

Dan's Revenge  
by  
Simon Wiedemann

© 2024

INT. DAN'S VAN - DAY

It is a rainy day. DAN is driving at a moderate pace with a chilling sense of calm. Relaxing Mozart piano music plays on the radio. There is what looks like a disconnected games console controller on the neighbouring seat. Out of the window and on DAN'S left are a row of fancy houses, and on his right is a forest area. The straight road goes on as far as the eye can see. DAN hums to the music with a vacant stare.

Soon enough, DAN notices a house with a swimming pool in the front garden. He stops his vehicle by it, opens the door and exits. He walks to the back of the van to see its numberplate says 'NOP4L1ND'. He opens the back door to reveal a large package. He picks it up with both hands and walks to the front door of the same house. On the door is the writing 'James's Wonderful Abode'. He leaves the package by the door.

He walks back to the driver door, opens it and gradually drives away, into the forest. It's a bumpy drive and consequently the back numberplate falls off. Soon enough, the houses are gone in the rear view mirror. He stops, picks up the controller and leaves the van again. He presses a button on the device and a massive explosion is heard. He is no longer calm and runs further into the forest as fast as he can. Out of breath, he shouts to himself.

DAN

Oh my God, oh my God, what have I done???

JAMES is sitting alone in his rumbling living room with the TV on. Huge bags of salt are everywhere, and many water pistols hang on the walls. He jumps up in a panic.

JAMES

What is God's name was that???

He runs to the entrance of his house to see that is now gone. Rubble is everywhere. Half a dozen NEIGHBOURS cover their faces in shock. JAMES speaks to them, alarmed.

JAMES

Any idea what the hell happened???

A MAN in his 30s shrugs his shoulders.

MALE NEIGHBOUR 1

I have absolutely no idea!

A WOMAN also in her 30s points to the disturbed woodlands.

FEMALE NEIGHBOUR 1  
It looks like someone has driven  
through the forest... That's weird...  
Why would anyone do that?

JAMES  
Dan's van...

FEMALE NEIGHBOUR 1  
I'm sorry?

JAMES  
Dan... It's his numberplate...

FEMALE NEIGHBOUR 1  
What does it mean?

JAMES  
It means 'no palindrome'. It's a  
pathetic way of getting to me.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

The forest is as thick as ever and DAN is still running for his life. His van is gone. He then collapses to the ground and starts crying. Sirens are heard in the distance.

DAN  
I don't know what to do! I can't go  
to jail! I have to hide!

DAN desperately tries to bury himself under the soggy dirt as JAMES is heard shouting 'DAN!' 'DAN!' over and over again. The shouts get nearer and nearer. DAN starts to cry as he digs harder.

DAN  
It's all over now!

JAMES  
(heard not far away)  
Dan's van! I knew it!

DAN gives up trying to bury himself and lays face down on the mud, lifeless.

DAN  
James, please...

JAMES stands over DAN, who is still face down. Two ultra rapid response POLICEMEN are by his side.

JAMES  
(sadly)  
Dan, what have I ever done to you?

DAN  
 (talking to the dirt  
 and fed up)  
 What have you done to me? Well, how  
 about give me years and years of  
 torment, how about that?

JAMES  
 Well you ruined the best second of a  
 thousand years, so...

POLICEMAN 1 looks puzzled.

POLICEMAN 1  
 What's that mean?

JAMES  
 Would you like to explain yourself  
 Dan? Or is that too incriminating?

DAN  
 Screw you...

POLICEMAN 1 looks serious.

POLICEMAN 1  
 Where did you get the bomb, Dan? What  
 do you have connections with  
 terrorists? What I do know is that we  
 have had a mysterious tipoff, but it  
 was very vague. We've been following  
 you.

DAN  
 (still talking to the  
 mud)  
 I made it myself, I've been planning  
 this for years. The bomb wasn't just  
 a bomb, you know? It was  
 sophisticated. Very expensive and  
 difficult to make. One of a kind.

POLICEMAN 2 tries to be understanding.

POLICEMAN 2  
 Why now?

DAN  
 Why not?

POLICEMAN 2  
 Fair point.

DAN  
 Am I going to jail?

POLICEMAN 2

We'll go easier on you if you tell us who you're working with...

DAN

It was just me.

POLICEMAN 1 smiles.

POLICEMAN 1

Thank you for telling us who you were working with. We will now go easy on you.

JAMES

What??

POLICEMAN 1

It's simple logic, James. Now stay there, Dan, so I can cuff you.

DAN

Doesn't seem like you're going easy on me, right now...

POLICEMAN 1

Don't worry, as you've been so helpful, you could be looking at just days in prison...

DAN

No way...

POLICEMAN 1

Yep, you'll be giving a podcast in no time. Judging by your current situation, I'm sure it will be a fascinating listen. One of your best.