

Chapter 10 *Why did you do it?*

Sometimes, now, I still can't believe what happened in Barcelona. I don't know the whole story, of course, but I know most of it.

Simon did not stay for the second half of the concert in the theatre in Barcelona that night. 'No problem,' he thought, 'Penny saw me at the concert. The orchestra saw me. Penny thinks I'm sitting at the back.' Poor Simon.

Simon went to a bar to meet someone. But Frank was also in the bar. Frank needed a drink. He needed to think about his problems. You see Frank loved Candida. But then Marilyn decided that she loved Frank too. She sent him letters, gave him things, talked to him, followed him everywhere. Frank didn't like Marilyn following him. He needed a drink.

Simon didn't see Frank. Frank didn't see Simon either, at first. But the barman saw Frank – and later he saw a picture of Frank on the television – so he rang the police.

A tall Frenchman came into the bar with a black bag. Perhaps that's when Frank looked up and saw Simon, but he didn't speak to him. Frank knew that something wasn't right.

'Thank you *Monsieur* Hunt,' the Frenchman said. 'We have got the picture. My friend is very happy.' He opened his bag. He gave Simon a large brown envelope. Frank was listening.

'All this, just for a Cézanne painting,' Simon laughed.

Frank probably remembered the article in the newspaper. The Frenchman walked out of the bar. Simon looked into the envelope. There was money in it. A lot of money. Frank saw it too. It was money for 'The Gardener' by Cézanne, of course. Frank didn't know the whole story then, but we know now: a rich man in France wanted it for his secret collection of art. Something else Frank didn't know. Simon's cousin worked at the Tate Gallery as a security guard. She took the painting from the gallery. She gave it to Simon and he put it in my double bass case. Nobody looks for a painting in a double bass case in an orchestra truck!

Simon went back to the hotel. Frank went to his own room first and made that phone call to London. Then he went to Simon's room. Perhaps he wanted to ask him, 'Why? Why did you do it?' Perhaps he wanted to tell him to run. I don't know. But it wasn't a good idea to go to Simon's room. Simon's window was open. Frank fell five floors to the ground.

The police found Simon at Barcelona airport. He went there after his night with me.

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The policeman walked through the police station. I followed him. It was very hot in the building.

We got to a door. The policeman unlocked the door.

There was a different policeman in the room. And Simon.

'Hello,' Simon said. He looked terrible.

'Hello,' I said quietly. 'How are you?'

'What do you think?' he said. It wasn't a real question.

'Oh Simon, did you really kill Frank?' I asked him.



‘Yes. No. He was angry. He fell. Well, I pushed him.’

‘Why?’ I asked. I couldn’t believe this.

‘He saw me in the bar,’ Simon said in an unfriendly voice. ‘He saw me with the Frenchman. He knew about “The Gardener”.’

‘Why?’ I shouted. ‘Why did you do it?’ I was very angry.

‘Why did I do it? Money, of course. I wanted more money.’

‘And why didn’t you run?’ I asked.

‘I did. After Frank “fell”, I left the hotel. But then I

thought. "Nobody knows. It was an accident. That's what people will say." But I didn't know about his telephone call. I didn't know that the police could see where his fingers were, his fingerprints on the window of my room.'

We sat in that room for a few more minutes. We didn't look at each other.

'What's going to happen to you?' I asked.

'What do you think? I'm going to be in prison for a long time, I expect.'

'Poor Simon.'

'Oh, be quiet. Go away. Go away. I don't want you in this room. I don't want anybody here with me. I don't want to see you again. Ever. Just get out.'

I wanted to stay. Simon was not a good person, but I loved him. Well, I loved him once upon a time.

'Simon,' I said. 'Simon I . . . ' but I didn't have any words in my head. Simon looked at the floor. The Spanish policeman looked out of the window. I left the room.

When I walked out of the police station I didn't look back.