

LOS ANGELES LEGENDARY SLEUTH

Chapter 12: The Street Racers

"FUCK!"

Luke had the urge to kill the bastard with one shot.

Others screw over their fathers, he screws over his partners.

Luke made up his mind that he definitely needed a new partner when he got back.

But for now, he had no choice but to cover for him.

David was the first to rush into the house, searching to the left, "Clear."

Luke followed closely, searching the right side of the house, "Clear."

The two moved in a staggered advance, one in front of the other.

The house wasn't large. It only had a living room, kitchen, bathroom, and one bedroom.

Inside, the place was a mess, cluttered with various items and food trash, a sour smell hitting their noses.

"Clear."

"Clear."

...

After a thorough search, Luke and his partner found no one in the house.

Luke put away his gun and rubbed his finger on the coffee table, finding a thick layer of dust. There was leftover pizza on the table, which had grown mold.

Judging by the state of the rotting food, it seemed no one had lived here for at least a week.

"David, there's not even a mouse in the house, where did that cry for help come from?"

David shrugged, saying nonchalantly, "Maybe... I heard wrong, you know."

"Of course, I know. You're just a reckless asshole. If you don't get rid of this bad habit, you're going to get us killed sooner or later."

"The feeling is mutual. I'm an asshole, you're a lazybones. You ignore such important clues to go grab a meal first."

"At least I don't get my partners complained against. And while we're eating, we could apply for a search warrant."

"Come on. By the time a search warrant is issued, the suspect would already be in Mexico. According to police protocols, in emergencies, officers are authorized to search a suspect's place. What we did isn't illegal."

"To you, everything's an emergency."

The two argued for a bit, and the atmosphere became tense.

After a moment of silence, David spread his hands, "OK, I'm in the wrong here, and I apologize.

But since we're here already, why not search properly? We might find some valuable clues."

"David, this isn't over," Luke said, and they each continued their search.

The living room and bedroom were both in disarray. Luke also found a bag of white powder, several hundred US dollars, and some in-season clothes in the cupboard.

From the looks of it, the suspect had left in a hurry.

David, having finished his search, stood by the window looking out, frowning, "Hey, there's a sneaky guy loitering by our car. What the hell is he up to..."

They stepped outside and saw a scruffy white man peering into the vehicle through the window, forcefully pulling at the door handle with his right hand while holding a long piece of wire in his left.

"Asshole, get your dirty hands off!"

Seeing David approach aggressively, the scruffy white man quickly stepped back, tossing the wire aside, "Whoa, take it easy, it was just a joke."

"Your joke's very funny, but you picked the wrong target," David flashed his badge.

"Oh, no. I respect you; I don't want any trouble," the white man said, taking a step back and then turning to run.

Luke had already made his way to the other side and blocked his path of escape.

The white man swung his fists, pretending to hit Luke.

Luke sidestepped and hooked his right foot around the man's lower leg.

In a hurry, the disheveled white man couldn't evade and fell to the ground with a "bang!"

Luke pressed his knee into the man's lower back, "LAPD. Trying to steal a cop car, that's gutsy."

The scruffy man didn't try to resist and just turned his head to say, "Sir, I wasn't really going to steal it, it was just a joke."

"The long piece of wire in your hand doesn't look like a joke." Luke handcuffed him, pulling him up off the ground.

A woman with disheveled hair ran over from a distance, "What are you doing? Why are you arresting my friend?"

David showed his badge, "Are you his accomplice?"

"You're cops?" The woman's state of mind didn't seem very good.

David tilted his head slightly, looking at the woman as if he recognized her, "Lindsay, it's me, David."

The woman waved her hand, "Let him go."

David tapped his chest, "Lindsay, it's me, David."

The woman seemed to recognize David, she shook her head and looked uneasy.

David slowly approached, "It's okay. I've been looking all over for you, just wanted to make sure you were doing all right. Are you okay?"

The woman stepped back, "I'm fine, I'm fine. Just stay away from me."

"I just want to help you, that's all I want."

Lindsay retorted, "You want to help me?"

"Yes."

"Give me all the cash you have on you?"

"What?"

"The money, give it to me."

"How about I take you to a rehab center instead?"

"I don't need to go to that kind of place. Hurry up."

David looked back at Luke helplessly, "Lindsay, don't be like this."

The two made eye contact for a moment, and with a soft sigh, David pulled out several bills from his pocket.

Lindsay snatched them away and ran off.

David gazed at her disappearing figure with a look of desolation.

Luke was somewhat dumbfounded, seeing such a 'weak' side of David for the first time, "What happened?"

David's eyes reddened, and he walked over quickly, punching the unkempt man in the stomach, "What's your name?"

"Logan Salmo"

"David, that's enough, someone's coming." Fearing David might act irrationally, Luke dragged the unkempt man aside.

David gritted his teeth and warned, "Remember this lesson, there won't be a next time."

The unkempt man couldn't even straighten up due to the pain and nodded repeatedly.

Luke asked, "What should we do with this guy?"

"Let him go."

"You serious?"

"Just let him walk."

The unkempt man urged, "He's letting me go."

Luke unlocked the handcuffs and let the unkempt man leave, then sat in the passenger seat with irritation and asked, "What's going on?"

David, head bowed and voice filled with helplessness, replied, "That's my wife; I haven't seen her for almost half a year now."

Luke was taken aback, "Ex-wife?"

"We haven't divorced." David let go of the car thief, not wanting to involve his wife.

If word got out that someone had stolen his car and his own wife was the lookout, he would become the laughingstock of the entire police station.

With just a few glances, Luke could tell that the woman was on drugs.

The wife of a cop turning out to be an addict was a matter too shameful for anyone to speak of.

"Calm down for a bit; I'll ask the neighbors about Tony," said Luke, getting out of the car and scanning the surroundings, which, aside from a few loitering individuals, showed no sign of proper residents in their own yards.

Luke knocked on several neighbors' doors, but not one person opened up. He didn't know if it was because they weren't home, away, or simply didn't want to open the door.

"This godforsaken place..." Luke started to miss home.

Back in the car, David seemed to have regained his composure and took the initiative, "Any luck?"

"I didn't even see a soul."

"These lousy people are like vampires; they only come out at night." David started the car, "I'll take you to meet some friends; they should know something about Tony."

The car drove forward a few hundred meters, eventually coming upon a bar nearby.

There were many motorcycles parked on the open ground in front of the bar, surrounded by a group of men in leather jackets, some of which bore white skulls on them.

"These are the friends you mentioned?"

"Do you know how to identify members of a biker gang?"

"The emblems on the jackets can reveal the gang's name, origin, and status. The name of this biker gang is 'Motorcycle Hardnuts'." Luke chuckled and cursed, "Those bastards actually stole my 'nickname'."

David said, "The bikers run this area; they'll definitely know Tony's background."

"You got an informant here?"

"No, but I will have one soon."

"What do you mean?"

David counter-asked, "Know which guys are the most dangerous among this crowd?"

"Those with the skulls on their jackets?"

"No, it's the ones without skulls on their jackets. The only way for them to move up is by committing a serious crime in front of other gang members, like assaulting a cop."

Luke glanced at him, "You want to fight?"

"Yeah, I'd rather be beaten to death than die of suffocation."