

PARKING IN NEW YORK CITY.

By James Collins

Father Jerry and Father John were two Augustinian priests located in Villanova College, Pennsylvania. One of their students had just given them two tickets to a new show on Broadway in Manhattan, New York City. The show was on a Saturday and this would not interfere with any of their teaching schedules. They went to the Abbott to get permission to go into Manhattan and see the show. He encouraged them to go to the presentation and he recommended they take the brand new Cadillac that the order had just received.

On Saturday, the two of them drove the Cadillac down to W. 51st St. to the theater district. They found an inside parking garage and drove in. The parking attendant came over and noticed their clerical garb.

"Good morning fodders, how can I help you?"

"We would like to park our car and ask you to take good care of it, since we have it on loan from our boss."

"No problem fodder how long you plan to be?"

"Well, we plan to get a quick lunch; then were going to go to the show; and then we'll have supper before we head back to Pennsylvania. Figure 5 hours."

"No problem fodder will put it in the back, where it won't be moved. We'll take good care of the car for you. Have a nice day."

As the attendant and drove the limo up the ramp, they turned; went out on the street and spotted a small restaurant where they had a quick lunch. An hour or so later they presented their tickets at the door; walked into the theater and sat down. Twenty minutes later, they realize that the show was off-color and they were dressed in religious garb. Father Jeff turned to father John and said, "We can't stay here dressed like this. This show is very inappropriate. We better leave and go back to Villanova."

As they walked into the parking garage, the attendance seemed flustered.

"Fodders is something wrong? What happened? Why are you back so soon? You said you be gone five hours."

"The show was very racy and were dressed in our religious garb so we couldn't stay there. It would be scandalous. Therefore, we decided not to stick around for dinner and we're going to head back right away. We'll get home in time for vespers and we will have supper at the college."

"But fodders, you told me you would be at least five hours before you came back. I had a take your car and put it away in the back upstairs so nobody could touch it, but we can't get at it cause we have

so many other cars parked in front of it. Why don't you go; have supper and then come back in about three or four hours and will have your car out and ready to go."

"No we can't do that. We decided we have to get back and we called ahead to reserve our places at supper. So if you would please just get us our car we will be on our way."

"But fodder. I just told you we can't reach your car you'll have to come back when you told us in about three or four hours. There's nothing I can do about it. You'll just have to be patient."

"Okay if you can't reach the car there is nothing you can do about it. Nothing we can do about it. So we'll go wander around and sight see," said father Jerry. With that, the two priests went out of the parking garage and up to the next corner.

"What's going on?" Asked father John.

"Something's very fishy here. We better find a cop." Said father Jerry.

On the next corner, they found a New York City Patrolman directing traffic. He was a massive Irish-American who immediately recognized the religious garb. "Fathers, I hope you're having a nice day in New York. The weather is good. The sun is shining and all's well with the world."

With that, the two priests related their story to the patrol officer whose nametag identified him as Tim Murphy. He listened intently and said, "There's something definitely wrong here. Let me handle this. Take me back to parking garage. I'll talk to the attendant."

As the three entered the parking garage, the attendance got very excited. "Fodders, I thought we had this all taken care of. I explained to you that we will have your car ready in three or four hours. There's no reason to call the cops. We're all friends here."

"Spider Walsh, I might have known it would be you. What have you done with the priest's car?"

"Nuttin Murphy, the fodders here told me they would be gone for five hours, so I put their car way back against the wall and put all the short term cars in front. I told them to comeback in a couple of hours and I'm working to get their car out."

"Spider here is one of the light fingered members of the Hell's Kitchen crew who all live around here. Anything he says is a lie. I've arrested him several times before. I looks like I may be taking him in now unless he takes us right to your car."

With the attendant in the lead, the three followed him up the ramp to the second tier of the garage. As they rounded a corner, they could hear the loud sound of tools striking metal, and a couple of men in conversation. There in front of them was the brand-new Cadillac in the middle-of-the-road with an 'A frame' tripod in the front and the hood up. A series of pulleys and a winch were part of the contraption, and at the end was the engine and the transmission half out of the hood of the car. Immediate alongside on a rolled cart, was another engine and transmission assembly. This one was quite old, well used and grimy. The group was trying to switch out the new engine and transmission

with an old engine and transmission and needed the time to do it. Patrolman Murphy recognized the other participants and informed them they were all under arrest.

The miscreants went to court and eventually to jail; the priests took the train back to Villanova; the Cadillac dealer in Manhattan repaired and reinstalled the engine and transmission; the insurance covered the costs; and the following week the car arrived at Villanova.

The moral of the story is, never tell a parking attendant; you will be gone for several hours. You don't know what they are planning. Your car might end up in a stickup. If they ask you how long you will be gone always, tell them about an hour. In that way, you will not be a target of industrious thieves.

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