

# The Juggler

***'Be careful who you pretend to be, you might forget who you are'***

A noir thriller, based on many true events, set in present-day Merseyside

***A naïve accountant, forced into covertly gathering evidence against a prolific and cunning credit card and crypto fraud master, is drawn into an addictive world of wealth and power, forgetting who he really is and losing everything in the process.***

## Plot Synopsis

Anglo-French forensic accountant, **Alain Bernard**, is fired from his job at a Hong Kong bank by CEO Mr. Lee, for a mistake costing millions of dollars. This prompts Alain to finally leave his abusive and unstable wife **Leia**, who subsequently commits suicide. Sent home to France in disgrace and penniless, Alain reluctantly accepts an assignment from **Jane Gillam**, head of a private fraud investigation company, to infiltrate Oyster Investments, an organization run by **John Henderson**. John lives an intricately fraudulent life, taking Mr. Lee's bank for millions via a credit card fraud, and scamming many more millions through no end of other diverse and illegal activities.

Gillam engineers matters so that Alain can quickly befriend John, who soon offers him a job on a probationary basis. John gives Alain a simple rule to live by; *'Fuck the system but never your friends, they will always get you back'*.

Analysing John's company finances, Alain uncovers many inexplicable irregularities, and also discovers a member of staff, **Rosa**, who is heavily pregnant and due to leave, has been systematically embezzling for years. He informs John, who says he will take care of it. Based on Alain's good work, John declares the probation period over and Alain part of the team. Shortly after, Alain hears that Rosa had a fall in a public park and lost her baby. Realising John likely caused the fall as punishment for Rosa's dishonesty, an initially shocked Alain soon recovers, continuing his investigations and becoming ever more entangled in John's affairs. He quickly learns how fast and loose John acts with women, alcohol, and money, but also how clever and evasive he is with his business. The ultra-charismatic John enjoys Alain's company and provides him endless opportunities, setting him up with an apartment, car, clothes, and cash, plus letting Alain in on a massive real estate deal he is planning. In the process, Alain meets numerous colourful characters who act on John's stage, and John even persuades Alain to take on a new identity, **James Marsaud**, thus enabling further frauds. Along the way, Alain falls in love with John's ex, **Sarah**.

With all this excess, Alain starts to lose sight of why he is in Liverpool. Gillam tries to act as a consistent reminder but Alain disregards her. Despite eventually uncovering the magnitude and extent of John's criminal network, Alain now no longer wants to entrap John but become him, and by this time, almost forgets his own name.

Throughout, the brutal **Yulong**, Mr. Lee's personal bodyguard, has been shadowing Alain in Liverpool, having been sent by Mr. Lee as a precaution should Gillam's efforts fail. Yulong, who is Leia's uncle and shares her mental instability, also seeks personal revenge on Alan for his niece's death.

Gillam, frustrated by lack of progress, fires Alain from the assignment, but Alain, now determined to stay, plans an elaborate blackmail scheme to silence Gillam. The scheme, executed in Luxembourg, where Gillam is now based, goes awry, resulting, Alain assumes, in her death.

Yulong confronts Alain at a secluded dockside warehouse where John stores various items of contraband, including crates of illegal arms. Brandishing a fearsome knife, Yulong, instructed by Mr. Lee to offer Alain a one-way ticket to France, tells Alain he intends to kill him, and the two grapple, Alain eventually shooting Yulong with a handgun from one of the crates.

Alain disposes of the body and the gun in the dock and covers up any other evidence of the murder. With Gillam and Yulong out of the way, Alain conspires with Sarah to make a lot of money from John's keyman and life insurance policies, by faking John's death and blackmailing him with his crimes to stay quiet.

All seems to be going well until the morning after Alain and Sarah's wedding, when John calls to say that he knew all about Alain's subterfuge, and has turned the tables, using the very insurance scam Alain planned to fake the death of Alain's new identity, James. John's parting shot is to remind Alain; *'Never fuck your friends'*.

Sarah, meanwhile, announces she was working with John since Alain first proposed the blackmail plot to her, the wedding being a sham so she can collect her share of the insurance as the grieving widow. She also explains that John only recently realised Alain was plotting against him and working undercover, but had his office bugged all along as a precaution and also has CCTV video of him committing murder. Sarah abandons the now broken Alain in their honeymoon suite, taking his wallet and phone with her.

Alain's world is turned upside down.

Sarah, now imagining she is financially secure, and with all loose ends tied up, is then shocked to hear Gillam (who actually narrowly survived the accident in Luxembourg), calling Alain's phone to say she wants him back on the case and is determined to nail John and his crew once and for all.

Sarah's world is turned upside down.

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