

Leap of Faith by Jane Dutton

Derek Groves looked out of the grubby window. Nearing his own retirement as a solicitor in family law, he seemed as worn out as the office appeared. He had seen all types through stressful life events, from hard-won adoptions to acrimonious divorces, but there was something most disagreeable about the current probity case.

He felt a deep sense of jealousy and injustice. He himself had worked hard all his life, studying tirelessly through grammar school and then on to university, now achieving a modest income. Yet he found himself here in a moderate-sized greying office, waiting for the spotty youth who was, as Derek noted, already late for the appointment. Of course it was tragic that Xavier had been orphaned by the death of his parents on Valentine's Day, just two weeks before his raucous eighteenth birthday celebrations. Derek however felt that Xavier was less concerned about his parents' death than calculating the vast wealth that he would shortly inherit. It all seemed so unfair to Derek but there was nothing that he could do, such were the injustices of life.

As the door opened, Xavier burst in full of excitement, hardly appearing the grieving son. He rummaged in a bag and handed Derek the necessary document. It was merely a formality, as both Derek and Xavier knew.

Seated at the desk, Derek read the document and then reread it carefully. He opened the file and produced the will. It clearly stated that Xavier, as sole beneficiary to the estate, would inherit its entirety on the eighteenth anniversary of his birth.

Derek looked up, suppressing a smile that threatened to reveal his dark pleasure. With deepest joy he noted the date of February 29th on Xavier's birth certificate.