

Bog Man.

A free short story by

M T McGuire

Published by M T McGuire

My Website Edition

© M T McGuire, March 2010

For more titles by M T McGuire visit my smashwords author page via this link

<http://bit.ly/SWfromBog> or visit my author website and blog at www.MTMcGuire.co.uk

Hello there kindly reader,

Thank you for downloading this free e-short.

Please feel free to share it with anyone you like. In fact, so long as you keep it in its original form, you can do pretty much whatever you want with it unless you're using/publishing excerpts (then you need to ask me) or making money out of it – in which case you need to give me a cut!

If you have any questions you can contact me by e-mailing <mailto:freeybc@gmail.com> or you can leave me a comment on my website at www.MTMcGuire.co.uk and I'll get back to you

Thank you to Damian Wilson <http://www.flickr.com/photos/scampbird> for letting me use his excellent photo for the cover.

Right, I think that's about it. Enjoy.

Bog Man

The Director lay back on an eighteenth century chaise-longue – which, like the rest of the furniture in his office, was a 'stored' exhibit from the Department of Furniture and Paintings – and listened to the music. The tinny computer speakers made it sound as if it was coming from behind a curtain or a sheet of glass; loud, immediate yet somehow, not quite there. Since his secretary dealt with all his paperwork and correspondence the lap-top was little more than an expensive ornament; so after being shown how to play a CD with it, he was delighted to have found a use for the wretched thing.

The report lay across his stomach, he took a sip of wine, placing the glass back on the occasional table beside him – another piece of stored art – he flipped the document upright and leafed through the summary paragraphs again.

“Who wrote this drivel?” he said, to no-one in particular. He stared up at the stuccoed ceiling. He was going to put a rocket up the Keeper of Antiquities' arse for this. He could pass it on to whoever was actually responsible. It had to be a joke, no keeper in their right mind would knowingly sign this off although, the Director reflected dourly, few keepers were in their right minds, eccentricity – extreme in most cases – came with the job.

He examined the week's events. The body of a man, thousands of years old, perfectly preserved, had been lifted from the mire of one of the local fens. The fen in question was not

far from the Museum, just on the outside of the town on a patch of what was now, scrubby river meadow although, of course – as the Director had knowledgeable explained to the gathered press – in the time of their find, it would have been marsh. It was difficult to grasp the significance of the event. Similarly preserved cadavers had been found in marshy areas of the UK and several deep-frozen child sacrifices had been discovered in the higher regions of the Andes. But there was an incongruity about such a happening so close to the centre of a university town.

The figure, clad in rough clothes of a sack-like material had lain with its spear in the peaty soil for thousands of years – eight thousand to be precise – until somebody's dog had uncovered it. The Director thanked the Lord his dog hadn't been responsible for digging up the Museum's oldest (and newest) acquisition and wondered idly what existence would have been like, eight thousand years ago, for a man living by his wits in the tall reeds of the marshes. Needless to say, as the body was finally removed from the earth, some joker had suggested calling it Bob. Within minutes this had transformed itself into Bog and unfortunately, like the mud from the site which had clung so tenaciously to the Director's knees, ruining a perfectly good suit, it stuck.

Bog was now reclining in the palatial splendour of a humidor constructed specially for him in the staff kitchen of the Museum's office area – there was no room anywhere else or insufficient security because of the building works. Initially, the staff had been barred and this had caused murmurings until they had been allowed to have a closer, more private examination of Bog in groups of three.

On his first sight of Bog the Director had been shocked by his greenish black colour and he was finding the thought of him, curled in his humidor downstairs as he and his family slept peacefully in the flat above, no less harrowing. Was it the way the leathery skin was drawn taut across the face or the staring, sightless eyes? Possibly. But the Director's quiet fear was that Bog reminded him of somebody and at the moment, he couldn't pinpoint who.

He turned his attention back to the report. It was patently ridiculous.

He got up, slipped on his shoes and went downstairs. After turning on every light and turning off the alarm he unlocked the door of the kitchen. Bog was reposing in perfect serenity as he had been for the last twenty four hours since he had finally been exhumed, transported the few hundred yards to his current resting place in a special air-ride suspension lorry and installed. He had been wearing a bright gold ring, surprisingly well preserved, on his left third finger which had been removed for further examination and which – and this was where the problem with the report arose – the Keeper of Antiquities believed came from Tatners, a cheap and cheerful jewellery chain with a branch in town.

A Tatners ring. Except that it was also supposed to be a few thousand years old. It had been biked over to Archaeology and Anthropology who were better equipped to date prehistoric artefacts.

“Where did you get that, Mister Bog?” said the Director. “Married were you?” His voice seemed unnaturally loud in the silence of the kitchen. Bog was lifelike. The Director almost expected him to bang on the glass in which he was encased and demand to be let out. He imagined the voice as Bog argued the toss, a thin weasely whine like Terry the electrician demanding immediate release.

“I’m sorry but you would dry out and crumble to dust...” said the Director. Why was he talking to this thing? He sighed. He hoped it wasn’t going to be lying about where it was for long. He turned to leave and hesitated.

Terry. That was it! That’s who Bog reminded him of. Terry was the head electrician, in charge of all the systems at the Museum. A couple of weeks previously, he had popped out to lunch and never come back. No-one knew where he was or what had become of him, not even his wife. The technicians had irreverently started a rumour that he’d drowned after having too beerier a lunch and falling, unobserved, into a less frequented part of the river on his way back to work. The Director wouldn’t have been surprised... Staff members did disappear from time to time, even commit suicide, it was all part of the rich tapestry of working in a Museum. But Terry had been happily married and apparently had never confided anything in his wife that might shed light on his unexplained disappearance.

The Director switched off the lights, reset the alarm and climbed upstairs to bed. As he passed through the hall in his flat, he tossed the Antiquities Department’s ludicrous report on the table. The phone rang.

He consulted his watch.

Yes, it was after midnight. Who the hell would be calling him now?

“Hello?”

“Hello, I need to speak to the Director.”

“Not at this time of night you don’t...” he began.

“This is Sally, I need to speak to Dr Bond, it’s about Terry... I think he may have committed suicide...” She burst into tears.

No. Not this, not now. The Director rubbed one temple with his free hand. “Ah..” he said, “this is Dr Bond...” His pyjama-clad wife put her head round the bedroom doorway and mouthed, “who is it?”

“Sally.” said the Director, with his hand over the mouthpiece.

“Who?”

He sighed.

“Terry’s wife, she’s in a terrible state...” smiling kindly, the Director’s wife walked over to him and put her hand out for the phone. “Sally, I’m sorry... but... would you like to speak to my wife? She’s a bit better at... um... providing succour and comfort than I am.” Succour and comfort, what in the name of God was he saying?

“Yes... thank you...” sobbed the stricken female on the other end. Obviously Terry had confided something to Sally, something which, the Director realised, she was much more likely to tell his wife. He handed the receiver to a more sympathetic ear and went to bed.

The sun shone bright and crisp on the fen as the Director took his dog for its early morning run. The birds were singing and despite the wateriness of the sun the air held the promise of spring. It was seven a.m. and there was nobody else about, his wife was still in bed – not surprising after forty minutes of listening to Sally blubbing at one o'clock in the morning. Never mind, she had made some headway, apparently, he looked forward to chatting to her about it over the breakfast table... or, if she wasn't up by the time he returned, he would make her breakfast in bed. Toast and jam, because cooking much else wasn't his forte, with lots of fresh filter coffee.

The Director liked these early sessions, they gave him time to clear his mind before the day started in earnest. As he walked he took his coat off and slung it over one shoulder, the dog trotting ahead of him. After he had come about half a mile, just past the place where they had found Bog, he stopped and sat down on his usual bench where, as was his habit, he opened his newspaper. It was still warm but the sun had acquired a hazy quality, as if there was mist coming down. At first he was too busy reading, and occasionally glancing up to check on the whereabouts of his dog, to notice anything unusual. Then he saw it. Rolling across the fields towards him was a wall of thick white fog. It was so dense that nothing could be seen through it at all and it was moving at speed like a pyroclastic cloud.

Eerie. The Director was seized with an irrational desire to run for his life. He stood up and called the dog who came at once, her tail between her legs. She was no more impressed by the fog than he was. The wall of billowing whiteness was about a hundreds away now and as it engulfed a small tree the Director made up his mind. With fumbling fingers he connected his pet to the lead and they proceeded, as fast as they could, in the opposite direction.

The Director and his dog were both reasonably fit but they had gone no more than twenty yards when the fog reached them, icy wisps of white flowing round them. The Director cried out and panted for breath, he felt as if he was drowning as the stifling blanket of moisture enveloped him. It wrapped itself about him like frozen fingers and seemed to hold him there as he coughed and struggled. He battled forwards with all the strength and energy he could muster, his only aim to be free of his rising claustrophobia and that was when he left the path. Or did the path leave him? One step he felt the ground under his feet the next he was flailing through reeds, waist-deep in brackish water.

The fog parted enough for him to be able to see the figure of a man. He was small and squat, dressed in clothes of sacking and in his raised hand he held a flint-tipped spear. Despite the panic which had taken hold of him the Director had time to notice that the figure was left handed and wearing a gold ring.

“Oh very droll.” this had to be a joke, except that the Director wasn't finding it funny. “Hello Bog.”

As the stranger's expressionless gaze met the Director's he spoke in some unintelligible tongue. No doubt one of the keepers at the Museum would have been able to translate, but unfortunately he was none the wiser. Perhaps it was one of the Museum's younger, more exuberant employees. No, from where the Director was standing, it didn't look like it. He reacted in the manner of most frightened people, with anger.

“Well, Bog, or whoever you are, if this is some kind of sick joke, I should warn you that I am unamused and now, not only am I unamused but I am very much in the mood for firing people.” The figure stared at him blankly. “I will also sue you,” continued the Director. “I will sue you for every penny you possess, no I will sue you for such enormous amounts that you will have to sell your soul to the devil to pay me. Do you understand?”

The figure continued to stare.

“Well DO YOU!” shouted the Director. “Because now’s the time to own up, before I really lose my temper.”

The figure yelled, waving its arms, and lunged at him. Screaming, he blundered away. Something caught him a glancing blow on the back of the head and he felt himself falling into unconsciousness... no, he would drown in the water, but the surface he landed on was hard.

When he awoke, he was lying face down on the grass, the sun was a little higher in the sky and the birds were singing. His clothes and body were covered in slime as if he had been wading through some deep, stagnant quagmire and smelled like it, to boot. But the Director gave it little thought as he searched, distraught, for his dog.

Some time later, he had no idea how long, he realised he was panicking. He stopped, took some deep breaths and tried to calm down. He’d had a bang on the head and he didn’t really know what had happened to him, he did know where he lived and worked, though, and he realised he should go back there.

By the time he reached the Museum gate he had almost successfully convinced himself that the morning’s experience was nothing more than a dream he’s had while he was out cold. He checked the facts in his head, one, he had obviously been in the river – the state of his clothes bore witness to that – but it must have happened before he’d knocked himself out because, in the manner of the concussed, he had forgotten. Perhaps he had slipped, two... Wolf was gone. Her absence was more difficult to explain, she often disappeared on her own but she always returned to him.

He looked at his watch and immediately wondered why he had bothered, the glass was full of brown pond water and it had stopped. He wondered how long he had searched for Wolf, an hour? More? Maybe?

He hoped his recalcitrant pet would be the first thing he saw but when he arrived home but he found the place significantly free of domesticated animals.

He rubbed the back of his head, it was tender and aching and all he wanted was a hot bath. As he mounted the stairs his secretary appeared from her office.

“Doctor Bond, they found something else on the fen yesterday...” He turned and she took in the state of his clothes, “Oh... What happened? Are you alright?”

He shrugged, spread his hands and shook his head in the hope it would clear his confusion.

“I’m fine, I had a bit of an accident that’s all, I lost the dog...” he shook his head again, “she got frightened... fell in the river I think... I don’t really know, I don’t remember much, my head, maybe I’m concussed..?” He shrugged again. “I think I’d better go and change.”

“I’ll cancel your meetings and call a doctor... there wasn’t much on this morning, only Sally.”

“Terry’s wife?”

“Yes.”

He swallowed. He imagined the slight form of forty-a-day Terry thrashing about in the marshes, trying to escape from hessian-clad hunters with stone tipped spears. He wouldn’t have stood a chance. The Director was taller, thicker-set and certainly fitter than Terry. There but for the grace of God...

“I gather she’s upset...” he said.

“Yes.” said his secretary.

He glanced down at the soggy remains of the second Saville Row suit ruined in as many days.

“Aren’t we all.” he muttered. “I’ll see her... but I’ll see a doctor, first, if I may.”

“Henderson, from the medical school, was in the Friends Room a few minutes ago, do you want me to borrow him for a moment to come and look you over.”

The Director gave her a grateful smile.

“Yes, thank you, right away if you please. When is Sally due in?”

“This morning.”

“Ah... if you can, put her off until this afternoon. How bad is she?”

The secretary leaned towards him and adopted a confidential air.

“I think she’s totally lost it...” she whispered tapping her head with her finger.

“Don’t tell me, she thinks Bog’s Terry.”

She stared at him.

“Yes.”

He shivered. So did he.

“Oh and that report from Antiquities?”

“Yes?”

“Tell them I’ve read it. I want them to get that thing X-rayed as soon as possible and check its dental records...”

“If you insist...”

“Yes, I do insist, I was talking to old Grierson at the Museum of Archaeology and he said the first thing you must do with a...” he waved on hand in the general direction of the kitchen, “thing, like this, whatever the evidence to the contrary, is to check it’s not a murder victim.”

“But it’s thousands of years old.”

“Allegedly.”

“Surely the Department of Antiquities...?”

“Could have made a mistake?” said the Director firmly, “Yes. Oh and is there anything more on the ring..?”

“Not yet Dr Bond.”

“Yesterday on the fen, they’d found something else, you said, was it a black and white mongrel dog? You know, a bit like mine.”

She was very pale.

“Yes... I’m so sorry, today of all days, when you’ve lost ...”

“Indeed.”

“How did you know?”

“I heard some people talking about it yesterday evening,” he lied and went upstairs. He would be committed after this, he thought grimly, or imprisoned for the murder of Terry. One or the other.

Terry’s widow was middle-aged, thin, like Terry and, like her deceased (possibly) husband, she chain-smoked. When the Director marched into the Syndicate Room, ignoring his secretary’s efforts to speak to him first, it was already thick with smoke. The borrowed doctor had confirmed he had light concussion and suggested he take some painkillers and go to bed. The Director had to admit that the idea of bed appealed, his head ached abominably. Yes, he would take the doctor’s advice but first he should speak to Sally.

He greeted her with an air of dignified concern. He wasn’t sure how he was going to handle this. She was showing worrying signs of dependency on him and his wife and he did not wish to encourage it. She had to learn to cope alone and, most importantly for this interview, she had to hold back the tears. The Director couldn’t cope when women started crying.

“Sally...” he said. “I’m so sorry to hear about...” his voice trailed off, thank goodness he hadn’t said he was sorry for her loss. He had considered it, but decided against, on the grounds that it sounded unbearably trite and unctuous to his old-fashioned ears. There, sitting next to Sally, was Terry, despite the university’s no smoking policy they both had a cigarette on the go. “Where the hell have you been?” he snapped before he could stop himself. “Do you know how much trouble you’ve caused?” oops, he’d gone in a bit heavy there. He regarded their stricken faces. More than a bit. He sighed. And the smoke was making his headache worse. “I’m sorry,” he said, “I’ve had a taxing morning, I’ve lost the dog...’no idea what I’ll tell the children...” he strode over to the sash window and wrenched it open with a flourish. “Perhaps you’d better start at the beginning and explain what happened...”

“It all got too much,” whined Terry.

“Right...” said the Director.

What had got too much? He thought. Here was a man with a job for life who, as far as he could tell, spent most of his days drinking tea and complaining about how much work he had to do rather than actually doing any. On the productivity front, his two week absence had hardly been noticed. Then again, as someone who had come to the Museum from a career in industry, the Director was aware that his view of what constituted a sensible work ethic was at variance with that of his staff. He heaved another sigh, yes, and his idea of a decent, motivational wage was equally at variance with the reality laid down by the University Pay Board. From his privileged position, the Director could easily appreciate why the University was one of the richest institutions in the country.

“I had to get out for a couple of days...” said Terry.

“I see,” There was too much sarcasm in the Director’s voice but he couldn’t help himself.

“I’m sorry, I didn’t mean no harm but I had to go.” Terry put his cigarette down, in order to run his nicotine-stained fingers through his grey blonde curly hair.

“Might I be so bold as to ask where?”

“Broadstairs.”

“Broadstairs.” said the Director flatly.

“In Kent.”

“Yes, Terry, I know where it is.”

“There’s no call for sarcasm, Sir.”

“Terry! Don’t be cheeky.” scolded Sally.

“No, Sally, your husband has a point. Please accept my apologies, Terry,” said the Director. “Sally, if you don’t mind, may I speak to him alone?”

“Yes, of course.” She cast a fleeting glance at Terry but he was staring straight ahead.

The Director’s secretary knocked on the door and put her head round.

“Dr Bond, could I have a word?”

“Can’t it wait?” he nodded to Terry and Sally.

“It’s urgent.”

“Alright, would you both excuse me for a moment?” He was annoyed with his secretary for interrupting, “has anyone offered you a hot drink, coffee, tea?”

They shook their heads.

“Would you like one?”

“No thank you, we had one before we came out,” said Terry, reaching out and patting his wife’s hand, “unless you’d like a cuppa love?”

“No thanks dear,” said Sally embarking on a volley of hacking coughing. Something made the Director imagine one of her lungs landing on the table with a splat and he spent the next few seconds trying extremely hard not to. It was bad enough with Bog in the kitchen... he shuddered as he left the room.

“What is it?” he asked his secretary impatiently as they stood in the hall, his head thumping.

She held out a self-sealing plastic bag containing a wedding ring.

“That was quick...” suspiciously quick.

“Well, it didn’t take long it IS from Tatners, one of the technicians wears one the same.”

“But it came off Bog’s hand didn’t it?” said the Director.

“Yes.”

“Then who put it there?”

“By the looks of it, Bog, himself.”

“That’s impossible.” said the Director trying not to confront his fear to the contrary. “Should we be passing this thing onto the police?”

“No, that’s the trouble, the results of the carbon dating show that the ring is the same age as the body,” she paused for effect, “eight thousand years old.”

The Director gave himself a second or two to appreciate this concept.

“Are we sure about the dating...?”

“The Keeper of Antiquities is adamant that the results are correct but concedes that it must be an anomaly somewhere... he’s just not certain where at this stage... he wanted you to know he is working on it.”

“Doubtless he did.” said the Director. “Thank you,” he smiled grimly. “I apologise for being short with you, I am not enjoying today.” She flashed an understanding smile as he took the bag from her outstretched hand. He should find a way to get her a pay rise, he thought as he disappeared into the Syndicate Room where Terry and his wife, Sally, were waiting.

Sally stood up.

“I’ll just go and wait outside shall I?” She seemed frightened.

“If you would be so kind,” he held the door open for her “Why don’t you pop into the Friends Room? I won’t be detaining Terry long, I just need to ask him a couple of questions.”

When she had gone, the Director closed the door and turned his attention to Terry. The electrician seemed even more shifty than usual and squirmed in his seat as if trying to make himself as inconspicuous as possible. The director made eye contact.

“Where did you actually go Terry?”

Terry’s eyes slid sideways.

“I’m sorry, Sir, but I don’t know what you mean?”

“Alright, we’ll play it your way. What I mean is that you didn’t go to Broadstairs did you?”

Terry’s face went blotchy, as if his skin was trying to blush and go pale at the same time. Dumbly, he shook his head.

“Does your wife know what happened?” Terry adopted a set expression. “Didn’t she ask about the mud?”

Silence.

“Anything you say will be in the strictest confidence, you have my word on that and I don’t give it lightly.”

Terry shifted in his seat again.

“What I am trying to say, Terry, is don’t be afraid to tell me the truth, however strange it may seem.”

“Thank you, Sir.” Whispered Terry, his expression no less guarded. The Director sighed, this interview wasn’t going to plan and he didn’t like being called ‘sir’

“Have you seen our new acquisition?”

“Bog man?”

“The same.”

“No.”

“Would you like to?” Terry hesitated and the Director decided to take it as a ‘yes’. “Come with me.” He stood up, walked to the door and held it open.

In the kitchen, as his employee stared into the humidor, the Director watched him closely. Had he noticed a faint glimmer of recognition on Terry’s face? Difficult to tell and the electrician wasn’t giving anything away, he merely leaned his hands against the glass and peered in. More fingerprints to wipe off. Oh, the cleaners would be delighted, and it had taken enough to persuade them to clean Bog’s quarters in the first place, the Director sighed and rubbed his aching temples.

“Originally he was wearing a ring,” he said conversationally and Terry turned his head. “It isn’t there now, of course, it’s been sent away for analysis...” he nodded at the electrician’s left hand. “I see you’ve lost yours.”

Terry gazed at him with a downcast expression.

“Was it foggy the day you disappeared?” asked the Director gently.

“No...” said Terry with a furtive glance at Bog.

“Not even for a little while, out there on the fen?”

“No.”

“Level with me Terry, what actually happened?”

“What do you mean?” said Terry nervously, “Nothing happened. I told you. I went away because I couldn’t stand the pressure but I can’t be without my Sally so I came back...”

“This morning.”

“Yeah.”

“And that’s it?”

“Yes.”

“That’s what you’re saying but what do you THINK happened, what are you afraid you did?”

Terry was sweating.

“The same thing.”

“Really. Is that so?”

“Yes.”

“I’m afraid I don’t believe you. I think you were walking across the fen when you came across some unusual fog, you found yourself... God knows where, with gentlemen – and possibly ladies – like Mister Bog here all around you. Were you captured? Is that why you couldn’t come back? It wasn’t just me they were chasing this morning, was it?”

He noticed Terry’s staring eyes and wondered if he had gone a bit too far. The man smoked for Britain, after all, it would be unfortunate if he keeled over and died especially, an uncharitable little part of the Director thought, at work.

“I think, begging your pardon, Sir, that you should go and see a good shrink.”

Nope, thought the Director, he hadn’t gone far enough. He held up the plastic bag with the ring in it.

“While you were... away, this was found in the bottom of a container of acid. You know, the stuff they dilute and use for cleaning... I’m afraid it’s not weathered its acid bath too well but I wondered, is it yours?”

Terry seemed intensely relieved and yet, at the same time, a little frightened. “Yes,” he said.

“Are you sure? Here, take a look.” The Director passed him the bag and watched as he examined it closely.

“It’s mine. I’d know it anywhere.” said Terry as he handed it back.

“Hmm... Well, I should tell you, I lied about where it came from...”

“I know.” whispered Terry, “but you said it was OK to be honest.”

“I did and I meant it. So... In light of what you just said I assume you realise your ring was found with our friend here. Did you use it to buy your freedom? Come on Terry, I wasn’t the only one to walk out of the fog today, was I?”

Sadly, Terry shook his head.

“Have you told Sally?” asked the Director.

“No... she’d never understand... you’re not going to say anything are you?”

“No.” said the Director, trying to imagine how he would explain the situation to his own wife and failing.

“What are you going to do to me?”

“Nothing. I was walking Wolf, my dog, on the fen this morning when a bank of fog rolled in and I found myself...” the Director waved one hand as he tried to think of an appropriate adjective, “somewhere else. I met Mister Bog, here, who bashed me over the head – most

uncharitably, I thought. When I came round I was lying on the grass in the sun, and apart from the absence of my dog and the fact I was smelling like the bottom of a pond everything was back to normal. I have been wondering if this morning's adventure was a psychotic episode and now I am reassured that it was not..."

"I'm glad to hear that, Sir." said Terry.

"Yes, I am sure you are, and frankly, Terry, I can only admire you for surviving two weeks of that with your sanity in one piece... It's reassuring that neither of us needs to see a psychiatrist but if you would like some trauma counselling the Museum would be happy to oblige..."

"Thank you, Sir, but I think I shall be alright."

"Good, if you change your mind the offer's there."

"Thank you sir."

"Oh and Terry."

"Sir?"

"I have a name and it's Dr Bond. Please don't call me 'sir'. I am not the previous Director."

"I can't help it, Sir, I'm old-fashioned."

"Could you get by with Director, then?" He asked with the merest hint of a smile.

"I s'pose I could." said Terry. His eyes were fixed on the ring in its little plastic bag.

"Thank you." said The Director. He followed Terry's gaze. "It's survived rather well, hasn't it?" he held the bag by the seal and shook it a little, "considering it came from Tatners."

"Mr Director... instead of the counselling... could I have it back?"

The Director glanced at Bog.

"I don't see why not, I shouldn't think he'd mind." He smiled, "Although, of course, if anyone asks, you lost your ring in the Museum where it was found by the wrong people and used to play an elaborate practical joke on the Keeper of Antiquities."

"Yessir... I mean, Mr Director..." said Terry. 'Mister' the Director noted, not 'Doctor'. Should he say anything he wondered? No, he could cut the man some slack.

"Shall we?" the Director opened the kitchen door and they went to find Sally.

"Thank you, Mr Director." said Terry as he ushered the pair of them out of the administration building.

“No thank YOU, Terry.” Replied the Director and with a considerably lighter step, he climbed the stairs to his private flat and shut the door.

Hmm... that's a lot of thank you's but here's another... Thank you for reading.

If you like this story, Check my website at <http://bit.ly/blogfrombog> for news of my forthcoming novel Few are Chosen.

You can find another free short story to read – Is This Heaven? – here:
<http://bit.ly/HeavenfromBog>

And... You can ensure your future halo is shiny (and help a struggling author) by writing a review saying how smashing you think this story is and posting it on wherever you downloaded it.

Regards

M T McGuire