

Four hours in Accident and Emergency can seem a lifetime. 'We should have brought a bottle of whisky,' said Mike.

'You think the doctors would be impressed by that?'

'I'm sure they would be if you offered them a glass.'

'It's not like the old days. Drinking on the job isn't fashionable anymore.'

Eventually we found ourselves at the front of the queue. A small demure nurse with red hair led us to a waiting room. 'Sorry about the wait. Friday night is always hectic.'

'Drunks?' said Mike.

'Afraid so,' replied the nurse. 'Some people can't hold their drink.'

'Shocking,' said Mike.

'How did you injure your leg?' asked the nurse.

'Playing football,' replied The Ghost. 'A nasty tackle.'

The nurse frowned. 'It looks like it may be broken. We'll need an x-ray.'

'Can we do that now?'

'Unfortunately not. I'll give you some pain killers for tonight, along with some crutches. Come back tomorrow and we'll sort the x-ray for you.'

The nurse gave Mike an appointment card.

Mike looked at the pain killers. 'Can I mix these with alcohol?'

'Best not,' said the nurse. 'Otherwise they will give you a tremendous high.'

'No, I don't want that,' said Mike, with a gleam in his eye. 'Thank you for your help.'

I left Mike at the entrance to his flat. 'Sure you don't want any of these little beauties?' he said, clutching the pain killers in his hand. 'Would go well with a Southern Comfort.'

'No, you're ok,' I said. 'Let me know how you get on tomorrow.'

I watched as The Ghost discarded his crutches in the hallway and putting his weight on his good foot, began to hop up the stairwell. 'Until tomorrow,' he said, swallowing a handful of painkillers with one hand whilst supporting himself on the stairwell with the other.