

Ctrl-Alt-Delete (Extract)

by Dave Lewis

Prologue

August 2010...

Jenny had drunk far too much white wine. It was an easy mistake to make and now she was going to die.

How long had she been unconscious? She had no idea. No concept of time. Struggling hard not to panic as she felt herself begin to hyperventilate Jenny instinctively knew she must absorb and assimilate every detail, something somewhere might save her. She also knew she must act immediately if she wanted to escape.

She struggled for breath and forced herself not to give in to the gagging reflex as her desert-dry mouth filled with burning bile. Jenny's swollen eyes strained to become accustomed to the murky gloom. She tried to shake her long, curly brown hair away from her face but dried sweat held it tight as the cold metal of the handcuffs cut into her wrists. Her whole body was aching and her pulse throbbed relentlessly in her head.

Thinking back to earlier that evening she vaguely remembered her vision blurring and the muted sound of words slurring, like holding your head underwater in the bath. Then her stomach had tightened and warm flushes had begun to spread out all over her body. A distorted Daliesque clock face slowly slithered down the wall. As Jenny's coordination flew off into the evening her knees buckled. She headed for the carpet in slow motion. A small, rough hand expertly plucked the free-falling wine glass from mid-air and delicately placed it on a low wicker table.

Terror can manifest itself in different ways but all Jenny could visualize at this moment was Hal's grinning face staring back from the centre of a computer monitor. In the first brief seconds of consciousness she searched for reassurance. She tried to reason with herself, to tell herself it would be OK.

She tried to justify her actions, to make sense of it, to make it alright. It wasn't her fault. What else could she have done? Stalkers don't just stalk anybody do they? You have to give them a reason. You have got to make them want to do it.

Oh shit! What have I got myself into? The thought of being a lonely old spinster was suddenly very appealing... then unexpectedly, off to the side, a long penetrating torch beam flashed across her body and in a nanosecond she was catapulted back to the present. The harsh light settled on her pale face and blinded Jenny for a brief moment before an echoing click plunged her back into silence and darkness.

With her senses heightened by fear she could taste the damp, musty smells of straw, onions and potatoes. The odour of mouse droppings mingled with the stink of rotting, wet vegetables. She desperately searched the dim recesses of her prison. Her funeral-black pupils frantically scanned the darkness for hope.

Penetrating, probing. Looking for anything that could offer her a way out of this nightmare... and then she saw them.

Laid out purposefully in a neat line on the small wooden bench in the corner of the barn. Almost out of sight. Not placed in front of you – for effect. Not staring you in the face, not carefully arranged like pretty glass ornaments on a living room shelf. Not meant to shock or terrify. These had been put there for a purpose. Practical. To be used.

Jenny shivered, her big brown eyes grew to saucers, her face became china-white as the adrenaline kicked in and coursed through her blood. She tried to jerk free but the restraints held firm as she slowly traced the metallic shapes in perfect clarity. Her screams were muffled by the

crimson scarf tied tight around her mouth, and an earthy taste of silk mixed with her briny tears as they streamed into her mouth.

Suddenly and without warning she felt warm liquid flow down her legs as her bladder opened involuntary. She stank of fear. She missed her daddy.

Then, slowly but surely, the same rough hand emerged from the shadows and reached for a shiny, clean scalpel that glinted sporadically in the half-light. It edged closer to her, leaving the rest of the knives, dissection instruments and power tools set out clinically in the dark.

One

April 1st 2010...

Hal Griffiths had been fast asleep. His head submerged deep in a pillow, Egyptian cotton sheets wrapped around his lean but muscular torso.

A thick winter duvet lay in a pile on the floor next to a pair of old Levi jeans and a faded blue Billabong tee shirt. Bridgedale light-weight walking socks and a pair of Merrell trail shoes were close by. Smiling to himself, semi-conscious now, he kept his eyes closed tight.

These were the precious minutes just before waking when your mind knew it was time to face another day but your body craved another hours rest, or was it the other way around? Either way he wasn't going anywhere, the voluptuous super-model Elle McPherson was with him.

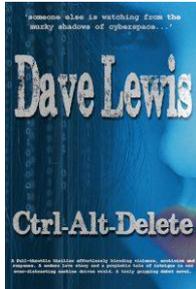
Novels by Dave Lewis

Ctrl-Alt-Delete

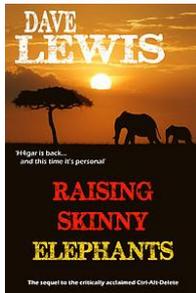
Raising Skinny Elephants

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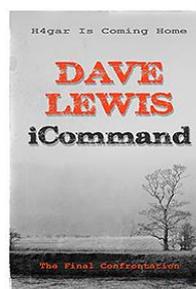
Really good read - and definitely makes you think about the far reaching effects of social media and technology in general. Thoroughly enjoyed it. Very believable with the author seeming to have an excellent knowledge of the technology. Definitely makes you think twice about how much personal information is out there about us all. Now for the sequel!



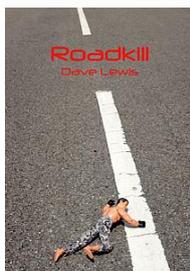
Excellent book, written by excellent author.

After reading Ctrl-Alt-Del in just a few days, I was waiting in anticipation for a sequel and the sequel delivered. Like the first book, the research was thorough, making you visualise every aspect of the story, it felt like i had been to Kenya (realistically the closest i have been to Kenya was down Butetown).

You warm to the characters and urge them on throughout the book, even the lunatics. The story draws you in right to the very end and keeps you wanting more. Without giving anything away, a third book has to be on the cards?



The eagerly anticipated third book in this trilogy is every bit as compelling as the previous two (Ctrl-Alt-Delete and RSEIE). Set in a much smaller arena (Cardiff/Rhondda Valleys), the tale of Hagar's homecoming provides some unexpected twists and turns along the way, with the final confrontation revealing a secret you won't see coming! Highly recommended (ideally reading all three books in order) Easily worthy of a 5 star rating



This modern collection of socialism, nature and love poetry is alive with larger than life images and delicate, tender moments in equal measure. A poet with an obvious burning passion for life and love. One of the best books to come out of Wales for many years. Buy it and discover a unique poetic voice!

