

Stuck Again

by

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Scene: An elevator in an apartment building. A young man gets on the elevator followed by an elderly man. They turn facing the door, press the floor buttons, and look straight ahead. After a short time the elevator suddenly stops between floors.

Young Man: (alarmed) What the hell! Why have we stopped?

Old Man: (calmly) Oh, it is stuck again. This happens every month or so. We could just press the emergency button and alert the super. . . . We will be rescued in due course.

Young Man: (vexed) You mean I am stuck in this elevator with. . .

Old Man: (bemused) With. . . . me? But why should that bother you? I can be very good company, you know!

Young Man: (softly) Never mind.

Old Man: Might your aversion to my company have something to do with what I am?

Young Man: I don't know what you are talking about!

Old Man: Don't you live on the same floor as I do?

Young Man: (with hostility) So what?

Old Man: "My name is on my door: Saul Epstein. I assume that you have noticed it since you pass it every day. That's a very Jewish name, is it not?"

Young Man: Yeah, what's that to me?

Old Man: I would have thought it would be a lot to you. You forgot to lock your door one day when you stepped out. I hope that you will forgive me but I took a look in your apartment. I could not help but notice . . .

Young Man: (exploding) You bastard! You went into my apartment when I wasn't there?

Old Man: (smiling) I knocked first. I really thought that there might be some emergency.

Young Man: (with fury) Yeah, sure! You slime bag, if you ever go into my apartment again, I will kill you!

Old Man: " I don't think there will be any need of my going in any more. I saw all I wanted to: the pictures of Hitler, the swastikas, anti-Semitic literature. . .It was all very interesting.

Young Man: (defensively) So what? There is nothing illegal in what I am doing.

Old Man: Of course not, dear boy. But I also know who you are. . . Does that surprise you?

Young Man: (with disdain) I'm Jasper Bigelow. My name is on my door too. You don't have to be a genius to figure out that's my name.

Old Man: Yes, that's your name now. But it was not always. It was Nathan Jones. You blew up a synagogue in New Jersey. You were tried but acquitted on a technicality. You moved here and changed your name. We know a lot about you, Nathan.

Young Man: We?

Old Man: “Yes, I mean the organization that I am associated with. We have been trying to find you for some time. It was just serendipity that I finally located you in my own apartment house.

Young Man: (sarcastically) So you have found me, old Jew! What do you plan to do with me? Expose me! No one would care. I was acquitted by your filthy Jewish legal process—even the judge was Jewish!

Old Man: (calmly) Oh, no. We don’t plan to expose you. . .We plan to kill you, my boy.

Young Man: (with growing anxiety) Bull shit! You don’t have the guts!

Old Man: (taking a stun gun from his pocket) “There is where you are wrong, my boy. I have disposed of many like you. Not only do I have the guts but we have a good plan. (He glances at his watch.) In thirty seconds I will use this stun gun on you. After you are unconscious, my colleague will start the elevator, which will go the basement. We will then inject you with a substance that will kill you and make it seem as if you have had a heart attack. We will place your dead body in the alley.

Young Man: (shaking and starting to sob) Please! For God’s sake! Please! (He starts to whimper and sinks to his knees)

Old Man: (with a steely tone) “Oh come now, this is hardly the appropriate conduct for a young Nazi. Why not say “Heil Hitler!”?

Young Man: (looking up from a kneeling position and raising his hand weakly in a Nazi salute) “Heil Hitler!”

The Old Man fires the stun gun, the young man falls to the floor writhing. He puts the stun gun back in his pocket and pulls out a cell phone and dials a number.

Old Man: (calmly) "Abe, start the elevator!"

He presses a button in the elevator and stands silently facing the door along side the prostrate body of the young man.