhh god, he inwardly moaned.

"C'mon," Doyle whispered, his voice a sinuous tendril in the dark, tugging at Bodie. "Haven't you ever thought about it?" He shifted closer, his heat brushing at Bodie's defenses, melting his resolve. "I've often wondered...." He let it drift off into the dark, an open question, hovering, waiting for an answer.

"No," Bodie tried to say but the words never reached his lips. Doyle's whispers were spinning their seductive web around him, the words like arrows finding their mark even in the dark, pinning him in place when he should have run, stilling the jolt of his reaction when he should have lashed out against the light touch that fumbled across his chest, searching for the opening in his jacket.

Quickly, shakily, he grabbed the slender wrist, wresting it away from his burning skin. "No..." This time it came out, hoarsely. "Don't," he said, clearing his tight throat, squeezing shut his eyes, not against the dark. "Get your bloody hands off me or I'll serve you your balls for breakfast." Bodie reached down and opened the door as a car crept past, its headlights illuminating the inside of the Escort. A gush of cold air filled the car, brushing the dark curls back from Doyle's face, exposing the touch of grey at his temples. Bodie got out and slammed the door shut. He needed to get away from Doyle and the seductive warmth of the car, away from the itchy hypnotic sound of Doyle's voice and the dangers that lurked just below its tantalizing surface. He crossed the road and started to walk towards the illuminated shop fronts, the chill clearing his head and easing his feeling of entrapment.

Doyle sat back, squinting sightlessly, breath even as he watched Bodie dodge traffic. He turned on the radio and fiddled with the knobs. A thumping disco beat blared out of the tinny speakers and with a disgusted snort he turned it off. He reached underneath his jacket and fingered his gun, toying with the catch on the holster. It was warm and familiar as he ran his thumb and forefinger caressingly over the handle. A horn blared in the distance. He glanced over at the pub again. Nothing.

There was a squawk and a short burst of static. Doyle groaned, sinking lower into his seat. He reached out but quickly drew his hand back as a piercing screeeee filled the small car.

4.5, 3.7, George Cowley's voice burred over the transmitter. *Alpha One.*

Thumbing the handset, Doyle closed his eyes in weariness and answered, "4.5, sir."

Report, Cowley barked.

"Nothing yet, sir." He could hear the silent disapproval of his boss. "He hasn't made a move yet. He's just been, um, running errands." The door to the pub swung open, a pool of light tumbling out of the door and into the semi-darkness of the night. Doyle scanned the street. Where the hell was bloody Bodie? He'd been gone at least 10 minutes. Probably up at the late-night newsagents stocking up on sweets. Manfredi could finish his drinking and leave any time. Where the *hell* was Bodie? Serve the bastard right if Doyle had to drive off without him, leave him standing on the curb, pockets bulging with Dairy Milks and the *News of the World*. Explain *that* to the Cow, eh, Bodie, he thought, thumping the dash with a fist.

Keep me informed, 4.5, Cowley's voice, distorted and distant, filled the confined space of the car. *I don't want to lose this one. Do I make myself clear, Doyle?*

"No, sir. Yes, sir. He'll not get past us, sir," Doyle said through gritted teeth, murderous thoughts of his partner flitting across his imagination. Stupid sod. Can't sit still for 15 minutes. How the hell they'd made it through as many stakeouts and tails as they had was beyond him.

And then he saw Manfredi, the object of their stakeout, coming out into the night. Closing time. The glow from the pub backlit him as he hitched his trousers up and slowly started to head up the street, away from Doyle.

"Damn!" Doyle muttered, fumbling with the key. The car started with a cough and a lurch and he slowly began to inch out into the traffic, keeping one eye on Manfredi and one searching for the familiar gait of his disappeared partner. A loud thump on the roof of the Escort made him jump and then Bodie, red faced and puffing pulled open the door of the slow moving car. Cursing loudly he threw himself inside and slammed the door.

"Oh, very inconspicuous, that," Doyle turned to glare at Bodie as he sped up. "I'm sure no one on the street noticed you wailing after me."

“Don’t say anything, Doyle,” Bodie said furiously. “Just drive the car.” And he yanked the seatbelt around him, angrily punching it into the socket. They followed at a slow pace as Manfredti strolled through the thinning crowds and past closed up shops, heading up the high street, cutting across traffic and aiming unerringly towards the glaringly lit Underground station several streets away.

“Oh, nooo,” Doyle moaned. “Not a bloody tube station,” and he began scouring the street for a parking space. Bodie just leaned his head back and took a deep breath. Then he undid the latch on the seatbelt and opened the door.

“I’ll catch you up inside. Don’t be long” And he jumped out of the car, hurrying off after Manfredti.

The parking gods must have been watching over them for Doyle caught up with Bodie moments later. Keeping a discreet distance, they followed Manfredti through the turnstiles and down into the maze of the station. As usual, only the down escalators were working. Bodie grinned smugly at the puffing crowds laboriously climbing up towards them as they glided down the rickety escalator, a dizzying river of theatre and shoe advertisements sailing along beside them.

They came out on the platform, a scattered crowd milling around, waiting for the next, almost the last, train to ferry them off into the dark, to the end of the line. Manfredti had strolled several meters down the platform, past a group of mini-skirted and leather clad punks. Sauntering along, Bodie sidestepped the small tangle of punks. Stupid kids, he thought. All spotty and full of themselves.

Hands crammed in his jacket pockets, nervously toying with the car keys, Doyle assiduously stared at the adverts across the tracks, seemingly immersed in *Miss Selfridge’s* and *Silk Cut* cigarettes but tracking Manfredti surreptitiously.

Manfredti, bored with the *Borscht and Tears* advert across the way, ambled down to stare at the Underground Map, scarred and covered with graffiti.

Edging closer to Manfredti, Bodie debated the wisdom of gambling 10p on a packet of Smarties, his sweet tooth finally winning out over caution. Rummaging in his pocket for a coin, he kept a discreet eye on Manfredti pacing nearby. Slipping the thick coin into the slot with a satisfying *thunk*, the machine jammed. He jiggled the knob,

frowned, and then gave the glass front a swift thump. Doyle glanced over and glared. Bodie shrugged. Sprawled on the bench next to him, a scrawny, spotty kid with a shaved head and a safety pin in his cheek let out a snarly laugh. Bodie gave him and the torn T-shirt covered with swastikas a sideways glance then turned back to the stubborn machine. The punk sneered derisively and then he spat, not quite at Bodie, the blob of yellowish phlegm a defiant symbol shining and wobbling in the fluorescent glare.

Pulling up to his full, intimidating height, Bodie puffed out like a cat on the prowl. He looked dangerous, his eyes narrowed to a menacing slit as he turned slightly to face the lounging kid. He put his hand to his jacket, as if reaching for a gun and took a small step forward.

“Oow, ya fookin’ prick,” the kid snarled as he gathered his dignity and nervously shuffled on down the platform. To Doyle’s annoyance, Bodie smiled smugly, quite pleased with himself. Doyle looked away in disgust.

Bodie focused on the vending machine again, determined to get his Smarties. He was very near Manfredti who’d been idly watching. Close enough to smell his after-shave and hear the scraping of his nail across his jawline. Slowly, Bodie unzipped his leather jacket a little, the metallic rasp sounding clearly in the sudden stillness of the tunnel. Manfredti watched as Bodie reached inside for something to pry the machine with. The jacket gaped, the stiff leather bunching under his arm. Manfredti could plainly see the white woolen polo shirt as it pulled taut over Bodie’s chest, see the rounded fingers as they slid into a hidden, inside pocket, see the deadly, black gun in the holster as it caught the light. A strong breeze coursed through the tunnel, whipping up loose pieces of paper and trash as the approaching rattle and roar of a train filled the air. People sifted forward, impatient for the haven of the brightly lit cars and their promise of speed.

As Bodie slid a penknife from his pocket, a small smile of satisfaction played across his lips. Manfredti’s gaze was locked on the gun and as the gaping jacket closed over, obscuring its power and draw, his eyes travelled across the broad chest, up over the strong jaw and pursed lips to land squarely in dawning blue eyes. Pinned together, the two stood transfixed for long moments, a fine sweat breaking out on Manfredti’s temples.

Doyle turned from the adverts to see the still tableau, a funny, quizzical look on Manfretti's face, a look Doyle couldn't understand until he swung his gaze to his partner. Bodie stood rooted, one hand delicately holding the penknife, the other grasping the tab of the jacket's zip, hovering just below the planes of his chest, the heavy material still bunched slightly where the gun rested warm and secure in Bodie's armpit.

Awareness and instinct simultaneously swept over Doyle and Manfretti. Knocking into a woman standing near him Manfretti scrambled his way through the loitering crowd and headed for a way out. With a sharp shout of "Bodie!" Doyle started after him with Bodie a second or two behind.

And they were running, tearing after Manfretti down a long corridor with peeling posters and eerie echoes. The heavy thud of their footsteps reverberated with each racing step. The tang of sweat and urine filled their nostrils, almost suffocating in its pungency. Manfretti was fit. He was also scared. Realizing he had a tail on him gave him a speed he might not have found otherwise. Bounding up a short flight of stairs and over a wire mesh enclosed bridge that hovered above the tracks, he gained some distance on his surprised pursuers.

They reached a corner and skidded into each other, their momentum twining them for long seconds. Moving again, Bodie tugged at his zip and pulled out his gun. A woman walking towards them in the corridor saw the weapon and screamed, lunging back quickly to let these two madmen past.

"Put that fucking thing away," Doyle bellowed at him. "'S what got us in this mess to begin with." His breathing was paced, the words spat in disgust.

The tunnel that stretched ahead inclined slightly uphill. Bodie's heart was pumping furiously now, his lungs drawing in regular, short breaths, exhaling them used and depleted of oxygen. Suppose all those bloody tramps across Wales are paying off again, he thought morosely. And those bloody freezing runs through Brompton Cemetery that Doyle's always so keen on. They came to another turn, sharper this time, and found themselves slipping and hip-hopping their way around it. Bodie gave his partner a glance. Running half a pace ahead, face slightly flushed, a fine sheen of sweat on his temples, Doyle's attention was concentrated inward, focused on the pace of his feet, the

inhale and exhale of air, the slight burn in his left calf muscle as it loosened to the exertion.

Fear propelling him forward, Manfretti managed to keep just enough ahead. The two agents lost ground when a small covey of well-dressed tourists tangled into them in intersecting tunnels.

And then, just when they were almost upon Manfretti, they ran smack into a swell of people exiting a train. More football fans, their woolen scarves bright banners in the greyness of the underground. Manfretti dodged a path among the throng, darting through an archway and onto the platform. Bodie, trying to weave his way through the waves of people, ended face to face with a broad, half sober man. He grabbed the stranger's shoulders and with the momentum of the run behind him, they danced an elegant little ballroom swirl until Bodie, back towards Manfretti, disengaged his hands from the heavy winter coat he was clutching, and spun once more to face his prey racing down the platform.

The train that had just disgorged the football fans stood, doors open and beckoning in the fluorescent glare. As they began to shoosh shut, Manfretti made a wild leap into a car, catching hold of one of the metal poles inside and spinning round to watch as his two pursuers, breathless and furious, came slamming up against the closed glass and steel. The train began to shudder and move, Doyle pounding his palms against the thick, unheeding door. Manfretti grinned, his crooked teeth glinting, and shoved two fingers viciously into the air in a triumphant, obscene gesture.

Panting and angry, the two CI5 agents stood staring as the train disappeared into the black. Furious, Doyle turned away and stomped toward the 'way out' sign. In his fury he gave a vicious kick to a metal mesh rubbish bin. Bodie followed in silence. In front of him, Doyle stopped abruptly.

"Where the fuck are we?" Doyle asked. It was a large station with multiple entrances and levels, the kind of station one could wander around in for long hours and never tread the same stairs twice.

"Uh?" Bodie replied.

"I mean, *where the fuck are we?*" Doyle clarified. "What street did we leave the motor on?"

Bodie looked up at the names of streets on the exit sign. It wasn't where they had come in. In the chase for Manfretti they had managed to wind their way through the bowels of this fetid underground and arrive at the opposite end of

where they needed to be.

“Dunno,” he answered. “None of these, I think. Must be the other way.”

“Oh, bloody brilliant, that,” Doyle grumbled. “Not only do you bloody lose fucking Manfretti, now we have to fucking hike back to the bloody fucking car.”

“Might be easier to just leave from here,” Bodie suggested without enthusiasm.

“No, it would *not* fucking be easier.” Doyle staccatoed each word. “It’s *wet* and *dark* and fucking *cold* out there.”

“It’s *always* wet and cold. Yer point?” Bodie asked sarcastically. Doyle let a withering glare speak for him.

Bodie shrugged and turned, heading back into the long tunnels that had just surrendered them. Doyle followed, silent anger seeping from him, threatening to scald Bodie. They walked in silence together, footsteps echoing in the almost empty tunnels as they backtracked their way up stairs and across bridges. Doyle was unnaturally quiet, making Bodie ever more nervous. Tension bubbled and thickened until Bodie could stand it no more. In a deserted stretch of tunnel, the smell of stale urine permeating the air, Bodie stopped and grabbed Doyle’s shoulder. “Damn it, Doyle. Say it,” Bodie said, spinning Doyle to face him. “Just fucking well say it,” he spat, allowing his anger to rise.

“You fucked up, Bodie,” Doyle answered, rising to the bait.

Bodie winced inwardly. He knew he’d fucked up the job and was angry enough at himself, but it burned when Doyle hurled the words at him.

“You bloody sodding-well fucked up,” Doyle continued, anger unabated. “You scared off Manfretti with that bloody stupid stunt of yours.” He started to untwist the scarf from his neck, the air cool on his exposed skin. “What did you think you were doing anyway?”

“Yeh, I admit it. I let him get away. I’ll take my whipping from Cowley, face it like a man.” He nervously stuffed his hands in his pockets. “He’ll understand.”

Doyle sneered at his partner. “Oh, Cowley’ll be right pleased with this one, mate. He wanted Manfretti *tailed*, not chased away, and he’s not particular who he rakes over the coals for it. And you bloody think he’s going to just slap us on the wrist?” Doyle paced side to side, scowling at his

partner. “Cowley’d just as soon eat us alive as spitted and roasted.”

“What do you want from me, Doyle?” Bodie asked frustratedly. “I told you I fucked up. I’ll tell Cowley the same. *Mea culpa, mate*. What more do you want?”

“What do I bloody want from you?” Doyle straightened and took a step towards Bodie. Toe to toe, chests almost touching, he narrowed his eyes. “What do I *want*?” His breathing was fast as he tripped rapidly over the words. Something inside him seemed to snap, the problem at hand straining, twisting itself back into their discussion in the car, the discussion they’d been arguing over for the past two weeks. “What I *want* is something you’re too cowardly to give. What I *want* is something you obviously haven’t a clue about. What I want,” he grasped the lapel of Bodie’s jacket, pulling his face close, “is something you’re not fucking *man* enough to understand.”

It was eerily empty in this part of the station. Most of the late evening theatre-goers and football fans had already passed through. Even the occasional passenger hurrying by them blindly trying to catch the last train home seemed to have disappeared.

The suddenly intense closeness of Doyle disconcerted Bodie. The feel of him so near, almost pressed up against him caught at Bodie’s guts with a wrench. In desperation he took a small step back to stare at Doyle who let go of the jacket. He stiffened, trying vainly to control the emotions surging through him. He’d known with some doomed sense of premonition that it would eventually come to this, come to some sort of face off between the two of them. But damnit, why here, why in the middle of a fucking tube station? The little prick was really pushing it too far. But the cant of Doyle’s hips, the tilt of his sneer, the challenge in his eyes added up to a lure Bodie was finding increasingly difficult to resist. It also angered him to a point edging just beyond reason. The smugness of the little sod, the *assumption* that all Doyle had to do was crook his little finger and Bodie would come sliding to his knees in supplication. Well, it wasn’t going to be like that, not this time, not ever.

“Yeh. Thought so,” Doyle whispered, eyeing Bodie up and down. He could sense Bodie’s monumental resolve faltering, giving way. He knew this man, knew that if he kept chipping

away, that thick façade of indifference would shiver and crumble leaving him an obeisant Bodie. “Yer as yellow as they come.”

Bodie gazed slowly up the long stretch of empty corridor, heard distant voices rise and fall, the deafening rumble of the trains now a gentle purr. Here he was again, stuck in the winding bowels underneath the city with Doyle, his close presence an itchy reminder of earlier. He felt trapped, tricked into a situation he’d been assiduously avoiding. But Doyle wasn’t letting up.

“Afraid, aren’t you?” Doyle whispered still, a slip of a smile toying on his lips. “Afraid someone might come by, catch us?”

Bodie startled and looked at Doyle. Damn it. If the bastard was going to keep pushing like that, maybe he should do it, maybe he should bloody-well give Doyle what he thought he wanted. A small frisson ran up his spine. His cock gave a little throb as he reached out with one hand and grasped Doyle by the face, squeezing his cheeks, pushing him back against the tiled wall, bruising. Doyle just stared at him, eyes wide and wild, a satisfied smile creeping over his face.

“Is this,” and his other hand grabbed Doyle by the waistband, fumbling with the button, “is *this* what you want, you bastard?” The zip slid down with a satisfying rasp. Doyle’s hands instinctively went to push him away but Bodie swatted them off, almost growling. “Oh, no you don’t you little sod. You’ve been on me all night.” He pulled the front of the jeans open as wide as they would go, exposing a bright blue bulge of cotton. The scent of Doyle, carnal as the night, reeking of sex, of soap and musk and cum, assailed him, pushing him closer to that final, irreversible moment. “And now you’re going to do it. End of the line, Doyle.” With that he managed to tug the bit of stretchy cotton down. Doyle’s semi-hard cock rose, tingling, into the chill air. Bodie caught a finger underneath the elastic and pulled Doyle’s balls up and out, so that they were held aloft by the fabric underneath, the cock bobbing wildly.

A last bubble of contrariness, of spite, played in Doyle’s eyes. Now that the hook had pierced Bodie’s pale skin, he wanted to tug it, jiggle it, make sure it had sunk securely into the tender flesh and that Bodie wouldn’t squirm out of his grasp and go plunging back into the night. “Ah, now,” he spoke hesitantly. “Uncle George won’t be too pleased to drag us out of nick on charges of public indecency.”

Bodie simply stared at him.

“C’mon. Not here, Bodie.” Doyle’s whisper faded off as he looked squarely into the steely eyes in front of him.

Bodie gave a small smile, the kind he used interrogating villains, just before he got really *nasty*. “I don’t think so, Doyle,” he said without inflection. Doyle felt a momentary ripple of panic rise up within him. The bloody fool *would do* it. He would play it to the end. That was the trouble with Bodie. He didn’t know when enough was, always pushing things past their reasonable limit, Doyle thought, forgetting that he was the one who had been prodding at Bodie, seducing him with words and smells and touches until, dizzy and exhausted by the onslaught, Bodie was finally succumbing, angrily giving in to the whorish demands of his partner.

He tried again to brush Bodie’s hands away but Bodie lashed out suddenly and grabbed both of his wrists, bringing them around behind Doyle’s back, pinning him with his full weight in a suffocating bearhug against the grimy wall. “No, Doyle,” Bodie whispered into the mass of Doyle’s brown curls. “I don’t think you’re going anywhere just yet.” Doyle struggled, wriggling in Bodie’s tight grip, savoring his hardwon prize. His cock, still sticking out at an angle, rubbed against Bodie’s jacket, the supple leather abrading his length, making him quiver. Thrusting his hips slightly, he slid his cock along the warm fabric, the hairs of his balls catching and pulling on the zip. Bodie pulled back slightly. “Like that, do you, you little slut?” his breath whispered acridly across Doyle’s face. Doyle’s nostrils flared with the scent.

Pushing away just enough to free his hands from behind Doyle, Bodie leaned his weight on one forearm against the wall, his face inches in front of Doyle’s, their breaths mingling. His other hand grasped Doyle’s cock, the textures at once familiar and foreign. He didn’t like the sensation. He began, the movements the same as how he did himself even if the circumstances were different. He watched the jolt of surprise on Doyle’s face as he too understood the familiarity of it all, the intimacy.

It was the one way to shut him up, Bodie thought ironically. And he’d wondered, more than fleetingly, what it would be like to hold Doyle in his palm, quivering and fragile. Wondered how it would feel to see Doyle showing a glint of vulnerability. But it was a connection that he didn’t want

now, a sharing too personal, too intimate for him to be comfortable with. *Get out of here NOW!* screamed shrilly inside his head. His muscles twitched but his feet stayed rooted to the spot. Without thought of the mechanics, his fingers began an inexorable stroking, sliding down and up, excruciatingly slowly, seductively, tormenting the flesh in his hand. Doyle shuddered. Grasping the base of the sweating cock, Bodie's thumb stretched down, circling the flared rim of the head. Sliding his fist down the length, he let one finger caress the pink tip, dipping into the tiny opening to gather the tangy precum to spread upward and around the shaft.

Instead of struggling, Doyle let the feel of the calloused hand on his aching cock lull him into blindness, deafness, immobility, the ripples of intense pleasure the only thing he was conscious of. Involuntarily, he began a slow thrusting into Bodie's hand that rapidly quickened, his hips pumping, buttocks clenching. One hand reached up to grab Bodie's jacket, fingers tightly grasping the thick leather.

And as the wildness in Doyle ignited like dry kindling, the cock in Bodie's grasp grew full and rigid. Bodie's jaw tightened, his face hardening into a blank look of indifference. He was angry. He'd been maneuvered into this and resented it. He didn't want to be enjoying it, refused to allow himself to be a part of what was happening. Yet, a tickle of pleasure laced through him, charging his nerves. It was the feel of pliant flesh under his power, the look of stunned pleasure on his partner's face. Much as he'd prodded and needled him like an acupuncturist, Doyle hadn't expected this, hadn't expected Bodie'd actually *do it*. Bodie squeezed a little harder on the cock in his hand.

Doyle's eyes flickered and opened. His knees had begun to tremble and he couldn't seem to stop them. Pressed together, their two bodies entwined and angled back against the curving wall yet the layers of leather and wool blocked any real contact.

Bodie's eyes gleamed, the only bit of light in an otherwise hardened face. And then, without volition, he leaned in the few inches to Doyle's face and brushed his cheek lightly with soft lips. It was a feather touch and in his shock he wasn't sure he'd even done it. But Doyle's eyes opened wider with a puzzled look as he turned his face towards Bodie's. Time slowed and stretched as their eyes met, the

racing beat of Doyle's heart echoing in the hollow silence between them.

"No," Bodie said roughly, breaking the silence.

"No?" Doyle asked, surprised.

Bodie stared stoically at the wall. "No. It's not what you're thinking." His fingers continued to stroke Doyle's length, purposefully making concentration difficult.

"What am I thinking?" Doyle asked, probing.

"Whatever, it isn't."

There was something buried here, some tiny truth lurking just beneath the surface of Bodie's controlled features. Behind the indifference, underneath the cool veneer, Doyle could see a flicker of something. Something peculiar in Bodie's look, something familiar, something that told Doyle this wasn't a first for Bodie. *He's done this before*, Doyle thought, shocked and giddy with the covert knowledge. Now he understood why Bodie had been so bloody reticent, so fucking *coy* all this time. He'd been lying to Doyle; perhaps he'd been lying to himself. "You've been on this side of the street before, mate," Doyle stated firmly.

"You don't understand. You can't understand."

"Can't I?" Doyle asked. "What the *hell* do you think we're doing here?"

"No," Bodie said flatly, denying it all.

"Yes," was Doyle's only reply.

Bodie hesitated, faltered. He hadn't meant to do anything. It had happened without his awareness, without knowledge or thought. Such a small action and it had given away more than he had ever wanted Doyle to know. He was suddenly and acutely afraid. As his hand stilled, Doyle wrapped cool fingers around the fist that held his cock, urging it to continue. After a momentary pause the slow crescendo of sensation started again.

The strangeness of holding Doyle's cock ensheathed, his own hand encased by Doyle, moving, sliding, gripping, startled Bodie. The flood of understanding frightened him. Doyle had sensed the truth, some truth. And Bodie knew he wouldn't let go, knew this had been what Doyle had been after all this time, what he'd been badgering and wheedling for. And finally, Bodie, pushed to his limits, had cracked and opened wide letting Doyle see inside. A fatal mistake. An error of such immense, intangible proportions that he would have to tell Doyle the truth, share with him secrets so long hidden he had hoped them forgotten. But now, by this simple event, they would come

spuming up to wash his past in swirling eddies at his ankles. And they would bind him to Doyle in shared silence. He became numb.

The rhythm of his stroking hand had not let up as his thoughts had spun and collided in a tumult of chaos and recriminations. But Doyle's sudden stillness brought him back with a jolt. He'd stopped thrusting and his breathing was ragged and hard. He arched back shoving his cock fiercely into Bodie's grip, groaning out into the hollow silence. And then he was coming, the warm liquid oozing over Bodie's palm, trailing slowly, dripping over the back of his hand. Bodie stared at him in amazement. The fist that had gripped Bodie's jacket so tightly loosened and fell slack against Doyle's side. Bodie reached into his pocket and pulled out a handkerchief. Without a word he meticulously wiped his fingers clean.

Sightlessly, Doyle sagged against the wall and felt Bodie disappear from him. The warm bulk pulled away, the scent of his sweat and the sound of his breath dissipated as Doyle sank down on trembly legs. He wanted to reach out, call him back but was incapable. Instead, he lay sprawled, unable to move, to speak, to think, as Bodie's footsteps echoed away. Somehow Doyle's jacket had managed to mostly cover his pale and limp

penis. He closed his eyes. In the distance he heard the muted roar of a train hurtling down the line and a gust of chill air surged through the tunnel, cooling his sweat soaked face. He rested his head against the dirty tile of the wall. With effort, he fumbled with the woolen scarf, tugging one long end of it onto his lap, fingers tightly clutching the fabric.

He sat there for a long time, trying to reconcile the images racing through his mind, to grasp the understanding of Bodie's actions. In his haze he heard footsteps, the sound curling through the long corridors, bouncing and echoing. Faint voices swelled and fell. He knew he had to get up, to find Bodie, to demand explanations, to understand. He opened his eyes long enough to see a man round the corner, his raincoat open and billowing behind him. He closed his eyes again, not wanting this stranger to see inside him to discover the secret he was now holding. Instead, he stayed slumped and ragged looking, another drunk asleep in the safe embrace of the Underground. The steady footsteps wavered and slowed. Then he heard a distinctive clink and clatter as a pair of ten pence coins landed next to him. The man mumbled something unintelligible and walked on to catch the last train home.