

LOS ANGELES LEGENDARY SLEUTH

Chapter 16: Clues

Monday morning.

Robbery and Murder Department.

Luke had just walked into the office when Marcus came over, rubbing his dark circles, "Hey, buddy, how did things go last night?"

"Dinner was good, the night view was beautiful, and we had a great chat."

"Come on, you know what I mean?" Marcus made a thrusting motion with his body.

Luke laughed, "Ease up on the one-night stands, man. You never know when you'll crash and burn."

Matthew said, "Friendly tip, you should get an HIV test."

"Heh heh... I know you're just jealous, I get it. Sour grapes, huh." Marcus grinned widely, "I take precautions."

The deputy chief said, "Infectious diseases aren't just HIV, best of luck to you."

"Oh... I'll admit I'm a bit spooked, definitely need to hit the bar and drink a few more tonight to calm my nerves." Marcus mimicked a dancing gesture.

The deputy chief shook his head, "Don't mind him, the guy's beyond help, women will be the end of him someday."

Luke, who had taken a day off yesterday, asked, "Any new developments in the Tessar gun robbery case?"

The deputy chief said, "Yesterday we checked the cell phone numbers registered to Tony, but the SIM cards have been deactivated and can't be located. This further increases the suspicion of Tony's involvement. Our main task now is to find Tony."

Luke continued, "How is Tony's financial situation?"

Matthew answered, "Tony doesn't have a legitimate job and has been collecting welfare. His financial situation isn't very good, and the house he's living in is rented. We found no credit card transaction records."

Marcus said, "People like Tony usually prefer cash transactions, which makes it hard to track their location through credit card spending. I've asked some gang friends to help look for him."

"Creak..." The captain's office door opened, and David walked out, waving at Luke, "Alarm clock, there's a task."

"You really are asking for a beating."

"Takes one to know one."

The two left the detective bureau, with Luke getting into the passenger seat first. David sighed softly, settling into the driver's seat.

"What's the task?"

"Harry found a lead on Tony and wants to report it to us in person." David started the car and was about to drive off when Luke handed him an envelope, "What's this?"

"I borrowed three thousand US Dollars from you at the end of last year, now I'm repaying you with interest, making it 3200 US Dollars."

David looked surprised, glanced into the envelope, "Did you rob a bank during your day off yesterday?"

Luke joked, "That's right, this is your hush money."

David put the envelope into his inner pocket, "Call me next time."

"I'll consider it."

David laughed too, "Didn't expect you to pay me back, it's a pleasant surprise."

"You knew I might not pay you back, and you still lent me the money?" Luke thought to himself, Are you a fool?

True to his original personality, he might indeed have not returned the money, not out of malice but because he was never financially comfortable.

David's expression was complex, "I've seen some cops take the wrong path because they needed money. It's easy for LAPD to turn power into money, but that's a road of no return. If you need money, you can still come to me."

"Didn't realize you cared so much about me."

"Don't flatter yourself, I just don't want to get shot in the back one day."

"Haha..."

Luke laughed, now that was more like David.

The car approached Tony's neighborhood, and David parked at the entrance of an alleyway where a man quickly got into the back seat. It was Harry, the informant David had just recruited.

David got straight to the point, "Did you find Tony's whereabouts?"

Harry said, "I've used all my contacts to find Tony, but I haven't discovered his hideout. I can confirm he's not hiding nearby."

David turned and said, "That's not enough, you want freedom, you'll have to trade for it with valuable information. If you're just going through the motions, I don't mind putting the handcuffs back on you."

"Hey, relax, although I didn't find Tony, I found his close buddy. These two are always together, no one knows Tony's situation better than he does. You can ask him directly whatever you want to know."

"What's his name, and where does he live?"

"We all call him William, he's a wanderer. His tent is just in the alley up ahead. He's a white guy with a big beard, only four fingers on his right hand—easy to spot." Harry paused, then continued,

"I believe he should have the information you're looking for. Are we even now?"

David said, "No, you have to help us find Tony before we're even."

"I'd like to help you, but I only hang around here, only familiar with the local scene. What I can promise is that if Tony comes back, I'll tell you right away. But if he's gone somewhere else, I'm powerless."

David stared at him for a while, "Help me find one more person, and we'll call it even."

"I knew it, knew you wouldn't let me off so easily..." Harry complained, but he knew it was futile and said resignedly, "OK, I can help you, but this is the last time."

"But you have to find the person."

"Who?"

"Lindsay Halse."

"Is she a junkie?"

"Yes."

"What did she do?"

"That's none of your business, I need her address."

"Find her, and we're square."

"Waiting for your information."

"OK, you're the boss." After saying that, Harry got out of the car.

Luke said, "Are you abusing your power for personal gain?"

"Are you planning to report me?"

"Even if I did report you, it wouldn't be for something like this. I have my own reputation to consider."

David chuckled and drove a few hundred meters forward, stopping at the entrance to another alley and looking inside to indeed see a blue tent.

Both got out of the car, one after the other, and walked into the alley. Luke called out, "Hey, William, you've got visitors."

After a moment, the tent opened from the inside, and a disheveled man poked out his head, "Who are you? I don't know you."

"We're friends of Tony's."

"I've known Tony for nearly ten years, Haven't seen him with other friends, except for me."

"Looks like we've got the right person." Luke flashed his badge, "LAPD."

"Sir, I know you don't like me, but I haven't committed any crimes."

"Indeed you haven't, but your friend has." Luke offered him a cigarette, "We're looking for Tony."

William took the cigarette and sniffed it under his nose, "We haven't seen each other for a while, what's up with him?"

Luke asked, "When was the last time you saw each other?"

"I can't remember the exact time, but it's been at least half a month. Did something happen to him?"

"Was there anything unusual about him before you separated?"

William thought for a moment, "Seems like... around that time, he was a bit tense, and his mood was off too, kept avoiding me when I asked him to drink.

Then, he suddenly disappeared."

"Tony has been missing for so long, and as his only friend, why didn't you report it to the police?"

"Tony doesn't like cops, sorry sir, no offense.

But from what I know about Tony, if I had reported it, not only would he not appreciate it, he might even cut ties with me."

"Why?"