



# *the Darker Part of Night*

An interactive crime story



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**Opieka merytoryczna, redakcja**

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# *Foreword*

## *or "Behind the Scenes"*

*On a winter's night, in a small, secluded hotel situated somewhere in the mountains, beautiful Charlotte is murdered. She was a young student who had come to the hotel with five of her friends as a prize for winning a competition. Soon after the crime is committed, a detective arrives at the scene in order to find the murderer. He carefully inspects the crime scene and interrogates five suspects: Charlotte's friends – Ivy, John, David, Mason and Sarah. From these interrogations, the detective learns what happened during the final hours before the murder. He also knows that the murderer is one of Charlotte's friends...*

This is the beginning of the interactive crime story, which is the product of ten months of work of five English Studies students at the University of Humanities and Economics in Lodz, Poland. They all volunteered to participate in the Creative Writing student society during the academic year 2020/2021. Because it was the peak of the COVID pandemic, all

our meetings took place online. We met regularly, once a week, during the cold and windy autumn and winter months, and then even more often during the brighter and warmer spring months. During the summer time (yes, we did meet in the summer as well!) our meetings, just like the days outside, became longer as we headed towards the end of our story and had to agree on final key details.

One might wonder how we managed to write one story in a group of five. Well, we will not lie and claim that it was not of concern to us at the very beginning. We were all used to seeing writing as a very individual activity, done alone, with the door closed, as Stephen King puts it. Contrary to King, though, we opened the door earlier – namely, at the very beginning of the process. The whole group (back then it was a little larger) was engaged in creating the plot of our murder mystery. We thought of setting the scene on the Orient Express, then we moved to installing the main character in an Amish family, finally bringing the whole story closer to the life we know ourselves. We discussed many books and films which were supposed to (and did) inspire us, such as *Contratiempo*. *The Invisible Guest*, *Knives Out*, novels by Agatha Christie, Netflix series and many more. The side effects of our meetings included watching fascinating films and series compulsively and reading many dark but gripping crime stories! However, the moment came when we understood that the more we watched, the less sure we were of what we wanted to create. Hence, we stopped and focused on the plot of our own murder mystery.

We started with creating the place where the action would take place. We had to think about all the details concerning the weather conditions which would make our story work, the location of the hotel we set the scene in, the reason for the students, our characters, to be there, the relationships

between them, and of course the reason for the murderer to kill. We considered issues I would never in my life have imagined wondering about, namely: how long does it take for blood to congeal? How long will you smell marihuana on somebody? We had to think about subplots which, on the one hand, would make it difficult for the reader to point at once to the murderer, while, on the other hand, would provide the reader with the suggestions necessary to allow him/her to guess who had carried out the killing. And, of course, we had to agree on the structure of the book, on the perspective we would take in the book, on the tense in which the story would be written. The moment we agreed on these issues, we started writing (which was after one semester of discussing all the details mentioned so far).

Once we had the main part of the book ready, we were hungry for some reliable opinion as to whether our story made sense and whether it was possible to guess who had killed Charlotte (or just to see whom readers would nominate as the killer). For this reason, we decided to send the beta version of our story (without the final chapters) to our beta readers, mostly our friends and co-students. Their comments assured us that we were going in the right direction! The work continued. While the students carried on writing the last chapters of the murder mystery, I focused on editing the text. But what editing it was! I not only took care of the language of the story (together with prof. Michael Fleming, who always polishes our texts so that they sound more English than Polish). I also had to investigate, just like a detective does when investigating a murder case, whether we did not miss anything; whether all of the chapters provided a consistent version of events; whether we did not leave out any key elements that would help readers uncover the murderer. I felt almost like our George Black!

However, everything has to come to an end. The work on our murder mystery did too. As one of the creators of the murder mystery said: *Mission impossible* (at least in the very beginning) turned into *mission complete*. But how do we feel now after finishing such a project in these difficult pandemic circumstances? We all claim that participating in this project gave us the opportunity to develop our English language and writing skills. Most importantly, though, we learned firsthand that group work can be (and in fact is!) much more interesting and fruitful than working individually. In this way it turned out that what we feared most in the very beginning, namely creating a story not individually but together with others, turned out to be the best element of the whole project! We had the opportunity to get to know each other better and spend our free time with people who were ready to listen to us, inspire us, discuss interesting issues with us, and help us when needed. In this way we created relationships which I am sure will outlive our murder mystery!

Enough has been said about the process of creating our story. Now the moment has come for You, Our Dear Reader. We will not make you wait any longer! Find a good time during a (preferably) gloomy autumn evening, close the curtains in order to feel the atmosphere of the story better, switch off your mobile and enter the world we have created for you. We hope you will enjoy reading this murder mystery at least as much we enjoyed writing it!

On behalf of the Authors

*Ola Majchrzak*

Tutor of the Creative writing student society

A black and white photograph of a majestic mountain range. The mountains are rugged with sharp peaks, some of which are covered in snow. The sky above is filled with heavy, textured clouds.

*There was no point in wasting time.*

*although he knew he would be here*

*for a little longer than he wanted to.*



# *Prologue*

There was a guy like him in every police station. An investigator who could solve all of the cases – a man who worked as a detective for most of his life and who was fed up with those foolish crimes committed by young people.

Unfortunately, this case was very similar to them.

However, George Black didn't care much about it. He knew he would solve it quickly and go back home.

But this morning there was also bad news. That damn snow was falling, painting the whole world white. As soon as the detective got out of his car, he realized that he would surely be forced to stay in this hotel for a day or two. There was no way that someone would clear the roads before he got bored here.

Do these murders always have to take place in the middle of the forest? One year ago, he had to get to a shelter in the mountains to examine a crime scene.

He crossed his arms and looked around. The snow on the grass and path muted his steps. The clouds gathered again, bringing an earlier night.

'Here we go again,' he muttered to himself and took his luggage out of the car. At the same time the hotel's door opened, and a tall, middle-aged man appeared.

'Sir,' he greeted him. 'Good to see you here.' His voice was trembling as if he was trying to stay calm.

Black didn't answer. He just walked past him and entered the hotel lobby, where he put down one of his bags.

'You are the owner, am I right?' the detective asked.

This place would be lovely if he hadn't come here because of this murder case.

'Yes, sir. I'm the one who called you.'

'Great.' He nodded. 'Where is the body?' There was no point in wasting time, although he knew he would be here for a little longer than he wanted to. The rest of his crew was stuck a few miles from this hotel, so he was on his own.

'First floor, third door on the right. We haven't touched anything.'

'All of the suspects are here?'

'Right here.' He pointed to the far end of the lobby. 'With my family.'

'I'll need a list of guests and their ID cards. As well as yours and your family's.'

After taking off his coat and hat, he headed for the stairs. The wooden corridor reminded him of his hometown – a small village in Utah. Since his mother was murdered, he had never visited that place again. However, he was aware of how his mother's death had influenced his future career. That's why he hadn't retired, although he'd had the opportunity.

Finally, he climbed the stairs and headed to the third room. He smelled it before he even saw the body. After putting on his gloves, he

took his camera and gently pushed the door open. There was not much light inside but it was enough to see the crime scene.

A living room with a huge sofa, a few tables, and chairs. They even had a fireplace and a television with speakers. The floor was cluttered with cups, crumbs, and crisps packets.

And in the middle of this mess, right on the sofa, lay a body.

The first thing that he noticed was a red stain on the floor, but this itself was not strange at all. It was the shoepoint on dried blood which caught his attention.

George Black took a photo and crouched down.

The victim's name was Charlotte Spencer. She was twenty-two years old and she came from a rich family. She was here because of an award that she and her group won after completing a project for the university. And yet, she was lying lifeless on her stomach. Her lips were dark, as well as the front of her calves and the fingertips of her right hand, which was almost touching the floor.

At least he knew that the body had not been moved anywhere.

He took another photo.

In the air there was a perceptible scent of marihuana.

The wound on the girl's back was not wide, but surely lethal. George couldn't measure the exact length of the cut, but he assumed that it was committed with a kitchen knife.

Then he gently raised the cold body to check a phone which she was holding.

'This should help,' he whispered to himself when he saw a picture in the gallery taken three minutes past two in the morning. Charlotte was sitting here on the same couch with no one nearby. Her blonde hair covered

most of her face – it looked like the photo was taken by accident. In the corner there was something pink ... a piece of somebody else's clothing.

'Enough,' he said and walked out of the room.

The owner was waiting for him on the ground floor. He gave him the list of suspects.

'Were you here when the murder was committed?' he asked directly. The man looked a little bit shocked and confused.

'Of course not.'

'Then where?'

'In our house... you can check it on the security cameras.'

'I will.'

'They record motion around the whole area,' added the owner. The detective didn't have enough patience to ask more questions, so he just followed him to the security room.

It turned out that, indeed, no one had come to the hotel at night. It narrowed down the group of suspects to those students waiting in a room near the kitchen.

But, before he heard them, he decided to check the kitchen. Nothing in here seemed suspicious to him. He was just leaving the kitchen when a dishwasher caught his attention. He headed back, led by his investigator's sense which didn't let him down this time – he found three knives in there, all clean. Black was sure that one of them was the murder weapon, so he secured them and went to see the suspects.

Five students, all scared, all confused.

When he saw their faces, everything became clear.

He knew it.

He felt it.

There was a storm on the way.

*The room was empty,*

*but it was about to be filled*

*with the words of the suspects...*





*She started to fold  
and unfold the sleeves of her sweater.*

*That caught the detective's eye.*



# *Interrogation - Ivy Howard*

Ivy was observing him through the window from the moment he parked his car in front of the hotel. He looked so confident, yet so bored with doing his regular tasks.

Examining the body took the detective a while. He had to put on yellow tape almost everywhere for no one to enter the place of the possible crime scene and ruin the evidence. When he went into their room, suddenly everyone became silent. If only he knew what they had been talking about earlier...

‘Ivy Howard?’

She stood up. ‘That’s me.’

‘Please follow me to the other room. You will be the first one to be interrogated.’

Slight whispers could be heard among the rest of the group.

In the room he told her to sit down comfortably, not to be stressed, yet he kept his eyes on her all the time.

‘So, tell me, miss ... Howard, what exactly are you doing here?’

‘Spending time with my friends. Partying, let’s say. But nothing wild.’

‘Alright, you’re saying *nothing wild* and I can smell weed all around these rooms, so don’t lie to my face, miss, understood?’

‘Understood,’ she said silently.

‘So, who was smoking?’ the detective continued.

‘I’m... not sure actually. Basically, all of them were smoking something, but I don’t know if it was marijuana.’

‘Okay, miss Howard, let’s leave that topic for now.’ He turned some pages in his notebook and left it aside. ‘Is it true that you’re the one who found Charlotte’s dead body?’

‘That’s true,’ she responded.

‘Can you tell me what time you found her?’

Her eyes began to run from the detective to random things around the room. Her hands were trembling, yet she tried to stay focused on what she should say.

‘In the morning. I must say I can’t remember exactly. After that I ran straight to John and he was the one who called the police. I guess that was the moment when ...’ The last words were barely audible for the detective.

‘What were you doing in that room?’

Ivy thought for a second.

‘Well, I woke up and started to pack my things before heading back home,’ she explained.

‘So, the room that the corpse was lying in was the one that you were partying in last night?’

‘Correct.’

‘Tell me more about the party. Was there an argument of some sort between you and your friends? Leave the topic of drugs and drink for now, speak about the rest,’ the detective encouraged her.

‘Mason and John fell out with each other.’

‘Why?’

Ivy became silent.

‘Why, miss Howard?’ the detective asked a little louder.

‘Because of Charlotte,’ she finally answered.

‘Why is that?’

Ivy became silent again, but eventually continued:

‘John wasn’t there with me,’ she sobbed. ‘I mean, he was there, but mentally he was somewhere else. His eyes were locked on Charlotte all the time. He was laughing and partying with them, not paying attention to me at all. I thought I could rely on him. Turns out... I can’t rely on anyone anymore.’

‘What happened after that, miss?’

‘I left. I just ran out to the kitchen. I don’t know what happened next.’

‘What time was it?’

‘I suppose it could have been around 1 a.m. I was shocked by the situation and I stayed in the kitchen for some time. Then I went to my room as I felt extremely tired. But before I left...’

‘Yes, continue.’

‘Before I left, John came to check on me,’ she blushed a bit. ‘Just to say that in his opinion there was nothing wrong with his behaviour.’

The detective looked out of the window. ‘Oh, kids these days,’ he muttered to himself. ‘Did you see anyone later?’

‘Someone went into the kitchen.’

The detective looked at her with curiosity, ‘Any idea who it was?’

‘Absolutely not. I was in tears and I had no desire to talk to anyone at that time. However, I remember that this person turned on the dishwasher.’

‘And that was it?’

‘What do you mean, detective?’

‘I found some stains of blood left in the sink.’

Ivy’s eyes widened after these words.

‘What?!’ Ivy almost screamed, terrified.

‘Stay calm, miss Howard, we’re nearly finished. One more question – how would you describe your relationship with Charlotte Spencer?’

‘Are you trying to say that I... killed her? I told you that I was only sitting there, I needed peace and quiet, and then someone came in and...’

‘No, miss, are you listening?’ The detective was starting to lose his patience. ‘I just asked: what was your relationship with Charlotte?’

‘Oh, so... Charlotte, Sarah and I used to go to the same kindergarten and our, uh... friendship started back then. But we were different then. With time Charlotte became popular, I focused on my education and my boyfriend, and Sarah... actually changed the most. She used to be happier, wear bright clothes and have lots of friends and hobbies. Now? She’s quite the opposite, she looks like some cult leader to me, to be honest. Is that all, detective?’

She started to fold and unfold the sleeves of her sweater. That caught the detective’s eye.

‘Miss, is that your sweater? The sleeves seem to be a bit too long, don’t you think?’

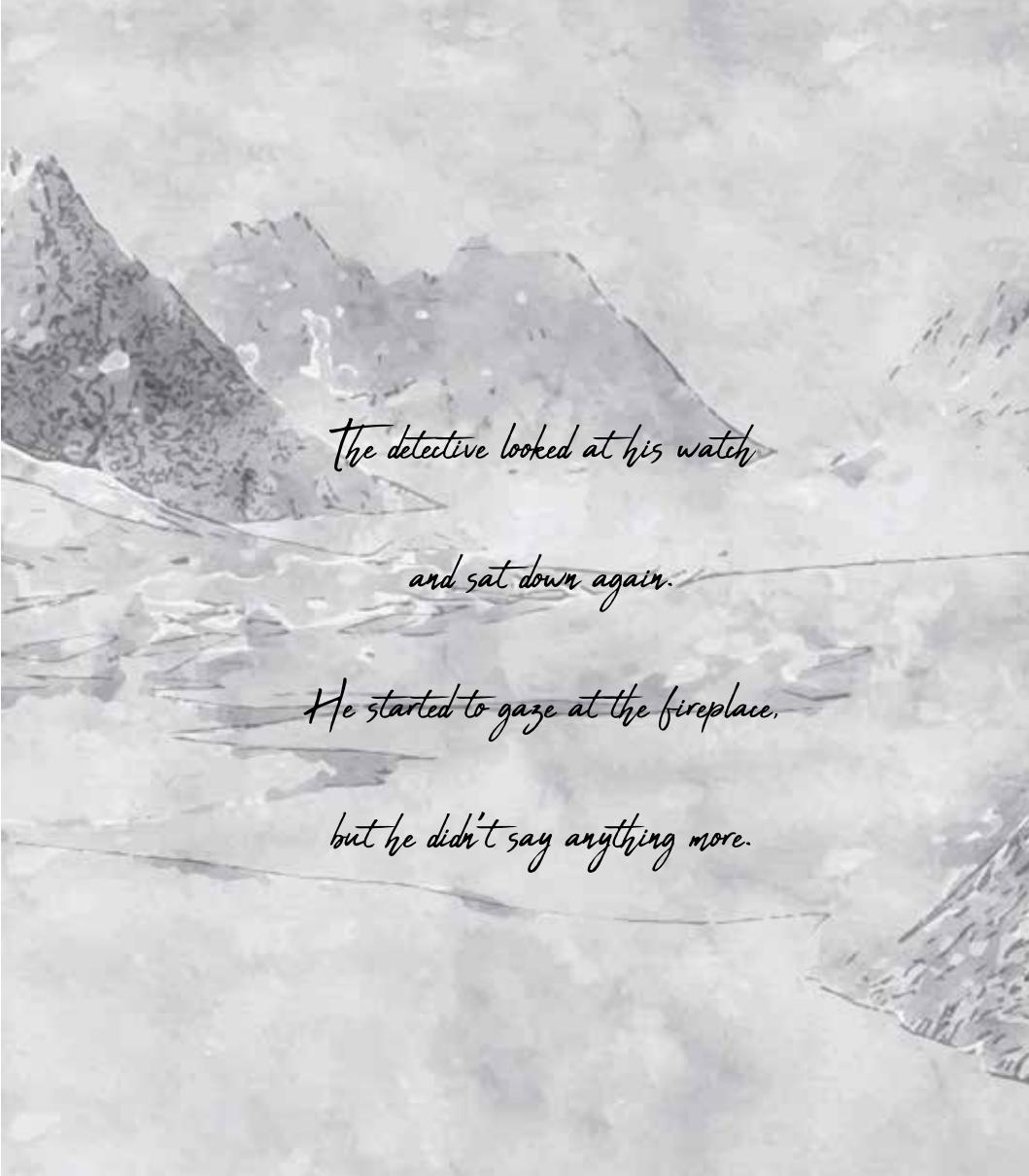
‘Well, yes. Actually, it belongs to Sarah. She gave it to me, because none of my clothes were warm enough and it’s freezing today, isn’t it?’

He looked at her once again and slowly nodded.

‘Right. Well, thank you for your time, miss Howard. You may leave now.’

And so she left. The last thing she wanted to do was to talk with the rest of the group, so she decided to go for a walk.



The background of the image is a black and white photograph of a rugged mountain range. The mountains are covered in snow and have sharp, rocky peaks. The lighting creates strong shadows, emphasizing the three-dimensional nature of the terrain.

The detective looked at his watch

and sat down again.

He started to gaze at the fireplace,

but he didn't say anything more.



*Interrogation -  
John Collins*

When John came into the room, the detective was waiting for him, sitting on a brown armchair with his feet up on the table.

‘Sorry to keep you waiting,’ the young man said.

John was wearing an elegant black coat, a gold watch, and glasses with gold ornaments. In his left hand, he was holding a thick reddish book he was going to finish after this interview. He seemed relaxed and not worried about the situation.

‘Well, tell me, John: who found the body?’ the detective asked.

He didn’t expect that this question would appear so quickly.

He took off his glasses and cleaned them with an eyeglass cleaning cloth which he took from the pocket of his jeans. He put the red book next to the detective’s shoes. He looked at the detective and said to him calmly:

‘My girlfriend, Ivy. She found the body.’ He paused for a second. ‘That was my fault. She didn’t feel comfortable with our company. She was embarrassed because of all the stupid things we did. Especially what I did. We quarrelled and I left her.’

He stopped for a moment to let himself think. Meanwhile, he put on his glasses again and glanced around the small room. He couldn’t remember it. The windows were big, exposing a beautiful garden. A fire burned in the fireplace.

The detective remained silent.

‘I love Ivy,’ John started carefully. ‘She’s a good girl. She couldn’t hurt anyone. She’s very sensitive. But I was drunk and started to flirt with Charlotte. Ivy was mad at me, and she decided to leave the party. I went after her to the kitchen, and we started arguing.’

‘What was the connection between you and the victim?’

‘We are in the same high school. I used to like her, love her. And I asked her on a date, but she refused. She laughed, because my idea was ‘ridiculous’. From that time on, I started to hate her. Then, Charlotte started dating my brother, Mason. At the party, I got drunk, and decided to try one more time with Charlotte. It didn’t work, actually.’

‘Where were you at 3 a.m.?’

‘I was reading,’ John gave the book to the detective to have a look at it. ‘William Shakespeare, ‘Hamlet’. My favourite play. After our argument, I couldn’t find Ivy, so I went back to my friends. I sat on a chair and started to read my book. I like learning, it’s the purpose of my life. It’s the key to success.’

‘And when did you see the victim for the last time? Was she in the room too?’

And again, John had to think about it. He wasn't sure if his answer would be any good, but he said:

'I don't think she was with us.'

The detective got up.

'Did the victim behave normally?'

The detective started to go around John, which was very uncomfortable for the boy.

'What do you mean?' John wondered. 'Well, Charlotte came from a rich family. She had what she wanted when she wanted. She was just an innocent girl with a big mouth. Furthermore, she liked drinking a lot and going to parties.'

'Do you think that she might have argued with someone?'

'Yes, she used to argue very often. But even with her bad behaviour, everyone liked her. She cheated on her boyfriend, but he didn't know that at all.'

'Did someone want her dead?'

'Every girl was jealous and wished her ill, but not to be dead.'

'Did you want her to be dead?'

'What?!'

John Collins was outraged. He was trying not to behave out of character, but now his emotions were at his wit's end. He knew that he had to calm down a little, and stop acting suspicious, or the detective would see him as the main suspect.

'Of course not... Okay, I didn't like her, maybe I hated her, but would I kill her, only because she rejected me?! This is insane!'

'Just asking.' The detective smiled for a second. 'Now tell me, Mr. John Collins, who smokes weed?'

John thought that the detective's questions were starting to get weird. He didn't want to be there.

'Was there marijuana? I was so drunk that I can't remember.'

John lied without batting his eyelid.

'Do you think that Charlotte was smoking this shit?' the detective asked carefully.

'If there was any weed, she would be the first person to try it. She wasn't scared of anything. Fearless.'

The detective looked at his watch and sat down again. He started to gaze at the fireplace, but he didn't say anything more. His strange behaviour was an indication to John that the interview was over. Now John could breathe a sigh of relief and go back to his book.

A black and white photograph of a majestic mountain range. The mountains in the foreground are sharp and rocky, with snow clinging to their peaks. Behind them, more mountain ranges fade into a hazy, cloudy sky.

It lasted only two seconds.

but something changed on his face.

Clouds covered the sun and threw

a shadow on his cheeks.



# *Interrogation -*

## *David Lee*

‘You.’ George Black took a quick glance at David’s face. ‘You’re next.’

David didn’t ask any questions, he just stood up and followed the detective to the provisional interrogation room. Mason and Sarah watched him as he sloped past. It was rather visible that he was trying to hide his nervousness. What did they think about him? Did they suspect him?

As soon as David entered the room, he took a seat on a wooden chair. He slowly let the air out of his lungs.

‘I’ll let you have your say, but I want to ask you some questions first. Is that alright?’ asked the investigator, walking from one side of the room to the other. David’s eyes were glued to him.

A few seconds passed.

Was there any choice?

‘Fine by me...’ said David barely audibly.

‘Perfect. Who found the body then?’ he asked.

David’s hands trembled.

‘Ivy Howard, sir. As we already testified.’ His green eyes opened wide. The detective smiled sarcastically.

‘Yeah, that’s right. Next question. Are those shoes new?’ He stopped walking and sat on his chair.

David looked at him unconsciously.

‘Excuse me?’ asked David.

‘Are those shoes new?’ he repeated calmly.

‘No... What kind of question is that?’

The detective shrugged.

‘I’m just curious. You know, that’s my job. So, are they?’

‘They’re not, sir,’ David said.

‘One of them is really clean,’ noticed Black.

David bowed his head and looked at his shoe.

‘Yes... I cleaned it because it was dirty after I stepped in mud.’

The detective scowled at him, not at all convinced, even though it was a decent explanation.

‘Fair enough,’ he said as the light bulb above their heads flickered. Then he turned a page in his notebook. ‘Did someone threaten Miss Charlotte?’

‘Threaten?’ David giggled nervously and raised his eyebrows. ‘Of course not... I mean...’

Silence.

‘Yes, Mr. Lee?’ The detective encouraged him.

‘Charlotte... she was very popular,’ he started slowly.

‘So she had enemies?’

‘Yes, like everyone, but... For example, Sarah was jealous because Charlotte had a rich father, and her own left her. Ivy was scared of Charlotte sometimes, I had a few arguments with Char, but... but I don’t know a single person who would wish her dead,’ said David.

‘Well, someone did. She’s dead now.’

‘I know!’ he burst out, but then he apologized. George Black remained calm.

‘We all know it, but sometimes it’s good to recall the fact. Whom do you suspect then?’

‘Nobody,’ said David immediately. The detective tightened his lips and frowned.

‘Which one of your friends did this to Charlotte?’

David took a quick, shallow breath.

‘None of them.’

‘You mean that *you* killed her?’ There was an audible tone of pressure in Black’s voice. David laughed nervously.

‘No, sir. I mean that the one who killed her is not my friend anymore.’

‘But who do you think it is?’

David frowned. He was really disappointed or exhausted... or both at the same time.

‘I-I don’t know...’ he shook his head. ‘I’m not a snitch!’

‘So you do have something to tell me,’ countered the detective.

There was something in the air that warned the detective of an outburst of rage.

‘Stop it! How could I blame any of them? I don’t know anything!’ David stood up and so did the detective. Their eyes met. The younger

man was breathing deeply. ‘Why are you so damn cruel to me?! My friend *died*.’ He hit the table with his fist. ‘What did I ever do to you? I can tell you whatever you want, but stop being so aggressive without any reason! Do you know what it’s like to see your friend covered in blood?!’

When he finished, he covered his face as if he wanted to cover his fear. The detective’s eyes darkened.

A few seconds passed.

‘Watch your words, Mr. Lee, and I will try to be more polite. There is no point in arguing, right?’

‘Yes... yes, I’m sorry, sir, it’s just...’

‘Anger. Sit down, please. Shall we continue?’

David nodded.

‘The reason for my questions is that...’ Black took another pen out of his pocket and started to fiddle with it, ‘someone was smoking marijuana. And the smell coming off you makes me think that it was you, Mr. Lee.’

David did not answer.

‘Do you know the fine?’

‘One hundred bucks,’ he whispered.

George Black bent over him.

‘I’d suggest giving those drugs to me right after this interview. Or else the fine may be higher. Do you understand, Mr. Lee?’

David shook his head but said the opposite:

‘I understand.’

‘Let’s continue. I have a few more questions. What was your relationship with the victim? And what was your and her role in the project for your university? Because that’s why you’re here, right?’

‘It was an award for a project, yes.’ He didn’t look happy. ‘She gave a presentation. And I... actually, I did nothing special, just some computer stuff. Charlotte was my friend, nothing more, nothing less.’

‘Good.’ The detective wrote something down in his notebook.  
‘When was the last time you saw Charlotte Spencer alive?’

If someone sat there and watched this whole discussion, they’d think that David would never answer. It lasted only two seconds, but something changed on his face. Clouds covered the sun and threw a shadow on his cheeks.

‘At the party, sir.’

‘And where were you at 3 a.m.?’

David took a quick look at his watch. He was prepared for this question.

‘I was in my room. Sleeping. I can prove it, my smartwatch monitors my sleep.’ Right after saying these words, he took it off and gave it to the detective. The man looked at it carefully.

‘I see... I’ll take this as a piece of evidence.’

The younger man looked at the detective with faith as he stood up and pushed his chair forward.

‘That’s convincing, isn’t it?’ David wanted to make sure that the investigator understood the issue.

George Black sighed.

‘It’s neither convincing nor unconvincing. Only the truth will reveal the murderer.’ He turned away, but stopped as if he’d just remembered something. Their eyes met. ‘One more thing, Mr. Lee. You said you cleaned your shoes because they were dirty. But... It’s very cold outside. There is no mud or slush.’



A black and white photograph of a rugged, rocky terrain. A narrow, light-colored path or stream bed winds its way through the center of the frame, surrounded by large, angular rock formations. The sky above is bright and hazy.

The detective tried to catch

a glance from the boy

sitting in front of him.

~~but it didn't happen.~~



# *Interrogation - Mason Collins*

Tired, hungover and mentally exhausted were the words that perfectly described Mason's condition. The moment he entered the temporary interrogation room, a sharp, almost blinding beam of light made him take a step back.

'Please come inside,' the detective said.

The boy went inside, avoiding unnecessary greetings, and without waiting for directions from the detective, he took his place on the chair at the table.

There was a deafening silence. The detective tried to catch a glance from the boy sitting in front of him, but it didn't happen.

'Mr. Collins, are you ready to answer my questions?'

Mason only said, 'I don't want to, but I guess I have to.'

Unimpressed by the brutal honesty and lack of cooperation, the detective decided to carry on. 'Since you are here, I will ask you a few ques-

tions.' The man rested his arms on the table, clasped his hands together, and directed his full attention to Mason. 'Tell me, what were you doing last night?'

The question was like irritating vibrations to the ear. After a while, Mason decided to make eye contact with his interlocutor.

'What do you think? I drank, talked, played, and had a good time with my friends. Such trips don't happen very often, right?'

'What do you mean by *such trips*?' the detective asked.

'These far ones, where you can forget about everyday problems,' the boy replied calmly.

'Of course. What problems did you want to forget about?'

'School and people there. In general, many things started to mess up in my life.'

'I understand,' the detective nodded. 'What was the relationship between you and Charlotte Spencer?'

Mason looked away and began staring at the window. He shivered. You could say that there were even tears in his eyes. After a few seconds, he quickly came back from his thoughts, and continued.

'We were a couple, and it was great. I'd never met a girl like her before. Even my brother John tried to get her attention – without success. She had her flaws, just like everyone else. It's obvious that there would be people who'd wish her the worst, but she didn't care because she was focused on herself.'

'You said she was focused on herself. Does that mean she stopped paying you attention, Mr. Collins?' the Detective said.

Angry sparks flashed in the boy's eyes. He pursed his lips. He leaned quickly towards the detective and glared at him.

‘What the hell are you suggesting? I thanked God for such a fantastic girl. She was pretty, popular, and talented. I often wondered how I was so lucky in my life. We may not have been the most mature of people, but we took our relationship seriously in our own way,’ Mason answered.

‘Then why did you break up?’ the detective asked.

‘It’s not your business. It doesn’t matter,’ the boy replied, at the same time looking at the various objects in the room.

The detective wrote down all the answers and studied his notes for a moment. He leaned back in his chair and began tapping his pen on the table. ‘What were you doing at 3 a.m.?’

Mason crossed his arms, leaned back in his chair like a detective, and spat. ‘I was riding unicorns in rainbow wonderland, or maybe I was with Santa Claus. I don’t actually remember.’

This time it was the detective who began to lose his patience. ‘Can you stop these stupid answers? One more second and we’ll finish this interview at the police station.’

‘Then stop with these weird questions,’ Mason replied seriously. I don’t even know how I found myself back in bed. I don’t remember half of the party.’

‘Why don’t you remember half of the event?’

‘I got drunk.’

‘Was there only alcohol there?’ the detective asked.

‘I think so,’ Mason said quietly.

‘You are lying. I can smell marijuana on you.’

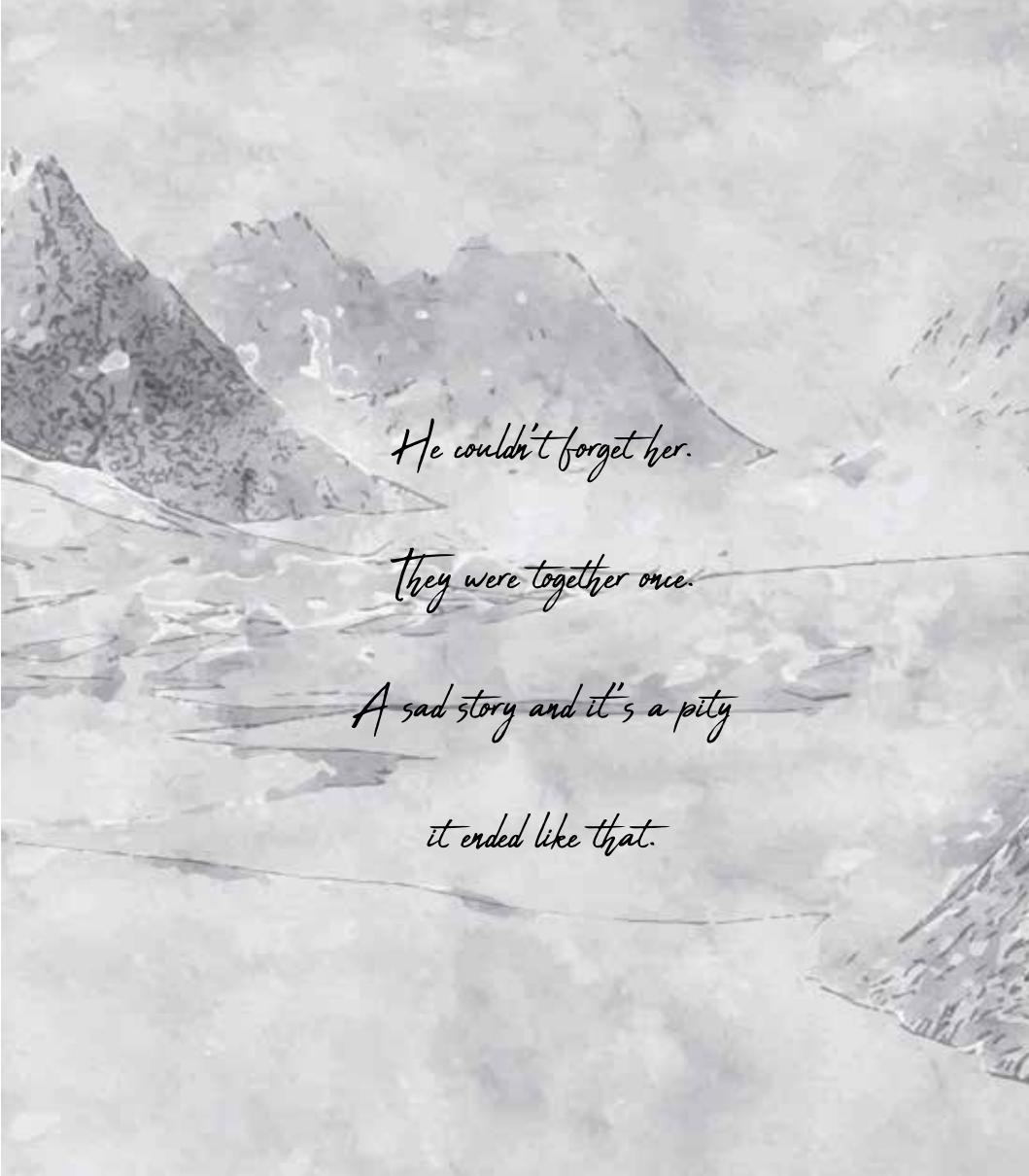
‘You’ve been sitting here for quite a long time, so maybe your mind is playing tricks on you already,’ the boy shrugged.

‘Do you know what your situation is like? I smelled marijuana on the victim, and I smell it on you, which means you were together. The interesting fact is that you don’t want to talk about your breakup with the victim, and then you both go on the same trip and spend time together. I suspect you failed to get Charlotte’s attention. Your break up made you lose your popularity, which ruined your reputation at school. That made you angry, so alcohol and drugs pushed you into uncontrollable acts that you do not remember or pretend not to remember. Great alibi.’

As the last words were spoken, Mason shot out of his chair so quickly that it fell over under his sudden movement.

‘What goddamn *uncontrollable acts*? Are you suggesting I KILLED her?’ The boy shouted. His fists hit the table with great force. ‘That is enough. That is the end of the interrogation. Nobody is going to make me the murderer of the girl I was in love with!’

‘COLLINS!’ the detective warned. ‘This is not the... end.’ Mason was overcome with fury. All he left behind were more questions and a small dent in the table.

A black and white photograph of a vast, snow-covered mountain range. The mountains are rugged with many sharp peaks, some of which are partially covered in snow. The sky above is filled with heavy, grey clouds.

*He couldn't forget her.*

*They were together once.*

*A sad story and it's a pity*

*it ended like that.*



# *Interrogation - Sarah Winmore*

Another person entered the room. She looked very depressed. Her raven hair fell over her shoulders. She walked slowly and turned her gaze on the detective.

'I'm Sarah Winmore. You called me, sir.'

'Yes. Please sit down, Sarah. Tell me what you did yesterday.'

Sarah took her time to sit down on a chair. She didn't answer immediately.

'I was at a party with my friends,' she started. 'We danced and drank alcohol. Everyone wanted to chill out.'

'Alright. Was there any quarrel?'

'Well, there was only one quarrel. Mason argued with his brother about Charlotte. I felt sorry for him. He couldn't forget her. They were together once. A sad story and it's a pity it ended like that.' Sarah didn't look sad at all.

‘Could you please tell me what happened from the very moment you got on the bus before you got to the hotel?’ the detective asked, looking into his notes.

Sarah smiled.

‘You know, the whole time David was playing some songs which we used to listen to when we were in school.’

‘Do you have a good relationship with him?’ Black continued.

‘No. We went to the same class together and that’s it. He’s one of those guys who’s nice to everyone and tries to make a good impression. He has a high opinion of himself, but he’s nobody special.’

‘Let’s go back to what happened on the bus,’ the detective said and stopped her monologue.

Everyone was silent. Charlotte chatted on the phone. Mason pretended to be asleep, but he kept glancing at her. Ivy and her boyfriend John were watching a movie on a tablet. But he wasn’t as interested in the movie as she was, and he also kept peeking at our star, Charlotte,’ Sarah said, hardly concealing her smile.

‘You’re quite smart. What were you doing?’

‘Thanks. I listened to music and took a nap,’ she said, tapping her fingers on the table.

‘What happened next?’

‘We arrived at the hotel and the party started.’

‘Where there any drugs at the party?’

‘There was something,’ Sarah said. ‘Honestly, I wasn’t really interested in it, because I don’t smoke.’

‘What were you interested in then?’ the detective asked, which made her laugh.

‘Of course: Mason. I wanted to have him all to myself that evening. I was waiting for him to get drunk, which didn’t take long. After an argument with his brother, he began flirting with Charlotte. But she rejected him again and the poor boy started drinking heavily. When he was completely drunk, I decided to escort him to his room. And then he was only mine.’

‘We don’t need to go into details,’ Black interrupted her. ‘Just tell me what time you left.’

‘Well... about 2 a.m., I believe.’

George Black studied his notes one more time and nodded.

‘I think that’s enough. Did anything special happen at the party? How did Charlotte behave?’ he asked.

‘Ivy left the party. She was angry at John, because he hit on Charlotte again. Charlotte decided to mock the feelings of both brothers. She talked with John for a while. Mason drank too much alcohol and became jealous about Charlotte. Then he started arguing with his brother. But Charlotte ignored both of them and she talked with David. He was very pleased about it. He served her drink after drink. They were having a great time.’ It seemed like Sarah could talk for hours.

‘A few more questions. Tell me: what was your connection with the victim?’

‘We went to the same school. I didn’t like her much because she mocked “second class” people, including me. You know, my mother became an alcoholic after my father left us.’ Her voice cracked. ‘It was especially painful for me. She shouldn’t talk like that about another person. I’m sorry, but these are difficult topics for me...’ Sarah said, biting her lip. There were tears in her eyes.

'It's alright, I'm sorry. Last question, and you're free to go. When and how did you hear about the murder?'

Sarah wiped tears from her cheeks and took a deep breath.

'It was morning. I don't remember the exact time. I was woken up by a hard knock on the door. Someone shouted that we should get up immediately. I got up and tried to wake Mason up, but he was sleeping hard. I put my clothes on quickly and opened the door. I saw John. He was very nervous.' With each word she started to talk faster and faster. 'He told me to go with him immediately. We went to the party room and then I saw Charlotte. She was dead. We called the police, although David didn't like the idea. Then we went to inform the staff about the whole situation.'

'Why do you think David didn't want to call the police?'

Sarah burst out laughing.

'That's obvious.' She looked him in the eyes, as if she wanted to tell him the biggest secret. 'Because of the drugs. He was very shaky. He probably felt guilty.'

'That's what I thought. Thank you, you're free to go,' said the inspector.

'Thank you.' She rose slowly from her chair and walked towards the door. He didn't notice the expression on her face as she left.

A black and white photograph of a majestic mountain range. The mountains are rugged with sharp peaks, some of which are covered in snow. The sky above is filled with heavy, textured clouds.

The students didn't look the same as on arrival.

There was no longer any trace of joy here.

The place was quiet.



# *Final Decision*

It took the police a long time to get to the hotel. By the time they arrived, the detective had finished gathering evidence and questioning witnesses. George Black wasn't satisfied with the information he'd obtained as there were many unknowns and gaps left. He hadn't expected this investigation to bring so many problems. However, he had to present a serious and professional face all the time and look as if he knew everything, and couldn't allow himself to reveal any of his emotions. There was no place for any mistake here. At the same time, he had to bear in mind that the killer was awake, watching him and maybe planning another move. It was necessary to act quickly.

Although the officers were tired after the long journey, there was a lot of work ahead of them. Thanks to the detective's earlier work and securing the area, everything went more smoothly. The police officers quickly took care of the dead body and the collected evidence.

The students didn't look the same as on arrival. There was no longer any trace of joy here. The place was quiet. The silence was broken only

by the loud footsteps of the detective and policemen, and the hum of walkie-talkies. How was it possible that one of the innocent students had become a killer? Recently, everything seemed so simple and uncomplicated. The party was supposed to integrate and connect them. However, last night's events had turned friends into enemies, traitors.

Ivy couldn't say a word, as if an invisible cord had tied her lips. John tried to make eye contact with Ivy, but in vain. David looked baffled and very nervous. Mason calmed down a bit after his outburst of fury, but his gaze was vacant. Sarah anxiously watched the room and was upset.

The detective peeped into the room. 'What a pathetic sight,' he thought and walked further into the hotel. He walked slowly down the corridor, which looked very dark and gloomy in the daylight. He crossed his arms and thought it was time to make a report and start putting the facts together. He picked up his cell phone and dialed the number. He didn't wait long.

'George Black, I understand you already have something for me.'

'Yes sir,' the detective replied in a serious and calm voice.

'I told you I don't want to hear about any mistakes or else you know how it will end. Better do the job right. So, I'm listening...' the man said on the phone.

'We have some important information. I found three clean knives in the dishwasher, and I'm sure one of them is the murder weapon. We also have the victim's phone with a photo taken probably just before the murder, with a piece of pink clothing. There is a shoe print on the dried blood next to the body of the victim. I asked David Lee about his shoes. He claims to have removed mud from one of them although there is no mud outside. We also have his smartwatch to check the sleep tracker. Ma-

son Collins remembers nothing; however, he could have done anything because he was very intoxicated. John Collins argued with his brother about Miss Spencer and later with his girlfriend. Ivy Howard was very quiet, and I have a feeling that she didn't tell me everything. I noticed that there was a bloodstain on the pink sweater she was wearing. She also had a tense relationship with the victim, just like Sarah Winmore. Miss Winmore was very interested in Mason Collins; she was sober and knew what was going on around her. That's what the situation looks like,' Black replied.

'Intriguing, but what interests me the most is your opinion,' said the interlocutor. 'Tell me, what do you think? Who killed Charlotte Spencer?'

There was a moment of silence that seemed to last forever. Then the detective's words came.

'It was...'



*Now it's time for you to choose.*

*If you think that...*

*Ivy is the murderer, go to page*



61

*John is the murderer, go to page*



65

*David is the murderer, go to page*



69

*Mason is the murderer, go to page*



75

*Sarah is the murderer, go to page*



81



*Every day was the same as the previous one.*

*She could observe her skin going grey,*

*her body looking almost anorexic.*



# *Murderer - Ivy Howard*

Ivy Howard was charged with the murder of Charlotte Spencer.

One year after these events she was all alone in a cold cell, wondering how things could have possibly gone so wrong.

She was sentenced to ten years of imprisonment. Doesn't seem like such a long time, right? But not for our poor Ivy. A girl so scared of life, so weak emotionally and so fragile.

She'd seen many things by that time in prison. It was nothing like the movies. No such thing as friendships, special recovery programs, beneficial workplaces for inmates. Just a bunch of depressed, demoralized women in grey sweatpants and t-shirts which would be theirs for the rest of their time. And those were her only belongings too. Until that very day.

Ivy thought about ending it all almost every day. That life had nothing in common with real life outside the jail. It was just pointless. She

had been attacked for being too weak or for not cooperating with other inmates. Sometimes days passed when she did not speak to anybody. Sometimes she kept telling herself that everything would be okay if she did the right thing. Every day was the same as the previous one. She could observe her skin going grey, her body looking almost anorexic. There was no silver lining to her current predicament. Well, at least that was what she thought.

Inmate Howard had a guest that day. Her cousin, a lawyer, came to visit her, carrying a thick pile of papers covering her case as well as her friends'. In those papers was the day's edition of the local newspaper. An article reported that the general investigator had changed his statement and marked the cause of death of Charlotte as a "homicide certainly NOT committed by Ivy Howard" — the main evidence in her case turned out to be false. What a shame she'd never read that.

By the time the lawyer left with no idea where the girl was, Ivy had been hanging beneath the ceiling in the janitor's room, already pale and swollen, with no sign of oxygen in her bloodstream.

The murderer has unintentionally taken their toll one more time.

The background of the image is a black and white photograph of a majestic mountain range. The mountains are rugged with sharp peaks and deep, shadowed valleys. Some patches of snow are visible on the higher slopes. The lighting creates a dramatic effect with strong highlights and shadows.

He reflected on what had happened,

where it happened and, most often,

who might have been

involved in what happened.



*Murderer -  
John Collins*

Silence was always horrible for John. It didn't allow him to focus on studying or working. Now, when he was sitting in a small and ugly cage with no windows, it was even worse. However, there was something worse than silence – this terrible and unexplained feeling of guilt that he had been living with for a long time.

Every day he went over the memories of that one night, which started (or rather ended) everything. He reflected on what had happened, where it happened and, most often, who might have been involved in what happened. However, even the most promising clues usually led to nowhere. Maybe someday everything would become clear and the real murderer would be found?

Now, though, the dangerous criminal was free while he, John, was here, in prison.

The murderer ruined his whole life – his family hated him, even his sweet little girl was ashamed of him. Ivy never said it to him, but when she visited him once or twice, her emotions could be seen clearly. John wasn't stupid. She didn't love him anymore.

It was the murderer who should be in prison now, not John.

But John Collins could not just give up. He was too stubborn to give up. He was the only one who could connect the dots and solve the case. But every time he tried, he got lost as if he had overlooked something. And then he went crazy.

John knew he was innocent.

However, being in this situation made him crazy.

John's only goal now was to prove that he wasn't the murderer.

A black and white photograph of a vast, snow-covered mountain range under a cloudy sky. The mountains are rugged and majestic, their peaks partially obscured by low-hanging clouds. The foreground is a soft-focus view of the snow-covered ground.

*It was pitch black,*

*only one gleam of red light*

*glowing from a nearby store*

*brightened his bedroom.*

*The silence was overwhelming.*



# *Murderer - David Lee*

*David Lee is charged with the murder of Charlotte Spencer.  
What do we know about the young victim from the students' trip?  
How did the trial of David Lee end?*

All of these newspaper headlines seemed surreal to him. He felt like he'd spent his whole life in jail, although it was just one year, and now he was sitting calmly in his own house. Anything that happened before was blurred and faded in his mind, but those newspapers reminded him of his previous life. He recalled sitting with his mother and he almost cried while reading those cruel articles.

Now his mother was dead. He hadn't even been able to attend her funeral. What was worse, he still wasn't sure if he had committed this murder. Theoretically, he could have. Drugs deceived his senses, so he didn't remember the whole evening. But he knew seeing Charlotte's body

was a shock. And it didn't make him recall anything – he didn't find himself holding a knife and stabbing the girl. So he was doing everything to persuade himself that it was him who killed her. In this way it was just easier to handle this punishment.

But then, suddenly, the police stated that he wasn't the one to blame. His other friend had killed her, therefore he'd spent one year in hell although he was innocent.

David slowly rose up from his bed, throwing newspapers aside. He ran his fingers through his hair and looked around. It was pitch black, only one gleam of red light glowing from a nearby store brightened his bedroom. The silence was overwhelming. David took a glance at his reflection in the mirror. It almost scared him. He had enough and he knew that he had to finish *this*, so he packed everything that he needed in a sports bag. A bottle of water, a few clothes, something to eat, a knife, a gun, and also a few other things that he thought might be useful.

After that, he went out with a backpack in one hand and car keys in the other. It was the anniversary of his mother's death. She died because she couldn't accept that someone had put her only son in jail. David never liked her enough to care about her, because she was nervous and weak, yet, deep in his heart, he loved her; he felt an attachment to her. She didn't deserve to die for such a stupid reason, nor did Charlotte.

David opened the car door and sat behind the steering wheel. His breath was jerky and heavy.

'That's it,' he said to himself, trying to calm down. 'Don't freak out.'

When the car started, he headed straight to a nearby crossing. Loud music deafened his dark thoughts, while he was trying to focus on his goal. He felt like street lights were flickering around him. David speeded

up; adrenaline was coursing through his veins. His black eyes had that dangerous glint of sad madness.

David wasn't sure what exactly he wanted to do.

However, he was sure about one thing – that he wasn't scared of prison anymore.

So he was going to kill the detective.

George Black had to pay for his mistake.



A black and white photograph of a tree with many branches and leaves, filling the frame.

There was a moment of silence.

A light warm wind

moved the leaves of the tree,

creating a noise pleasant to the ear.



*Murderer -  
Mason Collins*

What if he had never met her? Would life be easier? Would she still be alive? Nobody knew the answer to that question.

Last year was like a black hole for Mason that stole a lot of his precious time and freedom. He felt as if he had just woken up from a long sleep, like when he woke up after the night when he'd been sleeping drugged after that party. Living in constant fear and insanity. The tormenting thoughts that he could be the one who killed his soulmate, his love. He wasn't surprised. They had him down as a suspect because he also blamed himself for what had happened. He was able to believe anything anyone told him. The truth is that he was innocent.

After testing Mason's blood, it turned out that he had huge amounts of various substances in his body, which made him very intoxicated. It was clear that even if the boy had murdered Charlotte, it wasn't on pur-

pose. Nevertheless, he was treated as a suspect, closely watched and psychologically tested. The trial took months. Everyone noticed how broken Mason was. When he was released from custody, returning to normal life turned out to be the biggest problem. Now, he couldn't even tell how he could breathe all this time. He wasn't walking, he was levitating. His thoughts bothered him. A visit to a psychiatrist was unavoidable, but it did help. He didn't want to see any of his friends, now ex-friends. He could never trust anyone in that group again. Could he ever trust anyone? He tried not to think about it.

It was Charlotte's birthday today. He went to *their* place, where they used to spend time together, where everything was so easy and carefree. There they were themselves and didn't pretend to be anyone else. They both knew each other's faces without the masks they usually put on in front of other people. Before he came to this wonderful place, he picked a beautiful flower on the way, which stood out from the rest. Just like her, it was special. He sat on a bench under a tree. Their secret place was on a hill with an amazing view of colourful meadows. He put the flower next to him, leaned back on the bench, and looked up at the sky.

'Even being up there, you're playing with me,' he laughed sadly under his breath. 'You see, I'm still chasing after you. You shine as always.'

There was a moment of silence. A light warm wind moved the leaves of the tree, creating a noise pleasant to the ear. As if the leaves wanted to say something.

'Do we still have a chance... you know, on the other side, someday? Will you forgive me for failing and not being able to stop... what happened?' he asked.

He quickly felt stupid, as if he was afraid that someone might hear his tender words. However, a few seconds later, he felt a pleasant warmth. He opened his eyes, which he had to narrow immediately, as a blinding sun appeared from behind the clouds. The hot rays aimed directly at him, burning his skin. At the same moment, he heard the rustle of leaves again. It was her. He thought she probably wanted to let him know she said 'yes'. A tear welled up in his eye, but he quickly wiped it away. The sun hid behind the clouds again. Mason didn't want to lose touch with his beloved. However, he knew that he had to give her peace, so he just asked, 'Are you happy there?' Nothing happened. The boy experienced disappointment and thought it was only his mind that was playing tricks on him and trying to conjure up something that was not there. But then again. The rustle of leaves, the rays of the sun and the warmth. He was sure then.

'Thank you, Char,' he said and smiled sincerely. It was a relief. He didn't forgive his friends and had no idea how to start his life again, but the most important thing for him was that Charlotte helped him forgive himself and move on.

Suddenly, the pleasant silence was interrupted by a ringing phone. Mason reluctantly took his smartphone from his pocket and stared at the screen. As he did so, the sun hid quickly, and his body shuddered as if the temperature had suddenly dropped a few degrees. He had the feeling that what he was about to hear wasn't going to be good. George Black was calling him. He clicked the green button.

'I'd rather not pick up,' Mason said coldly.

'Mason Collins,' the detective replied. 'Normally I wouldn't call, but I have an official police report,' he continued.

'And?' the boy asked.

‘The investigation has ended. We know who killed Charlotte Spencer,’ Black said slowly in a low voice.

These words struck like a tsunami wave that never ends.

Mason hung up.



Sometimes she had the feeling  
that she was going crazy.

She was hearing things  
that she wasn't supposed to hear.



# *Murderer - Sarah Winmore*

She thought that the days in jail would pass quickly. She was even convinced that the monotony would make the time completely blur, transforming it into a sequence of everyday activities. Sleep, wake, exercise, meal, then nothing for a long time. Then another meal and sleep again. This was how she'd imagined it.

But since she was imprisoned, all her beliefs turned out to be wrong. And all the detective stories she had read turned out to be useless.

There was no escape from this place. Sarah Winmore ended up in a hell that she had brought on herself and which was gradually devouring her. Every minute in the cell dragged on endlessly. After the first week, she was sure that she had spent all her meaningless life in this place. And when she realized that this was just the beginning of what was awaiting her, she became more and more depressed.

Sometimes she had the feeling that she was going crazy. She was hearing things that she wasn't supposed to hear. She saw faces she shouldn't see. She smelled blood that wasn't there.

However, she tried to cope with it. She was strong, after all, and the murder she had committed was a revenge perfectly planned and carried out. Charlotte's father, that son of a bitch who had left Sarah's mother, could at last experience a sense of loss. She wanted him to feel what she had felt when she found out who her father was and why she had never met him.

Charlotte's beautiful face was rotting now in the police mortuary.

And Sarah had achieved success. Success in the form of twenty years of imprisonment.

What more could she wish for?

She was just putting her meal on the tray – an unsalted potato mash and a piece of undercooked chop.

What more could she wish for?

'Move on!' someone bellowed behind her, because Sarah had been standing still for far too long, staring at the cook's knife rising and falling. The blade plunged with an unpleasant sound into the meat that was about to hit the pan.

Sarah flinched, but didn't react, so she was pushed.

She turned angrily to the aggressor.

And she spotted Charlotte. Charlotte dug her long, red fingernails into Sarah's bare arm. The girl's lips showed the broad, polite smile that she pleased her friends with.

Sarah screamed before realizing that her imagination was playing tricks on her. However, the tray of food had already landed on the floor,

and she could not count on a second portion. As she fell to the floor to pick up her dinner, someone kicked her in the ribs. So she grabbed what she could and moved away. While she was walking backwards, she bumped into one of the guards. He grabbed her by the elbow.

‘Be careful! When you finish, I’ll take you to see your lawyer,’ he growled.

‘My lawyer?’ she asked quietly, but there was no fear in her voice. She knew she didn’t have a lawyer...

‘Are you deaf? Eat what you have and get out,’ the guard shouted. Then he left the cafeteria.

Sarah sat down at one of the tables. To the delight of her fellow inmates, she ate only what she managed to pick up from the floor. When she finished and they were allowed to leave, the guard grabbed her at the door, dragging her away from the crowd. The same was done with three other prisoners who had visitors.

She was led into a room with many windows. It had been a long time since she had seen so much natural light in a room...

She looked around confused, but then got hold of herself. She was strong. She had to be strong or she would never get out of here.

Finally Sarah saw the man to whom the guard had led her. The attorney was smartly dressed. His pale hair was slicked back, and the look in his eyes was relentless.

They were left alone.

‘Sarah Winmore, right?’ he asked in a voice that would have probably upset her, were it not for the fact that the man was an attorney.

‘Yes. And who are you?’

‘Thomas Ackworth, your attorney,’ he introduced himself.

'I don't have a lawyer,' she said.

Thomas raised one eyebrow.

'You do.' He leaned over to the girl. 'Don't ask who sent me here. My client doesn't want you to know.'

'I don't understand what you're talking about,' she said, narrowing her eyes. *Who was this guy?* she thought.

'You don't have to understand anything here. We both know you killed Charlotte, but together we'll convince the court we're all wrong. That's what lawyers are for, right?' he grinned broadly.

His smile scared her, but she decided to take the opportunity – no matter at what cost. She smiled back at him and said:

'So, tell me, what should I do?'

On a winter's night, in a small, secluded hotel situated somewhere in the mountains, beautiful Charlotte is murdered. She was a young student who had come to the hotel with five of her friends as a prize for winning a competition. Soon after the crime is committed, a detective arrives at the scene in order to find the murderer. He carefully inspects the crime scene and interrogates five suspects: Charlotte's friends – Ivy, John, David, Mason and Sarah. From these interrogations, the detective learns what happened during the final hours before the murder. He also knows that the murderer is one of Charlotte's friends...

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