

## SURPRISE

799

By James Collins

In 1982, Jay Murphy and his wife Barbara traveled from Bangor Maine to New York City on a vacation. It was March, and Maine had loads of snow on the ground while New York was bone dry. They came with a huge Range Rover station wagon with four wheel drive, oversize studded snow tires and Maine plates. The packed vehicle contained their luggage their clothes and gifts for their family.

Barbara asked Jay if they could visit the Empire State building, as she always wanted to go up on top of that New York icon and view the city from the great height. Jay agreed and they drove down 34th St. to the Empire State building and circled the block. Lo and behold, they found an empty parking space right on the corner immediately in front of the building. They were overjoyed. They saved a \$20 parking fee and they did not have to find a parking garage in that frantic city traffic. Jay secured the car and walked into the building. In the lobby, he asked how to get to the observation desk. They located the correct elevator, paid their entrance fee, and went up to the top of the building. As they walked out onto the observation deck, the view astonished them. Jay walked over and looked down to see his car. Lo and behold, the car was gone.

Jay told Barbara, "Our car is gone. It's been stolen."

"Jay, you are just turned around. You probably have the wrong corner of the building. From up here, all corners look the same. You have to go around and check all four corners before you can make a statement like that."

Jay complied and walked to each of the four corners of the observation deck and looked down. The car was gone.

They went downstairs and called the local police. A patrol car arrived and they told their story. They described the Range Rover and the police asked what was visible from the outside they said their luggage their clothes and the presents they bought for the family.

The police officer responded, "If that could all be seen from outside the car it's no wonder the car was stolen."

Jay said "But we're only gone 12 to 15 minutes."

"Look this is New York .15 minutes is forever for thieves. They are on the lookout for tourists and plan to hit them because they have many valuables with them including cameras and money, phones and electronics. "

"How long will it be before we get our car back?"

"It could be a week a month or never. It depends on whether they're trying to ship it overseas to South America."

"Will you begin looking for the car right away?"

"Sir, over 200 cars are stolen the New York City every week. They all look the same and nobody will recognize a particular car."

"How many oversized Ranger Rover station wagons with four-wheel-drive and oversized studded snow tires with Maine plates do you think are in New York right now? I

**think there is only one. Can you put one of those BOLOs out you know ‘be on the lookout’ for this car?”**

**“I think you’re right. This car is very unusual and might be spotted. I will put a BOLO out right away and will see what happens.”**

**“Thank you, we appreciate that very much. We’ll be staying down the street at the RKO Hotel.”**

**I still verified to that okay I’ll is good but the part of Cisco’s upstairs to take the guy  
Two days later the police department notified them that the car had been located in an  
impoundment lot at W. 48<sup>th</sup> St. on the Hudson River. They went down there and found  
their car intact with all the valuables from inside gone. The cost to retrieve their car was  
\$280, which covered the parking ticket, the tow and the storage in the impoundment lot.  
The \$20 they saved and parking fees was not a bargain.**

**THE END**