

## **“MAKING HIS WAY NORTH” by Alexander Lee-Rekers (StageMilk, 2024)**

*Police Sergeant KNAPPER has been tracking down local criminal Ben Smiles after a bank robbery left four customers dead. After learning that Ben has been using a credit card owned by his brother VANCE, the sergeant calls on the younger Smiles to press him for information.*

**KNAPPER:** No work today?

**VANCE:** It's my morning off. What's this about?

**KNAPPER:** I'm looking for Ben.

**VANCE:** Is he in trouble?

**KNAPPER:** Why would you ask that?

**VANCE:** Why else would you be looking?

**KNAPPER:** I'm asking 'cause he hasn't been seen in about a week. Not since that thing at the bank.

*VANCE nods, eyebrows raised as if to say: “sad business, couldn't be helped”.*

**VANCE:** That had nothing to do with him.

**KNAPPER:** I never said it did. You seen him around?

**VANCE:** Nope.

**KNAPPER:** You talk to him?

**VANCE:** Nope.

**KNAPPER:** And you've got an alibi for the bank?

**VANCE:** *(He laughs.)* I've been taking double shifts the past month when I can. Ask Jim, he'll show you the timesheets. *(Nodding back inside the house.)* I should get back-

**KNAPPER:** It's just- You see... Ben's been making his way north. For about a week. We know this because he's using a credit card to pay. And that credit card ... belongs to you.

**VANCE:** He borrowed that a way back. Nothing wrong with helping out family.

**KNAPPER:** Can I come in?