

Riddles and Confession
a mystery screenplay
by Wytemi

LOGLINE:

With the help of a cryptic riddle, a Detective unravels the mystery of the murder of a police officer.

Philadelphia
(208) 223-1950
wytemi.co@gmail.com

©2024

Draft #2

EXT. MARKET STREET - NIGHT

DETECTIVE HARRIS(25); a woman wearing a trench coat and police uniform, chews gum and strolls an empty market street.

She leans against a flickering street lamp. Her phone rings

DETECTIVE HARRIS
(disheveled)
Harris here.
(pauses)
Yes,
(disappointed)
Alright... I'm on my way.
(hangs up)
You finally met your end...old
friend.

EXT. CORONER'S HALLWAY

The hall is narrow and cluttered with strewn decor. At the end, a small, dimly lit door is ajar.

INT. CORONER'S OFFICE

Detective Harris enters the office.

DETECTIVE HARRIS
Arne, you here?

CORONER ARNOLD(30); wearing a white lab coat, untucked shirt, half-done tie, and bags under his eyes, shuffles around the body of SCHMIDT(25); tall, brown hair, and faded skin tone.

CORONER ARNOLD
Please, Harris, just Arnold...Only
my wife gets to call me that.

The room is cluttered with medical instruments and paperwork.

CORONER ARNOLD (CONT'D)
Officer Schmidt. Time of death: 6
days ago.

DETECTIVE HARRIS
(mutters)
3 weeks you were missing...
(pauses)
What's the cause of death, Coroner?

CORONER ARNOLD
 (examining body)
 My educated guess is poisoning, but
 the exact substance is still
 undetermined. Toxicology is
 pending.
 (drones off)

DETECTIVE HARRIS
 (frowns)
 It doesn't add up. Any signs of
 struggle?

CORONER ARNOLD
 (shaking his head)
 No wounds. No bruises. No Scars.

Harris notices a note crumbled in a glass bowl.

CORONER ARNOLD (CONT'D)
 Was in his pocket.

DETECTIVE HARRIS
Find the truth where shadows purge.

CORONER ARNOLD
 Mean anything?

DETECTIVE HARRIS
 (studying the note)
 One of his riddles.
 (chuckles)
 What did you get yourself into?

INT. DETECTIVE HARRIS' OFFICE

Harris sits at a desk cluttered with case files.

She scribbles on a notepad, deep in thought.

DETECTIVE HARRIS
 (muttering to herself)
 Where the shadows fall...
 shadows...

She kicks her feet on the desk and rocks back and forth.

DETECTIVE HARRIS (CONT'D)
 Truth's key...

Harris places the note under a lamp.

She flips through a file for OFFICER SCHMIDT. She lifts a news article copy and reads it.

NEWS ARTICLE HEADLINE: SCANDOLOUS DRUG BUST.

DETECTIVE HARRIS (CONT'D)
 (muttering to self)
 You were on to something big. You disappeared after the news. But who leaked it? It was a huge bust; nigh of 2 million in cash. largest pool ever...but the money disappeared, and so did you.

She notices the note change colors.

DETECTIVE HARRIS (CONT'D)
 Cheeky.

Harris holds the letter under the lamp, revealing more text.

DETECTIVE HARRIS (CONT'D)
*Confession, a false restitution.
 Trust betrayed.*

SHADY(40); a hunched-over janitor wearing torn athletic wear and a Christian chain necklace, sweeps across the floor.

Shady sweeps under Harris and notices the file.

SHADY
 (stutters)
 Schmidt! We used to go to church together. Shame what happened.

DETECTIVE HARRIS
 Shady, Where's the nearest church?

EXT. CATHOLIC CHURCH, NIGHT

A children's choir sings a hymn while holding candles.

Harris takes a seat on a bench and rests her arms on the back. FATHER BRYAN(60); an elderly priest, approaches her.

FATHER BRYAN
 What can I do for our fine police?

DETECTIVE HARRIS
 Treading faded footsteps.

The choir sings of shadows.

FATHER BRYAN
I hear he was your partner.

DETECTIVE HARRIS
Yes...and friend.

FATHER BRYAN
You must have known then what
caused his demise.

DETECTIVE HARRIS
Enlighten me.

FATHER BRYAN
(sighs)
Same I told the others. He visited
here regularly and I would counsel
him. He would routinely visit the
nearby bridge. Said it was ideal
for casting shadows from his soul.

Harris stands up and walks away

FATHER BRYAN (CONT'D)
There are many mysteries
surrounding these parts of town.
Best not to get too curious.

EXT. BRIDGE, NIGHT

Harris overlooks the river on the bridge.

Harris gets a call.

CORONER ARNOLD (O.S.)
(phone)
We have the toxicology. Highly
distilled water, poisoned with
purified capsaicin.

The church bell RINGS.

DETECTIVE HARRIS
(muttering)
Midnight.

Harris notices an eerie, rope hanging from the bridge

DETECTIVE HARRIS (CONT'D)
Do me a favor, Coroner?

INT./EXT. UNDER THE BRIDGE

Harris finds a fresh noose swinging from a hook.

Behind her, Father Bryan emerges from the bridge shadow. He grabs the noose and wraps it around Harris' neck.

Father Bryan kicks Harris over the side and she hangs choking and holding the rope for dear life.

FATHER BRYAN

I saw the note...I let him keep it
so I could lure you in.

Harris swings to the sidewalk and kicks Father Bryan down. She removes the noose and gags.

DETECTIVE HARRIS

(panting)

You...are under...arrest...

Father Bryan tries to rise but Harris pins him down.

DETECTIVE HARRIS (CONT'D)

(heaves)

Stay...He told you his secrets
during confession.

Father Bryan ignores her.

DETECTIVE HARRIS (CONT'D)

He confessed to you too much, and
you betrayed him.

FATHER BRYAN

Even a priest doesn't make a lot
these days. Who could blame me?

EXT. BRIDGE TOP

Father Bryan is led into a police car.

They drive away, leaving Harris alone to stare at the church.

DETECTIVE HARRIS

I found truth's key, and your
shadow has fallen. Rest in peace,
Schmidt.

END SCENE