

The chauffeur who drove the Managing Director of Gigantic Business and the Legal Manager to the meeting is walking around the car park of The Golden Astrolabe Hotel waiting for his passengers to return.

The Managing Director had telephoned him about five minutes earlier. They have had a long standing arrangement that the Managing Director would telephone him five minutes before he needed the car so that the chauffeur could take a break rather than sit continually with the car. Today the chauffeur has been a guest in the staff dining room at the invitation of the hotel manager, who had first cleared the arrangement with the Managing Director when he had shown the two gentlemen to the lounge.

A flashback.

“Would it be alright if we extend an invitation to your chauffeur to be our guest in the staff dining room?”

“Yes, certainly, tell him I’ll give him a telephone call with five minutes notice when it is time to leave.”

“Thank you sir.”

The flashback ends.

The chauffeur had had a very early lunch so as to be able to get the two gentleman to the meeting. So he had now had an early afternoon tea, indeed a stylish afternoon tea, with gluten-free cakes with deliciously flavoured icing, the same as would be served to customers later in the afternoon.

The two gentlemen emerge from the hotel entrance.

The chauffeur opens the nearside rear door for the Managing Director and then walks around the rear of the car and opens the other rear door for the Legal Manager. Then back around the car to close the two doors in turn. The chauffeur then drives the car out of the car park and proceeds back to the head office of Gigantic Business.

‘I’m glad he’s not driving.’ thinks the Legal Manager as he knows that the Managing Director is very good at putting on a sociable manner, but that that often masks his inner feelings which all too often come out in a private meeting later.

After a few miles, the Managing Director speaks.

“Someone has done that and I intend to find out who and why.

“We need a list of everybody who could have been in a position to do it and then we need to find out which one .... or more than one ..... of them did it.

“I am not going to have my instructions contradicted in this way.”

“The verbal instructions that were given ...” says the Legal Manager, somewhat cautiously.

“What do you mean?”

“Well, supposing that you found out and sacked him, her or them and it ended up in an Industrial Tribunal ...”

“What sneaking that extra facility into the software, defensible?”

“Maybe not, but it would almost certainly come out about the verbal instructions and ...”

“Yes, and it would look bad and be very bad publicity for the company, ... I know, I know.”

“And maybe for the position of the person who gave those verbal instructions ...”

“If you mean for me then say for me.”

“Well, for the person who gave the instructions.”

‘Legal people!’ thinks the Managing Director, ‘and their painting around the edge.’

There is silence.

The car proceeds on its journey back to the head office of Gigantic Business.