

Mystery/Detective - A Mystery

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“Jake was suddenly awakened by the loud noise of the television, and found himself alone in a hotel room with his hands tied behind his back. He had a dull pain in his head, and felt dazed and confused. Strangely, he could not remember how he got here. Worse yet, he could not even seem to remember anything about himself – his name, his profession or his friends. As he tried to move, he heard an ominous ticking sound emanating from under the bed. He instinctively realized, somehow, that it was a time bomb even without looking at it. He knew that he had to escape immediately before it was too late...”

Richard had finished reading. Now he started from the very beginning again. Finally he put the draft on his large desk and looked at a nervous young man sitting uneasily on his expensive sofa in the office.

“So this is completely your own work? I wonder how could a pale — no offence — pale author like you could write this James Bond’s story.” He asked with stern voice.

“Yes, yes sir.” The poor man nearly stood up, “I swear...”

“That’s enough. I believe you.” Richard interrupted him and gazed at this young man with strong interest. He thought he had saw this writing style before.

“Have you ever heard the name of Eric Brown?” He had to be careful, though. A man at his position cannot take any risk.

“Well, never. What’s wrong, sir?” The young man seemed so anxious that he kept on wringing his hands.

“Nothing. I have to say that this is a terrific detective story.”

“Thank you!” The young man relieved himself a little, “Not as good as yours, sir. It’s a pity that you only published one book. That is truly a masterpiece. But you are still one of the greatest editors these days.”

Richard enjoyed the young man’s flattery for a while and then sat up from his cozy chair, “Now we can talk about the publication. Here is the thing. I will arrange all the other frivolous stuff and you bring me other parts of your story. Say, one week a chapter. Is that okay?”

“Every week...? Sir I’m not so sure...”

“Son, you should realize that this kind of opportunity don’t show up every day. I’m sure that a year later your name will be remembered by everyone, even those most rigid critics.” Richard slowed the speed and used a soft, persuasive sound.

“Okay. I think that will work.” The young man finally made his mind.

“Hope you will enjoy our cooperation...” Richard stood up and reached out his hand.

“Charles Bing. I’m Charles Bing.” The young man stood up so quick that nearly knocked down the tea table.

“Charles. See you next week.” Richard smiled and realized that Charles was much taller and stronger than he looked like.

Three months later, Richard read Charles's story again. He knew it was the time to let this talented young man disappear and let himself return to public with a wonderful masterwork. A few years ago he was already a well-known editor, but his job cannot satisfy his ambition of being a celebrity. One day an arrogant but obscure young writer, Eric Brown, found him and showed him a mystery novel. It was the most fascinating book he had ever read. Then he realized it was his chance. Richard lied to Eric that he would manage to publish his book several months later. Unfortunately Eric did not doubt his words. After a delicious dinner and several bottles of wine, he pushed Eric down from 20 floors and arranged it as a suicide.

He succeeded. Eric's work had given him unprecedented reputation. The only shame is that Eric only wrote one book. It didn't matter now. Here came his opportunity again. This Charles guy, his writing style was just like Eric and the story was also entertaining.

This weekend on a yacht his publisher would have a party. A perfect place for an incident.

On Saturday afternoon, the party was on. Richard smiled and walked through the crowd. He was heading to the end of that boat. Earlier that morning, Richard met Charles on the boat. He had already told Charles that his book would be presented as a surprise for chiefs so he had better not tell anyone who he was too early.

"Just wait me at the end of the boat." Richard warned him. "Don't let anyone see you."

Charles nodded so hard that Richard was afraid that his head might fall down. This poor young man blushed, seemed so excited. Suddenly he hugged Richard.

"Oh sir thank you so much! I don't know what to say. You know..."

"Save it for the future. Now go!" Richard was a little impatient. Calm down. He told himself. Two hours later he would be the temporary Arthur Conan Doyle.

"Oh, sir! Is the moment coming? I will become famous?" Charles was pacing up and down with a big, silly smile on his face. Seeing Richard coming, he shouted loud.

"Yes, it's time." Richard looked around and made sure that other people were all enjoying the party.

"You are a brilliant writer. It's a pity that I have to do this." Richard pulled out his gun and pointed at Charles.

"Is this about that book?" Strangely, Charles stopped. Confidence arose in his eyes, "Is this why you killed Eric?"

"No! Don't be silly." Richard whispered, "I never killed Eric, did I? He fell down himself. What I did was just giving him a hand. Now it's your turn."

After a short gun shoot, Richard had already seen his magnificent future. He returned to the party, finding out everyone staring him with shock. The loudspeaker was repeatedly playing what he had just said.

"I never killed Eric, did I? He fell down himself. What I did was just giving him a hand. Now it's your turn..." Hearing that gunfire, Richard desperately realized that his career had screwed.

On Richard's hearing day, he saw Charles again. He was no longer the pale guy but

as strong and shiny as an athlete.

“How did you do it?” Richard yelled at him.

“Oh sir, I put a bug on you during that hug. Eric’s family hired me to take you down. That story? Oh, that’s what really happened to me. By the way, I am a private detective.” Charles waved his hand when Richard was crammed into a police car.

This time Richard did not miss the irony. It was too late.