

"VACANT POSSESSION"

by

Michael J. Bird

FRANK and SYLVIA DALY a very stable and very ordinary couple are spending their last night in their rented flat on the top floor of a nineteenth century terraced house in a provincial town. The Dalys have lived there happily for the past eight years and they are both very upset about having to leave it.

The following morning though, and with more than a little reluctance and apprehension, they are flying to Botswana where FRANK DALY is to take up a three year tour of overseas duty for the Company for whom he works. And, intending to buy their own house on a new estate on their return to England, they have given up the tenancy of the flat.

That night the flat changes around them and they are seemingly drawn back into a series of terrifying events, first as witnesses and then finally as participants in a chilling drama which, although the Dalys had no previous knowledge of it, was apparently played out in the house many years before when a man named Ramsey murdered his wife.

Aware from the beginning of the nightmare that the murder has, been committed and powerless to intervene in any way as Ramsey plans his crime, the Dalys are caught up in the inevitability of the horror to come.

They survive the horror just. And not before they have seen Ramsey kill his wife and then dispose of her body.

The next morning, with the nightmare over, they try to rationalize their experience but the only possible explanation is that somehow, for a few hours, they stepped back into the past.

And then, as they are about to leave for the airport, the man from the Estate Agents introduces them to the new tenants of the flat.

But the Dalys need no introduction; they have seen Mr. and Mrs. Ramsey before.

It wasn't the past they had witnessed during their night of terror it was the future.

NOTE:

In Bird's files he has a hand amended copy of this outline.

Among the changes he alters:

- the title to "In Possession"
- all references to "flat" become "apartment"
- the name "Ramsey" to "Prentice"
- "Botswana" to "Africa"